Adult Recipients of Bullying Behaviour:

Effects and Coping Strategies

Volume I

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Adult Recipients of Bullying Behaviour:
Effects and Coping Strategies
Volume I

by

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Jean Lynch

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Summary

This study identifies the negative effects of bullying behaviour on thirty people in their place of work. Personality differences between participants in the study who claim to have been bullied and a matched control group, and the coping strategies employed in stressful periods were sought. Possible individual and organisational antecedents to bullying were identified. In addition, to using psychometric measures to obtain quantitative data the findings were enriched by including qualitative research methods.

The thesis is divided into four sections. The first section includes a literature review covering studies carried out by major researchers in Europe, Australia, the United States of America and Japan into the area of workplace bullying. Psychological theory is examined in an attempt to explain the behaviours of the perpetrators and recipients of bullying behaviours. Likely causes within organisations are identified with reference to previous studies in the area of workplace bullying and theoretical explanations suggest possible antecedents of bullying behaviours in organisations including organisational change and theories of leadership. The effects of bullying on the recipients of such behaviours in this study were found to be severe and, therefore, the possible negative effects of trauma are explained. Coping strategies and their effectiveness are discussed.

The second section details the methods used and describes the questionnaires, psychological measures, and inventories which were completed by the participants and explains the procedure for obtaining qualitative data during interviews with the bullied group. The inclusion of qualitative data in the study was seen as central to it, thus giving a more insightful understanding of the experiences of people who label themselves as bullied at work.

Section three contains the results of the study. Without exception, the bullied group had been exposed to a large number of negative behaviours. They had all suffered, at some time during their distressing experiences, severe effects including depression, physical and psychological ill health, anxiety, heightened levels of anger, effects of trauma, and low self-esteem.

Significant differences between the bullied and control groups, illustrate that the social climate at work plays a role in the prevalence of bullying. The bullied group

reported more negative experiences in regard to job and organisational satisfaction, workload, relationships at work, organisational climate and daily hassles. Organisational change and leadership were shown to be central to the negative experiences of the bullied participants.

It was found that bullied participants were more conscientious and agreeable than the participants in the control group. Those who were more extrovert and sociable were more likely to suffer from physical and psychological ill-health including anxiety and withdrawal behaviours. Scrutiny of the relationship between specific elements of work pressure and physical and psychological ill-health identified increased workload, poor working relationships, and pressure from daily hassles as the major causes of distress among bullied participants.

Subsequent coping strategies, used by bullied participants, included both problem and emotion focused coping. This was particularly evident for those whose adjustment, or emotional ability, is high. Their choice of coping strategies was shown to be adaptive particularly when their self-esteem had not been too severely damaged. However, when their physical and psychological health had been affected, they were shown not to cope well. Pressure from a high workload also led to less adaptive coping. The use of coping strategies was affected by personality factors in that those who were out-going, open to new experiences, and more agreeable were more likely to seek emotional social support.

In the final section the results of this study are compared with previous findings. Limitations of the study and suggestions for future research are discussed.

Raw data are included in the Appendices.

Table of Contents

SECTION I - INTRODUCTION

SECTION 2 - MATERIALS and METHODOLOGY

SECTION 4 - DISCUSSION

List of Tables

List of Figures

Abbreviations

ASTI		Association of Secondary Teachers of Ireland
B gp		Bullied Group
C gp		Control Group
COPE		Coping Inventory (Carver, Scheier & Weintraub, 1989)
	Acc	Acceptance - in COPE
	AC	Active Coping - in COPE
	A/D	Resorting to alcohol and/or drugs - in COPE
	BD	Behavioural Disengagement - in COPE
	Den	Denial - in COPE
	Hum	Using Humour - in COPE
	MD	Mental Disengagement - in COPE
	Plan	Planning - in COPE
	PR	Positive Reinforcement - in COPE
	RC	Restraint Coping - in COPE
	Rel	Turning to Religion - in COPE
	SCA	Suppressing Competing Activities - in COPE
	SESS	Seeking Emotional Social Support
	SISS	Seeking Instrumental Social Support - in COPE
	VE	Venting of Emotions - in COPE

Coping abbreviations in text

	adap	Adaptive coping
	leadap	Less adaptive coping
	maladap	Maladaptive coping
	avoidcop	Avoidance coping
	cogcop	Cognitive reconstruction
	emocop	Emotion focused coping
	probcop	Problem focused coping
CSO		Central Statistics Office, Ireland

DSM-IV   Diagnostic Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders American
            Psychological Association)

EU   European Union

EVLN   Exit, Voice, Loyalty, Neglect - Model (Withey & Cooper, 1989)

GHQ   General Health Questionnaire (Goldberg & Williams, 1988)

    ghqanx   anxiety score in General Health Questionnaire

    ghqdep   depression score in General Health Questionnaire

    ghqsd   social dysfunction score in General Health Questionnaire

    ghqsom   somatic symptoms score in General Health Questionnaire

    ghqtot   Total score in General Health Questionnaire

IES   Impact of Event Scale (Horowitz, Wilner & Alverez, 1979)

INTO   Irish National Teachers Organisation

LIPT   Leymann Inventory of Psychological Terror (Leymann, 1990)

MMY   Mental Measurement Yearbook

NEO-PI   Personality Inventory measuring Neuroticism, Extraversion, Openness
            (Costa & McCrae, 1992)

    N   Neuroticism as a personality construct in NEO-PI

    E   Extraversion as a personality construct in NEO-PI

    O   Openness as a personality construct in NEO-PI

    A   Agreeableness as a personality construct in NEO-PI

    C   Conscientiousness as a personality construct in NEO-PI

NHS   National Health Service - United Kingdom

PDSD   Post Duress Stress Disorder

PMI   Pressure Management Indicator (Williams & Cooper, 1998)

    JI   Job Satisfaction - in Pressure Management Indicator

    JO   Organisation satisfaction - in Pressure Management Indicator

    OC   Organisational Commitment - in Pressure Management Indicator

    OS   Organisational Security measure - in Pressure Management
            Indicator

	PC	Recognition of work - in Pressure Management Indicator
	PD	Daily hassles - in Pressure Management Indicator
	PH	Pressures from work and home - in Pressure Management Indicator
	PO	Atmosphere in place of work - in Pressure Management Indicator
	PM	Personal responsibility - in Pressure Management Indicator
	PP	Managing and supervising others - in Pressure Management Indicator
	PR	Working relationships - in Pressure Management Indicator
	PW	Workload - in Pressure Management Indicator

PTSD   Post Traumatic Stress Disorder

   ptsdi   Post Traumatic Stress Disorder - intrusive thought scale

   ptsda   Post Traumatic Stress Disorder - avoidance scale

SES   Self-esteem Scale (Rosenberg, 1965)

   SE   Self-esteem score on self-esteem scale

STAI   State/Trait Anxiety Inventory (Spielberger, Gorsuch & Lushene, 1970)

   Stanx   State anxiety in State/Trait Anxiety Inventory

   Tranx   Trait anxiety in State/Trait Anxiety Inventory

STAXI   State/Trait Anger Expression Inventory (Spielberger and Rickman, 1991)

   Stang   State Anger - in State/Trait Anger Expression Inventory

   Trang   Trait Anger - in State/Trait Anger Expression Inventory

   Temp   Anger temperament

   Reac   Anger reaction

   Angin   Anger in

   Angout   Anger out

   Angexp   Anger expression

UK   United Kingdom

SECTION I - INTRODUCTION

1. 1 Workplace Bullying

1. 1. 1 Introduction

Adams (Adams & Crawford, 1992) is frequently acclaimed as the first person in the UK and Ireland to have identified workplace bullying (Rayner & Hoel, 1997) when she identified bullying behaviour as a misuse of personal power over others and separate from the recognised problems of sexual harassment or racism. Rayner & Hoel (1997) reported that early research into violence at work focused on aggressive verbal behaviour or physical aggression between strangers, which was not necessarily repeated. However, Hoel and Cooper (2000) purported that workplace bullying has been increasingly recognised internationally as a serious problem in the working environment and a cause of severe stress for employees subjected to such behaviours. Consequently, where personal physical violence at work has always been recognised, the presence of psychological violence and bullying has only recently been acknowledged (Di Martino, Hoel & Cooper, 2003). A survey carried out among employees in further education and higher educational institutes in Wales showed that the experience of bullying in the workplace was ranked higher by respondents than sex discrimination, or sexual and racial harassment (Lewis, 1999).

Cooper, Liukkonen, & Cartwright (1996) concluded that stress in the workplace has had an adverse impact on both individual and organisational health with occupational stress likely to be a continuing problem for both individuals and employers. A level of stress is inevitable in a working environment but where individual and organisational health is affected there is, arguably, a responsibility on employers to take preventative action. It is reasonable to conclude that research in the area of stress should be the initial step to assess the problem so that the incidence, effects on individuals and organisations, and intervention strategies can be measured. According to Zapf and Einarsen (2001) bullying is a gradually evolving process, during which a person may acquire a disadvantaged position resulting in highly aggressive behaviour by colleagues, managers, and/or subordinates. On the other hand bullying has been seen as a deliberate attempt to harm and ultimately destroy the target of aggressive behaviour (Field, 1996). Research,

1

therefore, is necessary to determine accurate data on the phenomenon of bullying behaviour, its effects and causes, so that informed decisions and actions can be taken to minimise the problem.

Bullying among school children has received attention in Scandinavian countries since the 1970's. By the late 1980's the work of Olweus carried out in Norway (Olweus, 1978, 1993) and literature on bullying in schools (Besag, 1989; Rolande & Munthe, 1989) influenced studies into school bullying in Ireland (O'Moore, 1995; O'Moore & Hillery, 1989; O'Moore, Kirkham, Smith, 1997), the UK (Whitney & Smith, 1993) and Australia (Rigby, 2002). Randall (1997a) maintained that research carried out to examine bullying behaviours in a school environment can add to the knowledge of workplace bullying by identifying the role of specific factors and personality traits of the aggressor and the recipient. Although research into bullying in schools has been evident for approximately 30 years, adult bullying is a recently acknowledged phenomenon and research in the area was not systematically described until a study was carried out in Sweden by Leymann in 1982 (Leymann, 1996).

Since the 1990's the concept of workplace bullying has been the central theme for many international researchers in Europe (Archer, 1999; Bjorkqvist, Osterman, & Hjelt-Back, 1994; Brown, 1997; Einarsen & Skogstad, 1996; Hoel & Cooper, 2000; Lewis, 1998; Leymann, 1996; Liefooghe & Olafson, 1998; Mikkelsen & Einarsen, 2001; Niedl, 1996; O'Moore, 2000b; O'Moore, Seigne, McGuire, & Smith, 1998; Rayner and Hoel, 1997; Vartia, 1996, 2003); the United States of America (Brodsky, 1976; Keashly, 2001); Australia (McCarthy, 2000; Sheehan & Barker, 2000) and Japan (Tokunaga & Sato-Tanaka, 1998). However, much of the existing literature of the 1990's is concerned predominantly with quantitative data (Lewis, 1998) and it is only in more recent times that research includes a high element of qualitative data (Doherty, 2003; Lewis 2003; Liefooghe & Davey, 2003) which adds to the understanding of bullying behaviour.

1. 1. 2 Terminology and definitions

A literature search of school and workplace bullying revealed evidence that there are difficulties for researchers using basic terminology not only in definitions but also in the word used to describe bullying. Negative or aggressive behaviours have been named

as victimisation (Olweus, 1991), work abuse (Bassman, 1992), psychological terror (Leymann, 1996) mobbing (Leymann, 1996; Einarsen, 1999), bullying (Adams & Crawford 1992; Einarsen & Skogstad, 1996; Hoel & Cooper, 2000; O'Moore, 2000b), and harassment (Brodsky, 1976; Vartia, 1996), with arguments given by different researchers for the adoption of their choice of word. Some researchers have used both bullying and harassment in their definitions (Einarsen, Raknes, & Matthiesen, 1994; O'Moore et al, 1998).

The argument for using bullying rather than harassment purports that harassment indicates tangible incidents, such as sexual harassment and physical abuse, whereas bullying suggests a wider outline of subtle behaviours (Rayner & Hoel, 1997). Leymann (1996) felt that bullying should be used for behaviours between children and teenagers whereas mobbing should characterise more sophisticated behaviours such as isolating the victim. Zapf (1999) argued that mobbing is often concerned with aggression from a group of people, which tends to be directed towards one person.

Randall (1997a) differentiated between bullying and harassment maintaining that bullying is more commonly associated with physical aggression and therefore mor appropriate. He reported that harassment is seen by many personnel managers as a more psychological form of aggression and, for them, the most appropriate term for use in describing the types of behaviour that cause stress in the workplace. However, Randall (1997a) concludes that the use of the term "harassment" may lead to the more serious types of aggression associated with aggression not being recognised.

According to Liefooghe and Davey (2003) employees, in their research, use the term bullying differently from researchers, employers and other interest groups. They maintain that employees argue that it does not apply to their experiences but suggests behaviours of bullying among school children and use the term to refer to abuse of power in the organisation.

It is arguable that neither bullying nor harassment alone sufficiently describe the negative behaviour in the workplace, to which some people conclude they are subjected. In an attempt to overcome this difficulty Einarsen et al (1994) and O'Moore et al (1998) use both bullying and harassment in their definition. Equally, Leymann (1996) used both psychological terror and mobbing. Nevertheless, researchers and those affected by

3

bullying, harassment, psychological terror, or mobbing, appear to have an understanding of the negative behaviour and use terms, which, to them, describe the negative behaviours that they claim to have experienced.

Researchers have defined the act of bullying in terms of aggression (Bjorkqvist, et al 1994; Randall, 1997a) conflict (Keashley, 2001; Einarsen, 1996), psychological terror (Leymann, 1996), and negative behaviour (O'Moore, 2000b). On occasion specific examples of negative acts have been used in definitions to describe bullying behaviour, such as hostile and unethical communication (Leymann, 1996), insulting remarks and offensive teasing (Einarsen et al, 1994), or sarcasm, threats, and assignment to unpleasant jobs (McCarthy, Sheehan, & Kearns, 1995). Other researchers and writers have used more general terms to describe acts of bullying, for example, persistent criticism or personal abuse (Adams & Crawford, 1992), hostile and aggressive behaviour (Leymann, 1996) and negative behaviour (O'Moore, 2000b).

Since bullying behaviours can be esoteric there is a necessity to produce clear definitions that can identify negative behaviours as bullying. Researchers have adopted definitions for the purpose of conducting studies but Rayner and Hoel (1997) maintained that definitions have, to some extent, been influenced by the legal perspective which requires more specific behaviours to demonstrate the difference between bullying and, for example, management styles and normal banter in the workplace. The diversity of definitions adopted by researchers is shown below.

Reference	Definition
Adams (1992)	Persistent criticism and personal abuse in public or private, which humiliates and demeans a person.
Bjorqvist, Osterman, & Hjelt-Back (1994)	Repeated activities, with the aim of bringing mental (but sometimes also physical) pain, and directed towards one or more individuals who, for one reason or another, are not able to defend themselves.
Brodsky (1976)	Repeated and persistent attempts by a person to torment, wear down, frustrate, or get a reaction from another person; it is treatment which persistently provokes, pressures, frightens, intimidates or otherwise causes discomfort in another person.

4

Crawford (1992)	Bullying, in a nutshell, is where aggression is being used not in the service of the organisation, but where cruelty, viciousness, the need to humiliate and the need to make someone feel small is a dominant feature of a relationship between colleagues.
Einarsen, Raknes & Matthiesen (1994).	Bullying and harassment are situations where a worker or supervisor is systematically mistreated and victimised by fellow workers or supervisors through repeated negative acts like insulting remarks and ridicule, verbal abuse, offensive teasing, isolation, and social exclusion, or the constant degrading of one's work and efforts.
Einarsen & Skogstad (1996)	Bullying (harassment, badgering, freezing out, offending someone) is a problem in some workplaces and for some workers. To label something bullying it has to occur repeatedly over a period of time, and the person confronted has to have difficulties defending himself/herself. It is not bullying if two parties of approximately equal strength are in conflict or the incident is an isolated event.
Einarsen, Hoel, Zapf, & Cooper (2003)	Bullying at work means harassing, offending, socially excluding someone or negatively affecting someone's work tasks. In order for the label bullying (or mobbing) to be applied to a particular activity, interaction or process it has to occur repeatedly or regularly (e.g. weekly) and over a period of time (e.g. about six months). Bullying is an escalating process in the course of which the person confronted ends up in an inferior position and becomes the target of systematic negative social acts. A conflict cannot be called bullying if the incident is an isolated event or if two parties of approximately equal 'strength' are in conflict.
Hoel & Cooper (2000)	We define bullying as a situation where one or several individuals persistently over a period of time perceive themselves to be on the receiving end of negative actions from one or several persons, in a situation where the target of bullying has difficulty in defending him or herself against these actions. We will not refer to a one-off incident as bullying.
Keashly & Nowell (2003)	Bullying at work is interactions between organisational members that are characterised by repeated hostile verbal and non-verbal, often non-physical behaviours directed at a person(s) such that the target's sense of him/herself as a competent worker and person is negatively affected.
Leymann (1996)	Psychological terror or mobbing in working life involves hostile and unethical communication, which is directed in a systematic way by one or a few individuals mainly towards one individual

who, due to mobbing, is pushed into a helpless and defenceless position, being held there by means of continuing mobbing activities. These occur on a very frequent basis (statistical definition: at least once a week) and over a long period of time (statistical definition: at least six months of duration).

Mattiesen, Raknes & Rrokkum (1989)	One or more person's repeated and enduring negative reactions and conducts targeted at one or more persons of their workgroup.
Olweus (1993)	A student is being bullied or victimised when he or she is exposed repeatedly and over time, to negative actions on the part of one or more other students. Negative action occurs when someone intentionally inflicts, or attempts to inflict, injury or discomfort on another - basically it is aggressive behaviour.
O'Moore et al (1998) O'Moore (2000b)	Bullying/harassment, in the workplace is where aggression is being used not in the service of the organisation, but where cruelty, viciousness, intimidation and the need to humiliate dominates a working relationship. Thus a person is bullied or harassed at work when he or she is repeatedly exposed to aggression, whether verbal, psychological or physical. Isolated incidents of aggressive behaviour may be regarded as bullying but our definition emphasises repeated negative behaviour.
O'Moore (2000a)	Bullying is negative behaviour, which can be direct or indirect, verbal, non-verbal or physical, initiated or conducted by one or more persons against another or others in a systematic and on-going manner. Isolated incidents of aggressive behaviour can also be described as bullying if they are unjustified and serve to intimidate on an on-going basis.
Randall (1997a)	Bullying is the aggressive behaviour arising from the deliberate intent to cause physical or psychological distress to others.
Salin (2003)	Bullying is repeated and persistent negative acts towards one or more individual(s), which involve a perceived power imbalance and create a hostile work environment.
Vartia (2003)	Bullying is long lasting, recurrent serious negative process of actions and behaviour that is annoying and oppressing. It is not bullying if you are scolded once or someone shrugs his or her shoulders at you once. Negative behaviour develops into bullying when it is continuous and repeated. Often the target of bullying feels unable to defend him or herself.

Zapf and Gross (2001)	Bullying occurs if someone is harassed, offended, socially excluded, or has to carry out humiliating tasks and if the person concerned is in an inferior position. To call something bullying, it must occur repeatedly (e.g. at least once a week) and for a long time (e.g. at least six months). It is not bullying if it is a single event. It is also not bullying if two equally strong parties are in conflict.

It is apparent that there is no general agreement on the definition of workplace bullying, although there are constant themes: frequency and duration, imbalance of power, repeated behaviour, intent of perpetrator, and the effects of bullying on the victim.

Constructs of definitions have been identified where frequency and duration are the main criteria to some definitions (e.g. Niedl, 1996; Leymann, 1996; Einarsen & Skogstad, 1996; Einarsen, et al, 2003; Zapf & Gross, 2003). Although precise duration is not always contained in definitions (e.g. Hoel & Cooper, 2000; Olweus, 1991; O'Moore, 2000b) it is frequently specified for research purposes and respondents are asked to state whether they have been bullied for a specific period. This can make comparisons between researchers difficult as time limits vary from within six months (Stogstad, Matthiesen, & Hellesoy, 1990), over six months (Leymann, 1996; Niedl, 1996), within twelve months (O'Moore, 2000b) to ever bullied (Rayner, 1997; O'Moore 2000b). Vartia (2001) found that many employees felt that they were targets of bullying although they had been treated negatively for less that six months. With regard to frequency of bullying, Leymann (1996) and Zapf and Gross (2003) used the precise terminology of "once a week", whereas others refer to repeated and/or systematic behaviour without defining how many times the behaviours have been repeated (Bjorgvist et al, 1994; O'Moore, 2000b). In contrast, O'Moore (2000a, 2000b) included isolated incidents of aggressive behaviour in her definition thus eliminating duration. Although the frequency and duration of bullying behaviours can assist researchers by quantifying data, it is obvious that, in order to make meaningful comparisons, a standard format needs to be agreed.

The imbalance of power between the bully and victim has its roots in research into school bullying (Hoel, Rayner & Cooper, 1999). This imbalance could either reflect the formal structure in an organisation or a source of informal power based on knowledge and access to support from people with real power, frequently management. However, in

the context of workplace bullying it is "normally" considered to define bullying as existing when an individual establishes power over someone else and is perceived to reinforce their superiority unnecessarily (Hoel et al 1999). Einarsen et al (2003) suggest that an imbalance of power is crucial to determine the presence of bullying behaviours and distinguish bullying from conflict. They conclude that a conflict situation could escalate to the extent that one of the parties is placed in a weaker position and a state of affairs exists where bullying behaviours are present. Definitions where phrases such as "pushed into a helpless and defenceless position" (Leymann, 1996); "experience difficulty in defending himself or herself" (Einarsen et al, 1994); "often the target of bullying feels unable to defend him or herself" (Vartia, 2001) indicate that an imbalance of power should be present for bullying to exist.

Repeated or systematic behaviour has normally been central to definitions (Einarsen & Skogstad, 1996; Leymann, 1996; O'Moore, et al, 1998; O'Moore, 2000a) although researchers vary in how frequently the bullying behaviours should occur. Although researchers generally do not consider one negative act to constitute bullying O'Moore et al (1998) and O'Moore (2000a) suggested that one act should not be disregarded. Einarsen et al (2003) concurred and argued that not all bullying behaviours are episodic and used the examples of a rumour or a person moved into poor working conditions, both which result in a permanent negative state from one action. A further argument for including a one off behaviours in definitions is that one incident could take place in a working climate of fear and cause severe distress for the individual involved. It is also possible that a prospective recipient of bullying behaviours witnesses others being targeted and, living with the expectation that they will be next, feel the impact of bullying after one incident directed at them.

Intent of the perpetrator is a construct where researchers have evolved in their definitions of bullying. Brodsky (1976) maintained that people "attempt ... to torment" and, in their definition, Bjorkqvist et al (1994) used the term "with the aim of bringing mental ... pain". Randall (1997a) is more definite when he included the term "deliberate intent" in his definition. Insisting that intent is necessary for bullying to occur could lead to the perpetrator's argument that they did not intend to cause distress, that they are merely behaving in a manner that they feel to be appropriate, and therefore they did not

8

display bullying behaviour. Nevertheless this does not diminish the resultant distress on the recipient of such behaviours. It is also possible that the target of bullying behaviours does not suffer distress, with no impact on their physical or psychological health. This does not take into account the effect on witnesses (O'Moore, Lynch & Kirkham, 2003c) or the long-term effect on the recipient if they realise in the future that they have in fact been bullied.

Niedl (1996) contended that a person exposed to aggressive actions will feel bullied if they experience these actions as hostile, unpleasant, degrading, and directed at themselves. Therefore the presence, or otherwise, of bullying behaviour is normally a subjective judgement by the recipient of such behaviours based on the impact it has on them (Einarsen et al, 1994; Rayner, 1997). This is reflected in some definitions. For example, Randall (1997a) referred to "physical or psychological distress" in his definition and Adams (1992) also considered the impact of bullying as behaviour that "humiliates and demeans a person". On the other hand, the impact is not referred to in other definitions (e.g. Einarsen & Skogstad, 1996; Hoel & Cooper, 2000; O'Moore, 2000b). This subjective judgement, made by the target, does not take into account the effects on other recipients of bullying behaviour by the same aggressor, nor the impact on observers and bystanders. It could be argued that negative behaviours should still be defined as bullying even when they do not have an impact on the target as observers of bullying have been shown to be affected by such behaviours (Vartia, 2001).

Rayner, Hoel, and Cooper (2002) suggested that bullying may be defined differently by people in different professions. For example, when a legal case is processed, repeated behaviours and corroboration will be necessary. Personnel managers and union representatives, who may be in a position to intervene, will need to identify behaviours quickly and not wait for a period of time that is specified in some definitions. Recipients of bullying behaviours may not wish to be labelled as victims but are likely to be more concerned with the effects on their mental health and expect this to be reflected in a definition.

For the purpose of this research the definition of bullying favoured is that suggested by O'Moore (2000a).

Bullying is negative behaviour, which can be direct or indirect, verbal, non-verbal or physical, initiated or conducted by one or more persons against another or others in a systematic and on-going manner. Isolated incidents of aggressive behaviour can also be described as bullying if they are unjustified and serve to intimidate on an on-going basis.

By using general terms, this definition is considered to be inclusive of all bullying behaviours, avoids the intent of the perpetrator, and includes the notion that isolated incidents can still cause intimidation.

1. 1. 3 Bullying behaviours

Bullying has been described as a process during which, in the early phases, recipients of aggressive behaviour are subjected to subtle and indirect actions (Einarsen et al, 2003). At this stage the person may find it difficult to determine the nature of the behaviours and not recognise them as bullying, and yet they are aware of severe effects. As the aggressor becomes more confident and, if they are not checked, their behaviours may become more overt.

Einarsen (1999) purported that bullying behaviours can be present for two distinct reasons. He identified predatory bullying where the recipient of bullying behaviours is accidentally in the situation and compared this to dispute related aggression, which develops out of grievances and involves social control reactions to perceived wrong doings. He concluded that dispute related bullying could be a result of interpersonal conflicts.

The identification of specific activities and behaviours that constitute the perceived act of bullying is necessary to quantify data for research. These behaviours in themselves may not have a purely negative character, may be considered to be normal interactive behaviour and necessary in the course of a working relationship. For example, a manager may find him/herself in the position of having to apply firm management techniques to an employee, who may erroneously perceive this as bullying. However, if negative behaviours are used frequently, in an unfair manner, over a period

10

of time and causing distress, their content and meaning changes into a dangerous and communicative weapon (Leymann, 1996). A further difficulty arises for those attempting to definitively recognise behaviours as bullying since bullying behaviours vary along a continuum of apparent minor acts of social exclusion to obvious stressors such as physical threats (Crawford, 1997).

Rigby (2002) examined perspectives on bullying in schools and the workplace and confirmed Crawford's (1997) opinion that the severity of bullying varies along a continuum. He judged the severity of bullying by the nature of the action, the duration, and the frequency of bullying acts. Low severity bullying included periodic teasing, name-calling, and occasional exclusion. Systematic and hurtful bullying was suggested to be of intermediate severity, whereas severe bullying was cruel and intense especially if the behaviours were carried out over an extended period and caused serious distress. Such behaviours can involve physical assaults and total exclusion.

Earlier research identified specific behaviours which could be developed and subdivided into categories depending on the effects they have on the recipient (Leymann, 1996). Leymann (1996) classified these as effects on the victims' possibilities to communicate adequately, to maintain social contacts, and to maintain their personal reputation. He also included effects on the victims' occupational situation and effects on their physical health. Within these categories Leymann (1990, cited in Leymann 1996) itemised 45 different activities and developed the Leymann Inventory of Psychological Terror (LIPT: Leymann, 1990). He emphasised the possibility that these behaviours are relevant in northern European countries and may not be pertinent in other cultures.

Zapf, Knortz, and Kulla (1996), by applying factor analysis to items in LIPT, generated seven factors for use in their research to examine the relationship between mobbing, job characteristics, social environment variables, and psychological health. These included attacking the victim with organisational measures, attacking the victim's social relationships with social isolation, attacking their private life and attacking their attitudes. They also included physical violence, verbal aggression and rumours. Where Leymann (1996) reported the effects on recipients, Zapf et al (1996) examined the behaviours carried out by the perpetrators.

Einarsen (1999) referred to the categories of bullying behaviour types identified by Zapf et al (1996). However, he combined some of the categories resulting in the following classifications of behaviours: work-related bullying which may include changing work tasks or making them difficult to perform; social isolation; personal attacks or attacks on the recipient's private life by ridicule, insulting remarks, gossip or the like; verbal threats including being criticised, yelled at or humiliated in public; and physical violence or threats of such violence.

In her study of bullying among the Finnish Federation of Municipal Officers, Vartia (2003) examined the prevalence of bullying behaviours in the categories of social isolation, organisational and work related means, personal means, and intimidation.

O'Moore (1999) identified twenty-five behaviours, which were used in the questionnaires for the Irish national survey (O'Moore, 2000b), and were considered to be representative of behaviours experienced by people in the workplace. These include: -

- withholding information so that work becomes difficult,
- severe or unfair criticism,
- humiliation by being shouted at,
- set unrealistic work targets,
- sexual harassment,
- spreading malicious rumours to discredit,
- excessive monitoring of work,
- physical abuse or threats of physical abuse,
- ordered to work below his or her level of competence,
- hurtful teasing, taunting, mocking ridicule - especially in front of others,
- being deprived of responsibility or work tasks,
- use of foul, obscene or offensive language,
- being contacted at home, weekends, holidays, sick leave, with 'urgent' work or unreasonable demands,
- being given deliberately ambiguous instructions and then being blamed for failure,
- social exclusion, intimidation,
- threats of disciplinary action,

- blocking promotion or pay increments,
- encouraging staff to disregard views,
- neglect of opinions or views,
- false claims of under performance that do not square with the facts,
- silence or hostility as a response to attempts at conversation,
- devaluing work and efforts,
- undue pressure to vote in a certain way in meetings,
- interference or disappearance of personal items,
- difficulty with requests for sick leave, holidays, compassionate leave, change of shifts,
- any form of dirty tricks campaign.

These individual behaviours were used in this study so that direct comparisons can be made with the national sample.

Lists of bullying behaviours cannot be totally comprehensive and to be determined as bullying behaviours, particular actions need to take place within an atmosphere of fear, submission, or oppression. For example, difficulty with requests for holiday leave could be acceptable at a time of short staffing and market demands.

Einarsen et al (2003) discussed organisational bullying as opposed to bullying behaviours by individuals. They suggested that organisational bullying refers to situations in which organisational practices and procedures perceived to be oppressive, demeaning, and humiliating, are employed so frequently and persistently that many employees feel victimised by them. In such situations, bullying refers to indirect interactions between the individual and management (Liefooghe & Davey, 2001) rather than behaviours between individuals. Organisational practices, that can be described as bullying consist of ignoring the employees a voice in pay negotiation and the use of the appraisal system in a manner which could be seen as unfair (Liefooghe & Davey, 2003). However, for the purpose of the present study, bullying is understood to be bullying behaviours carried out by individuals and not organisational bullying.

13

1. 1. 4 Prevalence of bullying

Comparison of the prevalence of bullying behaviours in international studies are difficult to establish due to different methodologies, cultural differences, and in particular, the different definitions of bullying that have been used (Einarsen, 1996). In Finland, for example, Bjorkqvist et al (1994) found that among employees at a Finnish University, 30% of the men and 55% of the women had been subjected to some form of harassment during the past year. Leymann (1996) in Sweden, found a prevalence rate of 3.5% among the Swedish working population. However, he estimated that 25% of the Swedish workforce, at some point in their working lives, could experience 'mobbing', the term used in Sweden for bullying behaviours. Einarsen and Skogstad (1996) used the same time parameter as Leymann (1996) - six months of exposure to bullying - to examine the incidence of bullying in Norway, and reported a prevalence rate of 8.6% among respondents of 14 different Norwegian studies that encompassed a broad array of organisations and professions. However, Niedl (1996) who also used the Swedish definition, found that in a public hospital in Austria, 26.6% of the respondents (7.8% of all employees in the hospital) reported that they were subjected to bullying.

In Finland, Vartia (1996) found that 10.1% of municipal workers had perceived themselves to be bullied. This rate is similar to that found by Salin (2003) when she surveyed business professionals in Finland where 8.8% of respondents who classified themselves as having been bullied. However, this number increased to 24.1% when respondents in the study were asked if they had been subjected to at least one of 32 negative acts presented to them in the questionnaire. A considerably higher number had been affected by bullying as 30.4% reported that they had witnessed bullying in the previous 12 months.

The most recent national study in the UK, (Hoel & Cooper, 2000), found that 10.5% of their sample of the workforce have been bullied (7.2% occasionally, 1.4% weekly or daily), while 24.4% of the same sample reported that they had been bullied during the past 5 years. This survey showed that 46.5% of workers had witnessed bullying.

However, when particular sections of the workforce in the UK were surveyed results show a higher incidence of bullying, which could result from a different

14

methodology or reflect an actual higher incidence. For example, a figure of 50% of people, who were public sector union members within the U.K, claimed to have been bullied at some time in their place of work, while 14% claimed to have been bullied in the previous 6 months (UNISON, 1997). Yet when Rayner (1997) asked part time students in the UK whether they had been subjected to bullying during the whole of their working lives, 53% stated that they had been bullied at some point and 77 % of the respondents reported that they had observed others being bullied. A further UK study, by Edelman and Woodall (1997), found a prevalence rate of 18.7 % among members of the Professional Association of Teachers. This figure is in line with the results of a study carried out by Lewis (1999) where 18% of respondents, in further and higher education in Wales, had been bullied, and 22% of respondents had witnessed bullying.

An example of different rates of bullying among people with the same employer is illustrated by the surveys carried out by Quine (1999) and Ball and Pike (2001). Quine (1999) reported that of 1100 National Health Service employees in the UK, 38% have been subjected to one or more forms of bullying while 42% of employees had witnessed the bullying of others. Ball and Pike (2001) found, in a survey commissioned by the Royal College of Nursing in the UK, that 17% of nurses had been bullied in the previous 12 months.

Results from a national survey carried out in Ireland (O'Moore, 2000b) show that 16.9% of respondents claimed to have been bullied occasionally (once or twice) in the previous 12 months with 6.2% claiming to have been bullied frequently in the same period. When the time period was extended to "bullying in your present job" 27.2% felt that they had been bullied occasionally and 14.4% bullied frequently. There were 41.5% of respondents who maintained that they had witnessed bullying in the workplace.

In Ireland, also, the incidence of bullying has been studied amongst various different occupational groups showing a higher incidence than the national survey. The Irish Nursing Union (1997) reported that bullying was a widespread problem among its membership. The most common forms of bullying reported were verbal or psychological in nature. 87% of nurses who took part in the study had experienced verbal bullying and the incidence of psychological bullying was almost identical. Only 3.3 % of respondents had been subjected to physical bullying. However, the definition used in the survey did

not categorise bullying as repeated negative or hostile behaviour making direct comparison with the other research difficult.

A study conducted by O'Moore (1999b), among members of the Teachers Union of Ireland, indicated that 32% of teachers had experienced bullying once or twice in their present job and another 11% had been subjected to frequent bullying. Bullying had been witnessed by 59.1% of respondents. There were 17.8% who reported themselves to be bullied once or twice within the previous 12 months and 3.9% stated that they had been subjected to bullying frequently in the same period. The Association of Secondary Teachers of Ireland (ASTI ,1999) found that 72% of their respondents reported that they were aware of others on the staff of their schools who have been bullied at work. Their results indicate that 23% of teachers, in the course of their work, experienced malicious teasing, taunting, mocking or ridicule in front of others, a further 19% of respondents stated that they had been victims of someone spreading malicious rumours to discredit them. The Irish National Teachers Organisation (INTO, 1998) found that 41% of their members had been publicly humiliated in their work situation with 48% reporting that they were undermined at work and 56% claiming that they were subjected to verbal abuse. Furthermore, the INTO found that 10% had been threatened with the loss of their jobs. Much less common were sexual harassment experienced by 4% of INTO members, and physical abuse, reported by 8% of the respondents. The INTO survey also found that 50% of their members had witnessed bullying at work.

Rayner and Hoel (1997) maintained that it is possible that national culture and work culture differences alone account for the different trends. This is a possibility since Irish and UK studies repeatedly reflect that there is more bullying of subordinates than there is of peers (O'Moore et al, 1998; Rayner, 1997) whereas the opposite is true of the Scandinavian countries (Einarsen et al, 1994). According to O'Moore (2000b) it would appear that cultures that are more egalitarian, as are the Scandinavian countries in contrast to Ireland and the UK, which tend to be very hierarchical, have more collegial than managerial bullying. Mikkelsen and Einarsen (2001) agreed and commented that lower rates in general in the Scandinavian countries could be due to their prevailing feminine and egalitarian culture. However, Salin (2001) showed different rates depending on the strategy used for measuring bullying. Results from her study of

professional business people varied from 8.8% when respondents were presented with a definition to 24.1% when using a modified version of the Negative Acts Questionnaire (Einarsen & Hoel, 2001). However, until a standard definition and methodology has been agreed among researchers, comparisons cannot be made in any meaningful manner.

1. 1. 5 Factors affecting the prevalence of bullying

Both environmental factors and characteristics of the victim and the aggressor are assumed to contribute to the onset of a bullying situation (Vartia, 2003). The environmental view emphasises the importance of the social climate of the workplace and the role of leadership and management practices. Leymann (1996) argued that the environment and work conditions are the main causes of bullying and that the personality of the victim is irrelevant. Conversely, Coyne, Seigne and Randall (2000) suggested that victims may have certain characteristics that could lead to their being selected as targets. It could be argued that neither environmental nor personality characteristics alone account for bullying and that bullying is an interactive and escalating process in which the work environment, the personality traits of both the victim(s) and the person(s) exhibiting bullying behaviours, and other human interactions within the organisation, all have significant input towards the existence of bullying (Einarsen 1999).

The influence of demographic factors on the prevalence of bullying have been identified as age (e.g. Einarsen & Skogstad, 1996), marital status (O'Moore, 2000b), gender (O'Moore, 2000b; Salin, 2002), occupational factors (e.g. Hoel & Cooper, 2000), and organisational factors (Liefooghe & Davey, 2001). These are covered in sections 1.1.5.1 to 1.1.5.4.

1. 1. 5. 1 Age and marital status

The relationship between age of recipients of bullying behaviour and bullying is inconsistent across studies pointing to cultural as well as labour market differences (Hoel et al, 1999). Older employees are more vulnerable and more frequently bullied in Scandinavia (Einarsen & Skogstad, 1996) with younger workers in the UK being targeted more often (Hoel & Cooper, 2000; Quine, 1999). Hoel et al (1999) suggest that lower

age of entry into employment in the UK, higher retirement age in Scandinavia as well as discrepancies in employment protection, may account for part of this variation.

O'Moore (2000b) found, in the Irish national survey of workplace bullying, that there was no significant relationship between victimisation and age. However, there was a significant difference between those who reported being bullied and marital status with single respondents being at most risk of occasional victimisation (37.4%) and widowed respondents (18.8%) subjected to frequent bullying.

1. 1. 5. 2 Gender

A nationwide study of bullying in schools, carried out in Ireland by O'Moore et al (1997), showed that there was a significant difference in the prevalence of bullying with regard to gender. Boys were bullied more frequently than girls. The percentage of girls bullied once a week was 1.4 % and several times a week was 1.8 %. Comparative figures for boys were 2.3 % and 2.9 %. As the age profile of the children increased, there was still a significant difference in the frequency of bullying with regard to gender. There were 8.4 % of girls at post-primary level bullied once or twice compared with 14.7 % of boys. When the frequency of bullying behaviours was increased to an average of once a week, 0.3 % of girls and 1.2 % of boys at this educational level had been bullied once a week and 0.7 % girls and 2.2 % boys had been bullied several times a week.

According to Hoel et al (1999) most studies of adult bullying conclude that reports of incidence and nature of the experience are similar for both men and women. Einarsen and Skogstad (1996) showed no difference in the prevalence of bullying among men and women but that more men were reported as offenders. However, more recently, Salin (2002) reported that studies in the EU have consistently shown that women are over represented in the number of victims. A survey study among 385 business professionals in Finland showed that significantly more women than men classified themselves as bullied and only female respondents reported being bullied by subordinates (Salin, 2002). She commented that this could be because women are subjected to more negative acts or that women are more sensitive to bullying. The findings from another study (Bjorkqvist et al, 1994) confirmed Salin's (2002) conclusion as they found that women experience work harassment more often and more severely than men. Although results from the

Irish national survey (O'Moore, 2000b) showed that a higher percentage of women were bullied in the preceding twelve months the differences were not significant. However, women were more seriously affected.

The gender issue can be applied to both recipients and perpetrators of bullying behaviours. In the Irish national survey (O'Moore, 2000b) showed that women were bullied more often than men but that men bullied more often than women. In her survey 63.5% of recipients of bullying behaviour reported being bullied by men and 38.3% bullied by women, in the previous 12 months. In the UK national survey on workplace bullying, Hoel and Cooper (2000) showed that for 61% of the male respondents who were bullied the perpetrators were other men and 36% of the female respondents were bullied by other women.

While men are predominately bullied by other men, women may be bullied by men or by other women, though more frequently by other women (Einarsen et al, 1994; Hoel, 2000; O'Moore et al, 1998). Same sex bullying may reflect the horizontal component of segregation (men work primarily with other men and women with women), whilst the greater likelihood for women of being bullied by a man may be accounted for by women's position in the lower levels of the occupational hierarchy (Einarsen & Skogstad, 1996).

Einarsen (2000) offered an explanation for the higher incident of bullying among women. He purported that people normally behave in such a manner that is effective in harming others and yet offers a low risk of danger to themselves. This led him to the conclusion that since men are more often in positions of superiority at work and since leaders may experience less risk associated with aggressive behaviour, this may explain gender differences in bullying.

1. 1. 5. 3 Occupational factors

Di Martino et al (2003) report that a review of European surveys of bullying in the workplace identified several high-risk occupations. Overall there appeared to be a higher risk of bullying within the public sector than within the private sector. The transport and communications, hotels and restaurants, and education and health sectors also emerged as high-risk occupations. Agriculture and fishing, electricity, gas and water

supply were the sectors with the lowest rate of bullying. Zapf, Einarsen, Hoel, and Vartia (2003) concurred and suggested that employment in the public sector provides less room for mobility with fewer people leaving through conflict. It was suggested by Leymann (1996) that an over representation of bullying in the public sector may be due to organisational and managerial shortcomings.

On examination of individual surveys Rayner (1997) found that there were no significant differences between the occupations of victims. However, in a national survey carried out in the UK, Hoel and Cooper (2000) showed that the prevalence of bullying varied between sectors and occupations with employees in the prison service, post and telecommunications, school teaching and the dance profession being most at risk. However they caution that some of the sectors were less well represented and this should be taken into account when forming conclusions. Einarsen and Skogstad (1996) showed that employees in the health and education sectors were at a low risk of being bullied with Einarsen and Raknes (1997) finding large male dominated organisations giving a high risk. A number of studies indicate that public employees and those working in voluntary organisations are particularly vulnerable to bullying (Zapf et al, 1996; Adams, 1992).

O'Moore, Lynch and Nic Daeid (2003a) normalised their data from the Irish national survey (O'Moore, 2000b) to measure the rate of bullying per 100,000 employees in each occupational group. They found that the high risk occupations were the Garda Siochana (Irish police force) and "other professional occupations" with low risk groups being "building and construction" and "farming, fishing and forestry".

The level at which individuals were employed within the organisation was not found to affect the risk of bullying by Hoel, Cooper and Faragher (2001) whereas Salin (2001) reported that, among business professionals, more people employed at a lower level maintained that they had been bullied with one in six bullied by subordinates. The results of a Danish study (Hogh & Dofradottir, 2001) confirmed those produced by Vartia (1996) that the offenders were mostly colleagues. In Norway employees were bullied equally by both colleagues and superiors. Bullying by managers was found to be more prevalent by studies in the UK (Hoel & Cooper 2000; Quine, 1999; Rayner, 1997) and Ireland (O'Moore, 2000b). Findings, therefore, appear to be inconsistent.

1. 1. 5. 4 Organisational factors

According to Liefooghe and Davey (2001) organisations play an active role in the prevalence of bullying and confirm the comment by Zapf (1999) that employees react to the environmental problems. Several studies have illustrated that bullying was associated with a negative and stressful working environment (e.g. Leymann, 1996, O'Moore 2000b; Vartia, 1996, 2003). Vartia (2003) confirmed results found by Einarsen et al (1994) and Hoel and Cooper (2000) that a poor social climate, lack of individual control and high role ambiguity were associated with a high prevalence of bullying. Results from a cross sectional study conducted among business professionals (Salin, 2003) revealed that there was a correlation between a politicised and competitive climate and bullying. Zapf et al (1996) were able to demonstrate that people who had less time for conflict resolution and fewer opportunities for socialising in their place of work, which tended to cause isolation from colleagues, led to a higher incidence of bullying behaviours. Role conflict, dissatisfaction with management (Einarsen et al, 1994), and poor information flow (Vartia, 1996) were shown to be associated with an increase incidence of bullying.

Events involving significant change in their workplace environment coincided with the onset of bullying suggesting that change in workplace practice is a major factor in the onset of bullying (O'Moore et al, 2003a; Vartia, 1996). 27% of respondents in the study carried out by O'Moore (2000b) reported that bullying started after a change in manager. O'Moore et al (2003a) found that there was significant correlation between the growth rates for twenty-two occupational categories and the rate of bullying.

O'Moore (2000b) found that a significantly greater number of recipients of bullying behaviours reported that they worked in departments or organisations managed in an authoritarian manner than those who were not bullied. Similarly, Vartia (1996) found that people who had not been bullied (or observed bullying) reported that disagreements tended to be solved by negotiation indicating that an authoritarian style of management was not employed. A laissez-faire style of management also allows for bullying to take place (Einarsen et al, 1994).

It appears therefore that bullying has consistently been associated with a negative and stressful working environment, organisational change and low satisfaction with leadership.

1. 2 Recipients and perpetrators of bullying behaviours

1. 2. 1 Introduction

According to Matthiesen and Einarsen (2001) the experience of being bullied is a cognitive process of evaluation and this process is affected by personality variables as well as situational variables. The onset of bullying, therefore, may be influenced by the personality traits of the people involved, both victim(s) and offender(s) (Einarsen, 2000). However, Leymann (1996) disagreed with this and maintained that research, to date, had not revealed any important personality traits with respect to either adults or children who had been bullied at work or at school. The suggestion of a victim personality has been a source of discussion among researchers (Coyne et al, 2000; Einarsen, 1999; Leymann, 1996; Vartia, 1996; Zapf, 1999) with a concern that it may be possible that victims of bullying may be blamed by employers, and those dealing with bullying, rather than any responsibility placed on the aggressor.. Nevertheless, Zapf and Einarsen (2003) concluded that no comprehensive model of workplace bullying would be satisfactory without also including personality and individual factors of both perpetrators and recipients of bullying behaviours.

Studies among school children have suggested that victims of bullying at school tend to be more anxious and insecure (Olweus, 1997). Olweus (1997) also suggested that they are often cautious, sensitive and quiet. Randall (1997a) commented that it is possible that these traits may emerge within adult victims who may become more prone to being bullied.

Zapf (1999) reported that victims reported that some of their individual characteristics, such as their appearance or their private lives, cause bullying. Although Vartia (1996) found that recipients of bullying in her research tended to be more conscientious and less stable than those who were not bullied, she also maintained, (Vartia, 2003), that a recipient of bullying behaviours may differ from others in that they may represent a minority in terms of race, gender, or occupation. Zapf and Einarsen (2003) also identified specific personality traits, which, they contended, may have a role in the onset of bullying. Firstly, a person who is exposed and vulnerable could make an easy target for the aggressor. Equally, a perpetrator of bullying behaviour is likely to select a person with low self-esteem and social incompetence as a target. The third set of

22

personal characteristics is over achievement and conflict with group norms. Brodsky (1976) described victims as conscientious, liberal minded, unsophisticated, overachievers, and with unrealistic expectations of their own ability.

It has been suggested that individuals may be selected due to their personality since the bullies perceives a weakness such as lack of social skills (Vartia, 1996), a tendency to avoid conflict (Zapf, 1999), and an inability to cope (Einarsen, 1999). Zapf (1999) reports that anxious behaviour may produce a negative reaction in a group and leads to bullying. Individuals who perceive themselves to be conscientious may be considered by others to be patronising. Personality traits may provoke annoyance and/or anger in others or cause some victims to be more vulnerable when faced with aggressiveness confirming the provocative victim among school children identified by Olweus (1993). According to Martin, Watson, and Wan (2000), aggressive behaviour may be precipitated by anger with the aggressive behaviour directed towards an individual who was not the cause of anger.

The personality profile in the study carried out by Coyne et al (2000) lends itself more to the vulnerable victim argument than the provocative one identified by Olweus (1993); they suggest that further research should be carried out to clarify this issue. The profile of avoiding conflict, being highly conscientious, preferring being alone and having difficulty in coping points more to someone who will be an easy target rather than someone who promotes aggression in others. They conclude that their findings imply that before an individual reaches the workplace, their personality profile may predispose them to being bullied in their working environment.

However, Matthiesen and Einarsen (2001) argued that there is no general victim personality and that some recipients of bullying behaviour are either more sensitive to bullying or react more dramatically than others when bullying takes place.

Rayner and Cooper (2003) maintained that much is written about people who bully but few researchers claim to have actually talked to people who have been accused of bullying. Research findings on the profile of perpetrators are based on studies into school bullying (Olweus, 1978, 1993; O'Moore & Hillery, 1989) which have been able to suggest characteristics of both recipients and perpetrators of bullying behaviours (Olweus, 2003).

Olweus (2003) reported that bullies are not only more aggressive towards their peers, but are also more aggressive towards their parents and teachers. They are often characterised by impulsiveness and a strong need to dominate others in a negative way. According to Olweus (2003) bullies have little empathy with victims of bullying behaviour. He concluded that typical bullies can be described as having an aggressive reaction pattern combined, in the case of boys, with physical strength and that bullying can be viewed as a component of a more generally antisocial and rule breaking (conduct disorder) behaviour pattern.

Research into the profile of adult perpetrators normally relies on the recipients' perception of their aggressors (Bjorqvist et al, 1994; Hoel & Cooper, 2000; O'Moore, 2000b; Rayner & Cooper, 2003; Salin, 2003; Vartia, 1996). Nevertheless, profiles of perpetrators have been suggested (Crawford, 1992; Costigan, 1998; Field, 1996; Randall, 1997a) and have been identified with aggressiveness (Randall, 1997a), insecurity, a lack in confidence, and poor interpersonal skills (Field, 1996). According to Vartia (1996), the personality characteristics of aggressors, from the recipients' prospective, include envy, jealousy, competitiveness, and lack of insight into their own behaviour. However, she also cautioned that the process of attribution by the victims should be taken into account when assessing the behaviours of perpetrators (Vartia, 2003). Bjorqvist et al (1994) looked for reasons from respondents as to why individuals were selected as targets for bullying behaviour. Results from their study, carried out among university employees, indicated that competition for status and jobs, uncertainty of the bully, and envy were reasons put forward by victims as possible causes of their being selected for bullying.

Although attempts have been made by some researchers to identify a "bully" (Olweus, 1997) and "victim" (Coyne et al, 2000) personality, there is a reluctance among other researchers (Matthiesen & Einarsen, 2001) to label individuals since this is open to abuse by employers. Findings in regard to personality constructs could also be unreliable as a traumatic experience, such as being a recipient of bullying behaviour, could affect personality traits, arguably on a temporary basis.

Psychologists and sociologists have proposed personality theories, which may suggest explanations for the behaviours of both bullies and victims. These are discussed

in sections 1.2.2 to 1.2.6. However, no single approach can fully explain the complexity of human nature and an eclectic view needs to be taken when considering individual behaviour.

1. 2. 2 Theory of personality

There is a long tradition in both psychology (Allport, 1961; Kelly, 1963; Mischel, 1993) and sociology (Adorno, Frenkel-Brunswick, Levinson, & Sanford 1982; MacGreil, 1996) to define the more or less permanent characteristics or temperaments of individuals. Allport (1961), who was one of the most influential trait theorists maintained that personality is the dynamic organisation within the individual of those psychological systems that determine his or her characteristic, behaviour or thought. He concluded that personality is a more or less enduring organisation of forces within the individual which help to determine responses in various situations, and it is thus largely to them that consistency of behaviour - whether verbal or physical - is attributable. He sustained that behaviour is not the same as personality, but rather that personality causes behaviour patterns and is within the individual. Mischel (1993), from a sociological point of view, purported that the word 'personality' usually refers to the distinctive patterns of behaviour (including thoughts and emotions) that characterise each individual's adaptations to the situations in his or her life. Both definitions infer that personality affects behaviour although Allport (1961) places more emphasis on the inherent aspect of personality.

Personality formation can be seriously affected by examining what Giddens (1984) termed "critical situations" which he identified as circumstances of radical disjuncture of an unpredictable kind. According to Rayner (1997) it is likely that the trauma of being bullied may initiate changes in the personality of individuals. However, it can be argued that some people are able to sustain a level of control and self-esteem that has allowed them to survive for a longer period and on such occasions it is likely that a period of re-socialisation takes place in which an attitude of trust has been re-established. The sequence of heightened anxiety and regression, followed by a reconstruction of typical patterns of behaviour occurs. In ordinary social life, individuals have a motivated interest in sustaining trust and stability which leads to a generalised commitment to the integration of behaviour patterns across time and space.

1. 2. 3 Psychoanalytic theory of personality

The psychoanalytic account of personality remains the most comprehensive and influential theory of personality ever created (Atkinson, Atkinson, Smith & Bem, 1993). Freud (1933-1964) purported that during the first five years the individual progresses through several developmental stages that affect personality referring to them as psycho-sexual stages. He further concluded that problems at any stage could arrest development and have a lasting effect on the individual's personality. Erikson (1963) defined the same stages as psycho-social stages involving primary ego processes and claimed that the first stage occurred in the first year when a child learns to trust. In later stages the child learns a sense of self-control and adequacy, the ability to initiate their own activities, and competence in intellectual, social, and physical skills. Erikson (1963) maintained that psycho-social development proceeded through life and in adolescence an integrated image of a unique person is formed.

According to the psychoanalytic approach, the personality is relatively fixed and people emerge as relatively passive creatures. As a scientific theory, this approach has been persistently criticised since many of its concepts are ambiguous and difficult to define or measure.

1. 2. 4 Phenomenological and humanist theories of personality

Phenomenological theories and humanistic psychology, based on the individual's subjective experiences and an alternative to psychoanalytic and behaviour approaches, offer explanations to personality construction. Humanistic psychologists, such as Rogers (1902-1987) and Maslow (1908-1970) emphasise a person's self concept and strive for growth. According to Rogers, the individual evaluates every experience in relation to their self-concept and attempts to behave in the ways that are consistent with their self image. Specifically, Maslow proposed that there are a hierarchy of needs ascending from the basic biological needs to the more complex psychological motivations. This approach emphasises the individual's role in defining and creating their own destiny. However, it can be argued that the phenomenological approach does not examine the cause of behaviour.

1. 2. 5 Social learning

Examining personality from a social psychologist aspect, Adorno et al (1982) rely on Freud to explain the theory of the structure of personality for a more or less systematic conception of the more directly observable and measurable aspects of personality. They justify this by explaining that the forces of personality are primarily needs (drives, wishes, emotional impulses) which vary from one individual to another in their quality, their intensity, their mode of gratification, and the objects of their attachment, and which interact with other needs in harmonious or conflicting patterns. They argue that since personality is important in the organisation of needs and opinions, values and attitudes depend on these needs, and personality may be considered to determine a person's way of thinking. Influences during childhood are more effective in personality formation and are normally determined by economic and social factors. However, Adorno et al (1982) proposed that, although personality is a product of the social environment of the past, it is not, once it has developed, a mere object of the contemporary environment. What has developed is a structure within the individual, which is capable of self-initiated action on the social environment and, though always capable of modification, is frequently very resistant to fundamental change. The theory proposed by Adorno et al (1982) is confirmed by MacGreil (1996). He maintained that personality is a product of socialisation and genetically inherited capacities and continued to explain that the place in society and the accepted norms of the culture greatly influence the development of the individual's innate ability.

According to social learning theory, the social behaviour of a person, is shaped by their perspective of the world, from a particular place, at a particular time. Although personality psychologists generally focus their attention on individual differences as explanations of social behaviour, social psychologists are convinced that explaining behaviour primarily in terms of personality factors can be superficial in that it leads to a serious under-estimation of the role played by a principal source of human behaviour - social influence. The situation therefore has a profound impact on how human beings behave and relate to each other. Social learning theory in psychology assumes that personality differences result from different learning experiences. A person's behaviour, therefore, depends on the specific characteristics of the situation, in interaction with the

27

person's appraisal of the situation and reinforcement history. Mischel (1993) used social learning theory to explain that person variables, such as competency, expectancy, subjective values, perception, and self-regulatory plans, interact with the conditions of a particular situation to determine the person's actions at the time.

1. 2. 6 Trait theory

Trait personality theories offer several explanations for personality that resemble the psychoanalytic and humanistic points of view. They suggest that internal influences, as opposed to external factors, affect the personality and that personality is consistent from situation to situation not because of an emotional outlook affected by early experience, or because of inherited memories or needs, but because of specific attributes peculiar to the individual. Allport (1961) distinguished between common traits and personal dispositions but it is his identification of traits that enabled a quantitative analysis and systematic comparison of individuals.

Factor analysis allowed Cattell (1986) to condense the personality factors identified by Allport (1961) and produce twelve factors which, with the addition of a further four factors, resulted in his 16 Personality Factor Questionnaire. Cattell (1986) highlighted an important distinction between surface traits and source traits. Surface traits are those that are actually measured and are, therefore, expressed in overt behaviour. Source traits (some of which are genetically determined) are those that are the underlying causes of overt behaviour. Other source traits are shaped by culture. Cattell (1986) also distinguishes between ability, temperament, and dynamic traits. Of these, the traits of most interest to social psychologists are dynamic traits, which set the person in motion towards a goal and determine a person's motivational make up. Although Cattell's theory has been criticised for assuming that human behaviour is more consistent than in reality and for concentrating on groups and group averages, his theory rests on a solid foundation of empirical research.

A second major trait personality theorist to use factor analysis was Eysenck (1953). He produced two major factors: the Stable-Unstable axis and the Introverted-Extraverted axis. Even though Allport included a humanistic approach and Eysenck a learning theory they could not explain how in the one individual behaviour may vary

from one situation to another. For this reason it is probable that trait measures of personality have not been as successful in predicting behaviour across situations as psychologists had hoped or expected.

It could be argued that the trait approach is not itself a theory but a set of methods for assessing stable characteristics of individuals. Trait approaches do not take into account the dynamics of the personality and it is possible that the underlying assumption that the behaviour of people vary from one situation to another is flawed. However, an analysis by Epstein and O'Brien (1985), indicated that identifying personality traits will give enough information to predict a person's behaviour averaged over a number of situations but not on a particular occasion.

1. 2. 6. 1 Personality factors

John (1990) commented that there is a consensus emerging among many trait researchers that five trait dimensions could provide an acceptable compromise in attempts to break down the factors that form the personality of the individual. The five factors that have emerged are considered to reliably assess the personality of individuals (McCrae & Costa, 1986). These factors are neuroticism, extraversion, openness, agreeableness, and conscientiousness. McCrae and Costa (1986) suggested that the first of these, neuroticism, is characterised by the adjective pairs of calm - worrying, hardy - vulnerable, and secure - insecure. Costa and McCrae (1992) contended that neuroticism is the most pervasive domain and contrasts adjustment or emotional stability with maladjustment or neuroticism. A person with a high level of this factor will have a general tendency to experience negative affects such as fear, sadness, embarrassment, anger, guilt and disgust. Individuals who score low on neuroticism are emotionally stable. Results from a study carried out in Germany by Zapf (1999) showed that a group of victims could not be distinguished from other workers in terms of neuroticism and self-esteem.

The extraversion factor can be represented by retiring - sociable, quiet - talkative, and inhibited - spontaneous. Extraverts are social and prefer large groups but are also assertive, active and talkative. According to Costa and McCrae (1992) they tend to be energetic and optimistic. Introversion should be seen as the absence of extravertion

rather than the opposite. They tend to be reserved, independent and even-paced. Although they are not given to the exuberance of extraverts, introverts are not unhappy or pessimistic (Costa & McCrae, 1992).

Conventional - original, unadventurous - daring, and conservative - liberal are representative adjective pairs of the openness factor. Costa and McCrae (1992) maintain that the elements of openness to experience (active imagination, aesthetic sensitivity, attentiveness to inner feelings, intellectual curiosity, and independence of judgement) have frequently played a role in theories and measures of personality throughout the development of personality theory. Open individuals are curious about both inner and outer worlds, and their lives are experientially richer. They are willing to consider new ideas and unconventional values. They also experience both positive and negative emotions more keenly than closed individuals. Although openness is related to aspects of intelligence, such as divergent thinking and creativity, openness is not equivalent to intelligence and, Costa and McCrae (1992) explain, some intelligent people can be closed to new experiences. People who are not open to new experiences tend to be conventional in their behaviour and conservative in outlook. They prefer the familiar and their emotional responses tend to be suppressed. Costa and McCrae (1992) caution that although open individuals are unconventional, willing to question authority, and prepared to accept new ethical, social, and political ideas, they are not unprincipled.

Agreeableness is primarily a dimension of interpersonal tendencies. Costa and McCrae (1992) describe the agreeable person as sympathetic, eager to help, and believes that others will be helpful in return. By contrast, the disagreeable or antagonistic person is egocentric, sceptical of others' intentions, and competitive rather than co-operative. Although the agreeable side to this domain appears to be more socially acceptable, the readiness to fight for one's own interests is often advantageous. Sceptical and critical thinking contributes to accurate analysis in the sciences. McCrae and Costa (1987) reported that irritable - good natured, ruthless - soft hearted, and selfish - selfless represent the agreeableness factor.

Costa and McCrae (1992) describe the conscientious person as purposeful, strong-willed, and determined. On the positive side a conscientious person is normally associated with academic and occupational achievement, on the negative side, it may lead

to annoying fastidiousness, compulsive neatness, or workaholic behaviour. They are scrupulous, punctual and reliable. People who are judged as being low in this domain are not necessarily lacking in moral principles, but they are less exacting in applying them. They are more easy-going in their approach towards their goals. McCrae and Costa (1986) identified careless - careful, undependable - reliable, and negligent - conscientious as being representative of the conscientiousness factor.

Although psychoanalytic, phenomenological and social learning theories offer explanations on personality development, trait personality approaches have enabled researchers (Coyne et al, 2000; Matthiesen & Einarsen, 2001; Zapf & Gross, 2001) to identify measurable traits among victims of bullying.

1. 2. 7 Personality and bullying

Einarsen (2000) cautioned that the issue of personality traits in relation to bullying at work is controversial, especially with regard to the victim. Bjorkqvist et al (1994) also questioned personality traits as precursors of bullying behaviours in individuals and Leymann (1996) concluded that there is no difference between the personality of victims and those who have not been bullied. Nevertheless, Coyne et al (2000) examined the extent that workplace victim status can be predicted from personality traits. They compared personality traits of 60 people who claimed to have been recipients of bullying behaviour with those of a control group, matched on a number of organisational and personal criteria. They claimed that significant differences emerged on all major scales. Victims tended to be less independent, less extroverted, less stable and more conscientious than non-victims. The authors further concluded that personality traits may give an indication of those in an organisation most likely to be bullied and why they become victims. They did not appear to take into account the level of trauma that recipients of bullying behaviour suffer and that this trauma can affect apparently stable personality traits (Leymann, 1996; Rayner, 1998). Leymann and Gustafsson (1996) argue that post-traumatic stress disorder, an effect of bullying behaviours, may result in a personality change.

Research among recipients of bullying behaviour has shown that victims are likely to be conscientious in their approach to work. Zapf and Gross (2001) found that

victims of bullying, in their study, tended to make no mistakes and be as correct as possible in their work which suggests that they could be high in conscientiousness. Coyne et al (2000) compared characteristics of recipients of negative behaviours with those of a control group and found that victims of bullying tended to be conscientious as well as being submissive and non-controversial, quiet, and anxious. They were found to be less assertive and less competitive.

Matthiesen and Einarsen (2001) examined the personality profiles of 85 members of two support associations in Norway. All participants confirmed that they were victims of bullying at work with 22% suffering from on-going bullying at the time. Findings partially confirmed that the victims of bullying portrayed a personality profile indicating severe psychological disturbance. However, a sub-set of the sample had a normal personality profile which, Matthiesen and Einarsen (2001) concluded, inferred that associations between bullying and personality are complex and suggested that some victims of bullying are either more sensitive to bullying or react more dramatically.

It appears, therefore, that it is possible that the personality of victims of workplace bullying could be different from that of other workers. However, what is not certain is whether the personality of the victims in the studies referred to above has been permanently altered by the trauma of being a recipient of bullying behaviour, or whether they were selected because of their personality constructs.

1. 3 Explaining bullying behaviour

1. 3. 1 Introduction

It has been suggested that a cycle of bullying exists where bullying behaviour has begun in school, continued through adolescence and on into the workplace (Adams & Crawford, 1992, Randall, 1997a). Other explanations of bullying behaviour have relied on personality profiles of perpetrators. Although bullying is normally regarded as a complex process with its prevalence due to numerous factors including the individuals involved and organisational factors, it is worth considering the motivations and explanation for aggressive behaviours in the individual.

Bullying behaviour is frequently defined in terms of aggressive or negative behaviour (Crawford, 1997; Leymann, 1996; O'Moore et al, 1998; O'Moore, 2000a; Randall, 1997a) with Bjorkqvist et al (1994) suggesting that harassment is a specific type of aggression, leading to victimisation of the individual(s) subjected to these activities. However, Randall (2001) purported that the term "aggression" is one of the most value-laden when applied to human behaviour and one of the least well defined for the purposes of operational definition in research. He concluded that aggression is interpreted in the light of the subjective perceptions of the people involved. According to Martin et al (2000), anger related emotions, behaviours, and cognitions are likely to be interrelated but can be viewed separately. Not every angry person resorts to shouting or physical violence.

Human aggression is a complex and multi-factorial subject, and therefore any individual theoretical account is likely, in isolation, to be limited. Attempts to explain anti-social or aggressive behaviour were made in the 1960's by social psychologists such as Asch (1955), Milgram (1974) and Zimbardo, Ebbesen and Maslach (1977) who examined conformity, obedience and deindividuation, and the loosening of normal constraints on behaviour.

Aggression has been defined as a response that delivers noxious stimuli to another organism (Buss, 1961). Aggressive action, therefore, can be seen as any behaviour aimed at causing either physical or psychological pain and is normally considered to be intentional. Aronson, Wilson, and Akert (1997) suggest that aggression manifests itself in two forms: hostile aggression, which springs from emotions such as anger and intends to injure, and instrumental aggression, which is a means to some other end other than causing pain, although pain can result. Hostile aggression includes intention to carry out the behaviour as well as the intention to hurt the recipient. However, research in the area of workplace bullying tends to conclude that intent is not a necessary criterion for bullying behaviours to exist (Einarsen, 1999).

Kremer and Stephens (1983) commented that one cause of aggression stems from the need to reciprocate after being provoked by aggressive behaviour from another person. However, reciprocation is not inevitable and can be determined by the perception of the recipient with regard to the intention of the perpetrator of aggressive behaviour.

33

Similarly if there are mitigating circumstances, known at the time of the provocation, counter aggression will not occur (Johnson & Rule, 1986).

Researchers in the area of workplace bullying frequently use psychological theory to explain the reasons for the aggressive actions of the perpetrator (Crawford, 1997; Hoel, 1997; Randall, 1997a). Personality traits, such as authoritarianism and psychopathic tendencies (Costigan, 1998) and a lack of appropriate interpersonal skills with the existence of immature behaviour skills (Field, 1996) have been used in attempts to explain the causes of bullying behaviour in the individual. Research by Olweus (1993) has indicated that children who persistently bully others at school are likely to do so in adult life indicating that a tendency to behave in an aggressive manner can become a permanent feature in the personality make up of the individual as a result of learned behaviour. In a critique of a personality focused explanation of bullying behaviour, Hoel (1997) maintained that bullying can result from poor or unsuccessful parenting where the bully has learned through positive reinforcements and will select their victims accordingly and, he continues, trait theory suggests that there is a cycle of violence. Attachment theory purports that infant aggression arises because of insecure attention by the mother with parental rejection frequently cited as being associated with early childhood aggression (Randall, 1997a). Randall (2001) suggests that group membership can affect behaviour when the rules of behaviour are not clearly defined. He also referred to frustration as a possible cause of anger and aggression.

The following sections (1. 3. 2 to 1. 3. 10) discuss explanations and psychological theories, in an attempt to explain why bullying behaviour occurs. These include conflict escalation, instinct and biological theories of personality, child development and social learning, group influence, frustration, self-esteem, psychopathic behaviour, and authoritarianism.

1. 3. 2 Conflict escalation

Keashly and Nowell (2003) discussed the occasions when conflict escalation can be used to explain bullying. They concluded that from the literature on conflict situations it would appear that bullying can be described as intractable, escalating, violent conflicts between individuals.

Potter-Efron (1998) also used conflict escalation to explain bullying behaviour when he suggested that the conflict can result from minor incidences causing frustration leading to physical and emotional tension. The tension is evident as irritability, which escalates to anger, and results in conflict. He explained the process in terms of emotional, cognitive, behavioural, and moral levels. At the emotional level as the level of anger increases the possibility for reasonable discussion decreases. At the cognitive level, people are not able to think clearly, interpret the actions and words of the other person negatively and fair judgements are not made. People begin to behave in a more impulsive and explosive manner and lose control over their behaviour. Finally, at a moral level, people become more rigid; frequently they become bitter and hostile.

Zapf and Gross (2001) argued that bullying signified an unresolved social conflict having reached a high level of escalation and an increased imbalance of power. They outlined conflict escalation models, which they purported could be used to explain how initial friction in the workplace could reach a stage when individuals formed the opinion that they were being bullied. Conflicts that underlie bullying are negative for the victim, result in an unequal power structure, consist of a series of conflict related episodes, and last for a long time.

Zapf and Gross (2001) described a model of conflict escalation proposed by Glasl (1982) which was developed before research on workplace bullying began. This was presented in the form of nine stages: -

9. Total destruction / suicide

8. Attacks against power nerves of the enemy

7. Systematic destructive campaigns / sanction potential

6. Dominance of strategies of threat

5. Loss of face, moral outrage

4. Concern for reputation

3. Interactions through deeds not words

2. Polarisation and debating style

1. Attempts to co-operate / incidental slippage into tension

This model differentiates between three phases. According to Zapf and Gross (2001), during the first phase there is rational conflict and a consensus that a reasonable solution can be found. There is some degree of co-operation and the conflict parties, although aware of tensions, handle them in a rational and controlled manner. However, there can be slips into tensions and friction. The next phase is achieved when the original conflict has disappeared and the relationship between those concerned has become the main source of tension. In this phase the parties find it more difficult to solve their differences and they attempt to exclude each other. In the final phase confrontation becomes destructive and any attempt to achieve a positive outcome is closed. The logical consequence of this model is that the recipient of bullying behaviours would be forced out of his or her employment. One problem with this model is that it assumes a progression of negative behaviours, whereas it is possible that the hostility can begin at any of the stages with resolution impossible from the initial onset of conflict. Conflict theory seems a reasonable explanation of bullying behaviours if the conflict is caused by external factors. However, if the cause of conflict results from internal factors, such as the dislike of a potential target or a threat to value system of a potential aggressor, there may be no stages involved.

Leymann (1996) maintained that the course of mobbing changes its character over time as the social setting changes. Initially there is a critical incident, which is normally a conflict. This phase may be very short and could not at this stage be described as bullying. During the second stage bullying behaviours occur but they are not indicative of aggression or expulsion. However, with frequent use the context of the behaviours can change and they may be used in stigmatising the person. Leymann (1996) contended that aggressive manipulation is the main characteristic of these events. At the third stage management becomes involved and due to previous stigmatisation the situation can be mis-judged to be the fault of the recipient of bullying behaviours. Colleagues and management tend to blame the person rather than the environmental factors. Finally the recipient of bullying behaviours develops serious illnesses which can be misdiagnosed as paranoia, manic depression, or character disturbance. The person is expelled from the organisation.

Bjorqvist (1992, cited in Einarsen, 2000) suggested a three phase model of bullying with a focus on the intensity of bullying behaviour. Initially there are indirect behaviours followed by more direct acts of aggressive behaviour. The person is isolated and humiliated and the aggressor feels that their behaviour is justified. Finally, extreme forms of direct aggression are used.

The models proposed by Bjorqvist (1992, cited in Einarsen, 2000) and Leymann (1996) describe an escalation of negative behaviours which eventually leaves the recipient of such behaviours in a powerless condition.

Zapf and Gross (2001) caution that bullying may not always follow the stages of any model and that, to date, there has been little empirical research into conflict escalation being an explanation for bullying behaviours. However, they conclude that it is possible that bullying could appear at the high stages of models presented. Einarsen (2000) argued that when applying a theory of conflict escalation in an attempt to explain bullying behaviours the conflict does not necessarily initially have to contain an imbalance of power normally associated with bullying. However, as the level of conflict increases an imbalance of power could result and a bullying situation exist. In conclusion, therefore, conflict escalation can be an explanation for some bullying situations but other situations could be explained by other psychological theories.

1. 3. 3 Instinct and biological theories

According to Freud's early psychoanalytic theory, many human behaviours are determined by instincts. He maintained that when expression of these instincts is frustrated an aggressive drive can be induced. Later theorists in the psychoanalytic tradition broadened this frustration aggression hypothesis and contended that when a person's effort to reach any goal is blocked an aggressive drive is induced that motivates behaviour to injure the obstacle causing the frustration (Dollard, Doob, Miller, Mower & Sears, 1939). There are two critical aspects to this proposal. One is that the normal cause of aggression is frustration, the other is that aggression has the properties of a basic drive. However, it can be argued that some people do appear to have a predisposition to aggressive behaviour and the hypothesis that aggression is a basic drive receives some support from studies showing a biological basis of aggression (Lorenz, 1996).

Lorenz (1996) offered explanations of aggressive behaviour that could be used to explain bullying behaviour. He maintained that it is more than probable that the effects of the human aggressive drives, explained by Freud as the results of a special death wish, derive from the fact that in prehistoric times intra-specific selection bred into man a measure of aggression drive for which in the social order of today he finds no adequate outlet. He purported that the rushed existence into which industrialised, commercialised man has precipitated himself is a good example of an inexpedient development caused entirely by competition between members of the same species. Lorenz (1996) continued to explain that human beings of today are attacked by so called managerial diseases such as high blood pressure, and succumb to aggression because they have no time for cultural interests.

Lorenz (1996) was the first to examine the ranking order in the domestic fowl and to speak of the 'pecking order', or ranking order, a principle of organisation without which, he maintained, a more advanced social life cannot develop in higher vertebrates. The term 'pecking order' was also used by Leymann (1996) to explain bullying behaviour in organisations where negative behaviours are used to maintain the hierarchical structure in the organisation. Under this rule every individual in the organisation knows who is stronger and who is weaker than they are. In this way people can retreat from the stronger and expect submission from the weaker if they should get in the way.

A further theory purported by Lorenz (1996) in explaining the instinct theory of aggression is that, in the animal world, predators cannot concentrate on more than one prey at a time and attempts are always made to separate one species from the pack - isolate and kill. It could be argued that this theory offers an explanation in understanding bullying behaviour as to why the aggressor will select one member of the group and isolate them from the rest by his or her aggressive behaviour. Einarsen (2003) commented that social exclusion, as a bullying behaviour, can have a severe effect on the victim as the fear could stem from the basic instinct to be part of the tribe

In explaining extreme aggressive behaviour Lorenz (1996) maintained that the most violent form of fighting behaviour is motivated by fear. The most intense flight impulses, whose natural outlet is prevented by the fact that the danger is so near the animal dares not turn its back on it, fights with the proverbial courage of desperation. In

a bullying situation, fear can emanate from a person concluding that they could be forced into a weak position with regard to their job on which their livelihood depends. A conscientious worker could therefore become a target for bullying behaviour as they appear to be such a threat to another employee.

Evidence for a biological basis for aggressive behaviour in humans revolves round the theory that higher levels of testosterone in men are more likely to have a history of aggressive behaviour (Dabbs & Morris, 1990). Among the normal range of teenage boys and adult men, those with high testosterone levels are more prone to delinquency, hard drug use, and aggressive responses to provocation (Olweus, Mattsson, Schalling, & Low, 1988). Olweus et al (1988) cautioned that although findings provide some evidence for this theory, the link is often tenuous. Nevertheless this theory has been used to explain a higher incidence of bullying behaviour in men.

Instinct and biological theories are limited in their explanations for any behaviours, including aggression and bullying. However, when these theories are viewed in conjunction with other psychological theories, for example, childhood development and social learning, the development of a person with a possible propensity to bully may become clearer.

1. 3. 4 Child development and social learning

The propensity to bully others has been explained in terms of social learning (Randall, 1997a). Although social learning theory has its origins in behaviour studies of animal learning, it is concerned with human social interaction and focuses on the behaviour patterns that people develop in response to environmental contingencies. Through the process of differential reinforcement, people eventually select the more successful behaviour patterns. Social learning theory differs from strict behaviourism in that it stresses the importance of cognitive processes. It also stresses the importance of vicarious learning, or learning by observation.

The experiments by Bandura, Ross and Ross (1961) give clear indication that children learn aggressive behaviour through imitation and modelling. In these experiments children learn to use the same actions and same aggressive words as the adult and, in addition, some went beyond imitation and engaged in novel forms of

aggressive behaviour. Although Randall (1997b) argued that one of the main causes of bullying among school children rises from inappropriate parenting styles, he also contended that the punishment associated with parental rejection provides a model of hostility and an inappropriate use of aggression.

Social learning theory rejects earlier concepts of aggression as an instinct or a frustration produced drive, and maintains that aggression can be learned through observation or imitation, and the more often it is reinforced, the more likely it is to occur. Where theories of aggression based on instinct and frustration assume that hostile urges erupt from inner emotions social psychologists contend that aggressive behaviour is learned by observing, imitating, and by being rewarded and punished.

The moral thoughts of children and adolescents are constructed as they pass from one stage to the next rather than accepting a cultural norm of morality (Santrock, 1996) resulting in the formation of levels of reasoning identified by Kohlberg (1981). At the lowest level (pre-conventional reasoning) the individual shows no internalisation of moral values. Moral thinking is based on punishment, rewards and self-interest. Conventional reasoning is the second level where individuals value trust, caring, and loyalty to others. Moral judgements are based on understanding the social order, law, justice, and duty. At Kohlberg's final level the person understands that values and laws are relative and that standards vary from one person to another and the person has developed a moral standard based on human rights. Although, Kohlberg's theory has been criticised for placing too much emphasis on moral thought rather than on moral behaviour (Santrock, 1996), it could be used to explain behaviours in individuals when their moral codes allow them to act in an aggressive manner. However, social learning in terms of workplace bullying must include the context of work itself and all the associated factors.

1. 3. 5 Group influence

Group membership to some extent defines a person's social identity. A person's whole self concept contains not only personal identity (attributes and attitudes) but social identity (Myers, 1996) and therefore, through social identification people conform to group norms. A bias towards the person's own group will lead them to favour the group

to which they belong and can also reflect dislike for the other group. Loyalty to a group could, therefore, devalue other groups (Vivian & Berkowitz, 1993). This, together with the fear that they could be the next target, or the possibility that their job may be jeopardised, could be one of the reason's for people apparently taking the perpetrator's side in a bullying situation. Recipients of bullying behaviours can feel that there has been a concerted effort by the perpetrator(s) to isolate them from their work colleagues and that a group has formed around the perpetrator(s).

It is arguable that one reason for the selection of a particular person as a recipient of bullying behaviours could be that they are perceived as a threat to group cohesion, or individual prejudices. They could be different or seen to be different, if they cannot, or do not, observe and subsequently practice the norms of the group. For example, a conscientious worker when others in the group are lazy; an honest worker when others are not.

Studies in the effect of group polarisation (Myers, 1996) have shown that group decisions, whether spontaneous or following discussion, although not necessarily more speculative are more extreme than individual decisions. If group members are initially inclined to be risk-takers on a particular dilemma, then the group will become more risky; if group members are initially inclined to be more cautious, the group will be even more cautious. Group polarisation extends beyond issues of risk and caution, and explanations for the phenomenon include informational influence and normative influence. Pre-existing information of group members is likely to affect their contribution to a discussion and, if members are motivated to be seen positively by the group, they may conform to the group's position or even express a position that is more extreme. This may explain why people will exhibit extreme negative behaviour in a group that would be outside their normal individual behaviour patterns.

Janis (1985) proposed a theory of group-think, a phenomenon in which members of a group are led to suppress their own dissent in the interest of group consensus. It is further fostered by a directive leader who explicitly favours a particular course of action. It is more likely that social influence, particularly in the presence of the individual attempting to sway any decision to comply with the social norms of the group, is more likely to play a part with group bullying a result.

The uninhibited aggressive behaviour shown by perpetrators of bullying behaviour may be the result of a state of deindividuation (Myers, 1996) in which group members feel that they have lost their personal identities and have merged into the group. Anonymity reduces self-awareness and may contribute to the behaviours.

A bystander to an emergency or a witness to negative behaviour is less likely to intervene or help if in a group than if alone (Latane & Darley, 1970). Two major factors that deter intervention are defining the situation and diffusion of responsibility. By attempting to appear calm, bystanders may define the situation for each other as a non-emergency, thereby producing a state of pluralistic ignorance. Thus they may not intervene when one of their colleagues is being bullied. The presence of other people also defuses responsibility so that no one person feels the necessity to act.

Experiments in conformity (Asch, 1955) and obedience (Milgram, 1974) demonstrated that strong pressure to conform and obey is likely to result in behaviours that the individual would not normally carry out. Studies of conformity and obedience reveal that situational factors exert more influence over behaviour than the individual realises resulting in an under estimation of situational factors on behaviour. This theory could explain why individuals conform in a situation of group bullying when their normal standards would not allow them to behave in such a manner

1. 3. 6 Frustration

Frustration, defined as the blocking of goal directed behaviour (Myers, 1996), has been seen as a cause (Randall, 2001) of bullying behaviours. It increases when the motivation to achieve a goal is strong, when the person expects gratification, and when the blocking is complete. Several factors can accentuate frustration and increase the probability that some form of aggression will occur. One such factor involves the closeness of the person to their expected goal. The greater the closeness, the greater the expectation of pleasure, the more likely the aggression (Harris, 1974).

Berkowitz (1989) examined early theories of frustration-aggression and theorised that frustration produces anger, an emotional readiness to aggress. An aggressive person is likely to express anger when aggressive cues become apparent. However, he maintained that frustration does not always produce aggression. Rather frustration seems

42

to produce anger or annoyance and a readiness to aggress if other factors in the situation are conducive to aggressive behaviour (Gustafsson, 1989). Berkowitz (1989) contended that these factors include the strength of the person responsible for the frustration together with that person's ability to retaliate. Similarly, if the frustration is understandable, legitimate and unintentional, it usually does not lead to aggression. The aggressive energy brought on by frustration need not necessarily be directed towards the source but may be displaced towards a safer target who may ultimately become a victim of bullying. However, in using frustration as an explanation for bullying behaviour, Randall (2001) concluded that if the frustrations are caused by deliberate actions and perceived to be unfair the aggression is likely to be directed at the people who appear to be to blame. Thus an individual in a work situation may claim to be bullied when, in practice, they may have contributed to their predicament by their own negative behaviours.

1. 3. 7 Self-esteem, egotism, and narcissism

Myers (1996), discussed the self in a social world, and maintained that the ideas and feelings that a person has about themselves can affect how events are interpreted and recalled, and determine their reaction. He concluded that the sense of self organises thoughts, feelings and actions. However, when attitudes and feelings are uncertain or ambiguous, through self-perception, individuals observe their behaviour in a given situation and form an opinion of themselves. Myers (1996) maintains that global self-esteem affects a person's feelings about their traits, abilities, memories and thoughts and is determined by multiple influences. These include secure early attachment to parents, the appraisal of others, self-comparisons, culturally influenced identities, and achieving specific competencies. As challenges are overcome and new skills learned, successes lead to a more confident approach to the world. Although self-esteem influences thought processes, it is also influenced by daily experiences.

Self-concept, which is the individual's awareness of their own self, includes not only the beliefs a person has about themselves at the present time but also who the person thinks they may become. Laurence (1988) concludes that self-concept is an umbrella term since there are three aspects included in the self: self-image (what the person is),

ideal self (what the person would like to be), and self-esteem (what the person's evaluation of the discrepancy between the two). Self-concept is a complete and thorough description a person has of themselves and differs from self-esteem which contains an element of evaluative judgements. Self-esteem, therefore, is a person's evaluation of their own self worth.

Bandura et al (1961) identified the concept of self-efficacy, a sense that a person has of their competency and effectiveness and distinguished this from self-esteem, a sense of a person's self-worth. Self-efficacy determines a person's perception of influence they can have on a situation and, consequently, their perceived control over possible outcomes.

Self-esteem can be viewed as a summation of self-schemas and possible selves and is determined by a person's self-perception indicating that high self-esteem depends on attributes such as attractiveness, intelligence and past successes. However, it could be argued that people who value themselves in a general way - those with high self esteem - are more likely to accept their looks and abilities. To enhance this argument, Smith and Petty (1995) have shown that people with high self-esteem maintain positive emotions.

Psychological theory appears to give diverse opinions on the relationship between self-esteem and aggressive behaviour. Conventional wisdom has regarded low self-esteem as an important cause of violence, but the opposite view is theoretically viable (Baumeister, Smart, Boden, 1996). Baumeister et al. (1996) maintain that although the main cause of violence is an ego threat, violence is produced by a combination of favourable self-appraisals with situational and other factors and, on both empirical and theoretical grounds, rejected the view that low self-esteem causes violence with the most effective direct predictors of violence being narcissism scales, particularly sub-scales for grandiosity and exhibitionism.

Research findings have shown that the level of self-esteem in individuals affects their ability to experience anger and hostility. Kernis, Grannemann, and Barclay (1989) examined the stability of self-esteem and level of self-esteem as predictors of dispositional tendencies to experience anger and hostilities. Results revealed that individuals with unstable high self-esteem reported especially high tendencies to experience anger and hostility, and that individuals with stable high self-esteem reported

particularly low tendencies; individuals with stable and unstable low self-esteem fell between these two extremes. Raskin, Novacek, Hogan (1991) illustrated that hostility, grandiosity, dominance, and narcissism are substantially inter-correlated and significantly predict variations in the subject's self-esteem.

Zapf and Einarsen (2003) confirmed this view and concluded that people with low self-esteem are usually not aggressive as they fear losing the battle. They present depressive reactions and withdraw. In contrast, when favourable views about a person are questioned or contradicted, aggressive behaviour may result particularly if these views are unrealistically positive or inflated.

Bushman, & Baumeister (1998) agreed that it has generally been proposed that low self-esteem causes violence. However, they concluded that laboratory evidence is lacking, and some contrary observations have characterised aggressors as having favourable self-opinions. Their research findings indicated that self-esteem proved irrelevant to aggression and the combination of narcissism and insult led to exceptionally high levels of aggression toward the source of the insult. These findings contradict the popular belief that low self-esteem causes aggression and point instead towards threatening egotism as an important cause.

Slee and Rigby (1993) found that the tendency to bully was not associated with low self-esteem, whereas Byrne (1994) and O'Moore et al (1997) found that children who bully showed levels of low self-esteem. According to O'Moore and Kirkham (2001) those victims who bully others gave evidence of significantly lower global self-esteem. The group of children who admitted to bullying had a significantly lower self-esteem than those children who had not bullied, but the difference was not significant when the "pure bullies" was examined. Children and bullies who were involved in the dual role of bully and victim were shown to have significantly lower levels of self-esteem than those who were classified as just bullies or victims.

Olweus (2003) discussed anxiety and insecurity of children who bully others and reported that his results did not support the view that individuals with an aggressive and tough behaviour pattern are anxious and insecure. His findings suggested that bullies had unusually little anxiety and insecurity or were roughly average on such dimensions (Olweus, 1993). He concluded that bullies did not suffer from poor self esteem but

cautioned that the results did not imply that some individual bullies could not be both aggressive and anxious. These results were confirmed by O'Moore and Kirkham (2001). They found that there was a tendency for bullies of post primary age to see themselves as less anxious and more physically attractive than their peers, but not significantly so. However, O'Moore and Kirkham (2001) cautioned that the notion of "good looks" can be mistakenly taken as positive global self-esteem.

According to Myers (1996), motivation to maintain and enhance self-esteem can lead to an unrealistic belief in a person's expectations and abilities, and an unrealistic optimism about their future, which could subsequently contribute to misjudgement in interpersonal relationships. Myers (1996) continued to explain that given the choice between distorting the world in order to maintain a high self-esteem, and representing the world accurately, people will often take the first option and display inappropriate behaviours towards others. It is arguable that some people will treat others in an aggressive manner if they feel that their self-esteem is threatened.

It would appear, therefore, that self-esteem is central to explanations of aggressive behaviour with where both high and low self-esteem have been associated with individuals with a propensity to bully others.

1. 3. 8 Bullying as deviant behaviour

Although surveys have indicated that bullying behaviour occurs frequently in the work place, for example, O'Moore (2000b) showed that 41% of workers had been exposed to bullying in their present job, Leymann (1996) estimated that 25% of the Swedish workforce would experience mobbing at some point in their working lives, and 24.4% of the sample used by Hoel & Cooper (2000) reported that they had been bullied in the past 5 years, it is arguable that bullying behaviour should be seen as unreasonable, unacceptable, and deviant behaviour and fit the description of deviance proposed by Downes and Rock (1996). They define deviance as behaviour that is considered to be banned or controlled, which is likely to attract punishment or disapproval, and only occasionally will deviancy be publicly exhibited. They maintain that secrecy is normally involved, giving rise to varied social ramifications. Downes and Rock (1996) concluded that when rule breaking is guarded, and when it is surrounded by devious explanations, it

46

is quite possible that deviants themselves are not fully aware of the extent and nature of their own activity.

Cohen (1966) concluded that, on occasions, the deviant behaviour is treated as a single episode and there is considered to be an abrupt move from a state of conformity to a state of deviance. However, he explained that other theories of deviancy emphasised interaction process, the deviant behaviour develops over time and through a series of stages. A person in the pursuit of some interest or goal, and taking account of the situation, makes a move. This is possibly in a deviant direction, but possibly with no thought of deviancy in mind. The next move, the continuation of the course of action, is not fully determined by the state of affairs at the beginning. The chosen direction will depend on the state of the person at the situation at this time. What these theories propose is that the conception of the act itself is a tentative process, not fully determined by the past but always capable of changing its course in response to changes in the current scene.

According to Cohen (1966) behaviours in any societal setting can be seen as the "property of the system"; that there is something about the social climate that generates its rate of negative behaviours. He argued that sociological theories alone cannot explain deviancy but suggested that the properties of the culture or social structure determine the behaviours of the members of the system and define the social norms. The social structure includes the impact of culture on the personalities of the members, the situations in which they operate, the combination of the personality and situation, and the interaction processes between them. The culture or social climate of an organisation could determine the acceptability, or otherwise, of bullying behaviours and affect the incidence of bullying.

These explanations of deviant behaviours follow similar arguments to those put forward to explain aggressive behaviour and bullying behaviour (Hoel, 1997; Vartia, 2003).

1. 3. 9 Psychopathic behaviour

Field (1996) maintains that the definition of psychopathic personality frequently fits the style of behaviour exhibited by perpetrators. In contrast Rayner et al (2002)

commented that undoubtedly psychopaths do exist but the data suggests that they are few in number. Nevertheless, psychopathic behaviour is worth considering in the context of bullying.

In current usage the terms antisocial personality disorder and psychopathy are often used interchangeably. According to the DSM-IV definition the adult antisocial personality shows irresponsible and anti social behaviour by not working consistently, breaking laws, being irritable and physically aggressive, defaulting on debts and being reckless. He or she is impulsive and fails to plan ahead. In addition, he or she shows no regard for truth nor remorse for misdeeds.

The concept of psychopathy is closely linked to the writings of Hervey Cleckley and his classic book, The Mask of Insanity (1976). On the basis of his clinical experience he identified criteria which referred less to antisocial behaviour and more to psychopathic behaviour. For example, one of the key characteristics of the psychopath is poverty of emotions, both positive and negative. He maintained that psychopaths have no sense of shame and even their seemingly positive feelings for others are merely an act. The psychopath is superficially charming and manipulates others for personal gain. The lack of negative emotions may make it impossible for psychopaths to learn from their mistakes, and the lack of positive emotions leads them to behave irresponsibly toward others. Cleckley also remarked that psychopaths are not neurotic and seldom anxious and described the antisocial behaviour of the psychopath as inadequately motivated. He explained that their behaviour is not due, for example, to a need for something such as money, but is performed impulsively, as much for pleasure as anything else. This description of a bully has been used by victims of bullying to describe their aggressors (Costigan, 1998; Field, 1996).

Research and aetiology of psychopathy centres around biological and psychological factors. Mednick, and Hutchings (1978) concluded that findings suggest that some forms of criminal behaviour may have a genetic component. However, they caution, most conclusions into psychopathic behaviour have resulted from studies of people who have been convicted of criminal activities and available literature may not allow generalisation or extrapolation to those whose behaviour can be described as bullying.

Randall (2001) described personality disorders, including psychopathy, as pervasive and resistant to change. He described the central features of psychopathy as deceit and manipulation. Psychopaths are often impulsive and irritable people who are easily aroused to anger. Typically they believe that everyone else is to blame and show a marked disrespect for victims who appear to be helpless or weak in any way. He concluded that a person with antisocial personality disorder and sufficient ability to sustain a stable employment, is likely to become a persistent and incurable bully in the workplace causing extreme damage to others. Randall (2001) commented that in normal community samples the prevalence of this personality disorder is approximately 3% for men and 1% for women.

Randall (2001) also maintained that the narcissistic personality disorder, which is evident in tough-minded, superficial, exploitative behaviour, could be responsible for bullying behaviours in an individual. He concluded that the essential nature of the person with this disorder is a need for admiration and a portrayal of self-importance.

In conclusion, people in the workplace who display symptoms of personality disorders undoubtedly contribute towards the prevalence of bullying. However, research in the area of the personality of those who bully others is limited (Rayner et al, 2002).

1. 3. 10 Authoritarianism.

Results from studies carried out by Vartia (1996) and O'Moore (2000b) revealed that authoritarian forms of management and leadership are conducive to bullying behaviour from superiors.

The concept of the authoritarian personality has persisted since it was first identified by Adorno et al (1982). They concluded that the authoritarian personality is governed by the superego and has to contend with strong and highly ambivalent id tendencies. Authoritarian personalities are driven by the fear of being weak and can be summarised as a person with a blind belief in authority and readiness to attack those who are regarded as weak or are socially acceptable as victims. According to Adorno et al (1982) they develop compulsive character traits and are highly punitive, identify with strength and reject weakness, and appear to be afraid of close physical contact.

49

The research carried out by Adorno et al (1982) has been criticised from various aspects. The value of the measurement scales have been doubted because of psychometric methodological problems. However, according to Kline (1993), modern studies of authoritarianism, with improved measures, still support the concept of the authoritarian personality. This personality concept has been defined and refined by psychometric testing and therefore, according to Kline (1993), should be considered in the understanding of personality. A further criticism of Adorno et al's (1982) description of authoritarianism is offered by Giddens (1993) who argues that authoritarianism is not a characteristic of personality, but reflects the values and norms of particular subcultures within the wider society. He concluded that the investigation, carried out by Adorno et al (1982), may be more valuable as a contribution to understanding authoritarian patterns of thought in general rather than distinguishing a particular personality type. Argyle (1972) concluded that individuals at the extremes of any dimension are more consistent than those nearer the middle and that this could, to some extent, explain the consistent behaviour of the authoritarian personalities, originally identified by Adorno et al (1982).

MacGreil (1996) also examined the concept of the authoritarian personality. He defined authoritarianism as a complex personality trait, and is significantly correlated with prejudice. He maintained that authoritarianism can be measured by analysing attitudes. MacGreil (1996) illustrated that there is a positive correlation between both age and rural communities in Ireland and authoritarianism. However, he concluded that education levels exercise most influence on authoritarianism and intolerance with authoritarianism reduced by education. MacGreil (1996) examined the cause of authoritarianism and concluded that as children, they often were harshly disciplined. In this respect he agreed with Randall (1997a) that the propensity to bully is formed in childhood by overly severe parenting. The harsh discipline supposedly led the children to repress their hostilities and impulses and to project them onto out-groups. The insecurity of authoritarian children, according to McGreil (1996) seemed to predispose them towards an excessive concern with power and status and an inflexible way of thinking that made ambiguity difficult to tolerate. Such people therefore tended to be submissive to those with power over them and aggressive or punitive towards those beneath them.

Although recipients of bullying behaviours have maintained that the style of management in their organisation has been authoritarian (O'Moore, 2000b), research into the personality of individual perpetrators of bullying, authoritarian or otherwise, has not been carried out (Rayner et al, 2002).

1. 4. Environmental causes of bullying

1. 4. 1 Introduction

Liefooghe and Davey (2001) reported that, in over a decade of research into bullying at work, the focus has been on defining, measuring, and explaining the essential nature of bullying and has placed the individual as the main area of research with the organisation acting as an area where bullying takes place. Einarsen and Skogstad (1996) maintained that research findings indicate that work environment factors can offer only partial explanations to the cause of workplace bullying. However, bullying has been seen as a symptom of unhealthy organisations (Randall, 1997a) and as a symptom of organisational dysfunction (Crawford, 1997). Other researchers into workplace bullying have also identified a relationship between bullying and the quality of work environments (Einarsen et al, 1994; Hoel, Einarsen & Cooper, 2003; Lewis, 1999; Leymann, 1996; O'Moore et al, 1998; O'Moore 2000b; Salin, 2003; Vartia, 1996; Zapf et al, 1996) where the recipients of bullying behaviours perceived the social climate at work as negative.

Leymann (1996) maintained that research, at the time of his publication, had not been able to validate the hypothesis that the problem of bullying arose when an employee with character difficulties entered the workforce. He contended that the social climate of the workplace and organisational practices must account for the prevalence of bullying in an organisation. By analyses of approximately 800 cases studies he found that extremely poorly organised production and/or working methods and an almost helpless or uninterested management were present.

In contrast to Leymann's (1996) statement, Einarsen (1999) claimed that it is unlikely that bullying may be explained exclusively in terms of work conditions or that the social work environment is the only cause of bullying. He concluded that bullying may be more likely to occur through environmental effects on aggressive behaviour. He

summarised research to date on the probable environmental causes of bullying at work and identified lack of control over work tasks, role conflict, deficiencies in work design, and leadership behaviour, as the main contributory factors in the prevalence of bullying behaviours.

The following sections (1. 4. 2 to 1. 4. 4) discuss the social climate of organisations, change, and leadership, which are likely to contribute towards the prevalence of bullying in the workplace.

1. 4. 2 Social climate of organisations

Argyle (1972) explained that, historically, the worker/employer relationship has fluctuated through social responsibility towards the worker and obligation towards the employer in the Feudal period, to an unscrupulous and authoritarian attitude frequently evident in the attitude of entrepreneurs in the Industrial Revolution. It was during the period of Liberal Capitalism (1850-1939) that incentive payment was introduced, government regulations and trade unions came about, assembly line production groups began, and time and motion studies were introduced although management at this time was usually authoritarian. It was in more recent times (1950-1970) that automation and training courses for managers were introduced. The main influences of technology were the introduction of working groups and socio-technical systems where problems could be resolved by reorganising jobs and relationships within working groups. The Human Relations movement, evident in improvements in social relations and physical working conditions, followed.

Emler (1995) also examined the historical socialisation of the workplace and concluded that through time there has been a transition from a task to a time emphasis in work with timetables and schedules assuming greater importance. This, he maintained, highlighted pressures exerted by influences outside the individual worker

Schein (1988) reported that research, such as the Hawthorne Experiments carried out in the United States in the late 1920's, showed that democratic styles of supervision led to more output and job satisfaction and that social relationships within groups affected productivity. He also maintained that social factors, such as relations with peers and supervisors were important in job satisfaction; it was widely believed that job

satisfaction was correlated with, or was the cause of, high productivity. However, further research showed that, with increased job satisfaction, the direct effects of increased productivity were modest (10-25%) although there was reduced absenteeism, labour turnover, and better communication and co-operation.

According to Schein (1988) the concept of authority in organisations and pure power or non-legitimate authority, can rest on the possession of strength or on the control of rewards and punishments. He reported that Weber (1947) argued that the dominant organisational form in the modern world would be bureaucratic, implying a level of literacy and education among workers and that this would lead to a hierarchical system dependent on educational level. A defining characteristic of this bureaucracy would be the quality of the authority exercised within it, referred to by Weber (1947) as legal-rational authority. Schein (1988) also described traditional authority where managerial authority is a matter of tradition within the culture of the organisation and typically is passed down along family lines. The ultimately rational basis, according to Schein (1988), on which to have authority in the organisation, is if the person in authority possess specific information, competence, or expertness in relation to the problem being experienced. Emler (1995) noted that conditions for obedience to authority have little to do with the capacity of an organisation to coerce compliance from its members but relies substantially on the employees' willingness to obey someone who is formally entitled to exercise authority within legitimate limits.

There were 16.6% of respondents in the Irish survey (O'Moore, 2000b) who reported a perceived hostile working environment. Of those respondents who found the atmosphere at work to be hostile, over half were bullied at work. The majority (88.2%) of the respondents who reported that staff relations were very positive had not been subjected to bullying in the past 12 months and of the respondents who reported staff relations to be negative and critical, 54.3% had been bullied during the past 12 months. There was a significant difference between total respondents and those bullied with regard to perceived working conditions. These conditions included the level of responsibility given to employees, work control, work recognition, and promotional prospects.

These results confirmed comments by other researchers that a hostile environment is a reality for many employees who are recipients of bullying behaviour in their place of work (Adams & Crawford, 1992; Hoel et al, 1999; Leymann, 1996; Zapf et al, 1996). Bjorkvist et al (1994) found that the worst environment was associated with the most severe bullying.

Findings from a study carried out by O'Moore et al (1998) showed that 83.3% of participants, all of whom claimed to have been bullied, found their work environment to be competitive with 77% reporting that the work environment was strained and stressful. Furthermore 90% reported that they found the leadership to be autocratic.

Vartia (1996) also reported that the general atmosphere, in workplaces where bullying occurs, was most often experienced as strained and competitive. According to Vartia (1996), social interaction at work and the relationships between co-workers as well as between supervisors and other employees, is of great importance.

Findings from the survey among the Norwegian Employers Federation carried out by Einarsen et al (1994) showed that the occurrence of bullying and harassment is significantly correlated with all measures of work environment used in the study. Low satisfaction with leadership, work control, social climate, and particularly the experience of role conflict, correlated most strongly with bullying. The results also showed that different work conditions are related to bullying in different organisational settings. Only role conflict showed partial correlation with bullying in all sub-samples. Work conditions accounted for 10% of the variance in bullying, ranging from 7% to 24% in the different sub-samples. The results show that both the victims of bullying and the observers of bullying report a low-quality work environment.

Vartia (1996) also identified work-related risks of bullying in the psychological work environment and the organisational climate. She illustrated that some features in the functioning of the work unit, e.g. poor information flow, an authoritative way of settling differences of opinion, lack of mutual conversations about the tasks and goals of the work unit, and insufficient possibilities to influence matters concerning the individual can all promote bullying. Both the victims and the observers of bullying perceived deficiencies in these aspects at their workplace. The victims of bullying felt that envy, a

weak superior, competition for tasks or advancement, and competition for the supervisor's favour and approval were the most common reasons for bullying

Zapf et al (1996) analysed the relationship between mobbing, job characteristics, social environment variables, and psychological ill-health. Mobbing was correlated with bad job content, a bad social environment, and psychological ill-health. The findings suggest that the more social support supervisors gave, the less the victims reported being shouted at, being constantly criticised, and receiving verbal threats. In contrast the more social support the victims received from their colleagues the less they reported being socially isolated or being ridiculed with regard to their private life. The data suggested that organisational factors are potential causes of mobbing at work

Salin (2003a) contended that the different roles and dynamics of organisational antecedents of bullying should be examined. She identified three groupings of explanations for, and factors associated with, bullying. The first of these, enabling structures and processes included a perceived power imbalance, low perceived costs such as weak leadership, and dissatisfaction and frustration. The second grouping consisted of incentives which, she maintained is prevalent in organisations with a politicised climate. Finally, the third grouping consisted of precipitating processes, which typically involve change. She concluded that bullying is typically an interaction between structures and processes from all three groupings.

Findings from Salin's (2003a) research also showed that there was a positive relationship between a politicised environment and bullying and that it is arguable that bullying can be a form of organisational politics. She argued that increased pressures for efficiency and restructuring could contribute to increased internal competition and may lead to more bullying.

In a study carried out in Wales (Lewis, 1999) among employees in further and higher education, respondents were presented with six events that could be considered to contribute towards work issues, including bullying. These were short term contracts and job insecurity, the organisation's values and beliefs, post incorporation contractual changes, funding pressures, power imbalance between managers and academics, and a lack of professionally trained managers. Although findings from the study indicated that respondents believed that all six factors were likely to impact on bullying, the two most

prominent features were a lack of professionally trained managers and a power imbalance between managers and lectures.

1. 4. 3 Change

Morgan (1997) commented that the ideas and philosophies governing modern organisations are in a constant state of change and that change in the workplace is inevitable in an expanding economy and social adjustment has taken place throughout history to accommodate this. Vartia (1996) maintains that where actual change can bring about distress if working conditions deteriorate, even the anticipation of forthcoming changes can also elicit anxiety. Sheehan (1999) identified changing pressures in organisations as global competition, consumer demands, technological change, changing labour expectations, environmental awareness and economic recession and stated that these pressures demand organisational change. However, with fair policies and procedures in place, with emphasis on order and ethics in behaviour, bullying need not be an inescapable consequence (Leymann, 1996).

Hoel and Salin (2003) reported that, with an increasing number of people working in self-directed and autonomous teams, conflict between workers may result due to increased pressures. They also commented that workers may be increasingly exposed to abusive behaviour and excessive demands from clients at a time when the needs and rights of customers are of more importance that the rights of employees.

Change in the organisational and employment conditions have been associated with a higher rate of bullying (Einarsen et al, 1994; Hoel & Cooper, 2000; O'Moore et al, 2003a; Salin, 2003a; Vartia, 1996). O'Moore et al (2003a) purported that at the time of the Irish nationwide survey in 1999 (O'Moore, 2000b), Ireland was recognised as a nation that experienced high and rapid economic growth in the last decade. By comparing the level of bullying with the growth or decline in twenty-two occupations in Ireland they showed that results from the Irish nationwide survey (O'Moore, 2000b) supported the claim by Einarsen et al (1994), and Vartia (1996) that bullying is related to different aspects of the work environment. This study showed that expansion or decline in the number of people employed in particular sectors was significantly related to an increased rate of bullying. Changes in the workplace, identified by respondents in the Irish

56

nationwide survey (O'Moore, 2000b) as coinciding with the onset of bullying, included staff shortages, working in a high pressure industry, and poor management skills.

Hoel and Cooper (2000) found, in their nationwide study in the UK, that the association between bullying and organisational events appeared to be strongest for "change of management". This confirmed a second study in the UK (UNISON, 1997) and the nationwide study in Ireland (O'Moore, 2000b) which also suggested that bullying coincided with change of management. Hoel and Cooper (2000) commented that this association cannot be explained with reference to dissatisfaction and the present state of mind of those being bullied at the time. Hoel and Salin (2003) agreed with Sheehan (1999) and maintained that it is also feasible that managers tend to adopt more autocratic practices to bring about change.

Hoel and Cooper (2000) found a statistically significant relationship between exposure to bullying and events frequently associated with organisational change the strongest association being change of management.

1. 4. 4 Leadership

Together with role conflict, low satisfaction with leadership was found to be an organisational feature strongly identified with bullying (Einarsen et al, 1994; Einarsen, 1999; Hoel & Cooper, 2000; Leymann, 1996; O'Moore et al, 1998; O'Moore, 2000b; Vartia, 1996). O'Moore et al (2003) showed that the greatest difference between the bullied and non-bullied was the level of satisfaction with their immediate supervisor's ability to resolve conflicts which arise at work.

Where more than half of all respondents in the Irish nationwide survey (O'Moore, 2000b) reported that they felt the style of management in their organisation to be autocratic, this figure increased to two thirds among those claiming to have been bullied. A significantly greater proportion of the bullied respondents reported that their organisations and departments were managed in an autocratic manner. Approximately one half (53.4%) of all respondents felt that their supervisors had organisational ability whereas approximately one third (34.9%) of those bullied had confidence in their supervisors ability in this area. The level of confidence in supervisors' ability to resolve conflict was 37.4% for all respondents and 20.4% for those bullied.

Hoel and Salin (2003) concluded that managers who perceive themselves as powerless in undertaking their tasks may resort to bullying behaviour and use whatever power they can to regain control. In such situations, managers are likely to be defensive and fearful of anyone critical of their regime. Hoel and Salin (2003) also commented that managers' ignorance and failure to recognise and intervene in bullying cases may indirectly contribute to bullying by conveying the message that bullying is acceptable.

Schein (1988) conceded that any definition of "good leadership" usually reflects the historical, social, or cultural context in which the analysis is conducted. He concluded that five different aspects of the situation should be taken into account. Firstly the level of the individual in the organisation should be considered. The second aspect is the type of leadership under consideration. This could be a face-to-face situation, or a broader concept of task accomplishment, which may cut across many organisational levels. Thirdly, the cultural, political, or socio-economic concepts that underlie the organisation need to be taken into account. Fourthly, the nature of the task, the subordinates, and the situational constraints that may be operating should be determined. The final aspect for consideration is the stage of development of the subordinate group and the leader-subordinate relationship. He concluded that an acceptable definition of leadership is a relationship between the leader, the followers, and the task/situational characteristics (Gibb, 1969). This definition incorporates behaviour that is appropriate to a given situation within the larger environment.

Schein (1988) reported that, historically, leadership was assumed to be a psychological trait and a set of characteristics within the individual. He commented that Brown (1954) identified leadership qualities as intelligence and good judgement, insight and imagination, ability to accept responsibility, a sense of humour, a well balanced personality and a sense of justice. If leadership is examined in terms of the relationship between the leader and those who are led, Brown (1954) maintained that necessary attributes would then include the power to co-ordinate, power to express the common aim, impartiality, power to delegate, and power to reflect the progress of the group.

According to Bennis (1991) after an early emphasis on leader traits and characteristics of individuals, a more social perspective was considered which saw leadership as consisting of the transactions between leaders and followers. The leader

could be in a position to inspire their subordinates and respond to the needs, concerns, wishes, and desires of the group. In contrast, the leader could create a demotivating environment resulting in an unproductive organisation. Attention subsequently moved from identifying individual attributes to identifying behaviours and resources useful in interpersonal exchanges. For a period in the 1960's it was believed that sensitive human relations skills were needed for successful leadership, but research in this area was inconclusive (Kanter, 1977). Early studies also examined leadership style by comparing authoritarian, democratic, and laissez-faire leaders and were able to illustrate that there were advantages and disadvantages in group productivity and morale associated with each emphasis.

There is evidence that the identification of personal characteristics of leaders is still relevant in understanding leadership in modern organisations and evidence has been found that there is a difference between characteristics of leaders and non-leaders. Aronson (1997) cited studies which illustrated that leaders tend to be more intelligent than non-leaders, more driven with desire for power, more charismatic, (House, Spangler, & Woycke, 1991), and more adaptive and flexible (Zaccaro, Foti, & Kenny, 1991). Personality test have shown that effective leaders tend to be outgoing, energetic, conscientious, agreeable, emotionally stable, and self confident, (Hogan, Curphy & Hogan, 1994, cited in Myers, 1996). Additional qualities have been found in effective leaders which include trust, an ability to achieve goals, and the possession of a self confident charisma that encourages the allegiance of their followers (Bennis, 1984; House & Singh, 1987, cited in Bennis, 1991).

The level of the leader within the organisation may also affect the style expected by subordinates. According to Schein (1988) the higher the level in the organisation, the more important it is for a leader to be oriented attitudinally towards people and to be interpersonally competent, and the less important it is to be oriented to task problems and to be task competent, provided task orientation and competence remain at some reasonably high level. Lower level leaders and managers need to be task oriented and technically competent but can get by with a minimal amount of interpersonal competence. However, Bennis (1991) maintained that effective leadership should be present throughout the whole organisation since it gives pace and energy to the work and

empowers the work force. Empowerment, he maintained, is the collective effect of leadership. When empowered people feel significant and aware that they make a difference to the organisation. They also understand that learning and competence are important especially if they are encouraged to appreciate that there are no failures, only mistakes that give feedback. Effective leadership style attracts and energises people to work towards the future; they feel that they are part of a community and that the work is exciting, stimulating, and challenging. Empowerment motivates through identification rather than through reward and punishment.

Schein (1988) discussed styles put forward by researchers in the area of leadership. Hersey and Blanchard (1977, cited in Shein, 1988) defined four basic leadership styles, assigned labels: 'telling', which was appropriate with a high task and low relationship behaviour; 'selling' could be used with high task and high relationship behaviour; 'participating' style with a low task and high relationship behaviour; and 'delegating' with a low task and low relationship behaviour. They propose that the style should be adapted to suit the situation and effectiveness depends on the leader's ability to do this. However, they also maintain that subordinates behaviour plays a crucial role in defining the style to be most effective and more important than the situation.

Myers (1996) identified two major orientations in leadership, task oriented and social oriented. Task leadership involves organising work, setting standards, and focusing on goal attainment. These leaders have a directive style which is effective if the leader is sufficiently competent and gives adequate orders (Fiedler, 1987). Since they are goal orientated, such leaders keep the group's attention and effort focused on its mission. Experiments show that the combination of specific, challenging goals and periodic progress reports help motivate high achievement (Locke & Latham, 1990). Social leaders often have a democratic style; they are able to delegate authority and welcome input from team members. Such leadership is good for morale and group members usually feel more satisfied when they participate in making decisions (Spector, 1986). People who value group cohesion and take pride in achievement therefore thrive under democratic leadership when the leader is concerned with feelings and relationships between workers.

Vallely (1993) discussed the notion of functional leadership, which focuses on what leaders do rather than what they are. He maintained that the main roles of a leader is to give a sense of direction, inspire team members and encourage them to work together, set an example and be able to produce their own output. To accomplish these roles they should be able to communicate well and listen to their subordinates and at the same time, recognise people's achievements and shortcomings. Jolson, Dubinsky, Comer, and Yammarino (1997) identified five leadership styles used in organisations. Using an autocratic style, the leader expects compliance from their subordinates; a bureaucratic style gives rise to a situation where subordinates are expected to respond to rules, procedures, and policies of the organisation, which are then policed by the leader. Participative styles, generally more acceptable to subordinates, include consultative and democratic practices. Using consultation the leader will discuss the decision alternatives with subordinates and invite arguments and recommendations; with a democratic style subordinates are invited to participate in the decision making process and the solution determined through consensus, majority vote, or committee. Finally, a laissez-faire style results in the leader setting the goal but then relinquishing decision making authority.

Vroom (1976, cited in Schein, 1988) maintained that examination of the situation is as relevant to leadership styles as the personal characteristics of leaders and asserted that leaders should have the ability to vary their behaviour from highly autocratic to highly participative, as appropriate. The style of leadership to be employed in any given situation, therefore, depends on the diagnostic abilities of the leader. Subsequent decisions should be determined by the situation and should depend on the amount of available information, the trust that the leader has in the subordinates, and the degree of structure of the problem. Vroom (1976) also stressed the importance of the characteristics and activities of subordinates. Their ability to accept the decision of the leader, together with the amount of possible conflict within the group over the solution, especially if it could be seen as unfair should affect the style of decision making of the leader. From this he developed a system where the leader is able to analyse the problem and arrive at a suitable conclusion for a variety of circumstances.

The environment of the group together with particular situations within the environment influences the relationship between style of leadership and maximum

effectiveness; a person who becomes an effective leader of one group will not necessarily become an effective leader of another (Suedfeld, 1997). This is particularly evident if the two groups have different missions; the qualities that result in good leadership in a corporate board meeting are different for those in a research laboratory. Situations can frequently vary within the same group, depending on the task being performed and the group personality at the particular time. The ability to become a successful situational leader results from knowing when to use each style. Leaders who are unable to make this change tend to lose their prominent positions. The ability to recognise the best level of complexity for a given situation, and the ability to then work at that level, is a personality related characteristic just like other coping factors such as hardiness and optimism.

Blanchard (1991) suggested that the actual situation should determine the leadership style employed by an effective leader and there is no definitive style appropriate for all situations. He examined different combinations of directive and supportive leader behaviours from which to choose for any given situation. The right style, he maintains, is primarily a function of two variables, the degree of difficulty of the task and the development level of the person doing the task.

A further way of looking at authority in an organisation is to examine management styles. Bluen and Barling (1988) identified two perspectives of management: unitary and pluralist. In the unitary perspective, people accept their positions in the organisation and do not question the authority of the leaders. This acceptance is based on genuine respect or compliance. Any conflict that does exist is seen as either negligible or caused by faulty communications, stupidity, or the work of agitators. It is arguable that the prevalence of bullying behaviours will depend on the ability of members of the organisation to perceive and resolve conflict. The pluralist perspective accepts the existence of several different interest groups, each with their own leaders, loyalties and objectives in any organisation. Within this perspective, conflict is not regarded as abnormal and although bullying could exist, mechanisms are normally in place to deal with it.

Low satisfaction with leadership has been shown to be central to the high prevalence of bullying (Einarsen et al, 1994; Einarsen, 1999; Hoel & Cooper, 2000; Hoel & Salin, 2003; Leymann, 1996; O'Moore et al, 1998; O'Moore, 2000b; O'Moore et al,

2003; Vartia, 1996). Together with promoting the benefits of a positive working environment, and the management of change in the workplace, the development of effective leadership may assist those dealing with intervention measures to lower the high rate of bullying currently experienced by workers.

1. 5 Effects of bullying behaviours on individuals

1. 5. 1 Introduction

Some definitions of bullying take the impact of the targets into account (e.g. Adams & Crawford 1992; Keashly, 2001) and the effects on recipients of bullying in the workplace of such behaviours has been reported by numerous researchers (e.g. Einarsen & Raknes, 1997; Einarsen & Mikkelsen, 2003; O'Moore, 2000b; Niedl, 1996; Vartia, 1996, 2001; Zapf et al, 1996). The effects on the level of mental and physical well-being in individuals has varied from social stress (Zapf et al, 1996) to being a major cause of suicide ideation (Einarsen, 2000; O'Moore, 2003; Vartia, 2001). Rayner et al (2002) commented that there is a wide spectrum of potential response, which are negative in nature and effect. However, Einarsen (1999) maintained that to have a negative effect on an individual, a potential bullying behaviour has to be perceived and evaluated. The effects of bullying appear to vary from person to person and it is possible that an individual's perception of the behaviour of others affects the severity. Perception is, therefore, discussed in the following section. Stress, its role in the workplace, and the symptoms of stress most commonly identified by recipients of bullying behaviour in this study are elucidated in sections 1. 5. 3 to 1. 5. 5.

1. 5. 2 Perception

The process of self-appraisal is affected by the accurate perception and interpretation of the reactions of others, as identified by Festinger's (1954, cited in Myers. 1996) social comparison theory. Festinger (1954) stated that where possible people rely on objective behaviour; but on occasions there is no objective standard, and uncertainty results. However, not all cognitive inconsistencies are equally upsetting. Thibodeau and Aronson (1992, cited in Myers, 1996) showed that dissonance is most

powerful when a person performs an action or learns something about themselves that threatens their self-image and it is arguable that this is a strong motivator for bullying another individual. Cognitive dissonance always produces discomfort and therefore motivates a person to try to reduce the discomfort. This can lead to changes in the way a person thinks about the world and the way they behave.

According to Matthiesen and Einarsen (2001), the experience of being bullied is a cognitive process of evaluation with this process affected by personality variables as well as situational variables. Einarsen et al (1994) argued that different individuals have different thresholds, which affect perception and therefore the reaction to, or impact of, bullying behaviours. It is possible that some behaviours can be perceived as bullying by some individuals and not by others. The subjective perception and interpretation of behaviours can influence the effects on the recipient of such behaviours. Anecdotal evidence suggests that individuals frequently are unaware that the behaviours to which they have been subjected are in fact bullying behaviours. Vartia (2003) argues that victims do not usually perceive any personal involvement in the emergence of bullying and often consider themselves to be hard workers, wronged by the system. A study of university and college lecturers, carried out by Lewis (2003), showed that there is a role for work colleagues in the identification of a person being bullied. Sheehan and Barker (2000) also acknowledged that individuals can have difficulties in recognising whether or not they are being bullied. They assessed the perceptions of victims of bullying behaviours by using metaphors and found that this helped victims to communicate their experiences and emotions.

The way people construe their relationship with the environment is a function of cognition. Cognition, or mental activity, involves the acquisition, storage, retrieval, and use of knowledge (Matlin, 1994). Thoughts influence emotions and these, in turn, influence the way in which the world is perceived. All experiences are filtered through unique personalities, personal histories, and individual viewpoints on life. In general, people determine which of these experiences will be enhancing and which will be depressing. Perception, therefore, is a process that uses previous knowledge to gather and interpret the stimuli registered by the senses (Matlin, 1994).

Social perception and implicit personality theory could offer an explanation as to why some people conclude that they have been subjected to bullying behaviours by an alleged aggressor while this behaviour has little or no effect on others. Aronson et al (1997) used social perception to explain how impressions are formed and inferences made about other people and how attempts are made to understand the behaviour of others. On initial encounters with other people, impressions are formed based on appearances and verbal communication. A further important source of information used to form impressions of others is non-verbal behaviour, such as facial expressions, body movements, tone of voice, eye contact, and abuse of personal space. Implicit personality theory (Schneider, 1973, cited in Aronson et al, 1997) is a schema used to group various personality traits together. For instance if a person is kind, they can be judged to be generous; a person who is dominating can be judged to be capable of anti-social behaviour. This type of thought process can lead to, for instance, a person feeling that they have been bullied when in practice they are being firmly managed by a dominating personality.

Aronson et al (1997) continued to explain that people tend to use non-verbal behaviour and implicit personality theory to make assumptions concerning the other person's personality. They discussed attribution theory (Heider, 1958, cited in Aronson et al, 1997) which is a description of the way in which people explain the causes of their own and other people's behaviour. Heider (1958) commented that in general the causes of a another person's behaviour emanates from the person, whereas people tend to blame the situation for their own behaviours. The fundamental attribution error, therefore, occurs when there is a tendency to overestimate the extent to which a person's behaviour is due to internal dispositional factors and to underestimate the role of situational factors.

Attribution theory has been used by researchers in the area of workplace bullying (Bjorkqvist et al, 1994; Einarsen, 1999; Rayner & Hoel (1997) to explain the victims' perceptions of bullying behaviours and also why perpetrators of such behaviours feel justified in carrying out their actions. Leymann (1996) also used attribution theory to explain why others in the workplace claim that their colleagues who have been subjected to bullying behaviours victims are mentally ill.

The cognitive evaluation of their aggressive treatment by others, therefore, may determine the level of stress and subsequent effects on recipients of bullying behaviours. It should be taken into account that those witnessing aggressive behaviour are also likely to be negatively affected resulting in stress related symptoms (O'Moore, 2000b; Vartia, 2003).

1. 5. 3 Stress

Links between the adverse impact of excessive stress at work, on the individual and organisational health, and negative outcomes have been consistently demonstrated (Cooper et al, 1996). Cooper et al (1996) reported that stress can make people ill, impair their day-to-day functioning and relationships with others and reduce their effectiveness in the workplace.

Stress is a complicated multifaceted construct that has been approached from many perspectives by numerous researchers. Kaplan, Sallis, and Patterson (1993) discussed causes and models of stress and reported that the earliest theories concentrated on psychological disturbances caused by early experiences (the psychoanalytic model). Later theories focused on learning, specifically on learning bad habits (the behavioural model). They also considered that genetics could play a role in the effects of stress through the existence of predisposing factors. According to Kaplan et al (1993) further evidence suggests that personal dispositions and social situations could moderate, or exaggerate the impact of stress and concluded that there is sufficient published evidence that each of these models has merit. They further commented that the relationship between stressful life events and health is complex, with the environment and personal predispositions and characteristics feeding back on each other.

One of the earlier researchers in the area of stress, Lazarus (1966), maintained that stress cannot be objectively defined and suggested that the way the environment or event is perceived or appraised determines when stress is present. More specifically, he purported that stress is experienced when a situation is appraised as exceeding the person's adaptive resources.

Selye (1980) defined stress as the non-specific result of any demand upon the body. He applied the notion of homeostasis to his theory of General Adaptation Syndrome with regard to stress and maintained that the innate drive to maintain balance

caused the body to respond to any stressor in stages. The organism has a finite reserve of adaptive energy and, when depleted, the organism lacks the ability to cope. Selye (1980) maintained that some stress is essential for life and that complete freedom from stress is death. He concluded that stress is a natural occurrence in a person's life-span and, as a feature of everyday living, can be positive. It is subjective in the sense that what may be stressful for one person may be a challenge for another. Therefore it is not necessarily the objective situation that causes stress but the person's perception of this situation.

According to learning theory two aspects of the conditioning process are important in understanding stress. These are emotional responses, including behavioural, psychological and physiological components, acquired through conditioning, and anticipatory anxiety that can be aroused, once conditioning has occurred, by thinking or talking about the feared stimulus and produces stress (Rice, 1992). In general, any stressful situation that produces high or unmanageable levels of anxiety is likely to motivate some form of escape or avoidance. Rice (1992) concluded that, using learning theory, stress is seen to be caused more by specific external events than by internal conflicts. Avoidance strategies, once learned to be affective, are established as a means of coping and used repeatedly.

The most influential cognitive model of stress is that proposed by Lazarus and Launier (1978). The central point of this transactional model is that stress is neither an environmental stimulus, a characteristic of the person, nor a response but a relationship between demands and the power to deal with them without unreasonable or destructive costs (Rice, 1992). The way events are perceived and the individual resources for coping with it are factors that determine whether it will be stressful. Stress, therefore, is a result of interaction between a particular person and a particular event (Coyne & Lazarus, 1980). In most situations, stress depends on the way a person interprets the stressor, with the interpretation based on previous experience with similar circumstances and on the person's ability to cope.

Folkman (1984) saw that problem situations resulting in stress represent circumstances when internal or external demands exceed resources. He emphasised that stress and the resultant coping relies on the perception of an environmental situation,

processing across time and changing circumstances and conceptualised coping as a transactional process or exchange between person and environment.

Carver & Scheier (1994) saw stress as consisting of two appraisal processes: appraisal of threat, challenge, or loss, and appraisal of how to respond, plus the execution of coping responses. They used the description of the appraisal process referred to by Folkman (1984) and defined cognitive appraisal as a process through which the person evaluates whether a particular encounter with the environment is relevant to his or her well-being, and if so, in what ways. Initially, by primary appraisal, the person evaluates whether there is anything at stake in this encounter and if so, by secondary appraisal they evaluate what if anything can be done to overcome or prevent harm or to improve the prospects for benefit. Primary and secondary appraisals then converge to determine whether the person-environment transaction is regarded as significant for well-being, and if so, whether it is primarily threatening (harmful) or challenging (Folkman, Lazarus, Dunkel-Schetter, DeLongis, & Gruen, 1986). Cognitive appraisal accounts for the difference between individual reactions, i.e. evaluative cognition processes that intervene between the encounter and the reaction (Folkman, 1984). This offers an explanation for the differing responses from people who are recipients of bullying behaviours.

Lazarus and Folkman (1984) proposed three stressful appraisals: harm-loss, which involves real or anticipated loss; threat, which occurs when a situation demands more coping capacity than is available; and challenge, which is a situation evaluated as demanding but with an emotional overtone of excitement and anticipation. In effect, appraisal processes evaluate the presence of threat or challenge as well as the resources available to meet the demands. However, in a bullying situation it is possible that although the individual may feel that their own resources may be adequate to deal with the situation, resources in the workplace may not be conducive to resolution. When a person is bullied there can be a real threat to their physical and psychological well-being (O'Moore, 2000b; Niedl, 1996; Vartia, 2001) and also to their financial position (O'Moore 2000b). On occasion recipients of bullying behaviours have been able to take action to cause the bullying to stop (Hoel & Cooper, 2000; O'Moore, 2000b) possibly because they had the resources available to deal with the situation.

1. 5. 4 Stress in the workplace

Researchers investigating stress in the workplace have been concerned with identifying the causes and outcomes of negative stress. Cooper et al (1996) identified the causes as a changing workforce, the changing nature of the organisation and the changing nature of the work itself. Newman and Beehr (1979) define stress in the workplace as a situation wherein job related factors interact with a worker to change (i.e. disrupt or enhance) his or her psychological and or physiological conditions such that the person (i.e. mind or body) is forced to deviate from normal functioning.

Spector (1996) defined a stressor at work as a condition or situation that requires an adaptive response on the part of the employer. He saw a job strain as a potential aversive reaction by an employee to a stressor, such as anxiety, frustration, or physical symptoms and identified, in his opinion, the main job stressors. The first was role ambiguity, which is the extent to which employees are unclear about what their job functions and responsibilities are supposed to be. Secondly he identified role conflict which occurs when there is incompatibility between demands at work or between work and non-work as a source of stress. He maintained that two dimensions of work-load: quantitative (the amount of work a person has) and qualitative (the difficulty of the work relative to a persons capabilities) and job control which includes the extent to which employees are able to make decisions about their work produce stress for employees. Some occupations, by their nature, have a high stress content that is inherent in the job. For example, machine pacing where a machine controls the rate at which a worker must make a response is a form of stress.

The literature on the effects of bullying behaviours indicated that recipients of bullying claimed that they suffered from stress (O'Moore, 2000b; Hoel et al, 1999; Vartia, 1996) with a study, carried out in Germany by Zapf et al (1996), showing mental health variables with significant differences between bullied and non-bullied respondents.

1. 5. 5 Stress experienced by recipients of bullying behaviours

A literature review of the effects of bullying behaviours on recipients revealed that psychological and physiological ill-health (evident as somatic symptoms, insomnia,

social dysfunction and depression), anxiety, anger, symptoms of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, and low self esteem were the major effects. These topics are covered in depth.

1. 5. 5. 1 Psychological and physiological well-being

Stress, attributed to the experience of stressful life events, can elicit a range of physical and psychological disorders and the presence and degree of these disorders gives a measure of stress. A central premise underlying the observed association between life adversity and health status is that stress exerts a suppressive effect on an individuals immune functioning.

A study carried out to examine psychological, behavioural, and physical reactions to stress process identified physical symptoms including skin irritation, headaches, sore neck and body muscles, and nausea (Hinds & Burroughs, 1997). Psychological effects included negative mood state such as impatience, worry and irritability changes in daily routines that were either related to basic bodily functions, such as eating and sleeping, or social activities, such as social withdrawal, tiredness, a desire to work harder or longer were also noted. These findings are in line with results of studies carried out among victims of workplace bullying.

A study carried out in Norway (Einarsen & Skogstad, 1996) indicated a significant relationships between victimisation and psychological, psychosomatic and muscle-skeletal health complaints although the effects were moderated by the individual's self-esteem and anxiety in social settings. Einarsen and Raknes (1997) found, in their study of male shipyard workers in Norway, that bullying explained 23% of the variance in psychological health and well-being.

When carrying out the nationwide survey in Ireland, O'Moore (2000b) presented respondents with lists of physiological and psychological symptoms and behavioural changes which she identified as being symptoms of stress. Physiological symptoms included headaches / migraine, sweating / shaking, palpitations, feeling / being sick, stomach and bowel problems, raised blood pressure, disturbed sleep, and loss of energy or appetite. Psychological symptoms included anger, anxiety, worry, fear, panic attacks, depression, loss of confidence and self-esteem, tearfulness, loss of concentration, forgetfulness, lack of motivation, thoughts of suicide, feeling isolated, and feeling

helpless. In addition, respondents were asked to identify behaviours that are characteristic of recipients of aggressive behaviour. These included becoming aggressive, irritable, revengeful, withdrawn, making greater use of tobacco, alcohol and drugs, obsessively dwelling on the aggressor, becoming hypersensitive to criticism, and becoming totally emotionally drained.

Other researchers have sought specific symptoms of stress and findings indicate that recipients have reported nervous symptoms (Bjorkqvist et al, 1994; Vartia, 1996); lack of concentration (Bjorkqvist et al, 1994; O'Moore, 2000b); and tension / restlessness (Vartia, 1996). Zapf (1996) identified social dysfunction to be a result of bullying.

Hoel and Cooper (2000) used the General Health Questionnaire (Goldberg & Williams, 1988) to measure the mental health of respondents in their study of bullying at work in the UK. They found a significant difference between those currently bullied and those previously bullied, witnesses to bullying, and those not bullied. Their findings indicated an average value well above a threshold level, which suggested that the people who were currently being bullied may need screening for potential psychiatric conditions.

Stress, therefore, measured by psychological and physical ill-health, has been evident among victims of bullying. However, indications of stress can also include other more clearly defined symptoms, such as depression, anxiety, anger, symptoms of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, and low self-esteem.

1. 5. 5. 2 Depression

Depression, or symptoms of depression such as mood swings, crying and showing distress, and being withdrawn, were found to be present by O'Moore et al (1998), Leymann (1996), Neidl (1996), Vartia (1996), Bjorkqvist et al (1994), Zapf et al (1996), Hoel et al (1999). O'Moore (2000b), O'Moore et al (1998), and Vartia (1996) found that more serious symptoms of depression such as helplessness and isolation were present with suicidal ideation found by Leymann (1996) and O'Moore (2000b).

Davison and Neale (1994) describe major (or unipolar) depression as an emotional state marked by great sadness and apprehension, feelings of worthlessness and guilt, withdrawal from others, loss of sleep, appetite, and sexual desire, or loss of interest

and pleasure in usual activities. Often depression is associated with other psychological problems, such as anxiety, and with medical conditions.

Although there is general agreement among practitioners on the most common signs and symptoms of depression, the formal DSM-IV (1994) diagnosis of a major depressive episode requires the presence of five out of nine symptoms for at least two weeks. Either depressed mood or loss of interest and pleasure must be one of the symptoms. Symptoms include: -

- Sad, depressed mood.
- Loss of interest and pleasure in usual activities.
- Difficulties in sleeping (insomnia); not falling asleep, initially; not returning to sleep after awakening in the middle of the night, and early morning awakening; or, in some cases, a desire to sleep a great deal of the time.
- Shift in activity level, becoming either lethargic or agitated.
- Poor appetite and weight loss or increased appetite and weight gain.
- Loss of energy, great fatigue.
- Negative self-concept; self-reproach and self-blame; feelings of worthlessness and guilt.
- Complaints or evidence of difficulty in concentrating, such as slowed thinking and indecisiveness.
- Recurrent thoughts of death or suicide.

Depression has been studied from several perspectives including psychoanalytic views which emphasise the unconscious conflicts associated with grief and loss; cognitive theories, which focus on the depressed person's self-defeating thought processes; and interpersonal factors, which emphasise how depressed people interact with others. Biological processes, involving the activities of the central nervous system, have also been examined in depth by researchers.

Brown & Siegel (1988) discussed the psychoanalytic theory of depression which revolves round loss and grief where grief can go astray, in overly dependent individuals, developing into an ongoing process of self-abuse, self-blame and depression. They continued to explain that psychoanalysts suggest the concept of symbolic loss in order to

keep the theoretical formulation and that a large body of evidence indicates that depression is precipitated by stressful life events, which frequently involve loss. This explanation offers reasons why recipients of bullying behaviours express loss of financial security, loss of status, and loss of their role definition. However, it is arguable that the loss suffered by victims is real and not necessarily caused by grief that has gone astray as suggested by psychoanalytic theory.

Cognitive theories of depression purport that thoughts and beliefs are regarded as major factors in causing or influencing the emotional state. One such theory is that of Aaron Beck (1967) who maintains that depressed individuals feel as they do because their thinking is biased toward negative interpretations. The negative beliefs are activated whenever new situations are encountered that resemble, in some way, the conditions in which they were learned. Cognitive biases subsequently affect the person's perception of reality leading them to expect to fail most of the time, burdening them with the responsibility for all misfortunes and a negative self-evaluation constantly reminds them of their worthlessness. Beck (1967) named the negative views of the self, the world, and the future as the negative triad. Support for Beck's theories comes from numerous studies showing that depressed people think more negatively and, in general, more hopelessly than non-depressed individuals about themselves, the future and the world. However, research into a causal relationship has proved inconclusive (Davison & Neale, 1994) resulting in the conclusion that depression and negative thinking are correlated.

Abramson, Metalsky, and Alloy (1989) proposed that some forms of depression are regarded to be caused by a state of hopelessness, an expectation that desirable outcomes will not occur or that undesirable outcomes will occur and that the person has no responses available to affect the situation. Their proposition fits the experiences of victims who report hopelessness to be a consequence of bullying (O'Moore, 2000b).

In a nation-wide survey investigating work place bullying within the Irish labour force approximately 5% of all respondents who had been bullied indicated that they had had thoughts of suicide (O'Moore, Lynch, Nic Daeid & Cahill, 2002). The survey (O'Moore, 2000b) also showed that other mental and physical health problems, such as depression, anxiety, anger and a sense of isolation (all well known potential precursor

73

symptoms of suicide ideation) were significantly greater for victims of bullying. This suggests that workplace bullying has the potential to become a serious contributor to stress, depression and potential suicidal thoughts within the working population, and for this reason the problem of workplace bullying should be addressed.

1. 5. 5. 3 Anxiety.

Recipients of bullying behaviour have been found to suffer from anxiety which they claim to be a direct result of such behaviours (Bjorkqvist et al, 1994; O'Moore, 2000b; O'Moore et al, 1998; Neidl, 1996; Rayner et al, 2002; Vartia, 1996; Zapf et al, 1996). The concept of anxiety is one of the most often used and loosely defined concepts in psychology and all of the major theories confront it in some way, leading to several models and explanations for the cause of anxiety.

A definition suggested by Horney (1937, cited in Davison & Neale, 1994) summarised basic anxiety as a feeling of being small, insignificant, helpless, deserted, endangered, and in a world that is out to abuse, cheat, attack, humiliate, betray and envy. She concluded that anxiety itself could be defined and measured but how it is perceived and adopted by the individual must affect its influence. She specified that generalised anxiety occurs when a person feels unable to cope with many everyday situations and consequently feels apprehensive much of the time. It is this feeling of apprehension that identifies the presence of anxiety. Kelly (1955, cited in Davison & Neale, 1994), who defined traditional concepts in psychology according to his personal construct theory, defined anxiety as the recognition that the events with which one is confronted lie outside the range of convenience of one's construct system.

May (1967) studied the theories of anxiety proposed by Kierkegaard and Freud and saw that anxiety could be normal or neurotic. He maintained that normal anxiety, which is in proportion to the threat and does not involve any avoidance behaviour, is part of the growth process, and felt that attempts should not be made to eliminate it from a person's experience. It is in the conscious and is diminished or eliminated if the anxiety-provoking situation is changed. He also saw this anxiety as a signal of danger and necessary to promote action when real danger is involved. May's (1967) explanation of neurotic anxiety is similar to that of Freud who proposed that neurotic anxiety is a

reaction that is disproportionate to the threat, involves repression and other forms of intra-psychic conflict. It is managed by various evasive activities, which give a sense of abandonment; the feeling that life's demands will be overwhelming and create a feeling of helplessness.

More recent research into the concept of anxiety has been carried out by Spielberger and Rickman (1991) who defined anxiety as an unpleasant emotional state or reaction that can be distinguished from other states, such as anger or grief, by a unique combination of experiential qualities and psychological changes. They explained that an anxiety state consists of feelings of tension, apprehension, nervousness, and worry, and activation of the autonomic nervous system. The physiological manifestations generally include increased blood pressure, rapid heart rate, sweating, dryness of the mouth, nausea, vertigo, irregularities in breathing, and muscular/skeletal disturbances.

They accept that the meaning of anxiety varies from culture to culture but generally increased anxiety is normal in a situation where immediate danger might result in physical harm. Spielberger, Ritterband, Sydeman, Reheiser, and Unger (1995) claimed that relatively independent state and trait anxiety factors have consistently emerged from research. They maintained that although state and trait anxiety are usually positively correlated in individuals, they are logically quite different constructs. State anxiety refers to an unpleasant emotional state or condition which consists of consciously perceived feelings of tension, apprehension, nervousness, and worry. These emotional states vary in intensity and fluctuate over time as a function of perceived physical or psychological danger. Trait anxiety is conceptualised in terms of relatively stable individual differences in anxiety proneness. People with high trait anxiety tend to perceive a wider range of situations as dangerous or threatening and respond to perceived threats with more frequent and more intense elevations in state anxiety. Theories that purport to explain anxiety follow those suggested for depression: the psychoanalytic model; theories focused on learning, specifically on learning ineffective habits where anxiety is seen as being caused more by specific external events than by internal conflicts; cognitive theory, where a cognitive step, referred to by as an irrational belief will lead to feelings of anxiety. Trait theories focus on specific attributes particular to the individual, or as blends of many different characteristics that people have to a greater or lesser extent, with

anxiety having a different effect on an individual depending on their personality type (Rice, 1992). Rice (1992) maintained that trait anxiety tends to be relatively stable across time and place and that people who are high in trait anxiety have a much greater tendency to be anxious whatever the situation and relatively more anxious all the time compared to those low in trait anxiety.

DSM-IV (1994) describes General Anxiety Disorder as excessive anxiety and worry (apprehensive expectation), occurring more days than not for at least six months, and concerned with a number of events or activities (such as work or school performance). The person has difficulty controlling the worry and the anxiety which are associated with three (or more) of the following symptoms.

- Restlessness or feeling keyed up or on edge,
- Being easily fatigued,
- Difficulty concentrating or mind going blank,
- Irritability,
- Muscle tension,
- Sleep disturbance (difficulty falling or staying asleep, or restless unsatisfied sleep.

The effects of anxiety vary from person to person and in different situations in the same individual. Extreme neurotic anxiety can be evident in phobias, obsessive compulsive behaviour, panic attacks and post traumatic stress disorder. Although a level of anxiety is normally present in all individuals, the level caused by being a victim of workplace bullying has been shown to be severe (Bjorkqvist et al, 1994; O'Moore, 2000b; O'Moore et al, 1998; Neidl, 1996; Rayner et al, 2002; Vartia, 1996; Zapf et al, 1996).

1. 5. 5. 4 Anger

Adams and Crawford (1992) commented that in a bullying situation anger is literally passed around. The anger in the aggressor is passed on to the victim but, due to the imbalance of power in the relationship, the victim's anger has to be retained. Anger is experienced as an unpleasant reaction, which can accompany a situation where a person feels threatened (Reber, 1995). Although anger and aggressive behaviour are normally seen as a motivation for bullying behaviour towards another (Randall 1997a), anger and

irritability can result within the recipient of bullying behaviour (Bjorkqvist et al, 1994; O'Moore, 2000b; O'Moore et al, 2002; Niedl, 1996).

Potter-Effron (1998) described the process of anger as it progressed through the emotional, cognitive, behavioural, and moral levels. As intensity of anger increases, the possibility for reasonable discussion and good judgement decrease. People become more impulsive and explosive and can become bitter and hostile. When the recipient of bullying behaviours can no longer process complex information or their own behaviour becomes inappropriate and their aggressor can feel justified in their behaviour.

Spielberger, Reheiser, and Sydeman (1995) discussed psychological studies of aggressive behaviour including the frustration-aggression hypothesis (Dollard et al, 1939). They commented that proponents of this theory proposed that frustration provoked and stimulated an internal drive that motivated aggressive behaviour. They differentiated between aggression, anger, and hostility and defined anger as an emotional state that varies in intensity from mild irritation or annoyance to intense fury and rage with both physiological and cognitive aspects.

Spielberger et al (1995) maintained that anger has a trait and a state dimension. They defined state anger as a psycho-biological state or condition consisting of subjective feelings that vary in intensity with concomitant activation or arousal of the autonomic nervous system and purported that state anger would fluctuate over time as a function of frustration, perceived affronts, injustice, or being verbally or physically attacked. Trait anger was defined in terms of how often angry feelings were experienced over time. They assumed that persons high in trait anger would perceive a wider range of situations as anger provoking than persons low in trait anger and that high anger individuals would be more likely to experience more frequent and intense elevations in state anger when they were annoyed of frustrated.

Anger can have a severe negative effect on individuals. Rice (1992) reported that an increase in the hormone norepinephrine, present in greater amounts when anger occurs, causes people to become more vulnerable to stress because they cannot deal effectively with daily problems. This was confirmed by O'Connor and Sheehy (2000) who reported that hostility, anger and conflict frequently characterise the interpersonal

77

relationships of para-suicides suggesting a link between anger and suicide ideation and intent.

1. 5. 5. 5 Post Traumatic Stress Disorder

Although Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PSTD) is normally associated with war veterans the same effects of trauma have been documented for rape victims (Foa, Feske, Murdock, Kozak & McCarthy, 1991) and bullying (Leymann & Gustafsson, 1996; Bjorkqvist et al, 1994; Einarsen, 1999). Rayner et al (2002) commented that PTSD was seen to be linked exclusively to single extreme traumatic events but, from the mid 1990's, researchers in Scandinavia noted a similarity in the symptoms of those who had been severely bullied and people who had been diagnosed with PTSD. Based on research in Sweden, Leymann (1996) concluded that the majority of recipients of bullying behaviours in his study could be diagnosed as suffering from PTSD. A factor analysis of symptom statistics collected through answers from a study representative of the entire Swedish workforce showed PTSD as the plausible diagnosis (Leymann, & Gustafsson, 1996). In their study, Leymann and Gustafsson (1996) found that 64 patients subjected to mobbing at their workplaces were diagnosed with the co-operation of a rehabilitation clinic specialising in the treatment of chronic PTSD. The statistical analysis of these 64 diagnoses shows a severe degree of PTSD, with mental effects fully comparable with PTSD from war or prison camp experiences. Using the Impact of Event Scale (Horowitz, Wilner & Alvarez, 1979), they found median scores on both the intrusive thought and avoidance scales to be high. A study carried out in Finland by Bjorkqvist et al (1994) revealed that symptoms of PTSD were evident in people they interviewed who claimed to have been recipients of bullying behaviour. Einarsen and Matthiesen (1999) compared levels of PTSD symptoms between victims of disasters and refugees from war zones, and a group of long-term sufferers of workplace bullying. They concluded that three quarters of victims of severe bullying qualified for PTSD with higher levels of scores.

Post Traumatic Stress Disorder was introduced as a diagnosis in DSM-III and reflects an extreme response to a severe stressor including increased anxiety, avoidance of stimuli associated with the trauma, and a numbing of emotional responses. The criteria for PTSD, laid down by the American Psychological Association (DSM-IV, 1994),

include exposure to a traumatic event where there is a threat to death, serious injury or a threat to the physical integrity of self or others and the person's response involved intense fear, helplessness or horror. The traumatic event is persistently re-experienced in one or more of the following ways: -

- Recurrent and intrusive distressing recollections of the event, including images, thoughts, or perceptions,
- Recurrent distressing dreams of the event,
- Acting or feeling as if the traumatic event were recurring (includes a sense of reliving the experience, illusions, hallucinations, and dissociative flashback episodes, including those that occur on awakening or when intoxicated),
- Intense psychological distress and/or physiological reactivity at exposure to internal or external cues that symbolise or resemble an aspect of the traumatic event,

Persistent avoidance of stimuli associated with the trauma and numbing of general responsiveness, as indicated by three or more of the following: -

- Efforts to avoid thoughts, feelings, or conversations associated with the trauma,
- Efforts to avoid activities, places, or people that arouse recollections of the trauma,
- Inability to recall an important aspect of the trauma,
- Marked diminished interest or participation in significant activities,
- Feeling of detachment or estrangement from others,
- Restricted range of affect (e.g. unable to have loving feelings),
- Sense of foreshortened future.

Persistent symptoms of increased arousal, as indicated by two or more of the following: -

- Difficulty falling or staying asleep,
- Irritability or outbursts of anger,
- Difficulty concentrating,
- Hypervigilance,
- Exaggerated startled response.

Duration of the disturbance should be more than one month and cause clinically significant distress or impairment in social, occupational, or other important areas of functioning.

As with other disorders in the DSM-IV (1994), Post Traumatic Stress Disorder is defined by a cluster of symptoms, but, unlike other psychological disorders, it also includes its presumed aetiology, namely, a traumatic event that is physical in nature, which the person has directly experienced or witnessed. DSM-IV (1994) differentiates between post traumatic stress disorder and acute stress disorder, which is normal following exposure to a traumatic event, in that recovery from this condition occurs after a few days or weeks. The likelihood of PTSD increases with the severity of the event (Foy, Sipprelle, Rueger & Carroll, 1987) and risk factors for PTSD have been identified which include being female, early separation from parents, family history of a disorder namely, panic disorder, obsessive compulsive disorder, and depression (Breslau, 1998). However Foy, Sipprelle, Rueger & Carroll (1984) concluded that well-adjusted people can develop PTSD.

Many people who encounter traumatic life events do not necessarily develop PTSD, with psychological and biological theories proposed to account for its occurrence in some people but not others. A psychodynamic theory proposed by Horowitz (1986,1990) posits that the traumatic event is repeated constantly in the person's conscious mind but causes such distress that it is either consciously suppressed or repressed. The person is believed to engage in an internal struggle to integrate the trauma into their existing beliefs about themselves and the world in order to make sense of their experience. A biological theory holds that the trauma damages the noradrenergic system, raising levels of norepinephrine and thereby making the person startle and express emotion more readily than normal (Krystal, Kosten, Southwick, Mason, Perry & Giller, 1987). Learning theorists maintain that the disorder arises from classical conditioning where avoidances are built up which are reinforced by the reduction of fear that comes from not being in the presence of reminders of the traumatic event (Foy, Resnick, Carroll & Osato, 1990).

Scott and Stradling (1994) suggested that account should be taken of the difference between trauma caused by an acute, physical event and enduring psychological

stressors. They identified the effects of persistent work-related stress to be similar to those experienced by people who were diagnosed as suffering from PTSD. The term Prolonged Duress Stress Disorder (PDSD) was adopted, which allows the distinction to be made between the long term experience of workplace bullying and a single traumatic life-threatening experience. However, Einarsen (1999) argued that the experience of being bullied can be seen as life threatening by the recipient of bullying behaviours as the individual is likely to loose their job, financial security, and identity with regard to their role as a worker. Bullying can also lead to suicidal ideation and intent.

Doherty (2003) considered that no single diagnosis adequately summed up the total symptom profile of participants in her study who claimed to have been bullied at work, as well as PTSD. This was despite the fact that there had been no dimension of physical threat.

1. 5. 5. 6 Effects of low self-esteem

Effects of low self-esteem can be severe causing emotional discomfort with links to more serious psychological and psychiatric complaints including depression, high anxiety, and a feeling of worthlessness. It can result in somatic symptoms, insomnia, and social dysfunction. Low self-esteem can also lead to a feeling of discomfort caused by information that is discrepant from a person's conception of themselves, as a reasonable and sensible person. Festinger (1957) identified this as cognitive dissonance. Aronson et al (1997) defined cognitive dissonance as a drive or feeling of discomfort, originally defined as being caused by holding two or more inconsistent cognitions and subsequently defined as being caused by performing an action that is discrepant from one's customary, typically positive self-conception. Baumeister, Heatherton and Tice (1993) commented that the reason people view the world the way they do can often be traced to an underlying need to maintain high self esteem. It is arguable, therefore, that in order to make sense of their world, a person with low self esteem would be negatively affected if they were treated in what they saw to be an unfair manner.

The nationwide study of bullying behaviour of school children in Ireland (O'Moore, 1995; O'Moore & Hilary, 1991; O'Moore & Kirkham, 2001) showed that the self-esteem of children who reported that they had been bullied was significantly lower

than those who reported that they had never been bullied. Findings showed that the greater the frequency of bullying, the greater were the feelings of inadequacy. This confirmed results found by Olweus (1993). Researchers into workplace bullying (Einarsen et al, 1994; Neidl, 1996; O'Moore, 2000b; O'Moore et al, 1998; Vartia, 1996; Zapf et al, 1996) have identified loss of self-esteem and self-confidence to be a result of bullying behaviour.

Egan and Perry (1998) concluded that low self-esteem was a factor in predicting subsequent increases in victimisation. However, their measure of self-esteem was self-perceived social confidence and they concluded that global self-esteem is not a precursor. They showed that self-regard is related to peer victimisation as both cause and effect. It could be argued that although research findings indicate that low self-esteem has been associated with both recipients and perpetrators of bullying behaviours, the cause and effect relationship has not been established.

1. 6 Coping Strategies

1. 6. 1 Introduction

The emotions and physiological arousal created by stressful situations are highly uncomfortable, and it is this discomfort that motivates the individual to attempt to alleviate their distress. Coping, therefore, is the process by which a person attempts to manage stressful events. It has been described as a major factor in the relationship between stressful events and outcomes such as depression, psychological symptoms and somatic illness (Folkman et al, 1986). The term coping describes the range of responses for dealing with everyday hassles and stressors as well as the demands and threats of negative experiences (Weinmann, Wright & Johnston, 1995). It refers to both thought processes and actions.

Coping has been classified into the two broad categories of approach and avoidance strategies. Within these categories problem-focused coping (strategies used to change the demands) and/or emotion-focused coping (managing the associated negative emotions) are employed. Any of these strategies can be effective or otherwise.

Dewe (1991) maintained that the appraisal process is crucial to any understanding of coping. He concludes that as a result of an ongoing transaction with their environment, individuals are confronted with demands that impinge on their cognitive processes and challenge their ability to cope or adapt. The key to the process of cognitive appraisal is that something must be at stake for a situation to give rise to stress and there must be an awareness that there is some deviation from normal functioning. Such an appraisal is associated with a desire for resolution: it provides the motivation and direction for coping. Coping therefore is initiated in response to primary and secondary appraisal (Dewe, Cox, & Ferguson, 1993).

1. 6. 2 Defence Mechanisms

Suls, David and Harvey (1996) reported that Freud (1937) saw coping mechanisms as defences that were unconscious means of dealing with negative emotions brought on by internal sexual and aggressive conflicts and, together with other psychodynamically oriented investigators, Freud produced hierarchies of defence mechanisms invoked by people to deal with these conflicts. They continued to explain that later researchers such as Haan (1977, cited in Suls et al, 1996)) included external threats as additional sources of conflict that would instigate the use of defence mechanisms. In Freud's psychoanalytic theory, the strategies were used to avoid or reduce anxiety and involved an element of self-deception. The mechanisms consist of adjustments made unconsciously, either through action or the avoidance of action, to keep from recognising personal motives that might threaten self-esteem or heighten anxiety. These defence mechanisms purportedly altered the person's perceptions of stressful events in order to reduce distress and minimise the changes in the internal and external environments (Vaillant, 1994, cited in Suls et al, 1996). However more recent researchers concluded that this theory did not sufficiently explain coping behaviour and there was general discontent with the psychodynamic perspective of coping which helped to initiate a new period of theory and research.

Cutler, Randy & Bruce (1996) attempted to differentiate between defence mechanisms and coping strategies and suggested that the term coping has been used to refer to both the generic process of responding to adversity and to specific strategies or

mechanisms used in the service of that process. They maintained that coping mechanisms involve a conscious, purposeful effort and are used with the intent of managing or solving a problem situation, whereas defence mechanisms, which also function to diminish negative affect, are used without conscious intentionality. However, Cramer (1998) maintains that there tends to be confusion where some commonly considered coping strategies such as denial are also considered to be defence mechanisms and concluded that coping mechanisms are commonly thought of as reactions to situations, while defences are generally conceived of as dispositions that are part of the individual's enduring personality.

Defence mechanisms, therefore, are conceived of as relatively stable, enduring characteristics of individuals. In contrast, coping mechanisms are generally conceived of as being situationally dependent, with a number of researchers for example, Lazarus and Folkman (1984), taking the position that personality dispositions are unimportant in determining coping reactions. Exceptions to this position also have occurred, for example, Carver, Scheier, &Weintraub (1989) and Suls et al (1996) maintained that personality is crucial in the understanding of coping. Nevertheless, the general thrust of coping research paradigms has been to focus on the effect of situations in determining coping strategies.

1. 6. 3 Definitions of coping

In general coping is seen to be a cognitive and behavioural effort (Begley, 1998; Cox & Ferguson, 1991; Dewe et al, 1993; Lazarus & Folkman, 1984; Folkman et al, 1986; Stone & Neale, 1984) to deal with or manage stress in an attempt to control the situation.

Lazarus and Folkman (1984) examined definitions of coping (Beehr and Bhagat, 1985; 1984; Schuler, 1985) and revealed some convergence around the notion that coping is part of a person-environment transaction that occurs when an individual appraises a situation as stressful where stressful situations can take the form of harm, threat or challenge. The majority of definitions do not further define 'stressful' but outline stress in terms of targets towards which coping is directed. In most cases the targets are the stressful situation in problem-focused coping, or the attendant negative emotions in

emotion-focused coping (Aldwin, Sutton & Lachman, 1996). Many definitions do not necessarily take into account the fact that coping strategies could be dysfunctional nor do they differentiate between coping strategies and defence mechanisms.

A definition offered by Folkman et al (1986) determined that coping is constantly changing cognitive and behavioural efforts to manage the internal and external demands of transactions that tax or exceed a person's resources. This definition allows three distinctions important to research on job stress: coping behaviours or processes are a more appropriate focus than stable coping styles, coping is separate from coping effectiveness, and coping applies to challenge as well as harm and threat situations (Latack & Havlovic, 1992). Key features of this definition are that it is process-oriented, it identifies how the person thinks, how they act, and how this changes the encounter. Coping is seen as contextual in that it is influenced by the person's appraisal of the demands and resources for managing them. Finally there are no a priori assumptions about what constitutes good and bad coping (Folkman et al, 1986). This definition was adopted by Begley (1998) who concluded that coping capacity comes from matching the appropriate coping strategies to the situation at hand.

Stone and Neale (1984) defined coping as those behaviours and thoughts which are consciously used by an individual to handle or control the effects of anticipating or experiencing a stressful situation. This definition excludes psychodynamic processes of which the person is unaware (e.g. complete denial) as well as simple reactions to situations that are not meant to handle the stressful situation or its effects. It also introduces the notion of control which Folkman (1984) purported can affect the adaptational outcome of stressful encounters.

Dewe et al (1993) acknowledged that an encounter has to be recognised as stressful when they defined coping as the cognitions and behaviours adopted by the individual following the recognition of a stressful encounter, that are in some way designed to deal with that encounter or its consequences.

The definition favoured for the present study is that proposed by Cox and Ferguson (1991) as this definition contends that coping deals with the emotional correlates of a stressful transaction and creates a sense of control. The definition also encompasses problem solving i.e. directly confronting or dealing with the source of

stress, reappraisal i.e. re-thinking the meaning of the transaction, and avoidance i.e. avoiding or being distracted from the problem. They defined coping as the cognitions and behaviours which, following a stressful transaction and defined independently of outcome, have the primary function, consciously decided, of dealing with the emotion caused by the transaction and developing a sense of personal control. This is achieved by those cognitions and behaviours combining into strategies which perform a mixture of functions: problem solving, reappraisal and avoidance. Any particular option or strategy may perform one or a number of these functions in the space of dealing with one stressful transaction.

1. 6. 4 Emotional and problem focused coping

Folkman and Lazarus (1980) proposed that coping can be divided into emotion and problem focused coping. They defined emotion-focused coping as efforts aimed at regulating the emotions and referred to problem-focusing coping as efforts aimed at altering the person-environment transaction.

Emotion-focused coping takes a cognitive form as in trying not to think about the situation, attempting to see the positive side of the situation by affecting change in a person's perception of it, or using the stressful situation as an opportunity to learn and develop new skills (Latack & Havlovic, 1992). Problem-focused coping involves behaviours such as avoiding the situation or taking action to deal with it (Carver et al, 1989). However, problem focused coping can also be cognitive. For example, taking extra care to plan and organise and attempting to find out more about the situation which require cognitive effort (Billings & Moos, 1984).

Folkman and Lazarus (1980) purported that although most stressors elicit both types of coping, problem-focused coping tends to predominate when people feel that something constructive can be done, whereas emotion-focused coping tends to predominate when people feel that the stressor is something to be endured.

O'Connor and O'Connor (2002) concluded that defining coping in terms of problem and emotion focused coping was too simplistic and determined two further factors: cognitive reconstruction and avoidance coping. Billings and Moos (1984) also suggested that a distinction could be made between proactive/control-oriented methods

and escapist/avoidance methods of coping. They explained that proactive and control strategies show a "take-charge" approach, for example, making a plan of action or thinking positively about an individual's capabilities. Escape and avoidance strategies consist of staying clear of the person or situation or trying not to get concerned about it.

1. 6. 5 Coping behaviours

More recent research suggested that these broad categories of coping strategies were insufficient but there is still no agreement as to whether it is more useful to focus on broad tendencies that describe coping behaviours or to define a wide range of specific coping strategies (Weinman et al, 1995). Coping measures may be situation specific, or reflect a general disposition in a person to cope in a particular manner across different situations.

Carver et al (1989) concluded that the distinctions between problem-focused, emotion-focused, and avoidance/approach coping, although useful, had been shown to be too simple. They commented that ambiguity could exist when a single item combines conceptually distinct qualities. For example, some emotion-focused responses involve individual strategies, such as denial, seeking social support, and positive reinterpretation, each of which could have different implications for a person's success in coping. Similarly problem focused coping can involve several distinct activities such as planning, seeking assistance, and screen out other activities.

In the development of the Ways of Coping Questionnaire (Folkman & Lazarus, 1980) factor analysis of items indicated that coping responses could be grouped into eight different coping strategies within the problem-emotion focused division and the approach-avoidance division. The first of these strategies is confrontation which Folkman and Lazarus (1980) saw as aggressive actions to respond to the situation. Distancing (efforts to remove themselves from the situation), seeking social support (attempts to obtain information or emotional comfort), and planful problem-solving (deliberate efforts to act on the stressful situation) were seen as problem focused strategies. Self-control (attempts to actively regulate the expression of feeling), positive reappraisal (efforts to find positive meaning in the experience), accepting responsibility (a reappraisal in which the person's role is acknowledged), and escape avoidance (efforts

87

to replace the negative experience of the event by more positive experiences) were seen as emotion focused strategies.

Carver et al (1989) also concluded that it was necessary to identify specific strategies. During the development of a multidimensional coping inventory (COPE) to assess the different ways in which people respond to stress, they identified thirteen individual items. These measure conceptually distinct aspects of problem focused coping (active coping, planning, suppression of competing activities, restraint coping, seeking of instrumental social support); five scales measure aspects of what might be viewed as emotional focused coping (seeking of emotional support, positive reinterpretation, acceptance, denial, turning to religion); and three scales measure coping responses that arguably are less useful (focus on and venting of emotions, behavioural disengagement, mental disengagement).

According to Carver et al (1989) active coping consists of taking action, and exerting efforts, to remove or circumvent the stressor. They described planning as thinking about how to confront the stressor and planning active coping efforts. Seeking instrumental social support is seeking assistance, information, or advice about what actions to take where seeking emotional social support is getting sympathy or emotional support. Suppression of competing activities consists of suppressing attention to other activities in order to concentrate more completely on dealing with the stressor, and turning to religion is an increased engagement in religious activities. Positive reinterpretation and growth is making the best of the situation by growing or viewing it in a more favourable light. Restraint coping is coping passively by holding back coping attempts until they can be used. Acceptance, they described as accepting the fact that the stressful event has occurred and is real. Focus on and venting of emotions is an increased awareness of emotional distress and a tendency to discharge those feelings. Denial is an attempt to reject the reality of the stressful event, whereas mental disengagement is the psychological disengagement from the goal with which the stressor is interfering, through day-dreaming, sleep, or self-distraction. Finally, behavioural disengagement is giving up, or withdrawing from, the attempt to attain the goal with which the stressor is interfering.

These finer distinctions allow a clearer assessment to be made when evaluating strategies used by individuals when coping with stressful situations.

1. 6. 6 Effectiveness of coping

Weinman et al (1995) commented that there is a tendency to discuss coping in evaluative terms, that is, successful or unsuccessful coping but that the problem with the evaluative view of coping is that it assumes a causal link between coping and physical or psychological health. A coping response may be the cause or consequence of a psychological or physical state.

The literature on the effectiveness of coping seems as a whole to be more informative about coping that interferes with good outcomes than about coping that facilitates good outcomes with more findings of positive associations between avoidance coping and distress (Suls et al 1996). One well-replicated effect in the empirical literature is that the use of emotion-focused coping strategies is associated with undesirable outcomes, e.g. psychological distress (Endler & Parker, 1990, cited in Suls, 1996). However, McCrae and Costa (1986) concluded that mechanisms that were deemed more effective by one criterion in one situation were also rated more effective by the same criterion in the others. They also purported that different mechanisms may be more or less effective for specific groups and problems. Whether a strategy is successful frequently depends on the context of the situation. For instance, if the situation cannot be changed, then an emotion-focused strategy may be more appropriate although Carver et al (1989) concluded that focusing on negative emotions can impede adjustment.

Begley (1998) concluded that there could be a discrepancy between the coping strategies that are most likely to be chosen in response to a particular stressor and the ones that are most likely to be effective. There could be a cost of coping in that the use of personal resources to address the stressor may alleviate distress from it, but it may lessen the resources available to deal with other aspects of a person's life. An effective coping strategy may be identified, but owing either to lack of means, skill or motivation, it may not be executed effectively (Begley, 1998).

The mediating effects of coping strategies used during stressful situations was researched by Aldwin et al, (1996). They found that approximately 90% of those examined, in three separate studies, reported long-term effects from recent stressful experiences, equally split between negative, positive, and mixed effects. These long term effects did not vary by type of situation; rather available sources and coping strategies

were more important covariates. The effects of prior experiences in coping with a recent problem was also included in their research. There were 81.9% of the respondents who reported drawing on prior experiences and 22.7% drew upon similar stressful episodes; the rest drew upon problems from work, military experiences, illness deaths, etc.

Perlin and Schooler (1979) found that individual coping appears to be least effective when dealing with the more impersonal problems of work received some support with reports that occupational problems may not be easily resolved by individual efforts alone. A further finding by Shinn, Rosario, Morch, & Chestnut, 1984 suggested that individual responses can have little effect on problems. In situations such as job loss, individuals may not be willing to use problem-focused coping strategies because they add to the stress (Dewe et al, 1993).

According to Billings and Moos (1984) the cumulative evidence indicates that the avoidance types of coping typically work against people rather than to their advantage. They examined coping strategies used by 424 men and women entering treatment for depression and found that the use of active and problem-focused coping responses were associated with less depression. The use of responses that serve to avoid actively confronting a problem or to directly reduce tension have been associated with more depression (Billings & Moos, 1984; Pearlin & Schooler, 1978). Carver and Scheier (1994) also concluded that avoidance coping strategies are ineffective.

Results from research into the role of perfectionism and coping in predicting hopelessness and psychological distress among 213 undergraduate students from two British universities indicated that the relationships are moderated through coping styles (O'Connor & O'Connor, 2002). The maladaptive effect of perfectionism was exacerbated by a maladaptive coping style. Social perfectionism interacted significantly with avoidance coping to predict changes in general psychological distress measured in terms of anxiety, depression, insomnia, and somatic symptoms. Findings suggested that high scores in cognitive reconstruction, considered by O'Connor and O'Connor (2002) to be effective, were associated with reduced hopelessness and better psychological well-being. In contrast, their findings indicated that avoidance coping, considered by them to be maladaptive since it involved denial, behavioural disengagement and turning to alcohol in times of stress, correlated positively with hopelessness and psychological distress. They

found no correlation between problem-focused or emotion-focused and psychological well-being.

Although definitions of social support vary, most measures include practical support such as financial, and intangible support such as encouragement and guidance. Social support and social resources appear to be significant buffers for stressful life events and moderators of psychological and physical well-being, (Sarason & Sarason, 1985b, cited in Kaplan & Saccuzzo, 1993). Billings and Moos (1984) concluded that seeking emotional social support would seem to be functional when an individual who feels insecure resulting from a stressful experience is reassured by obtaining this sort of support. They argued that this strategy could foster a return to problem-focused coping, but commented that sources of sympathy may be used more as outlets for the ventilation of feelings and using social support in this way may not always be very adaptive. Billings, Cronkite, and Moos (1983) demonstrated that reduced social support lessens a person's ability to handle negative life events. Einarsen (2000) suggested, based on his findings from a study with Norwegian labour-union members, that victims of bullying high on social support at work, are probably less vulnerable when faced with aggression.

The use of denial is somewhat controversial. Carver et al (1989) suggested that denial can be useful by minimising distress and thereby facilitating coping. Nevertheless, they argued that denial may create additional problems unless the stressor can be profitably ignored. Denying the reality of the event may result in difficulties arising during delayed coping behaviours. Denial, therefore, can be useful at early stages of a stressful transaction although it may impede coping later on. This is particularly valid in many health related situations (Weinman et al, 1995).

Weinman et al (1995) commented on the effectiveness of the coping strategies measured by COPE (Carver et al, 1989). They maintained that active coping, planning, seeking instrumental social support, positive reinterpretation and growth, and acceptance are hypothesised to be adaptive in situations where active coping is associated with positive outcomes. With seeking emotional social support, suppression of competing activities, and restraint coping there is a less obvious link with active coping but they should also be adaptive. In contrast, focus on and venting of emotions, denial, and mental and behavioural disengagement describe responses which are maladaptive in

situations where active coping is called for. However, Weinman et al (1995) maintain that they are not intrinsically maladaptive since there could be health related situations where they are valuable.

In general, therefore, the findings on the effectiveness of coping are diverse, with researchers typically suggesting, for example, that at best the effects of coping may be neutral and, perhaps, at worst that to lower stress individuals should avoid maladaptive coping behaviours. There is little unequivocal evidence that particular personal traits or coping styles consistently lead to the attenuation of the relationship between stress and well-being (Edwards, 1988).

1. 6. 7 Coping and Personality

Dispositional theories of coping propose that there are enduring stable personality differences within the individual (Rice, 1992) and personal characteristics may provide protection against the effects of stressful situations. By observing people who handle stress well Kobasa, Maddi, and Kahn (1982) identified specific personality constructs, which they maintained were present in stress-resistant or "hardy" individuals. They reported that the presence of three characteristics (commitment, challenge, and control) affected the stress level of subjects in a longitudinal study of business executives. Einarsen (2000) commented that personality traits may be positively related to a person's health by causing them to respond to a difficult situation in an optimistic, flexible, and enduring manner, and that victims of bullying, with a positive self image, may cope better than others when faced with interpersonal problems. Individual differences are implicit in the selection of coping options available, in the person's decision on combining options into strategies, in the functions that these strategies are designed to fulfil, and in the way they are used in particular person-environment transactions.

Rice's (1992) comment that personality traits in individuals can affect their reaction to stressors and the subsequent coping methods used by them was confirmed by Terry (1994) who purported that there was considerable evidence that stable factors in personality influence situational coping responses. His longitudinal study of students provided consistent support for the proposal that situational variables (situation type and appraisals) would influence the type of coping used to manage the demands of a

particular encounter. There was, however, some evidence suggesting that the effects of the resources and situation type on coping were mediated by situation appraisals. Overall, according to Terry (1994), the evidence suggested that how people cope in response to a new event appears to be, in part, a function of how they coped in the past. In the trait-oriented approach, therefore, it is assumed that coping is primarily a personality construct, and variations in the stressful situation are of little importance.

In contrast research carried out by Folkman et al (1986) is characterised by an interest in the actual coping processes that people use to manage the demands of stressful events, as distinct from trait-oriented research. They concluded that the context is critical in the transactional perspective because coping is assessed as a response to the psychological and environmental demands of specific stressful encounters. Coyne and Gottlieb (1996) agreed with Folkman et al (1986) and questioned the influence of the individual's personality when using a transactional perspective. Although they suggested that the personality traits are taken into account, they concluded that this is of limited value. To overcome this limitation they recommended that personality should be construed in terms of what situations afford for particular individuals and how they construct and respond to these situations.

According to Suls and David (1996) situations vary in the level of stress expected and personality differences may not be particularly helpful in understanding coping responses. In strong problem situations responses may be relatively uniform, but for weaker situations, personality should become increasingly important in determining which strategies are enacted.

Carver et al (1989) commented that the notion that stable coping styles, in an individual, exists is controversial and Folkman and Lazarus (1980) emphasised that coping should be thought of as a dynamic process that changes in nature from stage to stage during a stressful situation. This was confirmed by the results obtained by Niedl (1996) and Zapf and Gross (2001) who both illustrated, in separate studies, that individuals use different strategies as they proceed through the different stages in attempting to deal with their problems at work due to bullying behaviours.

Coyne and Lazarus (1980) emphasised the role played by various coping responses per se, pointing out that coping reactions can change from moment to moment

across the stages of stressful transaction. Given this variability in people's reactions, they purported that it may not be profitable to try to predict situational responses from the person's typical style of coping. There is some merit in the argument that people develop habitual ways of dealing with stress and that these habits or coping styles can influence their reactions in new situations. However, Carver and Scheier (1994) argued that a person who reports a tendency to use active coping when under stress displays active coping at each phase of the transaction, whether relevant or not. They maintained that it is difficult to make a clear distinction between dispositional and situational coping as a dispositional coping style might influence situational coping at one particular phase of a transaction but not at others.

Suls et al (1996) summarised the debate by claiming that while a great deal of evidence has emerged over the past decade or so linking personality and coping, a fundamental characteristic of the transactional perspective is that it wrongfully, in their opinion, downplays the role of dispositions in stress management.

1. 6. 8 Coping strategies and workplace bullying

Active coping behaviours used by recipients of bullying behaviours were identified resulting from surveys carried out by Rayner (1997) and O'Moore (2000b). Other strategies have been identified in research into workplace bullying specifically carried out to highlight the use of such strategies (Hogh & Dofradottir, 2001; Neidl, 1996; Zapf & Gross, 2001).

In the nationwide survey carried out in Ireland by O'Moore (2000b) 23.6% of respondents, who claimed to have been bullied in the previous twelve months, were considering using the avoidance strategy of leaving their present employment as a result of bullying. Over 60% of these respondents reported that they had taken an active approach and confronted the bully. Results showed that this action was the most successful in terms of decreasing the negative behaviours and stopping it altogether. The questionnaire used in this survey offered other options which included seeking help from management, the union, and other agencies.

Niedl (1996) showed that health professionals in Austria and Germany did not cope with bullying by using simple flight or fight reactions. The qualitative data from the

94

German sample were analysed using the EVLN-model (Withey & Cooper, 1989) which suggests four specific coping actions when people are unhappy at work. These are: reduction of commitment, constructive coping measured by voice and loyalty, and exit. Niedl (1996) reported that his exploratory results indicated that individuals showed a complex sequence of reactions influenced by different factors and did not cope using a single strategy.

The results of a Danish study carried out by Hogh and Dofradottir (2001) to ascertain the psychosocial work environment, health and well-being, indicated that people who are subjected to bullying behaviours do not use problem solving as a coping strategy as frequently as those who are not subjected to such behaviours. However, they found that respondents somewhat exposed to negative acts used humour as a coping strategy more often that bullied respondents and concluded that humour may have been used to diffuse an intense situation. They found that there was no linear association between 3 groups of respondents consisting of those not exposed, those somewhat exposed, and those very exposed to bullying behaviours.

Rayner (1997) in her survey of part time students at Staffordshire University found that 27% of those who were bullied left their jobs. Findings also showed that fewer respondents who had been subjected to bullying tended to seek support from colleagues than non-bullied respondents. Hogh and Dofradottir (2001) found that bullied respondents appeared to seek support more often than respondents exposed to slander and teasing but did not claim to have been bullied.

Zapf and Gross (2001) commented that bullying victims most often use avoidance strategies, which he considered to be negative, and use integrating and compromising less often. The results of a diary study (Gross, 2003) showed that victims who felt that they had successfully dealt with their situation had defined a clear boundary for themselves and had decided to "get out of the bad game". They had also taken sick leave and/or received support in the form of psychotherapy. Finally objective changes had been made to the work situation by the intervention of a third party.

The findings of Gross (2003) confirmed those of by Zapf and Gross (2001) who based their results on a qualitative study with 20 semi-structured interviews with people who claimed to have been bullied in their place of work. The data were supplemented

with the results of 149 questionnaires from the bullied group, and 81 questionnaires from a control group. They showed that most victims started with constructive conflict-solving strategies, changed their strategies several times, and finally tried to leave the organisation. The victims who were interviewed most frequently recommended that others leave the organisation and seek social support. Avoidance in the form of absenteeism was frequently used.

According to Zapf and Gross (2001), separation of recipients of bullying behaviours and their aggressors is the most reasonable solution. When bullying has reached its final stage, aggressors and victims generally see that they can no longer work together and victims are convinced that their aggressors want to expel them from the organisation.

1. 7 Options open to recipients of bullying

1. 7. 1 Introduction

Intervention strategies and programmes have been identified for both individuals (Field, 1996; Izamoje, 1997; Peyton, 2003; Randall, 1997a; Rayner, 1999; Rayner et al, 2002) and organisations (Rayner, 1998; Rayner et al, 2002; Resch & Schubinski, 1996). These come in the form of advice on the practical aspects of dealing with bullying. For example, Rayner et al (2002) discussed the options for the individual of doing nothing, and confronting the bullying. They also suggested that using silence towards the bully could be effective in combating the negative behaviours. However, they caution that silence could irritate and escalate the conflict.

O'Moore (2000b) identified strategies, which could be employed by individual recipients of bullying behaviours and included these in the questionnaire for the Irish nationwide survey. The results showed that over 60% stated that they confronted the bully with 35.6% complaining to the bully's boss. There were 26.4% of respondents who consulted with the personnel office, 32.5% spoke with their Union Representative and 19.4% made a joint complaint. The results showed that confronting the bully was the most successful action in terms of decreasing or stopping the bullying. A number of respondents found that their Union Representative was dismissive of their claims. 23.6%

were considering leaving their jobs because of the bullying and 36.3% stated that they intended staying in their jobs and not taking any action. For 6.5% of victims, who had been bullied in their present job, the bullying stopped with no particular intervention or strategy.

Organisational intervention programmes have been suggested by people working in the area of workplace bullying (Peyton, 2003; Randall, 2001; Rayner et al, 2002). These programmes suggest policies and procedures aimed at combating bullying and also stress the importance of monitoring situations. Tackling the problem at source by the identification of recognised antecedents of bullying and adequate management training are also recommended by Resch and Schubinski (1996), Einarsen et al (1994), Leymann (1996), and Vartia (1996). They proposed that a programme that incorporated changes in work design, leadership behaviour, improvement in the social position of each individual worker, and raising moral standards in the department should form the basis of an intervention strategy.

1. 7. 2 Intervention programmes

Olweus (2003) stated that the basic message of his research findings and experience of bullying among school children is that with a suitable intervention programme, it is possible to reduce dramatically bully / victim problems in schools. Roland and Munthe (1997) outlined the Norwegian programme to combat bullying in schools which involved teachers, parents pupils and about 350 professionals from the school's psychological service, and people who were employed at colleges and universities.

Following the nationwide survey of bullying behaviour in Irish schools (O'Moore et al, 1997), a pilot project for a proposed anti-bullying intervention programme was carried out involving the training of a professional network in Donegal. Surveys were carried out in winter and spring of 1998-1999 and repeated in the summer of 2000. The findings showed statistically significant reductions in pupils' reports of having been victimised in the intervening period. There was a 20% reduction of bullying within the last term. Frequent victimisation (once a week or more often) was reduced by 50%. There was also a reduction of 17% in pupils' reports of having taken part in bullying

97

others within the last term. Frequent bullying of others was reduced by 69% (O'Moore & Minton, 2001). Following the success of the programme, in Donegal, it has been extended to a Nationwide Intervention Programme to prevent and counter bullying, aggressive behaviour and harassment in Irish primary and post-primary schools. This will run from October 2003 – September 2006 and will be an extension of the pilot project in Donegal. The programme consists of regular outreach services to schools, which includes working with parents, pupils, and teachers. Work with school management authorities on anti-bullying policy formation is also part of the programme.

Randall (2001) considered that school based interventions are effective and since much has been learned from research of bullying among school children with regard to victims and perpetrators (Olweus, 1993; O'Moore, & Hillery, 1991; O'Moore & Kirkham, 2001; Sharp, Cowie, & Smith, 1994) which can be applied to adult bullying, it is possible that school intervention programmes could also be considered and adapted for use in the workplace.

Literature on proven intervention strategies in workplace bullying are scarce but Cooper et al, (1996) presented the experiences of three organisations in Sweden, the Netherlands, and the UK in their attempts to decrease work related stress. It is arguable that since the prevalence of bullying has been shown to be associated with a negative social climate (Einarsen et al, 1994; O'Moore, 2000b; Salin, 2003; Vartia, 1996) any programmes that successfully reduce workplace stress should affect the incidence of bullying. According to Cooper et al (1996), in all three cases there were positive outcomes and benefits associated with the interventions.

In the first case study, an electrical manufacturing company, held occupational training, training in conflict management, group dynamics, and relationship psychology. This led to group members having improved skills and a fairer distribution of work. The wage system was modified to include flexibility, dependent on the group's results. The results showed that in a three year period absence through illness was reduced from 14% to 4%, and long term occupational injury and illness cases were significantly reduced although direct comparisons could not be made due to changes in insurance.

The second case study involved an integrated health promotion programme introduced in a division in a Dutch construction company. The intervention took the

form of improvements in the consultative structure, a training course for middle management with an emphasis on communication skills, a training course in stress management, and interview training to teach managers how to deal effectively with stressor-related problems. Over a two year period, there were significantly fewer complaints with regard to work organisation, task ambiguity and job demands. There were also significantly fewer complaints in relationships with management and colleagues, and consultative structure.

The third organisation was a large pharmaceutical company. Their stress management strategy consisted of six levels with responsibilities for each level clearly defined. Initially casualties had to be treated and the occupational health professions carried out this task. The occupational health professionals, together with management, carried out the second level, which was to detect other cases. The third level, legitimising stress, was the responsibility of senior management. Increasing awareness, the fourth level, was carried out by managers, the training team, and occupational health. The training team and occupational health also taught skills. Finally it was the responsibility of the whole organisation to improve the culture. The impact of the intervention programme was assessed using questionnaires, examining the number of individuals suffering from stress, and from feedback. The company were unable at the time of publication to empirically test the success of the programme but commented that maintaining the health of staff and managing stress positively is likely to improve productivity, reduce errors, increase creativity, improve decision making and lead to enhanced job satisfaction.

1. 7. 3 Organisational procedures

Since January 2003, it is a legal requirement for all organisations in Ireland employing more that 100 people to have a Code of Practice to deal with bullying situations in the work place. However, prior to this date many organisations had Anti Bullying and Harassment Policies, which outlined procedures that recipients of bullying should follow. An example (Anti Bullying Research and Resource Centre, 2001) of the recommended initial actions is included below:

- Make it clear to the bully that the behaviours are not acceptable. This is where some responsibility is placed on the victim to let it be known that they are being bullied
- Tell someone. This could be a work colleague, a family member or a work colleague
- Keep a record of all events that they feel could amount to bullying behaviours
- Keep a copy of all memos etc.
- If sick leave is necessary, tell the doctor the true reason for it
- Report the bullying behaviour together with the effects, to someone in the organisation such as a manager, member of the Human Resource department, or a union representative.

Policies normally lay out the informal and formal procedures. The format of an informal procedure can vary depending on the incident, the people concerned, and the organisation. The purpose of an informal procedure is to settle the issue as quickly and painlessly (for both parties) as possible. The informal procedure generally involves confronting the alleged bully either alone or with the support of a work colleague, the victim's manager, or a member of the human resource facility.

An informal procedure is always preferable initially (Rayner et al, 2002). If this is not satisfactory then the option of a formal procedure is open. The decision on whether or not the investigation is formalised is a difficult one. Ideally the complainant should make this decision but the organisation can be put in a difficult position if the complainant insists that it remains at an informal level and yet allegations abound. Equally an alleged aggressor should have the right to instigate a formal procedure in an attempt to clear their name if they feel that wrongful allegations have been made. More recent policies (Bausch & Lomb, 2001) include this option.

The stages of a formal procedure were laid out by the Anti Bullying Research and Resource Centre (2001). They state that the first step is to obtain a written submission from the complainant. This should be presented to the alleged perpetrator who should be given the opportunity to respond. The option of calling in an independent investigator acceptable to both the complainant, respondent, and the organisation will then be considered. It may be feasible for an external investigator to work alongside an employee of the organisation trained in investigations. Prior to any investigation, the

investigator(s) should meet with a representative of management to state the investigator(s)' agenda, ascertain expectations of management, and discuss the feasibility of recommendations.

The complainant, the person against whom a complaint has been made and any witnesses will be interviewed. Other interviewees could include people who may not have actually been present and witnessed the alleged bullying behaviours, but who know the people concerned and whose opinion could assist the investigator(s) in forming their conclusions. The purpose of the interview is to collect facts but the impact of alleged bullying behaviours and the impact of being accused of bullying should be noted. A background to the working relationships should be ascertained together with the interviewees' perception of the breakdown in their working relationship. Each interviewee will be given the opportunity to check the accuracy of their statement. The contents of any relevant documentation will be taken into account including correspondence, diary entries and notes taken at the time of alleged bullying behaviour.

It is the responsibility of the investigator(s) to judge whether the allegations are upheld. This judgement is formed on the consistency of reports, evidence of documentation, and reliability of witnesses. Ultimately the investigator(s) rely on their personal experience.

On completion of the investigation, the investigator(s) will submit a report to the management representative. This report will include the conclusions of the investigator(s) on the presence and extent of bullying behaviour based on evidence obtained. Following discussion with management, the report may include recommendations as to how the problem could be resolved. It is the responsibility of management to act on any recommendations and take any necessary disciplinary action. The Anti Bullying Research and Resource Centre (2001) advocate that the post-investigative situation be monitored.

A further process, mediation, has been evident in more recently published policies (National Maternity Hospital, 2002). The recommended stages of mediation (Anti Bullying Research and Resource Centre, 2001) are outlined below: -

- At the meeting with both parties and the mediator, the process is explained with emphasis on the willingness of both parties being essential,
- The mediator highlights the benefits of reaching a solution and disadvantages of not doing so. The aim is for a WIN-WIN solution,
- Confidentiality is promised by the mediator and each party is advised on the confidentiality on their part,
- Each party tells their "story" with no interruptions - this includes the effects that the alleged bullying behaviour had on the claimant and how each party feels,
- The mediator summaries each "version" and checks that the other side has understood correctly - this implies that the mediator has to interpret,
- Each party is asked for possible solutions,
- The mediator helps them to find areas of agreement in the suggested solutions,
- The mediator drafts and subsequently writes an agreement which both parties sign,
- The situation is monitored by both parties - failure to comply could (will?) lead to disciplinary measures
- If no agreement is forthcoming, mediation is deemed to have failed.

1. 7. 4 Legal options

The most common routes of proceeding with a grievance through the legal process include constructive dismissal through a Tribunal and damages awarded under Common Law in the District and High Courts. Under the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act (1989) employers have a duty of care to provide a safe place of employment for their employees, including psychological care.

Present legislation in Ireland includes the Employment Equality Act (1998). This Act defines harassment as "any act or conduct - - (including without prejudice to the generality, spoken words, gestures or the production, display or circulation of written words, pictures or other material) constitutes harassment - - if the action or other conduct is unwelcome - - and could reasonably be regarded - - as offensive, humiliating or intimidating." *Section 6* states that discrimination takes place if a person is treated "less favourably than another is, has been or would be treated" on the following nine grounds:

gender, marital status, family status, sexual orientation, religious belief, age (if between 18 and 65), disability, race, or membership of the travelling community. *Section 8* forbids discrimination on these grounds by an employer against an employee or prospective employee and a provider of agency work against an agency worker in relation to access to employment, conditions of employment, training, promotion, or classification of posts. If bullying has taken the form of discrimination on any of the above grounds, then the individual can take their employer to the Equality Authority. This can involve compensation or instructions given to the employer, with regard to the welfare of their employee, by the Authority.

The Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act (1989) places the employer under the obligation of a general duty of care to do whatever is necessary to ensure that the employee is kept safe, the workplace is safe, and that the health and welfare of the employee is maintained. This act covers both physical and psychological damage. If the individual can show that the bullying behaviours have taken place, and their psychological ill-health is directly due to their negative experiences in their workplace, they can take their employer to the District or High Court to seek compensation.

On occasions the recipient of bullying behaviours, due to the effects of their negative experiences at work, make the decision to leave their place of employment. Under the Unfair Dismissals Act (1977), later to the Unfair Dismissals (Amendment) Act (1993), they can take their employer to the Employment Appeals Tribunal and sue for loss of earnings and other costs. These costs can include medical expenses and damages due to the distress caused by being a recipient of bullying behaviours. The burden of proof lies with the individual to show that their working conditions were intolerable and that they suffered psychological distress due to their experiences.

Other Acts, cited by (Eardly, 2002), which can be used to obtain redress include the Freedom of Information Act (1997), the Minimum Notice and Terms of Employment Act (1973), the Payment of Wages Act (1991), and the Terms of employment (Information) Act (1994). Under EU Legislation, Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (General Application) Regulations (1993) employers have an obligation to ensure the safety and well-being of their employees.

Vicarious liability can also incur costs when an employer is liable for the actions of an employee in the course of their employment, regardless of whether the actions were carried out with their knowledge or approval.

1. 8 The present study

The Anti Bullying Research and Resource Centre, Trinity College, Dublin, is the main source of academic information on workplace bullying in Ireland but, to date, it had not been possible to take full advantage of qualitative data made available by callers to the Centre. The research conducted by the Centre has been quantitative, for the most part, and resulted from surveys. Two National Surveys have been carried out, one among school children and the other among workers. Individual surveys have also been conducted at the request of Unions and individual employers. Descriptive surveys have the advantage that many respondents can be questioned quickly and there is less influence from the dynamics of interpersonal variables, and less bias in analysing answers (Coolican, 1999).

People who claim to be recipients of bullying behaviours in their place of work and seek help from the Anti Bullying Research and Resource Centre, are referred by solicitors, doctors, or are self-referred. Having access to recipients of bullying behaviour provided the opportunity to carry out qualitative research and enabled information gained, where the individuals benefited directly from the contact, to be used for research purposes. Banister, Burman, Parker, Taylor, and Tindall (1994) discussed "new paradigm" research (Reason & Rowan, 1981) where the information given by interviewees is valued and treated as meaningful and informative. They maintained that the research is viewed as a collaborative enterprise, which incurs responsibility on the part of the researcher to be accountable to the participants. Research is carried out in a non-exploitative, non-dehumanising way.

Fielding and Fielding (1986) suggested the research method of triangulation, which they described as referring to situations when a hypothesis can survive the confrontation of a series of complimentary methods of testing. The usual emphasis is on combining methods. If diverse kinds of data support the same conclusion, confidence in

104

the data is increased. The basic procedure is to check links between concepts and indicators by using other indicators. Using the same sample to elicit quantitative data should lead to a convergence of data thus attempting to confirm validity. For this research methodological triangulation was adopted where there are two variants: "within-method" approaches when the same method is used on different occasions and "between-method" approaches, when different methods are applied to the same subjects.

Quantitative data for this study resulted from the completion of questionnaires and psychometric testing. A psychological test is essentially an objective and standardised measure of a sample of behaviour (Anastasi & Urbina, 1997). They were developed as measurements for human psychological characteristics (Coolican, 1999) and quantifiable psychometric information can provide a useful baseline from which progress can be made and can also be of use in applied research (Powell & Enright, 1993). However, research results are open to giving inaccurate information as confounding variables can affect the person's cognitions at a particular time. Confounding variables, therefore, can discredit research and unless other stressors are taken into account the relationship between variables becomes obscure and it is possible that the data may not reflect the symptoms that are due to bullying. This type of information can be gathered, to a much greater extent during interview.

Qualitative research is the interpretative study of a specific issue or problem in which the researcher is central to the study (Banister et al, 1994) and can assist quantitative work in providing a theoretical framework, validating survey data, interpreting statistical relationships, and offering case study illustrations (Fielding & Fielding, 1986). It has the advantage of allowing the procedures to fit the situation and the nature of the people taking part in the research, as they are revealed (Holliday, 2002). The qualitative method adopted for this research was based on "thick description". Holliday (2002) used this term to describe information that gives the context of an experience, states the intentions and meanings that organise the experience, and reveals the experience as a process.

Qualitative data was gained in the present study by face to face interviews which gave the advantage of allowing exploration of issues that may be too complex to investigate through quantitative means. Mishler (1995) discussed definitions of an

interview and concluded that an interview is a behavioural event as opposed to a discourse. He proposed a definition that centres on a view of the interview as a discourse between speakers and on the ways that the meanings of questions and responses are contextually grounded and jointly constructed by interviewer and respondents. He recommended that an interview for the purpose of research should take a position between naturally occurring conversation and structured interviews reliant on a stimulus/response situation. The interviewer should assume a non-argumentative, supportive, and sympathetically understanding attitude.

One problem with attempting to structure interviews for this research became obvious when during some interviews, the interviewee became extremely distressed, on other occasions talked incessantly, and at other times had an apparent impersonal approach to their predicament. This confirmed the conclusion formed by Mishler (1995) and strengthened the argument to allow the interviews to be jointly constructed by the interviewer and recipients of bullying behaviour. This approach was discussed by Coolihan (1999) who concluded that structured questions miss more informative data.

Due to demand characteristics, the relationship between interviewer and interviewee was likely to have influenced the information obtained during interview. The results of the assessment were of paramount importance to participants, as the claim for damages against their employers depended on the severity of the impact of bullying behaviours. It is reasonable to assume that this must have influenced their responses to questions and subsequent scoring in the inventories.

The traditional scientific method of research in psychology has much to offer in collecting data in order to expand knowledge and qualitative data is useful in that it lends itself to replication. The opportunity to obtain a combination of qualitative and quantitative data for the present study should give a deeper understanding of the effects of negative behaviours, and how recipients coped with such effects. With such an approach it was felt that the context and integrity of the research could enhance any conclusions while loss of quantified material could be avoided. In combining methods it was possible to reveal aspects of the problems that individual methods would overlook. The data was approached with multiple perspectives and hypotheses in mind allowing the hypotheses to emerge as the research progressed.

1.9 Research Aims

There are five research aims in this study. Firstly, to identify the nature of bullying behaviours experienced by a sample of people (N = 30) who classified themselves as recipients of such behaviours in the workplace. Secondly, to identify pressures in the workplace of this group, and to compare findings with those of a control group, matched with respect to gender, age, economic sector, and occupational group. This may offer an explanation as to how different pressures in the working environment could contribute to bullying, or, alternatively, how being a victim of bullying could cause the individual to perceive their working environment differently. Thirdly, to identify the effects of workplace bullying on the physical and psychological health of the bullied group. Fourthly, to identify coping strategies employed by both groups. Analysis of findings will identify whether victims of bullying, who are suffering from stress, use different coping strategies to those who claimed not to be under stress. Finally, to analyse to what extent the personality constructs of victims of bullying behaviour differs from the control group.

More specifically, the study attempts to examine the following: -

- Personal and work related details of people who classify themselves to be recipients of bullying behaviours in their place of work,
- The nature of bullying behaviours experienced by participants from the bullied group,
- The effects on the physical and psychological well-being and perceived behavioural changes of the bullied group,
- The level of self-esteem of the bullied group, compared with that of the control group,
- Work pressures experienced by the bullied group, compared with that of the control group,
- Coping strategies employed by the bullied group, compared with that of the control group,
- Personality constructs of the bullied group, compared with that of the control group.

Significant differences are hypothesised between the bullied group and the control group with regard to self-esteem, work pressures, personality constructs, and coping strategies.

SECTION 2 - MATERIALS and METHODOLOGY

The methodology used for the study was a combination of quantitative and qualitative approaches. The quantitative data were collected through questionnaires, psychological measures and inventories, which were completed by two groups of participants. The first group consisted of people who claimed to have been recipients of bullying behaviour in their place of work and were pursuing justice through the legal system or internally with their employers. They were recruited over a two-year period between June 2001 to May 2003. The second group, a matched control group, completed questionnaires in May 2003. The qualitative data were obtained during interviews with the bullied group. The inclusion of qualitative data in the study was seen as enriching the data obtained through questionnaires and giving a more insightful understanding of the experiences of people who are bullied at work.

Participation in this study was voluntary. The psychological assessments were carried out for the benefit of participants in the bullied group thus avoiding the dilemma of having individuals relive their experiences for the benefit of research only. There was no deception involved and the reason for the research was fully explained to each participant before they agreed to complete the additional questionnaires. Participants were also guaranteed complete anonymity. It was considered, therefore, that the qualitative methods used in this study were ethically justifiable.

2. 1 Sample

There were thirty participants in the bullied group and an equal number in the control group. The bullied group was selected from people who attended the Anti Bullying Research and Resource Centre, Trinity College, Dublin, for psychological assessments, advice, and/or support. Throughout the interview participants were observed with regard to their mental state and a subjective decision taken towards the end of the interview whether or not to request their participation in this study necessitating the completion of further inventories. This decision was based on the ethical question of causing distress for the purpose of research.

This resulted in thirty-seven people, thirty-three of whom had been referred by

their solicitor or doctor for psychological assessment, and four people who had approached the Centre for advice and/or support, being asked to take part in the study. However, seven of these did not return, or correctly complete, the questionnaires. This resulted in thirty participants, fifteen men and fifteen women.

Purposive sampling, where elements of the experimental group are considered to be relevant to any conclusions (Shaunessy & Zechmeister, 1994), was used in the formation of the control group. A snowball system was used starting with people personally known to the researcher and her colleagues in the Anti Bullying Research and Resource Centre. This comprised thirty individually selected people in the work force, matched to the bullied group with respect to gender, age group, economic sector, and occupational group. The economic sector and occupational group categories were those used by the Central Statistics Office, Ireland, for the National Census (CSO, 2001). One person did not return the questionnaires and, as it was impossible to identify this person, a person in the work force known to the researcher was asked to complete a set of questionnaires. This resulted in twenty-six people matched in all four conditions, four people were not matched with regard to age only, and two of these were not matched with regard to economic sector.

2. 2. Qualitative data

Qualitative data were collected during face to face interviews with each participant in the bullied group. The order of the content of each interview was determined by the interviewee and data were reorganised to extricate the required information. Data were sought with regard to the interviewees' perceptions of the negative behaviours to which they claimed to have been subjected and the duration of their negative experiences. Other data included their subjective opinion of the perpetrator and the perpetrator's status in the organisation, the possible cause for onset of the bullying behaviours, and their opinion of the social climate of the organisation. They were also asked to describe the effects, as they saw them, of the negative behaviours on their mental and physical well-being, and on their family.

Data were required concerning how the interviewee felt they had coped with their distressing circumstances in their place of work and how they saw themselves as an

employee. Finally, the actions taken by each interviewee, the action by their employer, and their present state of employment were ascertained during interview.

2. 3. Materials

Quantitative data were collected by means of questionnaires, and psychometric measures and inventories. The selection of inventories was based on two main criteria. Firstly, the internal consistency and test-retest reliability, and validity of inventories was taken into account. Where possible the Mental Measurement Yearbooks (MMY) were consulted, otherwise references in journal articles and manuals (Costa & McCrae, 1992; Leymann & Gustafsson, 1996; Spielberger et al, 1995; Spielberger & Rickman, 1991; Carver et al, 1989) were considered. The second criterion was based on the literature review of earlier research and inventories (e.g. Bjorkqvist et al, 1994; Einarsen, 1999; Leymann & Gustafsson 1996; O'Moore, 2000b; Neidl, 1996; Vartia, 1996 & 2003; Zapf, 1996). This made for easier comparisons with previous research.

The number of questionnaires, and psychometric measures and inventories, used in this study, to measure the psychological ill-health of participants, was determined by the bullied participants who presented for assessments as part of their legal case. The Courts demand an in-depth examination that will stand up to rigorous cross examination. Therefore, measures which confirm the results of a clinical interview were necessary.

Murphy and Davidshofer (1994) argued that recent measures should be used, as normative data can become out of date, and their argument was considered. However, it was decided that other justification for the inclusion, or otherwise, of a particular inventory had more importance and this is discussed in the description of individual questionnaires in paragraphs 2.3.1 – 2.3.11. Examples of all questionnaires, psychometric measures and inventories are given in Appendix I.

2. 3. 1 Demographic information

Demographic information was collected using sections of a questionnaire designed by Professor O'Moore, Director of the Anti Bullying Research and Resource Centre, Trinity College (Appendix I). This questionnaire was used to conduct a National Survey among the work force in Ireland in 1999 (O'Moore, 2000b). It was chosen for its

comprehensive treatment of the nature of bullying and its impact on recipients of negative behaviours. A further advantage of its use is that it is possible to extract demographic and personal information. Since the questionnaire has been used in Ireland on a national scale it makes for more ready comparisons of current national data.

In addition to gender, age, and marital status (Questions 1-3), information with regards to the person's employment was also available through the completion of this questionnaire (Questions 6). However, it was decided to re-categorise the economic sector and occupational group of each person to correspond with those used by the Central Statistics Office, Ireland, when carrying out National Surveys (CSO, 2001). This ensured that it would be possible to compare results from future research with those of this study.

Job related information included the number of years with the employer where they had experienced the negative behaviours present and the position held in the organisation (Questions 8 & 9). The gender composition of their place of employment was requested where respondents were asked to select whether their organisation employed mostly men (80-100%), more men than women (60-80%), equal number of men and women, more women than men (60-80%), or mostly women (80-100%) (Question 5).

2. 3. 2 Negative behaviours

In addition to interviewees claiming to have been bullied, bullying was measured by a list of negative behaviours (Question 56) that can be defined as bullying, which was included as a section of the survey questionnaire (O'Moore, 1999). The list had been influenced by research carried out in the UK (Rayner, 1998), Norway (Einarsen et al, 1994) and Sweden (Leymann, 1996). Work related bullying was identified by statements such as "withholding information so that your work gets difficult", and "being deprived of responsibility or work tasks". Social isolation was identified by "social exclusion, cold-shouldering, snubbing, sending to Coventry". Statement such as "humiliation by being shouted at", "severe criticism", and "the use of foul, obscene or offensive language", highlighted verbal bullying. Sexual harassment and physical abuse were specific statements.

The duration of negative behaviours was also ascertained by the completion of the questionnaire (O'Moore, 1999) (Question 43a). For analysis purposes the periods were broken down into 4 years of less, 5 – 10 years, 11 –20 years, and over 20 years. The decision to select 4 years or less as one of the categories was made as a result of the findings of the National Survey in Ireland (O'Moore, 2000b) where the average number of years exposed to bullying was found to be 3.5. Details of perpetrators were also obtained through responses to specific questions in the questionnaire. Respondents were asked whether their aggressors were in a senior position, at the same level, or in a subordinate position. They were also asked the gender of the perpetrator and to state the number of people who had taken part in the behaviours.

Possible events coinciding with the onset of negative behaviours were also obtained through responses to specific questions in the questionnaire (O'Moore, 1999) (Question 43e). These included a change in the nature of the job, change in the boss/manager, change in the line manager, funding cuts, staff cutbacks, change in the organisational operation, and other. Respondents were also asked to identify actions they had taken, in attempts to stop the bullying behaviours to which they were subjected (Question 61). These included confronting the perpetrator, complaining to the perpetrator's boss, consulting the Personnel Officer or Union Representative, or making a group complaint.

The results of actions taken, from a list presented to respondents, included no positive outcome, labelled a troublemaker, offered a move, the bullying increased, the bullying decreased, the bullying stopped, action was taken against the bully, the respondent was threatened with dismissal, they were dismissed, or the allegation was over ruled.

2. 3. 3 Organisational factors

The questionnaire devised by O'Moore (1999) allowed participants to identify words that described the atmosphere in their place of employment (Question 20). Respondents were asked to select from a list, words that they considered described the climate/atmosphere in their place of work. This list comprised friendly, supportive, businesslike, competitive, and hostile. Staff relations at work could be described as very

good/positive, variable, formal, difficult, and negative/critical. Management style was selected from autocratic, democratic, and laissez-faire.

To confirm these self-reports a further questionnaire was included in the study that would indicate the level of job and organisation satisfaction, organisational security and commitment, and sources of pressure experienced by participants in this research. It was decided to include a measure of the social climate of the work place since data in this area had been collected in previous research into causes of bullying behaviours in the workplace (Einarsen et al, 1994; Hoel & Cooper, 2000; Salins, 2003; Vartia, 1996).

The Pressure Management Indicator (PMI) is a 120-item self-report questionnaire, developed by Williams and Cooper (1998) and includes sub-scales to measure these and other factors. Permission to use the Pressure Management Indicator was given by the publisher: Resource Systems, Claro Court, Claro Road, Harrogate, England, HG1 4BA. The authors claim that the PMI works across occupational groups and cultural boundaries and norms were given for the UK. However, it was decided to request the control group to complete the questionnaire as a confirmation that these norms were appropriate.

The questionnaire is divided into eight sections with responses indicated on a Likert scale with minimum and maximum scores vary for each section. Although participants completed the entire questionnaire, data for this study, obtained from Sections 1, 2 and 7, were used. Data available from sections 3 - 6 were obtained from other measures used in the study.

Section 1 assesses organisational security (OS), i.e. how the person feels about the stability of their organisation and the level of their job security by five statements such as "I worry about the future of my job". This section also assesses organisational commitment (OC), i.e. how committed the person is to their organisation and the extent to which they enjoy their job and feel that the work improves the quality of life. Statements such as "I really enjoy my work" measure this factor. Responses range from "very strongly disagree", "strongly disagree", "disagree", "agree", "strongly agree", to "very strongly agree". The minimum score for each scale is 5 and the maximum is 30.

The second section measures job satisfaction (JI), i.e. how satisfied the person is with the type of work that they carry out, by using six statements such as "the degree to which you feel motivated by your job". This section also measures organisation

satisfaction (JO), defined as the degree to which a person is satisfied with the way their organisation is structured and the way it works. A typical statement is "communication and the way information flows around your organisation". The Likert scale, of 1-6, ranges from "very much dissatisfied" to "very much satisfied" giving a minimum score of 6 and a maximum score of 36. In both section 1 and section 2 a high score represents more satisfaction, commitment and security.

Sources of pressure at work are covered in section 7. Pressures include the workload and difficulty of the person's work (PW) measured by six items such as "not being able to switch off at home", and the working relationships with colleagues (PR) is measured by eight items such as "lack of consultation and communication". Recognition of work (PC) is measured by four items and includes "unclear promotion prospects". The atmosphere within their place of work (PO), and the pressure brought on by managing and supervising other people (PP) are both measured by four items. An example of the atmosphere is "factors not under your direct control" and of managing others is "making important decisions". Responsibility for their own actions and decisions (PM) is measured by, for example, "simply being seen as the boss". The balance between pressures from work and home (PH) is measured by six items including "my partner's attitude towards my job and career", and the daily irritants and aggravations in the workplace (PD) is measured by four items, such as "attending meetings". The Likert scale of 1 - 6 represents statements that range from "very definitely is not a source" to "very definitely is a source". The six item sections give a minimum score of 6 and a maximum of 36; the four item sections give a minimum score of 4 and a maximum of 24. A high score illustrates increased pressure.

Williams and Cooper (1998) summarise the reliability of the PMI scales and show that, with the exception of Daily Hassles ($\alpha = 0.64$), all of the scales met or exceeded the target reliability of $\alpha = 0.8$ or above for the full scale, and $\alpha = 0.7$ and above for the sub-scales. They admitted that validity of many of the PMI's scales still need to be demonstrated but results of comparative analyses provide an early indication that the scales measure what they purport to measure.

2. 3. 4 Stress symptoms

Participants were asked to identify physiological and psychological symptoms and behavioural changes, generally associated with stress. This list forms part of the National Survey questionnaire (O'Moore, 1999) (Questions 58 - 60). Physiological symptoms include headaches / migraine, sweating / shaking, palpitations, feeling / being sick, stomach and bowel problems, raised blood pressure, disturbed sleep, loss of energy, and loss of appetite. Psychological symptoms include anger, anxiety, worry, fear, panic attacks, depression, loss of confidence, loss of self-esteem, tearfulness, loss of concentration, forgetfulness, lack of motivation, thoughts of suicide, feeling isolated, and feeling helpless. Behavioural changes include becoming aggressive, becoming irritable, revengeful, or withdrawn, greater use of tobacco, alcohol, or prescribed drugs, obsessive dwelling on the aggressor, becoming hypersensitive to criticism, and becoming totally emotionally drained.

2. 3. 5 Physical and psychological ill-health

Recipients of negative behaviours frequently report somatic symptoms, anxiety, insomnia, and depression. They also maintain that they are unable to function and perform their daily tasks. The General Health Questionnaire (GHQ) (Goldberg & Williams, 1988) was examined for its suitability to confirm the effects on physical and psychological health ascertained by self-report.

According to Goldberg and Williams (1988) the original purpose of the General Health Questionnaire was to distinguish between people with some form of psychological disturbance from those who are relatively healthy. Goldberg and Williams (1988) observed that disruption in the performance of daily life activities and the experience of subjective distress should illustrate the presence of a psychological disturbance. It was designed as a self-administered screening test and focuses on two main areas: ability to carry out normal functions and the appearance of new and distressing phenomena.

Three forms of the General Health Questionnaire (GHQ) are available: GHQ-60, GHQ-30 (a short form) and GHQ-28. GHQ-28, providing separate scale scores for somatic symptoms, anxiety and insomnia, social dysfunction, and depressive symptoms/suicide ideation is used more frequently in research. The GHQ Manual

(Goldberg & Williams, 1988) claims that validity is supported by numerous studies with the median correlation between GHQ-28 and various psychiatric interview measures as 0.76.

The four sub-scales measure somatic symptoms, anxiety and insomnia, social dysfunction and depression. Somatic symptoms are measured by questions relating to physical health, such as "have you felt that you are ill?" Anxiety and insomnia are measured by statements such as "have you felt under constant strain" and "have you lost much sleep over worry?" Participants identify the presence of social dysfunction by questions such as "have you been satisfied with the way you have been carrying out tasks?" Depression is typified by a question such as "have you been thinking of yourself as a worthless person?" There is a strong element of suicide ideation in this section.

The responses generally consist of statements such as "not at all", "no more than usual", "rather more than usual", and "much worse than usual" for questions such as "have you been getting headaches?" Other questions, such as " have you been managing to keep yourself occupied?" have a choice of responses "more so than usual", same as usual", rather less than usual" and " much less than usual".

Goldberg and Williams (1988) discussed two methods of scoring the GHQ-28. The scoring method chosen for use in this study, on the four way Likert response scale, was 0, 0, 1, 1, as Goldberg and Williams (1988) showed that this method of scoring correlated with other scales such as the Present State Examination (PSE) (Finlay-Jones and Murphy, 1979). This method gives a minimum total score of 0 with a maximum score of 28. Goldberg and Williams (1988) comment that the subscales (with scores from 0 to 7) are not independent of each other suggesting that the total score may be more appropriate for this research. However, it was decided to use both the subscales and the total score.

LoBello (1995) maintained that the GHQ scales have been the focus of a large amount of research over the twenty-five years since its development and should be considered by anyone desiring rapid, accurate determination of general psychiatric status. The General Health Questionnaire (Goldberg & Williams, 1988) was used by other researchers in their assessment of the effects of workplace bullying (e.g. Leymann and Gustaffson, 1996) and this was a factor in its selection for this research.

2. 3. 6 Anxiety

Anxiety is invariably experienced by people presenting at the Anti Bullying Research and Resource Centre for psychological assessments and advice or support. It is normally apparent during interview, by observation of the person, and also referred to by the person as they describe the effects of bullying behaviours. Spielberger and Rickman (1991) purported that anxiety is an unpleasant emotional state or reaction that can be distinguished from others, such as anger or grief, by a unique combination of identifiable experiential qualities and physiological changes. State anxiety varies in intensity and fluctuates over time as a function of perceived threat (Spielberger, Sydeman, Owen, Marsh, 1999). They define trait anxiety in terms of relatively stable individual differences in anxiety proneness, and in the person's disposition to respond to situations. It was considered that the two measures of anxiety would illustrate any heightened level of anxiety caused by negative experiences.

The State-Trait Anxiety Inventory (STAI) was designed by Spielberger, Gorsuch and Lushene (1970) to evaluate individual anxiety levels as an aid to clinical screening for anxiety, as an indicator of current anxiety level of therapy and counselling clients, and as a research tool. It measures both state anxiety and trait anxiety, which are measured by statements indicating that anxiety is present and anxiety is absent. Representative items on the State scale, for anxiety present are "I am tense" and "I am worried". Anxiety absent is identified by items such as "I feel calm", and "I feel secure". Respondents rate the intensity of their anxiety on a four-point scale; responses include "not at all", somewhat", "moderately so", and "very much so".

On the trait anxiety scale, respondents report how they generally feel by rating themselves on a four-point frequency scale. Examples of items for anxiety present are "I feel like a failure" and "I have disturbing thoughts". Anxiety absent is measured by statements such as "I feel satisfied with myself" and "I am content". Responses include "almost never", "sometimes", "often", and "almost always".

The scales of both inventories consist of a Likert scale with a score from 1 - 4, giving a possible minimum of 20 and maximum of 80. Appropriate norms were not available for this inventory but, as the data was used to examine the elevation in state

anxiety over trait anxiety and this study examines levels of anxiety measured by this inventory and the General Health Questionnaire (Goldberg & Williams, 1988) this was not considered to be sufficient reason to exclude the STAI.

The Spielberger STAI has excellent psychometric properties. Spielberger et al (1999) give details of test-retest reliability for trait anxiety as around 0.75. For state anxiety it is about 0.3 but they conclude that this is an inappropriate measure since state anxiety fluctuates by definition. Because anxiety states are expected to vary in intensity as a function of perceived stress, measures of internal consistency provide a more meaningful index of the reliability of the state measures than test-retest correlations. Spielberger et al (1999) reported that internal consistency reliability for both scales is around 0.9. According to Spielberger et al (1999), the trait scale has correlations with two other anxiety scales, the IPAT Anxiety Scale (Cattell and Sheier, 1963, cited in Spielberger et al, 1999) and the Manifest Anxiety Scale (Taylor, 1953, cited in Spielberger et al, 1999) of between 0.75 and 0.85.

Kline (1993) concludes that as a quick and easy measure of state and trait anxiety, the STAI would appear to be adequate.

2. 3. 7 Anger

Experience in the Anti Bullying Research and Resource Centre confirms that the majority of people presenting as being recipients of negative behaviour appear to be exceptionally angry and, therefore, it was decided that the measurement of this emotion was central to this research using the State-Trait Anger Expression Inventory (STAXI) (Spielberger & Rickman, 1991). State anger is defined as an emotional state marked by subjective feelings that vary in intensity from mild annoyance or irritation to intense fury and rage. Over time, the intensity anger varies as a function of perceived injustice, attack or unfair treatment by others, and frustration resulting from barriers to goal directed behaviour (Spielberger & Rickman, 1991). Spielberger and Rickman (1991) define Trait anger as the disposition to perceive a wide range of situations as annoying or frustrating, and the tendency to respond to such situations with more frequent elevations in state anger. They maintain that individuals high in trait anger experience state anger more often and with greater intensity than individuals low in trait anger.

The State-Trait Anger Expression Inventory (STAXI) (Spielberger & Rickman, 1991) provides concise measures of the experience and expression of anger. The scales consist of six scales: State Anger; Trait Anger which contains two sub-scales, Anger Temperament (measures a general propensity to experience and express anger without specific provocation) and Anger Reaction (measures individual differences in the disposition to express anger when criticised or treated unfairly by others); Anger-in; Anger-out; Anger Control; and Anger Expression. Anger expression is conceptualised as having three major components. The first component involves the expression of anger toward other people or objects in the environment (Anger-out). The second component of anger expression is anger directed inward: that is holding in or suppressing angry feelings (Anger-in). Individual differences in the extent to which a person attempts to control the expression of anger (Anger Control) constitutes the third component of anger expression.

State anger is assessed by responses to ten statements such as "I am furious", and "I feel like breaking things" with participants identifying their present feelings on a Likert scale from 1 - 4. These represent "not at all", "somewhat", "moderately so", and "very much so". The ten statements that assess trait anger include, for example, "I am quick tempered", (anger temperament) and "I feel infuriated when I do a good job and get a poor evaluation" (anger reaction). The Likert scale represent "almost never", "sometimes", "often", and "almost always". The presence of Anger-in is assessed by, for example, "I tend to harbour grudges that I don't tell anyone about", Anger-out by, for example, "I make sarcastic remarks to others", and Anger Control by, for example, "I am patient with others". Anger expression is calculated by a formula suggested by Spielberger and Rickman (1991), where: -

Anger Expression = Anger-in + Anger-out - Anger Control + 16.

Norms are provided for men and women, adolescents, college students, adults and special populations that indicate the percentile into the person's level of anger places them. Spielberger et al (1999) maintained that individuals who score beneath the 25th percentile on trait anger, anger in and anger out scales generally experience, express, or suppress relatively little anger. Scores between the 25th and 75th percentiles fall into what may be considered normal range. People with anger scores above the 75th

percentile are likely to experience and/or express angry feelings to a degree that may interfere with optimal functioning.

Correlations given in the STAXI Manual (Spielberger & Rickman, 1991) were high: S-Anger, alpha coefficient = 0.93 (both sexes); T-Anger, alpha coefficients = 0.87 (male) and 0.84 (female) scale. Internal consistency of the S-Anger and T-Anger scales is especially impressive.

2. 3. 8 Post Traumatic Stress Disorder

Leymann and Gustaffson (1996) concluded that Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) would be an appropriate psychiatric diagnosis for those people who had been victimised at work. Furthermore they include the Impact of Event Scale (IES) by Horowitz, Wilner and Alverez (1979) as one of the psychiatric diagnostic instruments used by them to arrive at this conclusion.

The Impact of Event Scale (IES) (Horowitz et al, 1979) was developed to measure current subjective distress related to a specific event. The IES is a 15 item questionnaire evaluating experiences of avoidance, intrusion, and dissociation, i.e the feeling that the events did not occur, and attempts to reflect the intensity of the post-traumatic phenomena. The IES scale consists of 15 items, 7 of which measure intrusive symptoms (intrusive thoughts, nightmares, intrusive feelings and imagery), and 8 measure avoidance symptoms (numbing of responsiveness, avoidance of feelings, situations, ideas), and combined, provide a total subjective stress score. All items of the IES are concerned with a specific stressor. In common usage, respondents are asked to rate the items on a 4-point scale according to how often each has occurred in the past 7 days. The 4 points on the scale are: 0 (not at all), 1 (rarely), 3 (sometimes), and 5 (often).

The scores for the intrusive sub-scale range from 0 to 35, and is the sum of the scores for items 1, 4, 5, 6, 0, 11, and 14. The scores for the avoidance sub-scale range from 0 to 40, and is the sum of the scores for items 2, 3, 7, 8, 9, 12, 13, and 15. The sum of the two sub-scales is the total stress score.

In their use of the IES, Leymann and Gustafsson (1996) used a scoring system where evaluations were made in such a way that the answers "almost every day" and "at least once a week" each received one point. "at least once a month" and "more seldom or

never" received no points. So that the results of this research could be compared with those of Leymann and Gustafsson (1996) their scoring method was adopted with "sometimes" and "often" given a score of one and "never" and "rarely" given a score of zero. Thus the range on the intrusive thoughts sub-scale is from 0 to 7, and on the avoidance sub-scale from 0 to 8.

Corcoran and Fischer (1994) found that the subscales of the IES show very good internal consistency based on 2 separate sample groups. The coefficients ranged from 0.79 to 0.92, with an average of 0.86 for the intrusive subscale and 0.90 for the avoidance subscale. The split-half reliability of the IES scale was high (r = 0.86). Internal consistency of the subscales, calculated using Cronbach's Alpha, was also high (intrusion scale = 0.78, avoidance scale = 0.82). A correlation of 0.42 (p<0.0002) between the intrusion and avoidance subscales indicates that the two subsets are associated, but do not measure identical dimensions. Horowitz et al (1979) administered the 15-item IES to a new sample (N = 30) twice with an interval of one week between each rating. Results indicated a test-retest reliability of 0.87 for the total stress scores, 0.89 for the intrusion subscale, and 0.79 for the avoidance subscale.

Horowitz et al. (1979) concluded that both the intrusion and avoidance scales have displayed acceptable reliability (α = 0.79 and 0.82, respectively), and a split-half reliability for the whole scale of 0.86. The IES has also displayed the ability to discriminate a variety of traumatised groups from non-traumatised groups (Briere, 1997).

2. 3. 9 Self esteem

Self-esteem is typically described as the evaluative component of the self-concept and has been central in much of the research carried out to examine the negative effects on recipients of bullying behaviours among both school children (O'Moore & Kirkham, 2001; Olweus, 1993) and people in the workforce (Vartia, 1996). The construct of self-esteem is often assumed to be a general evaluative attitude towards oneself, ranging from extremely positive to extremely negative, that is stable and entirely subjective in nature. Anastasi and Urbina (1997) maintained that simple and obvious measures of global self-esteem such as Rosenberg's Self-Esteem Scale (SES) (1965) do appear to be relatively stable over time and may be useful as a gauge of general self-regard for some purposes.

However they concluded that more recent research has shifted away from uni-dimensional conceptualisations of self-esteem and toward studies of its specific facets. They maintained that under certain circumstances the use of a single, global self-esteem measure can yield inconsistent results or fail to reveal significant correlations with other variables and a more narrowly defined construct, such as self-concept in a particular area, which can yield consistent and significant results, should be used. Their comments, however, refereed to research and testing that has been carried out in the area of clinical practice and it is reasonable to assume that this criticism may not be applicable for the present research. While other inventories were considered for this research, Rosenberg's SES (1965) has been used by other researchers in the area of workplace bullying (Vartia, 1996) and this was a major factor in selecting this scale. Lack of appropriate norms led to the inclusion of this scale to be completed by the control group.

In the Rosenberg Self-esteem Scale (1965) positive self-esteem is judged by statements such as "On the whole I am satisfied with myself" and negative self-esteem by statements such as "at times I think that I am no good at all". Half of the items are expressions of positive self-esteem and half are negative. Items are scored by participants identifying whether they "strongly agree", "agree", "disagree", or "strongly disagree". Total scores, from item scores on a Likert scale of 1 to 4, are from 10 to 40 with low scores indicating high self-esteem.

2. 3. 10 Coping

Coping has been defined as the constantly changing cognitive and behavioural efforts to manage specific external and/or internal demands that are appraised as taxing or exceeding the resources of the person (Edwards & Baglioni, Jr., 1993). Carver and Scheier (1994) purported that methods of studying coping have proved difficult and outline three major reasons for this. Firstly, stressors differ from person to person, making it hard to control the characteristics of the event with which the subjects were coping. Secondly, subjects indicate their coping responses to the situation as a whole when coping is frequently acknowledged to be process oriented. Thirdly, coping reactions can change across the stages of a stressful transaction. However, the reviewed literature (Aldwin et al, 1996; Begley, 1998; Carver et al, 1989, 1993; Coyne, & Gottlieb,

1996; Dewe et al, 1993; Stone, & Neale, 1984; Terry, 1994) has provided convincing arguments that the measurement of coping is valid and people develop habitual ways of dealing with stress and that these coping styles can influence their reactions in new situations.

After considering other inventories, such as those discussed by Edwards and Baglioni (1993), namely the Ways of Coping Checklist (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984) and the Cybernetic Coping Scale (Edwards, 1991) to measure coping strategies, the COPE inventory (Carver et al, 1989) was selected as the most appropriate for this research. It was devised to measure a wide range of potential responses to stressors and to distinguish each coping quality as well as possible from other coping qualities. The COPE inventory was derived partially through a theoretical path in that several scales chosen for inclusion measures aspects of coping that are of particular theoretical interest. It has gone through several generations in its development, and a number of theoretically important factors were identified. The distinction between problem-focused and emotion-focused coping is widely acknowledged but Carver et al (1989), among others, concluded that both coping functions have to be subdivided because there are a variety of distinct ways to solve problems or regulate emotions.

Another advantage of the COPE scale is that it reflects a balanced view about the disposition versus situation issue. It can be used in its situational format when assessing people at the time of stress, and in its dispositional format for assessing coping strategies used by the control group.

COPE is made up of the following scales:
1. Active coping: taking action, and exerting efforts to remove or circumvent the stressor.
2. Planning: thinking about how to confront the stressor.
3. Seeking instrumental support: seeking assistance, information, or advice about what to do.
4. Seeking emotional social support: getting sympathy or emotional support from someone.
5. Suppression of competing activities: suppressing one's attention to other activities in

which one might engage, in order to concentrate more completely on dealing with the stressor.

6. Turning to religion: increased engagement in religious activities.

7. Positive reinterpretation and growth: making the best of the situation by growing from it or viewing it in a more favourable light.

8. Restraint coping: coping passively by holding back one's coping attempts until they can be of use.

9. Acceptance: accepting the fact that the stressful event has occurred and is real.

10. Focus on and venting of emotions: an increased awareness of one's emotional distress, and a concomitant tendency to discharge those feelings.

11. Denial: an attempt to reject the reality of the stressful event.

12. Mental disengagement: psychological disengagement from the goal with which the stressor is interfering, through day dreaming, sleep, or self-distraction.

13. Behavioural disengagement: giving up, or withdrawing effort from the attempt to attain the goal with which the stressor is interfering.

14. Humour.

15. Use of alcohol or drugs.

Each scale is brief (4 items) and focuses on a particular aspect of coping. In the dispositional format statements are, for example, "I usually don't do this at all"; in the situational format statements such as "I have not been doing this at all" are used. Responses are indicated on a likert scale from 1 – 4 giving a score of 4 – 16 for each strategy. The scores for each scale indicate the extent to which each type of coping was used.

Ingledew, Hardy, Cooper, and Jemel (1996) proposed that the coping strategies identified in COPE can be divided into four factors: problem focused coping, avoidance coping, emotion focused coping and cognitive reconstruction. The problem focused factor included active coping, planning, suppression of competing activities, and restraint coping. Denial, behavioural and mental disengagement, and turning to alcohol were the components they determined constituted avoidance coping behaviour. The third factor, emotional-focused coping, comprised seeking instrumental and emotional social support and focus on venting of emotions. The fourth factor, cognitive reconstruction consisted

of the scales positive reinterpretation and acceptance. Ingledew et al (1996) omitted humour and religion. This breakdown into broader categories was considered useful for this study and these factors were calculated.

Weinman et al (1995) maintained that coping responses could be categorised into adaptive, less adaptive and maladaptive coping. They hypothesised that active coping, planning, seeking instrumental social support, positive reinterpretation and growth, and acceptance are adaptive in situations where active coping is associated with a good outcome. With seeking emotional social support, suppression of competing activities, and restraint coping there is a less obvious link with active coping but they suggest that they should be adaptive. In contrast, they conclude that focusing on and venting of emotions, denial, and behavioural and mental disengagement describe responses, which are expected to be maladaptive in situations where active coping is called for. However, they insist that these strategies are not intrinsically maladaptive.

These sub-divisions contribute to the flexibility of the inventory and their existence was considered in selecting COPE for this research.

There was no appropriate normative data offered and therefore it was decided to request the control group to complete the questionnaire. The situational version was used for participants who had been bullied, as they were obviously coping with the effects of bullying behaviours at the time of their assessment. This version elicits responses to a specific stressor. Since the control group were selected on the basis of not being under a particular stress at the time of completion, the dispositional version of COPE was used.

Carver and Scheier (1989) purport that internal consistency is acceptably high with only one Cronbach's alpha coefficient falling below 0.60 (mental disengagement). Evidence of test-retest reliability, with the exception of mental disengagement (0.45) vary between 0.42 and 0.89. They admit that the self-reports of coping tendencies measured by COPE are not in general as stable as personality traits but are relatively stable.

2. 3. 11 Personality

A strong argument for treating personality as an integral element for understanding how people adapt to adversity was presented by Aldwin et al (1996). They maintain that the study of coping is rooted in individual differences in reaction to stress,

with the assumption that how individuals cope is largely a function of personality characteristics, which result in global coping styles.

Personality measurement has been hindered by disagreements over the consistency of behaviour and over which factors should be included in an adequate description of normal personality. John (1990) contended that in recent years both debates have been to some extent resolved; most researchers believe that behaviour is sufficiently stable to allow meaningful measurement, and that the five factor theory provides a reasonable taxonomy of personality.

Although the Personality Inventories of Cattell (1986), and Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (Briggs & Myers, 1976) were considered in detail, more recent research has used Costa and McCrae's NEO-PI (Costa & McCrae, 1992). The NEO-PI-R was developed to measure the five-factor model of personality which are considered to represent the most basic dimensions underlying personality traits. The domains measured include neuroticism, extraversion, openness, agreeableness, and conscientiousness. Each domain consists of 12 facets.

Costa and McCrae (1992) described the five domains. They considered neuroticism to be the most pervasive domain of personality. This domain contrasts adjustment, or emotional ability with mal-adjustment, or neuroticism. The second domain is extraversion. They maintained that extraverts are not only sociable but like people, prefer large groups, are assertive, active, and talkative. In contrast they described introverts as reserved, independent, and even-paced. The openness domain illustrates openness to experience in the respondent. The elements are active imagination, aesthetic sensitivity, attentiveness to inner feelings, preference for variety, intellectual curiosity, and independence of judgement. According to Costa and McCrae (1992) people with low scores on this scale tend to be conventional in behaviour and conservative in outlook. Agreeableness is primarily a dimension of interpersonal tendencies with a high score identifying sympathy to others and eagerness to help. A low scorer is egocentric, sceptical of others intentions, and competitive rather than co-operative. The final domain identifies the conscientious person as an individual who is purposeful, strong-willed and determined, with high academic and occupational achievement. Costa and McCrae (1992) point out that low scorers are not necessarily lacking in moral principles but they

are less exacting in applying them, and are more easygoing in working towards their goals.

In operation the participant is presented with 60 statements, which are given values from 0 - 4. However, for this study, to keep this inventory in line with others that were presented to participants, the scale was altered to 1 - 5. "The statement is definitely false" is given a value of 1; "the statement is mostly false" is 2; "you are neutral on the statement, you cannot decide, or the statement is about equally true and false" is 3; "the statement is mostly true" is 4; and "the statement is definitely true" is 5. The neuroticism domain is identified by statements such as "I often feel inferior to others". Extraversion is identified by statements such as "I like to have a lot of people around me". A statement such as "once I find the right way to do something, I stick to it" represents the openness domain and illustrates that some of the statements are in reverse. Agreeableness is represented by statements such as "I try to be courteous to everyone I meet". The final domain, conscientiousness, is represented by statements such as "I keep my belongings neat and clean".

Raw scores are entered on scales which enables results to be compared with normalised data. This gives results of "very low", "low", "average", "high", and "very high" for both men and women. Although these norms were used in this study, it was also decided to request the control group to complete the NEO-PI-R to avoid cultural differences.

Juni (1995) reports that the NEO-PI-R is a reliable and a well-validated test of personality features deriving from a theoretical base lacking in conceptualisation; validation studies are well constructed, plentiful and impressive. Kline (1993) also concludes that the NEO-PI-R is by far the best-developed measure of the big five personality factors and maintains that recent research indicates that there is little doubt that these are the main factors among traits. This version of NEO-PI-R has adequate psychometric properties and was considered to be the most appropriate measure for this research with retest reliability for the facet scales ranged from 0.66 to 0.92 and for the Neuroticism, Extravesion, and Openness domain scales were 0.87, 0.91, and 0.86 respectively. A six-year longitudinal study of Neuroticism, Extravesion, and Openness scales showed stability coefficients ranging from 0.68 to 0.83 (Costa & McCrae, 1992).

2. 4 Procedure

Participants of the study who formed the bullied group as described in 2.1, were interviewed in available offices/seminar rooms in the Department of Education, Trinity College, Dublin. The settings were far from ideal as they were unfamiliar to the researcher and liable to interruption. However, on some occasions these surroundings appeared to put the interviewee at ease and led to a level of informality.

Qualitative data were gathered during interviews. The semi-structured interviews were devised to last between one to two hours but the time was flexible and if necessary extended until the participant had finished relating their experiences. As a high level of distress and anxiety in participants was expected, time was spent at the beginning of the interview reassuring the person and the format of the interview was explained to them. While maintaining a level of objectivity, the interviewees needed frequent reassurance that they were believed.

Since the purpose of the interview was for the benefit of the interviewee, in obtaining a psychological assessment or advice and support, and not for research purposes, the style and content of the interview had to be dictated by their requirements. A sheet (Appendix II) was devised to ensure that all information necessary for the psychological assessment report was collected. This included the interviewee's name, address, date of birth, marital status, name of the employer where the alleged bullying had taken place, their position in the organisation, and how long they had worked for the organisation. Information regarding medication and psychological and psychiatric treatment was also noted as well as any background information, which could affect their state of psychological distress. This information was collected at the beginning of the interview.

Each person was observed with regard to their level of distress, anxiety and anger as they spoke of their experiences at work and this was noted. The subsequent order of the content of the interview, to a great extent, depended on the level of distress of the interviewee with the interviewer asking appropriate questions to ensure that all information was gathered. To overcome problems such as self-reporting bias, core questions were asked irregularly throughout the interview rather than in a specific order.

No formal interview guide was used but some items were common to each

interview, and the main themes persisted. Once specific details on the sheet had been obtained, few questions were asked and the person was allowed to "tell their story". Initially the interviewee was asked to outline their career with the organisation where the alleged bullying behaviours occurred, with particular emphasis on those factors that they saw as contributing to their present state of psychological health. On occasions the required information was given with little prompting but if this information did not emerge spontaneously during the interview, direct questions were asked.

During the early stages of this study the researcher interviewed each participant alone but later she was accompanied by a second researcher, who was able to take more comprehensive notes. Notes concentrated on the nature and effects of bullying behaviours, but emphasis was on observing the person with the knowledge that inventories would be used to obtain or confirm details. Since note taking was disjointed, with some comments consisting of individual words, statements used as data for the study, had to be re-written in the researcher's own words.

If written records, such as correspondence between the interviewee and their employer, or the Statement of Claim to be used in the court case were presented these were scrutinised and also used for data collection. This gave information that was necessary for psychological assessment reports but was generally of little value for this study.

Follow-up phone calls were made to participants in the bullied group, at approximately three monthly intervals, to monitor their progress as they took action to deal with their distressing experiences at work. The phone calls took the form of support calls and the required information was noted.

The qualitative data, with regard to the mental health of participants, had been organised into themes and confirmed, or otherwise, by psychometric findings from the completion of questionnaires and inventories. They were completed at the end of the interview. Interviewees were given the option of completing the inventories themselves, in the presence of the researcher, or having the statements read out to them by the researcher who marked the appropriate response.

The inventories, described in sections 2.3.5 to 2.3.9, measure general physical and psychological health (General Health Questionnaire, Goldberg & Williams, 1988),

anxiety (State/Trait Anxiety Inventory, Spielberger, 1970), anger (State/Trait Anger Expression Inventory, Spielberger, 1991), the level of trauma (Impact of Event Scale, Horowitz et al, 1979), and self-esteem (Self Esteem Scale, Rosenberg, 1965). To minimise demand characteristics, where participants in research are anxious to confirm what they consider to be the desired outcomes of the research, the inventories were presented, untitled, to participants. However, each inventory was explained to participants at the end of the interview. Completion time for the combined inventories is approximately 25 minutes.

Interviewees were given the questionnaire (O'Moore, 1999) to elicit information described in 2.3.1. to 2.3.4 and an addressed envelope, to be taken home and completed in their own time. It was explained to those attending for a psychological assessment that the responses to this questionnaire were needed for the assessment report. Completion time for this questionnaire is approximately 20 – 30 minutes.

Interviewees who were selected to form the bullied group (N = 37) were given additional questionnaires, which included those to identify coping strategies (COPE, Carver et al 1989), personality constructs (NEO-PI-R, Costa & McCrae, 1992), and the level of job satisfaction, organisational commitment and work pressure (Pressure Management Indicator, Williams & Cooper, 1998). The questionnaires and inventories were not labelled. These questionnaires are described in 2.3.3 and 2.3.10 and 2.3.11. It was explained to the selected participants that they were not to proceed with completing the additional questionnaires if they found that it caused distress. It was also explained that their anonymity would be maintained if information concerning them was used for this study, and that the return of the questionnaires would be taken to be their consent to the information being used. Following this decision and discussion, questionnaires were given to participants to be completed in their own time (completion time was likely to have been approximately one hour) and returned to the Anti Bullying Research and Resource Centre in a pre-addressed envelope.

Quantitative data was gathered from the control group by the completion of inventories that would assess their self-esteem (Self Esteem Scale, Rosenberg, 1965), coping strategies (COPE, Carver et al 1989), personality constructs (NEO-PI-R, Costa and McCrae, 1992), and the level of job satisfaction, organisational commitment and

work pressure (Pressure Management Indicator, Williams and Cooper, 1998). The inventories were not labelled and were delivered by hand. An explanatory letter asked for the completed inventories to be returned by post, to the Anti Bullying Research and Resource Centre and assured participants that their anonymity would be secured. This letter also explained the purpose of the research.

2. 5 Data analysis

Data were analysed using SPSS Version 10. The data were initially screened to ensure that only information from correctly completed questionnaires was included. Statistical tests used in the comparison of data are non-parametric as the sample population is small. Scrutiny of data showed that they are not normally distributed and, for this reason also, median and mode scores are presented in the results. However, the literature on workplace bullying revealed that it is common practice to present mean and standard deviation scores and, therefore, these have also been included.

SECTION 3 - RESULTS

The results are presented in seven sections. Demographic details of the bullied and control groups and details of their employment are presented. This is followed by the nature of the bullying behaviours and information with regard to the perpetrators, as perceived by the recipients. The third section examines organisational factors such as job and organisation satisfaction, organisational security and commitment, and work pressure. Findings of both the bullied and control groups are presented. The fourth section examines the negative effects of the bullying behaviours on the bullied group, with self-esteem scores presented for both groups. Coping strategies and personality constructs are examined for both groups in sections five and six. Finally, in the seventh section, the actions taken by the bullied group in their attempts to deal with their negative experiences at work are presented.

The qualitative element of the research is presented in the form of comments made by participants and are included where appropriate in sections 2 - 7.

Appendix II contains the raw quantitative data and Appendix III consists of the qualitative data relating to each person in the bullied group.

3. 1 Demographic details

Demographic details were collected from the bullied group. Due to incorrectly completed questionnaires it is possible to present demographic details for only 30 of the 37 people who had agreed to take part in the study. The sample was equally divided between men and women and this breakdown was matched for the control group. There were 30 correctly completed questionnaires received from the control group.

3. 1. 1 Age profile

There was no attempt to select participants according to their age group, the frequency of which is presented in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1 Age profile and frequency of the bullied group

Age Group	Frequency		
	Female N = 15	Male N = 15	Total N = 30
Between 31 and 40	2	2	4
Between 41 and 50	10	7	17
Between 51 and 60	3	5	8
61 and older	0	1	1

It can be seen from the Table 3.1 that there were no participants in the bullied group under the age of 30 and more than half (N = 17) were in the 41 to 50 age group. All but four bullied participants were matched with respect to age in the control group and the results are shown in Table 3.2.

Table 3.2 Age profile and frequency of the control group

Age Group	Frequency		
	Female N = 15	Male N = 15	Total N = 30
Under 30	1	1	2
Between 31 and 40	1	1	2
Between 41 and 50	10	6	16
Between 51 and 60	2	6	8
61 and older	1	1	2

3. 1. 2 Marital Status

The majority of the bullied group (70%) were married or living with their partner, 20% were single and 10% were separated or divorced. Two thirds of the control group were married and one third was single. None of the control group were separated or divorced.

3. 1. 3 Area of work

Participants in the bullied group were asked to identify their area and type of work. So that results of this research can be compared with other research in Ireland, the employment details of participants were placed within the economic sector and occupational groups used by the Central Statistics Office in carrying out national surveys in Ireland. Table 3.3 shows the number of the bullied group working in the categories within each economic sector.

Table 3.3 Economic sector and number of bullied group in each sector

ECONOMIC SECTOR	Female N = 15	Male N = 15	Total N = 30
		Frequency	
Agriculture/forestry/ fisheries	1	0	1
Other production	1	2	3
Construction	0	2	2
Wholesale-retail	2	1	3
Financial and other business	3	2	5
Public administration and defence	3	2	5
Education and Health	3	5	8
Other*	2	1	3

*Other areas of work include a Trade Union, a religious body, and a voluntary organisation.

From this table it can be seen that the greatest number of people (N = 8) worked in education and health. The second most common sectors represented were financial and other business (N = 5), and public administration and defence (N = 5). The hotels / restaurants and transport / storage / communication sectors were not represented. Three participants in the control group were not matched in regard to the economic sector resulting in an additional two females from the Education and Health sector and one additional male in the Public administration.

Table 3.4 Occupational Group and number of participants in each group

Occupational group	Frequency Female N = 15	Male N = 15	Total N = 30
Management/administration	6	5	11
Professional	4	6	10
Professional/technical	1	1	2
Clerical/secretarial	4	0	4
Craft and related	0	2	2
Sales	0	1	1

Table 3.4 shows the occupational groups used by the Central Statistics Office and the number of male and female participants from the bullied group working in each group. It can be seen that twenty three (77%) of the participants were employed in managerial, professional, or professional/technical occupational groups. The protection service, and plant and machine operatives were not represented.

3. 1. 4 Length of service in organisation and present position

Participants in the bullied group, had been employed by their present or most recent employer (if they were no longer working) for a minimum period of one year to a maximum of 40 years at the time of their assessments. The average time was 17.5 years, with standard deviation 9.75 years. They had been in their present, or most recent, positions for an average of 10.7 years, with standard deviation 9.85 years. Table 3.5 shows that although almost half of the bullied group (N = 14) had been with their present or most recent employer for 20 years or under, 19 had been in their present or most recent position when they were being assessed.

Table 3.5 Length of service of participants in the bullied group with their present (or most recent) employer and present (or most recent) position.

Time in present or most recent job / position	Frequency (with employer)			Frequency (in position)		
	Female N = 15	Male N = 15	Total N = 30	Female N = 15	Male N = 15	Total N = 30
< 10 years	3	3	6	11	8	19
11 - 20 years	7	7	14	1	4	5
21 - 30 years	4	3	7	2	3	5
31 - 40 years	1	2	3	1	0	1

3. 1. 5 Gender composition of the organisation

To establish the gender composition of organisations participants in the bullied group were asked to identify the ratio of men to women in the organisation in which they were employed. The categories with which they were presented were mostly men (80-100%), more men than women (60-80%), equal numbers of men and women, more women than men (60-80%), and mostly women (80-100%).

Table 3.6   Gender ratio of the organisations.

	Frequency		
Gender ratio	Female N = 15	Male N = 15	Total N = 30
Mostly men (80–100%)	3	8	11
More men than women (60-80%)	1	2	3
Equal numbers of men and women	1	2	3
More women than men (60-80%)	4	3	7
Mostly women (80-100%)	6	0	6

It can be seen from Table 3.6 that more than a third of participants in the bullied group (N = 11) worked in organisations that employed mostly men and under a quarter (N = 7) worked with more women than men. More men worked in male dominated

environments (N = 10) and more women worked in female dominated environments (N = 10).

3. 2. Negative Behaviours

Qualitative data, obtained during in interview with the bullied group, are presented initially followed by quantitative data of negative behaviours selected by self-report. These are presented as frequencies of occurrence in regard to gender and age.

3. 2. 1 Qualitative data

During interview, with bullied participants, they were asked to describe the behaviours to which they had been subjected.

It was evident that recipients of negative behaviours do not always recognise that they are being bullied. It was also evident that the negative behaviours appeared to be insignificant to the recipients initially and that the repetition of behaviours led the person to conclude that they were being bullied. Comments to illustrate this are presented below.

6 (M) I couldn't understand what was happening . . . I didn't realise for months that it was bullying.

17 (F) I didn't recognise it as bullying for a long time. I thought that if I worked harder they would leave me alone. I would be in work at 8 o'clock in the morning and always be the last to leave - but one of them would come into my department during the day and find an untidy rail, or some litter, or something in the wrong place. I could not work out what they wanted and then I realised that they wanted me to leave and they were bullying me.

16 (F) This was so stupid ... it was all about lighting ... I offered to pay for it myself but that made things worse and she gave me a negative appraisal ...then I realised it was serious.

Nevertheless the bullying behaviours were seen as severe as illustrated by the following comment.

13 (F)) The unbridled predatory behaviour of **** is nothing short of wilful institutional abuse.

Comments showed that bullying behaviours could be placed into the categories identified by Einarsen (1999).

Work related:

3 (F) ... stopped me from doing my job by excluding me from meetings.

27 (F) I was excluded from all work-team meetings so I had no idea of who was doing what ... then I got blamed for not knowing what was going on.

Verbal threats:

5 (F) He said "If you ever try that again I'll ruin you".

20 (M) he said "go home and think about your future in the company and I will do the same ... you are a liar and you are dishonest".

22 (M) He put pressure on me to comply with his financial practices ... they veered on dishonesty.

Isolation and social exclusion:

2 (F) . . . excluded from meetings.

8 (F) In the end everyone sided with her and I was totally left out of everything.

Personal affronts and humiliation:

9 (F) I was subjected to open humiliation during conference calls.

12 (F) She made derogatory remarks concerning my competency as a parent.

Physical abuse or threats of physical abuse:

5 (F) He walked threateningly towards me ... I felt real fear ... I thought he would hit me.

*7 (M) I was directly and physically manhandled by ****. I felt and experienced it as a physical and frightening attack on me.*

12 (F) One colleague threw vouchers at me and another backed me up against a press and warned me to keep away from her desk.

19 (M) He drove his car into me deliberately and I was knocked down.

28 (F) He held his fist up close to my face and said that his wife also wanted to hit me.

Sexual harassment:

4 (M) He put pressure on me to visit strip clubs when I was on a trip to New York ... there were frequent sexual innuendoes in e-mails.

28 (F) This was sexual harassment ... I was told to "pucker your lips and give us a kiss".

Scrutiny of this data reveals that participants in the bullied group, therefore, experienced negative behaviours representative of those identified by Einarsen (1999).

3. 2. 2 Quantitative data

The individual negative behaviours to which the bullied group claimed to have been subjected were examined with regards to the gender and age.

Table 3.7 Negative behaviours and frequency with regard to gender

Negative behaviour	Frequency			%
	Female N = 15	Male N = 15	Total N = 30	
Withholding information so that work becomes difficult	15	13	28	93
Severe or unfair criticism	12	15	27	90
Humiliation at being shouted at	12	9	21	70
Set unrealistic work targets	12	13	25	83
Sexual harassment	1	2	3	10
Spreading malicious rumours to discredit	11	10	21	70
Excessive monitoring of work	12	11	23	77
Physical abuse or threat of physical abuse	4	5	9	30
Ordered to work below level of competence	10	6	16	53
Hurtful teasing, mocking, ridicule - in front of others	7	13	20	67
Deprived of responsibility or work tasks	14	9	23	77
Use of foul, obscene, or offensive language	10	9	19	63
Contacted at home weekends, holidays, sick leave, with "urgent" work or unreasonable demands	7	12	19	63
Given deliberately ambiguous instructions and then blamed for failure	8	9	17	57
Social exclusion	11	11	22	73
Intimidation, threats of disciplinary action, blocking promotion or pay increments	13	14	27	90
Encouraged staff to disregard views	11	13	24	80
Neglect of opinion or views	14	13	27	90
False claims of under performance that do not square with the facts	12	14	26	87
Silence or hostility as a response to attempts at conversation	11	14	25	83
Devaluing work and efforts	13	12	25	83
Undue pressure to vote in a certain way at meetings	6	5	11	37
Interference or disappearance of personal items	7	5	12	40
Difficulty with requests for sick leave, holidays, compassionate leave	9	9	18	60

From Table 3.7 it can be seen that the most frequent negative behaviours to which participants were subjected, include withholding information so that work becomes difficult, severe or unfair criticism, and intimidation by using threats of disciplinary action, blocking promotion or pay increments. Sexual harassment was the least frequent with one woman and two men being subjected to this behaviour. The other less frequent behaviours were actual abuse or threats of physical abuse, and undue pressure to vote in a certain way at meetings. Notable differences between the male and female respondents occurred with regard to "being ordered to work below their level of competence" (10 women and 6 men), "being deprived of responsibility or work tasks" (14 women and 9 men) and "being contacted at home" (12 men and 7 women).

Table 3.8 illustrates the negative behaviours in regard to the age of participants in the bullied group. Since there was just one person over the age of sixty, they were included in the 51 to 60 age group for this analysis. The uneven numbers in the three age groups makes comparisons difficult. However, there are variations due to age among participants who had been subjected to sexual harassment. There were no bullied participants in the younger age group, two people in the 41 - 50 age group, and one person in the over 50 age group who were subjected to this behaviour. Each person in the under 40 age group had been deprived of responsibility or work tasks compared with three quarters (N = 13) of the 41 - 50 age group and two thirds (N = 6) of the over 51 age group. The younger age group (under 40) were subjected less to having other staff disregard their views (50% compared to 82% and 89% in the other age groups). Similarly almost half of each of the older groups (N = 11 in the 41 - 50 age group and N = 4 in the over 51 age group) had more difficulty with requests for sick leave, holidays, and compassionate leave compared with the under 40's (N = 3).

Table 3.8 Negative behaviours and age group of recipients

BEHAVIOUR	Frequency		
	<40 N = 4	41-50 N = 17	51+ N = 9
Withholding information so that work becomes difficult	4	16	8
Severe or unfair criticism	4	14	9
Humiliation at being shouted at	3	12	6
Set unrealistic work targets	4	13	8
Sexual harassment	0	2	1
Spreading malicious rumours to discredit	3	10	8
Excessive monitoring of work	3	13	7
Physical abuse or threat of physical abuse	0	7	2
Ordered to work below level of competence	2	9	5
Hurtful teasing, taunting, mocking, ridicule	3	13	4
Deprived of responsibility or work tasks	4	13	6
Use of foul, obscene, or offensive language	1	14	4
Contacted at home weekends, holidays, sick leave, with "urgent" work or unreasonable demands	2	10	7
Given deliberately ambiguous instructions and then blamed for failure	2	9	6
Social exclusion	3	13	6
Intimidation, threats of disciplinary action, blocking promotion or pay increments	4	15	8
Encouraged staff to disregard views	2	14	8
Neglect of opinion or views	3	16	8
False claims of under performance that do not square with the facts	4	13	9
Silence or hostility as a response to attempts at conversation	3	15	7
Devaluing work and efforts	4	14	7
Undue pressure to vote in a certain way at meetings	1	6	4
Interference or disappearance of personal items	0	8	4
Difficulty with requests for sick leave, holidays, compassionate leave	3	11	4

3. 2. 3 Duration of bullying behaviours

During interview participants in the bullied group were asked to state how long they had endured the negative behaviours.

22 (M) 7 years ago as a result of a take over ... I thought it would stop ... for 7 years I did nothing and thought it would go away ... I feel such an idiot that I thought it would just stop ...he was the owner's son so I could do nothing.

Another participant had lived tolerated bullying behaviour for 25 years.

15 (M) I stayed and put up with it for so long (25 years) because he was my brother ... it had been the same when we were children so I was used to it. I thought that at he'd have to stop some time but the High Court was the only way to do it. He ruined my reputation and I'll never work again.

He hoped that his brother's behaviour would change. He also commented that he felt that his trust in people had been totally destroyed since *"if your brother can do that what can anyone else do"*.

Analysis of quantitative results showed that the bullied participants in the study were bullied for an average of 6.5 years but most common was a period of one, two, or four years. One person had suffered bullying for 22 years and another for 25 years.

Participants were asked to identify the status of their aggressor in comparison to their own status in their workplace. The results show that the majority of participants in the bullied group (N = 25) were bullied by people in a senior position to them, the remainder were bullied by people by those at the same level (N = 4) and by subordinates (N = 1). One person stated that she was bullied by 11 people and that they were in subordinate positions to her. A second person was bullied by 12 people, who worked at the same level. Group bullying, from between two and five people, had been endured by 15 participants in the bullied group. The results further showed that 13 people were subjected to bullying behaviour by one person. These results are shown in Table 3.9.

143

Table 3.9 Number of years of bullying behaviour endured by participants and status of their aggressor

No. of years	Frequency			
	Senior position	Same level	Subordinate level	Total
1 - 4 years	13	3	1	17
5 - 10 years	7	0	0	7
11 - 20 years	3	1	0	4
>20 years	2	0	0	2
Total	25	4	1	30

When the results were examined it was found that the greatest number of participants in the bullied group (N = 25) reported that their aggressor was a man, while the rest of the group (N = 5) were bullied by women. On examination of the data it was found that for 14 of the male participants their aggressor was another man whereas only one man was bullied by a woman. There were 11 women bullied by men and 4 women bullied by other women.

3. 2. 4 Profile of perpetrators

Examination of qualitative data, obtained during interview, illustrated the subjective opinions of recipients of bullying behaviour with regards to their aggressors. On occasions the recipients attempted to understand their aggressors.

7 (M) I tried to understand why he behaved with such apparent hatred. I concluded that it must have been my English accent or my small stature.

8 (F) I think that she felt that she was in a superior position through her husband's standing in the town.

24 (F) On occasions he was amenable and civil, but this just led me not to know what to expect.

27 (F) He was under great pressure himself - it wasn't his fault - he just wasn't able for the job. He was frustrated himself.

The descriptions given by other recipients illustrate that the aggressors were perceived in a disparaging manner.

4 (M) He was an out and out thug.

9 (F) He was an animal who was out for the kill ...he had an evil intent.

15 (M) He is by brother ... he is a born bully ...he tried to destroy me mentally.

25 (M) He became addicted to power.

26 (M) He is a classical serial bully.

28 (F) He is anti-women, racist, and had problems with women telling him what to do.

28 (F) I knew he was trouble

Group bullying was described by one participant

17 (F) With four of them at me they were there all the time and everywhere ... one of them lived down the road and I couldn't go out in case I met them.

These comments offer subjective views of people whose behaviour is alleged to be bullying. Although these data are not central to this study, they illustrate that people who claim to be bullied have formed opinions on their aggressor and that these vary and here was no consistent theme. There was no qualitative data gathered to confirm these opinions.

3. 2. 5 Onset of bullying

Participants in the bullied group were asked to give any reason why, in their opinion, the bullying behaviours had started. Results reflected that the most common reason was coming into contact with the aggressor. This was particularly the case when the aggressor had been their manager.

3 (F) The presidency changed hands and that was when my difficulties began.

23 (M) My troubles started when she became acting supervisor and wanted to put her own stamp on it.

30 (F) There was no problem until he joined the department ... I felt from the beginning that he would try to break me.

During interview, bullied participants were asked why they thought they had been bullied. One of the persistent themes was that the alleged aggressor had been envious of them.

23 (M) I felt that he was envious of me.

29 (M) I concluded that he was envious of me because I was organised.

Other participants concluded that they had contributed to the behaviours through their own actions.

1 (M) ...resulted from a query I made with regard to irregular practices among other staff members.

26 (M) There were fraudulent practices and I pointed them out.

29 (M) I have been bullied all my life ... I was bullied at school ... it is in my nature.

Another reason that became evident during interviews was that there was a culture of bullying in the organisation caused by factors outside the workplace. One person commented that:

22 (M) the friction was a result of family disagreement

Examination of the quantitative data revealed that a change in the boss, manager, or line manager coincided with the onset of bullying behaviours for almost half (N = 13) of the participants in the bullied group. A change in the nature of the job corresponded with the onset of bullying for 5 people and change in organisational operation for 3 people. Another explanation for the onset of bullying at a particular time (N = 5) was that they moved into a job where there appeared to be a culture of bullying behaviours. For 3 participants, a new staff member, with a propensity for bullying behaviours, joined their place of employment. One participant maintained that she began to be bullied when she decided to take legal action against the employer for another issue.

3. 3 Social climate in the workplace

Participants in the bullied group were encouraged in interview, to use their own words to explain the social climate of the organisation for which they worked when they were subjected to bullying behaviours. These qualitative data are presented first. This is followed by the description suggested in the questionnaire (O'Moore, 1999) and selected by participants. Finally quantitative data obtained from the Pressure Management Indicator (Williams & Cooper, 1998) are presented.

3. 3. 1 Qualitative data

Comments from the bullied group included the following statements with regard to the atmosphere in their place of employment.

147

6 (M) The atmosphere at work was fearful with intimidation, vindictiveness, power play and my subservience was demanded continually. This atmosphere lead to hyper-vigilance.

12 (F) There was an air of bullying.

13 (F) There was a total atmosphere of hostility, interactions with people were negative. The place was all picture and no sound.

17 (F) I noticed that there was an atmosphere of bullying when I joined the department.

This suggests that there was a hostile environment in the workplace without necessarily attributing blame to the individual aggressor. Other bullied participants identified particular conditions, which they concluded allowed bullying behaviours to exist.

8 (F) The work ethic in the department was not to my standard. There was an element of bad practice, laziness . . . it was dishonest.

11 (M) There was an excessive workload and I was not trained for the work.

10 (M) After the take over the culture of the organisation changed. They were systematically getting rid of the management team.

22 (M) They were not skilled in management techniques.

These comments suggest that high workload, change and poor leadership can contribute to the prevalence of bullying. However two people had no complaints about the atmosphere at work which suggests that the social environment can contribute to the incidence of bullying but that ultimately it is the behaviour of the individual which determines the existence, or otherwise, of bullying.

11 (M) It is a good place to work. I enjoyed working there and I had many friends.

19 (M) The only problem I had at work was when the union instructed the others not to talk to me.

3. 3. 2 Quantitative data: self report

The qualitative data were confirmed by the results of the completed questionnaire (O'Moore, 1999) where, in one section, participants in the bullied group were asked to select words from a list presented to them, which they felt described their working climate. There were two thirds of bullied participants who felt that their work climate was hostile, one person found it to be competitive, three worked in a business-like climate, and four people found their work climate to be friendly. However, it was found that when the gender composition of the workplace was mostly men, six men and two women found the work climate hostile. With a gender composition of mostly women, four women found the work climate hostile.

Participants in the bullied group were also asked to select words to describe management styles and staff relationships in their organisations. The majority of the participants in the bullied group (N = 27) described the management style as autocratic with over half the group (N = 18) describing their work climate as hostile. There were 3 participants who found the style of management to be laissez-faire. Over half (N = 17) the participants reported relationships among the staff as difficult, negative or critical whereas less than half (N = 13) described staff relationships as very good or variable. One person described his work climate as friendly, the management style as laissez faire, and staff relationships as very good and positive. This participant maintained that he was being bullied by members of his union.

3. 3. 3 Quantitative data measured by the Pressure Management Indicator

To expand on these subjective responses, recipients of bullying behaviours who took part in the research completed sections of the Pressure Management Indicator (Williams & Cooper, 1998). Although norms were given by Williams and Cooper (1998)

the control group were also asked to complete the Pressure Management Indicator to ensure that any cross cultural differences would not confound the results.

3. 3. 3. 1 Job and organisation satisfaction

Satisfaction with the job and the organisation for the bullied group (B gp) and the control group (C gp) are presented in Table 3.10. The scales measure job satisfaction, organisation satisfaction, organisational security, and organisational commitment.

Table 3.10 Job and organisation satisfaction experienced by participants and the control group

	Job satisfaction		Org. satisfaction		Org. security		Org. commitment	
	B gp	C gp	B gp	C gp	B gp	C gp	B gp	C gp
Mean	15.37	25.63	9.10	21.63	14.90	19.37	15.47	20.83
Median	15.50	26.00	8	22.00	14.00	19.00	16.50	21.00
Mode	6	24	6	22	20	19	10	22
Min	5	10	6	6	5	11	5	14
Max	28	36	20	32	25	29	25	29
St. Dev	7.18	5.55	3.71	5.89	5.16	3.34	5.82	3.49

From Table 3.10 it can be seen that the bullied group reported less job and organisational satisfaction. They also reported that they were concerned with the stability of their organisation and were less committed to their employer. A high score indicates more satisfaction, security and commitment.

Significant differences were found between the scores of the bullied and the control group, using the Mann-Whitney U-test, in all factors that indicate the level of job and organisation satisfaction: job satisfaction, ($U = 117.00$, $p < 0.01$) organisation satisfaction ($U = 48.00$, $p < 0.01$), organisation security ($U = 225.50$, $p < 0.01$) and organisation commitment ($U = 213.00$, $p < 0.01$).

3. 3. 3. 2 Work pressure

The Pressure Management Indicator (Williams & Cooper, 1998) also measures sources of pressure at work. Results of the bullied group (B gp) and the control group (C gp) are presented in Table 3.11 and Table 3.12.

Table 3.11 Work pressures experienced by the bullied the control group

	Workload		Relationships		Recognition of achievement		Org. climate	
	B gp	C gp	B gp	C gp	B gp	C gp	B gp	C gp
Mean	25.00	17.27	41.00	25.37	15.83	12.70	18.63	12.93
Median	26.00	16.50	43.00	24.00	16.00	14.00	18.50	13.00
Mode	31	12	48	24	12	14	19	10
Min	11	6	29	11	6	5	13	6
Max	36	29	48	42	24	19	24	19
St. Dev	6.46	6.79	6.23	9.41	5.14	4.34	2.88	3.06

It can be seen from Table 3.11 that the bullied group reported higher levels of pressure caused by workload, relationships with their work colleagues, the extent to which their achievements are recognised, and the atmosphere in their place of work.

Table 3.12 Work pressures experienced by the bullied and control group

	Personal responsibility		Managerial role		Home/work balance		Daily hassles	
	B gp	C gp	B gp	C gp	B gp	C gp	B gp	C gp
Mean	14.00	13.13	9.43	10.10	12.20	15.50	13.67	11.50
Median	14.00	12.50	9.00	8.00	10.00	13.50	14.00	11.00
Mode	10	9	6	8	6	9	17	10
Min	7	4	4	4	6	6	5	6
Max	21	21	17	17	24	32	21	21
St. Dev	3.92	3.88	4.36	3.89	5.40	7.72	4.04	3.09

Table 3.12 shows that the bullied group were more able than the control group to not allow their work pressures to interfere with their home life, and vice versa. Section

3.4.3.4 will illustrate that recipients of bullying behaviour claim that they are unable to put thoughts of their negative experiences out of their minds. The above result illustrates that, in circumstances when bullied participants were not in a hostile situation, they did not dwell on pressures in their workplace when they were at home. They reported more pressure from daily hassles at work.

Significant differences were found between the two groups, using the Mann-Whitney U-test, in some of the factors that indicate sources of pressure at work. There was a significant difference between the workload and relationships at work of the bullied and the control group (U = 185.00, p < 0.01; U = 89.00, p < 0.01) with participants in the bullied group recording a higher workload and poor working relationships. Recipients of bullying behaviours in this study also experienced significantly worse organisational climate (U = 84.00, p < 0.01) and greater daily hassles (U = 281.50, p < 0.05) than the control group. However, there was no significant difference between the groups in regard to recognition of achievements, personal responsibility, managerial role, and home / work balance.

3. 4 Effects of negative behaviour

Participants were encouraged, in interview, to use their own words to explain the distress which they concluded had been brought on by their negative experiences in their place of work. This qualitative data was arranged into physiological and psychological effects and behavioural changes, and are presented first. This is followed by the symptoms and changes identified by self-report from lists included in the questionnaire (O'Moore, 1999). Finally quantitative data obtained from psychometric questionnaires and inventories are presented.

3. 4.1 Qualitative data

Participants were asked, in interview, to report the effects which, they maintained, had resulted from negative behaviours in their workplace. Their comments included statements that illustrated the severity and long term consequences of their suffering.

5 (F) Now I'm an alcoholic - I'll never work again - I'm 48 and finished.

14(F) I cannot bear it that so many people hate me and want to destroy me.

16 (F) I watch other people getting on with their lives ... I was forced to retire and I know that I could have worked for many more years.

Further comments suggest that effects of bullying, on recipients of such behaviours, can be broken down into categories that will be confirmed by quantitative data: physiological and psychological symptoms and behavioural changes.

Physiological symptoms:

16 (F) I have no energy - I feel as if I am sick.

9 (F) I was diagnosed with chronic fatigue syndrome ... I had facial droop on the left side.

8 (F) I thought I was dying of cancer - knot in stomach - unable to breath.

23 (M) I had a blackout and collapsed... I was hospitalised.

Psychological symptoms:

5 (F) I don't have the confidence to apply for another job.

18(F) I became very anxious ... lost confidence when I'm with other people.

9 (F) When I heard an American accent it was enough to take me back into deep despair.

8 (F) I have never mentioned this to anyone else but one night I went into the back garden

and wished I was dead. I can't believe that I thought that because we are such a close family and they wouldn't survive without me.

17 (F) I was really frightened when I was in my car on the roof car park ... I was going to drive off and then I wouldn't have to face them again ... then I decided that they had taken four years of my life, they were not going to get away with actually taking my life.

25 (M) I sat in the car ... I was at the right place in the river to drive in ... thoughts of my family stopped me.

Behavioural changes:

3 (F) I am unable to complete my studies.

15 (M) I became a control freak with my family.

18 (F) I can't go to lunch at work ... I am afraid to make relationships in and out of work

These comments suggest that the effects of bullying on participants in this study were severe to the extent that there was suicide ideation. For others, although they had suffered as individuals, the effects on their family had been just as serious.

6 (M) I have no family life ... I have suffered but so have my wife and kids.

7 (M) My children wrote me a note 'don't let the work bugs bite, Daddy'.

21 (M) I haven't been away on holiday for 5 years. My daughter leaves school next year and doesn't know what a family holiday is like ... she doesn't know what a family is like.

25 (M) My children lost 8 years of parenting

Two people concluded that they suffered no permanent negative effects due to their experiences

24 (F) I have no long term effects ... I am over it now. At the time I needed medication, counselling ... I had a complete lack of trust in everybody and was obsessed with the problem ... I was suspicious and morbid. I used the opportunity to learn and improve myself.

29 (M) I keep myself fit by exercise. I have a strenuous keep fit regime and run in marathons.

However, these participants commented that at the time of their negative experiences and for a long period time afterwards (7 years for 24F and 3 years for 29M), they had been seriously affected.

3. 4. 2 Quantitative data: self report

Qualitative data were confirmed by quantitative data. The physiological and psychological effects of bullying behaviours on recipients was assessed, by presenting participants in the bullied group with a list of symptoms and asking them to identify those from which they concluded they suffered. Bullied participants were also asked to identify behavioural changes in themselves. Table 3.13 shows the number of physiological and psychological symptoms, identified by the bullied group, and illustrates the high level of symptoms experienced by them. All participants had experienced disturbed sleep, anxiety, loss of confidence and loss of self-esteem. Of most concern is the high rate of depression (N = 24) and suicide ideation (N = 16). This is despite participants taking prescribed medication (N = 21) for depression (N = 17), anti anxiety tablets (N = 1) and sleeping tablets (N = 4) as a direct result of being the recipient of bullying behaviours. At the time of their assessments twenty-four people were, or had been, receiving counselling highlighting the need for psychological intervention.

155

Table 3.13 Physiological and psychological symptoms

Physiological symptoms	Frequency N = 30	Psychological symptoms	Frequency N = 30
Headaches	26	Anger	26
Sweating/shaking	25	Anxiety	30
Palpitations	19	Worry	29
Feeling/being sick	25	Fear	29
Stomach/bowel problems	24	Panic attacks	18
Raised blood pressure	11	Depression	24
Disturbed sleep	30	Loss confidence	30
Loss of energy	27	Loss self-esteem	30
Loss of appetite	24	Tearfulness	26
		Loss of concentration	27
		Forgetfulness	23
		Lack of motivation	26
		Thoughts of suicide	16
		Feeling isolated	27
		Feeling helpless	28

Reported behavioural changes for bullied participants are shown in Table 3.14. The majority of people in this group showed increased irritability (N = 28), becoming totally emotionally drained (N = 27), becoming withdrawn (N = 24), and obsessive dwelling on their aggressor (N = 22).

Table 3.14 Behavioural changes

Behavioural changes	Frequency N = 30
Becoming aggressive	9
Becoming irritable	28
Becoming vengeful	12
Becoming withdrawn	24
Greater use of tobacco	8
Greater use of alcohol	11
Greater use of prescribed drugs	21
Obsessive dwelling on the aggressor	22
Becoming hypersensitive to criticism	19
Becoming totally emotionally drained	27

Statistical results of physiological and psychological symptoms, and behavioural changes among bullied participants are illustrated in the Table 3.15.

Table 3.15 Physiological and psychological symptoms, and behavioural changes.

	Physiological symptoms N = 9	Psychological symptoms N = 15	Behavioural changes N = 10	Total score N = 34
Mean	7.17	13.17	6.33	26.67
Median	8.00	13.50	6.00	27.00
Mode	8	15	5	31
Minimum	3	8	2	17
Maximum	9	15	9	32
Std Dev	1.66	1.90	1.94	4.58

Examination of Table 3.15 illustrates the high prevalence of physiological and psychological symptoms in the bullied participants. However, there was less evidence of behavioural changes. Significant differences were found between those who had admitted to thoughts of suicide and the number of psychological symptoms identified by self report.

People with suicide ideation suffered a greater number of psychological symptoms (U = 35.50, p < 0.01).

3. 4. 3 Quantitative data - psychological scales and inventories

Recognised psychological scales and inventories were used to confirm the symptoms and behaviours reported by participants. Results of each inventory are presented below.

3. 4. 3. 1 General Health Questionnaire (Goldberg & Williams, 1988).

Results from the General Health Questionnaire (Goldberg & Williams, 1988) (GHQ) were examined. Statistical analysis of scores from the four subscales, somatic symptoms, anxiety and insomnia, social dysfunction, and depression, together with the total score is presented in Table 3.16. The minimum score, on the sub-scales and total scale is 0, with a maximum score of 7 and 28, respectively.

Table 3.16 Scores on the General Health Questionnaire (Goldberg & Williams, 1988)

	Somatic symptoms	Anxiety and insomnia	Social dysfunction	Depression	Total
Mean	4.57	5.67	5.00	2.87	18.10
Median	5.00	6.50	6.00	2.00	19.50
Mode	6, 7	7	7	0	28
Minimum score	0	0	0	0	0
Maximum score	7	7	7	7	28
Std. Dev.	2.30	1.88	2.35	2.67	7.76

One person's score in this inventory indicated that they did not have symptoms of physical or mental ill-health, although this person had identified 8 / 9 physiological symptoms, 14 / 15 psychological symptoms, and 8 / 9 behavioural changes by self report. In interview, it became evident that this person had suffered greatly at the time when she was bullied but at the time of her assessment she had gained strength and support and her mental and physical well-being was high. Four people gave a maximum score of 28.

Examination of data revealed that there was a significant correlation between the GHQ total scores and the psychological symptom self-report score (Spearman's rho = 0.540 p <0.01). There was also a significant correlation between the GHQ total score and the total score for physiological and psychological symptoms, and behavioural changes (Spearman's rho = 0.393 p<0.05). This indicates that the measures on the GHQ reflects those obtained by self-report.

Significant differences were sought between the GHQ scores of participants in the bullied group who had expressed suicide ideation. Those who had expressed thoughts of suicide scored higher in the GHQ depression sub-scale ((U = 24.50, p < 0.01) and the GHQ total score (U = 61.00, p < 0.05).

There were no significant differences between men and women in the scores on the GHQ. However Figure 3.1 illustrates that both men and women in the 40's age group had lower mean scores than those in the other age groups and that the range in this group was high.

Figure 3.1 Boxplot of GHQ total score, age and gender

159
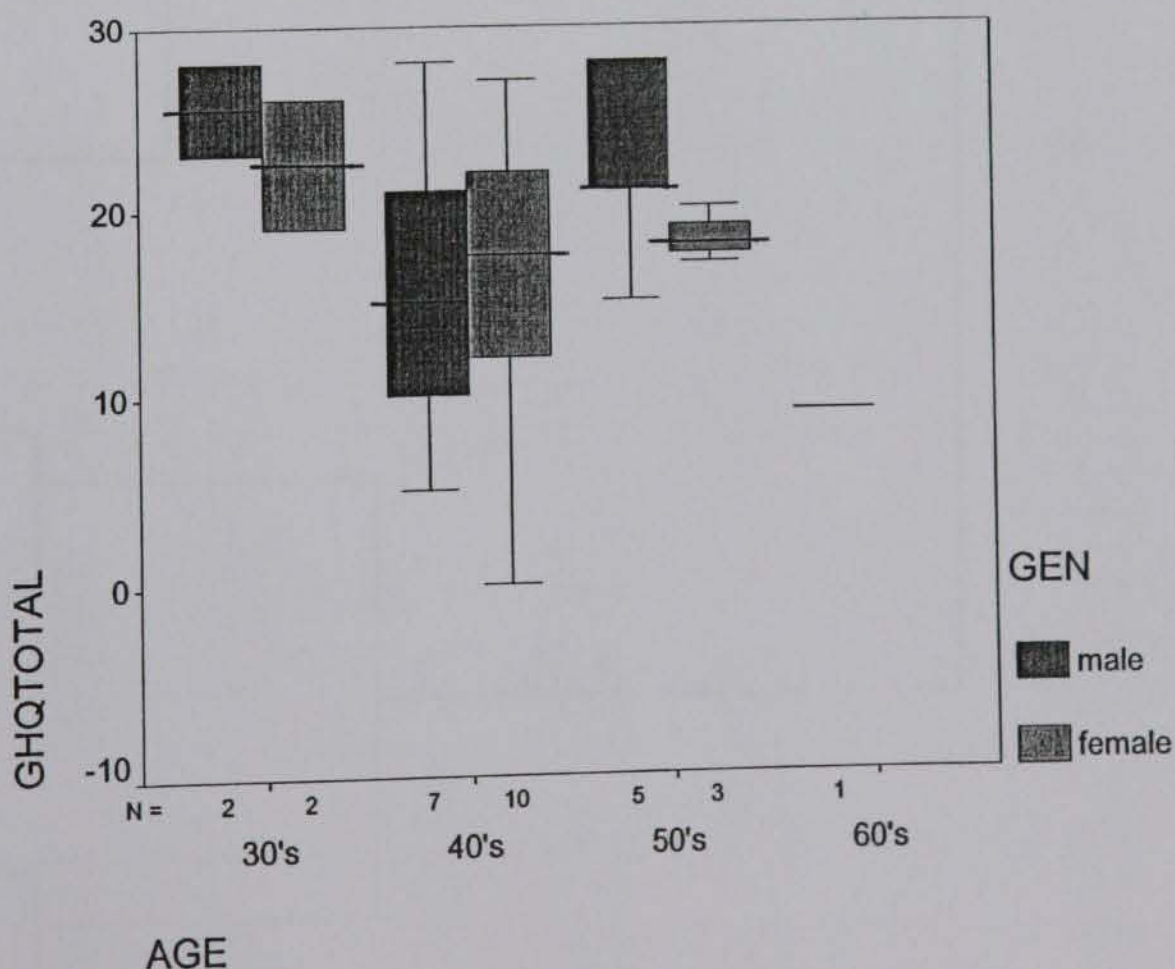
Using hierarchical cluster analysis, the dendrogram illustrated in Figure 3.2 shows which individuals are most closely related with each other with regard to the GHQ total score.

Figure 3.2 Dendrogram representing GHQ total scores using average linkage


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                        Rescaled Distance Cluster Combine

C A S E      0          5         10         15         20         25
Label   Num  +---------+---------+---------+---------+---------+

  27
  28
   5
  10
   6
  15
   3
  30
  14
  19
  16
   2
  11
  17
  20
  22
   4
   7
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  26
  12
  18
  13
  25
  24
  29
   8
```
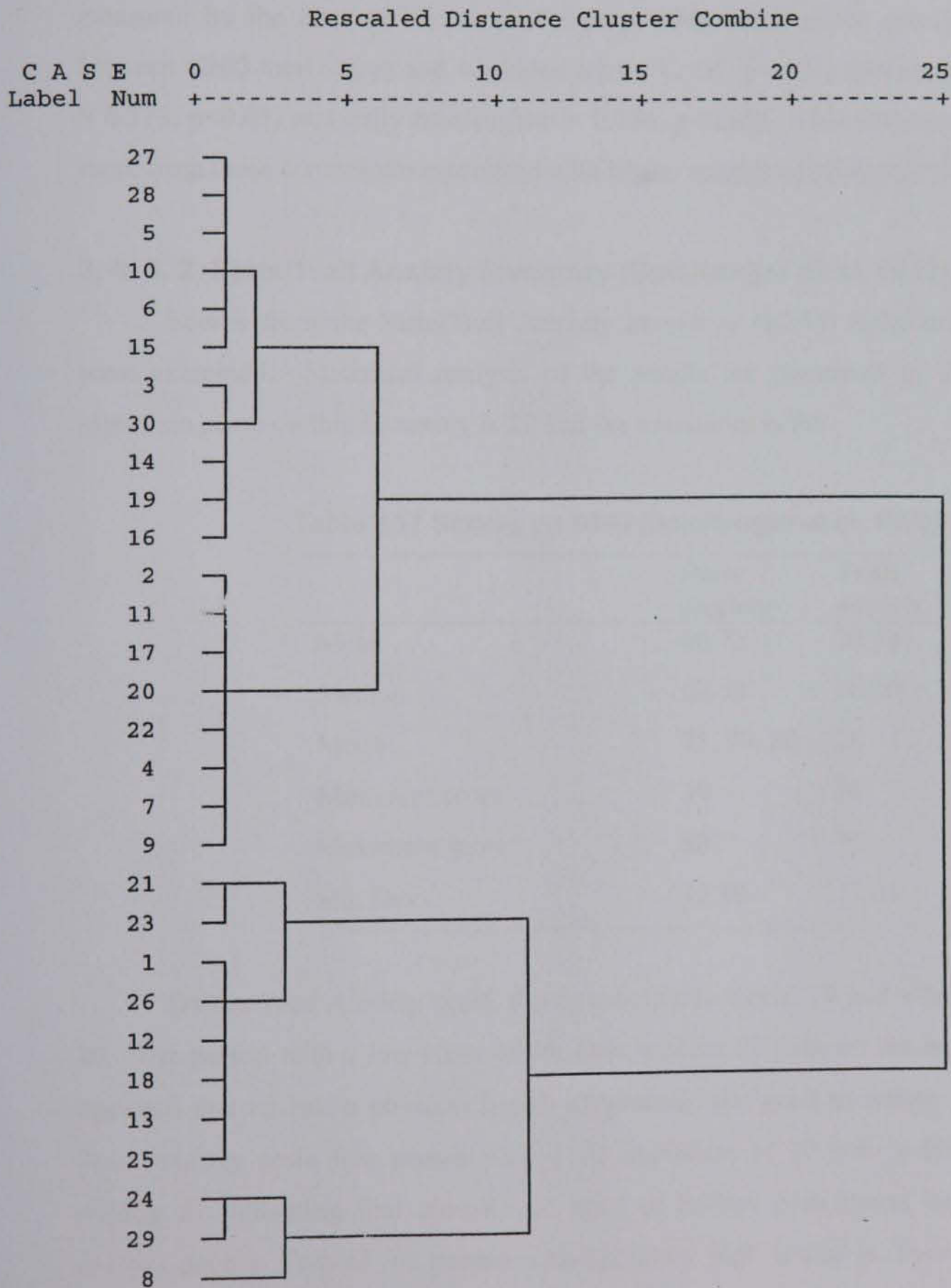
Examination of the dendrogram shows that two groups emerge and scrutiny of the raw data revealed that the minority group (N = 11) had a low GHQ total score. However, the raw data did not reveal any obvious reason why this group should be produced. Case numbers 8 (F), 24 (F), and 29 (M) emerged as a sub group. Qualitative data showed that these people concluded that they had coped well with their distressing circumstances. Comparisons were made between scores on the GHQ and aspects of the pressures at work measured by the PMI (Williams & Cooper, 1998). A positive correlation was found between GHQ total scores and workload (rho = 0.505, p<0.01) relationships at work (rho = 0.373, p<0.05) and daily hassles (rho = 0.386, p<0.05). This indicates that pressure at work from these sources are associated with higher mental and physical ill-health.

3. 4. 3. 2 State/Trait Anxiety Inventory (Spielberger et al, 1970),

Scores from the State/Trait Anxiety Inventory (STAI) Spielberger et al, (1970) were examined. Statistical analysis of the results are presented in Table 3.17. The minimum score on this inventory is 20 and the maximum is 80.

Table 3.17 Scores on STAI (Spielberger et al, 1970)

	State anxiety	Trait anxiety
Mean	66.73	30.50
Median	69.50	28.00
Mode	75, 79, 80	20
Minimum score	39	20
Maximum score	80	70
Std. Dev.	12.50	11.61

On the State Anxiety scale, three participants scored 79 and a further three scored 80. The person with a low score of 39, case number 29 (M), on the State Anxiety scale admitted that he had a physical health programme designed to reduce anxiety. On the Trait Anxiety scale five people scored the minimum of 20 with a further four people scoring 21 indicating that almost one third of bullied participants were normally not anxious people. Two of the people with relatively high scores in Trait Anxiety had the

same score on the State Anxiety scale indicating that there were no effects of bullying behaviour on their level of anxiety.

Spearman's rho indicated that there is a negative correlation between state and trait anxiety (rho = -0.542 p < 0.01), indicating that an anxious person is less likely to feel more anxious when subjected to bullying behaviours. There was a positive correlation between state anxiety and the anxiety score on the General Health Questionnaire (rho = 0.646, p < 0.01) indicating that these measures of anxiety are comparable.

Using the Mann-Whitney U-test it was found that where men had significantly higher scores than women in trait anxiety (U = 58.5, p < 0.05), there was no significant difference in state anxiety between men and women.

Boxplots were produced to illustrate the state anxiety score and the GHQ anxiety score for gender and age differences. Figures 3.3 and 3.4 show that for both inventories that male participants in the 40's age group had the lowest mean scores.

Figure 3.3 Boxplot of state anxiety score, age, and gender
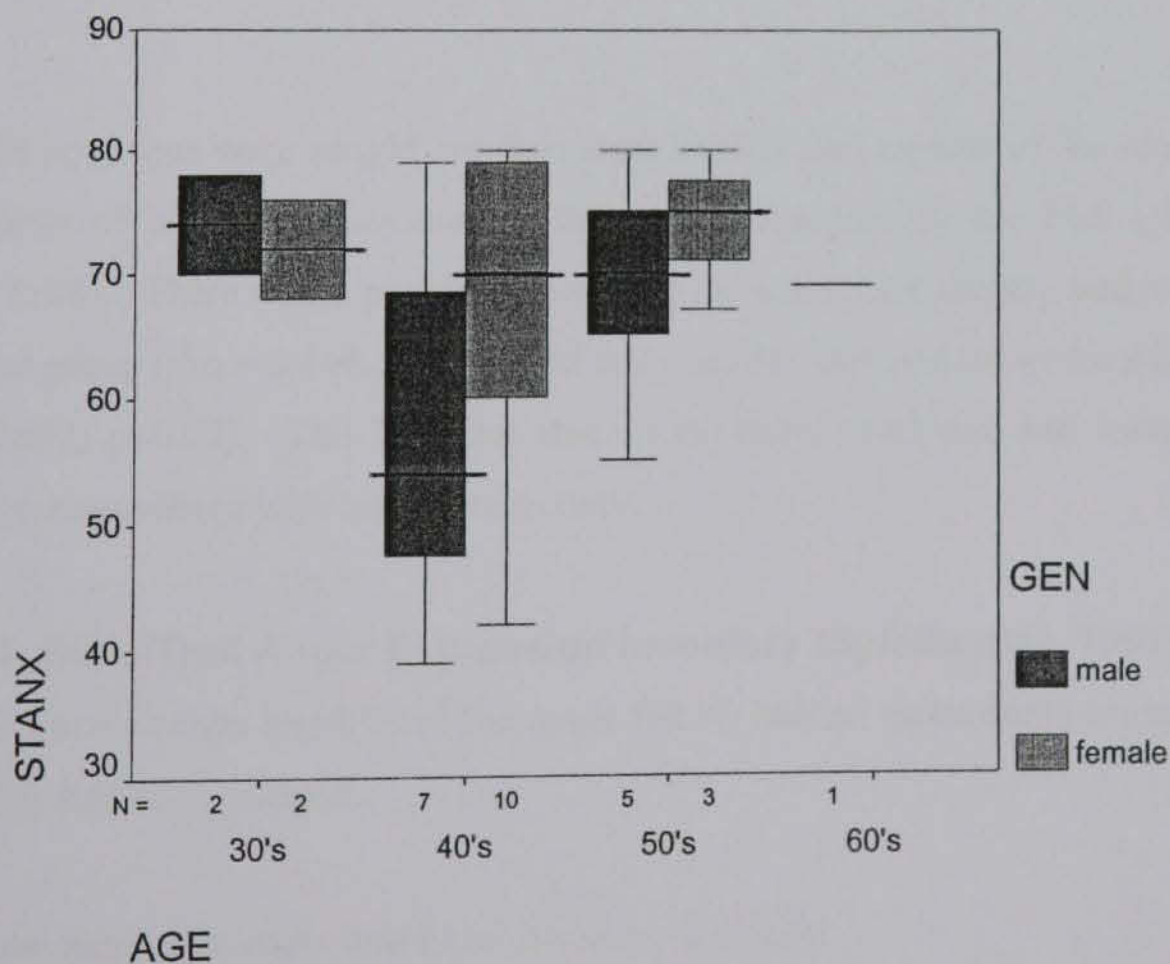
Figure 3.4 Boxplot of GHQ anxiety score, age, and gender
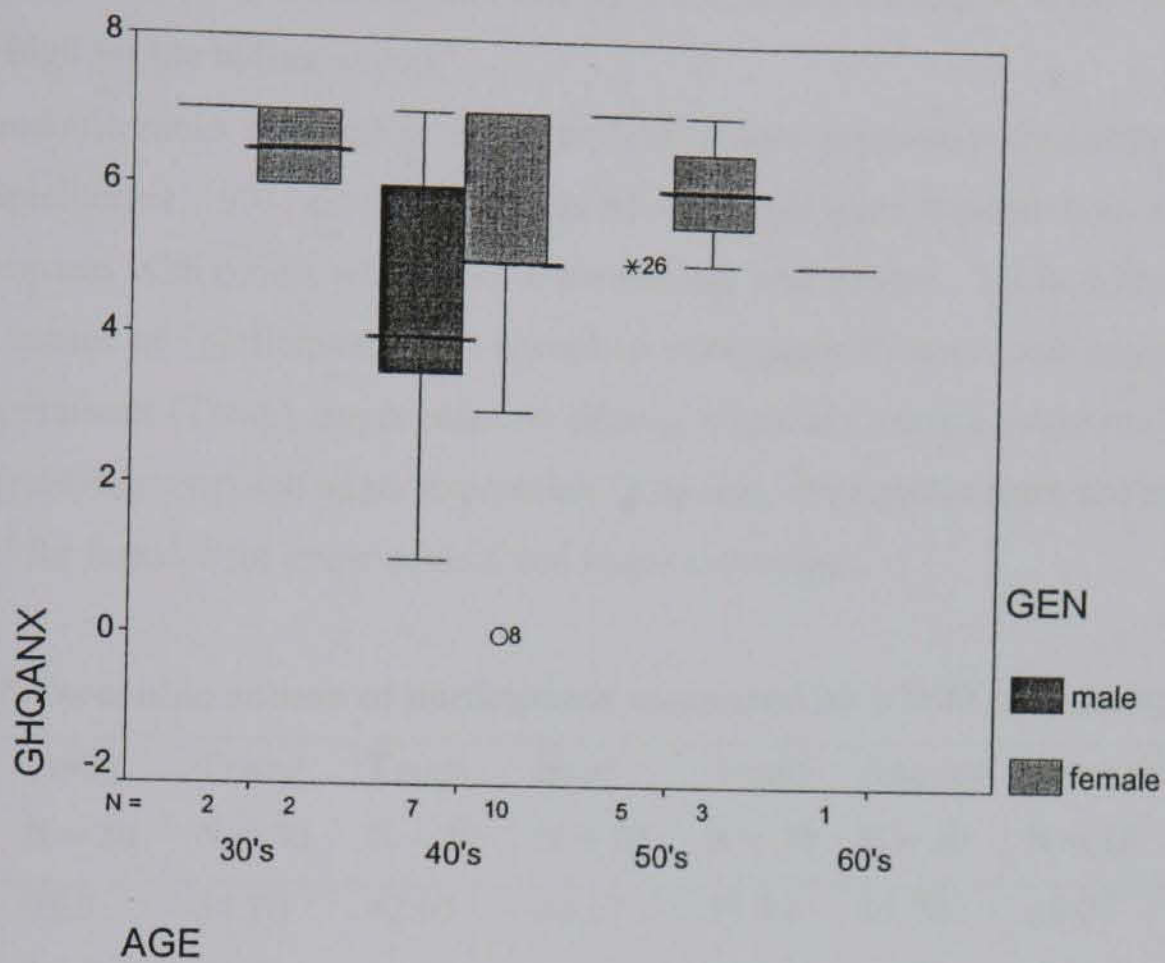
Comparisons were sought between state anxiety and aspects of the social climate of recipients of bullying behaviours in this study measured by the PMI (Williams & Cooper, 1998). There was a positive correlation between state anxiety and workload of the bullied group (rho = 0.448, p<0.05) and daily hassles experienced in the place of work (rho = 0.462, p<0.05). This indicates that an excessive workload and increased daily hassles were associated with high state anxiety.

3. 4. 3. 3 State/Trait Anger Expression Inventory (Spielberger, 1991)

Qualitative data highlighted the anger felt by bullied participants especially when their family had been affected.

19 (M) I am extremely angry and I lash out at my children.

21 (M) I feel very angry, especially as my family had been affected.

Examination of the quantitative results showed that measured anger levels were extremely high for the bullied group.

Percentile ranks reported in the State/Trait Anger expression Inventory (STAXI) Manual (Spielberger, 1991) corresponding to STAXI scale score indicate how a particular person compares with others who are of a similar age and gender. Table 3.16 shows the percentile scores of participants with regard to state anger (Stang), trait anger (Trang), anger temperament (Temp), anger reaction (Reac), anger in (Angin), anger out (Angout), anger control (Angcont) and anger expression (Angexp). Percentiles were not available in the manual for females for anger control and anger expression.

Table 3.18 Percentile scores of participants measured by STAXI (Spielberger, 1991)

	Stang N = 30	Trang N = 30	Temp N = 30	Reac N = 30	Angin N = 30	Angout N = 30	Angcont N = 15	Angexp N = 15
Mean	95.9	34.70	42.03	44.17	59.59	44.70	66.07	45.13
Median	98.0	29.00	30.00	38.00	64.50	43.00	74.00	45.00
Mode	99	19	30	25	31	43	65	61
Min	60	1	29	1	3	4	6	1
Max	99	91	83	99	97	99	99	96
Std. Dev	7.27	23.91	17.27	29.70	29.12	29.05	29.51	33.45

The mean value of percentile scores presented in Table 3.18 indicate that the bullied participants in the present study experience high levels of state anger and anger control. However, one person scored in the 60^{th} percentile in state anger and stated in interview that they had worked on their anger in counselling sessions and that they "were not going to waste any more of my life and let what happened to me eat me up". This person's low score accounts for the high values of standard deviation. Figure 3.5 illustrates that this was a female in her 30's. Case number 8 (F) also scored low on state anger. This person had accepted that she was a victim of bullying and felt that she had taken control of the situation.

Figure 3.5 Boxplot of state anger score, age, and gender
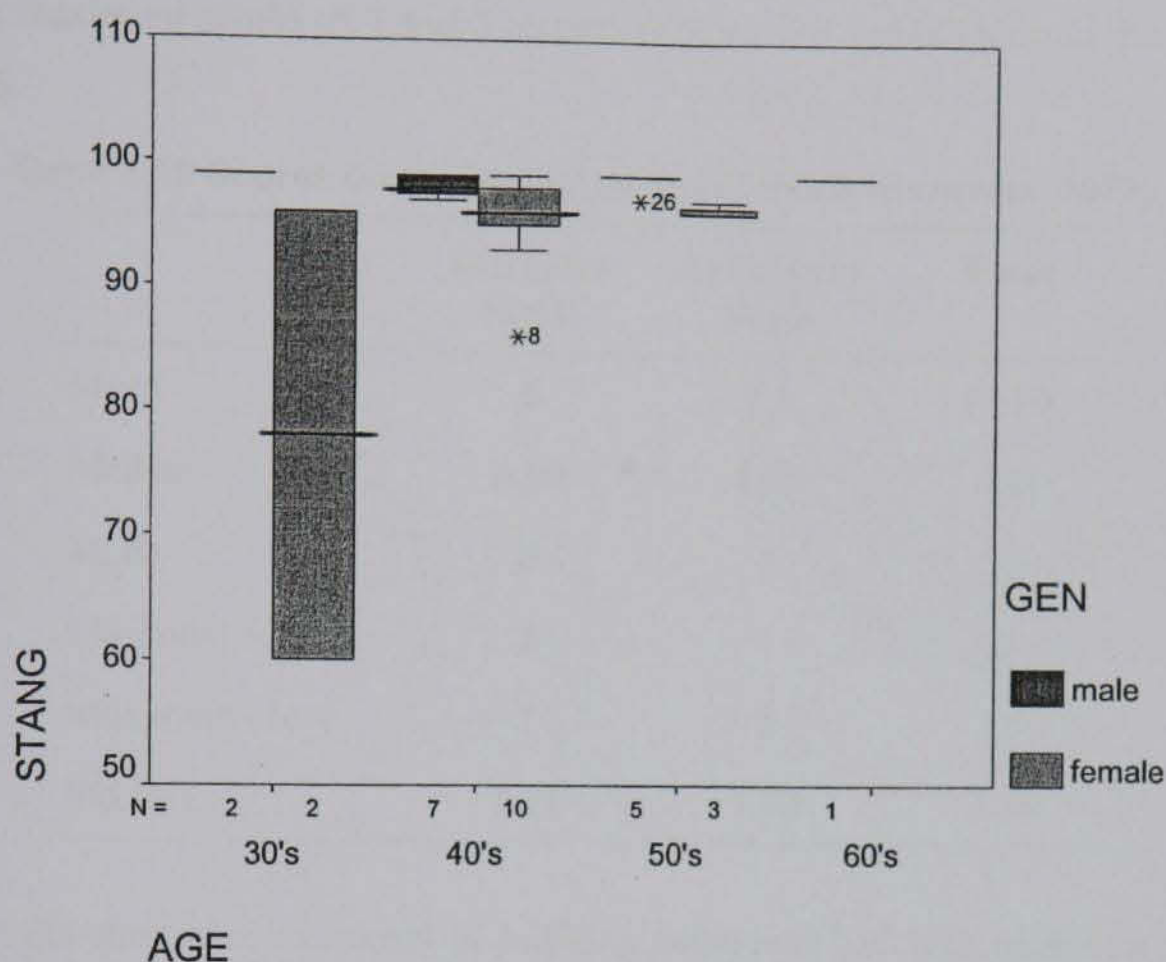
The mean value of scores indicate that participants fall between the 25[th] and 75[th] percentile for anger levels with the exception of state anger where the mean value is 95.9%. These results also show that there is an above average level of anger in and anger control experienced by participants.

Correlations were also sought between measures of anger and anxiety levels, and GHQ scores. It was found that there was negative correlation between anger temperament and state anxiety ($r = -0.374$, $p < 0.05$) indicating that a person with an angry temperament is less likely to be anxious in the stressful situation caused by bullying. Trait anxiety correlated negatively with anger control ($r = -0.725$, $p < 0.01$) and positively with anger expression ($r = 0.659$, $p < 0.01$) indicating that an anxious person is less likely to be able to control their anger and yet more likely to express it. State anger correlated positively with the GHQ's somatic symptoms, ($r = 0.368$, $p < 0.05$) indicating that anger brought on by negative behaviours is likely to cause somatic symptoms.

3. 4. 3. 4 Impact of Event Scale (Horowitz et al., 1979)

The statistical results of the Impact of Event Scale (IES) (Horowitz et al, 1979) are presented in Table 3.19. The minimum score on both the intrusive and avoidance scale is 0 with the maximum scores of 7 and 8 respectively, giving a maximum on the combined scale of 15.

Table 3.19 Scores on the Impact of Event Scale (Horowitz, 1979)

	Intrusive Scale	Avoidance Scale	Total
Mean	6	7.1	13.10
Median	6.00	8.00	14
Mode	6	8	15
Minimum score	2	1	3
Maximum score	7	8	15
Std.Dev	1.11	1.60	2.50

Results show that recipients of bullying behaviour had high scores in both sub-scales and total stress scores with the exception of one person who scored 2 in the intrusive thought sub-scale and 1 in the avoidance behaviour sub-scale. It became evident during interview that this person, case number 29 (M), had been forced to tolerate extreme negative behaviour from his aggressor for a period of thirteen years and perceived this to be bullying. However, he maintained that his acceptance of his situation and positive mental health regime enabled him to avoid being traumatized by it.

Figure 3.6 illustrates that with the exception of 29 (M), men in their 30's and women in their 40's had lower scores in the intrusive thought scale. The person affecting the range of scores for women in their 40's is case number 28 (F).

It can be seen from Figure 3.7 that there are constant high scores in the avoidance scale with the exception of 29 (M) and women in their 40's, including 18 (F). Qualitative data showed that 18 (F) was working in a similar position in another organisation and although she had lost trust in people she had been forced to confront her fears as she was the sole provider for herself and her children.

166

Figure 3.6 Boxplot of intrusive thought score (PTSDI), age, and gender

Figure 3.6 Boxplot of intrusive thought score (PTSDI), age, and gender

Figure 3.7 Boxplot of avoidance (PTSDA) score, age, and gender
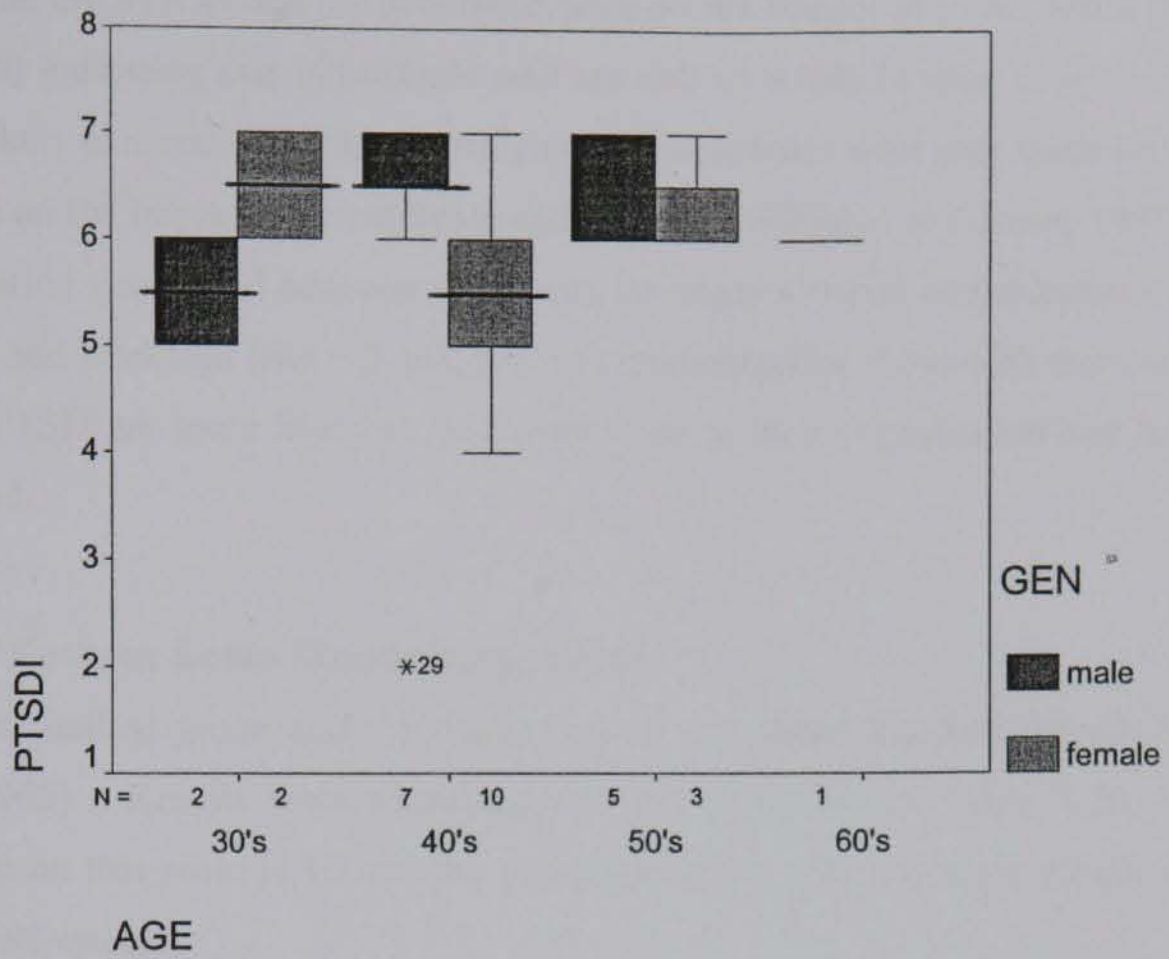
Figure 3.7 Boxplot of avoidance (PTSDA) score, age, and gender
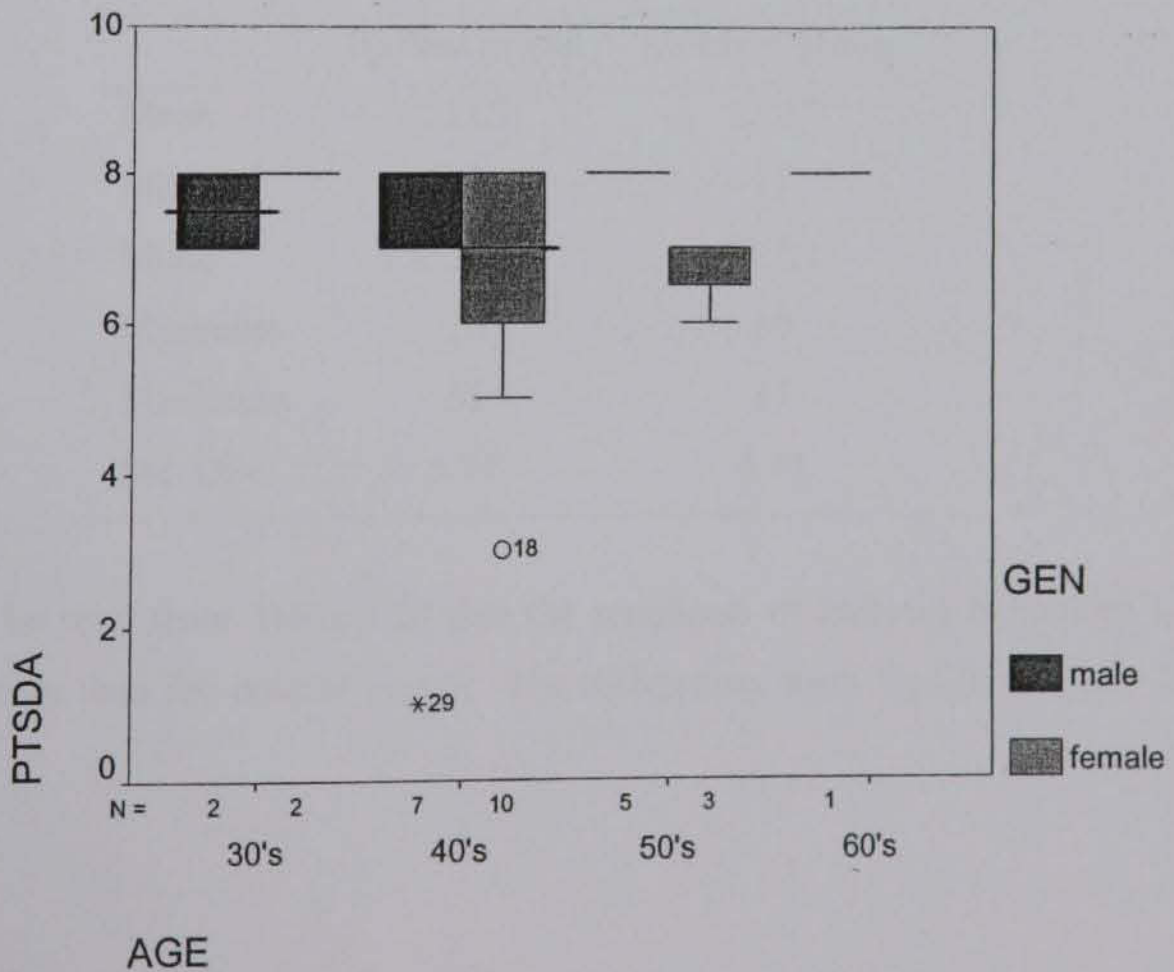
Using Spearman's rho it was found that there was positive correlation between anger in score on the STAXI and the avoidance scale on the Impact of Event Scale (rho = 0.380, p < 0.05) indicating that individuals who are able to withhold their angry feelings may be more likely to avoid reminders of bullying. Comparisons were also made between the total scores on the Impact of Event Scale and the PMI (Williams & Cooper, 1998). A positive correlation was found between the scores for organisational commitment (rho = 0.427, p<0.05) and workload (rho = 0.368, p<0.05) indicating that those with more severe symptoms of PTSD are more likely to feel committed to their organisation and have a higher workload.

3. 4. 3. 5 Self Esteem Scale (Rosenberg, 1965).

Both the bullied group and the control group completed the Self Esteem Scale (Rosenberg, 1965). Results were examined and are presented in Table 3.20. The minimum score on this scale is 10 and the maximum is 40. On this scale a high score indicates low self-esteem.

Table 3.20 Scores on the Self-Esteem Scale (Rosenberg, 1965) for the bullied and control groups

	Bullied group	Control group
Mean	23.03	17.27
Median	23	17
Mode	23, 25, 28	20, 21
Minimum	10	10
Maximum	36	17
Std. Dev.	6.71	4.33

It can be seen from Table 3.20 that the recipients of bullying behaviour have a lower self-esteem than the control group. The differences were significant (U = 212.5, p<0 .01).

The difference is illustrated by the boxplot in Figure 3.8. The boxplot revealed that the results of the bullied group had a greater range than those of the control group and that there was a higher frequency of low self-esteem scores among the bullied group.

Figure 3.8 Boxplot to show the comparison of self-esteem scores between the bullied and control group
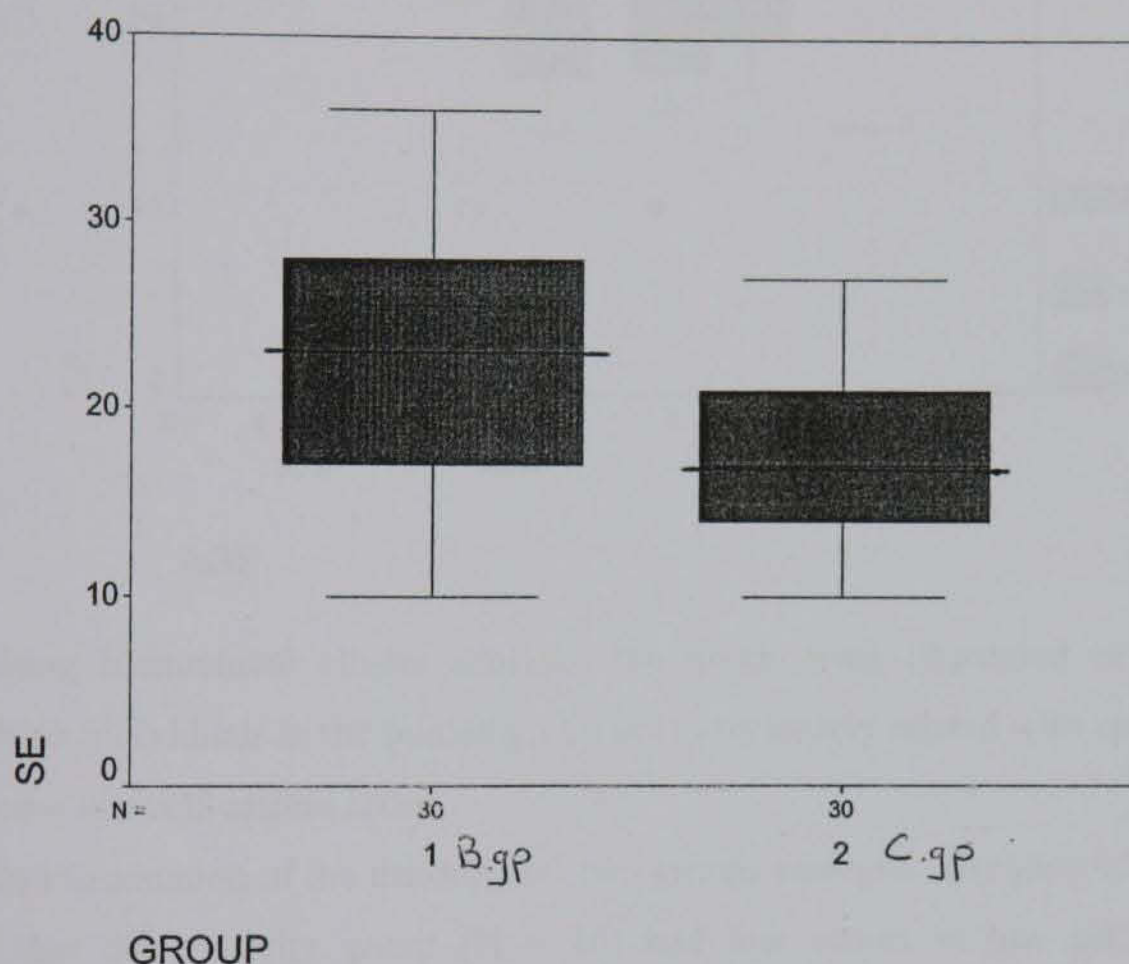
High scores on Rosenberg's Self Esteem Scale (1965) indicate low self-esteem. The boxplot in Figure 3.9 illustrates that both men and women in the 30's age group had high scores and, therefore, lower self-esteem than the other participants in the bullied group. From Figure 3.9 it can be seen that the level of self-esteem of two bullied participants, 1(M) and 23 (M), was higher than the others. These men had been successful in their careers and reported having high principles. It is possible that at the time of their distressing experiences, their self-esteem may have been affected but as they attempted to seek justice their self esteem returned and they began to think of themselves as people of worth.

Figure 3.9 Boxplot of low self-esteem scores, age, and gender (Bullied Group)
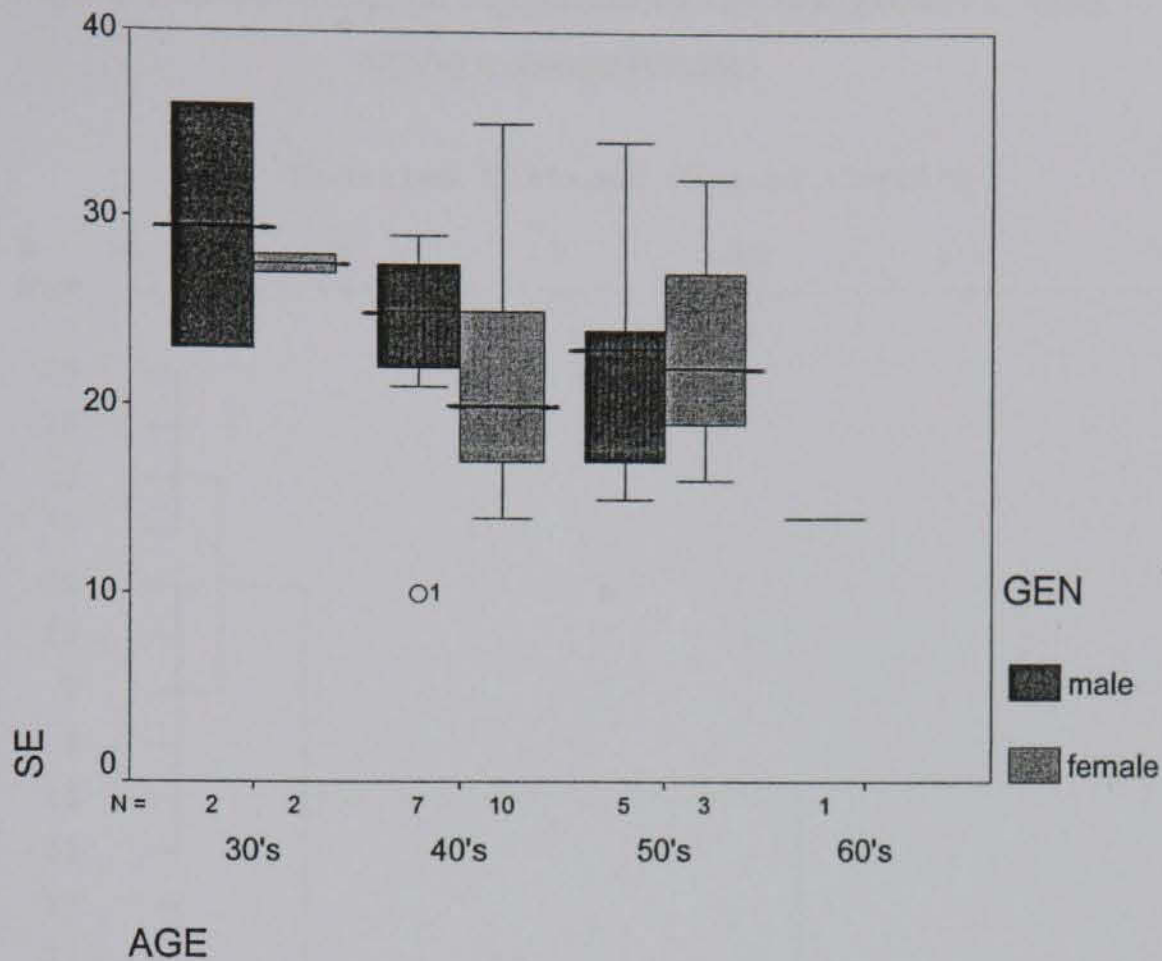
Using hierarchical cluster analysis, the dendrogram illustrated in Figure 3.10 shows which individuals in the bullied group are most closely related with each other with regard to the low self-esteem score.

On examination of the dendrogram two groups emerged. Scrutiny of the raw data revealed that the minority group (N = 10) had low scores in low self-esteem and, therefore, displayed high self esteem. Seven of these people are also in the group of people (N = 11) who had low scores in the GHQ total score. One of these people (24F) reported during a follow up phone call that she has been able to use her experiences positively and feels that she has grown as a result of them. The second person (8F) pursued her case through the legal process but was unsuccessful. However, she commented that she has no regrets that she took action and has begun to rebuild her life. She also commented that she has been able to view things in a positive manner and has learned much from her experiences. Case numbers 1 (M), 2 (F), 18 (F), 23 (M), 26 (M) considered that they had been successful in their careers. It is possible, therefore that this could have been a buffer and that when distant from their negative experiences their self esteem was high.

170

Figure 3.10 Dendrogram representing low self esteem scores
using average linkage

Rescaled Distance Cluster Combine
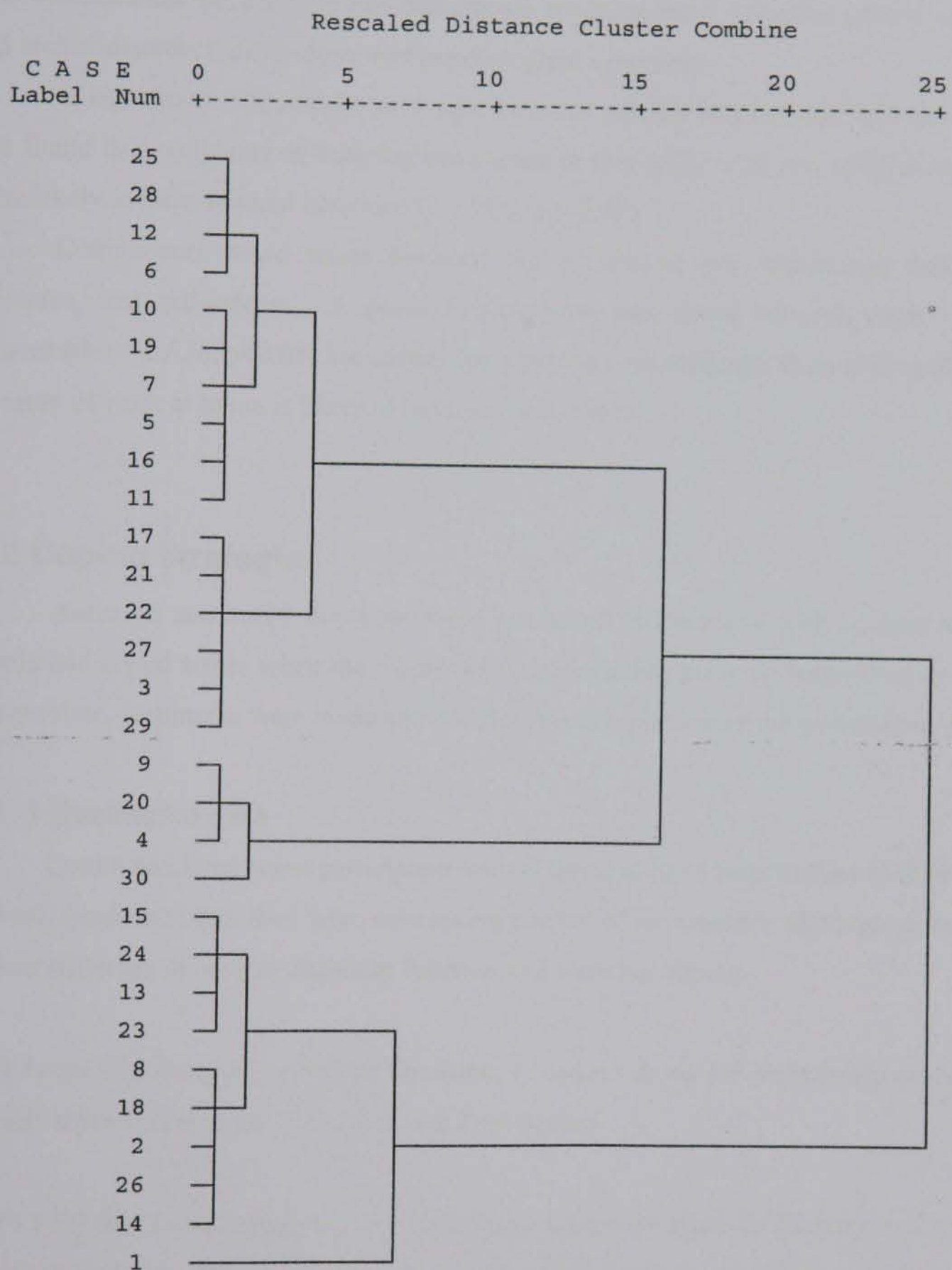
Using Spearman's rho, correlations were sought between low self-esteem and other aspects of distress. There was a significant positive correlation between low self-esteem

and the total score in the General Health Questionnaire (rho = 0.480, p < 0.01), the depression scale in the General Health Questionnaire (rho = 0.694 p < 0.01), and the number of psychological symptoms identified by participants (rho = 0.469, p < 0.05). This indicates that people with low self-esteem are more likely to suffer general physical and mental disorders, depression, and psychological symptoms.

A significant difference was sought between suicide ideation and self esteem. It was found that recipients of bullying behaviours in this study with low self esteem were more likely to have suicidal ideation (U = 58.5, p < 0.05).

Comparisons were made between the effects of job satisfaction and work pressures, and self-esteem. A positive correlation was found between work / home balance (rho = 0.436, p<0.05) indicating that a person with difficulty in switching off from pressure of work at home is likely to have low self esteem.

3. 5 Coping strategies

Although structured questions were not asked in interview with regards to how people had coped either when they were being subjected to bullying behaviours or at the present time, comments were made and noted. This complemented the quantitative data.

3. 5. 1 Qualitative data

Comments from some participants who claimed to have been bullied in their place of work, confirmed that they were now taking control of the situation although at the time of their suffering they were unable to function and were not coping.

2 (F) I coped by being prepared for the worst. I couldn't do my job and always expected a bad day when I went in but now I feel that I am coping.

24 (F) I felt that I was coping well but there were occasions when the bullying had seemed too much to bear. However, I feel that now I have used my experiences to learn and develop.

29 (M) I am a fitness freak ... I get rid of my anger by running ...that's how I coped with this ... they tried to take my life but I wouldn't let them have everything ... they didn't burn me up completely

This was not valid for all participants who found that they were unable to cope with being bullied.

7 (M) I have always been able to cope in the past. The stress I am now feeling must be due to being bullied and I am not coping with it. My wife encourages me to talk about it.

27 (F) I am not coping, not living. I'm not in charge of my life. There's no fun in my life?

23 (M) I feel that my whole career has been a failure because I couldn't cope with this.

One person attempted to solve his difficulties at work by confronting his aggressor.

25 (M) On occasions I approached him and told him to lay off but he did not change.

Another person coped by concluding that his stress was caused by overwork and denied to himself that he was being bullied.

6 (M) I knew that I was under pressure at work but did not realise for many months that I was bullied. Even when it did cross my mind that this could be happening, I denied it.

3. 5. 2 Quantitative data

Quantitative data for measuring coping strategies were collected, from the bullied group (B gp) and the control group (C gp), using COPE (Carver et al, 1989). This inventory measures fifteen strategies: active coping (AC), planning (Plan), seeking instrumental social support (SISS), seeking emotional social support (SESS), suppressing competing activities (SCA), religion (Rel), positive reinforcement (PR), restraint coping

(RC), acceptance (Acc), venting of emotions (VE), denial (Den), mental disengagement (MD), behavioural disengagement (BD), resorting to alcohol or drugs (A/D), and use of humour (Hum). Results from the bullied and control group are presented in Tables 3.21 to 3.23. The maximum possible score on each scale is 16 and minimum possible score is 4. A higher score indicates that the participant is using this strategy.

Table 3.21 Scores measured by COPE - bullied and control group

	AC		Plan		SISS		SESS		SCA	
	B gp	C gp	B gp	C gp	B gp	C gp	B gp	C gp	B gp	C gp
Mean	14.30	11.97	13.80	12.87	12.63	11.97	12.53	10.73	11.37	10.27
Median	16.00	12.00	15.00	13.00	13.00	12.00	13.50	11.50	11.50	11.00
Mode	16	12	16	12	16	10	16	16	13	11
Min	8	6	4	8	6	5	5	4	5	4
Max	16	16	16	16	16	16	16	16	16	13
St.Dev	2.48	2.81	2.94	2.11	3.17	2.91	3.63	4.43	2.71	2.33

Table 3.21 illustrates that participants in the bullied group are more likely to use active coping, planning, seeking both instrumental and emotional social support, and suppressing competing activities more frequently than the participants in the control group. Significant differences were found for active coping (U = 228.00, p < 0.01) and planning (U = 310.00, p < 0.05).

Table 3.22 Scores measured by COPE - bullied and control group

	Rel		PR		RC		Acc		VE	
	B gp	C gp	B gp	C gp	B gp	C gp	B gp	C gp	B gp	C gp
Mean	10.30	6.80	11.17	11.37	10.40	10.47	11.37	11.17	12.03	8.67
Median	12.00	5.50	10.00	11.50	10.00	10.00	11.50	11.50	12.00	8.00
Mode	4	4	10	14	9	10	16	9	9	8
Min	4	4	5	5	4	5	4	6	6	4
Max	16	16	16	15	16	16	16	16	16	16
St.Dev	4.58	3.37	3.39	2.41	3.40	2.13	3.43	2.90	2.95	3.14

Table 3.22 shows that participants in the bullied group turned to religion and used venting of emotions more frequently than participants in the control group. In contrast the control group used positive reinterpretation more frequently. Significant differences were found between turning to religion (U = 259.00, p < 0.01) and venting of emotions (U = 195.50, p < 0.01).

Table 3.23 Scores measured by COPE - bullied and control group

	Den		MD		BD		A/D		Hum	
	B gp	C gp	B gp	C gp	B gp	C gp	B gp	C gp	B gp	C gp
Mean	7.43	5.77	9.53	8.23	5.87	5.87	6.57	6.00	6.10	7.97
Median	7.00	4.50	9.50	8.00	5.00	5.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	8.00
Mode	4	4	8	8	4	4	4	4	4	4
Min	4	4	6	5	4	4	4	4	4	4
Max	12	12	15	13	16	14	16	16	16	16
St. Dev	2.67	2.33	2.29	1.87	2.62	2.30	3.28	2.98	3.01	3.25

Table 3.23 shows that participants in the bullied group reported using denial and mental disengagement more frequently than the control group but humour was used less frequently. Significant differences were found in the use of these three strategies: denial (U = 277.50, p < 0.01); mental disengagement (U = 300.00, p < 0.05); and humour (U = 280.00, p < 0.05).

Correlations were sought between coping strategies and scores in the measures of psychological well-being for the bullied group. There was positive correlation between humour and Post Traumatic Stress Disorder score (rho = 0.480, p<0.01), and the social dysfunction score on the General Health Questionnaire (rho = 0.426, p<0.05). This indicates that participants who were traumatised were possibly able, at the time of the assessment, to take a less serious attitude towards their experiences even though they felt that they were not functioning well in their daily routine. However humour correlated negatively with the total number of stress symptoms (rho = -0.363, p<0.05) indicating that they were likely to take a more serious view of their experiences if their symptoms were more numerous. Behavioural disengagement correlated positively with state anxiety (rho

= 0.376, p<0.05) indicating that those who are anxious, due to their recent experiences, are more likely to withdraw from attempts to address their situation. A negative correlation between acceptance and social dysfunction (rho = 0.417, p<0.05) suggests that participants who accepted their situation were likely to be able to function well.

There was negative correlation between denial and trait anxiety (rho = -0.452, p<0.05) but positive correlation between denial and state anxiety (rho = 0.483, p<0.01). This suggests that participants who were not normally anxious would be likely to deny negative circumstances in their lives but anxiety brought on by being a recipient of bullying behaviour was likely to cause them to use denial as a coping strategy.

3. 5. 2. 1 Adaptive and maladaptive coping

Since the number of participants was too small to use cluster analysis, in order to reduce the number of strategies, correlations were sought between the coping behaviours used by the bullied group. These are presented in Appendix IV

It was observed that the strategies with high correlations included those identified as adaptive and less adaptive by Weinman, Wright, and Johnson (1995). They were active coping, planning, seeking instrumental and emotional social support, positive reinforcement, and acceptance. However, there was also a high correlation between venting of emotions, considered by Weinman et al (1995) to be maladaptive. Individual strategies were totalled within these divisions and results for both participants and the control group are presented in Table 3.24. A high score indicates more use of the behaviour. Thus a higher score in adaptive coping indicates that the individual is coping effectively and a higher score in mal-adaptive coping indicates that the strategies adopted by these individual are indicative of ineffective coping.

It can be seen from Table 3.24 that the bullied group used all coping strategies more frequently than the control group indicating a greater range of behaviours. There was no significant difference in the use of adaptive coping between the two groups. The Mann-Whitney U-test showed that recipients of bullying behaviour used less-adaptive coping strategies (U = 282.00, p < 0.05) and mal-adaptive strategies (U = 210.00, p < 0.01) more frequently than the control group.

Table 3.24 Adaptive, less adaptive and mal-adaptive coping used by participants and the control group

	Adaptive Coping		Less adaptive		Mal-adaptive	
	B gp	C gp	B gp	C gp	B gp	C gp
Mean	63.27	59.40	43.40	38.33	34.57	28.43
Median	65.50	59.00	45.50	38.00	34.50	26.50
Mode	63	51	46	36	32	25
Min	34	32	9	23	25	18
Max	80	75	61	54	46	41
Std. Dev	12.77	9.82	11.02	7.57	5.59	6.21

Correlations were sought between adaptive coping, less adaptive coping and maladaptive coping and scores in the measures of psychological well-being for the bullied group. It was found that there was negative correlation between low self esteem and adaptive coping (rho = -0.411, p<0.05) and less adaptive coping (rho = -0.533, p<0.01) indicating that high self esteem is associated with adaptive and less adaptive coping. The total GHQ score correlated positively with less adaptive coping (rho = 0.858, p<0.01) suggesting that severe physical and psychological effects may lead to the strategies in the less adaptive category of coping.

3. 5. 2. 2 Problem-focused coping, avoidance, emotion-focused coping, and cognitive reconstruction

Using categories of coping strategies identified by Ingeldew et al (1996) results were grouped into problem-focused coping, avoidance, emotion-focused coping and cognitive reconstruction. Statistics were calculated for participants and the control group and are presented in Table 3.25. A higher score indicates more use of coping strategies in these categories.

Table 3.25 Results of problem-focused, avoidance, emotion-focused coping and cognitive reconstruction used by participants and the control group.

	Problem-focused		Avoidance		Emotion-focused		Cognitive reconstruction	
	B gp	C gp	B gp	C gp	B gp	C gp	B gp	C gp
Mean	12.47	11.37	7.46	6.49	12.39	10.17	11.27	11.23
Median	12.38	11.50	7.00	5.88	12.17	10.50	10.50	11.75
Mode	12.75	11.50	6.25	5.75	11.33	8.67	10.50	12.00
Std. Dev	1.81	1.80	1.75	1.75	2.69	2.75	3.15	2.02
Min	9.00	7.00	4.50	4.25	7.67	5.00	4.50	6.50
Max	15.25	14.75	12.25	11.75	16.00	15.00	16.00	14.50

Table 3.25 illustrates that participants in the bullied group used strategies that could fit into all categories more frequently than the control group. However, significant difference between coping strategies used by the bullied and control groups were found in three of these four categories. The bullied group scored higher in problem focused coping (U = 315.500, p < 0.05), avoidance coping (U = 273.000, p < 0.01) and emotion coping (U = 258.500, p < 0.01). There was no significant difference between the bullied and control group in the use of cognitive reconstruction.

Data from the bullied group was examined with regard to the categories of coping strategies: problem-focused coping, avoidance, emotion-focused coping and cognitive reconstruction. Age and gender were considered. The box plot in Figures 3.11 illustrates that people, in the bullied group in their 30's, use problem focused coping less frequently than people in the other age groups. The greatest range of scores was among men in the 50's age group. Figure 3.12 illustrates the mean scores in avoidance coping with regard to age and gender. On examination it is evident that the use of avoidance coping increases with age, with a greater range among women in the 40's age group.

Figure 3.11 Boxplot of problem-focused coping scores, age, and gender
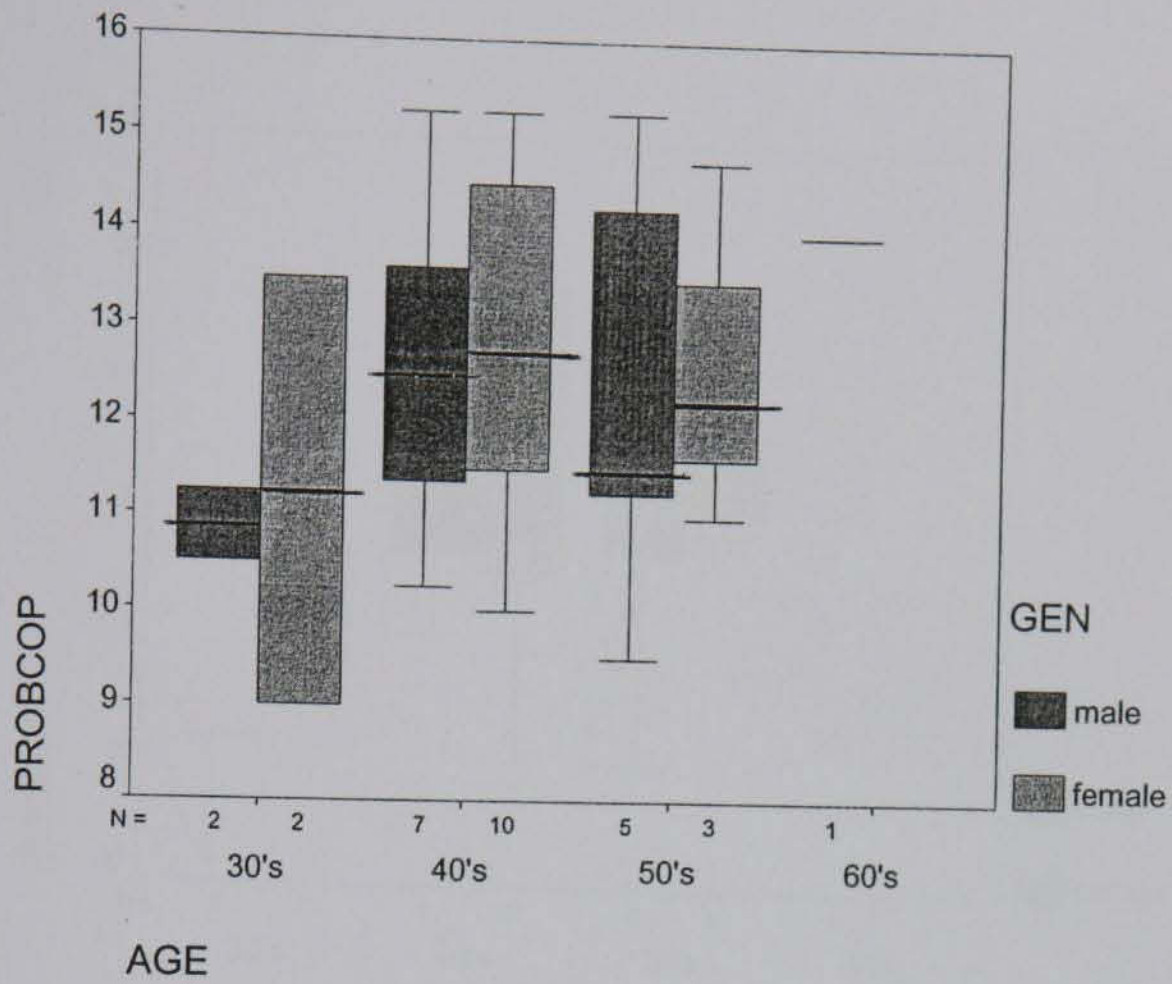
Figure 3.12 Boxplot of avoidance coping scores, age, and gender
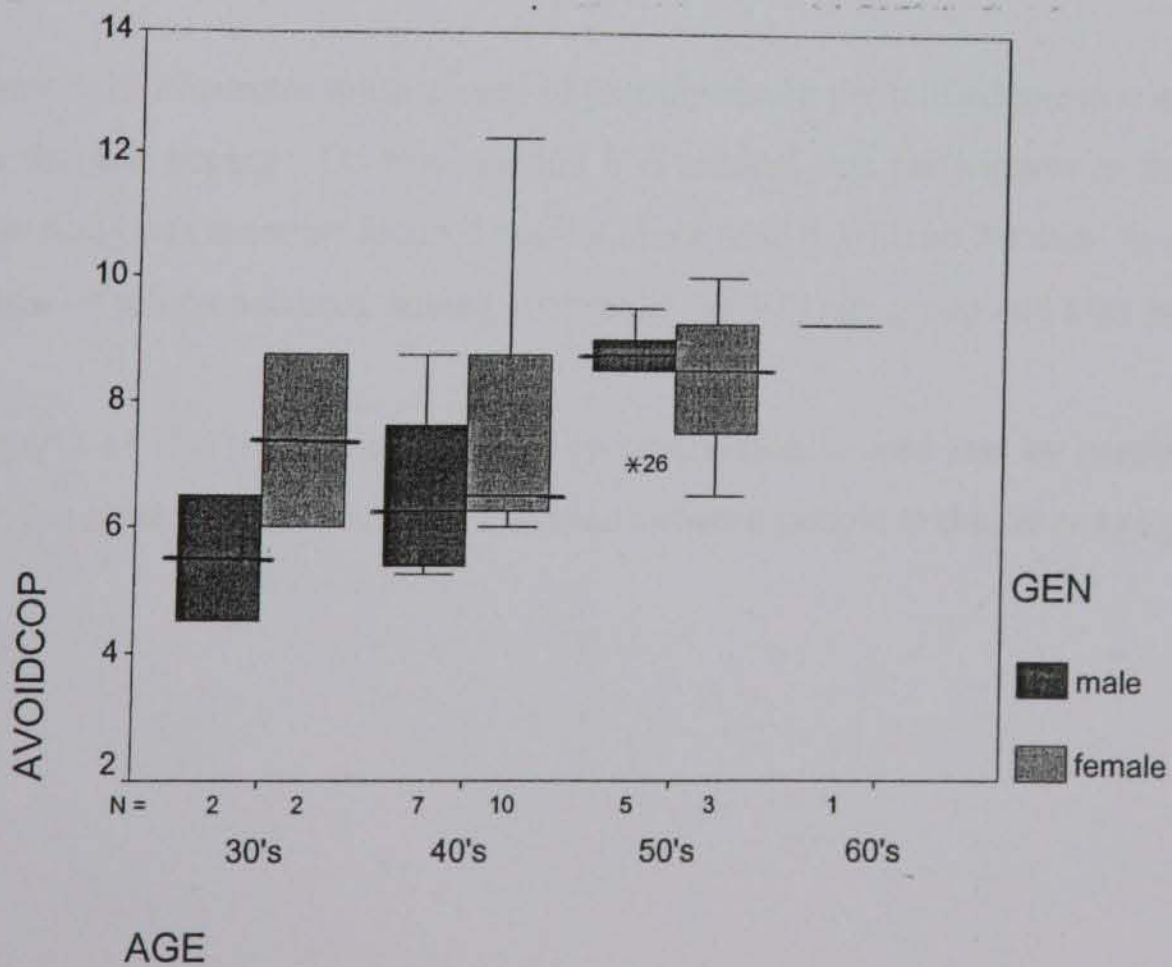
Figure 3.13 Boxplot of emotion-focused coping scores, age, and gender
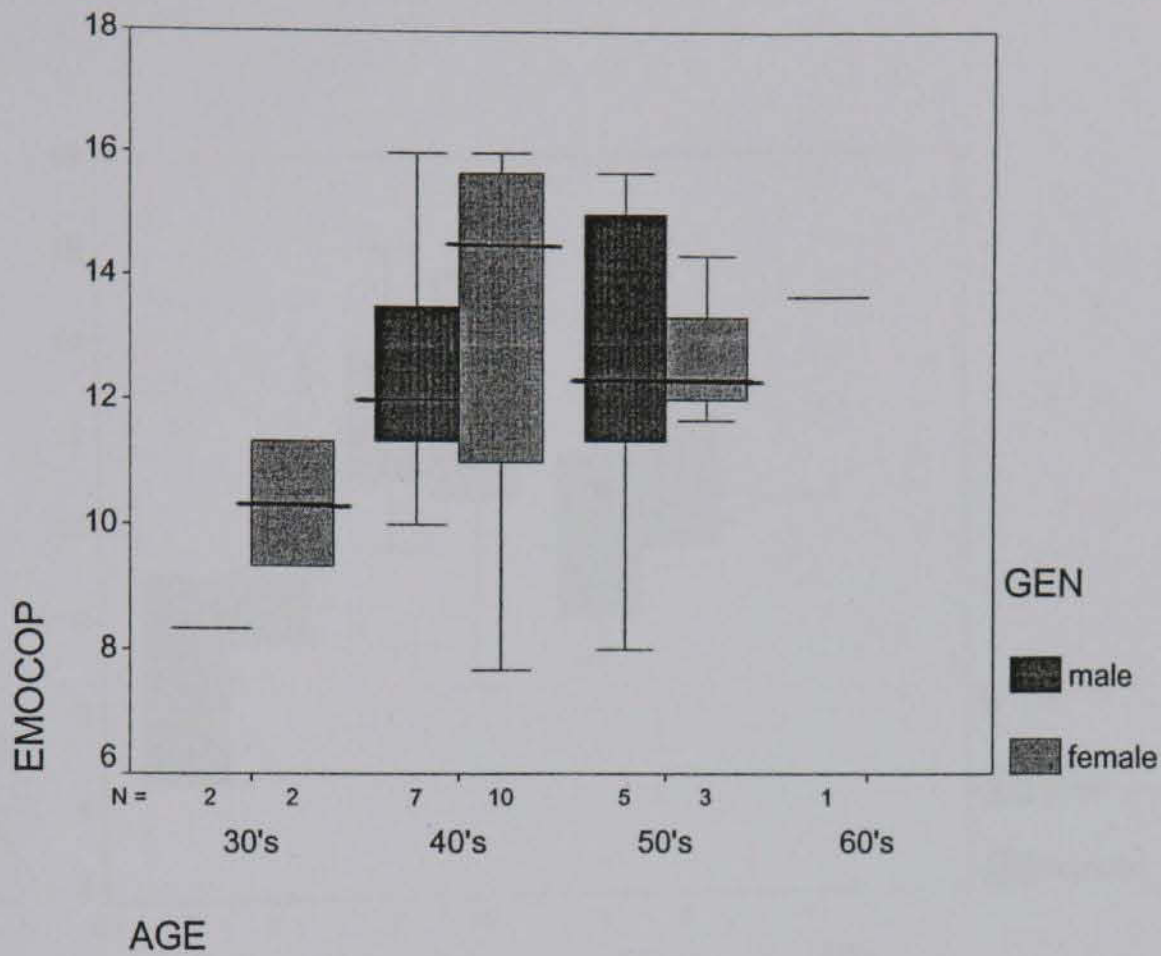
Figure 3.13 illustrates mean scores of participants in the bullied group with respect to emotion focused coping. On examination it is evident that participants in the bullied group in the study use emotion focused coping more readily with an increase in age. The greatest range of scores occurred among women in the 40's age group and men in the 50's age group.

Figure 3.14 illustrates that cognitive reconstruction is used less by participants in the 30's age group with a less obvious difference between people in the other age groups.

Figure 3.14 Boxplot of cognitive reconstruction scores, age, and gender
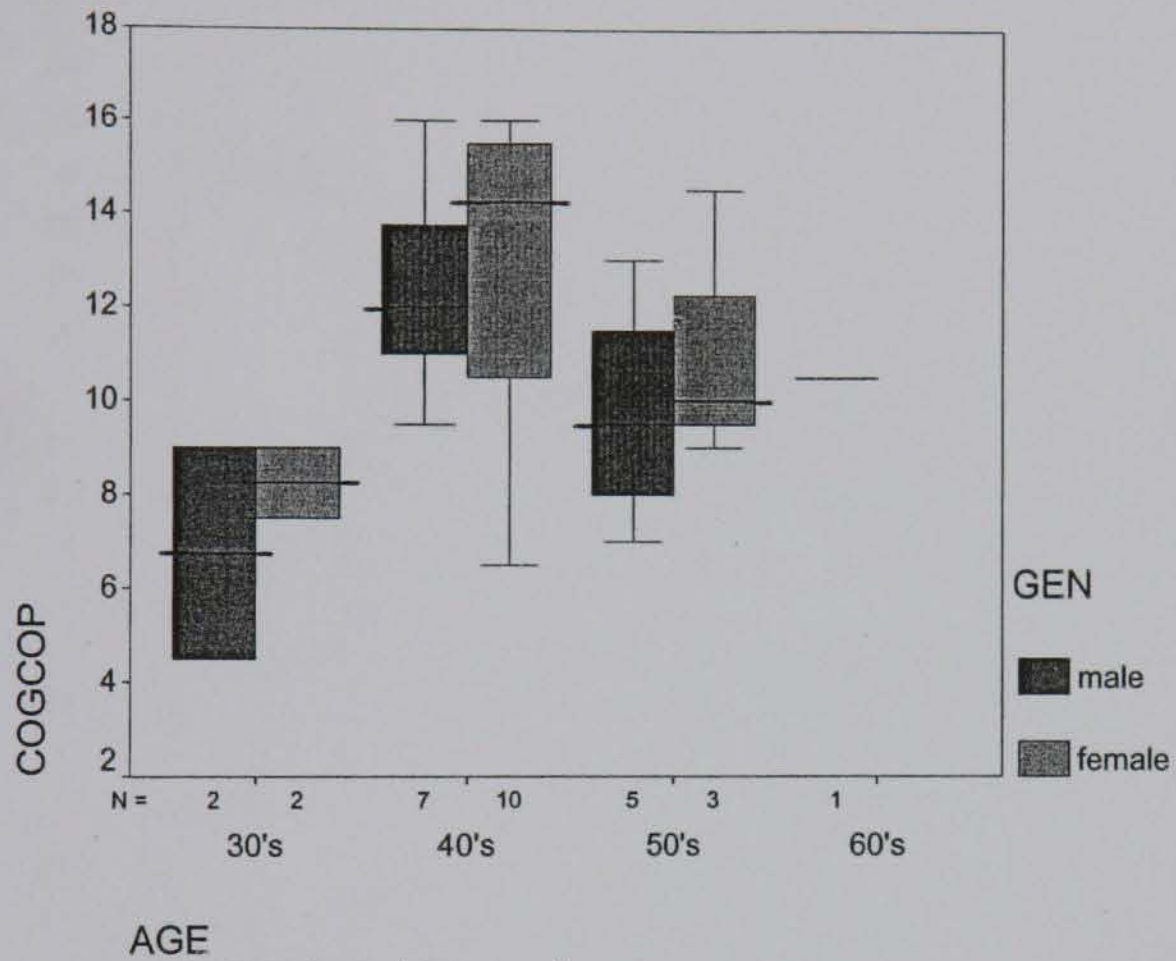
Dendrograms were produced to illustrate which individuals are most closely related with each other with regard to the categories of coping strategies: problem, avoidance and emotion coping, and cognitive reconstruction. These are produced in Figures 3.15 - 3.18

Figure 3.15 Dendrogram representing problem-focused coping scores using average linkage

```
Rescaled Distance Cluster Combine

 C A S E    0         5        10        15        20        25
 Label  Num  +---------+---------+---------+---------+---------+

      27 ─┐
      28 ─┤
      15 ─┤
       6 ─┤
      10 ─┤
      29 ─┤
      30 ─┘
       9 ─┐
      14 ─┤
      25 ─┤
      18 ─┤
      24 ─┤
       1 ─┤
      22 ─┤
       8 ─┤
      17 ─┘
      20 ─┐
      21 ─┤
       5 ─┘
       3 ─┐
       4 ─┘
      11 ─┐
      26 ─┤
       2 ─┘
       7 ─┐
      23 ─┤
      13 ─┤
      19 ─┤
      12 ─┤
      16 ─┘
```
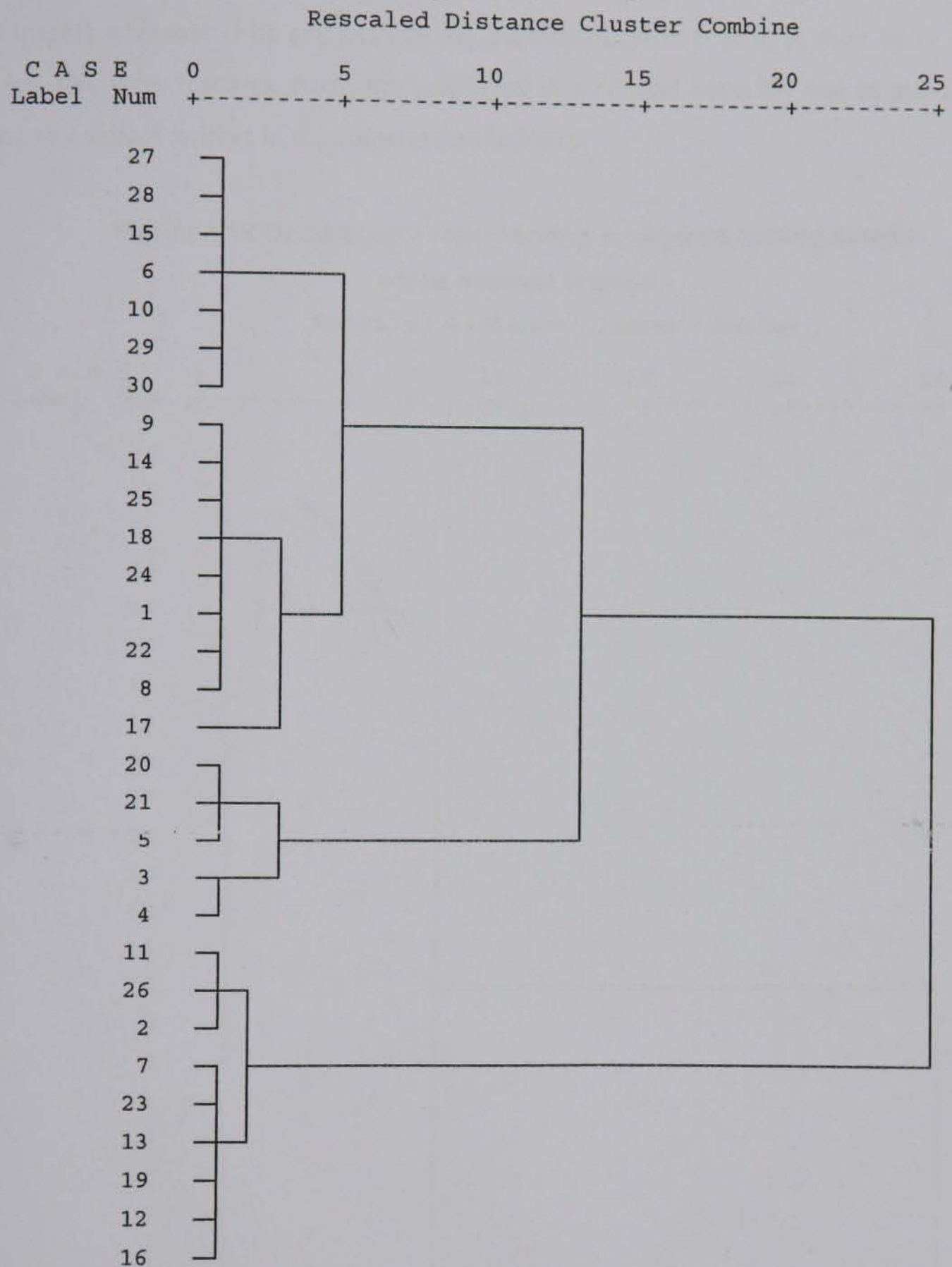
Examination of Figure 3.15, with reference to the raw data, revealed that a group of people emerged with higher scores in problem focused coping (N = 9). By comparing the individuals in this groups with the group of people with a high level of self-esteem in the bullied group (N = 10), results showed that only four people with high self-esteem

used problem focused coping. Scrutiny of the raw qualitative data showed that there was no common feature in regards to their occupational groups. Although three people were managers who would be expected to use problem-focused coping in their daily working lives, two were teachers, two were employed in a clerical capacity, one in publicity and one as a skilled worker in the construction industry.

Figure 3.16 Dendrogram representing avoidance coping scores using average linkage

Rescaled Distance Cluster Combine

```
  C A S E      0         5         10        15        20        25
  Label  Num   +---------+---------+---------+---------+---------+

          22   ─┐
          29   ─┤
           1   ─┼┐
          10   ─┘│
          21   ─┐├─────────────────┐
          26   ─┤│                 │
          12   ─┤│                 │
          14   ─┴┘                 │
          20   ─┤                  │
          27   ─┤                  │
          24   ─┤                  │
          28   ─┤                  │
          17   ─┤                  │
          11   ─┤                  │
          18   ─┤                  ├──────────────────────────────┐
           8   ─┤                  │                              │
           9   ─┘                  │                              │
          13   ─┐                  │                              │
          19   ─┤                  │                              │
           3   ─┤                  │                              │
           6   ─┤                  │                              │
           4   ─┤                  │                              │
          16   ─┤                  │                              │
          25   ─┼┐                 │                              │
           2   ─┤│                 │                              │
          15   ─┤├─────────────────┘                              │
          23   ─┤│                                                │
           7   ─┘│                                                │
          30   ─┘                                                 │
           5   ─────────────────────────────────────────────────┘
```
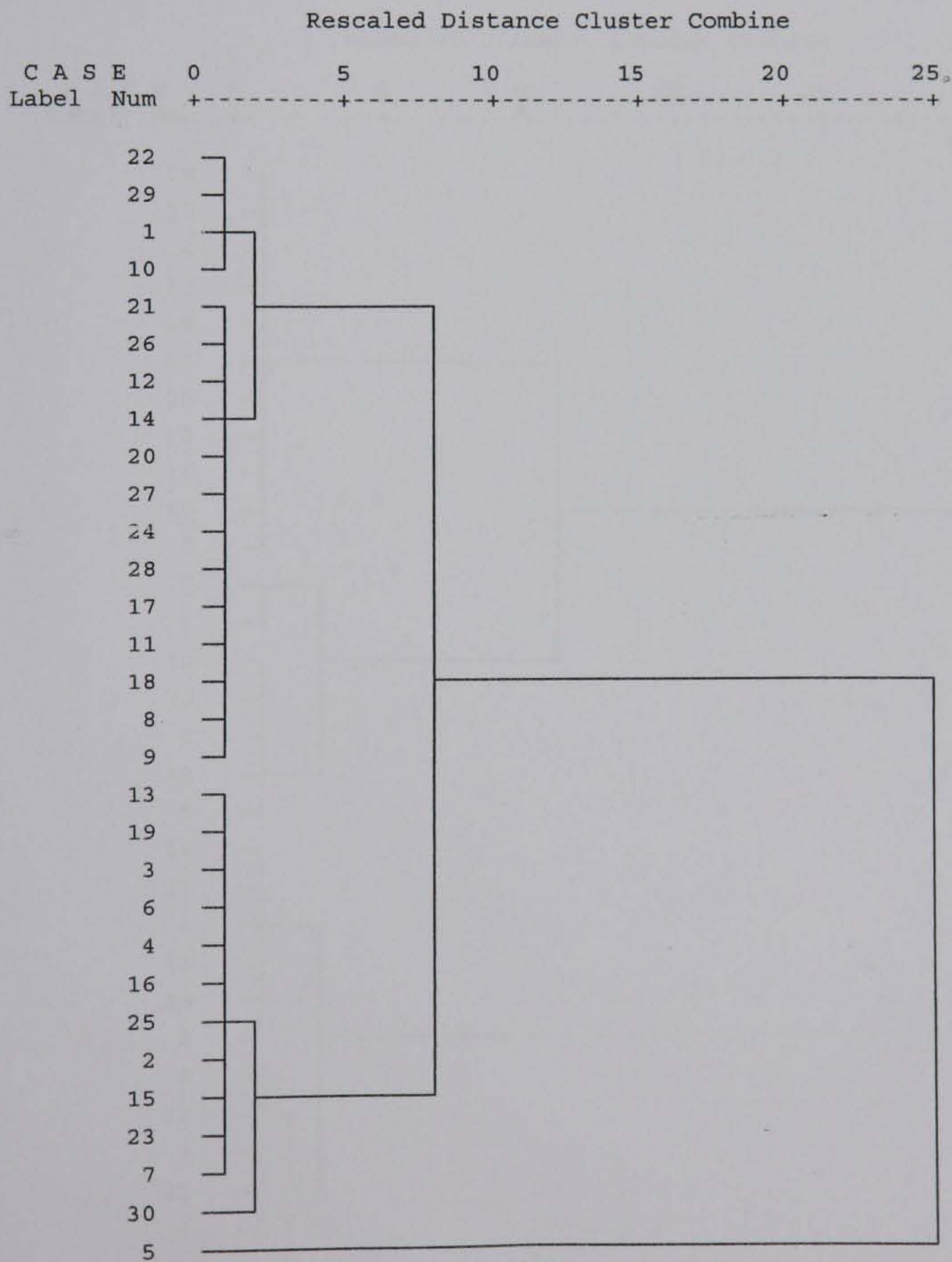
Examination of the dendrogram representing avoidance coping, Figure 3.16, showed that one person emerged with a score that was not related to any other person. Scrutiny of the raw data identified the person, 5 (F), as a woman in her 40's who, according to information given during follow-up phone calls, began to abuse alcohol as a direct result of her distressing experiences at work. This person had low self-esteem.

Figure 3.17 Dendrogram representing emotion focused coping scores using average linkage

```
                    Rescaled Distance Cluster Combine

C A S E      0         5        10        15        20        25
Label  Num   +---------+---------+---------+---------+---------+

       19    ┐
       29    ┤
        4    ┤
       17    ┤
       28    ┤
       11    ┤
       25    ┤
       30    ┤
       14    ┤
       15    ┤
        9    ┘
        3    ┐
       21    ┘
       10    ┐
       20    ┤
        6    ┤
       12    ┤
        5    ┘
       18    ┐
       27    ┤
        1    ┤
       13    ┤
       26    ┤
        2    ┘
        8    ┐
       16    ┤
        7    ┤
       22    ┤
       24    ┤
       23    ┘
```

184
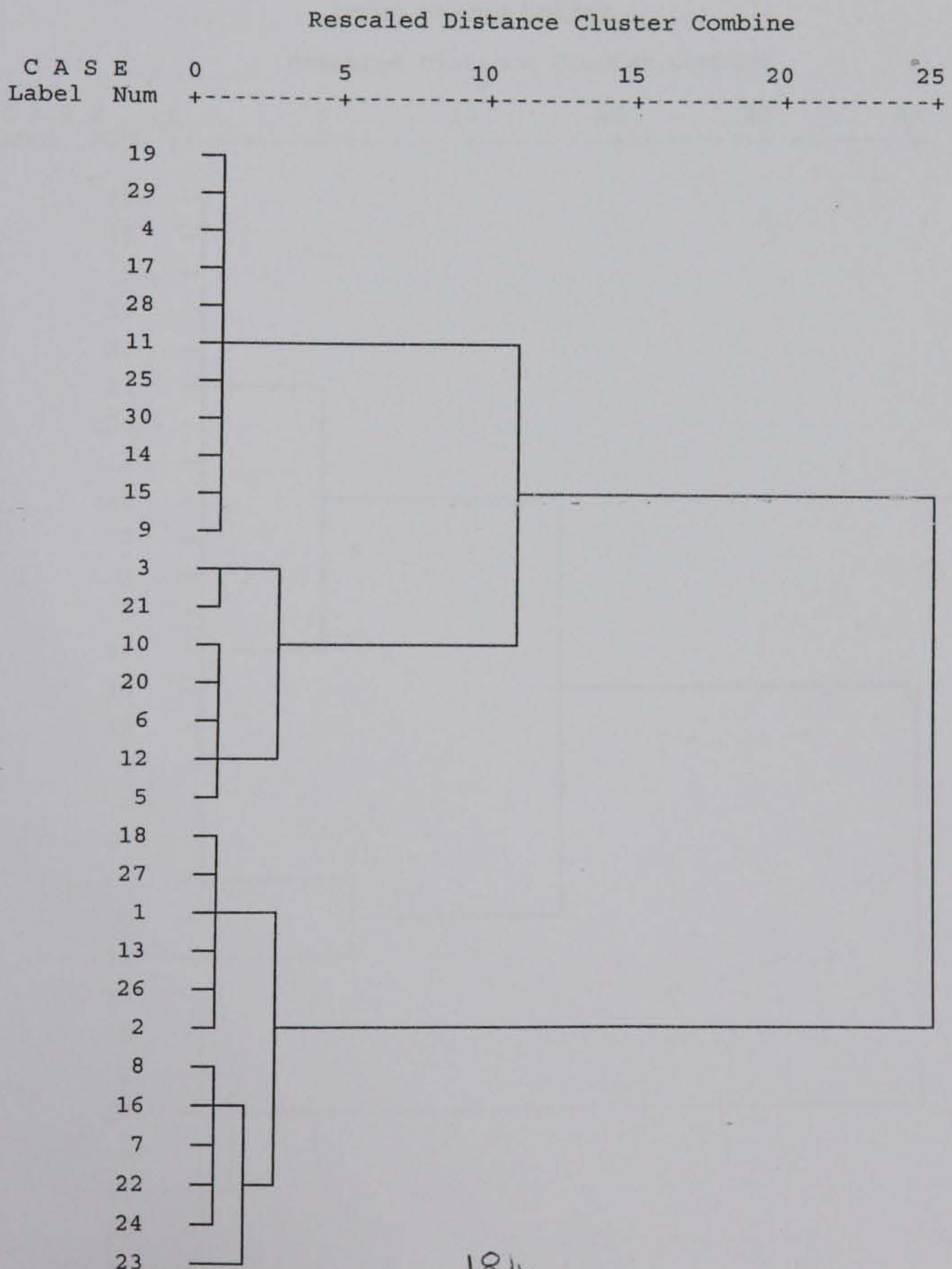
Examination of Figure 3.17 revealed a group (N = 12) of people whose scores in emotion focused coping were related to each other. Reference to the raw data showed that this group used emotion focused coping more frequently than the rest of the participants in the bullied group. Reference to the raw data also showed that all of the people in this group had moderate to high self-esteem. This group also included 8 (F) and 24 (F) who had family support and who were visible upset during interview.

**Figure 3.18 Dendrogram representing cognitive reconstruction scores
using average linkage**


```
                         Rescaled Distance Cluster Combine

   C A S E       0         5         10        15        20        25
   Label  Num    +---------+---------+---------+---------+---------+

        23      ┐
        28      ┤
         9      ┤
        19      ┤
        30      ┤
        21      ┤
        26      ┤
        12      ┤
        16      ┤
        20      ┤
         3      ┘
         7      ┐
        29      ┤
        15      ┤
        25      ┤
         1      ┘
         6      ┐
        17      ┤
         4      ┤
         5      ┘
        10
        18      ┐
        22      ┤
         2      ┤
        27      ┘
         8      ┐
        11      ┤
        13      ┤
        14      ┤
        24      ┘
```
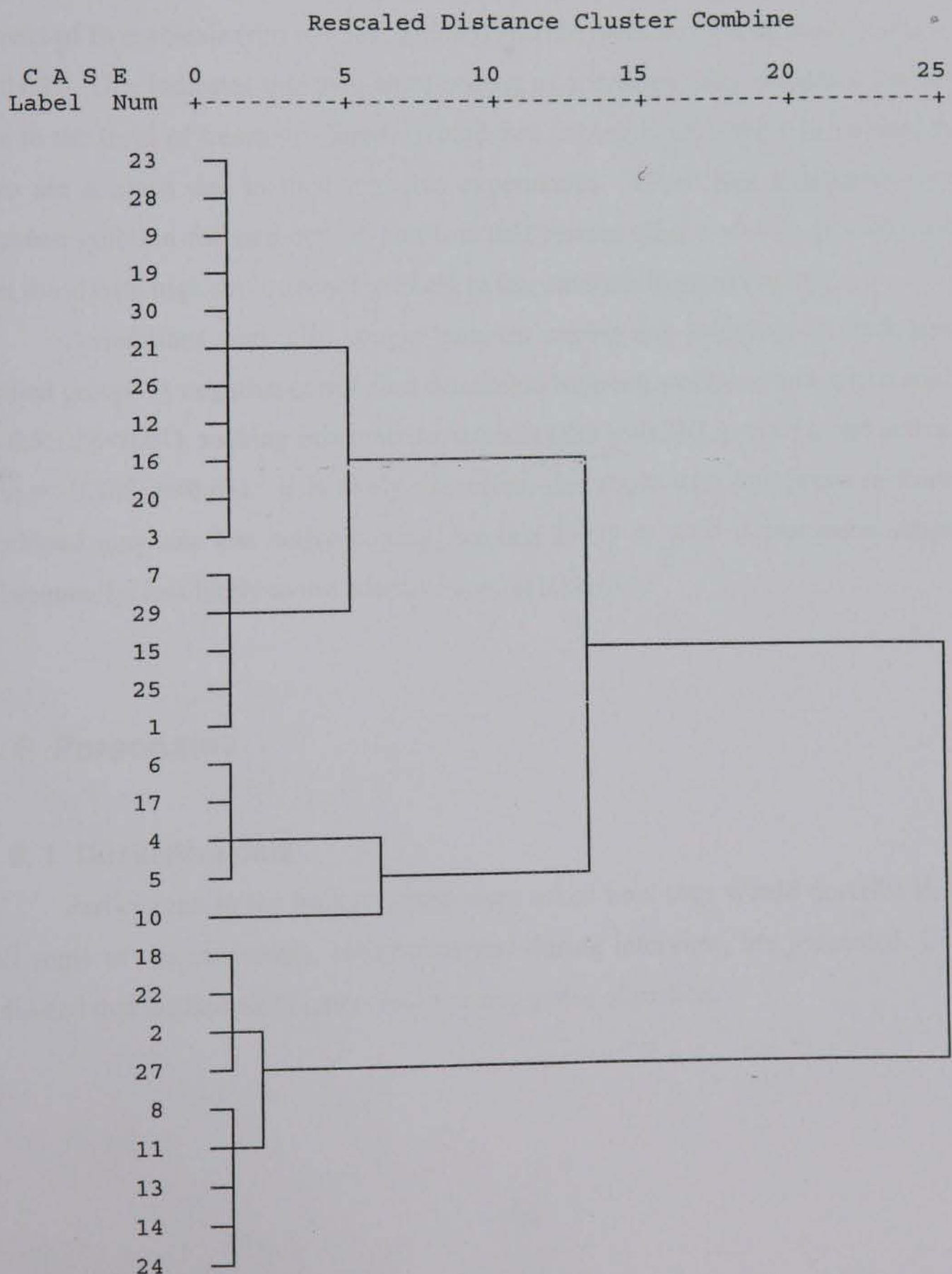
Figure 3.18 illustrates which people in the bullied group had scores more closely related in cognitive reconstruction (N = 9). Six people in this group had high scores in self-esteem. This group again included 8 (F) and 24 (F) who admitted to having learned from their negative experiences.

Correlations, using Spearman's rho, were sought between these categories of coping strategies and scores in the measures of psychological well-being for the bullied group. Problem coping was associated negatively with low self esteem (rho = -0.563, p<0.01) indicating that this type of coping is more likely to be used by people with high self esteem. Avoidance coping was positively correlated with the avoidance scale in the Impact of Event Scale (rho = 0.367, p<0.05) and the measure of state anxiety (rho = 0.403, p<0.05). This indicates that avoidance coping as a strategy, may influence the behaviour due to the level of trauma suffered. Avoidance coping is also likely to be used by those who are anxious due to their negative experiences. There was a negative correlation between emotion focused coping and low self esteem (rho = -0.474, p<0.01) indicating that those with high self esteem are likely to use emotion focused coping.

Correlations were also sought between coping and pressures at work among the bullied group. A negative correlation was found between workload and active coping (rho = -0.550, p<0.01), seeking instrumental support (rho = -0.367, p<0.05), and active coping (rho = -0.368, p<0.05). It is likely, therefore, that those who feel pressure from a high workload may use less active coping, are less likely to seek instrumental support and, subsequently, less likely to use adaptive coping stategies.

3. 6 Personality

3. 6. 1 Qualitative data

Participants in the bullied group were asked how they would describe themselves and some of the statements, which emerged during interview, are presented. Comments indicated that bullied participants had a strong sense of justice.

1 (M) I would describe myself as a man with particularly high moral principles.

19 (M) I am high-principled and believe in the rights of workers.

22 (M) I have a strong sense of social justice, which strengthened my resolve to fight the organisation both for my sake and other employees.

Other comments showed that bullied participants felt that they were hard working and conscientiousness

9 (F) I am competent and strong, willing to face challenges, and am not prepared to compromise my standards to fit in with the low levels of work.

17(F) I was a hard worker.

29 (M) I am conscientious, strong, efficient, organised and highly qualified.

However, there was evidence that being a recipient of bullying behaviours had brought about change in the personality.

8 (F) I have become totally withdrawn and unsociable

14 (F) I used to be disorganised and untidy, now I strive for perfection.

17 (F) I am now inefficient because I am afraid of doing the wrong thing.

20 (M) I find now that I am a totally different person ... I used to be outgoing and have loads of mates and now I stay in with my parents.

21 (M) Now I'll do anything for peace and quiet.

Comments, therefore, were generally positive. Nevertheless one person admitted that he had antagonised his aggressor. He maintained that he was normally argumentative and that this behaviour was not a result of being a recipient of bullying behaviours.

11 (M) I am particularly argumentative and have a short temper - on one occasion I threw a chair at a member of staff.

3. 6. 2 Quantitative data - personality assessment

Personality of the bullied group (B gp) was assessed using the NEO Personality Inventory (NEO-PI-R) (Costa & McCrae, 1992). The control group (C gp) was also asked to complete the NEO-PI-R to compare scores. This inventory measures five facets of personality: neuroticism, extraversion, openness, agreeableness, and conscientiousness .

The results were examined and the statistics are produced in Table 3.26. A high score in the personality facet indicates that the individual will tend to display behaviours and thoughts to indicate that they are more stable, outgoing, open to new experiences, agreeable, and conscientious.

Table 3.26 Personality facets for the bullied and control group.

	Neuroticism		Extraversion		Openness		Agreeableness		Conscientious	
	B gp	C gp	B gp	C gp	B gp	C gp	B gp	C gp	B gp	C gp
Mean	21.73	20.00	28.37	29.63	29.57	29.77	37.30	31.30	38.83	34.70
Median	22.50	18.50	29.00	29.50	30.50	29.50	38.50	31.00	40.00	35.50
Mode	26	15,23	29,34	27	26,33	28	39	27,33	40,42	38
Min	7	9	9	16	13	18	24	23	21	21
Max	44	40	41	42	42	44	44	45	48	46
St. Dev.	9.15	7.50	6.96	5.99	7.00	6.18	4.09	5.50	6.56	6.61

Examination of Table 3.26 shows that bullied participants scored higher than the control group in neuroticism, openness, agreeableness, and conscientiousness. However, significant differences were only found in agreeableness (U = 170.00, p < 0.01) and conscientiousness (U = 262.50, p < 0.01).

Costa and McCrae (1992) suggest that it is useful to summarise results in terms of five levels: very low, low, average, high, and very high. In their research they have found that approximately 38% score in the average range, 24% score in the high and low range, and 7% score in the very high and very low range. The results in the present study are presented in Table 3.27.

Table 3.27 Frequency and % of personality facets among participants

	Neuroticism		Extraverion		Openness		Agreeableness		Conscientious	
	Freq N=30	%	Freq N=30	%	Freq N=30	%	Freq N=30	%	Freq N=30	%
Very low	3	10.0	4	13.3	2	6.7	1	3.3	1	3.3
Low	6	20.0	5	16.7	4	13.3	0	0	2	6.7
Average	9	30.0	9	30.0	9	30.0	8	26.7	5	16.7
High	8	26.7	11	36.7	12	40.0	15	50.0	16	53.3
Very high	4	13.3	1	3.3	3	10.0	6	20.0	6	20.0

From examination of Table 3.27, it is evident that more participants scored in the high or very high categories, in openness, agreeableness, and conscientiousness, than the norms presented by Costa and McCrae (1992).

The results from the control group were examined using the same categories suggested by Costa and McCrae (1992) of very low, low, average, high, and very high and are presented for comparison with participants in Table 3.28.

Table 3.28 Personality factors of participants and the control group.

	Neuroticism		Extraversion		Openness		Agreeableness		Conscientious	
	B gp	C gp	B gp	C gp	B gp	C gp	B gp	C gp	B gp	C gp
Very low	3	1	4	2	2	0	1	3	1	2
Low	6	11	5	4	4	4	0	10	2	6
Average	9	11	9	11	9	13	8	11	5	11
High	8	4	11	11	12	7	15	4	16	9
Very high	4	3	1	2	3	6	6	2	6	3

From examination of Table 3.28 it can be seen that had more participants in the control group had average scores in each facet of personality.

Correlation was sought between personality domains of the bullied group and effects of bullying behaviours. A positive correlation was found between extraversion and the total score for the General Health Questionnaire (rho = 0.367, p<0.05) indicating that it is more likely that people who are bullied and outgoing are more likely to suffer physical and mental ill-health. A negative correlation between extraversion and trait anger (rho = -0.383) was found which suggests that people who can be described as angry are more likely to be introverted. Also a positive correlation between neuroticism and low self esteem (rho = 0.412, p< 0.05) was found, suggesting that people who have been bullied and whose adjustment, or emotional ability is low, are likely to have low self esteem.

The relationships between personality factors and pressures at work were examined, for the bullied group, and a positive correlation was found between conscientiousness and organisational climate (rho = 0.457, p<0.05) and a negative correlation between conscientiousness and organisational commitment (rho = -0.442, p<0.05). This indicates that a conscientious person is likely to work harder if the organisational climate is good and may work less hard when they are no longer committed to their employer.

Correlations were sought between the five personality facets and the fifteen coping strategies among the bullied group. There was significant negative correlation between neuroticism and active coping (rho = -0.469, p<0.01), planning (rho = -0.549, p<0.01), seeking instrumental social support (rho = -0.372, p<0.05), seeking emotional social support (rho = -0.527, p<0.0) and positive reinforcement (rho = -0.415, p<0.05). This suggests that those who have been bullied and whose adjustment, or emotional ability, is high are more likely to use both problem focused and emotional focused coping. Extraversion correlated positively with seeking emotional social support (rho = 0.497, p<0.01) and denial (rho = 0.392, p<0.05) suggesting that the people in the bullied group who were outgoing would seek emotional support from others and yet would be reluctant to admit to themselves that they were a recipient of bullying behaviours. The openness facet correlated positively with seeking emotional social support (rho = 0.582, p<0.01), positive reinforcement (rho = 0.576, p<0.01) and venting of emotions (rho = 0.361,

p<0.05) indicating that participants who were open to new experiences are likely to seek emotional support, express their emotions and learn from their experiences. Agreeableness is also positively correlated with seeking emotional support (rho = 0.432, p<0.05) and positive reinforcement (rho = 0.441, p<0.05). There was a negative correlation between conscientiousness and alcoholism (rho = -0.410, p<0.05) indicating that conscientious people in the bullied group are less likely to abuse alcohol.

To examine any effects of personality on coping dispositions due to being a recipient of bullying behaviour, the same analysis was carried out for the control group. A positive correlation was found between neuroticism and denial (rho = 0.363, p<0.05). Positive correlations were also found between extraversion and active coping (rho = 0.47, p<0.01), planning (rho = 0.502, p<0.01), seeking instrumental social support (rho = 0.402, p<0.05), suppression of competing activities (rho = 0.451, p<0.05), positive reinterpretation and growth (rho = 0.537, p<0.01), and a negative correlation with humour (rho = -0.445, p<0.05). There was a negative correlation between openness and behavioural disengagement (rho = -0.463, p<0.01), and a negative correlation between agreeableness and alcohol abuse. Positive correlation was found between conscientiousness and active coping (rho = 0.564, p<0.01), planning (rho = 0.474, p<0.01) and seeking instrumental social support (rho = 0.506, p<0.01). The correlation between conscientiousness and behavioural disengagement was negative (rho = -0.545, p<0.01).

Correlations were also sought between the five personality facets of the bullied group measured by NEO-PI-R and the four coping styles suggested by Ingeldew et al (1996). There was a negative correlation between problem focused coping and neuroticism (rho = -0.476, p< 0.01) and emotional focused coping and neuroticism (rho = -0.484, p<0.01) confirming the correlations between neuroticism and individual coping strategies. There was positive correlation between emotional focused coping and extraversion (rho = 0.480, p<0.01) and openness (rho = 0.518, p<0.01) which indicates that emotional focused coping is more likely to be used by sociable people who are assertive, active, and talkative and those who are open to new experiences. A negative correlation was found between cognitive reconstruction and openness (rho = 0.404, p<0.05). This suggests that people in the bullied group who are open to new experiences

are less likely to perceive their negative experiences as an opportunity to change their attitudes.

3. 7 Action taken by the bullied group

Participants were asked in interview what actions they had taken during their employment, and subsequently, in an attempt to stop the bullying or deal with the issue. This complemented the quantitative data.

Only one participant (16F) took no actions whatsoever. She reported that she felt too vulnerable. Some participants reported that no effective action was taken by their employer in attempts to end their negative experiences when they took what they considered to be appropriate action in their place of work.

7 (M) I told my boss ... I told my Union rep ... I told my wife ... nothing changed so I went sick - when I went back they behaved well for a time but then came back at me even worse. He concluded that *When the head of the organisation is involved there is no other remedial course available other than the legal route.*

8 (F) I told head of department ... he said "sort it out between you".

12 (F) I told my manager who said that personality clashes were unavoidable. My union rep said that the normal procedure was for the complainant (me) to be removed.

18 (F) I spent a year trying to make it work ... I didn't want to leave ... there was no formal way to solve my problems during my employment there.

For other participants the bullying behaviours increased even though action was taken by management and on occasions investigations were carried out.

4 (M) I made an official complaint ... The bully got moved - my next manager was the owner of the company and he was worse.

24 (F) The investigation showed that the team was dysfunctional and avoided the issue of bullying.

26 (M) The investigators report found that *** did breach the Anti Bullying Policy. He isolated me, excluded me and humiliated me. The company issued a serious reprimand and offered him counselling. He is still in his job. I was demoted and was not offered counselling or anything.

For twenty-four people complaining about their distressing experiences resulted in being forced to leave their place of employment by resigning, taking sick leave, or being dismissed.

9 (F) He was my boss and I'd no-one to turn to ... he broke me and I resigned.

16 (F) I had to retire on sick leave. My career was destroyed, my confidence lost, I have no enthusiasm for life, no energy, I am envious of people who are able to get on with their lives.

27 (F) I was phoned at home and given two options ... "reintegration (on their terms) or termination" ... they chose "termination" for me.

However, it was possible for some people to take action and ultimately be satisfied with the result.

17 (F) I "trained" my Union rep and he was quite good eventually. He organised a generous redundancy package ... all I wanted to do though was to stay there and work without the bullying but I realised that this was impossible and that if I could leave and feel I had won then I could get on with my life.

25 (M) I had to go to the highest authority in the land ... I had to name names ... I got moral justice and legal justice.

Examining the quantitative data showed that the most common action was to confront the perpetrator but that this action was rarely successful. Table 3.29 shows the action taken by participants when they were asked to identify the behaviour from a list presented to them.

Table 3.29 Actions taken by recipients of bullying behaviours

Action taken	Frequency N = 30	Frequency of positive outcome
Confronted the perpetrator	25	1
Complained to the perpetrator's boss	20	2
Consulted the Personal Officer	16	1
Spoke with the Union Representative	17	2
Made a group complaint	4	0

Participants took more than one step in attempts to stop the bullying behaviours. Ten participants had confronted the perpetrator, complained to the perpetrator's boss, consulted with the Personal Officer and spoken with their Union Representative. One person had confronted her aggressor, complained to her aggressor's boss, and consulted with the Personnel Officer resulting in a decrease in the bullying behaviours. For two participants the Unions had been particularly effective in assisting their members and one of these was able to continue with his career. For one person the Personnel Officer had been supportive to the extent that the participant was satisfied with the outcome of his complaint and able to stay with his employer, but the Personnel Officer was subsequently victimised. Eleven people maintained that the bullying increased as a result of their complaint, five were threatened with dismissal and three were actually dismissed. Two people were labelled as troublemakers, while for six people their employers ignored their complaints. Of the thirty participants, two were able to continue their careers with the same employers without demotion, while three others are still employed by the same employer but their careers have been severely affected. Table 3.30 shows the status of participants at the time of writing the thesis.

Table 3.30 Present status of participants

	Frequency		
	Male	Female	Total
Dismissed / unemployed	2	3	5
Sick leave /retired	3	5	8
Resigned / unemployed	2	1	3
Resigned / new job	4	5	9
Employed same company	3	1	4
Unknown	1	0	1

In total at the time of writing the thesis 9 participants, who claimed to have been bullied in their place of work, had been awarded financial settlements by pursuing a legal route through the Courts or Employee Appeals Tribunal. One of the people still employed by the same organisation received a financial settlement awarded by the High Court. All the people who were dismissed (N = 5) were eventually awarded damages by the Courts although only one person's case was heard to conclusion. The remaining 4 people settled their cases either before or during the hearing. One person secured a redundancy settlement from her employer, and 2 people were forced by their employers to take early retirement but considered themselves to have been dismissed. One person is still waiting for a date to be set for his case to be heard. Of the 9 people who resigned from their jobs 2 received a pre court settlement and one person lost her case. One of the people on sick leave negotiated a pension package with the company on an Income Contingency Plan.

SECTION 4 - DISCUSSION

The present study illustrates the advantages of a combined quantitative and qualitative approach to research, as data analysis allowed results to be presented with qualitative data leading to further explanation and expansion. Thus the research could be labelled as second level research (Zapf & Einarsen, 2001) as it demonstrated progression from establishing the causes and consequences of bullying to a more in-depth and rigorous study of antecedents and effects of bullying behaviour, and the personality and coping behaviours of recipients.

All participants in the bullied group claimed to have been bullied in their place of work without reference to a definition and, on occasions, without a systematic identification of the behaviours. However, a subjective decision was subsequently made during the study, on each participant, which agreed with their own interpretation that they had been recipients of bullying behaviour in their place of work. It was only possible to collect additional data that could confirm or otherwise this claim for participants who had successfully pursued their experiences through the legal route or internal investigations in their workplace. The inclusion of a control group enabled comparisons to be made with regard to some factors in the quantitative data. Nevertheless participants in this study were a particularly narrow group and caution should be taken when attempting to extrapolate information to other groups of people who claim to have been bullied at work.

Comparisons will be made with other studies throughout this discussion, even though the sample in this study were made up of a particular group of people who sought practical help from the Anti Bullying Research and Resource Centre or who took legal action. However, evidence points to the fact that each person had been severely bullied resulting in serious effects. Thus it has been possible to make comparisons with data from this study confirming findings from other studies.

4.1 Demographic information

Demographic information was available for the bullied group which enabled the control group to be been matched in regard to gender, occupational group, and economic

sector but it was not possible to the match the groups with regard to age. Nevertheless the match was considered to be sufficiently acceptable to compare data from the groups.

Examination of the age profile of the bullied group showed that more than half of the participants were in the 41 to 50 age group with the under 30 age group not represented. This does not agree with the age profile of the Irish nationwide survey (O'Moore, 2000b) where the findings indicated that 21% were in the 21 to 30 age group, 30% were in the 31 to 40 age group, and 27% were in the 41 to 50 age group. The nationwide survey showed that there was a significant relationship between age and the level of bullying, during the previous 12 months, with the under 20 age group reporting the highest level of victimisation. The under-representation of younger recipients of bullying behaviour in the present study could indicate that although younger people claim to be bullied, they are in a position to change jobs more easily and walk away from their distressing situation rather than take action within their place of employment, or legal action, to resolve their work problems. It is also feasible that monetary considerations may inhibit the younger age groups seeking redress through the legal system, although it is arguable that older people have more financial commitments. Nevertheless the under-representation of this age group infers that findings from this study cannot be generalised.

The bullied group in the present study consisted of equal numbers of men and women but since participants were self-selected no conclusions can be formed in regard to gender. However, the equal numbers of men and women in the sample reflect findings from the Irish nationwide survey (O'Moore, 2000b). The marital status of participants in this study also reflected the findings from the survey (O'Moore, 2000b) with approximately two thirds of the bullied group being married.

The economic sectors that were most represented by participants in this study were education and health, financial and other business, and public administration and defence (almost two thirds) confirming findings of a review of EU surveys (Di Martino et al, 2003). It is feasible that these sectors of the workforce employ a greater proportion of higher level occupational groups, which is reflected by the distribution of participants in the occupational groups where more than two thirds of participants are employed in managerial/administration and professional positions. The high representation of management and professionals contrasts the findings of the two national surveys carried

out in Ireland (O'Moore, 2000b) and the UK (Hoel & Cooper, 2000). O'Moore (2000b) found that 27% of professionals and 18% of managerial respondents claimed to have been recipients of bullying behaviour and Hoel and Cooper (2000) found that bullying appeared to be equally as likely to affect a manager and a worker.

It is possible that employees in management and professional occupations are more intolerant of injustice towards themselves. They may conclude that they have a higher investment of time and money to achieve their positions, they have too much to lose in terms of status, and they are used to having their opinion valued at other periods of their career. This could explain the over representation of people in management and professional occupations in a group of people seeking justice, support and / or advice.

The mean length of time participants had spent in their job was 17.5 years but a standard deviation of 9.85 years illustrated the high range of time periods. During interview it became apparent that the greater length of service led to a greater feeling of injustice as participants felt let down by the employer where they had given such loyal service. The mean length of time spent in the job, for respondents in the Irish nationwide survey (O'Moore, 2000b) was 14 years which is acceptably close to the findings in this study.

The gender composition of the organisation where each participant worked did not reflect the findings of the Irish nationwide survey (O'Moore, 2000b). This study showed that more than a third of the bullying took place in organisations that employed mostly men, whereas the Irish survey showed that while there were more men than women in organisations with a higher prevalence of bullying, the difference was not as great.

The personal and demographic information obtained during this study with the exception of participants' occupational group, appeared to reflect adequately the findings of the Irish nationwide survey (O'Moore, 2000b), thus indicating that the sample was reasonably representative of the Irish workforce. However, the size of the sample and the narrow specification of selection of participants limits extrapolation to a larger population.

4. 2 Negative behaviours: bullied group

The sample for the bullied group was taken from people who claimed to have been bullied but had not made this decision within the confines of a definition, rather they had used the individual behaviours to which they had been subjected to arrive at this conclusion. Scrutiny of the definition suggested by O'Moore (2000a) showed that it could be applied to the experiences of the bullied group. This definition states that bullying is negative behaviour, which can be direct or indirect, verbal, non-verbal or physical, initiated or conducted by one or more persons against another or others in a systematic and on-going manner. Isolated incidents of aggressive behaviour can also be described as bullying if they are unjustified and serve to intimidate on an on-going basis. However in this study the bullying behaviours had all been part of an on-going situation and there were no isolated incidents.

Qualitative data reflected that some recipients of bullying behaviours were not initially aware of what was happening and it was as the bullying behaviours became more overt over time that they concluded that they were being bullied, confirming the opinion offered by Einarsen et al (2003) that bullying is often preceded by an escalation of conflict.

Comparisons, using qualitative data, between the present study and the Irish nationwide survey (O'Moore, 2000b) showed similar patterns of bullying behaviour. The most frequently experienced behaviours in both studies were in relation to work "withholding information so that work becomes difficult", "severe or unfair criticism", "neglect of opinion or views", "false claims of under performance", "being set unrealistic work targets", and "devaluing work and efforts". The results of this study also confirmed those of Salin (2001) where the most frequently reported negative behaviours were work related.

People in the bullied group in the present study had experienced a greater number of negative behaviours than respondents in the nationwide study (O'Moore, 2000b). With the exception of "sexual harassment" (10%), "physical abuse or threats of physical abuse", (30%), "undue pressure to vote in a certain way at meetings" (37%) and "interference or disappearance of personal items" (40%), the percentage of participants being exposed to individual negative behaviours ranged from 53% to 93%. In the Irish

nationwide survey (O'Moore, 2000b) the percentage of respondents exposed to negative behaviours ranged from 6% to 52%. However, in the present study all participants in the bullied group claimed to have been bullied, whereas in O'Moore's (2000b) study the random sample included people who had been recipients of negative behaviours but did not conclude that they had been bullied.

There were two notable differences between this study and that carried out by O'Moore (2000b) with regard to individual negative behaviours. The first concerned "intimidation, threats of disciplinary action, blocking promotion or pay increments" where 90% of the people in the bullied group in this study claimed that this had happened to them whereas 20% of respondents in the national survey claimed that they had been intimidated in this manner. However this study confirmed findings by Vartia (2003) where verbal threats was the second most prevalent negative behaviour in her study. It is possible that the presence of a verbal threat with regard to future employment could lead people to the conclusion that, as their livelihoods were threatened, they had no option other than to seek redress through the legal route.

The second major difference between this study and that of O'Moore (2000b) is that 70% of the bullied group in this study maintained that they had "suffered humiliation by being shouted out" whereas 33% of respondents in the survey underwent the same experience. It is possible, therefore, that a personal affront leads to a determination that action needs to be instigated to seek redress.

Findings from this study confirmed those of Rayner (1997) where "intimidation" and "persistent criticism" were reported to have occurred frequently as bullying behaviour. However, the most frequent negative acts in Rayner's (1997) survey were concerned with "work overload" whereas in the present study "being set unrealistic work targets" was reported by 83% of bullied participants and was not the most frequently reported negative behaviour.

Findings also confirmed those of Hoel and Cooper (2000) who found, in their nationwide study in the UK, that respondents were most frequently exposed to "having your opinions and views ignored" which was experienced by 53.6% in their survey. They concluded that for the total sample, behaviours related to what they referred to as "personal derogation" were those found to be most closely associated to bullying and

gave examples of these behaviours as "attempts to find fault with your work", being humiliated and ridiculed in connection with your work", and "spreading of gossip and rumours about you". Zapf et al (1996) also found that "rumours", as a bullying behaviour, occurred most frequently. However, their findings that "social isolation" and "verbal aggression" occurred frequently contrasted with this study where these behaviours occurred less frequently.

Examination of the negative behaviours with regard to age and gender showed that in the over 40's age groups more women than men had been bullied. This confirms findings by Bjorqvist et al (1994) and Salin (2002) which suggest that women of all age groups were more represented than men as bullied respondents. Although this study did not find significant differences between bullying behaviours and age, each participant under 40 had been deprived of responsibility or work tasks. Hoel and Cooper (2000) and Quine (1999) found that their results suggested that younger respondents were more likely to be recipients of bullying behaviours. It is possible that this reflects discrimination with regard to gender and age where women and younger employees are more likely to be bullied by being deprived of responsibility and work tasks.

Salin (2003) found that the prevalence of bullying in her survey varied depending on whether participants were presented with a definition (8.8%) or a list of negative behaviours (24.1%) even though both groups claimed to have been bullied during the past 12 months. This study confirmed some and contrasted with other findings of previous studies when the presence of individual negative behaviours was examined to ascertain the prevalence of bullying. This suggests that the identification of individual behaviours may not be the most appropriate measure of assessing the level of bullying. A more accurate interpretation of the experiences of people who claim to have been bullied may be gained following discussion with the individual concerned, which includes an examination of the effects of bullying on them. The use of a definition, such as that proposed by O'Moore's (2000a), allows bullying to be described as negative behaviour and takes the physiological and psychological effects into account.

4. 3 Profile of perpetrators

The status of the alleged perpetrators of bullying behaviours, in this study, differs from previous research. There were 83% of participants in the bullied group who had been bullied by person(s) in a senior position. This compared with 70% (O'Moore, 2000b), 75% (Hoel & Cooper, 2000) and 54% (Einarsen and Skogstad, 1996). O'Moore (2000b) proposed that the reason the prevalence of bullying by superiors is higher in the UK and Ireland than the Scandinavian countries could reflect a more egalitarian society. The options taken by bullied participants in this study could indicate that when an individual is bullied by a person in a superior position in the workplace the situation is less likely to be resolved internally and the person has no option but to seek redress elsewhere.

Since the accounts of the behaviours of perpetrators of bullying, in this study, were from the prospective of the recipient, any conclusions should be proposed with caution. Nevertheless subjective qualitative data gathered during interview with the bullied group illustrated a range of opinions as to why, from the recipients' perspective, perpetrators behaved in an aggressive manner. Victim accounts of their aggressors varied from attempts to understand the motivation behind the behaviours to a subjective judgement that the aggressor had evil intent. However, the data can only illustrate the recipients' perception of their aggressor, which may not accurately reflect the true behaviours and motivations of the aggressors.

The findings of Baumeister, Stillwell, and Wotman (1990) may offer an explanation with regard to victims' accounts of their distressing experiences. They examined victim and perpetrator accounts when they had been angered or expressed anger towards someone else. The provoking behaviour was generally portrayed by the perpetrator as meaningful and comprehensible, whereas the victim tended to depict it as arbitrary, gratuitous, or incomprehensible. Victim accounts portrayed the incident in a long-term context that carried lasting implications, especially of continuing harm, loss, and grievance. Perpetrator accounts tended to cast the incident as a closed, isolated incident that did not have lasting implications. Qualitative data in this study suggests that bullied participants felt that there were long term effects on their health and future earning capacity.

Qualitative data confirmed findings of Vartia (1996) who found that respondents in her study experienced envy, a weak superior, and competition as the main reasons for bullying while envy and competition were also given as the most common reasons in the study carried out by Bjorkqvist et al (1994). Envy was the most common reason for bullying behaviours, referred to in the Norwegian study carried out by Einarsen et al (1994). The Irish nationwide survey (O'Moore, 2000b) and the Teachers Union of Ireland study (TUI, 1999) also showed envy among the reasons why a person is bullied. Thus findings in this study support other Irish studies and other European trends. Qualitative data also confirmed findings of Bjorkqvist et al (1994) that a perceived reason for bullying could be aggressor feeling uncertain about themselves.

Quantitative data showed that almost half of the participants in the present study claimed that a change in the boss, manager, or line manager coincided with the onset of bullying. This compared with 14% of respondents in the Irish survey (O'Moore, 2000b). For a further three participants, a new staff member with a propensity for bullying behaviours, joined the workforce and targeted them. This indicates that, for the majority of people in this study, the onset of bullying was more likely to occur when the recipient and the perpetrator come into contact with each other. However, it is possible that the perpetrator of bullying behaviours may have targeted another employees in the past and that this is their normal behaviour in the workplace.

Spector (1996) used theories of motivation to explain behaviour in a workplace setting. For example reinforcement theory, in the context of environmental influences, could lead members of the work force to behave in the manner that they have concluded will comply with the normal practices that will bring about rewards of monetary value or promotion. This was evident by comments from participants in the bullied group suggested that bullying behaviour was the norm when they moved into the department.

It is possible that conclusions formed by bullied participants with regard to the motivation for bullying behaviours were inaccurate. The fundamental attribution error, identified by Ross (1977, cited in Myers, 1996), explains that people will underestimate the situational influences and overestimate dispositional influences on the behaviour of other's. Although qualitative data confirmed that bullied participants had examined their

role in the conflict situation, it was evident that ultimately they had put the responsibility onto the perpetrator of the bullying behaviours.

4. 4 Social climate in the workplace

Findings that identified a work environment to be hostile for two thirds of participants in the bullied group confirmed the results of studies carried out by O'Moore (2000b), O'Moore et al (1998), and Sheehan (1999). In the present study the social climate was affected by the gender composition of the organisation with men finding a hostile environment when mostly men were employed and women finding the environment hostile when mostly women were employed. Only one person in the present study reported that their workplace was competitive whereas Salin (2003), from her research among business professionals in Finland, concluded that bullying seems to flourish in hectic and competitive environments. Findings from other research showed that recipients of bullying behaviour reported a highly stressful and competitive environment (O'Moore et al, 1998), and that organisational climate factors explained 24% of the variance in bullying with bullying associated with a negative work climate (Vartia, 1996).

The use of qualitative data allowed participants to use their own words to describe their perception of the working environment. In this study participants used words such as "intimidation" and "fearful" in descriptions of their work environment indicating that their perception of their workplace was extremely negative and un-supportive. It is feasible that the perceived hostile work environment may have existed and contributed to the individual person being bullied and qualitative data suggested that this was the case. However, an objective opinion may have shown the work environment not to be hostile and the negative experiences alone to have caused the individual's perception of the environment to be hostile.

Qualitative data from five people who reported their workplaces to be friendly or supportive indicated that they were able to separate the behaviours of their aggressors from the general atmosphere in their place of work. The comment of 20(M) "*they were good to me*" suggests that this person put the blame of his distressing experiences onto

204

the aggressor and did not hold the rest of his work colleagues responsible. However, ultimately he did blame his employers. For 29(M), leaving his place of employment would have been particularly difficult as the social aspect of work was positive and he had many good friends there. Ultimately he was able to return to work with his original employers. It is possible that an overall friendly and supportive work environment may exist for other recipients of bullying behaviour and this could explain why they stay with their employers even though they are severely affected by bullying of one, or several, work colleagues.

The diversity of perceptions of the social climate among participants in the bullied group, with nine participants not describing their working environment as hostile, suggests that it is possible for bullying to take place in a positive social climate. This confirms the suggestion by Einarsen (1999) that bullying cannot only be explained by the social climate of the organisation but that there is input from the individuals concerned.

Fishbein (1997) maintained that, although people are not completely dependent on their environment, they can consciously decide to tailor their want to their conditions. He maintained that different behaviours may require different skills and abilities to achieve a specific goal and the presence or absence of environmental constraints will depend on the actions under consideration. This could explain why some people appear to be more tolerant of bullying behaviour, affected less by the negative behaviours, and accept the hostile environment at work as the norm and do not claim to be bullied.

4. 4. 1 Change

Quantitative data illustrated that all participants in the bullied group considered that changes in their workplace coincided with or were responsible for the onset of bullying. More specifically, the present study showed that for eight people (27%) a change in the nature of the job, or in organisational operation coincided with the onset of bullying confirming the Irish nationwide survey (O'Moore, 2000b). This survey revealed that a change in the nature of the job was relevant for 21% of respondents who claimed to have been bullied and a change in the way the organisation operated for 17% of the same group. The findings also confirm those of Hoel and Cooper (2000) where a significant

relationship was found between exposure to bullying and events linked with organisational change.

4. 4. 2 Leadership

The high representation of autocratic style leadership, for those in this study who claimed to have been bullied, confirmed findings by O'Moore et al (1998), Einarsen et al (1994), and Hoel and Cooper (2000). This illustrates that this style of leadership is not conducive to a work environment that would inhibit bullying. Equally, a laissez-faire style (identified by three participants in the bullied group) may allow bullying to occur without challenge from higher management. As Leymann (1996), Einarsen (1999), Vartia (2003), and Zapf et al (1996) identified an association between a high prevalence of bullying and poor or uninterested leadership, this study confirms that the issue of leadership is central in any attempts to prevent or combat bullying.

4. 4. 3 Comparisons between the bullied and control groups

The Pressure Management Indicator (Williams & Cooper, 1998) identified specific constructs of the social climate in the workplace from both the bullied and control groups. The bullied group displayed significantly lower levels than the control group in all factors that indicate the level of job and organisation satisfaction. This confirmed findings by Einarsen et al (1994) who showed that a high prevalence of bullying was associated with low job satisfaction.

Examination of data identified a greater difference in the median scores between the groups with regard to organisation satisfaction. It is possible that the perception of participants in the bullied group was affected by the manner in which their present difficulties were dealt with and they may have scored differently if assessed in the period prior to their negative experiences. The least difference in median values was the organisational commitment score suggesting that participants in the bullied group were still committed to their employer and confirmed the qualitative data and description discussed in the previous section.

When the scores of the bullied and control group were compared with regard to factors that indicate work pressure, significant differences were found in workload,

relationships at work, organisational climate and daily hassles. In each of these factors, scores from the bullied group indicated that their work pressure was higher than the control group. However, examination of the scores representing recognition, personal responsibility, managerial role, and home/work balance showed no significant difference.

Although an excessive work load, identified as "set unrealistic targets" in the list of negative behaviours was not the most frequent behaviour reported by bullied participants in this study, scores in the Pressure Management Indicator (Williams & Cooper, 1998) showed that workload was a source of pressure for bullied participants. It is possible, and confirmed by qualitative data, that recipients of bullying behaviour will take on more work in an attempt to appease their aggressors and it is also possible that the aggressors may take advantage of the conscientious worker and inflict a high workload on them.

A significant difference between the groups in regard to daily hassles, with the bullied group scoring higher, illustrates that bullying behaviour could be an extension of day to day irritants and aggravations in the workplace. Where daily hassles can be a normal experience for some people, on the occasion when the hassles occur in a bullying situation and there are effects on the physical and mental well-being of a person, the hassles become a cause of harassment.

The significant difference between the groups in regard to organisational climate confirms the findings by self-report in the present study and those of Einarsen et al (1994) and Leymann (1996) who concluded that poor working relationships were associated with bullying.

Findings showed that participants in the bullied group felt that their achievements in work were recognised but, to a lesser (not significant) extent than for the control group. Findings also showed that participants in the bullied group were able to cope with their responsibilities for managing and supervising others and making decisions. This could illustrate that bullied participants were able to withstand normal pressures at work and suggests that their performance did not contribute to their being selected as targets.

Although the difference was not significant, findings suggest that participants in the bullied group were less able to switch off from the pressure of work when at home. This is more likely to refer to the pressure brought on by bullying than normal work

pressure and a symptom of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder explained in the next section. Qualitative data showed that some participants were unable to expel thoughts of their negative experiences from their minds. It is also possible that bullied participants in this study, perceived work as a larger part of their self identity than others and therefore are more threatened by negative behaviours.

4. 5 Effects of bullying behaviour

With the exception of self-esteem, data on the effects on physical and mental health were only available for the bullied group. Both quantitative and qualitative data ascertained from participants in the bullied group suggested that each person had been severely distressed by their negative experiences at work and that for with the exception of two people, severe effects were still evident.

Quantitative data, by self-report of physiological and psychological symptoms, and behavioural changes associated with stress, confirmed this and suggest a high stress level with all participants having disturbed sleep, anxiety, loss of confidence and self esteem, and depression. Over half of the participants stated that they had thoughts of suicide, which they attributed to their distressing experiences. These results confirm other research into the effects of bullying (Groeblinghoff & Becker, 1996; Hoel et al, 1999; Leymann & Gustaffson, 1996; Mikkelsen & Einarsen, 2001; Niedl, 1996; O'Moore et al, 1998; O'Moore, 2000b; O'Moore et al, 2002; O'Moore et al, 2003c; Vartia, 1996; Zapf, 1999) where physical and mental ill-health, as a result of bullying behaviours, were identified by self report.

The accuracy of individual recollections of a persons own experiences and data obtained by self report have been criticised (Folkman et al, 1986). According to Eysenck and Keane (1996) the importance and emotionality of events are likely to affect their subsequent recallability. They also commented that people who are anxious and depressed tend to recall a disproportionate number of negative events with exaggerated severity. Coyne and Gottlieb (1996) also maintained that negative automatic thoughts are basic to the dysfunction associated with depression.

These comments suggest that the severity of effects on bullied participants, in this study may be exaggerated. A major concern of self-report is social desirability but, in this study, it is more likely that participants may have an exaggerated perception of their symptoms as they recall the distressing effects of their negative experiences at work. At a conscious level it is possible that they were aware that it was in their best interest to be seriously affected by their experiences as they were in the process of claiming for damage to their physical and psychological health. It is also possible that they recalled their physiological and psychological symptoms to be more severe than in reality. Although, undoubtedly, bullied participants were severely affected by their negative experiences, data should be viewed with these reservations.

4. 5. 1 Results of psychological scales and inventories

Psychological scales and inventories gave a more in-depth understanding of the effects on the mental health of participants in the bullied group. The total scores on the General Health Questionnaire (Goldberg & Williams, 1988) correlated with the total stress score by self report and confirmed findings by other researchers using the GHQ (Hoel & Cooper, 2000; Leymann & Gustafsson, 1996; Vartia, 1996) who concluded that bullying behaviours were a cause of physical and psychological ill-health in recipients of such behaviours.

Examination of the dendrogram, representing participants with scores relatively close to each other in the GHQ, enabled the identification of three participants with low scores on this questionnaire and, therefore, good physical and mental well-being. Scrutiny of raw data identified 24(F) who presented as a person who had been successful in her career and was determined not to allow her experiences to affect the rest of her life. Her positive attitude could have minimised the effects of bullying on her physical and mental well-being. 29(M) stated that he had a strong "keep fit" regime and that he had determined not to be affected although he had not totally succeeded especially at the beginning of his distressing experiences. Although 8(F), at the time of the assessment, presented with high psychological well being, she admitted that she had felt suicidal during the time she was exposed to bullying behaviours. This person acknowledged having a high level of family support and claimed that this had positively affected her

209

well-being. It is possible, therefore, that a positive attitude and strong support may have contributed to good physical and mental health. However qualitative data from other participants in the bullied group showed that they also attempted to be positive, received support, and yet were negatively affected with high levels of physical and mental ill-health.

The anxiety level of participants in the bullied group was confirmed by the State/Trait Anxiety Inventory (Spielberger et al, 1970) which showed excessive state anxiety for all bullied participants; three of these people had a maximum score. The male bullied participants had significantly higher scores than women in trait anxiety but the resultant state anxiety, due to their negative experiences at work, showed no differences. As norms had not been ascertained during this study and were not available for this type of sample, it was only possible to use this data to compare scores in state and trait anxiety. Only one person gave a high score in the trait scale, which was equal to his state anxiety score, with all others giving a particularly low score. Although there was an obvious increase in anxiety, undoubtedly due to their negative experiences at work, the extreme low scores, of some bullied participants, could reflect a false perception of trait anxiety where participants felt that they were not anxious people before they became recipients of bullying behaviours in their place of work.

Spielberger (1996) identified the high trait-anxious person as one who needs relatively less external stress to trigger a stress reaction, whereas a low trait-anxiety person will be more relaxed all the time, regardless of the situation. This was not confirmed by the present study where a negative correlation was found between state and trait anxiety indicating that bullying behaviour was likely to cause a high state of anxiety for people who are low in trait anxiety. This confirms the earlier comments that it is possible that the scores on the trait anxiety scale in this study are unreliable.

The level of state anger identified by comments made in interview with the bullied group and self-report was confirmed by the State/Trait Anger Expression Inventory (Spielberger, 1991). The results of both qualitative and quantitative data indicate that high levels of state anger exist in participants even when they have been out of the situation for an extended period of time. Relatively high levels of anger-in and anger control suggest that effort was made to monitor and control feelings of aggression

brought on by participants' negative experiences. Scores on the trait anger scale were low indicating that the present feelings of anger were situationally determined. During interviews it was obvious that this anger was caused by the negative behaviours to which participants claimed they had been subjected and the inability of management to deal effectively with their complaints. The low scores for trait anger are possibly inaccurate with the explanation for low scores in trait anxiety still valid. The findings of this study confirm those of Bjorkvist et al (1994), O'Moore (2000b) and Zapf et al (1996) who found irritability among those claiming to have been recipients of bullying behaviour.

The scores on the Impact of Event Scale (Horowitz et al, 1979) indicate the presence of symptoms of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder and confirm findings by other researchers (Doherty, 2003; Einarsen, 1999; Leymann & Gustafsson, 1996; Zapf et al, 1996) into the effects of bullying behaviours. The median score of 6 on the intrusive scale, in this study, is in accordance with that found by Leymann & Gustafsson (1996) whereas the score of 8 on the avoidance scale, in this study, is in excess of their median score of 5. These high scores, despite counselling for 24 participants and medication for 22 participants indicate that Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder could be the correct diagnosis for recipients of bullying behaviour, confirming the conclusion of Einarsen (1999), as their symptoms persisted over an extended period.

However, the conclusion by Scott and Stradling (1994) that Post Duress Stress Disorder is a more correct diagnosis since there was no life threatening occurrence is equally valid. Doherty (2003) came to the same conclusion although she used a different measure, PENN (Hammerberg, 1992), to assess the level of trauma symptoms.

Two participants in the bullied group, 21(M) and 26(M), had received neither counselling nor medication. Examination of the raw data revealed that they had low scores in anxiety and depression, indicating that their medical advisors correctly judged that medication for these conditions was unnecessary. Their level of self-esteem was also moderate to high, indicating that they may not have felt the need for counselling. It is possible, as qualitative data suggests, that the high level of anger evident in both participants was the major factor in encouraging them to seek legal redress. As one of them had been dismissed (21M) and the other (26M) severely demoted, they maintained that they had nothing to lose by progressing their cases.

4. 5. 2 Work pressure and physical and mental well-being

Einarsen et al (1994) found that bullying was associated with a high workload. Findings from this study confirm this and suggest that pressure resulting from an increased workload is likely to affect specific constructs of physical and mental well-being. Findings indicate that increased workload was associated with increased state anxiety, raised levels on the Impact of Event Scale (Horowitz et al, 1979) and high scores on the General Health Questionnaire (Goldberg & Williams, 1988). It would appear, therefore, that an increased workload was a serious cause of pressure for the participants in the bullied group likely to result in increased anxiety, effects of trauma, and negative effects on their physical and mental health.

Findings from this study showed that pressure from daily hassles in the workplace were likely to cause high state anxiety and physical and mental ill-health. This suggests that bullying behaviour may consist of what some people could interpret as daily hassles but others, through severity, frequency, or impact of such behaviours, determine that they are victims of bullying.

Increased levels of physical and mental ill-health associated with poor working relationships, for the bullied group, suggests that the social aspect of the workplace is significant. This confirms the comments by Schein (1988) that social factors at work, such as relations with peers and supervisors, were important determinants of job satisfaction.

Other work pressures for the bullied group, which affected levels of psychological distress include a high organisational commitment, increasing the level of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder symptoms. This could suggest that when people in the bullied group in the present study had a higher commitment to their organisation they were more distressed as their illusions were shattered through the negative treatment at work.

These findings indicate that particular sources of pressure are likely to effect the psychological health of bullied participants more than others with increased workload likely to cause a greater range of symptoms. However, a heavy workload alone may not constitute bullying behaviour. As 83% of bullied participants in this study, identified

212

"set unrealistic work targets" as a type of negative behaviour to which they had been subjected, high workload for them was likely to be seen as bullying behaviour.

Although the bullied group of participants had indicated that they had less job and organisational satisfaction than the control group, none of the components of this measure correlated with the negative effects on participants' mental health. It is possible, therefore, that bullying behaviour containing elements of increased workload, daily hassles and poor working relationships may have a greater impact on recipients of bullying behaviours than job and organisational satisfaction.

4. 5. 3 Self-esteem

Both the bullied and control group completed the Self Esteem Scale (Rosenberg, 1965) so that their scores could be compared to ascertain any effects of bullying on self-esteem. Findings suggested that the bullied group had significantly higher scores in low self-esteem than the control group and the range for the bullied group was greater. The findings confirm research carried out among children who had been bullied at school (Olweus, 1993; O'Moore et al, 1997; O'Moore & Kirkham, 2001; Slee & Rigby, 1993) and adults in their place of work (O'Moore et al, 1998; O'Moore, 2000b; Vartia, 1996) where the self-esteem of those bullied had suffered. The quantitative data confirmed both information acquired by self-report and qualitative data.

Qualitative data was able to give invaluable insight into the relationship between self-esteem and the effects of the negative experiences of the bullied group and confirmed quantitative data that suggests that bullied participants with low self-esteem were more likely to suffer physical and psychological ill-health, particularly depression and suicide.

Qualitative data showed that two people in particular, 8(F) and 24(F), maintained that although they had been severely affected by their negative experiences, the effect on their self esteem was temporary. According to 8(F), she felt so unworthy that she felt suicidal at one period during her distressing experiences. However, once she realised that she did not deserve her treatment at work and began legal proceedings, she began to regain her sense of worth. Even though she lost her case at a cost of €60,000, she still expressed no regrets in taking her employer to a Tribunal and felt that there was success

by standing up for her principles. Her self-esteem at the time of her assessment was high. Also 24(F) scored with high self-esteem at the time of her assessment and maintained that her level of self-esteem was low at the time of her negative experiences but as she began to take control of her circumstances her feelings of self worth improved. It is possible that other participants in the bullied group who scored with high self-esteem had suffered from low self-esteem and self-confidence in the past and regaining control was a factor in recovering their feelings of worth.

Resulting from two decades of research on bullying among school children, Olweus (1991) found that child recipients of bullying behaviour tend to be more anxious and insecure than other children, and have lower levels of self-esteem. They are frequently seen to be cautious, sensitive, and quiet. Results of an Irish nationwide survey among school children (O'Moore & Kirkham, 2001) also found that the global self-esteem of children who were recipients of bullying behaviour was lower than those who had not been bullied. They concluded that it is possible that high self-esteem protects children and adolescents from involvement in bullying but commented that it is impossible to determine whether the low self-esteem of the individual is a result of being a recipient of bullying behaviour, or if the measure of self-esteem was low before bullying behaviours commenced. The present study confirms these findings but qualitative data gives further explanation and suggests that low levels of self-esteem, for bullied participants in this study, can be attributed to the negative experience of being bullied.

Jex and Elacqua (1999) commented that self-esteem is generally considered to be a personality trait and argued that people with low self-esteem are more influenced by the environment than those with high self-esteem. They concluded that, since people with low self-esteem tend to use more passive forms of coping, they are more vulnerable to the effects of stressors. Their argument, therefore, suggests that people with lower self-esteem are more likely to be affected by bullying thus causing a downward spiral of low self-esteem and more serious effects on the ill-health of the recipient.

O'Moore (2001) commented that in research to examine self-esteem there may have been a failure to distinguish between the global self-esteem measured by Rosenberg's Self Esteem Scale (1965) and the multidimensional nature of self-esteem.

Rigby (2002) suggested that the measured self-esteem should include an indicator of perceived (and probably real) inadequacy in handling interpersonal difficulties that precedes peer victimisation. However, in the present study global self-esteem was measured, using Rosenberg's Scale (1965), so that findings could be compared with the study carried out by Vartia (1996). Qualitative data suggests that bullied participants felt that where their ability to perform their duties at work had been affected, this was due to their negative experiences.

Although a quantitative measure of self-efficacy was not ascertained by this study, qualitative data confirmed that recipients of bullying behaviour felt that they were competent at their work prior to their distressing experiences. However, there were comments that the effects of being bullied led them to conclude that they were incompetent and, in fact, their quality of work did deteriorate. As they took control of the situation by taking action to redress their difficulties, they felt that their level of self-esteem and self-efficacy was returning to former high levels.

The relationship between low self-esteem and an ability to disengage from work problems, indicated that when participants in the bullied group were unable to leave work pressures behind and carried them into their family life this was likely to impinge on their level of self-esteem. Qualitative data suggests that recipients of bullying behaviours blame themselves for allowing their families to suffer confirming findings by O'Moore (2000b) in the Irish nationwide survey. This is likely to further decrease their self worth.

Qualitative data suggests that some participants concluded that their level of self-esteem had been moderate to high in the past and that their negative experiences accounted for the present lowered levels. Such subjective judgements are useful but should be viewed with caution. Nevertheless if bullied participants did have high levels of self-esteem, as they claimed, this would be likely to make them unlikely targets, according to Einarsen (2000). He concluded that the personality of a recipient of bullying behaviour, especially a person with low self-esteem, may make them easy targets of aggression and may make them more vulnerable when faced with conflict.

Spielberger and Rickman (1991) suggested that people who are low in self-esteem and lacking in self-confidence are more vulnerable when being evaluated by others and are, therefore, generally high in trait anxiety. However, findings from the

present study showed that in this sample of people there was no correlation between self-esteem and trait anxiety. However, as already stated, it is possible that the scores of trait anxiety in this study may be biased.

4. 6 Coping strategies

Studies examining workplace bullying have included an examination of options open to recipients of bullying behaviour in their place of work and suggested that these could be considered to be active coping possibilities (Hoel & Cooper, 2000; O'Moore, 2000b; Neidl, 1996; Rayner, 1997; Zapf & Gross, 2001). These actions included confronting the bully, seeking help from personnel, the Union, making group complaints, and/or seeking medical advice (O'Moore, 2000b; Rayner, 1997). Hoel and Cooper (2000) also included making use of the organisation's grievance procedure.

Findings from this study confirmed those of the Irish nationwide survey (O'Moore, 2000b) and the study carried out by Rayner (1997) where most bullied participants, 83% in this study, had confronted the perpetrator. However, one person in the present study who found this to be an effective action in causing the bullying to stop claimed that this was due, in part, to pressure from the Union. Qualitative data showed that this person (29M) was eventually able to return to the place of work where he was bullied and did not pursue a legal outcome. The majority of bullied respondents (62%) in the nationwide study (O'Moore, 2000b) had used the same option with 30% of respondents finding this an effective strategy. The nationwide survey (O'Moore, 2000b) showed this to be the most effective strategy whereas, with the present study, the greatest success rate was when the people complained to the perpetrators boss or used the assistance of their Union representatives.

The action most commonly reported by targets of bullying in the survey carried out by Hoel and Cooper (2000) was to discuss the problem with work colleagues (47.3%) whereas only 34.4% confronted the bully. The findings in this study, therefore, did not confirm those of Hoel and Cooper (2000).

Qualitative data, in the present study, suggests that the behaviour of participants in the bullied group followed a series of actions. This confirmed the findings of Neidl

216

(1996) and Zapf and Gross (2001) who concluded that employees did not cope by using simple 'flight or fight' reactions but showed a more complex sequence of reactions influenced by different factors. Carver and Scheier (1994) agreed and contended that stressful encounters differ in nature from one stage to another and to treat an entire encounter as a single event, or to assume that coping is similar throughout is to greatly over simplify.

Qualitative data suggests that bullied participants felt that their work colleagues, or their families, expected them to stand up for themselves and take action to end the situation which they, as witnesses, found distressing. According to Suls and David (1996) in more difficult situations, responses are likely to be known to others and there are clear expectations about how a person is supposed to deal with the situation. In less difficult situations, there are normally no witnesses to actions taken and there are no clear normative standards about responses or behaviours. They purported that difficult situations should prompt similar responses in almost everyone, whereas less difficult situations will evoke greater variation. The effects of bullying indicate that the experience of being bullied should be considered to be difficult with the expected actions being to confront the bully or consult others in the workplace who are in a position to stop the bullying behaviours.

Gross (2003) identified the use of pyscho-therapy as a coping strategy used by bullied victims in her study. In the present study this option was taken by 80% of bullied participants. Sick leave, which resulted in avoiding the situation, was taken by all participants in this study giving a higher rate than respondents in the Irish nationwide study (O'Moore, 2000b) and the study carried out by Gross (2003). The higher incidence could result from more serious effects of bullying in this study which had led to individuals taking legal action.

The majority of participants in the bullied group (83%) were no longer with the employer where they claimed to have been bullied at the time of their assessments. This confirmed the studies by Rayner (1997), who found that 27% of bullied victims in her study had left their jobs, and Zapf and Gross (2001) who also found that, after reducing commitment to their employer, the bullying experiences ultimately resulted in their taking extended sick leave or leaving the place of employment. These avoidance

strategies could also be evidence of symptoms of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, or Post Duress Stress Disorder, as the recipients of bullying behaviour avoided reminders of their stressful experiences and were unable to re-enter their place of work. Zapf et al (1996) also confirmed that victims of bullying behaviour were likely to use avoidance strategies and O'Moore (2000b) found that 23.6% of bullied respondents had considered leaving their jobs.

The definition for coping used for the present study is that proposed by Cox and Ferguson (1991). They concluded that coping is the cognitions and behaviours which, following a stressful transaction and defined independently of outcome, have the primary function, consciously decided, of dealing with the emotion caused by the transaction and developing a sense of personal control. This is achieved by those cognitions and behaviours combining into strategies which perform a mixture of functions: problem solving, reappraisal and avoidance. Any particular option or strategy may perform one or a number of these functions in the space of dealing with one stressful transaction. Coping deals with the emotional correlates of a stressful transaction and creating a sense of control. It also encompasses problem solving i.e. directly confronting or dealing with the source of stress, reappraisal i.e. re-thinking the meaning of the transaction, and avoidance i.e. avoiding or being distracted from the problem.

This definition is considered appropriate for this study as coping strategies employed by participants in the bullied group were found to be both emotion-focused and problem-focused and independent of outcome as participants expected resolution but qualitative data illustrated that they were mentally prepared to be unsuccessful. Although there was evidence of initial denial, all participants in the bullied group had accepted that they were recipients of bullying behaviours. That 24 participants in the bullied group had received counselling illustrated that they were dealing with their emotions and their presenting for assessments and/or advice also shows that they were developing control and using problem solving strategies. Avoidance coping was high for this group and there was evidence of reappraisal as qualitative data suggests that some participants were able to use their negative experiences as a learning process.

Lazarus and Folkman (1984) suggested that the relationship between coping, appraisal and outcome variables is bi-directional, with each affecting the other and

positions coping as possible independent and dependent variables at different stages in the stress process. Hogh and Dofradottir (2001) also discussed the possibility that coping has a bi-directional element and concluded that in a cross sectional study, such as their study and the present one, it cannot be established whether the respondents used the coping strategies because they were subjected to bullying or whether they were subjected to bullying because they used the coping strategies. Equally, the use of a particular strategy may influence the physical and psychological effects or the effects may influence the strategy adopted. To establish cause and effect a prospective study is needed. Furthermore, in a cross sectional design coping can only be measured as a style and not a process (Lazarus & Folkman, 1988).

Qualitative data in this study illustrates that in a stressful situation the internal resources may be present to deal with the stress but lack of resources within the work place may impede resolution causing frustration and anger thus exacerbating stress. This complex situation reliant on both internal and external resources may affect individuals in different ways depending on factors such as personality, coping styles, and social support. Cognitive appraisal (Carver and Sheier, 1994) may suggest to the individual which actions need to be taken but a lack of fair systems and procedures in their place of work may lead to the person feeling re-victimised and further increase their stress level.

4.6.1 Results of psychological inventory COPE (Carver et al, 1989)

The present study also measured individual coping strategies identified by a psychometric inventory (COPE, Carver et al, 1989). Coping in this context is the process by which a person attempts to manage stressful events and describes the range of responses for dealing with stressors (Weinmann et al, 1995). It extends beyond the active strategies presented to respondents in surveys.

Although both the bullied and control groups had been presented with the dispositional version of COPE (Carver et al, 1989), it is likely that the bullied group responded by identifying with statements that represented their present, situational, coping behaviours. However, Pearson, Ross and Dawes, (1992, cited in Coyne & Gottlieb, 1996) maintained that respondents using checklists recognise themselves in coping items that describe cognitive or behavioural efforts that they have used in the past

219

and are inclined to endorse their use regardless of whether or not they have used them in the particular circumstances. Terry (1994) confirmed this by concluding, from his research into how students coped during examinations, that the evidence suggested that how people coped in response to a new event appeared to be, in part, a function of how they coped in the past. Using these conclusions there is a possibility that the identified strategies, by bullied participants in this study, may represent dispositional styles.

The significant differences between the bullied and control groups in active coping, planning, turning to religion, venting of emotions, denial and mental disengagement with the bullied group scoring higher in each case were not unexpected. Since participants from the bullied group were in the process of taking action to redress their distressing experiences, they were obviously using active coping and planning strategies at the time of assessment and were likely to be aware of this and identify strategies accordingly. The resultant negative effects of bullying behaviours in participants included anxiety, anger and a deterioration in their mental well-being and, as a normal reaction to these conditions is the venting of emotions, it is likely that this would have been identified by participants as they completed the questionnaire. Rice (1992) commented that stress produces high anxiety, which will lead to some form of escape or avoidance. Mental disengagement, therefore, would be a likely response for participants in the bullied group.

The significant difference between the bullied and control groups in strategies defined as problem focused coping by Ingledew et al (1996) confirmed that participants in the bullied group used problem-focused coping more frequently than the control group, measured by COPE (Carver et al, 1989) as active coping and planning. This confirmed findings by O'Brien and DeLongis (1996) whose results showed that stressors at work were linked most strongly with planful problem solving. In contrast Hogh and Dofradottir (2001) found that respondents in their study of people who had been bullied at work did not use problem solving strategies.

Participants in the bullied group also used avoidance strategies significantly more than the control group. Carver et al (1993) found, in their research among women with breast cancer, that avoidance coping was a predictor of distress and Billings and Moos (1984) also showed that avoidance coping was associated with a higher rate of

220

depression. Findings from O'Connor and O'Connor (2002) confirmed this and they suggested that the use of avoidance as a coping strategy could lead to more psychological distress. They concluded that, as psychological well-being related to maladaptive coping in their study, avoidance could be assumed to be maladaptive. However, the use of avoidance behaviour may not be a selected option but indicative of symptoms of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder where individuals with this condition will avoid reminders of the circumstances that are responsible for their state of distress. This may have confounded the measurement of avoidance coping.

Venting of emotions was used significantly more frequently by the bullied group, compared with the control group, and this was confirmed by qualitative data and observation of participants during interviews as people became visibly distressed when recalling their experiences. Although Billings and Moos (1984) found an association between venting of emotions and depression this could also reflect a bi-directional association.

Denial and venting of emotions were considered by Weinman et al (1995) to be mal-adaptive as, they concluded, excessive use of these strategies prevents individuals from moving forward. However, the high use of active coping and planning and the reality that participants in the bullied group were attempting to regain control of their lives indicates that venting of emotions could be part of the healing process.

According to Suls and David (1996), current researchers maintain that encounters with earlier stressors can influence future coping efforts but McCrae and Costa (1986) purported that additional stressors in a person's life, at a particular time, could affect coping effectiveness and confound any results and therefore should be taken into consideration. They concluded that the effect of prior experiences, together with individual differences in personality, also make any generalisations almost useless. Unless an inventory of all life strains and stressful events that have occurred in a period in an individual's life, and data on how they coped with each, is available, the relationship between coping and outcome remains obscure.

Considering this conclusion of McCrae and Costa (1986), qualitative data in this study were able to identify the presence or otherwise of other stressful events in the lives of participants in the bullied group, to be identified. All participants stated that they had

not experienced any significant strain that was outside normal human experience. Qualitative data showed that participants in the bullied group had experienced marital separation, the illness of a spouse, and the death of a parent in the comparatively recent past. Each person claimed that this had no bearing on their present state of psychological health and contended that the effects of these other stressors, although severe at the time, were not as severe as the effects of being bullied. The remaining 27 bullied participants claimed that they had not experienced any other stressful experiences.

Latack (1986) maintained that coping measures should specifically address coping and not coping effectiveness. He argued that coping strategies that alleviate distress in the short term may aggravate it in the long term and, conversely, coping strategies that increase distress in the short term may provide long-term relief. Where coping strategies may reduce certain forms of distress they can increase other forms, e.g. alcohol can reduce psychological distress by numbing emotions, but increase somatic complaints from their physically adverse effects. A change of job may solve the immediate problem if that is the source of stress, but may create further stress in re-location and family considerations.

The bullied group used significantly more less-adaptive and mal-adaptive strategies, as identified by Weinman et al (1995), than the control group. During interviews qualitative data obtained illustrated that most participants in the bullied group did not feel that they had coped well initially. A common theme was that they felt that the ineffective coping methods adopted by them was evident by showing signs of distress and not being able to continue working in the same place where they had experienced bullying. However, there was a general commentary that as they began to take control of their situation by seeking redress through the legal system they concluded that their coping behaviour had improved. From the bullied participants' perception, therefore, taking control was synonymous with effective coping.

4. 6. 2 Coping, physical and mental well-being, and work pressure

The negative correlation between low self-esteem and adaptive coping, identified by Weinman et al (1995) indicates that individuals in this study with high self-esteem are likely to use adaptive coping. The positive correlation between the total GHQ (Goldberg

222

& Williams, 1988) score and less adaptive coping suggests that severe physical and psychological effects may lead to the use of strategies in the less adaptive category of coping. This confirmed the findings by Carver et al (1989) who showed a positive correlation between active coping and high self-esteem, and Billings and Moos (1984) in their research among people with unipolar depression, who found high self-esteem to be associated with less social dysfunction, indicating that this active coping should be adaptive.

In the present study an association was found between behavioural disengagement and state anxiety indicating that those who are anxious, due to their negative experiences in their workplace, are more likely to withdraw from attempts to address their situation. Carver et al (1989) also found a relationship between behavioural disengagement and psychological distress. The bi-directional causation effect leads to a possibility that the severe anxiety and distress experienced by participants in the bullied group is likely to encourage withdrawal. Equally, it is possible that those who are unable to engage in activities become more anxious. Qualitative data suggest that the effects of bullying include withdrawing from people. However, there was no correlation between social dysfunction (a negative effect evident in some bullied participants) and behavioural disengagement. A negative correlation between social dysfunction and acceptance suggests that participants who accepted their situation were more likely to be able to function better in their daily activities.

The association between denial and low trait anxiety suggests that participants who were not normally anxious are likely to deny negative experiences in their lives. However, the association between denial and state anxiety suggests that anxiety brought on by being a recipient of bullying behaviour was likely to cause participants in the bullied group to use denial as a coping strategy with disbelief that they had been treated in such a manner.

Findings showed that participants in the bullied group were less likely to use active coping and seek instrumental social support if their workload caused them pressure. Qualitative data suggests that people concluded that no action would be taken if they pursued a claim of bullying as their workload was not conducive to individual care in the organisation. If the organisation allowed them to be pressurised through an

223

excessive workload, then taking action within the organisation would not be effective. It is also possible that they were so inundated with work that it was only when they stood back from their situation that they concluded that they were bullied. Qualitative data supported this.

One perspective posits that people hold positive expectations of their abilities to deal with hardships and that these beliefs are associated with positive out comes. Among the researchers holding this view is Taylor (1989) who asserts that in the face of adversity people develop positive illusions (i.e. self-aggrandisement, unrealistic optimism, and exaggerated perceptions of control) which in turn are associated with positive outcomes and adjustment. Furthermore, she contends that personality plays little or no role in the relations between positive illusions and adjustment.

4. 7 Personality

The present study examined the personality factors of both the bullied and control group thus following the recommendation by McCrae and Costa (1986) that personality, particularly the extraversion and neuroticism factors, should be a standard feature of coping research. They contended that personality represents a powerful alternative explanation for presumed effects of coping on adaptational outcomes. Zapf (1999) also illustrated that there are multiple causes of bullying that need to be taken into consideration of which personality is one factor.

Qualitative data in the present study suggest that participants in the bullied group felt that they were conscientious and hard working although comments suggested that, at the time of their distressing experiences at work, they had initially blamed themselves and sought faults in the work they produced or in their attitude towards work. Qualitative data also suggest that recipients of bullying behaviours, in this study, may attempt to appease their aggressor and so become (or feel that they have become) more agreeable and harder working as a result of being bullied.

These findings were confirmed by results obtained from the personality assessment (NEO-PI-R, Costa & McCrae, 1992) completed by both the bullied and the control groups. Findings showed significant differences between the groups in the

224

conscientiousness and agreeableness factors where participants in the bullied group scored higher. There were no significant differences between the groups with regard to neuroticism, extraversion, and openness to new experiences.

This study did not confirm findings from the study carried out by Coyne et al (2000) and Vartia (1996) who found that victims in their study were significantly different from their control groups in neuroticism, and therefore likely to be more sensitive, emotional, and prone to experience feelings that are upsetting. However, examination of data where scores have been located in categories suggested by Costa and McCrae (1992), showed a higher number of participants in the bullied group in the "high" level of neuroticism. This difference was not significant but illustrates that some individual bullied participants in this study could be more prone to irrational ideas and cope less well than others. It is possible that the omission of people presenting for assessments, who were considered at the time to be too distressed to be asked to take part in the present study, resulted in lower scores in the neuroticism facet of personality.

This study differed from the one carried out by Coyne et al (2000) in the time interval when the personality assessment was carried out suggesting a difference in the sample. In this study participants were out of the bullying situation and had taken action and control as they pursued redress and justice. In the study carried out by Coyne et al (2000) the sample was taken from people still in their place of employment with a possibility that some people could still be in the bullying situation. Groeblinghoff and Becker (1996) purported that from a clinical point of view it should be considered that bullying and the consequent damages to health represents a psychodynamic process with the researcher selecting the momentary, subjective setting.

A further difference between this study and that of Coyne et al (2000) is in regard to the determination of bullying in the sample. Although both samples were self-selected, the bullied participants in this study claimed to have been bullied using their own judgement, whereas in Coyne et al's (2000) study participants had been presented with a definition which included a requisite that bullying had occurred over the previous twelve months and within the frequency of behaviours as defined by Leymann (1996). The bullying behaviours, therefore, were more likely to be recent.

This study also did not confirm the findings of Matthiesen and Einarsen (2001) who demonstrated that victims of bullying at work have an elevated personality profile showing a tendency to emotional and psychological disturbance on a wide range of personality factors. However, the use of different personality assessment inventory (MMPI-2) by Matthiesen and Einarsen (2001) could account for this where the personality constructs include depressive tendencies and compulsive conditions. The present study found a tendency towards psychological disturbance but did not find a significant difference in emotional disturbance, which could be included in a description of neuroticism.

The identification of a high level of neuroticism at the time of the assessment does not explain whether this personality factor was a permanent personality trait or that it was formed as a result of the victim's distressing and traumatic experiences as suggested by Leymann and Gustafsson (1996). If the experience of being bullied had affected this personality factor, it is possible that, in time, the person may become less sensitive, their trust restored and the score in neuroticism could revert to a previous low level. Suls and David (1996) maintained that researchers need to accept that stressors can influence aspects of the personality, either positively or negatively and that the interpretation of personality assessments should take this into account.

Brodsky (1976) included conscientiousness in his description of victims of bullying and the present study confirmed that victims of bullying are more likely to be conscientious. The findings by Coyne et al (2000) that victims were more conscientious than those who were not bullied, therefore, was confirmed. However, it is possible in a work situation that a target of bullying behaviours could become more conscientious as they worked harder to appease their aggressor. The bi-directional element of behaviours could account for this association.

This study confirmed findings of Zapf (1999) who found a pre-existing behaviour in victims of bullying as they tended to give way to others, which could be a description of agreeableness. However, a high score on the agreeableness scale could indicate that recipients of bullying behaviour tend to attempt to appease their aggressors and thus leading to a temporary change in this aspect of their personality.

However, this study did not confirm findings of Coyne et al (2000) and Vartia (1996) who found that respondents in their studies who claimed to have been bullied at work, were likely to be introverted. Qualitative data in this study suggest that there was a change in the opinion that some participants in the bullied group had of themselves in regard to their social behaviour and they maintained that there had been a change in their personality. There was evidence of people becoming less social and withdrawn.

Qualitative data from one bullied participant (8F) indicate that she felt that she was out-going, popular and sociable and that her illusions were totally shattered when she realised that she could be hated to such an extent to warrant being treated so badly. She commented that this resulted in her becoming withdrawn as she no longer held trust in others. It could be that she would have scored higher on the extraversion scale prior to the distressing experience of being bullied but that the bullying had caused her to become more introverted.

Qualitative data also suggest that withdrawal and other symptoms of introversion could result from a fear of meeting the alleged aggressor or reminders of their distressing experiences, e.g. passing the place of work, and embarrassment at having to explain why they were not at work. It is possible that the score on the extraversion scale may be different and that there may not have been a permanent change in this personality factor as the fear and embarrassment decrease over time.

The findings of an association between bullying and introversion among school children (Olweus, 1993) was not confirmed. However, O'Moore (2000c) also commented on this finding and remarked that statements made by Olweus (1993) were ill-fitting for a victim she had encountered. This illustrates the hazards of generalisation.

Although not significant there was evidence that there were a higher number of bullied participants in the "high" level of openness to new experience which, according to Costa and McCrae (1992), suggests that they may have broad interests and be imaginative. According to O'Brien and Delongis (1996) people who are open to new experiences and engage in positive reappraisal, or reinforcement, may tend to cope in an ideal method, as they are able to cognitively reframe stressful situations to their advantage and to respond sensitively during stressful periods. This suggests that the

recipients of bullying behaviours with high scores in openness to new experiences, in this study, are likely to be judged as using effective coping.

Findings with regard to personality factors need to be considered in the light of comments by Leymann and Gustafsson (1996) that Post Traumatic Stress Disorder is likely to bring about permanent change in personality.

4. 7. 1 Personality and psychological distress

The association between extraversion and psychological distress, in the present study, suggests that it is more likely that people who are bullied and outgoing may suffer physical and psychological ill-health. It is possible that the effects of bullying are greater on those who have attributes such as warmth and assertiveness, and possess positive emotions as a high score in the extraversion scale indicates. It is also feasible that such people have been popular through much of their lives and are not used to negative behaviour. Thus when they are exposed to bullying it can have a greater effect on them.

This study also suggests that those who have high scores on the extraversion scale, which suggests that they are sociable, energetic and optimistic, are less likely to be angry by nature. However, since the scores on the Trait Anger scale, for this study, are possibly biased no real conclusion can be formed.

In studies carried out by Costa and McCrae (1986) it was shown that neuroticism is associated with increased use of withdrawal. As withdrawal was not ascertained through any psychometric scale for this research their findings cannot be confirmed. However, a positive association between neuroticism and low self esteem found in this study suggests that low self esteem is likely to be associated with people who have been bullied and whose adjustment, or emotional ability, is low. It is arguable that withdrawal is a symptom of low self-esteem as the person has lost confidence in themselves and does not socialise.

4. 7. 2 Personality and work pressure

According to O'Brien and Delongis (1996) those high in neuroticism have been found to report greater distress when faced with work overload or interpersonal stress than those with a low score on neuroticism. However, in the present study bullied participants who

228

scored highly on the neuroticism scale were more likely to feel pressure from work when the source of pressure was personal responsibility. The findings from O'Brien and DeLongis' (1996) study suggested that this may be due in part to a greater tendency to use coping strategies that create and maintain stress and their failure to use strategies that could solve their difficulties.

The relationships between other personality factors and pressures at work illustrated that a conscientious person is likely to work harder if the organisational climate is good and may work less hard when they are no longer committed to their employer.

4. 7. 3 Personality and coping

O'Brien and DeLongis (1996) found that personality dimensions have important associations with coping strategies and McCrae and Costa (1986) concluded that neuroticism and extraversion appear to be closely related to the most pervasive and replicable factors in coping. Findings in the present study confirmed that there are associations between personality factors and coping styles for both the bullied and control groups.

Findings from the present study showed a negative relationship between neuroticism and active coping, planning, seeking instrumental social support, seeking emotional social support, and positive reinforcement for the bullied group. This suggests that those who have been bullied and whose adjustment, or emotional ability, is high are more likely to use both problem focused and emotional focused coping. However, the lack of any correlation between neuroticism and these coping strategies in the control group indicates that neuroticism may not play a role in the coping styles generally adopted when people are not under any particular stress. Therefore the comment by McCrae and Costa (1986) that even in a normal population, individuals high in neuroticism are prone to the use of coping mechanisms generally perceived to be ineffective (McCrae and Costa, 1986) was not confirmed by this study. It is possible that for bullied participants being a recipient of bullying behaviours affected a change in the neuroticism factor of personality but that other conditions, such as anger or a sense of injustice, caused them to be pro-active in their coping styles.

The extraversion factor for the bullied group correlated positively with seeking emotional social support and denial suggesting that those who were outgoing are likely to seek emotional support from others and yet likely to be reluctant to admit to being a recipient of bullying behaviours. The lack of association between extraversion and problem focused / active coping confirm the findings by O'Brien and DeLongis (1986) who commented that their findings were unexpected as an association between extraversion and problem focused coping is one of the most well-replicated findings in the literature. However, the extraversion factor for people in the control group, correlated positively with problem focused coping, and other effective coping styles such as planning, suppressing of competing activities, and positive reinterpretation.

The openness facet of personality correlated positively with seeking emotional social support and venting of emotions for the bullied group. These findings confirm those of O'Brien and DeLongis (1996) who concluded that those higher on openness were able to accept emotional support from family members and friends, which they felt suggested that these people may be open to their own feelings. The association found between openness and positive reinforcement is consistent with the description of those high on openness suggested by Costa and McCrae (1989) as being characterised by divergent thinking, reflectiveness, flexibility of thought, creativity and originality. No association was found between openness and behavioural disengagement in the bullied group whereas there was a negative association between these factors in the control group. This suggests that in general a person who is open to new experiences is not likely to give up in attempts to reach their goals whereas a person who is bullied may find it difficult to pursue their objectives.

Agreeableness, for the bullied group, was also found to be positively correlated with seeking emotional support and positive reinforcement. The finding of this study in regard to agreeableness and seeking social support also confirms those of O'Brien and DeLongis (1996). They concluded that for those who are agreeable by nature, engaging in interpersonal confrontation may cause distress as they place a higher value on having harmonious relationships with others. The association between agreeableness and positive reinforcement, in this study, is not unexpected as Costa and McCrae (1992) suggested that the agreeable person is fundamentally altruistic and believes that others

230

will be equally helpful in return. The measure of positive reinforcement and growth in COPE (Weinman at al, 1995) includes the statement "I look for something good in what is happening", which is arguably a conducive comment for an agreeable person.

There was no association between conscientiousness and coping strategies for both groups with the exception of a negative correlation with alcoholism for the bullied group. This study, therefore, confirmed the findings of O'Brien and DeLongis (1996) who found significantly less use of avoidance strategies, when the use of alcohol is considered to be an avoidance strategy, and more use of problem solving behaviours among respondents who were conscientious.

According to Hergenhahn (1994) psychologically defined personality trait theories, such as those proposed by Cattell and Allport, have been highly criticised with critics claiming that the theories are characterised by too much subjectivity. The intricacies of human nature mean that consistency in behaviour at any particular time and in similar situations is notoriously unreliable. He continued to explain that social psychologists do not appear to be subjected to the same level of criticism, and concluded that this was probably because social psychologists are more open to the effects of the environment in personality formation. Where researchers into workplace bullying (Coyne et al, 2000; Einarsen, 2000; Vartia, 1996; Zapf & Gross, 2001) and the present study, examine both personality constructs and work environment the effects of each factor should lead to a more comprehensive understanding of bullying.

Furnham (1995) was also critical of research in the field of personality and behaviour at work commenting that it is theoretically naive and methodologically weak. He purported that this could be because researchers hope to find personality correlates of occupational behaviour without understanding the reason for this relationship. By examining coping styles in addition to personality, in a particular scenario of bullying behaviours, this study aims to overcome Furnham's (1995) criticism to some extent.

4. 8 Present situation of bullied participants

According to qualitative data participants in the bullied group felt that they had exhausted all methods of seeking resolution within their place of employment. Twenty

six of them had concluded that the only way forward was to seek justice through the legal route. At the time of writing ten cases had been concluded with the judgement going against the complainant in one case. This person, (8F), was still confident that her complaint was justified and that it was her lack of witnesses that forced the judgement to go against her. She still feels that she was bullied and was justified in bringing her case through the legal system. Of those who had proceeded to the Tribunals or Courts and a settlement had occurred, they felt that as they were no longer employed by the company, there was no victory. Only one person who had proceeded through the legal system, won his case, and continued to work for the same organisation. This person (25M) reported that his alleged aggressor was relieved of his duties and forced to take early retirement. Two years later 25M accepted a promotion but after a further two years he maintained that he was being bullied by senior management in the organisation and negotiated a settlement package. He commented that at last he is at peace.

A total of six bullied participants were still employed by the company where they claimed to have been bullied at the time of their assessments. This was unexpected and indicates high resilience in these people. However, there were nine people who had been dismissed indicating further victimisation as they brought their distressing experiences to the attention of their employers. A further eight people on long term sick leave illustrates the severe effects of bullying in that they were unable to return to their place of work.

Qualitative data showed that the recipients of bullying behaviour in this study, had not wanted to seek justice through the legal system and wanted to continue to work in a harassment free environment. When this was impossible qualitative data suggest that participants in the bullied group were aware that the only feeling of success, for them, could be achieved by taking control of their lives and forcing their aggressors and employers into the courts or tribunals. This was a compensatory thought for the participant (8F) who lost her case and commented that at least she was able to stand up for her principles when she felt "*pushed into a corner*".

4. 9 Limitations of the study

According to Coyne and Gottlieb (1996), coping researchers share with other social scientists the problems of having to rely on respective self-report. Folkman et al

(1986) were also critical of self-report. They maintain that it is inherently more fallible than other methods of inquiry and ultimately requires verification by other methods such as observation of direct behaviour and psychological assessment.

The advantage of this study includes the adoption of the method of triangulation using a series of complimentary methods of obtaining data. By using data obtained during interviews, self-report, and psychometric assessments it was possible to confirm data obtained by each method.

A common criticism of workplace bullying research is in the use of a definition. Although definitions were discussed in section 1.1.2 and an appropriate one selected to describe the experiences of bullied participants, in practice participants had concluded that they had been recipients of bullying behaviours without any constraints of a definition or list of negative acts.

Significant correlations were obtained with regard to negative effects of bullying, the social climate in the workplace, personality, and coping styles. However, the design of this research does not allow for the establishment of causal relationships. The bi-directional element of behaviours and symptoms should be considered when examining findings in this study.

The sample size has implications for interpreting results. In addition, the sample was not completely representative with regard to age, economic sector and occupational groups when compared to the Irish nationwide survey (O'Moore, 2000b). The sample was also specific in that bullied participants had taken control of their bullying experiences as they pursued the legal route or sought justice within the workplace with the assistance of personnel from the Anti Bullying Research and Resource Centre. For these reasons the possibilities to generalise findings to other recipients of bullying are limited.

A further limitation of this study results from the highly sensitive nature of bullying. The participants in this study displayed strong emotions during interviews and results of their assessments were extremely high indicating that they were severely affected by the bullying, particularly with reference to anger. This makes it difficult to obtain objective data in regard to the exact description of negative behaviours, the

233

attitude of the perpetrator, and the actions taken by employers to resolve the issues surrounding bullying.

According to Powell & Enright (1993) a concern during any research is that desirable behaviours and effects often increase and undesirable behaviours and effects generally decrease when they are monitored. It is also possible that the observation itself could affect results since research indicates that behaviour may be altered simply because it is being monitored. The behaviours and distress found in bullied participants could be affected by the support given by their families, colleagues and their legal team. Qualitative data suggest that bullied participants felt re-victimised by the legal system and it is possible that this could be reflected in the results of their assessments.

It is possible in qualitative research conducted through interview, that the material can be mis-interpreted by the interviewer as responses are recorded inaccurately to comply with information the interviewer expects. The selection of comments from an interview lasting up to two hours is possibly affected by the required result of an impact report needed for a legal case. The information, therefore, needs to reflect the severity of behaviours and effects and may give a distorted interpretation.

Coyne and Gottlieb (1996) examined coping research carried out using checklists and concluded that as they are currently employed, conventional checklists render an incomplete and distorted portrait of coping. Specifically, these checklists are grounded in too narrow a conception of coping. They concluded that the application and interpretation of checklists in the typical study are not faithful to a transactional model of stress and coping and no consistent interpretation can be assigned to coping scale scores. However, in this study all bullied participants had been exposed to similar negative behaviours, therefore the criticism of Coyne and Gottlieb (1996) that the event posed different threats needing emotion focused coping or problem solving efforts is, at least, minimised.

Latack (1992) also expresses concern that there is a problem in using composite (multi-item) scales to capture a particular type of coping. However, he concluded that, in spite of concerns about the imperfections of scales and the continuing debate on the stress-health relationship, ultimately the individual experiencing stress possesses the most unique, and potentially most accurate, appreciation of their stress. Checklists give a

level of objectivity if the respondent is unaware of the condition that is measured by a particular scale. However, many of the limitations brought on by checklists and questionnaires can be overcome in a semi-structured interview which can elicit the information needed to clarify the context of coping and the personal significance of what has transpired in the lives of respondents.

These criticisms can be applied to the use of other scales and inventories used in this study and it was for this reason that well validated and accepted inventories were used. However, scores in trait anxiety and anger suggest a level of social desirability and therefore results of all inventories should be treated with caution. Inventories were presented to participants untitled to limit social desirability.

A major concern of self-reporting is social desirability. Respondents are likely to avoid endorsing certain items on a checklist because they refer to behaviours which they feel are undesirable. Cramer (1991) concluded that the only way to adequately demonstrate the level of psychological physical well-being, coping styles, or personality is to have an independent assessment (external criterion) of the outcome variables. Relying on self-report measures to assess outcome status is highly likely to yield biased results. Responses may reflect what participants thought and did in specific stressful encounters rather than actual behaviours and feelings. This was evident in this research in the scores of trait anxiety and anger which were extremely low and possibly reflected an ideal, but unrealistic, state of well-being for participants before the bullying behaviours began.

A retrospective design, such as this study does not allow causal inferences to be evaluated and bi-directional relations to exist among the variables. For example, the theory put forward by Folkman et al (1986) suggests that in general appraisal influences coping, and coping in turn influences encounter outcomes. In addition to appraisal influencing coping, coping may influence the person's reappraisal of what is at stake and what the coping options are. Similarly it is possible that certain forms of coping, such as positive reappraisal, may be influenced by the outcome of an encounter rather than vice versa. This issue can only be addressed with a prospective design.

4. 10 Conclusion

Although the number of participants in the bullied group (N=30) was limited, by comparing demographic data with that of other studies in Ireland, this sample could be seen to be reasonably representative of people in Ireland who have been bullied at work and are seeking assistance or redress. Without exception, the bullied group had been exposed to a large number of negative behaviours. They had all suffered, at some time during their distressing experiences, severe effects including depression, physical and psychological ill health, anxiety, heightened levels of anger, and effects of trauma. Self-esteem for the bullied participants was shown to be significantly lower than that of the control group with qualitative data suggesting that low self-esteem was a result of being bullied.

Significant differences between the bullied and control group, in regard to job and organisational satisfaction, workload, relationships at work, organisational climate and daily hassles (with the bullied group reporting more negative experiences) illustrate that the social climate at work plays a role in the prevalence of bullying. However, as nine of the bullied participants had not described their workplace as hostile and five had described it as friendly, it follows that there must be some contribution from the individuals concerned for a bullying situation to exist. Organisational change and leadership were shown to be central to the negative experiences of the bullied participants.

Scrutiny of the relationship between specific elements of work pressure and physical and psychological ill-health identified increased workload, poor working relationships, and pressure from daily hassles as the major causes of distress among bullied participants.

Participants in the bullied group had all taken action within their workplace in the expectancy that the bullying behaviours towards them would cease. When this did not occur they pursued a course of action that necessitated either a high level of support or the involvement of a legislative procedure. Subsequent coping strategies, used by bullied participants, included both problem and emotion focused coping. This was particularly evident for those whose adjustment, or emotional ability, is high. Bullied participants also used avoidance coping strategies but, as avoidance behaviour is a symptom of Post

Traumatic Stress Disorder, it is possible that the traumatic experiences resulted in their evading reminders of their experiences. Their choice of coping strategies was shown to be adaptive particularly when their self-esteem had not been too severely damaged. However, when their physical and psychological health had been affected, they were shown not to cope well. Pressure from a high workload also led to less adaptive coping.

The findings, in regard to significant differences between the groups in the conscientiousness and agreeableness personality factors, were not unexpected. It could be argued that a recipient of bullying behaviours may attempt to appease their aggressor and this may be evident in their becoming more conscientious and more agreeable. However, those who were more extrovert and sociable were more likely to suffer from physical and psychological ill-health including anxiety and withdrawal from others. The use of coping strategies was affected by personality factors in that those who were out-going, open to new experiences, and more agreeable were more likely to seek emotional social support. The association between agreeableness and positive reinforcement suggests that the agreeable person believes that others will be equally helpful and supportive in return.

Although the advantage of this study is the use of triangulation using a series of complimentary methods of data collection, this necessitated a small sample size, which has implications for interpreting and extrapolating results. Nevertheless this study has made a significant contribution in the field of bullying behaviour, especially the effects on recipients of bullying behaviour, and the influence of the social climate on the prevalence of bullying. This study also identifies personality constructs in recipients of bullying behaviour which are arguably desirable in employees thus indicating that employers could not identify likely victims prior to employment. This study also contributes to the knowledge of how individuals cope in stressful situations.

4. 11 Future research

Research into workplace bullying has concentrated on representative studies that aim to demonstrate the frequency and nature of bullying at work with findings resulting from surveys. These studies have also included effects of bullying, antecedents of

237

bullying behaviours, and actions taken by recipients of bullying behaviours. Other studies have attempted to examine the phenomenology of bullying (Brodsky, 1976), personality (Coyne et al, 2000; Doherty, 2003; Matthiesen & Einarsen, 2001), and coping (Zapf & Gross, 2001; Hogh & Dofradottir, 2001).

Research has included the collection of qualitative data through interviews with recipients of bullying behaviour so that qualitative data can compliment quantitative data (Doherty, 2003; Zapf & Gross, 2001). This has enabled the progress of participants in the research to be observed and monitored as they begin to recover from their negative experiences (Doherty, 2003) or cope with their negative experiences at work (Zapf & Gross, 2001).

The present study adds to the fund of knowledge from other research. The combination of qualitative and quantitative methods has enriched results and allowed the beginning of a longitudinal study to ascertain any long term effects of bullying. Future research, therefore, could build on findings from this study and include a follow-up of people who have been bullied in the past (including some of the participants in this study) to assess coping and personality. However, there is an ethical question in that participants in this study are moving on in their lives and to request them to recall their distressing experiences could risk affecting their psychological well-being.

To overcome this difficulty future research could include a prospective study where members of the work force are assessed with regard to physical and mental health, personality, and coping styles initially and the assessments repeated at intervals throughout their career to judge any changes dependent on their experiences at work. This would take into account the comment by Rick and Guppy (1994) that researchers in the area of coping strategies should use longitudinal designs, to ascertain the extent and nature of the buffering effect of coping. Suls and David (1996) agreed and commented that longitudinal studies, in which individuals can serve as their own controls, are essential. However, qualitative data should also be collected to ascertain the possible presence of confounding variables. Finally intervention studies could be conducted to see if coping behaviour can be changed, and if the changes produce benefits to health, psychological well-being, or other appropriate criteria. Such interventions should employ measures of personality and coping in order to provide data on whether some

individuals are more prone than others to learn, use, and benefit from more effective coping efforts.

Retrospective assessment has problems of inaccurate memory leading to problems associated with self-report. In an attempt to overcome this future studies should include comparison of self-reported coping and reports about the targeted person from others, perhaps spouses or trained observers. The meaning individuals give to events, a measurement of the meaning, and facts concerning the event should be ascertained so that appraisal could be taken into account. Whether the environment or event is stressful, or not, will depend on how it is appraised. Individual evaluations may therefore be a more powerful predictor of affect than the events themselves (Dewe, 1991).

One recommended method of coping research (Dewe, 1991) is to begin assessments with one of the more job-oriented coping measures and compare it to the general measures for missing content that should be added. An alternative method would be to adapt the general measures to focus on job stress among a particular group or setting. This strategy may make it possible to tie empirical efforts to both theory and stress management solutions. An example of this approach is reflected in a recent adaptation of Latack's (1986) coping measure (Kinicki and Latack, 1990). Theory-based coping items that originally dealt with role stress were reworded to apply specifically to job loss (they could be applied specifically to bullying). Another example is Ashford's (1988) study of strategy for coping with organisational transitions, which focused on employees of the Bell System during divestiture (Latack, 1992).

Research into identifying the actions and behaviour of victims of workplace bullying after the event, and coping strategies they used, may assist in providing people entering the workplace, through the education system, with the skills to deal with negative encounters.

A further area of study into workplace bullying could include subordinates bullying managers (Lewis & Sheehan, 2003). O'Moore (2000b) found, in her nationwide survey in Ireland, the occurrence of "up-ward bullying" to be 9% of respondents who claimed to be bullied. According to McCarthy, Sheehan and Barker (2003) employers have been reluctant to address the issue of bullying and, although the cost in monetary

239

and human terms have been outlined for them, it is possible that research into managers being victims of bullying may be of interest. Other researchers (Rayner et al, 2002) have highlighted the lack of research in regard to the perpetrators of bullying behaviours. This could provide invaluable data which could be used in intervention programmes.

Intervention programmes have been developed with regard to bullying among school children (Pikas, 1989; O'Moore & Hillery, 1991; O'Moore & Minton, 2001; Roland & Munthe, 1997) and have been shown to be effective. According to Smith (1997) findings from bullying among school children can be applied to workplace bullying. It is possible therefore that the adoption of proven intervention programmes devised for schools could be effective in the workplace. According to Thomas-Peters (1997) increasing the standards of professional relationships can only improve the social climate at work and improve efficiency. The effect of intervention programmes could also be an area of future research.