

Bullying: A Whole School Approach

Elza Venter

*Department of Psychology of Education, College of Education,
PO Box 392, UNISA, Pretoria South Africa 0003
E-mail: ventee1@unisa.ac.za*

KEYWORDS Bullying. School. Educational Psychologists. Parents. Teachers. Social Skills. Whole School Approach

ABSTRACT Bullying is a serious problem in South African schools. The present study proposes a whole school approach where parents, teachers and educational psychologists are involved in creating a healthy positive environment for child development. This research was a phenomenological, descriptive, qualitative study. It started with a literature review of the most important aspects of the study. The empirical study consisted of an open question about how the different participants in the study, namely teachers, parents and an educational psychologist, deal with the issue of bullying in schools to see whether a whole school approach was appropriate to deal with the problem. The participants were purposively selected from three schools. Interviews were conducted with one open ended question using an interview schedule with probes. The responses were transcribed and categories and sub themes were identified through open coding. The research findings indicate that teachers and parents needed more information and training in dealing with bullying. Workshops, training and guidance from educational psychologists could be options. Educational psychologists could contribute to school policy and the code of conduct of the school. It is suggested that stakeholders in the school context should work together in curbing the problem of bullying. By supporting each other stakeholders could make a difference in the lives of bullies and victims of bullying, not just in the present, but also in their lives as adults.