Is bullying in the eye of the beholder?

Examining employees' perceptions of workplace bullying in the

Education and Hospitality sectors.

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Abstract

The literature suggests that dominant behavioural and attitudinal norms within an industry may influence an employee's perception of what constitutes workplace bullying. The present study investigated this possibility by collecting data in relation to perceptions of workplace bullying from employees in Education (an industry with a potentially low tolerance for workplace bullying) and in Hospitality (an industry with a potentially high tolerance for workplace bullying).

Semi-structured, in-depth interviews were conducted with a representative sample of 16 full-time secondary school teachers and 16 full-time bar workers. Firstly, participants were required to read and respond (with the help of prompt questions) to three short, purpose-written scenarios. One scenario described a bullying situation, one a performance management situation and one a one-off harassment episode. These scenarios were used as prompts to get participants thinking and talking about specific behaviours in the workplace. Until this point in the interview, there was no mention of 'workplace bullying'. Part two of the interview explored how participants defined workplace bullying and what criteria they used. As part of this process, participants were asked to reflect back to the three scenarios and say which, if any, described workplace bullying. The content of the interviews was transcribed and analysed using thematic analysis.

Although there were similarities between the two sectors in respect of employees' perspectives of workplace bullying, there were also substantial differences. Participants from both industries believed that people in authoritative positions were most likely to be causing or fuelling bullying, and certain personality traits (e.g. introversion) made individuals more prone to being targeted. In relation to industry differences, the participants from the Hospitality sector often seemed to find it difficult

to distinguish between bullying and what they saw as 'harmless joking around', whereas the participants in the Education sector tended to have an understanding of bullying which was more in line with the academic literature. Both groups appeared to have very different norms associated with how new employees were treated. In Hospitality the perception was that newcomers were purposely picked on, for the sole reason that they are new (bullying is– or should be – accepted by new people as part of 'fitting in'), whereas, newcomers to the Education sector tend to be actively looked after and given more time to fit in.

The differences presented in this study highlight the importance of understanding the conceptualisation of bullying in different workplace environments. The study gives an insight into how industry norms can potentially be related to employee perspectives. These differences and norms could be the underlying reason why bullying is still prevalent. This research could potentially be a step towards prevention initiatives for improving and creating a healthier work environment. It may raise the awareness of policymakers and cause them to consider the conceptual differences among industries. This research may also influence the prevention of bullying through the use of customised initiatives that inform employees about what is and is not acceptable behaviour (irrespective of industry).

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<center>**Chapter One: Introduction**</center>

1.1 Background

Workplace bullying is a major issue facing organisations worldwide (Saunders, Huynh, & Goodman-Delahunty, 2007). Research examining workplace bullying was pioneered in the 1990s by Heinz Leymann, a clinical psychologist and psychiatrist from Sweden. Leymann (1990) examined the prevention and management of workplace bullying and its negative impact on the individual and organisation. His research quickly gained attention from many other Scandinavian academics such as Einarsen and Skogstad. Interest then spread to researchers in other parts of the world such as Rayner and Hoel in Britain, Zapf and Gross in Germany and Austria, and O'Driscoll, Cooper-Thomas, Bentley, Catley, Gardner and Trenberth in New Zealand. A variety of methodologies were used in their studies but all reported incidents of workplace bullying (Einarsen, 2000; O'Driscoll et al., 2011).

The issue of workplace bullying has fascinated researchers increasingly in the past decade; more recently international researchers have started working together to understand this phenomenon in more depth. International studies have mainly concentrated on (a) the nature of bullying, (b) defining bullying, (c) measuring bullying frequency and prevalence, (d) identifying and understanding the impact of bullying on the target and the organisation and (e) recognising the individual characteristics of a bully and a target (Ayoko, Callan & Hartel, 2003; Baron & Neuman, 1998; Einarsen, Raknes & Matthiesen, 1994; Leymann, 1990; Saunders et al., 2007). Despite developments in the knowledge of workplace bullying, the most challenging issue that even academics have struggled with is the development of an agreed definition for bullying. According to Einarsen, Hoel,

Zapf and Cooper (2011, p. 22), one widely cited definition of workplace bullying is

> A situation where a person feels they have repeatedly been on the receiving end of negative actions from one or more other people in a situation where it is difficult to defend themselves against these actions. The behaviour has to occur repeatedly and regularly (e.g., weekly) and over a period of time (e.g., about six months).These negative actions could be physical or non-physical (e.g., verbal abuse). A one-off incident would not be defined as bullying.

Studies indicate that the Scandinavian countries were among the first to actively address the issue of bullying in the workplace. Laws were created and passed in Sweden in 1993 and Norway in 1994 that specifically tackled bullying in the workplace (Rayner & Hoel, 1997). Although bullying has been addressed in parts of Europe it is still widespread and prevalent in countries such as New Zealand (Branch, Ramsay & Barker, 2012; O'Driscoll et al, 2011; Mikkelsen & Einarsen, 2001). Research examining workplace bullying in New Zealand is still in its adolescence, with the number of studies that have been published, small and focused (O'Driscoll et al., 2011). They have focused mainly on the nature and prevalence of bullying, which is often concentrated in specific industries, or on the wider issue of work stress in different work environments and its relation to bullying (Bentley et al.,2009 ; Scott, Blanshard & Child, 2008).

Prevalence of workplace bullying in New Zealand is difficult to compare with other countries as the examining prevalence (Scott, Blanshard & Child, 2008) used approaches which are not internationally recognised or considered

appropriate measurement tools, as described in Nielsen, Notelaers and Einarsen (2011). However, the study by Thrilwall and Haar (2010) is one New Zealand study which used an internationally recognised tool –The Negative Acts Questionnaire – to measure and compare prevalence of bullying in New Zealand with that in Norway, Denmark, Turkey and the US. Their results showed frequencies relating to bullying in New Zealand were far higher than in the comparable European studies, but similar to those from the US. This indicates that employees in New Zealand organisations are experiencing workplace bullying and that more organisational attention is needed nationally to address the issue.

Workplace bullying is important to address because it can have detrimental consequences for the individual and the organisation. Bullied individuals may experience low self-esteem, more negative emotions, high anxiety and stress, and higher levels of depression than those who have not experienced bullying at work, and these experiences can lead to short- and long-term psychological suffering (Einarsen et al., 2011; Rayner, Sheehan & Barker, 1999; Zapf & Einarsen, 2005). Organisations where workplace bullying occurs could, as a result, have an unproductive workforce, higher absenteeism, reduced business or higher staff turnover (Hoel, Sheehan, Cooper & Einarsen, 2011).

Studies that have investigated bullying mainly reflect one perspective in the bullying situation, the target (Einarsen, Hoel & Notelaers, 2009; Ortega, Hogh, Pejtersen, Feveile, & Olsen, 2009). While it is important to understand the target, other perspectives should be explored (Cowan, 2012). Studies that have examined the bully are very limited, and tend to focus on descriptions of their personality traits (Seigne, Coyne, Randall & Parker, 2007). This could be due to the difficulty in gathering information about the bully, as they may not actually recognise that

their actions are harming anyone and, if they did consider their actions as bullying, they would not admit it (Namie & Namie, 2003; Seigne et al., 2007;). Very few studies exist in New Zealand or elsewhere which have investigated employee perceptions and *their* understanding of workplace bullying in different industries. This is an important aspect; employees, managers and policymakers may benefit by having insight into how employees perceive workplace bullying behaviours, and whether industry norms impact the nature and extent of those perceptions.

Previous studies have shown that certain industries have reported higher incidences of bullying than others due to the difference in work environments (Bloisi & Hoel, 2008; Bourdain, 2004; Rayner & Hoel, 1997). Differences in workplace environments may influence and alter an employee's views and their understanding of the norms of acceptable workplace behaviour (Archer, 1999; Baillien, Neyens, De Witte & De Cuyper, 2009; Jennifer, Cowie & Ananiadou, 2003). Baillien et al. (2009) reported a work environment that clearly promoted acceptable workplace behaviour (through workshops and policies, for example) and had fewer cases of bullying than workplaces which did not implement such policies. Work environments, or norms, that support incivility may mean an employee has a higher tolerance level for inappropriate behaviour or bullying (Beswick, Gore, & Palferman, 2006; Neuman & Baron, 2011). Very often, industry norms are difficult to challenge; as a result, an employee may learn to tolerate negative behaviours. For this reason, it is important to investigate employee perceptions from different work environments and determine their understanding of certain workplace behaviours.

Previous studies have reported that the Hospitality industry and the Education sector have a high prevalence of bullying (Bentley et al., 2009; Bloisi & Hoel,

2008; Notelaers, Vermunt, Baillien, Einarsen & De Witte, 2011). The Hospitality industry may have higher occurrences of bullying due to the lack of enforced procedure, socialisation, training and policies; as a result, bullying could be underreported or tolerated (Bentley et al., 2009; Bloisi & Hoel, 2008; Bourdain, 2004). Yet in the Education sector, there are appropriate procedures for their employees to identify bullying in its initial stages. According, to Bentley et al. (2009) when bullying occurs in Education, employees are aware of how to identify and report it, but it emphasises the need for management to challenge bullying through reinforcing procedures to prevent it reoccurring in the future.

1.2 Purpose and research question

This is an exploratory, qualitative study that examined the perceptions and understanding of workplace bullying of employees from different industries. The purpose of this study was to understand the conceptualisation of bullying in different workplace environments, and whether industry norms can potentially influence an employee's perspective and understanding of workplace bullying. If these industry-based differences in understanding bullying exist, then their existence may act as a barrier to effective prevention strategies in the workplace.

This study focused on employees' perceptions of workplace bullying in Education (an industry with low tolerance) and Hospitality (an industry with high tolerance). The study used semi-structured interviews and short, purpose-written scenarios. The scenarios were used as prompts for participants to discuss what they perceived as workplace bullying. The interviews also gave an opportunity for employees to reflect on norms in their industry, and provide an explanation of what workplace bullying means.

Therefore, this study investigates the following research question:

Do employees from the Hospitality and Education sectors perceive workplace

bullying differently?

This study may provide crucial insights into how employees perceive workplace bullying and whether industry norms influence their understanding of workplace behaviours. Examining how employees interact, interpret and assign meanings to behaviours may contribute to the existing definition of bullying, and could influence those in charge of creating effective interventions, initiatives or policies to consider these industry differences.

The following sections of this thesis are organised as follows: chapter two presents a review of the literature of workplace bullying, and background on workplace bullying in different industries, with focus on the Education and Hospitality industry. Chapter three outlines the justification for the methodology and design used in this study, the data collection phase, and data analysis. Chapter four reports on employee perceptions of workplace bullying (including perception of scenarios) and presents them in terms similarities and differences. Chapter five discusses the findings and relevant explanations. The implications, significance and limitations of the research are presented in chapter six.

<center>**Chapter Two: Literature Review**</center>

2.1 Workplace Bullying

2.1.1 Definition of workplace bullying.

Different terms to describe this phenomenon are often used interchangeably by researchers in different countries. *Bullying* is the preferred term in the United Kingdom (UK), Ireland, Australia and New Zealand. *Mobbing* is the term likely to be used in Northern Europe, and in France and Belgium researchers refer to it as *moral harassment* (Bloisi & Hoel, 2008). Studies in the US use terms such as *workplace trauma* (Keashly & Jagatic, 2003) or *abusive supervision* (Tepper, 2000). The use of different terms by researchers stems from the type of behaviour that is being reported to occur most commonly within the country in which bullying is being examined (Saunders et al., 2007). For example, in Germany, the term mobbing is used because bullying is associated with a mob of bullies, rather than a single bully, something that not all countries may relate to (Leymann, 1990; Saunders et al., 2007; Zapf & Einarsen, 2005). Researchers and practitioners have also struggled to establish a single definition of workplace bullying.

Researchers recognise that bullying starts subtly and is unaddressed, but over time it escalates and becomes extreme and intense (Cowie, Naylor, Rivers, Smith & Pereira, 2002; Cowan, 2012; Einarsen, 1999; Leymann, 1996). The typical behaviours are actions unwanted by the target and causing severe social, psychological and psychosomatic problems that affect the target's tasks and competencies thus creating a hostile workplace for the target (Einarsen et al., 2011; Keashly & Jagatic, 2003; Zapf & Einarsen, 2005; Zapf, Escartín, Einarsen, Hoel & Vartia, 2011). An isolated event of negative behaviour would not be considered bullying, as bullying needs to be frequent and ongoing (Einarsen et al., 2011).

Very often, targets recognise that they are persistently being humiliated, mocked, and criticised by the bully (Cowan, 2012). To date there are numerous definitions that are currently being used to investigate this serious workplace issue (Saunders et al., 2007). However, these definitions generally have three recurring themes: the negative effect of this behaviour on the target, the frequency, and the persistency of the behaviour (Cowan, 2012; Einarsen et al., 2011; Leymann, 1996; O'Driscoll, et al., 2011; Salin, 2003; Saunders et al., 2007). Other definitions also mention the 'intent' of the bully or the power imbalance which the behaviour must create to be considered bullying, yet this is still debated (Bloisi & Hoel, 2008 ; Di Martino, Hoel & Cooper, 2003).

Not all researchers' definitions include 'intent' as a feature of bullying, but other definitions are very clear that bullying is intentional (Saunders et al., 2007). Researchers state that due to bullying being frequent and ongoing, bullies are aware of their actions and for that reason their behaviour is intended to harm their targets (Saunders et al., 2007; Zapf & Einarsen, 2005). However, researchers who may not want to include intent in their definition because it is 'normally impossible to verify the presence of intent' (Einarsen et al., 2011, p. 12), while other researchers may not worry about empirically validating intent and could include it as a characteristic of bullying (Cowan, 2012).

Even though intent is not a recurring theme in researchers' definitions of workplace bullying, perceived intent could influence whether an individual determines they have been bullied or not. For example, if an individual's own understanding of bullying includes intent, and the definition provided does not coincide with their understanding, then the individual may be hesitant to identify their experience as bullying (Saunders et al., 2007). Also the field is typically

understood from the perspective of the target therefore, as long as the harm has been done, intent is largely irrelevant for researchers (Einarsen et al., 2011).

There are also contradictory ideas amongst researchers on the theme of power and power imbalance (Cowan, 2012; Einarsen et al., 2011; Hoel & Salin, 2003; Salin, 2003). Many researchers' definitions recognise power and its link to the bully and target, but they contest whether the target exerts power or lacks power in a bullying situation (Cowan, 2012; Einarsen et al., 2011; Hoel & Salin, 2003; Lutgen-Sandvik, 2006). Power imbalances can either be organisationally defined through having a superior position, access to resources or an informal relationship with power holders (Cowan, 2012; Einarsen et al., 2011; Hoel & Salin, 2003; Salin, 2003). In other cases, the imbalance is created over time when one party becomes unable to defend themselves, i.e. they become victimised (Cowan, 2012; Keashly & Jagatic, 2003; Namie & Namie, 2003; Salin, 2003).

Another challenge to the definition involves whether bullying is just a result of bad conflict management. However, there is a difference between bullying and 'normal' conflict, in that it is not essentially what and how something is done, but rather the frequency and longevity of what is done (Salin, 2003). A key point of difference between conflict and bullying is that conflict can occur one time only, whereas bullying is frequent and repeated (Einarsen et al., 2011). The study by Zapf and Gross (2001) acknowledged that bullying differs from conflict, because the successful use of conflict management strategies (such as active problem-solving or management) will not prove successful when applied to a situation of bullying. Besides, when bullying has escalated to its final stage, the bully and target typically see no point in continuing a working relationship (Zapf & Gross, 2001). Often the target leaves, as they are convinced that the bully wants to expel

them from the organisation and see this only way to resolve the issue (Cowan, 2012; Zapf & Gross, 2001).

The understanding of bullying may also vary for practitioners and courts, so definitions of bullying could be dependent on professional need and requirement. The study by Cowan (2012) looked at the Human Resource (HR) professionals' definition of workplace bullying which suggested that bullying was considered borderline harassment but, due to the nature of bullying as subtle and covert, it made it harder to pin down. HR professionals admit that not all bullying is the same and that the experience of a HR professional will have a significant effect on what gets interpreted as bullying and what does not. Consequently, this leaves inexperienced HR professionals to guess whether an issue constituted bullying or not.

In New Zealand the definition of bullying may also be challenged as there is no current legal definition. Bullying may have some obvious similarities to harassment (e.g. unwelcomed behaviour) but there are significant differences. Harassment is unlawful under both the Human Rights Act 1993 and Employment Relations Act 2000, whereas bullying is not specified as unlawful in New Zealand. Harassment incidents can be one-off experiences whereas bullying tends to be ongoing behaviour (Einarsen et al., 2011). In addition, workplaces have a legal duty to protect their employees from harassment (Rutherford & Rissel, 2004). The lack of legal guidance and definition for a practitioner or a policymaker may be a hindrance when dealing with workplace bullying.

Despite the lack of legal guidance, the concept of the psychological contract plays a key role in organisational justice and the understanding of workplace bullying (Thomas-Peter, 1997). Saunders et al. (2007) suggested that the psychological

contract formed between an employee and employer exerts expectations of appropriate workplace behaviours. These expectations include the employer protecting and assisting an employee if bullying was occurring. If these expectations differed between an employer and an employee, the understanding of bullying in the workplace could be challenged.

2.1.2 Types of workplace bullying behaviours.

A common theme in definitions of workplace bullying is the frequent experience of a negative behaviour. These types of behaviours can take either a physical form – such as an item being thrown at the target – or a psychological form, such as subtle and covert actions, snide comments or dirty looks (Bentley et al., 2012; Saunders et al., 2007). More is reported about bullying taking a psychological form than a physical one (Ayoko, Callan & Hartel, 2003; Einarsen et al., 2011). Bullying behaviours are typically targeted at one or a few individuals, rather than a broad workplace (Salin, 2003). When bullies put effort into aggression against others, they want to maximise the harm to their target and minimise the danger to themselves (Bjorkqvist, Osterman & Lagerspetz, 1994). For this reason, bullies often prefer disguised forms of workplace aggression to harm the target, while making it very difficult to identify them as a source of such harm (Baron & Neuman, 1998).

Researchers acknowledge that actions such as attacking a person in private, verbal aggression, spreading rumours, social isolation, withholding task-related information from an individual, and unrealistic deadlines are behaviours associated with bullying (Rayner & Cooper, 2006; Zapf et al., 2011;). In Table 1,(p.12) the most common workplace bullying behaviours are grouped into five categories.

Table 1

Categories of Workplace Bullying

Categories of workplace bullying	
Threat to professional status	e.g. belittling opinion, public professional humiliation, accusation regarding lack of effort
Threat to personal standing	e.g. name-calling, insults, intimidation, devaluing with reference to age
Isolation	e.g. preventing access to opportunities, physical or social isolation, withholding of information
Overwork	e.g. undue pressure, impossible deadlines, unnecessary disruptions
Destabilisation	e.g. failure to give credit when due, meaningless tasks, removal of responsibility, repeated reminders of blunders, setting up to fail

Note. From *A Summary Review of Literature Relating to Workplace Bullying* (Rayner & Hoel, 1997, p. 183).

2.1.3 Effects of workplace bullying.

There has been a substantial amount of research by academics on the effects of workplace bullying on individuals and organisations. The impact of bullying is damaging; a debilitating and costly problem not only for the organisation, it can take a traumatic toll on the individual's work and personal life (Ayoko et al., 2003; Einarsen, 1999; Hoel & Salin, 2003). Bullying is neither 'harmless fun' nor 'tough management' for both the individual and the organisation concerned (Bentley et al., 2009).

2.1.3.1 Effects on individuals.

A study by Tepper, Duffy and Shaw, (2001) outlined the effects on individuals who had been bullied. These individuals felt the bullying influenced their psychological well-being, job and life satisfaction. Research by O'Driscoll et al. (2011) showed bullying significantly correlated with higher levels of strain,

reduced well-being and commitment to the organisation. The consequences of bullying also motivated many employees to quit, as well as negatively affecting their personal life, such as their relationships with their family and friends (Bloisi & Hoel, 2008; Einarsen et al., 2011). A study by Field (1996) suggested that some noticeable behaviours of an individual experiencing bullying could be aggressiveness, irritability, isolation and frequent mood-swings due to the inability to understand or cope with what is happening to them.

Studies have documented that bullied individuals find it difficult to stand up for themselves, and when laying a complaint they are frequently met with disbelief (Bloisi & Hoel, 2008; Leymann, 1996; O'Moore, Lynch & Daeid, 2003). An individual who chooses to formally complain through grievance procedures, may find themselves following an ambiguous process with the possibility of further victimisation and stress (Bentley et al., 2009; McCarthy & Barker, 2000). In some severe cases the individual is expelled from the organisation, either through dismissal or voluntary resignation (Keashly, 1998; Leymann, 1996).

The effects of constantly witnessing bullying behaviour in a workplace could also eventuate in the bullying becoming an accepted and tolerated behaviour, known as a 'learned behaviour' (Hoel et al., 2011; Lewis, 2003). An employee's perception of acceptable workplace behaviour could be developed when an employee observes a negative behaviour, and then witnesses the reaction to the bullying behaviour from the victim causing them to potentially imitate this reaction in the future (Einarsen, Raknes & Matthiesen, 1994; Rayner & Hoel, 1997). These behaviours then become learned and may be inflicted on other employees, creating a negative spiral of bullying.

2.1.3.2 Effects on organisations.

The presence of workplace bullying affects an organisation as it may cause higher absenteeism, higher staff turnover, reduced job satisfaction, and lower organisational commitment and productivity from an employee (Agervold & Mikkelsen, 2004; Bentley et al., 2012; Loh, Restubog & Zagenczyk, 2010). A study by Hoel and Cooper (2000) conducted in the United Kingdom, found that bullied employees take seven more days of sick absenteeism on average than those who were neither bullied nor witnessed bullying in their workplace. This calculated to 18 million lost working days (Hoel & Cooper, 2000). Another UK study by Quine (1999) investigated bullying absenteeism and reported eight per cent of employees had taken time off as a result of their bullying experience.

Employees who take time off as a consequence of being bullied can end up costing an organisation immensely. Organisations could lose their best employees as bullied individuals are more likely to leave or quit as they become less committed to their organisation (Djurkovic, McCormack & Casimir, 2008). The financial effects on an organisation as a result of bullying are associated with efforts to help staff cope with bullying incidents and costs to investigate the issue and potential court action (Rayner & Keashly, 2005). If organisations are aware of the financial and non-financial cost of bullying, it may provide an incentive for organisations to address the issue (Bentley et al., 2009).

2.1.4 Antecedents of workplace bullying.

Antecedents are pre-existing conditions or events that may help explain why bullying occurs in the workplace (Einarsen et al., 2011; Salin, 2003). A number of studies which have explored the potential reasons, have categorised the

antecedents into three groups: individual, social and work environment (Baillien et al.,2009; Beswick et al., 2006; Hoel et al., 2003).

2.1.4.1 Individual antecedents.

Individual antecedents relate to the individual characteristics that may cause bullying in a situation, such as the personalities of the target and bully (Coyne, Seigne & Randall, 2000). The characteristics of either a bully or a target are often different (Baillien et al., 2009; Seigne et al., 2007). Bullies frequently feel the need to be socially dominant (Parkins, Fishbein & Ritchey, 2006). Therefore, they could use bullying to protect their self-esteem or position, and are often seen to lack empathy, social competence or have micro-politically motivated behaviours (Beswick et al., 2006); whereas individuals are targeted because they seem to be at the low end of social competence, or they are seen as an overachiever, or too good at their job (Baillien et al., 2009; Beswick et al., 2006). The fact that an individual is an overachiever could be perceived as a threat to the bully. More often than not, bullies protect their position by targeting individuals who seem to outshine them (Beswick et al., 2006). Individuals are also targeted when they have a weak personality profile or are less assertive (Vartia,1996).

2.1.4.2 Social antecedents.

The social antecedents are characteristics drawn from employees' interactions in the workplace which may cause bullying. These social factors may be condoning aggression or may be social norms that shape and reinforce aggression (Neuman & Baron, 2011). The acceptance of such social norms may encourage employees to join or support the bully, rather than going against them. An individual may act like this because it is considered socially desirable, meaning that 'the tendency of

respondents [is] to reply in a manner that will be viewed favourable by others'
(Nielsen et al., 2011, p. 164).

The presence of such norms could reduce the likelihood that witnesses to
workplace bullying would take action against it, as doing so would be perceived
as weakness or a violation of the social norms (Neuman & Baron, 2011). The
bully could influence employment opportunities as, due to an unsteady economy
or seeing many profitable companies relocating offshore, no one is guaranteed
continued employment. Therefore, an employee's best interest could be protected
by applauding and supporting the bully (Neuman & Baron, 2011).

Neuman and Baron's (2011) study states that being difficult or tough in the
workplace can pay off from the bully's perspective. Managers and peers will often
select the path of least resistance in order to avoid dealing with an unpleasant
individual. This avoidance comes at the expense of the others, who are forced to
do the work that should have been assigned to the bully. People then begin to
resent the unfair distribution of work, and this resentment can turn and lead to
displaced aggression against others.

Bullies can also be rewarded for their actions by the workplace; for example,
being promoted to a more authoritative position. Rewarding bullying behaviour
could provoke more hostile behaviour within the workplace, as other employees
perceive this as effective behaviour to gain rewards (Einarsen et al., 1994).
Therefore, workplace bullying could indeed stem from social factors, from the
real or perceived treatment individuals receive (Neuman & Baron, 2011).

2.1.4.3 Organisational antecedents.

Organisational antecedents focus on the link between the work environment and the occurrence of bullying (Leymann, 1996). Acts of bullying are often integrated as part of the workplace environment (Salin & Hoel, 2011). The study by Baillien et al. (2008) indicated organisations that were too informal, with leaders who are tolerant of bullying behaviour, let bullies get away with bullying as there was no clear outline of appropriate workplace behaviour (Andersson & Pearson, 1999; Beswick et al., 2006; Rayner, 1999). By comparison, formal organisations with a strict focus on power relations and high internal competition have been found to have a high correlation with the presence of bullying, as bullying is often used as a micro-political strategy by an individual to enhance their position within their organisation (O'Moore et al., 1998; Vartia, 1996). Since studies have demonstrated how bullying could be fostered in extremes of informal or formal work environments, it may therefore be necessary for organisations to have a healthy balance between informal and formal in order decrease the risk of bullying (Baillien et al., 2008; Salin & Hoel, 2011; O'Moore et al., 1998).

Another study suggested, that a sudden change at work – such as new management, or a wider organisational change – may ignite bullying (Baillien et al., 2009). When there is a lack of training for those holding management positions and facilitating change the quality of leadership in the organisation may be affected; then the combination of poor leadership, poor communication and cooperation can cause low morale and the negative social climate, associated with workplace bullying (Keashly & Jagatic, 2003; Vartia, 1996). The study by Bentley et al. (2009) acknowledged that a lack of understanding in management appears to be a major barrier to progress in the prevention of this problem. Other

potential antecedents are role conflict and role ambiguity which occur when there is no definite job description or delineation of tasks; this can create uncertainty which can cause employees to bully (Beswick et al., 2006).

These three categories of antecedents have been found to correlate strongly with the presence of bullying (Beswick et al., 2006). Most information about antecedents is based on victims' self-reported data. Self-reporting potentially creates self-selecting groups of those that have experienced bullying (Beswick et al., 2006; Zapf & Einarsen, 2005). It is vital to acknowledge that there is a lack of data that examines the perceptions and experience of accused bullies. Bullies themselves may continue with their behaviour as they do not acknowledge that their actions are harmful (Seigne et al., 2007; Namie & Namie, 2003).

2.1.5 Interventions and initiatives.

Interventions or initiatives are actions an organisation undertakes to prevent, reduce or manage bullying (Di Martino et al., 2003; Vartia & Leka, 2011). As it is an employer's duty to provide a safe working environment interventions are in their area of responsibility (Catanzariti & Byrnes, 2006). There are different types of interventions and initiatives (see Table 2 p.19), with primary, secondary and tertiary stages that can be directed at the level of the organisation or the employee (Vartia & Leka, 2011, p. 360).

These are utilised to either attempt to prevent an issue from escalating further, or at least reduce its impact (Hoel, Rayner & Cooper, 1999; Rayner 1999; Vartia & Leka, 2011). Salin (2003) argued that work environments where there are no policies against bullying, and no monitoring or punishment, bullies may engage in

these negative actions more, as the bully could perceive the costs and dangers of bullying (to themselves) as very low.

Table 2

Levels of Intervention

Different Levels of Interventions	
Primary stage	Interventions are proactive by nature and aim to prevent the harmful phenomena or effects emerging in the first place, by reducing their risks. ***Examples:*** *Anti-bullying policy, code of conduct and management training*
Secondary stage	Interventions aim to reverse, reduce or slow the progression of the situation or ill health, to stop the event from recurring, and/or to increase the resources of individuals to cope with the situation. ***Examples:*** *Industrial tribunal, conflict resolution and mediation*
Tertiary stage	Interventions are rehabilitative by nature, aiming at reducing the negative impacts caused by different occupational hazards and restoring the health and well-being of employees, as well as restoring a safe and healthy workplace. ***Examples***: *Corporate agreements, group recovery programmes and therapy counselling.*

Note. Adapted from *Interventions for the Prevention and Management of Bullying at Work* (Vartia & Leka, 2011, p. 360).

Interventions may not always be present or available in certain industries due to cost constraints and the size of the organisation. A study by Bentley et al. (2009), which investigated initiatives taken by industries to manage bullying in different work environments, discovered that policies and resources appeared less frequently in smaller organisations. Only larger organisations were able to provide personal grievance programmes and advocates for their employees and these advocates were able to mediate or discipline meetings and provide advice and counselling to staff. Although interventions could encourage mediation to settle a bullying situation, it is important to note that precautions need to be taken in

mediation, especially if legal action or official parties are used to mediate the conflict. This is because official parties can make a bullying situation worse and cause further victimisation whereas, if the issue was dealt with without a third party (i.e. the manager separates the bully and victim) this may moderate or stop the bullying. However, it does not prevent it (Zapf & Gross, 2001).

Research indicates it is difficult to persuade organisations to take part in intervention studies for bullying as either they do not recognise bullying as an issue in their organisation, or they fear acquiring a negative image because of carrying out an intervention to reduce bullying at work (Mikkelsen, Hogh & Pugaard, 2011; Vartia & Leka, 2011). A study by Ferris (2004) revealed that the most helpful organisations do not see bullying merely as a personality issue but as an organisational problem, that needs to be addressed through coaching for the bully, counselling, performance management and representative training. Lack of understanding of workplace bullying by employees and their organisation can also interfere with the success of interventions (Vartia & Leka, 2011). There is more research identifying ineffective approaches to bullying than there is identifying and evaluating effective strategies (Bentley et al., 2009). Little research has been focused on interventions in workplace bullying, but this topic is being investigated more, as research has revealed none of the current intervention strategies available to targets have been effective in preventing a situation in which bullying is tolerated (Zapf & Gross, 2001).

2.2 Workplace Bullying in Different Industries

It has been reported that bullying is more prevalent in certain industries than others (Bentley et al., 2009; Einarsen & Skogstad, 1996; Leymann, 1996; Vartia, 1996). Studies that have paid attention to the characteristics of industry and work

environments have shown there is a positive correlation between an industry culture and the way it can influence an employee's perceptions (Schrodt, 2002; Shahtahmasebi, 2004). One instance would be the way an employee makes judgements or decisions on how they choose their interaction with other employees (Schrodt, 2002; Shahtahmasebi, 2004). Previous studies have revealed bullying occurs more in industry cultures that are heavily dependent on the conservation of the existing hierarchy (Archer, 1999; Bloisi & Hoel, 2008; Notelaers et al., 2011). Workplace bullying is a problem in a number of industries, and how it is understood and handled could be influenced by these industry differences. A study by Jennifer et al., (2003) using 677 employees from five different working populations (managers, teachers, technicians, call-centre operators, and engineers) identified a link between the work environment and its impact on employee perceptions of bullying behaviours.

A New Zealand study by Bentley et al. (2009) examined the work-related stress factors relating to bullying in the Education, Health, Hospitality and Travel industries and exposed bullying as a significant issue being faced by many sectors in New Zealand, but one which is poorly recognised and understood. How employees recognise and understand a negative situation in the workplace (for example, as either bullying or firm management) could be influenced by the work environment and industry culture (Cowie et al., 2002). However, little to no research in New Zealand exists that has specifically investigated employee perceptions of workplace bullying and whether an industry's norms can influence the interpretation of a bullying incident. There has been a sense of curiosity surrounding the phenomenon of abusive behaviour among industries, especially in

the Hospitality and Education sectors where research has indicated that bullying is prevalent (Bentley et al., 2009; Bloisi & Hoel, 2008; Notelaers et al., 2011).

2.2.1 Industry background on Hospitality and Education.

2.2.1.1 Hospitality.

With reality shows, such as *Hell's Kitchen*, often glamorising the abuse received by Hospitality workers as a necessary part of the job, it is not surprising that Bloisi and Hoel (2008) stated that the Hospitality industry is seen to have a high prevalence of bullying, yet incidents may go under-reported. Due to the socialisation of employees in Hospitality, which may influence their interpretation and perception of bullying, they may pass off bullying as 'horseplay' or leadership style (Bloisi & Hoel, 2008). Other studies have compared the Hospitality sector with defence forces and have discovered some shared characteristics such as close-knit teams; uniforms; an authoritarian, hierarchal management style; power based on rank, shouting at recruits, and the use of threats (Archer, 1999; Bloisi & Hoel, 2008).

2.2.1.2 Education.

Research in the Education sector has indicated high levels of workplace bullying (Bentley et al., 2009; Notelaers et al., 2011; O'Driscoll et al., 2011). Statistics from the UK National Workplace Bullying Advice Line suggest 20% of their cases are from the Education sector (Shahtahmasebi, 2004). Research has found that contributory factors likely to impact on workplace bullying in the Education sector are the lack of professionally trained middle and senior managers, and a power imbalance (Lewis, 1999). Furthermore, managers are unaware of how to deal with bullying when faced with it, putting it down to lack of training and the

need for disciplinary procedures (Bentley et al., 2009; Bourdain, 2004; Poulston, 2008).

2.2.2 Hierarchal structure and power.

The way an industry is structured in terms of its hierarchy and power divisions could have an impact on whether it encourages a culture of incivility or not (Neuman & Baron, 2011; Notelaers, et al., 2011). Research into the Education sector has shown that without strong leaders in authoritative positions to enforce anti-bullying policies and guidelines, the policies will be ineffective (Bentley et al., 2009). By contrast, other studies have indicated that individuals in powerful positions may not want to challenge bullying, as they may not see the bullying behaviour as a problem, or may have the tendency to be bullies themselves (Bentley et al., 2009; Lewis, 1999). Brodsky (1976) viewed bullies as people manipulating for power or privilege, and that some positions of power encompass the scope to inflict harassment. In the Hospitality industry, those holding higher positions are often perceived to be the bullies, as they have the power to potentially impose their orders on others and manipulate them (Bloisi & Hoel, 2008). Only a limited amount of research has been reported about the relationship between the size of an organisation and dealing with bullying in the Hospitality industry.

2.2.3 Socialisation.

The socialisation process is where a new member gradually adopts the shared, (possibly destructive) norms which have been demonstrated within their work environment (Neuman & Baron, 2011). New entrants are particularly vulnerable to the socialisation process because they are exposed to these norms early on in

their career (Bloisi & Hoel, 2008; Poulston, 2008). The socialisation process of some industries often involves the new members being 'tested'. These actions could involve rituals or initiations that may be considered as bullying but complaining about them would be an act of disloyalty and cause further victimisation (Brodsky, 1976; Hoel & Salin, 2003). The normality of abusive behaviour in a work environment becomes internalised and reproduced from one generation of employee to the next by means of the socialisation process (Bloisi & Hoel, 2008). Therefore, individuals working in an industry where giving and receiving abuse is part of the socialisation process claim that it creates a shell of hardiness needed to function in the industry (Bloisi & Hoel, 2008; Bourdain, 2004). New employees wanting to fit into the organisation are less likely to complain about being treated unfairly (Archer, 1999; Ortega et al., 2009). Individuals may learn to cope by hardening up, which may progressively change their professional outlook and expectations and indirectly contribute to normalising abuse and bullying behaviour for them (Hoel et al, 2007).

The lack of a formal induction in a workplace causes an employee to learn from other employees how to respond and act in the organisation (Poulston, 2008; Salin & Hoel, 2011).The socialisation of a new employee is vital, as a poor induction could provoke bullying and lead to the individual feeling unsupported and unaware of the process or procedure to take if they are bullied (Salin & Hoel, 2011). Furthermore, informal work environments, that rely heavily on workplace humour – characterised by jokes, surprises and teasing – could foster bullying (Salin, 2003; Salin & Hoel, 2011). Humiliating jokes which could be accepted as normal in everyday life and part of the organisational culture, could easily turn

sour and become bullying if the target for some reason cannot take the joke or defend themselves (Collinson, 1988; Einarsen & Raknes, 1997; Salin, 2003).

2.2.4 Perceptions.

A study by Liefooghe and Olafsson (1999) identified that behaviours which are perceived as bullying may differ from one organisational context to another. Because there are differences in what is considered acceptable behaviour between organisations bullying can be difficult to challenge (Hutchinson, Vickers, Jackson, & Wilkes, 2006) The increasing informality and casual behaviour in organisations could pose difficulties for some employees to distinguish what constitutes proper and professional interpersonal behaviour (Pearson, Andersson, & Porath, 2000). Brodsky (1976) has highlighted that for bullying to occur in an industry, the culture needs to permit bullying behaviours and be rewarding.

Individuals from different industries who witnessed bullying, have often presented their experiences in complex ways, as though looking through a different lens (Lewis, Sheehan, & Davies, 2008) since a work environment can act as a filter affecting the interpretation of bullying behaviour and its acceptance (Einarsen et al., 1994). An investigation into different industries is required to understand whether these differences and norms in the industries influence employees' perceptions and interpretation of workplace bullying and this may bring academics a step closer to a holistic understanding of workplace bullying.

2.2.5 Tolerance levels.

Some industries may be more tolerant of negative behaviour than others and this could affect an employee's perceptions and interpretation of bullying (Einarsen et al., 1994). Different tolerance levels could be developed by an employee due to a

poor workplace environment which is often inclined to have more hostile behaviours (Einarsen, 1999). Bloisi and Hoel (2008) have stated that abusive supervision present in an industry and tolerated might be consistent with the prevailing cultural norms. If there are no policies or guidelines about appropriate workplace behaviours, abuse tends to be tolerated more and accepted. This creates a barrier to eliminating workplace bullying, as employees may have built up a tougher skin and developed a higher tolerance for negative behaviours (Pryor & Fitzgerald, 2003).

2.3 Summary

The first part of this literature review recognized the fundamental aspects of workplace bullying. It provided an outline of the different types of bullying, the negative effects it has on the individual and organization, antecedents of bullying, and interventions. Focus was drawn on the lack of relevant research investigating employee perceptions. The second part of the literature review indicated certain industries have a higher prevalence of bullying. It addressed characteristics of an industry such as, hierarchal structure and power, socialisation, perceptions and tolerance levels that may influence an employee's perception on appropriate workplace behaviours. Little has been explored investigating employee perceptions and their understanding of bullying from different work environment. It is importance to understand the conceptualisation of bullying in different workplace environments, and whether industry norms can potentially influence an employee's perspective and understanding of workplace bullying. This research could introduce a new aspect that would be helpful as a step to improve or create a more healthy work environment.

Chapter Three: Methodology

3.1 Research Design

The purpose of this study was to investigate how employees perceive workplace bullying in the Hospitality and Education sectors. It was reasoned that if these two groups had differences in understanding workplace bullying, then the existence of those differences might help explain patterns of prevalence in an industry and why bullying is still widespread.

This exploratory study used a qualitative research design that utilised semi-structured interviews. Part One involved participants reading and responding to three short, purpose-written scenarios. One scenario described a bullying situation, one a performance management situation and one a one-off harassment episode–this was followed by a number of open-ended prompt questions. No mention was made of workplace bullying in these materials. Part Two of the interview was focused on understanding how and by what criteria participants described workplace bullying. As part of this process participants were asked to reflect back to the three scenarios and say which, if any, described workplace bullying.

3.1.1 What are scenarios?

Scenarios are a set of potential occurrences that can be used to help an individual explore and comment on how a situation makes them feel and what the situation may mean (Ducot & Lubben, 1980). Their value lies in representing a hypothetical situation that can stimulate reflection for an individual (Spalding & Phillips, 2007). Researchers, who have explored bullying using scenarios, view it as a valuable tool as it creates a great focal point for talking about the topic of interest (Katrinli, Atabay, Gunay & Cangarli, 2010). Barter and Renold (2000) have acknowledged that scenarios are useful for engaging with individuals,

providing a less threatening way to explore sensitive topics. The use of scenarios may provide insight into the lives, perceptions and attitudes of individuals.

3.1.2 Why this research design?

As this is an exploratory study, the choice to develop the scenarios and use them in the interviews was appropriate. The scenarios acted as a tool to get individuals to think about workplace behaviour in their industry. The way scenarios are interpreted by a participant is a core feature of scenario-style research (Katrinli et al., 2010). Semi-structured interviews are a flexible way of interviewing participants. Using open-ended questions allows the participants to use their own words for responses rather than pre-determined ones. Therefore, the method could provide explanatory responses that are meaningful to the participants, as well as unanticipated by the researcher. Using this method also gives the investigator flexibility to encourage participants to elaborate their responses as well as engage with them according to their individual personalities and styles (Ulin, Robinson, & Tolley, 2004). Therefore, this research design was considered an appropriate method to gather data from employees in different workplace settings, about their perceptions of what behaviours they considered normal or not (Cowie et al., 2002).

3.1.3 Samples.

3.1.3.1 Recruitment.

To meet the aim of the study, posters, social media and snowball sampling were used to seek and recruit suitable participants. (Refer to Appendix A). All methods advertised information detailing the study, and what was needed from participants as well as inviting them to participate term 'workplace bullying' was replaced with 'workplace behaviours' for the reason that it may have spoiled the purpose of

the investigation by priming potential participants, and because workplace bullying is a sensitive topic for some individuals. Participation was voluntary. Participants were not reimbursed for their time and were drawn from a range of demographics and backgrounds in their industry. Following up referrals that participants provided was the technique that was most effective for the Education sector, whereas flyers and posters were most effective for the Hospitality industry. Eventually, the desired number of participants was achieved for each industry. Having a manageable sample size also helped keep the study narrow, and reduce potential complexities.

3.1.3.2 Participants.

Comprehensive research that examined how many interviews were enough to achieve data saturation revealed that new themes emerged infrequently after the first twelve interviews (Guest, Bunce & Johnson, 2006). Therefore, only twelve respondents were originally required from each population; however, the study had an overwhelming response of sixteen participants from each sector. This provided additional depth to the findings, as well as achieving data saturation. Participants used for this research were full-time secondary school teachers for the Education sector and full-time bar workers for the Hospitality sector. Participants from both populations needed to have been currently working in their sector for a minimum of six months as of 29 July 2013 (the date I intended to start data collection). The reason for requiring participants to have been employed in their sector for the minimum six months was that to call behaviour bullying, it must occur repeatedly (i.e. at least once a week) and for a long time (i.e. at least six months) (Einarsen et al., 2011).

3.1.3.2.1 Education sample description.

The Education sample is summarised in Table 3, following. Referring to Table 3, ten females and six males were interviewed. The average age for participants from the Education sector was over 48 years; this may indicate an older workforce. Participants mainly identified themselves as NZ/European; only two were Middle Eastern. The role of seven participants involved managerial responsibilities while the remaining nine participants identified themselves as teachers. The majority of the participants had worked for more than six years in the sector; this may indicate that many do see it a long-term career choice. The average time for participants in their current organisation was over six years, which may reaffirm that participants may see teaching as a long-term career.

Table 3

Education Sample Description

Education sample description	
Gender	Male: 6 Female 10
Age	18–23 years: 1 24–29 years: 1 30–35 years: 4 36–41 years: none 42–47 years : 3 48 years and over: 7
Ethnicity	NZ/European: 14 Middle Eastern: 2
Worked in the sector	Less than a year: 1 1–3 years: 2 3–6 years: 2 6+ Years:11
Currently worked in the organisation	Less than a year: 2 1–3 years: 2 3–6 years: 2 6+ Years 10
Job role	Teacher/managerial: 7 Teacher: 9

3.1.3.2.2 Hospitality sample description.

The Hospitality sample is summarised in Table 4, following. Referring to Table 4 (p.32), the gender imbalance was representative of the population – Bloisi and Hoel, (2008) had identified the Hospitality sector as a mainly male-dominated industry. Age could be seen as a sensitive topic to some individuals, therefore it was decided to keep ages in ranges. The ages of participants from the Hospitality sector ranged between 18–23 years. This may indicate that the industry has a young workforce. There was an equal balance of ethnicities of European and non-European participants.

Ten participants had managerial responsibilities, while the remaining six identified themselves as bar workers. The time worked in the industry by participants ranged from three to six years and most participants had been employed in their current organisation for one to three years, followed by five participants working less than year. The length of time worked in an industry may indicate that many do not see it as a career, whereas the length of current employment may indicate a higher staff turnover which is common in the industry (Bentley et al., 2009). Although the time spent in the industry and employment lengths were measured by ranges, a continuous method would have provided better accuracy.

Table 4

Hospitality Sample Description

Hospitality sample description	
Gender	Male: 11 Female 5
Age	18–23 years: 7 24–29 years: 6 30–35 years: 3 36–41 years: none 42–47 years: none 48 years and over: none
Ethnicity	NZ/European: 8 Asian: 3 Fijian: 2 Middle Eastern: 2 South African:1
Worked in the industry	Less than a year: none 1–3 years: 4 3–6 years: 7 6 years and over: 5
Currently worked in the organisation	Less than a year: 5 1–3 years: 10 3–6 years: 1 6 years and over: none
Job role	Bar work/ managerial: 10 Bar worker: 6

3.1.3.3 Approval of ethics.

To gain approval for the ethics of the study, Massey University's Code of Ethical Conduct for Research was consulted and the screening questionnaire was completed. This determined that the research was a low risk notification. Therefore, a low risk notification was completed, and then approved by the university, on 15 April 2013. (Refer to Appendix C).

3.1.3.4 Participant consent.

Before any interview took place, each participant was verbally briefed about the purpose of the research investigating how employees from different industries perceive workplace behaviours. Again, the term 'workplace bullying' was substituted with workplace behaviours. They were also told what was expected of

them (including the time the interview was likely to take), that it was voluntary, and that they could withdraw at any time. Participants were asked if the interview could be voice-recorded and told how confidentiality and anonymity would be protected. An opportunity was then given for participants to ask any questions. I requested verbal consent to participate in the interview and asked for verbal consent for the recording. This is a generally an acceptable way to get participant consent for when dealing with low risk research.

3.2 Instrument Description and Development

3.2.1 Drafting of scenarios.

The scenarios were inspired from a range of sources, such as actual legal cases and relevant literature on workplace bullying (Daniels, 2005; Einarsen et al., 2011). This was done to give the scenarios a more realistic sense. The database that was used for the legal cases was the New Zealand Legal Information Institute. The search criteria that was used was 'bully* OR bulli* AND "employment relations"'; this brought up the full determination report of each case. In the scenarios, the bullying behaviours were chosen to exemplify the definition produced by Einarsen et al., (2011, p. 22):

> A situation where a person feels they have repeatedly been on the receiving end of negative actions from one or more other people in a situation where it is difficult to defend themselves against these actions. The behaviour has to occur repeatedly and regularly (e.g., weekly) and over a period of time (e.g., about six months).These negative actions could be physical or non-physical (e.g. verbal abuse). A one-off incident would not be defined as bullying.

Originally six purpose-written scenarios were drafted, two of each portraying an action either of bullying or performance management or a one-off harassment situation. I gave these scenarios to experts to be reviewed and provide feedback on the content. Both experts had doctoral degrees with a background in organisational behaviour, and prior research experience looking at workplace bullying in New Zealand. I used the experts to check the appropriateness of the actions in each scenario. Once reviewed, the experts helped me narrow down the choices to three scenarios, which were selected based on content and clarity of actions. The experts provided feedback on what still needed to be edited or changed. It was noted that the scenarios were set in the industries being investigated. So in order to avoid bias in answers from the participant responses, the experts suggested changing them to Retail and Health, so that the setting was neutral. The final three scenarios were then submitted, and approved by the experts as appropriate to use.

Only three scenarios were selected as it was considered an appropriate number to get people thinking about different workplace behaviours. If there had been more scenarios they may have exhausted participants' interest and responses.

3.2.2 Scenarios

3.2.2.1 Scenario A (Bullying)

Scenario A

Stacey took up a job as a Personal Assistant and her boss, Richard, was admired and considered by many of his staff to be a good guy doing a great job. Yet, over the last few weeks, he always made fun of Stacey's work. Stacey thought she was doing a good job until Richard told her she was 'too efficient' and needed to 'chill out'. Stacey asked Richard what he meant by 'too efficient' and 'chill out' but these discussions always ended in Richard getting angry and yelling at Stacey. He would then walk around the office floor complaining loudly of Stacey's inefficiency and flaws. Everyone in the office trusted what a good manager Richard was and would never go against him; not a single

person ever sided with or stood up for Stacey. Stacey knew no-one would understand how she was feeling and dreaded heading to work every morning.

The content of the scenario was inspired by Daniels (2005) and Einarsen et al. (2009). Scenario A portrayed actions of a typical situation of workplace bullying (refer to workplace bullying definition on p.31) and its effects. The bully that is characterised in this scenario goes beyond just one or two instances of low-level incivility, as Richard (the boss) has repeatedly been aggressive in his communication. The actions above portrayed the boss bullying Stacey (his PA) by repeatedly picking on her, shouting and walking around complaining loudly. The scenario also shows the work environment has been made hostile for Stacey, as she feels uncomfortable with Richard's actions. In addition, Stacey feels unsupported by her colleagues and wants to leave her work, as she feels she cannot defend herself.

3.2.2.2 Scenario B (Performance Management)

Scenario B

Claire enjoyed her position as a nutritionist in a private clinic but during the week her meetings with patients would go on for hours. Claire did not see a problem with that but her lack of time management skills caused her to work longer hours (often late into the evening) and caused delays in other patients' appointment times. Paula, her direct manager, often came in to cease meetings or to grumble about her long work hours in evening. Claire told Paula 'it is none of your business how many hours I've worked and it was not your place to interrupt meetings with patients.' In her defence, Paula replied 'It is my responsibility under The Health and Safety Act 1992 to ensure that you aren't burning yourself out at work, especially when meetings with your patients go past the clinic's closing time for the day.' Claire feels that Paula is picking on her by applying standards that are not applied to other staff members.

The actions described above were inspired by a case finding from the Employment Law Database which was dismissed as not workplace bullying, (Inglis v Vice-Chancellor of Massey University, 2010). A few changes to the

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original case were made, such as changing the industry and names. The original case was set in the Education sector but, as suggested by the experts, it could have caused biased responses therefore it was changed to the Health sector. The health and safety act was introduced as a regulation to further record it as a performance management issue.

3.2.2.3 Scenario C (One-off Incident)

Scenario C

Peter is a sales person and has been working at his retail job for four weeks. He came into work on his usual Thursday night shift forgetting to wear his name badge which was part of the store's policy. Tracey his manager, was having a bad day and would usually let something like this slide, instead she constantly kept throwing abusive comments at him which made him feel anxious and nervous in front of customers. Tracey continued to complain to other staff all night about how incompetent he was. Her comments really upset Peter's feelings because he had only made one innocent error but was being harassed all night. Tracey does not usually throw comments like this at him but after this incident he is dreading going back to work and is considering leaving his job.

This scenario was used to understand how participants may interpret a negative action which happened only once. According to Rayner and Hoel (1997), a manager shouting abusively at employee once is unlikely to be taken as bullying. This is because bullying needs to have a measure of frequency and be ongoing; therefore, a negative behaviour occurring once is not considered bullying (Einarsen et al., 2011). The scenario portrayed actions that are aligned with the characteristics of harassment behaviours happening only once.

3.2.3 Interview Overview

The interviews had two parts which together, on average, took about 30 minutes for participants to complete. The first part involved participants reading and responding to three purpose-written short scenarios. One scenario described a bullying situation, one a performance management situation, and one a one-off

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harassment episode. These scenarios were used as prompts to get participants thinking and talking about behaviours in the workplace. Up until this point in the interview, no mention was specifically made of workplace bullying. Part two of the interview was focused on understanding how and by what criteria participants defined workplace bullying. Participants were asked to reflect on the scenarios and indicate which of the scenarios they thought portrayed a bullying situation. After doing this participants were presented with a hard copy of an academic definition of workplace bullying to read, then asked to reflect on the scenarios again and identify which scenario fitted the definition best. An opportunity to provide reasoning for their choice was also provided.

3.2.4 Pilot interviews.

Six pilot interviews were conducted, using individuals of different reading abilities and backgrounds to check the clarity of the scenarios and screen out any issues with the interview procedure. I needed to ensure that the sentences in the scenarios were simple and easy to understand for those who had English as a second language or had weaker reading abilities. This was important step to ensure that the participants were able to read and understand clearly what the scenarios were portraying. In addition, I conducted pilot interviews to test the method and check if any issues arose with the procedure, before my official data collection started.

Originally, in Part One in the interview, once participants had read the scenario questions, they were asked to rank the actions of each character on a 5-Likert scale according to the appropriateness of their workplace behaviour. But the decision to use a 5-Likert scale was ruled out after three pilot interviews because it did not gather rich data nor engage the participant in thinking about behaviours.

Further, it created an awkward break in the interview. So instead of having 5-Likert scale questions, prompt questions for the scenarios were introduced. Another three pilot interviews were conducted after this change. This showed an improvement in the flow of the interview and gave more room for the participants to express their opinions.

For the second part of the interview, participants were originally asked to define workplace bullying. I decided not to use the term *definition* as participants in my pilot interview found it intimidating and had difficulty expressing themselves. So instead of asking for a definition, they were asked for a description of workplace bullying.

3.3 Procedure

After gaining approval for the ethics in the study from the Ethics Committee at Massey University, the process of finding appropriate participants took place. Potential participants were sought by advertising through pamphlets at various bars around Auckland (for the bar workers) and at schools around Auckland (for the secondary school teachers). Additional participants were contacted via email (some schools had agreed to promote the study and ask for participants in their staffrooms). People who expressed interest (either by email or physically) were provided with information detailing the purpose of the study, describing the criteria participants needed to meet, and what was required from them. They were then invited to participate in the study.

To protect the anonymity of the respondents, interviews were not held at the workplace but at a location convenient to the participant such as the interview room of a public library, cafes or via video conferences. Interviews were scheduled at the convenience of the participants and took place over the course of

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three weeks. All participants were interviewed separately by myself, and were able to speak freely within the context of the interview structure. I took the following to each interview: an information sheet (Appendix B), an interview schedule sheet (Appendix D), the three scenarios (each printed separately), the academic bullying definition used for this study (printed separately) (refer to p.2 for definition), a voice recorder and some plain paper.

At the beginning of each interview the participant was provided with a hardcopy of an information sheet to read about the purpose of the study and its objective. It emphasised that data gathered from the participant would remain confidential, and that there would be no personal, identifiable information disclosed. The participant was then asked if they had any questions and would agree to take part of the study. The participant provided verbal consent at this point. I then wrote down a unique identification number that belonged to the participants on my interview schedule sheet. This would consist of Education2xx, or Hospitality1xx, with 'xx' being replaced with the participant's number in the order in which they were interviewed.

I then proceeded to ask the participant for permission to record the interview and explained to each participant that it was for transcription purposes. If a participant consented to be recorded, I turned on the voice recorder and took note of the voice record file by writing it under their participant's identification number on the interview sheet. If the participant declined, I prepared to take thorough notes of the interview. Having identification numbers helped link participants to voice recording files and their population sample (i.e. Hospitality or Education).

Part One of the interview involved participants reading the three short, purpose-written scenarios. Each participant was given a hardcopy of a scenario, one at a

time, to read by themselves. The order of the scenarios were counterbalanced and recorded on the interview sheet. Counterbalancing is administering the scenarios in different sequences (Cozby, 2009). Having the scenario counterbalanced helped to control order effects in a repeated measure design (Cozby, 2009). After the participant indicated they had finished reading the scenario, they were asked a few prompt questions to get them thinking about workplace behaviours. The prompt questions were broad and asked participants to retell what they thought was happening in the scenario. Questions relating to their responses and thoughts on the characters' management, behaviour and communication were asked too. This exact procedure was repeated for the other two scenarios including similar prompt questions. Up until this point in the interview, no mention of the term workplace bullying was made. The objective was to gain an understanding of how the participants identified, labelled and described the actions and behaviours in each scenario. This was used as a warm-up to the topic before asking participants specific questions about workplace bullying.

Part Two of the interview focused on explaining and understanding what were perceived as actions of workplace bullying by the participants. The first question gave an opportunity for the participant to explain workplace bullying in their own words, reflecting on the industry they were in, and giving general examples. Using their understanding of workplace bullying, the participant was asked to reflect back on each scenario and indicate which ones they thought were situations of workplace bullying. Participants were given the opportunity to explain their answers as to why they labelled certain actions workplace bullying over others. I took note on the interview sheet by circling A or B or C for the scenarios they thought were workplace bullying.

After doing this, I presented a hardcopy of an academic definition of workplace bullying for the participant to read. Once they had read it and understood the characteristics of workplace bullying I asked them again to reflect back on the scenarios and point out (if any) scenarios that matched this definition. Once the participant had seen the academic definition, I proceeded to ask if they would change their answer from their earlier response. I took note on the interview sheet – by circling A or B or C – which scenarios were still considered workplace bullying, once they had read the definition. An opportunity was provided at this point for the participant to justify or present reasons for their earlier decisions on the scenarios and discuss the academic definition.

Following this, I indicated that the main part of the interview was over and that I needed them to fill out some general demographic information (attached to the interview schedule sheet). In concluding the interview, participants were asked if there were any other points they would like to raise. This allowed the participants to add any commentary or turn the interview in any direction they wished; it was a good way to end the interview and give participants a sense of control. I chose to stop the voice recorder at this point and the participant was thanked for participating and reminded of how they could contact me if they had any questions.

3.4 Data Analysis

Firstly, all participants' responses that were recorded were transcribed. I used an application (called Express Scribe) to help organise my recordings and slow the pace of the recorded conversation making it easier to type up. All interviews were typed up separately on Microsoft Word which yielded 225 pages of data. Having the transcriptions typed made it easier to upload and analyse, and I chose to

organise my data using computer software, Nvivo (Burnard, Gill, Stewart, Treasure & Chadwick , 2008). Nvivo allowed me to annotate, retrieve, locate words, phrases and segments of data, and to extract quotes. This was very useful when trying to identify common themes and patterns in perception across both populations..

Given that the study is exploratory in nature, an inductive approach and a type of thematic analysis called *decomposition analysis* was used (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Using an inductive approach identifies themes or categories which are strongly linked to the data themselves (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Thematic analysis allows flexibility in identifying, analysing and reporting patterns that emerge from the data, and using decomposition analysis prevents these patterns from being dedicated to any pre-existing theoretical framework (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Burnard et al., 2008). The process of coding the data without trying to fit it into a pre-existing coding frame or the researcher's analytic preconceptions is a key feature of this approach (Braun & Clarke, 2006). This method helps organise and describe the data in rich detail (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Burnard et al., 2008). Therefore, this method was useful in the interpretation of the interview transcripts, as it allowed themes and categories to emerge from the data.

3.4.1 Approach.

The first stage of analysis was to group participants according to their industry. Once this was done, each industry was separately analysed but using the same procedure. Participant's demographics were coded. If participants indicated they had managerial responsibilities – e.g. Head of Media Department, or Bar Manager – these participants were placed in the appropriate category of either 'Teacher with managerial responsibilities' or 'Bar worker with managerial responsibilities'.

All other participants who did not indicate that their role involved managerial responsibilities were placed in the appropriate category of either teacher or bar worker.

Following this, the data from each transcript were separated into the relevant interview sections of either 'Part One: Scenarios' or 'Part Two: Bullying Descriptions'. Each participant's transcription was read thoroughly, and then the participant's whole response was grouped into the appropriate interview sections.

For instance, Table 5 (p.44), shows an example from the Hospitality industry where the participant response coded Hospitality105, is placed into the relevant interview section of Scenario A for Part One. The criteria applied in order for it to be grouped under Scenario A were that it stated relevant characters and behaviour that were observed specific to Scenario A. This step was repeated for each scenario in every transcription in each population set. A similar procedure was repeated for Part Two of the interview; this involved reading transcripts and removing content that related to describing bullying in a separate section for Part Two. This first stage was done to make it easier to gather raw data quotes and help get a richer picture of participants' responses relating to each section.

Table 5

Participant Response Coded and Grouped Into Relevant Question

Example of participant response was coded and grouped into relevant question
"… Richard has some feeling for Stacey and I think he is not getting his way and then sort of trying to flirt with her and Stacey is like not a good looker and Richard is giving her mixed vibes and she is not getting it and he is getting frustrated." (Hospitality105)
Scenario A
Part One
Hospitality industry
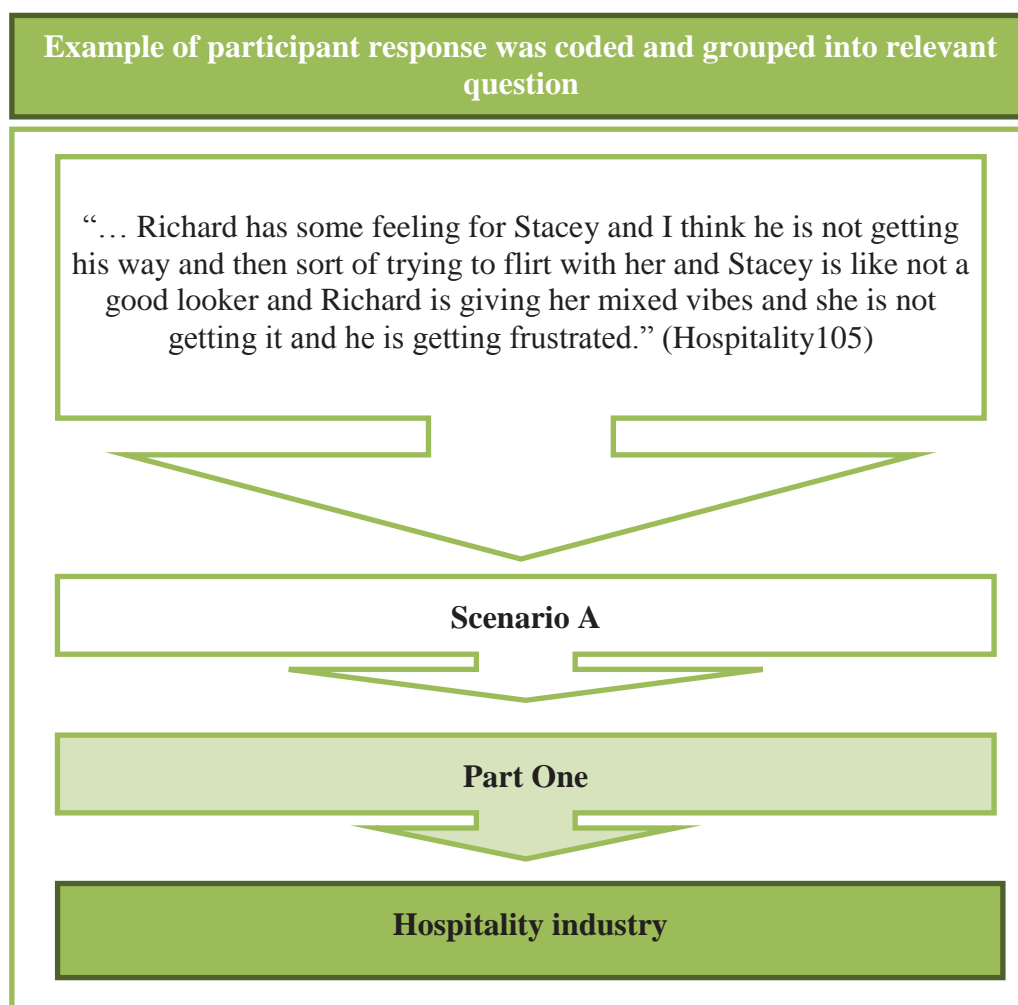
3.4.2 Generating codes and defining themes.

The second stage of analysis involved going through each transcript and annotating data by applying detailed codes that linked to passages or words. The annotated data for each code was then reviewed to identify any overlapping ideas which were later grouped together. This was done to refine and reduce the number of codes to help form themes. Referring to Table 6 (p.45), an example of how the criteria applied to code 'Power' is shown. Participants that either mentioned the word or passages to do with authority were coded as 'Power'. This then become a

subcategory of the theme 'Describing bullying' which belonged to Part Two of the interview.

Table 6

Generating codes
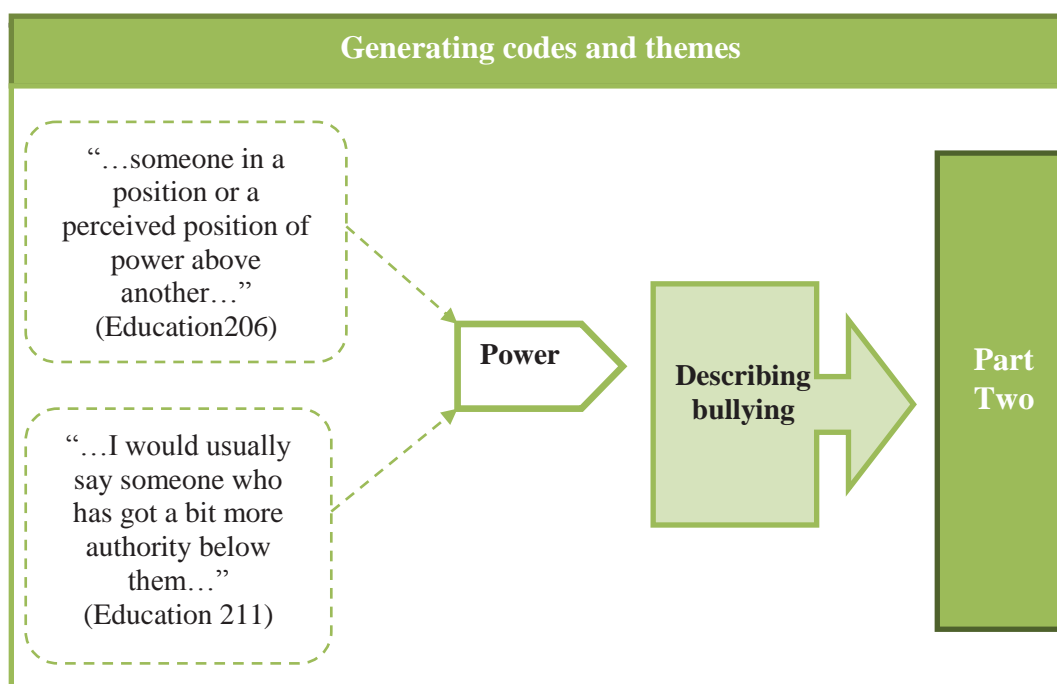
The prompt questions for the scenario were designed to look into how the participant understood the scenario, using their own descriptions and words. The questions asking participants to describe workplace bullying were to explore how participants perceived it. The intention of this research was to understand how the participant interpreted bullying in their workplace. The design of the interview helped create a connection with the participant, as through conversation I was able to gather rich meaningful data. The questions that the participants were asked were straightforward. The aim was to engage participants and encourage them to explain in their own words how they perceived the scenario. The credibility of this study was important; therefore interviews were recorded so that I could focus on the participants' responses. Common responses from participants have been quoted in the chapter presenting the findings. This was done firstly, to provide

evidence and an explanation as to how the themes were formed and, secondly, to provide assistance for other researchers to audit or follow the data, methods of analysis and decision-making to replicate these findings. Following this would also ensure verification of analysed data. Key findings will be presented separately, describing similarities and differences from each population sample.

Chapter Four: Findings

The findings presented in this study were derived from the collected responses from participants in the interviews. The analysis used an inductive coding mechanism to allow themes to emerge from the data. Although there was a vast amount of information that came through, only the key themes will be reported in this chapter.

The findings will be presented in the same order as the interview was conducted:

- Part One: Perceptions and interpretations of the scenarios
- Part Two**:** Understandings and descriptions of workplace bullying

Part One concentrates on participants' perceptions of each scenario. This will be presented by identifying similarities and then differences between Hospitality and Education, following participants' suggested actions. Part Two focuses on understandings and descriptions of workplace bullying by participants within their industry followed by the results of each scenario with the participant's response of whether it constitutes a bullying situation, before and after being prompted by a definition.

4.1 Part One: Perceptions and Interpretation of Scenarios

Part One of the interviews required participants to read a scenario and explain what they thought was going on. A few prompt questions were used about how they perceived the character's behaviour and how the situation was handled. No mention of workplace bullying was made at this point in the interview. Once all three scenarios were read and responded to, participants moved on to Part Two of the interview. Each set of scenario responses was analysed separately and focused

on identifying any similarities and differences between the Education and Hospitality groups on how they recognised bullying behaviours in their workplace.

4.1.1 Scenario A (Bullying)

4.1.1.1 Perceptions of scenario A

Twenty four participants (fifteen from Education and nine from Hospitality) were in agreement that Stacey was being targeted for something that was not work-related. Education participants commonly used words such as 'bullying', 'harassment' and 'victimised' to explain the situation, whereas Hospitality participants frequently used words such as 'teasing', 'having fun' and 'picked on' to explain the situation. There were similarities – hierarchy and power – as well as differences, which were personal motives and work environment.

Similarities.

Stacey and Richard's characters

Participants felt bad for the position that Stacey was in and acknowledged her as a 'hard worker' (Education201, Hospitality108) and that it was 'in her nature' (Hospitality105) to be efficient. Her feelings of being 'upset' and 'sad' (Hospitality104) were genuine. The Education participants described Richard as 'aggressive' (Education215) and 'irrational' (Education207) whereas the Hospitality participants labelled him a 'bad boss' (Hospitality103). Hospitality participants described Richard's actions in 'making fun' (Hospitality103) of Stacey in front of other staff as 'not professional' (Hospitality 114). Participants mentioned that as a boss he should be 'approachable' (Education204), 'supportive' (Hospitality106) and 'nice to all his staff' (Hospitality113). One Education participant mentioned that 'Richard could have handled the situation better;

otherwise he needs to be retrained in his people skills' (Education204). Education participants labelled his actions towards Stacey inappropriate, saying it was wrong to 'belittle', 'undermine' and 'pick on' staff.

Respondents mentioned it could be a breakdown in communication leaving Stacey feeling confused, helpless, unsupported, alone and unsure what is going on. This was due to Richard 'not willing to actually tell her what the issue was' (Hospitality110). The Education sample recognised that Stacey was on the receiving end of conflicting messages as to what Richard wanted from her: 'it's nothing to do with the way she is doing her job so he hasn't talked to her about there being a problem' (Education206). Participants from Hospitality agreed, and saw there was no proper discussion or an occasion where he was 'actually telling her what he means' (Hospitality111).

Hierarchy and power

Participants identified power differences between Richard (the boss) and Stacey (the assistant). Education respondents mentioned 'he has all the power and she has no power' (Education211) and 'he was only considered a good boss if you were working at equal capacity not sort of assistant capacity' (Education206). Furthermore, Hospitality respondents commented 'that he is the boss; he can get away with belittling her because in the end, he is in charge' (Hospitality108) and 'she can't really do anything to stop it after all he has a higher status than her' (Hospitality111). Hospitality participants frequently reasoned it was very 'difficult to talk back to the boss' (Hospitality109).

His behaviour was deemed inappropriate by participants especially for someone who is in a leadership position where he needed to be a role model and supportive. Common responses that referred to this were 'Richard just wanted to show off

that "Hey I am in charge!"' (Hospitality105) , 'he is using his position to continually pick on staff and undermine their abilities' (Hospitality103) when 'he needed to show support for his team' (Education202). Nineteen participants (eleven from Education and eight from Hospitality) mentioned Richard feeling threatened by Stacey as she was too good at what she did, which may have made him look lazy. Nine participants from the Education group suggested they would tolerate it either by ignoring it, moving forward or quitting,

Differences

Personal motives

Education participants saw Stacey as the target for something else Richard was dealing with, such as personal problems at home that were being brought to work. Education participants commented, 'Richard has something going on outside of work' (Education207) or had 'other issues going on at home' (Education210) and 'she is being persecuted for something that is his problem' (Education216).

An unexpected finding was the Hospitality group suggestion that the actions between Richard and Stacey were flirtatious. One of Hospitality responses was 'Richard was confused how to catch her attention in a workplace so this was one way of getting her attention' (Hospitality116), and another Hospitality respondent stated, 'Richard was having some mixed emotions about Stacey and did not understand how to go about his emotions ... yea he obviously has a crush on her' (Hospitality105).

Work environment

The term 'bullying' was used directly by eight Education participants when describing this scenario, even before prompted by the definition; however, there

was no mention of the term by Hospitality participants. Education respondents frequently mentioned that Richard was creating a hostile work environment for Stacey, even more so since her colleagues were not supporting her. Six Education participants made a firm point that staff who usually side with the boss are reassured they have a job the next day. Frequent comments like 'he probably allows his colleagues that continue to stand up with him get away with murder' (Education213) illustrated this view. Hospitality participants had a different view and felt that Richard wanted to create 'a friendlier atmosphere but was going about it the wrong way as he sees work should be easy going and not serious' (Hospitality112).

Suggested actions

Hospitality respondents put it down to Richard being a bad boss and that the 'last thing a manager does is attack the people who are working for [them]' (Hospitality114) and therefore suggested 'Richard and Stacey needed to sit down and talk' (Hospitality102) about it in a 'calm manner in private' (Hospitality113). Twelve Education respondents were in agreement that Stacey should stand up for herself by 'actually going up to him and asking him to elaborate what the issue is' (Education205) and 'confronting the bully' (Education216). If this did not work respondents from the Education sample mentioned 'she needs to speak to HR and get someone onsite' (Education206) and 'seek some external advice or some sort of advocate such as a harassment officer' (Education214, Education204). Many of the Education participants focused on resolving the issue using a third party (union, legal advisor, mediator). If no legal action could be taken, or third party could not help by intervening in the situation, twelve participants (four from Hospitality and eight from Education) suggested, 'Stacey should just quit the job'.

Hospitality participants seemed to tolerate the behaviour for longer, as ten participants mentioned Stacey should 'avoid' or 'ignore him'. Respondents also mentioned that if those attempts failed, they would be left with no choice but to tell Stacey to quit their job. No Hospitality participants suggested a third party intervention.

Education participants concentrated on the issues to be resolved by either third party intervention or by talking to a higher power, as they believed that would be the appropriate influence to mediate the issue, whereas Hospitality participants focused their efforts on helping the employee (Stacey) cope, and if she could not handle the environment they would advise her to leave the workplace.

4.1.2 Scenario B (Performance Management).

4.1.1.2 Perceptions of scenario B

Participants were in an agreement that the scenario encompassed some sort of conflict which was work-related, that was not viewed as serious and was easy to solve. Education participants frequently concentrated on 'Paula wanting to keep in line with the rules and move in a right order in her management' (Education201). On the other hand Hospitality participants gave views on both sides of the situation, but favoured Paula's argument more: 'I have to agree with Paula, again she (Claire) is burning herself out … and she took a reasonable approach and explained it to Claire what she was doing to herself too' (Hospitality102). There were many similar perceptions on the scenario, yet differences arose with respect to the degree of acceptance of Paula and references to the Health and Safety regulation.

The Claire and Paula Characters

Twenty-five respondents (16 Hospitality and 13 Education) did not think Claire was being picked on, nor the target of any sort of harassment and that, in fact, it was work related. Claire's actions were causing delays to other appointments which 'would be a problem for the clinic because they are obviously not turning over enough of their patients in the one hour' (Education203). Common responses such as 'Paula's looking out for her' (Education209) and 'at the end of the day Paula is looking out for the best interest of her staff members,' (Hospitality109) revealed an agreement that as manager, Paula's duty was to ensure her staff were being looked after. Eight Education respondents thought Paula barging into appointments was rather 'inappropriate' (Education212) saying there 'could be a better approach' (Education214). However, many of the Education participants justified Paula's actions saying 'it needed to be done as patients are waiting for their appointments' (Education209, Edcuation210). Hospitality participants stated that they 'don't think Claire should tell her manager, it's none of her business' (Hospitality110) and were shocked and unimpressed with Claire's 'rude response' to Paula.

Lacked time management

Respondents identified Claire's terrible time management skills as the main issue here. They agreed that it was necessary for Paula to speak to Claire because 'she isn't managing her time effectively' (Hospitality107) and 'time is money' (Education212). Other respondents said she was 'taking too long with clients' (Hospitality116) and suggested that was because Claire was 'not able to wrap up [the] appointment' (Education203) or was 'getting too involved with the client'

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(Hospitality108). Education participants were more concerned about her induction process such as 'did she have the proper training for the job' (Education202) as 'Claire was being a bit too sensitive here' (Education211). This was also reflected by the Hospitality participants who suggested that Claire was taking this a bit too personally, as she is at fault for letting her appointment times run over time.

Differences.

Health and Safety Act.

A recurring response was about the Health and Safety Act, and this from all respondents. It was commonly agreed by respondents that 'Paula using the act as [a] legal document to support her actions' (Education204) was a good way to justify why she was addressing the issue with Claire. As it was seen, 'she was taking her legal responsibility here as an employer' (Hospitality115). Education participants were questioning to know what the work environment was like, and felt it had a strong influence here. One participant suggested that 'policies or a guideline … should be made visible so everyone is reminded' (Education202). Although respondents from the Education sample were comfortable with the reference to policies and a legal document, responses from Hospitality participants triggered a sense of discomfort or unease about these being used in a work environment. Hospitality participants mentioned her approach was 'far too formal' and she 'needed to put in a bit of a personal touch not to just say it is my job or the law' (Hospitality101).

Suggested actions.

Respondents suggested 'some mechanism for professional development,' (Education203). Any such mechanism should be able to 'give strategies to manage her time a bit better' (Education211) or she could be sent 'on a time

management course' (Hospitality105). Participants focused on how Paula had approached Claire, suggesting that Paula could have 'approached Claire differently' (Education214) such as in 'a closed contained environment' (Education210) or 'arrange[d] a meeting outside' (Hospitality111). Education participants agreed that Paula should call a meeting in her office with Claire and discuss the issue in a civil manner. Hospitality respondents were more concerned that Paula was being too formal. Some suggested 'giving a bit of personal thinking as well, not [just] saying 'it's her job' (Hospitality104).

4.1.3 Scenario C (One-off incident)

4.1.1.3 Perceptions of scenario C

All participants acknowledged that Tracey's actions were inappropriate and that she had exaggerated the situation. Education participants used words such as 'inappropriate', 'harassed' and 'overreacting' to describe the situation. Hospitality respondents used words such as 'uncomfortable', 'unsupportive' and 'harden up, Peter' to explain the situation, stating that 'he probably needs get over it a bit because it does happen' (Hospitality114) whereas people in the Education sample frequently responded by saying, 'I thought this was relatively minor, and I thought they easily could have fixed it' (Education203). Both groups of participants were concerned about the nature of the work environment, Tracey bringing personal problems into the workplace, and being an unsupportive team leader.

Similarities.

Tracey and Peter's characters

Participants agreed that Tracey did not handle the situation properly and put it down to bad management skills. One response was, 'as a boss she shouldn't be

complaining about one staff member to other staff members' (Hospitality106). Other responses were 'she is not much of a manager' (Education212) and 'how would she feel if someone did something like that to her' (Hospitality113). Participants recognised that 'belittling' Peter was inappropriate and maybe out of character for Tracey. Peter was frequently described by both groups as 'poor guy' because he is being 'given grief over something minor' (Education209). Respondents could understand him wanting to leave work, but think he is overacting and should 'toughen up' (Education207) or 'harden up' (Hospitality111) as it has happened only once.

Personal problems

Hospitality respondents thought it was wrong for Tracey to bring her bad mood to work and 'throwing that emotion on to Peter and that shouldn't happen' (Hospitality104). Therefore 'Tracey is letting her bad day … sort of cloud her judgement' (Hospitality107). Participants agreed Peter was a victim of something Tracey was dealing with personally. 'She has brought something into the picture personally' (Education204) and the 'first little thing that went wrong has set her up for the rest of the shift' (Education213). Participants were in mutual agreement that she should not bring personal problems to work and take it out on her colleagues. Some responses about this were 'you leave your personal feeling at the door when you come to work' (Education202) and 'they are not your slaves' (Hospitality104).

    Differences.

Tracey and Peter characters

There was a small division of opinion between the respondents on Tracey and Peter's behaviour. An Education respondent mentioned 'she should be more

supportive considering he is new on the job' (Education208) whereas the Hospitality respondent thought 'it is his fourth week of job so he can't stuff up little things such as presentation is really important in Hospitality' (Hospitality101). Hospitality participants mentioned he needs to accept he has done something wrong but his telling off had a bit more force due to Tracey's 'bad day'.

Work environment

Education respondents saw it was inappropriate to go around publicly announcing negative comments to other colleagues about him: 'quite not professional' (Education214), 'no it's not acceptable at all' (Education213). Only Education participants mentioned the work environment was made hostile for Peter and identifying that as 'not good if other staff are witnessing everything that was happening' (Education214), whereas Hospitality respondents saw it as just another thing that happens in the workplace: 'happens all the time' (Hospitality104), especially getting 'shouted at and called names' (Hospitality106).

   Suggested action.

Education participants were more concerned about whether this is a pattern in her behaviour, suggesting that the situation 'should be kept on file in the case of its reoccurring' (Education203). Again, this indicates their ease with the use of formal procedures. Hospitality participants advised Peter to just be quiet, accept it and move on, as it will fade away by tomorrow. Surprisingly, some of the Hospitality participants suggested addressing this issue with higher management, whereas Education respondents commented that Tracey needed to 'sit down and talk to Peter' (Education216) about his mistake by making it 'explicit and obvious

that he needs to wear his name badge' (Education202). Participants also mentioned if that did not work and he was still being given a hard time then he should quit.

4.2 Part Two: Describing Workplace Bullying

In Part Two of the interview participants were asked for their describing of workplace bullying. They were able to express what they considered were actions or reasons related to it. Following this, the second question in Part Two of the interview asked the participant to reflect back on the scenarios and point out anything they considered was an example of workplace bullying. Their responses were noted. Then, participants were presented with an academic definition of workplace bullying to read. After reading the definition, they were asked to reflect back again on the scenarios to see if they would still label their chosen scenario(s) as workplace bullying. This section showed there were some similarities but there were also substantial differences between both samples.

4.2.1 Describing workplace bullying.

Similarities.

Education participants commonly mentioned that bullying 'basically has got to be constant and on-going, over a long period of time, like six months or something, and the person has expressed the fact that it makes them feel uncomfortable and then it continues and it normally takes a personal nature' (Education202). Another Education respondent commented that 'bullying continues even after the target has shown they do not welcome this behaviour' (Education211). Many of the Education participants' definitions were very close to the academic definition. However, Hospitality participants initially struggled to describe bullying

behaviour or to separate it from joking. They mentioned that 'a series of small incidents that continue over time' (Hospitality116) would be considered bullying.

Power division in a workplace was also a key element mentioned by both groups. Participants observed that individuals holding authoritative positions seemed to fuel or create bullying situations. Hospitality respondents felt that bullying occurred in 'any situation that you abuse your power over someone else' (Hospitality111) and 'higher positions usually bully staff' (Hospitality103) as they 'intimidate or, in a figurative sense, stand over other employees' (Education210). One interesting finding from a Hospitality respondent referred to 'inexperienced, young or immature people who are pushed up to these positions and they don't know what to do with the power' (Hospitality106). This may cause those individuals 'to go on a power trip to just to show off they are in charge' (Hospitality105).

Differences.

Hospitality participants commonly used words like 'having fun with other colleagues', 'joking', and 'teasing' when asked to describe bullying behaviours. One Hospitality participant said 'bullying is about having fun and if you aren't having fun than that's not bullying' (Hospitality104) whereas Education participants seemed to understand the seriousness of bullying and did not take it lightly.

Frequent references to *intent* were made, for example Hospitality respondents in their description said, 'You don't necessarily know what bullying is until you get a reaction from someone. … I might say a joke that unintentionally causes offence and I wouldn't know that until I see my workmate's reaction' (Hospitality101). Other Hospitality responses struggled to separate bullying

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behaviours from teasing because 'bullying is making someone feel bad on purpose' (Hospitality113). Therefore, the intent to harm was considered an important feature of bullying within the Hospitality industry, whereas Education participants had already established that, due to the nature of bullying being ongoing, bullies' actions were harmful.

The two groups' views differed on whether bullying was a one-off incident. Hospitality participants still perceived a one-off incident (only happening that day) as bullying, whereas participants from the Education sample made it very explicit that acts of bullying needed to be ongoing and constant over a long period of time to meet the definition: 'Something that's repeated and ongoing' (Education205), 'it's got to be continuous' (Education206) and 'it's not just a one-time incident' (Education211). Education participants also mentioned that it was the likelihood of the actions happening again that was of concern.

4.2.2 Types of workplace bullying

Similarities.

Even though participants were provided with an opportunity to describe types of bullying, no participant mentioned workplace bullying taking a physical nature; instead, both groups observed it taking a psychological form. Hospitality participants considered 'It's [bullying] where everybody keeps quiet about it and [the] manager gets away with it' (Hospitality114). Comments from Education participants were, 'there would always be gossiping about her in the work room and there would always be little checks of what's wrong with her or why is she taking a day off, rumours and you know just nasty sort of stuff it's like kids' stuff' (Education212). Specific actions of bullying were described by the Education participants as 'snide comments', 'gossip', 'being rude' and 'undermining' and

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Hospitality participants saw it as 'shutting you out completely or trying to get others against you' (Hospitality114). Participants were in mutual agreement that bullying could involve social isolation, defaming the person and their knowledge, and constant undermining to make someone smaller than you.

Education participants saw continuous interference with an individual's own tasks (such as auditing work) or 'allocation of unnecessary tasks that is [*sic*] not your responsibility' (Education214) as a type of bullying act. One Education participant stated 'what I see is that resources are kept, there is no help between staff and lots of teachers withholding information' (Education215). Other Education participants also mentioned withholding information and not communicating sufficiently with those who rely on the information as a form of bullying. Often these actions 'set people up for disaster as usually that information needs to be passed along in order for everyone in the unit to do their assigned tasks' (Education215).

Differences.

Education participants not only perceived a target as a single person, but also a group of people. Education participants mentioned bullying can be happen among staff 'like between different departments or different groups of people trying to compete for the same job' (Education214). However, Hospitality participants perceived that 'people sort of band together here with others they like and if they don't really like someone, or if there was one of them that was coming off as the odd one out then they would get picked on. Yeah.' (Hospitality109).

4.2.3 Effects of bullying

Individual effects.

Both groups perceived similar negative effects of bullying for an individual. 'The person who feel[s] that they are being bullied, I would say they have symptoms like dread going to work in the morning' (Education206). Respondents explained that bullying makes the target feel 'powerless, frustrated and probably lacking in confidence' (Education208). Hospitality participants mentioned 'bullying makes your work and personal life difficult' (Hospitality106) and 'you have to agree cause there isn't anything you can do about it' (Hospitality108). Other comments were 'under pressure' (Hospitality103), 'helpless' (Hospitality104), 'isolated' (Hospitality111) and 'unsupported' (Education213). Bullying 'can have detrimental effects on your health' (Education211) and 'it can affect work performance' (Education216). The consequences of these actions can leave the target feeling humiliated as the bullying often occurred in front of colleagues. Education participants suggested that the bullied individual feels powerless, but Hospitality participants saw that 'the person may not have the right or [be] brave enough to stand up to them and say something is wrong, and because of that the unfortunate person who suffers the most is the victim in this' (Hospitality114).

Organisational effects.

Participants did not acknowledge that bullying could create more absenteeism, yet other potential negative effects on an organisation were mentioned. Bullying may cause an individual to 'avoid making new business for the organisation' (Education206), 'lose motivation for work' (Education216) or 'leave their job' (Hospitality101). Hospitality participants were more concerned that if 'bullying

was seen by customers as not a good look for business' (Hospitality114). Almost all participants agreed that bullying can cause good employees to quit a job.

4.2.4 Antecedents of workplace bullying

Individual antecedents.

Similarities.

Both groups referred to a particular personality trait such as 'quiet personalities or introverts … as easy targets' (Hospitality111) because they are not so outspoken and would not fight back. If they were bullied 'they keep it to themselves … and continue to feel devastated' (Education207). Education respondents described the bully as 'a strong extrovert personality that shakes things up a bit' (Education207). Both groups used terms such as 'not sensitive to those around them' (Education202), 'blurts out things' (Education210) in a 'very unprofessional manner' (Hospitality111) and 'rude' (Hospitality113) to describe the personality of the bully. Education group mentioned specifically that a threat to a position was another key influence which caused bullying in their industry. An Education response was, 'if you were perceived too well at your job it caused jealously or a threat to the person in charge' (Education212).

Hospitality participants considered that it was difficult to stand up to the bully 'Like if you are [a] more outgoing person than the other person, and you know that by acting a certain way the other person is just going to do what you say cause they just find it hard to stand up to you' (Hospitality111).

Differences.

Education respondents mentioned that bullying could involve personal motives, 'about the individual, and is miles away from the original situation'

(Education202), therefore bullying was not necessarily job-related. Education participants elaborated that 'it starts off as a work-related situation but it escalates to a personal attack of what the bully really thinks of the person, so in fact it is actually a personal thing pointed at them' (Education210). However, Hospitality participants perceived it being more of a personal issue that the bully is dealing with. Hospitality respondents described this as 'when they have their own personal issue and they for some reason feel like they can take it out on their staff … because somehow it boosts them up' (Hospitality108). For example, 'like a person or a manager had a bad night yesterday, comes with anger to work' (Hospitality112), and 'it's not even due to work, its due to outside circumstances that cause them to create that issue and drama at work' (Hospitality116).

Respondents in the Education sample indicated that in their sector bullying was associated primarily with personality types. However, Hospitality participants indicated that appearance was the main trigger, 'being a bit different' (Hospitality104). This referred to their physical appearance (e.g.. gender, height) or background (e.g. accent, race). According to Hospitality respondents, individual appearance would be a trigger for bullying, but it would be regarded as having fun. For example 'I know one guy – short, skinny and funny-looking – and there was a great opportunity or chance that people give him a nickname of monkey.' (Hospitality105). There were gender references made among the Education participants: 'women are the ones that usually cause the gossip or send off rumours and get involved in someone's business whereas men tend to avoid or ignore these areas' (Education215). Hospitality respondents mentioned that gender bullying was present and females were targeted the most until, only recently, policies changed that.

Social antecedents.

Similarities.

Hospitality participants recognised some social interactions in the workplace that prevented individuals from sticking up for the target. For example, 'employees who witness and feel the victims pain, won't say anything, because they are too afraid of their own position being jeopardised' (Hospitality114). Education participants identified that if you were not considered supportive of the bully and their actions, you were placed in a vulnerable position yourself. Education participants labelled groups that support the bully as 'cliques', 'little social groups' or 'suck ups' who just want to be close to a person in higher authority. Education participants described the social interactions of this group as they 'do not talk back' or 'ask questions' of the leader. One commented: 'she had got her little sicker fans who run after her because they know a couple of bottles of wine … will get them the next years whatever the class they want' (Education212). These social interactions often, if not understood or conformed to, could potentially cause a bullying situation to erupt. The Hospitality participants did not mention any specific labels for the groups: 'workplace bullying it's just segregating others which causes groups to divide' (Hospitality102).

Differences.

In the Hospitality sector, behaviours such as raising your voice or bossing others around were considered acceptable as 'they work in a fast pace environment, everyone is under pressure and needs to work quickly as a team' (Hospitality110). By contrast, the participants in the Education sample stated that this behaviour was not accepted or tolerated in their industry: 'I think shouting at people or

screaming at them or raising your voice is not appropriate instead you need to have a fair discussion' (Education202).

The participants in the Hospitality group believed that employees placed in higher positions (e.g. a manager) should be aware of the need to model appropriate behaviour. For example,

> Jokes, should not be made when other staff are around because other staff may get the wrong idea that it is acceptable which can create all the wrong behaviours, you know, and because I have a higher position, so they think it okay to go around to other staff and say it, but the other staff member may take it as bullying, so you have to be careful (Hospitality113).

The Education participants, however, did not raise this as an issue in their responses. Instead Education participants recognised to deal with difficult people in the workplace was 'trying to avoid dealing with that person at all costs' (Education206), and as a result employees end up working harder and the bully 'they don't do as much work' (Education206).

An interesting perception from a few Hospitality participants was that they perceived bullying as a result of someone who had feelings of attraction towards another employee, and bullying was a good way to flirt with a colleague or catch their attention. For example,

It is a way to give them attention, without wanting to show them that you are giving them attention, and there is only so much you are allowed to do in the workplace … you know once you make them upset … and use it as an excuse like can I take you for a drink after work to make up for it' (Hospitality116).

Organisational antecedents.

Difference.

Hospitality participants recognised their workplace interactions as informal, with a big emphasis on teasing, and having fun with other employees in the workplace. Hospitality participants distinguished their work environment as potentially more informal and causal, with a common comment being 'teasing around and calling each other names, wouldn't consider it bullying, we have that personality' (Hospitality108) or 'I like all the people and the staff here when we work … here we just have fun and all quite often' (Hospitality113). In Hospitality, 'teasing is not really bullying it's just teasing around, staff tease each other and once some customers know our staff they tease back' (Hospitality104).

Education participants indicated a formal structure in their workplace, with references to an established but small hierarchy for their school or college. An Education participant commented that 'teaching in Education, the hierarchy isn't like other places; the hierarchy here is small' (Education208). However, it potentially causes bullying as people compete for positions, to 'like getting higher responsibility, higher rewards … you need to be competitive; [it is the] kind of thing which could cause bullying' (Education214).

Participants in the Hospitality sample considered poor leadership and communication in an organisation would cause division into groups which might result in bullying. For example, 'an individual not being able to pull their weight

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for the team … and in Hospitality you need to be an all-rounder … otherwise people would be here until 2 am, because they are not communicating' (Hospitality105). They considered 'not working as a team' (Hospitality109) and an 'unsupportive team environment' (Hospitality113) could be a catalyst for bullying behaviours.

4.2.5 Interventions and initiatives.

Differences.

The availability, or lack of, intervention in each of the groups differed. One Education participant responded,

> The school does nothing about it and I wished they did as it needs to be publicised … but actually last year they did do something about it and they did get a lawyer to you know … go around a few people and see. Cause she was sending very horrible emails. And I mean horrible emails! (Education212).

While other Education respondents mentioned they were "going through learning mechanisms to try support and advise when this situation happens but some teachers were not willing to take on the advice." (Education203).

Hospitality participants did not seem to be aware of any bullying initiatives or interventions, however they did acknowledge the usefulness of previous policies that were introduced such as harassment policy and the positive influence it has had on the social interactions. Hospitality participants mentioned "there is gender bullying big time!"(Hospitality103), for example, "Boys bullying girls about

dress codes e.g. short dresses etc, girls take it seriously, and guys take it lightly as girls can't take a joke. …if you have a male and female and especially if you have a male superior and a female inferior it tends to go beyond what is good taste and good fun…. Sometimes it would obviously be borderline sexual harassment or harassment in general… then again I would say that it would be less likely now, because men are scared of any comment being misconceived as harassment so they concentrate more of their efforts on the guys" (Hospitality106). There was also reference by Hospitality participants to health and safety practices in their workplace. "I guess health and safety standards are structured in a way that promote a healthy workplace, so I guess if like I am making a staff member uncomfortable, clearly I am not promoting that"(Hospitality116). This may indicate that Hospitality participants understand the importance of promoting a healthy work environment.

4.2.6 Workplace environment

Differences.

Education participants mentioned 'bullying is very current in their industry' (Education202) and 'that you always see it' (Education212) and 'it does happen probably more than people think' (Education205). Hospitality participants said 'when it happens at work that's just really bad … because everyone has gotta come to work' (Hospitality113). However, Hospitality participants did not emphasise or strongly perceive bullying as a serious matter in their industry.

Socialisation.

Hospitality participants identified that due to social norms in the Hospitality industry new individuals are bullied more. For example, 'when newbie comes

along … they mock them for walking too slow or even their hair style; it could be all fun and how they get to know each other' (Hospitality108). Another example,

> Yea the newbies for an example, Bree … she got picked on because she is a newbie, then again everybody has been through that stage. It's a process because it's kind of like an initiation but again it could be that is workplace bullying to be honest' (Hospitality102).

Initiations were a common theme in the Hospitality participants' responses, and initiations set up by the team leader were considered an act of bullying. Some Hospitality participants recognised that although it could be bullying, it is an accepted social norm which potentially overrides whether it is fair or not. 'Our initiation, like if we leave our drinks around the bar and when it's really busy we will spike drinks with hot sauce especially if it is new person. So again that's really bullying' (Hospitality102). They defended these bullying initiations by labelling it 'fun' and 'joking around'. Initiations which included spiking a team member's drink, or mocking their colleagues on how they worked or looked, were completely acceptable. Hospitality participants mentioned that is how they got treated when they first started their role so they thought it was perfectly fine. They also said everyone goes through it and 'that's just how we do things around here' (Hospitality110).

However, in the Education sample, the socialisation process of those early in their career involved a more formal induction. Education participants mentioned that new teachers are looked after more and supported by their colleagues, teacher

mentors and external parties such as unions (Education204, Education208, Education214). They are given a lot 'more time allowances and consideration than teachers with a bit more experience' (Education204). This was an interesting finding; it could occur because 'they were not labelled yet in their career' (Education208).

Tolerance levels.

Hospitality participants mentioned 'those that came from a different industry would find it harder to adjust to Hospitality culture' (Hospitality103). They mentioned that there is 'a lot of joking, making fun and teasing around in this industry which may be considered offensive to some' (Hospitality113). Hospitality participants acknowledged that certain behaviours are more tolerated in their industry. Hospitality respondents said 'in terms of bullying attention, a reaction from the individual will always solicit more in an escalated version of that' (Hospitality106), and 'some guys know they are abusing someone, cause the individual is showing offence. But the guys think it's even funnier cause he being offended, so they keep doing it' (Hospitality104). They also made it clear that if an action was dubbed bullying, 'there was slim chance that it would stop, even if the target gave a strong reaction wanting it to stop' (Hospitality104).

4.2.7 Which scenario represents bullying?

Before bullying definition.

Scenario A

When participants were asked whether they would label Scenario A as workplace bullying, Education participants were quick to mention that it was bullying or some form of harassment.

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I think its harassment … I am just trying to think of the harassment law, it's constant and continual and this is constant and continual harassment. He is basically forcing Stacey out of a job because she is going to decide she's not going to come to work and she shouldn't be in that position … she should organise an appraisal session but even if he is generally making fun of her, it's not appropriate to my mind … and complaining about her to other people is totally inappropriate (Education202).

Other participants from the Education sample had similar responses such as 'He kept repeating the behaviour. He is yelling, getting angry and she is obviously uncomfortable with it. He is also going around doing it so I would label that workplace bullying' (Education207). And, 'you can't directly see it (bullying) because it is pretty covert and in this scenario, but bullying is like that … so I think it is some form of bullying' (Education212).

On the other hand, respondents from the Hospitality sample really struggled to understand or pin down what was happening in the situation. Comments that reflected this were 'The boss is on a power trip trying to show her who's boss. It's not bullying' (Hospitality105), and 'That's just like unresolved something else ... Maybe personal stuff?' (Hospitality108). Only three respondents in the Hospitality sample labelled this situation as workplace bullying (refer to Table 7 p.77). Other Hospitality respondents mentioned that it happens in their industry and did not see it a big deal. Two Hospitality respondents suggested that Richard's actions in the scenario were well intended. For instance, 'He is making you work harder, perform harder. Richard's intention is putting pressure [on] for

your own benefit' (Hospitality103), and 'It's not bullying, it's more of a compliment. I can tolerate this ... it is not a problem' (Hospitality112).

Scenario B.

Education participants did not think Scenario B was workplace bullying (refer to Table 8 p.78) and suggested it may be a performance management issue. One Education response was 'I don't see it as workplace bullying; I see it as miscommunication and that a mediator could well resolve this issue' (Education202). No Hospitality respondents labelled this scenario workplace bullying (refer to Table 7); however, they struggled to label it anything else. 'If Paula does it right it won't be bullying the way she talks and tries [to] manage stuff I think' (Hospitality104). Some participants in the Hospitality sample called it 'bad communication'. People in the Education sample mentioned that 'with more information they could see if Claire was actually being picked on or not' (Education211).

Scenario C.

Participants from the Education sample had already acknowledged that a one-off incident is not considered bullying. For that reason they were resistant or reluctant to label Scenario C as bullying, as they identified the behaviour had only happened that one day. 'I see a little bit, but if it happened a bit more regularly, you know more than once, But yea she just had a bad day but yeah she should have apologised' (Education211). However, Education participants that still labelled it bullying, defended it by saying it was the 'likelihood of it reoccurring' (Education206). Almost every participant's response in Hospitality labelled this scenario as bullying (refer to Table 7). Some participants in the Hospitality sample concluded the behaviour in Scenario C represented bullying: . 'Tracey's

outright bullying Peter' (Hospitality108), and 'I think the one *with* the name badge is bullying' (Hospitality105). Hospitality participants also emphasised that the behaviour occurred 'in front of customers' (Hospitality116) and that 'it is unprofessional to show your emotions in front of customers' (Hospitality111). Other Hospitality participants who labelled this bullying, defended their responses by saying Tracey was fuelled by her personal issues and had escalated the situation over something minor.

After Reading the Definition of Bullying.

Scenario A

When both groups were presented with an academic definition, participants from the Education sample were even more convinced that Scenario A was an example of workplace bullying. Over half of the Education participants did not change their response as they had labelled the behaviour as bullying (refer to Table 8). 'It sounds like it's ongoing, so that's not one-off. So I maintain my choice of scenario A' (Education205). In contrast, the Hospitality participants were surprised when they saw the definition, as it enabled them to understand the characteristics of bullying. Some participants had known very little and only a few originally labelled Scenario A as bullying (as shown in Table 7). However, some changed their response upon reading the definition: 'Ohh! So then Scenario A would be bullying because it happens on a regular occurrence' (Hospitality110). Yet, not everyone in the Hospitality sample was convinced this was a bullying situation as the actions in the scenario were 'normal' and happens all the time in their industry.

Scenario B

When participants were presented with the academic definition and asked whether Scenario B could be labelled as workplace bullying, Education respondents did not need to change their response as the majority had identified it already as a performance management issue (refer to Table 8). 'It is not bullying; it is more like there needs to be better communication between two people' (Education214). Surprisingly, five Hospitality participants changed their response and labelled Scenario B as workplace bullying, (as shown in Table 7). Hospitality participants defended their responses by saying 'She is experiencing constant negative actions from Paula' (Hospitality104), and 'You could say it's a case of bullying because she is particularly focusing on Claire' (Hospitality112).

Scenario C

Participants in the Education sample were reluctant to change their original response of bullying to this situation. They questioned whether it was a pattern in Tracey's behaviour and restated that if this situation reoccurred, then it would be bullying. Education participants that maintained this view are shown in Table 8. Hospitality participants seemed to be very surprised that the one-off incident was not considered bullying. Hospitality responses included 'Okay, so the one-time-only thing would eliminate Scenario C' (Hospitality106), and 'I would change my answer, as it is just one-off" (Hospitality110). Only a few challenged the definition of what ongoing' meant. Hospitality participants who maintained Scenario C represented workplace bullying are shown in Table 7.

Table 7

Hospitality Response to Scenarios Before and After Reading the Academic

Definition

Participant	Before Definition of Bullying			After Definition of Bullying		
	Scenario A	*Scenario B*	*Scenario C*	*Scenario A*	*Scenario B*	*Scenario C*
101	✓		✓	✓		✓
102	✓		✓	✓		
103			✓			✓
104					✓	
105			✓		✓	
106	✓		✓	✓		
107	✓		✓	✓		✓
108			✓	✓		
109	✓			✓		
110			✓	✓		
111	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
112			✓		✓	
113	✓		✓	✓	✓	
114	✓			✓		
115	✓		✓	✓		✓
116	✓		✓	✓		

Note. A tick indicates that the scenario was defined as bullying.

Table 8

Education Response to Scenarios Before and After Reading the Academic

Definition

Participant	Before Definition of Bullying			After Definition of Bullying		
	Scenario A	*Scenario B*	*Scenario C*	*Scenario A*	*Scenario B*	*Scenario C*
201	✓			✓		
202	✓			✓		
203	✓			✓		✓
204	✓		✓	✓		
205	✓		✓	✓		
206	✓			✓		
207	✓		✓	✓		✓
208	✓		✓	✓		✓
209	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
210	✓		✓	✓		✓
211	✓			✓		
212	✓		✓	✓		
213	✓		✓	✓		✓
214	✓		✓	✓		✓
215		✓				✓
216		✓				✓

Note. A tick indicates that the scenario was defined as bullying.

Chapter Five: Discussion

Workplace bullying is a significant issue that can potentially have devastating effects on an employee's health and an organisation's productivity. Very few studies exist in New Zealand or elsewhere which have investigated employee perceptions and their understanding of workplace bullying. This study set out to investigate whether employees' perceptions and understanding of workplace bullying differed between the Education and Hospitality industry. It is argued that if these industry-based differences in understanding bullying exist, then these differences may undermine effective large-scale workplace bullying prevention strategies. In this section, the results from chapter four are analysed and discussed.

5.1 Describing Workplace Bullying

The Hospitality group struggled to describe bullying whereas the Education group widely reflected themes in their descriptions common to researcher's definitions. There is still no agreed academic definition of bullying (although many researchers have proposed one). However, researchers' definitions incorporate three themes (a) a negative effect of the behaviour on the target, (b) the act is frequent and (c) the act is persistent (Cowan, 2012; Einarsen et al., 2011; Leymann, 1996; O'Driscoll, et al., 2011; Salin, 2003; Saunders et al., 2007). This difference between the two groups is an issue, as an employee's inability, or lack of knowledge, to describe the basic elements of workplace bullying could cause a bullying situation to go unrecognised. Learning to recognise what bullying is early on, could be the first step in stopping it. Providing employees with guidelines that clearly outline the common characteristics of workplace bullying may help individuals identify and recognise a bullying situation in their workplace.

Both groups found it was impossible to describe bullying without involving the element of power. Previous studies have debated whether to include power or not in their definition (Cowan, 2012; Einarsen et al., 2011; Hoel & Salin, 2003; Salin, 2003). The Education group indicated those who have a higher position with more authority – a manager or Dean's – are more likely to target a subordinate, intimidate others, or create bullying situations. The members of the Hospitality group also perceived individuals with more authority using bullying to show others in the workplace they are boss. This may indicate that both groups equally perceived that power imbalance is a likely feature of bullying. The study by Bloisi and Hoel (2008) found that those individuals with greater power often think it is okay to manipulate and order other people around. Previous studies have also found that bosses are identified as the cause of bullying more often than not (Keashly et al., 1994; Lutgen-Sandvick & Namie, 2009). However, researchers' definitions that that do not include a power imbalance argue that bullying can happen among employees of equal positional power (Cortina, Magley, Williams, & Langhout, 2001, Keashly & Neuman, 2004; Schat et al ., 2006). Despite the ongoing debate, this study recognised power imbalance as an important characteristic of describing bullying as perceived by both groups, with the focus on higher authority as the source of bullying.

'Intent to harm' was a key element in describing a bullying situation for the Hospitality group whereas the Education group largely perceived intent as unrelated. It is also a matter of debate among researchers whether to include intent or not in the definition of bullying (Einarsen et al., 2011; Hoel et al., 1999). Researchers that resist 'intent' in their definition perceive the nature of bullying being frequent and ongoing, therefore harm has already been done and intent is

largely irrelevant (Einarsen et al., 2011; Hoel et al., 1999 ; Zapf & Einarsen, 2005). Researchers that *do* include intent in their definitions, perceive the bully purposely intending to cause harm (Bjorkqvist et al., 1994; Olweus, 2003). The differences in employees' understanding of intent may influence whether an incident is recognised as bullying or not. For instance, the members of the Hospitality group agreed bullying would not be recognised as bullying if a colleague's action was not intended to harm. Therefore, if there was no intention to cause harm, there was no bullying. The possibility of an employee's own definition – which includes intent – conflicting with the definition supplied by the organisation may confuse an individual trying to identify bullying (Saunders et al., 2007). Including intent in the definition of bullying may also make bullying distinguishable from other forms of negative acts for some individuals. This could be particularly useful for a workplace that depended heavily on workplace humour as it may differentiate bullying from one-off incidents of thoughtlessness or the misperception of innocent acts (Einarsen et al., 2011; Keashly & Jagatic, 2003).

5.2 Types of Workplace Bullying

Previous research has categorised the reasons for bullying into five main groups: threats to professional status, threats to personal standing, isolation, overwork and destabilisation (Einarsen et al., 1994; Rayner & Hoel, 1997). Many of the types of bullying behaviours the Hospitality and Education groups recognised had their origin in one or other of these reasons (Refer to Table 1, p.12). Only the Education group recognised bullying could be perpetrated by groups. The fact that the Hospitality group did not understand that groups could bully is an important finding. Previous research has suggested it is a type of bullying that is more likely to occur. For example, the study by Zapf (1999) identified that bullying by one

person was rarer and it was more common for a bullying situation to have involved four or more bullies. Studies have indicated that, due to the frequency and persistence of bullying, it becomes more serious and involves more individuals (Einarsen & Skogstad, 1996; Zapf & Gross, 2001). The Zapf (1999) study also showed a positive correlation between the number of bullies and the duration of the bullying. It is important for all organisations to clearly recognise all the different forms of bullying, including bullying by groups. Then they can help employees be aware of all the different forms of bullying which would otherwise go unrecognised.

5.3 Effects of Workplace Bullying

5.3.1 Individual.

The negative effects of bullying on an individual that the participants identified reflected what has been discovered in earlier studies, i.e. that the bullied individual would withdraw and experience devastating consequences in their work and in their personal life (Bloisi & Hoel, 2008; O'Driscoll, et al., 2011; Rayner & Hoel, 1997). It is encouraging to observe that both groups gave almost identical responses when it came to the individual effects of bullying, as it shows that individuals understand the harm bullying may cause. However, the results did not indicate whether employees understood the long-term effects of bullying on an individual. Previous studies which investigated targets described the long-term effects of bullying in terms of psychological symptoms – inability to concentrate, depressive symptoms, mood swings or anxiety – as well as psychosomatic symptoms such as respiratory difficulties, hypertension or cardiac complaints (Hallberg & Strandmark, 2006; Hogh, Mikkelson & Hansen, 2011; Zapf et al., 1996). Employees need to be aware of the long-term effects of bullying as it

increases the understanding of how serious bullying can be in the workplace and the need to address it.

5.3.2 Organisational.

Both groups perceived similar organisational effects of bullying that have been highlighted by previous studies such as reduced job satisfaction, lower productivity and decreased work motivation (Hoel et al., 2011; Kivimaki et al., 2000 Quine, 1999;). Previous research has also found a strong relationship between bullying and absenteeism (Kivimaki et al., 2000). However, neither of the groups in this study made a direct mention of absenteeism or perceived it as a consequence of bullying. This could be because people typically report more specific effects of bullying as opposed to general effects such as absenteeism,(Johns, 1994). An employee absenteeism is a deliberate absence from work, and unscheduled absenteeism can be unpredictable and unexpected therefore can present particular problems for an organisation and its normal operations (Seago, 1996). Although, organisations allow employees to miss a certain number of workdays each year, organisations should be aware of any excessive absences as it may suggest the presence of bullying in an organisation.

5.4 Antecedents of Workplace Bullying

5.4.1 Individual antecedents.

Only the characteristics of the bully were perceived as similar by each group, whereas the perception of differences was based on the motives of the bully. Participants of both groups described the bully as an individual who is often insensitive to those around them, very rude, unprofessional and loud. Research has shown this is a common stereotype of a bully: an aggressive person with the

need to dominate socially and who lacks empathy for others (Olweus, 2003; Parkins et al., 2006).

The motives of a bully were perceived differently by the two groups. The Hospitality group shared two views: firstly, that bullying often happened when an individual is experiencing personal issues and they find it acceptable for them take out their frustration on other employees. Previous research has mentioned that bullying could be due to personal problems in the bully's life, and that may cause them difficulty in dealing with frustration and stress at work (Cowie et al., 2002).

Secondly, the Hospitality group believed bullying could be deliberately employed as way of applying pressure on an employee to work harder for their own benefit. Previous research has shown that bullying was considered as a means of increasing productivity (Keashly & Jagtic,2011). This was corroborated by Bodsky (1976, p. 145) who stated that 'workers are most productive when subjected to the goad or fear of harassment.' Therefore bullying could be perceived by management as practical, and perhaps essential, to achieve productivity '(Keashly & Jagtic, 2011). Although a bully may be conscious of their actions, they can also be unaware they are causing harm and that their actions may have been motivated by wanting to achieve a particular work-related goal (Bloisi & Hoel, 2008). Neither of these two views was shared by the Education group.

The Education group commonly perceived bullying attacks to occur when the bully felt their position was threatened or challenged. Previous studies have shown bullies can be motivated by individuals who pose a threat to them, like an overachiever (Baillien et al., 2009; Beswick et al., 2006; Parkins et al., 2006).

Personality and individual differences were perceived by both groups to play a likely role in bullying but some differences emerged concerning the specific descriptions of targets. Research findings have shown that industries should be careful not to dismiss possible bullying in their workplace by labelling it as 'personality differences'. The Education group considered that a weaker personality or a drive to overachieve can provoke bullying. Previous studies have recognised that weaker personality profiles were more likely to be affected by bullying as these individual are less assertive (Baillien et al., 2009; Beswick et al., 2006; Parkins et al., 2006 ; Vartia, 1996).

In contrast, the Hospitality group revealed that certain personalities amongst targets learned to cope better with bullying than others. Individuals in the workplace who seem to take everything seriously, or are humourless were percieved to be more vulnerable to these acts (Einarsen, 1997; Thylefors, 1987). This could be because workplace humour is heavily present in Hospitality. However, such humour could potentially turn sour and offend an employee. However, it is the responsibility of management to ensure the prevention and management of such problems (Zapf & Einarsen, 2011). A possible way to deal with this is effective coping strategies for dealing with these behaviours could be provided for all their employees.

5.4.2 Social antecedents.

Negative social norms in the Hospitality industry may promote negative behaviours in interactions. For instance, raising your voice, shouting and bossing others around were acceptable and normal elements within the Hospitality industry. The acceptance of such negative norms may shape and reinforce aggression in the workplace (Neuman & Baron, 2011). Further, frequently

witnessing and observing these social norms of bullying in a workplace could turn it into an accepted and tolerated behaviour, known as a 'learned behaviour' (Hoel et al., 2011; Lewis, 2003). Not being able to tolerate these behaviours could be perceived as weakness, therefore toughness is emphasised to cope with a situation (Keashly & Jagatic, 2011; Neuman & Baron, 2011).

Bullying could be seen as a response to an individual who is unable to conform to social norms. The Hospitality group perceived bullying as a form of having fun in the workplace. Work envrionments that rely heavily on workplace humour, are characterised by jokes or having fun, may foster bullying. (Salin & Hoel, 2011). However, if a joke turns sour for the target, the bullying would still continue because it is just 'having fun'. Therefore the target's inability to cope with these social norms could cause them to become more vulnerable to these acts (Neuman & Baron, 2011). Being perceived as weak and not obeying social norms can force an individual into the role of being devalued and subjected to targeting (Brown, 1997; Tajfel & Turner, 1979). By comparison the Education group stated that these behaviours would not be tolerated in their industry, as there would be mechanisms to remind employees of appropriate professional behaviour.

The Education group considered that speaking up against bullying or not supporting the bully could place them in a vulnerable position. This finding was in accord with the results of Neumann and Baron (2011) whose study found that the bully could have influence over people's employment and, by supporting the bully one's own interests would be protected. The Education group observed that being part of social groups in the workplace which supported the bully would be rewarded. Failure to understand or respect these norms could cause an individual to miss out on opportunities for promotion and career advancement. Furthermore

it could undermine solidity between workers (Jennifer, Cowie, & Ananiadou, 2003). Research has shown that individuals may support a bully because of external threats to their job arising from fluctuating market pressures, a greater threat of redundancy and the impact of intense competition (Hoel & Beale, 2011)

Social norms may promote negative behaviours and interactions as they could influence the ability to recognise bullying. Not being able to conform to these norms may have devastating results for the individual and the failure to provide appropriate mechanisms to cope with bullying may alter their professional view of what is acceptable workplace behaviour.

5.4.3 Organisational antecedents.

The members of the Hospitality group viewed their work environment as casual and informal. Previous research has shown that informality pervades some organisations and eventually encourages employees to behave towards one another in a disrespectful manner (Keashly & Jagatic, 2011). Other studies have further demonstrated that informality may encourage disrespectful behaviour and that may fosters bullying in an environment due to unclear outlines of appropriate behaviour (Andersson & Pearson, 1999; Beswick et al., 2006; Rayner, 1999). Other studies have recognised that many individuals deny that bullying is even a problem because the behaviours may not fall under any policies and, therefore, they accept and normalise the negative behaviour in their workplace (Bentley et al., 2009; Namie & Namie, 2009; Rayner & Keashly, 2005). This may pose a particular problem for those newly entering the Hospitality industry if they are unable to conform to such behaviour. Due to increasing informality and casual behaviour in organisations it may be appropriate to introduce initiatives to help

employees distinguish what constitutes appropriate and professional interpersonal behaviour.

In contrast, the Education group commonly made references to a formal hierarchy and observed that bullying could occur in order to establish power over their colleagues. They thought that the limited numbers of positions of authority available caused bullying to develop among teachers as they competed for these positions. This could be due to bullying being used by an individual as a political strategy to enhance their position. This dynamic is especially present within organisations with a strict focus on power relations and high internal competition (O'Moore et al., 1998; Vartia, 1996).

The Hospitality group understood that poor management created poor cooperation causing teams to divide and individuals to be singled out to bully. Previous studies have shown these elements cause low morale and a negative social climate (Baillien et al., 2009; Keashly & Jagatic, 2003). The members of the Education group thought that available initiatives were in need of further enforcement. Previous research has suggested that a lack of training for people in leadership positions influences whether bullying initiatives are effective or not (Bentley et al., 2009). Training for those in leadership positions needs to be reinforced to ensure they model appropriate behaviour, establish mechanisms to stop bullying, and provide appropriate initiatives to enable individuals to cope with bullying.

5.5 Interventions

The members of the Hospitality group considered their industry to have little in the way of policies or guidelines. Appropriate support from management for an employee who was being bullied was close to none. Instead bullied individuals

commonly dealt with bullying through avoidance or acceptance. Earlier studies have shown that targets require management support and that management needs to intervene when bullying occurs (Djurkovic et al., 2005; Mikklesen, 2004). Targets of bullying are more likely to employ avoidance behaviours than to be assertive or seek formal help (Djurkovic et al., 2005). Surprisingly, the managers in the Hospitality group recognised the importance of promoting a healthy work environment. Workplaces that have visible guidelines or policies about health and safety perceived it as a good reminder for all staff to be aware of appropriate workplace behaviours (Bentley et al., 2009).

In contrast, the members of the Education group were more proficient in understanding how to deal with bullying and were more comfortable about using a third party to mediate the issue, but they considered that management needed to be more supportive of established bullying initiatives. The Education group reported bullying as lengthy process and felt further victimised or annoyed when no progress was made by management. Previous studies which looked at situations where victims sought help also claimed that it can cause further victimisation, and that it is often those management positions who do not want to challenge bullying due to lack of training (Bentley et al., 2009; McCarthy & Barker, 2000). Although an organisation can have written policy around the issue of bullying, it can be a common mistake not to promote the policy effectively; the organisation thereby fails to confirm the seriousness of the issue (Rayner & Lewis 2011).

5.6 Workplace Environment

5.6.1 Hospitality industry..

The members of the Hospitality group observed that newcomers get picked on for sole reason that they are new in the workplace. Workplace initiations that have been set up solely to target a newcomer were perceived as bullying. This finding is consistent with previous research that indicates initiations and rituals are a type of bullying (Hoel & Salin, 2003; Salin, 2003) Workplace initiations are used as a rite of passage; therefore newcomers are expected to tolerate it and accept it. If individuals complain about these behaviours, it would be seen as an act of disloyalty or weakness (Hoel & Salin, 2003; Salin, 2003). This underlines the potential strength and impact of the socialisation process and how bullying behaviours begin to be accepted and tolerated (Bloisi & Hoel, 2008; Johns & Menzel, 1999; Salin, 2003).

Newcomers take time to learn the trade but are expected to do so quickly as delay places pressure on the team.. Research has identified that new individuals who are slow and putting pressure on other staff are targeted, as others have to cover for them (Bentley et al., 2009). The findings of this study were also consistent with a previous study by Poulston (2008) that identified the major issues in a newcomers' experience were poor training, misuse of the concept of on-the-job training, and the frequency of (and support for) sink-or-swim workplace initiations. Surprisingly, the results of this study indicated that the Hospitality group agreed that newcomers should be supported. Organisations should consider reviewing their socialisation process to ensure it is not harming new entrants, but instead is providing support and proper job training.

5.6.2 Education industry.

The members of the Education group identified that bullying is prevalent in their sector and is strongly associated with power. Education participants observed that a few years into teaching and having little positional power could cause an individual to experience bullying, such as decisions being made without their notice. Previous studies have indicated that staff with little positional power may experience changes being made without being consulted, and this is a type of bullying behaviour (Bentley et al., 2009).. Interestingly, although having little positional power, newcomers were often protected by third parties (external unions). They were also frequently provided with formal training, information about external unions, and a teacher mentor. Research has recognised the benefits of formal inductions as often they provide training programmes that may have specific mechanisms which help workers be aware of issues relating to bullying and its outcomes, as well as the non-acceptability of negative behaviours in the workplace (McCormack, Djurkovic, & Casimir; 2013; Luzio-Lockett 1995) The use of formal inductions taught new teachers how they are protected and supported.

<div align="center">**Chapter Six: Conclusion**</div>

6.1 Conclusion

The study established that there were similarities and differences in employee perceptions and their understanding of bullying. Descriptions by the Education group were commonly consistent with researcher's definitions whereas the Hospitality group struggled to describe the basic elements of bullying. The study revealed that lack of power, or any power imbalance, was a key element in recognising whether behaviour constitutes bullying or not. However, the two industry samples in this study differed about whether intent should be included in their description; the Hospitality group identified it as a key point but the Education group did not. The Hospitality group lacked understanding and required clarity as to why a one-off incident of harassment would not be classified as bullying.

The possibility of an employee being provided with a guideline that clearly outlines the common characteristics of workplace bullying may help individuals identify and recognize a bullying situation early on in their workplace. Although studies have still debated whether to include the characteristic of power imbalance in their definition, this study recognized power imbalance as an important characteristic of describing bullying perceived by both groups, with focus on higher authority as the source of bullying. Additionally, this study also had a divide in opinion whether to include intent in the bullying definition. However, including intent may also make bullying distinguishable from other forms of negative acts for some individuals.

The study discovered that the types of bullying behaviour recognised by both groups were in line with previous research; bullying was seen to primarily take a

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psychological form. It was interesting to observe that both groups perceived bullying as likely to happen to an individual, while the Education group was also aware that groups can bully. It is important for all organisations to recognise these differences, to ensure all employees are aware of all forms of bullying, so employees are able to identify the behaviours involved in bullying in their workplace.

The results of the study were encouraging in that both groups were aware of the individual and organisational *effects* of bullying. However, neither of the groups mentioned long-term effects of bullying on the individual, or absenteeism as an effect for an organisation. Organisations could be more attentive towards abnormally excessive absences of an employee as it may suggest the presence of bullying.

There were similarities between the two groups on identifying the characteristics of a bully, but differences on what each group perceived to motivate the bully. Furthermore, the characteristics of the target differed; the Education group perceived weaker personalities that are unable to be assertive were targeted, as well as high achievers. The Hospitality group perceived that new comers and those that are do not have a sense a humour to be vulnerable to bullying.

The study revealed significant differences between the two groups based on social interactions and norms in their industry. The Hospitality group considered that negative behaviours (a) were an acceptable part of the industry, (b) were harmless fun, and (c) represented socialisation as a new entrant 'hardened up'. Further, the group considered that certain personalities are unable to cope with industry norms. Not being able to conform to these norms may have devastating results for the individual such as bullying.

The Education group indicated that negative behaviours were (a) not much tolerated in their industry, and (b) are a serious issue in their workplace. Further the group indicated that new teachers were supported within schools and colleges as well as protected by external parties, and those weaker personalities, or individuals that pose a personal threat to the bully, were targeted more.

The study highlighted differences of organisational antecedent's between both groups and the potential for those differences to influence bullying behaviour; to either initiate it or to tolerate it. The Hospitality group identified their industry as a casual environment with little formality, and tolerant of disrespectful behaviour, as well as having few or no policies. On the other hand, the Education group did not tolerate disrespectful behaviour, but recognized formal initiatives to report and address workplace bullying. However, the small hierarchy in the Education industry, as the study suggested, could cause bullying among employees as they compete for those positions. Furthermore, both groups identified that supporting the bully was in their best interest, otherwise they could jeopardise their own employment and become vulnerable. The study revealed that both groups valued good leadership skills and stressed the importance of leadership training. Attention could be paid to the reinforcement of training for those in leadership positions such as training managers early on to stop bullying.

An interesting finding in this study was that the Hospitality group perceived the importance to promote a healthy and safe work environment. But, there seems to be a lack of available initiatives set in place to prevent bullying. The study identified that the Education group had interventions and initiatives to deal with bullying in the workplace, and were comfortable with using them, yet they were disappointed at the lack of effort from their organisation to process complaints or

to try to prevent future bullying incidents. As it is still has the duty of an organisation to ensure they are used effectively and reinforced.

Overall, the Hospitality industry was perceived to have a weaker understanding of workplace bullying and did not consider it a serious issue in their workplace. This weaker understanding could be due to the industry mistaking bullying as teasing or having fun. This study observed that the Hospitality industry values toughness which is developed in the socialisation process, as newcomers are put through initiations which expose them to negative behaviours. To speak out against these behaviours would be to violate the norm of the industry and preclude one's acceptance into the team. The study revealed that these established social norms and interactions emphasising toughness may influence an employee to consider the behaviours as normal and accept them. The possibility of providing appropriate job training and formal training could address this issue as it may allow new comers to establish appropriate relationships with a sense of trust between co-workers.

The Education group had a stronger understanding of how to conceptualise bullying. The Education group was able to recognise the actions in Scenario A as inappropriate even before reading the academic definition of bullying. This group was also able to justify their decisions about each scenario with good reasons. Furthermore, the Education group description was almost identical to academic definitions in the literature. In addition, this group acknowledged the availability and usefulness of third party intervention and was comfortable with the use of formal policies. However employees were disappointed at the lack of follow-up by their organisation when incidents were reported, and emphasised the need for organisations to address this.

6.2 Research Implications

Workplace bullying is a serious issue that many organisations are being challenged by. This study highlighted differences of understanding the conceptualization of bullying in the Education and Hospitality The differences presented in this study highlight the importance of understanding the conceptualisation of bullying in different workplace environments. The study gives an insight into how industry norms can be related to employee perspectives on workplace bullying. This research could introduce a new aspect that would be a helpful step to improve or create a more healthy work environment. It may be useful for policymakers to consider the differences in definition among industries when creating initiatives for bullying prevention. The implications for future research are listed below along with suggestions for policymakers who wish to prevent bullying in the workplace:

- The fact that inter-industry differences in the understanding of bullying exist, along with the specific differences identified in this study may help those in charge of formulating policy. These differences between industries could complicate the formulation of initiatives and the mediation of bullying. It is important to acknowledge these differences in the conceptualisation of workplace bullying as bullying has not yet been specifically defined by the New Zealand Employment Court.

- This study recognized power imbalance as an important characteristic of describing bullying perceived by both groups, with focus on higher authority as the source of bullying. Additionally, including intent could make bullying distinguishable from other forms of negative acts for some individuals.

- The results from this study indicate that failure to recognise differences in descriptions of bullying between industries may allow bullying incidents to go unrecognised. Therefore it is important for employees to be provided with guidelines or information on workplace bullying to help identify all forms of bullying behaviour.

- This study posits that it would be helpful to understand an industry's work environment. – culture, social interactions and structure – when designing interventions as industries will differ from each other.

- It is important to create customised programmes or initiatives that inform employees what is and is not acceptable behaviour (irrespective of industry). Other initiatives could be providing a workplace bullying helpline, or anonymous feedback.

- Attention could be paid to the reinforcement of training for those in leadership positions to ensure appropriate behaviour is exhibited in a manner that could reduce negative behaviour in a workplace, for example, implementing peer review systems.

6.3 Limitations and future research

This study used small samples from the current Hospitality and Education sectors in New Zealand. Therefore the following points need to be noted:

- The assumption that the two industries vary significantly in relation to their tolerance of workplace bullying needs to substantiated empirically.

- This study, as qualitative research, has laid a foundation for further study of the differences in employee perceptions on workplace bullying. These results need to be confirmed using a wider range of industry participants and by using more generalisable quantitative methods. Quantitative

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research is required, especially with respect to the impact of size and structure on norms and induction, as well as bullying behaviour.

- Further research could also be undertaken to investigate induction of new employees, the effects of a lack of induction, and exit interviews of employees. This could help an organisation to understand the influence an induction process has on employee perception of workplace bullying. Also, a more formalised induction process might reduce the trial by fire of 'newbies' and provide them with ways to recognise and deal with bullying.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Advertising for participants

Appendix B: Research Information Sheet
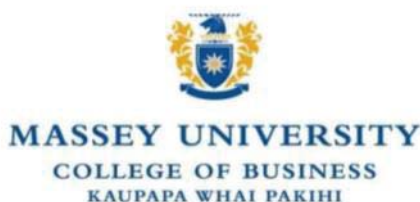
Perceptions of workplace behaviours between the Hospitality and Education sectors.

Researcher(s) Introduction

My name is Sokaina Alhaseny, and I would really appreciate your participation for my research in creating a healthier and safer work environment. In order to complete my Master of Management Degree I am doing an exploratory study looking at behaviours and perceptions in the workplace.

Project Description and Invitation

I would like to formally invite you to participate in this project. This study aims to examine differences in perception in the understanding of behaviours in the workplace between the Education and Hospitality sectors. Different sectors tend to have varying norms, attitudes and values in the workplace and these are reflected in how people perceive, understand and define certain actions. In this project you will be presented with three scenarios followed by a number of questions   concerning   them.
No questions will be asked about your personal experience or history.

Participant Identification and Recruitment

The intended participants for this research are employees that have worked in the industry for a minimum of six months in New Zealand as of 29 July 2013. Two groups of at least 12–15 participants from each industry participants will be involved in this project.
Project Procedures

The research will require participants to be interviewed. Interviews will be held at a location that is convenient to the participant. Interviews will be held in a private room and will be tape recorded and transcribed. If respondents do not give consent to be recorded then notes will be taken. The interviews should take approximately 20 minutes in duration and will be semi-structured. Participants will be given a hardcopy of three scenarios to read followed by a number of open- and closed-ended questions.

Data Management

All data obtained will be used only for this project and not given to anyone else for any other use.

Participants' Rights

You are under no obligation to accept this invitation. If you decide to participate, you have the right to

- decline to answer any particular question;
- withdraw from the study by the 20 August 2013;
- ask any questions about the study at any time during participation;
- provide information on the understanding that your name will not be used unless you give permission to the researcher;
- be given access to a summary of the project findings when it is concluded;
- ask for the recorder to be turned off at any time during the interview.

Please do not hesitate to contact either myself or my supervisor if you have any concerns or questions regarding this project.

Project Contacts
Researcher
Sokaina Al Haseny
 sokaina.alhaseny@gmail.com

Supervisors:
Bevan Catley: b.e.catley@massey.ac.nz
Darryl Forsyth: d.forsyth@massey.ac.nz
Committee Approval Statement

'This project has been evaluated by peer review and judged to be low risk. Consequently, it has not been reviewed by one of the University's Human Ethics Committees. The researcher(s) named above are responsible for the ethical conduct of this research.

If you have any concerns about the conduct of this research that you wish to raise with someone other than the researcher(s), please contact Professor John O'Neill, Director, Research Ethics on 06 350 5249 or email humanethics@massey.ac.nz.'

Appendix C: Low Risk Notification Approval Letter

MASSEY UNIVERSITY
TE KUNENGA KI PŪREHUROA

16 April 2013

Sokaina Al-Haseny
108 West Hoe Heights
Orewa 0931
Auckland

Dear Sokaina

Re: Workplace Bullying in the Eye of the Beholder

Thank you for your Low Risk Notification which was received on 15 April 2013.

Your project has been recorded on the Low Risk Database which is reported in the Annual Report of the Massey University Human Ethics Committees.

The low risk notification for this project is valid for a maximum of three years.

Please notify me if situations subsequently occur which cause you to reconsider your initial ethical analysis that it is safe to proceed without approval by one of the University's Human Ethics Committees.

Please note that travel undertaken by students must be approved by the supervisor and the relevant Pro Vice-Chancellor and be in accordance with the Policy and Procedures for Course-Related Student Travel Overseas. In addition, the supervisor must advise the University's Insurance Officer.

A reminder to include the following statement on all public documents:

"This project has been evaluated by peer review and judged to be low risk. Consequently, it has not been reviewed by one of the University's Human Ethics Committees. The researcher(s) named above are responsible for the ethical conduct of this research.

If you have any concerns about the conduct of this research that you wish to raise with someone other than the researcher(s), please contact Professor John O'Neill, Director (Research Ethics), telephone 06 350 5249, e-mail humanethics@massey.ac.nz".

Please note that if a sponsoring organisation, funding authority or a journal in which you wish to publish requires evidence of committee approval (with an approval number), you will have to provide a full application to one of the University's Human Ethics Committees. You should also note that such an approval can only be provided prior to the commencement of the research.

Yours sincerely

John G O'Neill (Professor)
**Chair, Human Ethics Chairs' Committee and
Director (Research Ethics)**

cc   Dr Darryl Forsyth   Bevan Catley
        School of Management   School of Management
        Albany   **Albany**

        Prof Sarah Leberman, HoS
        School of Management
        Albany

Appendix D : Interview Schedule

Interview Schedule

Part One

Participant reads scenario A

1. What do you think is going on here?
2. What do you think about Stacey's behaviour in the above scenario?
    a. Communication/Social skills – how they handled the situation
3. What do you think about Richards's behaviour in the above scenario?
    a. Communication/Social skills – how they handled the situation
    b. Management skills

Participant reads scenario B

1. What do you think is going on here?
2. What do you think about Claire's behaviour in the above scenario?
    a. Communication/Social skills – how they handled the situation
    b. Management skills
3. What do you think about Paula's behaviour in the above scenario?
    a. Communication/Social skills – how they handled the situation
    b. Management skills

Participant reads scenario C

1. What do you think is going on here?
2. What do you think about Peter's behaviour in the above scenario?
    a. Communication/Social skills – how they handled the situation
3. What do you think about Tracey's behaviour in the above scenario?
    a. Communication/Social skills – how they handled the situation
    b. Management skills

Part Two

1. How would you describe workplace bullying in your own words?
    a. If possible please can you give me an example – it doesn't have to be a real one
2. Now, according to your explanation, do you think any of the actions in the scenarios are workplace bullying? Yes / No
    If Yes, which scenarios   **A**   **B**   **C**
3. Now, I will present you with an academic definition:

A situation where a person feels they have repeatedly been on the receiving end of negative actions from one or more other people in a situation where it is difficult to defend themselves against these actions. The behaviour has to occur repeatedly and regularly (e.g., weekly) and over a period of time (e.g., about six months).These negative actions could be physical or non-physical (e.g. verbal abuse). A one-off incident would not be defined as bullying.(Einarsen et al., 2011,p.22).

4. After reading that I would like to know whether you change your mind about your choice of scenario(s).

If Yes, which scenarios   **A**   **B**   **C**

Demographics

Please circle the relevant answer.

1. **What is your Gender?**   Male   Female
2. **Age group:** ☐18–23   ☐24–29 ☐30–35   ☐ 36–41 ☐42–47   ☐48+
3. **Ethnicity:**   _____

4. **How   long   have   you   worked   in   this   <u>sector/industry</u>?**
   Less than a year   1–3 years   3–6 years   6+years

5. **How long have you worked at this <u>current company/firm/organisation</u>?**
   Less than a year   1–3 years   3–6 years   6+years

How would you describe your current role? _____