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WORK PLACE BULLYING: USING SOCIAL MEDIA AVENUES
TO COLLECT AND ASSESS PRIMARY DATA OF WORKPLACE
BULLYING PREVALENCE AMONG WOMEN AGED 18-40

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M.P.H., Emory University, 2016

B.Sc. King's College London, 2004

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Abstract

WORK PLACE BULLYING: USING SOCIAL MEDIA AVENUES TO COLLECT AND ASSESS PRIMARY DATA OF WORKPLACE BULLYING PREVALENCE AMONG WOMEN AGED 18-40

Workplace bullying is becoming a topic of increasing interest in the fields of rehabilitation, human resources, occupational health and organizational behavior (Fox, S. & Stallworth, L. E. 2009). Workplace bullying refers to repeated, unreasonable actions of individuals and even sometimes groups directed towards an employee (or a group of employees) (Salin, D., & Hoel H., 2011). These actions are often intended to intimidate, degrade, humiliate or undermine the target; which creates a risk to the health or safety of the employee(s).

Methodology: This study used a mixed method design, to understand the aspect of bullying and the targets of bullying from women 18-40 years of age.

Results: Out of 106, 77 replied.

Ho (Ho= null hypothesis): $(M = \mu) M_{agegroup} = M_{bullied}$

Ha (Ha= alternative hypothesis): $M (M = \mu) M_{agegroup} \neq M_{bullied}$

The post-hoc test for this data was LSD. The results of the procedure, (results shown above), demonstrate an F-Value of 1.31. This is fairly low, which in turn would not permit the null hypothesis to be rejected. The p-value is listed as 0.35.

Ho (Ho= null hypothesis): $(M = \mu) M_{education} = M_{bullied}$

Ha (Ha= alternative hypothesis): $M (M = \mu) M_{education} \neq M_{bullied}$

The post-hoc test for this data was LSD. The results of the procedure, (results shown below), demonstrate an F-Value of 0.66. This extremely low, this in turn would not permit the null hypothesis to be rejected. The p-value is listed as 0.58.

Summary: As the body of work in research with regards to interventions aimed at reducing workplace bullying grows (Salin, 2010; Vartia & Leka, 2010) so must the body of work surrounding the reason why it takes place. Workplace bullying is a serious threat to the health of both individuals and organizations, and a multi-faceted approach must be taken where it is addressed by employers, trade unions and the government and much more. More incentive must be given also to gain accurate responses.

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Table of Contents

Background	1
Review of the literature for the definition and causes of workplace bullying	1
The problem.....	1
The problem redefined	4
Impact of Workplace Bullying on Individuals.....	5
Displacement, Withdrawal, Anxiety & Despondency	8
Impact of the Economic Crisis.....	9
Characteristics of Bullies	10
Work Related	11
Psychological/Personal	11
Organizational Impact of Bullying.....	12
The Impact of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD).....	14
Effects on Bystanders/Co-worker	15
Social Determinants	17
Research Questions/Hypotheses.....	18
Methodology.....	18
Study Procedures	21
Results	22

Conclusions, Implications and Recommendations	28
Discussions of the findings.....	28
References	32
Appendices.....	36
Appendix 1: Introductory Email.....	36
Appendix 2: The Survey	37
Appendix 3 : Table of Definitions of Workplace Bullying.....	44
Appendix 4: Excerpts from Qualitative Survey	45
Appendix 5: Raw data	53

List of Figures

Figure 1: Bullying based on self description	26
Figure 2: Number of years participants worked at their establishments.....	27
Figure 3: Outcome of Bullying Both Positive and Negative	27
Figure 4: Visual Model for Mixed Methods Procedures	35

List of Tables

Table 1: Output results from gender and those who answered “yes” to being bullied.....	22
Table 2: Output results from age and those who answered “yes” to being bullied.....	24
Table 3: Output results from level of education & those who answered “yes” to being bullied.....	25

Background

Workplace bullying is becoming a topic of increasing interest in the fields of rehabilitation, human resources, occupational health and organizational behavior (Fox, S. & Stallworth, L. E. 2009). Workplace bullying refers to repeated, unreasonable actions of individuals and even sometimes groups directed towards an employee (or a group of employees) (Salin, D., & Hoel H., 2011). These actions are often intended to intimidate, degrade, humiliate or undermine the target; which creates a risk to the health or safety of the employee(s). Often, this bullying involves an abuse or misuse of power that creates a feeling of defenselessness and injustice in the target and undermines an individual's right to dignity at work (C Rayner & L Keashly, 2005). Workplace bullying is thought to be a subset of organizational violence and while the most prevalent, the least documented (Bowie, Fisher, & Cooper, 2005). To date the vast majority of organizations do not recognize or work to actively stop this phenomenon from occurring within their organization and while there are employee programs designed to deal with the byproduct of workplace bullying such as stress and depression, none work to eradicate the root cause.

The emotional, psychological and physical toll this behavior takes on the target has remained obscure (Farmer, 2011). Thus this thesis will add to the body of evidence relating to workplace bullying, documenting the toxic effects and prevalence of "Workplace bullying," specifically looking at women age 18-40 years in the United States.

Review of the literature for the definition and causes of workplace bullying

The problem

In recent years, bullying in the workplace has been shown to be on the rise; largely unaddressed and; wreaking havoc on staff and organizational productivity (Farmer, 2011). Moreover, some researchers

have claimed that the incidence of workplace bullying has nearly doubled in the past decade, and recent studies have reported that between 80 and 90 percent of the workforce will suffer this type of abuse at some point in their careers (Glendinning, 2001; Gouveia, 2007; Thomas, 2010).

The rest of the world has evolved leaps and bounds when it comes to work place bullying. Numerous countries have legislation to protect workers from bullying. Australia, Canada and nine European countries have passed anti-bullying laws, including Denmark, France, Serbia, and Sweden. In most cases, an employee can apply to an external government body to investigate instances of workplace bullying. If proven, this governing body will issue a letter to the employer summoning them to ensure that the bullying ceases as seen in Australia. Researchers have identified this behavior amongst corporations of all sizes within a diverse range of industries, and in workplaces throughout the world (Daniel, 2009). The US however, is lagging in its research on workplace bullying as well as an established process to deal with workplace bullying once it is identified at an individual organizational level as well as a federal level. A review of the literature reveals that workplace bullying is present across occupational sectors and organizational segments. The term workplace bullying has been described as an umbrella term, as it can incorporate harassing, intimidating, and aggressive or violent behaviors (Fox & Stallworth, 2004). Despite this umbrella definition being widely accepted, there is still some discrepancy as this definition is not comprehensive enough to include all the facets of workplace bullying. A comprehensive definition must encompass the scope of the behavior and experience of the bullies as well as targets, be discernible from commonplace negative workplace behaviors (which does not necessarily qualify as bullying), and be clear enough to gain an acceptable measure of prevalence.

Heinz Leymann is credited for producing decisive research in the area of workplace bullying, and his definitions which outlines "Mobbing and Psychological Terror at Workplaces" is loosely used to study

this growing phenomenon (Agervold, 2007). He defines bullying as psychological terror or mobbing in working life as involving hostile and unethical communication which is directed in a systematic manner by one or more individuals, mainly toward one individual, who, due to mobbing, is pushed into a helpless and defenseless position and held there by means of continuing mobbing activities (Leymann, 1990). Workplace bullying is unique from conflict in that there are measures of frequency and duration, escalations, and an element of power imbalance (overtime the target becomes progressively more powerless as the situation spirals) (Leymann, 1990).

Work place Bullying Institute (WBI) survey reveals that “bullying in the U.S. is four times more prevalent than illegal, discriminatory harassment, which includes such things as discrimination due to race, gender, ethnicity, religion, disability or age (Know Bull, 2010). In an attempt to have a comprehensive definition to create a frame for the problem, WBI conducted a survey among a sample representative of all American adults in the US in August 2007. In this first survey, the first of its kind with 7,740 respondents, workplace bullying was defined as "repeated, health harming abusive conduct committed by bosses and co-workers." In the second survey, conducted in 2010, a single-question survey workplace bullying was defined as "repeated mistreatment: sabotage by others that prevented work from being done, verbal abuse, threatening conduct, intimidation, & humiliation" (Namie, 2011). From these surveys, WBI deduced that “around 37% of U.S. workers had reported being bullied on the job, while 49% said they had witnessed a bully in action. This represents an incredible 86% of the workforce, or 71.5 million Americans being affected by bullying in the workplace at a cost of \$74 billion per year” (Namie, 2011). A third survey is slated for 2014 and hopes to redefine workplace bullying in the light of recent economic climate. Moreover, and more recently, the WBI survey conducted in 2014 showed that while the prevalence of workplace bullying had remained relatively the same, there was an increase in awareness of what Workplace Bullying is.

In terms of gender, the Workplace Bullying Institute (2007) states that women appear to be at greater risk of becoming a bullying target, as 57% of those who reported being targeted for abuse were

women. Men are more likely to participate in aggressive bullying behavior (60%), however when the bully is a woman her target is more likely to be a woman as well (71%). These results reveal that women are the targets in most cases and thus the focus of this thesis will be the tactic that women bullies employ in bullying female targets. These include work tactics such as “last minute pop up meetings invite”, nitpicking ones work through over analysis and isolation which ultimately strips the target of their confidence and reducing the quality of their work over time.

The problem redefined

In Table 1, an extensive overview of labels and definitions is presented to illustrate that workplace bullying has been both defined and redefined over the last 3 decades. The different labels and somewhat divergent descriptions may indicate that there is still debate about the core issues or definitional elements of workplace bullying (Nielsen, 2009). One thing that scholars do agree on from review of the definition is that bullying is repetitive, persistent, and systematic with a target that is defenseless. It seems logical to conclude that scholars largely agree that bullying is about recurring negative acts over a period of time. Thus, a proposed all-encompassing definition would be:

“systematic aggressive communication (examples include cursing and degrading or demeaning tone), manipulation of work (using power to nitpick ones work or overwhelming one through unrealistic targets, even catch one unawares, through last minute meetings), and acts (such as backstabbing, or favoritism of the “untouchable” employee”) aimed at humiliating or degrading, isolating one or more individual that create an unhealthy and unprofessional power imbalance between bully and target(s), result in psychological consequences for targets and co-workers, and cost enormous monetary damage to an organization’s bottom line”

The earliest reported incidence of workplace bullying dates back to the late 70’s (The Harassed

Worker (1976)) and much of the body of research from this early documentation is from outside the U.S., specifically Europe. What's more, as stated earlier the recent recession (2007-2009) has created the "perfect storm" where increased pressure to produce, with less resources has given to a rise in documented case of workplace bullying. Workplace bullying can be divided into three overarching themes; work-related, psychological/emotional, and physical/threatening (Maglich-Sespico, Faley, and Knapp, 2007). With a number of scholars noting a significant relationship between stress symptoms and workplace bullying (Bilgel, Aytac, & Bayram, 2006; Kaukiainen et al., 2001).

Impact of Workplace Bullying on Individuals

A natural byproduct of work place bullying is an immense amount of stress. The broader literature on stress and health has established links between discrimination and harassment, workplace bullying and adverse health outcomes ((Okechukwu, C., Souza, K., Davis, K., de Castro, B. 2011). Since the actions of bullying are often intended to intimidate, degrade, humiliate or undermine the target; which creates a risk to the health or safety of the employee(s). Though, the emotional, psychological and physical toll this behavior takes on the target has remained quite obscure (Know Bull, 2011), the occupational health literature, has shown that workplace injustices are directly associated with four types of adverse outcomes: poor psychological and physical health, unhealthy behaviors, and decreased job performance.

Futhermore, research has shown that stress is often accompanied by an array of physical reactions ((Okechukwu, C., Souza, K., Davis, K., de Castro, B. 2011). These symptoms can be characteristic of other physical or mental disorders. They include, sleep disturbance, clench jaw, grinding teeth, digestive upsets, mental slowness, confusion, forgetfulness, irritation, frustration, decreased contact with family and friends, poor work relations and performance and overtime, this can have more serious consequence and links have been shown to heart disease, obesity and depression Kivimäki et al., 2003).

Bullying in a sense is an intangible phenomenon, which makes it difficult to recognize and capture these systems (Leka, Varia, et al, 2008). One thing that is clear is that in most cases, bullying achieves its objectives to the point where the individual has to seek medical or counseling support, or ultimately leave their employment. Hansen et al. states, people who experience bullying tend to suffer from depression, stress-related disorders, and lowered self-esteem. Unlike other types of organizational violence, bullying is regarded as a form of psychological rather than physical harassment (Bowie, Fisher, & Cooper, 2005). Furthermore, workplace bullying can be described as an attempt to exert psychological control (thus establishing power) through humiliation or harassment of another (Gouveia, 2007). These actions, culminate in an unhealthy workplace environment which is why some scholars have labeled workplace bullying as the most disastrous issue affecting modern-day corporations (Glendinning, 2001; Roscigno, Lopez, & Hodson, 2009)

Cross-sectional and longitudinal studies illustrate the association between workplace bullying and short- and long- term change in psychological distress (Hogh, Henriksson, & Burr, 2005) and depression (Kivimäki et al., 2003; Nolfé, Petrella, Zontini, & Uttieri, 2010). One longitudinal study suggested the possibility of a cycle because developing depression in turn increased the risk of workers becoming targets of bullying (Kivimäki, Elovainio, & Vahtera, 2000). Several studies have found evidence of symptoms and diagnosis of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) among workers exposed to workplace injustice (Buchanan & Fitzgerald, 2008). There is evidence to also show links between workplace bullying, depression and suicide. Depression, in the US, has been shown to cause tremendous emotional pain, disrupts the lives of millions of people, adversely affects the lives of families and friends, reduces work productivity and absenteeism and have a significant negative impact on the economy, costing an estimated \$44 billion a year (Kivimäki, Elovainio, & Vahtera, 2000).

Workplace Bullying can occur for any reason including; as a result of perceived weakness (physical

and/or psychological), gender, sexuality, ethnicity, or simply jealousy. Without agreed comprehensive definition and difficulties in talking about workplace bullying means that incidences are scarcely recorded, primarily due to fear of losing one's job or as a result of the trauma endured (Farmer, 2011).

A study conducted by Campanini et al (2013) showed that workers exposed to a workplace bullying reported higher sickness absenteeism as compared with non-exposed subjects. Only 23% of private sector employers offer at least one day of paid sick leave, leaving many victims of workplace bullying to be exposed to prolonged periods of stress culminating in more serious ailments with the eventuality of quitting or taking federally protected Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) leave and being absent for longer periods.

Furthermore, exposure to bullying has been linked to an increased level of worrying (Hubert, Furda, & Steensma, 2001; Notelaers & De Witte, 2003), to a higher recovery need (Notelaers & De Witte, 2003), to decreased sleep quality (Hansen et al., 2006; Notelaers & De Witte, 2003) and to symptoms of burn-out (Bowling & Beehr, 2006). A large body of research has investigated complaints that are more psychological in nature. Empirical research repeatedly reports that exposure to bullying is related to anxiety (Baruch, 2005; Bilgel, et al., 2006; Hansen, et al., 2006; Kaukiainen, et al., 2001; Leymann & Gustafsson, 1996). Moreover, many researchers have found a significant association between exposure to workplace bullying and depression (Adoric & Kwartuc, 2007; Bilgel, et al., 2006; Bowling & Beehr, 2006; Hansen, et al., 2006; Leymann & Gustafsson, 1996). Several scholars have also reported suicidal ideation (Balducci, et al., 2009; Brousse et al., 2008; Leymann & Gustafsson, 1996) among targets of workplace bullying. Without making any claims as to the extent to which bullying may lead to suicide, suicides in many countries has been associated with workplace bullying in the local press and media at large. A study conducted by the workplace bullying institute showed that 16% of those with suicidal thoughts even had a plan and that 20% later succeeded.

Displacement, Withdrawal, Anxiety & Despondency

When bullied, a target can displace his/ her anger about being bullied at work onto the family at home. When anger can't be leveled against the source of frustration and humiliation, the bully at work, especially when the bully is your superior, this frustration is often released outside of the work setting. Much more common is emotional withdrawal. Targets are overwhelmed by emotional abuse and exhausted at work. It takes all of their energy to survive the 8 to 10 hours and commute to home. The stress strips away their appetite and zeal for life. So, often they skip dinner, retiring to bed to seek the protection that sleep might provide. Unfortunately, sleep is disrupted by the distress caused by bullying. Solid REM sleep is rarely enjoyed. Sleep deficits make the targeted family member a non-participant, especially weekends. Family routines and family time gets postponed or abandoned completely impacting the entire family. Resentment can build. Without intervention through counseling or if the bullying does not come to an end, the target and their family are caught in a vicious cycle. Declining mental and physical state continues to impact the family thus worsening the downward spiral.

Spouses & Partners

At times the effects of workplace bullying directly spill out onto spouses and partners. In some instances can result in domestic violence for female partners. Male partners at home could be subjected to emotional abuse (and some physical abuse). In any form, the violence teaches the children inappropriate ways to cope with stress. For this reason, workplace can result in divorce or break up between partners.

Of course, couples can be forced closer together to survive the emotional crises that bullying causes. Cohesion is high, but stress is doubled. Most of the stress comes from the impending loss of economic security. It is all worsened if the bullied partner is the sole wage earner for the family. Apprehension

of facing destitution is distressful for everyone. Given the high probability that the target will lose her or his job, the fear is not imaginary.

Spouses and partners aware of the bullying experience helplessness from not being able to stop it. They vicariously experience the emotional strain but cannot control its intensity or exposure time. They cannot intervene at work. They stand by watching their afflicted mate spiral down into an emotional morass with little they can do to help.

Children

Adult children, of course, will be affected like the non-targeted parent, if still living at home. Adult children in college or in the workforce will be capable of providing support to the bullied parent. The only possibility of harm from child to parent happens in the case of disbelief. As with coworkers or anyone listening to the bullied target's story, a child not treating the reported experience as credible is particularly debilitating to the parent.

Children old enough to be deprived of quality time with the bullied parent will voice their resentment and anger. That compounds the target's guilt. Now, guilt compounds the already present shame. However, for the child, it is somewhat healthier to express her or his negative feelings. Younger children, more often than not are shielded.

The greatest danger, short of the risk of violence, is that the bullied parent's withdrawal deprives the developing child of the much needed intimate relationship with that parent. If the bullied parent is not the one who deprives the child of the security of emotional acceptance, the other parent must work doubly hard to not allow tending to the partner lead to an inadvertent deprivation. Research demonstrates clearly that parental emotional deprivation leads to neurological deficits in the ability to experience or express empathy and compassion for others. In other words, young children in households invaded by workplace bullying may become socially impaired as a result.

Impact of the Economic Crisis

In recent years, the rise in the prevalence of workplace bullying coincides with the global recessions, while this may not be the cause of workplace bullying, the global recession may have exacerbated the situation as most companies are now forced to do more with less (resources and employees) while maintaining quality. In fact, companies strive for excellence in performance of their employees but fail to identify or establish managers with excellent social/interpersonal skills. Furthermore, processes such as annual deselection based on performance measured by your manager and behavioral perception also measured by your manager are subject to abuse. Manager deselected who they don't like and thus deepening the stigma and the vicious cycle of workplace bullying. Other causative factors include management and supervision style (Bono et al, 2007), general cultural contribution on a macro scale or on the scale of industrial relations and general workplace culture.

Characteristics of Bullies

Harvey et al provide an interesting discussion focusing on the brain structure of bullies embedded in aggression research, past experience and opportunity. The majority of bullies are described as being opportunistic with an ability to read favorable situational cues on which they can then act. The paper also suggest that management identify and screen employees to treat bullies among them, as well as prevent their hiring in the first place (Harvey et al, 2006). This is a problematic approach, as argued in Denenberg and Braverman, as they quote a specialist in the field: "...clinical research 'indicates that psychiatrists and psychologists are accurate in no more than one out of three predictions of violent behavior over a several year period among institutionalized populations,' whose past behavior is well documented. More recently Lipton and Power argue that both bullies and targets share a wide range of bully-typifying personality traits. More strikingly, they state that the majority of bully-typifying traits (Machiavellianism, narcissism, psychoticism, and the aggression measures) were associated with being a victim. They do however state that they recognize limitations to the study since the subjects were undergraduate students who often hold entry level jobs and have not fully had the

opportunity to immerse in the corporate culture.

Work Related

The disparity created by the manager/subordinate relationship creates an imbalance, which can lead to workplace bullying (Barlett & Barlett, 2011). There is limited data showing boss versus subordinate perpetrators and what limited data is out there is very specific to an exact subset. This can lead to the target being assigned heavy workloads (with unrealistic goals) or paradoxically, removal of responsibility and assignment of menial tasks (Quine, 1999). All of these acts sets up the individual to fail and can have a negative impact on the target's career advancement. Furthermore, some workplace bullies will use work processes to bully their target . These behaviors were multidirectional between subordinates, peer or subordinates (Barlett & Barlett, 2011). Behaviors also included oppressing opinions and overruling decisions (Einarsen, 2000; Simpson & Cohen, 2004; Vartia, 2001). In contradiction, other behaviors included controlling resources and withholding information, all within the work process paradigm (Baillien, Neyens, DeWitte, & De Cuyper, 2009; Gardner & Johnson, 2001). Additionally, this imbalance from supervisor to peer lead to unfair evaluations, including micromanagement and excessive monitoring, biased criticism and blocking employees promotions (Randle, Stevenson, & Grayling, 2007).

Psychological/Personal

These can in essence be categorized by indirect and direct, where indirect bullying are interactions between the bully and a third party who indirectly harms the target as opposed to direct where bullying interactions are between the bully and the target (Barlett & Barlett, 2011). Isolations and exclusion, ignoring are all forms for indirect personal bullying (Fox & Stallworth, 2006, Agervold, 2007). Whereas direct bullying can cover an array of behaviors including interrupting others to more

severe acts such as threats and intimidation (Barlett & Barlett, 2011). Other behaviors include persistent criticism, personal jokes, negative eye contact and constant humiliation (Agervold, 2007; Baillien et al., 2009; Fox & Stallworth, 2006; Gardner & Johnson, 2001; Quine 1999)

Some researchers have focused on personality or individual traits of targets (Glaser et al 2007) in an effort to discern the factors that culminate in a bullying situation in the workplace. Bullies are opportunistic and tend to prey on people they perceive as a threat or that they dislike because of differences. In addition to perceived threat from excellent employees (seen in employer (boss), employee (subordinate) other traits of targets include vulnerability, caring, social and collaborative, fair, honest and ethical, woman and minorities (Linton and Power, 2013). Some workplaces pit workers against worker in a zero-sum (cutthroat) work arrangement, something that has become more prevalent in this recession. While Glaser et al claim that targets of workplace bullying display any set personality profile, these are some traits that notably tie them together.

Organizational Impact of Bullying

Many studies have shown that exposure to workplace bullying is associated with lowered job satisfaction (Baruch, 2005; Bilgel, et al., 2006; Hauge, Skogstad, & Einarsen, 2010a; Hubert, et al., 2001; Quine, 2003), an association recently confirmed in a longitudinal study (Rodríguez-Muñoz, Baillien, De Witte, Moreno-Jimenez, & Pastor, 2009). Different cross-sectional studies have reported that exposure to workplace bullying is related to lower levels of organizational commitment (Bowling & Beehr, 2006; Hubert, et al., 2001). Studies have also shown that exposure to bullying is associated with a higher turnover intention (Baruch, 2005; Hauge, et al., 2010a; Lutgen-Sandvik, 2006). In a UK survey, a quarter of those previously bullied actually left their jobs (Rayner, 1997b). In addition, 20% of bystanders, 27 who outnumbered the targets (cf. supra), chose to leave their jobs as a consequence of their encounters with bullying (Rayner, et al., 2002).

From all of these it has been estimated that 86% of the workforce(71.5 million Americans) are affected by bullying in the workplace with a financial cost of \$74 billion per year” in the US (Know Bull, 2011). For the employer, the costs of bullying may be seen in terms of low morale, high rates of sickness and absenteeism, reduced productivity, and a high staff turnover. The costs to the organization include reduced efficiency, unsafe work environment, increased absenteeism, poor morale, increased workers’ compensation claims and civil actionFarrell, L. (2002). Therefore, it is in an organization’s interest to maintain a bullying-free workplace rather than having to intervene or mediate during an established pattern of bullying.

Most organizations have no idea just how much employee stress costs them each year. A 1990 study by the Princeton, NJ, firm of Foster Higgins & Co. indicated that corporate health benefits cost the average company 45 percent of its after-tax profits. With research implicating stress in 60 percent to 90 percent of medical problems, companies cannot afford to ignore the huge health-care expense employee stress creates (Human Nature at Work, 2012).

Stressed-out and depressed employees are more likely to miss work both due to health-related problems and as a coping mechanism. A recent study published in the American Journal of Health Promotion found that workers experiencing high stress were over two times more likely to be absent more than five times per year. Lost productivity and replacement costs make absenteeism a costly consequence (Human Nature At Work, 2012).

In fact, lost productivity due to insomnia, a noted by product of workplace bullying, costs companies \$3,156 per employee. It costs \$3,500 to replace one \$8.00/hr worker, when you count the cost of recruiting, interviewing, hiring, training and initial reduced productivity. Additionally, stress costs companies somewhere between \$200 and \$300 billion each year. Workplace bullies can cost

companies over \$16 million in turnover and \$8 billion in lost productivity. Furthermore, workers Compensation Claims Stress-related claims have skyrocketed. The California Workers' Compensation Institute (CWCI) reports that the number of workers compensation claims for mental stress increased by almost 700 percent between 1979 and 1988. Nine out of ten stress claimants ended up receiving compensation benefits. "Job pressures" account for nearly seven in ten stress claims, according to the CWCI. In Maine, stress-related claims have increased by 1,000 percent since 1985; according to Bureau of Labor Standards statistics creates (Human Nature at Work, 2012).

Better research has been done in Europe where it was found that

- Based on previous figures suggested by the Health and Safety Executive in the UK, in 2007 work-related stress cost society approximately £4.55billion and that workplace bullying costs society approximately £682.5million.
- Based on findings from the wider literature in 2007 33.5million days were lost by UK organizations due to bullying related absenteeism, almost 200,000 employees would have left organizations and the equivalent of 100 million days productivity were lost as a result of bullying.
- Taking the above figures for absenteeism, turnover and productivity costs of bullying, the total cost of bullying for organizations in the UK in 2007 can be estimated at approximately £13.75billion
- -HR Review, 2011

The Impact of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)

There is also substantial agreement that targets of bullying show severe psychiatric symptoms (Matthiesen & Einarsen, 2004). In explaining how bullying leads to PTSD, Einarsen and colleague

(2003) posit that even though the experience of workplace injustice is often not life-threatening, the experience threatens the inner world of the target by shattering basic cognitive schema about fairness and justice and negatively influences one's social and personal identity leading to PTSD. Even though severe exposure to bullying does not meet the official criteria of the DSM IV that would qualify these symptoms as a post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) (cf. discussion in: Einarsen & Mikkelsen, 2003), clinical studies have empirically shown that targets of workplace bullying do experience typical symptoms of PTSD (Balducci, Alfano, & Fraccaroli, 2009; Leymann & Gustafsson, 1996; Matthiesen Einarsen, 2004; Mikkelsen & inarsen, 2002). However, in contrast to 'regular' sufferers from PTSD, many targets have to face their trauma day in and day out. At work, some are even 'forced' to relive their trauma on a daily basis.

Effects on Bystanders/Co-worker

Bullying often takes place in plain daylight (between the target and a perpetrator (s) as it unfolds in the workplace, a social setting where there are non-involved observers as well as potential collaborators. Even though workplace bullying may be discrete and subtle in its early phases (Björkqvist, 1992), it does not remain totally unnoticed by 'non-involved' others.

In a study by Keashly and Neuman (2008), they noted that 41% of the participants in a study among faculty 25 members confirmed that they witnessed workplace bullying. Across three samples, Vartia (2003) found that the percentage of participants who observed bullying varied between 8.7% and 35.4%. The proportion of witnesses can be very high: in a university sample, the proportion of witnesses was 55% (Haffner, 2009). In a study among healthcare professionals, 68% of the participants had observed bullying in the last two years (Tehrani, 2004). Bystanders or witnesses do not just observe others being bullied. There seem to be both explicit and implicit costs associated with being an observer of bullying (Heames & Harvey, 2006). Bullying has in fact been shown to lead to similar, albeit weaker, negative effects on bystanders in cross-sectional designs (Hansen, et al., 2006; Hoel & Cooper, 2000; Lutgen- Sandvik, Tracy, & Alberts, 2007). Witnesses of workplace bullying

report a poorer social climate and a less favourable managerial climate (Vartia, 2003). Bystanders have been found to report higher levels of feelings of stress, mental distress and lower job satisfaction than respondents who were neither observers nor targets (Hansen, et al., 2006; Hubert, et al., 2001; Vartia, 2003). In a sample from a municipality, observers of bullying used twice the amount of sleep-inducing drugs and sedatives as their colleagues (Vartia, 2001). In three different samples, witnesses reported significantly lowered general health compared with participants who neither witnessed nor experienced incidents of workplace bullying (Mayhew et al., 2004).

In an interview study using an experimental setting in which participants were asked to recall either a situation in which they were bullied or a situation in which they had witnessed somebody being bullied, the level of reported psychological distress was similar for both witnesses and targets (Janson & Hazler, 2004). Moreover, the level of psychological distress among these witnesses was similar to or higher than among emergency workers, police officers and schizophrenic individuals having a psychotic breakdown (Janson & Hazler, 2004). These witnesses' scores on a measure for establishing Post Traumatic Stress Disorder exceeded the cut-off point that clinicians associate with risk of posttraumatic illness following life-threatening disasters (Janson & Hazler, 2004). Finally, skin conductance and heart rate in beats per minutes did not differ between witnesses and targets, which suggests that interviewees still experienced elevated emotional arousal when recalling past episodes of witnessing bullying (Janson & Hazler, 2004).

As mentioned earlier, workplace bullying is not a simple private exchange process that follows a simple sender-receiver pattern. Many more people are involved or affected. Hence, in a dysfunctional organizational climate in which workplace bullying thrives, the negative consequences are far further reaching and more pervasive than earlier imagined (Heames & Harvey, 2006). The need to prevent workplace bullying may thus be of crucial importance to productivity, loyalty to the institution and to

the reputational capital of organizations (Mayhew, et al., 2004).

Social Determinants

Most bullying occurs in a social setting within work and work is viewed as an effective site for intervention as there is an assumed amount of situational control. There are several theories associated with health promotion practice; among these are theories of individual behavior, interpersonal relationships and communication, community development, and public policy. Such theories attempt to explain health as a result of individual factors, social factors, policy decisions, or interplay between them. In order to plan for the ideal intervention towards bullying, a socioecological approach to the issue should be taken and in it several theories would fit at each individual level. At the individual level, those who bully and/or are targets of bullying have been shown to have a predisposition to bullying, i.e. experienced bullying in their childhood, or abuse within the home. This predisposes them to either display aggression as adults or perpetuate the abuse by being susceptible to being a target in their adulthood. At the social and community level, corporations that suffer high rates of workplace bullying, have been shown to have a corporate culture that is conducive to bullying; giving managers the leeway to execute bullying tactics at their discretion (as long as the desired outcome is reached; the work is done)). There is no precedence at the policy level; however the new healthy workplace bill is set to change this.

Research Questions/Hypotheses

This thesis aims to document the toxic effects and prevalence of “Workplace bullying” in USA among women aged 18-40 years and postulates that bullying has increased as bullies and target fear their status within the company as a result of the recession. The scope of the project will be limited to looking at the prevalence of workplace bullying among women in the aged category between 18-40 years, as WBI 2010 survey found they were more likely to be bullied and to take a look at the perpetrating groups and tactics employed to carry out this terrifying act.

Research Question I: What is the prevalence of workplace bullying among women aged 18-40 years old?

Research Question II: What is a more comprehensive definition of workplace bullying?

Inclusion criteria: Females who are currently working in the US or have worked in the US, aged 18-40, who met the definition of those who have been bullied at work. Males and Females of any age who may be classified as work place bullies of females within the inclusion criteria.

Exclusion criteria, Females who have never worked in the US, fall outside of the age range, who do not meet the definition of someone who has been a target of workplace bullying. Males who meet the criteria of being a target of workplace bullying.

Research Question III: Is there a difference in the education levels of those being bullied?

Methodology

This study will use a mixed (Qualitative and Quantitative) methods design, to understand the aspect of bullying and the targets of bullying from women 18-40 years of age (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2003) , Creswell, 2002) (figure 1). The reason for mixing both methods is that in such a relatively new and undocumented phenomenon, neither quantitative nor qualitative methods are sufficient by

themselves to capture the trends and details of the situation. In combination, quantitative and qualitative methods can complement each other and allow for a much more complete analysis. The quantitative data will add to the body of work regarding the prevalence for this relatively undocumented phenomenon which cannot be gleaned from the qualitative data only. The qualitative data will allow better categorization of trends and allow for the emergence of a more comprehensive definition for Workplace Bullying as it will delve deeper from the information obtained quantitatively. Data will be collected using professional social media networks (through an online survey). In designing a mixed methods study, three issues need consideration: implementation, priority, and integration (Creswell, Plano Clark, Guttman, & Hanson, 2003).

This study will use concurrent explanatory mixed methods design, consisting of two distinct phases (Creswell, 2002, 2003; Creswell et al., 2003).

- In the first phase, the quantitative, numeric, data will be collected first; using a web-based survey of 300 plus participants and the data will be subjected to a 45 discriminate function analysis. These data will include participant demographics, those who reported bullying at their place of employment (and the type of job). The goal of the quantitative phase will be to identify at least 50 potential participants for the more in depth second phase through responses garnered on a survey. To get the 50 respondents we will access a pool of about 500 people as the WBI surveys have shown a response rate of about 10%.
- The second phase will consist of a qualitative multiple case study approach which will allow the researchers to collect text data; this too will be delivered through a survey media. Based on the responses, the respondent will be prompted to proceed to the latter phase or end the survey at that point (Appendix 1). Benefits of this method, is that this delivery method, will allow a broader reach of participants as location is not a limitation to involvement in the survey. Limitation of this study is that both phases are delivered via a survey.

The reasoning behind this approach is that quantitative data and results provide a general picture of

the research problem i.e. short term and long term effects of workplace bullying and its prevalence, while the qualitative data and its analysis puts a face and background to the targets by explaining those statistical results by exploring participants' views in more depth. The visual model of the procedure for the sequential explanatory mixed methods design of this study is presented in Figure 1. The priority in this design is given to the qualitative method, because the qualitative research represents the major aspect of data collection and analysis in the study and also focuses on the in-depth explanations of quantitative results. Integration occurs at the beginning of the qualitative phase while selecting the participants for case study analysis and developing the interview questions based on the results of the statistical test. Integrations occur again at the results phase where the discussion of the outcome of the whole study is explained.

Social media will be the driving force behind participant selection. Participants will be selected using their profile statistics and through the group "Move Work Forward" invited via a private inbox message to join the group (with guidelines surrounding maintaining anonymity) and participate in the survey (the link will be delivered privately). LinkedIn Head Quarters was contacted to request assistance in reaching out to women who fall into this research category. LinkedIn counts 200 million members on its site with 74 million members located in the US. With approximately 50% of users being women. The page invited a 1000 female participants across the US in one of the five fields (top five jobs for women by forbes 2013):

1. Health professional, doctor, dentist, nurse, pharmacist, physician assistant, occupational therapists
2. Scientist (medical)
3. Lawyer
4. human resource managers
5. computer and information systems managers

Study Procedures

The survey took approximately 30-45 minutes to complete and this was the total burden for the participants. The online platform used for the survey was survey monkey. No identifiers was collected. Recruitment for this study took place via social media medium and while a written consent was taken, participants were asked to assent to by indicating within the body of the survey. Contact was made by either direct inbox through LinkedIn, advising participants of the group and survey or sponsored postings in other social media websites. Please note, there was no way to track individual participants making the survey anonymous. Confidentiality was assured by ensuring only the principal investigator (PI) had/has access to the data and url where data is stored and PI was open to signing a confidentiality agreement where needed to minimize any associated risk. The benefits participants gained was additional information regarding workplace bullying and for those who indicate imminent harm to self to others, further information would have be provided to allow them to get help. Data was stored on password protected equipment and accessed only through a secure survey and de-identified if necessary to ensure anonymity.

Data Analysis: As a sensitive topic, studying bullying posed challenges both in terms of contacting possible respondents and obtaining access to data. I wanted at least 300 respondents or more for this research in order to draw statistically significant conclusion and extrapolate to the population of targets of work place bullying at large for those who fall within the inclusion criteria. However, we received a 106 responses total. This was achieved by randomly selecting 1000 or so LinkedIn participants to contact. Knowing that profiles are often not up to date, and often inactive a 30% response rate seems in lines with other studies that have used these methods. As this study was voluntary, respondents could cease the questionnaire at any time.

IRB Review: Emory University Human Subjects Review committee reviewed the IRB application for this study and subsequently exempted it from additional review.

Results

Hypothesis 1: Is there a difference between gender and whether or not the person responded yes to being bullied. Observing the data set of 100 respondents, an analysis was run to determine if there was a difference between the gender and whether or not the person was bullied. The null hypothesis for the analysis is that there will be no significant difference between gender of a person has and whether or not they answered “yes” to being bullied by the definition. The alternative hypothesis for this dataset states that there will be a difference between level of education and being bullied.

Ho (Ho= null hypothesis) : $(M = \mu) M_{\text{gender}} = M_{\text{bullied}}$

Ha (Ha= alternative hypothesis) : $M (M = \mu) M_{\text{gender}} \neq M_{\text{bullied}}$

The post-hoc test for this data was LSD. The results of the procedure, (results shown below), demonstrate an F-Value of 0.71. This extremely low, which in turn would not permit the null hypothesis to be rejected. The p-value is listed as 0.40. Compared to an alpha level of 0.05, there is not enough evidence to state that there is a significant amount of difference between the gender and whether or not the person was bullied (based on definition).

Table 1: The ANOVA procedure: Output results from gender and those who answered “yes” to being bullied based on the definition

Source	DF	Sum of Squares	Mean Square	F Value	Pr > F
Model	1	0.24295476	0.24295476	0.71	0.4037
Error	75	25.83496732	0.34446623		
Corrected Total	76	26.07792208			

R-Square	Coeff Var	Root MSE	VAR7 Mean
0.009316	42.63421	0.586912	1.376623

Of the 106 responses, 98 indicated their gender, 12 male, 76 female. Of the 38 people that indicate

they had been direct target of bullying, 33 suggesting that the prevalence of bullying amongst women is much higher, while both men and women, had witnessed bullying of both male and female targets.

Source	DF	Anova SS	Mean Square	F Value	Pr > F
VAR3	1	0.24295476	0.24295476	0.71	0.4037

Hypothesis 2: Is there a difference between the age group (i.e. 21-50 versus 51 plus) of a person that responded is in and those who answered yes to the definition of being bullied. Observing the data set of 100 respondents, an analysis was run to determine if there was a difference between the level of education and whether or not the person was bullied. Out of 106, 77 replied. The null hypothesis for the analysis is that there will be no significant difference between the age group a person is in and whether or not they answered “yes” to being bullied by the definition. The alternative hypothesis for this dataset states that there will be a difference between age and being bullied.

Ho (Ho= null hypothesis) : $(M = \mu) M_{agegroup} = M_{bullied}$

Ha (Ha= alternative hypothesis) : $M (M = \mu) M_{agegroup} \neq M_{bullied}$

The post-hoc test for this data was LSD. The results of the procedure, (results shown above), demonstrate an F-Value of 1.31. This is fairly low, which in turn would not permit the null hypothesis to be rejected. The p-value is listed as 0.35. Compared to an alpha level of 0.05, there is not enough evidence to state that there is a significant amount of difference between the age group a person is in and whether or not the person was bullied (based on definition). This is the lowest p-value calculated out of the ANOVA procedure’s run.

Table 2: The ANOVA procedure: Output results from age and those who answered “yes” to being bullied based on the definition

Source	DF	Sum of Squares	Mean Square	F Value	Pr > F
Model	5	1.92375541	0.38475108	1.13	0.3520
Error	71	24.15416667	0.34019953		
Corrected Total	76	26.07792208			

R-Square	Coeff Var	Root MSE	VAR7 Mean
0.073770	42.36934	0.583266	1.376623

Source	DF	Anova SS	Mean Square	F Value	Pr > F
VAR4	5	1.92375541	0.38475108	1.13	0.3520

There appears to be a stronger relationship between being bullied at ages 21-50 than groups older than 51. The younger age groups answered “yes” to being bullied more than the older age groups. Older age groups appeared to also answer “still not sure” when asked if they were bullied. Because of this, perhaps in further experimentation of the data, we would select younger individuals to survey for whether or not they were bullied, as they appeared more certain of their status on bullying.

Hypothesis 3: Is there a difference between the level of education a person has completed and those who answered yes to the definition of being bullied. Observing the data set of 106 respondents, an analysis was run to determine if there was a difference between the level of education and whether or not the person was bullied. Out of 106, 77 replied. The null hypothesis for the analysis is that there will be no significant difference between the level of education a person has and whether or not they answered “yes” to being bullied by the definition. The alternative hypothesis for this dataset states that there will be a difference between level of education and being bullied.

Ho (Ho= null hypothesis) : $(M = \mu) M_{\text{education}} = M_{\text{bullied}}$

Ha (Ha= alternative hypothesis) : $M (M = \mu) M_{\text{education}} \neq M_{\text{bullied}}$

The post-hoc test for this data was LSD. The results of the procedure, (results shown below),

demonstrate an F-Value of 0.66. This extremely low, which in turn would not permit the null hypothesis to be rejected. The p-value is listed as 0.58. Compared to an alpha level of 0.05, there is not enough evidence to state that there is a significant amount of difference between the level of education and whether or not the person was bullied (based on definition).

Table 3: The ANOVA procedure: Output results from level of education and those who answered “yes” to being bullied based on the definition

Source	DF	Sum of Squares	Mean Square	F Value	Pr > F
Model	3	0.69250854	0.23083618	0.66	0.5770
Error	73	25.38541353	0.34774539		
Corrected Total	76	26.07792208			

R-Square	Coeff Var	Root MSE	VAR7 Mean
0.026555	42.83666	0.589699	1.376623

Source	DF	Anova SS	Mean Square	F Value	Pr > F
VAR6	3	0.69250854	0.23083618	0.66	0.5770

Level of VAR6	N	VAR7	
		Mean	Std Dev
College graduate	50	1.34000000	0.51941883
Graduate School graduate	19	1.52631579	0.77232845
High school graduate	7	1.28571429	0.48795004
Technical School graduate	1	1.00000000	.

The qualitative yielded the following responses. Most of the questions remained unanswered therefore a conclusive pattern could not be garnered. Below are the answers results from 4 of the 13 open ended questions posed.

Please describe the bullying in detail, in your own words; what happened?

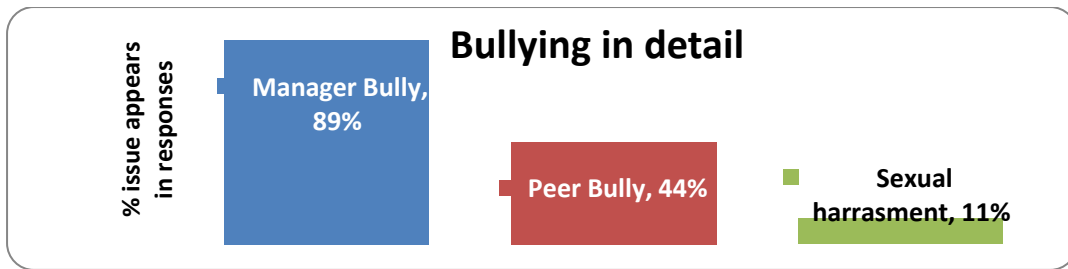


Figure 1: Bullying in details based on self-description.

We see that the majority of bullying experience involved supervisor almost double the number that involved peer to peer bullying.

This was exemplified by one of the responses that states: *“My manager would discuss my competencies with my workmate who was a paygrade below me..... I would come in sometimes to be yelled at by my colleague, who I think was more about my race, because she was a paygrade below me, but would yell at me publicly about errors I had made, but soon I realized she had even bigger errors”*

This example shows the complex dynamics of workplace bullying. If bullied by a supervisor, the rest of the team often see it as a “green light” to disrespect the target. It’s almost as if their social stock is reduced by the lack of value perceived by their immediate supervisor.

How long had you worked there?

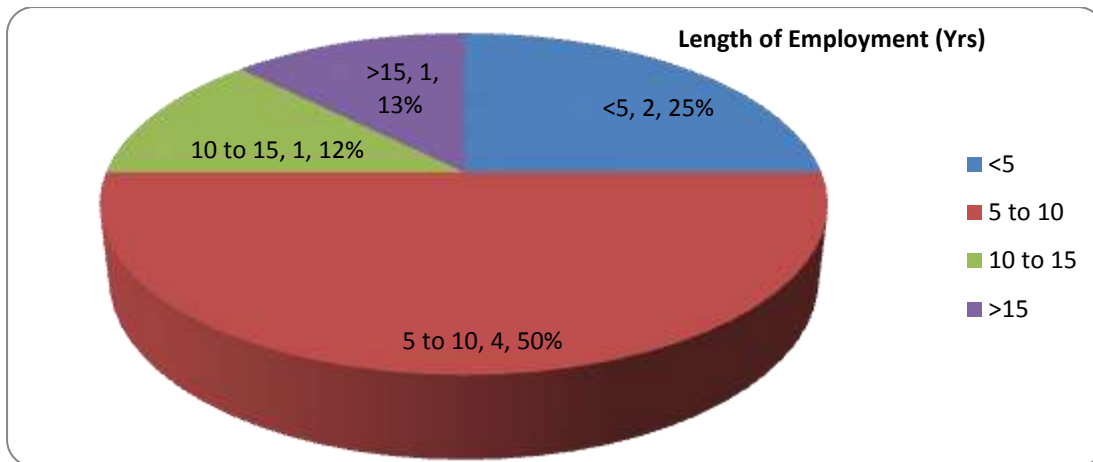


Figure 2: Number of years participants worked at their establishment

We see from this dataset of nine respondents, 50% had been at their place of employment between five and ten years

How did this experience affect you? *Combined with*

How did this experience change you? are you an advocate for others/did you never work again?

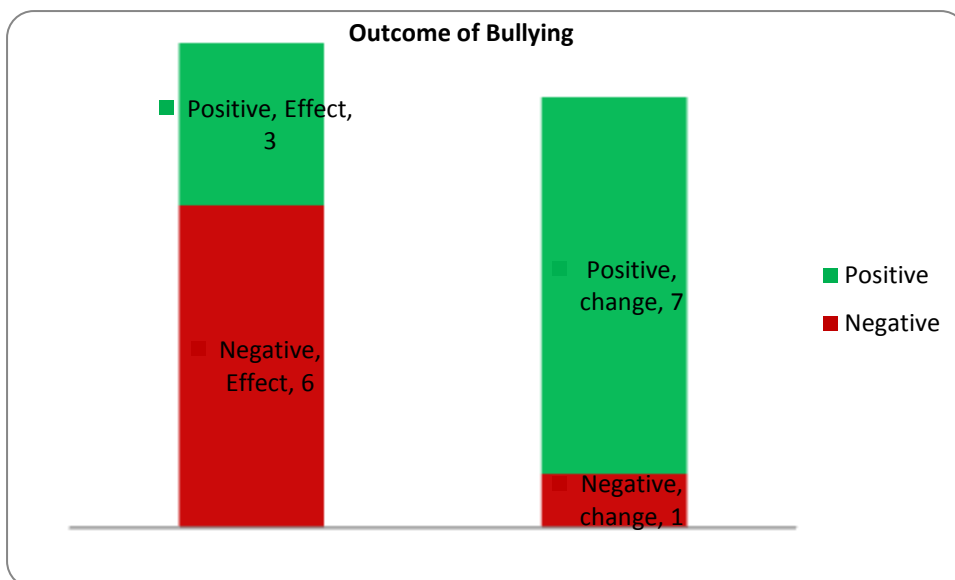


Figure 3: Outcome of Bullying Both Negative and Positive

The results show that while workplace bullying had a negative effect on the target or witness to this phenomenon, they felt that the experience had changed them for the better. Making them advocates

for targets and for those directly targeted, more self-assured and stronger.

Some responses that exemplifies this:

Response 6: Affected: Fear, low self esteem, long-term anger, resentment, disappointment and lost all respect for dentists

Change: I continue to work at the present location. I do consider myself as an advocate for others and tend to defend others when possible. Over the years, this experience has changed me both positively and negatively. Positive in the sense that it has made me more determined to be an advocate for others. Negative in that my health and the level of stress I endure each day is simply unhealthy

Conclusions, Implications and Recommendations

Discussions of the findings

As the body of work in research with regards to interventions aimed at reducing workplace bullying continues to grow (Salin, 2010; Vartia & Leka, 2010) so must the body of work surrounding the reason why it takes place. Workplace bullying is a serious threat to the health of both individuals and organizations, and a multi-faceted approach must be taken where it is addressed by employers, trade unions and the government and much more.

Based on the results, the strongest relationship seen was between age group and bullying. While this suggests that older employees suffer least from bullying, the results were not conclusively strong enough to rule definitely. A larger population pool may yield more conclusive data and asking the respondents their precise age may allow for definitive result. This would allow for a more accurate pin point of what age people are being bullied at. The data also shows that women were 7 times

more likely to victim of workplace bullying but again a larger population would be required to make a draw a definitive conclusion.

From the data yielded we can deduce that a more comprehensive definition to describe this phenomenon could be

“systematic aggressive communication (examples include cursing and degrading or demeaning tone), manipulation of work (using power to nitpick ones work or overwhelming one through unrealistic targets, even catch one unawares, through last minute meetings), and acts (such as backstabbing, or favoritism of the “untouchable” employee”) aimed at humiliating or degrading, isolating one or more individual that create an unhealthy and unprofessional power imbalance between bully and target(s), result in psychological consequences for targets and co-workers, and cost enormous monetary damage to an organization’s bottom line”

Additionally we do see a slight bias in the data as most of the respondents were of a healthcare or healthcare related field and while this may be due to the dissemination of the survey and call to action, which also included emails through different workplace institution from the healthcare field amongst others. The approximately 33% estimated response rate carries the risk of a self-selection bias, with bullied staff perhaps being more likely to respond. However, this estimate represents a minimum value and both the response rate and findings are comparable with other questionnaires distributed in a similar fashion that do not focus exclusively on workplace bullying. This minimal risk was probably reduced as the survey was disseminated via various medium including within the body of an email with a call to action.

Other things to consider is that because of the sensitive nature of the topic, disseminating the survey electronically may allow people to answer more honestly (Turner et al., 1998) as they can “hide behind their computers”, without embarrassment (target) or shame (bully & target) and therefore

compensate for different cultural/personalities that may otherwise be more reserved or aggressive (silencing the passive) if the survey was conducted in person.

From the qualitative portion of the survey we can see that workplace bullying has a huge impact on those who are targeted and those who are witness to the targeting. We see both positive and negative reactions to this phenomenon. Those who have been changed for the better, made stronger by the experience, and become advocates for change. We also see those who witness this targeting also becoming advocates and expressing admiration for the sufferers. On the other hand we also witness those who are devastated by its effect, emotionally physically and in one case listed above, one who has not worked again since due to the devastating effects of this phenomenon.

Workplace bullying has detrimental effects on the health of both individuals and organizations. Therefore, it is of the utmost importance that this occupational hazard is managed properly. The present thesis aimed to contribute to the first step of a risk control management system. The present thesis focused on the identification of the hazard, the exploration of working populations at risk and the investigation of possible work-related factors as the feasibility of the risk control cycle depends entirely upon this first step.

As being a target of workplace bullying is most often defined as experiencing recurrent negative behaviors, research employing the risk control approach may focus on the victims cluster to establish risk groups and risk factors for workplace bullying. The results gleaned could be explained by the fact that at older ages, the law protects those above 40 from some of the behavioral traits witnessed by those subjected to workplace bullying.

Future Research Directions: This research paper is still in its infancy as is the study of workplace bullying as a body of work. The battle to come up with an all-inclusive definitive definition of workplace bullying, shows how far we still have to go with this topic. To bolster the work started with this research a larger selection pool is required and possibly funding to allow incentives for people to participate on such a sensitive topic. Additionally, there needs to be an awakening of

corporate consciousness where the wellbeing of the employee becomes paramount and linked to increased productivity. This shift would make corporations more corporately responsible and begin to put measures in place to end this problem that is becoming more pervasive. Finally, despite a relatively small sample size, this initial study has provided insights into a previously under-researched topic.

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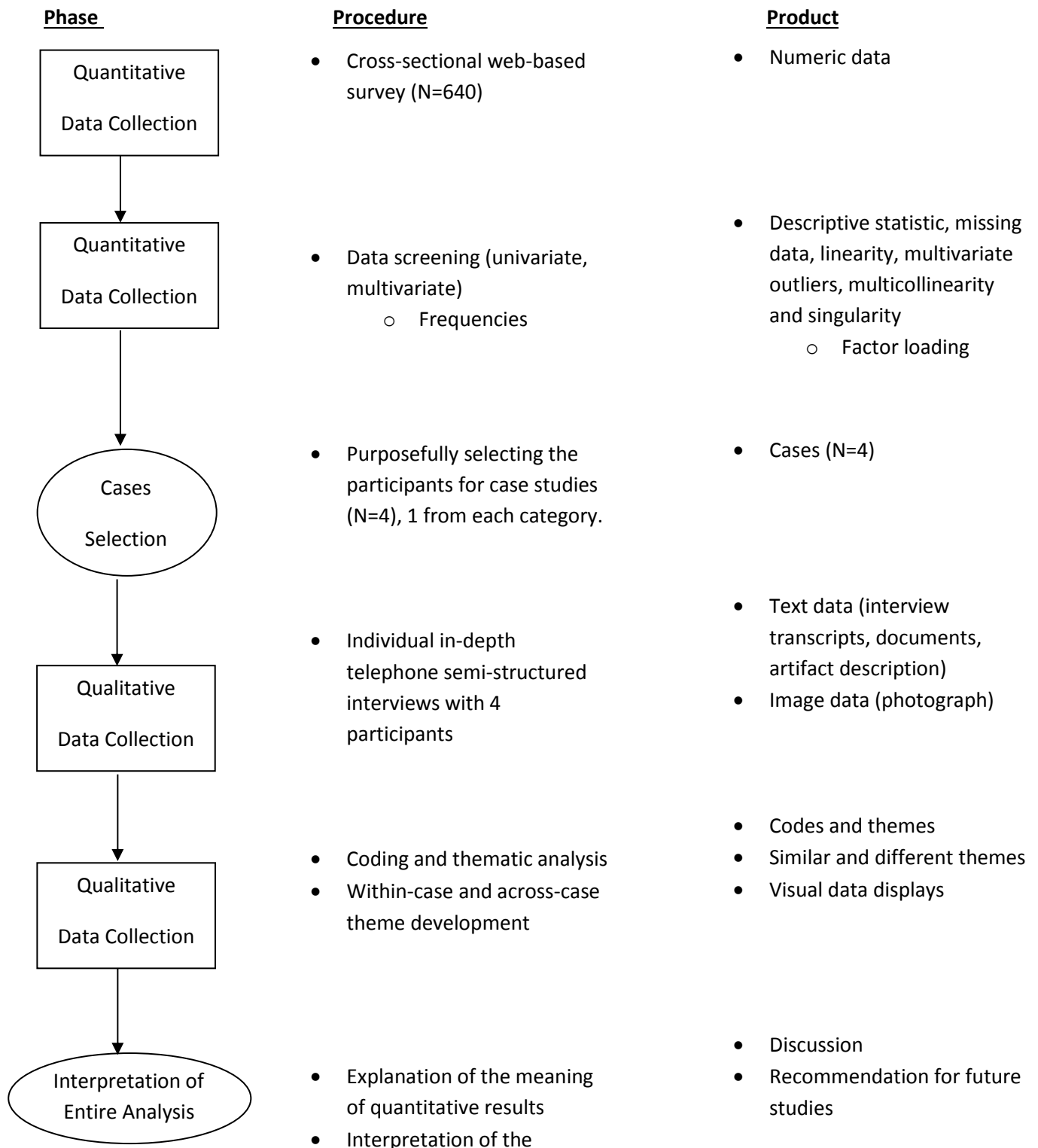
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Figures

Figure 4: Visual Model for Mixed Methods Procedures (Sequential Explanatory Mixed Methods Design)



Appendices

Appendix 1: Introductory Email

Dear All,

My name is Nina Renner-Thomas, a MPH student at Emory University, and I am extremely passionate about understanding workplace bullying. As such I have chosen this topic as part of my masters in public health thesis "Workplace bullying: Prevalence among women age 18-40 across the USA". My aim is to add to the body of evidence available to better find ways to prevent this phenomenon and offer support to those who are affected by Workplace Bullying. It is imperative that everyone works in a workplace where they are treated with dignity and respect while carrying out their duties.

Unfortunately, this is not always the case; one in ten workers report being bullied at work in the last six months, with one in four workers being bullied sometime in the last five years. Almost half of the workforce, around twelve million people, report witnessing bullying in their workplace.

Subsequently, I would like to assess the level of the problem in the US workforce and am asking you to help. You can choose to fill out the survey confidentially or provide your contact information for further questions. I truly appreciate time and look forward to your participation which will help raise awareness of the problem and help attract funding to assist employers in making a concerted effort to create the organizational culture they desire among their employees rather than have one by happenstance, with a resultant environment conducive to bullying.

I thank you in advance for completing the survey. For more information about Workplace bullying and for support please visit the Workplace bullying institute at <http://www.workplacebullying.org/>.

Please access the survey through this link

<https://surveymonkey.com/s/SN7ZNCT>

Appendix 2: The Survey

The researcher requests your consent for participation in a study about workplace bullying. This consent form asks you to agree to allow the researcher to use your comments to enhance understanding of the topic of Workplace Bullying

This questionnaire asks for your preferences about whether to remain anonymous or to allow the researcher to contact you for further information and to quote you directly. (You can report the findings on an individual and/or aggregate basis and still keep the participant's identification anonymous).

Participation in this study is completely voluntary. If you decide not to participate there will not be any negative consequences. Please be aware that if you decide to participate, you may stop participating at any time and you may decide not to answer any specific question.

The researcher will maintain the confidentiality of the research records or data, and all data will be destroyed in 90 days.

By submitting this form you are indicating that you have read the description of the study, are over the age of 18, and that you agree to the terms as described.

If you have any questions, or would like a copy of this consent letter, please contact me at narenne@emory.edu.

Thank you in advance for your participation!

1. I agree to participate in a research study. I understand the purpose and nature of this study and I am participating voluntarily. I understand that I can withdraw from the study at any time, without any penalty or consequences.
Yes/No
2. I grant permission for the data generated from this interview to be used in the researcher's publications on this topic.
Yes/No/Under the following conditions
3. Any information that is obtained in connection with this study and that can be identified with you will remain confidential and will be disclosed only with your permission. Choose one of the following options:
I agree that a brief synopsis can be included in the documentation of the research, including my initials. I understand that no other personal information will be communicated. I prefer to remain anonymous and to have no professional information or organization or business name included in the researcher's publications based on this study.
4. Choose one of the following options:
I grant permission for the researcher to use direct, attributed quotations from my interview

I grant permission for the researcher to use my contributions to the interview in aggregate or anonymous statements, but I prefer to maintain confidentiality and request that any comments are presented without attribution to me.

5. Please type your initials in the box below to indicate agreement to participate in this study.
-

Figure 7 Part A

1. Please indicate your gender

Text box

2. Are you:

- a. Under 18 years old (if chosen survey terminates)
- b. Under 21 years old
- c. 21 to 30 years old
- d. 31 to 40 years old
- e. 41 to 50 years old
- f. 51 to 55 years old
- g. 56 to 60 years old
- h. 61 or older

3. Do you currently live in the U.S?

4. Do you currently work for an employer in the US?

5. If you do not currently work in the U.S., have you EVER WORKED in the U.S.? (terminate if no)

6. How would you define the sector of the business within which your employer operates?
Government, private, academia etc

7. If you do not currently work, are you RETIRED?

8. Did you GRADUATE from:

(Please select all that apply below)

- a. High school graduate
- b. College graduate
- c. Graduate School graduate
- d. Technical School graduate
- e. None of the above

9. Workplace bullying is the “*systematic aggressive communication* (examples include cursing and degrading or demeaning tone), manipulation of work (using power to nitpick ones work or overwhelming one through unrealistic targets, even catch one unawares, through last minute meetings), and acts (such as backstabbing, or favoritism of the “untouchable” employee”) aimed at humiliating or degrading, isolating one or more individual that create an unhealthy and unprofessional power imbalance between bully and target(s)

Using this definition do you believe you have been a target of workplace bullying?

Yes/No Survey continues if yes or no

10. Do you believe you have been a target of workplace bullying, in spite or aside from the aforementioned definition

11. If so, please describe

Yes/No

12. In addition to yourself and/or if you have never been a target of workplace bullying, do you personally know ANYONE ELSE who has been a target:
Yes/No
13. Based on the definition above have you ever been a bully to a colleague? If so please anonymously describe
14. If you personally know someone OTHER THAN YOURSELF who has been a target, is that person/are those persons your:
(Please select all that apply below)
- Work Colleague(Female)
 - Work Colleague (Male)
 - Friend (Female)
 - Friend (Male)
 - Spouse (Male)
 - Spouse (Female)
 - Dosmestic Partner (Male)
 - Dosmestic Parter (Female)
 - Cousin (Male)
 - Cousin (Female)
 - Boyfriend
 - Girlfriend
 - Son
 - Daughter
 - Father
 - Mother
 - Brother
 - Sister
 - Uncle
 - Aunt
 - Other (specify) _____
15. Please indicate their age (approximate age)
- Their age:
- a. Under 21 years old
 - b. 21 to 30 years old
 - c. 31 to 40 years old
 - d. 41 to 50 years old
 - e. 51 to 55 years old
 - f. 56 to 60 years old
 - g. 61 or older
16. In the US were you targeted at
- One job
 - Two different jobs
 - Three different jobs
 - Four or more jobs
17. If more than one job, what factors do you think attributed to this?

18. In the following questions, circle one number in response to each statement where you're given a choice of 1 to 5, or answer Yes or No, as appropriate.

On a scale of very good (1) to very bad (5) How would you answer

- a. How good or bad is your work?
- b. The way my manager treats me
- c. Freedom to decide how to do the job
- d. The number of changes at work
- e. Having the right tools, equipment or clothing for the job
- f. Training to do the job
- g. Opportunity to use my skills
- h. Level of pay
- i. Volume of work
- j. Performance targets
- k. Opportunities for rest breaks

19. Working Relationships

Have you been bullied or harassed in the past year?

Did the bullying or harassment involve a manager (male/female)?

Did the bullying or harassment involve a non-manager/colleague (male/female)?

Have you witnessed someone else being harassed/bullied in the past year?

Did the bullying or harassment involve a non-manager or colleagues of theirs (male/female)?

Was the bullying or harassment related to race?

Was the bullying or harassment related to sex or sexual orientation?

Was the bullying or harassment related to a physical characteristic or disability?

20. If you have been bullied or harassed, or witness the bullying or harassment of another, which of the following happened? (Please indicate if this happened to you or if you witnessed this happening to another or select both fields if applicable)

To you/ To another/Yes/No

Unpleasant personal remarks

Intimidation

Ganging up

Physical attack

Malicious gossip

Bad language

Threats

Public humiliation

Last minute meetings

Moving goal posts without business justification

21. Reporting bullying or harassment (Please indicate if you reported that this happened to you or if you witnessed this happening to another. Select both fields if applicable)

To you/ To another/Yes/No

22. If you didn't report the bullying or harassment what was the reason? (Please indicate why you did not report that this happened to you or if you witnessed this happening to another. Select both fields if applicable)

To you/ To another/Yes/No

I did not think it would be taken seriously

- My manager was the bully (male/female)
 It would have made things worse
23. Quality of Support. Please indicate if you received the following.
 Very good to very bad
 Training or counseling to deal with stress, bullying and harassment
 The way your employer deals with bullies and harassers
24. Does your profession fall under the following:
 Health professional, doctor, dentist, nurse, pharmacist, physician assistant, occupational therapists
 Scientist (medical)
 Lawyer
 human resource managers
 computer and information systems managers
 other
 Please indicate if you are currently employed and your profession, state and employer.
25. How did the bullying end:
 You/the affected person/yes/no
 Quit
 Fired
 Went on disability
 Retired
 Other
26. Please indicate if you would like to leave detailed response about bullying
 Yes/ No (end here)

Figure 7 Part B

Survey (Part 2)

Question ONE(N/A if not applicable):

Please describe the bullying in detail,

In your own words; what happened/?

How long had you worked there?

Was it your first job, second etc?

how soon after you started did bullying begin and what do you believe triggered it?

Is the only job you've had were you had been bullied? Confusing?

How did this experience affect you?

How did this experience change you? are you an advocate for others/never work again??

Question TWO

Based on the definition above have you ever been a bully to a colleague?, if so talk about your experience? Why did you bully the target, did their appearance, actions or attitude play a part?

Yes/No

Do you feel sharing too much information at work resulted in your bullying?

Do you feel that your clothes played a part?

Did you get paid sufficiently to change you clothing/appearance?

Free text: Talk freely about the questions above:

Thank you for participating in this survey!

Appendix 3 : Table of Definitions of Workplace Bullying

Table 1 : Labels and definitions of workplace bullying: investigation of the common elements in scholarly definitions

<p>Harassment (Brodsky,1976) Repeated and persistent attempts by a person to torment, wear down, frustrate, or get a reaction from another person; it is treatment which persistently provokes pressures, frightens, intimidates or otherwise cause discomfort in another person. Typically, a victim of harassment and bullying is teased, and insulted and perceives that she or he has little resource to retaliation in kind.</p>
<p>Bullying (Olweus, 1993,2010) A person is bullied when he or she is exposed, repeatedly and over time, to negative actions on the part of one or more other persons, and he or she has difficulty defending himself or herself.</p>
<p>Scapegoating (Thylefors,1987) One or more persons who during a period of time are exposed to repeated, negative actions from one or more other individuals.</p>
<p>Mobbing (Matthiesen, Raknes, & Røkkum, 1989) One or more person's repeated and enduring negative reactions and conducts targeted at one or more persons of their work group.</p>
<p>Health endangering leadership (Kile, 1990) Continuous humiliating and harassing acts of long duration conducted by a superior and expressed overtly or covertly</p>
<p>Mobbing/ psychological terror (Leymann, 1990b) Hostile and unethical communication that is directed in a systematic way by one or more persons, mainly towards one targeted individual.</p>
<p>Bullying (Adams, 1992) Bullying is offensive behaviour through vindictive, cruel, malicious or humiliating attempts to undermine an individual or group of employees. Bullying is also persistently negative attacks on personal and professional performance, typically unpredictable, irrational and often unfair. This abuse of power or position can cause such chronic stress and anxiety that the employees gradually lose belief in themselves, suffering physical ill-health and mental distress as a result.</p>
<p>Harassment (Vartia, 1993) Situations where a person is exposed repeatedly and over time to negative actions on the part of one or more persons. 9 Harassment (Björkqvist, et al., 1994) Repeated activities, with the aim of bringing mental (but sometimes also physical) pain, and directed towards one or more individual who, for one reason or another, are not able to defend themselves.</p>
<p>10 Bullying (Einarsen, Raknes, & Matthiesen, 1994) The term bullying refers to situations where an employee is persistently picked on or humiliated by leaders or fellow co-workers. A person is bullying or harassed when he or she feels repeatedly subjected to negative acts in the workplace, acts that the victim may find it difficult to defend themselves against.</p>
<p>Ostracism (Williams & Sommer, 1997) Ostracism, the act of ignoring and excluding individuals and groups by individuals and groups.</p>
<p>Victimization (Aquino, 2000) The individual's <i>self-perception</i> of having been exposed, either <i>momentarily or repeatedly</i>, to aggressive actions emanating from one or more other persons.</p>
<p>Bullying (Hoel & Cooper, 2000) A situation where one or several individuals persistently over a period of time perceive themselves to be on the receiving end of negative actions from one or several persons, in a situation where the target of bullying has difficulty in defending him or herself against these actions. We will not refer to a one-off incident as bullying</p>
<p>Abusive supervision (Tepper, 2000) Abusive supervision refers to the "sustained display of hostile verbal and nonverbal behaviours, excluding physical contact"</p>
<p>(Einarsen, 2000) Bullying is defined as instances where an employee is repeatedly and over a period of time exposed to negative acts (i.e. constant abuse, offensive remarks or teasing, ridicule or social exclusion) from co-workers, supervisors, or subordinates</p>
<p>Bullying (Zapf & Gross, 2001) Bullying occurs, if somebody is harassed, offended, socially excluded, or has to carry out humiliating tasks and if the person concerned is in an inferior position.</p>
<p>(Cowie, Naylor, Rivers, Smith, & Pereira, 2002) Persistent exposure to negative acts at work, in the form of work related acts, personal acts or social isolation</p>
<p>Emotional abuse (Keashly & Jagatic, 2003) Interactions between organisational members that are characterised by repeated hostile verbal and non verbal, often non physical behaviors directed at a persons(s) such that the target's sense of him / herself as a competent worker and person is negatively affected.</p>
<p>Bullying (Einarsen, Hoel, Zapf, & Cooper, 2003) Bullying at work means harassing, offending, socially excluding someone or negatively affecting someone's work tasks. In order for the label bullying (or mobbing) to be applied to a particular activity, interaction or process it has to occur repeatedly and regularly (e.g. weekly) and over a period of time (e.g. six months). Bullying is an escalating process in the course of which the person confronted ends up in an inferior position and becomes the target of systematic negative social acts. A conflict cannot be called bullying if the incident is an isolated event or if two parties of approximately equal 'strength' are in conflict</p>
<p>Workplace Harassment or bullying (Varhama & Björkqvist, 2004) Work harassment occurs when one or several individuals at the workplace are repeatedly exposed to insulting and infringing behaviour, which they, for one reason or another, cannot defend themselves against.. Work harassment is, by its very nature, degrading.</p>

Appendix 4: Excerpts from Qualitative Survey

Please note errors were not corrected.

Please describe the bullying in detail, in your own words; what happened?

Response 1

Some manager courage bullying in the dept./ if they don't like you, My kinds of job is like Coordinator/ senior Coordinator give back feed back to manager of what is going on in the dept. I personal have been a victim that one of new Coordinator try every things to get exonerate me in my dept, she went around asked about my worker ethic and lair against me. But each time I am confront about a particular job I just finished, I am willing to go over every job I do. I take pride to work as lab support and help in save life.

Response 2

I work for a small business that has no business structure. There is a female co-worker that manipulates and intimidates a majority of the other co-workers and is allowed to do so because management allows her. Management also bullies employees regularly by making passive aggressive comments. I was once called an "ungrateful traitor" for making the choice to take a position with another company and was eventually coerced into staying with promises that have yet to be fulfilled.

Response 3

Was made clear that I would suffer as a result of my supervisor's actions.

Response 4

Asking questions was audibly encouraged, but visually and passively discouraged. 'Encouragement' was more like cattle prodding. I watched someone follow through with an order that was intended to humiliate due to employee's lack of discernment or 'common sense'.

Response 5

My co-worker had been bullied by two different people (one is a female and one is a male). The male is her direct supervisor. He set unrealistic goals for her and criticized her work performance. No adequate training was provided. She was repimanded by the female manager in the presence of other workers. Other managers tend to make comments about the employee's performance to junior staff.

Response 6

In one office was sexual harrassment, male dentist took my hand and tried to place it on his crotch, he also said very perverse & graphic sexual comments on what he would like to do to me. Most male dentists I've worked for have a mentality of male superiority and the old fashioned viewpoint of women are stupid and need to sit down and shut up. There's no job protection, you can work somewhere for years and get fired for no reason. I've never felt secure in that line of work and that's why I'm now back in school. A majority of the employees in the dental profession are miserable, scared and have "learned helplessness" from years of emotional & psychological abuse.

It's much worse in Georgia than Michigan. The dentists in Georgia hold all the power and not only do they know it but they make sure to let you know it too and that "you better be on your best behavior or else."

Response 7

The bullying over the years has ranged from

Response 8

There was me and one other person at the particular location. She would let her leave at noon to work on a presentation for more than 8 months. I would have to handle any of her work duties during that time. My time would be micromanaged - I would get in trouble if I went to a doctor's appointment without telling her. Out of the blue, she and her BFF (asst supervisor) would question me about about something - would not accept my responses, the two of them would make baseless accusations (which didn't even make sense at face value). She would be confrontational, verbally, in print or as a formal employee correction action about a matter without ever asking me about it before deciding what her judgement of the matter was. Most of the time, she was in error and/or lacked any understanding of the issue (she was not physically located in or familiar with the facility). One time, another dietitian complained to the Medical Director about her concerns that because there were only 2 of us dietitians, and only I (not herself) could assess and manage the parenteral nutrition patients, that it was a problem because she was afraid that I might not be able to manage them 7 days a week like I had been up to that point. There were more and more of these patients over the years. The Director instructed me to explain that this was a potential safety concern in an email and send it to some selected individuals that he named. I did and I got no response, except for a week later, I was asked to go up to EUH and meet with supervisor, and I was written up for going outside chain of command. I explained how and why the email was sent (I'd already mentioned it to my supervisor verbally). She denied it, and said that I was being written up and not to tell the Medical Director about it or I would be in more trouble. ---- Of course the other employee who was making a fuss didn't help me out either. Dozens of examples like this over the years until I quit. I was working on my MPH and the supervisor made it a point to tell me that it wasn't pertinent to my job (she incidentally as an MPH from the very same program, which is how she got her job). Any time, materials, and finances to maintain my required credentials were paid by me, or I used my own vacation time (while still phoning it in from home for the parenteral nutrition patients). I am gay, and did notice a disparity in recognition of my relationship compared to straight relationships with supervisor #1 (supervisor #2 was so clueless, I didn't notice a disparity between me and the other, we both were denied personal time). Oh, in job #2, Budd Terrace, they were praying during required care plan meetings, making families and patients wait. I mentioned that maybe we shouldn't be praying like that given that we were an inclusive organization and Emory had pretty clear policies and my boss said my thoughts on not wanting to be praying at work was because I was single (I wasn't at the time as my partner hadn't died yet). The issue went further and the praying stopped (at least when I was present), but I was then known as the one trying to take Jesus out of Budd Terrace. Really. At Budd Terrace (BT), I was not allowed to take time to be with my partner when she was diagnosed with pancreatic cancer. It was a shocking diagnosis, she died 4 months later. I still go to therapy and grief groups and the guilt over not being with her, of her being alone, when she was given this news, and then her driving away with this new information...I'll never forgive

myself. After, I tried to juggle both taking care of my partner and working, but while I was given time to do chemo with Laura, I still had all the work to do, so it wasn't real time. I ended up taking a leave of absence, returned for 2 months after Laura passed, then resigned. I was good at my job, and I even liked it there, despite the praying, but it was too overwhelming and I couldn't manage, they wouldn't accommodate, so I left.

Response 9

My manager would discuss my competencies with my workmate who was a paygrade below me. I would be allotted time on the schedule after everyone had picked what was convenient for them, despite me having two kids, and them being single. So I worked all weekends. I would come in sometimes to be yelled at by my colleague, who I think was more about my race, because she was a paygrade below me, but would yell at me publicly about errors I had made, but soon I realized she had even bigger errors, and that was when I realized this is not about the job, its about bullying me.

How long had you worked there?

Response 1

3 year

Response 2

3 years

Response 3

8 years

Response 4

4 years: 1 year

Response 5

About six years.

Response 6

I've worked for several dentists over 15 years (more than 30) and it's the same in almost all offices. There's a small exception to the rule and those offices are so hard to get a job in because their employees do not quit ever so there's never any job openings except fill in basis when they're on vacation or maternity leave.

Response 7

Over 9 years.

Response 8

I'd been working there since 1991, but she did not become my boss until 2004...she came to take over the supervisory duties at my facility as EmoryHealthcare took over the facility (Wesley Woods Hospital). At job #2, Budd Terrace, I worked there for a year and a half...I transferred there to get away from boss #1.

Response 9

Right when I started to the end of the first year

Was it your first job, second etc?

Response 1

third job

Response 2

Second

Response 3

1st: 4th

Response 4

Second.

Response 5

N/A

Response 6

Third

Response 7

No

Response 8

4th job

how soon after you started did bullying begin and what do you believe triggered it?

Response 1

because try to learning for another dept., she is scare that I will be promote to be a Coordinator like her.

Response 2

Year and a half. I believe it was triggered when I told management that I had plans to eventually go back to school and they took it personally.

Response 3

My supervisor had internally exposed the bullier of sexually harassing a female co-worker. The bullier then attacked me, because he could not attack my supervisor.

Response 4

2 months

Response 5

I noticed it almost as soon as I started working there. The employee had been working there two years before I joined and she is still an employee. She did not quit but considered taking legal action against her direct manager. I am not sure if she is being singled out because she is older (late 50s) and the managers are in their early 40s.

Response 6

It started from the very beginning of moving to Georgia and nothing triggered it, it's the nature of this profession. Ask any non-dentist professional and they'll tell you the same thing.

Response 7

The bullying started after the first day of work. My age at that time was the trigger. These days it's because I'm a graduate student at Emory. I also believe that at that time this individual was going through a divorce, and could not, and still can not disassociate her personal issues from her professional responsibilities.

Response 8

Through organizational structure changes, the bully boss became my boss around 2004. We'd met and handled certain things together in the past but not as a specific boss-employee manner before that time. Bullying started in 2005.

Response 9

I think its the fact that I was new, this was three years ago. It stopped the moment I decided to stop telling the manager and deal with my bullies myself. I did not hesitate to remind them of Policies in the workplace and I will not tolerate any more demeaning tones or yelling or gossip.

Unfortunately, the next three questions yielded a yes no response with only 4 responses providing little clarity.

How did this experience affect you?

Response 1

not comfortable.

Response 2

I no longer love the work I do and dread coming into the office. As of now, I currently work for the same company.

Response 3

Advocating for others as well as being sure to document incidences.

Response 4

Very little. I told the provost what happened, and I know that the bullier was severely punished for attacking me.

Response 5

I felt terrible for my co-worker. I know she is intelligent and capable, but unfortunately, she has been stigmatized. HR does not seem to do anything to curb the bullying behavior.

Response 6

Fear, low self esteem, long-term anger, resentment, disappointment and lost all respect for dentists

Response 7

This experience has made me miserable and depressed for over 9 years. I wake up daily with stomach problems, I've cried numerous times on my way to work or at work, and I've had numerous anxiety attacks. It has affected my personal relationships, my ability to focus on school, and my confidence. It is debilitating and a serious problem in the workforce. Unfortunately, women need to take a good look at themselves because the message we are sending to younger generations is that it's okay to bully, and it's okay to be rude and hurtful. I would rather have someone literally stab me in the back because I think that would feel so much better than the hurt I've had to endure at work over all these years.

Response 8

Despite going through pancreatic cancer diagnosis with my partner, and then losing her, virtually all of my nightmares over the past few years are still about the job.

Response 9

At first I was really affected, but I have learnt how to recognize what is bullying and I have developed coping skills.

How did this experience change you? are you an advocate for others/did you never work again?

Response 1

yes, I am stronger advocate by my self, I am still worker and put record of every things.

Response 2

It has helped me realize what I want for myself career-wise and has prompted me to look for other work.

Response 3

Advocating for others as well as being sure to document incidences.

Response 4

I admire her for hanging in and not quitting.

Response 5

I've decided to switch careers by going back to school, I loved my career as a dental hygienist but miserable working for an a-hole where you're constantly on eggshells. I've also not recommended the field of dentistry for others to go into when I'm asked and have shared mine & others experiences on why to choose another profession.

Response 6

I continue to work at the present location. I do consider myself as an advocate for others and tend to defend others when possible. Over the years, this experience has changed me both positively and negatively. Positive in the sense that it has made me more determined to be an advocate for others. Negative in that my health and the level of stress I endure each day is simply unhealthy

Response 7

Never worked again (so far).

Response 8

It made me more assertive, firm and even more professional with following discrepancy policies and protocols.

Why did you bully the target, did their appearance, actions or attitude play a part? Elaborate..

Response 1

"appearance in person and liar to the manager without not asked the another person question"

Response 2

"NA. I've also offered my support and being a teamplayer b/c I know how horrible it feels and also feel that the dental staff needs to "stick together" in order to survive the continual wrath of the dentist and the dentist's constant mood swings as you never know why you'll be dealing with from one day to the next. I work part-time in a popular women's clothing store and this is the only job I've ever felt secure in which I wasn't in fear of each day if I was going to get fired or not."

Appendix 5: Raw data



Sheet_1.xls