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Handbook of Research on Organizational Culture and Diversity in the Modern Workforce

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Chapter 7

Workplace Bullying in Digital Environments: Antecedents, Consequences, Prevention, and Future Directions

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ABSTRACT

Workplace bullying continues to be a prevalent workplace conflict issue in organizations around the world. The organizational reliance of communication technologies and digital media have enabled workplace bullying to evolve into workplace cyberbullying. Workplace bullying impacts individuals, relationships, organizations, and societies. For this reason, this chapter reviewed the transdisciplinary workplace bullying literature to conceptualize key constructs such as workplace bullying and workplace cyberbullying. This chapter also reviews the prevalence of workplace bullying, antecedent behaviors of workplace bullying, the consequences of workplace bullying, and the intervention approaches. Lastly, this chapter offers several recommendations for the future trends of workplace bullying scholarship.

INTRODUCTION

Being harassed by a peer or a supervisor in the workplace can harm employees and an organization's working environment when not managed effectively. Being called malicious names at work such as, "You're an idiot, you can't do anything right" or "You're stupid, why don't you just quit your job, we don't need you" can make long-lasting emotional scars in individual employees. Other indirect forms of aggression can include being excluded from a team and being ignored from participating in meaningful work tasks. Because of the latest technological advances within organizations, workplace bullying has evolved into workplace cyberbullying. Aggressors, or bullies, may use mobile devices to harass other workers within and outside of working hours through email, text messaging, instant messaging, or through apps. Victims may also receive threatening and harmful messages from their colleagues and supervisors through email systems and social networking sites.

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The Workplace Bullying Institute (2014) conducted a national survey which revealed that 27% of American workers have experienced abusive conduct in the workplace (Namie, Christensen, & Phillips, 2014). Most of the reported workplace bullying behaviors were enacted by organizational leaders such as supervisors and managers. Interestingly, even though 72% of Americans were conscious of workplace bullying behavior at work, they reported not reporting the behavior and not addressing the problem adequately (Namie, Christensen, & Phillips, 2014). Approximately 27% of employees reported directly witnessing workplace bullying behaviors without taking action (Namie, Christensen, & Phillips, 2014).

Researchers and practitioners have conducted a plethora of research studies to investigate this phenomenon by examining it from the psychological, communication, organizational, and sociological perspectives. Despite the high prevalence of behavioral misconduct at work, managers and employees continue to struggle with this issue with little to no preparation. Some of these common struggles include identifying and reporting workplace bullying behavior, managing workplace bullying as a manager, and developing a civilized organizational culture.

In order to prevent workplace bullying, Yamada (2002) originated the Healthy Workplace Bill (HWB) to prevent abuse in the workplace; however, criticisms have been reported about the bill. First, the bill does not require employers to take responsibility for workplace bullying behavior (Namie, Namie, & Lutgen-Sandvik, 2011). Although many employers were aware of the bill, several employers did not implement the suggested recommendations to create a safe working environment. Second, the bill is not linked to any judicial action by the courts and it did not protect all victims of workplace abuse. Without the support from lawmakers and federal legislation, making amends due to the injustices of workplace abuse became more difficult to achieve (Namie, Namie, & Lutgen-Sandvik, 2011). According to the Workplace Bullying Institute (2014), thus far, there is no federal law protecting the labor rights of abused American workers, despite the consistent reports of physical and psychological injuries due to workplace misconducts.

Given the continued high prevalence of victimization in the workplace and the lack of understanding of workplace bullying, this chapter will address the following six themes: 1) the conceptualization of workplace bullying, 2) the prevalence, 3) the antecedent behaviors, 4) the consequences, 5) the prevention approaches, and 6) the future directions of workplace bullying scholarship.

BACKGROUND

Conceptualizing Workplace Bullying, Workplace Harassment, and Cyberbullying

Workplace bullying has been previously defined as the “repeated behavior that offends, humiliates, sabotages, intimidates, or negatively affects someone’s work when there is an imbalance of power” (Barron, 2003, & Zapf & Einarsen, 2001, p. 5). It also includes “harassing, offending, or socially excluding someone or negatively affecting someone’s work” (Einarsen, Hoel, Zapf, & Cooper, 2011, p.22). Nielsen, Matthiesen, and Einarsen (2010) also extended Olweus’ (1991) definition of bullying that was tailored to children to the definition of workplace bullying based on the following four elements: target exposure, repeated negative behaviors, duration of mistreatment, and an imbalance of power. First, a target receives a direct or indirect negative message (e.g., threat) that is both unwanted and emotionally disturbing. Second, the aggressive behavior is not a singular event, but rather repeated over time toward

one or more individuals in an organizational setting. Third, the duration of the workplace bullying behavior occurs over an extended period of time (e.g., months, years). Fourth, there is a power imbalance between the target and the bully (e.g., supervisor-subordinate).

In addition to this definition, several typologies have been proposed in order to conceptualize workplace bullying behaviors. For instance, Harvey, Heames, Richey, and Leonard (2006) developed a five-facet typology which includes aggressive behavior, self-esteem attacks, manipulation of work, ostracizing, and threats. Aggressive behavior include both verbal and physical abuse behaviors such as shoving, shouting, and physical intimidation (Harvey et al., 2006; Moayed, Daraiseh, Shell, & Salem, 2006). Self-esteem attacks serve to reduce the confidence of workers at work by spreading malevolent rumors, ridiculing workers' performance, and expressing criticisms and belittling remarks (Harvey et al., 2006; Moayed et al., 2006). Manipulation of work focuses on hindering workers' capacity to perform effectively, which can include assigning an excessive workload, setting workers up to fail, and excessive micromanaging (Harvey et al., 2006; Moayed et al., 2006).

Ostracizing includes isolating workers from a work group through ignoring workers' presence, making practical jokes, and through social exclusion (Harvey et al., 2006; Moayed et al., 2006). Threats focus on eliciting fear among workers through threats to their personal or professional status and through physical threats (e.g., punching, kicking, and poking). This typology highlights how workplace bullying behaviors vary by the intensity of cognitive and physical attacks, and by the motives of the aggressor. Ultimately, these differing workplace bullying behaviors enable managers and workers to identify workplace bullying episodes.

Another taxonomy of workplace bullying strategies was developed by Rodríguez-Carballeira, Escartín, Visauta, Porrúa, & Martín-Peña (2010). The indirect workplace bullying strategies include isolation, control and manipulation of information, and control-abuse of working conditions (Rodríguez-Carballeira et al., 2010). Isolation focuses on the marginalization of workers by physically isolating workers from other colleagues or by socially isolating workers by restricting employees' interactions with other colleagues. Control and manipulation of information focuses on manipulating information which workers receive through interference or deceptive practices to sabotage the workers. Control-abuse of working conditions refers to putting workers at risk through obstructionism, which hinders workers' performance or through assigning risky work tasks that can harm an individuals' health.

The direct workplace bullying strategies include emotional abuse, professional discredit, and devaluation of the workers' role in the workplace (Rodríguez-Carballeira et al., 2010). Emotional abuse focuses on expressions that harm workers' emotional well-being through messages that are threatening, disrespectful, humiliating, and rejecting. Professional discredit focuses on cognitive processes such as discrediting of workers' professional credibility through belittlement of workers' expertise, knowledge, and performance. Devaluation of the role in the workplace refers to undervaluing employees' duties and roles in order to make workers feel inferior within an organization. This taxonomy conceptualizes workplace bullying using both indirect and direct workplace bullying strategies in order to enable researchers and practitioners to identify workplace bullying behavior within an organization.

On the other hand, workplace cyberharassment is another increasing modern workplace conflict problem which includes sending threatening messages that can be racist or sexist via email or mobile phone technology (Whitty & Carr, 2006). Cyberharassment is defined as "a personal attack against an individual using any form of technology" (Ophoff, Machaka, & Stander, 2015, p. 494), which can include computers, telephones, mobile devices, tablets, and electronic watches. It can include "obscene or hate

e-mail/text messages that threaten or frighten, or e-mails/text messages that contain offensive content” (Bowie, Fisher, & Cooper, 2005, p.252).

Cyberharassment in the workplace can also include cyberstalking through surveillance systems, cyber-terrorism behaviors such as spreading computer viruses that harm personal computers, and unwanted cybersex solicitations (Piotrowski, 2012). Scholars also use the harassment term synonymously to cyberbullying behaviors (Ophoff, Machaka, & Stander, 2015). Employees may become targets of cyberharassment from their peers, subordinates, supervisors, or clients. This form of cyberharassment abuse in the workplace has gained an enhanced amount of attention in the fields of psychology, business, and communication (Durkin & Patterson, 2011). However, insufficient literature exists about the topic and defining workplace cyberharassment has been a continuous struggle.

While face-to-face workplace bullying and workplace cyberbullying share similar conceptualizations, workplace cyberbullying extends to the Internet with the use of communication technology and it is not limited to only the workplace environment. For instance, it is possible to get cyberbullied by a supervisor or a manager using a mobile device from one’s home, or from an environment outside of a workplace setting. This lack of geographical restriction is one of the key characteristics of cyberbullying. Furthermore, cyberbullying that only occurs within a workplace setting such as exchanging hostile emails at work is referred to as “cyber incivility” (Lim & Teo, 2009). Cyber incivility tends to occur due to the lack of netiquette training, which is necessary to train employees to fulfill an organization’s ethical communication standards when communication with other workers (Giumetti, McKibben, Hatfield, Schroeder, & Kowalski, 2012; Giumetti, Hatfield, Scisco, Schroeder, Muth, & Kowalski, 2013; Park, Fritz, & Jex, 2015).

Cybervictims are employees who receive threatening messages through the Internet or through communication technology, and they experience workplace cyberbullying in face-to-face environments and/or in electronic environments. Cybervictims tend to consistently receive several negative attacks from one individual such as a colleague, supervisor, or a customer, or by a work group (Zapf & Einarsen, 2001). Because cybervictims can receive negative, threatening electronic messages from their coworkers and/or supervisors outside of a working environment, their emotional pain is extended to the privacy of their own homes and lives, which can make cyberbullying more emotionally painful in comparison to face-to-face workplace bullying (Zapf & Einarsen, 2001; Baruch, 2005).

However, cyberbullies in the workplace are characterized as aggressive communicators who send direct or indirect negative messages to intimidate or harass others online or via communication technology such as a mobile device, tablet, laptop, or computer (Zapf & Einarsen, 2001). Unlike face-to-face bullies, cyberbullies often remain anonymous when engaging in aggressive behaviors due to the Internet’s anonymity characteristics (Griffiths, 2003). A cyberbully may elect to remain anonymous, use pseudo-names, and pseudo-accounts to post harmful messages in social networking sites, blogs, and websites without any perceived consequences (Griffiths, 2003). The anonymity of the Internet can make it difficult to identity the perpetrators of cyberbullying and it may empower bullies to continue their negative behaviors.

Because the Internet and technological advices are not well regulated by organizations, bullies tend to continue to harass their workplace victims without the fear of getting caught (Patchin & Hinduja, 2006; Tokunaga, 2010; Forsell, 2016). Cyberbullies also experience the disinhibition effect, or reduced social boundaries in online interactions between themselves and their targets (Griffiths, 2003). In face-to-face aggressive episodes, workplace bullies may practice impression management strategies to maintain their identity in front of their peers or supervisors, but in a technological environment, where nonverbal

cues are unapparent, bullies may engage in cyberbullying behaviors without facing similar identity risks (Sheridan, 2014). Without the nonverbal cues such as facial expressions and gestures, cyberbullies are less likely to empathize with their victims because they are not able to see the negative consequences of their behavior (Slonje & Smith, 2008; Forsell, 2016). Thus, workplace bullying and workplace cyberbullying have several unique characteristics and distinctions that set these concepts apart.

Prevalence

The prevalence of workplace bullying in the U.S. is widely documented by various researchers. According to Wheeler, Halbesleben, and Shanine (2010), approximately 50% of U.S. employees have reported incidents of workplace bullying, which can include acts such as having one's opinions being ignored, getting insulted, humiliated, joked about, or threatened. Another study found that approximately 14.6% of employees reported being bullied at work (Nielsen, Matthiesen, & Einarsen, 2010). Likewise, Fox and Stallworth (2005) noted that when assessing workplace bullying behaviors across five years, a total of 95% of employees reported being bullied in the workplace. In another study, Lutgen-Sandvik, Tracy, and Alberts (2007) suggested that "approximately 35-50 percent of US workers experience one negative act at least weekly in any 6-12 month period" (p. 855). These high prevalence rates suggest that workplace bullying continues to affect many American workers and that it still is a significant organizational problem to examine to better understand this phenomenon.

Workplace bullying is also prevalent in other countries. For instance, an Australian study by Privitera and Campbell (2009) found that the prevalence for cyberbullying in the workplace was 10.7%. In addition, this study found that the majority of respondents experienced face-to-face bullying (34%) in comparison to cyberbullying (10.7%) (Privitera & Campbell, 2009). In Europe, workplace bullying ranges from 10% to 15% (Zapf et al., 2011), in Sweden it is 15% (Olweus, 1991), in the United Kingdom it is 23% (Stephenson & Smith, 1989), in Norway it ranges from 2% to 14.3% (Nielsen et al., 2009), and in Scandinavian it ranges from 3.5% to 16% (Mikkelsen & Einarsen, 2001). In a Turkish study, Bilgel, Aytac, and Bayran (2006) found that 51% of white-collar workers perceived being bullied in the workplace.

Another recent Swedish study found that 9.7% of workplace employees had at least one cyber victimization of a negative act during the last six months (Forsell, 2016). From this sample, a total of 43.1% were male respondents and 39.9% were female respondents who had a position of authority (Forsell, 2016). Given these prevalence rates across different countries, workplace bullying continues to be a global phenomenon that impacts both male and female workers.

Antecedents

Individual Antecedents

The workplace bullying literature has revealed individual antecedents of workplace bullying, which target mainly the bully's behavior. An individual's egotistical tendencies such as Machiavellianism, narcissism, and selfishness tend to be correlated with workplace bullying behaviors (Einarsen, 2005; Astrauskaite, Kern, & Notelaers, 2014). Feelings of worthlessness, low self-esteem, and low self-confidence have also been linked to workplace bullying (Stein, 2006; Astrauskaite, Kern, & Notelaers, 2014). Emotional imbalances such as the inability to control anger, vengeance, and blame have also been linked to bullying behavior (Braithwaite, Ahmed, & Braithwaite, 2008). Power dynamics have also played a role given that

bullies report feeling dominant or superior to others at work (Glaso, Nielsen, & Einarsen, 2009). Some bullies have reported feeling victimized themselves in stressful and highly competitive work environments (Braithwaite, Ahmed, & Braithwaite, 2008).

Studies have also shown that bullying behaviors are motivated by a lack of social skills and leadership skills (Zapf & Einarsen, 2003). For example, Sheard, Kakabadse, and Kakabadse (2013) discovered different types of bullying behaviors manifested by leaders in the workplace, which include deluded, narcissistic, paranoid, and sociopathic bully types. Deluded leaders are unskillful, self-focused, and incapable of accomplishing tasks in a timely manner, and these leaders tend to blame others for their lack of competence. Narcissistic leaders may be socially skillful and ambitious, but they tend to belittle others in order to reclaim their power within an organization. Paranoid leaders are untrusting of others, yet possess no leadership competence, and they tend to use passive-aggressive approaches toward their employees. Sociopathic leaders are antisocial, yet competent leaders due to their harassment of the quality of performance of other workers. These leadership styles lead to a destructive workplace environment (Sheard, Kakabadse, & Kakabadse, 2013).

Few studies recounted the antecedents of victims of workplace bullying. A couple of studies found that personality characteristics were not associated with workplace bullying victimization experiences (Leymann, 1996; Hoel, Rayner, & Cooper, 1999). However, some studies revealed associations with being victimized in the workplace and negative personal characteristics such as shyness, high anxiety levels, low interpersonal skills, and neuroticism (Einarsen, Raknes, & Matthiesen, 1994; Vartia, 1996; Zapf, 1999). Negative affectivity, which involves the experience of negative emotions in the workplace has also been associated with workplace harassment (Duffy, Ganster, & Pagon, 2002; Bowling & Beehr, 2006). In another study, workers who reported being victimized at work reported possessing high cognitive skills and high job performance (Kim & Glomb, 2010). These studies suggest that victims tend to report having negative personality traits, high cognitive abilities, and poor conflict management skills.

Being a prior victim of workplace harassment has also been linked to episodes of future revictimization (Desraumaux, Machado, Przygodzki-Lionet, & Lourel, 2015). Victims who perceived low responsibility of the workplace bullying event were also more likely to get revictimized in the future (Desraumaux et al., 2015). Low status employees were also more likely to get harassed in the workplace in comparison to high status employees (Bowling & Beehr, 2006). When examining the coping skills of victims, some studies suggest that victims report having an avoidant style in addressing workplace conflict and having passive tendencies (Einarsen et al., 1994; Zapf, 1999). Given the findings of this scholarship, victims of workplace bullying report having low responsibility, low status, and poor conflict management skills, which might be the reason why workplace bullying persists in the workplace.

Organizational Antecedents

Researchers have also examined the antecedents of workplace bullying at the organizational level. For instance, Baillien, De Cyper, and De Witte (2011) conducted a two-wave longitudinal study and found that a lack of job autonomy and a heavy workload were significant antecedents of perpetrators of workplace bullying. In a series of interviews, Ciby and Raya (2014) found the antecedents for workplace bullying included supervisors' job demands such as setting unrealistic goals for employees, having an unsupportive leadership style, and an unprofessional management style. Additionally, a meta-analysis revealed that stressors such as role conflict, role ambiguity, role overload, and work constraints were linked with workplace bullying (Bowling & Beehr, 2006).

Other studies found that status inconsistency, peer pressure, competition, and social exclusion in the workplace leads to workplace bullying (Heames, Harvey, & Treadway, 2006; Leymann, 1996). The lack of social support at work from managers and coworkers can also lead to an escalation of workplace bullying (Leymann, 1996). The culture of an organization can also impact workplace bullying such having a poor climate, lack of workplace bullying policies, and poor organizational communication (Vartia 1996; Baillien, Neyes, & De Witte, 2004). Organizations with unclear job characteristics such as job requirements, role expectations, and ambiguous skills tend to cultivate negative working environments that yield high levels of stress, which can stir up organizational conflict and workplace harassment behaviors (Einarsen, 1994; Vartia, 1996; Hoel & Cooper, 2000).

Social Antecedents

Only a handful of studies have examined the social antecedents of workplace bullying. Societal norms promoted by the mass media need to be considered in order to understand how these social factors impact the behavioral processes of employees within an organization (Johnson, 2011). Coyne (2004) examined the role of mass media effects on abusive forms of organizational behavior. Television violence that displays workplace bullying with TV shows such as *The Office* for entertainment purposes, tend to normalize the perceptions of violence in the workplace (Coyne, 2004). In a content analysis of British television programs such as *Friends* and the *Simpsons*, Coyne and Archer (2004) investigated the different forms of indirect aggression displays (e.g., social exclusion, spreading negative rumors) and found that these forms of aggression were not perceived to be violent in comparison to direct forms of aggression (e.g., punching, shoving).

While most studies of traditional bullying and cyberbullying focus on the media's impacts on youth and children (Bauman, 2015), organizational implications may be derived from these investigations. Bauman (2015) argued that popular media such as television programs and movies promote a distorted view of cyberbullying and traditional bullying. In an empirical study, participants reported a higher prevalence of suicide over cyberbullying issues, when statistical reports indicate that traditional bullying had a stronger statistical link to youth suicide. Given the findings of this study, different types of popular media may need to be explored as antecedents of workplace bullying and cyberbullying in adult populations. Because not many scholars have examined mass media as an antecedent factor, future scholars may fulfill this gap in the workplace bullying scholarship.

The laws implemented by society can also provoke judicial actions against workplace bullying behaviors. To date, there are no existing laws at the federal nor state levels that make workplace cyberbullying illegal. While the U.S. has not implemented a federal law against workplace bullying, a couple of states have initiated statutes to protect American workers (Yamada, 2015). In the U.S., only two states began their statutes from the Healthy Workplace Bill (HWB) to illegalize workplace bullying, which include California and Tennessee (Yamada, 2015).

Unlike the U.S., several countries have implemented laws against workplace bullying, which include Canada, Australia, and several European countries such as Sweden, France, and Denmark (Cobb, 2013; Ragusa & Groves, 2015). Victimized individuals who are employed in countries with legislative support have an advantage to pursuit lawsuits and to obtain support when experiencing these types of abusive behaviors (Cobb, 2013; Davidson & Harrington, 2012). Without legislative support, organizational leaders may not motivated to take workplace bullying 'seriously' and may not make the proper amends when workplace bullying occurs within their organizations (Martin & LaVan, 2010; Oppermann, 2009).

Thus, a society's laws may serve as antecedents to understanding the occurrence and prolongation of workplace bullying.

The culture of a society can also impact workplace bullying behavior. Hofstede (2001) cultural dimensions theory explains how the values, norms, and rules in a given society serve to ascribe a series of workplace behaviors based on the nations' perceptions of power distance and individualistic motives. For example, in the U.S., United Kingdom, and Sweden, organizational leaders maintain a low power distance between themselves and their subordinates. These leaders adopt open communication approaches to engage in direct communication with their subordinates without the interference of power dynamics, which may enhance the prospects for direct forms of harassment (Hofstede, 1997; 2001). In these countries, leaders tend to have an individualistic orientation in order to succeed in competitive environments (Jacobson, Hood, & Van Buren, 2014). Given these orientations, leaders and supervisors may engage in workplace bullying to maintain their status and individualism (Hofstede, 1997; 2001).

On the other hand, countries such as Singapore, Mexico, and France maintain a high power distance orientation (Hofstede, 1997). Authoritarian leaders maintain their high power distance by not engaging in personal conversations with their subordinates, which may enhance their odds of excluding subordinates in the decision-making process (Jacobson, Hood, Van Buren, 2014). A country with a collectivist orientation promotes values of social cooperation and unity (Hofstede, 1997). Organization leaders with a collectivistic orientation may pressure members to engage in consensus to maintain the harmony of the group and may adopt mobbing to pressure individuals who disagree with the group's objective (Khan, 2014). In collectivistic cultures, members may engage in indirect forms of workplace harassment using nonverbal cues (e.g., rolling the eyes; lack of eye contact) or social exclusion through silence practices (Samnani, 2013).

In summary, individual, organizational, and social antecedents should be considered when dealing with face-to-face and electronic workplace bullying. Examining one or two antecedent factors alone will not highlight the extent of workplace bullying problems, which can limit one's ability to understand the complexity of this phenomenon. Exploring different types of antecedents may be necessary to develop training manuals and organizational policies to address this problem in the workplace.

Consequences

In addition, digital workplace bullying has several negative individual, interpersonal, and organizational consequences. Digital workplace bullying has been associated with individual issues such as psychological, emotional, and physical distress (Altman, 2012). For instance, victims report feeling fear and anxiety due to prolonged workplace bullying behaviors (Lutgen-Sandvik, 2003). Victims of workplace bullying have also reported higher depression rates, stress (Mikkelsen & Einarsen, 2002), and sleep disorders (Guastella & Moulds, 2007). Consistently receiving threats and hurtful messages from coworkers or managers also lead to reduced self-esteem, self-confidence, self-worth, and autonomy (Kinney, 1994; 2006). In a 3-wave longitudinal Norwegian study, Birkeland Nielsen, Hostmark Nielsen, Notelaers, and Einarsen (2015) found that victims of workplace bullying reported an increase of suicide ideation overtime. Not only does it impact individuals' mental well-being, but it also impacts individuals' physical health in terms of elevated blood pressure (Hoel, Faragher, & Cooper, 2004).

Vie, Glasø, and Einarsen (2011) found support for self-labeling as victims of workplace bullying as a moderator of the relationship between workplace bullying victimization and poor health outcomes such as physical fatigue, back pain, and experiencing headaches. Victims of workplace bullying also

report experiencing low job satisfaction and intentions to exit the organization (Lutgen-Sandvik et al., 2007). Another study found that workplace cyberbullying in a multi-national corporation led to poor job satisfaction and low job performance regardless of the particular technological medium that was used (e.g., e-mail, phone) (Baruch, 2005).

Interpersonal issues also emerge from workplace bullying. Victims tend to experience social isolation and feelings of stigmatization, which negatively impacts their workplace relationships and career opportunities (Keller, Shiflett, Schleifer, & Bartlett, 1994; Kinney, 2012). Bystanders and team workers may also distance themselves from both the victims and bullies, to avoid any possible risks from being involved with workplace bullying (Coyne, Craig, & Chong, 2004). Victims' romantic partners and children also become negatively affected by the victims' emotional distress (Heames & Harvey, 2004). Additionally, the victim-bully relationship tends to deteriorate the victims' future professional relationship with the bully (Lutgen-Sandvik, 2006). Given these interpersonal disturbances, victims sometimes choose to exit an organization to distance themselves from the bully and from their colleagues (Lutgen-Sandvik et al., 2006). Fundamentally, workplace bullying tends to place an additional relational burden on the victims.

There are also direct and indirect organizational consequences to workplace bullying. Indirect consequences include job burnout, absenteeism, poor organizational commitment, decreased productivity, and high turnover from victimized workers (Dhar, 2012; Glaso & Notelaers, 2012). Organizations may also face litigation leading to legal lawsuits, damaged corporate image, and reduced credibility (Earnshaw & Cooper, 1996). Organizations may also deal with direct economic consequences due to workplace bullying from turnovers and lawsuits, which can range from US\$20,000 to US\$750,000 annually (Indvik & Johnson, 2012).

Lieber (2010) argues that workplace bullying can cost any organization about US\$2 million dollars per year. Given these economical costs, organizations are better off preventing and managing this issue before it becomes uncontrollable. Organizations that develop workplace bullying also become vulnerable to cultivating a negative work climate, which may lead to poor organizational performance (Samnani & Singh, 2012). As these studies suggest, digital (and non-digital) workplace bullying have consequences at the individual-level, interpersonal-level, and the organizational-level.

SOLUTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Given these consequences, prevention and intervention efforts have been implemented by organizational leaders and researchers to determine ways of reducing workplace bullying at the individual, organizational, and societal levels.

Individual

Some workplace bullying prevention efforts have focused on dealing with individuals within an organization. Prevention efforts are designed according to how workplace bullying is defined. For instance, if workplace bullying focuses on psychological traits such as personality, then prevention approaches will tailor their trainings to deal with a bully's aggressive behaviors and their personality traits (Kinney, 2012). By treating a bully's aggressive tendencies and helping bullies to manage their anger and stress, these approaches focus on decreasing the bully's aggressive behaviors (Osatuke, Moore, Ward, Dyrenforth, & Belton, 2009).

Workplace Bullying in Digital Environments

Other approaches train bystanders to learn to identify and report workplace bullying behavior (Hogh & Dofradottir, 2001). These preventative approaches train bystanders to avoid negligence and distancing behaviors (Paull, Omari, & Standen, 2012). In addition, other approaches focus on treating the victims of workplace bullying, by providing social support and helping them to engage in self-advocacy behaviors (Fox & Stallworth, 2009). Prevention and intervention approaches that focus solely on individuals (e.g., bully, victim, bystander) at the micro-level are not always effective, due to the complexity of onsite and online workplace bullying (Johnson, 2011).

Organizational

Prevention and interventions have been designed at the organizational level, to implement formal policies and rules to address workplace bullying behaviors. For example, studies have examined company policies that reduce cyberbullying in the workplace and managers' responses to digital interpersonal conflicts emerging in the workplace such as the use of counseling and workshops (Lalonde, 2007; Piotrowski, 2012). Having an official zero-tolerance policy against workplace bullying behaviors that includes online harassment in an organization may not always be effective, and for this reason, organizational leaders need to train their staff about the use of the policy (Martin & Lavan, 2010). Cowan (2011) interviewed human resource professionals and inquired about their knowledge of anti-bullying policies at their current organization, and some were oblivious to their organizations' anti-bullying policies. Therefore, it is important to ensure that human resource professionals and managers understand the existing policies that exist to cope with onsite and digital workplace bullying.

Having Internet and civility policies in place in the workplace does not guarantee the implementation of these policies. For this reason, some companies have implemented a variety of alternative strategies to overcome workplace bullying. Some organizations use software technology to monitor technological communication in the workplace to detect threatening or hurtful messages through office computers and email systems (Whitty, 2004). Psychological assessments have also been used during the hiring process to detect potential 'bullies' or aggressive employees (Whitty & Carr, 2006). Organizational personnel also adopt consulting approaches to intervene in workplace bullying issues (Saam, 2010).

For example, mediation has been adopted as a common intervention strategy to cope with workplace bullying, which is handled by an external mediator or a supervisor that facilitates the dialogue between bullies and their victims (Hubert, 2003). Mediation efforts are mildly successful and have been criticized due to the power imbalances and the lack of negotiation skills of the parties involved in the de-escalation process (Hubert, 2003; Ferris, 2004). Ferris (2004) investigated the various organizational responses to workplace bullying, which include trainings for potential bullies and staff, counseling, and performance management (p. 393ff). Interventions that treat workplace bullying as a multi-faceted, complex issue, are more likely to implement a variety of different strategies at the individual and organizational levels, which may be more effective in the long-run (Saam, 2010).

Societal

Unlike other countries, the U.S. still needs to obtain anti-workplace bullying laws at the federal and state levels. Countries such as Canada, Norway, and Sweden have implemented laws that protect employees from workplace harassment (Ordinance Swedish National Board of Occupational Safety and Health, 1993; Work Environment Act, 2012; Worksafe Victoria, 2012). Employees who experience workplace

bullying are encouraged to document their experiences and apply to the Fair Work Commission (Fair Work Amendment, 2013). International studies suggest the implementation of anti-bullying laws serve to empower employees' decisions to report workplace bullying behavior, which ultimately, can prevent negative outcomes such as job turnover and low job satisfaction (Work Environment Act, 2012).

However, Yamada (2003) found that U.S. courts are less likely to penalize face-to-face or online workplace bullying due to employees' emotional distress. Willard (2001) found that the laws that are implemented at the state-level do not deal with workplace cyberbullying, but rather more general behaviors of bullying in educational institutions. For example, California, Tennessee, and Utah have mandated trainings based on the WBI Healthy Workplace Bill (HWB) that applies to state employees, and this bill trains managers about the negative impact of "abusive conduct," which includes only face-to-face workplace harassment (e.g., verbal abuse) to attempt to prevent workplace abuse (Workplace Bullying, 2016). However, without the implementation of protective laws across the United States at the federal level, organizations and victims of workplace bullying will continue to face challenges in overcoming violence and abuse in the workplace (Yamada, 2003).

Informal

Organizations also tend to address workplace bullying using informal approaches. For instance, some organizations adopt and encourage ethical leadership in their organizations that discourages aggressive behaviors in the workplace (Appelbaum, Semerjian, & Mohan, 2012). Organizations may also develop values of respect, civility, and cooperation, which cultivate a civilized workplace culture (Power, 2013). With an emphasis on workplace safety, an organization's culture can impact the communication behaviors of employees and the managers (Power, 2013). By being informally intolerant of workplace violence behaviors, employees and managers are less reluctant to report and address workplace bullying as it emerges (Meloni & Austin, 2011). Organizations may also informally reward "netiquette" behavior in the workplace to promote civility, reduce cyberbullying, and foster positive work relationships (Whitty & Carr, 2006).

The literature suggests that adopting only one approach is ineffective to address workplace bullying. It is recommended that organizations implement a variety of strategies to prevent, intervene, and cope with workplace bullying (Kinney, 2012). According to Kinney (2012, 2009), prior to selecting a preventative or intervention approach, an organization should follow the following four-step criteria.

First, develop workplace bullying policies and practices within the organization to build a civilized culture (Kinney, 2012, 2009). Managers and employees may receive training regarding how to refer to and use these anti-bullying policies when confronted with misconduct in the workplace. Second, an organization needs to assess the approach's effectiveness (Kinney, 2012, 2009). Without assessments, an organization may continue to face obstacles in its prevention of workplace bullying. Assessments may include periodic monitoring of employees' behaviors, surveying and/or interviewing of employees and supervisors regarding their workplace bullying experiences, and observing the organizational climate through a third-party perspective.

Third, implement a tracking system of workplace bullying incidents (Kinney, 2012, 2009). These tracking systems may be maintained through paper documentation for each incidence or through electronic files. When implementing this tracking system, privacy and confidentiality issues need to be considered. Fourth, build supportive educational systems to educate all staff within an organization about workplace bullying (Kinney, 2012, 2009). These can include electronic podcasts, webinars, and

trainings and/or face-to-face workshops and trainings that educate all staff on identifying, dealing, and coping with workplace bullying that occurs face-to-face or in electronic environments (e.g., email, chat rooms, text messaging). By following these four criteria, organizations may reduce workplace bullying behaviors that occur onsite and/or online.

FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

Previous research studies have highlighted possible areas of growth in the future scholarship of face-to-face and digital workplace bullying. First, taxonomies must be developed to conceptualize concepts such as workplace cyberharassment and workplace cyberbullying. Thus far, the literature suggests that most existing taxonomies are focusing on face-to-face workplace bullying behaviors (Harvey et al., 2006; Moayed, Daraiseh, Shell, & Salem, 2006; Rodríguez-Carballeira et al., 2010). While researchers have a solid research foundation on workplace bullying, more research is needed to develop new taxonomies to better identify the specific electronic behaviors that occur via the Internet and through communication technology during workplace cyberbullying situations. For instance, future taxonomies might distinguish between email bullying, text message bullying, app bullying, and social network bullying. By developing cyberbullying taxonomies, researchers can improve their conceptualizations of cyberbullying and their measurement of cyberbullying.

Second, several models need to be developed to understand workplace bullying behaviors using a combination of different mediums (face-to-face; Internet; technology). Most recent models emphasize workplace bullying in face-to-face contexts emphasizing antecedents and consequences of workplace bullying during working hours, while neglecting electronic forms of harassment such as through email, text messages, and social networking sites (Van den Brande, Baillien, De Witte, Vander Elst, & Godderis, 2016; Perminiene, Kern, & Perminas, 2016; Trépanier, Fernet, Austin, & Boudrias, 2016). Because cyberbullying at work is becoming more prevalent, newer models need to be developed to understand the perplexity of cyberbullying at work using the Internet in social networking sites and email systems, and computer mediated technologies such as laptops, mobile devices and apps, tablets, and iWatches. Developing hybrid models may enhance our understanding of the theoretical connections between the antecedents and the effects of workplace bullying.

In addition to the different communication channels, several factors need to be considered in the development of these hybrid workplace cyberbullying models such as individual factors (e.g., personality traits, motivations, emotions, gender), interpersonal factors (e.g., hostility, status, power dynamics), organizational factors (e.g., climate, leadership styles, competitive values, hierarchy levels), and societal factors (e.g., socioeconomics, injustice, discrimination, inequality) that relate to cyberbullying perpetration and victimization behaviors. Due to the complexity of cyberbullying in the workplace, models need to account for the possible phases of the cyberbullying process.

Third, workplace bullying researchers need to apply computer-mediated theories to understand, prevent, and intervene in cyberbullying incidents in the workplace. While psychosocial and organizational psychology theories have been used effectively to understand workplace bullying such as social learning theory (Kolbert, Crothers, & Wells, 2014), social identity theory (Solanelles, Ullrich, Zapf, Schlüter, & Dick, 2013), attribution theory (Cowan, 2013), structuration theory (Boucat, 2001), and ecological systems framework (Johnson, 2011), computer-mediated theories should be implemented to understand workplace cyberbullying, for instance, social presence theory (Short, Williams, & Christie, 1976) can be

used to understand how the emotions of intimacy are impacted through cyberbullying behaviors and the role of psychological distance in mediated settings has on victims' emotional experiences. Social information theory (Walther, 1992) can be used to understand whether cyberbullying perpetration behaviors are perceived to be more (or less) threatening due to the lack of nonverbal cues. Similarly, the uses and gratification theory (Blumer & Katz, 1974) can help explain why cyberbullying victims in the workplace continue to use social networking sites, microblogging sites, and other mobile applications despite being cyberbullied outside of the workplace environment. The social identity model of deindividuation effects (SIDE) (Lea & Spears, 1991) can also be used to understand the role of anonymity and the expression of social identity in online mobbing behaviors that occur in group-based workplace cyberbullying. Thus, the application of computer-mediated theories may benefit the future scholarship of workplace bullying.

Fourth, additional studies need to place more emphasis on the examination of upward cyberbullying, which focus on low status individuals cyberbullying high status individuals within a workplace setting. Most studies focus on managers bullying employees through power abuse and aggressive tendencies (Hutchingson, Vickers, Jackson, & Wilkes, 2010; Hershcovis, Reich, Parker, & Bozeman, 2012; Arenas, León-Pérez, Munduate, & Medina, 2015). However, upward cyberbullying has emerged with the development of new technologies and social media. For instance, low status employees can use social networking sites such as Facebook and microblogging tools such as Twitter to post hostile messages about their managers, which may harm managers' reputation and the organization's credibility. By examining upward cyberbullying behavioral patterns in the workplace through surveying and interviewing organizational managers regarding their experiences, we can begin to understand this phenomenon with greater clarity.

CONCLUSION

This chapter reviewed the literature that conceptualizes workplace bullying and workplace cyberbullying. To date, no consensus has been achieved given the transdisciplinary nature of workplace bullying. What definitions are used in a given study will determine the factors that are used, which determine the outcomes of the findings. Scholars have emphasized several antecedents of workplace bullying at the individual, organizational, and societal levels. Research has also documented the negative consequences of workplace bullying, which continue to affect individuals in a variety of working environments. Given these consequences, researchers have implemented a variety of intervention approaches to help practitioners and scholars prevent and cope with workplace bullying problems within organizations. Suggestions to stimulate future scholarship on cyberbullying issues in the workplace are also offered. Because workplace bullying (face-to-face and online) will continue to aggravate organizations' working climates and the civility established within an organization, we need to continue to understand, identify, and address this prevalent workplace problem.

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KEY TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

Aggressive Behavior: Unwanted hurtful verbal and nonverbal behaviors that damage an individual's emotional and/or physical well-being.

Conflict Management: The process of reacting skillfully to conflictual situations in relational and business settings.

Cyberbullying: The process of sending and/or receiving harmful messages through communication technology, email, and social media.

Cyberharassment: Unwanted harassment behaviors such as intimidation, threats, and exclusion occurring in online environments through the Internet, mobile technology, and social media.

Deviant Behavior: Human behaviors ranging outside of the acceptable norm.

Healthy Workplace Bill: A California bill developed by David Yamaha to prevent workplace bullying.

Workplace Bullying Institute: A U.S. organization that educates individuals about workplace bullying issues.

Workplace Harassment: Unwanted harassment behaviors occurring in the workplace through intimidation, threats, exclusion, and physical abuse.