WORKPLACE BULLYING AND PERSONALITY TRAITS

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Abstract
Globalisation has made organisations flat as people belonging to diverse culture are working under one roof (Jyoti & Kour, 2015; Jyoti & Kour, 2017). Due to the cultural diversity among the employees they find difficulty in understanding the attitudes, values, feelings, behaviours (Jyoti, Kour & Bhau, 2015; Jyoti & Kour, 2017; Jyoti & Kour, 2015). Therefore, this gives rise to interpersonal conflicts and stress among them. Employees have the tendency or potential to abuse, threat, physically assault, harass etc. to new employees or the existing ones.This repeated negative behaviour is termed as workplace bullying.Employees who are bullied feel stressed, victimised, lack of confidence and are physically and mentally disturbed.

Keywords: Bullying, Personality Traits, Workplace.

Introduction
Globalisation has made organisations flat as people belonging to diverse culture are working under one roof (Jyoti & Kour, 2015; Jyoti & Kour, 2017). Due to the cultural diversity among the employees they find difficulty in understanding the attitudes, values, feelings, behaviours (Jyoti, Kour & Bhau, 2015; Jyoti & Kour, 2017; Jyoti & Kour, 2015). Therefore, this gives rise to interpersonal conflicts and stress among them. Employees have the tendency or potential to abuse, threat, physically assault, harass etc. to new employees or the existing ones. Rationalisations of this behaviour comprise of differences of religion, social class, reputation, race, sexual orientation, gender, appearance, body language, personality, strength, size, or ability.

This repeated negative behaviour is termed as workplace bullying. Most offices have a bully: a person who is pushy and manipulative, and happy to terrorise and harass employees. These people are often quite dominant and socially skilled, and their main purpose is to bring others down in order to gain more status. It has been estimated that 20% of employees experience bullying on a regular basis, and this is mostly based on reported cases. Other studies estimate that up to 50% of employees will experience bullying at some point of their careers.

Since many cases go unreported, the true incidence is arguably much higher than that. Workplace bullying has been referred to as America's silent epidemic. Technology has armed bullies with a wide range of tools for operating behind the scenes. Indeed, cyberbullying–bullying through digital means–is now a well-known phenomenon and it is rapidly catching up with physical forms of bullying.A growing number of scientific studies are attempting to define a common psychological profile for workplace bullies.

Bullying done by group of employees is known as mobbing. Employees who are bullied feel stressed, victimised, lack of confidence and are physically and mentally disturbed. According to Edelmann and Woodall(1997) bullying results in a loss of confidence (reported by 44.2 per cent); physical ailments (38.4 per cent); and stress (37.2 per cent). More long-term effects include physical or psychological ill-health (53.5 per cent), inability to cope (21.5 per cent), and low self-esteem (19.8 per cent).Therefore it is very important for organisation to help those employees who are bullied by seniors and co-workers.Workplace bullying doesnot happen in a social vacuum, rather, it happens in the context of an organisational environment that may aggravate or mitigate the incidence of workplace bullying. It also occurs in the context of a relationship and both members contribute to that relationship.

Therefore, the perpetrator–target relationship is likely to influence the enactment and experience of workplace bullying (Hershcovis& Reich, 2013; Hershcovis, Reich, Parker, & Bozeman, 2012).

Bullying is the repeated and negative behaviour that usually occurs due to cultural and perceived power imbalance. Negative behaviours are catergorisedinto two groups:
1. harassment for workplace bullying behaviours includes discrimination on the grounds of race, sex, religion, nationality, ethnic origin, sexual orientation, disability, age, language, social origin or other status (UN,2008).
2. the more generalised behaviours that affect anyone are called emotional abuse or petty tyranny by the French (Bukspan, 2004), bullying in the English speaking world (Lewis et al. , 2008).

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Types of Bullying
There are 5 types of bullying, which are as follows:
1. **Personal standing threat:**It containsdeclining personal integrity, negative sarcasm, making unsuitable jokes, continuous teasing, name calling, insults and intimidation.
2. **Professional status threat:**It includes accusations related to lack of efforts, public personal humiliation, threatening use of discipline.
3. **Isolation:** It contains avoiding access to opportunities, social and physical isolation, ignoring and excluding.
4. **Overwork:** It includes unmanageable deadlines, needless interruptions.
5. **Destabilisation:** It comprises failure to recognise good work, deduction of responsibility, constant notices of blunders, setting the target to fail, and unstable goals without the target's knowledge.

Abusive workplace behavior: Common abusive workplace bullying is as follows
By Bassman
1. Insulting the individual, usually through diminishing language or verbal abuse.
2. Overworking and devaluing the private, personal life.
3. Harassment by micromanaging time and tasks.
4. Managing by threatening the target.
5. Taking credit for someone else's work.
6. Blocking other's opportunities.
7. Impulsive damaging behavior.
8. Downgrading capabilities of the target.
9. Overvaluation and manipulation of information.

By Hoel and Cooper
1. Other's viewsoverlooked.
2. Not giving information which can affect the target's future performance.
3. Uncovering target to impossible hard work.
4. Being given irrational tasks or deadlines.
5. Ordering to work below competence.
6. Overlooking the target every time he is close.
7. Being a target of humiliation and ridicule at work.
8. Excessive checking of a person's work.
9. Spreading gossip of target's capabilities.
10. Insulting.

Pesonality and Bullying
Brodsky (1976) was the first psychologists to find out bully characteristics and identified traits of the harasser as being power-driven, aggressive and possibly being sadistic and bigoted. The other traits include being authoritarian (Adorno, Frenkel-Brunswik, Levinson & Sanford, 1950), abrasive (Brown &Levinson, 1978), abusive (Bassman, 1992), hostile (Baron &Neuman, 1996) and violent (Leather, Cox, & Farnsworth. 1990). Earlier studies have revealed that both Big Five personality traits and Dark Triad (Machiavellianism, narcissism, psychopathy) personality traits are correlated to bullying and cyber bullying behaviour in adults as well as nonage (adolescents)(Van Geel, Geomans, Toprak&Vedder, 2017).Van Geel, Geomans, Toprak andVedder (2017) revealed that personality dimensions effects bullying or victimisation behaviour in boys and girls of different age group. They revealed that lower level of Agreeableness and Conscientiousness and higher levels of Neuroticism and Extraversion were associated with both bullying and victimization. On the contrary, cognitive and affective empathy were negatively associated only with bullying behavior.

Dark Side of Personality
Office bullies show maladaptive personality features, particularly the dark triad of Machiavellianism, narcissism, and psychopathy. Even though these traits tend to harm long-term relationships–not just at work, but in any area of life–they often confer short-term benefits, such as the ability to fake ability by showing high levels of confidence, risk-taking, and charisma. This allows bullies to move against colleagues through various interpersonal diplomacies such as superficial charm, fearless confrontation, and bold aggression.The most amazing is that they often pick on people who have the same profile, perhaps as they are competing with them for status. As projected, bullies have also been found to be more aggressive and less empathetic, as well as more morally disengaged, than their counterparts.

Bright Side of Personality

One of the most important reasons for the high dominance of bullies at work is that they often display positive character qualities, which co-exists with their dark side. Studies have revealed that bullies are often gregarious, outgoing and assertive. They are also relatively fearless and confident, and those qualities tend to be rewarded in most corporate environments, particularly in the Western world. Further, bullies are often quite high on thrill-seeking, which tends to be linked to higher social status especially among younger employees. Recent studies suggested that some bullies may have higher emotional intelligence, which may enable them to read and influence colleagues to their own advantage. Thus, the combination of higher social skills and lower moral standards may result in more manipulative and mischievous actions at work, especially if people get a kick out of this. The consequences of workplace bullying–from stress, mental health problems, and absenteeism at the individual level to efficiency loss at the organizational level–recruiters and hiring managers would do well to screen out individuals with a propensity or predisposition towards bullying behaviors. It requires paying care to personality characteristics, especially dark side traits.It is also notable that bullying is not just a function of personality, but also the context in which people work, which clarifies the high geographical variability in bullying rates across the globe. Studies indicated that workplace bullying is much more prevalent in chaotic work environments and highly political organizational cultures. Indeed, when people are disappointed with working conditions, poorly managed, and under stress, they are more likely to engage in bullying behaviors even if they are not naturally predisposed to do so.

Recommendations to Reduce Workplace Bullying

The following recommendations are given to organisations to reduce workplace bullying:

1. Enhance awareness, encourage reporting and whistleblowing.
2. Naming and shaming will help uncover and punish bullies in front of public or their colleagues as it shows superiors want a culture that condemns bullying.
3. Coaching should be imparted to bullies which focuses on inhibiting aggressive tendencies in aggressors can be highly effective.
4. Leverage technologies as bullying is mostly done by digital means. Organisations should use text mining and email scraping tools to keep a check and punishing bullying.

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