



BOOK OF PROCEEDINGS

COPENHAGEN 2012

**The 8th International Conference
on Workplace Bullying and Harassment
-Future Challenges**

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defines difference between bullying and cyberbullying, and presents research exploring the causes of cyberbullying and the psychological impact on students.

Design/methodology/approach: To achieve this objective, a total of 20 middle school students were interviewed during focus groups held at two public schools. This qualitative design enables participant expanded and explain their experiences and feelings.

Results/ Hypothesis: It is expected to find that students victims of cyberbullying experience powerfully negative effects and have significantly lower self-esteem than those who had no experience with cyberbullying.

In this paper, I will present preliminary findings from my qualitative PhD project that seeks to contribute to a more rigorous understanding of cyberbullying and its consequences. More specifically, in this paper I will reflect the ideas and personal experiences that this students have related to cyberbullying, and to see what are the psychological consequences of this type of violence.

Cross-cultural understandings of workplace bullying: Preliminary findings from Turkey and Australia

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In an era of globalisation, workplace differences necessitate an increasing need for diversity tolerance. A key to tolerance is mutual understanding facilitating appropriate conduct, including between cultures.

Behaviour in the workplace is the focus of research into bullying, an area receiving increasing attention. The 7th International Conference on Bullying and Harassment included papers from more than 20 countries examining bullying and related constructs. This is evidence that bullying is not a country or culture specific issue.

Cross-cultural studies on workplace bullying are quite limited (Anderson & Bushman, 2002). Researchers accept that behaviours classified as bullying, as well as their antecedents and outcomes vary across cultures (Escartin, Zapf, Arrieta & Rodriguez-Carballeira, 2011; Moayed, Daraiseh, Shell & Salem, 2006). In the above-mentioned conference, among the approximately 150 papers presented only four offered comparisons between cultures. It is apparent, however, that cross-cultural studies will increase our understandings about bullying by identifying the effect of culture on perceptions, understandings and behaviours, and help us develop more effective prevention and intervention strategies.

In the current study, university business students in Turkey and Australia were asked to reflect on their workplace experience and contribute their perspectives on bullying as part of a larger project which aimed to develop a cross-cultural perspective. Turkey is one of only two countries situated in both Europe and Asia; and Australia, is uniquely western in history, but located in the Asia Pacific region. Both countries have considerable diversity within their populations, reflected in their workforces.

Early analysis of free response survey data has yielded a comparison of the convergence and divergence of views between cultures, and also between literature and actual workplace experience. Results develop an understanding of the diversity of perceptions of 'bullying', and place them in a cultural context. Intra-cultural understandings as well as cross-cultural differences play a role in individual interpretations of what constitutes workplace bullying, as does workplace experience.

Social and institutional conditions for bullying

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Much of the work regarding workplace bullying, to-date, has focused on specific aspects: the target, the bully, workplace policies, rehabilitation, remediation, laws designed to prevent the behavior, and so forth. If we are to move towards prevention, though, there is a need to better understand the societal and institutional factors which allow such uncivil behavior to occur at all. This presentation will offer a framework for understanding the dynamics of bullying in a larger context, and suggest theories which might support future research and practice.

There is strong tendency in traditional science to attribute behavior to the intrinsic characteristics of an entity. Something or someone acts the way they do because 'it is the way they are.' In the case of bullying, reference is typically made to the thought that an individual in question 'is' a bully - rather than 'acted like a bully in this situation.' The same attributions, though, are rarely made about a target of bullying. It would, in fact, be rather condescending to suggest that a person 'is' a target, as if that were an inherent part of their nature.

In either case, assuming that a person behaved the same way in all circumstances would be foolish. People act in relation to their circumstances and environments. There are times and places when aggression is considered constructive, and others when it is not appropriate. There are situations and institutions in which varying levels of violence are expected (e.g. fighting matches in sports and reality television shows.) But even in such cases there are still norms about behavior, and limits to what is condoned.

How, then, have we arrived at place where economically-oriented organizations seem to operate without those understood norms of civility? Some of that is undoubtedly historical, and some a matter of current societal factors. This presentation will provide a framework for making sense of what often appears to be either abhorrent individual behavior, or the absence of moral codes.