Bullying in the Education Workspace in India

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Abstract:
Workplace bullying refers to repeated, unreasonable actions of individuals (or a group) directed towards an employee (or a group of employees), which is intended to intimidate and creates a risk to the health and safety of the employees.

Workplace bullying often involves an abuse or misuse of power. Bullying includes behavior that intimidates, degrades, offends, or humiliates a worker, often in front of others. Bullying behavior creates feelings of defenselessness in the target and undermines an individual's right to dignity at work.

Bullying is different from aggression. Whereas aggression may involve a single act, bullying involves repeated attacks against the target, creating an on-going pattern of behavior. "Tough" or "demanding" bosses are not necessarily bullies, as long as their primary motivation is to obtain the best performance by setting high expectations. Many bullying situations involve employees bullying their peers, rather than a supervisor bullying an employee.

This paper highlights the reasons for bullying, its consequences and how to prevent this menace in Education Workspace.

Key Works: Workspace Bullying, Education Sector, Consequences, Reasons and Prevention, and India

1. Introduction:

The American Medical Association defines workplace bullying as repeated, emotionally or physically abusive, disrespectful, disruptive, inappropriate, insulting, intimidating, and/or threatening behavior targeted at a specific individual or a group of individuals that manifests from a real or perceived power imbalance and is often, but not always, intended to control, embarrass, undermine, threaten, or otherwise harm the target. Individual, organizational, and health system factors may contribute to the overall workplace climate or culture that allows unprofessional behavior, such as bullying, to persist.

Factors that contribute to workplace bullying include the following1:
• A bullying culture
• Poor staffing levels
• Excessive workloads
• Power imbalances
• Poor management skills
• Role conflict or ambiguity
• Stress
• Lack of autonomy

Bullying in the Education profession is a well-documented issue involving the abuse of power or control over a person and repeated offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting behavior. A unpublished Workplace Bullying survey showed 83% of workers are aware of bullying in their workplace. Bullying in the workplace is more common than sexual harassment and is initiated by both men and women. All in the education sector can be victims and perpetrators of workplace bullying.

The effects of bullying in education sector can reach beyond the target to the faculty, teams, organizations, and the families of the students and victims. The effects of bullying on the

organizational culture and professional attitudes of the staff are significant and lasting, emphasizing the importance of changing the culture to address the problem

The major objective of the paper is to understand the reasons and consequences and prevention of bullying in an Education Workspace.

2. Literature Review:

There are numerous articles in the popular media on bullying in the workplace. Although these articles are not part of the review for this article, they do provide evidence on the extent to which the issue is impacting the workplace. Although there are varieties of theoretical frameworks providing lenses to examine workplace bullying, the input, process, output model provides a concise framework to examine types and outcomes of bullying. One of the major issues for Education Consultant professionals is to first understand the acts of workplace bullying and identify how it negatively impacts individuals and organizations. This knowledge will enable them to work strategically with the organization to address this vice. The purpose of the review is to examine workplace bullying, specifically, in regards to what types of workplace bullying are reported in the literature, explore the individual and organizational impacts of workplace bullying, and professional's role in reducing workplace bullying.

3. Research Methods:

The research methods employed are purely qualitative in nature. These methods were chosen with the aim of understanding what factors describe a workplace bullying and to identify variables that can then be measured or hear silenced voices. In this sense, this paper seeks to understand the variables of a Workplace bullying based on the voices of those at the Higher Education level which may be often unheard. The criteria for Workplace bullying were then identified based on the interpretation of the collective voices of all stakeholders. This study thus used a participatory approach where by a framework was developed through a desk study and focused discussions with experts and case study discussion, while its verification was conducted through observation and experimental approach.

4. Results and Discussions:

Why People are bullied at work?

Reasons:
- Skilled Workers Are Often Bullied
- Well-Liked Employees Are Often Bullied
- Good People Are Bullied at Work
- Non-Confrontational People Are Bullied
- Bullying Is Motivated By Prejudice
- Bullying Focuses on Appearance

Consequencs:

People who are the targets of bullying may experience a range of effects:
- Shock.
- Anger.
- Feelings of frustration and/or helplessness.
- Increased sense of vulnerability.
- Loss of confidence.
- Physical symptoms such as:Inability to sleep.and Loss of appetite.
- Psychosomatic symptoms such as: Stomach pains.Headaches,Panic or anxiety, especially about going to work. Family tension and stress. Inability to concentrate.Low morale and productivity.

Workplace Bullying Taxonomy

The dimensions, features, and sample behaviors and outcomes of workplace bullying.

BULLYING FACET	BULLYING FEATURE	SAMPLE BEHAVIORS AND OUTCOMES
Goal direction/ motivation	Hostile (aka "hot," "emotional")	Yelling at someone in anger; throwing things. Lying to get someone fired or otherwise make them suffer out of personal or identity-based hate (harassment) or intense insecurity
	Instrumental (aka "cold")	Spreading rumors/lies/distortions to remove a perceived "threat" of someone's talent or claim their office space, funding, position, or other resources
Immediacy	Direct	Punching, yelling, open blaming and shaming, sending angry messages, antagonistic and hostile body language
	Indirect	Spreading rumors, withholding information, circumventing, sabotaging
Visibility	Overt	Humiliating, silencing someone in front of others
	Covert	Gaslighting, withholding information, subtle blaming
Targeting	Downward	The bully boss (65% of reported cases)
	Horizontal	Peer/lateral/coworker bullying (21% of reported cases)
	Upward	Bullying by subordinates (14% of reported cases)
	Mixed	A mixed-position clique (supervisors and subordinates) bullying in multiple directions
Costs	Physical	Physical illness, burnout, disability
	Psychological	Anxiety, depression, PTSD, insomnia, nightmares, loss of confidence, suicidal ideation
	Social	Loss of reputation, friendships, trust, support, and professional networks
	Economic	Loss of income
	Organizational	Loss of time, productivity, and revenue; turnover and replacement costs; absence and health care costs; legal action; reputational and brand damage; limited talent pool

Source: Ludmila N. Praslova   ▽ HBR

Workplace Affects:
Bullying affects the overall "health" of an organization. An "unhealthy" workplace can have many effects. In general, these effects include:
- Increased absenteeism.
- Increased turnover.
- Increased stress.
- Increased costs for employee assistance programs, recruitment, etc.
- Increased risk for incidents.
- Decreased productivity and motivation.
- Decreased morale.
- Reduced corporate image and customer confidence.
- Poor customer service.

What should you do if you are being bullied at work?

If you are being bullied at work, start by telling someone you trust: A friend, family member, colleague, counselor, your HR. They can offer support and help you consider your next steps, including whether and how to confront the bully and how you can manage the stress associated with the experience. It's also important to keep records of what is happening.

How do you stop being bullied at work?

It depends a lot on the situation, but in some instances you can push back against being bullied at work. Being assertive (telling the bully to stop what they are doing) and seeking help (such as by reporting the bullying) can both help you feel better, even if they do not fully stop the bullying.

What are your rights if you are bullied at work?

If you are bullied at work based on your gender, age, religion, disability or personal medical condition, you may be able to make a complaint through the staff association. You may also have rights as a member of a association.

How can you help someone who is being bullied at work?

You can help someone who is being bullied at work by being a supportive friend. If you feel safe doing so, you could intervene on behalf of the target, for example by acknowledging their ideas during a meeting when they are being ignored or by refusing to participate in gossip about them. You could also offer to accompany the target to a meeting with human resources to discuss the bullying.

What can an employer do?
The most important component of any workplace prevention program is management commitment. Management commitment is best communicated in a written policy. Since bullying is a form of violence and harassment in the workplace, employers may wish to write a comprehensive policy that covers a range of incidents (from bullying and harassment to physical violence).
A workplace violence and harassment prevention program should:
- Be developed by management and employee representatives.
- Apply to management, employee's, clients, independent contractors and anyone who has a relationship with your company.
- Define what you mean by workplace bullying (and harassment and violence) in precise, concrete language.
- Provide clear examples of unacceptable behaviour and working conditions.

- State in clear terms your organization's view toward workplace bullying and its commitment to the prevention of workplace bullying.
- Precisely state the consequences of making threats or committing acts.
- Outline the process by which preventive measures will be developed and implemented.
- Encourage reporting of all incidents of bullying or other forms of workplace harassment and violence.
- Outline the confidential process by which employees, including witnesses, can report incidents and to whom.
- Assure no reprisals will be made against employees who choose to report their experiences.
- Outline the procedures for investigating and resolving complaints.
- Maintain confidentiality during the resolution process.
- Describe how information about potential risks of bullying and violence will be communicated to employees.
- Make a commitment to provide support services to victims.
- Offer a confidential Employee Assistance Program (EAP) to allow employees with personal problems to seek help.
- Make a commitment to fulfill the prevention training needs of different levels of personnel within the organization.
- Make a commitment to monitor and regularly review the policy.
- State applicable regulatory requirements, where possible.

5. Conclusions:

Workspace bullying is a menace and needs to be curbed immediately but if the situation does get resolved you need to move on emotionally. If the situation cannot be resolved then consider your options for leaving. CHANGE – don't expect to change the bully. Real behavior change is difficult and it takes time. You have no control over the person's willingness to accept that they have a problem and to work on it. You can do your best to manage the situation, but it's really the HEIs responsibility to be observant and responsive to the needs of their stakeholders and the general work environment. In the worst-case scenario you may need to leave your job or be prepared for a long hard fight with the person bullying you and your employer.

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