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The Effect of Workplace Bullying and Organizational Support on Health and Organizational Outcomes

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Publication Information

Nielsen, Jessica L.; Dorio, Nicole B.; Franz, Timothy; and McClure Brenchley, Kimberly, "The Effect of Workplace Bullying and Organizational Support on Health and Organizational Outcomes" (2015).

Psychology Faculty/Staff Publications. Paper 8.

https://fisherpub.sjfc.edu/psychology_facpub/8

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The Effect of Workplace Bullying and Organizational Support on Health and Organizational Outcomes

Abstract

We examined support systems on the health of those bullied at work. Our findings showed that bullied victims experience more stress, worse health, less satisfaction, and higher intentions to leave while organizational support systems help to minimize this effect of bullying on victims.

Keywords

fsc2015

Disciplines

Psychology

Comments

Presented at the 27th Association for Psychological Science (APS) Annual Convention in New York, New York, May 24, 2015.

The Effect of Workplace Bullying and Organizational Support on Health and Organizational Outcomes

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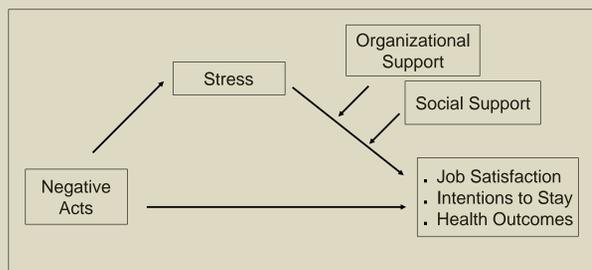
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Background

- Workplace bullying is a problem in contemporary work life, impacting the targets of bullying as well as their organizations (Einarsen, Hoel, Zapf, & Cooper, 2003).
- Workplace bullying is "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" (Hoel, Faragher, & Cooper, 2004; Einarsen & Skogstad, 1966).
- "Workplace bullying can adversely effect self-esteem, anxiety, stress, fatigue, burn out, depression, and posttraumatic stress, both while the bullying is occurring and for a considerable time after words" (Hoel, et al., 2004).
- Organizational performance is also negatively affected by workplace bullying in terms of increased turnover and absenteeism along with reduced satisfaction and work motivation (Einarsen, Hoel, Zapf, & Cooper, 2011).
- Organizations need to examine their internal processes to minimize the effects of workplace bullying. The consequences of bullying may be worse for those who have relatively less social support.
- As such, it is likely that more supportive workplace climates are associated with lower levels of bullying; if targets can engage and maintain their social networks to provide support the effects of bullying are likely to be lessened (Parzefall & Salin, 2010).
- In conjunction with the culmination of prior research, a conceptual model was developed in order to test organizational and social support as moderators of the influence of stress on health and organizational outcomes, commonly found in the presence of bullying.

Conceptual Model



Hypotheses

Hypotheses

- Negative acts (i.e. bullying) increase stress.**
- Organizational and social support moderate the impact of stress on health outcomes.**
- Organizational and social support will:**
 - Improve health
 - decrease turnover
 - increase job satisfaction
- In sum, we hypothesized that organizations who work to develop specific, ongoing support mechanism, including, access to HR, policies that deal with workplace bullying, and cultural support from peers, can reduce the negative outcomes of victims who experience workplace bullying.**

Method

Participants

- 458 participants completed the survey (56% women, age range 18-50+). Participants were recruited from an alumni database and multiple social media platforms. Participants were from different industries including, service (22%), manufacturing (13%), retail (3%), government (12%), non-profit/not-for-profit (17%), and other (33%). All participants were from different organizational levels including, worker/individual contributor (35%), supervisor (8%), middle manager (21%), senior manager (18%), and other (19%).

Measures

- Negative Acts Questionnaire Revised (NAQ-R):** A self-report 22-item survey measured how the participant had been treated within the last six months at work (Einarsen & Raknes, 1991). Participants rated themselves on 22 situations rating how often an event happened to them 0 (never) to 4 (daily).
- General Health Questionnaire (GHQ-12):** A self-report 12-item survey measuring whether certain situations were present in the current workplace environment (Goldberg & Williams, 1988). Participants responded either a 0 (absent) or 1 (present).
- Stress in General Scale (BGSU):** A self-report 8-item scale asking participants to respond yes, no, or unsure (Stanton, Ironson, Smith, Balzer, & Parra, 2001)
- Perceived Organizational Support Survey (POSS):** A self-report 15-item scale asked participants to rate if they 1 (strongly agreed) or 5 (strongly disagreed) with a statement about organizational support in relation to their job.
- Intentions to Stay:** 1 item (Ferris & Rowland, 1987)
- Job Satisfaction:** 1 item (Wanous, Reichers, & Hudy, 1997)

Results

- Three separate conditional indirect effect analyses were conducted to examine the influence of negative acts on each outcome (job satisfaction; intention to stay; general health) through the use of model 16 in PROCESS for SPSS (v2. 13, Hayes, 2013; See Table 1).
- Organizational and social support were tested as moderators of the influence of stress on each outcome.
 - More negative acts significantly predicted higher stress.

Table 1
Regression Results for Model

Predictor	B	SE	t	p	95% CI
Stress, N = 445, R ² = .15					
Constant	0.77	0.10	7.43	<.001	.56 to .97
Negative Acts	0.57	0.06	8.92	<.001	.44 to .69
Job Satisfaction, N = 445, R ² = .37					
Constant	4.25	0.46	9.34	<.001	3.35 to 5.14
Negative Acts	-0.34	0.08	-4.34	<.001	-.51 to -.19
Stress	-0.98	0.24	-4.04	<.001	-1.45 to -.50
Organizational Support (OS)	0.33	0.11	3.07	.002	.12 to .54
Social Support (SS)	-0.19	0.10	-1.92	.056	-.38 to .00
Stress X OS	0.07	0.06	1.25	.213	-.04 to .18
Stress X SS	0.11	0.05	2.29	.023	.02 to .21
Intention to Stay, N = 448, R ² = .18					
Constant	3.91	0.59	6.62	<.001	2.75 to 5.07
Negative Acts	-0.32	0.1	-3.16	.002	-.53 to -.12
Stress	-0.41	0.31	-1.3	.194	-1.02 to .21
Organizational Support (OS)	0.46	0.14	3.32	0.001	.19 to .73
Social Support (SS)	-0.26	0.13	-2.09	.037	-.51 to -.02
Stress X OS	-0.02	0.07	-0.31	.760	-.16 to .12
Stress X SS	0.09	0.06	1.4	.163	-.04 to .22
General Health, N = 442, R ² = .48					
Constant	13.76	1.07	12.85	<.001	11.66 to 15.87
Negative Acts	-1.43	0.19	-7.68	<.001	-1.80 to -1.07
Stress	-2.17	0.57	-3.82	<.001	-3.29 to -1.05
Organizational Support (OS)	0.02	0.25	0.09	.931	-.47 to .52
Social Support (SS)	0.1	0.23	0.46	.649	-.35 to .55
Stress X OS	0.22	0.13	1.71	.088	-.03 to .48
Stress X SS	0.04	0.12	0.38	.707	-.19 to .27

Note. Unstandardized regression coefficients are reported.

Job Satisfaction Model

- Higher stress significantly predicted lower job satisfaction. However, this effect was moderated by social support.
- The test of the conditional indirect effect indicated that more negative acts predicted higher stress, which in turn translated to lower job satisfaction, but this was amplified among those who reported lower social support.
- More negative acts also predicted less job satisfaction independent of stress.
- Organizational support did not moderate the relationship between stress and job satisfaction, but a main effect indicated that higher perceived organizational support predicted higher job satisfaction.

Intentions to Stay Model

- Stress did not significantly predict intentions to stay, nor was it moderated by organizational support or social support.
- More negative acts significantly predicted less intention to stay independent of stress.
- A main effect of organizational support indicated that higher perceived organizational support predicted higher intention to stay, but higher social support significantly predicted lower intention to stay.

Health Outcomes Model

- Higher stress significantly predicted poorer health, and this was not moderated by organizational support or social support.
- More negative acts significantly predicted poorer health independent of stress.

Conclusions

- In part, the findings corroborate those of prior studies, in that higher levels of perceived organizational support significantly predicted higher levels of job satisfaction and intentions to stay (Djurovic, McCormack, & Casimir, 2008; Quine, 2001).
- Four specific aspects of the analyses provide contemporary and significant contributions to the research of workplace bullying, those include; (1) the indirect effect of negative acts on both general health and job satisfaction through stress was significant, (2) social support was found to significantly moderate the effects of stress on job satisfaction, (3) independent of stress, social support significantly predicted lower intentions to stay, and (4) neither social or organizational support moderated the effects of negative acts on general health outcomes.
- This research shows the importance of organizational support for reducing bullying on improving job satisfaction and intentions to stay.