

Analysing bullying in the workplace philosophy essay



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

CHYPERLINK “ <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Childhood>” hildhood bullying can be mentioned as the early stages of workplace bully , is the way of individuals or groups to use consistent act of aggression or unreasonable behavior against a co-worker or subordinate, it is just like the school bullies have grown up physically and more ideas to bully, in other words they are higher level of bullies.

Workplace bullying can include such tactics as verbal, nonverbal, psychological, physical abuse social insults and humiliation. This type of behavior is particularly difficult because unlike the typical forms of school bullying, workplace bullies often operate within the established rules and policies of their organization and their society. Bullying in the workplace is in the majority of cases reported as having been perpetrated by management and takes a wide variety of forms. Bullying can be covert or overt.

Definition of workplace bullying by Amicus-MSF trade union

“ Persistent, offensive, abusive, intimidating or insulting behavior, abuse of power or unfair penal sanctions which makes the recipient feel upset, threatened, humiliated or vulnerable, which undermines their self-confidence and which may cause them to suffer stress”

MSF Union, 1994

Definition of workplace bullying by Tim Field

Those who can, do. Those who can't, bully.

“ Bullying is a compulsive need to displace aggression and is achieved by the expression of inadequacy (social, personal, interpersonal, behavioural, professional) by projection of that inadequacy onto others through control and subjugation (criticism, exclusion, isolation etc). Bullying is sustained by abdication of responsibility (denial, counter-accusation, pretence of victimhood) and perpetuated by a climate of fear, ignorance, indifference, silence, denial, disbelief, deception, evasion of accountability, tolerance and reward (eg promotion) for the bully.”

Tim Field, 1999

What is workplace bullying and who are the victims?

A workplace bullying is a repeated and aimless activity of an individual in an organization or can be the activity of subordinates towards an employee or a group of employees, which is done to intimidate, annoy and create a risk to the health and safety of the employees in order to reduce their work performance. These activities can have direct and serious effect on anyone's mental capabilities people who are the victims sometimes don't even come to work because they are scared of the confrontation. Workplace bullying mostly involves an abuse or misuse of power. Bullying includes behavior that make the victims do wrong things at their workplace, they get degraded, offended, and humiliated by making blunders at day to day work because of the disturbance created by the bullies, more often in front of others employees to make it more effective otherwise can be done in private to

strike at a person's emotional health. When bullied a person's feeling may involve no sense of belongingness, isolation, violation of one's rights and basically to create nuisance at workplace.

Bullying is not very different from criminal, their crime might not be seen or obvious but it can make someone's life as miserable as a person who got robbed or kidnapped. The act of bullying can give a serious mental torture to the victim that the victim may not be able to even concentrate of the family life basically it destroys the whole life and the system of one's life. The act may involve a single act, but may turn into regular activities of bullying, this usually happens regularly when the person who is a victim allows it the first time otherwise if the victim takes some action the first time it happened it might not happen the second time, bullying involves repeated attacks against the target, creating an on-going pattern of behavior. Angry or demanding bosses are not necessarily bullies, as long as their primary motivation is to obtain the best performance by giving impossible tasks.

One research from the (NIOSH) department of safety and health found that a one third of the 516 private and public companies found some cases of bullying in there that year. Which they say may increase if something is not being done and slowly it will become the part of their company's culture. This act almost happened everyday and the things that are being practice every day in a company may be called as the company's culture or part of the atmosphere.

Some bully activities

Blame unreasonably

<https://assignbuster.com/analysing-bullying-in-the-workplace-philosophy-essay/>

Blaming people for their own mistakes specially blaming the new members of the

Organization because it is easier to blame them and no one might believe them if they make a complain again the bullies because they are seniors. This is much easier to do when there are a group of bullies so they can testify each other by talking in favor of each other

Treated differently

This usually happens to the people who keep them isolated from the beginning or it happens because they are more skillful and being victimized out of jealousy. It usually happens because the lobbies have been built and the people like to be in their comfort zone and sometimes won't let new people in their group. Lobbying is the base of rumors and grapevine in an organization.

Criticism for no reason

When there are lobbies and groups people defend and support their own group and in the process they criticize each other for no reason. The criticism then takes an ugly turn and happens on daily bases until there are serious issues. Sometimes it is caused by the group of people against a single person because of the threat they have from the success of that particular person.

Humiliation in front of guests

People know the egos are hurt when they are insulted in front of guests. The bullies love to do that because of a simple idea of demolishing ones confidence. They also do it to draw attention of the guest towards themselves and to make the other person like an amateur who does not know what he/she is doing.

Cheap high school pranks

They are the worst type of acts by the bullies. They are worst because the victims feel like they are treated like high school kids with no self-esteem and people think that they are not respected at all. Prank may involve stealing files and other important things and things like throwing papers planes and other things at victim. It may involve other type of prank which is really unwanted in a work environment.

Excessive monitoring

This is done by the supervisors only they sometimes go overboard when it comes to monitor people, which can really make people uncomfortable. Some people don't like to be monitored at all because they can't take the pressure and some people need like needs to be corrected all the time so the monitoring is good for them. Monitoring is good but excessive monitoring kills the working environment and people can't give much to their work as they are more taken over by how to satisfy the supervisor.

Corporate bullying has different faces:

Asking for unreasonable and impossible task and assignments on employees just to pull their leg and when the time comes the victim can be humiliated

in front of everyone, task like these are bound to fail which means the boss thinks now he has a right to insult the victim because he did not meet the target. Mostly it happens because of personal interests of bosses, favoritism is another factor, making reasons to dismiss employees who are suffering from stress which is basically created on purpose so that the employee can be charged with incompetent behavior and can be fired easily, while completely ignoring or denying potential work related causes of the stress, or encouraging employees to false complaints about colleagues with promises of promotion or threats of discipline.

Signs of corporate bullying include:

Failure to meet organizational basic goals.

Increased frequencies of grievances, resignations, and requests for transfers.

Increased absences.

Lawsuits.

Incomplete tasks, delay in meeting goals

Increased disciplinary actions.

If you are aware of bullying in the workplace and do not take action, then you are accepting a share of the responsibility for any future abuses. This means that witnesses of bullying behavior should be encouraged to report any such incidences. Individuals are less likely to engage in antisocial

behavior when it is understood that the organization does not tolerate such behavior and that the perpetrator is likely to be punished.

It gets worst when people lose confidence in the management because management failed to take action against the bullies then people take actions by themselves. They do things like not coming to the office and not doing the task they have given. Sometimes people do that a lot to get fired from the job and get rid of it. The best way to let the management know about the incident is to complain as it happens and they should do it repeatedly so that the management is forced to take action. Sometimes the management avoid to take action when it is on a smaller level and they don't take it very seriously because they feel that the subordinates may solve it within themselves.

How Bullying Affects People:

Victims of bullying experience significant physical and mental health problems:

High stress; post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD)

Financial problems due to absence

Reduced self-esteem

Phobias

Sleep disturbances

Increased depression/self-blame

Digestive problems.

Literature Review

Tyrant At The Top

A bullying boss can hurt a company and its employees

By David Tarrant

The Dallas Morning News

Tuesday, June 13, 2000

She worked as a secretary in the regional office of a federal agency for eight years. It was a nice job except for one problem: Her boss was an “ absolute monster.”

He routinely screamed and cursed, but the worst incident took place three years ago.

“ I did something I’d done 10, 000 times before,” the Bedford woman recalls.

“ We had a call come in from Washington, and all I did was transfer the call.

But he didn’t like the lady who called.”

He called her into his office and ordered her to look in a mirror. “ I want you to remember what your head looks like, because if you ever do that again, your head won’t be on your shoulders anymore,” the man said.

She couldn’t quit because her husband did contract work, and her \$36, 000-a-year salary was their only secure income; they also needed insurance benefits. Finally, she got a transfer within the agency. She was treated for

<https://assignbuster.com/analysing-bullying-in-the-workplace-philosophy-essay/>

post-traumatic stress disorder and anxiety attacks. A complaint she filed resulted in an internal investigation. But the supervisor kept his position.

“ He gets the job done fastest for the least amount of money. He makes his superiors in Washington look good,” she says. “ So instead of stopping this man, they turn their heads and look the other way.”

They're called many names - “ tyrant,” “ ego-maniac,” “ jerk,” to cite a few.

But these bullies have one thing in common: They consider the workplace a jungle and employees their prey. Now businesses are increasingly coming under pressure to tame them.

“ Clearly, there's a lot that can be done from an organization's perspective to assure that these kinds of oppressive people aren't allowed to continue abusing others in the workplace,” says Dr. Joel H. Neuman, an associate professor of management at the State University of New York at New Paltz.

“ We spend more time at work than with our families. How we're treated there is very important,” says Dr. Loreleigh Keashly, a social psychologist at Wayne State University in Detroit.

The latest high-profile bullying case involved a workplace of a different sort - the basketball court. Bobby Knight, the legendary basketball coach at Indiana University, was accused of choking a player during practice.

The tempestuous 59-year-old Mr. Knight recently kept his job after agreeing to a strict code of personal conduct. He must demonstrate civility in public and make no physical contact with his players or IU staff.

<https://assignbuster.com/analysing-bullying-in-the-workplace-philosophy-essay/>

In 29 years at IU, Mr. Knight won three NCAA titles and 11 Big Ten titles. But a university investigation found that he had shown a pattern of uncontrollable anger and confrontational behavior with his players and others. In one incident, he threw a vase in the direction of his secretary and cursed at her.

The Knight case can serve as a lesson for organizations to curtail workplace bullies - no matter how valuable they are, says David Peterson, vice president of individual coaching services for the Minneapolis-based consulting firm Personnel Decisions Inc.

“ Why did people let . . . [Mr. Knight] get away with it for so long? It has to start with some kind of organizational responsibility,” says Mr. Peterson.

That won't be easy. The tough, intimidating boss has always been an icon of American business culture.

“ Some people have a tendency to believe that abusive treatment is almost part of the makeup of a person who's effective and successful in business. You know, the macho, dog-eat-dog syndrome. It's absolutely the classic stereotype,” Dr. Neuman says.

The problem is inflamed in the current atmosphere of corporate downsizings and mergers. Traditional bonds of loyalty between employer and employee are frayed, anxiety is rampant, and workers feel pitted against each other during rounds of job cuts.

“ With this merger mania, with the constant downsizing, with the constant jockeying of staff, the message is really getting clearer in corporate America: <https://assignbuster.com/analysing-bullying-in-the-workplace-philosophy-essay/>

Your gain will be at someone else's expense. It's a very hostile world," says Dr. Gary Namie, a California psychologist. He and his wife, Dr. Ruth Namie, have written *The Bully At Work* (Sourcebooks, \$14.95).

The couple also launched the Campaign Against Workplace Bullying to raise awareness about the issue. On their Web site, www.bullybusters.org, workers share stories of abuse from bosses or other co-workers.

Dr. Namie defines workplace bullying as "deliberate, repeated, hurtful mistreatment of one by another. It's got to be hurtful – emotional or physical."

Costly bullies

The economic and emotional costs of bullying are high – both to the worker and the organization. Studies have shown that repeated incidents of bullying can hurt the bottom line, Dr. Neuman says. Such behavior often leads to a decline in employee productivity, an increase in medical leave and turnover, and costly acts of sabotage. Lawsuits arising from an abusive work environment could also cost companies dearly.

And workplace bullying can be devastating to the workers targeted by bullies.

Readers of The Dallas Morning News' Web site, dallasnews.com, were asked to provide stories about workplace bullies. Here is a sample of responses:

A woman thought she had found the perfect job with a Dallas-based telecommunications business – until she met her supervisor.

“ She cussed, chastised employees in front of each other, called them incompetent behind their backs to their peers and blamed all mistakes on those who worked for her . . .” the employee writes.

“ She once altered a project piece of mine just hours before a big meeting. She was in such a hurry she made several typos and other careless mistakes. She blamed me for the mistakes after the meeting even though I had a soft and hard copy of my work.”

After three weeks, she could no longer take the abuse and quit.

“ I cannot believe that people are allowed to treat others like this in organizations today. I also can't believe that management doesn't recognize what high levels of turnover can indicate. Even though she had several of her direct reports complain, she is still gainfully employed and her department suffers as a direct result. It was a great job and it is the abuse that has kept me away from it.”

· A man who worked in the information technology department of a company was continually berated by his boss. “ He would verbally emulate Coach Bob Knight,” the man says. He would also call the employee about noncritical tasks on holidays and weekends, threaten him with same-day firing and take credit for work done by the employee.

“ I regret not documenting e-mails, etc., to expose this sick behavior,” the man writes.

Abuse survey

These aren't isolated incidents, researchers say. A recent survey of 930 employees in Michigan showed that one in five reported being "significantly mistreated" in the past year, says Dr. Keashly, who worked on the study.

Dr. Keashly's list of emotionally abusive behaviors ranged from yelling and swearing to talking down at employees. Workplace bullies also tend to flaunt their status, give employees the silent treatment, make them scapegoats for others' errors, put down workers in front of others, exclude colleagues from important activities or meetings, and use threatening gestures.

"The more people reported being exposed to these negative behaviors, the more likely they were to have experienced health problems, to have a greater desire to leave their jobs and to be less satisfied with their jobs," Dr. Keashly says.

Are people just being too sensitive? Dr. Keashly rejects the notion: "How much can you do to dismiss that? Is 20 percent of the working population too sensitive?"

What is the employer's responsibility when it comes to workplace bullying?

Currently, the law doesn't specifically provide relief to workers from abusive workplace behavior, except in cases of sexual harassment or racial discrimination, says David Yamada, associate professor of law at Suffolk University Law School.

Mr. Yamada is drafting a proposal that he hopes could form the basis for state laws providing protection against workplace bullying

“ Most people would naturally assume that the abusive behavior at work is not only wrong but that there would be legal protection. [But] a lot of state courts have held that workers’ compensation prevents them from bringing a lawsuit.”

Meanwhile, management experts encourage organizations to act quickly to prevent workplace bullying. “ If you simply ignore the negative behavior going on, you’re condoning it. You’re perpetuating it,” Dr. Neuman says.

Bullies are not always the psycho-pathological monsters they are popularly portrayed to be, Dr. Keashly says. Bullying can be a response to extreme stress and frustration or a lack of supervisory skills.

“ Many people move up in organizations, and they are never trained how to supervise. So you teach them how to be a better manager.”

That’s where Mr. Peterson comes in. He provides one-on-one coaching to problem managers.

“ Mostly I get called in to work with high-potential people. You have a guy who’s a tremendous asset to the company, but he’s leaving a trail of human debris in his wake,” Mr. Peterson says. “ They’re so successful with their talent, that they never develop other aspects.”

Many times, the bully is resistant to change because he’s convinced his bullying behavior is responsible for his success, Mr. Peterson says. Often he or she has been “ promoted over nice people time and time again. So the bully says, ‘ I’ve been rewarded for this behavior.’ There’s not enough insight into the damage their causing.”

<https://assignbuster.com/analysing-bullying-in-the-workplace-philosophy-essay/>

Mr. Peterson focuses on teaching better communication skills.

“ What you have to do is teach them how to be clear, direct and powerful in a respectful way. One of the principals is to attack the issue and not the person.”

He also uses role models, such as Jack Welch, the recently retired chairman of General Electric, who are tough, assertive but respectful of employees.

“ The irony is, most of the bullies I work with are good people. They’ve just learned a lousy way to manage. If you can show them a way to build loyalty and stronger teams that get results, why wouldn’t they try it?”

Explanation of the literature Review

We have reviewed the problem mention in the article above the problem which is more prominent to see is that the bully is very valuable to the organization and the victim is merely another employee. Due to the value assessment of employees by the higher authorities of organization the bullies are created, these bullies are treated well and spoiled by the organizations elders without noticing the problems they are causing to other because they are the one bringing the business.

The point which the elders of the organization miss to see is the long term effects they are causing to the company itself. They don’t for see the bad reputation they will create in the market regarding bad employee relation, which ultimately have a negative effect on their business.

Each of the individual consequences listed above can be very costly for the organization. The effect might be slow but it's going to have a major effect later on. Bullying generally has its effects on few major sections that can cause real damage to the organization.

Replacing staff members that leave as a result of being bullied.

Work effort being displaced as staff cope with bullying incidents.

Costs associated with investigations of ill treatment and potential legal action.

Bullies do not run good organizations staff turnover and sick leave will be high while morale and productivity will be low. Stress, depression and physical health problems result in time away from work that is costly in terms of workers' compensation and lost productivity.

The health problems experienced by victims of bullying result in a sense of helplessness and negative emotional states among employees. Low self-esteem and a negative organizational climate suppress creativity and hamper employees' abilities to respond to difficult situations or challenging goals.

The breakdown of trust in a bullying environment may mean that employees will fail to contribute their best work, do not give extra ideas for improvement, do not provide feedback on failures and may be less honest about performance.

Bullies are not taken care of because of a simple reason that the bully might be more important than the victims in the company and the company feels that if the victim leaves the organization it's not going to affect much but if we take action against the bully who is very important they might suffer if they leave. Sometimes the organization failed to realize that the firm can have a bad reputation because of that and has long term effect on the organization until the organization will be known for its bad employee relations.

In order for the employees to be happy and satisfied a company should monitor all its employees' activities and should treat everyone equally to create an environment which is governed by justice. The company which has strict justice policies can excel rapidly and can also build a very positive image in the society. The company should justify why certain person is promoted or demoted in order for everyone to understand what that person has done to deserve that but if the company will just overnight give a promotion to anyone without a justification it creates jealousy and different types of questions come in every employee's mind which can spread like a fire in the organization.

Sometimes the companies make a mistake by thinking that they are not accountable to their employees and they merely have a master-servant relation only which actually creates an environment which is not transparent and hazardous to work. If a company is not transparent the bullies will have more encouragement because they know that the complaints against them will not be taken seriously.

Theories to relate bullying problems with:

“ Structuration theory Anthony Giddens

Giddens' structuration theory is an attempt to ' put sociology back together again'. Its starting point is that the division between structural and social action approaches is essentially false.

Giddens seeks to demonstrate that social structures and social actions have a symbiotic relationship. They are dependent upon each other, but also constrain each other. Therefore, neither social structures nor social actions can exist independently of one another.

Consider language as an example: The structure of a language (grammar, construction, spelling) exists independently of any one individual. The structure is, however, shared between individuals to allow communication, which is a social activity, and all other social actions are possible because of this ability to communicate.

Furthermore, language, and therefore structure, is constantly evolving or being re-invented through communication/social action. These ideas help to demonstrate Giddens' key idea of the ' duality of structure', the fact that it both constrains and enables. Giddens suggests that humans create ' rules', which are principles governing social action, and make use of ' resources' (raw materials, power) which are only made usable by human action.

Structures do exist independently of individuals therefore, but only in so far as they are created and reproduced by human action. Giddens argues that we actively seek to create structures and institutions as we all desire a

degree of predictability in our lives. As we create our own structures we are
<https://assignbuster.com/analysing-bullying-in-the-workplace-philosophy-essay/>

not, as structuralists argue, puppets of society' but can always exercise some choice (course, job etc)".

Explanation of theory in relation to workplace bully

According to the theory people are bound or are more interested to follow the cultures of society as they are. People don't tend to change anything from it they try to use it as they are they don't intend to make it better or introduce new things in it. According to the theory there is more negative point to it than positive.

The negative points are that there won't any new thing indulging in the society and within no time that society will be isolated. They will not be welcoming any new ideas. They will be so well practiced with their structure that they will cease to see the harms of it. The theory suggested to recall or to keep checking the structure for pitfalls or negativities so that the culture will be preserved but without harmful material in it.

The preservation of culture is very important for any society, culture reflects the efforts of ancestors and their sacrifices but the culture created 100 years ago might not be applicable to the new era and generation or maybe they forwarded their legacy so that there will be improvements coming in the culture structure with innovation of new generation. There might be few harmful things in a culture those can be removed to make it better. If we talk about the culture of dowry in INDIA, which is given to the bride when she gets married it can be in a form of money, or things like car, house and electrical appliances it depend on the demand of grooms family or groom

himself. The dowry system was an exploitation of cultural traits, dowry used to have a solid base in the culture.

When this dowry system was passed through to the new generation they realized that it should be taken out of the system and there was strong opposition and they slowly managed to reduce it from the system. This system is still in the structure in form of gifts there are cases of abuse to the bride due to the violation of this dowry system. There are extreme cases of abuse to the bride which made the bride's parents suicide because they were unable to fulfill the demands.

If we talk about Pakistan there is a culture of expensive weddings. People try to overdo it sometimes out of their strength. Just because it's a culture they like to stretch the wedding for 4 to 5 days and each day there have to be food for the guests and different menu each day.

Even the poor people try to do it more than they can spent by taking advance money from their workplace or take loans just to feel reputed and just to have people talking about what great arrangements were there for days.

This culture of extravagancy is even against the Islamic teaching. It teaches us to be simple and not be extravagant. Even though people love to do it because they think that it is the best way to spend their money. The money that the rich people spent on a wedding is enough to feed poor families for months but they fail to see it because it's strongly indulged in the culture that people don't realize it.

Originally, the purpose of a dowry was to provide “ seed money” or property for the establishment of a new household, to help a husband feed and protect his family, and to give the wife and children some support if he were to die. A husband thus had certain property rights in his wife’s dowry. In addition, the wife might bring to the marriage property of her own, which was not included in the dowry and which was, as a result, hers alone. This property was beyond the dowry. Even in the oldest available records, dowry described as an already existing custom. Regulations surrounding the custom include: the wife being entitled to her dowry at her husband’s death, her dowry being inheritable only by her own children, not by her husband’s children by other women, and a woman not being entitled to a inheritance if her father had provided her dowry in marriage. If a woman died without sons, her husband had to refund the dowry but could deduct the value of the bride price; the dowry would normally have been the larger of the sums. This all has changed now and dowry has an uglier picture of the society now people don’t accept brides without dowry and dowry is not even return at the death of the woman. Dowry is considered as a token of appreciation which is given to the groom for accepting the bride in his house.

One of the basic functions of a dowry has been to serve as a form of protection for the wife against the possibility of ill treatment by her husband and his family. In other words, the dowry provides an incentive to the husband not to harm his wife. Since this idea of giving protection came along now the in laws take it as protection money and considered that if they will get the dowry only then their daughter can live happily at their house otherwise she will have a hard time. Sometimes if the bride’s family is not

capable of giving dowry at the time of marriage then they have given deadline to send the dowry or otherwise their daughter will be returned to their house which is considered as a very big issue and insult to the bride's family in the society.

It is true that a young man may require financial support to settle comfortably in his life and to fulfill other needs. But it should not be a reason to ask dowry and to spoil the life of a girl. Gifted that a girl gets from her parents home should solely be there with and there should be no pressure to spend more while marrying their daughter. Like said earlier there are many instances when a wife is murdered because her parents were not able to give enough dowries. These murders are usually and easily be proved as a case of accident because of another disgraceful act of bribery in the society.

“ Dowry was widely practiced in Europe. In Homeric times, the usual Greek practice was to give a bride [HYPERLINK “ http://en. wikipedia. org/wiki/Brideprice”](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Brideprice) price. Dowries were exchanged in the later classical time (5th century BC). Ancient Romans also practiced dowry, though Tacitus notes that the Germanic tribes practiced the reverse custom of the dower.

Failure to provide a customary, or agreed-upon,