Influence of Cyber and Workplace Bullying Towards Employee Negative Emotions the Moderating Role of Gender

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ABSTRACT

The main aim of this study is to understand the bullying behavior and its impact towards negative emotions among IT employees. There are two factors in bullying, workplace bullying and cyber bullying, which have an influence on emotional and social loneliness, depression, anxiety, stress and suicide (negative emotions) with moderating role of gender. The study is based on descriptive research design and non-probability purposive sampling methods which have been adopted for data collection. Items are adopted from various scales to measure workplace bullying and cyber bullying and its influence on negative emotions with a moderating role of gender. Findings: The findings of the study describes that negative emotions of employees are being influenced by bullying behavior. The result denotes that emotional and social loneliness is being affected due to cyber bullying and employee stress and depression level is being affected by workplace bullying.

KEYWORDS

Anxiety, Cyber Bullying, Depression, Negative Emotions – Emotional and Social Loneliness, Stress and Suicide, Workplace Bullying

INTRODUCTION

Introduction to the Problem

Bullying is not a new terminology for this technological century. Bullying is a negative attitude of one person towards another person in various places like school, college, workplace and web. This research mainly concentrates on workplace bullying and cyber bullying behavior and its negative impact on emotions like emotional and social loneliness, depression, stress, anxiety and suicide (Smith et al., 2008). Bullying is use of superior strength to others or force someone to do something in favor of bully.

Definition of Bullying

According to Olweus, (1993) Bullying defines as, “an aggressive, intentional act or behavior that is carried out by a group or an individual repeatedly and over time against a victim who cannot easily defend him or herself.”
**Definition of Workplace Bullying**

According to Einarsen et al., (2003) workplace bullying is defined as, “Bullying at work means harassing, offending, socially excluding someone or negatively affecting someone’s work tasks. In order for the label bullying (or mobbing) to be applied to a particular activity, interaction or process it has to occur repeatedly and regularly (e.g. weekly) and over a period of time (e.g. about six months). Bullying is an escalated process in the course of which the person confronted ends up in an inferior position and becomes the target of systematic negative social acts.”

**Definition of Cyber Bullying**

According to Smith et al., (2008) Cyber bullying is described as, “An aggressive, intentional act carried out by a group or individual, using electronic forms of contact, repeatedly and over time against a victim who cannot easily defend him or herself.”

Even though various definitions and inclusions are given to bullying, workplace bullying and cyber bullying, this category of bullying is denoted as an intentional harmful act using verbal, physical, internet, mobile, messages, emails, websites and social media (Snakenborg et al., 2011). Parallel to bullying, cyber bullying includes imbalance of power, aggression towards others and repeated negative action on a victim (Smith et al., 2008).

Harassment among people has been increased due to bullying in the organization and as well many social science studies are dealing with bullying for many decades. Laftman et al. (2013) establish the knowledge about workplace bullying and increase in information and communication technology leads a pathway for cyber bullying in the work environment (Hinduja and Patchin 2010). According to De Lanerolle (2012) survey, 37% of the people are submerged with social network with 71% are connected to the internet daily. This survey was done with young age people aged between 15 to 24 years. As the result, cyber bullying is the place where bullies project their aggressiveness towards victims.

In virtual, cyber bullying has unique characteristics than workplace bullying. These characteristics are influenced by technology and internet, it is a cyberspace which allows anonymity and spread small content to a larger number of people in a short span of time. Workplace bullying will take place between two people and ends with them, but, cyber bullying will spread to a large audience globally in a short period of time. It will be in the form of images, audios, videos, emails, etc. (Calvete et al., 2010). In added to that, Sabella et al., (2013) describes, cyber bullying is not limited to space and time. It will occur at any time at any place in the world which is not like workplace bullying. In cyber bullying people use multi-media features to bull a victim.

Based on Hemphill et al., (2012) the findings of workplace bullying and cyber bullying had an impact towards victim’s psychological effect which leads to negative emotions among victims. This negative emotion of the victims will reflect on the sense of emotional and social loneliness, depression, anxiety, stress and sometimes victim will make suicidal activity (Sabella et al., 2013). Workplace bullying and cyber bullying will lead to direct or indirect mind set of suicide and also leads to the negative emotions like loneliness, depression, anxiety and stress. This article focuses on bullying activities and its influence towards negative emotion among employees.

**REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

Bullying is a dangerous activity in the workplace. Employees are highly affected due to various forms of bullying like, verbal bullying, physical bullying, psychological bullying, work-related bullying, person-related bullying and cyber bullying in the work environment. According to Center for disease control and prevention and Human resource and service administration (2014), Bullying is an unwanted aggressive behavior of one or group of employees towards other employees in the organization. It
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