

Attributors of Workplace Bullying: Cleaning Workforces' Perspective

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Abstract

Known as a universal phenomenon, workforce bullying has become one of the inequalities that obstruct the creation of internal customer and market orientations that hinder the continuous development of the superior performance of the organisation. Aside from that, these unwelcomed incidences have also been proven to bring about numerous adverse consequences to the society especially to the victims and their family. Therefore, this paper believes that the issue of workplace bullying is analytically and critically in need of comprehension; so that the supportive environment in workplaces can be created and yet, assist in bringing mutual benefit to the organisation, employees, and society. For this purpose, this paper aims to discuss the attributors of workplace bullying by seeking answers from the perspective of the cleaning workforce in organisations since they have been categorised as a bottom-ranked position and their voices are unheard and are always ignored. Hence, this study utilises the quantitative approach by distributing surveys involving 248 cleaners in Selangor. The findings of this study revealed that interpersonal conflicts and poor physical work environments have significantly influenced workforce bullying ($p < 0.01$, $p < 0.05$) whereas poor leadership was found to have no significant influence towards workforce bullying. Notably, the main factor that influences workforce bullying was interpersonal conflict ($p < 0.01$, $\beta = 0.368$). While it is proven that workforce bullying is occur, this paper believe further corrective actions is need to be implemented so that the situation is not getting worse. Therefore, this study also discusses on several recommendations that are useful to be implemented by all organisations in overcoming workplace bullying. These recommendations are inclusive of primary, secondary, and tertiary interventions.

Keywords: workplace bullying; cleaning workforce

Introduction

Predominantly, in any organisation, the aggressive participation and engagement between *external customers* such as the government, clients, and society; with *internal customers* such as the employees (Lukas & Maignan, 1996; George, 1990; Bowen & Schneider, 1988; Gummesson, 1987) are crucial in driving and achieving its stipulated mission and vision. Furthermore, according to Conduit and Mavondo (2001), the orientation of *internal customers* is necessary to be formed so that market orientations

can also be successfully created. Based on Narver and Slater (1990), market orientation can be defined as an organisation's culture that most effectively creates any necessary behaviors for the creation of superior value for buyers. Thus, developing continuous superior performance in the organisation. Therefore, cooperation and mutual agreement between employees are paramount to be maintained. Hence, evolving both internal customer and market orientation.

However, the existence of workplace conflicts such as 'work bullying' – a universal phenomenon (Cusack, 2000) – is believed may obstruct the creation of internal customer and market orientation since according to Harvey *et al.*, (2006), workplace bullying eventually might affect the entire firm. As mentioned by Razzaghian and Shah (2011), the existence of workplace bullying might harm the organisation by reducing employment performance and productivity, organisation performance, financial bottom-line as well as employees' morale. Hence, pondering on these adverse effects caused by workplace bullying, undoubtedly, the formation of internal customer and market orientation can be impeded and may eventually affect the continuation of superior performance of the organisation. Therefore, the existence of workplace bullying evidently needs to be resolved.

Nevertheless, the adverse effects of workplace bullying is not only limited to the organisation *per se* but it may also bring several problems to the victims personally. According to Razzaghian and Shah (2011), there is a high probability for the victims to experience psychological and physical disorder as well as post-traumatic stress (PTSD) from the effects of bullying. Other than that, the upshots of bullying to the victims may also be detrimental to one's self-esteem, emotion, anxiety, stress, fatigue, burnout, and depression (Lovell & Lee, 2011; Hauge, Skogstad, & Einarsen, 2010; Lutgen-Sandvik, 2008; Agervold & Mikkelsen, 2004; Hoel, Faragher, & Cooper, 2004). All these negative consequences will leave lifelong scars to the victims and make them traumatized.

Meanwhile, other than causing negative consequences to the organisation and the victims, workplace bullying also gives undesirable effects to the victims' family and society. Einarsen, Raknes, and Matthiesen (1994) mentioned that it is common for family and next of kin to take time off from work themselves in order to take care of a victim in crisis or personal breakdown that has been affected from workplace bullying. Besides, societies will experience increased pressure in terms of resources on an already hard-pressed health and social service system since they have to pick up the bill for bullying. These are including in the form of additional expenses relating to long-term sickness absence, medical treatment, and early retirement.

Therefore, realising the adverse consequences that workplace bullying brings about to the organisation, the society, as well as the victims and their family; this paper believes that the issue of workplace bullying is analytically crucial to be understood. Hence, this paper focuses to discuss the attributors of workplace bullying; that is the underlying factors for this unwelcomed incidence. Then, by realising the fact that the cleaning workforce is categorised as a bottom-ranked position, it is prominent that their voices are unheard and are always ignored. Thus, this study considers to scrutinise the attributors based on their (cleaning workforce's) perspectives.

Literature Review

Bullying and Types of Bullying

According to Harper (2008), the word “bully” can be traced back as far since 1530's whereby in its most basic sense, bullying involves two types of people; bully(ies) or intimidator(s) and the victim(s). Further, as described by Einarsen *et al.*, (2009), there are three types of bullying and these types are work-related bullying, personal-related bullying, and physically intimidating bullying. As portrayed by its name, work-related bullying is the act of bullying carried out by a bully to the victims pertaining matters related to their work. This includes being given unreasonable deadlines, withholding information, provision of unmanageable workloads and ignoring opinions.

On the other hand, Einarsen, Hoel, and Notelaers (2009) also explained that personal-related bullying could be defined as behaviors or actions done by a bully to target their victims personally; personal matters of the victims. In other words, the bully “attacks” and makes the personal issue of the victims as “materials” of bullying, not in front but behind the victims. Pertaining to this type of bullying, the bully does not focus on other external issues but they do focus on the victims themselves. For example, an employee can be said to experience personal related bullying if his or her opinions are being ignored, as well as his or her personal matters being gossiped, rumoured or spread.

Lastly, according to Einarsen, Hoel, and Notelaers (2009), we can define physically intimidating bullying as the act of bullying experienced by victims directed to him or her (face-to-face). In other words, this type of bullying is occurred when a bully insults their victims directly and this type of bullying differs very much from personal-related bullying since physical intimidating bullying is done face-to-face. A

person can be said to face physical intimidating bullying if they are being intimidated and being shouted at; directly or face-to-face.

Forms of Bullying

Referring to D'Cruz (2015), the act of bullying can be classified into many forms. These forms are inclusive of downward bullying, horizontal bullying, upwards bullying and cross-level co-bullying. According to Lewis and Sheehan (2003), downward bullying can be referred to instances of bullying in which the target has lower hierarchical status than the perpetrator. In other words, downward bullying can be said to happen if bullies who have higher positions at the workplace bully employees of lower positions. For example, a finance team member (subordinate) has been intimidated and being shouted at by his or her finance manager (superior). This form of bullying was reported to be the one that is most common to occur (Rayner & Cooper 2003; Zapf *et al.*, 2003).

The second form is horizontal bullying and Lewis and Sheehan (2003) refers horizontal bullying as the instances of bullying in which the target and perpetrator have equal hierarchical status. In other words, horizontal bullying can be said to happen if it has been conducted by bullies who have similar level of work positions with the victims either among the superior themselves or among subordinates. For example, a member from the administration team either hits or verbally assault face-to-face another administration team member that possesses the similar work position as him or her.

The third form is upward bullying. As defined by Branch, Ramsay, and Barker (2013), upward bullying refers to the instances of bullying where the target has a higher hierarchical status than the perpetrator. In other words, upward bullying occurs when subordinates bullies their superior officer. According to Harper (2008), one example of indirect bullying is spreading rumours and gossip about the top officers by the lower officers at the workplace.

The fourth is cross-level co-bullying and D'Cruz and Rayner (2012) stated that this form of bullying occurs when peers and/or subordinates join superiors to bully the victim(s). In other words, this form of bullying happens when a few people regardless of rank conducts bullying to a person or a few simultaneously. For example, unmanageable workload is given to an employee or several employees (regardless of their working position) by a group of other employees (regardless of their working position that becomes the intimidators).

Interpersonal Conflict

Referring to Zapf and Gross (2001), bullying can be described as a certain subset of conflict and referring to Ciby and Raya (2014), the third source of workplace bullying is interpersonal conflict with supervisors or peers at intragroup or intergroup level. Subsequently, Ciby and Raya (2014) also added that the issue of interpersonal conflict (or negative interpersonal encounter) occurs either due to work-related issues or due to personal issues such as egoism, jealousy, and internal competition. Besides, Ilies et al. (2010) also mentioned interpersonal conflict has always been characterised as a contentious exchange, hostility, or aggression. Earlier, Einarsen (2000) explained in his article entitled *Harassment and Bullying at Work* that bullying often takes place when one or more person systematically and over time feel that they have been subjected to negative treatment on part of one or more person. Workplace bullying takes place in a situation in which the person(s) who is or are exposed to the treatment will face difficulties in defending themselves against the perpetrator(s).

Poor Physical Work Environment

According to Haynes (2008), the physical work environment can be defined as the working environment that consists of components that are related to office occupiers' ability to physically connect with their office environment. However, even if it is undeniable that physical work environment of an organisation might give comfortability to the employees in performing their daily tasks, but unmanageable physical work environment also might disrupt the employees by stimulating workplace bullying. For example, a finding extracted from the Government of South Australia (2012) mentioned that one of the factors that lead to workplace bullying is physical work layout and the mechanisms linking a poor physical work environment; and increased risk of bullying is likely to be the first two mentioned by Baillien *et al.*, (2009) and Baillien, Neyens, and Witte, (2008).

According to them (Baillien *et al.*, 2009; Baillien, Neyens, & Witte, 2008), firstly, poor physical conditions may lead to more frustration by eliciting more aggression in potential perpetrators. Additionally, they elicit more norm-breaking and poor coping characteristics among potential victims. Secondly, poor physical environments such as instance-cramped spaces may lead to more conflicts that in turn can lead to bullying if they are managed poorly. Besides that, high temperatures, crowded spaces, or otherwise unpleasant and irritating environments also may become one of the factors, which increase the risk of bullying.

Aside from these studies, several other studies successfully found the association between the incidence of workplace bullying and poor physical workplace environment.

These studies are inclusive of the studies conducted by Salin (2015), Bloisi and Hoel (2008), Mathisen, Einarsen, and Mykletun (2008), Lawrence and Leather (1999), Neuman and Baron (1998), Einarsen and Skogstad (1996), Leymann (1993), and Bell (1992).

Poor Leadership

According to Yukl (2006), leadership can be defined as the process of influencing others to understand and agree about what needs to be done and how to do it and the process of facilitating individuals and channelling collective efforts to accomplish shared objectives. However, as mentioned by Cooper et al., (2013), Hoel *et al.*, (2010), Hauge, Skogstad, and Einarsen (2007); Skogstad *et al.*, (2007) and Leymann (1993), having poor leadership in an organisation can lead to or exacerbate bullying in workplaces in various ways. This is because, according to Mathisen, Einarsen, and Mykletun (2011), leaders may also behave in aggressive ways themselves, model bullying behaviours which others copy, fail in intervening in bullying behaviour or even reward it.

Other than that, poor leadership may also cause superiors being forced to manage help provocations, threats or terror, vague or unclear superiors, superiors who run away from their responsibility, superiors who avoid handling conflicts, superiors whose response to notifications about criticisable conditions is revenge and superiors who abuse their power (Einarsen, Hoel, & Nielsen, 2000). Meanwhile, another studies conducted by Hauge, Skogstad, and Einarsen (2011), Mitchell and Ambrose (2007), Einarsen (2005) and Hepworth and Towler (2004) also reported that the perpetrators of workplace bullying tend to report having leaders who are less charismatic, too aggressive, too laissez-faire and more abusive as well as less fair and supportive. Therefore, poor leadership is prominently seen as one of the major factors for the incidence of workplace bullying.

Research Objectives

There are two main objectives of this study. These objectives are including:

- i) To examine the relationship between attributing factors (interpersonal conflict, poor physical work environment, and poor leadership) on the incidence of workplace bullying
- ii) To determine the main attributor that caused the workforce bullying to occur

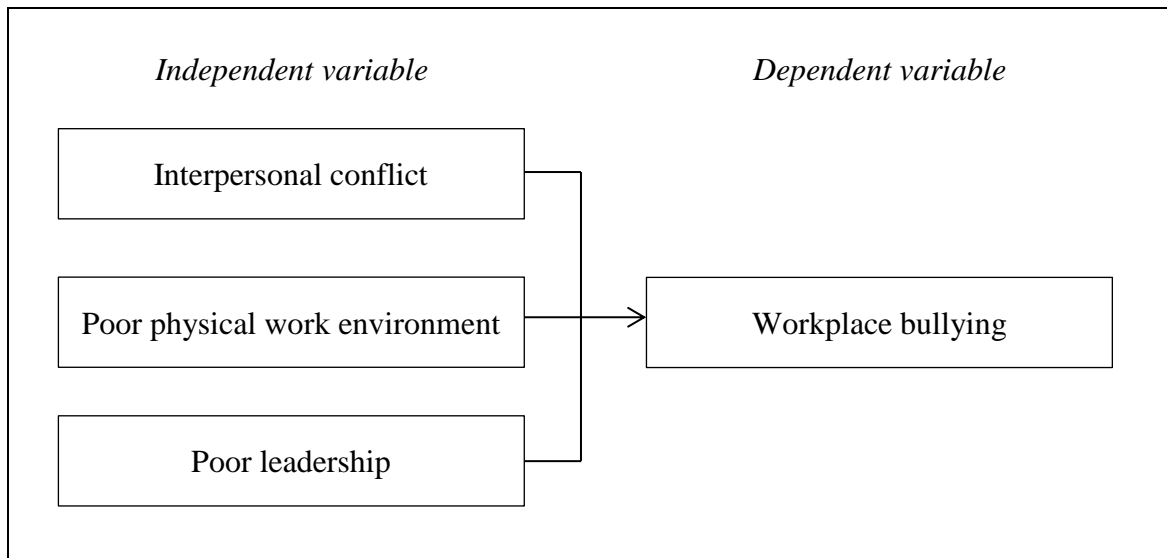


Figure 1
Conceptual Framework

As illustrated in Figure 1, there are three independent variables that are applicable in this study which are interpersonal conflict (IV 1), poor physical work environment (IV 2) and poor leadership (IV 3).

Methodology

This study utilises the quantitative research approach using personally administered questionnaire and was employed cluster sampling technique where samples were gathered from seven geographical clusters including Sabak Bernam, Hulu Selangor, Kuala Selangor, Gombak, Klang, Petaling, Hulu Langat, Kuala Langat and Sepang. Based on the information emailed by Labour Force Survey, Department of Statistics of Malaysia, the total number of population of cleaning workers in Selangor in the year 2013 is 104, 500. According to Sekaran and Bougie (2013), for a population of 100,000 and above, the proposed sample size is 384. However, this study only managed to get 248 respondents and this lower response rate was due to unwilling to participate in the survey, incomplete answers from the respondents, language barriers (unable to speak English or *Bahasa Melayu*), and the respondents choose to discontinue the survey for some reasons.

Findings

As mentioned in previous section, the objectives of this study are i. to examine the relationship between attributing factors (interpersonal conflict, poor physical work environment, and poor leadership) on the incidence of workplace bullying, and ii. to determine the main attributor that caused the workforce bullying to occur. Therefore, this section presents the findings based on these two objectives. However, initially, this section begins with some description regarding the demographic profile of the respondents.

Demographic profile of Respondents

The data collection process was carried out in April 2015, with a total number of respondents, namely cleaners; (n) = 248. Provided in Table 3 is the profile of cleaners who have participated in this study, based on respective items and categories that are vital for this study. The main purpose in presenting a profile of the respondents is to highlight the crucial features of respondents; cleaners who work in Selangor. Details on their profile are summarised in the Table 1 as below. The majority of the respondents is female and aged 50 years old and below. Other than that, most of them are Indonesian, married, and possessing low education level.

Table 1
Profile of the Respondents

Description of Items	Category	Frequency	Percent (%)
Gender	Female	174	68.8
	Male	72	28.5
Age	Under 20	25	9.9
	21-35	105	41.5
	36-50	84	33.2
	51-65	22	8.7
	Over 65	9	3.6
Nationality	Malaysia	20	7.9
	Indonesia	168	66.4
	Myanmar	34	13.4
	Vietnam	5	2
	Bangladesh	19	7.5
Marital status	Single	66	26.1
	Married	161	63.6
	Divorce	19	7.5
Education level	No Formal Academic Education	60	23.7
	Primary School	123	48.6
	Secondary School	56	22.1
	High School	2	0.8

Goodness of Measures and Testing Parametric Assumptions

In ensuring the goodness of measures, this study conducted the Exploratory Factor Analysis and reliability test. Other than that, in testing parametric assumption, normality test has been conducted.

The relationship between attributing factors (interpersonal conflict, poor physical work environment, and poor leadership) on the incidence of workplace bullying

The first research objective of this study is to examine the relationship between attributing factors (interpersonal conflict, poor physical work environment, and poor leadership) on the incidence of workplace bullying. Then, in order to fulfill this research objective; *Pearson Correlation*, mean and standard deviation as shown in Table 2 has been carried out.

Table 2
Mean, Standard Deviation, and Correlation Matrix

Variables	Mean	Std. Deviation	1	2	3
Workplace Bullying (DV)	3.7954	.71384			
Interpersonal Conflict (IV 1)	1.9488	.56949	-.356**		
Poor Physical Work Environment (IV 2)	2.6753	.20645	.086**	.186**	
Poor Leadership (IV 3)	2.2633	.99748	-.190	.245**	.038**

The finding shows that there is positive significant relationship between interpersonal conflict and workplace bullying ($p < 0.000$, $r = -.356$). Other than that, the study also found on the positive relationship between poor physical work environment with workplace bullying ($p < 0.000$, $r = .086$). Meanwhile, there is no relationship found between poor leadership and workplace bullying.

The main attributor that causing the incidence of workplace bullying to occur among the cleaning workforce

Analysis of Multiple Regression has been conducted to determine the main attributor that cause workplace bullying to occur (RO 2). The result as shown in Table 3 found that interpersonal conflict proves to be the main attributor to the incidence of workplace bullying with the highest Beta value .368, $p < 0.000$.

Table 3*Multiple Regressions: The main attributor for workplace bullying*

Independent Variable	Standard Coefficients Beta	T	Sig.
IV1 Interpersonal conflict	-.368	-5.979	.000
IV2 Poor physical work environment	.174	2.912	.004
IV3 Poor Leadership	-.106	-1.759	.080
R ²	.413		
Adjusted R ²	.171		
F	16.520		

Discussion

(RO 1) Attributing factors (interpersonal conflict, poor physical work environment, and poor leadership) that lead to the incidence of workplace bullying

Interpersonal conflict (IV 1): The finding obtained from this study is similar to the findings from other scholars (such as Ciby & Raya, 2014; Ilies *et al.*, 2010; Zapf & Gross, 2001; Einarsen, 2000; to name a few). In the study conducted by Ciby and Raya (2014), they also predicted that the increase of interpersonal conflict will lead to a high number of workplace bullying cases. This paper also trust that the escalation of conflicts experienced by the cleaners led to the bullying behavior. The issue of negative interpersonal encounter such as egoism, jealousy, and internal competition are occurs among them and derived the incident of workplace bullying to occur.

Physical work environment (IV 2): The finding of this study is alike to the findings from other studies (such as Salin, 2015; Government of South Australia, 2012; Baillien *et al.*, 2009; Baillien, Neyens, & Witte, 2008; Haynes, 2008; Bloisi & Hoel, 2008; Mathisen, Einarsen, & Mykletun, 2008; Lawrence & Leather, 1999; Neuman & Baron, 1998; Einarsen & Skogstad, 1996; Leymann, 1993; Bell, 1992; to name a few). In the study done by Salin (2015), for example, the results is strongly supported a relationship between poor physical work environment and the increase in terms of risk of bullying. This study also believe that the physical environment of the cleaners' workplace that are instance-cramped, crowded, and hot, might cause them to feel uncomfortable and tiring; force them to release their uncomfortableness and stress to their colleague by bullying them.

Poor leadership (IV 3): Accordingly, the finding obtained from this study regarding the positive relationship between poor leadership and the incidence of workplace bullying is dissimilar with previous studies (such as Cooper *et al.*, 2013; Mathisen, Einarsen, & Mykletun, 2011; Hauge, Skogstad, & Einarsen, 2011; Hoel *et al.*, 2010; Hauge, Skogstad, & Einarsen, 2007; Skogstad *et al.*, 2007; Mitchell &

Ambrose, 2007; Yukl, 2006; Einarsen, 2005; Hepworth & Towler, 2004; Einarsen, Hoel, & Nielsen, 2000; and Leymann, 1993). This study found that even though the leadership possessed by the superior of the cleaner is poor, it is not associated to the incidence of workplace bullying. This study believes that the inability of the cleaner to disclose the real information regarding their superior since they might be worried that the dissemination of the information regarding their superior which might affect their job such as dismissal from the current job. Therefore, that is why the finding shows on the negative relationship between poor leadership and the incidence of workplace bullying.

(RO 2) The main attributor that caused the workforce bullying to occur

This study found that the main attributor that caused workplace bullying to occur was interpersonal conflict. This study believes that the levels of negative interpersonal encounter among the cleaners due to work-related issues or due to personal issues such as egoism, jealousy, and internal competition are quite high. Hence, this situation creates contentious exchange, hostility, or aggression among them and leads the workplace bullying to occur and be the main attributor as compared to other attributors (i.e poor working environment and poor leadership).

Conclusion

As a conclusion, since the findings show the existence of bullying at the cleaning workforce level (i.e in this study it caused by interpersonal conflict and poor physical work environment), thus, further corrective actions need to be taken by respective parties in improving the quality of their workplace. Based on Einarsen (2005), the issue of bullying at work is an issue for all members of the working community and a basic issue of democracy and human rights in modern society. So that, the effort in overcoming workplace bullying is not the responsibility of merely one party as it is demanding for all. The organisational leader, employees union, civil society and the government have to fight for their human rights and equity by struggling in vanishing this unwelcome phenomenon. Only then, according to Einarsen (2005), a positive working environment can be created and finally, contribute to i. the development of ethical organisations, ii. working environments that foster dignity and diversity as well as iii. fair treatment and opportunities for all employees regardless of their position or rank in organisation.

Recommendation

Since there are many adverse effects attributed from workplace bullying as discussed earlier, actions need to be taken to prevent and correct this qualm.

Primary Intervention

Primary intervention can be said as preliminary actions taken by organisations in an attempt to prevent workplace bullying. This first intervention is alligned with “prevention is better that cure” since early preventive measures might help the organisation to eliminate or minimise this unhealthy behaviour before it further affects other employees and the organisation itself. There are few methods which can be classified as the primary interventions.

For example, primary intervention is comprise of policy communication, stress management training and negative behavior awareness training as it was proven to be adequate and efficient by Hoel and Giga’s (2006). Other than that, Hershcovis, Reich, and Niven (2015) also mentioned that by creating systems that can: (a) ensure role clarity and reasonable workloads, (b) offer leadership training that encourages supportive leadership styles and (c) generate policies to ensure fair and just treatment; decisions and outcomes may all help to reduce the prevalence of workplace aggression and bullying.

Secondary Intervention

Secondary intervention can be said as ‘responsive’ actions taken by organisations in facing workplace bullying after it takes place. This second intervention can be affiliated to “fighting” because this step provides the victims (employees) with necessary skills and/or coping resources to deal with bullying, should it occur. Although researchers have yet to test the efficacy of secondary interventions in reducing the negative effects of bullying, recent studies have suggested a number of potentially promising routes for such interventions (Hershcovis, Reich, & Niven 2015). Additionally, there are few methods that can be classified as secondary intervention.

One of the methods includes managing emotions as mentioned by Niven and his colleagues who worked on emotion regulation. They suggested strategies which employees can use to manage their own emotions in response to being aggressed against appear to be important factors that may influence the severity of consequences pertaining to employees’ health and well-being (Hershcovis, Reich, & Niven, 2015).

Meanwhile, Zapf and Gross's (2001) work suggested that people who successfully cope with bullying differ from unsuccessful copers in how they manage conflict. In particular, successful copers are better at recognising and avoiding escalating behaviour.

The second method is by reappraising the aggression (e.g., by trying not to take peoples' actions personally) via an adaptive response, that is by buffering the negative effects of aggression alongside suppressing one's emotional response and engaging in ruminative thinking (where one continually mulls over what happened in a negative manner) are maladaptive responses and a form of exacerbating negative consequences (Niven *et al.*, 2013). Through these two methods, scholars predicted that they are good measures in facing the bully and their inner egos.

Tertiary Intervention

Tertiary intervention can be said as corrective actions conducted by organisations to overcome workplace bullying after it takes place. This third intervention is suited to be said as corrective actions because in reference to Hershcovis, Reich, and Niven (2015), this intervention focuses on reducing negative consequences after bullying has occurred. It is crucial for organisations to respond appropriately once bullying has been reported. If not, victimisations can lead to negative consequences to targets because of poor organisational responses (Bergman *et al*, 2002). There are a few methods which can be classified as tertiary interventions.

One way organisations can respond is to use workplace mediation, in which a third party to the conflict (e.g., an external consultant or a member of HR staff) gets both the alleged perpetrator and victim together to work through the situation in a facilitated discussion, focusing on the present and future relationships (Hershcovis, Reich, & Niven, 2015). Saam in 2010 identified that mediation can be useful to prevent escalation, primarily when a situation is viewed as a conflict rather than full-blown bullying. However, when a behaviour pattern has become entrenched, mediation may be inappropriate due to power imbalance which develops between the perpetrator and victim (Hershcovis, Reich, & Niven 2015). Other than that, organisations can also consider administering sanctions to perpetrators (e.g., moving them to a different department, demoting or even firing them). However, because bullying cases are often "he said she said" in nature, sanctions can be difficult to justify legally (Hershcovis, Reich, & Niven 2015). Next, another effective method would be counseling which can be offered to the perpetrators of bullying.

Limitation of the Study

Lack of Cooperation

The first limitation in this study is the lack of cooperation from the respondents since it is quite difficult to get full cooperation from cleaners in answering the questionnaires, maybe due to their low self-esteem pertaining to their working title, nationality as well as being unfamiliar with outsiders who come and ask questions to them. Thus, researchers should start off by approaching these respondents by explaining the aims of the study and not by approaching them in a formal manner.

Non-disclosure of Information

The second limitation in this study is the non-disclosure of information from the respondents. In other words, the cleaning workforces might tend to non-disclose real or truthful information since they might be worried that their answers might be manipulated. This includes disseminating information about their superior which might affect their job such as dismissal from the current job. Thus, further studies should clearly explain to the respondents that the feedbacks and answers from them as well as their personal identity will be kept as private and confidential. They also need to be informed that the results of this study will not be given to their superior and thus, there is nothing for them to worry about. Through this, they might feel more confident to provide exact and precise answers which will lead to the more accurate findings.

Exclusiveness for Other Occupations

The third limitation in this study is the inclusiveness of the cleaners as respondents. Furthermore, as this study only focuses on cleaners as respondents, the nature of the sample could be one of the weaknesses in this study since the sample and data do not represent the employees from other occupations. Further research should also concentrate on bullying that occurs at other levels too since there is also the possibility of bullying. Based on Cusack (2000), workplace bullying does occur across organisations and occupations.

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