Transformation of organizational Cultural Paradigm to Bullying Culture And the Role of Diversity

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Abstract
Purpose: To view the change in organizational culture to bullying culture with reference to diversity at work place and to study the impact of bullying culture on the organizational functioning.
Methodology: First, the literature which covers the ''bullying'' and ''bullying culture'' and role of diversity in changing the culture of organization is reviewed in detail and then tried to explore the contributors' different views about the impact of bullying on organizational performance. The sample size is 50 and Indian IT sector is used for the study.
Findings: The answer to the question of the role of diversity in bringing bullying culture to organization is very difficult. However, it is found that all respondents agree to the fact that bullying is done basically on the basis of the types of diversity. Hence the impact of diversity is clearly seen the functioning of the organization.
Research limitations – Because the respondents does not open up easily to speak about bullying and the organization. The sample size is kept small and the study is confined only to the IT sector of India
Practical implications: The researchers would be able to construct empiric and theoretical evaluations in the framework of perspectives explored in the paper.
Keywords: Bullying culture, diversity, conflict

I. Introduction

In this era of globalization, the market has come under a single roof. The face of the organizations has changed from a homogeneous workplace to a diversified workplace. People from different background, social identity, and different culture are working in a single organization. A shift in the beliefs and values of the employees is observed. In this time of intense competition, diversity has proved to be a boon for the organization, as it provides a competitive edge to the organization. However, with this positive impact of diversity on the organization it has a very dangerous byproduct which is correctly spelt as bullying culture.

Bullying culture is the major issue faced by the employees of the organizations worldwide. Various researches have been done on finding and analyzing the harassment on the basis of racial and gender discrimination. Although, in various parts of the world bullying and harassment are used interchangeably, but actually there is a hairline difference between the two. Bullying in workplace is found to be more hazardous as compared to harassment. This paper is written to determine the relation of bullying culture on the performance of the employees considering diversity as an important mediating factor

II. Literature Review

2.1 Bullying culture

Various researchers had defined workplace bullying culture in various ways. Workplace bullying was first used in 1992 by Andrea Adams in a book named as "*Bullying at Work: How to Confront and Overcome It*(Andrea, 1992). According to (Namie) workplace bullying is defined as the frequent exploitations that are health-damaging which includes terrorizing, humiliation and sabotage that obstruct work. This definition was expanded by (Lutgen-Sandvik, 2006) according to which workplace bullying is defined as the *continual aggression (verbal and nonverbal), that includes social isolation, personal comments and various other agonizing messages and unreceptive collaborations*". According to Keashly, (1998) bullying is an interpersonal behavior which is unwelcome and unsolicited.

Therefore, it can be said that workplace bullying is the act of constantly humiliating the employees aggressively which include societal seclusion, impertinent remarks and sabotage. It is initiated by the wrong use of power. A bullied person feels like a clay pigeon in bullying environment. His personal as well as professional life gets depressed. It is important to note that bullying is different from aggression. Aggression is one time knock whereas bullying is a persistent mistreatment or attacks on a person that creates an ongoing behavioral pattern. A supervisor sometimes get aggressive, he cannot be taken as bullying the subordinate till his motive is

to get best performance out from the employees. Some examples of bullying at workplace are unrealistic target, personal commenting, intentional social boycott, excessive mentoring, browbeating etc.

Sometimes, harassment and bullying are used interchangeably. Harassment is considered as a part of bullying. There is a hair line difference between the two. However, harassment is recognized by law butbullying is not. Harassment is done on the basis of income group, gender orientation, race, religion and even disabilities. Bullying may be between two people or among the group. It may be intentional or unintentional. It has an adverse effecton the performance of the employees. The victimization of employees leads to mental health problems like anxiety, stress, phobia and the most hazardous is disturbed sleep (www.acas.org.ok). Bullying is a repetitive action while other forms of aggressive behavior are non-repetitive. Bullying is the persistent intentional hammering. Whereas other forms of aggressive behaviors are non-intentional. Bullying is usually long term in nature and last minimum for a couple of months. It gets escalated gradually and is more harmful as it has deep emotional and mental effects (Lutgen-Sandvik P. &., 2009).This paper would be discussing organizational bullying. Corporate or organizational bullying take place when bullying is embedded in an organization and turn out to be an integral part of the workplace culture. Organizational change is the most important reason for the shift of organizational culture to bullying culture.

2.2Cause and Nature of Bullying

It is clear from the aforementioned definitions of bullying, the core dimension of bullying is nothing but the "*repeated actions*" which are used to torment, frustrate and even provoke a person for wrong deeds. It is clear that bullying does not have any specific reason. However, the root cause of bullying comprises of both organizational and individual factors. According to Zapf and Einarsen (2003) there are three important reasons for the bullying. Firstly, people wants to safeguard their self-esteem. They like to show their value for the organization and even want to enhance it by undermining the talent of the others. Secondly, people who are deficient of social competence are more likely to bully others to safeguard their position. Thirdly and the most important reason for bullying is the imbalance of power in organizational culture.

Bullying culture (Workplace Bullying Institute, 2015) has correctly stated that it is the culture of the organization which describes the functioning of the employees. A large number of employees are working in a single organization. As an opportunity arises everyone wants to grab that opportunity. As a result of which a competition arises in the organization. This makes one winner amongst others. Victory is achieved at the cost of the loss of the others. This gives rise to bullying. Moreover, people start harming others for their own success. The person who gets bullied now bullies other to satisfy his self-esteem. As a result a vicious circle is formed which require an intervention from the management of the organization to stop bullying.

2.3Effects of bullying culture on the Organizational Performance.

Before discussing the impact of bullying on organizational performance it is necessary to discuss the impact of bullying on an individual. As bullying is repetitive in nature, the employee who is bullied gets mentally disturbed. Further, continuous bullying for a longer period leads to depression. As a result of this, the victims are not able to give their best performance. They suffer from a high degree of anxiety, anger, low self-esteem, chronic fatigue and inability to concentrate on work. As a result the organizational performance suffers.

It is usually found that the organizations turn a blind eye to the bullying. Thus, the bullied employees are not satisfied with the job. They always look forward to get a good change. As a result they do not contribute to the organization with full dedication. They feel worthless for the organization. The consequence of this is that the attrition rate of the organization increases. Moreover, the employee who just moved to other organization will most probably spread the bad-words about the previous organization. This is the most negative impact of bullying culture which directly hampers the image of the organization.

2.4Relation between organizational diversity and bullying culture

With globalization, the framework of the organizations has changed. Organizations are much more diverse than ever before. Diversity has double whammy effect on the performance of the organization and bullying culture is the undesirable byproduct of this organizational diversity. In an organization, employees have different background on the basis of culture, race, ethnicity, and age. According to social identity theory, people of same social identity are likely to form a group. If this group gains majority, the other minority group will becomelone wolf. This leads to social isolation. This is a part of unintentional bullying. However, the relationship of organizational diversity and bullying culture is yet to be studied.

III.   Research methodology

After doing an extensive literature review it is found that there is a need to study bullying culture with respect to diversity. The industry chosen for the study is IT sector. In India the most diversified sector is found to be the IT sector. So it is the most appropriate industry for the study. The sample size is kept 50. The size of

the sample is small because people do not open up about the bullying they had faced easily. Simple random sampling is used. The sample is divided into three categories. First category is the respondents should have an experience of more than 10 years. Second category includes the respondents with 5 years of experience and the last category has the respondents with minimum two years of experience. A face to face interview was conducted.

Findings

Experience	No of Respondents	Gender	No of Respondents	Age (Yrs.)	No of Respondents	Education	No of Respondents	Language	No of Respondents
10 Yrs. and above	10	Male	30	21-30	25	Graduation	30	Hindi	25
5-9 Yrs.	15	Female	20	30-40	15	Post-Graduation	20	English	15
1-4 Yrs.	25	-	-	Above 40	10	-	-	Others	10
Total	50	Total	50	Total	50	Total	50	Total	50

Table 1.1

According to table 1.1, there are 10 respondents who belongs to category C1, 15 respondents belongs to category C2 and 25 respondents belongs to category C3. A total of 50 respondents are interviewed. Out of 50 respondents 30 respondents are male and rest are females. According to table 1.2, 48% (50 % males and 45% females) of the total respondents said that they are bullied on the basis of their gender and 28% (30% of males and 25% females) respondents said that they are bullied on the basis of their language. On the other hand, 58% (63% males and 50% females) of the respondents said that bullying hampers the process of communication while 26% (20% males and 35% females) of the respondents said that bullying directly has an impact on task allocation.

Gender	Basis of Bullying					Impact of Bullying		
	Gender	Age	Education	Language	Religion	Communication	Networking	Task Allocation
Male (30)	15	1	2	9	3	19	5	6
Female (20)	9	2	1	5	3	10	3	7
Total	24	3	3	14	6	29	8	13

Table 1.2

Age (Yrs.)	Basis of Bullying					Impact of Bullying		
	Gender	Age	Education	Language	Religion	Communication	Networking	Task Allocation
21-30 (25)	10	4	2	6	3	10	5	10
30-40 (15)	7	1	1	5	1	9	2	4
Above 40 (10)	6	1	1	1	1	5	1	4
Total	23	6	4	12	5	24	8	18

Table 1.3

According to table 1.3, 46% (20% from 21-30 yrs. of age, 30% from 30-40 yrs. and 12% from above 40yrs.) of the respondents said that the basis of bullying is gender and 24% said that it is due to difference in language. Moreover, 48% of the respondents said that bullying has a big impact on the process of communication and 36% of the respondents said it directly influences the distribution of the task to the employee.

Education	Basis of Bullying					Impact of Bullying		
	Gender	Age	Education	Language	Religion	Communication	Networking	Task Allocation
Graduation (29)	10	2	2	8	7	10	9	10
Post-Graduation (21)	11	1	1	7	1	9	2	10
Total	21	3	3	15	8	19	11	20

Table1.4

According to table 1.4, 42% (34% graduates and 52% post-graduates) of the respondents said that they are bullied on the basis of gender while 30% (27% graduates and 33% post graduates) of the respondents said that it due to the difference in language. Moreover, the impact of bullying is more on task allocation i.e. 40% (34% graduates and 47% post graduates) while 38% (34% graduates and 42% post-graduates) of the respondents said that it directly influence communication process.

Religion	Basis of Bullying					Impact of Bullying		
	Gender	Age	Education	Language	Religion	Communication	Networking	Task Allocation
Hindu (30)	15	1	1	10	3	10	11	9
Muslim (11)	5	1	1	3	1	7	2	2
Others (9)	4	1	2	1	1	4	3	2
Total	24	3	4	14	5	21	16	13

Table 1.5

According to table 1.5, 48% of the respondents (50% Hindu, 45% Muslim and 44% Others) said that bullying is done on the basis of gender. While 28% of the respondents (33% Hindu, 27% Muslim and 11% others.) said that bullying is done on the basis of language. Moreover, 42% of the respondents said that the impact of bullying is more on communication while 32% of the respondents said that it is more on networking. India is a secular country. It is clearly mentioned in the constitution that there should not be any kind of discrimination on the basis of religion of the individual. But still there are certain places where bullying is done on the basis of religion. For example, Muslim women are not given job that require extroversion quality. Because it is believed in Muslim religion that women is meant to look after household activities and must speak less or speak on when it is extremely required. Hence there is much more bullying on their part on the basis of religion.

IV. Discussion

Diversity is the key essence of the organizations. After globalization, the workforce has changed drastically. More women and minorities are working in the society. Traditionally, women and minorities are supposed to do majorly the household activities but now they are equally participating in earning for their day to day living. Similarly in Indian organizations the number of women and minorities working has increased in past ten years (Catalyst. Quick Take: Women in the Labour Force in India. New York, 2017). As a result of this the organizations are getting much more diverse. This diversity has not come alone. It has bring its positive and negative impacts on the working of the organization. Although it has many positive impact in the organization, but this paper is focusing on a new drawback of diversity that has actually act as change agent in the organizational culture i.e. "Bullying". It is not wrong to say that bullying is the byproduct of diversity. From the data collected, it is clear that most of the respondents are bullied on the basis of gender, language and religion. However, it can be said that the way of the communication of the individual and his gender is one of the major reason of bullying. The way of communication is inculcated in the individual on the basis of the society. For example if a person born and brought up in India and other who is born and brought up in Europe has a different way of communication. This difference makes the employees who are working in the same organization and towards same goal, difficult to gel well in the team and as a result the work gets affected. Not only this the people with different way of communication are bullied just for having fun. This makes them feel annoyed and stressed as a result many unwanted complications arises with the bullied person. For example, employees get stressed, depressed, frustrated and his mental health also get deteriorated. Moreover, the attrition rate also increases. As a result of this he does not contribute with his full potential to the organizational goal and the performance of the organization suffers a lot.

When we talk about the bullying on the basis of gender, it is one of the most dangerous bullying. This is mostly done with females. It can be in the form of sexual harassment or by not giving females work according to their skills. Majority of the female respondents said that they are not given work according to their capabilities and moreover, theyare not given work of high credibility. As a result of this their confidence in them and in the system get agitated. This again leads to stress depression and lack of confidence. Since the task allotted are not realistic i.e. either they are given to the incompetent employees or they the given in an unrealistic time limit. The employees get stressed out and they do not give their 100% to the task allotted. Not only this the process of information sharing is also hampered. The essential information is not given on time and complete information is not shared. In other words, the information sharing or the communication process suffer a loss of aptness of the information. It is not shared on time, as a result of this the bullied person get more

frustrated and started feeling aloof. Sometimes the employees do not have confidence in their colleagues so they start making speculations about why the information is shared with them. Does other employees has an ulterior motive in this or they doing it for the sake of making mockery of them again. So there is a wrong interpretation of information is also present. As a result, the performance of the employee is reduced.
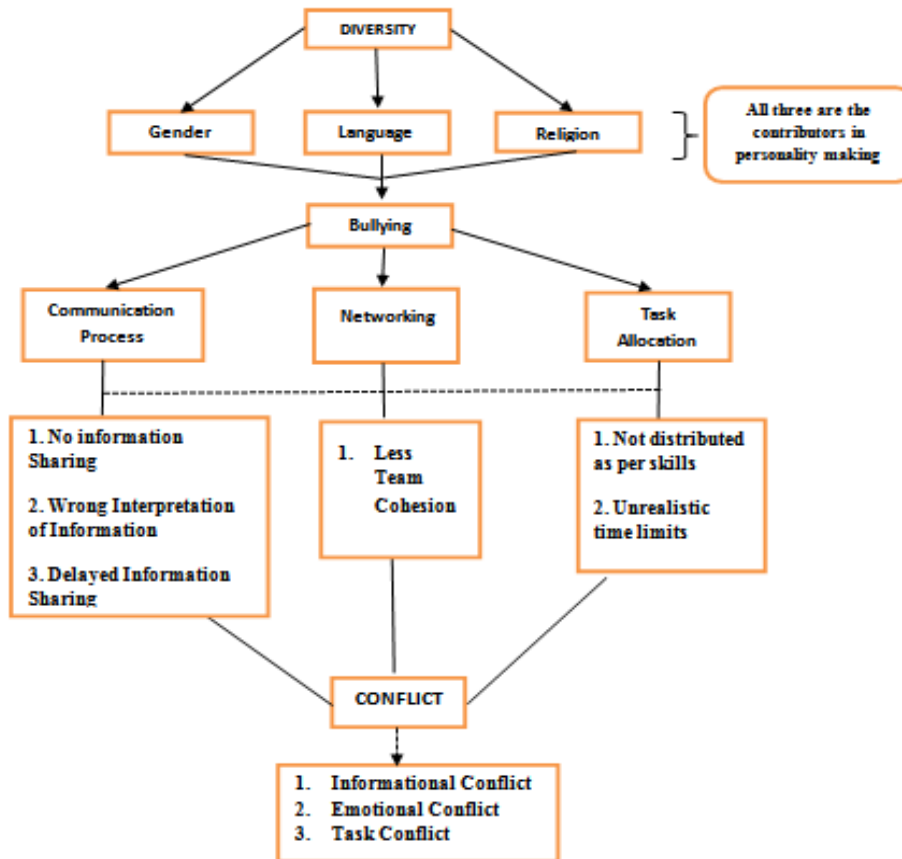
V. Conclusion

Diagram 1.1

The Diagram above illustrate that the root cause of bullying is diversity. Diversity has various types or dimensions. But according to this study, gender, religion and language are the prime causes of bullying. In Indian IT sector employees are bullied majorly on the basis of gender, religion and language. These three dimensions of diversity are the main contributors of the personality of a person. Hence, we can say that bullying is done on the basis of personality of the individual. As discussed above in the literature review, there are various drawbacks of bullying on the employee. Other than personal distress, the impact of bullying on the organization is more severe. First of all it hampers the communication process then networking and then task allocation. All these three functions are the backbone of the organization.

a. Communication process: An organization can function or work well only when the process of communication is crystal clear. The information must be shared at an appropriate time with the right person. The most important thing in the whole communication process is that the information must be interpreted in the way that it should be. Interpretation of the information is sometimes not done with open mind. This is because the threat of bullying has blocked the mind of the employee. He fears that the information given to him is either not right or has some ulterior motive to make mockery and ridicule of him again. So, the bullied employee does not take the information given to him seriously and hence interpretation of information is also not done properly. Hence, the productivity of the employee and organizational performance both reduces.

b. Networking: Networking is the bone of the organization. Majority of the task are completed only on the basis of networking. In a team networking plays an important role in keeping the team members together. Furthermore, networking has given an employee a sense of confidence and comfort that they are socially active while working. But bullying has a negative impact on the networking. The team members feel hesitated in sharing the information and even they do not talk so as to avoid being bullied again and again. This leads to communication gap among the team members. The team cohesion reduces which leads to less

networking collaboration. This ultimately increases the anxiety, stress and discomfort in the team and hence the performance of the team reduces.

c. **Task Allocation:**The task allocation is one of the most important activities of the organizational day to day activities. The task must be allocated as per the skills and capabilities of the employees and realistic time must be given to complete the task. But bullying does not allow the fair distribution of the task to the employee. The person who is bullying other intentionally, just for the sake of sadistic pleasure, does not give the right work to the employee whom he want to bully. Or he might not give the realistic time for the completion of the work. This again increases the anxiety in the employees to do work and as a result the health of the employees suffers a lot. Hence, the quality and the productivity both decreases. This, ultimately has reduced the performance of the employee. And hence, the organizational performance also decreases.

d. **Conflict:**All these factors gives rise to the conflicts in the form of informational conflict, emotional conflict and task conflict. As discussed above, the process of communication is disturbed due to no or less sharing of information, delayed information sharing and wrong interpretation of the information. This results in the wastage of resources because of which the organizations suffer a great loss. Employees get emotionally attached to the task given to them. When they are not able to justify the task allotted to them they get stressed and emotionally weak. They get emotionally drained out. As a result emotional conflict also increases. Not only this when the task allotted are not as per the skills and the time for completion of the job is also not realistic, this gives rise to task conflict. However, task conflict sometimes gives positive impact on the performance of employee. This can be explained with an example. Sometimes, there is an over-discussion for the task to do it in a better way. This leads to task conflict but in a way it is better because it gives a best way of doing the task.

This bullying has now become an inherent part of organizational culture. This actually require a strong intervention from management and government so that it can be eradicated from the organization in order to keep the asset of the organization " Human Capital" happy and satisfied for the betterment of the organization. This will reduce many problems of organization like attrition rate, conflict, absenteeism etc.

Limitations

This study has tried to focus on the negative impact of the diversity i.e. bullying as a part of the organizational culture. But this study also has certain limitations. First and the foremost is that the sample size is small and it is confined to IT sector only. However, other sectors are facing the same problem of bullying. The employees do not share the complete experience of bullying they had faced. They feel distressing while sharing their experience about bullying. They hesitate to accept that they are the victims of bullying. So it has become very difficult to approach the people who are openly sharing their experience about bullying.

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