Building relationships: An empirical analysis of shame, pride and workplace bullying

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What does past research tell us?

PREVALENCE RATES

ORGANIZATIONAL / SOCIAL CONSEQUENCES

• poor public image
• poor morale and commitment
• absenteeism and high staff turnover
• costs associated with
  - counseling, employee assistance, mediation
  - workers’ compensation claims, rehabilitation
  - law suits
  - early retirement

(Sources: European Survey on working conditions, 1996; Glendining, 2001; Kinimäki, Elorainio, & Vahtera, 2000; Leymann, 1990; McCarthy, 1996; Quine, 1999; Voss, Floderus, & Diderichsen, 2001; Whitehead, 1996)
What does past research tell us? (cont’d)

INDIVIDUAL CONSEQUENCES (Victims)

• losing self-confidence, self-respect
• having job dissatisfaction
• fear of dismissal
• feeling socially isolated
• feeling stress, anxiety
• developing stress related symptoms

(Sources: Bond et al., 2000; Einarssen & Skogstad, 1996; Knorz & Zapf, 1996; Leymann, 1992; Lyons, Tivary, & Ball, 1995; Neidl, 1995; Quine, 1999; Rayner & Hoel, 1997; Sheehan, 1999)
PSYCHO-SOCIAL CORRELATES (Bullies)
- lack leadership skills
- role conflict
- anxiety and depression

SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC CORRELATES (Bullies)
- full time
- male
- senior positions
- high salaries
- private sector
What is missing from past research?

- A social-psychological perspective
- Emotions – self-conscious emotions such as shame and pride
Shame and its management

SHAME ACKNOWLEDGMENT (adaptive)
- feeling shame
- taking responsibility
- making amends

SHAME DISPLACEMENT (non-adaptive)
- blaming others
- hitting out at others
- feeling retaliatory anger
Pride and its management

HUMBLE PRIDE (adaptive)
- showing humility
- respecting self
- respecting others

NARCISSISTIC PRIDE (non-adaptive)
- feeling arrogance
- feeling superior over others
- putting others down
What does past research tell us about shame and pride?

**CORRELATES OF SHAME**
- anger
- crime (e.g., domestic violence)
- school bullying
- tax evasion

**CORRELATES OF PRIDE**
- aggression
- threatened interpersonal relationships
- behavioral problems such as school bullying

A model of building relationships

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Constructive</th>
<th>Shame</th>
<th>Pride</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>Shame acknowledgment (Social solidarity)</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>Shame displacement (Social alienation)</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Hypotheses

1) shame acknowledgment will reduce bullying
2) shame displacement will increase bullying
3) humble pride will reduce bullying
4) narcissistic pride will increase bullying
5) the pride management variables will contribute to predicting bullying, above and beyond the shame management variables
Methodology

- data collected through the “Organizational Culture” Project (Australia, Bangladesh, and Japan)
- 824 full-time employees from Dhaka, Bangladesh
- 55% response rate

Demographics

- 63% - male
- average age - 34.4 years
- 68% - university education
- 56% private sector, 24% government sector, 20% semi-government sector
- 35% lower status, 33% middle status, 32% higher status
Measures

WORKPLACE BULLYING
- 20 items representing five categories (Rayner & Hoel, 1997)
  ✷ threat to professional status
  ✷ threat to personal standing
  ✷ isolation
  ✷ overworked
  ✷ destabilization

SHAME MANAGEMENT

PRIDE MANAGEMENT
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Correlation coefficients</th>
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<tr>
<td>Age</td>
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<td>Job status (middle)</td>
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<td>Shame acknowledgment</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shame displacement</td>
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<tr>
<td>Narcissistic pride</td>
<td>.63***</td>
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<tr>
<td>Humble pride</td>
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</table>
Table 2. Standardized beta coefficients from a hierarchical regression analysis in predicting workplace bullying

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Control Model</th>
<th>Shame Model</th>
<th>Shame and Pride Model</th>
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<td>Adj R square</td>
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Summary of results

SHAME MANAGEMENT
• Shame acknowledgment reduces bullying
• Shame displacement triggers bullying

PRIDE MANAGEMENT
• Humble pride reduces bullying
• Narcissistic pride triggers bullying
Where to from here?

This paper reveals the challenge of developing a paradigm of “emotionally intelligent justice” (Sherman, 1993), in which the central tools will be inventions for helping bullies, victims, and other staff including officials to manage each others’ emotions to minimize harm.