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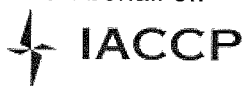
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Abstract

This study responds to the call for cross-cultural investigations of workplace bullying by examining the relationship between workplace bullying and attitudes among employees from two countries. The authors argue that employees from societies that are less inclined to accept that power differences exist as a result of structure (low power distance countries, e.g., Australia) will respond to workplace bullying more negatively than will employees from cultures that accept that power differences exist as a result of structure (high power distance, e.g., Singapore). In all, 165 Singaporean and 152 Australian employees completed surveys designed to assess workplace bullying, workgroup identification, and job satisfaction. Results showed that workplace bullying was negatively related to both workgroup identification and job satisfaction among employees from both countries. Moreover, national culture influenced the relationship between bullying and job satisfaction and workgroup identification such that the negative relationships between bullying and these attitudinal outcomes were stronger for Australians than Singaporeans.

Keywords

workplace bullying, culture, job satisfaction, workgroup identification

Does national culture influence employee responses to workplace bullying? The antecedents and consequences of workplace bullying have received much attention in psychology and the organizational sciences (Einarsen, Raknes, & Matthiesen, 1994; Einarsen & Skogstad, 1996; Hallberg & Strandmark, 2006; Hobman, Restubog, Bordia, & Tang, in press; Leymann, 1996; Rayner, 1997; Restubog, Bordia, & Tang, 2007), but cross-cultural examinations of workplace bullying have been rare. Evidence suggests that cultural beliefs and values may influence how individuals

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perceive and respond to aggressive acts (Hoel, Cooper, & Faragher, 2001; Rippon, 2005; Salin, 2003; Tepper, 2007). In fact, Salin (2003) argues that bullying is perceived as an acceptable and effective way of accomplishing tasks in some cultures, while other cultures view it as unacceptable. Consistent with this research, we argue that these different perspectives on bullying may hinge on a culture's acceptance of hierarchical power, or power distance. Power distance refers to "the extent to which a society accepts the fact that power in institutions and organizations is distributed unequally" (Hofstede, 1980, p. 45). Societies high in power distance tend to accept the fact that power differences exist between individuals, while low power distance societies tend to expect that individuals will have relatively equal power. Accordingly, we suggest that there will be a direct relationship between workplace bullying and outcomes and that national culture will influence the strength of these relationships. Specifically, we expect that culture will moderate employee reactions to bullying such that employees from low power distance cultures who experience bullying will have lower levels of job satisfaction and workgroup identification than will employees from high power distance cultures who experience bullying.

We test our hypotheses among a sample of employees from Australia and Singapore. These countries were selected specifically because Australia is considered to be a low power distance culture while Singapore is considered to be a high power distance culture. Understanding the potentially differential effects of bullying on the work attitudes of Australians and Singaporeans makes several important contributions to the literature and to practice. First, we expect to add additional evidence (job satisfaction and workgroup identification) to the growing literature empirically demonstrating the negative consequences of workplace bullying. Researchers have also linked workplace bullying with physical and mental health problems (Hoel, Rayner, & Cooper, 1999; Keashly, Hunter, & Harvey, 1997), withdrawal, and commitment (Hoel, Einarsen, & Cooper, 2003; Keashly & Jagatic, 2003). Second, we respond to several calls for research on the cross-cultural effects of workplace bullying (e.g., Salin, 2003). Most studies of bullying have been performed in Western cultures, leaving us unsure of the effects of culture on employee responses to bullying. Drawing on power distance research, we expect that while bullying is universally perceived as a negative situation, its effects will be stronger in low power distance cultures (Australia) than in high power distance cultures (Singapore). This suggests that bullying may be standard behavior that is accepted to a greater extent by employees in cultures that accept hierarchically based power disparity. From a practical perspective, our research should aid managers in understanding a topic that is clearly a growing problem in organizations. For instance, one survey revealed that more than half of employees have been bullied (Rayner & Cooper, 1997) while a second survey indicated that bullying was responsible for 18 million days lost in work productivity in one year in Britain (Keelan, 2000). Furthermore, our research is timely in light of the creation of the Singapore-Australia Free Trade Agreement (SAFTA) in 2003, which has created increased trade opportunities and greater intercultural exchanges between these countries.

Theory and Hypotheses

Workplace bullying is defined by Salin (2003) as "repeated and persistent negative acts towards one or more individual(s), which involve a perceived power imbalance and create a hostile work environment" (p. 1215). This definition represents some common themes that exist in the workplace bullying literature. First, workplace bullying reflects some form of internal conflict between employees within an organization (Baron, 1998). Second, workplace bullying involves persistent negative behaviors or practices that are directed toward one or more workers with the intention to hurt, offend, or humiliate (Einarsen, 1999; Einarsen, Hoel, Zapf, & Cooper, 2003). Indeed, researchers noted that bullying typically occurs repeatedly for an extended period of time (Einarsen & Skogstad, 1996; Vartia, 1996). Other researchers have adopted the view that even one single

act of bullying is one too many (Crawford, 1997; Neuman & Baron, 2003). Crawford (1997) views workplace bullying as a continuum of workplace violence where variation reflects intensity, not regularity. For example, at one end of the continuum, workplace bullying might occur in the form of joking or teasing. At the other end of the continuum, it might represent more intense emotional or psychological forms of bullying. Indeed, Crawford notes that it is the types of behaviors that take precedence in defining workplace bullying.

Nevertheless, there is general consensus in the bullying literature that the notion of persistency is important because it moves the focus away from negative acts to negative relationships and highlights the interpersonal nature of bullying (Keashley & Jagatic, 2003). As a consequence, workplace bullying generally occurs in a systematic manner over extended periods of time. Although bullying generally takes the form of an open verbal or physical attack on the victim, it may also take the form of more subtle acts, such as excluding or isolating the victim from his or her peer group (Leymann, 1996; Zapf, Knorz, & Kulla, 1996).

We speculate that bullying, whether open or subtle, will result in negative outcomes because it signals to victims that they are not valued members of a group. To make this argument, we draw on Baumeister and Leary's (1995) belongingness theory and Tyler and Lind's (1992) relational model of authority. Belongingness theory (Baumeister & Leary, 1995) postulates that individuals have a fundamental and innate motivation to seek out and maintain lasting, positive, and meaningful relationships and to prevent the dissolution of existing relationships. Indeed, the perception of being part of a group from which one derives appreciation, respect, support, and advice is strongly related to one's well-being. A considerable body of research provides strong empirical evidence that people lacking supportive interpersonal relationships are more likely to succumb to psychological and physical problems because they lack something vital that is only made available through interpersonal involvement (cf. Cohen & Wills, 1985; Viswesvaran, Sanchez, & Fisher, 1999).

Similarly, the relational model of authority suggests that individuals tend to value group membership because it offers them feelings of self-worth. Key to these feelings of self-worth is the extent to which an individual believes that he or she is treated fairly by a group or authority figures (Fischer & Smith, 2006; Lind, Tyler, & Huo, 1997). Fair or just treatment, according to Lind et al. (1997), signals to individuals that they will not be treated as second-class citizens within the group and thus will not suffer loss of social identity (Lind et al., 1997). For instance, Fischer and Smith (2006) find strong positive correlations between procedural justice and organizational commitment among British and German employees in various professions. Results of this study suggest that unfair treatment will reduce the extent to which an individual identifies with or is committed to a group. Because bullying will, in most cases, be perceived as unfair by victims, we expect that individuals will tend to value group membership to a lesser extent when they experience bullying.

We argue that the relational model of authority explains how employees evaluate their levels of satisfaction with their jobs. Specifically, job satisfaction has been defined as a positive emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one's job (Locke, 1976). Job satisfaction is important because it is negatively associated with turnover intentions (Bordia, Hunt, Paulsen, Tourish, & DiFonzo, 2004). Previous research suggests that junior doctors and National Health Service Trust employees exposed to workplace bullying reported decreased job satisfaction (Quine, 1999, 2003). In this article, we speculate that job satisfaction decreases in response to bullying because it makes spending time in the workplace where the job is performed a less enjoyable experience and reduces the positive rewards that accrue to an individual while performing the job.

Hypothesis 1a: Workplace bullying is negatively related to job satisfaction.

The relational model of authority also readily presents hypotheses regarding the extent to which employees identify with their workgroups. Workgroup identification is conceptualized as a cognitive connection between the individual and the workgroup (Mael & Tetrick, 1992) and is based in research on social identity theory. Social identity theory suggests that when an individual identifies with a group, that individual defines himself or herself by that group's attributes and experiences the group's successes as well as failures as one's own (Mael & Tetrick, 1992). Individuals develop a sense of who they are, and what their attitudes and goals should be, by identifying with characteristics perceived to be important to the group (Hogg & Vaughan, 2002). The relational model of authority suggests that unfair treatment—such as bullying—will signal to individuals that they are valued to a lesser degree than other group members. As such, they will lose social identity (Tyler & Lind, 1992). Consistent with this idea, previous studies demonstrate that workplace bullying reduces individuals' self-esteem because such negative treatment suggests that they belong to either a lower status group or are regarded as an outsider (Ashforth, 1997; Frone, 2000; Mikkelsen & Einarsen, 2002). Other bullying studies have observed that workplace bullying results in a sense of rejection (Schuster, 1996) and social isolation (Zapf et al., 1996). As a consequence, individuals who are bullied are less likely to identify with a group, as they derive fewer benefits (in terms of social identity) for doing so. Based on these empirical and theoretical considerations, we predict that:

Hypothesis 1b: Workplace bullying is negatively related to workgroup identification.

To date, evidence has supported the hypothesis that workplace bullying has negative consequences for employees' well-being. However, most of these studies have been based on Western samples. For example, workplace bullying has been examined in Australia (Rigby & Slee, 1991), Austria (Niedl, 1996), Denmark (Mikkelsen & Einarsen, 2001), Finland (Vartia & Hyyti, 2002), Ireland (O'Moore, 2000), and the Netherlands (Hubert & van Veldhoven, 2001). Although bullying in Western countries shares similar characteristics, other related research suggests that responses to bullying may be different in Eastern countries (Kanetsuna & Smith, 2002; Morita, Soeda, & Taki, 1999). For example, in a comparative study of Trinidadians and Americans, Griffith, Negy, and Chadee (2006) find that Trinidadians were more tolerant of domestic violence than Americans. In addition, Trinidadians were less likely to intervene and help the victims than their American counterparts. Therefore, cultural norms suggest that bullying is not only acceptable but also functional (Salin, 2003) and that the appearance of toughness is even celebrated in some cultures (Neuman & Baron, 1997). A considerable body of research has shown that there may be cross-cultural differences between Singaporeans and Australians with respect to their values and belief systems, communication styles, and power distances (Bochner & Hesketh, 1994; Brew & Cairns, 2004). We therefore argue that these cross-cultural differences will lead to differential employee responses to workplace bullying.

The relational model of authority is critical to understanding why bullying will have stronger or weaker effects on outcomes in different cultures because it incorporates the role that culture and fair treatment play in social identification (Fischer, 2008; Fischer & Smith, 2006; Lind et al., 1997). Specifically, researchers exploring the relational model of authority draw on Hofstede's (1980) concept of power distance to understand the role of culture in social identification. Power distance refers to the extent to which members of a society believe that power should be distributed unequally. Lind et al. (1997) and Fischer and Smith (2006) suggest and demonstrate that the extent to which individuals are engulfed in hierarchical societies will influence their responses to unfair treatment. Specifically, individuals in hierarchical societies are accustomed to power differentials and the resulting unfair treatment, while individuals living in societies that are less hierarchical will be less likely to accept this type of treatment (Hofstede, 1980; James, 1992).

Accordingly, employees' responses to procedural justice differ across cultures such that employees from high power distance cultures (e.g., Germany and China) respond less negatively when procedural justice is low than do employees from low power distance cultures (e.g., England and the United States; Fischer & Smith, 2006; Lind et al., 1997). This occurs because high and low power distance cultures differ in important respects. In high power distance cultures, employees display lower levels of initiative and lower levels of creativity than do employees in lower power distance cultures (House, Hanges, Javidan, Dorfman, & Gupta, 2004). In high power distance cultures, organizations tend to be more hierarchical, and team-based structures are less prevalent (Hofstede, 2001). House et al. (2004) thus speculate that employees from high power distance cultures are more likely to have deference for authority while employees from low power distance cultures maintain that power should be shared and that individuals should have equal rights and voice.

An outcome of these expectations is that directive leadership, defined as task-oriented behavior with a strong tendency to control discussions, dominate interactions, and personally direct task completion (Cruz, Hensington, & Smith, 1999), is expected in high power distance cultures (House et al., 2004). Similarly, Clugston, Howell, and Dorfman (2000) find that power distance was positively related to normative organizational commitment, supervisor commitment, and workgroup commitment. This indicates that employees from high power distance cultures tend to feel high levels of obligation to remain in relationships, even in the absence of affective attachment.

While individuals in high power distance cultures tend to maintain dependency-based relationships in which they accept their status in order to remain in their group (I. Chew & Putti, 1995; Restubog & Bordia, 2006), individuals in lower power distance cultures display the opposite set of expectations and behaviors. For example, Tyler, Lind, and Huo (1995) found that employees from low power distance cultures tended to form closer and more personal relationships with those who have authority over them. James (1992) demonstrated that low power distance individuals tended to respond in more negative ways when treated unfairly by authorities. In a similar vein, researchers find that low power distance employees have higher expectations for fairness and justice at work (Tyler et al., 1995) and tend to distrust supervisors to a greater extent than high power distance employees when procedural justice is perceived to be low (Lee, Pillutla, & Law, 2000). Overall, results of these studies suggest that employees from high versus low power distance cultures tend to have consistent and differing responses to power differences.

These perceptions of high versus low power distance cultures have important implications for bullying (Neuman & Baron, 1998; Tepper, 2007; Zapf, 1999). Bullying ultimately involves interpersonal conflicts between people, and in most of these conflicts, the victim is placed in a relatively helpless position due to the fact that he or she is less powerful than the bully (Salin, 2003). Accordingly, most studies reveal that "bullies" tend to be supervisors and victims tend to be employees with lower levels of legitimacy in organizations, such as minorities and women (for a review, see Salin, 2003). As a result, employees in such cultures who are bullied may not respond in a negative manner to the extent that employees in low power distance cultures would. Perhaps this is because they perceive that they are at fault, or because it is the norm not to complain about negative workplace treatment, or because it is expected that employees defer to those with greater power (e.g., Hofstede, 2001).

Cultural differences in power distance have been well established in the cross-cultural literature. For example, Hofstede (2001) finds that individuals in Singapore tend to have high levels of power distance compared to individuals in Australia, who have lower power distance orientations. Applying Hofstede's (1980) finding in our study, Australians are assumed to have low power distance and Singaporeans are assumed to have high power distance. We expect that bullying will be more readily accepted by Singaporeans and as a result will have a weaker impact on job satisfaction and workgroup identification. In contrast, bullying will be perceived more

negatively among Australians because it is inconsistent with societal norms. As a result, it will result in lower levels of job satisfaction and workgroup identification among the Australians.

Hypothesis 2a: The negative impact of workplace bullying on job satisfaction is stronger for Australians than for Singaporeans.

Hypothesis 2b: The negative impact of workplace bullying on workgroup identification is stronger for Australians than for Singaporeans.

Method

Participants and Procedure

We collected data from full-time employees enrolled in postgraduate business programs in Australia and Singapore. The Australian Caucasian sample consisted of 152 employees, of which 57.2% were females and 42.8% were males. Approximately 42% were in the 20- to 35-year-old age group. The average tenure of employees within their organizations was 4.82 years. In our Singaporean Chinese sample, there were 165 employees who participated in the study. Of these participants, 55.8% were female and 44.2% were male and approximately 49% were in the 20- to 30-year-old age group. The average tenure of the Singaporean employees within their organizations was 4.17 years. With the exception of age, there was no significant difference between Singaporean and Australian respondents in terms of gender, tenure, and the types of organizations for which they worked. Respondents in the Australian sample were slightly older than respondents in the Singaporean sample, $t(315) = 5.12, p < .001$. This age difference is to be expected. A report by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (2007) reveals that the median age of the Australian population is 36.8 years. The Singapore Department of Statistics (2007) reveals that the median age of the Singaporean population is 36.5 years.

Surveys were administered to participants via mail. Potential participants were given university-addressed prepaid envelopes. A cover sheet that briefly outlined the purpose of the study, voluntary participation, and assurance of confidentiality was also included. The surveys administered to the Singaporean participants were in English for three reasons: (a) English is spoken by a vast majority of Singaporeans in both work and nonwork contexts (Pakir, 2004; P. G. L. Chew, 2007), (b) the educational curricula and training of business students is conducted in English (Pakir, 2004; P. G. L. Chew, 2007), and (c) organizations frequently conduct survey research among their employees and these survey-based measures are typically developed in Western contexts (cf. Cheng, 1989). Of the 550 questionnaires distributed, a total of 317 participants completed the survey, which resulted in a 57.64% response rate. Our response rate is above average for mail questionnaires. Research suggests that response rates to mail questionnaires are typically low, as a 30% response rate is generally considered acceptable (Cavana, Delahaye, & Sekaran, 2001).

Measures

All variables were measured using 6-point Likert scales. All variables were measured using previously established scales. Items were coded such that higher scores indicated higher levels of the focal constructs. Individual responses were derived by computing the means of each construct.

Workplace bullying. Workplace bullying was assessed using the nine-item scale developed by Hoel et al. (2001) and Hoel, Faragher, and Cooper (2004). Participants rated the frequency with which they experienced bullying in their workgroup on a 6-point scale ranging from 1 = *never* to 6 = *almost daily*. We conceptualized a workgroup in terms of formal workgroup that has been created by an organization. Examples of formal groups include departments, units, divisions,

project groups, or committee groups. The major purpose of a formal workgroup is to perform specific tasks and achieve specific objectives defined by the organization (Guzzo & Dickson, 1996). The most common type of formal workgroup consists of two or more individuals working under the direction of a leader. This definition was provided to participants in the survey to guide them in responding to the questions. As formal workgroups are institutionalized as part of the organization, we believe that our Australian and Singaporean participants did not have any problems in understanding the meaning of workgroups. An example item is "How often were you humiliated or ridiculed in connection with your work?" Cronbach's alpha for the bullying scale was .80 for the Australian sample and .85 for the Singaporean sample.

Workgroup identification. Workgroup identification was assessed using Doosje, Ellemers, and Spears's (1995) four-item scale. The items were adapted for use in a workgroup setting. For example, instead of saying "I see myself as a [member of Group X, such as psychology student]," the statement was reworded to "I see myself as a member of my workgroup." Participants recorded their responses on a 6-point Likert scale with responses ranging from 1 = *strongly disagree* to 6 = *strongly agree*. Cronbach's alpha for the workgroup identification scale was .90 for the Australian sample and .91 for Singaporean sample.

Job satisfaction. Job satisfaction was measured using three items developed by Brayfield and Rothe (1951). Participants rated their responses on a 6-point scale ranging from 1 = *strongly disagree* to 6 = *strongly agree*. An example item is "I feel fairly well satisfied with my job." Cronbach's alpha for the job satisfaction scale was .85 for the Australian sample and .88 for the Singaporean sample.

National culture/ethnicity. We classified the ethnicity of our participants using a dummy-coded variable. We assigned a value of 0 for the Australian sample and a value of 1 for the Singaporean sample.

Control variables. We controlled for several demographic variables that may influence job satisfaction and workgroup commitment (gender, tenure, and age) in order to rule out alternative explanations for our study findings.

Results

Descriptive statistics and zero-order correlations are depicted in Table 1. All correlations were in the predicted direction. Reliability coefficients were above the prescribed threshold (Nunnally, 1980). We utilized a two-step procedure for examining measurement equivalence. In the first step, we examined the fit of the three-factor structure in each cultural group. Our results confirmed the three-factor model for each group with Comparative Fit Index (CFI) and Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI) indices ranging between .94 to .96 and root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) index ranging between .055 and .062. In the second step, using multigroup analysis, we began by testing the least restrictive model across the two cultural groups, one that specified an equal number of factors for the two cultural groups. We specified three factors to depict the structure and dimensionality of the three study variables (i.e., workplace bullying, job satisfaction, and workgroup identification). In the next step, we constrained not only an equal number of factors but also equal loadings onto their respective factors across the two cultural groups. Indices of fit were acceptable, suggesting that the factor loadings were equivalent across the two cultural groups. Finally, we tested a more restrictive model constraining an equal number of factors, equal factor loadings, and equal factor intercorrelations across the two cultural groups. Results were also acceptable. Overall, these results suggest that both factor structures and factor loadings of the survey measures used were equivalent between Australian and Singaporean samples.

We used hierarchical regression analysis to examine the significance of the criterion variance explained by the interaction term, over and above what was accounted for by the independent and

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics and Zero-Order Correlations Among the Study Variables

	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6
Australian sample								
1. Gender	n.a.	n.a.						
2. Age	5.11	2.22	.01					
3. Tenure (in months)	57.81	82.19	.21*	.49**				
4. Workplace bullying	1.58	0.43	.11	-.01	.07	(.80)		
5. Job satisfaction	4.83	0.75	-.17*	.14	.01	-.37**	(.90)	
6. Workgroup identification	4.95	0.71	-.09	-.01	-.02	-.38**	.53**	(.85)
Singaporean sample								
1. Gender	na	na						
2. Age	3.97	1.72	.17*					
3. Tenure (in months)	49.89	66.36	.02	.55**				
4. Workplace bullying	2.22	0.66	.12	.00	.01	(.85)		
5. Job satisfaction	4.32	0.78	.06	.09	.02	-.18*	(.88)	
6. Workgroup identification	4.45	0.72	.02	.07	.08	-.19*	.51**	(.91)

Note: Age is coded as 1 = younger than 20 years, 2 = 20 to 25 years, 3 = 26 to 30 years, 4 = 31 to 35 years, 5 = 36 to 40 years, 6 = 41 to 45 years, 7 = 46 to 50 years, and 8 = older than 50 years. Figures in parenthesis represents alpha.
* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$.

moderating variables. To prevent multicollinearity (Aiken & West, 1991), workplace bullying was centered at its mean. Ethnicity, on the other hand, was not centered because it was dummy-coded. All significant interactions were further inspected by simple slopes analysis. Control variables such as gender, age, and tenure were entered in the first step. In the second step, we entered the independent variable (i.e., workplace bullying) and the moderator variable (i.e., ethnicity) to test for main effects. In the third step, the interaction term was entered to examine two-way interaction effects. To test the significance of the slopes, unstandardized beta weights from the regression equations were used to plot the effect of the independent variable (e.g., workplace bullying) on each outcome variable (job satisfaction and workgroup identification) for both Australians and Singaporeans. The results of the hierarchical regression analysis are presented in Table 2.

In Hypotheses 1a and 1b, it was predicted that workplace bullying was negatively associated with job satisfaction and workgroup identification, respectively. Results of the hierarchical regression analysis suggest that the negative relationship between workplace bullying and job satisfaction was significant ($\beta = -.26$, $p < .01$), providing support for Hypothesis 1a. Similarly, we found support for the negative association between workplace bullying and workgroup identification predicted in Hypothesis 1b ($\beta = -.28$, $p < .01$).

Hypothesis 2a predicted that ethnicity would moderate the relationship between workplace bullying and job satisfaction. Entry of the interaction term (i.e., Workplace Bullying \times Ethnicity) contributed additional variance in predicting job satisfaction, $\Delta R^2 = .02$, $F(1, 302) = 8.75$, $p < .01$, over and above the effects of the main and control variables. Unstandardized beta weights from the regression equations were used to plot the effects of bullying and ethnicity on job satisfaction for both Australians and Singaporeans. Both slopes were statistically significant. Figure 1 shows stronger negative effects of bullying on job satisfaction for Australians, $t(310) = -3.24$, $p < .01$, as compared to the Singaporeans, $t(310) = -2.18$, $p < .05$. Hypothesis 2a was supported.

Hypothesis 2b predicted that ethnicity would moderate the relationship between workplace bullying and workgroup identification. The addition of the interaction term resulted in a significant increase in variance explained in predicting workgroup identification, $\Delta R^2 = .02$, $F(1, 302) = 7.22$, $p < .01$, over and above the contribution of the main effects and control variables. Again,

Table 2. Summary of Hierarchical Regression Analysis for Ethnicity, Workplace Bullying, and Attitudinal Outcomes

Step and Variables	Job satisfaction (β)			Workgroup identification (β)		
	1	2	3	1	2	3
Gender	-.06	-.02	-.02	-.05	-.01	-.01
Age	.24**	.14*	.12	.12	.01	-.01
Tenure	-.09	-.05	-.04	-.02	.03	.04
Workplace bullying		-.26**	-.24**		-.28**	-.23**
Ethnicity		-.16*	-.07		-.18*	-.10
Ethnicity \times Workplace Bullying			.26**			.23**
Adjusted R^2	.04**	.16**	.18**	.01	.15**	.17**
ΔR^2	.05**	.13**	.02**	.01	.15**	.02**

Note: Standardized beta coefficients are reported for the respective steps, workplace bullying and ethnicity (Step 2), and the interactive term between bullying and ethnicity (Step 3).

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$.

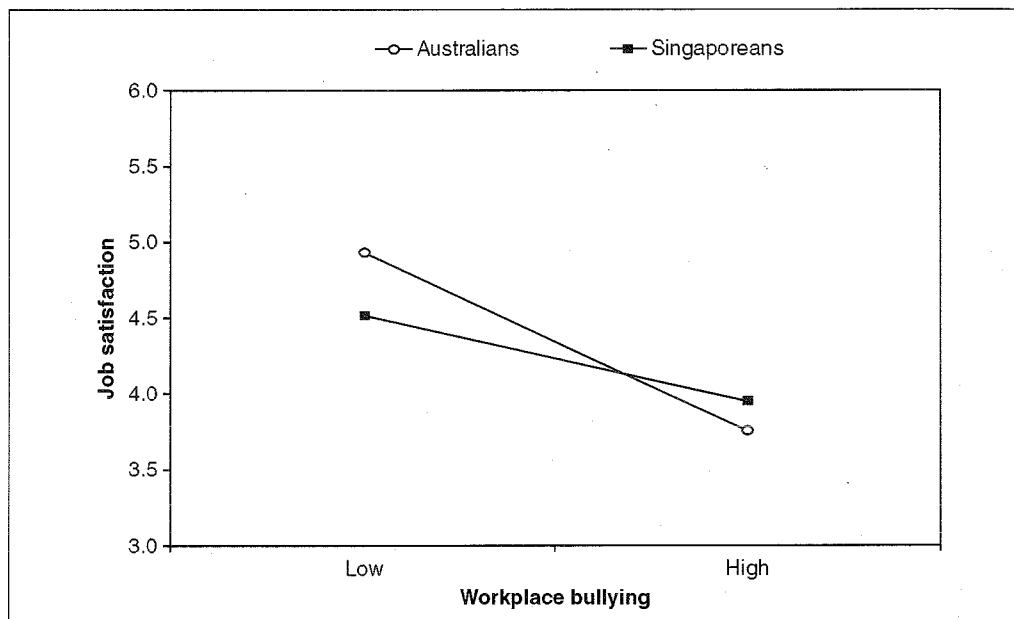


Figure 1. The relationship between workplace bullying and job satisfaction for Australians and Singaporeans

simple slope analysis suggests that both slopes were significant. Figure 2 suggests levels of workgroup identification demonstrated a sharp drop as the levels of bullying increased for the Australians $t(310) = -3.30, p < .01$, as compared to the Singaporeans, $t(310) = -2.45, p < .05$. Hypothesis 2b was supported.

Discussion

The aim of this article was to examine differential effects of workplace bullying on Australians and Singaporeans. To do this, we drew on belongingness theory and the relational model of

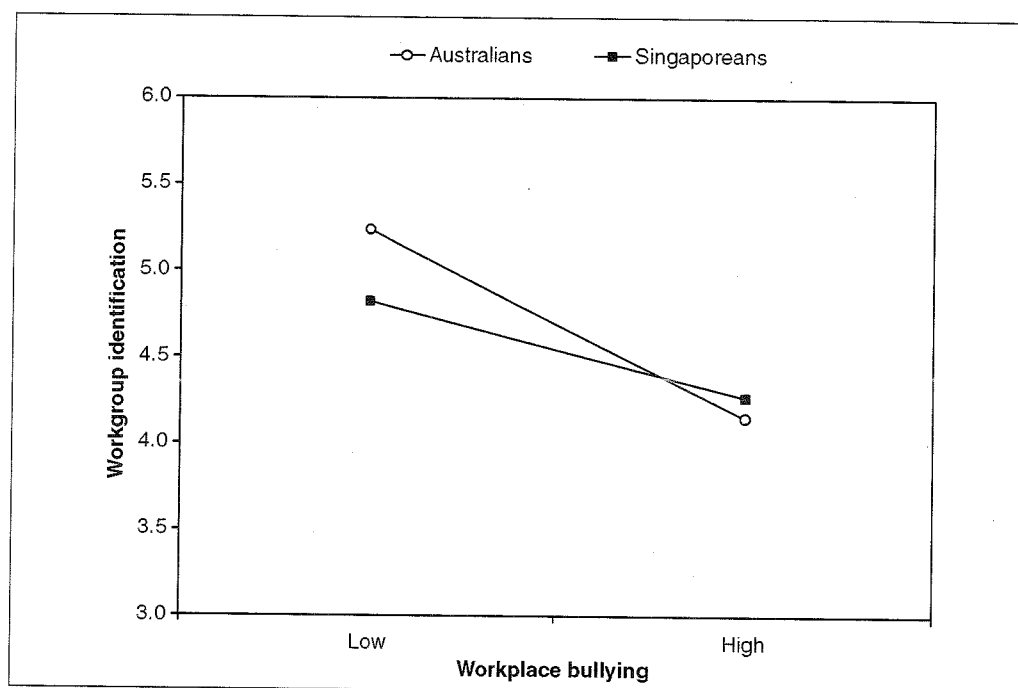


Figure 2. The relationship between workplace bullying and workgroup identification for Australians and Singaporeans

authority to approach the study of bullying from a cross-cultural perspective. Consistent with belongingness theory, we speculated that bullying would signal to employees that they did not have meaningful relationships in the workplace and as a result would be less satisfied with their jobs and identify with workgroups to a lesser degree. Furthermore, drawing on the relational model of authority, we suggested that these effects would be stronger for employees from Australia, who generally have low power distance orientations and would be less likely to see bullying as standard behavior. Our hypothesized predictions were largely supported. As expected, we found that workplace bullying was negatively related to both job satisfaction (Hypothesis 1a) and workgroup identification (Hypothesis 1b). Furthermore, as would be expected based on the relational model of authority, ethnicity moderated the relationships between bullying and job satisfaction (Hypothesis 2a) and bullying and workgroup identification (Hypothesis 2b) such that the relationships between bullying and outcomes were stronger for Australian employees than for Singaporean employees.

Our study makes several important contributions to the literature on workplace bullying. First, we provide empirical evidence for the damaging effects of workplace bullying on important attitudinal outcomes. Employees who experienced bullying at work were less satisfied with their jobs. Similarly, individuals who are bullied tend to be regarded by group members either as an outsider or as a lower status individual (Frone, 2000; Mikkelsen & Einarsen, 2002). As a result, individuals who are bullied may come to believe that they share fewer prototypical characteristics with members of the dominant group and are less likely to identify themselves with members of a group that is the source of the mistreatment. Second, our results demonstrate that bullying has destructive consequences for both Australian and Singaporean workers, but that the negative relationship between bullying and attitudes is stronger for Australians than for Singaporeans.

These results are consistent with research on the relational model of authority and power distance. Most countries in Asia and Latin America such as Hong Kong, India, Malaysia, and Singapore are characterized as having high power distance cultures in which people believe that superiors have greater power over their subordinates. Alternately, Western countries such as Australia, the United Kingdom, and the United States are considered to be low power distance cultures in which power is shared equally between superiors and subordinates. In high power distance cultures such as Singapore, there is a noticeable difference between superiors and subordinates (Hofstede, 1997). Employees accord due respect to authority by addressing them as "Sir"/"Madam" or "Mister"/"Miss." They are less likely to question the demands of their superiors than their Western counterparts. In contrast, low power distance cultures are characterized by a more equal distribution of power (Hofstede, 1997). There are no permanent superiors and subordinates, such that subordinates who perform in an outstanding manner in the organization may be given the opportunity to lead and occupy managerial roles. Subordinates address their superiors on a first-name basis. They also expect their superiors to consult and solicit their opinions on matters that concern their well-being (Tyler et al., 1995). Thus, while workplace bullying is negatively associated with job satisfaction and workgroup identification for Australian employees, it may be Singaporeans' deference to authority and preference for harmony in the workgroup that makes them less sensitive to incidents of bullying.

While there is a great deal of evidence demonstrating the negative ramifications of workplace bullying (e.g., Mikkelsen & Einarsen, 2001; Niedl, 1996; Rigby & Slee, 1991), this study sheds some light on understanding the effects of workplace bullying from a cross-cultural perspective. Due to the predominance of Western theories and practices in the field of management (e.g., Hofstede, 2001), we examined the effects of workplace bullying in two cultural contexts (i.e., Australia and Singapore). By attempting to examine the role played by culture in predicting negative responses to bullying, we provide researchers with direction in the discovery of both universal principles and cross-cultural variability that are inherent to specific cultural groups. This is important in today's increasingly diverse workplace where employees of different cultures and backgrounds are required to interact with one another in a work context. Several studies have shown that workplace bullying represents one of the most challenging interpersonal conflicts within groups and is driven by contemporary business pressures and stress (cf. Einarsen, 1999; Zapf, 1999).

Although the results of the study strongly supported our predictions, there are a number of limitations that need to be acknowledged and considered. First, our methodological design was cross-sectional and our results should be interpreted accordingly. Research that assesses the long-term ramifications of bullying over time will provide additional and robust support for the existence of these effects and could allow stronger conclusions about cause and effect relationships. A second limitation is that all measures were based on self-report data and there is risk that the correlations were inflated by common method variance (CMV; Podsakoff & Organ, 1986). However, we believe that the employee perspective was the most appropriate source for the data we have collected considering bullying, job satisfaction, and workgroup identification are all subjective perceptions.

A third limitation is that we did not implement any mechanism to determine whether the survey has been completed by "bullies" themselves. However, we should note that most, if not all, of our participants are from low levels of management and occupy service-oriented positions. There is evidence to suggest that individuals in positions of authority (e.g., managers) in organizations are among the foremost perpetrators of bullying (Hoel & Cooper, 2000). A fourth limitation is that we did not explicitly measure power distance at the individual level of analysis. As such, it could be argued that there is mild slippage between the theoretical framework we have used and our measures. Nevertheless, our treatment of ethnicity as a moderating variable is consistent

with the research design employed by Lind et al. (1997). Research suggests that there exists within-culture variation in power distance beliefs or the "extent to which an individual accepts the unequal distribution of power in institutions and organizations" (Clugston et al., 2000, p. 9). Accordingly, other researchers (see Brockner et al., 2001; Tyler et al., 2000) have measured power distance at the individual level. To address this concern, future research attempts should measure power distance at the individual level and examine if there is within-culture variation in employee responses to workplace bullying. Fifth, one could argue that identification and satisfaction are constructs that have a Western orientation, as they focus on attitudes and perceptions of individuals rather than collectives. Employees from collectivistic cultures may be less concerned with their own job satisfaction or their own sense of identification with the workgroup than they are with outcomes of the workgroup (or organization) itself. This could conceivably explain why workplace bullying did not elicit the same responses among Singaporeans that it did among Australians. Indeed, Salin (2003) suggests that bullying may be viewed as an acceptable or expected behavior.¹ Finally, a large majority of the participants in our survey were Singaporean Chinese, meaning that our sample does not represent the racial composition (e.g., inclusion of Malays and Indians in the sample) in the country. Thus, our results may not generalize to the wider Singaporean population.

Our study points to a number of avenues for future research. First, while our research provided preliminary evidence for the adverse effects of bullying on two important work attitudes, we recommend that future research examine the moderating effects of different cultural values (e.g., hierarchical values or beliefs in harmony) on workplace bullying. Researchers could then explore whether the moderating effects of these values vary between cultures and how they affect bullying. This is especially important when you consider that employees in workgroups and organizations are spending more time interacting with individuals who have different cultural beliefs and value systems. Second, we recommend using an interactionist approach to the study of workplace bullying. This approach acknowledges the interplay of dispositional and environmental factors in predicting attitudes and behaviors (Chatman, 1989). In other words, when both individual and the situational factors are considered independently, the results may not be as accurate and comprehensive compared to when the interaction of the person and the situation are examined simultaneously. Indeed, previous work has adopted an interactionist approach in cross-cultural research. For example, Fischer and Smith (2004) investigated the role of cultural values (e.g., self-enhancement vs. self-transcendence; openness to change vs. conservation) in the reward allocation-organizational justice relationship. Results suggested that self-enhancement versus self-transcendence emerged as a stronger moderator of the relationship than openness to change versus conservation. They also found that those valuing self-enhancement tended to view allocation decisions based on work performance or seniority to be fairer than those valuing self-transcendence. In another study, Chen and her colleagues (2006) found that an individual's personal orientation (i.e., idiocentrism vs. allocentrism) and situational preferences (i.e., situations characterized by the need for consistency vs. social proof) predicted the compliance behavior across three cultures. These studies highlight the importance of taking an interactionist approach that may provide greater explanatory power in predicting employees' responses to bullying. Therefore, future research work should consider adopting this approach when examining bullying from a cross-cultural perspective.

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