

The role of educational background on the employee's exposure to bullying

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Abstract: Bullying acts are the patterns of antisocial behaviours that are generally developed during the early stages of one's life. These are embodied with negative and deliberate undesirable acts for a prolonged period of time by taking an advantage of the visible power differences. These behaviors include outrageous, intimidation, offensive, abusive, hostile, devious, undermining acts towards another person. The objective of the present study was to find out the role of the employee's education and their parent's education in relation to the employee's exposure to bullying. Three hundred and one employees working in a private organization included in the study administered with negative acts questionnaire to measure bullying and their education background and their parent's education background were collected. From the results it is found that subjects educational background was significantly associated with work-related bullying and person-related bullying. Mother's education was significantly related to the employees work-related bullying, person-related bullying and physically intimidating bullying. Father's education was significantly associated with the total exposure to bullying among the employees.

Keywords: Educational background, father education, mother education, bullying, work-related bullying, person-related bullying, physically intimidating bullying.

Introduction

Workplace bullying is defined as a 'status-blind' interpersonal hostility, which occurs deliberately, repeatedly & sufficiently severe to harm the target. It is further driven by the perpetrators or bullied by their need to control another person through undermining legitimate business interests. [1] Workplace bullying is defined as negative or unwelcomed behavior's embodied with aggression, intimidation, hostility, and harm characterized by persistent and repetitious acts towards an individual or a group of individuals by another individual or group of individuals, that is instigated due to unequal power relationships [2] [3]. Bullying can be said to exist when there is a deliberate persistent abusive, offensive, malicious or insulting and intimidating behavior along with the abuse of power which are unwarranted, to undermine the targeted self-confidence as well as to make them feel upset, vulnerable, threaten and humiliate. Isolated aggressive acts or behaviors should not be depicted as bullying. One can describe bullying only when the behaviors are prolonged negative acts or abusive behaviors purposefully done in a systematic way over a period of time.

The tendency of bullying is an antisocial pattern of behavior that generally develops during the early stages of life, if it is unchecked at their early stage, this type of behavior develops beyond one's control. The people who are said to be bullied are generally inadequate, right from their childhood and they also have low self-esteem. In order to compensate their inadequacy, they indulge in the acts to destroy other people physically and psychologically. They were motivated by the envy and jealous towards more competent people and tend to exhibit bullying behavior to them. They fail to develop in certain areas of their life which characterize them to be- lack of compassion, poor social and communication skills, inability to share or cooperate [4]. **Bullying is an immature behavior which is manifested to disorient their weakness, inadequacy, and insecurity.** Sometimes bullying implies an opportunistic behavior, which was played cleverly to seize the moment by diverting the attention of their superiors from their inadequate performance to make their competitors' incompetent and thus retain their jobs or achieve promotion. Bullying acts in an organization such as deceitful and insidious behavior produced a stressful environment in the whole organization [1].

Education imparts knowledge and ingrain beliefs, values, attitudes, and habits to its seekers. The educational systems majorly concern with the conventional behaviours according to their cultural values, for example, social education or sociology, political education and moral education etc. Emotional responses and attitudes were expressed in a way that resembles in social situations in order to shape their behaviour by capturing their affective states. Shaping of behaviour was instilled by the affective interference in which the student is engaged in a drama or a story (not like an information system), in which a character was delineated as an appropriate model. This kind of education was a Theatre-in-Education (TiE) followed in the school of United Kingdom. Cognitive appraisal of the students when they were induced in the affective interference, inculcate knowledge regarding the consensual behaviors and can be able to differentiate it from uncongenial behaviors and could able to understand the contingencies of those behaviors. Each type of emotion is associated with unique cognitive appraisal connecting to objects, events and observed characteristics or behaviour of the involved person or persons. During the process of perception, individuals continuously organize the schemas related to the previous knowledge to the present sensory data. Hence, through the process of appraisal interference, cognitive appraisals are instilled in a way they were conventional toward social behaviours. [5]

Despite education plays a major role in inculcating appropriate behaviours at social situations in the children minds was not effectively reaching them to instil changes in their behaviour. This is from the evidence of a result the 73.8 percent of the employees were occasionally or severely bullied. [6] Somehow, education system in India has to be modified in order to create accountability in the children and these behaviours should be followed as they grow into adults. They should be able to differential appropriate and inappropriate, as well as conventional and unconventional behaviours. They should believe that they are responsible, when they harm someone. Such a kind of sensitivity should be imparted in their personality during their childhood through the means of education. Education shall not only give knowledge, it should also guide one's moral values.

In an investigation done by Lewis in 1999 found that different peoples at different positions in the organization have different opinions regarding bullying. Personnel professionals advice that instance of bullying may emerge but not a widespread problem to be considered more serious. At least half of the respondents from trade unions accepted the existence of bullying. They report that the incidents of bullying were extensive, institutional leaders and managers were the perpetrators of such events. [7]

Bullying was a widely discussed area in the western countries whereas in India even, well-educated person lack awareness regarding the instances what to be or what not to be considered as bullying. Even most of the educated persons do not know what bullying means. They were not aware that they can seek help from the court of law for the prolonged instances such as humiliation, deception at workplaces, intimidation, insulting behaviors etc. They learned helplessness to it and feel that it is their own fate or mistake. The targets of the bullies were unable to express their resentment towards them due to the fear of retaliation that they may face. The targeted employees of bullying were unable to succumb to the grievous agony they face and even lack societal support to overcome this state. Still, in India, there were no laws framed against employee bullying. It became quite common in the working society (from the results of the earlier research findings) [6] and the employers in a responsible position say that 'no such instances happen at their organization'. In general, employees believe that such instance was quite common in corporate work culture and one can stabilize only when they accept all those instances. Most of the employees working in an organized sector do not cover the unions in order to seek support from them.

Method:

The objective of the study is to find out the role of educational background of the employees and their parents in relation to their bullying exposure. A meta analytic done on 28 studies by Tippett and Wolke suggested that individuals from low socio-economic status were more likely to be the victims of bullying. Employees from SES can not obtain better education and their parents were also may not be educated. So, education background may have a significant association with bullying levels and no data was provided to prove this phenomenon at workplace. [8]

The study was conducted on 301 employees from a private organization. The information related to the employees' education and their parent's education was gathered and also, they were administered negative acts questionnaire in order to measure the bullying levels. Employees education and their parent's educational background was solicited as level 1 for 'no basic education', level 2 for 'education below tenth standard', level 3 for 'SSC or equivalent', level 4 for 'undergraduate', level 5 for 'graduate' and level 6 for 'postgraduate'.

Table-1 Number of employees

		Value Label	N
M EDU	1.00	No basic education	119
	2.00	Below tenth	17
	3.00	SSC or equivalent	113
	4.00	Undergraduate	21
	5.00	Graduate	26
	6.00	Postgraduate	5
F EDU	1.00	No basic education	80
	2.00	Below tenth	11
	3.00	Tenth or equivalent	30
	4.00	Undergraduate	82
	5.00	Graduate	84
	6.00	Postgraduate	14
S EDU	2.00	Below the tenth standard	4
	3.00	SSC or equivalent	5
	4.00	Undergraduate	44
	5.00	Graduate	153
	6.00	Postgraduate	95

From the above table, it is clear that all the employees were having at least a minimal schooling education and there were no illiterates. Four of the employees studied below the tenth standard and five of them studied only tenth standard. There is 44 undergraduate, and 153 graduate, and 95 postgraduate employees. A higher number of graduate employees were present in the whole sample. A total of 119 and 80 of the employees' mothers and fathers respectively were having no basic education. 17 of the

employees' mothers and 11 of the employees' fathers were having a school education below the tenth standard. The employees' whose mothers and fathers studied only tenth standard were 113 and 30 respectively. A total of 21 and 82 of the employees had undergraduate mothers and fathers whereas 5 and 14 of the employees had post-graduate mothers and fathers respectively. Most of the employee's mothers were illiterates and fathers were graduates. Hence, from this, we can say that employees' fathers were well educated compared to employees' mothers.

TABLE-2 Mean and Standard error of bullying

DV		S EDU		F EDU		M EDU	
		Mean	SE	Mean	SE	Mean	SE
TB	No basic education	-	-	44.786(a)	1.660	47.124(a)	1.290
	Below tenth standard	36.750(a)	5.273	53.556(a)	3.515	48.520(a)	2.750
	Ssc or equivalent	45.667(a)	4.814	51.804(a)	2.137	45.986(a)	1.293
	Under graduate	44.680(a)	2.037	45.013(a)	1.473	50.110(a)	2.737
	Graduate	49.049(a)	1.225	46.744(a)	1.624	53.515(a)	2.649
	Post graduate	51.095(a)	1.390	56.083(a)	2.870	56.000(a)	4.814
WRB	No basic education	-	-	18.793(a)	.412	19.404(a)	.320
	Below tenth standard	20.500(a)	1.309	20.167(a)	.873	18.020(a)	.683
	Ssc or equivalent	20.500(a)	1.195	19.720(a)	.530	18.016(a)	.321
	Under graduate	17.499(a)	.506	18.925(a)	.366	18.900(a)	.679
	Graduate	18.268(a)	.304	17.831(a)	.403	18.738(a)	.657
	Post graduate	19.194(a)	.345	17.167(a)	.712	16.500(a)	1.195
PRB	No basic education	-	-	30.219(a)	.656	30.047(a)	.510
	Below tenth standard	33.500(a)	2.084	31.500(a)	1.389	27.500(a)	1.087
	Ssc or equivalent	30.000(a)	1.902	29.809(a)	.844	28.710(a)	.511
	Under graduate	28.370(a)	.805	29.097(a)	.582	29.900(a)	1.081
	Graduate	28.707(a)	.484	28.138(a)	.642	30.069(a)	1.047
	Post graduate	29.766(a)	.549	27.833(a)	1.134	25.500(a)	1.902
PIB	No basic education	-	-	7.917(a)	.211	8.386(a)	.164
	Below tenth standard	8.500(a)	.671	7.833(a)	.448	8.020(a)	.350
	Ssc or equivalent	8.500(a)	.613	8.274(a)	.272	7.600(a)	.165
	Under graduate	8.156(a)	.259	7.948(a)	.188	7.300(a)	.348
	Graduate	7.806(a)	.156	7.968(a)	.207	8.346(a)	.337
	Post graduate	7.847(a)	.177	7.500(a)	.365	6.500(a)	.613

A) Based on the modified population marginal mean.

The above table-2, propagates that mean score of total bullying was low among the employees who were educated below the tenth standard and was high among them who pursued postgraduation. We can also observe a gradual increase in mean score of total bullying of the employees as their education increases with a minute distraction in the level-2 (studied SSC or equivalent). The average scores of total bullying were high among the employees whose mothers and fathers were postgraduates. The low average score was found among the employees whose fathers were illiterates and undergraduates, and also low among the employees whose mothers were accomplished only tenth standard. A moderate increase in total bullying levels was found among the employees when compared with their mothers' education from lower to higher levels.

Mean scores of work-related bullying was high among the employees who were illiterates and acquired school education below tenth and low among the undergraduate employees. The employees whose fathers acquired school education below the tenth standard and those who accomplished the tenth standard show higher mean scores of work-related bullying. Low mean scores of work-related bullying were found among the employees whose fathers accomplished Post graduation. From the above results, we can also observe that the exposure to work-related bullying was gradually decreasing among the employees in comparison with their fathers' education from lower to the upper level.

Person-related bullying had a low mean score among undergraduate employees and a high mean score among the employees who had basic education up to the tenth standard. Person-related bullying level was gradually decreased as the education of employee level increases up to graduation. The mean score of person-related bullying was high among the employees whose fathers were not having basic education and low among the employee whose fathers were postgraduates. We can notice a moderate decrease in the mean scores of person-related bullying among the employees along with the increase of their father's education level. Person-related bullying was observed to have low mean score among the employees whose mothers have accomplished post-graduation. They have high mean scores of person-related bullying among those whose mothers were graduates and illiterates.

The mean scores of physical intimidating bullying were high among the employees whose accomplished basic education up to the tenth standard and were low among the employees who were graduates and post-graduates. We can observe higher scores of physical intimidating bullying among the employees who achieved lower education levels up to under graduation and the lower scores were observed among the graduate and post-graduate employees. The average score of physical intimidating bullying was

observed high among the employees whose fathers were accomplished only tenth standard and low among those whose fathers were postgraduates. The mean scores of physical intimidating bullying were found low among the employees whose mothers scores were undergraduates and high among the employees whose has no basic education.

Table-3 Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

Source	DV	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
M_EDU	TB	352.170	5	70.434	.633	.674
	WRB	165.987	5	33.197	4.844	.000
	PRB	343.266	5	68.653	3.953	.002
	PIB	41.899	5	8.380	4.648	.000
F_EDU	TB	1822.662	5	364.532	3.278	.007
	WRB	76.254	5	15.251	2.226	.052
	PRB	84.690	5	16.938	.975	.433
	PIB	17.333	5	3.467	1.923	.091
S_EDU	TB	959.621	4	239.905	2.157	.074
	WRB	156.936	4	39.234	5.725	.000
	PRB	508.116	4	127.029	7.315	.000
	PIB	4.988	4	1.247	.692	.598
M_EDU * F_EDU	TB	1929.713	10	192.971	1.735	.073
	WRB	207.690	10	20.769	3.031	.001
	PRB	735.946	10	73.595	4.238	.000
	PIB	84.298	10	8.430	4.676	.000

TB- R Squared = .289 (Adjusted R Squared = .179)

WRB- R Squared = .358 (Adjusted R Squared = .259)

PRB- R Squared = .301 (Adjusted R Squared = .193)

PIB- R Squared = .286 (Adjusted R Squared = .177)

From the table-3 F-values of mother education in relation to total bullying was 0.633, work-related bullying was 4.84, person-related bullying was 3.95, and physical intimidating bullying was 4.65. The corresponding P-values of total bullying was 0.674, work-related bullying was 0.0, person-related bullying was 0.002, and physical intimidating bullying was 0.0 in relation to the employees' mother education. Hence, from the above results, we can construe that work-related bullying, person-related bullying and physically intimidating bullying among the employees was significantly related to their mothers' education level. In other words, Employees mother education was significantly associated with their work-related, person-related, and physically intimidating bullying levels.

The F-value of total bullying was 3.28, work-related bullying was 2.23, person-related bullying was 0.97, physical intimidating bullying was 1.92, in respect of the employees' father's education. P-value was significantly related to the total bullying of the employees in relation to their father's education at 1% level of significance ($P < 0.01$). Fathers education is some extent related to work-related bullying and physical intimidating bullying at 10% significance level. There is no significant relationship between person-related bullying and the level of father's education.

The F-value of the exposure to bullying among the employees in relation to their education was 2.16. the F-values of work-related bullying, person related bullying, and physically intimidating bullying were 5.72, 7.31 and 0.69 respectively in respect of their education level. To some extent, total bullying was significantly related to employees' education level at 10% significance level. Work-related bullying, person-related bullying scores were statistically significant at 1% significant level in relation the employees' education level. Which means the scores of work-related bullying and person related bullying were not same in all education levels of the employees. The education level of the employee has significantly related the work-related bullying and person-related bullying among employees.

Total bullying had an F-value 1.73, F-value of work-related bullying was 3.03, person-related bullying was 4.24, and physical intimidating bullying was 4.68 in respect of their parent's education. Parent's education was to some extent related to total bullying at 10% level of significance. Parents education was significantly related to bullying, person-related bullying and physical intimidating bullying at 1% significant level where $P < 0.01$. Hence, we can say that parent education was significantly associated with the exposure to bullying among the employees. In a study done by Marees, & Petermann, found that low parental education was significantly related to the high levels of bullying scores among children. [9]

R squared values of 0.289, conveys that employees and their parent's education account for 28.9 percent of the variance in total bullying scores, 35.8 percent of the variance in work-related bullying scores, 30.1 percent of the variance in person related bullying scores and 28.6 percent of the variance in physical intimidating bullying scores.

Conclusion:

Education of the employee was significantly related to the work-related bullying, person-related bullying, and physical intimidation bullying scores. Mean score of work-related, person-related and physical intimidating bullying were gradually decreasing as the employee's level of education increases from lower level to higher level. But in the employees who pursued postgraduation showed a little high mean score compared to graduate employees which may be attributed to a higher sense of responsibilities.

Employees mother's education was significantly related to the work-related bullying, a person-related bullying and physical intimidating bullying scores among them at 1% significant level. The means scores of work-related bullying were gradually decreasing as the employees' mother's education level increases. The average scores of person-related bullying and physical intimidating bullying were high among the employees whose mothers were illiterates and graduate and low among those whose mothers were postgraduates. The mean scores of person-related bullying and physical intimidating bullying were gradually decreasing as their mother's education increases without considering graduation level.

Employees father's education was significantly related to employees' exposure to the bullying. Mean scores of total bullying among the employees were low among those whose fathers were illiterates, graduates, and undergraduates and were high among those whose fathers were post-graduates, having basic education below the tenth standard and tenth standard.

Parent's education was significantly related to the work-related bullying, person-related bullying and physically intimidation scores of the employees at 1% significant level. To some extent parent education was related to total bullying scores at 10% level of significance. Various attributional and social reasons are present for the existence of a significant relationship between parent's education and workplace bullying (work-related bullying, person-related bullying, and physically intimidating bullying) among employees.

Educational background of the employees and their parent's education reflect 28.9 % of the variance in the employees' exposure of total bullying, 35.9 % of the variance in the exposure of work-related bullying, 30.1% variance in the exposure of person-related bullying, and 28.6 % of the variance in the exposure of physically intimidating bullying.

Suggestions: In order to prevent the occurrences of bullying and to reduce the harm done to its victims the organizations should implement awareness programmes, training programmes in emotional intelligence, resilience to stress etc along with the implementation of some policies against such immoral acts. To eradicate such behaviors from its gross roots the moral values should be incorporated into the school education itself. The shaping of behaviors has to be done through education which encompasses characters in stories that emphasize the emotions tied to those unpleasant behaviors and their consequences in a way to instill a wrong opinion towards such inappropriate and unpleasant behaviors.

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