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WHATS INSIDE?

ARTICLES:

- The puzzle of personality disorders: Understanding the blueprint of dysfunction
- Exploring the Dark Triad: Understanding Manipulative Personalities in the Office
- Psychology of Workplace Communication: Understanding Barriers and How to Overcome Them
- The Influence of Anxiety Disorders on Work Performance
- Workplace Bullying and Personality Traits

IIBP'S MISSION

Indian Institute of Business Psychology [IIBP] aims to create a community of individuals with similar interests & an ambition to transform the field of Business Psychology in India. IIBP acts as an accrediting body in the space of coaching practices, psychometric testing, assessment & development centres, and occupational health services.

On a regular basis, IIBP hosts webinars in varied areas of Psychology. This newsletter was created with the purpose to disseminate research & recent news in the field of business psychology & related disciplines. a standard-setting organization, IIBP strives to recommend and implement best practices in its functioning as well as the functioning of affiliated organizations.

The Puzzle of personality disorders: Understanding the Blueprint of dysfunction

Ms. Pranshi Jaiswal



Ms. Pranshi Jaiswal
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Pranshi Jaiswal is a dedicated researcher currently pursuing her masters degree in clinical psychology from Vikram University. Alongside her academic pursuits, she is an avid reader, constantly seeking knowledge to broaden her perspective. Pranshi also possesses extensive writing experience, having worked in both corporate and social settings.

The ancient Greeks were among the first to elicit that certain personality traits are problematic. For instance, they described "melancholia" and "hysteria," which can be seen as early descriptions of what we now know as personality disorders. Sigmund Freud and his psychoanalytic theory in the late 19th and early 20th centuries greatly influenced the understanding of personality disorders. Freud identified various personality types and proposed that childhood experiences and

unconscious conflicts contribute to the development of personality pathology.

As per DSM 5, a personality disorder can be diagnosed if there are significant dysfunctions in the self or interpersonal functioning altogether, with one or more pathological personality traits. These features must be stable and persistent with time and situations, abnormal for an individual's age or socio-cultural environment and the cause behind shouldn't be substance or medicinal.

These disorders can be puzzling and overlapping to each other, hence can be classified into clusters:

- A. Odd, Eccentric (Paranoid PD, Schizoid PD, Schizotypal PD)**
- B. Dramatic, erratic (Antisocial PD, Borderline PD, Histrionic PD, Narcissistic PD)**
- C. Anxious, fearful (Avoidant PD, Dependent PD, Obsessive-compulsive PD)**

Let's talk about these in a very concise way,

Paranoid PD: Marked by pervasive distrust and fear of others, including friends, family and partner, hence stay guarded and suspicious.

Schizoid PD: Detached/Aloof, indifferent to social norms and culture, stay retreated in the inner world.

Schizotypal PD: perceived odd/strange to people, characterized by magical thinking, illusions, derealization; beliefs or intuitions that events and happenings are somehow related to them.

Antisocial PD: Marked by disregard of others feelings, irritation, aggression, impulsivity, egocentrism; rejects discipline and authority.

Borderline PD: Marked by fear of abandonment, lacks a sense of self, emotional instability, outbursts of anger and violence (when triggered). More medical attention due to self-harm and suicidal attempts.

Histrionic PD: Characterized by flamboyance, impulsiveness, excitement; dependent on others attention; sensitive to rejection and criticism.

Narcissistic PD: Marked by heightened sense of self-importance and grandiosity, self-absorbed, insensitive, destructive anger and revenge, callousness and ignorance of others.

Avoidant PD: Characterized by shyness, feeling of socially inept, crave for companionship and uncritical acceptance.

Dependent PD: Marked by fear of abandonment, relying on others for decision making, requiring extra care, childlike perspective, feels inadequate and helpless.

Obsessive Compulsive PD: excessively concerned with details, rules, lists, order, organization, or schedules; extreme perfectionism leads to incomplete projects; and devotion to work and productivity at the expense of leisure and relationships.

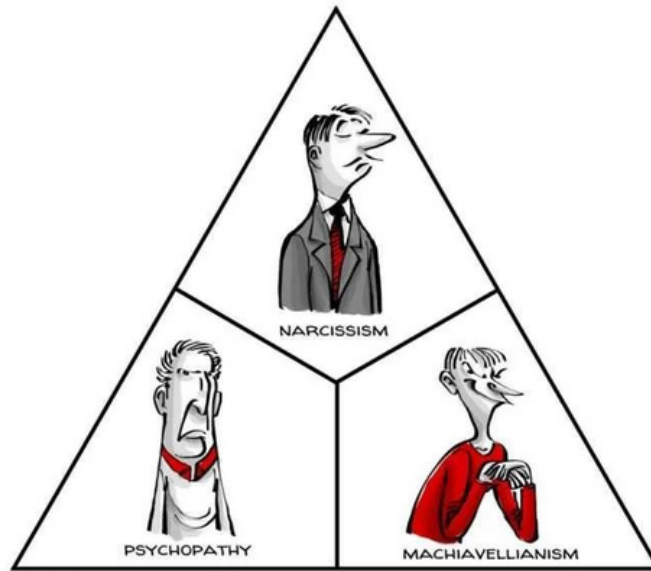
Final Words:

Personality disorders can share traits with a normal personality and overlap with another as well. Hence, they are even more difficult to characterize and diagnose. How far the impairment is significant from the normal personality also determines the course of disorder and possible diagnosis, since not everyone exhibits all the traits of the disorder. To what extent we can use the regular metric system of social and cultural norms and label people with personality dysfunction is totally subjective.

“Personal dislike, prejudice, or a clash of values can all play a part in arriving at a diagnosis of personality disorder, and it has been argued that the diagnosis amounts to little more than a convenient label for undesirables and social deviants.” - Neel Burton

Exploring the Dark Triad: Understanding Manipulative Personalities in the Office

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Ayush Pal is an aspiring professional in the field of Behavioural Economics. He has completed his graduation from Aligarh Muslim University, with a double major in Psychology and Economics. He is a highly skilled and versatile professional specializing in HR and content writing. In addition to his HR acumen, he possesses a flair for crafting engaging and persuasive content. He has produced compelling blog articles, website content, social media posts, and marketing materials that effectively communicate brand messages and engage target audiences.

Over the last 20 years, there has been a growing fascination among scholars and aware human population in studying “Dark Behaviours”. Many individuals have put their mind in rumination in order to be cognisant about their

dark personality and dark traits. One taxonomy of dark traits that has sparked particular interest is the “Dark Triad”, which consists of three toxic and malevolent tendencies: psychopathy, narcissism, machiavellianism. People who exhibit these characters are ruthless and manipulative, eager to do or say almost anything to satisfy their ego. The Dark Triad, holds significant importance in the realms of organizational behaviour and business research. By comprehending the impact of individuals and groups who possess these traits, organizations can effectively address the negative consequences while utilizing the potential benefits of their behaviour.

The conceptual and practical understanding of Machiavellianism was summarized in the classic book by Christie & Geis (1970), where Machiavellianism has been defined as “a strategy of social conduct that involves manipulating others for personal gain” (Christie & Geis 1970, p. 285; Wilson et al. 1996). Machiavellianism in the workplace can be characterised as the active manipulation of people, circumstances, and group dynamics in order to amass power. Furthermore, they openly display cynicism, sarcasm, and callousness in pursuit of money, power, promotions, and ambition.

As a result, Machiavellians are predisposed to unethical and organizationally wanton behaviours.

Narcissism has been studied in multiple theoretical models (such as NEO-FFI, and NPI) spanning applied psychology, personality psychology, and clinical psychology. People who have a higher level of narcissism tend to feel superior to others because they have an exaggerated sense of self-importance. They also have a strong desire for excessive attention and admiration, which can be problematic. Additionally, they may engage in exploitative behaviours and lack empathy towards others. In the workplace, narcissistic individuals are excessively self-centred and constantly seek validation. Their presence can create dissatisfaction among their coworkers, ultimately leading these employees to choose self-preservation and willingly leave their jobs.

The word Psychopathy has recently received quite a attention because of its use in many movies and web series to show us the complex and undesirable side of psychopaths. Psychopathic individuals, as described by criminal psychology researcher Robert D. Hare, are skilled social predators who possess an alluring persona. They exhibit a manipulative and merciless mindset, leaving behind a trail of shattered hearts as they disrupt the lives of those they encounter. Additionally, they lack empathy and concern for others, selfishly acting upon their own desires and emotions without experiencing any guilt or remorse. In the professional world, workplace psychopathy refers to the dominating and controlling behaviour of individuals towards their employees. These individuals tend to take risky actions without considering organizational rules or ethical standards. They are inclined to seek high-level positions within organizations as it allows them to exert control over a larger number of people.

Researchers in the organisational sciences are trying to figure out how the maladaptive behaviours associated with DT personality traits affect organisational, interpersonal, and individual outcomes. The amount of new theoretical and empirical articles tying the DT personality qualities to a variety of themes, such as job performance, leadership, and creativity, demonstrates this heightened interest. In a fascinating study conducted by Guedes (2017), it was discovered that individuals with narcissistic tendencies tend to have a more positive perception of themselves. This finding showed a significant positive correlation between self-rated job performance and narcissism. However, when job performance was measured objectively, this correlation no longer held significance.

In a fascinating study conducted by Reina et al. (2014), a moderated mediation model was used to explore the exciting possibility of CEO narcissism having a positive influence on firm performance. The results revealed that narcissism indirectly affected firm performance, as it was found to be mediated through the behavioral integration of the top management team. This research sheds light on the potential benefits of CEO narcissism in driving firm success. Machiavellianism and psychopathy don't show any bivariate relationship with job performance.

Exciting research conducted by Volmer et al. (2016) revealed some fascinating findings about the impact of leaders' personality traits on career success and employee well-being. The study showed that leaders with narcissistic tendencies actually experienced higher levels of objective and subjective career success, without negatively affecting their subordinates' well-being. On the other hand, leaders with Machiavellian traits reported lower levels of career satisfaction and higher rates of emotional exhaustion. Similarly, leaders exhibiting psychopathic tendencies were found to have a detrimental effect on their subordinates' job satisfaction.

When it comes to the Dark Triad, many people dismiss it as strange, unbelievable, or insignificant. However, business leaders should not underestimate its importance. This personality type is often associated with negative vibes and difficult individuals, but it is actually a component of our intricate subconscious mind. Looking at it from a neutral standpoint, the Id, Ego, and Superego all function differently depending on the situation.

By implementing comprehensive policies, resources, protocols, and procedures, you can ensure the well-being and safety of your workforce while achieving success in your business. It is crucial to take the necessary precautions against the presence of the Dark Triad in your workplace and foster an environment where everyone feels respected and supported. This is essential for maximizing productivity in the workplace!

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Psychology of Workplace Communication: Understanding Barriers and How to Overcome them

Ms. Garima Shah



Ms. Garima Shah
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Garima is a highly accomplished clinical psychologist with a Master of Science degree from The National Forensic Sciences University. She has excelled academically, receiving a gold medal during her bachelor's degree, and has presented numerous research papers at national and international psychology conferences. Recently, one of her papers was published in the psychology journal of Lady Shree Ram College, University of Delhi. While she has experience working with clinical populations and raising mental health awareness in colleges, Garima's true passion lies in organizational behavior. She aspires to work in the Learning and Development field, focusing on employee engagement and the underlying psychological principles that drive it.

An organizational setting is one of the primary locations where individuals from diverse backgrounds come together, uniting their efforts to function as a unit. As people collaborate, effective workplace communication becomes inevitable. However, due to variations in background, culture, education, and other factors, being on the same page while engaging in conversations can be challenging. While communication primarily involves information exchange through words, it encompasses more than mere verbal expression. Various elements, such as tone, intention, and intensity, significantly impact how information is received and acted upon. There is a psychological aspect to it, as words alone do not fully convey meaning; interpretation occurs within the mind.

Similar to how the Gestalt principle suggests that the whole is greater than the sum of its parts, words can result in different interpretations when other elements (as mentioned above) are added to them (Koffka, 1935). Thus, considering communication solely through the lens of words will not always deem fruitful. As correctly said, 'The most important thing in communication is hearing what isn't said.'

Communication plays a central role in employee engagement. However, individual differences and organizational hierarchies often act as barriers that can impact the productivity and performance of the employees. Most people perhaps think that they are communicating, but lack of clarity or misunderstanding can prove it futile. In many cases, employees may feel a lack of safe space to openly express their opinions or ideas, leading to interdepartmental friction which results in poor collaboration. This hints towards a mentality where employees perceive events from the lens of “them vs me”.

Such instances are often prevalent in organizational settings that follow a fixed hierarchical structure. In an interaction with a senior HR professional from a Gujarat-based company, instances were shared where employees confided in her. She reckoned how simply listening to them instantly alleviated 50% of their stress and negative emotions. A popular saying, "listening is the highest form of respect you can give." puts this aptly.

Just as customer needs are protected through attentive listening and problem-solving, employees require the same. A lot of research has focused on the communication styles of leaders and how they can result in positive or negative outcomes. By establishing a foundation of trust, transparency, encouragement, and engaging communication, organizations can create an environment where employees experience job satisfaction, effective conflict resolution, and mutual respect. Once this base level is achieved, employees then have the space to focus on tasks directly relevant to the organization, leading to increased performance and productivity. Another important aspect of any organization is teamwork, which has implications for decision-making and responsibility. Thus, it is imperative that freedom of expression is maintained in such settings. Ultimately, it is the organization itself that bears the outcomes.

Consideration of variations in beliefs, biases, prejudices, and perspectives among the workforce is essential. By acknowledging these differences, one can attempt and learn to communicate taking into account these factors, in order to facilitate discussions and decisions. To achieve this, individuals must also learn to not let their egocentric tendencies overpower. A speaker at a corporate training program I recently participated in emphasized that in most conversations, people are not truly listening; instead, they are waiting for an opportunity to respond back.

Multitasking (evaluating/judging the other person) simultaneously further hampers effective communication. And undeniably, non-verbal communication plays a significant role in how information is interpreted. Hence, the ability to actively listen and observe remains crucial, and most of all, to have the willingness. In a nutshell, individuals listen with their eyes first, then their hearts, and only then, their ears (Bucăța and Rizescu, 2017).

In the current scenario, where interdisciplinary approaches are encouraged, technology merges with the workforce, and cultural diversity thrives more than ever, it is pivotal to foster effective communication, that acts as a strong foundation that leads to both personal and organizational growth.

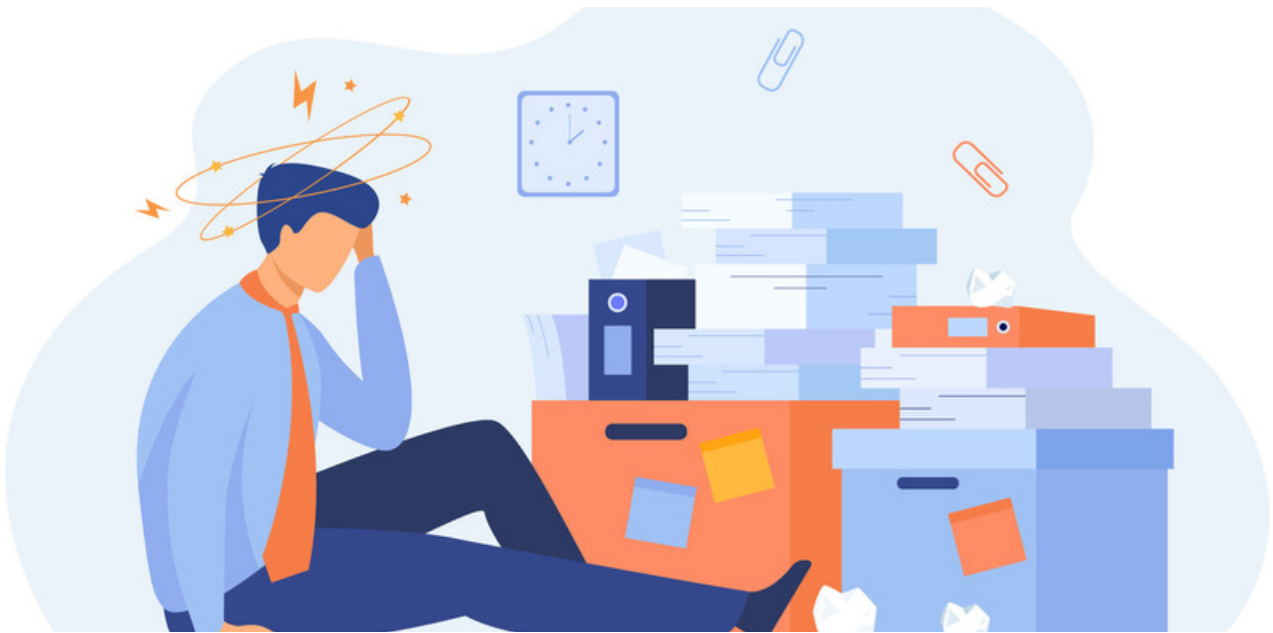
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The Influence of Anxiety Disorders on Work Performance

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Ms. Shruti R Karnalkar is a student at Vishwakarma University, Pune pursuing her Masters in Psychology. She has enrolled in a clinical psychology course, which covers evaluations, diagnosis, counselling, and treatment. Her specialty is research-based, queer affirming, trauma-informed counselling. She hopes to bring about a more compassionate and sensitive society. She is committed to developing her skills while upholding her ideals.

"Mental illness is a disease and like any other medical condition individuals need support, interventions and continued care to address their symptoms"

– Angeleena Francis.

According to a global prediction provided by Forbes Health in an article titled “Mental Health Statistics,” there are expected to be 374 million cases of anxiety disorders worldwide in 2023, a 25% increase from the previous year’s 298 million cases.

Anxiety disorders are one the most prominent and treatable disorders and often goes overlooked. Many people confuse fear with anxiety and use the words a little too casually. Fear is an alarm reaction that occurs in response to an immediate danger whereas Anxiety is excessive worrying, heart palpitations and involves a general feeling of apprehension about possible future danger.

Realistic, unreasonable fears or anxieties of incapacitating intensity are the primary and most conspicuous symptom of all anxiety disorders. However, they vary in strength, cause, and occasionally both. There are 11 anxiety disorders listed in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual 5 (DSM 5), which was created by the American Psychiatric Association to help clinical psychologists and psychiatrists diagnose mental illnesses effectively. These disorders include generalized anxiety disorders, social anxiety disorder-

ders, specific phobias, panic disorders, selective mutism, and agoraphobia.

In a simple form generalized anxiety disorder is about having persistent anxiety about everything, especially things that are not in the individuals control, Social anxiety disorders are about having anxiety related to sharing or being in a social situation wherein they might have to interact with people. Specific phobias and Agoraphobia are both phobias about a specific situation or setting. Panic disorders are when a person experiences recurrent panic and selective mutism is condition that involves the persistent failure to speak in specific social situations and interferes with educational or social adjustment.

From research papers and articles we can confidently say that young adults are the most affected. This same age group is either in college or working. This affects the organizations they work in, economy and the world at large. Catching up with the expectations of your organization itself is hard but if you're someone suffering from anxiety disorder, it becomes harder. The symptoms of anxiety can interfere with your ability to interact with others, to perceive and interpret information and to concentrate. Having an anxiety disorder with no proper help or diagnosis makes things worse.

Moreover, anxiety disorders often lead to decreased decision-making abilities. Individuals with anxiety disorders may struggle to make timely and effective choices due to the fear of making mistakes or the desire for perfection. This can result in delays, inefficiencies, and missed opportunities in the workplace. In addition, the excessive self-consciousness and fear of judgment prevalent in anxiety disorders can stifle creative thinking and limit the willingness to take risks. This can hinder problem-solving skills and restrict the contribution of individuals with anxiety to innovative initiatives within their work environment.

Anxiety disorders also pose challenges to interpersonal dynamics in the workplace. Symptoms such as restlessness, irritability, and social anxiety can make it difficult for individuals to establish and maintain positive relationships with colleagues and superiors. The cumulative effect of these symptoms can decrease energy levels, reduce resilience to stress, and increase the likelihood of burnout, all of which negatively impact work performance.

Asthma, chronic pain, hypertension, arthritis, cardiovascular disease, and irritable bowel syndrome are just a few of the medical conditions that anxiety disorders are linked to (Roy-Byrne et al., 2008). Additionally, people with anxiety disorders are heavy users of medical services (e.g., Chavira et al., 2009). According to a study, workers with anxiety disorders incurred significantly greater medical expenses and lost productivity expenditures.

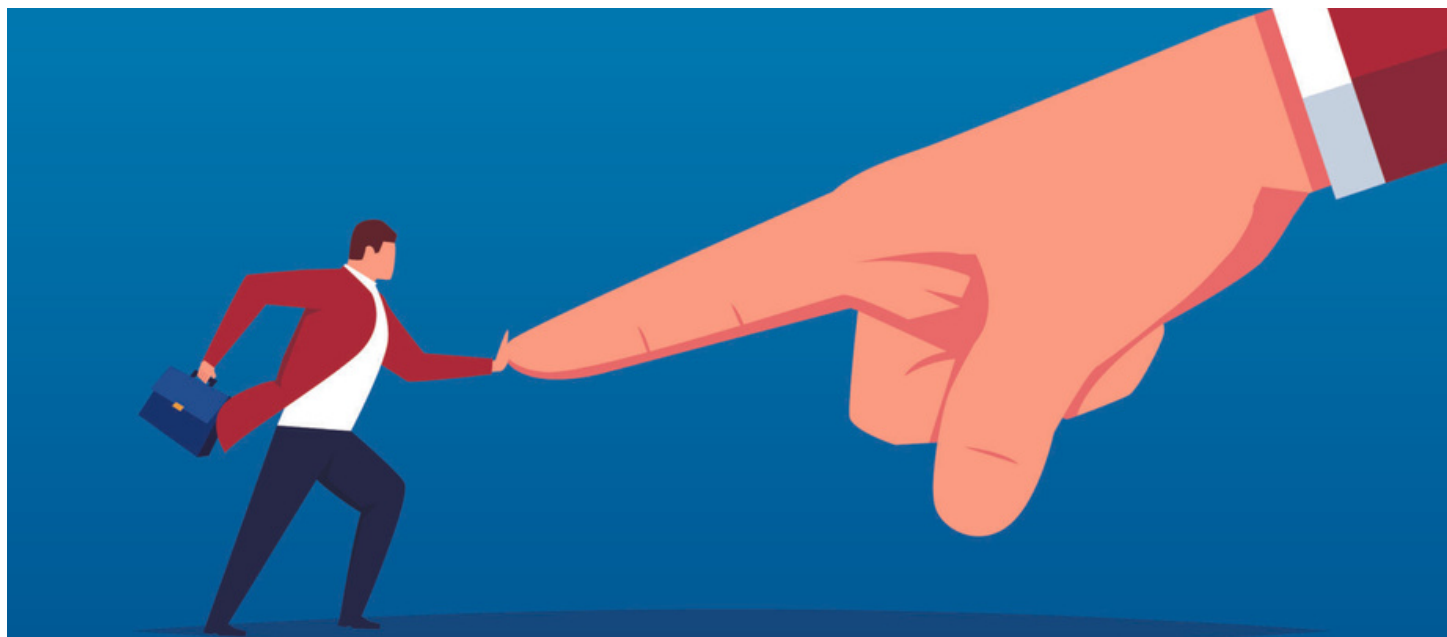
To address the influence of anxiety disorders on work performance, it is essential to break the stigma surrounding mental health in the workplace. The prevailing stigma often leads to silence and a lack of support for individuals with anxiety disorders. By creating an open and supportive work environment, organizations can promote understanding, empathy, and acceptance. This can be achieved through education and awareness campaigns, training programs, and providing access to mental health resources.

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Workplace Bullying and Personality Traits

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Ms. Gayathiri Sridharan is an Organizational Psychologist. She received her training from Loughborough University, UK. With more than 15+ years of experience in various realms of Strategic Human Resource Management, she is committed to help organizations maximize their effectiveness. She is a Certified Professional Expert to do EQ Brain Profiling, Assessing, Debriefing, an expert at Coaching individuals/teams on their emotional intelligence skills.

Scenario 1:

Harish mails the report to his boss before leaving the office and when he is about to make a move his boss calls him inside his cabin and says “You call this a report? How can you not present the data in excel even after these many years of experience?”

Scenario 2:

Harish mails the report to his boss before leaving the office and when he is about to make a move his boss calls him inside his cabin. Two other managers are available in the room. The boss appreciates himself for mentoring Harish and congratulates him for the collective work on the report. But there is no mentorship or collective work here.

Scenario 3:

Harish mails the report to his boss before leaving the office. The boss takes the report and presents it to higher-ups as if he alone prepared the data. The boss also spread rumours that Harish is not making any significant contribution.

In all the above three incidents, what Harish is going through is “workplace bullying”. Workplace bullying is difficult to address due to its wide and complex range of behaviours. Based on her 25+ years of research expertise and practice in this area, Ludmila has identified 15 different types of bullying in the workplace. The types, sample behaviours and outcomes are explained in Fig 1.

Workplace Bullying Taxonomy

The dimensions, features, and sample behaviors and outcomes of workplace bullying.

BULLYING FACET	BULLYING FEATURE	SAMPLE BEHAVIORS AND OUTCOMES
Goal direction/ motivation	Hostile (aka "hot," "emotional")	Yelling at someone in anger; throwing things. Lying to get someone fired or otherwise make them suffer out of personal or identity-based hate (harassment) or intense insecurity
	Instrumental (aka "cold")	Spreading rumors/lies/distortions to remove a perceived "threat" of someone's talent or claim their office space, funding, position, or other resources
Immediacy	Direct	Punching, yelling, open blaming and shaming, sending angry messages, antagonistic and hostile body language
	Indirect	Spreading rumors, withholding information, circumventing, sabotaging
Visibility	Overt	Humiliating, silencing someone in front of others
	Covert	Gaslighting, withholding information, subtle blaming
Targeting	Downward	The bully boss (65% of reported cases)
	Horizontal	Peer/lateral/coworker bullying (21% of reported cases)
	Upward	Bullying by subordinates (14% of reported cases)
	Mixed	A mixed-position clique (supervisors and subordinates) bullying in multiple directions
Costs	Physical	Physical illness, burnout, disability
	Psychological	Anxiety, depression, PTSD, insomnia, nightmares, loss of confidence, suicidal ideation
	Social	Loss of reputation, friendships, trust, support, and professional networks
	Economic	Loss of income
	Organizational	Loss of time, productivity, and revenue; turnover and replacement costs; absence and health care costs; legal action; reputational and brand damage; limited talent pool

Source: Ludmila N. Praslova



Workplace bullying, is defined as a form of interpersonal misconduct at the workplace that involves repeated demeaning or destructive behaviors towards others. It is considered one of the greatest social stressors, having a negative impact on targets, witnesses, harassers, and even the organizations in which these behaviors occur.

Researchers highlighted that bullying not only has adverse physiological and psychological effects (e.g., psychosomatic symptoms, anxiety, depression, and suicide) but also has a significant impact on to productivity (e.g., intention to leave, absenteeism, and job dissatisfaction).

Given the negative consequences of workplace bullying, researchers have made great efforts in identifying "Personality Traits" (an individual's thoughts, feelings and behaviour) as one of the main reasons behind this complex behaviour. The extant research on personality traits as antecedents of workplace bullying has usually been studied from the Five Factor model.

Based on meta-analysis (study that statistical analyses multiple studies in this area), researchers identified that victims' belong mostly to *Neurotic Type* (Persons with high scores on this trait are characterized by feelings of nervousness, worrying, and insecurity) and bullies scored low on agreeableness (respect for individual differences, cooperativeness and social harmony) and high on extraversion (tendency to be outgoing, sociable, interested in other people, assertive and active).

Based on the systematic research (study that summaries the results of several studies in this area), researchers recently identified that the bullies may be disagreeable, sadistic, selfish and manipulative.

It is important to note here that in a recent HBR article, the percentage of employees in India being bullied at work has been reported to be as high as 46% to even 55%. Given bullying's complex nature and the hierarchical model followed in India, there is also a possibility that this percentage could be even higher as employees may not be even aware that there are being bullied.

It is important to note the researchers who have studied the cause of bullying through the lens of “Personality Traits” have suggested using personality test for hiring talent, using the reports of the test for actively monitoring the behaviour of potential perpetrators (bullies) and victims and providing training programs like conflict management as and when required.

The question here is the possibility of implementing the above suggestions in developing countries like India considering cut-throat competitions among organizations, the talent war in the market, maturity of the organizations in handling sensitive issues and the availability of resources for continuous monitoring and training.

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