An Epidemicological Approach to Workplace Bullying

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The purpose of this paper is to describe how emotional contagion spreads the incidences of bullying through an organization. The model positions management as an enabler or foil of Bullying. The paper explains how bullies affect their targets, tangentially influence the emotions of onlookers, and how witnesses may respond in turn. It details how emotionally susceptible targets of and witnesses to bullying spread their associated feelings to others. The emotionally susceptible affect Emotion Infectors who transfer bullying-related emotions to their work groups infecting others. Group susceptibility to emotional contagion determines the flow of emotion associated with the spread of bullying.

INTRODUCTION

Group behavior can override personal norms influencing individual action (Harvey, Treadway, & Heames, 2007; Johnson 2009; Visser ,van Knippenberg, van Kleef, & Wisse, 2011). This view is supported by the discovery of "mirror neurons" which explains how individuals physically discern the emotions of others (Rempala, 2013). Persons neurologically experience affective states similar to those of others they observe (Strack, Martin, & Stepper, 1988) and leader-to-follower emotional contagion influences followers' behaviors (Johnson, 2009; Visser ,van Knippenberg, van Kleef, & Wisse, 2011). Emotional contagion must be properly managed, or performance will be affected (Vijayalakshmi & Bhattacharyya, 2012). It is the assumption of this paper that workplace bullying without management attention will spread. Little research has been devoted to the organizational and economic costs of bullying (Hoel, Sheehan, Cooper, & Einarsen, 2011), but current neurological insight into human behavior should give managers pause. This paper demonstrates the channels through which emotional contagion might flow and, in turn, disseminate workplace bullying.

Bullying is evidenced by repeated acts and practices directed toward and unwanted by others. These acts are humiliating, affect individual performance, and contribute to an inhospitable or threatening work environment (Baron & Neuman 1996; Einarsen 1999; Einarsen & Raknes 1997; Harvey, Treadway, & Heames, 2007). Abusive in nature, bullying negatively affects productivity, employee commitment, morale, turnover, occupational stress, and tension or conflict among employees (Einarsen 1999; Harvey, Treadway, & Heames, 2007; Luzio-Lockett 1995; Tepper 2000; Tepper, Duffy, & Shaw, 2001; Zapf, 1999). Einarsen, Hoel, Zapf, and Cooper (2011) aptly conceptualize the concept:

Bullying at work means harassing, offending, socially excluding someone or negatively affecting someone's work tasks. In order for the label bullying (or mobbing) to be applied to a particular activity, interaction or process it has to occur repeatedly and regularly (e.g. weekly) and over a period of time (e.g. about six months). Bullying is an escalated process in the course of which the person confronted ends up in an inferior position and becomes the target of systematic negative social acts (p. 22).

This paper is significant because the results of bullying are always negative (Keashly & Nowell, 2011). The bullying literature is dominated by research regarding who is likely to be victimized by such negative activity (Treadway, Shaughnessy, Breland, Yang, & Reeves, 2013), but there is little speculation about how it spreads. This paper remedies this situation.

Conflict can be functional or dysfunctional. "Bullying is a process with conflict stages, escalation, and intractability" (Keashly & Nowell 2011, p. 425). Intensity varies (Lutgen-Sandvick, 2007, p. 855). For example, *first-degree* is relatively low-level, but can cause damage over time. Alternatively, *second-degree* is intense, frequent and more painful, and *third-degree* is extreme in affect resulting in permanent damage. Unfortunately, organizations tend to take bullying more seriously only as the escalation increases (Rayner & Lewis, 2011). Like fungus, emotional contagion carries first-degree bullying to other organizational locations. Where a proactive strategy to confront bullying is absent, incivility and bullying will have room to grow and spread (Andersson & Pearson 1999; Ferriss 2002; Harvey, Treadway, & Heames, 2007). This paper provides a framework for the design of such a proactive strategy.

THE EPIDEMIOLOGY OF BULLYING

Emotional contagion takes hold when emotions in one individual automatically or unintentionally (Hsee, Hatfield, Carlson, & Chemtob, 1990) produce related changes in the emotions of another (Hatfield, Cacioppo, & Rapson, 1993; McHugo, Lanzetta, Sullivan, Masters, & Englis, 1985) whatever the circumstances (Domagalski 1999; Hatfield, Cacioppo, & Rapson, 1993). Considering emotional contagion in this context is important, for bullying behavior appears to be spreading globally while remedies are not effective (Harvey, Treadway, & Heames, 2007). When emotional contagion takes hold organizationally (Vijayalakshmi & Bhattacharyya, 2012), the incidences and consequences of bullying spread and escalate the longer it lasts (Zapf 2011; Zapf & Gross 2001). Consequently, emotional contagion informs our understanding of bullying. This section provides an "epidemiology of bullying" supporting that supposition. Next, who is susceptible to emotional contagion is considered, and the channels through which bullying related emotional contagion flows are discussed. An epidemiological model is then presented to illustrate.

Susceptibility to Emotional Contagion

Organizationally, emotional contagion appears where there is integrated interpersonal activity (Elfenbein, 2007). Through emotional contagion, individuals sense the affective states of others with whom they interact (Visser, van Knippenberg, van Kleef, & Wisse, 2011). They automatically mimic or synchronize verbal and nonverbal communications between them (Hatfield, Cacioppo, & Rapson, 1993). The emotional expressions of leaders are monitored by subordinates (Elfenbein, 2007, p. 6) because information is carried by it (Van Kleef, De Dreu, & Manstead, 2010). Emotional contagion, then, spreads the incidences and consequences of bullying as those who are affected adopt shared, destructive norms conducive to bullying (Salin & Hoel, 2011).

Individual Susceptibility to Emotional Contagion

Some are more susceptible to emotional contagion than others. Though not mutually exclusive, some persons are just more powerful broadcasters of emotion while others are more attuned to emotional detail. Verbeke (1997, p. 622) distinguishes between four categories of persons in this regard. *Charismatics* can spread or *infect* others emotionally and are *susceptible* to or are influenced by the emotions of others. *Empathetics* are unable to infect others, but are very susceptible to the emotions of others. *Expansives* can infect others and are not susceptible to the emotions of others. *Blands* are neither susceptible to the emotions of others nor are they able to infect others.

Strong infectors of emotion, individuals who are more likely to spread emotion, tend to score higher in dominance and affiliation (Hatfield, Cacioppo, & Rapson, 1993). Otherwise, high self-monitors have been associated with a strong capacity to control emotional expression and low-self monitors less so (Friedman & Miller- Herringer, 1991; Vijayalakshmi & Bhattacharyya, 2012). The empathetic tend to be

more sensitive to emotional cues presented by others (Omdahl & O'Donnell, 1999; Doherty 1997; Verbeke 1997; Vijayalakshmi & Bhattacharyya, 2012) as are the more charismatic (Verbeke, 1997). Zelenski & Larsen (1999) have found personal sensitivity to rewards and punishments as well as impulsivity-thrill seeking behavior associated with sensitivity to emotional experience (Vijayalakshmi & Bhattacharyya, 2012). It has been shown (Doherty, 1995) that women across occupational categories may be more susceptible to emotional contagion than their male counterparts. Whatever the gender, affective orientation, emotionality, sensitivity to others, and self-esteem have been associated with susceptibility to emotional contagion. Self-assertiveness, emotional stability, and alienation have been negatively associated with it.

Group Susceptibility to Emotional Contagion

Emotional contagion is an interpersonal phenomenon (Vijayalakshmi & Bhattacharyya, 2012) so groups may be uniquely positioned to accelerate emotional contagion organizationally. Dirks (2000) has found trust level among group members associated with group performance. High interpersonal congruence (the degree to which a group members see others as themselves) has been shown to improve task performance in small groups (Polzer, 2002). Therefore, mutual trust and interpersonal congruence may lead to greater emotional contagion (Vijayalakshmi & Bhattacharyya, 2012). Otherwise, the more people interact with one another, the more positively disposed they are to one another (Byrne 1961; Festinger, 1954), and the more they may be affected by their emotional connections. How well persons are acquainted (Barsade, 2002), their sense of affiliation (Gump & Kulik. 1997; Doherty. 1997), relative emotional bonding (Hess & Blairy, 2001), mutual level of trust between them (Omdahl & O'Donnell, 1999), team composition (Kelly & Barsade, 2001; Keinan & Koren, 2002), and task characteristics (Fisher & Ashkanasy, 2000) have been associated with susceptibility to emotional contagion (Vijayalakshmi & Bhattacharyya, 2012). Organizationally, psychological climate (Isaksen, 2003) and corporate culture (Barsade, 2002) provide the environment necessary to emotional contagion.

Targets of Bullying

Where abusive behavior appears, targets are unable to respond to the attack (Keashly 2001). They can exhibit dependency (Bassman, 1992), learned helplessness (Tepper, 2000), or vulnerability (Keashly & Jagatic, 2011). Bullying is instrumental so targets may view reacting to it as dangerous (Neuman & Baron, 2011) and acquiesce. "While victims are usually targeted due to their social incompetence, on some occasions bullies can possess high levels of social ability. Due to their social competence, they are able to strategically abuse coworkers and yet be evaluated positively by their supervisor" (Treadway, Shaughnessy, Breland, Yang, & Reeves, p. 273).

Witnesses to Bullying

D'Cruz and Noronha (2011) propose that, "Bystanders, while being important constituents of the bullying scenario, have received very little research attention" (p. 269). Witnesses are likely to internalize bullying they witness (Samnani, 2013), and Vartia (2001) reports observers of bullying experience higher levels of stress. They tend to initially side with the perpetrator (Samnani, 2013) then support the target of bullying (Leck & Galperin, 2006; Lutgen-Sandvik, 2006). They may become silent spectators if they fear retaliation (D'Cruz & Noronha, 2011). Social influence theory explains why some would conform to direct or indirect pressure learning aggressive behaviors in the process. Employees involved in antisocial behavior likely have coworkers similarly engaged (Robinson & O'Leary-Kelly, 1998).

Most bullying behaviors are relatively subtle (Bulutlar & Oz, 2009; Fox & Stallworth, 2005; Lee & Brotheridge, 2006; Samnani 2013). They are not immediately recognized as such and may be misinterpreted (Samnani, 2013). The severity or implications of bullying (Tracy, Lutgen-Sandvik, & Alberts, 2006) may be discounted. Targets and witnesses are initially confused allowing time for emotional responses to permeate the organization further (Salin, 2003). Persons who routinely bully may come to view this behavior as acceptable in the workplace (Collinson, 1988) over time. Others may feel

they must accept workplace behaviors or face ostracism (Kelman, 1958) and have time to do so. Neuman and Baron (2011) have suggested:

Norms of toughness, in turn, tend to reduce the likelihood that witnesses to workplace bullying will take action against it. On the contrary, such norms tend to increase the odds from the perspective of the effect/danger ratio, risk is reduced and the benefits are more likely to outweigh the potential costs (p. 217).

Emotional contagion flows on carrying the incidences and consequences of bullying with it. In bullying, actors become targets, and targets become actors (Glomb, 2002), targets become participants, and their mutual interactions further the process (Keashly & Jagatic, 2011).

Sensemaking

How we behave in response to bullying depends upon our cognitive framing (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984) or "…what we do comes from what and how we think" (Pfeffer, 2005, p. 128). The capacity and response repertoire available to management (Weick, 2001, p. 230) influences our perspectives on bullying and response(s) to it. Proverbial blind men pool their perceptions of an elephant to structure the unknown (e.g., Waterman, 1990) and to place their divergent impressions into a framework. That process is descriptive of what is meant here by sensemaking (Weick, 1995). The greater the number of people participating in the sensemaking process, the easier it should be to understand complex situations (Thiel, Bagdasarov, Harkrider, Johnson, & Mumford, 2012). Detection of and correction of anomalies in the workplace should be easier (Weick, 2001). Liefooghe and Davey (2001) found that a witness may initially blame the organization, work environment, or work culture for the bullying (Samnani, 2013). Others only recognize the bullying for what it was in retrospect (D'Cruz & Noronha, 2010). Therefore, subtle bullying can persist and intensify over time (Samnani, 2013). Targets and witnesses may even read bullying humor as efforts to help them 'fit in' to the work group (Baillien 2009; Einarsen & Raknes, 1997). Emotional contagion flows on unimpeded carrying the incidences and consequences of bullying until sensemaking yields a consensual agreement that bullying is present or until positive reaction is generated to counter the circumstance.

Emotional Mood

Mood, the generalized feeling individuals experience with no clear antecedent causes (Weiss, 2002), may influence susceptibility to bullying and susceptibility to the attendant emotional contagion. Moods last longer and are lower in intensity than emotions (Bhullar, 2012). The point here is that individuals dominated by negative moods will be amenable to negative triggering events (Brees, Mackey, & Martinko, 2013; Zillmann, 1988) resulting in mood contagion (e.g. Neumann & Strack, 2000). Individuals cognitively focus on mood-congruent (Bhullar 2012) stimuli during their day-to-day activities (e.g., Becker & Leininger, 2011). Barsade (2002), using a laboratory study, found that emotional contagion can influence an individual's and a group's moods, judgments, and behaviors. Emotional contagion can result from automatic or volitional behavior (Hatfield, Cacioppo, & Rapson, 1993). Mood transfer can be intentionally generated as individuals purposely empathize with others (Neumann & Strack, 2000), to proverbially walk in another person's shoes. Non-intentional transfer of moods more spontaneously occur as individuals mimic the demeanor of others (Vijayalakshmi & Bhattacharyya, 2012). As emotions flow person-to-person and clusters of individuals adopt a common mood, their collective cognitive focus might shift as well. Mood congruence has been found higher when emotions are positive and lower when they were negative (Totterdell, 2000). Mood congruent bias is discerned in the recall of positive and negative emotional events (Bower, 1981; Forgas & Moylan, 1987). Happy people have been shown to spend more time viewing happy photographic scenes and unhappy viewing the opposite (Doherty, 1998). The process is complex, but we might expect people with a higher positive affect would report higher susceptibility to positive emotions and those with negative affect the opposite (Bhullar, 2012).

Cognitive Knots and Revenge

Fulfilling a *self-fulfilling prophecy* (Merton, 1948), persons can form firmly held biases into *cognitive knots* (Douglas, 2008). Attitudinal biases are difficult to unknot once in place (Olson & Fazio, 2006; Brees, Mackey, & Martinko, 2013). Strong negative beliefs (Bryant & Zillmann, 1979) shape how individuals process and react to trigger events. Emotional arousal continues (Zillmann, 1988). Cognitive knots result in aggressive behavior that can escalate (Brees, Mackey, & Martinko, 2013). Some will take revenge (Elster, 1990; Douglas & Martinko, 2001). The presence of favorable attitudes toward revenge has also been positively associated with workplace aggression (Douglas & Martinko, 2001; Skarlicki & Folger, 1997; Skarlicki, Folger, & Tesluk, 1999). Whistleblowers may act (Bjørkelo, 2013), but immediate or long-term retaliation can follow (Bjørkelo, 2013; Near & Miceli, 1986; Rehg, Miceli, Near, & Van Scotter, 2008).

Gender

Little is known about gender and the process of bullying (Salin & Hoel, 2013). However, women are more likely to be bullied by coworkers while men are more likely to be accosted by immediate supervisors (Vartia & Hyyti, 2002). Dysfunctional work behaviors do not impact men and women equally. For example, women may be targeted for bullying when they deviate from accepted gender norms of behavior (Eagly & Sczesny, 2009; Salin & Hoel, 2013). There is evidence that men are slightly more likely to instigate bullying than women (Lee & Brotheridge, 2011; Rayner, 1997; Salin & Hoel, 2013). Women use social manipulation as a tool of bullying where men more directly target victims (e.g., Salin, 2001; Salin & Hoel, 2013).Males are more likely the targets of bullying than females (Hoel, 2001; Salin, 2001; Salin & Hoel, 2013). Women have been shown more likely to label negative experiences as bullying (Salin, 2003; Salin & Hoel, 2013) than men suggesting they may be more sensitive to various aggressive behaviors. It is conjecture at this point, but if women view more situations as bullying they may propagate bullying related emotional contagion more often.

Perceptions of Equitable Work Environment

Equity theory (Adams, 1963) posits individuals compare their perceptions (Thompson, 2009) of inputs (i.e., effort, skill, time) into their work with the perceptions of rewards thought to be received (i.e., extrinsic and intrinsic). The calculated ratio derived is also compared to those perceived as available to significant others. Individuals will seek to compensate where the ratio is found lacking. Individuals form judgments, then, about the level of bullying or the bullying threshold allowed in the work environment and judge that against their perceptions of unfair treatment. Individuals function positively where there is a sense of psychological well-being (Rathi, 2010). Theoretically, when bullying becomes intolerable, workers will more likely respond to it in some way.

Organizational Susceptibility to Bullying

The literature supports "…the notion that an organization's culture and related climate play a large and important role in the manifestation of hostile behaviors at work …." (Keashly & Jagatic 2011, p. 58). Hostile behaviors are associated with bullying in particular (Baillien, Neyens, & De Witte, 2008; Ballien & De Witte, 2009; Einarsen, Raknes, & Matthiesen, 1994; Vartia, 1996; Zapf, Knorz, & Kulla, 1996). For bullying to thrive, there must be a climate that condones, permits, and directly or indirectly rewards it (Einarsen, 1999; Salin, 2009; Salin & Hoel, 2011).

Management

People emulate their leaders (De Hoogh & Hartog, 2008; Hartog & Belschak, 2012). The emotions of mid-level managers govern subordinates' moods (Sy, Cote, & Saavedrea, 2005). Supervisor/subordinate conflict is a stronger predictor of bullying than peer-to-peer conflict (Skogstad, Matthiesen, & Einarsen, 2007). Therefore, it may be said that middle-managers are uniquely positioned to either facilitate bullying or to insure that it does not prosper. Leadership style, then, influences the

availability of bullying and bullying-related subordinate/supervisor relationships in the advance of related emotional contagion.

Leadership Style

Power adopted by leaders may be used to intimidate subordinates or to treat them with indifference and ignore inappropriate behaviors. Bullies are more likely to be among tyrannical and laissez-faire leaders (Hauge, Skogstad, & Einarsen, 2007). Laissez-faire leadership leaves the workplace open for bullying to germinate (Salin & Hoel, 2011). Autocratic, coercive leaders increase levels of fear and stress among others. For some managers, bullying is "…personnel work by other means…." (Salin & Hoel, 2011, p. 234) and substitutes for value driven leadership. Bullies, thwarted in goal-directed behavior, turn to more convenient targets (Neuman & Baron, 2011).

Bullying-Related Subordinate/Supervisor Relationships

Workplace bullying affects the targets' relationships between peers and supervisors (Bartlett & Bartlett, 2011; Glasø, Neilson, & Einarsen, 2009). Superiors are more likely guilty of aggressive behavior than their subordinates (Hoel, 2001; Rayner ,1997). Leaders in a positive mood have followers that are positive (Bono & Ilies, 2006; Van Kleef, Homan, Beersma, van Knippenberg, D., van Knippenberg, B., & Damen, 2009; Visser 2011). The opposite is true as well. Employees work in the "…morally justified principles and values…." (Becker, 1998, p 157) and the corresponding word/deed alignment cultivated by their superiors (Simons 2002). Attitudinal contagion results as similar behaviors flow through the organization (e.g., Bakker, 2010; Bakker & Demerouti, 2009; Bakker & Xanthopoulou, 2009). "Conflicts escalate into bullying only when the managers or supervisors either neglect or deny the issue, or if they themselves are involved in the group dynamics, thereby fueling conflict" (Einarsen, Hoel, Zapf, & Cooper, 2011, p. 23). Middle managers only intervene in bullying situations to the degree they are aware of them. Targets of bullying have reported little support from both colleagues and supervisors (Zapf 1996). Mirroring Hofstede's (2001) concept of power distance, *hieratic distance* has been coined by Godkin (2014) to label the awareness of "…the agathokakological, good and evil, human tendencies inherent in organizational behavior and decision making…." (p. 4). Supervisors who are isolated from or who ignore evidence of bullying exhibit hieratic distance. N*myopia* (Swanson, 1999, p. 512) characterizes executives who do not honor values at stake in decisions (Orlitzky, Swanson, & Quartermaine, 2006). *Deaf Ear Syndrome* (Beugré, 2010, p. 178) is characteristic of supervisors who discourage the reporting of untoward behavior to higher ups.

Work Design

Bullying is evidenced in work processes (Baillien, Neyens, Witte, & Cuyper, 2009; Einarsen, 2000; Simpson & Cohen, 2004; Gardner & Johnson, 2001; Vartia, 2001). Bullying appears where there is: (1) strong task conflict (Ayoko, 2007), (2) strict power relations, (3) highly formal, extreme goal orientation (Fox & Stallworth, 2006), (4) role conflict, and (5) role ambiguity (Salin & Hoel, 2011). Research on organizational politics suggests "…that marginalization and scapegoating are frequently used tactics employed to make victims look bad while enhancing the image and political position of the perpetrators." (Neuman & Baron, 2011, pp. 215-216)

Bullying appears where there is strong task conflict (Ayoko, 2007). Therefore, bullies with a high need for achievement may resort to bullying in environments characterized by internal competition and performance driven reward systems (Salin, 2003). The more competitive the work environment, the more bullying will be put to use (Aquino & Thau, 2009; Lutgen-Sandvik, Tracy, & Alberts, 2007; Salin 2003; Samnani & Singh, 2014). Careers take a negative turn in the process (Bartlett & Bartlett, 2011). Such competitive situations can become more intense where buttressed by accommodating reward systems (Salin, 2003). Pay systems, by design or default, can reward individuals for counterproductive work behaviors (Kerr, 1975). Bullying becomes instrumental to goal attainment. Individual-level rewards that are not zero-sum do not carry a corresponding negative affect (Samnani & Singh, 2014).

AN EPIDEMIOLOGICAL MODEL OF WORKPLACE BULLYING

This paper has described how an organization could become infected with bullying. It has detailed how the incidences and consequences of bullying spread organizationally through emotional contagion. Here a tentative descriptive model is proposed to illustrate this point of view (see Figure in Appendix).

Bullies exhibit aggressive behavior for various reasons. However, the model accounts only for management's role in precipitating bullying in the workplace. In the model, labeled Epidemiology of Bullying, Bullying appears at center left. Therefore, management's influence, Management and the Work Design determined by Management, are linked to Bullying by arrowed solid lines. A solid arrowed line links Management to Work Design because managers set the framework. Then, a solid arrowed line between Bullying and Targets suggests a direct relationship between the two. In turn, an arrowed line between Bullying and Witnesses to bullying indicates a relationship between the two. In other words, Witnesses are emotionally affected by both the situations. Onlookers observe both Bullies and their Targets and are influenced by their circumstances. Targets and Witnesses are related to the Emotionally Susceptible among them by solid arrowed lines linking the three. The Emotionally Susceptible and Emotion Infectors among Targets and Witnesses are pivotal to the flow of emotional contagion and the incidences and consequences of bullying contained in it.

Targets have been victimized by Bullying and may further the spread of Bullying directly. They may seek Revenge perhaps as a result of Cognitive Knots in their thinking. A dotted arrowed line between Emotionally Susceptible and Cognitive Knots suggests the emotionally susceptible may yield to negativity and participate in second-tier revenge.

Witnesses may suffer from coming into contact with Bullying and/or the observation of Targets in distress. The model suggests that Witnesses form their bullying-related Perceptions of Equitable Work Environment through Sensemaking. Those perceptions are tempered or filtered through the prevailing Mood evidenced among them. Solid arrowed lines between Work Design and Perception of Equitable Work Environment and Emotional Mood indicates further the influence of management on emotional contagion and bullying. Of course, the fact that targets of bullying follow a similar (Sensemaking, Perceptions of Equitable Work Environment, Emotional Mood) experiential pattern as their peers is indicated by the double-arrowed line between the two. Similarly, Witnesses may also be tempted to get revenge on perpetrators of bullying.

Finally, Management and Work Design account for management's potential contribution to the development of Bullying. Targets and Witnesses along with the Emotionally Susceptible and Emotional Infectors among them account for individuals responding to Bullying. Group Susceptibility to Emotional Contagion, on the middle right of the model, connotes the organization's work climate. Group susceptibility determines the chances that the incidence and consequences of Bullying will 'go viral' so to speak. There is a solid double-arrowed line linking Management to Group Susceptibility to Emotional Contagion. A single solid arrowed line links the Work Design employed by Management to Group Susceptibility as well. Hence, Management influences Group Susceptibility in a number of ways.

DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

The purpose of this paper is to describe how emotional contagion spreads the incidences and consequences of bullying through an organization. A corresponding model is included to illustrate (see Figure). Rooted in the literature, the model positions management as an enabler or foil of Bullying. The paper explains how bullies affect their targets, tangentially influence the emotions of onlookers and how witnesses may respond, in turn. The emotionally susceptible among targets of and witnesses to bullying spread the associated feelings to others. The emotionally susceptible affect Emotion Infectors who push the bullying-related emotions to their work groups infecting others. Group susceptibility to emotional contagion determines the flow of emotion associated with the spread of bullying.

The incidences and consequences of bullying can spread through emotional contagion unless ethical managers intervene (e.g., Bjørkelo, 2013). Management is uniquely positioned to handle the aggression

(Fenton, 1990 and positively channel workers' frustrations (Brees, Mackey, & Martinko, 2013) as they change their own emotional states (Vijayalakshmi & Bhattacharyya, 2012). With this in mind, managers are well advised to adjust Work Design to alleviate counterproductive stress and competition which leads to Bullying (Aquino & Thau, 2009; Arthur, 2011; Ayoko, 2007; Baillien, De Cuyper, & De Witte, 2011; Fox & Stallworth, 2006; Salin & Hoel, 2011; Samnani & Singh, 2014). This can be accomplished by lowering role conflict/ambiguity, alleviating stress from the rewards system, and supporting employee success rather than failure. Certainly, counterproductive behaviors should not be rewarded and zero-sum reward systems are best avoided.

Employees respond to Bullying to the extent they are mindful of it. This is a function of their relative moral imagination (Werhane, 1998) and codes of ethics incorporating statements about bullying (e.g., Adams, Armen, & Shore, 2001; Valentine & Barnett, 2002). Where strong ethical codes are used, employee ethicality tends to follow. Employees maintain common frames representative of what their employers mean to them. Aggregated, these perceptions contribute to an organization's identity orientation (Brickson, 2007). In this context, ethical codes including statements about bullying will "signal" what is appropriate and inappropriate behavior for employees (Adams, Armen, & Shore, 2001, p. 199). Rewarding bullying related ethical behavior will increase the frequency of that behavior. Sanctions will result in the opposite. Equity theory (Adams, 1963) suggests as bullying becomes intolerable, workers will more likely respond in a corresponding manner.

The part gender plays in the spreading of bullying is of particular interest. Actually, little is known about gender and the process of bullying (Salin & Hoel, 2013), but literature ferreted out for this paper raises an interesting issue. Examining the model reveals Gender embedded in both the responses of Targets and related to emotionally susceptibility. The social construction of gender affects why women experience bullying differently than men and dysfunctional work behaviors do not impact men and women equally (Salin, 2005). Importantly, it is reported that men are the principle targets of bullying (Hoel, Cooper, & Faragher, 2001; Salin 2001; Salin & Hoel, 2013), but women define bullying more broadly (Salin 2003; Salin and Hoel 2013). Specifically, women are more likely to label unpleasant experiences as bullying than their male counterparts. Circumstantially then, it appears that women may be more likely to consider themselves targets of bullying than men because they identify a larger universe of circumstances as such. More women may also, then, become witnesses to "bullying" more broadly defined and respond accordingly more often than men. Couple this with the evidence that women across occupational categories are more emotionally susceptible than men (Doherty, Orimoto, Singelis, Hatfield, & Hebb, 1995), it may indicate that women play a greater role in emotional contagion than men.

Finally, the Emotionally Susceptible may play a larger role in magnifying Bullying than is obvious. The model suggests that the Emotionally Susceptible may, along with Targets, develop Cognitive Knots and seek Revenge. It is easy to envision such a condition. For example, Bully Boss A accosts Employee B. Onlooker Employee C notes the Bullying. Onlooker Employee C doesn't like the Bully Boss A at all, and develops Cognitive Knots strong enough to prompt Revenge on Bully Boss A. Both Targets and Witnesses of Bullying may follow this course. Now, Gender may play a role here as well. Women in particular may be more involved in emotional contagion for the reasons explained earlier. Both female Targets and Witnesses who are Emotionally Susceptible may develop Cognitive Knots and seek, to a greater or lesser degree, revenge on the Bully. The model doesn't suggest it, but it is reasonable to assume that Witnesses who are Emotionally Susceptible might take Revenge when the Cognitive Knots are strong enough to motivate it. Targets may take Revenge directly with or without evidence of Cognitive Knots. Equity theory (Adams, 1963) supports this conclusion.

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FIGURE
EPIDEMIOLOGY OF BULLYING