

## Chapter 12

# Codifying Civility on Campus for Employees and Students: An International Perspective

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### ABSTRACT

*School-level bullying and workplace bullying are globally recognized as threats to organizational productivity, emotional safety, psychological wellness, and overall morale. Consequently, some countries have instituted legislation to prohibit bullying at various levels in society. This essay will proceed from two vantage points. First, workplace bullying will be addressed, considering the cost to organizations and individuals. Second, school bullying will be addressed with an examination of the bully as a threat to the school's reputation and individual student welfare. Further, cyberbullying affects both children and adults. Therefore, the purpose of this essay is to consider policy development for international leaders who are managing both students and professional educators.*

### INTRODUCTION

School level bullying and workplace bullying are globally recognized as threats to organizational productivity, emotional safety, psychological wellness, and overall morale. Consequently, some countries have instituted legislation to prohibit bullying at various levels in society. The Scandinavians led the fight against “psychological harassment” as they were some of the earliest researchers in the 1990s. In turn, northern Europe and several other countries such as Finland, France, Serbia, Norway, and Sweden have prohibited emotional and psychological abuse in the workplace (Court of Cassation, December 6, 2011, no. 10-82266; Occupational Safety & Health Act, 2004; Ordinance Swedish National Board Section 1, para 4, 1993).

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Bullying has gained more attention, as youngsters who face harassment are more likely to engage in suicidal ideation, and adults facing bullying at work are more likely to engage in self-protective behaviors. Both youngsters and adults are distracted with trying to find relief from a bully instead of using their full potential to advance in school or their career.

Theoretically, bullying and workplace bullying compromise the targets' self-determination. If a target is abused or harassed, that same target then finds that the goal is to survive the environment. Mithaug (1996) argued that self-determination is a right not a privilege. "Having equity and access means that all societies optimize prospects for self-determination for these least advantaged members by increasing their capacity and improving their opportunity to self-determine" (Mithaug, 1996, p. 11). Further, self-determination includes one's ability to determine their own development and progress. However, in the face of bullying the targets are dissuaded from personal development to one's own personal survival. Bullying in school or at work inhibits one's ability to determine a path for success. In contrast, those who do not face bullying are psychologically and emotionally free to consider academic studies, job advancement, or other objectives which otherwise can become secondary when staving off an abusive bully.

This essay will proceed from two vantage points. First, workplace bullying will be addressed, considering the cost to organizations and individuals. Second, school bullying will be addressed with an examination of the bully as a threat to the school's reputation and individual student welfare. Further, cyberbullying affects both children and adults. Therefore, the purpose of this essay is to consider policy development for international leaders who are managing both students and professional educators.

## **BACKGROUND ON WORKPLACE BULLYING**

Workplace bullying research has gained more attention since the 1990s. Starting with attention from European researchers, workplace bullying has international attention as a behavior that hurts both organizations and employees. Researchers vary on exactly what is considered workplace bullying, however the following definition is commonly accepted:

*Harassing, offending, socially excluding someone or negatively affecting someone's work tasks. This behavior occurs repeatedly and regularly over a period of about six months. With the escalating process, the person confronted ends up in an inferior position and becomes the target of systematic negative social acts. (Einarsen et al., 2011, p. 22)*

In working with targets of workplace bullying, I recognize that many will state they do not need six months of bad behavior to determine they are facing a bullying. However, it should be noted that workplace bullying is beyond a simple rude comment or a single bad day. Workplace bullying is a series of aggressive and harassing behaviors focused on a target over a period of time.

Canadian provinces such as Ontario, Quebec, British Columbia, Saskatchewan, and Manitoba have prohibited workplace bullying. In 2004, Quebec was the first Canadian province to officially prohibit workplace bullying. In 2007, Saskatchewan prohibited workplace bullying, followed by Ontario in 2012 and British Columbia and Manitoba prohibiting such abuse on the job in 2013 (New Harassment Prevention, 2011; Labor Standards, 2004; Preventing Workplace Violence and Harassment, 2011; Guidelines Workers Compensation Act Part, 2013; Workplace Bullying, 2012). In 2016, Calgary and Alberta introduced legislation prohibiting workplace bullying. Quebec's Labour Standards, Sec. 81.18, which became

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