From the President

Welcome to November newsletter.

The past few months have been jam-packed with activity at IAWBH!

The first thing I want to mention is that submissions for our 2020 conference in Dubai are now being taken. Abstracts close on December 7, so please put together your work and submit it. If you’re not intending to present a paper or workshop, you can still take advantage of the earlybird registration (and member discount), so register early!

I’d also like to ask everyone to please share details of the conference with their colleagues, clients and friends via email and social media #IAWBH2020. The web address is available all over the IAWBH site: https://www.uowdubai.ac.ae/iawbh2020

You can read in the newsletter about the two very successful Masterclasses held in the UK and Israel in August and September this year. I want to thank once again the organisers of both events for making them so successful! We also trialled the use of twitter at these events, and I encourage you to take a look at the pictures and comments accessible at @IAWBH._

Also in August the Board had its yearly face to face meeting. We met for almost 3 full days, and considered a wide range of issues important to the future of IAWBH. Briefly, among other things, this included discussion of the membership profile of our association and ways to grow the membership; changes to membership levels, fees and renewal periods; criteria for event locations; policy frameworks across several areas of activity to improve sustainability and succession; and developing a strategy for the development of the IAWBH.

We’ll communicate more information about these and other areas in the near future, via the newsletters and the website, so that members stay informed and aware of what is happening the Association. We will also be having our first member survey in early 2020. I want to thank the Board for their hard work at the meeting, and the time, expertise and enthusiasm they contributed to our Association.

Following the face to face meeting, I had the opportunity to travel to Dubai and meet with the Alison and Mahshid from the local organising committee. It was a quick visit, but I was able to see the conference and location, use the excellent metro system and even enjoy a little time by the pool. All the arrangements are going very well for our conference and it is going to be a great event. I really hope to see you there, and look forward to seeing your papers and other contributions. (My picture with this edition is at the Dubai Mall aquarium, just a short walk from the conference hotel, which is also part of the mall).

Best Regards

Carlo

IAWBH President, Carlo Caponecchia.
The 12th IAWBH Conference, Dubai, 8 — 11 June 2020

Developing an Oasis of Workplace Bullying Knowledge and Practice: People, Places, and Perspectives

Call for papers, abstracts, posters, and workshop proposals open

Over the past year the team at the University of Wollongong in Dubai (UOWD) has been busy arranging next year’s conference. We are looking forward to welcoming you to the UAE and we plan to provide a worthwhile schedule of speakers, papers, and events.

The purpose of the conference is to identify where inadequacies and smokescreens exist in global policy versus organisational policy and action, and work toward developing strategies to safeguard our global workforces. In a complex, multi-national environment, it is important to consider the impact on not only employees as targets, perpetrators, and witnesses but also the cultural views of organisations and the regions in which they operate.

We welcome submissions for oral presentations and posters, full papers, workshops, and invited symposia proposals within the following conference themes:

1. Prevention and Intervention
2. Legislation and Compensation
3. Work Environment
4. Identifying and Measuring
5. Risk Factors
6. Health Effects and Rehabilitation
7. Role of Social Actors
8. Ethics
9. Cyber Bullying
10. Coping
11. Multi-Cultural/International Contexts
12. Bystanders and Witnesses

Deadline for submissions:
7, December 2019

Submission Guidelines:
Click Here

More information:
Our website is available at:
https://www.uowdubai.ac.ae/iawbh2020

Key dates
Monday 8 June 2020 — SIG meetings and PhD Student Workshop
Tuesday 9 to Thursday 11 June 2020 — 3 day Conference

If you have any questions, feel to contact us at: IAWBH2020@uowdubai.ac.ae
TIBERIAS, ISRAEL: The dark side of organizations: Causes, consequences and mitigation—an organizational perspective

The Masterclass in Israel took place at Kinneret College which lies on the southern shores of the Sea of Galilee. Presenters came from as far as Japan, Australia, Canada, Ireland, UK, USA, and the Netherlands.

After an opening session and greetings by local hosts, a vignette of workplace bullying opened the sessions. Following this impressive scene of workplace bullying, Prof. Charlotte Rayner introduced the basics and definitions of workplace bullying. In continuation of her illuminating keynote talk, Charlotte facilitated a panel discussion focused on the antecedents of workplace bullying. As part of the panel, Miwako Wakui from Japan looked at the law as an antecedent of workplace bullying. Following her presentation, Jo Brown from the U.K looked at how the match between individuals and the employer/job serves as a contextual antecedent. Dr. Margaret Hodgins from Ireland concluded the session by adding her view on organizational culture as an antecedent of workplace bullying.

During the lunch break, attendees took a short tour to Magdala - uncovered remains of a first-century synagogue beside the Sea of Galilee that are providing what could be a direct link to the life of Jesus, and an opportunity for greater understanding between Christianity and Judaism.

In the afternoon, we had two parallel workshops:

- Sharon Yaroslovsky from Cassiopeia (Israel) showed how we could detect bullying by using a data-driven approach.
- Prof. Susan Johnson from the USA introduced the participants bullying from a healthcare viewpoint.

The Masterclass concluded the day in a networking session at the Kinneret Innovation Center, ending the day with a fabulous joint dinner.
The second day of the masterclass was aimed at dealing with organizational implications and organizational coping. In the first part of the day after another vignette of workplace bullying, Dr. Pat Ferris from Canada focused on the injury resulted from workplace bullying.

Following her talk, Pat and Prof Patricia Mannix McNamara from the University of Limerick gave two parallel workshops on the implications of bullying at work. After lunch, the final keynote talk — Evelyn M. Field OAM, summarized the implications of bullying to health and wellbeing.

The Masterclass concluded the day with a World café session led by Jo Brown, who used the platform to discuss critical issues around managing workplace bullying and harassment at work. Jos’ session concluded the fantastic two days, full of knowledge, interactions, and fun.

It was a great pleasure to host the Masterclass in Israel at Kinneret College on the sea of Galilee. The master class created opportunities for greater professional dialogue between international experts, local human resource professionals, academics and students, who appreciated the opportunity to discuss bullying and harassment issues, on equal terms, without the professional boundaries that exist at the conferences — thereby highlighting the value of a Master class. In particular, hearing about the employment cultures from the younger employee’s perspective, demonstrated how the workplace has changed, leading to a sense of uncertainty, fear, and demoralization. This will undoubtedly impact on bullying and harassment in the future.

Finally, what began as a casual discussion about the possibility of conducting a Master Class, materialized into an enjoyable, fruitful, productive, and professional two days. We also realized that bullying and harassment are still not appropriately dealt with around the world, and thus, there is a great need for these kinds of events. We want to thank Evelyn M. Field OAM, who visualized the event and contribute to its success and IAWBH for the opportunity given to us. We also want to thank our partners, the Israeli association for the prevention of workplace bullying and Haifa university and all those who contributed and participated in a great event.

Dr. Yariv Itzkovich
Event Report: Masterclass on Methodological Advancement in Workplace Bullying and Harassment Research

In the midst of an autumn heatwave, 35 participants gathered in London, UK, for a Masterclass on “Methodological Advancement in Workplace Bullying and Harassment Research”. Organised by Stephen Teo, Tim Bentley and Kevin Teoh with the support of the Department of Organizational Psychology at Birkbeck, University of London, the event had participants travel from as far as New Zealand and Canada to attend.

The Masterclass was structured to focus on methodological discussions on the first day followed by a focus on practice on the second. Day One began with Ria Deakin (Manchester, Manchester Metropolitan University, UK) and Kara Ng (University of Sheffield, UK) leading participants through a World Café discussion on what was needed to advance workplace bullying and harassment research. This generated a substantial buzz and discussion throughout the morning as participants not only got to know each other, but identified challenges around practice, measurement, implementation, ethics and relevance that needed to be addressed in future.

In the afternoon, Kevin Teoh (Birkbeck, University of London, UK) presented the findings of a systematic review on the financial cost of psychosocial workplace aggression. The findings here not only showed this to be a substantial issue, but that these were likely to be gross-underestimates of the actual issue. The review also highlighted conceptual challenges in how various constructs relating to psychosocial aggression are defined and measured.

Sheila White (Birkbeck, University of London, UK) then provided a flexible method based on ethnography and grounded theory to carry out qualitative research into bullying within organisations. Drawing on previous research as case studies, Sheila showed the importance of iterative reflexivity and how initial impressions form the basis from which understanding is built about a particular organisational context.

The day ended with a series of roundtable discussions where participants could raise research and practical challenges in order to obtain feedback from fellow participants, with discussions then continuing on with the social element at a local pub.
The second day of the Masterclass emphasised the relevance, importance and “how-to” of practice. Carlo Caponecchia (University of New South Wales, Australia) drew on his experience on a project bridging the gap between academic research and practice, which led to the development of a taxonomy of bullying interventions to guide research and practice on workplace bullying interventions. Here, there are important roles played by practitioners, academics and the pracademics that bridge this divide. Next, Duncan Lewis (Emeritus Professor, University of Plymouth, UK) reflected on his experience researching bullying and harassment in the UK National Health Service to offer practical tips on working with bullying victims, setting expectations with senior management, dealing with the media and establishing personal boundaries.

To avert any potential post-lunch slump, Michelle Tuckey and Annabelle Neall (University of South Australia, Australia) led the group through a karaoke rendition of Stand by Me, before their session on prevention-focused interventions. This drew on their work with SafeWork Australia, where recognising bullying as a systems issue meant the need for a preventative psychosocial risk management approach. Their work culminated with the development of an indicator checklist tool that can and has been used by work inspectors to investigate workplace bullying within organisations. The two-day event ended with a panel discussion with Michelle Tuckey, Carlo Caponecchia and Bevan Catley (Massey University, New Zealand) taking questions from participants on the practicalities of workplace bullying interventions.

Overall, the Masterclass was a success with positive feedback from participants. Moving forward, there are clear themes around the need for more varied methodological approaches to not only investigate and understand workplace bullying (e.g., cost of illness studies, qualitative approaches, taxonomy development) but that the gap between research and practice continues to be a challenge for us all to address.
Methodology Matters

Using Narrative Inquiry to Explore Intersections Between Workplace Harassment and Employment Standards Violations in the Context of Precarious Work

Introduction

Dr. J. Adam Perry works in the Department of Adult Education at St. Francis Xavier University in Antigonish, Nova Scotia Canada. His research and teaching focus on issues related to precarious work, labour migration and critical approaches to workplace learning.

Dr. Adriana Berlingieri is an organizational consultant, researcher, and educator. Her primary scholarly and professional interests are centered on bullying and other forms of violence at work. As a Postdoctoral Fellow at the University of Toronto, she is currently collaborating with the Centre for Research & Education on Violence Against Women & Children on projects related to domestic violence, and other forms of violence, at work. She teaches at the School of Administrative Studies, York University.

Dr. Kiran Mirchandani works at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, University of Toronto. Her research and teaching focus on gendered and racialized processes in the workplace; critical perspectives on organizational development and learning; criminalization and welfare policy; and globalization and economic restructuring. Using qualitative, interpretive approaches, her work is based on qualitative interviews with transnational service workers in India and workers in precarious jobs in Canada.

We share an interest in the intersection between work and workers who are at risk of experiencing abuses at work, including harassment and employment standards violations. In this Methodology Matters, our discussion focuses on an article: Precarious Work, Harassment, and the Erosion of Employment Standards, recently published in Qualitative Research in Organizations and Management: An International Journal. The article evolved out of a broader project, Closing the Employment Standards Enforcement Gap (www.closeesgap.ca) that seeks to inform effective employment standards enforcement in Ontario, Canada’s largest provincial jurisdiction.

What was the research question you sought to answer?

The article examines experiences of harassment in the context of precarious employment, which we define as work which involves “limited social benefits and statutory entitlements, high levels of uncertainty, low wages, and a lack of control over the labour process” (Vosko, 2006, p. 1). We were interested in understanding how workers’ exposure to harassment may be associated with employer violations (such as wage theft) of Ontario’s employment standards regulations. We felt that this was important to examine as in Ontario (Canada), approximately one third of the labour force work in precarious jobs. Precarious forms of work disproportionately affect women, migrants, immigrants and workers from racialized groups (Noack & Vosko, 2011).

In Canada, employment legislation falls within provincial and territorial jurisdictions. In Ontario, the Occupational Health and Safety Act (OHSA) addresses violence, domestic violence and harassment at work. The Employment Standards Act (ESA) is intended to provide legal protections for workers vulnerable to exploitation, and covers...
areas related to minimum wage, overtime pay, and maximum hours of work. Once we began to talk with workers, it became apparent that in precarious jobs harassment and employment standard violations could be interrelated even though they fall under the purview of two distinct pieces of legislation. What would this then mean for legal protection and redress for Ontario workers in precarious jobs?

**What prompted your use of the research methodology and methods?**

For this project we interviewed workers in precarious jobs in the Ontario cities of Toronto, Windsor and Sudbury. The sample was comprised of 72 workers in non-union and low-wage jobs in various industries and sectors. We also interviewed 52 Employment Standards Officers (ESOs) whose responsibility it is to enforce Ontario’s employment standards regulations. Narrative inquiry, the approach we used for data collection and analysis, provided the opportunity for participants to tell their own stories and share their lived experience. In the case of interviews with workers, each interview contained structured and semi-structured elements. We know from previous research that workers do not necessarily think of workplace problems in the context of legislative frameworks (Pollert & Charlwood, 2009). However, we wanted to better understand workers’ experiences of exploitation through the lens of these frameworks. Therefore, while we wanted to privilege workers’ narratives, we had to find a way to bound their stories in such a way that highlights their experiences and negotiations of the law. So, we created an interview structure that used concept cards, a qualitative research approach that could elicit stories that would be difficult to develop with an open-ended interview format. During the interview, 18 concept cards were placed on the table, each card representing a violation of Ontario’s ESA plus a harassment card. Each of the participants was invited to talk about their experiences of work in relation to the cards. Once we established which violations a participant had been subjected to, the interview switched to open-ended questions related to their experiences. With regard to the ESOs, we conducted semi-structured interview during which they were asked to reflect on critical incidents from their careers.

**What were the advantages/disadvantages of using the methodological approach?**

One advantage of engaging with narrative inquiry is that it allowed us to approach workers as active ‘knowers’ and not simply as passive respondents. This is important as we know from previous research that, within employment standards enforcement regimes, claimants are often constructed as illegitimate (Gellatly et al., 2011). It was thus crucial to collect and listen to stories from workers about their interactions with employment violations and employment law in order to counter mainstream enforcement narratives. Engaging with ESO narratives provided a means to understand how the perception of workers in precarious jobs infiltrates street-level discretion in the claims process thereby shaping the application of the law. Putting these stories in conversation with each other offers a unique contribution in the literature.

The advantage of cross-sectoral sampling is that it provides a rich macro understanding of the problem. However, sampling from various industries does produce a disadvantage in so far as we were not able to provide a fine grain analysis of any one particular industry. While Ontario is Canada’s largest and most diverse provincial jurisdiction, further research is required to examine other jurisdictions in order to gain a deeper understanding of social structural violence.
Three main themes emerged from our study:

**Harassment and precarious work:** Worker narratives described workplace environments as hostile and exposed patterns of managerial aggressions that were considered normal and, as one worker said, “just part of the job”. Workers reported being routinely exposed to verbal threats and offensive remarks often associated with retaliation for speaking up about problems at work.

**Harassment and employment standards violations:** The interrelatedness of harassment and employment standards violations occurs within a context that is shaped by legal frameworks. Interestingly, while harassment and employment violations fall under the purview of two distinct pieces of legislation, workers themselves did not make categorical distinctions between the two. We found that in precarious work, harassment is an abuse of power that is connected to and includes the wider evasion and violation of workers’ statutory employment rights.

**Harassment and the employment standards claims process:** For participants who did file a claim with the Ontario Ministry of Labour related to an employment standards violation, harassment often constituted an core aspect of their complaint. When harassment was present, workers reported a deeper sense of injustice. However, ESO narratives reveal how such claims are lacking in evidence, legitimacy, and are a drain on resources. Workers’ experiences of harassment are, therefore, made invisible in the way that legal frameworks are structured and practiced.


**References:**


Tell us something about yourself?

I am a lecturer in management studies and a Director of a Research Institute at University of Professional Studies Accra.

How did you become interested in workplace bullying?

I became interested in the topic through personal experiences and also witnessing episodes of bullying when I visited a hair salon and saw several apprentices being shouted at, being targets of spontaneous anger, being forced to work in trainer’s home doing laundry, housekeeping jobs and several other things which were not job-related. Aside that, one day I was driving to school when I saw three young teens, perhaps between the ages of fifteen and nineteen, kneeling by the roadside with arms raised in the full view of the human traffic on a very busy road. This used to be the way school children were punished when they went “wayward”. But this form of punishment had become obsolete for some time now. These issues made me alarmed and confused. I was wondering where the world of work had come up to, especially, for young apprentices. I began thinking about the fact that there was the need for some social policy to protect apprentices, especially, in the informal sector of Ghana.

This led me to think about how I was being treated at work and I realised that similar abuses happened at my workplace too which happened to be in a formal sector.

I began considering how employees in my workplace were being treated—being shouted at; being targets of spontaneous anger, being forced to perform tasks below their level, being ignored and such like.

I began wondering why there were no laws to protect people from such abuses. I was also personally bullied, even though there were times I stood up to the bullies, I also suffered severely for doing so. I was completely isolated, to the point that even those who sympathised with me were also punished and excluded from the group at the office. There was a time all my colleagues were invited to my boss’s birthday party. I was the only one who was not invited. Aside that, there were times I received cold calls at home from the perpetrator, he will just mention his name and not say anything. When I drop the line he will call again and again.

After sometime, I felt I needed a break from the ‘polluted’ environment because I could feel that I was not welcomed at my workplace any longer. As I was a lecturer at the University, I thought of furthering my education by doing my PhD. It was when I was researching for a topic for the PhD that I came across an article by from the US, bullying at work. I told myself …! This was the topic for me.
What can you tell us about development of the workplace bullying field in your country?

When I started my research in 2013, there was next to nothing. I think a Google search on ‘workplace bullying in Ghana’ gave me 665000 hits in 0.23secs. So I believed that some discussions and research work might have been going on, but in the real sense, not much had been done nationwide to even discuss the issue. More extensive research work is needed and discussions in the media to properly advocate for policies and laws to protect employees, especially, in the informal sector.

What do you hope to achieve in the field of workplace bullying in the future?

That work should not hurt anyone. The average employee going to work should feel happy and proud about what he/she does. I feel very sad about words people use to describe the thought of going to work—‘torture’, ‘hell’ ‘cell’. My immediate aim is to see that enough advocacy has gone on for some laws to protect people irrespective of whether they work in the formal or informal sectors. Eventually, such policies should impact on Africa and then the whole world.

Question from Imad Al Muala: Due to economic transformation in Ghana in the last few years has the poverty rate slightly decreased? Has this affected the levels of negative behaviour (i.e. workplace bullying) among people in Ghana?

According to the Ghana Statistical Service, the number of Ghanaians living in extreme poverty has reduced from 2.4million to 2.2million from 2005-2017. (Ghana Living Standards Survey, rounds, 5, 6 and 7). However, Ghana still struggles with effective macroeconomic and fiscal policy management, particularly inflation. Aside that, unemployment rate is very high. So while the books look good for Ghana, some sections of the population are experiencing slower growth, especially those working in agriculture, the urban poor and unemployed youth.

Much of bullying going on in the Ghanaian workplace is due to our culture, lack of knowledge and policies to address the issue. Thus, no one talks about it or raises serious concerns about this negative behaviour. It is somehow an ‘accepted’ ‘norm’. The average employee will not even consider their experiences as bullying that need to be addressed. Unemployment levels in Ghana remain very high, and occupational mobility is very low. I haven’t come across any literature linking the two—poverty and bullying in Ghana. My studies among nurses revealed that none of them was prepared to quit nursing profession because of being bullied. The reason being the high level of unemployment and the fact so many of their family members are depending on them for their daily sustenance. They were looking to be promoted to managerial level to escape being easy targets for bullying. From observation and little discussions around, the marginal decrease in poverty has not led to a decrease in bullying. High unemployment rate has rather led to an increase even the phenomenon is not seen as a great threat to the nation.

Which negative behaviour workplace bullying, sexual harassment, etc is most widespread in Ghana?

Unfortunately, I have not come across any statistics comparing these two negative behaviours at work. My future work will focus on that.

What is the greatest challenge you are facing to conduct a research on workplace bullying in Ghana?

Funding, most people in Ghana think the issue is not a problem. It is a ‘normal’ way of life, especially, if the abuse turns not to be physical.
Membership Update

At the moment the IAWBH consists of members from all over the world. Our recent analysis of membership data, illustrated in the chart below, shows where our global membership is represented.

Members’ country of origin

We are always interested in looking for ways to develop the association further. If you have ideas for growing the membership in particular countries, we’d like to hear from you and please get in touch with
Upcoming events

ANZAM 2019 Conference

IAWBH 2020 12th International Conference on Workplace Bullying and Harassment
8-11 June 2020, Dubai, UAE  https://www.uowdubai.ac.ae/iawbh2020

EURAM20
10-12 June 2020, Dublin, Ireland

European Congress of Psychology 19-24 July, Prague, Czechoslovakia
http://www.efpa.eu/events/2020-07-19-international-congress-of-psychology-icp2020-

IAWBH members Pat Ferris, Rebecka Forssell, Annabelle Neall, Eva Mikkelson and Neill Thompson were all part of the programme team that delivered lectures and workshops at the recent Bullying and Harassment at Work NIVA Course in Copenhagen.

If you have been presented research, delivered talks or training at a recent event we would love to hear about it. You can include us through social media: @IAWBH_ or send us a photo and we will include it in the next newsletter. Also let us know if you have upcoming events and we can include it on this page.
Literature update

The list of literature on bullying and related issues continues to be reviewed. Between June 2019 and November 2019, Bevan Catley identified 225 new publications. They range from:

A


to

Z


To access the whole new literature list, log-in to the IAWBH website.
Next newsletter and guidelines

We are delighted that a lot of our members contribute to the IAWBH newsletter. To ensure the quality of contributions, the Board of IAWBH has prepared some guidelines.

If you intend to write a contribution for the newsletter please first check the guidelines at our website: http://www.iawbh.org/Newsletterguidelines.

The next IAWBH newsletter will appear in January 2020. Please inform us about:

- your published work,
- international conferences on workplace bullying,
- special issues on workplace bullying and harassment,
- research breakthroughs,
- new research projects or challenging hypothesis,
- international cooperation and funding, and
- any news that may be relevant to a significant number of our members.

If you would like to contribute or discuss ideas, please get in contact: neill.thompson@northumbria.ac.uk

Purpose of the IAWBH

The purpose of the IAWBH is to stimulate, generate, integrate and disseminate research and evidence based practice in the field of workplace bullying and harassment, and to promote fairness, justice and dignity at work for all.

A full description of the IAWBH purpose is available: https://iawbh.org/Purpose-IAWBH

Disclaimer:
The viewpoints in contributions other than those communicated by Board members in their capacity as office bearers do not reflect the position of the IAWBH or its Board but of the author. Authors must necessarily ensure accurate referencing and citations and the IAWBH and its Board are not responsible for plagiarism within contributions.