

CAUSES OF UPWARDS BULLYING: MANAGERS' PERSPECTIVES

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ABSTRACT

Despite the recent increase in focus on workplace bullying, research into the phenomenon referred to as ‘upwards bullying’ (i.e. managers who are bullied by their staff) has received modest attention. Within this paper the perception of managers as to what are the causes of upwards bullying is explored. After a review of the literature and using attribution theory as a framework a 22 item scale of the causes of upwards bullying was developed. An exploratory factor analysis with varimax rotation of 119 (87 = Male; 32 = Female) responses to the items revealed a four factor solution. The results suggest it is vital to emphasise the multi-faceted nature of upwards bullying, including both individual and environmental factors within training programs.

Keywords: Workplace Bullying, Upwards Bullying, Antecedents of Workplace Bullying

INTRODUCTION

Researchers have explored the antecedents of workplace bullying in an attempt to understand and potentially reduce its impacts to individuals and organisations. Research into workplace bullying thus far has examined individual factors such as personality traits of the target or the bully (Ashforth, 1997; Coyne, Seigne, & Randall, 2000; Douglas & Martinko, 2001; Zapf, 1999) and bullying as an interpersonal conflict (Einarsen, Hoel, Zapf, & Cooper, 2003). The influence of organisational factors, such as leadership and the changing nature of work, on workplace bullying have been the focus of other research (Einarsen, 1999, 2000; Einarsen et al., 2003; Einarsen & Skogstad, 1996; Hoel & Salin, 2003; McCarthy, 1996; Sheehan, 1996; Vartia, 1996). Others have emphasised that bullying is a multi-faceted phenomenon and, as such, multiple causes, including organisational and group related factors and not just individual aspects, should be considered (Zapf, 1999). For instance, Hoel and Salin (2003) suggest that due to the complexity of workplace bullying, the actions and reactions of target and perpetrator can only be understood within the context they occur in.

However, despite an increase in research into workplace bullying in the recent decades, little is known about managers who are bullied by their staff and why this form of bullying occurs. This form of bullying is referred to in this paper as ‘upwards bullying’. Thus although more is known about ‘downwards bullying’ and ‘horizontal bullying’ (Lewis & Sheehan, 2003), an understanding of the antecedents of upwards bullying is lacking. As a result, a research program entailing two studies (Study 1-Interview study; Study 2- Questionnaire study) was developed to further understand the nature of upwards bullying. This paper presents the results from the questionnaire study that relates to

the perceptions of managers as to what are the antecedents of upwards bullying. We argue that with further understanding of individual's perceptions of why upwards bullying occurs, our ability to develop a comprehensive training program, that seeks to raise individual's awareness of the phenomena, will be enhanced.

ANTECEDENTS OF WORKPLACE BULLYING

Bullying is recognised as a multi-faceted phenomenon (Hoel & Salin, 2003) and as such can be examined through the levels of individual, dyadic, group and organisational. Each of these levels will be briefly introduced next prior to an introduction to what we know of upwards bullying.

At the individual level the personality of targets and perpetrators have been linked to bullying (Einarsen et al., 2003). For instance, an Irish study into workplace bullying found that targets of bullying were identified as introverts, conscientious, neurotic and submissive (Coyne et al., 2000). However, caution must be taken when considering results that indicate targets of workplace bullying have particular personality traits (Rayner, Hoel, & Cooper, 2002). Indeed some researchers have indicated that results linking personality traits to bullying could have emerged as a result of the bullying process (see Quine, 1999). Others have also suggested that researching the target's personality is an attempt to 'blame the victim'. However, Keashly & Harvey (2006) suggest that as conflicts like workplace bullying can be defined as a hostile relationship, exploring individual factors is a valid approach.

In addition, research has also looked at the personality of the perpetrator (Einarsen et al., 2003). Counter to the common assumption that low self-esteem leads to aggression and violence, Baumeister, Smart and Boden (1996) in a theoretical review of research into aggression, proposed that high self-esteem combined with ego threat is a major cause of aggression and violence. In a study that tested Baumeister et al.'s (1996) conceptualisation, Stucke and Sporer (2002) explored the relationship between narcissism (individuals with an inflated but unstable self-esteem), self-concept clarity and aggression. The authors found that "high narcissists, with low self-concept clarity reacted with anger and aggression" while less narcissistic participants displayed no aggression (Stucke & Sporer, 2002, p. 309). Further, their results also indicated that the aggression was always focused towards the perceived source of threat (Stucke & Sporer, 2002).

Research has also suggested that the reactions of targets may also play a part in the occurrence of workplace bullying (Keashly & Harvey, 2006). For instance, Zapf and Gross (2001) argue that the response of targets may further escalate the conflict between the perpetrator and themselves. Targets who successfully coped with workplace bullying were found to be better at recognising and avoiding escalating behaviour, and were likely to use less active direct strategies to de-escalate the situation. Furthermore, Tehrani (2003) suggests that the target-perpetrator relationship is not always simple to define. Instead an accusation of bullying is often “triggered by the individual’s responses to a series of interactions that are built up over a period of time” (Tehrani, 2003, p. 280). In fact, Tehrani (2003) proposes that during times of high stress and when a relationship is perceived as negative, small issues such as not saying hello in the morning, may be interpreted as an aggressive act.

Furthermore, group characteristics, such as envy and scapegoating of groups have also been linked to workplace bullying (Zapf, 1999). Scapegoating occurs when “groups may direct their aggression to a least powerful individual who is not accepted by peers” (Coyne, Craig, & Smith-Lee Chong, 2004, p. 302). Furthermore, group characteristics such as ethnicity (Fox & Stallworth, 2005; Rayner & Hoel, 1997), gender, age (Zapf cited in Zapf & Einarsen, 2003) and organisational status (Hoel et al., 2001) have been found to be related to workplace bullying. According to Einarsen et al. (2003) “witch-hunting processes arise when groups displace their frustration and aggression on to a suitable and less powerful group member” (p. 22). They suggest that being an outsider and rule breaking on the part of the target may be possible reasons why an individual would be targeted by a perpetrator of workplace bullying.

In addition to the focus on the group level of analysis, organisational factors, such as a negative social environment, poor job design, leadership style and role conflict, have been associated with the occurrence of workplace bullying (Einarsen et al., 2003; Leymann, 1996; Rayner et al., 2002). For instance, research has suggested that bullying in the workplace is associated with highly competitive workplaces (O'Moore, Seigne, McGuire, & Smith, 1998; Salin, 2003). Indeed, Salin’s (2003) study of 385 members of The Finnish Association of Graduates in Economics and Business Administration found a strong link between perceived organizational politics and workplace bullying (Salin, 2003). It was proposed that within the current organisational climate of increased organisational pressures,

bullying may be a rational response to the level of competition and need for survival in today's organisations (Salin, 2003). Furthermore, Salin (2003) concluded that in some cases, workplace bullying may be perpetrated in order to promote some people's own self-interest, which is in turn rewarded by the organisation through promotion.

In addition, there has also been suggestions that workplace bullying is related to organisational change. For instance, literature into workplace bullying suggests that due to the rate of change in contemporary workplaces "the potential for employees to project their fears and resentments into the construction of managers as bullies, whether deservedly or not, is high" (McCarthy, Henderson, Sheehan, & Barker, 2002, p. 536). In other words a 'victim-mentality' environment is created (McCarthy, 1999). Indeed, it has been proposed that staff may actually be using the term bullying as a way of voicing their dissatisfaction with organisational issues (Liefvooghe & Davey, 2001).

However, the nature of a causal relationship between a toxic work environments and anti-social behaviours such as workplace bullying is questioned (Keashly & Harvey, 2006). While research suggests that a toxic work environment leads to workplace bullying, other researchers have indicated that workplace bullying behaviours, if not addressed, can result in a toxic work environment (see Andersson & Pearson, 1999, for discussion of uncivil workplaces). Alternatively, Keashly and Harvey (2006) suggest a bidirectional relationship, with the environment and anti-social behaviours interacting together.

Upwards bullying – What we know about it

Despite the limited usage of the term upwards bullying (Lewis & Sheehan, 2003; McCarthy et al., 2002; Rayner & Cooper, 2003), there does appear to be general agreement in the literature that managers can indeed be the targets of workplace bullying from their staff (e.g. Zapf, Einarsen, Hoel, & Vartia, 2003). For instance, Hoel, Cooper, and Faragher (2001), found that 6.7% of their respondents had been bullied by staff. Nevertheless, researchers have not fully examined this area of workplace bullying. Insights into the prevalence of upwards bullying have been largely inferred from studies that focused primarily on downwards or horizontal bullying (see Zapf et al., 2003). Commonly, cases of upwards bullying are reported rarely (Rayner & Cooper, 2003) and are often presented anecdotally or as single cases (see Braverman, 1999, for example). While it is legitimate that the

predominant focus has been on managers as the perpetrators of workplace bullying (staff have consistently been found to be the primary targets of workplace bullying, Rayner & Cooper, 2003), it is important to explore and understand all forms of bullying in the workplace, including upwards bullying, in order to gain greater insight into the interpersonal and organisational processes that are involved.

After a review of the literature it appears there are a number of explanations for the causes of upwards bullying, including isolation, resentment, difference, a lack of a clear policy. For instance, Zapf et al. (2003) proposed that in order to overcome the positional power of a manager, staff would need support from superiors (i.e. other managers and supervisors) to bully a manager. They suggest that it would be difficult for a staff member(s) to bully a manager who has the support of their senior managers and colleagues (Zapf et al., 2003). By contrast, they argue that isolated managers who have lost the support of their colleagues and senior management would be vulnerable to upwards bullying. Therefore isolation, either due to geographical isolation or difference in individual characteristics, may make a manager more vulnerable to upwards bullying (Zapf et al., 2003). Vulnerability exposes them to the potential risk of abuse by a staff member with the assistance from another manager (Zapf et al., 2003).

Moreover, resentment of a decision made by the manager or a reaction to their own workplace stress may explain the commencement of this form of bullying (Davenport, Distler-Schwartz, & Pursell-Elliott, 1999; Hoel, Cooper, & Faragher, 2001). Indeed, it has been proposed that staff may actually be using the term bullying as a way of voicing their dissatisfaction with organisational issues (Liefvooghe & Davey, 2001). From the perspective of difference, Miller's (1997) study of gender harassment within the U.S. Army, supports the proposition that superiors can be bullied or harassed by a staff member. She found that often subordinates do not recognise the authority of women in power, believing that their power was obtained illegitimately, or that they have used their gender inappropriately to rise to their position. A more detailed case of upwards bullying by Braverman (1999) can be found in his chapter entitled *The Frightened Manager*. This case describes a situation where a manager is systematically bullied by a staff member, along with the failure of the company and the legal system to manage the situation. Key elements of the case included a lack of guiding

organisational policy, lack of special procedures and an over reliance by the organisation to follow specific legal procedures rather than gaining an understanding of the individual case. Thus, as it appears that isolation, resentment, difference and lack of organisational policies maybe factors that could cause upwards bullying.

In summary, the causes of workplace bullying can reflect individual factors such as personality and lack of skills to wider environmental factors such as change and climate. So too it appears that upwards bullying can be explained by a number of factors. Similarly attribution theory suggests that specific behaviours can be attributed to either external attributions that relate to the environment or internal attributions that relate to the person(s) involved (Weary, Stanley, & Harvey, 1989). According to attribution theory external attributions can include the “physical and social circumstances surrounding the action”, while internal attributions can include “the actor’s ability, motivation, attitude, or emotional state” (Weary et al., 1989, p. 8). Furthermore, it is argued that external attributions can either be stable (due to the situation, or task difficulty) or unstable (due to chance or luck), and that internal attributions can either be stable (due to ability) or unstable (due to effort, Weiner, 1985). We suggest that attribution theory can contribute to the bullying literature by developing a systematic approach to the understanding of the causes of workplace bullying and in particular upwards bullying.

Thus using attribution theory as a framework and the workplace bullying literature as a guide the current study seeks to explore the perceptions of managers as to why upwards bullying occurs. In order to do this 22 newly developed items based on the workplace bullying literature and attribution theory were developed and an exploratory factor analysis conducted. It is expected that similar levels, that is individual, dyadic, group and environmental, will be present within the final analysis.

METHOD

Participants

Data was collected from two samples, a government owned corporation and post-graduate students from an urban tertiary institution. Each of these samples will be discussed here.

Sample one

Within this sample eight-two questionnaires were completed. Three-hundred and fifty-six managers within a cross-section of the corporation were contacted by their employer via an e-mail informing them of the study, endorsing the study and inviting them to complete the questionnaire by either clicking on a hyperlink in the e-mail, or contacting the researchers by phone. Questionnaires could be completed either online via an internet based questionnaire ($n = 79$), or via a paper based ($n = 2$) or telephone interview questionnaires ($n = 1$). The range of distribution methods was necessary in order to accommodate the specific needs of the organisation. Within the introductory e-mail it was stressed to staff that the study was for research purposes only and the information would remain anonymous and confidential. While the response rate was well below the response expected and overall disappointing (23%), and an inspection of the data would suggest there was no evidence that the sample was unrepresentative.

Of those who responded, 70 were male and 12 were female. Such a gender imbalance was expected as there is a similar gender imbalance present in the organisation with women forming just under 10% of the total workforce within this male dominated corporation. The age of respondents ranged from 'over 20 but less than 30' ($n = 1$) to 'over 60' ($n = 5$), with the mean response 'over 40 but less than 50' ($n = 36$). Again this is consistent with the demographics of the organisation, with most of their staff over the age of 40. Of the 82 respondents, 4 identified themselves as supervisors, 61 as managers, and 17 as senior managers. The majority of respondents had been with the organisation for '20 or more years' ($n = 34$), again consistent with the demographics of the organisation.

Sample two

A further 37 questionnaires were completed by post-graduate students from an urban tertiary institution. Convenors of seven core post-graduate programs consisting of approximately 100 students in total, within an urban University agreed to administer the questionnaire to their post-graduate students with managerial work experience. Where appropriate, the researcher offered to facilitate a workshop to students on conflict and workplace bullying. Of the 37 managers (Male = 17; Female = 20) who responded, six identified themselves as supervisors, 26 as managers, and 5 as senior managers. The mean age of the respondents was 'over 30 but less than 40' ($n = 16$). Eighteen of the

managers identified as working within a private organisation while the remaining 19 worked in a public organisation. In summary, a total of one-hundred and nineteen managers (87 = Male; 32 = Female) from the two samples completed the questionnaire. Of this combined sample 20 managers self identified as having had an experience of upwards bullying.

Materials

The complete questionnaire consisted of four parts. Part 1 included of a range of demographic questions: age, gender, length of time with the organisation and organisational position. Basing the design of the questionnaire on Salin's (2001) study, the demographic questions were presented first. By taking this approach it was felt that respondents would become comfortable with the questionnaire prior to receiving questions with regards to negative behavioural experiences at work. Part 2 consisted of questions that asked the respondents about working in their organisation. Job satisfaction, intention to leave, and organisational identification scales were used. Part 3 consisted of questions from the altered revised Negative Acts Questionnaire (NAQ-R, Einarsen & Hoel, 2001), upwards bullying items and open ended questions as to individual's experiences of upwards bullying if identified. Finally, Part 4, consisted of questions as to why upwards bullying can occur, the focus of this paper.

Part 4 – Why inappropriate work behaviours occur

Within this section of the questionnaire respondents were asked to consider the reasons why staff may bully their supervisor or manager (*What do you think are the main reasons staff may bully their supervisors or managers at your organisation?*). In keeping with the overall structure of the questionnaire the 22 fixed response items were scored using a 5 point Likert scale ranging from 'Strongly disagree', 'Disagree', 'Unsure', 'Agree', and 'Strongly agree'. The items within this question were developed while considering attribution theory (Weary et al., 1989). Thus, items were developed within; External/Stable, e.g. attributions related to the external environment and situation; External/Unstable, e.g. attributions that could be related to luck; Internal/Stable, e.g. attributions in relation to the person's personality; and Internal/Unstable, e.g. attributions that relate to a person's level of effort. Furthermore, items were also developed from themes that emerged within a previous interview study, as well as the workplace bullying, power and dependency and social identity literature.

Prior to the administration of the questionnaire, a pilot study was conducted with a small group of managers within the government owned corporation, as suggested by Babbie (2001). As a result of the pilot study it was estimated that the questionnaire would take between 5 to 20 mins, depending on the respondent's experience of upwards bullying. Minor editing changes, were made as a result of the pilot study.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

An exploratory factor analysis was conducted with varimax rotation on 22 items for the total sample of one-hundred and nineteen managers using SPSS v.12. Prior to performing the principal components analysis (PCA) the suitability of the data for factor analysis was assessed. Inspection of the correlation matrix revealed the presence of a number of coefficients of .3 and above. Furthermore, the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy was 0.7, a level described as appropriate for a factor analysis (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2001) and the Bartlett' Test of Sphericity (Bartlett, 1954) was significant at the $p < 0.0001$ level, supporting the factorability of the correlation matrix.

A number of criteria were used to assist in the decision of the number of factors to be extracted as suggested by Pett, Lackey, and Sullivan (2003). Kaiser's criterion of eigenvalues > 1 , consideration of the percentage of variance accounted for by the factor solution, and an examination of the scree plot were all considered. Both unrotated and rotated solutions for different numbers of factors were considered with the final solution chosen due to its interpretability and theoretical coherence (Pett et al., 2003). A PCA revealed the presence of seven factors exceeding an eigenvalue of one, explaining 22.62 per cent, 12.86 per cent, 10.58 per cent, 7.18 per cent, 5.81 per cent, 5.16 per cent, and 4.70 per cent of the variance respectively. However an inspection of the screeplot and the percentage of variance revealed a break before and after the third and forth component. After considering the interpretability and theoretical coherence of either a three factor or four factor solution the decision was made to retain the four components for further investigation.

To aid in the interpretation of these four components, a Varimax rotation was performed (Kaiser, 1958). One item (item 17) failed to load on any of the factors using the .45 criterion (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2001, .45 is considered a fair loading). As such this item was excluded from the

final analysis. The rotated solution revealed the presence of a simple structure (Thurstone, 1947), with components showing a number of strong loadings, with all variables loading substantially on only one component. The component matrix for the factor solution chosen can be seen in Table 1. The four factor solution presented accounts for 54.4% of the variance which according to Hair, Anderson, Tatham, & Black (1998) is satisfactory.

Insert Table 1 about here

The internal consistency of each component was assessed with the use of Cronbach's alpha. A large coefficient alpha of .70 has been suggested for exploratory measures, as it indicates a strong item homogeneity and adequate coverage of the sampling domain (Hinkin, Tracey, & Enz, 1997; Nunnally, 1978). Alphas of .78, .75, .91, and .68 for each of the four components were found, which would suggest adequate internal consistency of each of the components.

Description of components

Using attribution theory as a framework and considering the highest loading item for each component each of the factors were named. The first factor was named 'Varying Individual Characteristics' and accounts for 15.61% of the variance. This factor relates to individual characteristics of the manager (the target) that can vary, such as the amount of effort or concern the manager demonstrates towards staff needs, as well as poor communication and management skills of the manager. Thus according to this factor managers perceive that upwards bullying occurs due to an inability of the manager to show concern, manage and communicate with staff. Interestingly, within the literature it has been suggested that the current work environment may be playing a role in reducing the ability of managers to carry out their duties in the best way they desire. For instance, managers now have to fulfil roles previously performed by specialized sections in the organisation, such as Human Resources (Hoel et al., 2001), which could result in role overload for the manager. Furthermore, competition and the increased pressure to deliver results within workplaces may inturn result in managerial practices that are more authoritarian, which may impact negatively on others perceptions of their managerial skills. Furthermore, as this factor includes items that relate to the perception that managers are not supported either by upper management or their work group may also

negatively impact on how others perceive their ability to perform. Thus, it appears that the perception that you are unsupported and lack concern and managerial skills may be one reason why managers believe upwards bullying can occur.

The second factor was named 'Individual Characteristics' and accounts for 13.84% of the variance. Unlike the previous factor the characteristics of this factor tend to remain stable and as such include characteristics such as the personality of both the bully and manager, as well as prejudices of the bully and the manager's vulnerabilities. This factor would suggest that individuals perceive stable individual factors such as personality as playing a role in the occurrence of upwards bullying. Interestingly, prejudices of bully and the manager's vulnerabilities are also included within this factor. Just as the personality is seen as stable so too could an individual's prejudices towards others and the manager's vulnerabilities be seen as stable traits that may increase a manager's chance of being bullied by a staff member.

The third factor was named 'Varying Environmental Characteristics' and accounts for 13.71% of the variance. This factor relates to those characteristics within the workplace environment that can vary, such as policies, procedures and training. Interestingly, typical methods suggested within the literature for preventing workplace bullying relate to the same aspects. McCarthy et al. (2002) suggest that prevention measures should include a clearly articulated 'no bullying' policy, training including knowledge of responsibilities and obligations of employers and employees alike, as well as an effective risk identification and system for complaints. These prevention strategies would accord with the perception of the current sample that an environment that is defined as lacking in training for management and staff as well as policies and procedures is a reason why staff may bully their manager.

The fourth and final factor was named 'Environmental Characteristics', accounting for 11.77% of the variance. This factor relates to the environmental characteristics the manager is functioning in that are stable, such as the culture, lack of respect and distrust and political items. Indeed, within the literature it has been suggested that a 'victim-mentality' environment is created (McCarthy, 1999) where fear, distrust and resentment of management is developed, thus creating an environment where management are seen as justifiable targets of bullying (McCarthy et al., 2002). Interestingly, the item

‘poor communication skills of the bully’ which at face value indicates an individual characteristic loads on this factor. However, if the environment in which the manager is working in is defined as a bullying culture, with staff distrusting management then it could be expected that such an environment would result in the manager managing staff who demonstrate poor communication skills using for example, aggression and manipulation. Thus, it appears that the perception of managers is that an environment in which aggression from staff occurs and is defined by distrust and as a bullying culture, plays a role in the occurrence of upwards bullying.

Comparisons of perceptions

In order to compare the perceptions of those who self-identified as bullied or not bullied four independent t-tests were conducted on each of the four factors. Managers who were not upwards bullied ($M = 3.51$, $SD = 0.62$) agreed more strongly that factor 1, ‘Varying Individual Characteristics’ was a reason managers are upwards bullied, than those who self-identified as upwards bullied ($M = 3.16$, $SD = 0.73$). This difference was significant, $t(109) = 2.25$, $p = .05$. The magnitude of the differences in the means was approaching medium (Cohen’s $d = 0.43$). Alternatively, managers who self-identified as upwards bullied ($M = 3.46$, $SD = 0.52$) agreed more strongly that factor 4, ‘Environmental Characteristics’ was a reason managers are bullied upwards, than those who were not upwards bullied ($M = 3.01$, $SD = 0.58$). This difference was significant, $t(111) = -3.18$, $p = .01$. The magnitude of the differences in the means was medium (Cohen’s $d = -0.60$). Comparisons for factors 2 and 3 did not yield significant differences (*Factor 2*, Not upwards bullied, $M = 3.84$, $SD = 0.58$, Upwards bullied, $M = 3.91$, $SD = 0.55$, $t(113) = -0.52$, *ns*; *Factor 3*, Not upwards bullied, $M = 3.02$, $SD = 1.14$, Upwards bullied, $M = 3.35$, $SD = 1.10$, $t(111) = -1.17$, *ns*). This result would suggest that for those who were upwards bullied environmental factors are perceived as a reason why managers are bullied by staff while for managers who have not been upwards bullied individual factors are perceived more so as a reason for why upwards bullying occurs.

Limitations of this study

The analysis of the responses of managers to the reasons why upwards bullying occurs suggested a four factor solution. However, a key limitation of the current study is the small sample

size, which would indicate that these findings are suggestive at this stage. Further research using a larger sample size would need to be performed to confirm the factor structure of this scale.

PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS

Implications of this study are especially relevant to developing awareness and prevention training of workplace bullying (a common intervention suggested for preventing workplace bullying, McCarthy et al., 2002; McCarthy, Sheehan, & Kearns, 1995; Vartia, Korppoo, Fallenius, & Mattila, 2003). The factor structure found within this study suggests that this sample of managers recognise that there are different reasons for why upwards bullying occurs and that it is a multi-faceted phenomenon. Thus within awareness training for workplace and upwards bullying this structure could be used as a framework, to assist attendees in understanding the different explanations for upwards bullying and what can be done at each level to prevent and manage the situation. Further research however, would be necessary to confirm this structure and to test whether this structure would be the same for subordinates as well as for workplace bullying more broadly.

Moreover, of interest were the results from the t-tests, which would suggest that correspondence bias, that is the tendency of individuals to attribute another's behaviour to internal dispositions, rather than environmental factors (Gilbert & Malone, 1995), may be having an impact on individuals' perceptions of why upwards bullying occurs. According to the factor analysis the first factor would suggest that managers perceive that upwards bullying occurs due to a lack of effort or concern shown by the manager (target) towards staff needs, as well as poor communication and management skills of the manager. Interestingly, those who identified as not having experienced upwards bullying agreed more strongly that this factor was a reason managers are upwards bullied. Alternatively, those who identified as having had an experience of upwards bullying agreed more strongly that factor 4, that is an environment in which aggression from staff occurs and is defined by distrust and as a bullying culture, was a reason managers are upwards bullied. It is suggested that correspondence bias may explain why this difference in the two groups is occurring.

A lack of awareness of situational factors is one reason given for why correspondence bias occurs (Gilbert & Malone, 1995). According to Gilbert and Malone (1995) lack of awareness can occur due to the invisibility problem and the construal problem. The invisibility problem relates to the

inability of observers to understand the situation as the individual is experiencing it, that is, they may be unaware of threats that have been made against the manager by a staff member, and as a result these situational factors are not considered (Gilbert & Malone, 1995). The construal problem can be attributed to either behavioural constraints, which change the behavioural options available to the individual, and psychological constraints, which change the individual's understanding of their options (Gilbert & Malone, 1995). In summary, "if observers have trouble recognizing the situation as it is (the invisibility problem), then they may have even greater trouble recognizing the situation as the actor sees it (the construal problem)" (Gilbert & Malone, 1995, p. 26).

It would seem that within this sample individuals who have not had an experience of upwards bullying may be blaming the inability of the manager to manage as the reason why upwards bullying occurs (which is consistent with correspondence bias towards the individual). Alternatively, those who identified as having experienced upwards bullying recognised the role the environment played in upwards bullying. Thus training programs that are designed to raise the awareness of workplace bullying and upwards bullying need to emphasise environmental factors and not just internal factors. Raising the role situational factors play in upwards bullying is even more important as the perception that 'managers themselves are to blame' for upwards bullying may result in managers who experience upwards bullying remaining silent in order to protect their reputation and standing within the organisation (Lee, 1997). Interestingly, Miller (1997) in her study of gender harassment in the US Army found, female officers were reluctant to seek help due to concerns it would be a sign of their inability to lead or get along with others. In conclusion, the results from the current study, although suggestive at this stage, indicate that it is important in a training program to raise the awareness of managers with regards to upwards bullying. Furthermore, it is vital to emphasise the multi-faceted nature of upwards bullying, including both individual and environmental factors.

Table 1
Component Matrix (loadings of <0.45 suppressed)

		1	2	3	4
Factor Name		Varying Individual Characteristics	Individual Characteristics	Varying Environmental Characteristics	Environmental Characteristics
% of variance explained by each factor		15.06	13.84	13.71	11.77
7	Supervisor or manager showing lack of effort or concern towards staff needs	.643			
9	Poor communication skills of the supervisor or manager (eg. lack of assertion, doesn't listen, shyness)	.797			
10	Poor management skills of the supervisor or manager (e.g. supervisory skills/feedback skills)	.788			
15	The perception that the supervisor or manager is not supported by their manager or upper management	.481			
16	The perception that the supervisor or manager lacks the support of the immediate work group	.622			
19	Supervisor or manager needing to deal with unresolved interpersonal conflict in the immediate work group	.596			
1	The personality of the bully		.783		
2	The personality of the supervisor or manager		.625		
3	Supervisor or manager too hesitant to report bullying by staff		.587		
4	A way for the bully to get what he/she wants in the workplace		.625		
5	Other reasons associated with the bully/ies (eg. envious of supervisor or manager, prejudices)		.675		
6	Reasons associated with the supervisor's or manager's vulnerability (eg. supervisor or manager is new to the organisation, manager unwell etc.)		.506		
11	Lack of effective organisational policies and procedures			.834	
12	Lack of staff training and development programs for supervisors and managers			.938	
13	Lack of staff training and development programs for staff			.903	
8	Poor communication skills of the bully (eg. too aggressive, doesn't listen, manipulates)				.511
14	Bullying is an intrinsic part of work culture				.621
18	The level of distrust staff have in management				.514
20	Bad luck, being in the wrong place at the wrong time				.505
21	Payback, staff responding to something the supervisor or manager has done				.726
22	Other supervisors or managers aligning themselves with the bully				.653
17	Lack of respect for a manager's authority by some staff		Failed to load		

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