

Overt and Covert Aggression and Negative Emotion in the Workplace

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ABSTRACT

This study explores indirect and direct aggression, emotion and aggressive behaviour in a male-dominated organisation, an Australian police force (APF). The study examines women's experience of direct/overt and indirect/covert aggression in the workplace and whether their experience of aggression is higher in the presence of men than of other women; also, whether men's experience of negative emotions is directly associated with their reported aggressive behaviour towards women. The study formed part of a larger project in which 144 women and 159 men employed in the APF completed a questionnaire. Results are discussed in terms of their theoretical and practical implications, and suggestions are made for future research into this important but difficult subject area.

INTRODUCTION

In Australia, the number of employed women increased by 31 per cent from 3,232,300 in December 1992 to 4,243,800 in February 2003, by which time women made up 45 per cent of all employees (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2003). This shows considerable growth in women's participation in the Australian labor force since 1984 when 1,437,100 employed women comprised only 33 percent of employees (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2003). Despite this growth, women's opportunities in certain occupations of the labor market remain considerably limited compared with those for men (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2003; Kim, 2002). For instance, the most recent Australian Census (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2001) shows that manager and administrator occupations were held by 28,865 men, compared with 12,833 women. Even more markedly, police officer occupations were held by 32,377 men compared with 8,115 women. This occupational gender segregation has negative organisational consequences such as income inequality (Blau, 1977; Jacobs & Lim, 1992), for example, male-dominated occupations have higher salaries than female-dominated occupations (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2003), and individual consequences (Jacobs, 1989) such as propinquity with similar individuals (e.g., men) and disassociation against dissimilar individuals (e.g., women) (Blau, 1977).

A study conducted by Pelled, Ledford and Mohrman (1999) demonstrated that gender inequalities are a substantial disadvantage to workplace inclusion as the gender minority is vulnerable to be subject to aggression and communication barriers in the workplace. For instance, recently, in an Australian Police Force there have been claims by policewomen of sexual harassment and bullying from policemen with costs to the organisation of approximately \$AUD 1 million a year and women deciding to leave the organisation (Porter, 2003). In addition, this propinquity between similar individuals and disassociation against dissimilar individuals in the workplace may lead to conflict or competition, and to negative emotions being experienced towards dissimilar individuals (Forsyth, 2000; Kelly & Barsade, 2001). Further, the experience of negative emotions may be intense and could be associated with aggressive behaviours and out-group derogation (Kelly & Barsade, 2001; Miller & Brewer, 1986). As such, this study took place in a male dominated organisation and was designed to explore whether women (gender minority) experience higher direct and indirect aggression from men (gender majority) than from other women. Further, we tested whether men experience higher negative emotions in the presence of women than of men and whether the intensity of men's negative emotions is positively associated with aggressive behaviours towards women.

AGGRESSION

According to Berkowitz (1993, p. 3), aggression is "any behaviour that is intended to injure someone physically or psychologically." Neuman and Baron (1998 p. 3) similarly suggest that "human aggression involves any act in which one individual intentionally attempts to harm another." Workplace aggression is defined as any type of intentional damage between individuals in the workplace; workplace violence relates only to physical attacks, intended to harm peers, subordinates, or supervisors (Neuman & Baron, 1998). Workplace aggression studies have primarily addressed workplace harassment, including bullying and sexual harassment (Bjorqvist, Osterman & Lagerspetz, 1994a; Einarsen, Raknes, Mathiesen & Hellesoy, 1996). Workplace harassment is considered a sub-category of aggressive behaviour, where a defenceless person is repeatedly targeted (Kaukiainen, 2003).

Thorough information regarding the scope of workplace aggression in Australia is not readily available (Mayhew & Duncan, 2002). However, limited empirical information (Hulls, 2003), suggests that workplace aggression in Australia, as reported by employees, occurs most frequently in the hospitality industry (21%), followed by the health industry (15%), the legal profession (15%), government (14%), and the media (14%) (Perrone, 1999). Workplace aggression has considerable effects on individuals and organisations, for instance, individuals are likely to be less productive and experience psychological distress which could lead to high levels of turnovers in the organisation, these effects are estimated to cost Australian businesses approximately \$AUD 3 billion a year (Hulls, 2003; Perrone, 1999).

Types of Aggressive Behavior in the Workplace and Individual Similarities and Dissimilarities

Studies conducted related to aggression in the workplace (Baron & Neuman, 1996; Geddes & Baron, 1997) have identified three main types of aggression in relation to the nature and frequency of aggression in the workplace (Neuman & Baron, 1998): (1) Expression of hostility containing body behaviors (gestures, body language, facial expressions, verbal harassment), ostracism (being ignored deliberately), and endless hostile remarks (sarcasm, gossip & defamation); (2) Obstructionism, consisting of hindering organisational members to perform their everyday activities (leaving the workplace when needed, negating paperwork, and workplace sabotage); and (3) Covert-Overt aggression, which is related to non-fatal forms of aggression, for instance, property damage and robbery (overt) and when individuals at work sabotage colleagues' work (covert). According to Perrone (1999), each of these three types of aggression in the workplace is common in Australia.

According to both Buss (1995) and Kaukiainen (2003), the expression of hostility and obstructionism in the workplace may be related to both direct and indirect aggression. Direct aggression is considered to occur when individual interactions are face-to-face, for example facial expressions and body language, while, according to Buss (1961, p.8), indirect aggression is considered to take place "via the negative reactions of others. That is, the victim gets into trouble at the end of the chain of mediating events and people". Usually when indirect aggression occurs the perpetrator is unidentified and unaccused due to the disguised nature of indirect aggression

(Kaukiainen, 2003). Furthermore, indirect aggression is considered to be part of social manipulation. For example, it may include persuading individuals not to relate to certain people or creating malevolent gossip towards a disliked person (Kaukiainen, 2003; Lagerspetz, Bjorqvist & Peltonen, 1988). In contrast, overt aggression towards an individual may be expressed openly by various means, while covert aggression is difficult to recognise if the perpetrator is irritated (Bjorqvist, Osterman & Hjelt-Back, 1994b).

A theory that could explain propinquity with similar individuals and dissociation against dissimilar individuals leading to negative behaviours such as aggression is the Self-Categorisation Theory (Hogg, Terry & White, 1995). Self-Categorisation Theory states that the basis for group behaviour is the categorization of the self with others and a depersonalization in perception where the individual's unique characteristics disappear from attention and one defines oneself in terms of stereotypical group characteristics (Hogg et al., 1995). This depersonalization leads to a perceived similarity of needs, goals and motives, a mutual and shared perception by in-group members of their interests as interchangeable and a main feature of self-categorisation theory is the dynamic responsiveness of the self-concept to social interactive contexts, therefore showing propinquity towards similar individuals (Hogg et al., 1995). Further, hostility towards dissimilar individuals could occur when competition between similar individuals and dissimilar individuals is involved (Kelly & Barsade, 2001). Hence, in male dominated workplaces where women are undertaking occupations usually established for men (e.g., police officer), where men may categorize themselves as similar to other men and dissimilar to women it is expected that:

Hypothesis 1a: *Women will experience higher direct/overt aggression from men than from women,*

Hypothesis 1b: *Women will experience higher indirect/covert aggression from women than from men.*

Negative Emotion and Aggression in the Workplace

Self-categorisation Theory also states that attitudes, beliefs, feelings and behaviours flow from our self-conceptions (Hogg et al., 1995). Therefore, if you conceive yourself as a group member (e.g., a male in-group member), it follows that your feelings, behaviours and interpretation of the

world will reflect that conception (Hogg et al., 1995). Indeed, male in-group members may feel threatened when females undertake occupations usually established for men, and intense negative emotions may be experienced towards the dissimilar females (cf. Kelly & Barsade, 2001).

Hence, in male dominated workplaces where women are undertaking occupations usually established for men (e.g., police officer), where men may categorise themselves as similar to other men and dissimilar to women it is expected that:

Hypothesis 2: Men will experience a higher level of negative emotion in the presence of women than in the presence of men.

Men's negative emotions are likely to be short and intense, and their intensity will be greatest when the person's values are perceived to be harmed (Brehm, 1999; Fridja, 1994; Kelly & Barsade, 2001). Mooney (1998) suggests that when men share work responsibilities with women, women may be perceived to be harming men's values and ability to develop a masculine identity. Men's emotional responses are likely to be negative and more frequent, highly intense and result in aggressive behaviour (Brehm, 1999; Atkinson & Birch, 1970). Hence, in a male dominated organization where women are undertaking occupations usually established for men (e.g., police officer), where men may categorize themselves as similar to other men and dissimilar to women it is expected that:

Hypothesis 2a: The frequency of men's experience of negative emotions in the presence of women is positively associated with the intensity of men's negative emotion in the presence of women;
and

Hypothesis 2b: The intensity of men's negative emotions in the presence of women is positively associated with the extent of men's aggressive behavior in the presence of women.

METHODS

Organisational Setting

An Australian police force (hereafter "APF") was selected as the site for the study. The police force in Australia, as in many western societies, is entrusted with enforcing the law and maintaining social order. It is the only civil corporation permitted by law to use force in order to fulfil its role (Moore, 1999), and like most (if not all) police organisations, it is an organisation which employs

predominantly male police officers. Thus, female police officers seeking opportunities may be considered “non-traditional” (Moore, 1999; Waddington, 1994).

The APF employment structure has two major categories: Sworn officers (ranging from the Chief Commissioner to Constable and recruits in training), and Unsworn officers (ranging from Executive Officer to Police Administrative Officer). Sworn officers are operational policemen and policewomen, while unsworn employees perform administrative support functions. Employment tenure categories include ongoing, fixed term and casual. Of the ongoing full-time sworn police officers, 85% are male and 15% female. Of part-time sworn police officers, 15% are male and 85% female. Of ongoing full-time unsworn employees, 36% are male and 64% female (Police Force, 2001–2002).

Survey and Reliabilities

The “Workplace and Feelings Scale” was developed by incorporating relevant characteristics from validated scales: The Overt – Covert Aggression Scale (OCAS) (Kaukiainen, Salmivalli, Lagerspetz, Lahtinen & Kostamo, 1997) and the Feelings in the Workplace Scale (Francis, 1997)

Overt/covert aggression

The measurement used to test Hypotheses 1a and 1b, was the Overt – Covert Aggression Scale (OCAS). The OCAS was derived from the Work Harassment Scale developed by Bjorqvist and Osterman (1992). Kaukiainen, Salmivalli, Bjorqvist, Osterman, Lahtinen, Kostamo and Lagerspetz (2001), in their study exploring aggression and well-being in Finland, and showed reliabilities from 0.86 to 0.90. Nonetheless, the scale has had limited psychometric assessment and to date there has been no evaluation of its construct validity, concurrent validity and predictive validity. Despite these limitations, the OCAS was used instead of other measures as it describes aggressive behaviours that are likely to be overt and covert, with the objective of the aggressor to harm another peer/person, and is thus apposite to assess Hypotheses 1a and 1b (Kaukiainen et al., 2001). The OCAS was employed with no changes from the original (Kaukiainen et al., 1997). On the OCAS, aggression is measured by participants responding on a four-point scale (from 0 = never to 3 = very often), as to how often they have been exposed to aggressive behaviours in the workplace. The scale measures if the aggression originates from males or females. Kaukiainen et al. (1997) analyse the items with four aggression

scales (direct/overt, indirect/manipulative, covert and insinuitive, and rational-appearing aggression). However in a policing organisation, daily affairs and matters are conducted face to face with peers (Police Force, 2001-2002) making the executor identifiable. As an executor is likely to be recognised by a victim, direct/overt aggression and rational-appearing aggression were included as one scale. In both indirect/covert and insinuitive aggression the executor is not identifiable, where the executor is covering or hiding his/her identity in both, therefore indirect and insinuitive aggression were included as one scale. The direct aggression scale consists of 11 items and the indirect aggression scale consists of 10 items; in total the OCAS consisted of 21 items.

Negative feelings/emotions

The Feelings in the Workplace Scale developed by Francis (1997) was used to test Hypotheses 2, 2a and 2b. The scale was based on Dahl's (1979) theory of emotion. In order to test the hypotheses, negative emotion items were extracted from the Feelings Scale and developed in order to ask: whether or not male police officers experience negative feelings/emotions in the presence of both female and male police officers, to assess the intensity of men's negative feelings/emotions in the presence of female and male police officers and to assess the extent of men's aggressive behaviour in the presence of female and male police officers. The frequency of men's experience of negative emotions was measured by participants responding on a five-point scale (from 0 = never to 4 = almost all the time). The intensity of men's negative emotions was measured by participants responding on a five-point scale (from 0 = none to 4 = extreme). The presence or absence of an aggressive response was measured by participants responding on two-point scale (1 = yes and 2 = no) and the extent of men's aggressive behaviour was measured by a five-point scale (from 0 = none to 4 = high). Negative feelings/emotions in the workplace were measured against 24 items. The alpha for men's experience of negative emotions in the presence of women was .91; .93 for the intensity of men's negative emotions in the presence of women; and .95 for the extent of aggressive behaviour in the presence of women.

It should be noted that items on the Feelings Scale included both positive and negative emotions. Francis (1997) divided positive and negative feelings by a principal component analysis, resulting in eight factors: defeat, interest, weakness, social harmony, worry, enthusiasm-boredom,

anger and social approval. The Cronbach alpha co-efficient for these eight factors were: defeat (.88), interest (.77), weakness (.69), social harmony (.80), worry (.90), enthusiasm–boredom (.80), anger (.86) and social approval (.88). The results of factor analysis provided evidence of the validity of this measure for the experience of negative and positive emotions.

Sample and Procedure

Part of a larger study, 300 females were randomly selected from among sworn APF members to evaluate Hypothesis 1a and 1b. Eight hundred males were randomly selected from among sworn APF members employed on an ongoing or fixed term basis. Participants were selected randomly by the APF Policing Research Unit from Police databases. Both APF unions provided a letter of endorsement, which was included in the survey information packets provided to participants.

Two weeks after the surveys were distributed; participants received a reminder note through the APF Intranet. The response from females was 48% (144 from 300). The response from males was approximately 20% (159 out of 800). Given the length of the survey and the sensitive issues explored, the response was deemed acceptable (Berdie, Anderson & Niebuhr, 1986; Wallbott & Sherer, 1989).

Data Analysis

For the analysis of Hypotheses 1a, 1b and 2, paired sample t-tests were used. For the analysis of Hypothesis 2a and Hypothesis 2b, a correlation analysis was used (unsworn employees were not considered due to an insufficient sample size).

Missing data were managed analysis by analysis on the t-test calculations, as this method uses all cases that have valid data for the pairs of variables tested. For Pearson correlations, missing data were managed pair-wise, as this method excludes cases only if they are missing the data required for the specific analysis (Pallant, 2005). Thus all returned surveys which were attempted were useable.

RESULTS

Results from the first paired t-test analysis show that women experienced higher levels of overt aggression in the presence of men ($M = .32$, $s.d. = .32$) than in the presence of women ($M = .20$, $s.d. = .22$, $t(140) = 4.6$, $p < .0005$). The eta squared statistic (.42) indicated a large effect size (Pallant, 2005). Therefore, the results support Hypothesis 1a.

Results from the second paired t-test analysis show that women experience higher levels of covert aggression in the presence of men ($M = .31$, $s.d. = .28$) than in the presence of women ($M = .25$, $s.d. = .24$, $t(140) = 2.4$, $p < .0001$). The eta squared statistic (.17) indicated a large effect size (Pallant, 2005). Therefore, the results support Hypothesis 1b.

However, men experienced higher levels of negative emotion in the presence of men ($M = 1.20$, $s.d. = .62$) than in the presence of women ($M = 1.08$, $s.d. = .68$, $t(128) = 3.6$, $p < .0005$). The eta squared statistic (.14) indicated a large effect size (Pallant, 2005). Therefore, the results do not support Hypothesis 2.

Results from the correlational analysis between the frequency of men's experience of negative emotion and the intensity of men's negative emotion in the presence of women, showed that there was a strong positive association between the two variables ($r = .92$, $n = 130$, $p < .0001$). The correlation is high, which could be a result of definitional overlap among the items (Hutcheson & Sofroniou, 1999). Paired t-test analyses were conducted for each negative item, in order to assess whether there were significant differences between the experience and the intensity of particular negative emotions. Results indicated that the frequency and intensity of ten negative emotions were significantly different. These were: critical, anxious, concerned, angry, dominated, displeased, disappointed, alert, frustrated and burdened. A second correlational analysis was undertaken between the experience and the intensity of negative emotions. The results show ($r = .92$, $n = 120$, $p < .0001$) that there is a strong positive association between these two variables. This result supports Hypothesis 2a. The results from the correlational analysis between the intensity of men's negative emotions and the extent of their aggressive behaviours showed that there is a strong positive association between the two variables ($r = .58$, $n = 78$, $p < .0001$). This result supports Hypothesis 2b.

DISCUSSION

Even though Hypothesis 1a and 1b were supported, the mean levels of aggression reported as received and experienced indicate low levels of both direct/overt and indirect/covert aggression at this APF. While this may indicate a positive finding, we are concerned by the relative differences and also note that the low levels of experienced aggression by women in this APF may be related to various

factors. For instance, men may recognise that direct aggressive behaviours could have negative consequences and thus may be less likely to engage in overly aggressive behaviours. Women may interpret this situation as not being subjected to aggression as indirect aggression is less easily identified (Kaukiainen, 2003). Another factor which may explain the low levels of aggression reported by APF women may be that even though participation was confidential, women may not report aggressive behaviours as they may consider that the information could have implications for their well being and career path in the organisation. For example, as this APF is male dominated women may feel threatened or fearful that reporting their experience of aggressive behaviours may jeopardise the acceptance of women collectively as police officers. In addition, female police officers may consider that aggressive behaviour is a male characteristic and they must accept this as part of admission into the organisation and for acceptance as police officers (Engen, Leeden & Willemsen, 2001).

Women's reporting of their experience of direct/overt and indirect/covert aggression from men in this APF may also be influenced by Attribution Theory. Attribution Theory describes the self-serving bias, that individuals think the worst of others and the best for themselves (Baumgardner, Heppner & Arkin, 1986; Kaukiainen, et al., 2001). Therefore, women reporting aggressive behaviours in this APF by men may be reporting men as being aggressive due to this bias and future research should control for this possibility.

Although there was a statistically significant difference, the results do not support Hypothesis 2 as the men in this study experienced higher negative emotions in the presence of men than in the presence of women. While this finding was not anticipated, it may have been due to factors other than those hypothesised. For example, the results may have been affected by "social desirability" (Podsakoff, Mackenzie, Lee, & Podsakoff, 2003). As such factors may have confounded the results, thus researchers could either test or control for social desirability. This result may even be the outcome of "aversive sexism," a subtle type of prejudice where individuals are motivated to not express themselves as bigots or to not experience negative feelings towards dissimilar individuals (cf. Dovidio & Gaertner, 2004; Gaertner, Dovidio, Banker, Rust, Nier, Mottola & Ward, 1997). As in the case of aversive racists (Dovidio & Gaertner, 2004), aversive sexists may over-compensate in social

contexts, where rules for correct behavior are clear, by feeling, acting or responding more favourably to out-group individuals than to in-group individuals (Dovidio & Gaertner, 2004; Gaertner et al., 1997). It will be important to assess, probably through qualitative research, whether or not aversive sexism is evident in the APF.

Alternative explanations may also apply. For example, men's experience of negative emotion in the presence of men, could be related to low self-esteem and repressed feelings and fears, of which men may be conscious or unconscious (Mooney, 1998). The presence of such feelings and fears may be explained by Pleck's male gender role strain model (Jansz, 2000; Mooney, 1998; Pleck, 1995). Pleck's model involves three theoretical subtypes: discrepancy-strain, trauma-strain and dysfunction strain. Discrepancy strain is related to the standards, norms and expectations of gender roles that males fit or do not fit. Not conforming to these standards has negative consequences for self-esteem and psychological well-being, due to negative social feedback and internalised negative self-judgements (Pleck, 1995). Trauma strain is related to the proscription of any "feminine" behaviour in men. These prohibitions may lead to an over-reliance on aggression and difficulties in experiencing and expressing positive emotions and in being intimate (Pleck, 1995). Dysfunction strain is related to the negative outcomes of successfully fulfilling gender role standards where the behaviours and the characteristics of the male gender role standards may be dysfunctional (Pleck, 1995). As a result of the introduction of policewomen, policemen may feel more stress in resolving their male identity with their male colleagues than with their female colleagues. Future researchers should assess and control for gender strain.

The correlational analysis undertaken to evaluate Hypothesis 2a shows that there is a strong positive correlation between men's experience of negative emotions and the intensity of men's negative emotions in the presence of women. This positive association may be due to the occurrence of an antecedent event (for example, a female police officer being promoted within the ranks), which has stimulated motivational arousal (Robertson, Lin, Woodford, Danos & Hurst, 2001). While this study did not assess the association between such events and men's responses to them this, as well as unacknowledged gender directed action, deserves attention in future research. For example, Brehm (1999) suggests that when motivational arousal is stimulated and the antecedent event is unknown,

negative emotions may be experienced, and the emotion tends to be at its maximum intensity. Acceptance and success in the organisation may be influenced by whether or not a man unconsciously or consciously demonstrates feminine characteristics to other men. Males may express hostility towards women and towards feminine/female behaviour and qualities in order to establish their masculine credentials with other males.

The correlational analysis undertaken to evaluate Hypothesis 2b also shows a positive association between the intensity of men's negative emotions and the extent of men's aggressive behaviour towards women. This positive association may be related to "normative alexithymia" (Levant, 1998). Alexithymia denotes "the inability to put emotions into words or without words of emotions" (Levant, 1998, p. 35). In mild and moderate forms, this inability is considered "normative alexithymia" and seen as a result of male gender role socialisation (Levant, 1998, p. 36). Levant has argued that men are socialised to restrain the expression of vulnerability and of caring emotions. Instead, men are encouraged to overdevelop anger and aggression (Levant 1998). Other negative emotions such as fear, disappointment, anxiousness and shame are funnelled into anger, through what has been called "the male emotional funnel system" (Long, 1987, p. 310), as these emotions could be considered too unmanly to be expressed. These emotions are transformed into anger (Keltikangas-Jarvinen, 1982; Levant, 1998). As a result, men may be unable to share work responsibilities with women. When working with women, the intensity of men's negative emotion may be positively associated with the extent of men's aggressive behaviour toward women.

Limitations of the Study

There are a number of limitations to this study. Firstly, it was focused on one very hierarchical male dominated organisation. As this may represent an extreme case, without further research and larger samples this study's results may not be able to be generalised to other male dominated organisations.

Secondly, this study was concerned with what is arguably a sensitive issue for individuals, that is, aggression and the experience of negative feelings in the workplace. The survey may have been affected by lack of participant truthfulness. Nonetheless, independent t-tests were conducted between men who reported aggression and men who do not report aggression, and these showed no

significant differences between the two groups (Berdie, Anderson & Niebuhr, 1986; Wallbott & Sherer, 1989). Misrepresentation could also have been present due to the self-attributions of participants, that is, where participants recorded feelings they thought they should have, or because they did not believe their responses would remain confidential (Zikmund, 1997). However, as we have noted, the union requested that participants answer the questionnaire honestly. Further research which evaluates workplace aggression should use qualitative methods (for example, observation or focus groups) and experimental methods in which situations may be varied under conditions of high internal validity. Although the survey was carefully designed and pilot studies were conducted, this study is cross-sectional not longitudinal and attitude-behaviour relationships were reported and collected simultaneously (Lindell & Whitney, 2001). It is possible that common method variance inflated the correlations reported between variables. While paired t-tests were used to evaluate whether significant differences occurred between the experience of negative emotion and the intensity of negative emotions, only ten negative emotions displayed these differences. It is possible that there was a definitional overlap between the experience and the intensity of the other 14 negative emotions (Podsakoff et al., 2003).

As the Cronbach alpha levels are high, and as item redundancy could be a concern, a construct validity analysis should be undertaken in order to demonstrate the further validity of this scale (Boyle, 1991).

Implications of the study

Despite these limitations, the results of this preliminary study suggest a need for changes in workplaces where masculine characteristics are dominant in order to foster environments in which masculine and feminine characteristics are more equal. This may lessen the social pressure on men to behave in ways identified as masculine (for example, needing to be or to appear to be tough), thereby permitting men greater opportunities to display more positive than negative emotion toward women and women to experience relatively less aggression from men. At the APF this could be achieved by employing more sworn policewomen in order to minimise the potential ingroup and outgroup differences to form along gender lines.

Construct validity analyses need to be conducted to evaluate the validity of the scale created to assess the experience and intensity of negative emotions, and the extent of aggressive behaviour in the workplace. While experimental or longitudinal designs would improve internal validity, further studies using cross-sectional designs should develop measurements to support tests of discriminant validity, by including a method variance marker. Such a marker theoretically should be unrelated to at least one other variable (Lindell & Whitney, 2001). These developments could build on our initial effort to explore, in a workplace of dissimilar individuals, a proposed association between negative emotion and aggressive behaviour.

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