Workplace bullying and gender: an overview of empirical findings

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Denise Salin

Abstract

The aim of this chapter is to summarize existing research on workplace bullying and gender, and examine the many ways in which gender may impact the bullying process. First, it seeks to provide an overview of empirical findings on gender differences in bullying and, second, theoretical explanations for the differences. In terms of prevalence rates, this summary suggests somewhat higher rates for women, although there are regional differences. The chapter reports complex relationships between gender on the one hand and forms of bullying, perpetrations of bullying, consequences of and responses to bullying, and interventions in bullying, on the other hand. The importance for both men and women of gender non-conforming behaviour and being in the minority are recognized as specific risk factors. Yet gender as a social category does not stand in isolation but may intersect and interact with other social categories, creating unique and different experiences for different employee groups. The chapter recognizes gender as a fundamental ordering principle in society and organizations, although many of the empirical studies surveyed still take a gender-as-variable approach instead of explicitly analyzing the gendered contexts in which these encounters take place. The overview shows that relationships between gender and bullying are complex, and largely shaped by social power afforded to different groups of men and women and by gendered expectations of appropriate behaviour.

Keywords: gender, bullying, sex differences; gender non-conforming, intersectionality, social power, gender role socialization, harassment

Introduction

Workplace bullying is typically described as a status-blind form of interpersonal harassment (e.g. Namie, 2003; Stone, 2012), meaning that any employee regardless of gender, race, sexual orientation, age and other social categories can be targeted. However, this does not necessarily mean the categories an employee represents are irrelevant in the bullying process. A vast number of studies show that employees in more vulnerable social groups, such as gender and sexual minorities, ethnic and religious minorities, and disabled employees, report higher rates of workplace bullying and related phenomena, such as workplace incivility and workplace harassment (e.g. Bergbom & Vartia, this volume; Cortina, Kabat-Farr, Leskinen, Huerta, & Magley, 2013; Fevre, Robinson, Lewis, & Jones, 2013; Fox & Stallworth, 2005; Hoel, Lewis, & Einarsdóttir, 2014; Ryan & Gardner, this volume; Salin & Hoel, 2011; Trades Union Congress [TUC], 2017).

In fact, in the overlapping field of workplace incivility, Cortina (2008) has coined the concept "selective incivility" to describe processes of modern day discrimination, whereby women and ethnic minorities are subjected to subtle negative social behaviours in disproportionate numbers. Selective incivility means women and members of other underprivileged social groups may face subtle, but systematic, forms of interpersonal discrimination, while perpetrators can mask their discriminatory attitudes and thus portray themselves as non-sexist (or non-racist).

As discussed in several chapters in this volume, the social categories a person belongs to may affect their risk of being subject to workplace bullying and harassment, their sense-making of it, and their responses to it. Such social categories may include gender, ethnicity, class or caste, age, sexual orientation, religion, and disability, to name a few. This chapter will focus on the significance of one specific social category, that is gender, and specifically in workplace bullying. Gender refers to the socially constructed roles, behaviours, activities and attributes that a given society considers appropriate for men and women (World Health Organization [WHO], 2015). In this chapter, the term "gender" will be used rather than "sex" to emphasize the social and cultural, as opposed to the biological, distinctions between men and women.

The aim of this chapter is to provide an overview of research on workplace bullying from a gender perspective. While this will primarily draw on bullying research, insights from related fields such as generalized harassment and incivility in the workplace will also be included to shed additional light on the phenomena in question. Prevalence rates, forms of bullying, risk factors, consequences, coping, and

interventions will all be discussed from a gender perspective. Empirical findings on different aspects of gender and workplace bullying will be presented and attempts made to provide possible theoretical explanations for these findings. Overall, the chapter recognizes gender as a fundamental ordering principle in society and organizations (cf. Acker, 1990) Nevertheless, many of the empirical studies surveyed are still limited to a gender-as-variable approach and relatively few explicitly analyze the gendered contexts in which these encounters take place. It is also worth noting that most of the empirical studies so far have treated gender as a binary category ("men" vs. "women"), and ignored the fact that not all employees fit into these narrowly defined traditional categories. As a result, also this overview of existing research therefore largely suffers from the same limitations, although the chapter also calls for more nuanced understandings of gender and a need for more research on employees transcending binary classification systems.

Prevalence of workplace bullying: are women at greater risk?

In discussing the topic of gender and workplace bullying, the first question typically raised is whether prevalence rates differ for men and women. This section provides an overview of studies on this question.

In examining results from prevalence studies, there are several characteristics of these studies that need to be borne in mind which may affect gender differences. First, some nationwide representative studies on the prevalence of workplace bullying have been undertaken (see Table 1), but the vast majority of bullying studies are within specific industries and sectors. This needs to be remembered when interpreting results, as gender differences may be bigger within individual sectors than in the working population as a whole. Also at a more general level, researchers have found that studies relying on non-random samples tend to report higher prevalence rates than samples relying on random samples (Nielsen, Matthiesen, & Einarsen, 2010). Second, bullying has been measured differently throughout the range of studies, and the measurement method has been shown to affect overall prevalence rates (Nielsen, Matthiesen, & Einarsen, 2010). Different measurement methods may also affect men and women differently (Salin & Hoel, 2013), as will be discussed later. Third, it is important to consider the regions where the studies have been conducted. Over the past years we have seen a growth in the number of countries where research on workplace bullying has been carried out (cf. Power et al., 2013; Van de Vliert, Einarsen, & Nielsen, 2013). Still, a very high proportion of the studies have been carried

out in a few countries in (Northern) Europe and the Anglo-Saxon world, with the Scandinavian countries clearly over-represented (Nielsen, Matthiesen, & Einarsen, 2010). Findings from one region cannot necessarily be generalized to other geographical and cultural settings. It is thus possible that cultural values affect not only the overall prevalence rate of workplace bullying (Nielsen, Matthiesen, & Einarsen, 2010), but also gender differences in prevalence (Salin, this volume).

Table 1 looks to summarize existing findings on gender differences in prevalence rates. Preference has been given to large-scale studies that either are representative of the working population or at least cover several different sectors and industries. Overall, it is worth noting that some of these studies point to no or only non-significant differences between men and women in terms of prevalence of bullying. This is particularly true for all three Scandinavian countries, as large-scale representative studies from Sweden (Arbetsmiljöverket, 2014; Leymann, 1992), Norway (Einarsen & Hetland, 2016; Einarsen & Skogstad, 1996), and Denmark (Hogh & Dofradottir, 2001; Ortega, Hogh, Pejtersen, & Olsen, 2009) all fail to find a significant gender difference in prevalence rates. For other European countries, the results are more mixed. Large-scale studies from Belgium (Notelaers, Vermunt, Baillien, Einarsen, & De Witte, 2011) and Italy (Campanini et al., 2013; Giorgi, Leon-Perez, & Arenas, 2015) find no statistically significant gender differences, whereas those from Finland (Kauppinen et al., 2013; Perkiö-Mäkelä et al., 2006), Ireland (O'Connell, Calvert, & Watson, 2007; O'Moore, 2000), Spain (Baguena, Belena, Toldos, & Martinez, 2011), Germany (Meschkutat, Stackelbeck, & Langenhoff, 2002), Greece (Galanaki & Papalexandris, 2013), and France (Niedhammer, David, & Degioanno, 2007), all report higher prevalence rates for women. For non-European studies, the results are even more mixed: while Canadian researchers have reported higher prevalence rates among women, those from South Africa report higher rates among men (Cunniff & Mostert, 2012). For Japan, different researchers have presented different findings: while Tsuno et al. (2015) found no gender differences in prevalence rates, Giorgi, Ando, Arenas, Shoss, & Leon-Perez (2013) found significantly higher rates for women. Similarly, results from the US are mixed: whereas Namie (2014) reported higher bullying rates for women, Schat, Frone, and Kelloway (2006), who studied exposure to different examples of workplace aggression, found more women than men had no exposure to psychological forms of aggression in the workplace. In sum, it is worth noting that none of the studies relying on self-labelling reported higher bullying rates for men, although several did so for women.

To date, few studies have specifically examined gender differences in prevalence rates of cyberbullying. In a large-scale Swedish sample, Forssell (2016) found that men reported somewhat more bullying

behaviours than women, but were no more likely to self-label as cyberbullied compared to women. In a sample from New Zealand, Gardner et al. (2014) found no gender differences for cyberbullying, although women reported somewhat more face-to-face bullying than men. However, it is worth noting that neither study included items of sexual harassment, which some qualitative studies have reported to be common among female cyberbullying targets (D'Cruz & Noronha, 2013).

It is important to note that gender differences in prevalence rates may vary considerably by sector, suggesting findings from individual sectors and industries cannot necessarily be generalized across the population. For instance, in a closer examination of different subsamples, O'Moore, Lynch and Daeid (2003) found that in the computer software sector Irish women faced a ten times higher risk than men, whereas men faced a 4.5 times higher risk than women in teaching and education. As will be discussed in greater detail in the section on risk factors, this points to the risk of working in an occupation dominated by one gender or the other.

In addition to possible regional variation in gendered patterns and differences between sectors, measurement methods may influence gender differences in workplace bullying, argue Salin and Hoel (2013). While behavioural checklists, where respondents are asked to indicate how often they have been subject to different negative acts, are often considered more objective and therefore more reliable, self-labelling brings in also more subjective elements such as the target's sense-making and interpretation of the behaviour (Salin & Hoel, 2013). Given that feelings of powerlessness and not being able to defend yourself against the negative behaviours are central defining features of workplace bullying (e.g. Einarsen, Hoel, Zapf, & Cooper, 2011; Salin, 2003a), such subjective judgments may hold much information and not merely act as noise (Salin & Hoel, 2013). While few studies have explicitly compared the gender implications of different measurement methods in bullying studies, some studies including both self-labelling and behavioural checklists can provide insights. For instance, in a study among Finnish business professionals, Salin (2003b) found that whereas 21.1% of men and 26.4% of women had experienced at least one negative act as least weekly, the percentage of women who classified themselves as bullied was more than double the percentage of men (11.6% versus 5.0%). This suggests women may be more likely to label their experiences bullying. Similarly, although Jóhannsdóttir and Ólafsson (2004) found that Icelandic male bank, retail and office employees reported higher exposure rates to negative acts than their female counterparts, they did not report higher levels of classifying themselves as "bullied". In a large-scale study from female-dominated sectors in New Zealand, 20.9% of men and 16.9% of women reported being subjected to any of the listed negative acts,

yet somewhat more women (4.3%) than men (2.2%) classified themselves as bullied (Bentley et al, 2009). These results align with Spanish findings showing that women rate several examples of bullying somewhat more severely than do men (Escartín, Salin, & Rodriguez-Caballeira, 2011; Escartin, Salin, & Rodriguez-Caballeira, 2013).

There are several possible explanations for the gender differences in labelling (cf. Salin & Hoel, 2013). In accordance with social power theory, studies have shown that individuals with less social power, for instance ethnic minorities, may feel more intimidated and stressed by uncivil or negative behaviours (e.g. Cortina, Magley, & Lim, 2002). Women, who still tend to occupy lower positions in the organization hierarchy and have lower social power (Miner & Eischeid, 2012), may thus feel less able to defend themselves against negative acts and so more victimized by them. This is also in line with the argument that a lack of power or a power deficit sensitizes a person to a perceived threat, and consequently low-power individuals tend to feel more exposed (Anderson & Berdahl, 2002; Keltner, Gruenfeld, & Anderson, 2003). This is supported by the finding that employees in higher positions in the organization hierarchy report weaker correlations between workplace bullying and decreases in well-being, than do those in lower positions (Hoel, Faragher, & Cooper, 2004). Moreover, some men might, consciously or unconsciously, find admitting to victimization threatens their self-esteem and may therefore refrain from self-labelling. This is in line with gender role theory (e.g. Eagly, Wood, & Diekman, 1987), since traditional gender roles typically prescribe that men are supposed to be self-reliant and independent.

Overall, results on gender differences in workplace bullying are thus inconsistent and inconclusive. While the Scandinavian samples are characterised by equal prevalence rates, gender differences still appear to persist in many other countries. Where the gender differences exist, they typically though not always show higher prevalence rates for women (see Table 1). This seems to be particularly the case for studies relying on self-labelling. Higher prevalence rates for women are also in line with findings from US incivility research (Cortina et al., 2002; Kabat-Farr & Cortina, 2012). Workplace incivility, which is here a related and partly overlapping phenomenon, refers to low-intensity aggression with ambiguous intent, such as rudeness. Some US researchers have in fact argued that incivility can be used selectively towards women and racial minorities as a form of subtle modern day discrimination that is hard to detect and prove (Cortina, 2008; Kabb-Farat & Cortina, 2012). However, relationships between gender and prevalence rates are complex, and as is discussed later, the gender dynamics of individual sectors and industries may affect both men and women within them.

While most prevalence studies have required respondents to identify as “men” or “women”, only a few have specifically examined workplace bullying among those who transcend such binary classifications. However, the studies conducted suggest that transgender employees experience a clearly elevated risk of bullying in the workplace. A UK report on harassment and discrimination among sexual and gender minorities found that almost half of trans people (48 per cent) had experienced bullying or harassment at work (TUC, 2017). This number is in line with a US Report of Transgender Discrimination data which showed 50% had experienced harassment at work (Grant et al., 2011). The report further revealed that unemployment in this group was twice as high as in the general population, and 26% reported they had lost a job due to being transgender. With so many out of employment, statistics on current harassment levels among the working population may fail to truly capture the extent of workplace harassment among transgender employees.

Gender of bullies: who are the perpetrators?

While research on the gender of targets has produced somewhat mixed results, studies examining the gender of perpetrators seem to report less inconsistency. While both men and women are reported as perpetrators of workplace bullying, studies seem to suggest the perpetrator is somewhat more often male. For instance, Namie (2017) reported that 70% of perpetrators in the US are men, and a Spanish study found that 52% reported the bullying was perpetrated mainly by a man, 21% reported bullying from a woman, and 27% reported that both men and women had participated in the bullying (Baguena, Belena, Toldos, & Martinez, 2011). Also in the (relatively egalitarian) Scandinavian countries, where equal victimization rates have been reported (see previous section), men have been reported over-represented among perpetrators. Einarsen and Skogstad (1996) found that 49% of victims were bullied by men, 30% by women, and 21% by both men and women. While most studies have examined perpetrator characteristics by asking targets about their perpetrators, Jóhannsdóttir and Ólafsson (2004) found that also when asked about own perpetration of bullying behaviours, women reported bullying others significantly less than men did. Although there is still little research on gender and cyberbullying, some preliminary evidence suggests men may be perpetrators more often than women (Baruch, 2005).

The over-representation of male perpetrators is also in line with findings from the related fields of workplace incivility and workplace aggression, where victims more often report that perpetrators are male than female. In a review of gender and workplace aggression, Neuman (2012) concluded that men

perpetrate most workplace violence and sexual harassment. Similarly, a meta-analysis of 57 empirical studies on workplace aggression found that males exhibited more aggression than females (Hershcovis et al., 2007). Research on workplace incivility points to men as the most frequent perpetrators (Pearson, Andersson, & Porath, 2000).

Despite results suggesting men are the more likely to engage in different forms of workplace mistreatment and aggression, it is important not merely to ascribe these differences to biological sex, but to seek understanding of the contexts that produce these differences. First of all, gender role socialization theory (e.g. Eagly, Wood, & Diekman, 1987) suggests that roles and norms of accepted behaviour for men and women are different, and this is a product of what society expects of them. Men and women are rewarded and punished for different behaviours and, thus, come to learn and exhibit those they believe appropriate to their gender. For example, Brescoll and Uhlmann (2008) found in a series of studies that expressing anger may heighten a man's status in some professional settings. In contrast, professional women who expressed anger were consistently accorded lower status and lower wages, and seen as less competent than angry men and unemotional women. As roles regarded appropriate for women typically prescribe interpersonal connection, and more strongly than for men disapprove of (overt) aggression and anger, this may affect bullying tendencies in men and women.

Second, the likelihood of engaging in workplace bullying may be linked to organizational power. When interpreting the results it is important to remember that although bullying can take place upwards, downwards and among peers, supervisors are still heavily over-represented among perpetrators in relation to their total number (Zapf, Escartín, Einarsen, Hoel, & Vartia, 2011). As working life is still characterized by vertical gender segregation, that is, men over-represented at higher hierarchical levels across countries, this may also contribute to the findings. Men, who more often occupy managerial and supervisory positions, may as a result of their hierarchical position have more resources and opportunities to engage in bullying. However, Lee and Brotheridge (2011) found that men engaged in more both direct and indirect aggression, even when controlling for perpetrator position.

Forms of workplace bullying: any gender differences?

As summarized in the earlier section, men appear to engage in somewhat more bullying behaviour than women. The gender of targets and perpetrators may also affect preferred forms of bullying.

In their seminal work on gender and workplace bullying, Björkqvist, Österman, and Lagerspetz (1994) found women tended to rely more on social manipulation, while men used more job-related harassment. Acts of social manipulation included those of rumours, backbiting, insulting comments about someone's private life, and social exclusion. The work-related acts included evaluating work in an unjust manner, reducing someone's opportunities to express themselves, interruptions, and critique. Björkqvist, Österman, and Lagerspetz (1994) referred to the work-related acts as "rational-appearing acts" to suggest they could often be undertaken under cover of normal managerial prerogative and performance management. This also suggests the same rationales as described in the earlier section, gender role socialization and formal power differences, may be at play in men's and women's choices of bullying techniques.

However, not all studies find similar patterns. Rutter and Hine (2005) examined gender differences in three forms of workplace aggression: expressions of hostility (behaviours that are verbally or symbolically hostile in nature), obstructionism (primarily passive behaviours that impede the target's ability to perform his/her job), and overt aggression (behaviours typically associated with workplace violence). While they originally hypothesized that men would engage more in overt forms of bullying and women more in passive and indirect forms of aggression (i.e. the two first forms of aggression), they found that males reported engaging in significantly more of all three forms of aggression. Similarly, Lee and Brotheridge (2011) found that men engaged in more both direct and indirect aggression.

As for victims of workplace bullying, studies also support the notion that there may be differences in the forms of bullying to which men and women are subject. For instance, Salin (2003b) found that Finnish female business professionals reported more often than their male counterparts devaluation of their work and social manipulation. This included being given tasks below their level of competence or outside their job description, receiving insulting emails or calls, being ignored or excluded, or having rumours and gossip spread. Similarly, in a German study, women reported more insults, teasing, and isolation (Meschkutat, Stackelbeck, & Langenhoff, 2002). The men in the same study reported more negative work-related acts than the women, such as information being withheld, attracting unjustified criticism, and being subject to false allegations. Moreover, in a Belgian study Notelaers, Vermunt, Baillien, Einarsen, and De Witte (2011) found that the only significant gender difference was that men were more likely than women to be victims of work-related bullying.

Sexual and sex-based harassment as gendered forms of bullying?

Although sexual harassment is typically studied as a separate phenomenon, it is important to note that sexual harassment and sex-based harassment can overlap with and be part of the workplace bullying experience. These behaviours thus warrant some extra attention.

Sexual harassment may include items such as unwanted sexual attention and sexual coercion (Fitzgerald, Gelfand, & Drasgow, 1995). This can involve sexualized comments about dress and appearance, pressure to agree to dates, unwelcome touching, making work-related decisions, for instance on promotion, contingent upon sexual favours, and at its extreme even attempted rape. Sexual harassment may also include other behaviours that create a hostile work environment for women, for instance, derogatory comments or demeaning jokes about women or e.g. posting offensive images (Fitzgerald, Gelfand, & Drasgow, 1995).

As sexual harassment primarily leads people to think of sexualized acts, some researchers have coined broader terms to describe also non-sexual forms of sex-related or sexist harassment. Gender harassment refers to "a broad range of verbal and nonverbal behaviours not aimed at sexual cooperation but that convey insulting, hostile, and degrading attitudes about women" (Fitzgerald, Gelfand, & Drasgow, 1995, p. 430). For instance, Cortina et al. (2002) who studied incivility in the legal profession, found that many women experienced negative remarks about women and their competence in general, devaluation of professional women or women in senior positions, and the use of unprofessional forms of address ("dear", "honey"). Leskinen, Cortina, and Kabat (2011) give further examples: anti-female jokes, comments that women do not belong in management, and crude terms of address that denigrate women (e.g. referring to a co-worker as a "dumb slut"). All of these can be seen as examples of sexist, but non-sexual, forms of harassment.

Lim and Cortina (2005) studied the relationships between sexualized forms of harassment (unwanted sexual attention and sexual coercion), gender harassment, and incivility. They found high correlations between the phenomena. While many respondents reported incivility only, those who experienced gender harassment or sexualized harassment typically also reported general forms of incivility. Leskinen, Cortina, and Kabat (2011), who studied sex-based harassment among women in the military and the legal profession, found very similar results; non-sexualized forms of gender harassment were by far the most common forms of sex-based harassment, and women experiencing sexualized forms of

harassment also reported the highest levels of non-sexualized forms of gender harassment, demonstrating that they were overlapping, rather than separate phenomena.

Although people may typically associate sexual and gender harassment with female targets, men may also be subject to such behaviours. In a Norwegian study, Nielsen, Bjørkelo, Notelaers, and Einarsen (2010) found that men were as likely as women to report sexually harassing items. However, they were much less likely to self-label as sexually harassed, suggesting they may have felt more able to cope or were unwilling to see themselves as victims. The may also be different interpretations of such acts: for instance, Salin (2003b) reported how male respondents had written "unfortunately not" in the margin of the questionnaire, when asked about exposure to sexual harassment. Similarly, Berdahl and Aquino (2009) found that women reacted negatively to both ambient and direct sexual behaviour in the workplace, irrespective of perpetrator gender, whereas men reacted positively to direct sexual behaviours from women.

Also other forms of sex-based harassment are not necessarily perpetrated by men against women: both men and women may harass same-sex targets who by breaking gender norms threaten the existing gender order. Berdahl (2007, p. 644) has defined sex-based harassment "as behavior that derogates, demeans, or humiliates an individual based on that individual's sex". Thus, both men and women can be targets. For instance, men who are not considered dominant and assertive enough may be called derogatory names, such as "fag" or "pussy" or subject to sexually humiliating acts (Berdahl, 2007). Berdahl (2007) has argued that perpetrators engage in sex-based harassment to protect or enhance their own sex-based social status, and are motivated and able to do so "by a social context that pervasively and fundamentally stratifies social status by sex" (p. 644). As will be discussed further in the section on risk factors, behaviour that does not conform to traditional gender roles and norms can thus be a particular risk factor.

Perpetrators of workplace bullying: does target gender matter?

In addition to being subject to somewhat different acts, men and women may also be subject to workplace bullying by different perpetrators. For instance, while men are typically bullied by other men, women are bullied by men and women in more equal proportions (Baguena, Belena, Toldos, & Martinez, 2011; Einarsen & Skogstad, 1996; Hoel, Cooper, & Faragher, 2001; Leymann, 1996). For

instance, Einarsen and Skogstad (1996) found that among male victims, 70% were bullied by other men only, while 10% were bullied by women only. For the women, the corresponding numbers were 49% (by other women only) and 31% (by men only). In a Swedish sample, Leymann (1996) found even more pronounced gender differences: 76% of the bullied men were targeted by other men, 3% were bullied by women, and 21% were subjected to bullying by both sexes. In contrast, 40% of the female targets were bullied by other women, 30% were bullied by men, and another 30% by members of both genders. However, Leymann (1996) pointed out that the structure of (Swedish) working life needs to be taken into account when interpreting these results: men mostly work together with men, and women with women, which partly explains the high numbers of same-sex bullying.

It is noteworthy that the least common gender configuration is that of female bully on male victim, as can be seen above and is supported by other findings. For instance, Venetoklis and Kettunen (2016) found that females bullying males was the least common form of bullying in Finnish ministries. In the UK, Hoel, Cooper, and Faragher (2001) reported that only 9.3% of male victims were bullied by women exclusively. Similarly, Namie (2017) found that only 10% of bullying cases in their US survey involved women perpetrators targeting men, while the most common bullying cases (46%) were those where the perpetrator was male and the target female. Again, structural factors, for instance that men tend to have male rather than female superiors, can at least partly explain this pattern. While woman-on-woman bullying has attracted a lot of attention in the media (cf. Lutgen-Sandvik, Dickinson, & Foss, 2012), Namie (2017) found that it accounted for only 20% of all bullying cases.

As hinted at above, the gender of the target also seems to be associated with the hierarchical position of the perpetrator. Research indicates that men are typically bullied by (individual) superiors, whereas women are often bullied by groups of peers (Hoel, Cooper, & Faragher, 2001; Vartia & Hyyti, 2002). Furthermore, Salin (2003b) indicated that women may, more often than men, be bullied by subordinates, an aspect that can again be linked to issues of perceived social power, or rather a lack thereof.

Also, it seems male and female perpetrators may react differently to hierarchical differences, with men typically seeking less powerful targets, which is not necessarily the case for women. For instance, Pearson, Andersson, and Porath (2000) found that men were seven times more likely to instigate incivility on someone of lower rather than higher status, whereas women were equally likely to behave uncivilly toward their superiors or subordinates. Pearson, Andersson, and Porath (2000) suggest women may thus be less willing or less able to attune their behaviours to the target's power. This may also

contribute to the finding discussed above, where female superiors are bullied more often than male. As women typically bully other women, they are more likely to target female rather than male superiors.

Workplace bullying, well-being and coping: gendered effects?

Workplace bullying has been shown to have severe consequences for employee health and well-being, as demonstrated by a meta-study conducted by Nielsen and Einarsen (2012). For instance, bullying has been shown to result in higher rates of both mental and physical health problems, strain, symptoms of post-traumatic stress, and burnout (Nielsen & Einarsen, 2012). While there is strong evidence for a negative relationship between bullying and well-being, it is less clear if bullying affects men and women to the same extent.

Where gender differences in health consequences have been examined, results have been inconclusive. While some researchers have found no gender differences in stress levels, others report that women experience stronger symptoms. Vartia and Hyyti (2002), who studied bullying among Finnish prison officers, found that bullying had similar effects on stress, mental health and job satisfaction in both men and women. Similarly, Cortina et al. (2002) found that both male and female attorneys in the US reacted to interpersonal mistreatment with similar decreases in job satisfaction and increases in job stress. Moreover, a Danish study also found that women did not report significantly more stress symptoms (Hansen, Hogh, & Persson, 2011).

However, studies have identified other gender differences in effects on well-being. While the abovementioned Danish researchers found no differences in stress symptoms, they did find that compared to men, women reported more somatic, cognitive and depressive symptoms in response to bullying (Hansen, Hogh, & Persson, 2011). Gender differences in health effects were also reported by Einarsen and Hetland (2016), who in a large-scale representative Norwegian study found women reported stronger associations between exposure to negative acts and symptoms of anxiety and depression. Rodríguez-Muñoz, Moreno-Jiménez, Sanz Vergel, and Garrosa Hernández (2010) found stronger associations between bullying and symptoms of post-traumatic stress among women than men.

An exception to the general trend that women are more severely affected than men where differences are found, is a study by Kaukiainen et al. (2001) from the Finnish public sector. They found that for men,

exposure to different forms of bullying was associated with clear effects on physical health (e.g. headaches, backache, elevated blood pressure), affective cognitive problems (e.g. anxiety, depression, concentration problems, lack of initiative), and psychosocial symptoms (e.g. family problems, alcohol problems, low self-esteem), whereas for women, bullying was associated only with psychosocial problems, and less so than men. Also, findings from the related field of ostracism, one particular form of bullying behaviour, have indicated that high levels of exclusion have a stronger effect on men's than on women's psychological health (Hitlan, Cliffton, & DeSoto, 2006); for men, exclusion was related to perceived threat to self-esteem.

As for gender difference in health consequences, Hoel, Faragher and Cooper (2004) suggested that measurement method may affect the differences found. In their large-scale study in the UK, the relationship between ill-health and bullying as measured by a behavioural checklist was seen to be somewhat stronger for women, while men reported somewhat stronger associations between ill-health and self-labelling. This is in line with a lower propensity among men as discussed earlier to interpret and label negative acts as bullying, with the apparent contradiction mitigated by men labelling as bullying only the more severe cases of exposure to negative behaviour. The same study showed that supervisors were less strongly affected by negative acts than workers. With more men at higher organization levels, formal power may also have affected the results. Again in the same study, the researchers suggested women may ruminate more about their experiences of bullying. Although men and women reported no significant differences in current exposure to bullying, when asked about bullying experiences during the past five years 27% of women versus 22% of the men labelled themselves victims within that period. It seems to suggest that, over time, men and women construe their exposure to negative acts differently (Hoel & Cooper, 2000).

Another possibility that has been put forward is that men and women may react to workplace bullying in different ways. Eriksen, Hogh, and Hansen (2016) found that although exposure to bullying was associated with immediately self-reported negative health for both genders, only bullied females had a higher, persistent increase in long-term sickness absence and adverse long-term health. Similarly, Voss, Floderus, and Diderichsen (2001) found bullying to be a significant predictor of sickness absenteeism for women only. Bullied men, in turn, reported higher rates of leaving the labour force (Eriksen, Hogh, & Hansen, 2016). Different effects were also uncovered by Attell, Brown, and Treiber (2016), who found that women reported more job stress than men in response to bullying, whereas men reported more anxiety and hopelessness than women.

Women and men may also try to cope with workplace bullying in different ways. In an Icelandic study, it was found that men were more likely than women to confront perpetrators, while women reported more use of social support and avoidance than men (Jóhannsdóttir & Ólafsson, 2004). This corresponds well with previous discussions about gendered expectations of self-reliant men and women being less assertive. Social power may provide an alternative explanation: low power has been argued to foster greater silence about work mistreatment (Pinder & Harlos, 2001), and as low-power individuals may feel more exposed to threats (Anderson & Berdahl, 2002) this may create a preference for less active coping strategies. However, again we need to be careful not to oversimply. While Jóhannsdóttir and Ólafsson (2004) reported that women were more likely to seek social support, Attell, Brown, and Treiber (2016) documented that men in fact reported getting more social support. Moreover, they found that social support had a stronger protective effect on the relationship between bullying and stress for men than for women. Also, qualitative research has drawn attention to the importance of social support for bullied men (O'Donnell & MacIntosh, 2016). Thus, once again, research findings show that the relationships between gender and bullying are complex and often even contradictory.

Risk factors: a gendered analysis

Where employees face an elevated risk of workplace bullying, gender may be relevant when we examine which groups of employees, and under what kind of organizational circumstances. It is thus possible that different individual factors and traits and different organizational factors are associated with an increased risk of bullying for men and women. Also, the gender dynamics of the work group may affect men and women differently.

Extensive research points to the risk of working in an occupation dominated by the other sex. For instance, women have been reported to be at a higher risk of victimization than men in male-dominated fields, such as among business professionals (e.g. Salin, 2003b), in the legal profession (Cortina et al., 2002), and among police officers (Nuutinen, Kauppinen, & Kandolin, 1999; UNISON, 2016). To further support this argument, the few studies that report higher prevalence rates for men are typically from female-dominated sectors, such as within childcare (Lindroth & Leymann, 1993), and among assistant or ancillary nurses (Eriksen & Einarsen, 2004).

Interestingly, in a large-scale representative sample based on data from Official Statistics of Finland, Salin (2015) found that working in tasks typically fulfilled by the opposite sex was a risk factor. However, closer examinations revealed this was true only for men. While this does not say anything about the risk to men as compared to women in the same jobs, it suggests that men are at higher risk in female-dominated tasks than in male-dominated tasks.

At a more general level, some studies have also suggested that gender-balanced fields overall are less prone to bullying than those that are either male- or female-dominated. For instance, Ortega, Hogh, Pejtersen, and Olsen (2009) found that employees working with clients (female-dominated fields, such as health care and social work) and those working with things (male-dominated fields, involving machinery and tools) had higher bullying rates than employees working with symbols or customers (more gender-neutral fields). Similar findings have been reported from Norway, where prevalence rates have been observed to be higher in male- and female-dominated occupations than gender-balanced (Einarsen & Hetland, 2016). The Norwegian findings further demonstrated that men in female-dominated occupations were a particular risk group, scoring significantly higher than any other. O'Moore, Lynch, and Daeid (2003), who studied bullying across a number of different occupations in Ireland, also found evidence for the risk of working in an occupation dominated by the other sex. However, in their study, females working in male-dominated fields reported the highest relative risk of bullying, with women in computer software and electrical trades reporting a 10 and respectively 9.6 times higher risk of bullying than their male counterparts. Men, in turn, reported the highest relative risk in central and local government and in education, at respectively 4.7 and 4.5 times the risk of women.

Gender proportions in the workplace have also been argued to affect men's propensity to exhibit aggressive behaviour. In a Finnish study, Kaukiainen et al. (2001) found that in predominantly male workplaces, men were perceived to exert more aggression than in gender-balanced or predominantly female workplaces. In contrast, women's aggression was not related to the relative number of females and males with whom they worked. The researchers argued that a male "culture of honour and power" allowed for more aggressive behaviour in male environments. However, it is also possible that societal expectations of chivalry (e.g. Eagly & Steffen, 1986) curbed the overt expression of aggression in environments with female co-workers, or that self-selection was in effect with less aggressive males opting into female-dominated fields. Interestingly, research also suggests that situational factors, such as organizational policies and tolerance for incivility, have a stronger impact on men's level of incivility

and aggression than they have on women's aggressive behaviours (Gallus, Bunk, Matthews, Barnes-Farrell, & Magley, 2014).

Hierarchical position also appears to affect men and women differently. While it is often assumed that a higher hierarchical position may offer some protection against bullying, these dynamics may operate differently for men and women. A high position in the hierarchy seems to offer women less protective effect, possibly because it may be perceived as gender-incongruent behaviour. For instance, Hoel, Cooper, and Faragher (2001) found that among lower tier personnel although males reported somewhat higher prevalence rates than women, in the senior management group 15.5% of females, compared with just 6.4% of males, reported having been bullied. Moreover, when limiting this to bullying on a regular basis, the numbers fell to 4.5% for female senior managers and 0% for male senior managers. When looking at individual acts, Hoel, Cooper, and Faragher (2001) found that women appeared to report the same levels of negative acts irrespective of hierarchical position, and in the few cases that differences were found it was women in higher positions reporting higher rates than those in lower positions. A higher position was, in particular, associated with a higher risk of unmanageable workload, of information being withheld, and rumours and gossip spread. For men, lower tier personnel typically reported higher levels of exposure to negative acts than did supervisors and managers.

Women face higher risk in male-dominated fields and when entering managerial echelons once largely the domain of men, and this may at least in part be explained by seeing bullying as a form of social control (cf. Cortina et al., 2002). Cortina et al. (2002) further found that professional women or women in senior positions often reported comments made that devalued their professional standing, such as gender denigration and belittling. In line with this, Salin and Hoel (2013) argued that women's progress at work may constitute a threat to the status quo of male dominance and female subordination. Bullying can thus be seen as a conscious or non-conscious way of punishing women who break established gender norms, and a way to preserve existing (gendered) power structures. This has been supported by qualitative research in the fire service, which showed women and ethnic-minority employees were often bullied in order to preserve "white male dominance" (Archer, 1999).

Also more generally, gender-incongruent behaviour, that is behaviour which deviates from social expectations of how men and women should behave, has been proposed as a risk factor for bullying. Lee (2002), who interviewed men and women in the UK Civil Service, found that bullying was often informed by judgments of "appropriate" gender conduct, so was a form of pressure to conform with such norms. The high prevalence rates reported by transgender employees (Grant et al., 2011; TUC, 2017) may also

be understood as a form of punishment for not conforming to expected gender roles. Bullying as punishment for gender-incongruent behaviour is also in line with Berdahl's (2007) findings on sex-based harassment, which she argues is often motivated by a desire to protect and enhance the perpetrator's own sex-based social status. Behaviour that challenges and blurs existing gender distinctions may carry a particular risk. This explains, for instance, why women entering male-dominated fields and men entering female-dominated fields are often at higher risk. Similarly, Berdahl (2007) argues that outspoken women, and men who are not seen as sufficiently masculine, are often reported as targets.

Interestingly, the same behaviour may be perceived differently depending on whether the focal actors are male or female. In a Finnish study, respondents were asked to read a vignette about a subtle bullying situation and speculate on possible reasons why the bullying had started (Salin, 2011). The respondents were unaware that different versions of the story had been distributed and the focal person, that is the target, had been described male in some and female in others. Although the descriptions were otherwise identical, respondents paid attention to different details in explaining why the person was targeted. The male actor was considered "not very sociable" or "different" as he was more educated than his team members. When the same focal person was given a female name, the respondents argued that she was being bullied because she was "too assertive" and "provocative".

As for organizational risk factors, while there is still scant research on possible gender differences, early research points to some. Salin (2015) found that the psychosocial and physical work environment strongly influenced the risk of workplace bullying for both men and women. However, the study also revealed some interesting differences. For instance, performance-oriented pay had a significant (protective) effect on women only (Salin, 2015). Furthermore, constructive leadership was significant for women only, suggesting higher relevance. It is, nevertheless, worth noting that leadership has been found to be a significant risk factor also in some heavily male-dominated samples, such as among seafarers (Nielsen, 2013), and Oxenstierna, Elofsson, Gjerde, Magnusson Hanson, and Theorell (2012) found that dictatorial leadership was a risk factor particularly for men. Moreover, job demands appeared to be a stronger predictor of bullying among men than women (Salin, 2015), although they increased the risk of bullying for both. Oxenstierna, Elofsson, Gjerde, Magnusson Hanson, and Theorell (2012), in turn, found that lack of procedural justice and an attitude of expendability (a sub-category of social support) were risk factors for men, while a lack of humanity (another sub-category of social support) was a risk factor for women. Nevertheless, studies on gender differences in risk factors are still in their infancy. In analysing risk factors, it is also important to remember that the labour market is still

characterized by clear horizontal gender segregation, meaning that men and women often work in different occupations. Such occupational and contextual factors, which may act as confounding factors, also need to be taken into account in analysing risk factors.

Interventions: does gender matter?

Overall, victims of workplace bullying often express dissatisfaction with the help and support they have received from management and human resources (HR) professionals (D'Cruz & Noronha, 2010; Ferris, 2004; Rayner, 2009). Organization representatives must first recognize bullying behaviour, consider it necessary or at least desirable to take action, and find appropriate measures that can actually stop the behaviour, if they are even to be seen as effective in putting an end to bullying.

Gender aspects may affect interventions in various ways, starting with affecting the likelihood that a certain situation will be considered bullying. Vignette studies have shown that the gender of target, perpetrator, and third party may all impact whether a certain scenario is labelled bullying. In a Finnish study, Salin (2011) found the situation least likely to be labelled bullying was when a male non-observing third party was informed about a female employee being subjected to negative behaviour by a male perpetrator. As some studies (e.g. Namie, 2014) suggest, this is the most common target-perpetrator configuration, and as many women due to vertical segregation have male superiors, this configuration is also very common behaviour in organizational life. This may also be a reason why many of the female victims interviewed by Lewis and Orford (2005) felt their concerns had been trivialized and not properly dealt with by either managers or union leaders.

A tendency to sympathize more with same-sex co-workers and less with opposite-sex co-workers has been documented in incivility research. In a US study among restaurant workers, Miner and Eischeid (2012) found that participants reported more negative emotionality when they witnessed incivility toward same-gender co-workers compared with opposite-gender co-workers. Negative emotionality here referred to anger, fear and anxiety. Case studies on incivility also suggest that observers' attitudes are influenced by the extent to which they share a salient identity – such as gender or race – with the participants (Montgomery, Kane, & Vance 2004). Social identity theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1979) can be applied to understand these tendencies. It holds that we place others and ourselves into categories and identify and associate with certain groups, i.e. our own groups. We thus tend to evaluate in favour of

our own group, something that in turn provides a basis for intergroup discrimination. While the strength of the negative effects may be impacted by target gender, this is not to suggest that employees would be unaffected by incivility towards the other sex. In contrast, Miner-Rubino and Cortina (2007) found that both men and women reacted with reduced psychological well-being, physical health, and job satisfaction in response to witnessing workplace incivility toward female colleagues.

Management's willingness to intervene may also be affected by the perceived reasons for the bullying and perceived ability of the target to defend him or herself. Research has shown that men seem to explain bullying more in terms of personal characteristics and weaknesses, while women tend to emphasize organizational factors to a greater extent (Salin, 2011). This might also explain why some female victims may feel (male) managers try to personalize the problem, seeking reasons for the bullying in the target's own behaviour (Lewis & Orford, 2005). This is in line with a somewhat greater tendency among male than female HR managers to avoid taking action in bullying cases, as reported by Salin (2009). Overall, third parties that hold the victim responsible tend to be less willing to intervene on their behalf (Mulder, Pouwelse, Lodewijkx, & Bolman, 2014; cf. Weiner, 2006).

On the other hand, the target's perceived resources to deal with the bullying and defend themself may also affect the responsibility that managers and HR professionals feel to intervene. Stereotypes about "strong" and "self-reliant" men may reduce the perceived need to help bullied males. This was supported by a Finnish study showing third parties were less likely to think that male than female victims of bullying would suffer health consequences (Salin, 2011). However, as research has shown that both men and women are negatively affected by bullying, this misconception may leave bullied males with less chance of being provided with support and rehabilitation.

Finally, perpetrator gender may impact how the organization responds to workplace bullying and treats alleged bullies. Vignette studies on workplace aggression have shown aggressor gender affects the punishments considered appropriate for the perpetrator (Brown & Sumner, 2006). While negative acts by men and women were rated equally aggressive, female aggressors were sanctioned significantly more severely than male aggressors. This seems to be in line with the previous argument that aggressive behaviour is considered more gender-incongruent for women and therefore subject to stronger condemnation.

Intersectionality: how does gender intersect with other social categories?

This chapter started by drawing attention to how many different social categories, such as gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, age, class or caste, disability, and religion, may impact the bullying process. It has continued by providing an in-depth analysis of one, namely gender. Several other social categories will be explored in more detail in the following chapters. Nevertheless, it is important to acknowledge that these different social categories do not exist in isolation, but may intersect and interact with each other.

Intersectionality refers to how different social categories overlap and intersect to shape individual experiences (Crenshaw, 1991). In other words, intersectionality "simultaneously consider[s] the meaning and consequences of multiple categories of identity, difference, and disadvantage" (Cole, 2009, p. 170). Patterns of privilege, power and discrimination are thus formed based on these multiple social identities, rather than on any one of them in isolation. For instance, White and Non-White women may have different experiences, just as age and sexual orientation may also interact with gender to create different patterns and experiences.

As discussed in this chapter, women seem to be somewhat more at risk of workplace bullying, and as shown by other researchers, Non-White employees also experience a higher risk (e.g. Fox & Stallworth, 2005; Attell, Brown, & Treiber, 2016). So it would be of value to investigate whether women of colour face an even higher risk or "double jeopardy". Berdahl and Moore (2006) examined this empirically, analysing workplace harassment broadly, including both sexual and ethnic harassment. Their findings showed that Non-White women did indeed report the highest rates of harassment, that is, higher rates than White women or White or Non-White men. Cortina, Kabat-Farr, Leskinen, Huerta, and Magley (2013) extended this research, concluding these findings held true also for general workplace incivility, low-level aggression that in terms of content is both gender- and race-neutral. Cortina, Kabat-Farr, Leskinen, Huerta, and Magley (2013) found the very same pattern, that is, women of colour experienced the highest levels of incivility of the four groups. This points to the importance of simultaneously acknowledging multiple social identities in discussing harassment and bullying.

Not only research on gender and race, but also on sexual orientation and gender points to interaction effects. Several studies show that women in a sexual minority report particularly high rates of bullying and incivility (Hoel, Lewis, & Einarsdóttir, 2014; Zurbrügg & Miner, 2016; TUC, 2017). For instance, in a

large-scale study conducted in the UK, Hoel, Lewis and Einarsdóttir (2014) examined bullying experiences among lesbian, gay, and bisexual employees, and compared these groups with heterosexual employees. Not only did they find differences between heterosexual and homosexual respondents, but also significant differences between gay and lesbian respondents. While 6.4% of the heterosexual employees self-labelled as having been bullied, the numbers were 16.9% for homosexual women compared with 13.7% for homosexual men. Taking frequency of bullying into account, the differences between lesbian and gay employees were even more striking. Whereas 5.3% of the lesbian women reported regular exposure to bullying, none of the gay men in the sample did. In fact, on taking frequency into account, straight, gay and bisexual men, and heterosexual women, reported approximately equal prevalence rates, whereas women in a sexual minority reported significantly more bullying. Moreover, in a US study of workplace incivility, Zurbrügg and Miner (2016) found support for sexual minority women reporting the highest levels of incivility; sexual minority women headed the figures, followed by heterosexual women and heterosexual men. Somewhat unexpectedly, sexual minority men reported the lowest rates of incivility.

Yet another example of how gender may interact with other categories is the findings on how occupational status may affect differently for men and women. As discussed earlier, UK findings show that male lower status personnel report more bullying than their female counterparts, while the opposite is true for managers (Hoel, Cooper, & Faragher, 2001). A similar pattern has been reported in sexual harassment research. In a study of American university employees, Richman et al. (1999) found that men in lower status groups reported more sexual harassment than women in the same group, whereas female academics were more exposed than their male counterparts and no less than women in the lower status groups. These findings seem to suggest a possible interaction between gender and occupational status, implying that high occupational status has less protective effect for female employees. Holding a high status position may be seen as more gender-congruent for men than for women, which may in turn explain why such a position has less protective effect for women.

Gender may interact with other social categories not only in shaping the risk of workplace bullying, but also in target evaluations of bullying as a stressor. One example is a study by Kakarika, Gonzalez, and Dimitriades (2017), who found that older women reacted most strongly to bullying. More specifically, the older women employee groups made the strongest association between workplace bullying and perceived breach of the psychological contract. In contrast, the relationship was negative for older men, the only group portraying such a relationship. Again, this points to complex patterns of how multiple

social categories may interact to create different and unique experiences for different groups of employees.

Conclusion

As demonstrated in this chapter, relationships between gender and workplace bullying are complex (cf. Keashly, 2012). At the same time, the findings reported in this overview show that gender is central to understanding patterns of bullying. Although both men and women can be bullied, and at least in the Scandinavian context appear to be subject to relatively similar levels of exposure to negative acts, bullying is not gender-neutral. Gendered dynamics appear to play a significant role in how bullying is expressed, how targets make sense of and label their experiences, how they respond, and how third parties and organizations respond.

Nevertheless, we should refrain from looking just at statistical differences and oversimplifying the picture. Although large-scale studies indicate that somewhat more women than men self-label as bullied in many countries, men may be at increased risk in female-dominated fields (cf. Eriksen & Einarsen, 2004; O'Moore, Lynch, & Daeid, 2003). Similarly, when studies find clear support that men are over-represented among perpetrators (Einarsen & Skogstad, 1996; Namie, 2017), we should not stop the analysis there but seek to understand the social structures that enforce and create such differences. This chapter's overview shows that patterns of bullying are largely shaped by social power afforded to different groups of men and women, and by gendered expectations of appropriate behaviour.

Social power and gendered power structures affect bullying in many ways as discussed throughout the chapter. For instance, power deficit sensitizes a person to a perceived threat and low-power individuals tend to feel more exposed (Anderson & Berdahl, 2002; Keltner, Gruenfeld, & Anderson, 2003), which in turn may affect both labelling and the ability to resist bullying and cope with the negative behaviour. Formal power, in the shape of hierarchical power, may affect possibilities to enact certain bullying techniques, in particular work-related forms of bullying. An actor's desire to protect their gender group's social status may further underpin attempts to punish those who try to blur existing gender boundaries; for instance, women entering male territory, or those who are not considered suitable prototypical representatives of a particular gender, such as e.g. feminine men (Berdahl, 2007).

Gendered expectations of appropriate behaviour may affect both expressions of aggression and coping strategies. As shown in the examples presented earlier, gender roles and norms may prescribe that women use more covert forms of bullying than men; or rely more on avoidance and seeking social support, and less on confrontation as compared to men (Jóhannsdóttir & Ólafsson, 2004). Similarly, expectations that men should be independent and self-reliant may make them unwilling to label experiences as bullying or to seek help. Gendered expectations of appropriate behaviour may further put those who deliberately or unintentionally break these norms at risk (e.g. Berdahl, 2007; Lee, 2002).

Overall, this chapter has in line with the empirical studies followed a traditional categorization of employees into a binary gender system, that is, "men" and "women". It is of course important to recognize that not all employees fit these narrowly defined categories, and those who transcend the classification may be at increased risk. The high bullying rates reported by trans employees may serve as an example of this (Grant et al., 2011; TUC, 2017). Unfortunately, transgender employees have to date received very limited attention in bullying research, and constitute a group we should study in greater detail to shed new light on the significance of gender in the bullying process.

This chapter has made a key contribution in showing that gender, as one social category, has a major impact on how bullying is expressed, made sense of, and responded to. Bullying is not a uniform experience that affects all employees in a similar way, gender and the other social identities of those involved play important roles in shaping the process. Negative social acts may be given different meanings by different employee groups, with different resources to defend themselves and resist the negative treatment. Similarly, risk factors may differ across sectors and among different groups of employees. This is seldom acknowledged in the literature, which tends to focus on a search for universal risk factors and consequences.

Although there is a reasonable body of research on statistical differences between men and women with regard to bullying, more in-depth analyses of the gendered contexts in which these differences arise are needed. As demonstrated by this overview, research on gender and bullying still typically takes a gender-as-variable approach rather than recognizing gender as a fundamental ordering principle in society and organizations (cf. Acker, 1990). To fully understand the gender dynamics of bullying, we need to understand the circumstances and social structures which create and maintain the differences reported. Similarly, gender is still typically treated as a binary category ("men" vs. "women") and there is a need for more research on employees transcending such binary classification systems. Finally, it is worth noting that to date most of the research on gender and bullying, with some exceptions, stems

from regions that score relatively high on gender equality in global comparison, such as Scandinavia, Western Europe, and Anglo-Saxon countries (cf. World Economic Forum, 2017). To increase our understanding of gender and bullying, further research on this topic should be encouraged also in other regions of the world.

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Cross-references

Bergbom, B. & Vartia, V. (this volume): Ethnicity and workplace bullying

Hoel, H., Lewis, D., & Einarsdottir, A. (this volume) Sexual orientation and bullying

Lewis, Deakin, & McGregor, (this volume): Workplace bullying, disability and chronic ill-health

Noronha, E. (this volume): Caste and bullying: Propensity to bully, harass and discriminate

Ryan, A M & Gardner, D (this volume): Religious harassment and bullying in the workplace

Index terms

selective incivility

social category

prevalence

self-labelling

behavioural checklists

social power

transgender

perpetrator

gender role socialization

forms of bullying

sexual harassment

gender harassment

hierarchical position

well-being

risk factor

gender proportions

gender norm

intervention

social identity theory

intersectionality

TABLE 1. Reported gender differences in prevalence in some large-scale bullying studies

Country	Author	Sector	Prevalence rate[a]	Estimation method
Belgium	Notelaers et al., 2011	Flemish respondents, various sectors, n=8,985	No significant gender differences	Behavioural checklist (Latent Class Cluster Analysis used to identify victims)
Canada	Government of Canada (2015)	Public sector employees, n=182,165	Men 16%, women 20%	Self-labelling (harassment at work)
Denmark	Ortega et al., 2009	Representative sample, n=3,429	No significant gender differences	Self-labelling
Denmark	Hogh & Dofradottir, 2001	Randomized sample, working population, n=1,857	No significant gender differences	Two items: "Exposure to gossip and slander" and "nasty teasing"
Finland	Salin, 2015	Representative sample, n=4,392	Men 3%, women 5.5%	Self-labelling
Finland	Kauppinen et al., 2013	Representative sample, n=2,218	Men 2%, women 6%	Self-labelling
Finland	Perkiö-Mäkelä et al., 2006	Representative sample, n=3,122	Men 3%, women 6%	Self-labelling
France	Niedhammer et al., 2007	Working population, n=7,694	Men 8.8%, women 10.7%	Behavioural checklist + Self-labelling
Germany	Meschkutat et al., 2002	Working population, n=2,765	Men 2.0%, women 3.5%	Self-labelling
Greece	Galanaki & Papalexandris, 2013	Junior and middle managers from different sectors, n=840	Women reported more bullying	Behavioural checklist; Self-labelling
Ireland	O'Connell et al., 2007	Representative sample, n=3,579	Men 5.8%, women 10.7%	Self-labelling
Ireland	O'Connell et al., 2001	Representative sample, n=5,252	Men 5.3%, women 9.5%	Self-labelling
Ireland	O´Moore, 2000	Representative sample, n=1,057	Men 39.9%, women 44.2%	Self-labelling
Italy	Campanini et al., 2013	Different sectors, Lombardy, n=8.992	Men 7.0%, women 7.3% (non-significant. difference)	Behavioural checklist
Italy	Giorgi et al., 2013	Different sectors, n=1,393	No significant gender differences	Behavioural checklist
Japan	Tsuno et al., 2015	Nationally representative, workforce, n=1,546	Men 5.8%, women 6.4% (non-significant difference)	Self-labelling

Japan	Giorgi et al., 2012	Various sectors, n=699	Men 3.5%, women 9.1%	Self-labelling (regularly bullied)
New Zealand	Bentley et al., 2009	Various female-dominated sectors (healthcare, education, hospitality, travel), n=1,728	Behavioural checklist: men 20.9%, women 16.9% Self-labelling: men 2.2%, women 4.3% (non-significant differences)	Behavioural checklist; Self-labelling
Norway	Einarsen & Skogstad, 1996	Broad sample, incl. 14 subsamples from different sectors, n=7,986	No significant gender differences	Self-labelling
Norway	Einarsen & Hetland, 2016	Representative sample, Norwegian workforce, n=2,344	No significant gender differences	Behavioural checklist
South Africa	Cunniff & Mostert, 2012	Six different sectors (financial, mining, government, manufacturing, academic, call centres), n=13,911	Men reported higher levels of bullying behaviour	Behavioural checklist
Spain	González Trijueque & Graña Gómez, 2009	Multi-occupational sample, n=2,861	Men 4.3%, women 6.9%	Behavioural checklist (frequent bullying)
Sweden	Leymann, 1992	Representative sample, n=2,438	Men 3%, women 4% (non-significant difference)	Behavioural checklist
Sweden	Arbetsmiljöverket, 2014	Representative sample, n=4,800	Men 9%, Women 9% (no gender differences)	Single item: personal persecution/ harassment (“unkind words or behaviour”)
UK	Hoel & Cooper, 2000	Several different sectors, n=5,288	Men 9.9%, women 11.4% (non-sig. difference)	Self-labelling
UK	Fevre et al., 2008	Working population, n=4,010	Men 6%, women 9%	Self-labelling
US	Namie, 2014	Stratified sample, n=1,000	Men 25.2%, women 28.5%	Self-labelling
US	Schat et al., 2006	Working population, n=2509	Men 43.3%, women 39.4%	Behavioural checklist: (psychological aggression rather than bullying)

[a]Exact prevalence rates for men and women reported where available. When this information was not available, a comment about reported gender differences has been inserted.