

**EAWOP Small Group Meeting (SGM):
“Workplace bullying research 2.0: leverage for interventions”**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. Meeting overview:

The SGM has taken place virtually on October 28th and 29th by means of the platform Zoom (account made available by the University of Bologna). It has been co-organized by Cristian Balducci, University of Bologna, Italy; Elfi Baillien, KU Leuven, Belgium; and Alfredo Rodriguez Munoz, Complutense University Madrid, Spain. The theme of the meeting was workplace bullying research, with an emphasis on methodological issues (tools, methods, designs) and interventions (with a primary, secondary, or tertiary focus).

Two keynotes have been given:

- 1) Guy Notelaers (University of Bergen): Construct validity in workplace bullying research: A methodological challenge for researchers and interventionists
- 2) Michelle Tuckey (University of South Australia): Organisational interventions for workplace bullying: Theory and practice.

A total of 28 participants had registered for the meeting, coming from European (UK, Belgium, Italy, Norway, Denmark, Sweden, Spain, Finland, Portugal) and non-European (USA, Canada, India, Australia) countries.

2. Key Highlights:

- The two virtual days were organized as a plenary session. This format operated smoothly and we saw a very intensive participation. On average, there were 20-22 participants connected during each day. The time allocated to each presentation (30 minutes) made possible to have an adequate (i.e., participated, lively and fruitful) discussion.
- The fourteen presentations were of very high quality and addressed a variety of innovative topics related to bullying such as the development of a bystander typology scale, cyberbullying, the role of stress preventive management competences in the prevention of bullying, trajectories of bullying across time and relationship with different strain indicators, development of assessment tools for early identification of the risk of bullying.
- The presented studies evidenced the variety of the methodologies adopted by researchers in this area, including classical longitudinal designs, diary studies, and qualitative investigations. This underlines that the field is moving beyond the traditional cross-sectional designs.

3. Meeting Outcomes:

- New networks have been established within subgroups of participants based on common research interests. These subgroups have already planned meetings at the end of 2021/beginning of 2022 to develop concrete collaborations.
- Organizers are making plans for developing a position paper (or a review of the literature) on bullying to be sent for publications to EJWOP or OPR.

Activity Report

EAWOP Small Group Meeting (SGM):

“Workplace bullying research 2.0: leverage for interventions”

1. Event General Information

The meeting took place virtually on October 28th and 29th 2021 (from 10 am to 5 pm) via Zoom, by using the account made available by the University of Bologna. The meeting was organized by Cristian Balducci (University of Bologna), Elfi Baillien (KU Leuven) and Alfredo Rodriguez Munoz (Complutense University Madrid). The virtual modality was chosen given the restrictions associated with the Covid pandemic and the trend of infections in many EU countries. Initially, it was planned to have a physical part of the SGM during the EAWOP congress. However, again due to the COVID pandemic, it was decided to cancel such part of the SGM – also following the cancellation of the EAWOP congress in Glasgow.

A total of 31 participants (including the three organizers) attended the meeting. Participants came from several different countries, namely United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (6), Portugal (2), Belgium (4), Norway (3), Sweden (1), Italy (2), Spain (5), India (1), Denmark (2), United States of America (1), Finland (1), Australia (3). Participants represented a total of 18 different Institutions, mainly from European countries (see ANNEX 2).

1. Program overview and course of the meeting

The main topics addressed by the meeting were related to interventions to prevent/tackle workplace bullying and to advancements in research designs and methodological issues in workplace bullying research. We chose these two main topics because we identified important gaps in the literature in these areas. The two keynote presentations were strictly related to the chosen topics. The first keynote was delivered by Guy Notelaers at the beginning of the first virtual day and dealt with construct validity in workplace bullying research. The presentation focused on the correct operationalization and measurement of bullying. The second keynote opened the second virtual day of the meeting and was delivered by Michelle Tuckey. She focused on the development, testing, and evaluation of an organisational intervention for workplace bullying addressing work organisation practices as a root cause of this form of mistreatment.

The 12 abstracts received (ANNEX 3) addressed the following main topics:

- antecedents of bullying such as the role of leadership styles/managerial competences and human resources practices in the development/prevention of bullying, including implications for interventions (4 papers);
- development of tools to operationalize important aspects of the bullying process, such as assessment tools for evaluating the risk of bullying development and bystander behaviour (2 papers);
- interventions on bullying such as on bystanders (2 papers);
- consequences of bullying for both targets and perpetrators and coping processes, including factors affecting such aspects of bullying (3 papers).

An additional paper presented a critical conceptual analysis of co-worker reactions to interpersonal mistreatment.

Each presenter was addressed to a time slot of 30 minutes (20 minutes for presenting the study plus 10 minutes for discussion and questions and answers). This ensured sufficient time for having an exchange between presenters and audience and for accommodating different questions and elaborated answers following each presentation. The two keynotes had 45

minutes for presenting. After the keynote there was intense discussion, also through the Zoom chat facility.

Each day was organized with a keynote presentation at the beginning, followed by six paper presentations. All the meetings were in plenary session.

Everything worked as planned and the event can be regarded as a success. The relatively low number of participants and the fact that several participants had already met in the past and/or built on earlier collaborations, ensured an open, friendly, and informal the atmosphere.

3. Short Description of the SGM Topic Discussion

There is increasing awareness among scholars in the field on the importance of conducting methodologically solid research to advance our understanding of bullying (Nielsen and Einarsen, 2018). In line with this idea, the scholars attending the meeting used a variety of research designs including classical longitudinal studies, diary studies, qualitative investigations and even randomized controlled trials. Discussions about participants were generally around the pros and cons of each design. It is clear that each solution has limitations (e.g., in classical longitudinal designs a critical aspect is the chosen time lag, in diary studies a potential problem is that a too short observation period is usually considered). The adoption of a specific design may also be related to the bullying-related issue examined – different issues may need a different design approach. Overall, it was clear during the meeting discussion that researchers are starting to think more strategically about design issues, and this will most likely benefit the quality of bullying research.

Another topic that received attention during the meeting was the threats to construct validity that may arise in connection to the data usually collected by researchers in the field. Samples usually have a low base rate of individuals exposed to bullying, with most participants not being targets or undergoing very rarely bullying behaviours. Consequently, all the knowledge deriving from such studies may not regard, strictly speaking, bullying and its antecedents and consequences, since the phenomenon is not very well represented in the data. Solutions to this potential problem has been proposed in the presentation by Guy Notelaers, such as using a logistic regression approach (which, however, has also drawbacks). There was discussion among participants about this and related measurement issues.

A final point of discussion was related to interventions and specifically to the appropriateness of a randomized controlled trial design to fully documenting the efficacy and effectiveness of interventions. On this, the discussion pointed to the opportunity of adopting a more flexible approach, trying to acknowledge the specificity of the context, and paying attention to the process of implementation and its evaluation. This is in line with recommendations increasingly given about organizational interventions for job stress prevention.

4. Meeting Implications/Outcomes

- In terms of scientific output, the organizers of the SMG and some additional participants are developing a position paper insisting on the limitations of available research on bullying and on indicating avenues for future research. The paper will be sent to EJWOP as a first choice.
- Additionally, new collaborations among participants have been started leading to a proposal for symposium on bullying at the next EAHP conference (Bordeaux, July 2022). Initially the proposal was submitted to EAWOP conference Glasgow, which was cancelled in December 2021 due to the pandemic.
- Informal networks have also been established followed by collaborations on specific projects. To give an example, based on a Belgian project aiming at the development of a tool for bullying risk assessment (PIs: Elfi Baillien), a network has been created with the idea of conducting

validation work of such workplace bullying risk assessment in different EU countries. Additional networks have also been established on interventions on workplace bullying.

4. Small Group Meeting evaluation.

The meeting worked very well, in our opinion, despite being virtual. We believe that the success is related to the small number of participants (< 30, excluding the organizers), adequate time allocated to each presentation including time for discussion (30 minutes), and the fact that several participants already collaborated before the meeting adding to an informal and productive climate. The Zoom chat was very useful for continuing discussions among participants in parallel to presentations. Additionally, we included some simple entertainment here and there by using the survey facility provided by Zoom, which was also appreciated. This was useful to alleviate a bit the fatigue usually associated with long virtual meetings and to have some fun together. Actually, at the end, the perceived success of the meeting was even beyond our initial expectations. The following are some example emails received after the meeting, attesting that the perception of participants regarding the success of the meeting was in line with our impression.

Da: XXX>

Inviato: venerdì 12 novembre 2021 12:42

A: Elfi Baillien <elfi.baillien@kuleuven.be>; Cristian Balducci <cristian.balducci3@unibo.it>; Alfredo Rodríguez Muñoz <alfredo.rodriguez@psi.ucm.es>

Oggetto: RE: Follow up - Workplace Bullying Research 2.0: leverage for interventions

Dear Elfi, Cristian and Alfredo,

Many thanks for organising such a wonderful event and sending these follow up resources. While it's sad to hear that the physical event will not take place in January, this is very understandable and I'm hopeful there will be many opportunities to meet in the future.

Thanks again,

XXX

Da: XXX

Inviato: venerdì 12 novembre 2021 12:20

A: Elfi Baillien <elfi.baillien@kuleuven.be>; Cristian Balducci <cristian.balducci3@unibo.it>; Alfredo Rodríguez Muñoz <alfredo.rodriguez@psi.ucm.es>

Oggetto: SV: Follow up - Workplace Bullying Research 2.0: leverage for interventions

Dear Christian, Alfredo and Elfi,

Thank you so much for organizing two great days with much learning opportunity! I really enjoyed it! (and thanks for the funny parts!!)

With regards to your decision, I think it is wise. I have decided not to go for the very same reasons that you outline. Personally I have just had my twins home for 6 days following possible exposure from classmates (no covid luckily).

But it is really a great pity that the pandemic once again prevents us from meeting each other. Hope that this will not be the case with our 2022 IAWBH conference (and if so our previous experience with the virtual platform Whova was fantastic).

Looking forward to catching up again and stay safe!

All the best and once again THANKS!

Venlig hilsen

XXX

Lektor

Institut for Psykologi (00)

Da: XXX

Inviato: giovedì 4 novembre 2021 03:18

A: Elfi Baillien <elfi.baillien@kuleuven.be>; Guy Louis Alice Notelaers <Guy.Notelaers@uib.no>

Cc: Alfredo Rodríguez Muñoz <alfredo.rodriguez@psi.ucm.es>; Cristian Balducci <cristian.balducci3@unibo.it>; SGM WBR Committee <sgm.wbr@gmail.com>

Oggetto: RE: Thank you!

Hello Elfi, hello all

It was great to be involved. Please find attached my presentation slides to share.

I look forward to more info on next steps. I think meeting again at OHP or IAWBH would work for me.

Kind regards

XXX

ANNEX 1 – Final program of the meeting

EAWOP Small Group Meeting: “Workplace bullying research 2.0: leverage for interventions”. Program of online meetings October 28 and 29, 2021

Time (CEST)	Day 1, Thursday 28 th October 2021(Virtual):
	Zoom meeting at: XXX Meeting ID: 731 023 0655; Passcode: 504591
10:00 – 10:30	Intro to the meeting: Cristian Balducci, Elfi Baillien, Alfredo Rodriguez-Muñoz
10:30 – 11:00	Keynote 1 – Notelaers, G.: Construct validity in workplace bullying research: A methodological challenge for researchers and interventionists
11:00 – 11:30	
11.30 – 12:00	Coffee Break
12:00 – 12:30	1-Ng, Niven: Development and validation of Bystander Typology Scale (BTS)
12:30 – 13:00	2-Berger, Czakert: Working anytime, anywhere, and the risk of workplace cyberbullying: The impact of transformational and laissez-faire leadership
13.00 – 14.30	Lunch break
14:30 – 15:00	3-Noronha, Bisht, D’Cruz: Beyond the personal to the organizational: Workplace courage underpins effective anti-bullying diversity and inclusion interventions for LGBTs
15:00 – 15:30	4-Einarsen K., Nielsen, Hetland, Olsen, Zahlquist, Mikkelsen, Koløen, Einarsen S.V.: Workplace intervention against workplace bullying and harassment: A bystander approach.
15:30 – 16:00	5-Balducci, Vignoli, Guglielmi: Exploring the role of supervisor stress preventive management competencies in the relationships between working conditions, employee exposure to bullying behavior and workplace phobic anxiety: A weekly diary study
16:00 – 16:20	Coffee Break
16.20 – 16.50	6-Samnani, Power: Can HRM break the cycles of employee mistreatment? Exploring revenge cognitions and retaliatory counterproductive work behavior.

(Program of day 2 follows)

Time (CEST)	Day 2, Friday 29 th October 2021 (Virtual):
	Zoom meeting at: XXX Meeting ID: 731 023 0655; Passcode: 504591
10:00 – 10:30	Keynote 2 – Tuckey, M.: Organisational interventions for workplace bullying: Theory and practice
10:30 – 11:00	
11:00 – 11:30	7-Farley, Song, Pieniazek, Unsworth, Wuwei: How do team support, team psychological safety, and team mindfulness influence coping responses to incivility? A multi-level investigation
11.30 – 12:00	Coffee Break
12:00 – 12:30	8-Rodríguez-Muñoz, Antino, Ruiz-Zorrilla, Sanz-Vergel, Bakker: Trajectories of workplace bullying and its impact on strain: Evidence from two intensive longitudinal studies
12:30 – 13:00	9-Ozer, Escartin, Griep: Breaking the cycle of perpetration: Longitudinal and diary studies on how workplace bullying perpetration is triggered and how perpetrators are impacted
13.00 – 14.30	Lunch break
14:30 – 15:00	10-Azzarouali, Baillien, De Witte, Notelaers: The development of COBHRA - A concise risk assessment tool for workplace bullying and harassment
15:00 – 15:30	11-Conway, Burr, Rose, Clausen, Balducci: Antecedents of workplace bullying among employees in Germany: five-year lagged effects of job demands and job resources
15:30 – 16:00	12-Bastiaensen, Baillien, Brebels: To help or not to help, is that the (only) question? Putting co-worker reactions to interpersonal mistreatment in context.
16:00 – 16:20	Coffee Break
16.20 – 16.50	Discussion and closure of the virtual part of the SGM

ANNEX 2
LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

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