Non Sequitur | Wiley

You could avoid gettin' your boat stuck at low tide if you'd just check the tide charts, Eddie...

That'd be a conflict of interest, Flo...

UH...

What?

I've got my own timetable that suits my agender, and I'm not gonna let some egghead scientists mess with it!

So... reality is subjective?

A-yeah... it's in the constitution! Look it up...

...in the cable news section of wikipedia?
Adequacy of a Sample Workplace Bullying Policy: Results of a Mixed-Methods Systematic Review

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Background

Our previous qualitative work illustrates WPB’s paradox:

• Workplace bullying (WPB) represents an ongoing, complex interpersonal interchange that seems impenetrable.
  • [The Drunken Driver has the Right-of-Way (Coen, 2009)]

• WPB tends to demand emotional responses and limited effective responses or remedies.

• WPB lexicon is limited and disparate (Dzurec; Dzurec, et al., 2012, 2013).
Study Purpose

Assess congruence:
• Broad policy guidelines and obligations
• Emergent themes from a mixed-methods review of workplace bullying research
Design and Methods

Sequential, longitudinal, mixed methods approach

First Prong
Policy Review
• Context
• Content

Second Prong
Literature Review
• Qualitative
• Quantitative
Assumptions Underlying Approach:

• Multiple philosophical perspectives enhance ‘knowing’
• Qualitative and quantitative findings are equally useful
• Explanation and understanding strengthen outcomes
• Pragmatism enhances breadth of awareness
Procedures/Prong I - Examined Policy Context

Reviewed Healthy Workplace Bill Website: http://healthyworkplacebill.org/

WPB Statistics: (as of May 30, 2013)
- No state has enacted a law against WPB
- 15 states had previous bills
- 25 states have legislation (10 are active)
- 16 states have identified WPB coordinators
- 10 states have no WPB-related activity
Procedures/Prong I (continued) - Examined Policy Sites

• [http://www.lni.wa.gov/Safety/Research/Files/Bullying.pdf](http://www.lni.wa.gov/Safety/Research/Files/Bullying.pdf) (inactive)

Company X considers workplace bullying unacceptable and will not tolerate it under any circumstances.

Workplace bullying is behavior that harms, intimidates, offends, degrades or humiliates an employee or a stakeholder in the University, possibly in front of other employees, clients, or customers. Workplace bullying may cause the loss of trained and talented employees and students, reduce productivity and morale, and create legal risks.

Company X believes all employees and students should be able to work in an environment free of bullying. Managers and supervisors must ensure no one is bullied.

Company X has grievance and investigation procedures to deal with workplace bullying. Any reports of workplace bullying will be treated seriously and investigated promptly, confidentially and impartially.
Company X encourages all employees and students to report workplace bullying. Managers and supervisors will ensure employees who make complaints, or witnesses, are not victimized.

Disciplinary action will be taken against anyone who bullies an employee, a student, or a stakeholder in the University. Discipline may involve a warning, transfer, counseling, demotion or dismissal, depending on the circumstances.

The contact person for bullying at this workplace is:

Name: ________________________

Contact Information: _______________________

Procedures/Prong II - Qualitative

• Continued ongoing analysis of qualitative studies to find emergent themes

• Lanigan’s (1988) entailed process:

   Description (data) ➔ Interpretation (meaning) ➔ Reduction (themes)
Procedures/Prong II - Quantitative

• Searched primary publications sites proposed by Gillen 2012 (Accessed Medline, Psych Info, CINAHL, EBSCO)

• Initially restricted search to nursing research (keywords ‘bullying interventions’ and ‘nursing’)

• Broadened to search for intervention studies in other, non-nursing workplace environments
Mixed-Method Analysis Findings
Overriding Theme

WPB policy and interventions are constrained
Regarding U.S. State-Level Policies

- Marked policy consistency across states
- Largely follow policy from Washington/Australia
  - (original site no longer active)
- Progress is irregular, at best
WPB policy formats may not be adequate:
Findings of our study indicate that something is missing
Qualitative Synthesis Illustrated:

• Complexity of victim experiences
  • Ready administrative dismissal (and thus, tacit approval)
  • Out-of-context judgments
  • Inadequacy of response
• Victims tend to doubt their own experiences; their administrators contribute to their sense of uncertainty.

• Doubt is reinforced by inadequate language about the WPB experience overall.
Quantitative Analysis Shows:

• Few instruments characterize bullying behaviors and victim responses.
• There are numerous descriptive, correlational, and even causal comparative studies identifying WPB antecedents and consequents.
• We found no intervention studies.
There is a significant gap in WPB knowledge and after 30 years, there are no clear interventions.
As Ariely (2011) noted, “...unless we admit how complex the world is and how little we really know, we will not search for better questions, better ways to comprehend the world, and better answers” (http://hbr.org/2011/09/what-was-the-question/ar/pr).
Our findings led to new questions:

• Have researchers, administrators, and policy experts walked away from the complex problems of WPB in the U.S. and internationally?

• Have they come to ‘premature closure’ (Wollman, Eylon & Lawson, 1980) regarding the issue?
Moreover, our findings suggest important next steps:
Recognizing and naming both objective and subjective issues inherent in WPB will strengthen methods to address it:
• Develop measures to operationalize objective and subjective WBP constructs.

• Develop and test relevant interventions.

• Assess the contribution of empirical literature to advancing bullying laws worldwide.
Policies Will Optimally Address:

1. A broader WPB lexicon
2. Bullies’ variable and obtuse approaches
3. Character of WPB’s emotional language
4. The context of denial
5. Vulnerable victims’ catastrophization behavior
6. Absent intervention studies
A short-lived IMPENDING OPPORTUNITY
Maine’s Amendment of LD-1201

‘Resolve, Directing the Workers’ Compensation Board to Study the Issue of Addressing Psychological and Physical Harm to Employees Due to Abusive Work Environments’

Vetoed by the Governor May 31, 2013; on June 3, 2013, Senate voted not to override the veto
Ongoing, focused, sanctioned, and evidence-based mixed-methods study results
Conclusions

• WPB policies may be enhanced by ongoing mixed-methods analyses of relevant constructs;

• Proactive, informed consideration and definition of interpersonal aspects of workplace bullying, at personal and organizational levels, should guide future, funded WPB research and state level policy development.
References

Go to:

https://nursing.kent.edu/content/wpb-and-policy-references
For WPB victims, reality *may* arise from subjectivity
(“in the cable news section of Wikipedia?”)
(–http://www.gocomics.com/nonsequitur/2013/01/29)

*Relevant* policy and research will acknowledge that
Websites

• http://www.lni.wa.gov/Safety/Research/Files/FY13-204SHARPBullyingFactsheet.pdf

• http://www.lni.wa.gov/Safety/Research/Files/Bullying.pdf