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Development of a multi factored approach toward the assessment of workplace bullying, assertive, passive, aggressive and coping behaviors

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Introduction: Work place bullying is one of the most harmful social stressors in organization. Trepanier, Fernet and Austin, 2013, p.123. Long-term project goal is to develop a quantitative battery of scales to identify individuals likely to engage in workplace bullying behavior. A comprehensive assessment would include interpersonal influence, coping, anger, teamwork and conflict scales which may provide reliable and valid psychometric data. This study is the first phase examining of interpersonal influence and coping instrumentation. Carver, Scheier and Weintraub (1989) proposed four coping scales which can be used to assess work place bullying: denial (refusal to acknowledge stressor), behavioral disengagement (goal attainment reduction), mental disengagement (goal achievement distracted thinking) and restraint (not acting prematurely). Glaser (n.d.) developed assertive, passive, openly aggressive and concealed aggressive scales which were selected from the Interpersonal Influence Inventory. Participants were Bachelor of Science in nursing undergraduate students who completed the questionnaire consisting of the four Carver et al., (1989) coping scales and the four Glaser (n.d.) interpersonal influence scales.

Hypothesis 1: Relationship among assertive, denial and behavioral disengagement.

Hypothesis 2: Relationship among passive, concealed aggressive and mental disengagement.

Hypothesis 3: Small correlations among the openly aggressive, concealed aggressive, mental disengagement, behavioral disengagement and restraint. Using SPSS 25, Pearson correlational analyses was used to determine the relationship among the Carver et al. (1989) and Glaser (n.d.) scales. Coefficient alpha reliability estimates would be calculated for each scale.

Results

Hypothesis 1: Correlational analysis revealed the denial coping scale (-0.388, $p=0.002$) and behavioral disengagement coping scale (-0.357, $p=0.005$) were negatively correlated with assertive scale. Hypothesis 2: The passive was positively correlated with mental disengagement scale (0.264, $p=0.04$). A significant positive coefficient was found between the passive and concealed aggression scales (0.367, $p=0.004$). Hypothesis 3: Correlation coefficients among the openly aggressive, concealed aggressive, mental disengagement, behavioral disengagement, and restraint ranged from 0.193 to -0.039. The reported findings suggest the interpersonal influence scales (assertive, passive, concealed aggressive, openly aggressive) and coping scales (denial, behavioral disengagement, restraint) offer a preliminary step toward developing a battery of scales designed to assess workplace bullying.

Biography

Dale M Hilty, Associate Professor at the Mt. Carmel College of Nursing. He received his PhD in counseling psychology from the Department of Psychology at The Ohio State University. He has published studies in the areas of psychology, sociology, and religion. Between April 2017 and April 2018, his ten research teams published 55 posters at local, state, regional, national, and international nursing conferences.