

Bullies, Browbeaters, and Bulldozers:  
Expectancy Violation and Management Intervention Processes of Workplace Bullying

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## **Abstract**

Bullies, browbeaters, and bulldozers are a prevalent problem within workplaces (Namie, 2017), resulting in extreme emotional effects for employees and intense impact on the bottom line of organizations (Olive & Cangemi, 2015). As workplace bullying continues to occur throughout many organizations, expectations for communication and behavior are repeatedly violated. Thus, expectancy violations theory (EVT) provides framework for the following workplace bullying behavior research. The relevant literature regarding EVT was reviewed, and its framing of intervention processes of workplace bullying, emotional cognitive response, and perceived organizational value of bullies (high-value bullies) was established. The purpose of the present empirical study is to examine a manager's decision to intervene in a workplace bullying relationship based on the level of the target's emotional response to the bullying interaction and based on the perceived cost to the manager of a high-value bully. An EVT framework was applied to generate hypotheses. Expectancy violations theory provides a framework for researching the intricate components of a workplace bullying relationship. The results supported the hypotheses. Implication and limitations of the study are discussed.

*Keywords:* workplace bullying, emotional response, expectancy violations theory, intervention, high-value bully, communication

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## **CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION**

Communication, if used strategically, holds the power to bring about positive change. Wielded as an informational, expressional, and influential tool that is readily at one's disposal, communication is often taken for granted, used ineffectively, or even utilized intentionally as a means of causing harm to others. Thus, there is a dark side to communication, where message exchange frames destructive, deleterious, and debilitating relationships. One way in which messages intend harm to others is through acts of bullying that exist across romantic, family, friend, and often, workplace relationships.

Typically, within the workplace, individuals are instructed to leave their personal lives at home and refrain from bringing home the problems that they encounter at work. However, the experience of emotion is part of being human, and for various reasons emotions are expressed to and are hidden from others in and out of the workplace, especially when bullying occurs within the workplace.

According to a survey conducted in May 2014, 33% of American workers wish there were a better way to express their emotions when communicating with others in the workplace (Cotap, Inc., 2014). The study also found that 81% of American workers are challenged when trying to convey emotion to coworkers using digital communications (Cotap, Inc., 2014). In a recent 2017 survey by the Workplace Bullying Institute, 19% of American respondents reported being bullied at work, and 29% of targets stayed silent about their bullying experience.

According to research by Dr. Gary Namie, in 2017, 61% of Americans were found to be aware of abusive conduct in the workplace, and 60.4 million Americans were found to be affected by it. In addition, 61% of bullies were bosses, and 77% of targets lost their jobs, involuntarily or by choice, because of bullying interactions (Namie, 2017). Unfortunately, bullying within the workplace often continues to be ignored and passed over by many individuals, especially those

witnessing the acts. In 2010, 20% of witnesses resigned from their organizations due to workplace bullying (Lieber, 2010). Moreover, bullying within the workplace can create a multitude of issues that eventually negatively impact an organization's bottom line. Lieber (2010) explained the logic behind workplace bullying and the effects it has on organizations, stating that, "Assuming an organization has 1,000 employees, if 25 percent are bullied and 15 percent of those quit as a result, their average "desk/replacement cost" is \$20,000, which comes to an annual cost of \$750,000. Add to those figures two witnesses per bullied employee, with 20 percent of affected employees quitting, and that analysis quickly subtracts \$1.2 million from the bottom line. Thus, a single workplace bully can easily cost an organization approximately \$2 million per year" (p. 93-94). As one might conclude, bullying within organizations is a significant problem that is in desperate need of future direction.

The present study addressed several gaps in the research literature. Past researchers have identified a need for more research to understand bystander, including managerial, intervention in bullying situations (Escartin, 2016; Hodgins, MacCurtain, & Mannix-McNamara, 2014; Nielsen & Einarsen, 2018), and to examine conditional factors (e.g., expectancy violation) with respect to managerial intervention (Frone, 1999; Hayes, 2013, Nielsen & Einarsen, 2018). Managers are the ultimate line of defense when workplace bullying occurs within an organization. The responsibility of mitigating incidents such as bullying within the workplace resides with the organization's managers and/or supervisors.

The purpose of the present study was to investigate under what conditions a manager intervenes when workplace bullying occurs within an organization. Two variables expected to predict managers' interventions are examined in the present study: (a) the target's portrayal of emotion in the workplace over time and (b) the perceived value that the perpetrator/bully brings

to the organization. The present study contributes to the existing research literature by using a values-driven framework to focus on managing interpersonal, organizational, and workplace bullying practices.

### **Defining Workplace Bullying**

The following section presents a definition of workplace bullying and the motivations and characteristics behind the various profiles of bullies, targets, and bystanders. Prior to defining bullying behavior, workplace bullying must be distinguished from organizational conflict. Workplace conflict provides opportunities for constructive processes to occur, whereas bullying, in and out of the workplace, does not. Organizational conflict may arise in situations in which positive intentions exist. Bullying is characterized by additional features of organizational oppression, such as aggression and intent to harm. Below, a definition of workplace bullying, bully profiles, types of bullying behavior, and bullied target and bystander profiles are presented in this section.

Tracy, Lutgen-Sandvik, and Alberts (2005) define bullying as “a form of hostile, negative social interaction that is repetitive, patterned and ongoing, yet unwanted and unsolicited” (p. 4). This act of bullying continues to exist in many arenas across the globe including schools, organizations, sports, and media. Although bullying is prevalent, many individuals are unequipped to handle this type of intimidation, especially when bullying transpires within the workplace.

Keashly and Nowell (2011, p. 424) define workplace bullying as: a pattern of repeated hostile behaviour over an extended period of time; actual or perceived intent to harm on the part of the actor [bully]; one party being unable to defend him or herself; [and] a power imbalance between parties.

As defined above, workplace bullying represents a form of organizational maltreatment that can be extremely difficult for targets to navigate. Some organizations have adopted workplace bullying policies that provide necessary steps if hostility in the workplace transpires (Salin, 2008).

In addition to workplace bullying, three types of bullies exist inside and outside of organizations (Lutgen-Sandvik & Fletcher, 2013). Accidental bullies are individuals who are motivated by economic resource goals, set extremely tight deadlines, and are usually unaware of their behavior. Narcissistic bullies are those driven by fear, motivated by identity/justice goals, and are talented in consistently altering their communication style. Psychopathic bullies are manipulative individuals in their interactions with others, who are motivated by mostly power goals, and display fake emotions out of self-gain (Lutgen-Sandvik & Fletcher, 2013). Many individuals think of a bully as just one profile, therefore these types provide guidance in understanding specific bullies in the workplace, and how individuals should handle bullying situations. For example, accidental bullies might benefit from managers or coworkers pointing out their behavior as bullying, thereby increasing the bullies' awareness of the effects of their behavior which may cause them to lessen their bullying behavior. Whereas narcissistic bullies are less likely to change their behavior even if they know that their actions are hurting others. More often, an organization would profit from releasing a narcissistic bullying employee from the company. However, it can be most difficult to recognize certain profiles of bullying behavior, especially that of psychopathic bullies, because these bullies tend to be charming and grandiose in their communication with others. Psychopathic bullies are extremely dangerous and if identified, should be immediately discharged from the organization.

In addition to delineating bully profiles, types of bullying behavior can be delineated. Hall (2016) identified six types of bullying behavior: physical, verbal, social/relational, cyber-bullying, property, and sexual bullying, social bullying, and cyber-bullying were examined in the present study. According to Hall (2016), verbal bullying includes name-calling, producing mean comments, and saying something scary or intimidating to or about another individual. Social bullying involves turning others against an individual, starting false rumors, and excluding an individual from the group. Cyber-bullying includes posting negative information about someone on the internet, sending nasty emails or text messages to someone, and producing unkind comments online about an individual (Hall, 2016).

In addition to bullies fitting profiles, targets and bystanders also fit specific profiles and motivations. Lutgen-Sandvik and Fletcher (2013) present four overarching target profiles. The first target profile represents aggressive provocative targets. These tend to be less-agreeable individuals motivated by social power goals. The second target profile is characterized as assertive provocative targets who are skillful individuals who often speak their mind and are motivated by justice/economic personal goals. The third target profile is referred to as submissive targets characterized as insecure and passive individuals who do not tend to defend themselves and are motivated by social functionality goals. The fourth and final target profile is identified as rigidly conscientious. Targets in this profile are organized and hardworking individuals often viewed as being condescending by others and who are motivated by social power goals (Lutgen-Sandvik & Fletcher, 2013). These profile traits often prompt bullies to take action, resulting in the individual becoming a target of bullying.

Just as there are three bully profiles, there are also three bystander profiles (Lutgen-Sandvik & Fletcher, 2013). Bully ally bystanders are motivated by economic resource,

relationship, identity, justice, and power/hostility goals; these individuals support bullies. The target ally bystanders are individuals who protect targets and are motivated by economic resource, justice, and relationship goals. Neutral or silent bystanders are characterized as individuals motivated by economic resource, identity and relationship goals who tend to stay as far away from bullying situations as possible (Lutgen-Sandvik & Fletcher, 2013).

The profiles for bullies, targets, and bystanders enable organizations to better pinpoint these individuals and begin to resolve the bullying issue. In understanding the basic motivations and functionality underlying the behavior of these bullies, targets, and bystanders those investigating a bullying interaction within a workplace might be better equipped to communicate and thereby apply effective interventions to resolve the workplace bullying.

Resolution of a workplace bullying issue may result in an exit strategy, whereby bullies are released from their organizational duties. However, it is not always the case that workplace bullying issues are resolved, because bullying within the workplace is often ignored and passed over by many individuals, especially managerial staff. Throughout many workplace bullying relationships, the target is at a loss.

Targets are often the ones who find themselves exiting an organization after having this kind of bullying relationship with another person. Yet, many individuals stay in an unhealthy bullying relationship at work, hoping it will improve someday or that the bully will become bored or uninterested in the target. In many ways, silence is viewed by bullies as a form of consent and so, the browbeating continues, verbally, nonverbally, and sometimes, physically. Targets of bullying experience intense emotions that are difficult to identify, and manage, especially when the bullying occurs within organizations.

## **Emotion and Workplace Bullying**

Emotion, particularly negative emotion, is often hidden within the workplace in a myriad of ways. Individuals stay silent, avoiding conversations about the appalling and repugnant goings-on that continually transpire within the workplace. Questions that frame the various manners in which portraying emotion in the workplace or discussing their situation is viewed include: Are employees living in fear of speaking the truth? Do they fear there will be consequences to the truth? Are they embarrassed? Do they feel their experience is believable?

Targets of workplace bullying might feel or be made to believe that they are simply taking the bullying experience or perceived conflict situation too personally. Hample and Dallinger (1995) described taking conflict personally as “a feeling of being personally engaged in a punishing life event,” whereby the person “feels threatened, anxious, damaged, devalued, and insulted” (p. 306). When taking conflict personally, emotions become more apparent and easily spotted. Additionally, one’s cognitive processes can negatively affect the technique used to try to solve the problem. Wallenfelsz and Hample (2010) stated that “prolonged thinking about conflict is counterproductive to effective conflict resolution unless it is accompanied by interpersonal communication” (p. 475). By overdramatizing the situation in one’s mind, the actual interaction might not succeed in resolving the conflict at hand. This tends to also apply to workplace bullying narratives and the way in which one communicates his or her workplace bullying experience. Thus, reactions to taking conflict personally and reactions to workplace bullying occurrences are portrayed similarly. Therefore, when emotions are heightened, regardless of whether it is due to workplace bullying or taking conflict personally, it may become difficult for others to believe that individual, resulting in a bully sliding by without any consequences.

Knowing that many bullying narratives are presumed to be exaggerated and sensationalized, many bullying occurrences within the workplace often go unreported, and sometimes, unnoticed. Moreover, “it is incredibly difficult for targets to report instances of bullying in part because they fear others will make negative judgements about the type of worker or person they are” (Tye-Williams & Ruble, 2017, p. 1). Employees tend to feel ashamed or embarrassed about what is happening to them. That being said, “stories have the power to bring about action” (Tye-Williams & Ruble, 2017, p. 1), and the way in which one tells his or her workplace bullying story can strongly influence the listener. In a study conducted on the various perceptions of workplace bullying narratives, Tye-Williams and Ruble (2017) suggested that to be taken seriously, targets of workplace bullying should communicate their narratives clearly and coherently, while expressing moderate levels of emotion when telling their story.

Nonetheless, it can be difficult for employees to remain calm and collected when communicating their gut-wrenching experiences. When an employee is experiencing heightened emotions after being bullied, the narrative can become fuzzy and unclear out of shock or disturbance that he or she has been treated in such a fashion (i.e., violating one’s expectations for appropriate and respectful human behavior). It may also benefit the bully-target to document the experience as it occurs and take some time to decompress so that one may clearly explain his or her story.

Additionally, the researchers recommend that organizations hire employees with strong interpersonal communication and listening skills to recognize and report bullying situations and empathize with those who might be experiencing workplace bullying (Tye-Williams & Ruble, 2017). Those lacking in interpersonal communication skills may not want to or be able to relate to one’s victimization experience, thus shrugging off the request for assistance. However, there is

still the possibility that an intervention does not take place even after a target has clearly and coherently narrated his or her experience to upper management, thus the bulldozing continues.

Assuming this is the case, prolonged portrayal of negative emotion at work regarding the victimization experience might result in management intervening due to expectancy violations of how the organization's employees should behave within the workplace.

### **Expectancy Violations Theory, Target Emotion, and Manager Intervention**

Established in 1978 as an interpersonal communication theory, Judee Burgoon's expectancy violations theory (EVT) "predicts and explains the effects of nonverbal behavior violations on interpersonal communication outcomes such as attraction, credibility, persuasion, and smooth interactions" (Burgoon, 2015, p. 287). According to EVT, people hold two types of expectancies for one another's behaviors (Burgoon & Hale, 1988; Burgoon, Stern, & Dillman, 1995; Guerrero, 2013). Predictive expectancies are based on knowing a person's routine behavior in particular situations, whereas prescriptive expectancies are based on social appropriateness of a specific situation and the need to conform to social norms (Guerrero, 2013). Put in other words, predictive expectancies are governed by how a person behaves ordinarily, and prescriptive expectancies are governed by how one should behave based upon societal rules. Positive emotions are customary following a situation where one person exceeds another's expectations, whereas negative emotions tend to form based on one person failing to meet another's expectations. Additionally, "unmet expectations are expectancy violations; met expectations are expectancy confirmations" (Burgoon, 2015, p. 3).

Another factor of Burgoon's EVT is the concept of communicator reward valence (CRV), which is used by the receiver of the violation to determine the reward value of the violator as a positive or negative violation of expectations (Burgoon, 2015; Burgoon & Hale,

1988; Burgoon et al., 1989; Burgoon, Olney & Coker, 1987; Levine et al., 2000). CRV is used to determine the significance or benefits of interacting with another individual. People may respond to someone failing to meet their expectations, or a negative expectancy violation by matching or offsetting the expectancy violation depending on the reward value. For example, Pat, an employee at a restaurant, is called a derogatory name by a fellow employee.

Pat matches the vulgarity with a similarly vulgar and look of disgust, resulting in a reciprocation of behavior as the fellow employee is considered an unrewarding individual to Pat. However, Pat might smile and laugh off his or her discomfort if the owner calls him or her the same derogatory name, resulting in compensation of the expectancy violation due to the owner being considered a highly rewarding individual based on his or her status/power. This supports the statement that “people are more likely to respond to negative expectancy violations positively when the violator is rewarding” (Guerrero, 2013, p. 121). CRV might serve as a predictor of bully-targets’ tendency to conceal their emotions in the workplace and tend to remain silent about their bullying experiences. Additionally, if a workplace bully is considered to be rewarding or highly valued to upper management for perceived contributions to the organization, upper management might respond to the negative expectancy violations of bullying behavior positively to maintain the considerable rewards that the organization is reaping.

As stated above, in the conceptualization of EVT, predictive expectancies focus on routine behavior, and prescriptive expectancies center around the expectation of how one should behave based on social norms. A manager will likely develop predictive and prescriptive expectations for employees’ emotional displays within the workplace. Managers presumably hold a predictive expectancy for a bullied target’s emotional displays based on the target’s previous, typical behavior. If the target continues to be bullied to the point that the target displays

emotions that violate this expectation, then the manager may be incentivized to intervene in the workplace bullying situation. Similarly, if a manager holds a prescriptive expectancy for emotional displays in the organization to maintain social appropriateness, and the target exhibits levels of emotion in the workplace that breach those expectations, then this violation of expectations could also result in an intervention in the workplace bullying situation. See *Appendix A* for defining functions of a manager.

Therefore, the following hypothesis will be tested:

*Hypothesis 1: A target's manager will intervene in a bullying situation to the extent that the bullied target's emotional display violates the manager's predictive and prescriptive expectations for emotional displays within the workplace.*

### **High-Value Bully**

In a study of organizational responses to workplace bullying, Ferris (2004) found that workers anticipated their supervisors to intercede in the bullying interaction and guarantee courteous and considerate treatment on the job. Although this is an expectation of employees, supervisors do not always intervene. The lack of intervention can have negative implications for the entire organization, including implicitly endorsing continual cycles of maltreatment within their divisions. (Mathisen, Einarsen, & Mykletun, 2011). Ferris (2004) identified three organizational responses: (1) the conduct is admissible, (2) the conduct is identified as unprofessional and evenly distributed to both individuals as a character clash; and (3) the conduct is damaging and tasteless. These three responses reflect seeing no evil, hearing no evil, and speaking no evil.

Ferris (2004) explains “seeing no evil” (Response 1 above) as the representative of an organization recognizing the bullying behavior and making an active choice to “normalize” the

behavior (p. 391). This comes from the ‘suck it up’ mentality, where targets may be viewed as taking conflict personally. “Occasionally, representatives acknowledged harm to the employee, but viewed this as a weakness on the part of the employee and subsequently advised the employee to ‘toughen-up’ and become more resilient to the behaviours they had experienced” (Ferris, 2004, p. 391). Whereas Response 2 above, “hearing no evil is being aware that there is a conflict present, but ultimately, responsibility is evenly distributed to both individuals, “often ‘blaming the victim’ for having the kind of personality that irritated the bully” (Ferris, 2004, p. 392). Additionally, this perspective suggests a misinterpretation of the act of bullying, and representatives would often “deny that the situation was relevant to the organisation because the behaviours did not fall under protected grounds (e.g., sexual, or racial harassment) as specified by human rights legislation” (Ferris, 2004, p. 392). Response 3 is regarded as recognizing the bullying behavior as being detrimental to the individual and the organization, in which case the organization addresses the complaint and holds the bully accountable for his or her actions (Ferris, 2004). What is most fascinating, is that “these organisations [that represent the typology of speaking no evil] had previously experienced a serious allegation of bullying that had been mismanaged and resulted in a lawsuit or were very disruptive to a manager or workgroup” (Ferris, 2004, p. 392). This research suggests that there is high value placed upon workplace bullies that seems to be worth more to managers and organizations than the effort it takes to address bullying behaviors.

This research suggests that any bully is valued over the target within organizations by normalizing behavior, distributing blame equally between the bully and target, or holding the bully accountable for his or her behavior, of which is viewed as unappealing by the organization due to the perceived creation of disturbance within workgroups. Based on these findings, I define

a high-value bully as an individual whose skills warrant or outweigh the action of repeated, hostile behavior to other individuals within a group. Additionally, I propose that high-value bullies are often found within the workplace.

### **Expectancy Violations Theory, High-Value Bully, and Manager Intervention**

As introduced above, the receiver's assessment of the communicator's reward valence (CRV) determines the advantages of engaging with a communication partner. CRV refers to the net evaluation of both relatively stable pre-interactional factors (i.e., long-term aspects of the communicator and relationship, such as gender, physical attractiveness, personality traits, and status differentials) and relatively fluid interactional factors (i.e., aspects of the communicator that dynamically emerge through conversation, such as the communicator providing validating feedback or conversing in an engaging manner; Burgoon & Hall, 1988). These characteristics combine to create an overall perception of the communicator's value as an interaction partner. For example, when an individual behaves in an unattractive way, the reward valence is determined to be negative. Whereas, when an individual behaves in an appealing nature, the reward valence is perceived to be positive. In merging all assessments of the violator, one may better determine where the violator lies upon the net evaluation continuum. In referencing exchange theory, researchers clarify that when formulating judgement on whether an interaction with the violator is worthwhile, "it means the benefits of interacting with the communicator outweigh the costs" (Burgoon & Hale, 1988, p. 62).

Organizations select, train, and attempt to retain individuals with qualifications, knowledge, skills, and abilities required to contribute to organizational goals. In addition, many organizations are searching to hire and retain employees who possess an exemplary moral compass and/or great capability to treat others as they wish to be treated (Lawrence & Nohria,

2016). However, this may not be the case for all organizations, or organizations may make selection errors resulting in employment of workplace bullies.

Research shows that some employees perceived to mistreat others within organizations maintain their jobs and are often even promoted within the company (Olive & Cangemi, 2015). Numerous members of upper management, often turn a blind eye to unprofessional and harmful behavior exhibited by their employees, especially bullying-related behavior. There is no intervention process occurring, an apparent lack in consequence to the bullying behavior, and noticeable habitual reward for poor behavior.

There is research presented on sales companies stating that unethical salespeople who are efficient in their occupation might be chided more forgivingly by sales managers (Bellizzi & Hasty, 2003; Valentine, Fleischman, & Godkin, 2018). It is concluded from this research that “consequently, sales managers may unknowingly lay a foundation for continued misconduct and unethical reasoning because they ‘just do not see it’ or knowingly establish such a workplace because they ‘do not want to see it’” (Valentine et al., 2018, p. 138). This might also be true for upper management in varying organizations, not only those holding occupations in sales.

As a result, upper management’s choice not to acknowledge workplace bullying within an organization tends to perpetuate the bullying. As previously mentioned, silence is a form of consent that is recognized by the bully. It is, however, important to acknowledge that upper management commonly wrestles with ethical reasoning as workplace bullying situations transpire. The cost of correcting the bully might result in the loss of that bully, thus the loss of the talents and skills associated with that bully. This could result in organizational conflict as upper management hustles to find new talent to replace that individual. Therefore, the common

misperception by management is that the cost of losing the bully might outweigh the benefit of the skills in which the bully contributes to the organization.

Thus, as a result of managers' assessment of high value, these bullies serve as valued organizational assets to the organization. Nonetheless, these high-value bullies acquire a "cold/calculating demeanor, and shallow emotional capacity, which can lead to diminished compassion and empathy for targets, even though they might display disingenuous concern to the contrary", [and] "if left unmanaged or unchecked, individuals exhibiting covert psychopathic tendencies are highly disruptive and create an alarmingly dysfunctional work setting" (Boddy, 2011; Valentine et al., 2018, p. 141). Managers overlooking the mistreatment or the perception of mistreatment within a workplace bullying situation are consciously or unconsciously placing higher value on the bully over the target.

Consequently, upper management might intervene when the high-value bully's CRV slides towards the negative side of the net evaluation continuum, whereby the negative behavior begins to outweigh the high value the bully brings to the organization. In other words, when the high-value bully's costs begin to outweigh the benefits, specifically when the cost outweighs the benefit for the manager of the organization, the manager may find sufficient reason to intervene in the workplace bullying relationship. The expectancy confirmation is that the high-value bully's skills and abilities permit the mistreatment of others within the organization. Management might ignore a high-value bully's behavior until the bully is perceived as a less-valued organizational member (e.g., there is a halt to the bully's contributions in skill to the organization, the organization's bottom line is negatively affected by the bully's behavior, or the bully challenges upper management in a problematic way). Suddenly, the bully, originally of such high value, does not appear so valuable anymore, and the perception of the high-value bully

ultimately shifts into a hostile individual who is now replaceable within the organization. Once this expectancy violation occurs, managers may intervene. Therefore, the following hypothesis will be tested in the proposed study.

*Hypothesis 2: A target's manager will intervene to the extent a bully with high perceived organizational value behaves in ways that negatively affect the manager.*

### **Intervention Processes**

Three intervention processes: primary (prevention), secondary (handling of cases), and tertiary (rehabilitation) have been identified (Nielsen & Einarsen, 2018). Primary interventions are aimed at preventing workplace bullying and include organizations providing discussions or courses on bullying behavior and conflict management (Mikkelsen, HØgh, & Puggaard, 2011; Nielsen & Einarsen, 2018). Initially, primary interventions should be implemented within organizations as a means of decreasing the need for secondary and tertiary interventions. In addition to preventing workplace bullying from occurring, primary interventions may also be aimed at mitigating continual bullying behavior within an organization, based upon how the intensity of the bullying interaction is perceived. Managers responsible for the execution of intervention processes, will likely determine the level of intensity within the bullying interaction. This intensity is represented in this study by two factors: emotional intensity of the target and perceived negative effect of the bullying behavior on the manager.

Secondary interventions focus on handling ongoing bullying and aim to terminate or diminish workplace bullying through “helping those targeted to retain regular health and functioning, and by addressing and readjusting the behaviors of the bullies” (Nielsen & Einarsen, 2018, p. 79). It is through secondary interventions that bullying behavior is properly and professionally addressed, which should be a major responsibility of upper management.

Tertiary interventions focus on depleting long-term effects of bullying such as posttraumatic stress, suicidal fantasy, and increased risk for disability retirement through “helping people manage the long-term, often-complex health problems and injuries and to improve their ability to function, their quality of life and their life expectancy” (Nielsen & Einarsen, 2018, p. 79). This intervention process should not be forgotten if workplace bullying has transpired within an organization. Considering that past researchers have found alterations in targets’ premise of their own “worth and meaning,” and the premise of the “worth and meaning” of the rest of the world due to bullying occurrences (Mikkelsen & Einarsen, 2002; Adoric & Kvartuc, 2007; Rodriguez-Munoz, Moreno-Jimenez, Vergel, & Garrosa, 2010; Nielsen & Einarsen, 2018, p. 79), effective tertiary interventions are vital to addressing bullying. The bullying behavior might have been terminated, but the possible health problems and emotional distress may still be present within the target of the bullying situation.

Researchers recommend investigating the intervention strategies for effectiveness in workplace bullying occurrences (Einarsen, Mykletun, Einarsen, Skogstad, & Salin, 2017; Nielsen & Einarsen, 2018), and it is recommended that “[p]roviding information on when and why certain interventions procedures may work is another pertinent need” (Nielsen & Einarsen, 2018, p. 80). Therefore, primary, and secondary intervention processes were examined in the present study. In addition, the present study was aimed at narcissistic bullies (Lutgen-Sandvik & Fletcher, 2013) because unlike accidental bullies, who, after being made aware of their bullying behavior, are likely to rectify it, or psychopathic bullies, who are likely to be terminated once their behavior is revealed, narcissistic bullies, are most likely to present the greatest bullying challenges to organizations (Lutgen-Sandvik & Fletcher, 2013).

**Purpose of the Present Study**

In summary, the purpose of the present study was to examine if and when managers will intervene based on varying types and degrees of workplace bullying behaviors presented in scenarios that also specify the target's displayed emotions and the bully's perceived value. More specifically, the purpose of the present study was to test the hypotheses stated above using a scenario-based approach.

## **CHAPTER II: METHOD**

## Sample

Participants ( $N = 541$ ) from the research participant pool at a large southeastern United States university completed surveys for the purpose of testing Hypotheses 1 and 2. Hypothesis 1 was tested using responses from a sample of consisting of 112 males and 150 females with an age range from 18 to 51 years ( $M = 20.06$ ,  $SD = 3.35$ ). Participants reported their ethnicity as being of African American descent (4.90%), Asian/Pacific Islander descent (4.20%), Caucasian American/White descent (85.60%), Mexican American/Latino descent (3.00%), American Indian/Alaskan Native (.40%), or Other (1.50%). Participants reported their class rank in college as freshman (36.90%), sophomore (39.20%), junior (13.70%), senior (9.50%), or graduate student (.40%). Participants indicated their current employment status as not being employed (53.20%), employed in an unpaid internship (1.50%), employed part-time (1-20 hours per week) (33.50%), or employed full-time (21+ hours per week) (11.40%). Participants reported that they had never supervised anyone (44.10%), they had supervised one or more individuals in an unpaid capacity (19.40%), or they had been paid to supervise one or more individuals (36.10%). Approximately 60 percent of the sample reported an occupation and about 40 percent of the sample reported being unemployed.

Participants indicated their occupation as valid (4.18%), education and childcare (8.37%), business and public administration (4.56%), customer service (food, hotel, and retail) (17.87%), communication, telecommunication and broadcasting (1.52%), arts, entertainment, and recreation (3.42%), religious (.38%), health care (3.04%), construction (1.14%), transportation and warehousing (2.66%), software (.38%), sales (4.18%), finance and insurance (.76%), agriculture, forestry, fishing, and hunting (.38%), legal services (.38%), scientific or technical services (1.14%), self-employed (.38%), other (5.70%), and unemployed (40.30%). Two

participants responded to working in two different occupations. One participant did not indicate his/her sex, age, ethnicity, class rank, employment status, or having experience with supervision over other employees in an organization, accounting for .40% of the above demographic questions.

Participants were asked about their prior experiences with bullying. Participants responded that they had never been bullied (22.40%), they had been bullied (71.10%), or that they were unsure if they had ever been bullied (6.10%).

Approximately 12 percent of the participants indicated they had never been verbally bullied, 83.7 percent reported having been verbally bullied, and 3.8 percent were unsure if they had been bullied verbally. When asked if they had experienced verbal bullying at a current or previous job, participants responded they had not experienced verbal bullying at a job (64.30%), they had experienced verbal bullying at a job (28.50%), or they were unsure whether they had experienced verbal bullying at work (6.80%). Participants indicated they had not witnessed verbal bullying at a current or previous job (39.20%), they had witnessed verbal bullying at a job (54.40%), or they were unsure if they had witnessed verbal bullying at a job (6.10%).

Participants responded to cyber bullying prior experiences, where they had not experienced cyber bullying (47.90%), they had experienced cyber bullying (46.80%), or they were unsure if they had experienced cyber bullying (4.90%). Participants responded they had not experienced cyber bullying at a current or previous job (84.40%), they had experienced cyber bullying at a job (10.30%), or they were unsure if they had experienced cyber bullying at a job (4.90%). In response to having witnessed cyber bullying at a current or previous job, participants indicated they had not witnessed cyber bullying at a job (72.20%), they had witnessed cyber bullying at a job (20.90%), or they were unsure if they had witnessed cyber bullying at a job

(6.50%). One participant did not respond to any of the questions regarding prior experiences with bullying, accounting for .40% of the bullying experience questions.

In response to social bullying prior experiences, participants indicated they had not experienced social bullying (23.20%), they had experienced social bullying (70.00%), or they were unsure if they had experienced social bullying (6.50%). Participants responded they had not experienced social bullying at a current or previous job (63.50%), they had experienced social bullying at a job (29.30%), or they were unsure if they had experienced social bullying at a job (6.80%). In response to having witnessed social bullying at a current or previous job, participants indicated they had not witnessed social bullying at a job (43.00%), they had witnessed social bullying at a job (52.10%), or they were unsure if they had witnessed social bullying at a job (4.60%) (see Table 1). All tables and figures are located in *Appendix B*.

Hypothesis 2 was tested using responses from a sample of consisting of 107 males, 166 females and five who prefer not to say. The sample had an age range from 18 to 34 years ( $M = 19.66$ ,  $SD = 1.57$ ). One participant did not indicate age. Participants reported their ethnicity as being of African American descent (5.80%), Asian/Pacific Islander (1.80%), Caucasian American/White (83.50%), Mexican American/Latino (5.00%), American Indian/Alaskan Native (.70%), or Other (3.20%). Participants for Hypothesis 2 reported their class rank in college as Freshman (41.00%), Sophomore (41.00%), Junior (9.0%), or Senior (9.0%).

Participants indicated their current employment status as not being employed (47.80%), employed in an unpaid internship (2.20%), employed part-time (1-20 hours per week) (41.40%), or employed full-time (21+ hours per week) (8.60%). Participants reported that they had never supervised anyone (48.90%), they had supervised one or more individuals in an unpaid capacity (21.90%), or they had been paid to supervise one or more individuals (28.80%). One participant

did not indicate his or her experience in supervision of others, accounting for .40%. Participants indicated their occupation as valid (3.60%), education and childcare (10.79%), business and public administration (2.88%), customer service (food, hotel, and retail) (21.58%), communication, telecommunication and broadcasting (.72%), arts, entertainment, and recreation (3.96%), military (.36%), health care (1.80%), construction (.72%), transportation and warehousing (14.29%), sales (2.88%), agriculture, forestry, fishing, and hunting (1.44%), scientific or technical services (.36%), self-employed (.72%), other (7.91%), or unemployed (39.20%). One participant responded to working in two different occupations.

Participants were asked about their prior experiences with bullying. Participants responded that they had never been bullied (24.50%), they had been bullied (63.30%), or they were unsure if they had ever been bullied (12.20%).

Participants indicated they had never been verbally bullied (16.90%), they had been verbally bullied (75.50%), or they were unsure whether they had been bullied verbally (7.60%). When asked if participants had experienced verbal bullying at a current or previous job, participants responded they had not experienced verbal bullying at a job (72.30%), they had experienced verbal bullying at a job (21.20%), or they were unsure whether they had experienced verbal bullying at work (6.50%). Participants indicated they had not witnessed verbal bullying at a current or previous job (50.40%), they had witnessed verbal bullying at a job (41.40%), or they were unsure if they had witnessed verbal bullying at a job (8.30%).

Participants responded to cyber bullying prior experiences, where they had not experienced cyber bullying (47.80%), they had experienced cyber bullying (43.90%), or they were unsure if they had experienced cyber bullying (8.30%). Participants responded they had not experienced cyber bullying at a current or previous job (91.00%), they had experienced cyber

bullying at a job (4.70%), or they were unsure if they had experienced cyber bullying at a job (4.30%). In response to having witnessed cyber bullying at a current or previous job, participants indicated they had not witnessed cyber bullying at a job (81.30%), they had witnessed cyber bullying at a job (14.70%), or they were unsure if they had witnessed cyber bullying at a job (4.00%).

In response to social bullying prior experiences, participants indicated they had not experienced social bullying (26.30%), they had experienced social bullying (67.60%), or they were unsure if they had experienced social bullying (6.10%). Participants responded they had not experienced social bullying at a current or previous job (74.80%), they had experienced social bullying at a job (20.10%), or they were unsure if they had experienced social bullying at a job (5.00%). In response to having witnessed social bullying at a current or previous job, participants indicated they had not witnessed social bullying at a job (50.40%), they had witnessed social bullying at a job (43.90%), or they were unsure if they had witnessed social bullying at a job (5.80%) (see Table 2).

Participants earned research participation credit if they were enrolled in SONA systems, counting for a small percentage of their final grade for completing the study.

## **Design**

Participants were randomly assigned to read either nine scenarios designed to test Hypothesis 1 or nine scenarios designed to test Hypothesis 2. After reading each scenario, participants responded to a set of questions about the events presented. Each hypothesis was examined independently using a within-subjects design.

## Scenarios

Scenarios were developed in which the key variables were manipulated. All scenarios included background information regarding the organizational cultural values, the manager, the target (Reese), and the bully (Alex). Participants were instructed to place themselves in the role of the manager. Each scenario presented a narcissistic bully (Lutgen-Sandvik & Fletcher, 2013) engaging in one of three types of bullying, verbal, social, and cyber (Hall, 2016). Bullying was divided into these three types with the purpose of increasing generalizability of the results.

The scenarios designed to test Hypothesis 1 included three levels of manipulation of the target's emotional response (low, medium, and high). Nine scenarios were created by crossing the three levels of the target's emotional response to the bullying with each of the three types of bullying. See *Appendix C*.

The scenarios developed to test Hypothesis 2 emphasized the value of the bully to the organization and manipulated the effects of the bully's behavior on management and the bottom-line of an organization. Nine scenarios were designed to test Hypothesis 2 by crossing three levels of the bully's negative effect on management and the organization (low, medium, and high) with the three types of bullying. In this set of scenarios, the bully was designated as high value in the background information. See *Appendix D*.

A sample scenario in the form presented to participants is shown in *Appendix E*. A series of six pilot tests were conducted to test the validity of the variables represented in each of the 18 scenarios. Scenarios were revised according to the pilot results. The pilot tests are reported in *Appendix F*.

## Measures

*Background Information.* Self-reported background information was gathered to describe the sample. Respondents indicated their sex, race, gender, education level, work experience, and their experience with bullying in the workplace. The background survey was presented as the last task to avoid exposing the purpose of the study. See *Appendix G*.

*Manipulation Check.* Several questions were used to check the manipulation. First, participants indicated if bullying has taken place by responding, *Yes, No, Not Sure*. If they responded, *Yes*, then they were asked to identify the target and the bully. Then, participants reading the scenarios for testing Hypothesis 1 were asked to identify the level of emotional intensity within the scenarios, and then they were asked how likely they would be to intervene in the situation. Participants reading the scenarios for testing Hypothesis 2 were asked to identify the level of negative effect on the manager within the scenarios, and then they were asked how likely they would be to intervene in the situation. These four items are presented in *Appendix H*.

*Extent of Managerial Intervention.* The extent of the intervention was assessed using a 6-point behaviorally anchored rating scale developed for this study. The Extent of Managerial Intervention Measure contains anchors based on primary and secondary interventions. Participants indicated which intervention they would engage in as the manager in the situation ranging from *do nothing* (1) to *console Reese and fire Alex* (6). See *Appendix I*.

## Procedure

Participants completed the study online. All information is presented using Qualtrics. All participants who decided to take the survey accessed it online through Qualtrics, and their results were recorded confidentially.

First, all participants completed a consent form. See *Appendix J*. After consenting, they read an overview of their role as manager. Then they were randomly assigned to either read the nine scenarios designed to test Hypothesis 1, which were presented in random order, or the nine scenarios designed to test Hypothesis 2, which were also presented in random order. Once having been assigned to either Hypothesis 1 or Hypothesis 2 through Qualtrics, participants read nine scenarios corresponding to that hypothesis. After reading each scenario, participants indicated how they, as the manager, would react in the situation described in the scenario using the Extent of Managerial Intervention Measure and they responded to the manipulation check questions. After responding to all of the scenarios, participants responded to the background survey. Participants received research participation credit for their participation in the study as they were enrolled in SONA Systems.

## CHAPTER III: RESULTS

Data from the background survey were analyzed and descriptive statistics, including means and standard deviations, were reported above to describe the sample. Below, tests of the manipulations, tests of the Hypotheses, and relevant post-hoc tests are reported.

### **Tests of the Manipulations to Test Scenarios for Hypothesis 1**

*Test of Bullying in the Scenarios.* Three sets of responses to manipulation check questions regarding qualities of the scenarios used to assess Hypothesis 1 were evaluated. The first set of responses indicated most participants responded that bullying took place in each scenario, and participants identified Reese as the target and Alex as the bully of the bullying situation. These results supported the manipulation of bullying in the scenario. See Table 3.

*Check of Emotional Display Manipulation.* All manipulation check questions were evaluated at an *alpha* level of .05. Hypothesis 1 stated that a target's manager will intervene in a bullying situation to the extent that the bullied target's emotional display violates the manager's predictive and prescriptive expectations for emotional displays within the workplace. This hypothesis was tested by presenting scenarios in which emotional display was manipulated. To evaluate the level of emotional display depicted within the scenarios, participants rated the degree of emotional intensity they perceived after reading each scenario. Emotional intensity was tested using univariate two-way repeated measures ANOVA. The within-subjects factors were type of bullying with three levels (verbal, cyber, social) and emotional display with three levels (low, medium, and high). The dependent variable was the perceived emotional intensity demonstrated in the scenarios. First, sphericity assumptions were checked. The results indicated sphericity was violated for type of bullying, for emotional display, and for the interaction between the type of bullying and the emotional display, therefore Huynh-Feldt Adjustment was used in tests of these effects.

The main effect for emotional display was significant,  $F(1.56, 407.75) = 451.99, p < .05$ , partial  $\eta^2 = .63$ . Fisher's LSD tests were conducted to examine the mean differences of level of intervention for each of the three emotional display conditions. To mitigate Type I Error, the alpha level for evaluating significance was set at .017 using the Bonferroni Correction. The results revealed that emotional intensity was perceived as lower when emotional displays in the scenario was depicted as low ( $M = 3.57$ ) relative to medium ( $M = 4.88, Mdif = -1.31, SE = .06$ ) and high emotional displays ( $M = 5.74, Mdif = -.2.17, SE = .09$ ), and it was also lower for medium emotional displays versus high emotional displays ( $Mdif = -.86, SE = .06$ ). Thus, these results support that emotional display was effectively manipulated in these scenarios.

The results also revealed a significant main effect for the type of bullying,  $F(1.97, 515.29) = 86.63, p < .05$ , partial  $\eta^2 = .25$ , which was not expected. Fisher's LSD tests were conducted to examine the mean differences of emotional intensity for each of the three types of bullying conditions. To mitigate Type I Error, the alpha level for evaluating significance was set at .017 using the Bonferroni Correction. The results revealed that level of emotional intensity was perceived as lower when the bullying in the scenarios were depicted as verbal bullying ( $M = 4.34$ ) relative to cyber bullying ( $M = 4.87, Mdif = -.53, SE = .05$ ) and social bullying ( $M = 4.98, Mdif = -.64, SE = .06$ ), and it was also lower for cyber bullying versus social bullying ( $Mdif = -.11, SE = .05$ ). Thus, these results support that the type of bullying affects how emotional intensity is viewed within these scenarios.

Likewise, the results indicated a significant interaction effect between type of bullying and emotional display,  $F(4, 1044) = 22.83, p < .05$ , partial  $\eta^2 = .08$ . This effect was not expected. However, post-hoc Fisher's LSD tests were conducted to further understand these results. Again, to mitigate Type I Error, the alpha level was set at .017 for each set of comparison.

Fisher's LSD tests were conducted to examine the differences represented in the figure and interpreted using Bonferroni's Correction ( $p < .017$ ). The interaction is represented in Figure 1 and Table 4. Tests of verbal bullying revealed that the emotional intensity perceived within the scenarios was significantly lower when the scenario exhibited a low emotional display ( $M = 3.11$ ,  $SE = .09$ ) than when the scenario exhibited a medium emotional display ( $M = 4.34$ ,  $Mdif = -1.23$ ,  $SE = .08$ ) or a high emotional display ( $M = 5.56$ ,  $Mdif = -2.45$ ,  $SE = .08$ ). The emotional intensity was significantly lower when the scenario exhibited a medium emotional display compared to a high emotional display ( $Mdif = -1.22$ ). This pattern of results supports the manipulation of emotional display in the verbal scenarios.

Tests of cyber bullying revealed that the emotional intensity perceived within the scenarios was significantly lower when the scenario exhibited a low emotional display ( $M = 3.81$ ,  $SE = .09$ ) than when the scenario exhibited a medium emotional display ( $M = 5.25$ ,  $Mdif = -1.45$ ,  $SE = .08$ ) or high emotional display ( $M = 5.55$ ,  $Mdif = -1.74$ ,  $SE = .08$ ). The emotional intensity was significantly lower when the scenario exhibited a medium emotional display compared to high emotional display ( $Mdif = -.30$ ). This pattern of results supports the manipulation of emotional display in the cyber scenarios

Tests of social bullying revealed that the emotional intensity perceived within the scenarios was significantly lower when the target exhibited a low emotional display ( $M = 3.78$ ,  $SE = .09$ ) than when the target exhibited a medium emotional display ( $M = 5.03$ ,  $Mdif = -1.25$ ,  $SE = .08$ ) or high emotional display ( $M = 6.11$ ,  $Mdif = -2.32$ ,  $SE = .07$ ). The emotional intensity was significantly lower when the target exhibited a medium emotional display compared to high emotional display ( $Mdif = -1.07$ ). This pattern of results supports the manipulation of emotional display in the social scenarios.

Fisher's LSD tests were conducted to examine the differences represented in the figure and interpreted using Bonferroni's Correction ( $p < .017$ ). The interaction is presented in Figure 2 and Table 4. Tests of the low emotional display condition revealed that the emotional intensity perceived within the scenarios was significantly lower when the target was subjected to verbal bullying ( $M = 3.11, SE = .09$ ) than when the target was subjected to cyber bullying ( $M = 3.81, Mdif = -.70, SE = .09$ ) or social bullying ( $M = 3.78, Mdif = -.68, SE = .09$ ). There were no other significant differences found within the low emotional display condition when comparing cyber and social bullying.

Tests of the medium emotional display condition revealed that the emotional intensity perceived within the scenarios was significantly lower when the target was subjected to verbal bullying ( $M = 4.34, SE = .08$ ) than when the target was subjected to cyber bullying ( $M = 5.25, Mdif = -.91, SE = .08$ ) or social bullying ( $M = 5.03, Mdif = -.70, SE = .08$ ). The emotional intensity within the scenarios was perceived as significantly higher when the target was subjected to cyber bullying than when the target was subjected to social bullying ( $Mdif = -.22$ ). This pattern of results supports the manipulation of emotional display in the scenarios.

Tests of the high emotional display condition revealed that the emotional intensity perceived within the scenarios was significantly higher when the target was subjected to verbal bullying ( $M = 5.56, SE = .08$ ) than when the target was subjected to social bullying ( $M = 6.11, Mdif = -.55, SE = .07$ ), and the emotional intensity perceived within the scenarios was significantly lower when the target was subjected to cyber bullying ( $M = 5.55, SE = .08$ ) than when the target was subjected to social bullying ( $Mdif = -.56$ ). There were no other significant differences found within the high emotional display condition when comparing verbal and cyber bullying.

## Tests of Hypothesis 1

Tests of Hypothesis 1 were evaluated at an *alpha* level of .05. Hypothesis 1, a target's manager will intervene in a bullying situation to the extent that the bullied target's emotional display violates the manager's predictive and prescriptive expectations for emotional displays within the workplace, was tested using univariate two-way repeated measures ANOVA. The within-subjects factors were type of bullying with three levels (verbal, cyber, social) and emotional display with three levels (low, medium, and high). The dependent variable was the level of intervention. First, sphericity assumptions were checked. The results indicated sphericity could be assumed for type of bullying. However, sphericity was violated for emotional display and the interaction between the type of bullying and the emotional display, therefore Huynh-Feldt Adjustment was used in tests of these effects.

Tests of the simple main effect for emotional display (low, medium, and high) were significant,  $F(1.82, 475.52) = 76.66, p < .05, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .23$ . Fisher's LSD tests were conducted to examine the mean differences level of intervention for each of the three emotional display conditions. To mitigate Type I Error, the alpha level for evaluating significance was set at .017 using the Bonferroni Correction. The results revealed that level of intervention was lower when emotional display was low ( $M = 4.14$ ) relative to medium ( $M = 4.50, Mdif = -.36, SE = .05$ ) and high emotional displays ( $M = 4.75, Mdif = -.61, SE = .06$ ), and it was also lower for medium emotional displays versus high emotional displays ( $Mdif = -.26, SE = .04$ ). Thus, Hypothesis 1 was supported.

In addition, the results indicated a significant main effect for the type of bullying,  $F(2, 524) = 77.31, p < .05, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .23$  and a significant interaction effect between type of bullying and emotional display,  $F(3.76, 984.32) = 12.02, p < .05, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .04$ . Neither of

these effects were hypothesized. However, post-hoc Fisher's LSD tests were conducted to further understand these results. Again, to mitigate Type I Error, the alpha level was set at .017 for each set of comparison.

The post-hoc tests for bullying revealed that level of intervention was significantly different between all three types of bullying. It was significantly lower for verbal bullying ( $M = 4.13$ ) than cyber bullying ( $M = 4.77$ ,  $Mdif = -.64$ ,  $SE = .05$ ) and social bullying ( $M = 4.49$ ,  $Mdif = -.36$ ,  $SE = .05$ ), and significantly lower for social bullying than for cyber bullying ( $Mdif = -.28$ ,  $SE = .04$ ).

The interaction is represented in Figure 3 and Table 5. Fisher's LSD tests were conducted to examine the differences represented in the figure and interpreted using Bonferroni's Correction ( $p < .017$ ). Tests of verbal bullying revealed that the level of intervention was significantly lower when the target exhibited a low emotional display ( $M = 3.70$ ,  $SE = .08$ ) than when the target exhibited a medium emotional display ( $M = 4.07$ ,  $Mdif = -.38$ ,  $SE = .06$ ) or a high emotional display ( $M = 4.62$ ,  $Mdif = -.92$ ,  $SE = .06$ ). The level of intervention was significantly lower when the target exhibited a medium emotional display compared to a high emotional display ( $Mdif = -.54$ ). This pattern of results is consistent and in support of Hypothesis 1, because the higher level of emotion displayed by the target, the higher level of intervention taken by the manager.

Tests of cyber bullying revealed that the level of intervention was significantly lower when the target exhibited a low emotional display ( $M = 4.37$ ,  $SE = .07$ ) than when the target exhibited a medium emotional display ( $M = 4.89$ ,  $Mdif = -.53$ ,  $SE = .06$ ) or high emotional display ( $M = 5.05$ ,  $Mdif = -.69$ ,  $SE = .06$ ). The level of intervention was significantly lower when

the target exhibited a medium emotional display compared to high emotional display ( $Mdif = -.16$ ). This pattern of results is also consistent with Hypothesis 1.

Tests of social bullying revealed that the level of intervention was significantly lower when the target exhibited a low emotional display ( $M = 4.36$ ,  $SE = .07$ ) than when the target exhibited a high emotional display ( $M = 4.59$ ,  $Mdif = -.23$ ,  $SE = .06$ ). This result is consistent with Hypothesis 1. Although the means were in the predicted order, no other significant differences were detected within the social bullying condition for emotional display.

The interaction was examined by testing the differences of intervention for each emotional display across types of bullying. See Figure 4 and Table 5. Tests of the low emotional display condition revealed that the level of intervention was significantly lower when the target was subjected to verbal bullying ( $M = 3.70$ ,  $SE = .08$ ) than when the target was subjected to cyber bullying ( $M = 4.37$ ,  $Mdif = -.67$ ,  $SE = .07$ ) or social bullying ( $M = 4.36$ ,  $Mdif = -.66$ ,  $SE = .07$ ). There were no other significant differences found within the low emotional display condition when comparing cyber and social bullying.

Tests of the medium emotional display condition revealed that the level of intervention was significantly lower when the target was subjected to verbal bullying ( $M = 4.07$ ,  $SE = .06$ ) than when the target was subjected to cyber bullying ( $M = 4.89$ ,  $Mdif = -.82$ ,  $SE = .06$ ) or social bullying ( $M = 4.53$ ,  $Mdif = -.46$ ,  $SE = .06$ ). The level of intervention was significantly higher when the target was subjected to cyber bullying than when the target was subjected to social bullying ( $Mdif = -.36$ ).

Tests of the high emotional display condition revealed that the level of intervention was significantly lower when the target was subjected to verbal bullying ( $M = 4.62$ ,  $SE = .06$ ) than when the target was subjected to cyber bullying ( $M = 5.05$ ,  $Mdif = -.44$ ,  $SE = .06$ ), and the level

of intervention was significantly higher when the target was subjected to cyber bullying than when the target was subjected to social bullying ( $M = 4.59$ ,  $Mdif = -.46$ ,  $SE = .06$ ). There were no other significant differences found within the high emotional display condition when comparing verbal and social bullying.

Hypothesis 1 was supported. The results indicated that the level at which a target expresses negative emotion with regard to workplace bullying predicts the level of intervention implemented by upper management. These results indicated that a higher level of negative emotion expressed by the target violates the manager's expectation that only positive, happy emotions are displayed within the workplace. Thus, the higher level of negative emotion displayed within the workplace, the more likely the manager would enact a higher level of intervention processes on behalf of the target.

### **Tests of the Manipulations to Test Scenarios for Hypothesis 2**

*Test of Bullying in the Scenarios.* Three sets of responses to manipulation check questions regarding qualities of the scenarios used to assess Hypothesis 2 were evaluated. The first set of responses indicated most participants responded that bullying took place in each scenario, and participants identified Reese as the target and Alex as the bully of the bullying situation. These results supported the manipulation of bullying in the scenario. See Table 6.

*Check of Negative Effect on the Manager Manipulation.* These manipulation check tests were evaluated at an *alpha* level of .05. Hypothesis 2 stated that a target's manager will intervene to the extent a bully with high perceived organizational value behaves in ways that negatively affect the manager. To evaluate the level of negative effect depicted within the scenarios, participants rated the degree of negative effect on the manager they perceived for each scenario. Level of negative effect on the manager was tested using univariate two-way repeated

measures ANOVA. The within-subjects factors were type of bullying with three levels (verbal, cyber, social) and negative effect on the manager with three levels (low, medium, and high). The dependent variable was the perceived negative effect on the manager demonstrated in the scenarios. First, sphericity assumptions were checked. The results indicated sphericity was violated for type of bullying, for negative effect on the manager, and for the interaction between the type of bullying and the negative effect on the manager, therefore Huynh-Feldt Adjustment was used in tests of these effects.

Tests of the simple main effect for negative effect on the manager (low, medium, and high) were significant,  $F(1135.67, 1103.88) = 283.95, p < .05$ , partial  $\eta^2 = .51$ . Fisher's LSD tests were conducted to examine the mean differences level of intervention for each of the negative effect on the manager conditions. To mitigate Type I Error, the alpha level for evaluating significance was set at .017 using the Bonferroni Correction. The results revealed that level of negative effect on the manager was perceived as lower when negative effect on the manager in the scenario was depicted as low ( $M = 4.04$ ) relative to medium ( $M = 4.30, Mdif = -.26, SE = .05$ ) and high negative effect on the manager ( $M = 5.59, Mdif = -1.54, SE = .08$ ), and it was also lower for medium negative effect on the manager versus high ( $Mdif = -1.28, SE = .07$ ) negative effect on the manager. Thus, these results support that negative effect on the manager was effectively manipulated in these scenarios.

The results indicated a significant main effect for the type of bullying (verbal, cyber, social),  $F(119.04, 685.19) = 47.95, p < .05$ , partial  $\eta^2 = .15$ . Fisher's LSD tests were conducted to examine the mean differences of negative effect on the manager for each of the three types of bullying conditions. To mitigate Type I Error, the alpha level for evaluating significance was set at .017 using the Bonferroni Correction. The results revealed that level of negative effect on the

manager was perceived as lower when the bullying in the scenarios were depicted as verbal ( $M = 4.37$ ) relative to cyber ( $M = 4.90$ ,  $Mdif = -.53$ ,  $SE = .05$ ) and social ( $M = 4.66$ ,  $Mdif = -.30$ ,  $SE = .06$ ), and it was higher for cyber versus social bullying ( $Mdif = -.30$ ,  $SE = .05$ ). Thus, these results support that type of bullying was effectively manipulated in these scenarios.

Likewise, the results indicated a significant interaction effect between type of bullying and the negative effect on the manager,  $F(51.41, 1311.7) = 10.82$ ,  $p < .05$ , partial  $\eta^2 = .04$ . Neither of these effects were hypothesized. However, post-hoc Fisher's LSD tests were conducted to further understand these results. Again, to mitigate Type I Error, the alpha level was set at .017 for each set of comparison.

Fisher's LSD tests were conducted to examine the differences represented in the figure and interpreted using Bonferroni's Correction ( $p < .017$ ). The interaction is represented in Figure 5 and Table 7. Tests of verbal bullying revealed that the negative effect on the manager was significantly lower when the scenario exhibited a low negative effect on the manager ( $M = 3.53$ ,  $SE = .10$ ) than when the scenario exhibited a medium negative effect on the manager ( $M = 4.16$ ,  $Mdif = -.62$ ,  $SE = .09$ ) or a high negative effect on the manager ( $M = 5.41$ ,  $Mdif = -1.87$ ,  $SE = .09$ ). The negative effect on the manager was significantly lower when the scenario exhibited a medium negative effect on the manager compared to a high negative effect on the manager ( $Mdif = -1.25$ ). This pattern of results supports the manipulation of negative effect on the manager in the scenarios.

Tests of cyber bullying revealed that the negative effect on the manager was significantly lower when the scenario exhibited a low negative effect on the manager ( $M = 4.39$ ,  $SE = .08$ ) than when the scenario exhibited a medium negative effect on the manager ( $M = 4.63$ ,  $Mdif = -.24$ ,  $SE = .09$ ) or high negative effect on the manager ( $M = 5.68$ ,  $Mdif = -1.29$ ,  $SE = .09$ ). The

negative effect on the manager was significantly lower when the scenario exhibited a medium negative effect on the manager compared to high negative effect on the manager ( $Mdif = -1.05$ ). This pattern of results supports the manipulation of negative effect on the manager in the scenarios.

Tests of social bullying revealed that the negative effect on the manager was significantly lower when the interaction exhibited a low negative effect on the manager ( $M = 4.20$ ,  $SE = .09$ ) than when the interaction exhibited a high negative effect on the manager ( $M = 5.67$ ,  $Mdif = -1.47$ ,  $SE = .09$ ). The negative effect on the manager was significantly lower when the interaction exhibited a medium negative effect on the manager ( $M = 4.12$ ,  $SE = .09$ ) compared to high negative effect on the manager ( $Mdif = -1.55$ ). There were no other significant differences found within the social bullying condition when comparing low and medium negative effect on the manager.

Fisher's LSD tests were conducted to examine the differences represented in the figure and interpreted using Bonferroni's Correction ( $p < .017$ ). The interaction is represented in Figure 6 and Table 7. Tests of the low negative effect on the manager condition revealed that the negative effect on the manager perceived within the scenarios was significantly lower when the target was subjected to verbal bullying ( $M = 3.53$ ,  $SE = .10$ ) than when the target was subjected to cyber bullying ( $M = 4.39$ ,  $Mdif = -1.03$ ,  $SE = .08$ ) or social bullying ( $M = 4.20$ ,  $Mdif = -.85$ ,  $SE = .09$ ). Tests of the low negative effect on the manager condition revealed that the negative effect on the manager perceived within the scenarios was significantly higher when the target was subjected to cyber bullying than when the target was subjected to social bullying ( $Mdif = -.19$ ).

Tests of the medium negative effect on the manager condition revealed that the negative effect on the manager perceived within the scenarios was significantly lower when the target was

subjected to verbal bullying ( $M = 4.16$ ,  $SE = .09$ ) than when the target was subjected to cyber bullying ( $M = 4.63$ ,  $Mdif = -.48$ ,  $SE = .09$ ). Tests of the medium negative effect on the manager condition revealed that the negative effect on the manager perceived within the scenarios was significantly higher when the target was subjected to cyber bullying than when the target was subjected to social bullying ( $M = 4.12$ ,  $Mdif = -.52$ ,  $SE = .09$ ). There were no other significant differences found within the medium negative effect on the manager condition when comparing verbal and social bullying.

Tests of the high negative effect on the manager condition revealed that the negative effect on the manager perceived within the scenarios was significantly lower when the target was subjected to verbal bullying ( $M = 5.41$ ,  $SE = .09$ ) than when the target was subjected to cyber bullying ( $M = 5.68$ ,  $Mdif = -.45$ ,  $SE = .09$ ) or social bullying ( $M = 5.67$ ,  $Mdif = -.45$ ,  $SE = .09$ ). There were no other significant differences found within the high negative effect on the manager condition when comparing cyber and social bullying. This was unexpected.

## **Tests of Hypothesis 2**

Hypothesis 2, a target's manager will intervene to the extent a bully with high perceived organizational value behaves in ways that negatively affect the manager, was tested using univariate two-way repeated measures ANOVA. The within-subjects factors were the negative effect with three levels (low, medium, and high) and type of bullying with three levels (verbal, cyber, social). The dependent variable was the level of intervention. First, sphericity assumptions were checked. The results indicated sphericity could be assumed for type of bullying and for the interaction between type of bullying and the negative effect on the manager. However, sphericity was violated for the negative effect on the manager, therefore Huynh-Feldt Adjustment was used in tests of these effects.

The results indicated a significant main effect for negative effect on the manager,  $F(1.93, 533.30) = 74.84, p < .05$ , partial  $\eta^2 = .21$ . Post-hoc tests were conducted to directly test Hypothesis 2. It should be noted that all post-hoc tests relevant to Hypothesis 2 were Fisher's LSD tests using the Bonferroni Correction ( $p < .017$ ). The results revealed that level of intervention was lower when negative effect was low ( $M = 4.40$ ) relative to high ( $M = 4.96, Mdif = -.56, SE = .06$ ) negative effect. However, level of intervention was not significantly different between medium ( $M = 4.45$ ) and low or between medium and high levels of negative effect. Thus, Hypothesis 2 was partially supported.

The main effect for the type of bullying was also significant,  $F(2, 554) = 19.30, p < .05$ , partial  $\eta^2 = .07$ . This effect was not hypothesized. Fisher's LSD tests revealed significant differences present between types of bullying. Level of intervention was highest for cyber bullying ( $M = 4.77$ ), which was significantly higher than for verbal bullying ( $M = 4.57, Mdif = .12, SE = .05$ ) and social bullying ( $M = 4.47, Mdif = .30, SE = .00$ ). Level of intervention was not significantly different for verbal bullying compared to social bullying.

The results indicated a significant interaction effect between the type of bullying and negative effect on the manager,  $F(4, 1108) = 8.91, p < .05$ , partial  $\eta^2 = .03$ , which was not hypothesized. However, post-hoc analyses were conducted to further understand these results. The interaction results are presented in Figure 7 and Table 8.

Tests of the verbal bullying condition revealed that the level of intervention was significantly lower when there was low negative effect on the manager ( $M = 4.18, SE = .08$ ) compared to medium negative effect on the manager ( $M = 4.59, Mdif = -.41, SE = .06$ ) or to high negative effect on the manager ( $M = 4.93, Mdif = -.75, SE = .07$ ). The level of intervention was significantly lower when there was medium negative effect on the manager compared to high

negative effect on the manager ( $Mdif = -.34$ ). This pattern of results is consistent and in support of Hypothesis 2, because the higher level of negative effect on the manager, the higher level of intervention taken by the manager.

Tests of the cyber bullying condition revealed that the level of intervention was significantly higher when there was low negative effect on the manager ( $M = 4.70$ ,  $SE = .07$ ) when compared to medium negative effect on the manager ( $M = 4.45$ ,  $Mdif = -.25$ ,  $SE = .07$ ) and significantly lower when compared to high negative effect on the manager ( $M = 5.15$ ,  $Mdif = -.45$ ,  $SE = .07$ ). The level of intervention was significantly lower when there was medium negative effect on the manager when compared to high negative effect on the manager ( $Mdif = -.70$ ). These results are partially consistent with Hypothesis 2.

Tests of the social bullying condition revealed that the level of intervention was significantly lower when there was low negative effect on the manager ( $M = 4.32$ ,  $SE = .07$ ) when compared to high negative effect on the manager ( $M = 4.80$ ,  $Mdif = -.48$ ,  $SE = .06$ ). The level of intervention was significantly lower when there was medium negative effect on the manager ( $M = 4.30$ ,  $SE = .07$ ) when compared to high negative effect on the manager ( $Mdif = -.49$ ). There were no other significant differences found within the social bullying condition when comparing medium negative effect on the manager and low negative effect on the manager.

These results are also partially consistent with Hypothesis 2.

The interaction was examined by testing the differences of intervention for each level of negative effect on the manager across types of bullying. The interaction results are presented in Figure 8 and Table 8. Tests of the low negative effect on the manager condition revealed that the level of intervention was significantly lower when the target was subjected to verbal bullying ( $M = 4.18$ ,  $SE = .08$ ) than when the target was subjected to cyber bullying ( $M = 4.70$ ,  $Mdif = -.52$ ,  $SE$

= .07). The level of intervention was found to be significantly higher when the target was subjected to cyber bullying compared to when the target was subjected to social bullying ( $M = 4.32$ ,  $Mdif = -.38$ ,  $SE = .07$ ). There were no other significant differences found within the low negative effect on the manager condition when comparing verbal bullying and social bullying.

Tests of the medium negative effect on the manager condition revealed that the level of intervention was significantly higher when the target was subjected to verbal bullying ( $M = 4.59$ ,  $SE = .06$ ) than when the target was subjected to social bullying ( $M = 4.30$ ,  $Mdif = -.29$ ,  $SE = .07$ ). There were no other significant differences found within the medium negative effect on the manager condition when comparing cyber bullying to verbal bullying or social bullying.

Tests of the high negative effect on the manager condition revealed that the level of intervention was significantly lower when targets were subjected to verbal bullying ( $M = 4.93$ ,  $SE = .07$ ) than when targets were subjected to cyber bullying ( $M = 5.15$ ,  $Mdif = -.22$ ,  $SE = .07$ ). The level of intervention was found to be significantly higher when the target was subjected to cyber bullying compared to when the target was subjected to social bullying ( $M = 4.80$ ,  $Mdif = -.36$ ,  $SE = .06$ ). There were no other significant differences found within the high negative effect on the manager condition when comparing verbal bullying to social bullying.

Hypothesis 2 was partially supported; results indicated the level at which the high-value bully's behavior is negatively affecting the organization determines the level of intervention implemented by upper management. These results suggested that a higher level of negative effect on upper management in result of the bullying behavior violates the manager's expectation that the organizational value that a high-value bully brings to an organization outweighs the bullying behavior itself. In other words, the higher level of positive organizational impact on upper

management, the lower the chance the manager will intervene in the bullying interaction. The results were inconsistent with the hypotheses in some instances which will be discussed below.

## **CHAPTER IV: DISCUSSION**

Managerial interventions are key for resolving workplace bullying situations, however, there is little empirical evidence addressing at what point managers choose to intervene (MacCurtain, et al., 2017). One purpose of present study was to address this research gap from the perspective of communication research. Therefore, another purpose of the present study was to test hypotheses generated on the basis of expectancy violations theory (EVT) to examine managerial interventions intended to mitigate bullying behavior. A manager's choice of intervention intensity in a workplace bullying situation was examined with respect to the level of the target's emotional response to the bullying interaction and negative effect of the bully on the manager.

According to EVT, a violation of expectations should influence the manager's choice of intervention intensity. Thus, in a bullying situation, the degree to which an employee violates organizational expectations for acceptable levels of emotional displays was expected to predict the intensity of the manager's intervention to remedy the bullying. Similarly, the degree to which a bully violates expectations in terms of affecting the production of quality work for the organization, resulting in negative effects for the manager, is expected to predict the intensity of the manager's intervention to address the bullying. These predictions were evaluated in the present study.

### **Violations of Emotional Display Expectations**

Hypothesis 1, which stated that the intensity of a manager's intervention will be positively related to the level by which the bullied target's emotional display violates the manager's predictive and prescriptive expectations for emotional displays in the workplace, was supported. The target's display of negative emotions represented in the scenarios was manipulated as low, medium, or high emotional display in response to each of three types of

bullying (verbal, cyber, and social). Results indicated for each type of bullying that the higher the target's emotional response displayed, which indicated a higher violation of organizational norms for emotional displays, the more intense the manager's intervention. Therefore, Hypothesis 1 was supported.

These findings are contradictory to previous research postulations. Past researchers have claimed that in order for targets of bullying to be taken seriously when sharing their narratives with upper management, they should do so with a calm and balanced display of negative emotions (Tye-Williams & Ruble, 2017). Furthermore, Tye-Williams and Ruble (2017) stated that bullies may be viewed in a more auspicious light than targets when targets exhibit high levels of negative emotion in regard to workplace bullying interactions.

However, EVT yields an opposing prediction in which higher negative emotional displays provoke more intense managerial action. The empirical support for this prediction obtained in the present study, may be consistent with growing societal norms in which bullying is explicitly discussed. Interaction norms are not static; they are everchanging. Therefore, perhaps degree of acceptance of negative emotion displayed either during the workplace bullying interaction or when producing the narrative following the interaction might also be changing in terms of stimulating interventions in the workplace. Moreover, the EVT perspective supports the belief that silence, which does not violate emotional display expectations, is a form of consent, not just to bullies, but also to those witnessing the bullying behavior. Witnesses of particular interest in the present study being the managers. Furthermore, the present results suggest that the less targets silence their emotional displays in response to bullying situations, the more likely an intervention is to occur. However, it is imperative to note that participants were enacting the role of the manager when responding to the scenarios, indicating that managers were presently

observing the bullying behavior as it transpired. This is contrary to the storyline where the target is sharing the bullying narrative with the manager following the bullying interaction, in which Tye-Williams and Ruble (2017) suggest displaying lower levels of negative emotion toward upper management.

Also, found within this study, the results revealed that type of bullying (verbal, cyber, and social) might affect how emotional intensity is viewed within these scenarios, thus eliciting different intervention responses from upper management based upon the emotional responses in combination with the type of bullying that took place. Overall, level of intervention was perceived as lower when verbal bullying occurred, and higher as cyber and social bullying transpired. We did not hypothesize for this. In referencing the EVT framework, these results suggest that a target's emotional display as a result of cyber and social bullying may more greatly violate upper management's expectations than a target's emotional display as a result of verbal bullying. Based upon predetermined societal rules, it may be that when verbal bullying occurs, prescriptive expectancies advocate for high negative emotional display by the target in response to this type of bullying behavior.

Moreover, tests of social bullying revealed that medium and high emotional responses were responded to similarly by the participants in terms of determining level of intervention to take place. Thus, before executing another empirical research article in this vein, stronger pilot testing of medium versus high emotional responses to social bullying might evoke a different outcome.

### **Violations of the Bully's Effect on the Manager**

Hypothesis 2, the intensity of the manager's intervention will be positively related to the level to which a high value bully negatively affects the manager was partially supported. A low,

medium, and high negative effect on the manager was examined for three types of bullying (verbal, cyber, and social). The results indicated strong support for the hypothesis for verbal bullying. For cyber and social bullying, the results indicated intensity of the manager's intervention was higher for high negative bullying effects compared to low and medium negative effects. The medium negative effect on the manager did not always produce the same results. These results were unexpected. Further exploration is needed to investigate these results surrounding the differences in the negative effect on the manager associated with the types of bullying. These results provide partial support for Hypothesis 2.

For social bullying, the pattern of results was consistent with the manipulation check results suggesting that the medium and low manipulations were too similar. However, this is not true for cyber bullying. For cyber and verbal bullying, the manipulation check results were as expected. The unexpected result in which the low level of negative effect on the manager was related to a more intense intervention than medium level of negative effect on the manager seems fluky. A Type I error in this case would indicate that low level of negative effect on the manager was found to be high, despite actually representing low negative effect. Alternatively, a Type II error would indicate that the pilot testing produced an incorrect outcome for the representation of low negative effect on the manager. However, this result might indicate that cyber bullying may be viewed differently than verbal or social bullying. It most certainly suggests a need for additional research.

Also, found within this study, the results revealed that type of bullying (verbal, cyber, and social) might affect how negative effect on the manager is viewed within these scenarios, thus eliciting different intervention responses from upper management based upon the negative effect on the manager in combination with the type of bullying that took place. Altogether, level of

intervention was perceived as lower when verbal or social bullying occurred within the low and high negative effect on the manager, and higher as cyber bullying transpired. Within the medium negative effect on the manager, level of intervention was perceived as higher when verbal bullying transpired than cyber or social bullying took place. We did not hypothesize this.

Overall, the results revealed the more negatively the bullying behavior affects upper management, the more intense the manager's intervention. Consistent with EVT predictions, a high CRV bully had to produce high violations of expectancies to provoke a high intensity intervention. It is only when the expectancy violation is high that the bullies' applied skills no longer outweigh or warrant how they treat others in the organization. Otherwise, the bully's CRV protects them from intense consequences when they attack a target. In the present study, participants read a profile background describing the beneficial qualities of both the target and the bully before responding to the bullying scenarios. Thus, although the bully was described as possessing skills valued by the organization, participants indicated that bullying had, in fact, taken place, and for the most part, a higher intensity intervention was warranted for higher violations of expectancies regarding the bully's effect on management. Therefore, even a high-value bully may engage in bullying behavior that negatively affects a manager enough to elicit intervention.

### **Contributions**

The present study contributes to the research literature by showing the value of EVT represented as a conditional factor (Frone, 1999; Hayes, 2013, Nielsen & Einarsen, 2018) for hypothesizing and understanding managerial interventions aimed to ameliorate bullying (Escartin, 2016; Hodgins, MacCurtain, & Mannix-McNamara, 2014; Nielsen & Einarsen, 2018).

The EVT predictions contradict previously proposed approaches to bullying (Tye-Williams & Ruble, 2017) and have implications for practical applications. For example, our findings suggest that emotional display in the workplace might modify how workplace bullying interactions are being treated and which intervention intensity is warranted. In addition to the results supporting the hypotheses, it is noteworthy that the tests of the manipulations revealed participants explicitly recognized that bullying had occurred in each scenario and the perception of bullying having occurred increased as the target's emotional display increased. These results held regardless of the type of bullying (verbal, cyber, and social).

Thus, managers should not only receive in-person training in recognizing emotional distress of their employees and developing suitable responses, but also in acknowledging workplace bullying behavior regardless of the emotional display by the target. In other words, managers might be trained to recognize bullying before their predictive or prescriptive expectancies are violated. During this training, scenarios such as those designed for the present study could be presented to the trainees to instruct them to identify bullying, develop appropriate responses, and take immediate action in response to the bullying behavior. Similarly, employees should be encouraged to come forward to upper management if a workplace bullying interaction were to arise and be instructed in communicating about their experience (Tye-Williams & Ruble, 2017).

The findings also suggested that the negative effect on the manager might modify how workplace bullying interactions are being treated and which intervention intensity is legitimate. Again, the tests of the manipulation checks and of the hypotheses revealed participants explicitly recognized the occurrence of bullying and viewed the effects of bullying increasing as the negative effect on the manager increased. These findings suggest that managers should be

checking with subordinates regularly to evaluate work performance and to gauge the interpersonal relationships among coworkers. Managers could be trained in communication interaction regarding flow of work and maintenance of relationships in order to improve their ability to recognize bullying situations and to step in before it negatively affects themselves or the bottom-line of their organizations (Lieber, 2010). Similarly, employees should be encouraged to come forward to upper management if a workplace bullying interaction were to arise and develop awareness in their work environment to be able to identify when bullying occurs and how to respond to it (Ferris, 2004; MacCurtain et al., 2017). When addressing workplace bullying situations with the managers, subordinates should develop an understanding that if they discuss these issues in terms of negative effect on the manager or negative impact on the organization's bottom-line, intervention may not be too far around the corner (Lieber, 2010).

### **Limitations and Future Research**

Two major strengths of the study were the strong theoretical foundation and the rigorous experimental design. Of course, in the conduct of rigorous research tradeoffs are made such that all studies have limitations which have implications for future research. Ideally, in the future, researchers might conduct field research on the topic using quantitative and qualitative approaches and therefore be able to obtain responses from managers who are facing bullying situations. Future researchers might also examine bullying types in more detail to decipher the differences between cyber, verbal, and social bullying. It was unexpected that participants' responses for lows, mediums, and highs within emotional display and within negative effect on the manager varied from one another when distinguishing the type of bullying (verbal, cyber, and social). Additionally, in terms of emotional response, specifically for social bullying, researchers

might take a look at how much higher the bullying behavior might have to be to evoke a stronger intervention.

The results evoked a higher level of intervention when cyber and social bullying occurred in comparison with verbal bullying in most cases. One possibility for these results might be that while verbal bullying is easily deniable and might be difficult to support without clear documentation or bystander confirmation, cyber bullying and social bullying leave a trail of corroboration that from an objective standpoint, bullying did, in fact, materialize. In referencing cyber bullying, there is a healthy chance that the behavior of the bully was captured by technological devices, in which it might be presently and easily referenced, assisting in determining at which level managers choose to intervene. Additionally, in referencing social bullying, bystanders to the bullying interaction are able to confirm or deny the presence of the bullying behavior, governing upper management's choice to intervene. When referring to verbal bullying, the hostile behavior of the bully may be more simply refuted, and others may not have borne witness to the bullying behavior, possibly resulting in lower levels of intervention from upper management. Future researchers might examine this possibility.

Another area in which needs additional research is the differentiation in medium response levels for both sets of hypotheses within the scenarios. In several areas of the results, medium response levels were viewed similarly by participants to both low and high responses within the scenarios. More pilot testing would account for this.

In the present study, the scenarios were distributed to university participants, where most individuals have only been in the workforce for an abbreviated period of time and where the age range was restricted. Future research might sample from a pool with wider ranges of work experience and age. The results from the present study suggested that the participants placed

more emphasis on treatment in the workplace and emotional expression than the “leave your emotions at the door” or the “suck it up mentality.” Similarly, based on the sample in the present study, the results indicated that those early in the workforce may place emphasis on how the bottom-line of a company is affected or how the manager is negatively affected by workplace bullying situations in consideration of interventions to remedy a bullying situation. Both of these findings may be the result of recent explicit condemnation of bullying in popular media (Chatzakou, et al., 2017; Green, Furlong, & Felix, 2017; Sumner, Scarduzio, & Daggett, 2020; Craig et al., 2020). Examining these effects across ages and experience would provide insight into how to address bullying in organizations.

Future research surrounding EVT and bullying might compare emotional display as a result of taking conflict personally (Hample & Dallinger, 1995) to emotional display as a result to workplace bullying situations. A common theme between the two concepts is the feeling of being threatened in some way. It appears that taking conflict personally has a more negative connotation when individuals are actively taking conflict situations as a personal threat to their identity than when they are not. Some research questions might include: How does upper management’s prescriptive and predictive expectancies for behavior in an organization differ when one exhibits high negative emotion as a result of taking conflict personally? How can emotional responses to taking conflict personally be confused with emotional responses to acts of workplace bullying? How are these two concepts similar? How do they differ? When is it considered acceptable to take conflict personally?

Another area worth researching is how targets of workplace bullying might become the perpetrators of workplace bullying, specifically in relation to EVT. Initial research questions might include: How do bullies relate to targets’ experiences? Why might targets pursue a

bullying role? When a bully violates a target's predictive and prescriptive expectancies for behavior, does this provoke a target to turn around and begin engaging in bullying behavior?

In response to the present findings, it is recommended that organizations hire individuals whose values and morals align with that of the organization. Moreover, one of the qualifications for every position at every organization should be acquiring interpersonal communication and effective listening skills. Interpersonal communication skills are desperately needed among organizations, especially in upper management (Hargie, 2021). Targets of workplace bullying should feel like they have access to their voice and that they can be heard. It is time to silence these bullies, browbeaters, and bulldozers of the world.

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## APPENDICES

## **Appendix A**

### **DEFINING FUNCTIONS OF A MANAGER**

Fayol (1949) describes the basic functions of management as planning, organizing, commanding, leading, and controlling. Thus, the proposed study references Fayol's (1949) conceptualization of managers' responsibilities, of which are expected to be upheld within varying businesses, in defining the functions required of upper management by organizations. The term manager is used in the proposed study to refer to "manager" and "supervisor." A manager is defined in the proposed study as the individual who has the autonomy to make challenging decisions regarding the supervision, command, and oversight of subordinates' contribution and behavior within an organization. Managers determine hiring and firing decisions, offer incentives and rewards such as praise, a raise and/or a promotion, and has the authority to offer disincentives such as admonishment, suspension and/or termination.

## Appendix B

### TABLES AND FIGURES

#### METHODS TABLES FOR HYPOTHESIS 1

*Table 1: Participants' Responses to Experiences with Bullying for Hypothesis 1*

Type of Bullying	Verbal Bullying	Cyber Bullying	Social Bullying
	%	%	%
No Experience Being Bullied	12.00	47.90	23.20
Experience Being Bullied	83.70	46.80	70.00
Unsure About Experience with Bullying	3.80	4.90	6.50
No Experience Being Bullied at a Current or Previous Job	64.30	84.40	63.50
Experience Being Bullied at a Current or Previous Job	28.50	10.30	29.30
Unsure About Experience with Bullying	6.80	4.90	6.80
Had Not Witnessed Bullying at a Current or Previous Job	39.20	72.20	43.00
Had Witnessed Bullying at a Current or Previous Job	54.40	20.90	52.10
Unsure About Witnessing Bullying at a Current or Previous Job	6.10	6.50	4.60

*Table 2: Participants' Responses to Experiences with Bullying for Hypothesis 2*

Type of Bullying	Verbal Bullying	Cyber Bullying	Social Bullying
	%	%	%
No Experience Being Bullied	16.90	47.80	26.30
Experience Being Bullied	75.50	43.90	67.60
Unsure About Experience with Bullying	7.60	8.30	6.10
No Experience Being Bullied at a Current or Previous Job	72.30	91.00	74.80
Experience Being Bullied at a Current or Previous Job	21.20	4.70	20.10
Unsure About Experience with Bullying	6.50	4.30	5.00
Had Not Witnessed Bullying at a Current or Previous Job	50.40	81.30	50.40
Had Witnessed Bullying at a Current or Previous Job	41.40	14.70	43.90
Unsure About Witnessing Bullying at a Current or Previous Job	8.30	4.00	5.80

### HYPOTHESIS 1 TABLES

*Table 3: Percentage of Participants Indicating the Presence of Bullying, Reese as Target, and Alex as Bully in the Scenarios used to Assess Hypothesis 1*

Scenario	Did Bullying Take Place?		Who is the target?		Who is the bully?	
	<i>n</i>	<i>% Yes</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>% Reese</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>% Alex</i>
Low Verbal	263	78.33	206	97.57	206	96.60
Medium Verbal	263	83.65	220	95.91	220	96.82
High Verbal	263	87.45	230	96.52	230	95.22
Low Cyber	263	93.16	245	97.14	245	97.14
Medium Cyber	263	95.44	251	98.41	251	97.61
High Cyber	263	93.54	246	97.56	246	96.34
Low Social	263	91.63	241	97.93	241	97.51
Medium Social	263	93.54	246	98.37	246	97.15
High Social	263	94.30	247	96.76	248	97.58

NOTE: Responses of yes, Reese, and Alex support the manipulations within the scenario.

*Table 4: Check of Emotional Display Manipulation: Means and Standard Deviations Representing Level of Emotional Display Demonstrated by the Target in Comparison to Type of Bullying Within the Scenario*

	Verbal Bullying		Cyber Bullying		Social Bullying	
	<i>M</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SE</i>
Low Emotional Display	3.11	.09	3.81	.09	3.78	.09
Medium Emotional Display	4.34	.08	5.25	.08	5.03	.08
High Emotional Display	5.56	.08	5.55	.08	6.11	.07

*Table 5: Hypothesis 1: Means and Standard Deviations Representing Level of Emotional Display Demonstrated by the Target in Comparison to Each Type of Bullying Within the Scenario*

	Verbal Bullying		Cyber Bullying		Social Bullying	
	<i>M</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SE</i>
Low Emotional Display	3.70	.08	4.37	.07	4.36	.07
Medium Emotional Display	4.07	.06	4.89	.06	4.53	.06
High Emotional Display	4.62	.06	5.05	.06	4.59	.06

## HYPOTHESIS 2 TABLES

*Table 6: Percentage of Participants Indicating the Presence of Bullying, Reese as Target, and Alex as Bully in the Scenarios used to Assess Hypothesis 2*

Scenario	Did Bullying Take Place?		Who is the target?		Who is the bully?	
	<i>n</i>	<i>% Yes</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>% Reese</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>% Alex</i>
Low Verbal	278	85.61	238	97.90	238	97.48
Medium Verbal	278	88.85	247	95.95	247	97.17
High Verbal	278	87.77	244	97.95	244	97.54
Low Cyber	278	92.09	256	98.05	256	97.27
Medium Cyber	278	87.41	243	96.71	243	95.88
High Cyber	278	92.81	258	97.67	258	98.45
Low Social	278	85.25	237	97.47	237	98.73
Medium Social	278	91.37	253	97.23	253	96.84
High Social	278	86.33	240	96.67	240	97.08

NOTE: Responses of yes, Reese, and Alex support the manipulations within the scenario.

*Table 7: Check of Negative Effect on the Manager Manipulation: Means and Standard Errors Representing Level of Negative Effect on the Manager Each in Comparison to Type of Bullying Within the Scenario*

	Verbal Bullying		Cyber Bullying		Social Bullying	
	<i>M</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SE</i>
Low Negative Effect on Manager	3.53	.10	4.39	.08	4.20	.09
Medium Negative Effect on the Manager	4.16	.09	4.63	.09	4.12	.09
High Negative Effect on Manager	5.41	.09	5.68	.09	5.67	.09

*Table 8: Means and Standard Error Representing Type of Bullying When Comparing to Level of Negative Effect on the Manager*

	Low Negative Effect on Manager		Medium Negative Effect on Manager		High Negative Effect on Manager	
	<i>M</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SE</i>
Verbal Bullying	4.18	.08	4.59	.06	4.93	.07
Cyber Bullying	4.70	.07	4.45	.07	5.15	.07
Social Bullying	4.32	.07	4.30	.07	4.80	.06

# FIGURES

## HYPOTHESIS 1 FIGURES

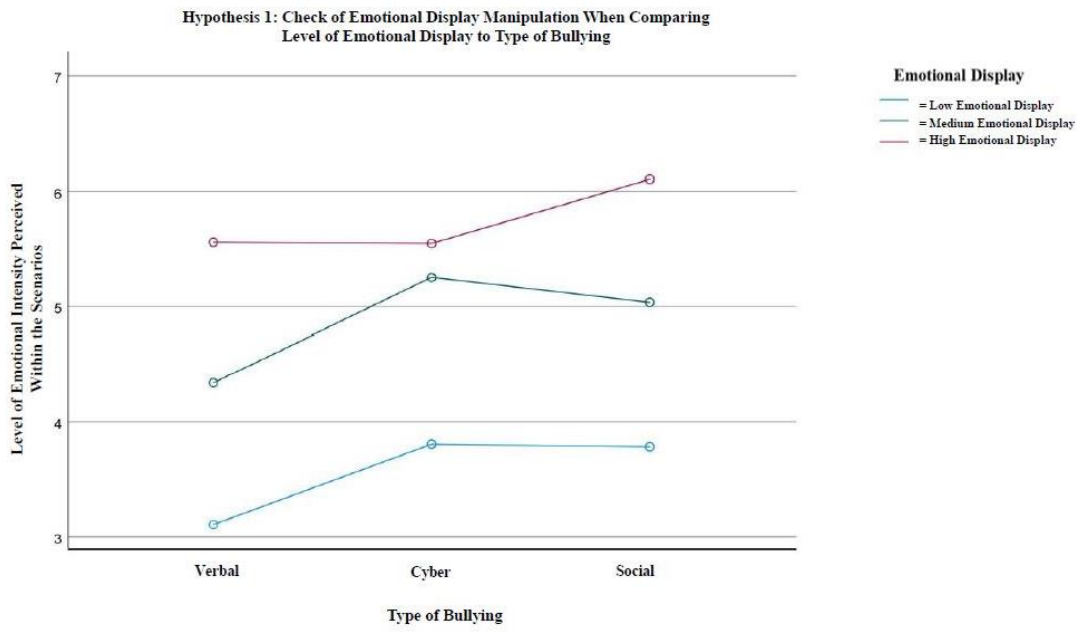


Figure 1: Check of Emotional Display Manipulation: Means Representing Level of Emotional Display Demonstrated by the Target in Comparison to Type of Bullying Within the Scenario

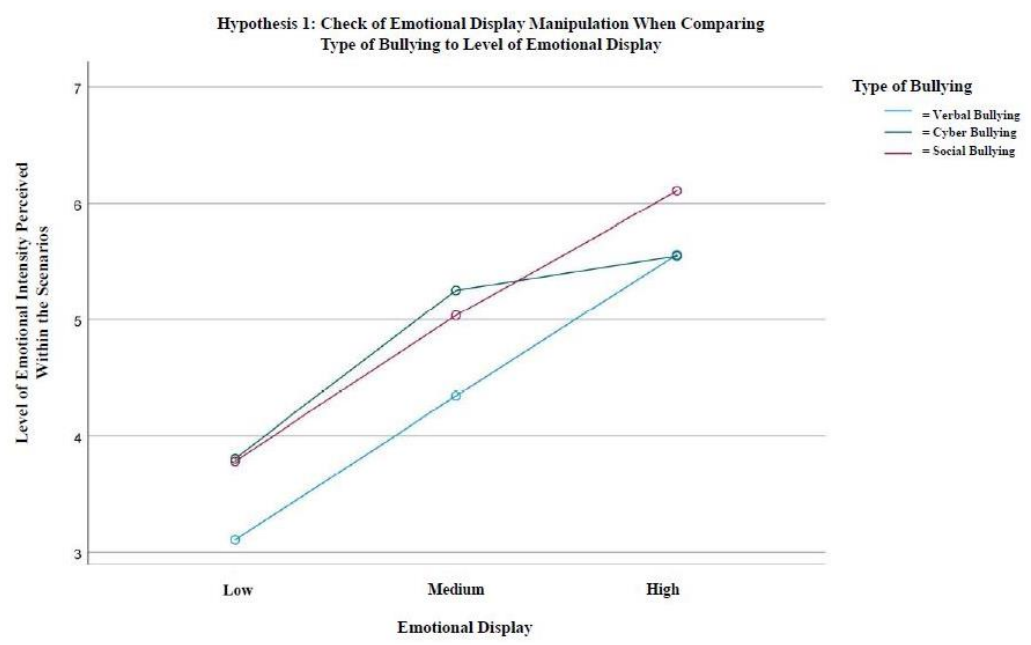


Figure 2: Check of Emotional Display Manipulation: Means Representing Type of Bullying in Comparison to the Level of Emotional Display Demonstrated by the Target Within the Scenario

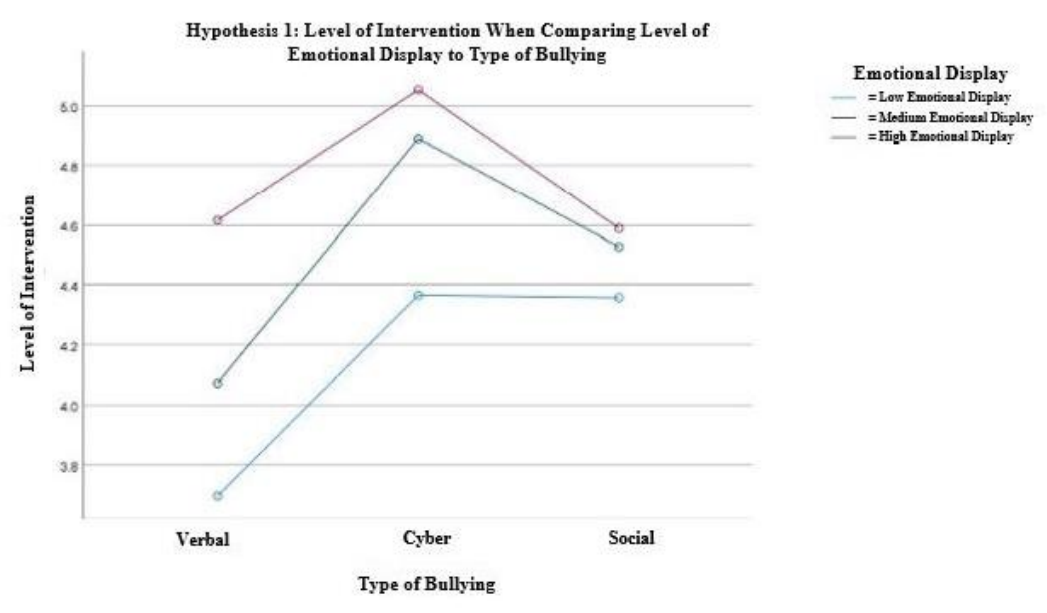
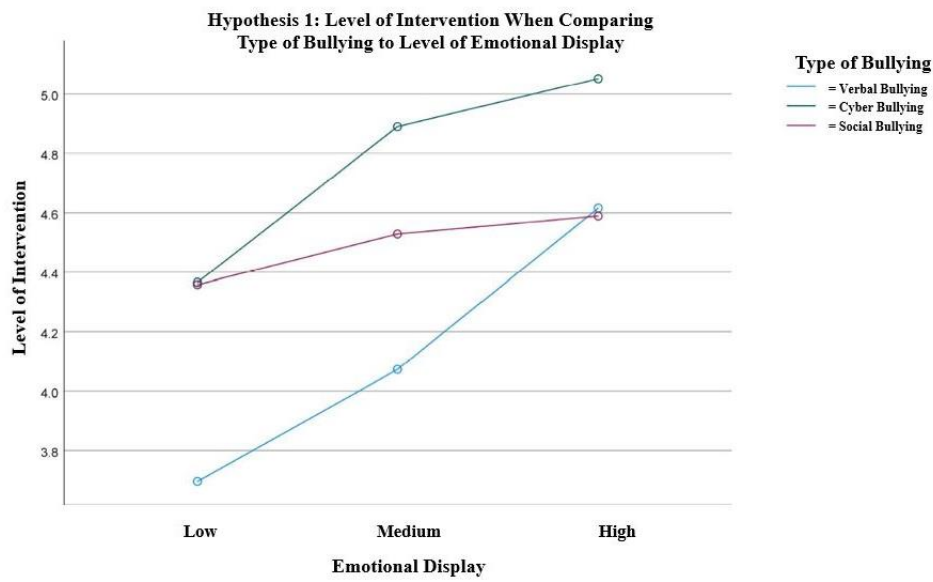


Figure 3: Hypothesis 1: Means Representing Level of Intervention When Comparing Emotional Display Demonstrated by the Target to Type of Bullying Within the Scenarios



*Figure 4: Hypothesis 1: Means Representing Level of Intervention When Comparing Type of Bullying to Emotional Display Demonstrated by the Target Within the Scenario*

### HYPOTHESIS 2 FIGURES

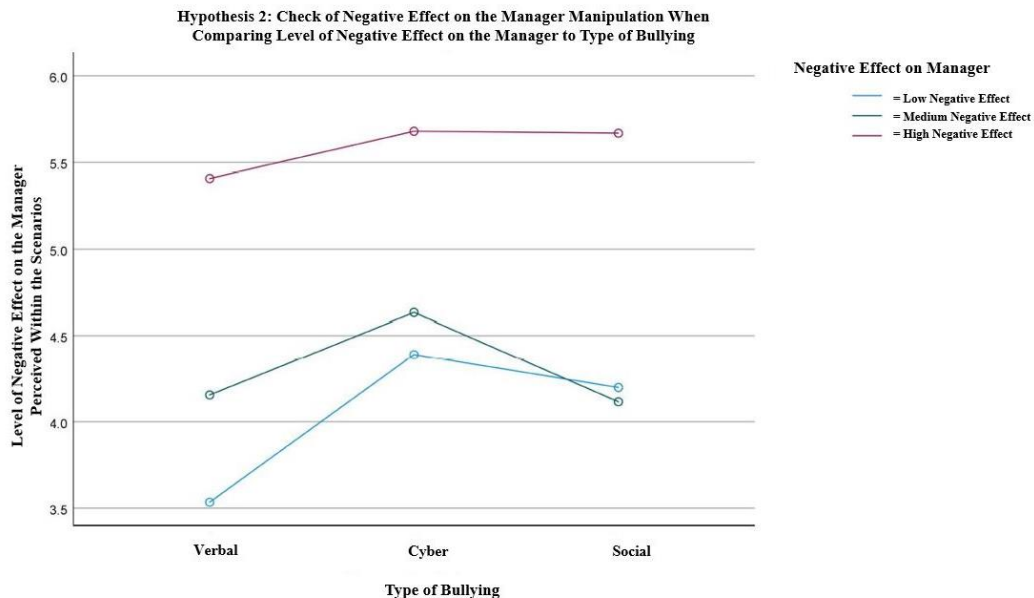


Figure 5: Check of Negative Effect on the Manager Manipulation: Means Representing Level of Negative Effect on the Manager in Comparison to Each Type of Bullying Within the Scenario

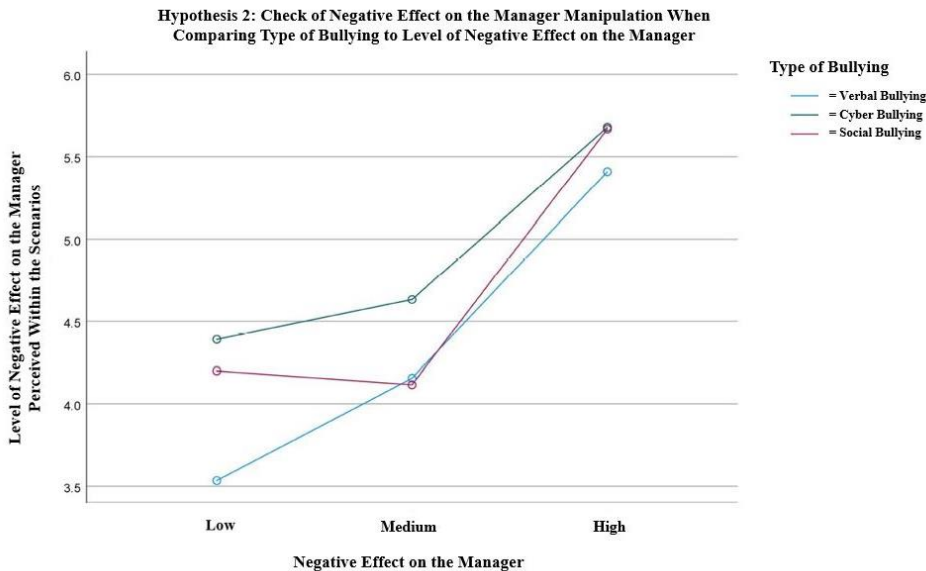


Figure 6: Check of Negative Effect on the Manager Manipulation: Means Representing Each Type of Bullying in Comparison to Level of Negative Effect on the Manager Within the Scenario

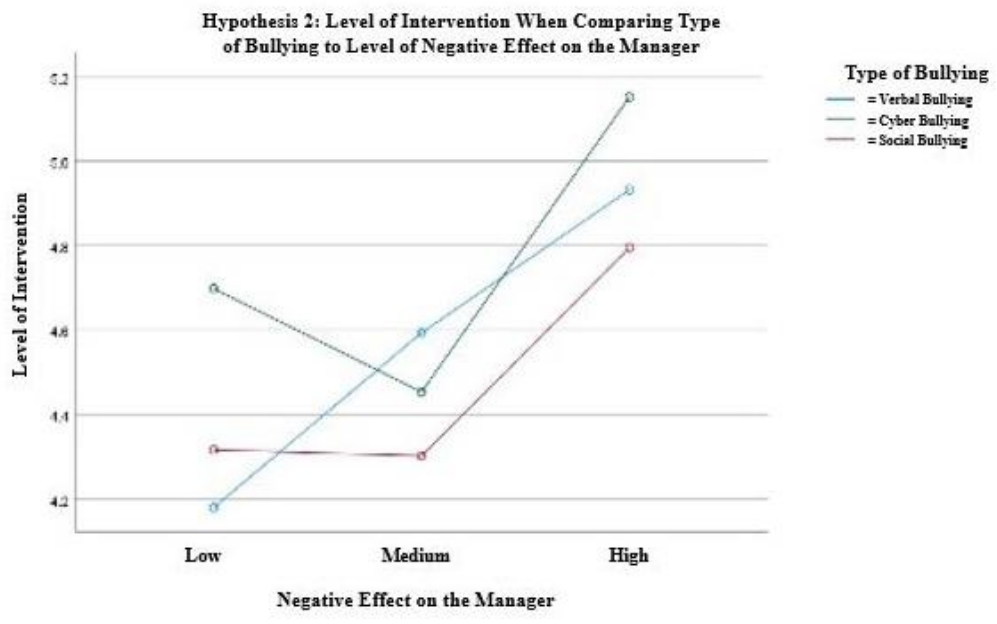


Figure 7: Means Representing Level of Intervention When Comparing Type of Bullying to Negative Effect on the Manager Within the Scenario

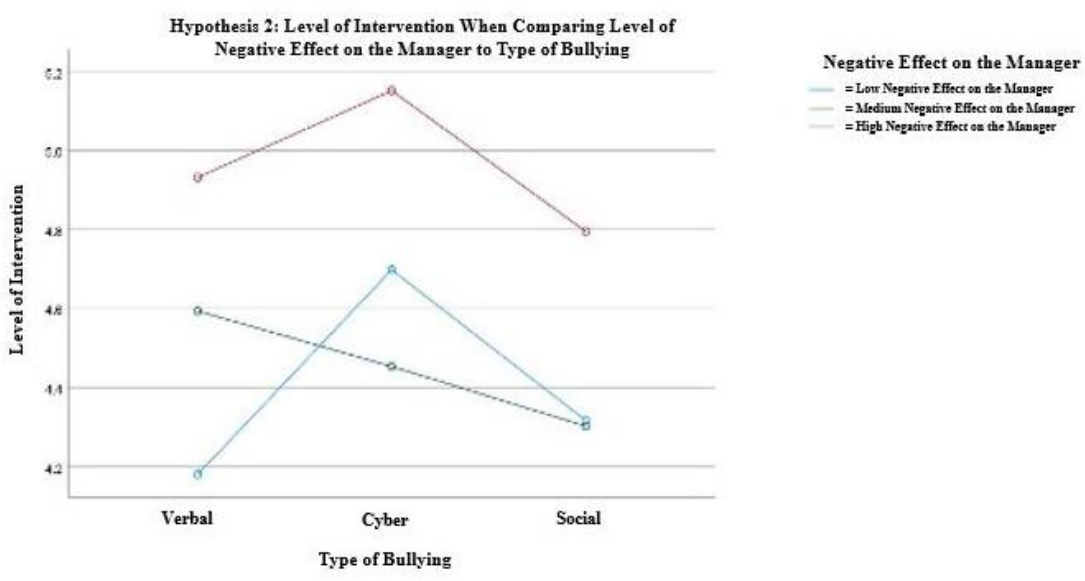


Figure 8: Hypothesis 2: Means Representing Level of Intervention When Comparing Level of Negative Effect on the Manager to Type of Bullying Within the Scenario

## Appendix C

### SCENARIOS FOR TESTING HYPOTHESIS 1

Instructions for Participant: Please read the following scenario carefully and imagine yourself as the manager in this organization. As the manager, you are responsible for making sure the organization runs as expected. A manager is defined in this study as the individual who has the autonomy to make challenging decisions regarding the supervision, command, and oversight of subordinates' contribution and behavior within an organization. Managers determine hiring and firing decisions, offer incentives and rewards such as praise, a raise and/or a promotion, as well as can offer disincentives such as admonishment, suspension and/or termination.

You as the Manager:

As the manager of this organization, you are focused on exhibiting positivity in the workplace and leading by example. You, as Manager, highlight the silver lining to every issue including weaknesses or challenges to the organization. You always aim to find and articulate the silver lining to others and expect others to focus on the positive. You are very observant and pay close attention to employee interactions.

Organization:

In this organization, there is an expectation that employees will exhibit only positive emotions while at work. It is important to the organization that negative emotions are left at the door once having entered the workplace. Their saying is "Enter the Workplace with a Smile on your Face and Keep it There." For the most part people, employees are happy and smiling.

**Bully:**

One employee, Alex, is perceived as likeable among coworkers and as having an easy-going attitude and even temperament. Alex is well-liked among upper management and clientele.

**Target:**

Reese, another employee is empathetic towards others and genuinely enjoys connecting with other coworkers. Reese has built exceptional rapport with the clientele and appears to be an overall, happy individual.

**Verbal Bullying**

Reese is making changes to the shared excel folder, and Alex says, “Who do you think you are? If you touch that folder again, you will find yourself in a difficult predicament.”

Low Emotional Response from Target: Reese shrugs off the encounter and half pouted throughout the rest of the day.

Medium Emotional Response from Target: Reese is shocked by the message and expresses it by widening eyes and dropping the jaw. Reese slams the phone on the table.

High Emotional Response from Target: Reese meets with you, the Manager, to discuss this incident. During the discussion, Reese is highly emotional and demonstrates strong negative emotions in response to the event. Reese pounds on the desk and expresses anger with a loud voice. Reese expresses anxiety, sadness, and hurt with tears.

**Social Bullying**

Alex spreads rumor that Reese is having romantic relations with half of the clientele, so that is why Reese has doubled the company's profit.

Low Emotional Response from Target: Reese does not make eye contact with coworkers and stares longingly out the window.

Medium Emotional Response from Target: As a result, coworkers begin to treat Reese differently and dismiss the Reese's questions and concerns. Reese begins to frown more and more with each coworker interaction and starts avoiding eye contact when discussing information with coworkers. Reese is perceived as anxious and short in response. You observe Reese throwing a pen across the office.

High Emotional Response from Target: Reese cries uncontrollably in your, the Manager's, office while explaining the situation. As the discussion progresses, Reese's voice becomes louder and gestures more aggressive as exhibits of heightened anger, slamming hands down on your desk. Uncharacteristically, Reese lets out a profane comment.

## **Cyber Bullying**

Alex instant messages Reese, “If you know what is good for you, you will find another organization to implode upon.”

Low Emotional Response from Target: Reese is slow moving during work hours and more reserved than usual.

Medium Emotional Response from Target: Reese is seen sobbing after having shared the message with you, the Manager. Reese exhibits darkened circles around the eyes. Reese is more fidgety than normal.

High Emotional Response from Target: Reese meets with you, the Manager, a second time, demanding action on your part, expressing rage, and bellowing in despair. Reese's stance is wide, and eyes are welling up with tears of anger and feelings of distraught.

## **Appendix D**

### **SCENARIOS FOR TESTING HYPOTHESIS 2**

Instructions for Participant: Please read the following scenario, carefully and imagine yourself as the manager in this organization. As the manager, you are responsible for making sure the organization runs as expected. A manager is defined in this study as the individual who has the autonomy to make challenging decisions regarding the supervision, command, and oversight of subordinates' contribution and behavior within an organization. Managers determine hiring and firing decisions, offer incentives and rewards such as praise, a raise and/or a promotion, as well as can offer disincentives such as admonishment, suspension and/or termination.

Organization:

In this organization, employees are expected to provide quality service to the clientele and perform to the best of their abilities. Employees are recognized for their exceptional work and commitment to serving the organization.

You as the Manager:

As the Manager of this organization, you oversee a department within the organization that has remained successful over the years and has received kudos for its accomplishments from the CEO and Vice President of the company. As the Manager, you have high expectations for the employees in providing efficient and quality service to clientele.

**Bully:**

Alex is an extremely dedicated worker who has worked with this organization for over ten years and has made many connections throughout the company. Alex is efficient at completing designated tasks, attends meetings on time, and is always willing to take on more work if needed. The organization has recognized Alex's accomplishments with awards throughout the years. Alex is considered to be a top employee.

**Target:**

Reese is very team-oriented employee who possesses excellent, professional writing and verbal skills. Reese has served the organization for five years and has introduced numerous clients to the organization. Reese is considered to be a good employee.

**Verbal Bullying**

Reese is making changes to the shared excel folder, and Alex says, "Who do you think you are? If you touch that folder again, you will find yourself in a difficult predicament."

Low Negative Effect on Manager: Reese takes a longer lunch than usual.

Medium Negative Effect on Manager: Reese is somewhat distracted at work, and clientele begin to ask if Reese is okay.

High Negative Effect on Manager: A group of coworkers approach you, the Manager, with complaints regarding Alex, and you notice that work productivity has declined significantly within the office. The company's bottom-line has been severely negatively affected.

### **Social Bullying**

Alex spreads a rumor that Reese is having romantic relations with half of the clientele, so that is why Reese has doubled the company's profit.

Low Negative Effect on Manager: Reese arrived at the team meeting and was unprepared for the discussion, which was unusual for Reese.

Medium Negative Effect on Manager: Reese sits at desk spending the afternoon alone and others in the workplace begin to notice. Coworkers spend the rest of the day discussing how Reese wasn't invited to lunch rather than working on tasks.

High Negative Effect on Manager: A group of coworkers approach you, the Manager, and threaten to quit arguing that the workplace is too volatile, and they cannot complete the work assigned to them. Clientele are becoming frustrated with the company.

### **Cyber-Bullying**

Alex instant messages Reese, "If you know what is good for you, you will find another organization to implode upon."

Low Negative Effect on Manager: Reese has a tough time concentrating on work tasks and cannot complete the days' tasks to the quality Reese normally delivers.

Medium Negative Effect on Manager: Reese frequently leaves the desk to walk the halls.

Clientele are left waiting for Reese to get back to them.

High Negative Effect on Manager: Reese notifies you, the Manager, and the Human Resources team and files a harassment complaint to initiate legal action against the company. The President of the branch is also notified and calls to question you regarding the event.

## **Appendix E**

### **SAMPLE SCENARIO**

Please read the following scenario, carefully and imagine yourself as the manager in this organization. As the manager, you are responsible for making sure the organization runs as expected. A manager is defined as the individual who has the autonomy to make challenging decisions regarding the supervision, command, and oversight of subordinates' contribution and behavior within an organization. Managers determine hiring and firing decisions, offer incentives and rewards such as praise, a raise and/or a promotion, as well as can offer disincentives such as admonishment, suspension and/or termination.

### **SCENARIO**

As the manager of this organization, you are focused on exhibiting positivity in the workplace and leading by example. You, as Manager, highlight the silver lining to every issue including weaknesses or challenges to the organization. You always aim to find and articulate the silver lining to others and expect others to focus on the positive. You are very observant and pay close attention to employee interactions.

In this organization, there is an expectation that employees will exhibit only positive emotions while at work. It is important to the organization that negative emotions are left at the door once having entered the workplace. Their saying is "Enter the Workplace with a Smile on your Face and Keep it There." For the most part people, employees are happy and smiling.

One employee, Alex, is perceived as likeable among coworkers and as having an easy-going attitude and even temperament. Alex is well-liked among upper management and clientele.

Reese, another employee, is empathetic towards others and genuinely enjoys connecting with other coworkers. Reese has built exceptional rapport with the clientele and appears to be an overall, happy individual.

Reese is making changes to the shared excel folder, and Alex says, “Who do you think you are? If you touch that folder again, you will find yourself in a difficult predicament.”

Reese meets with you, the Manager, a second time, demanding action on your part, expressing rage, and bellowing in despair. Reese's stance is wide, and eyes are welling up with tears of anger and feelings of distraught.

As the Manager of this organization, what would you do?

1 = do nothing,

2 = reassure Reese that Alex was just kidding around,

3 = advise that the two employees, Alex and Reese, work it out between themselves,

4 = pull employees together for a discussion about conflict management and bullying behavior,

5 = console Reese and address Alex's behavior with Alex by providing Alex with a warning,

6 = console Reese and fire Alex.

## Appendix F

### PILOT TESTING

Six pilot tests were conducted to establish the validity of the scenarios. Each is summarized below.

#### Pilot Test 1

- The purpose of Pilot Test 1 was to answer the following question: is there alignment across the types of bullying behavior in hostility?
- The participants were eight graduate students.
- The task was to determine whether bullying was present within the interaction, the degree of hostility present within the interaction, and who represented the bully in the interaction. Participants were provided with three variations of bullying interactions within the three types of bullying, verbal, social and cyber, totaling at nine different bullying interactions. The materials presented to them are shown below.
- The results indicated 100% of coders rated that each type of bullying was slightly hostile or above. In rating the degree of hostility, coders averaged between 4.375 and 4.5, somewhat hostile = 3 and extremely hostile = 5, which helped determine which of the scenarios to use for verbal, social and cyber bullying. Each of the three types of bullying, verbal, social, and cyber was rated an average of 4.0. This indicated that level of hostile behavior across the types of bullying, verbal, social and cyber was determined to be at about the same level for each type of bullying.
- Therefore, one description of bullying behavior for each type of bullying, totaling to three representations of bullying behavior was evaluated in pilot testing phases two and three.

## **Materials For Pilot Study 1**

Thank you for helping me out by participating in Phase 1 of my pilot study. This portion will take no more than 10 minutes of your time. First, please read the definitions of bullying and the examples of bullying behavior. Then, please read the scenarios and provide the requested ratings.

### **Please read these definitions carefully:**

#### Definition of bullying:

“a form of hostile, negative social interaction that is repetitive, patterned and ongoing, yet unwanted and unsolicited” (Tracy, Lutgen-Sandvik, & Alberts, 2005, p. 4).

Examples of bullying include:

- (a) name-calling, producing mean comments, and saying something scary or intimidating to or about another individual.
- (b) turning others against an individual, starting false rumors, and excluding an individual from the group.
- (c) posting something negative about someone on the internet, sending nasty emails or text messages to someone, and producing unkind comments online about an individual.

Please read through the scenarios and use the highlighting tool to... (a) indicate whether you believe bullying behavior is represented in each scenario, (b) rate the level of hostile behavior displayed in each scenario using the rating scale provided, and (c) indicate which actor in the scenario displayed the hostile behavior.

1. Reese is making changes to the shared excel folder, and Alex says, “Who do you think you are? If you touch that folder again, you will find yourself in a difficult predicament.”

**(a) Is bullying behavior represented in this scenario?**

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes

\_\_\_\_\_ No

**(b) Please rate the hostility of the present scenario.**

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all Hostile	Slightly Hostile	Somewhat Hostile	Hostile	Extremely Hostile

**(c) Which actor(s) displayed hostile behavior in this scenario?**

\_\_\_\_\_ Neither Alex nor Reese

\_\_\_\_\_ Alex

\_\_\_\_\_ Reese

\_\_\_\_\_ Both Alex and Reese

## **Pilot Test 2**

- The purpose of Pilot Test 2 was to answer the following question: is there a present violation of expectations regarding emotional behavior within the organization?
- The participants were eight graduate students.
- The task was to determine whether there was a violation of display of emotion and behavior within the organization and which actor displayed the violation of behavior and emotion in the interaction. Participants were provided with three representations of bullying behavior, approved from the first phases of pilot testing, accompanied with nine variations of the target's emotional response to the bullying behavior, totaling to nine scenarios. The materials presented to them are shown below.
- The results indicated that five of the eight coders rated the target as violating the expectations regarding emotional behavior presented within the organization in all scenarios, yielding a total of 62.5%. All coders rated there being a violation of expectations regarding emotional behavior within the organization, except for one coder in two scenarios. This yielded 97.22% overall for the violation being present. Therefore, all nine scenarios were used to conduct the research for this study.

## **Materials For Pilot Study 2**

Thank you for helping me out by participating in Phase 2 of my pilot study. This portion will take no more than 10 minutes of your time. You will be assuming the role of the manager throughout these scenarios. First, please read through the background of the organization, as well as the role you play within the organization. Then, please read the scenarios and provide the requested ratings.

**You as the Manager:**

As the manager of this organization, you are focused on exhibiting positivity in the workplace and leading by example. You, as Manager, highlight the silver lining to every issue including weaknesses or challenges to the organization. You always aim to find and articulate the silver lining to others and expect others to focus on the positive. You are very observant and pay close attention to employee interactions.

**Organization:**

In this organization, there is an expectation that employees will exhibit only positive emotional behavior while at work. It is important to the organization that negative emotions are left at the door once having entered the workplace. The organization's slogan is "Enter the Workplace with a Smile on your Face and Keep it There." For the most part, employees are happy and smiling.

Please read through the scenarios and use the highlighting tool to... (a) highlight "yes" or "no" to indicate whether you believe there is a violation of expectations for emotion/behavior within the organization based upon the RESPONSE to the interaction, and (b) indicate which actor in the scenario displayed the violation of display of emotional behavior.

**Scenarios**

1. Alex instant messages Reese, "If you know what is good for you, you will find another organization to implode upon."

Reese, who usually smiles, shows up to work the next few days not smiling and appears to be a little distant from coworkers. You later learn that Reese has been crying at the office.

**(a) You as the Manager observe this. Is there a violation of display of emotion and behavior within the organization?**

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes

\_\_\_\_\_ No

**(b) Which actor(s) displayed the violation of display of emotion and behavior in this scenario?**

\_\_\_\_\_ Neither Alex nor Reese

\_\_\_\_\_ Alex

\_\_\_\_\_ Reese

\_\_\_\_\_ Both Alex and Reese

### **Pilot Test 3**

- The purpose of Pilot Test 3 was to answer the following question: Is there behavior present that negatively affects the manager or bottom-line within the organization?
- The participants were four graduate students.
- The task was to determine whether there was behavior displayed within the organization that negatively impacted the manager or bottom-line of the organization and which actor initiated the chain of events that resulted in the negative behavior impacting the manager or bottom-line. Participants were provided with three representations of bullying behavior, approved from the first phase of pilot testing, accompanied by nine variations of behavior demonstrating a negative effect on the manager or the organization as a whole. The materials presented to them are shown below.
- The results indicated that 100% of coders indicated that there was behavior present that negatively affects the manager or bottom-line of the organization. Three of the four coders rated the bully as initiating the chain of events that resulted in the behavior that negatively affected the manager or bottom-line of the organization, yielding 75%. One coder rated the target as initiating the chain of events that resulted in the behavior that negatively affected the manager or bottom-line of the organization in two scenarios. This yielded 94.4% overall, supporting the bully initiating the chain of events. Therefore, all nine scenarios were used to conduct the research for this study.

### **Materials For Pilot Study 3**

Thank you for helping me out by participating in Phase 3 of my pilot study. This portion will take no more than 10 minutes of your time. You will be assuming the role of the manager

throughout these scenarios. First, please read through the background of the organization, as well as the role you play within the organization. Then, please read the scenarios and provide the requested ratings.

**Organization:**

In this organization, employees are expected to provide quality service to the clientele and perform to the best of their abilities. Employees are recognized for their exceptional work and commitment to serving the organization.

**You as the Manager:**

As the Manager of this organization, you oversee a department within the organization that has remained successful over the years and has received kudos for its accomplishments from the CEO and Vice President of the company. As the Manager, you have high expectations for the employees in providing efficient and quality service to clientele.

Please read through the scenarios and use the highlighting tool to... (a) highlight “yes” or “no” to indicate whether you believe there is behavior present that negatively affects the manager or bottom-line within the organization based upon the RESPONSE to the interaction, and (b) indicate which actor initiated the chain of events that resulted in the behavior that negatively affected the manager or bottom-line of the organization.

1. Alex instant messages Reese, “If you know what is good for you, you will find another organization to implode upon.” Reese leaves the desk and spends the afternoon in the bathroom.

Clientele are left waiting for an extended period of time for Reese to get back to them.

**(a) You as the Manager observe this. Is there a display of behavior within the organization of which negatively impacts the manager or bottom-line of the organization?**

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes

\_\_\_\_\_ No

**(b) Which actor(s) displayed in the scenario displayed behavior that negatively affects the manager or bottom-line?**

\_\_\_\_\_ Neither Alex nor Reese

\_\_\_\_\_ Alex

\_\_\_\_\_ Reese

\_\_\_\_\_ Both Alex and Reese

#### **Pilot Test 4**

- The purpose of Pilot Test 4 was to answer the following question: which emotional behavior responses to each scenario are represented as low, medium, and high?
- The participants were 15 undergraduate students.
- The task was to determine ranking order from low to high emotional response to the bullying scenario and the degree to which each response violates the expectation for emotional behavior within the workplace. Participants were provided with three representations of bullying behavior, approved from the first phases of pilot testing, accompanied with nine variations of the target's emotional response to the bullying behavior, totaling to nine scenarios. The materials presented to them are shown below.
- The results indicated that the majority of the coders classified each response to verbal bullying as low (71.43%), medium (53.33%), and high (66.7%). Additionally, 73.33% of coders rated one response as slightly or not at all violating emotional behavior expectations, yielding an average mean of 2.33 (low), 53.33% of coders rated one response as slightly, somewhat, or moderately violating emotional behavior expectations, yielding an average mean of 4 (medium), and 73% of coders rated one response as completely, very strongly, or strongly violating emotional behavior expectations, yielding an average mean of 5.4 (high). The results indicated that the majority of the coders classified each response to social bullying as low (78.57%), medium (60%), and high (46.67%). Additionally, 73.34% of coders rated one response as slightly or not at all violating emotional behavior expectations, yielding an average mean of 2.33 (low), 59.99% of coders rated one response as somewhat, moderately, or strongly violating emotional behavior expectations, yielding an average mean of 4.2 (medium), and 73.33%

of coders rated one response as completely, very strongly, or strongly violating emotional behavior expectations, yielding an average mean of 5.13 (high). The results indicated that the majority of the coders classified each response to cyber bullying as low (40%), medium (40%), and high (40%). Additionally, the majority of coders rated each response at between slightly, somewhat, moderately, and strongly violating emotional behavior expectations, yielding an average mean of 3.53 for one response, yielding an average mean of 3.47 for another response, and yielding an average mean of 4 for the final response. Thus, cyber bullying responses for Hypothesis 1 were retested and the results are shown in Pilot Test 6. Therefore, because of this pilot test, eight out of nine scenario responses were validated for this study.

#### **Materials For Pilot Study 4**

Hello: You are invited to participate in our survey Emotional Response to Workplace Bullying. It will take approximately 10 minutes to complete the questionnaire. Your participation in this study is completely voluntary. There are no foreseeable risks associated with this project. However, if you feel uncomfortable answering any questions, you can withdraw from the survey at any point. It is very important for us to learn your opinions. Your survey responses will be strictly confidential and data from this research will be reported only in the aggregate. Your information will be coded and will remain confidential. Thank you very much for your time and support. Please start with the survey now by clicking on the Continue button below.

Read the following scenario.

Scenario: Reese is making changes to the shared excel folder, and Alex says, “Who do you think you are? If you touch that folder again, you will find yourself in a difficult predicament.”

Below are four responses to the above verbal bullying scenario. Please rank (1-4) the following in order highest emotional response (1) to lowest emotional response (4).

1. Reese meets with you, as Manager, to discuss this incident. During the discussion, Reese is highly emotional and demonstrates strong negative emotions in response to the event. Reese pounds on the desk and expresses anger with a loud voice. Reese expresses anxiety, sadness, and hurt with tears. -- Select --
2. Reese is withdrawn and frowns during the rest of the meeting. Later, you, as Manager, observe Reese throwing a book, shedding tears, and appearing visibly distressed. -- Select --
3. Reese shrugs off the encounter and half pouted throughout the rest of the day. -- Select --
4. Reese is shocked by the message and expresses it by widening eyes and dropping the jaw. Reese slams the phone on the table. -- Select --

Read the following scenario once more with additional information about the organization.

Organization:

In this organization, there is an expectation that employees will exhibit only positive emotional behavior while at work. It is important to the organization that negative emotions are left at the door once having entered the workplace. The organization's slogan is "Enter the Workplace with a Smile on your Face and Keep it There." For the most part, employees are happy and smiling.

Scenario: Reese is making changes to the shared excel folder, and Alex says, “Who do you think you are? If you touch that folder again, you will find yourself in a difficult predicament.”

Below are four responses to the above verbal bullying scenario.

1. Reese meets with you, as Manager, to discuss this incident. During the discussion, Reese is highly emotional and demonstrates strong negative emotions in response to the event. Reese pounds on the desk and expresses anger with a loud voice. Reese expresses anxiety, sadness, and hurt with tears.
2. Reese is withdrawn and frowns during the rest of the meeting. Later, you, as Manager, observe Reese throwing a book, shedding tears, and appearing visibly distressed.
3. Reese shrugs off the encounter and half pouted throughout the rest of the day.
4. Reese is shocked by the message and expresses it by widening eyes and dropping the jaw. Reese slams the phone on the table.

Now, please rate the degree to which each response violates the expectation for emotional behavior within the workplace.

- (1) Does Not at All Violate the Expectation for Emotional Behavior
- (2) Slightly Violates the Expectation for Emotional Behavior
- (3) Somewhat Violates the Expectation for Emotional Behavior
- (4) Moderately Violates the Expectation for Emotional Behavior
- (5) Strongly Violates the Expectation for Emotional Behavior
- (6) Very Strongly Violates the Expectation for Emotional Behavior
- (7) Completely Violates the Expectation for Emotional Behavior

## Pilot Test 5

- The purpose of Pilot Test 5 was to answer the following question: which responses to each scenario are represented as low, medium, and high negative effect on the manager or bottom-line of an organization?
- The participants were 32 undergraduate students.
- The task was to determine ranking order from low to high negative effect on manager or bottom-line of an organization in response to the bullying scenario and the degree to which each response negatively affects the manager or bottom-line of the organization. Participants were provided with three representations of bullying behavior, approved from the first phases of pilot testing, accompanied with nine variations of the target's response to the bullying behavior negatively affecting the manager or bottom-line of the organization, totaling to nine scenarios. The materials presented to them are shown below.
- The results indicated that the majority of the coders classified each response to verbal bullying as low (51.52%), medium (48.48%), and high (42.42%). Additionally, the majority of coders rated each response at between moderately, strongly, very strongly, and completely negatively affecting the manager or bottom-line of an organization, yielding an average mean of 4.62 for one response, yielding an average mean of 5.16 for another response, and yielding an average mean of 4.12 for the final response. Thus, verbal bullying responses for Hypothesis 2 were retested and the results are shown in Pilot Test 6. The results indicated that the majority of the coders classified each response to social bullying as low (41.94%), medium (38.71%), and high (35.48%). Additionally, the majority of coders rated each response at between moderately, strongly, very

strongly, and completely negatively affecting the manager or bottom-line of an organization, yielding an average mean of 5.03 for one response, yielding an average mean of 5 for another response, and yielding an average mean of 3.48 for the final response. Thus, social bullying responses for Hypothesis 2 were retested and the results are shown in Pilot Test 6. The results indicated that the majority of the coders classified each response to cyber bullying as low (51.61%), medium (38.71%), and high (45.16%). Additionally, the majority of coders rated each response at between moderately, strongly, very strongly, and completely negatively affecting the manager or bottom-line of an organization, yielding an average mean of 5.1 for one response, yielding an average mean of 4.58 for another response, and yielding an average mean of 4.1 for the final response. Thus, cyber bullying responses for Hypothesis 2 were retested and the results are shown in Pilot Test 6. Therefore, because of this pilot test, all of the scenarios were retested to revise the rating of the degree to which each response negatively affects the manager or bottom-line of the organization.

### **Materials For Pilot Study 5**

Hello: You are invited to participate in our survey Emotional Response to Workplace Bullying. It will take approximately 10 minutes to complete the questionnaire. Your participation in this study is completely voluntary. There are no foreseeable risks associated with this project.

However, if you feel uncomfortable answering any questions, you can withdraw from the survey at any point. It is very important for us to learn your opinions. Your survey responses will be strictly confidential and data from this research will be reported only in the aggregate. Your information will be coded and will remain confidential. Thank you very much for your time and support. Please start with the survey now by clicking on the Continue button below.

Read the following scenario.

Scenario: Reese is making changes to the shared excel folder, and Alex says, “Who do you think you are? If you touch that folder again, you will find yourself in a difficult predicament.”

Below are three responses to the above verbal bullying scenario. Please rank (1-3) the following in order highest negative effect on you, the manager (1) to lowest negative effect on you, the manager (3).

1. A group of coworkers approach you, the Manager, with complaints regarding Alex, and you notice that work productivity has declined significantly within the office. The company’s bottom-line has been severely negatively affected. -- Select --
2. Coworkers witness the encounter. Coworkers become more anxious and spend more time discussing the event between Alex and Reese. As a result, coworkers spend less time on completing work tasks. -- Select --
3. Reese is somewhat distracted at work, and clientele begin to ask if Reese is okay. -- Select --

Read the following scenario once more.

Scenario: Reese is making changes to the shared excel folder, and Alex says, “Who do you think you are? If you touch that folder again, you will find yourself in a difficult predicament.”

Below are three responses to the above verbal bullying scenario.

1. A group of coworkers approach you, the Manager, with complaints regarding Alex, and you notice that work productivity has declined significantly within the office. The company's bottom-line has been severely negatively affected.
2. Coworkers witness the encounter. Coworkers become more anxious and spend more time discussing the event between Alex and Reese. As a result, coworkers spend less time on completing work tasks.
3. Reese is somewhat distracted at work, and clientele begin to ask if Reese is okay.

Now, please rate the degree to which each response below negatively affects you, the manager, using the following rating scale.

- (1) Does Not Negatively Affect the Manager
- (2) Slightly Negatively Affects the Manager
- (3) Somewhat Negatively Affects the Manager
- (4) Moderately Negatively Affects the Manager
- (5) Strongly Negatively Affects the Manager
- (6) Very Strongly Negatively Affects the Manager
- (7) Completely Negatively Affects the Manager

## Pilot Test 6

- The purpose of Pilot Test 6 was to answer the following questions: which responses to each scenario are represented as low, medium, and high negative effect on the manager or bottom-line of an organization? Which emotional behavior responses to cyber bullying are represented as low, medium, and high?
- The participants were 4 graduate students.
- The task was to determine ranking order from low to high negative effect on manager or bottom-line of an organization in response to the bullying scenario, the degree to which each response negatively affects the manager or bottom-line of the organization, and ranking order from low to high emotional response to the cyber bullying scenario and the degree to which each response to cyber bullying violates the expectation for emotional behavior within the workplace. Participants were provided with four representations of bullying behavior, approved from the first phases of pilot testing, accompanied with twelve variations of the target's response, edited as a result of pilot testing 4 and 5, nine for the bullying behavior negatively affecting the manager or bottom-line of the organization, and three for the emotional behavior response to cyber bullying, totaling to twelve scenarios. The materials presented to them are shown below.
- For Hypothesis 2, the results indicated that all the coders classified each response to verbal bullying as low (100%), medium (100%), and high (100%). Additionally, 100% of coders rated one response as slightly or somewhat negatively affects the manager or bottom-line of the organization, yielding an average mean of 2.5 (low), 50% of coders rated one response as somewhat or moderately negatively affects the manager of bottom-line of the organization violating, yielding an average mean of 4.25 (medium), and 100%

of coders rated one response as completely or very strongly negatively affects the manager of bottom-line of the organization violating, yielding an average mean of 6.75 (high). For Hypothesis 2, the results indicated that the majority of the coders classified each response to social bullying as low (50%), medium (50%), and high (100%). Additionally, 50% of coders rated one response as slightly or moderately negatively affects the manager or bottom-line of the organization, yielding an average mean of 4 (medium), 100% of coders rated one response as somewhat or moderately negatively affects the manager of bottom-line of the organization violating, yielding an average mean of 3.5 (medium), and 75% of coders rated one response as completely negatively affects the manager of bottom-line of the organization violating, yielding an average mean of 6.25 (high). Thus, we revised the social bullying scenario responses for Hypothesis 2 and added a manipulation check for all scenarios for this research study.

For Hypothesis 2, the results indicated that all of the coders classified each response to cyber bullying as low (100%), medium (100%), and high (100%). Additionally, 100% of coders rated one response as slightly or somewhat negatively affects the manager or bottom-line of the organization, yielding an average mean of 2.75 (low), 100% of coders rated one response as moderately negatively affects the manager of bottom-line of the organization violating, yielding an average mean of 4 (medium), and 100% of coders rated one response as completely negatively affects the manager of bottom-line of the organization violating, yielding an average mean of 7 (high). For Hypothesis 1, the results indicated that the majority of the coders classified each emotional response to cyber bullying as low (100%), medium (50%), and high (50%). Additionally, 100% of coders rated one response as slightly, somewhat, or moderately violates expectations for

emotional behavior, yielding an average mean of 2.75 (low), 50% of coders rated one response as moderately or strongly violates expectations for emotional behavior, yielding an average mean of 5.75 (high), and 100% of coders rated one response as moderately, very strongly, and completely violates expectations for emotional behavior, yielding an average mean of 6 (high). Thus, we revised the cyber bullying scenario responses for Hypothesis 1 and added a manipulation check for all scenarios for this research study. Therefore, because of this pilot test and the revisions having been implemented, all four scenario responses were validated for this study.

### **Materials For Pilot Study 6**

Hello: You are invited to participate in our survey, Negative Effect on Manager and Emotional Response to Workplace Bullying. It will take approximately 10 minutes to complete the questionnaire. Your participation in this study is completely voluntary. There are no foreseeable risks associated with this project. However, if you feel uncomfortable answering any questions, you can withdraw from the survey at any point. It is very important for us to learn your opinions. Your survey responses will be strictly confidential and data from this research will be reported only in the aggregate. Your information will be coded and will remain confidential. Thank you very much for your time and support. Please start with the survey now by clicking on the Continue button below.

Read the following scenario.

Scenario: Reese is making changes to the shared excel folder, and Alex says, “Who do you think you are? If you touch that folder again, you will find yourself in a difficult predicament.”

Below are three responses to the above verbal bullying scenario. Please rank (1-3) the following in order highest negative effect on you, the manager (1) to lowest negative effect on you, the manager (3).

1. Reese takes a longer lunch than usual. -- Select --
2. Reese is somewhat distracted at work, and clientele begin to ask if Reese is okay. --  
Select --
3. A group of coworkers approach you, the Manager, with complaints regarding Alex, and you notice that work productivity has declined significantly within the office. The company's bottom-line has been severely negatively affected. -- Select --

Read the following scenario once more.

Scenario: Reese is making changes to the shared excel folder, and Alex says, "Who do you think you are? If you touch that folder again, you will find yourself in a difficult predicament."

Below are three responses to the above verbal bullying scenario.

1. Reese takes a longer lunch than usual.
2. Reese is somewhat distracted at work, and clientele begin to ask if Reese is okay.
3. A group of coworkers approach you, the Manager, with complaints regarding Alex, and you notice that work productivity has declined significantly within the office. The company's bottom-line has been severely negatively affected.

Now, please rate the degree to which each response below negatively affects you, the manager, using the following rating scale.

(1) Does Not Negatively Affect the Manager

- (2) Slightly Negatively Affects the Manager
- (3) Somewhat Negatively Affects the Manager
- (4) Moderately Negatively Affects the Manager
- (5) Strongly Negatively Affects the Manager
- (6) Very Strongly Negatively Affects the Manager
- (7) Completely Negatively Affects the Manager

#### CONCLUSION FROM PILOT TESTING RESEARCH

Now, we have nine workplace bullying scenarios consisting of emotional response from the target with which to test Hypothesis 1 and nine workplace bullying scenarios consisting of negative behavior impacting the manager or bottom-line of an organization with which to test Hypothesis 2.

## Appendix G

### DEMOGRAPHICS

Select your biological sex.

Male

Female

Intersex

Select your age. [Participants were given a list of numbers, 0 through 100 to select from.]

Select your class rank.

Freshman

Sophomore

Junior

Senior

Graduate Student (Master's or above)

Please Indicate Your Ethnicity.

African American

Asian/Pacific Islanders

Caucasian American/White

Mexican American/Latino

American Indian/Alaskan Native

Other

Select the employment status that best describes you currently.

Employed full-time (21+ hours per week)

Employed part-time (1-20 hours per week)

Not employed

Employed in an unpaid internship

Select the level of supervisory experience that best describes you.

I have been paid to supervise one or more individuals.

I have supervised one or more individuals in an unpaid capacity.

I have never supervised anyone.

What is your occupation? (Open-ended question. Participants will respond by typing the answer in a box.)

---

Definition of Bullying: Bullying is defined as “a form of hostile, negative social interaction that is repetitive, patterned and ongoing, yet unwanted and unsolicited” (Tracy, Lutgen-Sandvik, & Alberts, 2005, p. 4).

According to the above definition, have you ever felt that you have been bullied?

Yes

No

Unsure

Definition of Verbal Bullying: According to Hall (2016), verbal bullying includes name-calling, producing mean comments, and saying something scary or intimidating to or about another individual.

Using the definition above as a reference, have you ever experienced verbal bullying?

Yes

No

Unsure

Have you experienced verbal bullying in your current or previous jobs?

Yes

No

Unsure

Have you witnessed verbal bullying in your current or previous jobs?

Yes

No

Unsure

Definition of Social Bullying: According to Hall (2016), social bullying involves turning others against an individual, starting false rumors, and excluding an individual from the group.

Using the definition above as a reference, have you ever experienced social bullying?

Yes

No

Unsure

Have you experienced social bullying in your current or previous jobs?

Yes

No

Unsure

Have you witnessed social bullying in your current or previous jobs?

Yes

No

Unsure

Definition of Cyber-bullying: According to Hall (2016), cyber-bullying centers around posting something negative about someone on the internet, sending nasty emails or text messages to someone, and producing unkind comments online about an individual.

Using the definition above as a reference, have you ever experienced cyber-bullying?

Yes

No

Unsure

Have you experienced cyber-bullying in your current or previous jobs?

Yes

No

Unsure

Have you witnessed cyber-bullying in your current or previous jobs?

Yes

No

Unsure

## Appendix H

### MANIPULATION CHECKS

In the scenarios you just read, did bullying take place? Yes or No

If Yes, who was the bully? \_\_\_\_\_

Who was the target? \_\_\_\_\_

H1 Manipulation Check: In the scenario above what is the level of emotional intensity you perceive in this scenario?

- (1) No Emotional Intensity at All
- (2) Slight Emotional Intensity
- (3) Somewhat Emotional Intensity
- (4) Moderate Emotional Intensity
- (5) Strong Emotional Intensity
- (6) Very Strong Emotional Intensity
- (7) Complete Emotional Intensity

How likely would you be to intervene in the situation?

- (1) Definitely Would **Not** Intervene
- (2) Probably Would **Not** Intervene
- (3) Possibly Would Intervene
- (4) Might Intervene
- (5) Probably Would Intervene
- (6) Very Probably Would Intervene
- (7) Definitely Would Intervene

H2 Manipulation Check: In the scenario above what is the level of negative effect on the manager you perceive in this scenario?

- (1) No Negative Effect at All on The Manager
- (2) Slight Negative Effect on The Manager
- (3) Somewhat Negative Effect on The Manager
- (4) Moderate Negative Effect on The Manager
- (5) Strong Effect on The Manager
- (6) Very Strong Negative Effect on The Manager
- (7) Complete Negative Effect on The Manager

How likely would you be to intervene in the situation?

- (1) Definitely Would **Not** Intervene
- (2) Probably Would **Not** Intervene
- (3) Possibly Would Intervene
- (4) Might Intervene
- (5) Probably Would Intervene
- (6) Very Probably Would Intervene
- (7) Definitely Would Intervene

## Appendix I

### OUTCOME MEASURE

The Intervention Measure is based on Nielsen and Einarsen's (2018) primary and secondary interventions to workplace bullying occurrences. The following item will assess the manager's response to the scenario.

As the Manager of this organization, from your perspective, what should be done?

1 = do nothing,

2 = reassure Reese that Alex was just kidding around,

3 = advise that the two employees, Alex and Reese, work it out between themselves,

4 = pull employees together for a discussion about conflict management and bullying behavior,

5 = console Reese and address Alex's behavior with Alex providing Alex with a warning,

6 = console Reese and fire Alex.

Primary intervention is represented in the above scale by Responses 3 and 4, because the response aims at preventing workplace bullying, of which includes organizations providing discussions or courses on bullying behavior and conflict management (Mikkelsen, HØgh, & Puggaard, 2011; Nielsen & Einarsen, 2018). Secondary intervention is represented in the above scale as Responses 5 and 6, which focus on "helping those targeted to retain regular health and functioning, and by addressing and readjusting the behaviors of the bullies" (Nielsen & Einarsen, 2018, p.79). Responses 1 and 2 indicate that no intervention has taken place. In the analysis, the

responses scale will be recoded such that Responses 1 and 2 will be coded as 1, Responses 3 and 4 will be coded as 2, and Responses 5 and 6 will be coded as 3.

## **Appendix J**

### **INFORMED CONSENT STATEMENT**

#### **Managerial Interventions to Workplace Bullying**

#### **INTRODUCTION**

You have been invited to participate in a research project being conducted by the University of Tennessee, Knoxville School of Communication Studies. The goal of this research is to understand workplace bullying situations. Specifically, this study will investigate what constitutes workplace bullying and reactions to workplace bullying.

#### **INFORMATION ABOUT PARTICIPANTS' INVOLVEMENT IN THE STUDY**

**Activities and Time Commitment:** You will be asked to read several scenarios and then respond to several questions about the scenarios. After doing so, you will be asked to complete a survey of information about yourself. Please allow 30 minutes to participate.

#### **RISKS**

Most research involves some risk to confidentiality, and it is possible that someone could find out that you participated in this study or may see your study information. However, the researchers believe this risk is unlikely because of the procedures used to protect your information. In the unlikely event you experience discomfort from participating in the study, you may exit the study at any time and contact the University of Tennessee, Knoxville Counseling Center at 865-974-2196 or [counselingcenter@utk.edu](mailto:counselingcenter@utk.edu).

#### **BENEFITS**

You may or may not directly benefit from participating in this study. You may benefit by learning more about how research is conducted and may experience a feeling of pride from contributing to the science of communication. The results from this study will add to the research

literature and may enhance supervisor ability to manage employee behavior within the workplace to make the workplace more hospitable.

### **CONFIDENTIALITY**

All information you provide in the research is CONFIDENTIAL. During this research project, all data will be kept in a secure online location. Only the researchers conducting this study will have access to the data. Only group level results will be reported. No individual level data will be reported. Data from this study may be used in future studies or for teaching purposes. No data that would identify you as an individual will be used in future studies or for teaching purposes. In answering the open-ended questions, refrain from providing identifiable information.

### **COMPENSATION**

If you are enrolled in a course giving credit for participation in research, you may receive one unit of research participation credit for fully completing the study. To receive research participation credit, enter your unique, 5-digit research code during the course of the study. At the conclusion of the study, the researcher will provide a list of research codes of participants who fully completed the study to the department's research pool coordinator. The researcher pool coordinator will inform your course instructor of the total number of credits you have earned at the end of the semester. If you choose not to participate in the study or choose not to complete the study, you will have the opportunity to earn course credit through non-research alternatives involving comparable time and effort to study participation. You may contact your course instructor for a list of alternatives. As per CMST SONA IRB Approved Guides, Item 14: "Students wishing to complete a non-SONA alternative assignment will be asked to write a critique (e.g., a recorded speech from the McClung Public Speaking contest). The time required

for an alternative assignment will be commensurate with the time required to meet participation requirements.”

If the research cancels your study in less than one business day, you are entitled to credit. If the researcher cancels your study in more than one business day, you are not entitled to credit. In accordance with CMST SONA, students will receive credit as follows: “Students who complete the study in the allotted time or less earn the amount of credit advertised. For instance, if it’s a 1 credit study but they finish in 25 minutes, they still get one credit. Students who opt to quit midway through a study earn partial credit for their participation proportional to the amount of time expended in the study relative to the total advertised in the consent form prior to quitting. For example, in a study advertised to take one hour, if a student quits before 30 minutes, the student receives one-half credit. If the researcher needs to terminate the session early for any reason (e.g., equipment malfunction), students are entitled to the amount of credit they signed up for.”

If you are NOT enrolled in SONA, there is no compensation.

### **CONTACT INFORMATION**

If you have questions at any time about the study or procedures (or if you experience adverse effects as a result of participating in this study), you may contact the researcher, Kylie Julius at 865-230-3012 or [kjulius@vols.utk.edu](mailto:kjulius@vols.utk.edu) or her advisor, Joan Rentsch, at [jrentsch@utk.edu](mailto:jrentsch@utk.edu). If you have questions about your rights as a participant, contact the Human Research Protection Program at (865) 974-7697.

### **PARTICIPATION**

You must be 18 years of age or older to participate in this study. Your participation in this study is voluntary; you may decline to participate without penalty. If you decide to participate, you

may withdraw from the study at any time without penalty. If you choose not to participate in the study or choose not to complete the study, you will have the opportunity to earn course credit through non-research alternatives involving comparable time and effort to study participation. You may contact your course instructor for a list of alternatives. If you withdraw from the study before data collection is completed, your exit from the study will be recorded, but the contents of your participation will be discarded.

---

### **FUTURE RESEARCH**

Participants' responses collected as part of this research with identifiers removed may be used in future research studies.

### **CONSENT**

Indicate below that you have read the information provided and your intent to participate in the study.

[Online button options]

- I agree to participate in this study.
- I do not agree to participate in this study.

### **Research Participation Code**

If you have a 5-digit code, type it in the space below in order to receive research credit for participating in this study.

---

**Non-Consent Message**

This message is to confirm that you have chosen not to consent to participate in this study and will not be awarded research credit for participation.

Thank you for your time and interest.

Kylie Julius  
Master's Student  
School of Communication Studies  
University of Tennessee, Knoxville  
[kjulius@vols.utk.edu](mailto:kjulius@vols.utk.edu)

## VITA

Ms. Julius was born in Knoxville, TN, where she graduated from the University of Tennessee, Knoxville with a Bachelor of Arts in Communication Studies with a Minor in Hotel, Restaurant, Tourism Management in May of 2018. She pursued a Master of Science degree in Communication and Information and is expected to graduate in May of 2022. She authored a thesis on managers and contributing factors that may guide their choices to intervene in workplace bullying situations.

Ms. Julius's research areas of interest lie within the interpersonal and organizational realms of communication. More specifically, she is interested in researching how individuals navigate established interdependence within relationships in the workplace. Ms. Julius conducts research surrounding theoretical concepts in conjunction with interpersonal and organizational conflict interactions. Research on workplace bullying relationships appeal strongly to Ms. Julius as these relationships tend to affect the efficiency and productiveness of an organization. Ms. Julius aims to conduct further research in this area by furthering the research she has conducted in the present document, creating an interactive study centered around bystanders to workplace bullying interactions, and administering a study surrounding workplace bullying situations present within the medical field. Her areas of interest in researching workplace bullying extend to the wider Department of Energy (DOE) Federal Agencies. Ms. Julius professionally presented her conference paper, "Bothersome Bullies and Troubled Targets: A Framework for Understanding the Application of Managerial Interventions to Mitigate Workplace Bullying" at the Southern States Communication Association's (SSCA)'s 91<sup>st</sup> Annual Convention in 2021.

Ms. Julius currently serves as a Business and Professional Communication Instructor at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville, where she is devoted to educating her undergraduate students. She aims to help them achieve essential business and professional communication skills through her continual instruction surrounding the following applications: effective public speaking practices, theoretical concepts encompassing organizational structure, strategic interview preparation and execution, business presentation development, organization, and delivery through language use and nonverbal communication, progression and reinforcement of constructive workplace relationships, intercultural communication, team and group interface, navigation of workplace bullying interactions, and group negotiation, conflict management, and decision-making.

Ms. Julius serves as a Recruiting Coordinator and Communications Specialist for a staff augmentation team, Strata-G, LLC. As a Communications Specialist, Ms. Julius aids the Corporate Communication Manager in conducting research to help improve employee retention rates, collaborating with staff on innovative ideas, directions, and venues for marketing and communication, and developing internal and external strategic processes to ameliorate the company's exchanging of messages. Ms. Julius assists Corporate Proposal Manager in preparing, writing, and editing Federal, state, and commercial proposal packages to ensure they are clear, concise, well-written, and that they present the team's qualifications and capabilities. She writes technical verbiage in accordance with Request for Proposal (RFP) requirements.

She works closely with the Division Manager of Infrastructure Services in proposal development and submission. Developed, submitted, and helped win the following Architect/Engineering task order bids under Consolidated Nuclear Security, LLC (CNS), valued at \$111M in total. As a Recruiting Coordinator, Ms. Julius aids the Corporate Divisions Manager in supporting the interviewing and hiring process, including continual communication with candidates and interview team, scheduling, conduction of interviews, and document control. She has worked for Strata-G, LLC for five years.

Ms. Julius enthusiastically instructed and guided undergraduate students as a Public Speaking Instructor at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville for almost three years from 2017 to 2019, advancing their oral communication skills by expanding upon the following effective public speaking practices: communication apprehension management, effective construction of visual aids, identification of professional attire, research conduction, utilization of accurate and credible sources, source citation– American Psychological Association (APA) style, speech structure and organization, professional and engaging language and delivery, development of ethical communication and interpersonal communication skills, audience analyses, active listening, and differentiation among informative, persuasive, and entertainment speeches.

Ms. Julius served Dr. Emily Paskewitz in college-level instruction as a Graduate Teaching Assistant for Introduction and Honors Introduction to Communication Studies Courses and submitted grading for 50-minute sessions. She helped introduce hundreds of college students to communication studies for one course each semester. She led class discussion and instruction on workplace incivility and workplace bullying during spring semester. She evaluated students group projects, papers, tests, and other assessments. She maintained records on students' progress in the course and was readily available to students' needs and attempted to connect with students.

Ms. Julius served as a Tap Choreographer for the University of Tennessee, Knoxville's BOSS Dance Company for two years, where she choreographed and provided instruction to dancers, managed casting for dance piece, offered feedback on the quality of segments, prepared location and set for rehearsals, communicated, and led weekly rehearsals, and coordinated with local dance studios.

Ms. Julius received the following awards during her college career. She was selected to receive the College of Communication & Information Scholarship of \$500 for High Standards of Excellence and Innovation in Writing and Exhibition of Courage and Conviction in Exploring Leading-Edge Subject Matter in 2020, earned Best Graduate Research Certificate for Annual Symposium Presentation in 2019, was distributed a Full Scholarship for the University of Tennessee's College of Communication and Information Master's Program in 2018, received Best Group Project Certificate for Nautical Boat Club Marketing Plan in 2018, was part of Lambda Pi Theta Honors Society Member in 2018, and was a member of the National Society of Leadership and Success Member from 2015 to 2020.

Ms. Julius has provided professional services in the following ways. She served as a Panelist for the University of Tennessee's Nuclear Engineering Department to discuss bias in the work

environment in 2020. She served as Contributor to a Graduate Student Team developing a media production to enlighten and touch on higher education institutions, such as the University of Tennessee, Knoxville (UTK) experiencing bias-based incidents over the years in 2019: <https://krichte1.wixsite.com/callinnotout>. She was part of the College of Communication and Information Graduate Student Council from AY2019 to 2020. She hosted the McClung Annual Public Speaking Contest in 2019. She provided Quality Assurance (QA) in coding videos for the University of Tennessee's Dr. Jenny Crowley and her research project regarding "effects of provider identity and locus of supportive conversation on coping with an identity-threatening stressor" in 2018. She assisted the Director and Associate Professor in the College of Communication and Information at the University of Tennessee, Dr. John Haas, with Public Speaking Identification Software for future public speaking courses in 2018 and was a member of the University of Tennessee's Communications Club in 2016.