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RE-ESTABLISHING THE PREVALENCE OF EMAIL BULLYING

Abstract:

Purpose: the purpose of this study is to re-evaluate the prevalence of email bullying as a result of a paucity of research on the topic in recent years. As workplace bullying continues to be a topical subject, and electronic communications continue to dominate workplace interactions, the importance of bullying requires highlighting.

Results: Bullying and uncivil behaviour by email continue to be a concern to workers and the occurrences of email bullying have not changed significantly over a 20 year period. Managers continue to be more likely to report having been bullied by email and to have received inappropriate or uncivil communications. There does not appear to be a relationship between the sender considering the needs of the recipient and the rates of email bullying.

Conclusions: Email bullying continues to be a concern with rates varying between 4% and 19.1% depending on employment role. Aggressiveness in email is also a significant concern with rates between 24.6% and 56.5% depending on employment role. There are no discernible reasons as to why managers are more likely report being bullied by email, but this study supports the conclusions of others on this topic and therefore it warrants further investigation.

Keywords:

Email, bullying, communication