

**Group & Organization Management Special Issue Proposal**  
**Dynamic and Multi-Party Approaches to Workplace Mistreatment Research**

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**The Focus and Purpose of the Special Issue**

Some conflict is inevitable when employees share and compete for resources through their daily interactions. This conflict often results in perceived workplace mistreatment. The majority of employees encounter some manifestations of workplace mistreatment throughout their career (Barling et al., 2009), and this mistreatment carries a tremendous personal and organizational costs for everyone in the organization, including increased stress and reduced performance (for a review see Dhanani & LaPalme, 2019). As a corollary, scholars have increasingly become interested in mistreatment topics spanning across multiple disciplines and covering an array of constructs, including incivility (e.g., Zhou et al., 2019), justice and fairness (e.g., Fortin et al., 2019), bullying (e.g., Notelaers et al., 2019), cyberbullying (Vranjes et al., 2020), harassment (e.g., McDonald & Charlesworth, 2016), and organizational and interpersonal deviance (Griep & Vantilborgh, 2018).

The proliferation of mistreatment research has helped us better understand both individual and contextual antecedents and consequences (Hershcovis et al., 2020). However, more research is needed that (1) transcends the dominant target-perpetrator perspective; and (2) extends beyond the static focus on employee perceptions in the workplace. This raises questions such as “What parties are involved and how does each party’s reaction influence further mistreatment? How is technology changing the mistreatment interactions? What role does the organizational context play in preventing mistreatment?”.

This Special Issue is meant to elicit novel approaches and evidence for understanding the broader context in mistreatment dynamics, including different parties involved, their interactions, and the role each plays in preventing workplace mistreatment. Articles for this Special Issue are intended to be high-impact scholarly pieces that provide an integration of literatures, offer a research framework, and highlight new directions for future inquiry or yield concrete recommendations for practice. We invite empirical submissions that apply novel and rigorous methodologies such as dyadic analysis, multilevel analysis, latent growth

modeling, latent profiles, grounded theory, or mixed-method designs. We will also consider theoretical contributions, reviews and meta-analyses. We particularly encourage submissions focusing on the mistreatment process, as well as the role of different actors within the emergence, maintenance, and dissolution of this process.

### **Research Questions**

Topics that might be addressed by papers in this special issue may include, but are not limited to:

**(1) The target-perpetrator dynamic.** The mistreatment process involves interactions between at least two parties: the perpetrator and the target. While a host of research illustrates the negative effects of perceived mistreatment on targets, more work is needed to elucidate how the mistreatment process develops and evolves within and between these two parties. For example: How do the target's responses influence further episodes of interpersonal mistreatment? How do the interpretations and perspectives of targets versus perpetrators diverge over the course of the mistreatment process? When does a target become a perpetrator of mistreatment and vice versa? What influence does new technology have on the target-perpetrator dynamic and the nature of mistreatment?

**(2) Bystanders.** Studies on workplace mistreatment are increasingly acknowledging the role bystanders play in the mistreatment process. Bystanders are not merely passive witnesses, but they can display a range of responses (e.g., challenging the perpetrator, comforting the target, doing nothing), which can significantly influence the dynamics of mistreatment. Consequently, researchers consider bystander research as a promising avenue for better understanding the dynamic of workplace mistreatment. However, many important questions remain. For example: Do bystanders react differently toward targets and/or perpetrators depending on their age, gender, or occupational status (to name a few)? Who are the intervening bystanders and what is their relationship with the target and/or the perpetrator? How does bystander involvement change the instance of mistreatment and its outcomes? What interventions are effective and what factors determine their effectiveness? How can bystanders be encouraged to intervene?

**(3) Organizational prevention strategies.** We know from previous work that workplace mistreatment is more likely to emerge in certain organizational contexts,

such as those characterized by a climate of mistreatment and the presence of environmental stressors. Organizations play a crucial role in both precipitating and preventing mistreatment, yet research on the contextual factors in workplace mistreatment remains limited and is most often investigated from an individual perspective. The mistreatment literature could thus benefit from more research that considers context in a more holistic way, for instance using multilevel approaches, while also investigating the dynamics between different layers of the organization. This can be particularly relevant in investigating organizational prevention strategies. We therefore invite articles that address questions such as: What role do organizational policies, culture, norms and values, leader-member interactions, and HRM practices play in preventing or mitigating mistreatment? How do the micro (e.g., individuals), meso (e.g., teams), and macro (e.g., organizations, cultural contexts) levels interact, and what effect does this have on how mistreatment plays out and is experienced? Do belief systems matter and can they be altered? How can organizations help prevent more covert or anonymous forms of mistreatment that are facilitated by online interactions?

### **Deadlines, Submission, and Review Processes**

This call is open and competitive, and a double-blind peer review process will be used for all papers submitted. Submitted papers must be based on original material not under consideration by any other journal. For papers based on data from which multiple papers have been generated, the authors must submit a data transparency appendix. Please also consider depositing the data associated with your submission into an online data repository such as the Open Science Framework and include a “data availability statement” on the titlepage of your submission.

All submitted papers will first be reviewed by Guest Editors to determine their suitability for the Special Issue. Only papers that fit the scope of the Special Issue and the quality standards of *Group & Organization Management* will be sent out for peer review. The Guest Editors will select a number of papers to be included in the Special Issue, but other papers submitted in this process may be recommended for publication in other issues of the journal. **The deadline for submissions is June 30th, 2021. The Special Issue is intended for publication by February 2023.** Papers should be submitted online via <https://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/GOM>. Please direct questions about the submission

process, or any administrative matter, to [info@sagepub.com](mailto:info@sagepub.com). The editors of the special issue will be happy to discuss initial ideas for papers, please contact Dr. Ivana Vranjes.

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