

Bullying DEOCS 4.1
Construct Validity Summary



Bullying DEOCS 4.1 Construct Validity Study

Content Review

The definition of bullying was taken directly from the memorandum, *Hazing and Bullying Prevention and Response in the Armed Forces*,” dated 23 December 2015, which replaced the 1997 policy memorandum, “*Hazing*.” The definition of bullying is as follows:

“Bullying is an act of aggression by a military member or members, or Department of Defense civilian employee or employees, with a nexus to military service or Department of Defense civilian employment, with the intent of harming a military member, Department of Defense civilian, or any other persons, either physically or psychologically, without a proper military or other governmental purpose. Bullying may involve the singling out of an individual from his or her co-workers, or unit, for ridicule because he or she is considered different or weak. It often involves an imbalance of power between the aggressor and the victim.

Bullying includes, but is not limited to, the following when performed without a proper military or other governmental purpose: physically striking another in any manner or threatening to do the same; intimidating; teasing; taunting; oral or written berating of another for the purpose of belittling or humiliating; encouraging another to engage in illegal, harmful, demeaning, or dangerous acts; playing abusive or malicious tricks; branding, handcuffing, duct taping, tattooing, shaving, greasing, or painting; subjecting to excessive or abusive use of water; the forced consumption of food, alcohol, drugs, or any other substance; and degrading or damaging the person or his or her property or reputation. Bullying can be conducted through the use of electronic devices or communications, and by other means, as well as in person.”

Table 1 displays the original DEOCS 4.0 items for bullying, which was titled Demeaning Behaviors.

Table 1.
DEOCS 4.0 items for Demeaning Behaviors

Certain members are excessively teased to the point where they are unable to defend themselves.
Certain members are purposely excluded from social work group activities.
Certain members are frequently reminded of small errors or mistakes they have made, in an effort to belittle them.

Candidate items for DEOCS 4.1 were created and piloted ($n = 4,943$) based on the above definition of bullying, using a “select all that apply” scale, in order to best reflect the specific behaviors associated with bullying. Table 2 on the following page displays the items that were piloted, analyzed, and ultimately adopted for the DEOCS 4.1.

Table 2.
DEOCS 4.1 Items for Bullying

Item stem: Individuals in my work environment who are seen as different are targets of which of the following (select all that apply):
Aggression
Abusive or malicious pranks
Active attempts to damage their reputation
Physically harmed
Psychologically harmed
N/A

Descriptive Statistics and Reliability

Table 3 provides the demographic characteristics of the sample used to pilot the items (missing responses account for disparities in totals shown below). Kuder-Richardson 20 (KR20; Kuder & Richardson, 1937) was run to obtain the reliability for the scale. This test was used instead of traditional reliability because the items measure dichotomous (i.e., coded zero or one) rather than continuous variables. The means for the items ranged from .26 to .29, while there was strong reliability (i.e., KR-20= .96). We also examined how deleting items would affect alpha. The five items presented below (Table 6) possessed high reliability; thus, none were removed from the analysis. Tables 4 – 6 provide additional information regarding the descriptive statistics and reliability of the bullying items. Table 7 provides the frequency of responses (i.e., yes and no responses) for the sample.

Table 3.
Sample Demographics of Bullying Items Piloted on DEOCS

	<i>n</i>	%
Branch of Service		
Army	2363	47.8%
Navy	1332	26.9%
Marine Corps	322	6.5%
Air Force	343	6.9%
Coast Guard	15	.3%
National Guard	535	10.8%
DoD/Joint	33	.7%
Component		
Active Duty	3,209	92.6%
Reserve	258	7.4%
Gender		
Male	3,830	77.6%
Female	1,105	22.4%
Seniority		

	<i>n</i>	%
Junior Enlisted (E1 – E3)	858	21.4%
Non-Commissioned Officer (E4 – E6)	2,260	56.3%
Senior Non-Commissioned Officer (E7 – E9)	419	10.4%
Junior Officer (O1 – O3)	300	7.5%
Senior Officer (O4 and above)	174	4.3%

Table 4.
Item Statistics for Bullying

	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	Skewness	Kurtosis
Aggression	.29	.45	.91	-1.16
Abusive or malicious pranks	.28	.45	.97	-1.06
Active attempts to damage their reputation	.29	.45	.94	-1.12
Physically harmed	.26	.44	1.08	-.83
Psychologically harmed	.29	.45	.92	-1.16
<i>n</i>		4943		

Table 5.
KR-20 Cronbach's Alpha for Bullying

KR-20 Cronbach's Alpha	<i>n</i> of Items
.96	5

Table 6.
KR-20 Cronbach's Alpha if item deleted

	Scale <i>M</i> if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
Aggression	1.12	2.81	.95
Abusive or malicious pranks	1.13	2.81	.95
Active attempts to damage their reputation	1.13	2.80	.95
Physically harmed	1.15	2.81	.94
Psychologically harmed	1.12	2.79	.95

Table 7.
Sample Frequencies for 4.1 Bullying

Select all that apply:		
	No	Yes
Aggression	3,499	1,444
Abusive or malicious pranks	3,551	1,392
Active attempts to damage their reputation	3,521	1,422
Physically harmed	3,649	1,294
Psychologically harmed	3,500	1,443
N/A	1,906	3,037

Conclusion

The results from the above analyses suggest that the items adapted from the 23 December 2015 memorandum are considered to be a reliable scale that accurately measures all aspects of bullying. The final five Bullying climate factor items that were adopted for use in DEOCS 4.1 are located above in Table 2.

References

- Deputy Secretary of Defense (2015). Memorandum for secretaries of the military departments.
Hazing and Bullying Prevention and Response in the Armed Forces, 2-5.
- Kuder, G. F., & Richardson, M. W. (1937). The theory of the estimation of test reliability.
Psychometrika, 2: 151-60