

The Washington Library Work, Stress, and Health Project:

Final Report

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The Washington Library Work, Stress, and Health Project

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The Washington Library Work, Stress, and Health Project

Executive Summary

Overview

The objectives of the Washington Library Work, Stress, and Health Project (WLWSH) were to examine library organization resources and relationships with psychological aggression and employee outcomes. Psychological aggression occurs in *many* work settings and we consider it progressive of the Washington Library Association (WLA) and Interest Group of Library Unions (IGLU) to encourage examination of this issue and to support this research. To our knowledge this research is the first to explore the role of work context resources in relation to psychological aggression, and the role of psychological aggression in relation to the health, family, and work outcomes of library staff.

Design and Method

The data presented here was provided by 224 library staff and collected from a convenience sample obtained through web-based employee surveys open to all Washington Library Association (WLA) members and their colleagues in the Pacific Northwest area who provide library services in public, private, academic, school, government and special libraries. Surveys were collected between October 7, 2010 and October 21, 2010. All study activities were approved by the Washington State Institutional Review Board (WSIRB).

Findings

Aim 1: Examine the relationships between work context resources and psychological aggression.

Work context resources are negatively related to psychological aggression, witnessing psychological aggression, and self-labeling as a target of psychological aggression.

We investigated the nature of work context resources including psychological aggression prevention climate, supervisor support and coworker support on psychological aggression outcomes. We found that when psychological aggression prevention climate is high, all psychological aggression outcomes are low and when supervisor support is high, experiencing psychological aggression, witnessing aggression, and self-labeling as a target of psychological aggression are also low.

Aim 2: Examine the relationships between work context resources and health, family, and work-related outcomes.

Workplace contextual resources are significantly and positively related to employee health, family, and work-related outcomes.

We conducted multiple analyses to investigate the relationships between psychological aggression prevention climate, supervisor support, and coworker support on health, family, and work outcomes, including physical symptoms, work-family conflict, life satisfaction, turnover intentions and burnout. We found that greater supportive resources at work, especially psychological aggression prevention climate and supervisor support were significantly related to better health, family, and work outcomes.

Aim 3: Examine the relationships between psychological aggression and health, family, and work-related outcomes.

Psychological aggression stressors of psychologically aggressive acts, witnessing psychological aggression, and self-labeling as a target of aggression are all significantly and strongly related to health, family, and work-related outcomes.

We found that:

- Worse self-reported health and physical symptoms, sleep disruption and depressive symptoms
- High work-family conflict and low life satisfaction
- High job dissatisfaction and turnover intentions
- High sickness absence and burnout (work exhaustion and disengagement)

Conclusion

The study contributes new knowledge regarding the importance of psychological aggression prevention climate and supervisor support as organizational resources that are significantly related to fewer psychological aggression experiences and better employee work and health well-being. The study findings on health, family and work outcomes are in alignment with previous research on workplace psychological aggression and confirm psychological aggression as a strong workplace stressor that is linked to worse library staff health, family and work-related outcomes.

Workplaces that tolerate psychological aggression may be fostering an environment that is detrimental to workers – a lack of preparedness and control over handling psychological aggression may have an increased negative effect on employee work and health-related outcomes. Organizations and their employees will benefit from efforts toward improving psychological aggression prevention climate and supportive supervision such as developing strong policies and procedures, education, and training supervisors to implement early intervention approaches.

General Recommendations for Library Organizations

When workplace psychological aggression is not curtailed, employee health, family-related and work-related outcomes are negatively affected. Library organizations that are aware and proactive in addressing psychological aggression and incivility can prevent and correct employee-to-employee negative behaviors. This study provides evidence in support of libraries' designing and implementing policies, procedures and practices to build resources of psychological aggression prevention climate and supervisor support for library staff. The recommendations that follow are made based on the empirical findings from the current study:

Build a Psychological Aggression Prevention Climate:

- Endorse and enforce zero tolerance psychological aggression policies
 - Create and maintain a code of conduct that defines acceptable and unacceptable behaviors for all staff
 - Develop a policy that outlines procedural responses to breaches in the code of conduct; especially a mechanism for reporting violations of policy without repercussions
 - Take complaints seriously and investigate all complaints systematically and promptly with clear safeguards in place for confidentiality and due process
 - Provide support to any individual impacted by psychological aggression

- Perform yearly supervisory and managerial risk assessments of the workplace environment, focusing on markers of positive psychosocial climates such as demonstrated equality in work and rewards

Build Supervisor Support Behaviors:

- Train and support managers and supervisors to adopt and role-model professional ethical and supportive behavior
- Prepare and empower managers and supervisors to recognize and appropriately address psychological aggression early through tailored conflict management and conflict resolution trainings
- Participate in and develop collaborative initiatives and continuing education programs to prevent aggressive and bullying behaviors and increase supportive resources in the workplace

Interventions or management efforts toward improving the organization's psychological aggression prevention climate and supervisor support behaviors may be significant opportunities to promote civility and professionalism among library staff and eliminate norms or patterns of aggressive behavior.

It is important to emphasize the significance of supervisors and managers to the above set of recommendations. Supervisors specifically are important role-models for positive behaviors and can be instrumental in addressing incidents of incivility and psychological aggression before they negatively affect the work and health of their employees. Library staff that reported higher levels of supervisor support also experienced lower levels of psychological aggression, better physical and mental health, less job dissatisfaction, and less burnout.

Managers and supervisors have critical roles as the voice and eyes of the organization, identifying problems and providing support. They translate the culture of the organization to new employees, enact organizational policies, and are the communication link between organizational administration and library staff. Organizations *can* do something to prevent aggressive acts in the workplace through building a positive organizational climate and increasing the supervisor support resources available to their employees.

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The Washington Library Work Stress and Health Project: Final Report

Overview

The purpose of this research is to document the experience of psychological aggression among library staff in the Pacific Northwest region, primarily Washington State. The specific goals are to document the occurrence of psychological aggression, the associated work, family, and health outcomes for targets and witnesses of psychological aggression, and to identify organizational factors related to reducing psychological aggression. Psychological aggression is any form of negative behavior initiated by employees that is intended to harm another individual in their organization and occurs in a work-related context (Schat & Kelloway, 2003; Barling, Dupre, & Kelloway, 2009; Baron & Neuman, 1996; Baron & Richardson, 1994). Workplace psychological aggression is a distinct but related construct to workplace violence, comprising all aggressive behaviors, not just those that are intended to cause physical harm (Barling et al., 2009). The objectives of this research project consisted of conducting an online survey for library employees to learn about library-level policies and practices related to addressing psychological aggression - the organizational support antecedents for and types of psychological aggression, and the work, family, and health outcomes related to psychological aggression. Psychological aggression occurs in *many* work settings and we consider it quite progressive of the Washington Library Association (WLA) and Interest Group of Library Unions (IGLU) to encourage examination of this issue and to support this research. To our knowledge, this research is the first to explore the role of work context resources in relation to psychological aggression and of psychological aggression in relation to the health, family, and work outcomes of library staff.

Background

Public health importance of workplace aggression has been established by the NIOSH and NORA research agendas that call for research on Type III workplace violence, or coworker to coworker workplace violence, which includes milder forms such as psychological aggression. The American Medical Association has identified psychological aggression and bullying in schools as a public health problem (Debarbieux, 2001), and it appears recognition is growing that it is a prevalent adult level problem as well. The phenomenon of workplace aggression has been of interest to researchers for over 30 years, however, only one study on workplace psychological aggression specific to the library setting has been addressed in the workplace violence literature (Hecker, 2007) to our knowledge.

Workplace psychological aggression can take many forms including, offending teasing, spreading false rumors and gossip, and may be perceived as bullying (Neuman & Baron, 1998; Einarsen, 2000; Einarsen, Hoel, Zapf, & Cooper, 2003). Research indicates that psychological aggression is a problem in the workplace. In a study conducted by Cortina, Magley, Williams, and Langhout (2001), nearly 75% of respondents reported experiencing psychological aggression at work at least once in the past five years. In another study, researchers found that more than half of the front-line workers they surveyed had experienced forms of psychological aggression at least once in the previous three years (Ehrlich & Larcom, 1994). A British study found that 39% of the participants had been bullied for over 2 years (Hoel, Cooper, & Fargher, 2000), and a U.S. prevalence study found 25% of respondents reported being bullied at work (Lutgen-Sandvik, Tracy, & Alberts, 2007). In a survey of public sector employees, researchers found 71% reported experiencing workplace incivility with 6% reporting experiencing such behavior many times which would constitute psychological aggression (Cortina et al., 2001). Finally, in the most rigorous prevalence study to date of U.S. workers, 41.4% of respondents reported experiencing psychological aggression at work in the past year representing 47 million U.S. workers

(Schat, Frone & Kelloway, 2006). Further, 13%, or nearly 15 million workers, reported experiencing psychological aggression on a weekly basis.

Current protections for employees exist under the OSH Act Section 5a. The OSH regulations require employers to provide a safe and healthy workplace for all employees free from known workplace hazards; this is known as the "general duty" clause. Work-related mental injury and illness are covered under the act. In its Workplace Violence Awareness and Prevention Guidelines (1996), OSHA recognized that workplace violence includes harassment and verbal threats (psychological aggression), in addition to physical injury. However, these are considered weak protections because they are extremely difficult to enforce under the OSH Act.

There is a law in Washington State addressing workplace violence prevention in healthcare settings (Safety – Healthcare Settings, 1999), however, no law currently exists that addresses coworker to coworker psychological aggression in any occupation or industry. Library supervisors and staff are not trained to recognize or resolve psychological aggression issues and therefore may not know how to defend against such behavior should it occur. Because there is no law to guide employers on psychological aggression prevention, organizations are often not aware the problem nor motivated to stop the behavior. Thus, there is little recourse for workplace targets of psychological aggression and bullying to address the problem. This lack of preparedness and control over handling psychological aggression may have an increased negative effect on employee health, family, and work outcomes.

As mentioned previously, psychological aggression at work can cause considerable stress to the targets, and can negatively impact their colleagues and spillover into their personal lives. In some severe cases, individuals are unable to function normally at work and in everyday life. Long term psychological aggression can lead to post-traumatic stress disorder (Keashly & Neuman, 2004; Leyman & Gustafsson, 1996; Mikkelsen & Einarson, 2002), loss of self-esteem, anxiety, depression, apathy, irritability, memory disorders, sleep disorders and problems with digestion, and even suicide (Hansen et al., 2006; Leyman, 1996; Lim, Cortina & Magley, 2008). Symptoms may persist for years after experiencing this form of repeated harassment at work. The serious nature of the problem is further emphasized as the adverse health effects appear to extend to bystanders who witness uncivil and psychologically aggressive interactions (Lim et al., 2008; Rayner, Hoel & Cooper, 2002; Vartia, 2001). In addition, Hoobler & Brass (2006) found that employees who experienced abusive supervision displaced their aggression towards family members. Thus, it is important to understand the impact of psychological aggression on work and family relationships, as well as, individual physical and psychological health.

In terms of work outcomes, psychological aggression can result in increased absenteeism and staff turnover, and reduced effectiveness and productivity (Andersson & Pearson, 1999; Cortina et al, 2001; Giga, Hoel, & Lewis, 2008; Pearson, Andersson & Porath, 2000). Employees are likely to take absence leave due to the physical and mental health consequences of mistreatment at work. If the abusive behavior cannot be stopped, employees will likely separate from the organization and seek to find workplaces where psychological aggression is not tolerated.

While there is a significant and growing body of research on psychological aggression in healthcare settings, no research has been conducted to date on the experiences of library staff with psychological aggression as a workplace stressor. Library organizations have been progressive on the issue, however. The Washington Library Association (WLA) conferences for members have included seminars and talks on psychological aggression in recognition of the problem in library settings. This research seeks to inform these

discussions and provide evidence in support of the importance of workplace contextual resources to employee experiences of psychological aggression and relationships between psychological aggression and employee health, work, and family outcomes.

An Occupational Health Psychology Perspective on Stress and Psychological Aggression Prevention

The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) proposed: “Occupational health psychology concerns the application of psychology to improving the quality of work-life, and to protecting and promoting the safety, health and well-being of workers” (Sauter & Hurrell, 1990, p.120). Occupational Health Psychology (OHP) emerged in response to three developments: “(a) the growth of and recognition of stress-related disorders as a costly occupational health problem; (b) the growing acceptance that psychosocial factors play a role in the etiology of emergent...problems such as upper extremity musculoskeletal disorders; and (c) recent and dramatic changes in the organization of work that foster both job stress and health and safety problems at work” (p. 117). They propose that through better understanding and control of organizational level risk factors, occupational health psychology may function towards *primary prevention* of occupational illness and injury. In this way, by analyzing the managerial and supervisory practices, processes, and policies of work organization and their influence on work, the knowledge gained can be used to advocate for and develop interventions for healthy work environments and safe workplaces.

Quick (1999) suggests that OHP has the objectives of developing, maintaining, and promoting healthy workplaces in the context of social and organizational psychology. OHP researchers bring together an understanding of the psychological processes that guide individual behavior *with* the capability of identifying the occupational and organizational factors that influence how people respond to situations at work. It has been put forth that the goal and essential objective of OHP is to “advance knowledge and expertise regarding organizational factors that threaten worker safety and health” by better understanding “the influence of workplace *environmental* stressors on worker safety and health” (p.120). This study’s emphasis on organizational context and workplace psychosocial environment in relation to workplace violence is an important and unique step towards furthering OHP research and potential solutions towards improving work-life quality. In keeping with the OHP perspective, we investigated the specific organizational resource factors of psychological aggression prevention climate and supervisor and coworker support.

The Need for Improved Research Designs

Over the past several years, occupational health psychologists have begun to call for the use of improved research designs within organizations. The suggestions for improvements in research design cover several different areas, including the use of a strong theoretical framework, multiple measures, collecting multi-source data, and adopting a multilevel approach (Bliese & Jex, 2002). Additionally, a call has been made by organizational researchers to measure multiple variables in the stressor-strain relationship, including antecedents and outcomes, as well as, various mechanisms or processes that may impact the stressor-strain relationship.

The current study with library staff in the Pacific Northwest responds to a number of these calls. We developed a strong theoretical framework grounded in the Job-Demands Resources Model (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007; Demerouti, Bakker, Nachreiner, & Schaufeli, 2001) in which our hypotheses are framed. An important strength of the current study is the examination of multiple different contexts, including work, family, and well-being. In examining employees as whole individuals, we are able to get a better picture of how

work-related demands or resources may spillover into the home domain to impact family functioning. Additionally, we've taken care to measure a number of well-being outcomes (e.g., physical symptoms, depressive symptoms, sleep disruption, job dissatisfaction, and burnout) in order to illuminate the relationship between psychological aggression and employee health, work, and family outcomes. Ultimately, the current study with library staff addresses a gap in the literature surrounding workplace aggression prevention programs by using a broad and systemic approach towards addressing both the organization of work and work-life integration (Wassell, 2009).

Research Aims

1. Examine the relationships between workplace contextual resources and workplace psychological aggression.
2. Examine the relationships between workplace contextual resources and employee health, family, and work-related outcomes.
3. Examine the relationships between workplace psychological aggression and employee health, family and work-related outcomes.

Washington Work, Stress, and Health Research Overview

The Washington Library Work, Stress, and Health Theoretical Model

We sought to develop a model that would integrate the research literatures on psychological aggression stress, organizational contexts, and health, family, and work outcomes. We aimed for a model that was theoretically sound, empirically supported, and pragmatically useful towards potential future projects applying our study findings in developing interventions that address work context resources, psychological aggression climate, and work-life integration.

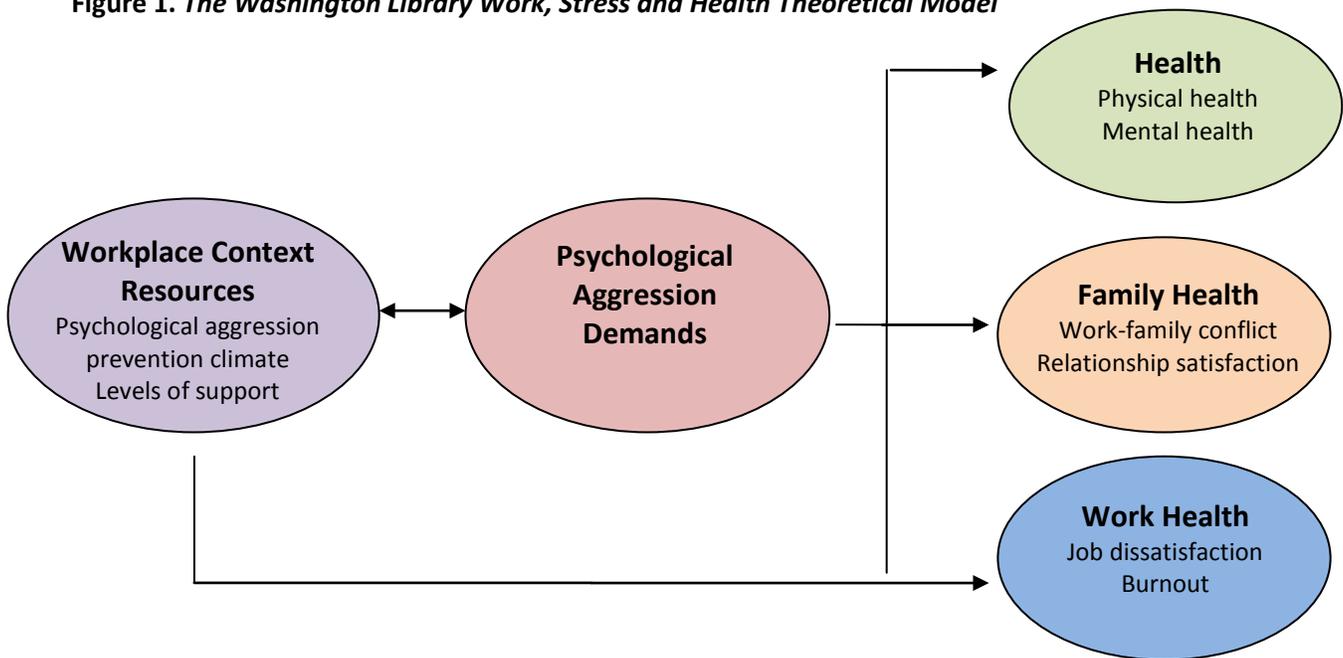
Our model will focus on the organization of work such as the effects of the psychosocial workplace context, the psychological aggression prevention climate of work, and supervisory and coworker support. We are interested in a model that conceptually ties the organization of work to worker and family health, in the hopes of the future development of workplace intervention strategies that will reduce psychological aggression and improve employee health, family and work outcomes. Theoretically, our model is based on the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) model (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007; Demerouti, Bakker, Nachreiner, & Schaufeli, 2001). The JD-R model of stress proposes that employees are different in the way they utilize organizational, social, psychological, and physical resources to cope with work demands such as psychological aggression. The Job Demands-Resources model of stress points out that employees differ in the physical, psychological, social, and organizational resources they can draw upon to cope with work demands (e.g., Bakker, Demerouti, & Verbeke, 2004; Demerouti et al., 2001; Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004). In this research, we focus on a set of contextual resources potentially related to psychological aggression demands.

According to the JD-R model organizational context factors of psychological aggression prevention climate and workplace support are considered to be organizational resources that employees' may draw on to replenish and reinvigorate library staff aggression prevention efforts. As such, we expect a negative relationship between psychological aggression prevention climate and social support measures with employees' psychological aggression experiences. For example, higher levels of support will be related to lower levels of psychological aggression. We would also expect relationships between psychological aggression and employees' health and family and work outcomes such that higher levels of workplace

aggression and psychological aggression will be related to higher levels of *dysfunction* in library staff health, family, and work outcomes.

The theoretical model is presented below in Figure 1 and is followed by the measurement model in Figure 2 with specific aims (see Appendix C for detailed specific aims and hypotheses). Tests of these relationships are described in more detail in the results section beginning on page 25.

Figure 1. The Washington Library Work, Stress and Health Theoretical Model



Research Design

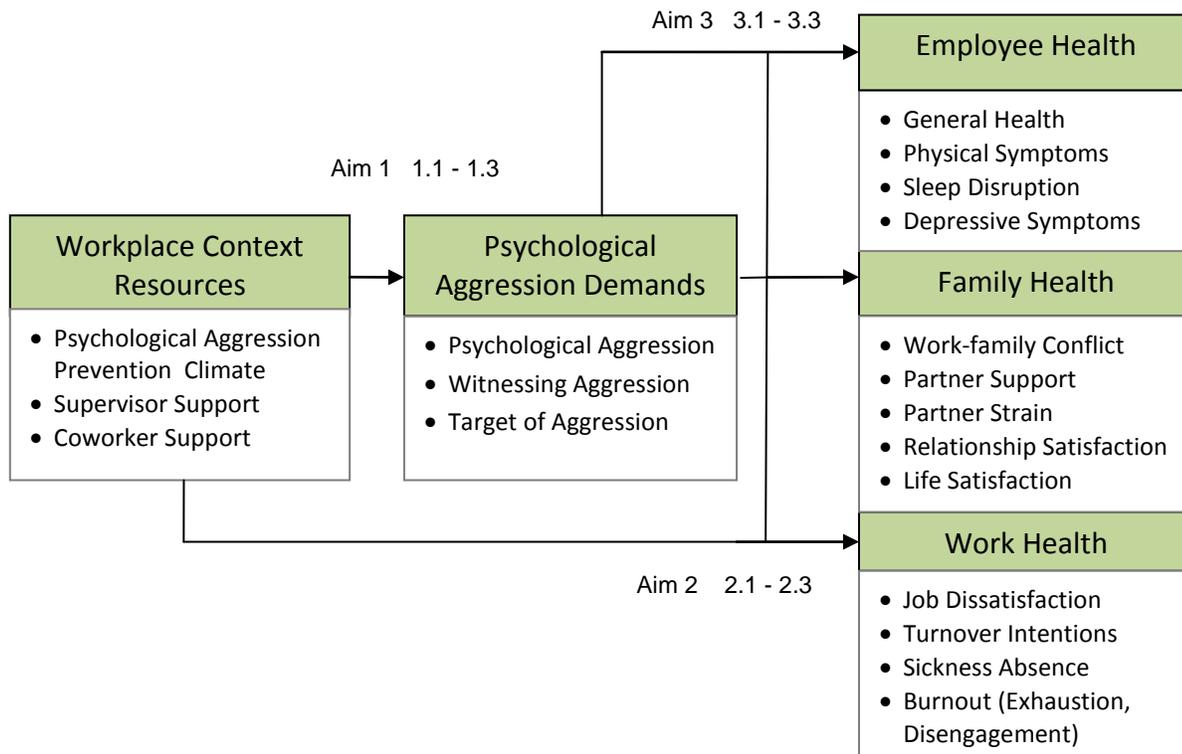
SHARP research at the Washington Department of Labor & Industries is focused on conducting research in the fields of Occupational Safety and Health and Occupational Health Psychology, as well as, in related fields devoted to understanding how individual and work environment factors influence occupational retention and turnover mad worker health and well-being. SHARP was created in 1990 by the Washington State Legislature with the mission of conducting research to prevent illness and injury in Washington workplaces. The current study was conducted with the support of the Washington State Department of Labor & Industries, the Washington Library Association (WLA), and the Interest Group of Library Unions (IGLU). The Washington Library Association (WLA) is a resource for libraries and library staff and is an advocate for libraries, library professionals and library allies. There are approximately 5,337 WLA member library staff in the state of Washington. The Interest Group of Library Unions (IGLU) is an organization that aims to offer and promote discussion and information about library unions in Washington, encourages ongoing research on unionization in libraries, and serves as a resource for active and developing unions of library workers in Washington State.

Design Overview

Our research used a cross-sectional study design that combines standard and validated organizational climate and work context questionnaire measures with validated measures of psychological aggression, as well

as, health, family and work outcomes. Figure 2 presents an overview of the research design and measures included in the WLWSH survey. These measures are further detailed in Appendix B.

Figure 2. The Washington Library Work, Stress, & Health Measurement Model



The independent variables analyzed here include: workplace context characteristics, work social support, psychological aggression behavior type and frequency. Dependent variables, or outcomes, include self-reported measures of employee general health, physical symptoms, sleep disruption, and depressive symptoms, work-family conflict, partner support/strain, relationship and life satisfaction, job dissatisfaction, turnover intentions, sickness absence, and work-related burnout. Items were also included to assess whether a respondent has witnessed psychological aggression at work or has a self-labeled target of psychological aggression. This research will provide analyses and findings to better understand organizational support resources in relation to psychological aggression occurrence in library settings and the impact of aggression on employee health, family, and work outcomes. In the following section, we provide a review of the research literature relevant to each measure included in our model.

WLWSH Model Literature Review

The Organizational Context

Prior research has shown facets of the organizational context to be significantly associated with employee exposure to psychological aggression and personal health, family, and work-related outcomes. For example, researchers have found a direct relationship between management style and several work issues including

group cohesion, turnover intentions, job stress, organizational commitment, and actual turnover (Force, 2005; Laschinger & Finegan, 2005; Laschinger & Havens, 1997; Leveck & Jones, 1996; Shobbrook & Fenton, 2002; Taunton, Boyle Woods, Hansen, & Boh, 1997; Volk & Lucas, 1991). Violence or aggression prevention climate (organizational policies, procedures, and practices) has been found to be significantly associated with exposure to workplace violence and verbal aggression (Kessler, Spector, Chang & Parr, 2008). Researchers also have acknowledged the importance of climate factors such as organizational support, trust, and decision involvement (Aiken, Clarke, Sloane, Sochalski, & Silber, 2002; Laschinger & Finegan, 2005; Laschinger & Havens, 1996; Sochalski & Aiken, 1999). These findings highlight the idea that research needs to study how the work context influences employees' experiences. Relevant features of the context in the current study include: *psychological aggression prevention climate, perceived supervisor support, and perceived coworker support.*

Psychological Aggression Prevention Climate

Psychological aggression prevention climate has emerged as a consistent antecedent of psychological aggression in the occupational health psychology research literature. Researchers conceptualized violence prevention climate as employees' perceptions of organizational policies, practices, and procedures regarding the control and elimination of workplace physical violence and verbal aggression (Spector, Coulter, Stockwell, & Matz, 2007). Specifically, aggression prevention climate refers to performing core and supportive activities that are designed to limit violent or aggressive incidents in the workplace (Kessler, Spector, Chang, & Parr, 2008). According to the resource-based Job Demands-Resources model (e.g., Bakker & Demerouti, 2007), organizations direct efforts to assist employees so that they perform effectively on the job. A positive prevention climate may serve as one of a range of resources from which library staff can draw to prevent violence and increase staff safety and well-being. Specifically, a positive prevention climate indicates that there are clear organizational policies, practices and responses to support employee efforts for preventing violent or aggressive incidents. In addition, strong management support exists to assist library staff with their efforts to prevent psychological aggression among coworkers, or to cope with the negative consequences of being victimized. In a 2012 study with hospital care providers, researchers found that a positive aggression prevention climate was associated with less job dissatisfaction and lower levels of burnout and coworker to coworker aggression (Yragui, Silverstein, Foley, Johnson, & Demsky, 2012).

Written documents such as workplace aggression and communication policies are *formal* expressions of an organization's *psychological aggression prevention climate*. In addition to developing sound policies on employee aggression (bullying) and educating employees about their content, organizations, supervisors and managers have a powerful role in communicating policy to employees and ensuring that policies, procedures, and practices are reasonably followed. A safety culture involves focusing on safety relevant cultural practices that reduce harm from aggression; and can be formed by enabling, enacting, and elaborating premises that prioritize and translate safe behavior practices for library staff and their managers (Vogus & Sutcliffe, 2007). Supervisors that communicate frequently to staff about the value of psychological aggression prevention may also quickly address issues related to psychological aggression and incivility with coworkers, subordinates, and members of the public. This is how organizational leaders create a climate of safety and prevention that promotes civility and positive psychosocial behaviors.

Supervisor Support

A large body of organizational research has established that employees' work experiences are strongly affected by perceptions of the quality of their relationship with their supervisors. We use the term perceived

supervisor support to refer to employees' understanding of the extent to which their supervisors provide emotional support (i.e., willingness to listen to problems). Prior literature on social support strongly suggests that the more support employees receive from their supervisors, the more favorable their occupational health and work outcomes (e.g., Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002) and often shows that perceived supervisor support can buffer employees from the adverse effects of job stressors (de Lange, Taris, Kompier, Houtman, & Bongers, 2003).

In general, social support at work has been linked with positive employee outcomes, including health, work attitudes, and work behavior (Cohen & Wills, 1985). The presence of support has been shown to interact with workplace stressors to lessen the negative impacts of stress on well-being outcomes. However, several researchers have suggested that the most effective forms of social support are those that are congruent with the form of stressor. For example, work-related support may be more effective than nonwork-related support in weakening the effects of workplace stressors on employee well-being (Cohen & Wills, 1985; Ganster & Victor, 1988).

Coworker Support

Support from coworkers can occur in multiple forms, including emotional (e.g., listening to a coworker's difficulties in balancing work and family) and instrumental (e.g., offering to help a coworker with a difficult client). A great deal of organizational literature has established that employees' work experiences are strongly affected by perceptions of the quality of their relationship with their coworkers. We use the term perceived coworker support to refer to employees' perceptions of the extent to which their coworkers provide emotional support (i.e., chances to express negative emotions) informational support (i.e., knowledge that makes one's work life easier), and instrumental support (i.e., tangible actions to help the employee). For library staff, important groups of coworkers include their library staff colleagues and supervisors.

More specifically, coworker support has been linked to a number of employee and organizational outcomes, including lower levels of role conflict, role overload, role ambiguity, effort reduction, absenteeism, intention to quit, and turnover and higher levels of job satisfaction, job involvement, and organizational commitment. In terms of performance, coworker support has also been linked to higher levels of organizational citizenship behaviors (targeted at both the individual and organization) as well as improved levels of general task performance (Chiaburu & Harrison, 2008). Additionally, a study of healthcare setting employees found that instrumental organizational support (including coworker support) weakened the impact of physical violence, aggression, and vicariously experiencing violence in the workplace on employee outcomes including emotional well-being, somatic health, and job-related affect (Schat & Kelloway, 2003). Coworker support has also been shown to have a moderating affect on the relationship between perceptions of injustice at work (fairness in process and outcome at work) and psychological distress (Rousseau, Salek, Aube, & Morin, 2009).

Workplace Aggression

Psychological Aggression

Health researchers have noted that the impact of aggressive behavior is costly for organizations – it causes distress among other staff, it undermines productivity, leads to low morale and high staff turnover (Rosenstein & O'Daniel, 2005; 2008). Again, psychological aggression is not unique to library organizations or library staff. Recent research estimates of the prevalence of a hostile work environment for those in the occupational group

of “education, training and libraries” were in-line with other occupations after adjusting for age, sex, and ethnicity, at 8.1%; comparatively, the overall estimated prevalence rate for workers was 7.8% (Alterman, Luckhaupt, Dahlhamer, Ward, & Calvert, 2012). Research has also shown that psychological aggression occurs frequently among coworkers and has a significant impact on staff satisfaction, morale, and turnover (Rosenstein & O’Daniel, 2005). We used the 22-item Negative Acts Questionnaire (NAQ) to measure psychological aggression in this study (Einarsen, Hoel & Notelaers, 2009). This validated measure of psychological aggression captures a full range of psychologically aggressive behaviors. The NAQ has been found to be a highly reliable measure of work-related psychological aggression and bullying, and prior analysis has shown the NAQ can differentiate between different levels of exposure (Einarsen, Hoel, & Notelaers, 2009). Respondents were not told that this was a measure of psychological aggression before responding to the NAQ items. After completing the items, they were presented with a definition of psychological aggression (bullying) and were asked if they had witnessed the aggressive behavior at work and if they considered themselves a target of aggression.

There is strong evidence linking individual outcomes to experiencing workplace psychological aggression, including long-term effects of exposure on work, health and well-being (Nielsen & Einarsen, 2012). Exposure to psychological aggression at work has been found to be negatively correlated to job performance, and this relationship is significantly explained by decreased job attitudes (Schat & Frone, 2011). Some research links incivility to employee turnover, another costly outcome for organizations. Cortina, Magley, Williams, & Langhout (2001) found that greater exposure to incivility was associated with lower job satisfaction, increased psychological distress, and stronger intentions to leave the organization. Similarly, Guidroz, Wang, and Perez (2012) found that interpersonal conflicts with doctors, patients, and supervisors influenced nurses’ retention outcomes by increasing their emotional exhaustion.

Witnessing Psychological Aggression

We used a single-item instrument to measure witnessing exposure, asking respondents if they had “witnessed a coworker being a target of workplace bullying” based on a previously given definition of psychological aggression (bullying). There is evidence of a causal relationship between interpersonal conflicts at the work and self-reported health and work outcomes, even for those who are bystanders to psychological aggression and bullying (Hansen et al., 2006). Coworker and supervisory conflict has been shown to be a statistically significant risk factor for an elevated need for recovery, prolonged fatigue, poor general health, and turnover (De Raeve, Jansen, van den Brandt, Vasse, & Kant, 2009). Being a *witness* to workplace bullying and incivility has also been linked to an elevated risk of developing depressive symptoms, greater stress and greater mental strain (Emdad, Alipour, Hagberg, & Jensen, 2012; Vartia, 2001). Researchers have also found that employees are more aggressive when witnessing – suggestive that witnessing can significantly affect not only the workplace context, but also employee behavior within that context (Aquino & Douglas, 2003; Glomb & Liao, 2003).

Observing hostility and perceiving a lax organizational prevention climate for harassment and hostility have also been found to be significantly related to lower general well-being and higher organizational withdrawal even when controlling for personal mistreatment (Miner-Rubino & Cortina, 2007). Porath and Erez (2007) found that student participants who experienced or witnessed rude behavior were more likely to exhibit reduced levels of performance, creativity, and helping behavior in subsequent tasks. Other research has shown that employees not vulnerable to, or directly affected by, psychologically aggressive behaviors at work

may still be affected by observing the interpersonal conflicts and aggressive behaviors between other staff (Cooper, Hoel, & Faragher, 2004; Hauge, Skogstad, & Einarsen, 2007). Such findings highlight the need for interventions aimed at preventing psychological aggression at work and ameliorating the harmful effects of conflict on employees and the organization.

Target of Psychological Aggression

Research in the field of workplace aggression is relatively young and has rapidly developed in the last three decades - this growth has coincided with the creation of overlapping constructs that fall under the broad construct of workplace aggression (Herschcovis, 2011). For this research, we distinguish between identifying as a self-labeled *target* or victim of ongoing weekly or daily (several months or longer) psychological aggression and reporting the experience of less frequent psychological aggression. Library staff may also experience prolonged and intensive psychological aggression at work without self-labeling as a target. We used a single-item instrument to measure identifying as a target of psychological aggression, first giving a specific definition of prolonged and frequent psychologically aggressive behavior and then asking respondents if they had been a target of this behavior. Researchers have conceptually distinguished these two constructs as representative of different perceptions and responses to workplace aggression, whereby an employee may not self-label as targeted but will report experiencing prolonged and frequent psychologically aggressive actions (Vartia, 2001; Vie, Glaso, & Einarsen, 2011; Tepper & Henle, 2011). Research suggests self-labeling as a target of bullying may also amplify the mental and physical effects of psychological aggression and workplace incivility above the strain of aggressive behavior and bullying alone (Nielsen & Enarsen, 2012; Vartia, 2001). Identifying as a *target* may be a distinct stressor-strain pathway affecting employee well-being and productivity.

In sum, experiencing psychological aggression, being a witness to psychological aggression, and self-labeling as a target of psychological aggression are three different demands that act as workplace stressors. The presence of psychological aggression leads to diminishing the organizational values and resources that contribute to employee work effort, productivity, performance, organizational loyalty and job satisfaction (Pearson & Porath, 2005). Providing high quality library services requires collaboration – defined as communication and behaviors that employees’ perform when working together, including shared decision-making and responsibility for problem solving and task advancement - employees working cooperatively to devise and enact effective plans for productive work (Baggs et al., 1999). Collaboration requires open communication and mutual respect in addition to shared decision making. Psychologically aggressive behavior interrupts good collaborative communication and reduces staff psychological safety as well as the quality of services provided (Rosenstein & O’Daniel, 2008).

Health Outcomes

General Health and Physical Symptoms

Research on the negative effects of psychological aggression on the physical health of employees is important to reducing the burden and risk of aggression and incivility in the workplace. Coworker conflict and workplace aggression have also been found to be predictive of poor general health (De Raeve et al., 2009), and employee injury and assault risk have also been tied to the informal social hierarchy of the organization and the presence of workplace incivility (Myers, Kreibel, Karasek, Punnett, & Wegman, 2007; Langlois, et al., 2007). We used the single item assessment of general health from the Medical Outcomes Study Short Form (SF-12v2) to measure general health status (Ware, Kosinski, & Keller, 1995). Research has shown single-item measures of

general health to be appropriately comparable to longer instruments in the assessment of self-reported health status (DeSalvo, Fan, McDonnell, & Fihn, 2005).

Physical stress-related symptoms occurring as the result of psychological aggression is a serious and important issue in occupational health research. Self-report measures of physical symptoms are also widely used and accepted as a proxy risk factor for musculoskeletal disorders in workplace health stress research (Yeung, Genaidy, Deddens, & Sauter 2005). For this research, we used an inventory measure from Brim, Ryff, and Kessler (2004), which asks respondents if they experienced any of the 10 symptoms listed (e.g. headaches) in the past 30 days. Previous research has shown evidence of a significant relationship between psychological aggression climate and employee injuries and physical health. This relationship is often moderated by other workplace context variables, including job control, job security, supervisor and coworker support and work-to-family conflict. There are positive associations between the number of hours worked per week and the frequency of negative health symptoms, especially for those who lack autonomy at work and social support (Tucker & Rutherford, 2005).

Coworker conflict or psychological aggression also contributes to poor employee health. However, workers who reported high levels of incivility had better physical outcomes when they perceived better organizational and emotional support (Miner, Settles, Pratt-Hyatt, & Brady, 2012). Library staff are at risk of increased mental harm, discomfort/pain, and physical symptoms from poor aggression prevention climate and low workplace social support.

Depressive Symptoms

Increased psychological demands from work, lack of job control and supportive relationships have been reflected in an increased risk of depressive symptoms and anxiety (Smith & Bielecky, 2012; Wood et al., 2011). To assess depressive symptoms we used the shortened version of the Center for Epidemiologic Studies Depression Scale (CES-D). The CES-D was developed as a measure of depressive symptoms in adults residing in the community (Santor & Coyne, 1997), and it is a widely used screening instrument in occupational health stress research. When compared with non-bullied respondents, it was observed that bullied respondents reported more symptoms of depression, anxiety, and changes in mental health (Hansen et al., 2006). A strong association between psychological aggression and depression has been found to exist after adjustments for sex, age and income in a dose-response manner (Kivimaki et al., 2003). Low job control and low job control with high job demands have both been found to have a negative effect on mental health (Dalgard et al., 2009), while job demands by themselves were not significantly associated with poor mental health – suggesting a significant interaction between demands and control. Other analysis suggests that targets of incivility endured psychological distress, dissatisfaction with and disengagement from their institution, and performance decline (Caza & Cortina, 2007). Including a measure of depressive symptoms in our study is important to measuring the psychosocial impacts of psychological aggression, and what may be a leading indicator of further work and health impacts, including burnout, emotional exhaustion, physical disability, and sickness absence.

Sleep Disruption

Bullying and psychological strain has been found to negatively affect sleep quality, which is predictive of stress and fatigue outcomes (Winwood & Lushington, 2006; Niedhammer, David, Degioanni, Drummond, & Pierre 2009; Lallukka, Rahkonen, & Lahelma, 2011). Sleep disruption complaints are common and may be an important symptom of other physical and mental disorders, especially in relation to mental disorders such as depression and anxiety (Buysse, Reynolds, Monk, Berman, & Kupfer, 1989). Sleep complaints have also been

associated with physical and psychosocial working conditions and work-to-family conflict even after controlling for unhealthy behaviors, health status, depression and medication use (Lallukka, Rahkonen, Lahelma, & Arber, 2010). Appropriate coping strategies and supportive behaviors to mediate the effects of psychological stressors is an important requirement for employees in order to avoid adverse health effects and maintain long-term and satisfying careers. Shift and night work has been found to significantly negatively affect sleep disruption, as well as job strain and job stress (Costa, Sartori, & Akerstedt, 2006; Burgard & Ailshire, 2009). Sleep quantity and sleep disruption have been associated with an increased risk of injury in a general sample (Choi et al., 2006). This research suggests an important relationship between organizational context, work stress, and sleep.

Family-Related Outcomes

Work-Family Conflict

Work-family conflict occurs when the demands or pressures of one life role, such as work, conflicts with the demands or pressures from another life role, such as family (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985). This conflict can come in several forms, including time or strain. For example, being required to unexpectedly work several hours of overtime may cause difficulties with scheduling or attending to family obligations, such as doctor's appointments or childcare. The strain of witnessing psychological aggressions in the workplace (e.g., workplace bullying) may follow an employee home and interfere with their ability to be attentive to and fully involved in interactions with family members and friends. Recent prevalence estimates of work-family imbalance for the occupational group encompassing library staff show a psychosocial exposure rate of 16%, which is almost equivalent to the overall prevalence rate of workers reporting difficulty balancing work and family of 16.3% (Alterman et al., 2012). In this respect, the demands of work and family on library staff may be representative of the general working population.

Work overload and irregular work schedules are associated with higher levels of work-to-family conflict, which was in turn associated with lower job and life satisfaction (Yildirim & Aycan, 2008). Support from supervisors—particularly support specific to managing work and family demands—has been linked to lower levels of employee work-family conflict. Other related research has found that work-related negative mood is related to both negative mood at home and higher levels of work-family conflict, consistent with the concept of spillover (Ilies et al., 2007). Higher levels of work-family conflict have been associated with a number of negative outcomes for employees, including elevated levels of alcohol consumption (Frone, Russell, & Cooper, 1997). Additionally, higher levels of family interference with work have been associated with increased levels of depression and poor physical health (Frone et al., 1997).

Partner Support and Partner Strain

As the current study seeks to look at the individual as a whole person, it is important to acknowledge the existence of multiple life domains (e.g., work and non-work). To this end we used a measure of partner support and partner strain from the Midlife in the US (MIDUS) Survey (Walen & Lachman, 2000). This is a widely used and validated measure that allowed us to differentiate support and strain by partner or spouse. A goal of this study was to examine the ways in which work demands can impact employees' non-work lives, as well as the presence of possible resources in the home domain. The presence of a supportive partner is one of several potential resources in the family domain that may help employees effectively manage both work and family demands. As an example, partners may be able to provide emotional support after a particularly

stressful day at work, or instrumental support with household tasks, such as caring for children, cleaning, making repairs around the house, or paying the bills.

Emotional support from partners may be particularly helpful for employees dealing with psychological aggression in the workplace. Indeed, previous work and family research has found a consistent relationship between partner support and lowered levels of work-family conflict (Byron, 2005). The presence of a supportive partner (as opposed to a partner who is not supportive) has also been shown to strengthen the positive effects of family supportive supervision on work-family balance (Greenhaus, Ziegert, & Allen, 2012). These two sources of support appear to have a synergistic effect on the ability to manage work and family in the context of handling psychological aggression demands.

Relationship Satisfaction

While it is important to examine potential resources in the non-work area of life, it is also critical to examine ways in which the presence of work demands and support in the workplace can impact employees' well-being outside of work. One area that may be impacted by work demands (i.e., overtime, low schedule control) and the presence of support for work and family is satisfaction with one's relationship. Relationship satisfaction is an assessment of one's relationship with a romantic partner, including satisfaction with the relationship itself, with one's partner, and with the level of communication within the relationship (Schumm, et al., 1986). The increased strain associated with higher levels of psychological aggression may, in effect, spillover to an employee's home life, in the form of negative mood and negative interactions with a spouse or partner. These negative interactions in the home domain may be associated with lower levels of relationship satisfaction over time (Levenson & Gottman, 1989).

Life Satisfaction

Life satisfaction is an indicator of an individual's perceptions of their quality of life. This assessment may involve placing varying levels of importance on different aspects of one's life (e.g., health, finances, or family) in accordance with personal values and standards (Diener, Emmons, Larsen, & Griffin, 1985). While life satisfaction is considered distinct from job satisfaction, the two are positively related, as work is one of many areas of life. Higher levels of work-family conflict have also been associated with lower levels of life satisfaction (Kossek & Ozeki, 1998), indicating family also plays an important role in one's satisfaction with life. While not many studies of psychological aggression have examined life satisfaction as an outcome, there are a few relevant examples in the literature. One study of abusive supervision, which refers to sustained hostile verbal and nonverbal behaviors from a supervisor, found that employees who experienced higher levels of abusive supervision also reported lowered levels of life satisfaction (Tepper, 2000). Bowling and Beehr (2006) also found that employees' experiencing greater perceived harassment at work reported lower levels of life satisfaction.

Work-Related Outcomes

Job Dissatisfaction

Job dissatisfaction has been defined as a "negative evaluative judgment one makes about one's job or job situation" (Weiss, 2002, p. 175). Prior research has shown lowered job satisfaction is associated with exposure to workplace bullying and psychological aggression (Hauge, Skogstad & Einarsen, 2010; Rodriquez-Munoz, Baillien, De Witte, Moreno-Jimenez, & Pastor, 2009). A variety of other work context factors have also been linked to job dissatisfaction, including organizational justice (Cohen-Charash & Spector, 2001), task

importance, autonomy, and task feedback (Hackman & Oldham, 1976). Furthermore, job dissatisfaction has been associated with a number of personal well-being indicators, such as anxiety, depression, burnout, cardiovascular disease, general mental health, and sleep problems (Spector, 2006). In a recent study on exposure to workplace aggression, researchers found that—in a sample of nurses and public service workers, higher levels of aggression from both supervisors as well as coworkers were associated with higher levels of job dissatisfaction (Merecz, Drabek, & Moscicka, 2009). Similarly, Cortina and colleagues (2001) found that greater frequency of incivility in the workplace was associated with higher levels of job dissatisfaction. Social support has been found to be negatively associated with job dissatisfaction – with supervisor support being most closely related (Baruch-Feldman, Brondolo, Ben-Dayana, & Schwartz, 2002). Other recent research has found that the relationship between workplace psychological aggression and job dissatisfaction is partly mediated by the emotions of employees – suggesting that organizations that support the emotional health of employees may mitigate the negative effects of bullying and psychologically aggressive behavior on job dissatisfaction.

Turnover Intentions

Turnover intention refers to an employees' desire to leave their current organization in order to seek employment elsewhere. Satisfaction with various aspects of the workplace has been associated with intentions to turnover, including satisfaction with professional growth opportunities, autonomy, workload, and relationships with coworkers. As might be expected, higher intentions separate from the organization are positively associated with actual turnover behaviors (i.e., leaving the unit or organization). One important question related to work experiences involves the relative contributions of positive resources and negative climate (or positive and negative experiences) to work outcomes. Recent research in the healthcare field found that nurses who experienced harassment from a manager were over four times more likely to intend to quit than those who did not experience such behavior. Those who experienced harassment from colleagues were twice as likely to intend to turnover as those who had not experienced harassment from colleagues. Finally, those experiencing harassment from both sources were over 11 times more likely to intend to quit than nurses who had not experienced harassment from both of these sources (Deery, Walsh, & Guest, 2011).

Poor psychological aggression prevention context (environmental incivility) has also been found to significantly affect employees' intention to remain over and above their personal experience of incivility (Griffin, 2010). Frequent and occasional exposure to incivility and aggression at work have also been shown to significantly affect turnover in a longitudinal study and further analyses showed that psychological well-being significantly partially mediated this relationship (Clausen, Hogh, Carneiro, & Borg, 2012). This research suggests the importance of workplace context and resources on the experience of psychological aggression and the impact of psychological aggression on turnover intentions and retention.

Sickness Absence

Sickness absence is a well-defined and commonly used outcome and is important as a measure of ill health, commitment to work, the use of health services and as a reason for lost productivity (Kivimaki, Elovainio, & Vahtera, 2000; Navarro, Reis, & Martin, 2009). Previous research has shown significant relationships between employees who reported being the victims of bullying and a higher prevalence of sickness absence (Kivimaki et al., 2000). More recent research has shown employee sickness absence significantly reduced in organizations that had a strong focus on employee health and morale (Ybema, Evers, & van Scheppingen, 2011; Gilbody et al., 2006). Sickness absence has also been significantly associated with

other poor worker health outcomes, such as depressive symptoms and poor sleep quality (Nakata et al., 2004). Burnout and disengagement have also been found to be significantly associated with the length and frequency of sickness absenteeism suggesting that sickness absence is an indicator of both health and motivational processes related to job demands and resources (Schaufeli, Bakker, & Van Rhenen, 2009).

Burnout - Exhaustion and Disengagement

Burnout is a psychological response to chronic work stress and is commonly used to describe a state of mental weariness. Our central measure of employee strain comes from the literature on employee burnout. A large body of research has established that burnout is an important concern for occupations involving intense interpersonal interaction. We measured burnout as a state of work-related emotional exhaustion and disengagement. In this conceptual model of burnout, exhaustion stems from job demands while disengagement is the result of a lack of job resources (Halbesleben & Demerouti, 2005). For this study we used the Oldenburg Burnout Inventory (OLBI) to measure burnout among this population of library staff. The OLBI has two separate scales measuring exhaustion and disengagement, with balanced positively and negatively worded questions. The OLBI also is designed to capture both cognitive and physical components of exhaustion which may capture a broader conceptualization. Halbesleben and Demerouti (2005) evaluated the OLBI and found that the measure was consistent across samples, suggesting a stability of the findings across occupational groups. Disengagement reflects a lack of dedication to one's job and work and has been shown to predict employee intentions to leave their positions as well as, the duration of absence due to sickness and lowered physical wellness (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004; Leiter & Maslach, 1988; Schaufeli et al., 2009; Puig et al., 2012).

In line with the Job Demands-Resources Theory, researchers have found that job demands such as experienced workload and time pressure are consistently associated with burnout, particularly the dimension of exhaustion. Additionally, the absence of job resources, such as social support, has been linked to higher levels of burnout. Supervisor support has been identified as particularly important in this relationship, even more so than coworker support. Verbal harassment in the workplace has also been associated with higher levels of burnout (Deery, Walsh, & Guest, 2011).

Research Methods

Human Subjects Approval

All research conducted was approved by the Washington State Institutional Review Board (WSIRB).

Instrument Design

In designing and administering our survey, we gathered data on a wide variety of validated survey instruments. Complete instruments are available from the first author and we have also presented a table in Appendix B that describes all the survey instruments, including references, key sample items, and response formats.

Participant Recruitment

A convenience sample was obtained through web-based employee surveys open to all Washington Library Association (WLA) members and their colleagues in the Pacific Northwest area who are staff in libraries that provide library services. Emailed poster and newsletter advertisements announced the availability of the web-

based survey and included the website where potential participants could log-on to complete the survey during their non-work time at home. This link was also forwarded by initial email recipients to their colleagues not on the WLA list serve. Advertisements were also included in library union interest group and association newsletters. Additionally, library employees were also able to contact SHARP toll free to either complete the survey by telephone or by mail (received a mailed paper survey packet). Advertisements announcing the survey emphasized that it was confidential and voluntary, and that the survey was for all library staff, whether or not they had experienced psychological aggression or bullying. This was highlighted in order to receive responses from library staff with a range of experiences with psychological aggression

Participant Characteristics

Study participants were current employees from libraries in the Pacific Northwest region in the US. The survey was submitted by 304 library staff. Eighty employees were excluded from the analysis because they did not complete the psychological aggression measures or work and health outcome measures. Thus, the study was based on 224 respondents who reported on the psychological aggression prevention climate of their organization, different levels of social support within their organizations, and their experiences with workplace psychological aggression. We present the study sample characteristics in Table 1 and Table 2 below.

The majority of the survey respondents are: white, female, married or living as married, age 40 or older, and have completed at least a 4-year college education. Almost a quarter of respondents had at least 1 child living at home and about 30% provided care for an older adult outside of work. We are unable to calculate a response rate as the survey was forwarded to an unknown number of librarians, beyond the scope of our original email to the WLA listserve. Survey respondents have worked at their library of employment for an average of about 10 years, and have been at their current position for a little over 6.5 years, though we did capture library staff at both ends of the spectrum, from the newly employed (those working less than a year) to the highly tenured.

Table 1. Pacific Northwest library staff participants' basic demographic characteristics.

	Frequency	Percent
Gender (N =224)		
Male	33	14.73
Female	185	82.59
Declined to answer	6	2.68
Age (N =223)		
18-30 years	20	8.93
31-40 years	32	14.29
41-50 years	57	25.45
51-60 years	92	41.07
61-65 years	22	9.82
Ethnicity (N =222)		
White	197	87.95
Black/African American	3	1.34
Asian	9	4.02
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	3	1.34
American Indian/Alaskan Native	4	1.79
Hispanic	6	2.68
Education (N =224)		
High School	6	2.68
Some College	48	35.29
4 years of college	33	14.73
5 years of college/grad school	31	13.84
6 years of college/grad school	57	25.45
7+years of college and/or grad school	49	21.88
Relationship Status (N =224)		
Married, Living as Married	166	74.11
Widowed	28	12.50
Divorced or Separated	29	12.95
Never Married	1	.45
Dependent Children at Home (N =224)		
0 Children	167	74.55
1 Child	28	12.50
2 Children	22	9.82
3-4 Children	7	3.13
Care for an older adult (N=224)		
Yes	67	29.91
No	157	70.09
Income (N =224)		
\$10,000 – \$29,999	8	3.57
\$30,000 – \$49,999	38	17.97
\$50,000 – \$69,999	47	20.98
\$70,000 – \$89,999	59	26.34
\$90,000 or more	63	28.12
Declined to answer	9	4.02

Respondents reported working a range of hours per week, from 6 to 90 hours, with an average number of hours worked, just under 40 per week (see Table 2). This range is influenced by the inclusion of part-time and supervisory staff who have different working hours and responsibilities. The average number of years spent working with their current supervisor was about 4.3 years. As a snapshot of the characteristics of work for library staff participants, these data reflect a range of occupational characteristics with a minority of staff reporting higher amounts of overtime and weekly hours worked. Averages overall are consistent with a typical 40 hour work week.

Table 2. Library staff participants’ work and demographic characteristics.

	<i>N</i>	Mean	Standard Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
Overtime Hours per Week	212	5.62	18.40	0	168
Hours Worked – Total per Week	223	39.13	14.40	6.00	90.00
Position Tenure (years)	224	6.64	5.67	.08	29.08
Tenure at current library (years)	224	10.07	7.77	.08	32.83
Occupational Tenure (years)	224	14.56	9.99	0	41.08
Years worked with current supervisor	224	4.27	4.73	0	32.83

Note: *N* = number of participants reporting; Mean = average; Standard Deviation = variation from the mean; Minimum = lowest value reported; Maximum = highest value reported.

Testing the Study Relationships

Analysis

To determine the effects of the organizational context variables, we conducted a series of multiple regression analyses predicting each model component from the set of organizational context variables and psychological aggression variables. Multiple regression analyses calculate the relationship between different sets of predictor variables and an outcome variable. This relationship is called a multiple correlation; the *squared multiple correlation* or *multiple R squared (R2)* indicates the total amount of variance explained in the outcome variable by the set of predictor variables and is considered a measure of the strength of effect of the measures in the model. Multiple regression analyses generate a set of standardized regression weights that indicate the relative contribution of each predictor to the outcome. Thus, researchers use multiple regression analyses to investigate which predictor variables explain the most variance in an outcome.

Control Variables

The control variables included in these models were chosen because they were characteristics thought to affect the relationship between the organizational resources available to library staff and workplace psychological aggression and employees’ health, work, and family outcomes. The individual differences of survey respondents and the differences in their organization’s size and type may impact the relationships among the study variables. Controlling for these variables allows us to model for the true effects of work context resources and psychological aggression on health, work, and family-related outcomes. To our knowledge, no prior research has examined validated measures of the work experiences of library staff with

this particular combination of variables as controls, predictors, and outcomes. Here, we focused on seven control variables expected to influence library staff responses to stressors and/or staff health and well-being and work-related outcomes: gender, age, income, job tenure, time spent with supervisor, library size and library type. Control variables differed depending on the analysis and were chosen based on their relationship to the dependent variables and relationships demonstrated in prior work stress research.

Gender, Age, Income

Higher age and female gender have been shown to be associated with higher risk of disturbed sleep and fatigue (Akerstedt, Knutsson, et al., 2002; Akerstedt, Fredlund, Gillberg, & Jansson, 2002). Female gender and older age have also been found to be significant to turnover intentions, and female workers have been found to experience greater frequencies of incivility than men (Andriaenssens et al., 2011; Cortina et al., 2001). Age and gender have been used as predictor variables in workplace violence and social support research, and are significant risk factors for health and well-being outcomes (Keyes, 1998; Estryng-Behar, et. al., 2008; Lambert, Hogan, & Tucker, 2009; Sundin et al., 2006). Differences in age, gender, and income have all been significantly associated with different reported amounts and experiences of workplace incivility and work-family conflict/flexibility (Hatch-Maillette et al., 2007; Islam et al., 2003; Parker & Allen, 2001). Other research has shown that family-related strain was more predictive of health outcomes for women, and family-related support was similarly, more buffering for women than men (Walen, 2000).

Job Tenure and Time Spent with Supervisor

Job tenure refers to the number of years a library staff have currently worked in his/her defined specialty. Researchers typically regard 2-3 years as the time during which employees transition from being considered as novice to being experienced. Past research highlights the need to account for prior experience in retention studies. For example, although employees with stronger organizational commitment are less likely to intend to leave their jobs (Chang et al., 2006; Glazer, 2005), some studies conclude that this relationship only exists for employees with over 1 year of job experience (Werbel & Gould, 1984). Job experience has also been linked to job satisfaction, retention/turnover, and shifts worked (Bowles & Candella, 2005; Cowin, 2002; Leveck & Jones, 1996). Time spent with supervisor is an important indicator of the number of opportunities for supervisor support or conversely, exposure to psychological aggression originating from a supervisor.

Library Size and Library Type

This research was open to library staff from all types of institutions, and library size and library type varied among survey respondents. Library staff who responded to our survey reported serving a population of less than 5,000 to over 100,000; and worked in public, educational, private and government institutions. Organization size and organizational conditions have been used as significant categorical or predictor variables in organizational psychology research, and it is possible that these measures capture certain organizational factors that affect the risk of workplace violence (Parker & Allen, 2001; Agervold, 2009). Library size and type may also affect the amount or intensity of workload and job strain, exposure to incivility, and the supportive resources available employees.

Research Results

Psychological Aggression Experiences

We start by presenting results of workplace aggression frequency by type of aggression experienced (see Table 3). Following this, Table 4 presents the results of our largest model which examines relationships between organizational context and psychological aggression variables with a hierarchical linear regression analysis. In this these analyses we control for individual differences in the first step, psychological aggression prevention climate, and organizational support variables in the second step to test for significant incremental effects over and above all the other variables in the model. Tables 5-7 show the results of the multiple regression analyses for the organizational context in relation to library staff health, family, and work outcomes. Tables 8-10 present the results for psychological aggression relationships with library staff health, family, and work outcomes. Significant relationships are shown in bold in each table with asterisks indicating the level of significance. We organize our discussion by each table, discussing all of the findings for each one in turn.

Table 3. Library Staff experience by type of psychological aggression.

Psychological Aggression	N	Frequency / Yes	%
Psychological Aggression (weekly, daily)	224	98	43.75
(any, past year)	224	201	89.73
Witnessing Psychological Aggression	223	116	51.79
Psychological Aggression Target	223	88	39.29

We asked participants to respond to whether they had experienced specific psychologically aggressive acts from coworkers, were a witness to psychological aggression, how often they experienced or witnessed aggressive acts from coworkers, and if they identified themselves as a target of daily/weekly aggression. A high percentage (90%) of library staff respondents reported experiencing any amount of psychological aggression in the past year and about 44% experiencing psychological aggression from coworkers and supervisors on a weekly or daily basis. Finally, nearly 52% of survey respondents reported witnessing psychological aggression among coworkers in the past year, and 39% responded that they had been targeted with psychologically aggressive behavior that was daily or weekly and occurred over several months.

The percentages on all three measures are considered to be high in organizational psychology research. Though we did ask for survey participation from library staff that had not experienced psychologically aggressive behavior or bullying, such high rates of response could be due to response bias (see Strengths and Limitations section, p. 36) where respondents who had experienced psychological aggression were more likely to complete the survey.

Aim 1: Workplace Context Resources and Psychological Aggression Outcomes

The model in the analysis below allows us to examine relationships between the organizational resources and the psychological aggression outcomes to understand which organization support resources are important for each outcome. The results of three analyses are presented in Table 4 with the purpose of examining the relationship of organizational resources with the outcomes of psychological aggression, witnessing psychological aggression, and identifying as a target of psychological aggression. Specifically, we wanted to know if different levels of organizational support are important for predicting aggression outcomes above and beyond the individual differences that could control for variations in psychological aggression outcomes.

Table 4. The effects of organizational context resources on psychological aggression outcomes.

Organizational Resources Predictors Step 2 Model	Psychological Aggression Outcomes		
	Psychological Aggression N=186	Psychological Aggression – Witness N=186	Psychological Aggression – Target N=186
Individual differences (β)			
Age	-.06	-.05	-.06
Gender	.05	.03	-.16
Income	-.01	.01	-.10**
Tenure with Supervisor	-.01	-.02	-.01
Weekly Hours Worked	.01*	.00	.01
Library Type	-.03	-.02	-.08
Library Size	.05	.18*	.11
Organizational Resources (β)			
Psychological Aggression Prevention Climate	-.16***	-.52***	-.44***
Supervisor Support	-.25***	-.25**	-.37***
Coworker Support	-.04	.00	.04
Variance explained (R^2)	.57***	.39***	.41***
Change in R^2	.45	.34	.33

Note: Hierarchical linear regression final models presented (3). Individual difference variables were entered in Step 1. Organizational resource variables were entered together in Step 2. Change in R^2 refers to change in variance with the addition of the Step 2 variables. β = standardized regression weight. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$.

Psychological Aggression, Witnessing Psychological Aggression, Target of Psychological Aggression

We found that high levels of aggression prevention climate and supervisor support are associated with low psychological aggression, or incivility, among library staff. The variance explained (R^2) in the psychological aggression analysis is 57%. The model explains 39% and 41% of the variance in witnessing and identifying as a target of psychological aggression, respectively. All three analyses are highly significant and the incremental variance explained (change in R^2) by adding the organizational resources, is quite high for each aggression outcome.

Aggression prevention climate represents individuals' shared perceptions of library policies, procedures and practices that contribute to an aggression prevention culture in the organization. These results tell us that the distal support of management response to create a climate for preventing aggressive behavior and the more proximal support of supervisors are critical resources for libraries.

Building resources along the lines of increasing aggression prevention climate and supportive supervisors is one approach libraries can take to eliminate psychological aggression. Library staff working in positive and aggression preventive climates may be protected by a better response from managers with greater prevention efforts, and thus, engage in, experience, or witness fewer psychologically aggressive acts at work.

Library employees with supportive supervisors may experience a positive direct effect from the support and recognition, thereby reducing the negative effects of workplace aggressive behavior.

It is important to emphasize that the incremental variance increase from both Step 1 to Step 2 of each analysis provides evidence that the support resources significantly contribute to the relationship between each psychological aggression outcome.

Tables 5-7 below present the results of the relationships between organizational context resources and library staff health, family, and work outcomes. Significant relationships for the predictor variables are shown in bold in each table with asterisks indicating the level of significance. We organize our discussion by each table, discussing all of the findings for each one in turn.

Aim 2: Workplace Context Resources on Health, Family and Work Outcomes

Table 5. The effects of organizational context resources on health outcomes

Organizational Resources Predictors	Health Outcomes			
	General Health N=180	Physical Symptoms N=186	Sleep Disruption N=186	Depressive Symptoms N=186
Step 2				
Levels of Support (β)				
Psychological Aggression Prevention Climate	.02	-.04	-.16**	-.10**
Supervisor Support	.25**	-.35*	-.14*	-.11**
Coworker Support	.22*	-.16	-.02	-.14***
Variance explained (R ²)	.24***	.18***	.20***	.36***

Note: The 12 analyses above include step 1 control variables of age, gender, income, time spent with supervisor, weekly hours worked, and library size. β = standardized regression weight.

*p < .05, **p < .01, ***p < .001.

The analysis above compares social support resources at different levels in the organization in relation to health outcomes. The data suggest that higher levels of aggression prevention climate, supervisor support, and coworker support are related to fewer stress-related health outcomes. Specifically, increased levels of aggression prevention climate are associated with less sleep disruption and fewer depressive symptoms. Higher supervisor support is associated with better self-reported general health, fewer physical symptoms, less sleep disruption and fewer depressive symptoms. Finally, coworker support is significantly associated with better self-reported general health and fewer depressive symptoms. The strongest relationships between the organizational resources and health outcomes are with depressive symptoms – evidence that social support in the workplace has a profound effect on mental health strain in the context of psychological aggression.

Table 6. The effects of organizational context resources on family-related outcomes

Organizational Resources Predictors	Family-Related Outcomes				
	Work-Family Conflict N=186	Partner Support N=149	Partner Strain N=149	Relationship Satisfaction N=165	Life Satisfaction N=186
Step 2					
Levels of Support (β)					
Psychological Aggression Prevention Climate	-.08	.12*	-.05	.28	.24*
Supervisor Support	-.21**	.07	-.01	.15	.42***
Coworker Support	.04	-.10	.03	-.17	.13
Variance explained (R ²)	.19***	.11*	.07	.09	.36***

Note: The 5 analyses above include step 1 control variables of age, gender, relationship status, # of children living at home, time spent with supervisor, weekly hours worked, and library size. All three support variables were entered in Step 2. β = standardized regression weight.

p* < .05, *p* < .01, ****p* < .001.

The analyses above, compares social support at different levels in the organization in relation to family-related outcomes. The data suggest that when aggression prevention climate is high, partner support and life satisfaction are also high. High levels of supervisor support are related to less work-family conflict and greater life satisfaction for library staff participants as well. Coworker support is not significantly related to any of the family-related outcomes; and relationship satisfaction and partner strain are not significantly correlated to any of the different levels of workplace social support. The variance explained (R²) in the analysis for life satisfaction is 36% - high for organizational behavior research and highly significant. Some of family outcome models provide strong evidence for a relationship between higher organizational support resources and better family-related outcomes.

Table 7. The effects of organizational context resources on work-related outcomes.

Organizational Resources Predictors	Work-Related Outcomes				
	Job Dissatisfaction N=186	Turnover Intentions N=186	Sickness Absence N=186	Burnout - Exhaustion N=186	Burnout - Disengagement N=186
Step 2					
Levels of Support (β)					
Psychological Aggression Prevention Climate	-.08	-.14	-.22	-.10**	-.07
Supervisor Support	-.37***	-.46***	-.35**	-.21***	-.23***
Coworker Support	-.14*	-.17*	-.02	-.07	-.08*
Variance explained (R ²)	.42***	.44***	.20***	.50***	.48***

Note: The 5 analyses above include step 1 control variables of age, gender, income, time spent with supervisor, weekly hours worked, and library size. All three support variables were entered in Step 2. β = standardized regression weight.

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$.

The analysis in Table 7 compares social support at different levels in the organization in relation to work-related outcomes. Here, the data indicate that higher psychological aggression prevention climate is significantly related to lower burnout-exhaustion. Higher levels of supervisor support are related to lower job dissatisfaction, lower turnover intentions, lower sickness absence and lower burnout-exhaustion and disengagement levels. Higher coworker support is related to lower job dissatisfaction, lower turnover intentions, and lower burnout-disengagement. The variance explained (R²) in the analyses for job dissatisfaction, turnover intentions, burnout-exhaustion, and burnout-disengagement outcomes are between 42% and 50% variance explained, which is a strong effect for organizational behavior research and highly significant. Thusly, these models provide strong evidence for a relationship between higher organizational support resources and better work-related outcomes.

Tables 8-10 below present the results of the relationships between psychological aggression measures and library staff health, family, and work outcomes. Significant relationships for the predictor variables are shown in bold in each table with asterisks indicating the level of significance. We organize our discussion by each table, discussing all of the findings for each one in turn.

Aim 3: Workplace Psychological Aggression Relationships with Health, Family, and Work Outcomes

Table 8. The effects of psychological aggression on health outcomes.

Psychological Aggression Predictors	Health Outcomes			
	General Health N=203	Physical Symptoms N=209	Sleep Disruption N=209	Depressive Symptoms N=209
Step 2				
Psychological Aggression (β)	-.72***	1.25***	.46***	.56***
Variance explained (R ²)	.27***	.29***	.17***	.45***
Psychological Aggression - Witness (β)	-.24***	.36***	.14***	.12***
Variance explained (R ²)	.20***	.20***	.10**	.18***
Psychological Aggression - Target (β)	-.25***	.44***	.16***	.19***
Variance explained (R ²)	.21***	.23***	.12**	.29***

Note: All 12 analyses are univariate with step 1 control variables of age, gender, income, relationship status, job tenure, time with supervisor, weekly hours worked, and library size. β = standardized regression weight.

*p < .05, **p < .01, ***p < .001.

Health Outcomes

General Health, Physical Symptoms, Sleep Disruption and Depressive Symptoms

We found strong effects for reports of worse health outcomes in relation to the psychological aggression variables. General health, physical symptoms, sleep disruption and depressive symptoms were all associated with being directly exposed to psychological aggression, witnessing, and self-labeling as a target of aggression. The variance explained (R²) in the psychological aggression analysis for depressive symptoms is especially notable at 45% - which is a strong effect for organizational behavior research and also highly significant. These findings suggest the important role of psychological aggression as a stressor in the work experiences and health outcomes of our library staff sample.

Table 9. The effects of psychological aggression on family-related outcomes

Psychological Aggression Predictors	Family-Related Outcomes				
	Work-to-Family Conflict N=209	Partner Support N=166	Partner Strain N=166	Relationship Satisfaction N=186	Life Satisfaction N=208
Step 2					
Psychological Aggression (β)	.48***	-.15	.15	-.45*	-.52***
Variance explained (R ²)	.20***	.06	.09	.05	.37***
Psychological Aggression -Witness (β)	.14*	-.02	.00	-.07	-.30***
Variance explained (R ²)	.15*	.04	.07	.03	.17***
Psychological Aggression -Target (β)	.15**	-.07	.04	-.22*	-.45***
Variance explained (R ²)	.16**	.06	.08	.05	.26***

Note: All 15 analyses are univariate with step 1 control variables of age, gender, income, # of children at home, relationship status, job tenure, time with supervisor, weekly hours worked, and library size. β = standardized regression weight.

*p < .05, **p < .01, ***p < .001.

Family-Related Outcomes

Work-to-Family Conflict, Partner Support, Partner Strain, Relationship Satisfaction, and Life Satisfaction

We found strong effects for reports of family outcomes in relation to the psychological aggression variables. Library staff who reported more psychological aggression and who perceived themselves as targets of psychological aggression reported more work-to-family conflict, lower relationship satisfaction, and lower life satisfaction. Library staff who were witnesses to psychological aggression also reported more work-to-family conflict and lower life satisfaction. Perceived targets of psychological aggression also reported lower relationship satisfaction. Partner support and partner strain were not associated with the psychological aggression variables. The variance explained (R²) in the psychological aggression analysis for the outcome of life satisfaction is high at 37%. This is notable because life satisfaction has global meaning for the individual worker. The experience of psychological aggression is such a powerful stressor that it significantly influences employees' general life satisfaction. Again, these findings suggest that psychological aggression is a powerful stressor that has a spillover influence from respondents' work experience to family and personal life outside of work.

Table 10. The effects of psychological aggression on work outcomes.

Psychological Aggression Predictors Step 2	Work-Related Outcomes				
	Job Dissatisfaction N=209	Turnover Intentions N=209	Sickness Absence N=209	Burnout - Exhaustion N=209	Burnout - Disengagement N=209
Psychological Aggression (β)	.52***	.56***	.36***	.60***	.62***
Variance explained (R ²)	.35***	.39***	.20***	.48***	.44***
Psychological Aggression - Witness (β)	.24***	.35***	.26**	.18***	.18***
Variance explained (R ²)	.20***	.23***	.13**	.30***	.25***
Psychological Aggression - Target (β)	.27***	.43***	.29***	.18***	.18***
Variance explained (R ²)	.24***	.30***	.15***	.32***	.27***

Note: All 15 analyses are univariate with step 1 control variables of age, gender, income, job tenure, time with supervisor, weekly hours worked, and library size. β = standardized regression weight.

*p < .05, **p < .01, ***p < .001.

Work-Related Outcomes

Job Dissatisfaction, Turnover Intentions, Sickness Absence, Burnout-Exhaustion and Disengagement

We found strong effects for reports job dissatisfaction, turnover intentions, sickness absence, burnout-exhaustion, and burnout-disengagement, in relation to perceptions of psychological aggression, witnessing psychological aggression and identifying as a target of psychological aggression. Respondents who reported more *psychological aggression, witnessing psychological aggression, and being a target of psychological aggression*, also reported more job dissatisfaction, greater turnover intentions and sickness absence, more burnout-exhaustion and more burnout-disengagement. These findings suggest the important role of psychological aggression as a strong stressor on mental and physical health and work outcomes. The variance explained (R²) in the psychological aggression analysis for these work and health outcomes ranges from 20% to 48%, which represents medium to strong effects.

Study Strengths and Limitations

An important strength of the current study is the examination of outcomes, including work, family, and well-being. The current study with library staff addresses a gap in the literature surrounding psychological aggression by using a broad and systemic approach towards addressing both the work psychosocial context, violence prevention, and work-life integration (Wassell, 2009). This study also looks at psychological aggression and workplace incivility in an under-studied organizational context of library settings. An additional strength of this study is our use of previously validated scales included in our analyses; scales for organizational contextual resources, psychological aggression, and health, family and work outcomes.

In the study, we used self-report measures in a cross-sectional design which may lead to issues regarding respondent consistency effects or response styles, transient mood states, and spurious results due to common method bias - where the observed associations between variable measures may be affected by other individual and external factors (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Lee, & Podsakoff, 2003). Moreover, the cross-sectional design impacts our ability to draw definitive conclusions about causality of work context resources and psychological aggression and psychological aggression relationships and relationships between psychological aggression, psychological aggression and health, family, and work outcomes. We also collected our data from a convenience sample of library professionals, so the generalizability of our results may be limited.

While there is a concern with common method variance in self report measures, we emphasize that self-report measures are the most appropriate for collecting data on targets' perspectives of psychological aggression at work (Goffin & Gellatly, 2001). There is value in reporting these perceptions. Understanding employee perceptions of organizational resources and psychological aggression stressors is crucial for identifying the contextual experience of library staff in the early stages of a program of research within an organization. The advantages of self-report are also that there may be no other sources for obtaining information and if we are interested in perceptions, we do want to ask the participant to self-report. This is an important first step in building research knowledge in organizations (Podsakoff & Organ, 1986).

The strengths of this study include the diverse sample of regional library staff that responded to our survey, our focus on workplace contextual resource variables as antecedents and potential points for intervention, and our inclusion of outcomes from multiple domains; health, family, and work. Even so, more than one study is needed in order to assess the complicated aspects of supportive resources and workplace aggression. For future research, we recommend using administrative data in combination with the measures reported here, and employing a longitudinal study design to test for causal relationships.

Future Work: Positive Occupational Health Psychology Interventions

This study provides strong evidence that organizational resources of psychological aggression prevention climate and supervisor support impact psychological aggression and library staff health, family and work outcomes for the better. Though we cannot make claims about prevalence rates of psychological aggression in libraries of the Pacific Northwest, the evidence of the analyses presented suggests a significant link between workplace context and psychological aggression and employee health and well-being. This is important evidence for future research and intervention as it points to opportunities for intervention at the organizational level. Libraries are no different from other organizations in terms of bullying and incivility, but in the state of Washington library associations and organizations have been progressive on examining the issue of psychological aggression. Organizations can take action to prevent aggressive acts in the workplace by

targeting the organizational climate for prevention and increasing the support resources available to their employees.

Interventions designed to prevent psychological aggression from occurring at all through increasing aggression prevention climate and workplace social support are considered to be primary prevention. A primary prevention goal is to alter the risk factors for experiencing extreme workplace stress whereas secondary or tertiary level interventions (Israel, Baker, Goldenhar, Heaney, & Schurman, 1996) only address preventing further harm after the stressor has already occurred. Our future work will include further dissemination of the knowledge gained from this study and pursuit of grant funding and related support to design interventions for primary prevention of psychological aggression.

Conclusions

Our research had three aims. We examined relationships between organizational support resources and psychological aggression expecting to see benefits when library organizations provide more support resources which our findings confirmed. We also wanted to understand if these support resources impacted employees for the better and our findings also supported this aim. Finally, we sought to learn if psychological aggression has a harmful effect on library staff health, family, and work. For this aim, our findings were in alignment with prior research that psychological aggression, witnessing and identifying as a target of aggression are related to worse health and work outcomes. The challenges of providing excellent library services in today's work environment are compounded when library staff work without the organizational support resources that can greatly improve their working conditions. In all three aims below, we tested a theoretical model that addresses the organizational resources, psychological aggression demands, and their relationships with library staff health, family, and work outcomes.

Aim 1: Examine the relationships between workplace contextual resources and workplace psychological aggression.

Key Findings: *When work context resources are high, psychological aggression, witnessing psychological aggression, and self-labeling as a target of psychological aggression are low.*

Our data provide evidence that and psychological aggression prevention climate and workplace social support resources are negatively related to psychological aggression and witnessing psychological aggression. Psychological aggression prevention climate and supervisor support were significantly associated with psychological aggression, witnessing psychological aggression, and self-labeling as a target of psychological aggression in a negative direction. A better climate for psychological aggression prevention was related to lower levels of psychological aggression and less witnessing of psychologically aggressive behaviors in the workplace. Similarly, higher levels of perceived supervisor support were significantly associated with lower levels of psychological aggression and less witnessing of psychologically aggressive behaviors in the workplace, and self-labeling as a target of aggression.

Aim 2: Examine the relationships between workplace contextual resources and employee health, family, and work-related outcomes.

Key Findings: *When work context resources are high, employee health, family, and work outcomes are better.*

This data provides evidence that *high* psychological aggression prevention climate and workplace social support resources are significantly related to *better employee health, family, and work outcomes* for library

staff. Specifically, high psychological aggression prevention climate was significantly positively related to fewer depressive symptoms and less sleep disruption; higher levels of coworker support were associated with better self-reported general health and fewer depressive symptoms. High psychological aggression prevention climate was also significantly associated with less burnout – exhaustion, more partner support, and greater life satisfaction. Significant relationships also existed between high coworker support and low job dissatisfaction, turnover intentions, and burnout – disengagement.

Most notable were the consistent and strong relationships between supervisor support and employee outcomes. Higher levels of supervisor support were significantly associated with almost all health, family and work-related outcomes, including better self-reported general health, fewer physical and depressive symptoms, less sleep disruption, less job dissatisfaction, less work-to-family conflict, and greater life satisfaction. Lower turnover intentions, absence due to sickness, and less burnout – exhaustion and burnout – disengagement.

Aim 3: Examine the relationships between workplace psychological aggression and employee health, family, and work-related outcomes.

Key Findings: *When psychological aggression demands are high employee health, family, and work-related outcomes are worse.*

Our data also shows significant positive relationships between experiencing psychological aggression, witnessing psychological aggression, and identifying as a target of psychological aggression and worse health, work and family-related outcomes. This is in alignment with prior research that exposure to psychological aggression, *including witnessing*, is highly stressful and significantly related to employee health and family and work-related domains. We found psychological aggression variables to be strong stressors in the workplace and all three psychological aggression variables are significantly associated with all health and work outcomes – with poor outcomes for library staff.

The study findings contribute new knowledge regarding the importance of psychological aggression prevention climate, supervisor support, and coworker support for reducing psychological aggression at work. In addition, our findings are in alignment with previous research on workplace psychological aggression and health and work outcomes. Workplaces that tolerate psychological aggression may be fostering an environment that is detrimental to workers – a lack of preparedness and control over handling psychological aggression may have an increased negative effect on employee health, family, and work outcomes.

Organizations and their employees will benefit from efforts toward developing a strong psychological aggression prevention climate such as creating strong policies and procedures, education, and early intervention approaches. In addition, organizations can train supervisors on specific behaviors related to implementing policies and practices and providing support to employees that instigate, witness, or are targets of psychological aggression.

General Recommendations for Library Organizations

When workplace psychological aggression is not curtailed, employee health, family-related and work-related outcomes are negatively affected. Library organizations that are aware and proactive in addressing psychological aggression and incivility can prevent and correct employee-to-employee negative behaviors. This study provides evidence in support of libraries' designing and implementing policies, procedures and practices

to build resources of psychological aggression prevention climate and supervisor support for library staff. The recommendations that follow are made based on the empirical findings from the current study:

Build a Psychological Aggression Prevention Climate:

- Endorse and enforce zero tolerance psychological aggression policies
 - Create and maintain a code of conduct based on principles of respect and professionalism that defines acceptable and unacceptable behaviors for all staff
 - Develop a policy that outlines procedural responses to breaches in the code of conduct; especially a mechanism for reporting violations of policy without repercussions
 - Take complaints seriously and investigate all complaints systematically and promptly with clear safeguards in place for confidentiality and due process
 - Provide support to any individual impacted by psychological aggression
 - Perform yearly supervisory and managerial risk assessments of the workplace environment, focusing on markers of positive psychosocial climates such as demonstrated equality in work and rewards

Build Supervisor Supportive Behaviors:

- Train and support managers and supervisors to adopt and role-model professional, ethical and supportive behavior
- Prepare and empower managers and supervisors to recognize and appropriately address psychological aggression early through tailored conflict management and conflict resolution trainings
- Participate in and develop collaborative initiatives and continuing education programs to prevent aggressive behaviors and increase supportive resources in the workplace

Interventions or management efforts toward improving the organization's psychological aggression prevention climate and supervisor support behaviors may be significant opportunities to promote civility and professionalism among library staff and eliminate norms or patterns of aggressive behavior.

It is important to emphasize the significance of supervisors and managers to the above set of recommendations. Supervisors specifically are important *role-models for positive, respectful behaviors* and can be instrumental in addressing incidents of incivility and psychological aggression before they significantly affect the health and well-being of their employees. Library staff that reported higher levels of supervisor support also experienced lower levels of psychological aggression, better physical and mental health, less burnout, and higher job satisfaction. Managers and supervisors also have critical roles as the voice and eyes of the organization, identifying problems and providing support, although they need to be *trained on what specific support behaviors are needed*. They translate the culture of the organization to new employees, enact organizational policies, and are the communication link between upper-level organizational administration and library staff. When organizational and supervisor support is high and accessible to library staff, negative outcomes – including experiencing aggressive behavior – are low.

We also want to highlight psychological aggression prevention climate and supervisor support as points of intervention because these resources were strongly related to all 3 workplace violence variables even when controlling for other potential predictors. Library staff with higher levels of experiencing direct aggressive behaviors or general workplace incivility will have a greater psychological need for support, especially support that addresses the employee's ability to integrate work and life responsibilities and demands, while contending with the psychological demands of being a focus of aggressive behavior. It is important that this supportive infrastructure includes leadership and management commitment to addressing unprofessional and psychologically aggressive behaviors.

Library organizations should draw from other industries and occupations in the development of their own models to address psychologically aggressive behavior, such as the model developed by Hickson and colleagues (2007) for health care. This model guides the trainings, institutional policies, monitoring and review processes, and resources for addressing incivility and aggressive behaviors by focusing on a graduated level intervention specific to the organization. As the recommendations above highlight, detailed policies and follow up positive actions are necessary for the development and sustainability of a vigorous and functional psychological aggression prevention climate that includes supportive supervision of employees in library organizations.

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Appendix A. Participant's Work Demographic Characteristics

Table 11. *Pacific Northwest library staff participants' basic job-related characteristics*

	Frequency	Percent
Have a supervisor (N =224)		
Yes	213	95.09
No	11	4.91
Have a second job (N =224)		
Yes	26	11.61
No	197	87.95
Declined to answer	1	.45
Library Size (N =224)		
<5,000 population served	38	16.96
5,001 – 25,000 population served	86	38.39
25,001 – 100,000 population served	45	20.09
over 100,000 population served	55	24.55
Library Type		
Public	128	57.14
Private	3	1.34
K-12	4	1.79
Academic	79	35.27
Government	5	2.23
Special	5	2.23
Supervise others (N =224)		
Yes	92	41.07
No	132	58.93
Most recent formal training on workplace bullying (N =224)		
Within the last 6 months	23	10.27
Within the last year	7	3.13
1-3 years ago	28	12.50
More than 3 years ago	18	8.04
Never	107	47.77
Declined to answer	41	18.30
Employment Status (N =224)		
Full-time permanent	153	68.30
Full-time temporary	5	2.23
Part-time permanent	54	24.11
Part-time temporary	10	4.46
Contract	4	1.79
Salaried or Exempt position (N=224)		
Salaried	109	48.66

Exempt	115	51.34
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Table 12. Organizational resource measures descriptive statistics

Organizational Support Resources	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
Psychological Aggression Prevention Climate	206	2.86	1.08	1	5
Supervisor Support	214	3.69	1.17	1	5
Coworker Support	224	3.73	.96	1	5
Organizational Support Resources	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
Psychological Aggression	224	1.62	.61	1	3.59
Psychological Aggression - Witness	223	2.05	1.24	1	5
Psychological Aggression - Target	223	1.87	1.30	1	5
Organizational Support Resources	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
General Health	218	4.68	1.14	1.89	6.20
Physical Symptoms	224	2.59	1.96	0	10
Sleep Quality	224	2.60	.72	1	4
Depressive Symptoms	224	1.81	.56	1	4
Job Dissatisfaction	224	2.13	.93	1	5
Turnover Intentions	224	2.43	1.61	1	5
Sickness Absence	224	.98	.57	1	9
Burnout – Exhaustion	224	2.94	.55	1	5
Burnout – Disengagement	224	2.81	1.04	1	5
Work-to-Family Conflict	224	2.64	.60	1	5
Partner Support	177	3.52	.65	1	4
Partner Strain	176	1.80	1.61	1	4

Relationship Satisfaction	197	8.04	1.30	1	10
Life Satisfaction	223	7.28	1.19	1	10

Appendix B. Measure and Sample Items

Table 13. WLWSH Project table of measures and sample items

Measure	# of items	Reference	Sample item
Psychological Aggression Prevention Climate ^b Practices and Response subscale	6	Kessler, S.R., Spector, P.E., Change, C., & Parr, A.D. (2008). Organizational violence and aggression: Development of a three-factor violence climate survey. <i>Work & Stress</i> , 22(2), 108-124.	Management encourages employees to report physical violence.
Supervisor Support ^b	3	Yoon, J. & Lim, J. (1999). Organizational support in the workplace: The case of Korean hospital employees. <i>Human Relations</i> , 82, 923-945.	My supervisor is willing to listen to my job-related problems.
Coworker Support ^b	3	Yoon, J. & Lim, J. (1999). Organizational support in the workplace: The case of Korean hospital employees. <i>Human Relations</i> , 82, 923-945.	My coworker can be relied on when things get tough on my job.
Psychological Aggression ^a	22	Einarsen, S., Hoel, H., & Notelaers, G. (2009). Measuring exposure to bullying and harassment at work: Validity, factor structure, and psychometric properties of the Negative Acts Questionnaire – Revised. <i>Work & Stress</i> , 23(1), 24-44.	Intimidating behaviors such as finger pointing, invasion of personal space, shoving, blocking your way.
Witnessing Psychological Aggression ^d	1	Einarsen, S., Hoel, H., & Notelaers, G. (2009). Measuring exposure to bullying and harassment at work: Validity, factor structure, and psychometric properties of the Negative Acts Questionnaire – Revised. <i>Work & Stress</i> , 23(1), 24-44.	Have you witnessed a coworker being a target of workplace bullying based on the above definition?
Psychological Aggression - Target ^d	1	Einarsen, S., Hoel, H., & Notelaers, G. (2009). Measuring exposure to bullying and harassment at work: Validity, factor structure, and psychometric properties of the Negative Acts Questionnaire – Revised. <i>Work & Stress</i> , 23(1), 24-44.	Have you been a target of workplace bullying based on the <u>above</u> definition?
General Health	1	Ware, J. E., Kosinski, M., & Keller, S. D. (1995). <i>SF-12: How to Score the SF-12 Physical and Mental Health Summary Scales (2nd ed)</i> . Boston, MA: The Health Institute, New England Medical Center.	In general, would you say your health is poor, fair, good, very good, excellent...?
Depressive Symptoms ^e	10	Santor, D. & Coyne, J.C. (1997). Shortening the CES-D to improve its ability to detect cases of depression. <i>Psychological Assessment</i> , 9, 233-43.	You were bothered by things that usually do not bother you
Physical Symptoms ^f	10	Brim, O.G., Ryff, C.D., & Kessler, R.C. (Eds.) (2004). <i>How healthy are we? A national study of well-being at midlife</i> . Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.	In the past <u>4 weeks</u> , have you had any of the following: Persistent cough?

Absence due to Sickness ^a	1	SHARP developed	In the past 4 weeks, how many days have you missed work because of an injury or illness related to this job?
Sleep Disruption ^h	3	Buysse, D. J., Reynolds, III, C. F., Monk, T. H., Berman, S. R. & Kupfer, D. J. (1989). The Sleep Quality Index: A new instrument for psychiatric practice and research. <i>Journal of Psychiatric Research</i> , 28(2), 193-213.	In the past 4 weeks, how would you rate your sleep quality overall?
Job Dissatisfaction ^b	3	Cammann, C., Fichman, M., Jenkins, G.D., & Klesh, J.R. (1983). Assessing the attitudes and perceptions of organizational members. In S.E. Seashore, E.E. Lawler, P.H. Mirvis & C. Cammann (Eds.), <i>Assessing organizational change: A guide to methods, measures and practices</i> (pp. 71-138). New York: Wiley.	All in all, I am satisfied with my job. (Reverse scored)
Turnover Intentions ^b	3	Cammann, C., Fichman, M., Jenkins, G.D., & Klesh, J.R. (1983). Assessing the attitudes and perceptions of organizational members. In S.E. Seashore, E.E. Lawler, P.H. Mirvis & C. Cammann (Eds.), <i>Assessing organizational change: A guide to methods, measures and practices</i> (pp. 71-138). New York: Wiley.	I often think about quitting this library.
Burnout – Exhaustion ^g	8	Halbesleben, J.R.B. & Demerouti, E. (2005). The construct validity of an alternative measure of burnout: investigating the English translation of the Oldenburg burnout inventory. <i>Work and Stress</i> , 19(3), 208-220.	After my work, I usually feel worn out and weary.
Burnout – Disengagement ^g	8	Halbesleben, J.R.B. & Demerouti, E. (2005). The construct validity of an alternative measure of burnout: investigating the English translation of the Oldenburg burnout inventory. <i>Work and Stress</i> , 19(3), 208-220.	I feel more and more engaged in my work. (Reverse scored)
Work-to-Family Conflict ^b	5	Netermeyer, R., Boles, J., & McMurrian, R. (1996). Development and validation of work-family conflict and family-work conflict scales. <i>Journal of Applied Psychology</i> , 81, 400-410.	The demands of my work interfere with my family time
Partner Support ^k	4	Walen, H.R. & Lachman, M.E. (2000). Social support and strain from partner, family, and friends: Costs and benefits for men and women in adulthood. <i>Journal of Social & Personal Relationships</i> , 17(1), 5-30.	How much does your spouse or partner really care about you?
Partner Strain ^k	13	Walen, H.R. & Lachman, M.E. (2000). Social support and strain from partner, family, and friends: Costs and benefits for men and women in adulthood. <i>Journal of Social & Personal Relationships</i> , 17(1), 5-30.	How much does [your spouse or partner] criticize you?

Relationship Satisfaction ^l	2	Prenda, K. M. & Lachman, M.E. (2001). Planning for the future: A life management strategy for increasing control and life satisfaction in adulthood. <i>Psychology and Aging</i> 16(2): 206-216.	Please use the scale from 0 (<i>the worst possible</i>) to 10 (<i>the best possible</i>) to rate each of the following: Your relationship with your spouse/partner
Life Satisfaction ^l	3	Prenda, K. M. & Lachman, M.E. (2001). Planning for the future: A life management strategy for increasing control and life satisfaction in adulthood. <i>Psychology and Aging</i> 16(2): 206-216.	Please use the scale from 0 (<i>the worst possible</i>) to 10 (<i>the best possible</i>) to rate each of the following: Your life overall
Psychological Aggression Training	1	SHARP developed	When was your most recent formal training in workplace bullying? Within the last 6 months/ Within the last year/1-3 years ago/More than three years ago/ Never
Open-ended survey question ^a	1	SHARP developed	What is the most important thing your library could do to make it easier for you to handle bullying effectively?

Note. ^aOpen-ended question; ^b Five-point agreement scale (1 = strongly disagree; 5 = strongly agree); ^c Five-point frequency scale (1 = never; 5 = daily); ^d Five-point frequency scale (1 = never; 5 = very often); ^eFive-point frequency scale (1 = rarely or none of the time; 5 = all of the time); ^f Five-point pain scale (1 = no pain; 5 = worst pain ever in your life); ^g Seven-point frequency scale (1 = never; 7 = every day); ^h Four-point scale (1 = very bad, 4 = very good); ⁱ Yes/No Binary Response (Yes=1; No=0); ^j Ten-point Likert Scale; ^k Four-point frequency scale (1=not at all, 4=a lot)

Appendix C. Research Specific Aims and Hypotheses

Aim 1: Examine the relationships between workplace psychosocial context and psychological aggression has 3 testable hypotheses:

(1.1) Employees with perceptions of higher levels of psychological aggression prevention climate will report lower amounts of psychological aggression, witnessing psychological aggression, and self-labeling as a target;

(1.2) Employees with perceptions of higher levels of supervisor support will report lower amounts of psychological aggression, witnessing psychological aggression, and self-labeling as a target;

(1.3) Employees with perceptions of higher levels of coworker support will report lower psychological aggression, witnessing psychological aggression, and self-labeling as a target;

Aim 2: Examine the relationships between workplace psychosocial context and health, safety, family and work outcomes has 3 testable hypotheses:

(2.1) Employees with perceptions of higher levels of psychological aggression prevention climate will report better health, family, and work outcomes.

(2.2) Employees with perceptions of higher levels of supervisor support will report better health, family, and work outcomes.

(2.3) Employees with perceptions of higher levels of coworker support will report better health, family, and work outcomes.

Aim 3: Examine the relationships between psychological aggression, witnessing psychological aggression, and self-labeling as a target of aggression and health, safety, family, and work outcomes has 3 testable hypotheses:

(3.1) Employee perceptions of psychological aggression, witnessing psychological aggression, and self-labeling as a target of aggression are related to employee health outcomes such that employees who perceive higher levels of psychological aggression will report lower subjective health perceptions, higher levels of physical symptoms, more sleep disruption, and higher levels of depressive symptoms;

(3.2) Employee perceptions of psychological aggression, witnessing psychological aggression, and self-labeling as a target of aggression are related to employee family outcomes such that employees who perceive higher levels of aggression will have higher work-to-family conflict, lower partner support, higher partner strain, and lower relationship satisfaction and life satisfaction;

(3.3) Employee perceptions of psychological aggression, witnessing psychological aggression, and self-labeling as a target of aggression are related to employee work outcomes such that employees who perceive higher levels of aggression will have higher job dissatisfaction, turnover intentions, sickness absence, and work exhaustion and disengagement