Review of: "[Commentary] Toxic Leadership and Vicarious Bullying"

Milton Arrieta-López[1]

1 Oakton Community College

The manuscript "Toxic Leadership and Vicarious Bullying," by Margaret Sims, provides an examination of how toxic leadership can foster an environment conducive to vicarious bullying within workplaces. Through a comprehensive literature review, Sims establishes a theoretical link between neoliberal leadership practices and subordinate bullying behaviors, suggesting that the organizational culture shaped by toxic leaders can indirectly legitimize and perpetuate bullying.

The essay is noted for its theoretical depth, effectively synthesizing and discussing a wide range of theories and literature on toxic leadership and vicarious bullying. This theoretical synthesis is relevant for understanding the underlying mechanisms that connect leadership style to power dynamics and abusive behaviors in organizations. The discussion on narcissism and power-seeking traits in leaders as contributors to an abusive organizational climate is informative and adds to the academic discourse in this field.

Discrepancies and Recommendations

Despite the theoretical contributions of the article, there is a notable discrepancy between the expectations set in the abstract and the manuscript's content. The critique regarding the lack of methodological clarity is valid, as readers might expect an empirical study, which the text does not deliver. This expectation clash is due to the fundamentally theoretical and discursive nature of the work.

To address this discrepancy, it is recommended that the author explicitly clarify in the abstract and initial sections of the article that the approach is a bibliographic documentary with critical analysis. This means the work is based on the review and critical discussion of existing literature, without aiming to present new empirical findings. Such clarification would align reader expectations with the objectives and nature of the article, ensuring proper understanding of its scope and contribution.

The article's discussion offers a valuable contribution to understanding power dynamics and abuse in organizational settings, emphasizing the need to consider the effects of toxic leadership beyond direct interactions between leaders and subordinates. This perspective broadens the view on workplace bullying, including vicarious forms that can be equally harmful.

Finally, the manuscript "Toxic Leadership and Vicarious Bullying" is a conceptually focused work that enhances understanding of toxic leadership and its impact on workplace bullying practices. By clarifying its methodology as a critical analysis based on a bibliographic review, the author could strengthen the presentation of the work and ensure that its theoretical contribution is appropriately recognized and understood by an academic audience.