The Personal and Job-Related Outcomes of Workplace Mistreatment Among Young Adults with Disabilities

by

Audrey Hodgins

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in

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Audrey Hodgins
Abstract

Despite comprising a significant percentage of the workforce and being susceptible to mistreatment, employees with disabilities have not been widely focused on in the workplace mistreatment literature. I conducted 11 semi-structured interviews to analyze the outcomes of workplace mistreatment among young workers who identify as having a disability; Young adults are learning about the world of work via their employment and may be more vulnerable to negative workplace experiences than their adult counterparts. Thematic analysis was used to analyze the qualitative data from the interviews. Results suggest young adults with disabilities experience many negative outcomes because of mistreatment, including but not limited to those associated with their self-perceptions, social relationships and mental health. Evidence also suggests that gender and disability type, may factor into the types of consequences experienced. This research has implications for theory and research and for organizational initiatives related to employees with disabilities.

Keywords: Disability, workplace mistreatment, young workers, mental health, social relationships, self-perceptions, withdrawal
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The Personal and Job-Related Outcomes of Workplace Mistreatment Among Young Adults with Disabilities

Workplace mistreatment covers a wide spectrum of harmful interpersonal behaviour, ranging from subtle displays of rudeness to overt manifestations of aggression (Hershcovis, 2011). Although the severity, intent, and frequency of workplace mistreatment often varies (Hershcovis, 2011), the detrimental effects on workers and organizations are a common thread among all types of this widespread organizational phenomenon (Dhanani & LaPalme, 2019; Rowe et al., 2022; Zhou et al., 2021). It is for this reason, that much attention in both the empirical and applied literatures, has been given to workplace mistreatment. Even still, though research has advanced our understanding of workplace mistreatment more broadly, the experiences of people with disabilities have been less well documented (Nario-Redmond, 2020). Indeed, while research indicates that the mistreatment of people with disabilities occurs at disproportionately high rates (Fevre et al., 2013), there is sparse data on the effects of this mistreatment. At the same time, the data that does exist fails to account for the potentially unique experiences of young workers with disabilities – a cohort of the workforce that previous research suggests could be suffering to an even greater extent (Duncan & Loretto, 2004; Loretto et al., 2000; Snape & Redman, 2003). A constrained understanding of the experiences of those with disabilities may result in a limited ability to support this cohort of the workforce and combat the mistreatment they encounter. Drawing on qualitative data derived from semi-structured interviews, I investigate the experiences of mistreatment encountered by young employees with disabilities, with a particular focus on the consequences of such mistreatment.

This research addresses multiple gaps in the empirical work to date, and in doing so has the potential to make important contributions to both research and practice. Considering both
occupational health and safety as well as psychological well-being, it is crucial to evaluate and minimize any potential risks to employees' health and safety originating from their work or workplace (Liu et al., 2021). However, before this can be done, more information pertaining to these experiences – including in this case, those of mistreatment - must be gathered. This study works towards this end, and in so doing, will offer valuable insights into how workplace mistreatment impacts an underserved and under researched group, specifically young employees with disabilities.

At the same time, by utilizing a qualitative methodology to investigate this issue, these insights will also be derived in a way that respects - and reveals - the lived experiences of those within this population, thus contributing to both the disability and workplace mistreatment literatures. Findings from this research may apply to later studies investigating the consequences of workplace mistreatment, particularly for researchers aiming to explore potential interventions addressing such mistreatment. Additionally, this research may also encourage additional studies focusing on the workplace mistreatment experiences of those in other underserved groups (e.g., ethnic and racial minorities).

Finally, studying the experiences of this population holds significant importance from the perspective of equity, diversity, and inclusion. By understanding the specific challenges and barriers that those with disabilities encounter – as associated with workplace mistreatment - organizations can work towards supporting individuals with disabilities in the workplace. Additionally, this research helps organizations develop a better understanding of the needs of young adults with disabilities allowing for more nuance to this end. This research also contributes to raising awareness when it comes to disability and mistreatment in the workplace and can potentially encourage others to come forward with their experiences.
Disability in Canada

The World Health Organization defines persons with disabilities as persons who have “long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments which in interaction with various barriers, may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others” (World Health Organization, 2021, p. 10). Canadian data reveals that 1 in 5 (22%) Canadians aged 15 or older have one or more disabilities (Morris et al., 2018). People with disabilities face unique struggles that impact their quality of life and well-being. For instance, financial insecurity is a prevalent issue for people with disabilities (Maroto & Pettinicchio, 2020) and can be seen through low employment rates. According to recent data from Statistics Canada, only 59% of adults (aged 25-64) with disabilities are currently in the Canadian workforce, while the employment rate for adults without disabilities is over 80% (2018). Moreover, the ability to find work is further reduced as the severity of disability goes up; among those aged 25-64, the employment rate for those with mild disabilities in Canada is 76%, compared to 31% for those with severe disabilities (Morris et al., 2018). Indeed, finding meaningful employment - that is also well compensated – is challenging among this population (Schur et al., 2017; Kruse et al., 2018). In addition to low employment rates and difficulty finding work, people with disabilities make less money on average than those without (Schur et al., 2017) and are less likely to receive health insurance or a pension plan (Hotchkiss, 2003), both contributing to financial insecurity.

Importantly, research also supports the damaging stereotypes (e.g., Nario-Redmond, 2010), disproportionate rates of violence (Mueller et al., 2019), and various manifestations of discrimination (Bogart & Dunn, 2019) that those with disabilities routinely encounter. Individuals with disabilities also experience various forms of workplace mistreatment, including (for instance) workplace bullying (Bernard, 2017; Figueiredo-Ferraz et al., 2015). These types of
encounters negatively impact the quality of life and well-being for these individuals, both outside - and plausibly inside - the walls of organizations (e.g., Figueiredo-Ferraz et al., 2015; Nario-Redmond, 2020; Stone & Collela, 1996).

Social Model of Disability

Individual or social-level beliefs about disability, are largely represented by two opposing disability models. The dominant model in Western culture, is the medical model of disability, which conceptualizes disability as an individual problem that needs to be fixed by medical professionals (Olkin & Pledger, 2003). In contrast, the social model recognizes disability as a product of societal barriers and biased attitudes – something that is socially constructed (Olkin & Pledger, 2003). These barriers and biases create inaccessible environments and contribute to the stigma and mistreatment of individuals with disabilities (Olkin & Pledger, 2003; Bogart & Dunn, 2019). The social model of disability suggests that when trying to solve problems related to disabilities, we should focus on changing society/environments rather than focusing on the individual. This research is situated within the social model of disability, as disability is understood to result from the interaction of health conditions and/or impairments, with personal and environmental factors (e.g., poor attitudes, limited social support). The goal is thus to work on removing barriers in society – included those pertaining to workplace mistreatment – and in so doing, create environments that are inclusive for everyone (Haegele & Hodge, 2016).

Disability in Varied Forms

Disabilities are diverse and complex, and individuals may experience different degrees and combinations of disability (Savulescu & Kahane, 2011). It is thus essential to recognize and respect the unique experiences and perspectives of individuals as they navigate their own disabilities. Depending on several variables, including the nature and extent of one’s disability,
the environment, and the resources available, people with similar disabilities may have very
different situations and needs (Giesbers et al., 2019). Despite the intricacies involved in
classifying disabilities in research, some of the ways disability is classified in the literature are
described below, in an effort to define the concept of disability.

As per the National Educational Association of Disabled Students (NEADS, 2023), there
are several primary categories of disabilities, such as physical disabilities, intellectual or learning
disabilities, psychiatric disabilities and neurological disabilities. Moreover, previous research has
considered the unique experiences of individuals from these different groups. For example,
having a physical disability (i.e., conditions that cause limitations or impairments in various
areas of bodily function, e.g., multiple sclerosis, visual and hearing impairment; Hill-Briggs et
al., 2007; Kosma et al., 2005; Lebrasseur et al., 2021), can present a range of challenges in the
workplace, including difficulties with accessibility, job accommodations, and the physical
demands of the job (Anand & Sevak, 2017; Bonaccio et al., 2020). Furthermore, employees with
physical disabilities report experiencing discrimination, being treated unfairly, and receiving less
support from both their colleagues and their supervisor (Carr & Namkung, 2021).

Those with learning disabilities (i.e., conditions marked by significant difficulties in the
acquisition and application of skills in math, reading, speaking, listening, and writing, e.g.,
dyslexia, dyscalculia; Cortiella & Horowitz, 2014; Hammill et al., 1987), often face challenges
such as bullying in the workplace, which can result in an amplification of depressive symptoms
for this population (Figueiredo-Ferraz et al., 2015). Research also suggests that individuals with
psychiatric disabilities (i.e., mental illnesses that require mental health services and/or workplace
accommodations, e.g., schizophrenia, bipolar disorder; Corrigan, 2006; MacDonald-Wilson et
al., 2002; Ostrow et al., 2019), deal with unreasonable expectations about work capacity,
insensitive language, lack of advancement opportunities, social exclusion and condescending remarks (Russinova et al., 2011), to mention a few.

Finally, neurodivergence (i.e., neurological conditions that affect how the brain processes information and experiences the world; e.g., autism spectrum disorder (ASD), attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), Morgan, 2019; Komarow & Hector, 2020; Mellifont, 2021), is associated with high levels of discrimination in the workplace (Wells, 2022). Moreover, various workplace challenges exist; for example, open offices meant to encourage teamwork can be disruptive for those who are sensitive to, or have difficulty processing, noise (Harris et al., 2020). Importantly, recent research on employees with autism suggests that 60% of informants have faced termination or had to quit their job due to issues related to their neurodivergence (Cooper & Kennady, 2021). This above not only demonstrates the diversity of disabilities but also raises awareness about the potential mistreatment and unfairness that individuals with varying disabilities may encounter within the workplace. The primary objective of this research is to gain a comprehensive understanding of the consequences faced by young adults with various disabilities.

**Workplace Mistreatment**

Workplace mistreatment can be defined as “offensive behaviour that is unsolicited and unwelcome, and which violates a fundamental right to respectful treatment” (Salin et al., 2014, p. 2; see also Harlos, 2010). The literature provides specific examples of various forms of workplace mistreatment, such as instances where an individual is repetitively called rude names (i.e., bullying; Chirilă & Constantin, 2013), a leader displaying hostility through their actions and words (i.e. abusive supervision; Tepper, 2000), someone withholding essential job information from someone who requires it (i.e., incivility; Andersson & Pearson, 1999), being denied job
promotion because of one’s gender (i.e. discrimination; Castaño et al., 2019), or someone being treated as they are invisible (i.e., ostracism; Ferris et al., 2008). Moreover, instances of mistreatment can vary in nature, ranging from situations with low and ambiguous intent to those characterized by persistent and frequent severe occurrences (Hershcovis, 2011). While far from exhaustive, these examples exemplify the diverse forms of mistreatment that individuals may encounter in the workplace.

Workplace mistreatment remains a challenge for both employees and organizations with research stating that within the general public, around 33% of employees report being mistreated (Dhanani et al., 2021). An employee poll revealed that 40% of workers had encountered some type of physical hostility at work, 90% had experienced psychological aggression, 76% had witnessed acts of aggression around them, and 50% had a fear of violence at work (Pacheco, Cunha, & Duarte, 2016), suggesting high rates of mistreatment in the average workplace. Moreover, previous research demonstrates the numerous detrimental consequences that stem from workplace mistreatment, for both employees and organizations. First, studies have linked this behaviour with employees’ psychological and physical well-being, documenting connections with (for example) burnout (e.g., Cheng et al., 2020), anxiety and depression (e.g., Einarsen & Nielsen, 2015), sleep difficulties (e.g., Takaki et al., 2010; Nielsen et al., 2020) and heart problems (e.g., Olson-Buchanan & Boswell, 2009). Moreover, multiple job-related consequences have been identified including reduced organizational commitment (e.g., Zia-ud-Din et al., 2017), turnover intentions (e.g., Rahim & Cosby, 2016) and withdrawal (e.g., Volpone & Avery, 2013).

**Disability and Workplace Mistreatment**
Although all employees (those with disabilities and those without) can be targets of workplace mistreatment (Koch et al., 2021), research suggests people with disabilities experience more than their counterparts without disabilities. Fevre et al. (2013) argue that people with disabilities or long term-illnesses experience more ill-treatment at work than their counterparts without impairments, when considering 21 different manifestations of workplace mistreatment. For example, their results demonstrate that people with disabilities are more likely to have their ideas and suggestions ignored, be checked on constantly even when unnecessary, be the targets of gossip, and be laughed at. People with disabilities also report both overt and subtle discrimination at higher levels than those without disabilities (Snyder, 2010). Overt workplace discrimination, estimated by Snyder (2010) to be experienced by approximately 17% to 33% of people with disabilities, can be seen in unfair promotion opportunities, unequal pay, and lack of trust leading to less responsibility. Another example of overt workplace mistreatment experienced by people with disabilities is having job accommodations requests denied, despite laws meant to prevent this from occurring (Koch et al., 2021). Furthermore, supervisors constantly hovering over and examining the work of a person with a disability because of doubt or skepticism, represents a common example of subtle mistreatment (Koch et al., 2021).

Importantly, research suggests there may be differences in the experience of mistreatment, depending on the type of disability. For example, studies reveal that the more obvious a person's disability, the more likely they are to be stereotyped negatively (Stone & Colella, 1996). Likewise, having a less observable disability presents unique circumstances around disability disclosure (e.g., Santuzzi et al., 2014) and “proving” one’s disability (Davis, 2005), both of which may shape experience with mistreatment.
At the same time, when it comes to employees with disabilities, issues of intersectionality cannot be ignored. The concept of intersectionality holds that various types of power relationships - such as those involving race, class, and gender - are not distinct (Collins & Bilge, 2020). Instead, they build on each other and reinforce one another, with these intersecting power connections having an impact on all facets of the social world (2020). When it comes to mistreatment, the combination of other underserved identities linked to ethnicity, sex or age can put people with disabilities at a further disadvantage (Ontario Human Rights Commission, n.d); the risk of experiencing discrimination is greater for someone who identifies with more than one underserved identity (Wei, 1996). Racialized women with disabilities, for example, are more likely to experience discrimination in the workplace than those who identified with only one of these identities (Nangia & Arora, 2021).

Finally, while minimal research has focused on the outcomes of workplace mistreatment for those with disabilities, what findings do exist, suggest that being mistreated on the job can indeed be costly. Adults with disabilities who are mistreated at work can experience forms of distress even after a single incident of mistreatment (Koch et al., 2021). Moreover, post-traumatic stress disorder can be found among employees with intellectual disabilities who have experienced workplace bullying (Figueiredo-Ferraz et al., 2015). Together, these findings suggest that more research on the topic of workplace mistreatment consequences among those with disabilities, is warranted.

**Young Employees**

Of the limited research that has focused on workplace mistreatment among those with disabilities, most has concentrated on the experiences of adult employees or not differentiated between adults and young workers. This has created a gap in the literature that should be
addressed by focusing research specifically on young adults with disabilities. Young employees play a vital role in the workforce, as they bring fresh perspectives, innovative ideas, and contribute to shaping the future of organizations (Loughlin & Barling, 2001). However, the experiences of young workers – both those with disabilities and those without – have largely been understudied compared to their adult counterparts. Given their age and relative inexperience, young employees are often treated less well than older employees (e.g., more likely to be denied promotions, receive lower pay and benefit options, are more vulnerable to layoffs; Chan et al., 2011; O’Higgins, 2001; Shimer, 2001).

McVittie et al. (2015) conducted a study on the experiences of young workers regarding workplace mistreatment. Their findings revealed a concerning statistic: 65% of young workers in public-facing jobs reported experiencing violence in the last 12 months. In addition, research conducted by Rauscher et al. (2019) highlights that young workers also face sexual harassment, while Namie and Namie (2009) shed light on the prevalence of workplace bullying among this population. In other words, young employees are exposed to workplace mistreatment (e.g., bullying, aggression and violence), with research suggesting they are subjected to more of this behaviour than are their older counterparts (e.g., Chasteen et al., 2021; Schat et al., 2006). These forms of mistreatment are common among young workers, and there is a possibility that they might be even more prevalent for those with disabilities, as they belong to two groups who experience high mistreatment rates (Fevre et al., 2013; Chasteen et al., 2021). In light of this, this research asks: What are the consequences of workplace mistreatment for young adults with disabilities?

**Current Study**
While existing literature has revealed much about workplace mistreatment more broadly, relatively little is known about the impact that mistreatment has on young adults with disabilities, both personally and in the workplace. Focusing on this issue, this study used semi-structured interviews, to learn from young adults with disabilities who have encountered workplace mistreatment. Informants were asked to discuss the nature of their disability (e.g., disability type), and to share their thoughts and feelings about their experience with mistreatment, including outcomes they feel they have endured.

Methods

Ontology/Epistemology

Philosophy plays a crucial role in designing, carrying out, analyzing, and interpreting research and its results. This research is rooted in a relativist ontology (study of being) and subjectivist epistemology (study of knowledge), given the belief that reality is something rooted in personal experiences. More specifically, as people’s worlds are different, and their interpretations and experiences can be different, knowledge cannot be truly objective – there are multiple “truths” (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011; Levers, 2013). For instance, in a workplace, each employee will have their own viewpoint on the quality of the organization based on their personal interactions with other employees, managers/supervisors and their past experiences (Ryan, 2018). Likewise, knowledge is always filtered through the lenses of one’s unique experiences and identities, and thus, an observer and what they observe are linked. This implies that researchers' own values and beliefs play a significant role in shaping the interpretation of individuals' unique experiences (Ryan, 2018).

Interpretivism then, is about exploring and understanding how these unique, individual realities are experienced, and the subjective meanings people attach to their experiences. For
example, how do people feel and perceive their reality? Interpretivism takes the view that people are experts in their own experiences, and hence seeks to hear from individuals themselves, when it comes to learning about phenomena, highlighting informants’ voices. This approach considers the specific circumstances and informants involved, understanding that these factors play a crucial role in shaping the research process and its outcomes (Alharahsheh & Pius, 2020). Thus, based on these guiding orientations, the decision was made to conduct qualitative interviews with young adults with disabilities, with the goal of capturing the unique lived experiences of these individuals, when it comes to workplace mistreatment. Given this research paradigm, it is important to remember that as the researcher, I play an active role in interpreting the meanings, intentions, and goals that informants have in their actions and experiences (Given, 2008).

**Researcher Reflexivity**

As a researcher, it is crucial to acknowledge my potential impact on this research project. I am currently a second year Master's student beginning my journey into researching disability and workplace mistreatment. While I am conducting this research as a requirement for the degree of Master of Arts in Organizational Psychology at Carleton University, I am drawn to this topic as I am passionate about advocating for the fair treatment of people with disabilities. As an individual who does not personally identify as having a disability, I recognize that I am an outsider when it comes to relating to the experiences of this population. This awareness may understandably lead to skepticism or challenges in gaining trust from informants. I want to acknowledge that although I am an outsider to the disability community, my experiences with family and friends who are insiders, provide me with valuable perspectives. These connections have given me insight into the challenges and needs of people with disabilities and allowed me to better understand the experiences faced by this population. In the disability community, there is a
meaningful mantra "Nothing about us, without us" (Charlton, 1998). This reminds us of the significance of including community members in research and initiatives that concern them. It ensures that the voices and perspectives of people within the community are included, respected, and valued. Before starting this research, I engaged in consultation with an insider from this community, who also studies disability, to seek guidance on the research question, methodological approach, and study materials. This individual’s knowledge and input was vital in shaping aspects of this research, for example, the approach to study materials.

At the same time, as a young worker, I am positioned in a way to connect with informants. Conducting interviews with informants from the same age bracket as myself holds the potential to establish a greater sense of trust, that may not be present with an older interviewer. Moreover, my previous part-time work experiences before entering academia have given me valuable insights into the challenges faced by young workers in the workplace. This firsthand understanding helps me approach my research with awareness of some of the circumstances and obstacles this population may encounter.

I am coming to this research with the belief that young adults with disabilities will experience negative outcomes related to workplace mistreatment. This belief stems from the extensive reading I have done on the topics of workplace mistreatment, disability, and young workers, as well as the things I have observed in workplaces. The information I have come across consistently highlights the difficulties and obstacles that people with disabilities face daily. It is my goal as a researcher to bring attention to these issues and advocate for an improved understanding of young workers with disabilities. At the same time, I remain open-minded to informant experiences that may potentially conflict with my expectations and seek to learn more about the varied experiences of those I am focused on. Throughout this process, I am committed
to applying the generic inductive method and ensuring that my own thoughts, biases, and outsider status do not overshadow the data collected.

**Methodological Approach**

For this study, a general inductive approach was selected to explore the consequences of workplace mistreatment among young adults with disabilities. Unlike the deductive approach, which follows a top-down strategy where previous theories guide hypotheses, the inductive approach is regarded as a bottom-up strategy (Mayring, 2014). This approach involves deriving themes or concepts directly from raw data and is commonly used in the fields of health and social sciences (Thomas, 2003). The primary characteristic of a general inductive approach is its flexibility in methodology. Unlike other qualitative methods such as grounded theory, phenomenology, narrative research, or case study, a generic inductive approach doesn't follow a specific framework (Creswell, 2009). The general inductive approach is similar to the grounded theory approach, however, instead of developing theories, the main goal is presenting and describing the most important themes from the results (Liu, 2016). In this case, the results are influenced by the goals set by the researcher (e.g., interview questions asked) and the different ways of looking at and understanding the data (Thomas, 2003). This means that the findings come from both what the study sets out to find and what is discovered when the raw data is interpreted. The inductive nature of this approach appreciates the valuable insights and detailed information present in the data and allows for themes to emerge naturally. This allows for a thorough investigation into the consequences of workplace mistreatment for young adults with disabilities.

Importantly, the trustworthiness of the data plays a crucial role in qualitative research and can be established in various ways. Credibility was strengthened by discussing and receiving
feedback from my supervisors throughout the process (Shenton, 2004). This practice, commonly known as interrater reliability checks, ensures consistency among the researchers' coding (Belur et al., 2021). It contributes to the development of ideas and interpretations while also mitigating the impact of personal biases and preferences. To ensure the data's applicability (or transferability) to other researchers, this study provides a comprehensive and detailed account of both the informants involved and the research process itself (Korstjens & Moser, 2018).

**Informants**

Informants were recruited using Prolific ([https://www.prolific.co/](https://www.prolific.co/)) - an online crowdsourcing recruitment platform. To participate in this study, individuals had to meet the following eligibility criteria: (1) identify as having a disability, (2) be between the ages of 18-29, (3) be currently employed in the workforce, (4) have experienced workplace mistreatment, (5) be a resident of Canada or the US, (6) be willing to participate in a virtual interview and be audio-recorded, and (7) be fluent in English. Prolific filters (e.g., age, fluent languages, long-term health condition/disability) were used to target potential informants for the distribution of recruitment notices (see Appendix A). Individuals who choose to participate in this pre-screen survey were directed to an online consent form where they were required to read and agree to the study details provided (see Appendix B). After providing consent, informants answered screening questions through Qualtrics (an online survey tool), to assess their eligibility and interest to participate in an interview (see Appendix C). This survey took approximately 1-2 minutes to complete. All informants who completed the pre-screening questions were compensated £0.15 (roughly $0.25 CAD or $0.21 USD) within 7 days, even if they withdrew their data or declined to participate in an interview. A total of 500 informants were screened,
with 127 of them meeting the criteria for this study. Not all individuals who qualified for interviews were contacted to schedule one.

Table 1 outlines the pseudonyms, gender, occupations at the time of mistreatment, and disability types of informants. A total of 11 informants were interviewed, consisting of 6 women and 5 men, with ages ranging from 18 to 29. More than half of the 11 informants reported multiple disabilities (i.e., two or more). The sample consisted of individuals from diverse racial backgrounds, including 6 White informants, 1 East Asian informant, 1 Latin American informant, 1 Black informant, 1 South Asian informant, and 1 informant of mixed race. Just under half of the informants \( n = 5 \) reported identifying with another marginalized identity (e.g., LGBTQ community, racial minority group). The informants in this study worked in a variety of different industries at the time they experienced mistreatment. These include working in fields such as business/financial (accountant), medical (medical technician manager), customer service (call centre associate), sales (sales associate), hospitality/food service (fast food worker, winery worker) and administration (program generalist, planning coordinator, library attendant). One informant did not disclose their occupation at the time of the mistreatment.
Table 1

Descriptive Information on Informants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Disability/Disabilities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>James</td>
<td>Man</td>
<td>Accountant</td>
<td>Deaf (one ear), generalized anxiety disorder, depression</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caroline</td>
<td>Woman</td>
<td>Medical Technician Manager</td>
<td>Back injury</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bruce</td>
<td>Man</td>
<td>Fast Food Worker</td>
<td>Autism spectrum disorder, ADHD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nicholas</td>
<td>Man</td>
<td>Sales Associate</td>
<td>Autism spectrum disorder, anxiety, depressive episodes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aaron</td>
<td>Man</td>
<td>Program Generalist</td>
<td>Schizophrenia, anoxic brain injury</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phillipe</td>
<td>Man</td>
<td>Planning Coordinator</td>
<td>Juvenile idiopathic arthritis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Katie</td>
<td>Woman</td>
<td>Call Center Associate</td>
<td>Hearing impaired</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jordan</td>
<td>Woman</td>
<td>Winery Worker</td>
<td>ADHD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sarah</td>
<td>Woman</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>Irritable bowel syndrome, depression, anxiety, PTSD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tylyn</td>
<td>Woman</td>
<td>Library Attendant</td>
<td>Autism spectrum disorder</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denise</td>
<td>Woman</td>
<td>Call Center Associate</td>
<td>ADHD</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Pseudonyms are used for research informants.
Interview Data Collection Procedures

Theoretical sampling methods were employed to determine who was selected for an interview. Attempts were made to have diversity when it comes to race, as well as to select an approximately equal number of men and women. Potential interview informants were contacted through Prolific’s internal, anonymous messenger, to seek their participation in the interview (see Appendix D). Informants were given information on how to contact the researcher (via anonymous message), should they be interested in participating. Once a date/time was mutually agreed upon, informants were provided with the specifics of the virtual meeting and a link to the informed consent letter (see Appendix E). Informants also received a list of interview questions to inform them of the types of issues that would be focused on in the interview (see Appendix F). Informants were asked if they required any accommodations during the interview process. Relatedly, closed captioning was activated during all interviews, to facilitate the process for informants with certain communication impairments. All interviews were audio-recorded through Zoom, and if the participant agreed, video-recorded.

Before the interviews started, I once again asked for participant consent. The informed consent was read, and informants were reminded that the interview would be recorded. Once verbal consent was obtained, the recording was started, and the interview began using the interview guide (see Appendix G). Informants were asked to share their experiences with workplace mistreatment. Details pertaining to personal examples of mistreatment, as well as the perceived effects of this mistreatment, were the focus of questioning. Pertinent demographics (gender, age, race, employment status, fluency in English, place of residence - Canada or the US) were also collected. Likewise, informants were asked about their field of employment, if they enjoyed their job, and if their employment represented a position set aside for people with
disabilities. If informants were comfortable doing so, they shared information on their disability disclosure in the workplace. After the first round of interviews, the sample comprised more men than women. This led to a second round of recruitment targeting women specifically. Interviews continued until theoretical saturation was reached. On average, interviews lasted 45 minutes. Once the interview was completed, informants were directed to a debriefing form containing several informational and support resources (see Appendix H) Informants were compensated £14.50 (roughly $25 CAD or $20 USD).

Data Analysis Procedures

All interviews were transcribed and analyzed using NVivo. Thematic analysis was used to analyze the qualitative data from the interviews. As the goal of this study was to learn what specific personal and work outcomes of mistreatment young adults with disabilities are experiencing, the data was approached in an inductive manner to search for patterns from observation in the interviews. This means that coding and themes were developed using the data as a starting point and foundation (Terry et al., 2017). Reports from the findings include participant quotes and descriptive details from the interviews, which allowed for themes to be created and organized into categories based on the lived experience of the informants. I started by reading each interview transcript multiple times and creating summary memos to document key points. In this data-led analysis, I then generated semantic codes (created in response to what informants said in the interviews) (Terry et al., 2017) which were then visualized using the “Mind Map” option on NVivo. Each code was considered individually and placed in a separate cell. Once the codes were constructed, I shifted from analysis of the data to analysis of the codes to see if there was a relationship between them (Braun & Clarke, 2012). I then constructed themes using the codes, which were defined, named, and then used to investigate the
consequences of mistreatment for young adults with disabilities. Throughout this process, analytic memos (what I am learning and thinking from the data; e.g., see Appendix I) were written to assist me in obtaining a precise understanding and accurate information from the data.

**Results**

Before digging into the consequences of mistreatment, time was taken to consider the nature of mistreatment that informants experienced. Informants described experiencing various forms of mistreatment, mostly (in all but one case, where mistreatment came from customers) stemming from supervisors or managers. For instance, an informant shared their experience of receiving an unfavorable evaluation as a result of needing to temporarily move away from the phone due to a hearing impairment. Another informant shared upsetting stories about how chronic pain affected their physical health and expressed frustration with being forced to work despite the difficulties they faced. There were many other cases of unfair treatment and discrimination, for example, supervisors not giving promised work, denying promotions based on disability limitations, treating individuals differently because of their disabilities, and calling informants rude names. One informant stated that she lost her job after disclosing a disability. These experiences represent an overview of the various types of workplace mistreatment faced by people with disabilities in this study, and represent the experiences from which the focal mistreatment consequences discussed by informants, emanate.

A substantial amount of information was gathered during the interviews, with data analysis revealing six overarching themes describing the outcomes of workplace mistreatment. All themes were thoroughly explored and determined essential to understanding the data. Informants reported many outcomes, which can be summarized as negative self-perceptions, withdrawal, strained social relationships, poor mental health, depletion, and resilience (see Table
2). These themes showcase several negative outcomes emanating from workplace mistreatment, as well as instances of strength in the face of challenges. The themes revealed several patterns pertaining to gender and disability type, that are also worthy of note. The analysis explored whether men and women encounter similar outcomes in relation to mistreatment. Moreover, the study also investigated whether individuals with different disabilities experience variations in outcomes.
### Table 2

**Central Themes Discovered in Data Analysis**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Illustrative Quote</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Negative self-perceptions</td>
<td>Self-esteem/Self-efficacy, Self-consciousness</td>
<td>“I felt like I couldn’t do things… I was stupid. I was incompetent.” (Jordan)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Withdrawal</td>
<td>Job withdrawal, Social withdrawal, Turnover intentions</td>
<td>“We’d also have work get together and stuff as well, that I would just not participate in.” (Caroline)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strained social relationships</td>
<td>Poor workplace relationships, Attitudes about others</td>
<td>“I did not have a working relationship with my previous supervisor because of that interaction.” (Philippe)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor mental health</td>
<td>Fear, Anxiety, Hurt, Depression</td>
<td>“It just made me feel sad and depressed that they were treating me the way that they were” (Tylyn)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Depletion</td>
<td>Stress, Sleep</td>
<td>“It stressed me out and those are the kind of things that keep me awake at night” (Katie)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resilience</td>
<td>Withstand adversity, Bounce back</td>
<td>&quot;As I've gotten older, it's gotten easier… to let those things just kind of bounce off me and not be as affected by it” (Aaron)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Negative Self-Perceptions

Informants were very open about how their experiences with workplace mistreatment resulted in negative self-perceptions. Many expressed how living through such interactions took a toll on their self-esteem, often resulting in feelings of self-doubt. As Jordan stated, it “made me feel really bad about myself and it made me feel I couldn’t do things as well as others”. Jordan also describes “I felt like I couldn’t do things…. I was stupid. I was incompetent.” In addition to questioning their own abilities in the workplace, informants also reported feeling self-conscious about their disability. As described by Katie, “I definitely kind of started to go out of my way really to hide [my disability], I guess... even though I know I shouldn’t but that's kind of how it makes me feel”. Using vivid imagery, Nicholas described how the experience of mistreatment felt like an attack resulting in self-feelings of vulnerability. In response to being called rude names tied to his disability, Nicholas notes that “In the moment, I immediately felt quite vulnerable given the fact that my condition was being weaponized against me”. These statements demonstrate the damaging impact that mistreatment can have on a person's confidence, self-consciousness, and feelings of power(lessness).

Withdrawal

Reflecting on their experiences of mistreatment, many informants reported experiencing significant feelings of withdrawal, not only when it came to workplace tasks, but also with regards to social situations. As described by Jordan, “I felt like I did not want to work there any longer because of all of that...I was not engaged at all”. Workplace task withdrawal looked different for informants. For Philippe, this meant “I'm not as .... willing to do work above what I'm expected to do”, while for Denise, this meant “there is a lot of things I should technically do, and I knew that I, you know, this was part of whatever, but I would intentionally kind of skip it”.
As described by Katie “I kind of lost the enthusiasm that I had for the job and the role”. Together, these statements demonstrate the impact that mistreatment can have on informants' motivation to complete regular workplace tasks.

Informants in the study also reported experiencing social withdrawal at work. Katie expressed how she purposely avoided socializing in the workplace, sharing “I went out of my way to avoid any kind of interaction with individuals who were not part of my inner circle, if that makes sense?”. Social withdrawal was also seen in outside-of-work social events. As Caroline explains, “we'd also have work get togethers and stuff as well, that I would just not participate in” These behaviours show the extent to which the mistreatment affected informants' ability to maintain social connections at work and led to social withdrawal.

The impact of mistreatment was often so severe that informants described contemplating quitting their jobs. Tylyn says, “it kind of made me think, well, you know, is this the job for me or is this, you know, somewhere I want to be where I'm being mistreated like this?”. Similarly, Bruce said, “I've considered finding another job, but I just haven't decided to do it.” Caroline shares similar sentiments - “I do want to start making movements. You know, like cross ladder movements instead of up or down within the company, just to kind of look for something different”. These informants expressed wanting to leave because of mistreatment but had not taken any action toward doing so. On the other hand, Aaron and Jordan described taking the step and leaving because they “just didn't feel comfortable” or “couldn’t take it anymore”.

Experiences such as these suggests mistreatment may be a significant factor contributing to employee turnover, among those with disabilities.

**Strained Social Relationships**
Informants frequently experienced *strained social relationships*, with strained interpersonal connections stemming from mistreatment with both the individual responsible for the behaviour, as well as other coworkers and/or supervisor. As might be expected, Katie described having “*no relationship like at all*” with her boss. Similarly, Philippe mentions “*I did not have a working relationship with my previous supervisor because of that interaction... Our relationship deteriorated to the point where we both requested to not work with each other*”. Whether due to the perception that they allow the mistreatment to occur, or failing to respond and/or provide support following the incident, strained relationships with work superiors was often a result of the mistreatment experience. Moreover, an important observation to make is that even when coworkers were not the source of mistreatment, informants described experiencing negative relationships with these peers. James describes not having “*a good relationship with any of those people on the team,*” referring to both supervisors and coworkers. Similarly, reflecting on her colleagues, Katie shares how she was “*trying to keep that interaction to a minimum, unless, again, it was absolutely necessary*” and not maintaining friends in the workplace. In addition, Sarah describes “*hating them and spiting all of them*” referring to both bosses and coworkers. This highlights the deep impact of workplace mistreatment as it extends beyond the people directly involved.

Informant data further suggested that the impact of workplace mistreatment goes beyond interpersonal interactions, also affecting informants' attitudes towards others. As Nicholas noted, mistreatment gave “*insight to know that not everyone is on your side*” demonstrating the general sense of distrust that mistreatment can cause. At the same time, Philippe highlighted the personal nature of mistreatment when he shared “*But for me, it's like, I can't see you any differently after you talk to me like that. I can't look at you the same after that situation*”. Overall, these findings
highlight the detrimental impact that mistreatment can have on individuals in the workplace, both in terms of their personal relationships and their attitudes toward other people.

**Poor Mental Health**

Results suggest the effects of workplace mistreatment can extend beyond the workplace and into *mental health*. Depression and anxiety were discussed by informants who had experienced mistreatment. As stated by Tylyn, *“It just made me feel sad and depressed that they were treating me the way that they were”*. Likewise, Caroline expressed feeling *“super depressed and anxious”* at the same time. This suggests that the negative impact of mistreatment can cause damage to individuals' mental well-being. In addition, multiple informants demonstrated feelings of fear. For Tylyn and Sarah fear meant being *“nervous to go into work”* or *“not [wanting] to apply for other jobs,”* while for Denise this meant being fearful of individuals in general and wanted to have *“less of a pessimistic and fearful attitude toward the world and other people”*. Another common emotion described by informants was feeling *“hurt”*. This was seen in many ways, including feeling upset or dismissed. Nicholas went as far as to say that this *“broke [his] heart”*, highlighting the intense emotional toll that mistreatment can take. It is worth noting that some informants describe experiencing many of these outcomes simultaneously, which can have more of an impact on individual’s overall health, particularly in the case of individuals already struggling with mental health challenges unrelated to workplace mistreatment.

**Depletion**

Almost half the informants demonstrated symptoms of *depletion* – the feeling of being emotionally and/or physically drained, often evident in stress levels and sleep patterns. Katie explained the close relationship between sleep and stress when she shared that *“it stressed me*
out and those are the kind of things that keep me awake at night”. Similarly, Jordan described how being mistreated in the workplace “created more stress in [her] life” leading to constant feelings of strain. In addition, some informants expressed feelings of stress in the sense of job security and financial stability. For example, losing their job or not receiving enough shifts because of mistreatment at work, resulted in palpable feelings of financial stress, and in turn, strain in day-to-day life. According to multiple informants, mistreatment also had a negative impact on sleep quality. Denise shared that she stayed up all night as a result of not wanting to face the next day in the workplace. For this participant, the stress associated with workplace mistreatment resulted in sleepless nights. Furthermore, James revealed that being mistreated had resulted in the experience of disturbing dreams pertaining to the incident, again demonstrating the impact of mistreatment on sleep quality and overall wellness.

**Resilience**

This study brings to light a significant outcome of mistreatment- resilience. Informants in this study demonstrate signs of resilience in various ways. Nicholas described channelling positive energy to improve their skills and not allowing other factors (such as the mistreatment or his disability) to downplay what he is capable of. Nicholas also discussed developing resilience to mistreatment by vividly comparing it to the process of building a "rhinoceros skin,” becoming stronger every day. Aaron demonstrated signs of resilience as he shared, "As I’ve gotten older, it's gotten easier... to let those things just kind of bounce off me and not be as affected by it”. A less obvious but important sign of resilience highlighted in this study is the ability to continue showing up and performing duties despite experiencing mistreatment. Katie describes still putting in 110% at work while continuing to be “super cheerful and polite” in the workplace. Tylyn similarly expressed her ability to still work as hard as before the mistreatment occurred.
Overall, these results emphasize the resilience shown by people with disabilities who experience mistreatment in the workplace. By channelling positive energy, developing a "rhinoceros skin", and continuing to show up and perform their duties, these individuals demonstrate their perseverance and motivation to move forward in the face of difficult circumstances.

The Role of Gender

Taking an intersectional approach, informant data was also considered from the perspective of gender. More specifically, efforts were taken to explore whether any patterns emerged from the data, that would suggest the experiences of women and men may be different. This sub-analysis suggested the outcomes of workplace mistreatment are very similar across gender. Most outcome themes had an equal number of men and women with supportive personal experiences. For instance, both men and women expressed wanting to "leave their workplace " because of mistreatment. However, one outcome theme where differences did emerge, was in the case of mental health; only women shared feelings of anxiety, depression and fear as a result of mistreatment. This highlights unique gender differences that need to be understood and addressed.

The Role of Disability Type

Based on previous research which suggests that different disabilities may result in different experiences (e.g., Davis, 2005; Santuzzi et al., 2014; Stone & Colella, 1996), informant data were also considered with an eye to how disability type may result in similar or divergent experiences. This sub-analysis suggested that there are some similarities based on an individuals’ specific disabilities. All four informants with physical disabilities reported encountering mistreatment that resulted in poor workplace relationships, thinking about, or leaving their job, and workplace withdrawal. Moreover, the informants with autism spectrum disorder stood out as
none of them described experiencing workplace or social withdrawal. This observation is noteworthy for its contrast with other disability types, where at least one individual reported undergoing some form of withdrawal. In the case of informants with autism spectrum disorder, this specific subtheme was absent.

**Discussion**

This study contributes to the existing body of knowledge on workplace mistreatment by specifically examining the effects of mistreatment on young adults with disabilities. The predominant themes that emerged from this research were (1) negative self-perceptions; (2) withdrawal; (3) strained social relationships; (4) poor mental health; (5) depletion; and (6) resilience. Together, these themes contribute to the understanding of personal and work outcomes of mistreatment and help us understand the magnitude of the challenges (e.g., mental health issues, poor social cohesion in the workplace) young adults with disabilities encounter when faced with such experiences.

This research contributes theoretically to both the young workers literature and workplace mistreatment literature in several important ways. In focusing specifically on the lived experiences of this population, this research gives voice to a segment of the workforce that has traditionally been ignored. Young workers with disabilities constitute a significant proportion of the workforce, and their perspectives are essential to creating a comprehensive understanding of workplace dynamics. Young workers discussed how mistreatment was often related to their disabilities, contributing to the understanding of the distinct mistreatment challenges experienced by young workers with disabilities, which might not always be readily apparent or widely acknowledged when examining the overall workforce.

Second, and relatedly, this study’s results contribute to our understanding of the nature of
workplace mistreatment for those with disabilities, by highlighting the varied consequences that emanate from these experiences. More specifically, while several different outcome themes emerged, workplace mistreatment appears to be damaging individuals’ job-based and personal well-being. With regards to the former, results suggest that mistreatment can have detrimental effects on one’s workplace relationships and feelings of belonging at work – a finding that is consistent with prior research conducted by Merrells et al. (2019), which suggests that individuals with disabilities, particularly young adults, often encounter feelings of segregation in their daily lives. Moreover, results suggest that mistreatment may result in turnover (or turnover intentions) among targets. This finding is particularly important, as it speaks to a factor that may be linked to higher unemployment among a group of workers who face systematic barriers to career sustainability (Jacob et al., 2023). Likewise, evidence that mistreatment results in withdrawal from tasks and job obligations, coupled with research demonstrating job withdrawal leads to lowered performance (Sliter et al., 2012), suggests mistreatment experiences may also contribute to the limiting of job advancement opportunities (Gregory, 2011) for those with disabilities, and hence the higher levels of underemployment among this group (Milner et al., 2017).

At the same time, results highlight the negative impact on personal well-being, that these targets of mistreatment face. The identification of distressing psychological states, such as anxiety, depression, fear, stress, and hurt, as outcomes of mistreatment demonstrates the substantial impact it has on mental well-being, aligning with prior research indicating elevated levels of mental distress among individuals with disabilities (Cree et al., 2020). In conjunction with the discovery of sleep difficulties as a direct result of mistreatment, the results serve as compelling evidence that the effects of mistreatment extend beyond the confines of the
workplace environment. For individuals who already experience anxiety and depressive disorders prior to mistreatment, it is highly probable that the mistreatment would exacerbate these existing disorders (Burns, 2022), suggesting an even bigger impact on well-being.

Mistreatment also significantly affects self-perception, as demonstrated by the emergence of outcomes such as reduced self-esteem and heightened self-consciousness regarding one's own disability. Within the context of individuals with disabilities, feelings of self-consciousness frequently accompany their daily experiences (Robertson, Gunn & Piper, 2022). However, results suggest the mistreatment endured in the workplace has the potential to intensify or instigate those feelings. It is important to consider that there may be variations in the levels of self-consciousness between individuals who can conceal their disabilities and those who cannot. For instance, individuals who rely on wheelchairs in the workplace lack the option to conceal their disability, unlike some informants who admitted to concealing disability because of mistreatment. As a result, these individuals may frequently experience strong internalized emotions related to self-consciousness, such as feelings of shame and guilt (Muris & Meesters, 2014).

Third, this research contributes to the mistreatment and disability literatures by considering the outcomes of workplace mistreatment, through an intersectional lens. The consideration of gender helps reveal an important difference: women in this research were more prone than men to experience feelings of anxiety, depression, and fear as a consequence of workplace mistreatment, suggesting gender continue to be considered in future research. Indeed, these findings further support previous research conducted by others, which suggest that women are more prone to depression and anxiety than men (Albert, 2015; McLean et al., 2011). Future research should consider explanations for these gender differences; one possibility, supported by
research conducted by Cleary (2012), is that men may find it more difficult to recognize and express symptoms of distress. This suggests that men may be less inclined to express emotions such as anxiety, depression, and fear. At the same time, it is important to recognize the power imbalance between men and women in the workplace and thus the potential influence of being in a lower powered position on women’s mental health (Michailidis et al., 2012).

While a plethora of research exists on disability, it remains difficult to categorize disability for meaningful comparisons due to its complex nature. According to Mont (2007), disability is challenging because of the significant variations in the nature and severity of disabilities. As such, this research chose to conceptualize disability according to impairment type. This allowed for the possibility of individuals multiple identities being considered in meaningful ways. For instance, Nicholas serves as an example, as he identified with multiple disabilities, including autism, anxiety, and depressive episodes, with each of these being considered when exploring mistreatment and disability type. As outlined, differences were identified, including those with ASD not reporting withdrawal (both social and task) in response to their mistreatment experiences. While research exploring possibilities as to why this might be are needed, one possibility pertains to the unique profile of ASD more generally, including socially-based challenges (Müller et al., 2008); It is important to consider that individuals with ASD may not readily perceive differences in their social interactions that stem from mistreatment experiences. Overall, these findings suggest that experiences with a disability are not uniform. Disabilities manifest in diverse forms and impact individuals in various ways. Each person's journey with their unique disability is influenced by individual circumstances, challenging the notion of a one-size-fits-all narrative. Acknowledging the individuality of
disabilities and recognizing distinct experiences allows us to develop inclusive and personalized approaches to support individuals with varying disabilities in the workplace.

While most of the consequences of mistreatment found in this research were harmful in nature, the theme of resilience demonstrates that people with disabilities may show strength when facing challenging circumstances. While at times resilience may be recognized as a positive attribute (Windle, 2011), when in the context of mistreatment may signal certain coping mechanisms. Based on the research conducted by King et al., (2003), most individuals with disabilities have the ability to see their experiences in a positive light and continue with their lives, undeterred and resilient. The presence of resilience in this context suggests that individuals employed this trait in response to the mistreatment they experienced. It is important to note that individuals who showed resilience also experienced harmful consequences as a result of mistreatment. This highlights the fact that resilience does not mean there were no negative effects, but more that those individuals found a way to navigate and overcome challenges despite their impact.

Finally, in addition to its contributions to the workplace mistreatment and disability literatures, this research also has practical implications, particularly when it comes to organizational initiatives aimed at supporting employees with disabilities. For example, organizations can review and amend their training activities, policies, and practices to be more inclusive and better align with the lived experience of young adults with disabilities. One way to address the impact of mistreatment on social relationships is through workplace training programs that focus on creating an inclusive environment (Royall et al., 2022). By providing training sessions that teach employees about the importance of being inclusive and giving them the skills to foster inclusivity, organizations can help reduce the negative effects of mistreatment.
on how people interact with each other (Nishii & Rich, 2014). These training programs can promote things like respect and understanding among colleagues, as well as improve communication and collaboration (Nishii & Rich, 2014). Ultimately, these efforts would create a workplace culture that is supportive and inclusive, leading to better social relationships and mitigating the negative effects of workplace mistreatment.

Limitations & Future Directions

While the findings of this study contribute to our understanding of the outcomes of mistreatment for young employees with disabilities, there are several limitations that must be considered. First, the sample used in this study was primarily comprised of those from the United States. As such, it is unclear whether these findings can be generalized to other cultures or populations. Differences in cultural values, norms, and societal structures vary between countries and can have a significant impact on how mistreatment is viewed and experienced. These cultural variations shape people's understanding of what mistreatment is and how situations are handled. For instance, the United States is widely recognized for its emphasis on individualism (Goldberg & Mercer, 2011), where personal achievement and success hold significant value. This means that individuals may face increased pressure to demonstrate resilience by showing strength and handling difficulties independently.

In addition, this study focused on young adults, and it is possible that these results may not be representative of older adults or other age groups. That is because factors like generational attitudes, life experiences, and developmental stages can play a role in shaping mistreatment experiences and outcomes. For example, young adults have more modern and inclusive beliefs about diversity and fairness (Smith & Turner, 2015). As a result, they may be more likely to notice and be affected by mistreatment in the workplace. Furthermore, given their age and stage
of development, young adults frequently find themselves in lower-level or entry-level positions where power imbalances are present (Lee et al., 2019). This discrepancy in power can leave them more susceptible to mistreatment from individuals in higher positions of authority. According to the Transactional Model of Stress and Coping (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984), individuals who become targets of bullying within a power imbalance are more susceptible to experiencing severe consequences compared to those in a situation with a balanced power dynamic. As a result, it is important to be careful when using these findings with other age groups or populations given that young adults may encounter distinct forms of mistreatment, which in turn could result in outcomes unique to this population.

Another potential limitation of this research can be seen in the use of Prolific panels to recruit informants. More specifically, this platform may not fully represent the diversity of people with disabilities. For instance, one disability that may need support on an online platform is visual impairment (Rodrigues et al., 2020), which can result in fewer informants within the disability category. This could be due to limited accessibility features or compatibility issues with assistive technologies used by individuals with visual impairments. At the same time, given the many ways to operationalize disability in the literature, there may be limitations associated with disability being captured via self-disclosure. Informants may receive varying diagnoses depending on the physician they consult with, as such, relying solely on self-disclosure may not provide a comprehensive understanding of disability. Future research may consider other ways to identify disability, for example via reports of others (e.g., medical professional) and/or the completion of disability forms (e.g., The Washington Group short set; Madans et al., 2011).

While certain measures were taken to establish trustworthiness (e.g., interrater reliability checks) this study could have been further enhanced by implementing member checks. Future
research should consider implementing member checks (or stakeholder checks) to assess the credibility of the research (Thomas, 2003; Korstjens & Moser, 2018). This step involves giving people involved in the study, like the informants, a chance to share their thoughts on the interpretations and themes derived from the data (Thomas, 2003). This practice strengthens the data, as researchers and informants often bring distinct perspectives when examining the results (Korstjens & Moser, 2018). The incorporation of member checks was not initially planned in this study, thus preventing their implementation.

One of the primary goals of this research was to contribute to the workplace mistreatment literature by addressing an existing gap concerning the lived experiences of those from an underserved group, namely, young workers with disabilities. These findings may encourage additional studies focusing on employees from other equity-deserving groups. For example, researchers can use these findings to explore the mistreatment experiences and consequences of those from different racial or ethnic backgrounds, LGBTQ+ individuals, immigrants and those from different socioeconomic groups. Moreover, conducting more research that includes a broader range of ages would be beneficial to gain a better understanding of the diverse ways mistreatment impacts people with disabilities across different stages of life. Relatedly, additional research taking an intersectional approach, is needed. For example, while this study explored how gender may factor into the mistreatment experiences of those with disabilities, investigating how other underserved identities pertaining to race and/or sexual orientation intersect with disability to affect workplace mistreatment outcomes, would be important.

It is important to recognize that this study is just the beginning of understanding workplace mistreatment among young adults with disabilities. Despite all informants reporting negative outcomes of mistreatment, the presence of resilience as an outcome holds particular
significance. It represents a distinctive experience for some individuals, pointing to an avenue to pursue in future research. Additionally, due to the observed disparity in mental health outcomes between men and women, it is crucial for future studies to look more into potential gender differences which would offer valuable insights into the unique challenges and experiences encountered by each gender. Further research is needed to investigate this topic comprehensively, and a grounded theory approach should be considered. This method involves collecting data and subsequently developing theories and hypotheses based on that data (Engward, 2013). This would help researchers foster additional theory that matches the lived experience of people with disabilities, leading to more informed and inclusive solutions for the workplace.

At the same time, future studies should consider using a mix of different research methods, including both qualitative (e.g., grounded theory) and quantitative data (e.g., survey). Although the current study helped gain an understanding of the consequences associated with workplace mistreatment for young adults with disabilities, quantitative research would help identify patterns or trends between informants. Additionally, this would allow researchers to examine the potential impact of moderators, such as disability disclosure and/or social support, on the consequences of workplace mistreatment. There is evidence that disclosing a disability can have its own negative consequences (Von Schrader et al., 2014). Opportunity loss, stigma and feeling vulnerable are all mentioned by (Moloney et al., 2019) as workplace obstacles that come with disclosing a disability. Moreover, according to research conducted by Yang et al., (2019), older individuals facing mistreatment tend to exhibit higher levels of resilience if they possess a strong social support system. Further investigation is needed to determine if the same findings regarding social support and mistreatment apply to younger adults with disabilities.
Gaining an understanding of moderators can offer valuable insights into their role in either reducing or intensifying the effects of mistreatment on those with disabilities in the workplace.

**Conclusion**

The current research has shed light on outcomes encountered by young adults with disabilities in the face of workplace mistreatment. Through these findings, a range of psychological, personal and workplace struggles experienced by these individuals have been identified, including diminished self-worth, withdrawal from social and workplace interactions, feeling like an outsider, emotional distress, feelings of depletion, and the display of resilience. Moreover, the analysis of gender provided insights into mental health outcomes, indicating that women are more likely to experience these effects. Additionally, the analysis of disability revealed specific shared outcomes depending on the type of disability (e.g., those with ASD did not experience any type of withdrawal). Overall, this research has the potential to stimulate further research in this field, contributing to a deeper understanding of the consequences of workplace mistreatment for young individuals with disabilities.
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to address title vii claims based on combined factors of race, gender and national origin.


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Appendix A
Recruitment Notice

Study Name: Workplace Mistreatment: Personal and Work Outcomes Among Young People with Disabilities

Description: This qualitative study will use interviews to better understand the personal and job-related outcomes of workplace mistreatment for young adults with disabilities.

Eligibility Requirements: To participate in this study you must (1) identify as a woman (2) identify as having a neurodivergent disability or a physical disability, (3) be between the ages of 18-29, (4) be currently employed in the workforce, (5) be a resident of Canada or the US, (6) be willing to participate in an interview, (6) be fluent in English and (7) never have taken part in this study before.

Duration and Locale: The first part of this study will be conducted through the Qualtrics website and is anticipated to take 1-2 minutes to complete. Based on your responses, we may contact you through Prolific to take part in an interview. If you agree, the second part of this study will take the form of a 45-minute interview that will be conducted via Zoom.

Compensation: Participants will be compensated £0.15 (approximately $0.25 CAD or $0.21 USD) for their participation in Part 1 of this study (which you will complete now), paid via Prolific. Participants who are selected for and take part in Part 2 (i.e. an interview at a later time) will be compensated £14.50 (approximately $25 CAD or $20 USD) for their participation in the interview, which they will receive through Prolific.

All participants who meet the eligibility requirements, and who are willing to participate in an audio-recorded interview, will be eligible to participate in an interview. We will not be interviewing every participant. We are hoping to interview a wide variety of participants (e.g., all genders), so your responses to our screening questions will help us to reach a broad group of participants.

Researchers:
Audrey Hodgins (M.A Candidate, Department of Psychology, Carleton University, E-mail: AudreyHodgins@email.carleton.ca)

Dr. Kathryne Dupré, Ph.D. (Associate Professor, Department of Psychology, Carleton University; E-mail: Kathryne.Dupre@carleton.ca, Phone: 613-520-2600 ext. 6026)

Dr. Angela Dionisi, Ph.D. (Associate Professor, Sprott School of Business, Carleton University; E-mail: Angela.Dionisi@carleton.ca, Phone: 613-520-2600 ext. 3134)

This study has been cleared by the Carleton University Research Ethics Board-B (CUREB-B Clearance #117588).
Appendix B
Informed Consent for Participants (Screening Questionnaire)

The informed consent is necessary to ensure that you understand what is expected of you during the study and why we are interested in researching this particular area. The informed consent form should provide you with enough information to allow you to decide if you wish to participate in this study.

Research Project: Workplace Mistreatment: Personal and Work Outcomes Among Young People with Disabilities

Research Personnel: The following people are involved in this study and may be contacted at any time if you have any questions or concerns.

Audrey Hodgins (M.A Candidate, Department of Psychology, Carleton University, E-mail: AudreyHodgins@carleton.ca)

Dr. Kathryne Dupré, Ph.D. (Associate Professor, Department of Psychology, Carleton University; E-mail: Kathryne.Dupre@carleton.ca, Phone: 613-520-2600 ext. 6026)

Dr. Angela Dionisi, Ph.D. (Assistant Professor, Sprott School of Business, Carleton University; E-mail: Angela.Dionisi@carleton.ca, Phone: 613-520-2600 ext. 3134)

Contact in Case of Ethical Concerns: Should you have ethical concerns with the research, please contact the Carleton University Research Ethics Board via email at ethics@carleton.ca.

Purpose: The researchers are interested in learning more about the personal and job-related outcomes of workplace mistreatment for young adults with disabilities.

Task Requirements: Part 1 of this study requires you to complete a series of questions to determine your eligibility to participate in Part 2 (i.e. an interview). All participants who meet the eligibility requirements, and who are willing to participate in an audio-recorded interview, will be eligible to participate in an interview. We will not be interviewing every participant. We are hoping to interview a wide variety of participants, so your responses to our screening questions will help us to reach a broad group of participants.

Those who are asked (and agree) to participate in Part 2 (i.e. an interview) will be asked to share about their experiences with mistreatment in the workplace. Details pertaining to personal examples of mistreatment, as well as the perceived effects of this mistreatment, will be the focus of questioning.

Duration and Locale: Part 1 of this study will be conducted through the Qualtrics website and is anticipated to take 1-2 minutes to complete. Part 2 of this study will take the form of a 45-minute interview that will be conducted via Zoom.
Eligibility Criteria: To participate in this study you must (1) identify as a woman, (2) identify as having a neurodivergent disability or a physical disability, (3) be between the ages of 18-29, (4) be currently employed in the workforce, (5) be a resident of Canada or the US, (6) be willing to participate in an interview, (6) be fluent in English and (7) never have taken part in this study before.

Remuneration: Participants will be compensated £0.15 (approximately $0.25 CAD or $0.21 USD) for their participation in Part 1, through the Prolific platform. Participants who take part in Part 2 (i.e., the interview) will be compensated £14.50 (approximately $25 CAD or $20 USD) for their participation in the interview, which they will receive through Prolific.

Potential risk/discomfort: There is a possibility that you could feel emotional distress when answering questions about mistreatment in the workplace. At the end of this study, we will provide resources for those struggling with this type of mistreatment. Moreover, you are not required to answer any questions you do not feel comfortable with.

Anonymity/confidentiality: No identifying information will be requested throughout the interview. The information you provide will only be used for research purposes. Some of your direct quotes could be used in the publication of research findings (e.g., journals articles, conferences). If this occurs, potentially identifying information that you disclose (e.g., names, specific locations) would be omitted and/or anonymized via a pseudonym (a randomly assigned name unrelated to you).

The only time any personal information disclosed in interviews will be shared is if our records are court-ordered for any reason.

Data security: Every effort will be made to make sure that all data collected is treated with the strictest of confidence. Please note, however, that confidentiality cannot be guaranteed while data are in transit over the Internet.

The data related to the screening questions will be collected via Qualtrics software, which uses servers with multiple layers of security to protect the privacy of the data (e.g., encrypted websites and password-protected storage). Your data will be stored and protected by Qualtrics in either Canada or the United States but may be disclosed via a court order or data breach. All data will be deleted from the Qualtrics server upon completion of the study and will be retained only on secure, password-protected computers.

All conversations conducted through Zoom are encrypted, and we will not be sending text-formatted information through the server. The conversations will be recorded using a digital audio device and will be transcribed after. These files will only ever be associated with pseudonyms to ensure anonymity. “In-session” data, such as the audio and video files, will be stored locally on the researcher’s computer. Operation data, such as meeting and performance data, will be stored and protected by Zoom on servers located in either Canada or the United States but may be disclosed via a court order or data breach. We will password protect any research data that we store or transfer.
Importantly, the Prolific platform is vulnerable to data breaches, through which it may become known that you participated in this study (although your responses to the questions cannot be associated with your identity). It is recommended that you review Prolific’s privacy policy at your earliest convenience. Prolific’s servers are located in the European Economic Area. Their security protections are governed by the United Kingdom General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR), which has been tailored by the Data Protection Act 2018.

All anonymous data are stored on secure, password-protected computers that only the researchers have access to. We are committed to protecting your privacy and will treat the data we collect as completely confidential. In potential publications of this research, any quantitative data will be aggregated (means and correlations) before reporting. Anonymous data might be shared with trusted colleagues (in line with guidelines 8.14 by the American Psychological Association).

**Interview recording:** All conversations conducted through Zoom are encrypted and we will be using a password-protected meeting to prevent intrusion. Interviews will be audio- and video-recorded by the conferencing software, Zoom. This is so the interviews can be transcribed. Importantly, should you not wish to be video recorded, you can keep your video camera turned off during the interview. If you wish to fully protect your anonymity, please consider changing your display name on Zoom.

Information about the recording process can be found here: https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/201362473-Local-Recording

Recordings will be recorded locally and saved directly to a password-protected computer (i.e., not on the cloud). Audio files will be deleted immediately after they have been transcribed.

**Transcription:** Transcripts are written documents that were originally presented in a different form. In the present study, your transcript refers to a written account of your interview. When your interview is transcribed, any potentially identifying information (e.g., names, workplaces) will be removed. Transcripts will be password protected and stored locally on the researcher’s computer.

We are committed to protecting your privacy and will treat the data we collect as completely confidential. To ensure confidentiality, each person who takes part in the study will be assigned a unique participant number, which will be used to identify your data (i.e., your data will not be linked to your name or Prolific ID number).

**Right to withdraw:** Your participation in this study is entirely voluntary. At any point during the study, you have the right to not answer certain questions, or to withdraw without penalty. If you wish to withdraw before the end of the online study, please advance through the study to see our debriefing form before you leave. If you wish to withdraw your data, please notify the researcher through the Prolific platform messaging system.

If you have not been contacted for an interview and wish to withdraw your data from Part 1, please contact the researcher through the Prolific platform. This will not affect your
compensation for participating in Part 1. It will, however, make you ineligible to participate in Part 2 (i.e. the interview) should you qualify. You can withdraw your data until two weeks after we have completed Part 2 of this study.

If you have completed Part 2 (i.e. an interview) and wish to withdraw your data, please contact the researcher through the Prolific platform. This will not affect your compensation for participating in Part 1, nor your compensation for participating in Part 2 (i.e. interview). Please note that because of the anonymous nature of the interaction, withdrawal from the study is not possible after two weeks following your interview.

This study has been cleared by the Carleton University Research Ethics Board-B (CUREB-B Clearance #117588).

Please select “I Agree” to indicate that you understand the information included in the informed consent and would like to participate in this study or “I Disagree” if you do not want to do the survey.
I agree ____ I disagree ____
Appendix C
Screening Questions

1. Please verify your Prolific ID number.

2. Are you a woman?
   Yes  No

3. Do you identify as having a neurodivergent disability (e.g., ADHD, autism)?  Yes  No

4. Do you identify as having a physical disability (e.g., sight issues, hearing issues, mobility)?
   Yes  No

5. Do you currently reside in Canada or the United States?  Yes, Canada  Yes, the United States
   No

6. Are you between the ages of 18 and 24?  Yes  No
   What is your age? (Dropdown list: 18-29 years)

7. Are you currently employed in the workforce?  Yes  No

8. Have you experienced workplace mistreatment in the past?  Yes  No

9. Are you fluent in English – that is, would you be comfortable and confident engaging in a 45-
   minute interview with a member of our research team conducted completely in English?
   Yes  No

10. Would you be willing to take part in a 45-minute interview with a member of our research team
    where you will be asked to share your experiences with mistreatment in the workplace. Details
    pertaining to personal examples of mistreatment, as well as the perceived effects of this
    mistreatment, will be the focus of questioning? (Please note that your response will not affect
    your compensation.)  Yes  No

    (If participants respond ‘No’ to Q8, they will exit the study at this point. If participants respond
    ‘Yes’ to Q8, they will proceed.)

11. During the interview, would you be willing to be audio-recorded?  Yes  No

    (If participants respond ‘No’ to Q9, they will exit the study at this point. If participants respond
    ‘Yes’ to Q9, they will proceed.)

12. Please specify your racial/ethnic background (dropdown menu provided from CUREB list).

13. [For Canadian ] Please indicate your province or territory of residence (dropdown menu
    provided).

14. [For American ] Please indicate your state of residence (dropdown menu provided)
Appendix D
Interview Recruitment Email

Hello, and thank you for responding to our screening survey. We appreciate your participation!

You indicated that you would be willing to participate in an interview via Zoom on the topic of workplace mistreatment for young adults with disabilities. Are you still interested in participating in this interview?

As a reminder, the interview would be approximately 45-minutes in duration. You will be compensated £14.50 (approximately $25 CAD or $20 USD) to take part in this interview.

If you are still interested in participating, please let our research team know via a message reply and we will be in touch to schedule a time for the interview. You will receive a document with an overview of the interview questions once your time slot is scheduled. When responding to this invitation, please also let us know of any accommodations that would facilitate your participation in this study. If you are no longer interested in participating, please feel free to ignore this message.

Once again, we appreciate your engagement with our research.
Appendix E
Informed Consent for Participants (Interviews)

The informed consent is necessary to ensure that you understand what is expected of you during the study and why we are interested in researching this particular area. The informed consent form should provide you with enough information to allow you to decide if you wish to participate in this study.

**Research project:** Workplace Mistreatment: Personal and Work Outcomes Among Young People with Disabilities

**Research personnel:** The following people are involved in this study, and may be contacted at any time if you have any questions or concerns:

Audrey Hodgins (M.A Candidate, Department of Psychology, Carleton University, E-mail: AudreyHodgins@cmail.carleton.ca)

Dr. Kathryne Dupré, Ph.D. (Associate Professor, Department of Psychology, Carleton University; E-mail: Kathryne.Dupre@carleton.ca, Phone: 613-520-2600 ext. 6026)

Dr. Angela Dionisi, Ph.D. (Associate Professor, Sprott School of Business, Carleton University; E-mail: Angela.Dionisi@carleton.ca, Phone: 613-520-2600 ext. 3134)

**Contact in Case of Ethical concerns:** Should you have ethical concerns with the research, please contact the Carleton University Research Ethics Board via email at ethics@carleton.ca.

**Purpose:** The researchers are interested in learning more about the personal and job-related outcomes of workplace mistreatment for young adults with disabilities.

**Task Requirements:** This is part 2 of a two-part study. For this study, participants will be asked to share about their experiences with mistreatment in the workplace. Details pertaining to personal examples of mistreatment, as well as the perceived effects of this mistreatment, will be the focus of questioning.

**Duration and locale:** This study will take the form of a 45-minute interview that will be conducted via Zoom.

**Eligibility Criteria:** To participate in this study, you must (1) identify as a woman (2) identify as having a neurodivergent disability or a physical disability, (3) be between the ages of 18-29, (4) be currently employed in the workforce, (5) have experienced workplace mistreatment, (6) be a resident of Canada or the US, (7) be willing to participate in an interview and be audio-recorded, (8) be fluent in English and (9) never have participated in this study before.

**Remuneration:** Participants will be compensated £14.50 (approximately $25 CAD or $20 USD) for their participation, which they will receive through Prolific.
Potential risk/discomfort: There is a possibility that you could feel emotional distress when answering questions about mistreatment in the workplace. At the end of this study, we will provide resources for those struggling with this type of mistreatment. You are not required to answer any questions you do not feel comfortable with. At the end of this study, we will provide contact information for distress support organizations, as well as links to further information about workplace mistreatment.

Anonymity/confidentiality: No identifying information will be requested throughout the interview. The information you provide will only be used for research purposes. Some of your direct quotes could be used in publication of research findings (e.g., journals articles, conferences). If this occurs, potentially identifying information that you disclose (e.g., names, specific locations) would be omitted and/or anonymized via a pseudonym (a randomly assigned name unrelated to you).

The only time any personal information disclosed in interviews will be shared is if our records are court-ordered for any reason.

Data security: Every effort will be made to make sure that all data collected is treated with the strictest of confidence. Please note, however, that confidentiality cannot be guaranteed while data are in transit over the Internet.

The data related to the screening questions will be collected via Qualtrics software, which uses servers with multiple layers of security to protect the privacy of the data (e.g., encrypted websites and password-protected storage). Your data will be stored and protected by Qualtrics in either Canada or the United States but may be disclosed via a court order or data breach. All data will be deleted from the Qualtrics server upon completion of the study and will be retained only on secure, password-protected computers.

All conversations conducted through Zoom are encrypted, and we will not be sending text-formatted information through the server. The conversations will be recorded using a digital audio device and will be transcribed after. These files will only ever be associated with pseudonyms to ensure anonymity. “In-session” data, such as the audio and video files, will be stored locally on the researcher’s computer. Operation data, such as meeting and performance data, will be stored and protected by Zoom on servers located in either Canada or the United States, but may be disclosed via a court order or data breach. We will password protect any research data that we store or transfer.

Importantly, the Prolific platform is vulnerable to data breaches, through which it may become known that you participated in this study (although your responses to the questions cannot be associated with your identity). It is recommended that you review Prolific’s privacy policy at your earliest convenience. Prolific’s servers are located in the European Economic Area. Their security protections are governed by the United Kingdom General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR), which has been tailored by the Data Protection Act 2018.

All anonymous data are stored on secure, password-protected computers that only the researchers have access to. We are committed to protecting your privacy and will treat the data
we collect as completely confidential. In potential publications of this research, any quantitative data will be aggregated (means and correlations) before reporting. Anonymous data might be shared with trusted colleagues (in line with guidelines 8.14 by the American Psychological Association).

**Interview recording:** All conversations conducted through Zoom are encrypted and we will be using a password-protected meeting to prevent intrusion. Interviews will be audio- and video-recorded by the conferencing software, Zoom. This is so the interviews can be transcribed. Importantly, should you not wish to be video recorded, you can keep your video camera turned off during the interview. If you wish to fully protect your anonymity, please consider changing your display name on Zoom.

Information about the recording process can be found here: [https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/201362473-Local-Recording](https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/201362473-Local-Recording)

Recordings will be recorded locally and saved directly to a password-protected computer (i.e., not on the cloud). Audio and video files will be deleted immediately after they have been transcribed.

**Transcription:** Transcripts are written documents that were originally presented in a different form. In the present study, your transcript refers to a written account of your interview.

When your interview is transcribed, any potentially identifying information (e.g., names, workplaces) will be removed. Transcripts will be password protected and stored locally on the researcher’s computer.

We are committed to protecting your privacy and will treat the data we collect as completely confidential. To ensure confidentiality, each person who takes part in the study will be assigned a unique participant number, which will be used to identify your data (i.e., your data will not be linked to your name or Prolific ID number).

**Right to withdraw:** Your participation in this study is entirely voluntary. At any point during the study, you have the right to not answer certain questions, or to withdraw without penalty.

If you have completed Part 2 (i.e. an interview) and wish to withdraw your data, please contact the researcher through the Prolific platform. This will not affect your compensation for participating in Part 1, nor your compensation for participating in Part 2 (i.e. interview). Please note that because of the anonymous nature of the interaction, withdrawal from the study is not possible after two weeks following your interview.

This study has been cleared by the Carleton University Research Ethics Board-B (CUREB-B Clearance #117588).

**Statement of consent (verbal consent)**
Do you have any questions about this study or need any clarification?

Do you voluntarily agree to participate in the study? Yes_______ No_______

Do you agree to be audio recorded? Yes_______ No_______
(Note: Audio recordings are not optional to participation)

Do you agree to be video recorded? Yes_______ No_______
(Note: Video recordings are optional to participation)

Date: ______________________
Participant’s Initials: ______________________
Appendix F

General Interview Questions to Send Participants in Advance of Interview

The following represents a general outline of the questions that may be touched upon during the interview. Importantly, please note that due to timing considerations, as well as how the conversation is unfolding, some questions may not be asked, while some variations of other questions may be posed.

1. **Background Information**

   Please tell me about yourself:
   How old are you?
   Where are you from?
   Where are you employed? What do you do there?
   How long have you been employed?
   Do you enjoy your current position?
   Is your employment set aside for people with disabilities?

2. **Disability Information**

   What is the nature of your disability?
   Do you consider your disability to be visible or invisible?
   Have you disclosed your disability to others (including those at work)?
   How do you talk about your disability to others? For example, how do you define “disability”? How does it factor into your identity?

   Do you identify with other underserved/marginalized groups?

3. **Mistreatment Information**

   Have you experienced mistreatment at work? Please provide examples if you are willing.

   Do you perceive that this mistreatment was related to your disability? If so, do you think it was one of many factors, or the predominate factor?

   How were you affected by this mistreatment? Did you experience any personal outcomes / consequences (for example to your health)? Did you experience any work-related outcomes / consequences (for example productivity)?
Appendix G
Interview Guide

Intro & Consent

Thank you for your participation. Before we continue, I wanted to go over the criteria for this study one last time.

Can you confirm that (1) you identify as a woman, (2) you identify as having a neurodivergent or physical disability, (3) you are between the ages of 18-29, and (4) you currently be employed in the workforce.

In this interview, I am interested in hearing about your experiences with workplace mistreatment. More specifically, I will be asking you to provide examples of mistreatment you’ve experienced, as well as the personal and work-based outcomes of that mistreatment.

With your permission, I would like to audio-record this interview. I will also be taking notes as we talk. Only my supervisors and I will have access to these recordings and the interviews will be transcribed. I will be recording our conversation locally on my computer (that is, not in the cloud). As soon as possible, I will transcribe our conversation. Once our conversation is transcribed, I will delete the audio file. When your interview is transcribed, any potentially identifying information that you provide (e.g., names, workplaces) will be removed. The transcription will be saved locally on a password-protected computer, and I will password protect the document, as well. Any files will be saved identifying you with a unique participation number, so it will not be able to be matched to your identity (for example, via your name. We will retain this transcript for five years, after which it will be destroyed).

Do you have any questions about your data privacy?

Your answers will be confidential, and your identity will be protected. If you are uncomfortable answering any questions, please let me know and we can skip them.

Do you have any questions for me before we begin?

Do you wish to continue with the interview?

[Turn audio recording on]

1. Ice Breakers

So, to start off, please tell me about yourself
a. How old are you?
b. Where are you from?
c. Where are you employed? What do you do there?
d. How long have you been employed?
e. Do you enjoy your current position?
f. Is your employment set aside for people with disabilities?

2. Disability status

At this point, I would like to talk to your more about your disability, if you are comfortable doing so.

What is the nature of your disability? (Probe: Can you say a little more about that?)

Do you consider your disability to be visible or invisible?

Have you disclosed your disability to others (including those at work)?

How do you talk about your disability to others? For example, how do you define “disability”? How does it factor into your identity?

Do you identify with other underserved groups (marginalized)?

3. Mistreatment

I mentioned that our research is aimed at better understanding the personal and work outcomes of workplace mistreatment. Have you ever experienced any type of mistreatment at work?

- Can you describe a specific situation that stands out to you as mistreatment?
- Have you experienced mistreatment like this more than once?
- Do you perceive that this mistreatment was related to your disability? If so, do you think it was one of many factors, or the predominate factor?
- How did this mistreatment make you feel?
- Are there other examples of mistreatment that you’ve experienced, that may differ in important ways, from that which you’ve just described? If so, please explain.

4. Outcomes- Ask about all the following:

Do you feel as though your __________ was impacted as a result of mistreatment? If yes, can you explain in what way(s).

Personal Outcomes of Mistreatment
- Emotional / Psychological well-being
- Attitudes – about yourself / your life (e.g., confidence, life satisfaction)
- Attitudes – about others (e.g., specific people, people in general)
- Physical health
- Academic performance
- Relationship with family / friends
g. Other?

Work Outcomes of Mistreatment
   a. Productivity
   b. Engagement / Participation
   c. Relationship with coworkers / bosses
   d. Level of responsibility
   e. Attitudes about work (e.g., expectations)
   f. Has this experience resulted in you taking action (or thinking about taking action) to find another job? Why or why not?
   g. Other?

Closing Down
   • Is there anything else you think I should know about your experience of mistreatment in the workplace?
   • Is there anything you want to discuss further, any concerns about the information you shared?

Thank you for participating in this study, do you have any questions for me? Please feel free to email me with any questions that may arise or with any additional information.

• Verbal debriefing / indication they have been emailed written debriefing (which contains contract information and support resources)
Appendix H
Written Debriefing for Participants

Purpose of the study

This study focuses on understanding the outcomes of mistreatment for young adults with disabilities. The researchers are interested in learning about the specific personal and work outcomes that are associated with mistreatment.

Where can I learn more about dealing with mistreatment in the workplace?

Ontario: Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development

Workers Health & Safety Center
https://www.whsc.on.ca/Resources/Publications/Workplace-Violence-Resources

What can I do if I found this study emotionally draining or if I would like to talk to someone about my experiences of mistreatment?

If you are feeling negative emotions, you can contact the Crisis Help Line 1-800-233-4357 (international and toll free). You may also wish to consult some of the following:

Resources for Specific Disabilities
https://naric.com/?q=en/content/resources-specific-disabilities

Mental Health Support in the United States
http://mhanational.org

Mental Health Support in Canada

Finally, if you live in either Canada or the U.S., you may also find a list of local helplines through the following website: www.befrienders.org.

Who can I contact to learn more from this study or to voice my concerns?

Audrey Hodgins (M.A Candidate, Department of Psychology, Carleton University, E-mail: AudreyHodgins@cmail.carleton.ca)

Dr. Kathryne Dupré, Ph.D. (Associate Professor, Department of Psychology, Carleton University; E-mail: Kathryne.Dupre@carleton.ca, Phone: 613-520-2600 ext. 6026)

Dr. Angela Dionisi, Ph.D. (Associate Professor, Sprott School of Business, Carleton University; E-mail: Angela.Dionisi@carleton.ca, Phone: 613-520-2600 ext. 3134)
Should you have ethical concerns with the research, please the Carleton University Research Ethics Board via email at ethics@carleton.ca.

If you are raising issues or concerns, please use the study’s ethics approval number (provided by the Carleton University Psychology Research Ethics Board-B; CUREB-B Clearance #117588).

**What if I want to withdraw my information?**
You can withdraw your data until two weeks after we have completed the interview process. If you have completed an interview and wish to withdraw your data, please contact any of the researcher through email. There will be no penalty for doing so. Please note that because of the anonymous nature of the interaction, withdrawal from the study is not possible after two weeks following your interview.

*Thank you for taking part in this research.*
Appendix I
Analytic Memo Example

April 7th, 2023

So far, 7 out of 11 interviews have been coded (Caroline, Denise, Nicholas, Katie, James, Philippe, Jordan). Today, I am reading over those interviews (again) and writing down my general thoughts. In the coming weeks, I will write down more specific thoughts on each interview.

A lot of participants seem to be in a different position than at the time of mistreatment, whether at the same company (moving up) or at a new workplace. On this note- some participants were unable to move up because of their disability.

Mistreatment made some people worker harder, almost like they felt they had to prove themselves and like they didn’t belong in their current position. But for some others, the mistreatment made them work way less (withdrawal). Interesting to read about both sides. Participants seemed to push through the job with the mistreatment as long as they could.

Participants are not shy to share person details about their disability and detailed experiences of mistreatment. They seem thankful and happy about the opportunity to share their experience. Overall, participants don’t want their disability to define who they are as a person. They want it to be a small part of who they are as a whole.

Seems like the main mistreatment experience comes from people who hold power positions (e.g., boss or supervisor). Mistreatment from coworkers or customers does happen, but not as prevalent. Get-togethers not work related- seem to be a common theme that participants who have experience workplace mistreatment do want to attend because of mistreatment. Participants struggled with keeping a relationship with the person or people that were the source of mistreatment.

People spend most of their days/weeks at work... coworkers and bosses become like a second family. I can see how being mistreated in this environment can have a major impact. A lot of mental health outcomes!

Participants don’t seem to go out of their way to talk about or disclose disability in the workplace. Does not seem like participants who disclosed disability were offered many accommodations to help their work days go smoother.

On a more positive note- most participants seem to be doing really good now.