THE EFFECT OF WORKPLACE BULLYING AND SEXUAL HARASSMENT ON COUNTERPRODUCTIVE WORKPLACE BEHAVIOR
A STUDY ON BANGLADESHI PRIVATE BANKS

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ABSTRACT

Purpose : The objective of this article is to identify the relation of sexual harassment and workplace bullying with the counterproductive workplace behavior in the field of private banking sectors of Bangladesh among the female employees.

Methodology: This article is based on various popular and academic literature reviews and an application of structural equation modeling (SEM) (AMOS-16) was used to generate the result. This is a quantitative approach.

Findings: workplace bullying and sexual harassment are considered as two of the major causes of counterproductive workplace behavior. Due to this problem associated within the organization employees' tent to suffer from various physical and mental disorders, however after survey it was found that workplace bullying is prevailing in the banking sector and generating a strong counterproductive workplace behavior among the employees specially female employees.

Research limitations: This article is based on only the female employees of different private banks in Bangladesh. The numbers of respondents are 110.

Practical implications: Banks and other corporate can have the knowledge that the female employees are suffering from workplace bulling more than sexual harassment. By acknowledging the problem they can address the solution and can built the better working environment.

Originality: lack of knowledge regarding sexual harassment and workplace bullying on the counterproductive workplace behavior can lead to turnover problem. In Bangladesh there were works on garment industry but there is a dearth of research in the banking sector, so this paper can generate the idea regarding the problem and can solve the issue.

Paper type: Research paper

1. INTRODUCTION

Hostile and apathetic behaviors in the workplace have been carried out tremendously now-a-days. The terms used to recognize these unwelcome behavior at work are explained in different journals by different researchers such as: workplace bullying (Einarsen, Hoel & Notalaers, 2009), workplace deviance (Bennett & Robinson, 2000), incivility (Anderson & Pearson, 1999), workplace violence and workplace aggression (Baron & Newman; 1996) etc. Workplace bullying and sexual harassment is severe in the workplace. For bullying and sexual harassment employees tend to suffer from various mental disorders like depression, frustration, anxiety, and demoralize. Sometimes they can express their problems to their managers and at other they choose to ignore or suppress the matter. In a study among business professionals, Salin (2001) documented that 8.8% of participants reported being bullied occasionally, 1.6% of the participants reported being bullied once per week, while 30.4% of the participants said they have observed bullying in the workplaces.

Workplace bullying takes place irrespective of color, race, gender, nationality, creed and religion of workers involved, as Gardner and Johnson (2001) said, "bullying pass beyond race, religion, or sex" (p.25). The information of workplace bullying and harassment within the workplace is not being addressed by many managers as there may not be any quick remedial actions or punishment system. Sexual harassment is also very alarming in the organizational behavioral perspective. This paper will examine the possible disparate outcomes by victims of sexual harassment and workplace bullying. Sometimes the organization has to face financial demerge for the problem. According to the United States Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC, 2011), harassment charges averaged $30989 per incident in 2010, which is all time high; this came into a dramatic increase of approximately 18% from 2006 to 2007.

In Bangladesh the issue of sexual harassment and workplace bullying is relatively new. While there have been some studies done in this regard in the context of ready-made garment industry (Paul Majumder and Begum, 2000, p. 26), there is a dearth of such studies conducted among the workers employed in the banking sector of Bangladesh. Banking industry in Bangladesh has witnessed a steady increase of female workers. There are almost 47 private commercial banks in Bangladesh (Banking Diploma Examination) and here lots of female employees' are working. According to a Bangladesh Bank (BB) data, around 13.08% of women work at entry level in the banking industry, but less at mid-level 8.58% and 4.44% work at senior management level In the banking sector, about 15.57% of women employees are there in the below-thirty age group. The percentage of female Board Members totaled came to only 9.73% in 2011.

The aim of this study is, therefore, to gain an insight into the nature of workforce harassment as experienced by the executives. Specifically, the study wishes to examine whether workplace bullying and sexual harassment have any impact on the counterproductive workplace behavior as displayed.

The paper is classified as follows: after a through introduction, a fleeting literature review regarding the topic at hand and development of study hypotheses are presented. Then it is followed by the methodology that includes sample size, sampling technique, measurement instruments and data analysis procedure. Next, findings of the study are highlighted where Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) is used to test the study hypotheses. A brief discussion and implication of research findings are then provided. The paper is then concludes with a few suggestions for possible areas of future studies.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Workplace bullying

Workplace bullying consists of methodical negative behaviors inflicted over time that force targets into a position where they feel unable to secure themselves causing harm to the target (Einarsen et al., 2011).Workplace bullying was defined by Gardner an Johnson (2001) as, "regular and importunate psychological harassment involving condemnation and humiliation".. Einarson et al. (1994) observed that "bullying and harassment at work is a consequential problem".(p.382). As leaders enjoy a great deal of power they may expedient to bullying tactics on others toward their own personal gains which as argued by Adams and Crawford (2009). These happen because those at the top have more authoritative power finding it easy for them to abuse their power in the name of organizational efficiency. As a result leaders become a supporter of the negative activities. Brodsky (1976) reported, "bullying in the work setting requires at least acquiescence by management"(p.84). A bullying problem may take different forms such as work overload, intimidation, work sabotage, recrimination etc. Slide (2009) suggested much like childhood bullies on school compounds, these days managers take recourse to devious and covert tactics submit to their whims and intentions".(p.90). Bullied victims usually do not get any unbiased support from senior leaders when they make bullying complaints. Ferris (2004) wrote that, " when the bullied employee contacts his/her organization for help to address the situation there may be risks involved in approaching an organizational representative for help. The representatives may side with the bully, dismiss the concern, or threaten the employee who complains"(Ferris, 2004,p.389). This is also shared by Namie and Namie(2003) who consider workplace bullying as "repeated, mischievous, health-endangering mistreatment of target employee."(p.3).

According to the works of Frost (2003) and Kulik et al. (2009), Cowan and Fox (2015) position bullying as one of the "toxins" human resource personnel (HRP) are expected to manage and resolve. Successfully addressing bullying complaints is essential both to resolve the instant situation and to diminish the likelihood of future cases. However, many HRP find managing a complaint of workplace bullying to be one of the most demanding aspects of their role (Harrington et al., 2012). With exceptions (e.g. Cowan, 2012; Fox and Cowan, 2015; Harrington et al., 2015), there is little research investigating the role and experiences of HRP when managing a complaint of workplace bullying. As Harrington et al. (2015) write, little is known about how HRP respond to an actual complaint of workplace bullying.

According to the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH-1996), "bullying refers to reiterated, unreasonable actions of individual or group directed toward an employee or group, which is intimidate and create a risk to the health and safety of the employees (p.1). Sometimes the organizational competition increases the bullying activity. When employees are rewarded for individual work and not team work, this may give rise to bullying". Comer and Vega (2005) wrote " bullying by colleagues may be the result of competition among co-workers for advancement and promotion"(p.106). Leymann (1990) stated that" bullying comes from a desire to get at a person or punish him/her"(p.121). Moreover, the act of bullying "can act as an organizational cancer eventually killing the entire organization"(Harvey et al.,2006, p.3).

2.2. Sexual harrasment

According to Title vii of the Civil Rights Act (1964), sexual harassment involves "unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature"(p.349). Although numerous definitions of sexual harassment have been proposed, Louise Fitzgerald and her colleagues' contribution has been particularly influential in our understanding of this research and is widely accepted in current research, they said that sexual harassment represents any "unwanted sex-related behavior at work that is appraised by the recipients as offensive, exceeding her/his resources, or threatening her/his well-being"(Fitzgerald, Swan, & Magley, 1997, p.15). On the other hand we can say that, sexual harassment in workplaces is largely superfluous and therefore unpleasant and, as such, deemed harassing. Hoel and Einarsen worked on hospitality industry and they found that, sexual harassment is a persistent workplace problem in the hospitality industry (Hoel and Einarsen, 2003), where female workforces are often sexualized (Wijesinghe, 2009) and power structures explicit (Kensbock et al., 2015).

As this study is conducted on female employees and there are several studies on violence against women advocate that malfunction to fulfill with sexual norms is often seen as a menace to men's dominance, resulting in verbal and even physical sexual harassment (Fineran and Bennett, 1999; Parish et al., 2006; Nyamhanga and Frumence, 2014). Social psychologists have also originate that the main purpose for harassment is not about sex, it is about power – a display of hostile attitudes toward a subtype of women who challenge traditional male dominance (Glick and Fiske, 1996; Glick et al., 2000; Siebler et al., 2008). Contrary to popular belief that sexual harassment is primarily an issue for women, past research demonstrated that the frequency and extent of sexual harassment among men have been underestimated (Richman et al., 1999; Rospenda, 2002). In 1994, survey results obtained from the USMSPB (1994) indicated that 44% of women and 19% men reported that they were at receiving end of some form of unsolicited sex related attention for two preceding years. Sexual harassment creates negative emotions to the

employee. To maintain the healthy working environment supervisors should be careful about the issues. Sexual harassment severely affects organizational commitment, task withdrawal, contentment with work and resignation. Estrada and Berggren (2009) found that sexual harassment is negatively related with job satisfaction, workgroup efficiency and organizational commitment.

2.3. Counterproductive Workplace Behavior

The damage caused by internal CWBs to an organization has been fully identified in theoretical and practical studies (Pilch and Turska, 2015). CWBs refer to individual behaviours that are exhibited in precise situations and are harmful to the organisation or individual; therefore, work situations such as corporate culture are crucial variables of CWBs (Treviño et al., 2006; Sulea et al., 2015).

Counterproductive Work Behaviors recently attract the interest of researchers. Researchers are now focusing on quality and quantity of work. These behaviors that do not conform to managerial principles are injurious to the organization and unfavorable to its operations (Kuo et al., 2014). They are trying to find out the behavior that is related to job performance. These work behaviors can be conceptualized as task, organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) and counterproductive work behavior (CWB; Lievens, Conway, & Corte, 2008; Rotundo & Sacktett, 2002). From the past research, Rotundo and Sackett (2002), described OCB as "behavior that contributes to the goals of the organization by contributing to its social and psychological environment (p.69). Contrary to this form of behavior is CWB, which is defined as volitional behaviors directed at both the individuals and the organization, in effect putting the organization and its members in harm's way(Gruys & Sackett 2003). Hollinger and Clark (1982) proposed that CWB can be separated into two independent categories which are termed as property deviance and production deviance.

Spector et al. (2006) introduced five specific forms of CWB: abuse towards others, production deviance, sabotage, theft and withdrawal. Dunlop and Lee (2004) in their analysis they shed some light on the extent to which the effective operation of a business unit is attributed to OCB and CWB at the individual level. The author proposed that non-task behaviors (i.e. OCB and CWB) complemented task related behaviors in contributing to the effective functioning of a business unit. Counterproductive work behavior causes a huge damage to the organization. Organization should be careful about CWB and should apply formal and informal controls to align employee behaviors to organizational goals. This paper focuses on how sexual harassment and workplace bullying encourage employee to engage in counterproductive work behavior.

3. DEVELOPMENT OF RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

For conducting this study two exogenous variables contemplated are: sexual harassment and workplace bullying, while the endogenous variable is the counterproductive work behavior. The two hypotheses developed for this study has been discussed below:

3.1. Sexual harassment and counterproductive workplace behavior

Studying harassment in the workplace is important because of the many negative consequences associated with it. For example, different forms of harassment have been shown to result in stress reactions, health complaints and lower job satisfaction (Fitzgerald et al., 1997; Mikkelsen and Einarsen, 2002). Workplace harassment can take many different forms. Although sexual harassment has received much attention in US literature, some studies have indicated that other forms of generalized workplace harassment are even more common (Richman et al.,1999).

Although a number of studies have been conducted concerning the prevalence of sexual and psychological workplace harassment (see, e.g. Ilies et al., 2003 and Zapf et al., 2003 for reviews) and factors increasing the risk for different forms of harassment (see, e.g. Hoel and Salin, 2003; Pryor and Fitzgerald, 2003 for reviews), we know little about organizational responses to these problems. In Bangladesh sexual harassment is existing in banking sector and for the harassment employees shows various types of counterproductive behavior in the workplace. It can, therefore be hypothesized as:
H1: Sexual harassment increases the tendency of counterproductive behavior.

3.2. Workplace bullying and counterproductive workplace behavior

Although the work environment is supposed to be safe and conducive to productivity and efficiency, this may not to be so in many cases. As the globalized world expands, so too does the expansion of leadership roles. However, many leaders do not have the time to adequately manage a large staff. Senior leaders may be aware that some managers are not operating in an ethical manner. The leaders may overlook the unethical activities because the supervisor or manager is considered to be a productive person within the organization. Sometimes the employee who has been suffered from bullying problem they tried to do some counterproductive workplace behavior like remaining absent from the workplace, theft the resources, misuse the property, damage of the work files. It can thus be inferred as:

H2: workplace bullying has the effect on employees in engaging counterproductive workplace behavior.

4. METHODOLOGY

In order to accomplishing this study, first, a survey questionnaire was developed. For the questionnaire development, few issues are considered, such as, employees consciousness and understanding about sexual harassment and workplace bullying, their experiences relating to sexual harassment and bullying, how frequently they have been bullied, etc. The instrumentation of the measurement items for the two exogenous variables, namely, workplace bullying and sexual harassment and the one endogenous variable, i.e. counterproductive workplace behavior was based on the extensive literature .The questionnaire was then subject to reviews for content validity by the academicians and practitioners highly experienced in this regard. The final questionnaire was thus revised that contained 21 items, with each exogenous variable containing 7 items, and the endogenous one 7 items. A five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree) was used to obtain the opinions of the respondents regarding the measurement items of the variables.

Regarding the sample size as chosen for this study, it adheres to the suggestion that the number of respondents should be at least five times the total number of measurement items constituting the study variables (Hair et al. (2010). Since the total number of such items stands at 21, a total number of 105 respondents would be adequate. With this view in mind, 150 survey questionnaires were distributed to the target respondents working in the banking industry of Bangladesh.

Data input was done in SPSS version 15.0 to perform the descriptive analysis of the demographic attributes of the respondents and the reliability analysis of the study variables. Structural equation modeling was performed using AMOS 16.0 to test the hypotheses developed for this study.

5. FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

Out of the total 150 questionnaires' distributed, 110 questionnaires are returned that aggregates to a response rate of 73%. Prior to conducting various analyses, data screening is done to address the few missing values in the survey questionnaires. This section presents the descriptive and reliability analysis of the study variables, and the full-fledged structural model done by AMOS version 16.0 that highlights the results of testing of the research hypotheses.

5.1. Descriptive statistics and Reliability Measures

In order to have a consequential data interpretation, the descriptive statistics presenting the mean, standard deviation and the reliability measure of the four factors are provided in Table 1.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics and Reliability Measures

Variables	Mean (Item)	SD (Item)	Cronbach Alpha
Workplace Bullying (WB) (7 items)	3.895	0.539	0.749
Sexual Harassment (SH) (7 items)	3.817	0.578	0.791
Counterproductive Work Behavior (CWB) (7 items)	3.773	0.533	0.773

From Table 1, it is observed that the means of responses of the items representing 'Workplace Bullying, 'Sexual Harassment stand at around 3.9, 3.8 respectively, each falling below 4.0, which corresponds to "agree" in the Likert scale. This suggests that there is scope for advancement in various issues vis-à-vis these factors. As for the Counterproductive Work Behavior, the mean levitate around 3.8 implying that the employees are trying to engage in this behavior. In this study, reliability is measured using Cronbach alpha as an indicator of internal consistency among the variable items with the cut-off value of 0.7 being appropriate for SEM. As the values of Cronbach Alpha in the above table indicate, all the scales exhibit adequate internal consistency, ranging from a minimum of 0.749 for Workplace Bullying to a maximum of 0.791 for Sexual Harassment of the employees.

5.2. Confirmatory Factor Analysis

The structural equation modeling (SEM) consists of two processes: first, testing the measurement model and then the structural model. According to Kline (2010), the measurement model points to the suitability as measurement instrument of the observed indicators representing a latent variable. The adequacy of a measurement model is performed by confirmatory factor analysis (CFA). For this, three fit indices are checked to determine the fitting of the model with the data: normed chi-square, root mean square error approximation (RMSEA) and comparative fit index (CFI). The general guidelines of the cut-off values for such indices: Normed chi-square and RMSEA are to be less than 5 and 0.08, respectively, while CFI values are to be above 0.9 (Hair *et al.*, 2010). Table III presents the CFAs for the three factors or the constructs, i.e., workplace bullying, sexual harassment, and counterproductive workplace behavior. As the Table III suggests, all the three factors or the constructs have adequate construct validity with the cut-off points of all the three indices being adequately satisfied.

Table 2: Results of CFAs of the Four Factors

Goodness-of-fit statistics	Normed-Chi Square	RMSEA	CFI
Workplace bullying(WB)	1.311	0.053	0.971
Sexual harassment(SH)	1.293	0.052	0.950
Counterproductive work behavior(CWB)	1.104	0.032	0.991
Threshold values for the fit indices	**< 5.0**	**< 0.08**	**> 0.90**

5.3.   Structural Equation Modeling

The structural equation modeling (SEM) is used to test the causal effect among the main constructs of a hypothesized model (Kline, 2010). Figure 1 shows the structural relationships among the three constructs considered in this research.

Figure 1: Full-fledged Structural Model
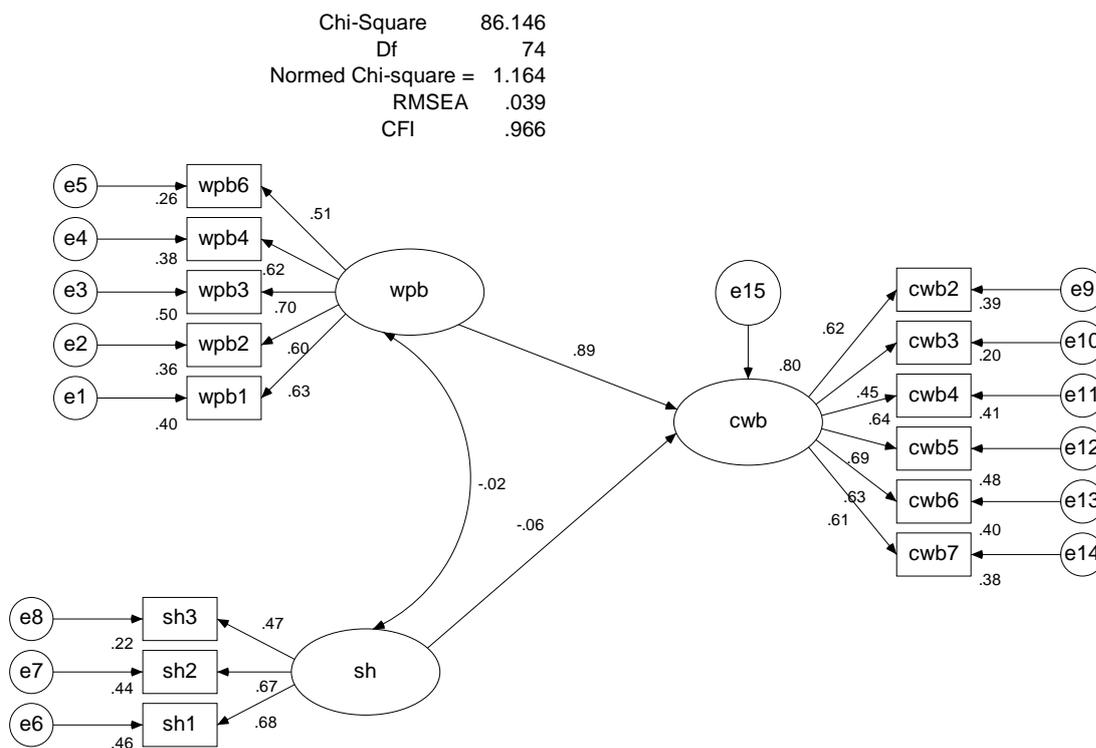
From Figure 1, it is observed that the structural model adequately fits with the sample data as all two fit indices meet their threshold values with normed- chi square and RMSEA falling well below 5.0 and 0.08 respectively, and CFI with a value of above 0.90. Besides, the constructs exhibit adequate convergent validity as all the loadings have values of above threshold point of 0.45. From Table 2 and Figure 1, it is observed that two path co-efficients, namely, wpb→cwb prove to be statistically significant at p < 0.001, while the other one, i.e., SH→Cwb does not. It can, therefore, be inferred that in this study, the hypotheses H2 (workplace bullying has the tendency to increase the counterproductive workplace behavior), (wpb …..cwb) is supported. The hypothesis, H1 (Sexual harassment increases the tendency of counterproductive behavior), [SH→CWB], is not supported by the model (Table 3).

The model in Figure 1 demonstrates that workplace bullying exerts a much higher influence (0.89) than that (-0.06) of sexual harassment on the counterproductive work behavior. The combined effect of these two accounts for 80% of the total variance in counterproductive work behavior by the employees.

Table 3: Regression Weights: (Group number 1 - Default model)

		Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P	Result
Cwb <---	Wpb	.914	.186	4.921	.001	Supported
Cwb <---	SH	-.039	.071	-.553	.581	Not Supported

6. DISCUSSIONS, IMPLICATIONS AND SUGGESTION FOR FUTURE WORK

Most of the respondents in this study are between 25 to 36 years which is around 74 % of total sample size. The population structure of Bangladesh is very much consistent because the large number of population belongs to age group of 20 to 40. Results of this study did not provide support for the predictions derived from the harassment-CWB link. Specifically, it was found that SH was not associated with CWB while workplace bullying is affecting the employee a lot.

Based on results of this study, it can be proposed the following managerial implications for reference or use by practitioners. First, the experimental outcome showed that bullying in the workplace can draw out behaviors that are harmful to the organization. Therefore, businesses should place primary importance on preventing workplace bullying. They must create a friendly work environment that establishes anti-bullying behaviors as a part of the organizational culture so that they are decisively entranced in the minds of each employee. The manager should also careful towards the emotional exhaustion which is has the direct relationship with the bullying and CWBs. Every organization should create a biasfree work environment so that the female employee can work freely. This study can contribute the organizations as well as the managers for their understanding about workplace bullying and sexual harassment and its impact on counterproductive workplace behavior. The managers then can ensure that this type of unwelcomed behavior would not happen in the organization. The organization could also take measurement to prevent the physical and mental damage of the victim and also can provide the psychological support for them. The sample used in this study was especially pertinent to this area of research since job incumbents would have more frequent and direct exposure to the specific work-related events presented in this study.

Though the findings obtained from this study contribute to the literature on workplace harassment, workplace bullying and CWB, this study has certain limitations that warrant further discussion. Most of the previous research was done on the consequences of workplace bullying and sexual harassment, only fewer research was there, which focused on the relation between workplace bullying and counterproductive workplace behavior. In this study it was found that, there is a less sexual harassment in the organization and more workplace bullying. The result is consistent with the result of Peng, Y. C (2016).

However, this study has some limitations as well that need to be addressed; first the data was collected from only the female employees of some selected private banks of Bangladesh. The number of respondent could be higher, as this study employed on only 110 employees. The paper was based on only Bangladeshi private banks, whereas there are some public banks prevailing in the country. The study is longitudinal survey this could be the cross-sectional one. This is done by using Structural Equation modeling (SEM), whereas it could be done with some other statistical tools. Regarding the application of SEM there is no mediating variables; in future the mediating factors like emotions, engagement, and performance could be employed. There is some other industry like leather, garment, poultry, medicine the survey could be done on those industries as well.

Indeed, the lack of support for the proposed hypotheses provides floor to question the psychometric qualities of the research design. However, the fault of the matter may simply lie in the sample selection for the study. Drawing from the organizational support theory, employees are more likely to engage in work behaviors that are in line with the interest of the organization if they perceive their work climate to be supportive and conducive in fulfilling their individual needs (Eisenberger et al., 1986). In this context, the appropriate research sample would be a large sample size of predominantly female respondents who are recruited from organizations that supports high levels of employee interaction as part of their work culture. Nonetheless, the findings of this study have provided preliminary insights into the harassment-CWB link and bullying-CWB link which may guide future research in developing and refining research designs for divert sample

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