

## **Organization based Self-Esteem as a Mediator between Workplace Bullying, Work Performance and Turnover Intention**

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Bullying in the workplace implies severe organizational and social concerns. This study examines the association among Work-Related Bullying (WRB), Person-Related Bullying (PRB), Work Performance (WP) and Turnover Intention (TOI) mediated by Organization Based Self-Esteem (OBSE) on the personnel working in banks in Karachi, Pakistan. 150 banking employees of Allied Bank and Askari Bank were asked to respond through survey. Structural Equation Modelling was applied using AMOS Software for Mediation Analysis. The data analysis showed that OBSE mediated the association among Person-Related and Work-Related bullying and TOI. Work-Related bullying and Person-Related bullying and OBSE did not affect Work Performance. It can be understood that Workplace Bullying has demoralized effects on an employee and therefore is a firm predictor of an employee's Turnover Intention.

*Keywords:* Person-Related Bullying, Work-Related Bullying, Work Performance, Turnover Intention

Workplace victimization indicates the repetitive maltreatment of workers, which includes being disgraced, threatened, or harassed to the point that it affects one's performance at work (Kohut, 2007). This has potential cost to both the employees and the organization itself. Some practices or decisions in the workplace may not look fair, but are not bullying. Manager is permissible to shift, demote, order, advise, tighten your belt or sack you which will not count in bullying. Harmful things are not controlled by the person under attack, and possibly will lead to a turn down in worker self-esteem and a change in a manageable way of life (Kohut, 2007).

Many studies differentiate between Person-Related and Work-Related Bullying. WRB includes, giving excessive workloads or deadlines to an employee. PRB often includes distasteful behavior such as impoliteness, ridicule, spreading gossips, and playing practical jokes

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against someone (Kohut, 2007; Lutgen-Sandvik & Namie, 2009; Bashir & Hanif, 2011; Georgakopoulos, Wilkin, & Kent, 2011; Yahaya et al., 2012; Tariq & Ali, 2012; Bano & Malik, 2013).

Various organizations are aware of the need to change the way of life of their organizations and clarify rules and policies to keep their employees secure from bullying (Bashir & Hanif, 2011). Workplace bullying affects others negatively, tending to reflect oppressive behavior towards the weak ones, intimidate them and even include physical harassment, all these stands under the definition of bullying. To avoid such circumstances in a workplace, there should be a healthy environment between managers and employees and also between coworkers. To prevent bullying from an organization, a manager must implement certain rules and policies. Re-posting system must be made sure in case of such acts. Training and workshops should be held to educate how to deal such situations and people (Bashir & Hanif, 2011).

This study relates to WRB and PRB with Work Performance and TOI via OBSE. Workplace bullying has become an overall concern for many administrations. This research is concerned with bullying, finger pointing, gossips that employees face while doing work that end up being harassment to them.

The symptoms of bullying reported that employees inbred the nature of bullying through their school life being bullied at that early age and youth experience which afterward led to workplace bullying. The behavior of the bosses towards their employees may include verbal abuse, pressures, extortion, exploitation, conveying unacceptable tasks, need of support and unsuitable written warnings. This can build up aggression and reducing performance or worst case scenario increase the intention to quit the job. After addressing through this investigation, prevention of bullying can be done and the organization may offer voluntarily available support to those who have been targeted by bullying.

The motivation behind this examination is to (1) discover the connection between work environment tormenting (Work and Person Related) and worker execution (2) discover the connection between work environment harassing (Work and Person Related) and TOI (3) test whether OBSE has any job (arbiter) to play in the connection between work environment harassing (Work and Person Related), representative execution and TOI.

### **Person-Related Bullying**

Person-Related Bullying (PRB) tends to have a huge impact on workers, mental and physical condition as it can badly affect their way of life (Yahaya et al., 2012). It includes social prohibiting, spreading rumors, ignoring someone's opinions, teasing, and making inappropriate sexual advances (Bashir & Hanif, 2011; Bano & Malik, 2013). Tariq and Ali (2012) define workplace bullying as constant verbal and nonverbal violent behavior, which can include personal attacks, ostracism, and hostile communication. Lutgen-Sandvik and Namie, (2009) indicate that workplace bullying usually involves a command in impartiality amongst both groups, with the party that has been targeted by the workers find themselves unable to stop or prevent the abuse or mental torture. Workplace bullying is an issue of mental and physical well-being that is connected to but separate from other forms of bullying. PRB in the workplace emerges attacking a person's thinking, attitude, way of life or appearance, gender references, accusations of being mentally disturbed can cause depression, frustration and sometimes when he couldn't find a way to deal with these issues then he is forced to resign from his job responsibility (Kohut, 2007). Bullying usually create harmful actions which are repetitive, plus constant. (Bashir, & Hanif, 2011). Whereas it is repulsive being the aim of someone's irregular violent actions, irregular actions are not generally defined as bullying. The exception is that the threatening actions are ruthless which create fear (Anjum, Yasmeen, & Yasmeen, 2011).

### **Work-Related Bullying**

Work-Related Bullying (WRB) can contain handing over unattainable target, not possible deadline, uncontrollable workload, or pointless tasks to a member of staff. Workplace bullying eventually has a downbeat sway on the association's presentation and achievement (Yahaya et al., 2012; Bashir and Hanif, 2011). In spite of the fact that the trouble of harassing continually existed, it was not looked into until the 1970s, with specialists basically center around working environments (Tahir & Konstantinos, 2011). Tariq and Ali, (2012) identify workplace bullying as constant oral and non-verbal antagonism, which can include attack, communal exclusion, and unfriendly communication. Nobody is to stand the bullying at the workplace though if you're the sufferer, and not the so called isolated witness, it gets hard to manage with such manners, particularly when policies haven't been put in position by an organization (Tariq & Ali 2012). These unethical actions may be linked

to sexual category; creed, races, cast and dwelling of the victim worker. Bullying can crop up by face, in writing (by email) or call. The bullying actions undermine the self-assurance and self-respect of the victim worker (Needham, A. (2003).

### **Work Performance**

Work Performance is a primary aspect of any organization (Khan, Azhar, Parveen, Naeem, & Sohail, 2012) and entails effectively accomplishing an assigned task, depending on the normal constraints of resources (Dar, Akmal, Naseem, & Khan, 2011). In this circumstance, the consequences of workplace bullying (low enthusiasm, absence, high income, and low Employee's performance) are accountable to affect Work Performance (Anjum et al., 2011).

Georgakopoulos et al. (2011) discovered that organizational cultures can exaggerate workplace bullying when employers do not understand the problem or boost it as a form of tough management and it directly affected the performance. According to Samnani (2013), most shared forms of bullying in the workplace are uncertain and complicated to identify. They studied the role of targets' attributions to identify the association between workplace bullying and employee performance. A study by Quine (2001) indicated that employees who had been threatened, reported important effects on their level of performance, apprehension, sadness, and tendency to give up.

In the same way, Einarsen, Hoel, Zapf, and Cooper, (2003) found that bullying affects employee's performance, psychological and physical diseases, credible discharge from the labor marketplace, high absenteeism of employee, low commitments and output, high revenue and TOI. As a type of emotional argument, bullying has negative impact on the representative's exhibition. Then again, not at all like factors, for example, inconvenience, nonattendance, awful wellbeing, income, between others makes it difficult to decide clearly the effect of tormenting on the representative's presentation as laborers may do their work regardless of whether they are harassed. The literature on bullying inarguably suggests that it has a great impact on a worker's performance (Einarsen, et al, 2003).

### **Turnover Intention**

TOI refers to the self-terminating objective of an employee (DeTienne, Agle, Phillips, and Ingerson, 2012). Management finds TOI among employees to be a very critical issue (Chen, Lin & Lien, 2010). In

another study organization-based self-esteem was studied with four dimensions of commitment and TOI. Their study reflected a significant negative association between OBSE and TOI (Panaccio, & Vandenberghe, 2011).

### **Organization based Self-Esteem**

Organization based self-esteem (OBSE) demonstrates an employee's assessment of his or her private efficacy and distinction as an organizational member and the self-appreciate worth that person have of themselves as organizational members performing within organizational surrounding. Employees with high OBSE are stable in the faith that they are loyal and valuable in organization members (Pierce & Gardner, 2004). Due to organization based self-esteem employees feel comfortable and confident about themselves, they are more satisfied with their jobs and bring enhancement in their jobs, due to the organization based self-esteem they became more cooperative, they feel that they can make a difference within the organization and they are taken seriously (Pierce & Gardner, 2004; Gardner, Van Dyne & Pierce, 2004).

Chen et. al, (2016) investigated Organization-based self-esteem (OBSE) as a mediator among contextual factors such as, promotion, social support, stress, job satisfaction with the turnover intention. It was concluded that, social support, job satisfaction affected turnover intention directly and indirectly via OBSE. Panaccio, and Vandenberghe, (2011) examined the relationship between role clarity and OBSE with four dimensions of organizational commitment and turnover intentions. Results revealed that role clarity was significantly related to all 4 dimensions of commitment and the affective and high-sacrifice dimensions were related to turnover intentions. Wu, Lyu, Kwan, and Zhai, (2019) examined the role of OBSE as a mediator and the role of traditionality as a moderator. The results demonstrated that OBSE mediates the positive association between mentoring quality and proactive behavior. Several recent studies have used OBSE as a mediator such as (Haider, Pablos Heredero, & Ahmed, 2019; Zhang, & Liu, 2019; Sholikhah, Wang & Li, 2019).

Researcher highlights a negative relationship between OBSE and turnover intentions. Employees who believe they are valuable to the organization and capable do not consider quitting (Pierce & Gardner, 2004). Payne (2007) examined the relationship between OBSE and organizational dissent. Findings suggested that individuals with higher

OBSE expressed dissent more as compared to the individuals with low OBSE. Lower OBSE was linked to latent dissent indicating that individuals with lower OBSE do not feel valued which affects their communication at work.

### **Theoretical Framework and Hypotheses Development**

In addressing the conceptual framework discussed in this study, we have applied the Affective Events Theory (AET) developed by Weiss and Cropanzano (1996) as a theoretical reference. According to the AET, work environment or events affect work attitudes via cognitive and affective path, which in turn affects the work behaviors such as job satisfaction and turnover intentions (Glasø, Vie, Holmdal, & Einarsen, 2010). Work environment includes daily hassles as well as uplifts which leads to affective reactions, work attitudes and behaviors (Glasø, et al., 2010). AET does not specify the work events or environments that create negative or positive affective reactions. Few studies have investigated the negative events of bullying caused by power imbalances, incentives, organizational changes, restructuring as well as role conflict, interpersonal conflicts, tyrannical and laissez-faire leadership (Johan Hauge, Skogstad, & Einarsen, 2007) which affect job satisfaction and turnover intentions. In accordance with these findings, one can say that Workplace Bullying is a significant work event which impacts Performance and Turnover Intentions of individuals mediated by OBSE. This study investigates that how Workplace Bullying may reduce Work Performance and increase Turnover Intention through Organization based Self-Esteem as shown in Figure 1. Figure 1 presents the Organization based self-esteem (OBSE) as a mediator in the study.

### **Hypotheses**

H1: Person-Related bullying indirectly reduces Work Performance via lower OBSE

H2: Work-Related bullying indirectly reduces Work Performance via lower OBSE

H3: Person-Related bullying indirectly increases Turnover Intention via lower OBSE

H4: Work-Related bullying indirectly increases Turnover Intention via lower OBSE

Hypotheses 1 and 2 tests the mediation of Organization based Self-Esteem (OBSE) between Workplace Bullying and Performance.

Hypotheses 3 and 4 tests the mediation of OBSE between Workplace Bullying and Turnover Intention.

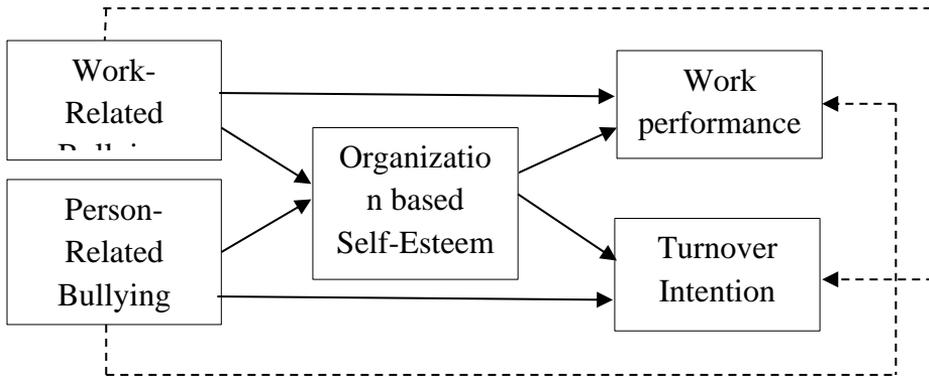


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework of Organization based Self-Esteem (OBSE)

## Methods

### Sampling

The target population for this study consisted of the employees in the banking sector of Pakistan. The sample of this study was drawn from two banks of Karachi: Allied Bank and Askari Bank. The data were collected from one city; i.e. Karachi. 84 branches of Askari banks are there in Karachi (Askari Bank Limited, 2015); while 112 branches of allied bank in Karachi (Guidepk, 2017). Systematic random sampling was used and 5% sample size was taken from each bank type which is 4 branches of Askari and 5 branches of Allied banks were used in the sample. Within these 9 branches, convenience based sampling of individuals was done keeping in mind that the individuals are non-managerial employees in order to assess the effect of bullying amongst them. The data were collected from 150 individuals from these 9 branches of 2 banks. Questionnaires were delivered and the final data set was 100. Fifty respondents were omitted from the data set because of missing responses, questionable patterns of responses (e.g. Selecting 3 for all the responses) and few did not return the survey.

**Inclusion criteria.** The Inclusion criteria, while recruiting participants for this study, considered banking officers having at least one year of tenure on the job. Respondents who are in the beginning of their career (junior employees; cited by Quine, 2003) have more experiences with Work-Related and Person-Related Bullying as compared to those

who are in their later years of job because they are not stable and are trying to maintain a firm position in their jobs.

### **Measures**

Survey method was adopted to collect the primary data. The survey was based on a structured questionnaire and questions were closed ended. The survey consisted of 29 questions being divided in their respective variables which were truly related to the dimensions of Work-Related and Person-Related Bullying and their impact on worker's performance via organization based self-esteem was conducted in these banks of Karachi. The questions on Work-Related and Person-Related Bullying and Work Performance was taken from Yahaya et al (2012) and Hussain and Aslam (2015). Work-Related bullying consisted of 7 items, sample item includes, "I am assigned an impossible workload"; Person-Related Bullying consisted of 7 items, sample item includes, "I am deliberately ignored or excluded" while Work Performance consisted of 2 items, sample item includes, "I completed the assigned tasks in the given time". Organizational based Self Esteem Scale was taken from Pierce, Gardner, Cummings, and Dunham, (1989) and it consisted of 10 items, sample item includes, "I am important" Turnover Intentions consisted of 3 items scale developed by Cummann, Fichman, Jenkins, and Klesh (1979), the sample item includes, "I often think about quitting". All the questions were measured on a Likert scale from 1 being strongly disagree to 5 being strongly agree. Person-Related Bullying (PRB) had a reliability of 0.556 with 4 items, 3 items were excluded because of low reliability. The reliability of Work-Related Bullying (WRB) for all 7 items was 0.605. Work Performance (WP) had reliability of 0.642. Organizational based Self Esteem (OBSE) had a reliability of 0.935 and Turnover Intention had a reliability of 0.876.

### **Results**

Table 1 shows the sample characteristics of the bankers; 75 were males while 25 were females. Out of 100 respondents; 36 respondents aged 25 or less, 45 respondents aged between 26 to 30, 25 were aged between 31 to 35 while 5 respondents aged between 36 to 40. 40 respondents had less than 1 year of experience, 31 had experienced between 1 to 3 years, 19 had experienced between 3 to 5 years while 10 had experience of more than 5 years.

Mean, standard deviations, reliability and correlations are reported in Table 1. To test all the hypotheses, Structural Equation

Modelling (SEM) was carried out. Mediation was tested using Amos 18. Work Performance only had two items and they were not loading in the model and were found to be insignificant, therefore Work Performance was removed from the entire model, therefore hypotheses H1, H2 were rejected in the study.

Table 1

*Descriptive Statistics and correlation of the study variables.*

Variables	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5
PRB	3.6314	.52052	-				
WRB	3.3157	.66490	.515**	-			
OBSE	3.9090	.81527	0.077	0.124	-		
WP	4.2650	.57496	-0.008	-0.059	0.044	-	
TOI	2.1333	.96632	-0.144	-.216*	-.552**	-	-
						0.019	

*Note: PRB=Person-Related Bullying; WRB= Work-Related Bullying; OBSE=Organization Based Self-Esteem; WP=Work Performance; TOI=Turnover Intention;  $p < 0.05$ \*;  $p < 0.01$ \*\**

### Structural Equation Modeling

Analyzed the mediation effect of OBSE using the analyses of Hayes (2013). The Structural equation modelling was done twice, first with PRB, OBSE and TOI and secondly with WRB, OBSE and TOI. When the mediated model of PRB, OBSE and TOI was conducted, it was found that there is a direct effect between Person-Related Bullying (PRB) and Organization based self-esteem (OBSE) (path a), estimate (-0.960) and  $p = 0.053$ . The direct effect of OBSE on TOI (path b) was strongly significant with the estimate (-0.659) and  $p$  value 0.001. The direct effect (path c) of Person-Related Bullying (PRB) on Turnover intention (TOI) was found to be insignificant (unstandardized coefficient = 0.400 and  $p = 0.385$ ). The indirect effect (path ab) of PRB on TOI via OBSE was significant (estimate=0.633) and  $p = 0.039$ . Further, the total effect (path  $c' = ab + c$ ) was found to be insignificant (estimate = 0.232). Thus, it can be concluded that there is full mediation and PRB impacts TOI via OBSE in this study thus hypotheses H3 is accepted. Figure 2 shows the structural equation modelling where OBSE is taken as a mediator between PRB and TOI.

When the mediated model of WRB, OBSE and TOI was conducted, it was found that there is a direct effect between Work-Related Bullying (WRB) and Organization based self-esteem (OBSE) (path a), with (estimate=-0.611) and  $p=0.010$ . The direct effect of OBSE on TOI (path b) was strongly significant with the estimate (-0.437) with  $p=0.003$ . As the OBSE increases, TOI decreases. The direct effect (path c) of Work-Related Bullying (WRB) on Turnover intention (TOI) was found to be significant (estimate= 1.192 and  $p=0.002$ ). As WRB increases, TOI also increases among employees. The indirect effect (path ab) of WRB on TOI via OBSE was significant (estimate=0.267) and  $p=0.006$ . Further, the total effect (path  $c'=ab+c$ ) was found to be significant (estimate= 1.459).

Thus, it can be concluded that there is partial mediation and WRB impacts TOI via OBSE in this study thus hypothesis H4 is accepted. Figure 3 shows the structural equation modelling where OBSE is taken as a mediator between WRB and TOI.

Table 2 shows the summary of Hypotheses for all the mediated models which shows that work performance was not significant. OBSE has a full mediation between Person-Related bullying and Turnover Intention. OBSE has a partial mediation between Work-Related bullying and Turnover Intention.

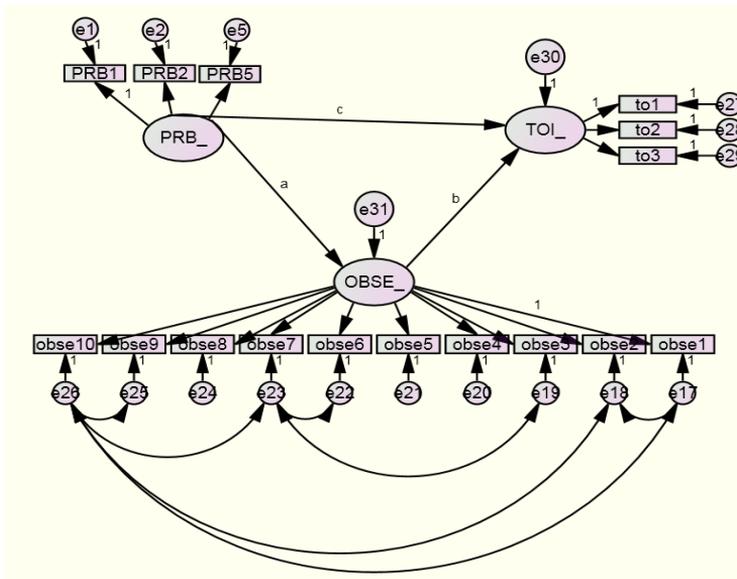


Figure 2. Structural Equation Model OBSE, PRB and TOI



that Person-Related and Work-Related Bullying increases job insecurity. Moreover, low self-esteem of the victims was caused by workplace bullying by the perpetrators who had high self-esteem.

### **Limitations and Future Research**

The limitation of the study includes the sample size which is small for generalizing this study and its results across other banks. Although, it is not uncommon to investigate based on relatively small sample sizes, because it reduces the statistical power of the model and study being conducted. It is important that the effect size should be greater for the results to be generalized to the targeted population. These small samples may produce biased estimates identified by (Ferguson, 2009). This will ensure that the results serve as a parameter to understand the phenomenon under study. Findings from these small samples must be interpreted with caution and confidence interval along with p values must be reported as well. An appropriate sample makes the research more efficient and reliable, which otherwise might affect the validity of the study (Faber, & Fonseca, 2014). Last of all, one of the main limitations was the names of the employees which were asked in the questionnaire. Employees will not be honest, even if have a turnover intention because their answers are not anonymous.

Future studies on OBSE and Bullying might take into account variables like leadership style or personality models such as Big 5 personality model or Myers Briggs Type Indicator. Also, using bigger samples would provide valuable knowledge too. Also, the differences between managerial and non-managerial staff might add more value to the existing subject knowledge.

Workplace bullying increases turnover intention and if such a vicious circle exists in the organization, then it will affect the future of organizations. Future research must critically re-examine this issue in a longitudinal study. The longitudinal study will clarify if the effect of bullying increases or dissipates over time. Also, it will help to understand which strategies reduce or have no effect between this link.

### **Conclusion**

In light of these results, management should develop and implement policies that allow people to report instances when they feel like quitting due to workplace bullying. HR departments should set a detailed policy that employees can use to report bullying in terms of a chain of command, and especially when and how to bypass the chain

when the bully is the victim's manager. Human Resource (HR) department must also train and educate employees about the nature of bullying and how to identify it as a victim, witness or observer. Such whistleblowers must be protected by the organization and forms must be created to report a formal grievance by the victims involved in such events.

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