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Impact of bullying on work motivation and job satisfaction

BACKGROUND

The purpose of this study is to investigate the impact that bullying has on the levels of work motivation and job satisfaction experienced by employees. It would be helpful if we could provide both private firms and the government some concrete ideas regarding bullying. According to the findings of this study, bullying does not have an effect on the degree to which workers are satisfied in their jobs or motivated to work.

PARTICIPANTS AND PROCEDURE

Participants in this study are employees in Indonesia who have been bullied while they were on the job. Researchers utilized a non-probability sampling technique using a purposive sampling strategy. The number of samples used in this study was 400 respondents. This research used a technique called purposive sampling, which involved collecting data from a total of 400 different respondents. Quantitative methods are utilized in the processing of the data.

RESULTS

The findings of this study come as a surprise due to the fact that they contradict the findings of earlier studies, which found that harassed employees do not have a direct impact on the job satisfaction and motivation of their co-workers.

CONCLUSIONS

The results of this research provide both an academic and a practical perspective that can be used to assist organizations in eliminating bullying issues. This research has implications that regardless of the results of this study, bullying must become a company concern to make strict rules for bullies and education about bullying for all employees.

KEY WORDS

bullying; work motivation; job satisfaction

BACKGROUND

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Every day, employees may be harassed and intimidated at work. Whether it is by colleagues, superiors, management and even HR, it depends on the company where they work. As we look back, the term "bullying at work" was used in the early 1990s to describe a phenomenon that was rather widespread but largely ignored, despite the fact that it had very serious implications for the health and safety of workers and businesses. At that time, it was common knowledge that employees were subjected to high levels of stress as a result of the continuous and recurring instances of intimidation and demotion that were a part of their day-to-day life and which they found difficult to cope with (Galanaki & Papalexandris, 2013).

Because of its increasing prevalence and the negative impact it has on those who are bullied, workplace bullying has been recognized as an issue on a global scale (Ansoleaga et al., 2019). Although decades of research document that workplace bullying negatively impacts their jobs, bullying continues to be a global problem (Etienne, 2014).

According to research conducted by the Workplace Bullying Institute, difficulties related to bullying in the workplace affect roughly one-fifth of all employees at some point during the course of their employment. The majority of employees, over 75%, have reported being affected either as targets or witnesses (Leticia, 2022). According to the results of a study conducted by Monster.com in 2019, almost 94% of 2081 workers indicated that they had been bullied while on the job. The most common ways that respondents reported being bullied at work were receiving hostile emails (23.3% of respondents), being subjected to bad coworker gossip (20.2% of respondents), and having someone yell at them (17.8%) (Robinson, 2019).

According to the information presented above, one conclusion that can be drawn is that bullying in the workplace constitutes a breach of the psychological contract between the company and its employees. This is due to the fact that the company is unable to protect its employees from being bullied at work and cannot guarantee a certain level of quality in the working environment. Because they lower the overall quality of work life in the workplace, these behaviors can also be seen as a breach of contract committed by a disrupter against the organization (Galanaki & Papalexandris, 2013).

Bullying at work occurs when an employee is subjected to negative actions by members within the organization or members of another organization, often and over a long period, in such a way that the target is unable to defend himself against these actions or to escape from the situation (Einarsen et al., 2017). Sometimes they may not even realize they are being disturbed until the process has been going on for some time (Chipps et al., 2013). The collateral damage, on the other hand, is that victims report lower welfare, lower job satisfaction, and higher stress levels than other employees who are not harassed (Power et al., 2013). Additionally, the organization experienced poor employee productivity (Gardner et al., 2016).This research has several objectives and novel aspects. First, this study provides a theoretical contribution by referring to the development of the conceptual model developed by De Cieri et al. (2019), which focuses on outcomes related to bullying. Second, this study aims to provide a methodological contribution to fill gaps from previous research (Van Heugten, 2013; Woodrow & Guest, 2014). Previous studies that examined the implementation of human resource management (HRM) and outcomes related to bullying used a qualitative case study method. Instead, we use a quantitative approach with many respondents. In addition, the data source of this research is different from previous research, which focused on the health industry, while this research focused on private sector employees (Ling et al., 2016; Yokoyama et al., 2016). Finally, research on bullying is expected to provide practical recommendations for policy makers in private companies and the government regarding bullying.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Bullying. The repeated act or practice of harassing, offending, or socially isolating someone or negatively affecting a person's work duties in a setting where the person affected has difficulty defending themselves is known as bullying in the workplace. Bullying can also be referred to as workplace harassment (Galanaki & Papalexandris, 2013; Lahelma et al., 2012; Woodrow & Guest, 2014). Even Chipps and Samnani maintain that bullying in the workplace is a deliberate and continuing occurrence, and not just an isolated incident (Chipps et al., 2013), between specific employees in an organization (Samnani et al., 2015).

It is now well acknowledged that bullying in the workplace is a pernicious aspect of the modern workplace that can have long-term negative implications not just for the victim of the bullying but also for the business (Akella, 2016). The consequences of bullying in the workplace are stress reactions, substance abuse, sleep problems, stress, and general and mental health problems (Ansoleaga et al., 2019; Van Heugten, 2013). When victims of bullying are assaulted, it will generate low job satisfaction, absenteeism due to illness, and eventually, low productivity and work performance in the workplace. This is another component of the problem (Galanaki & Papalexandris, 2013; Robert, 2018). Consequenc-

es for the organization include higher absenteeism and motivation to resign (Power et al., 2013). In addition, there was a correlation between bullying in the workplace and worse levels of job satisfaction, intention to leave the profession, and lower quality of care in research conducted on nurses (Yokoyama et al., 2016).

The use of criticism, claiming credit for the work of others, creating excessive workloads, imposing impossible deadlines, assigning work that is meaningless, taking credit for the work of others, setting excessive workloads, and shirking responsibility are all examples of work-related bullying (Chipps et al., 2013). Bullying encompasses a wide range of behaviors, such as forcing a victim to change their view or decision, attacking victims in a hostile or malicious manner, and overtly flaunting one's rank and authority. It manifests itself in the form of excessive supervision, unjust criticism, improper evaluation of one's performance, and obstruction of promotion opportunities. In addition to this, it entails ignoring the victim and not responding to their phone calls, notes, or emails (Akella, 2016).

Work motivation. Work motivation is a person's encouragement or desire to work well and achieve the desired work goals. Work motivation is very important because it can affect one's productivity, job satisfaction, and performance at work (Hakim, 2011; Murty & Hudiwinarsih, 2012). Here are some factors that can motivate someone at work (Siagian, 2014): Reward and recognition: people tend to feel motivated when they feel valued and recognized for their efforts and accomplishments at work. Challenges: new challenges and challenging assignments can provide a motivational boost for someone to achieve their work goals. Development opportunities: opportunities to learn and develop on the job can provide motivation for a person to continuously improve their skills and knowledge. Positive work environment: a positive work atmosphere, where the working relationship between employees is good and team support is present, can increase employee motivation and performance. Influence from others: support and encouragement from colleagues or superiors can provide additional motivation for a person to achieve their work goals. Personal satisfaction: achieving personal goals or feeling that the work being done is meaningful or makes a significant contribution to society or the environment can provide additional motivation. Everyone can have different motivational factors, and it is important for organizations to understand what motivates their employees and build a work environment that supports their motivation (John et al., 2012; Murty & Hudiwinarsih, 2012; Siagian, 2014).

Job satisfaction. Job satisfaction is a person's level of satisfaction or happiness towards his work. Job satisfaction can affect employee productivity, per-

formance, and retention in the workplace (Toropova et al., 2020). People who are satisfied with their jobs tend to be more motivated, more dedicated and more productive at their jobs (Kong et al., 2018).

Here are some factors that can affect one's job satisfaction (Dhamija et al., 2019): Salary: the amount of salary received by employees can affect their job satisfaction. Work environment: a pleasant, clean, safe and comfortable work environment, as well as good working relationships with colleagues and superiors, can affect one's job satisfaction. Development opportunities: opportunities to learn and develop on the job, such as training and career development, can influence job satisfaction. Recognition and rewards: recognition and rewards for work performance and efforts of employees can affect their job satisfaction. Challenges: challenges at work can provide encouragement and motivate a person to continue developing and improving their work skills. Free time: adequate free time and flexibility in work schedules can affect one's job satisfaction. Contribution: feeling that the work done makes a significant contribution to society or the environment can also influence job satisfaction. Everyone can have different job satisfaction factors, and it is important for organizations to understand what makes employees feel satisfied and build a work environment that supports their satisfaction. Thus, employees will feel happier, motivated and dedicated in carrying out their duties (Chandani et al., 2016; Hoboubi et al., 2017).
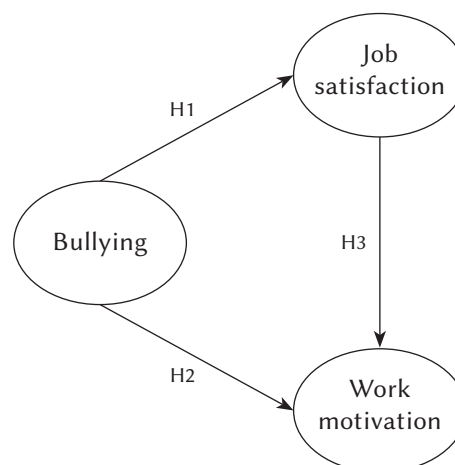
HYPOTHESIS

H1: Bullying affects job satisfaction.
H2: Bullying affects work motivation.
H3: Job satisfaction affects work motivation. See Figure 1.

Figure 1

Research model

PARTICIPANTS AND PROCEDURE

PARTICIPANTS

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The investigation was carried out in Indonesia due to the fact that Indonesia was ranked among the top five nations that had the highest incidence of bullying (Liswijayanti, 2020). The research was conducted between September 2022 and January 2023. This study employed a quantitative approach, employing a questionnaire and structural equation modeling. This study's participants are Indonesian workers who have encountered workplace bullying. The researchers utilized a non-probability sampling technique using a purposive sampling strategy. The number of samples used in this study was 400 respondents. This is an ideal sample size for using structural equation modelling (SEM), ranging from 200 to 400, where SEM relies on tests sensitive to sample size and magnitude of differences in covariance matrices (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016; Yamin & Kurniawan, 2009). Using Google Forms, we distributed the study instrument, which was in the form of a questionnaire, to the respondents. Following that, the Lisrel 8.8 application was utilized in order to accomplish the aforementioned goal. The items were measured using a Likert scale with five points, from 1 (*strong disagreement*) to 5 (*strong agreement*) (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016). Based on the suggestion from Hair et al. (2014) and Yamin and Kurniawan (2009), if the value of *t* is more than 1.96, then H0 is rejected; however, if the value of *t* is less than 1.96, then H0 is not rejected.

PROCEDURE

This investigation's questionnaire consisted of 26 questions, each of which was responded to and returned by the individuals who participated in the research. On September 1, 2022, the university's office of study ethics gave its official blessing to the ethical conditions that had been met for this study in order to receive its permission. It is the responsibility of the division to ensure that the permission form sufficiently communicates the aims of the study, encourages individuals to engage voluntarily, and safeguards the confidentiality of their responses in whatever way possible.

RESULTS

DISTRIBUTION OF THE RESPONDENTS

The distribution of respondents is shown in Table 1 depending on their social standing as well as their demographic characteristics. A total of 272 (68%) of the responders are male, while approximately 128 (32%) are female. In addition, 218 (55%) of the respondents are married, whereas approximately 182 (45%) of them do not have a partner.

Similarly, the age range of respondents ranged from 26 years for 83 (21%) of them, 26-30 years for 148 (37%) of them, 31-35 years for 165 (41%) of them, and 36-40 years for only 3 (1%) of them. In addition, 68 people reported having completed their education up to the level of a high school diploma, 1 person completed their education up to the level of a diploma, 328 people completed their education up to the level of an undergraduate degree, and 3 people completed their education up to the level of a graduate degree.

VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY

Convergent validity is examined by analyzing the importance of loading individual items by the *t*-test presented in Table 2, where 15 statements are invalid and must be discarded because the *t*-value is below 1.96. At the same time, construct reliability is assessed by examining the reliability of each construct as measured by the CR and AVE values in Table 3. The results from Table 3 show that all constructs are reliable because the CR value is more significant than

Table 1

Distribution of the respondents concerning their social status

Profile	Frequency	Percent
Sex		
Male	272	68
Female	128	32
Marital status		
Married	218	55
Single	182	45
Age		
< 26	84	21
26-30	148	37
31-35	165	41
36-40	3	1
Level of education has been completed		
High school	68	16
Diploma	1	1
Undergraduate	328	82
Graduate	3	1

Table 2

Convergent validity on each variable in terms of a t-value and standardized solution

Construct	Indicator (Likert scale 1-5)	*t*	Standardized loading factors	Adapted from
Bullying	My opinion and views are ignored.	11.46	0.65	(Kwan et al., 2020; Yahaya et al., 2012)
	I am given responsibilities that have targets or deadlines that are ridiculous or unachievable.	5.07	0.30	
	I am overly monitored for my work.	9.58	0.55	
	I am pressured not to claim things I am entitled to.	6.80	0.40	
	I got scolded for no relevant reason.	8.86	0.51	
	I get blamed when someone else is at fault.	7.43	0.43	
	I was talked about behind my back.	6.54	0.38	
Work motivation	My wage is sufficient to take care of all of my day-to-day requirements.	0.00	0.27	(John et al., 2012)
	The company gave me adequate rest time for 1 hour.	4.42	0.42	
	I have good health insurance.	4.80	0.57	
	I was given a guarantee that would cover my senior years by the corporation.	4.53	0.45	
	When it comes to doing my task, my employer is always encouraging me and helping me find answers.	4.60	0.48	
	It's always fun to collaborate with my coworkers.	4.81	0.57	
	Employees that excel in their work are lauded by their supervisors.	4.57	0.47	
	The company recognizes the contributions of its most dedicated workers with prizes.	4.74	0.54	
	The company allowed me to be creative at work.	4.60	0.48	
	Training opportunities are made available to employees of the organization in order to help them achieve better achievements in their employment.	4.65	0.49	
Job satisfaction	I am pleased with the opportunities that exist for me to progress in my work.	0.00	0.36	(Abaasi, 2016)
	Those employees who excel in their work and have a positive impact on the company as a whole stand a better chance of moving up the corporate ladder.	5.88	0.52	
	My manager is great.	6.31	0.64	
	My superior does not take into account the feelings of the people that work for him.	−3.80	−0.24	
	When it comes to getting his or her task done, my supervisor demonstrates a level of competence that is acceptable.	5.47	0.44	
	My job is enjoyable.	6.10	0.57	
	I enjoy the challenges that come along with my professional responsibilities very much.	5.84	0.51	
	They provide a benefits plan that is equitable for all of their staff members to take advantage of.	6.00	0.55	
	It is not fair that we do not have access to some benefits that we should have.	−3.70	−0.23	

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0.7, and AVE is greater than 0.5 (Hair et al., 2014; Yamin & Kurniawan, 2009). Overall consistency with the hypothesized model was evaluated utilizing fit indices from many families of fit criteria such as *p*-value for RMSEA, PNFI, CFI, IFI, AGFI, and GFI. The research model fit test results showed that this model has a good fit value.

HYPOTHESIS TESTING

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Figure 2 shows the significance level of the effect of the independent variables (bullying) on the dependent variable (job satisfaction and work motivation), known from the *t*-value. The *t*-value results are then recapitulated in Table 4.

Table 3

Construct reliability

Construct	CR	AVE	Decision
Bullying	1	0.99	Reliable
Work motivation	1	0.97	Reliable
Job satisfaction	1	0.98	Reliable

Note. Model fit indices: *p*-value for RMSEA = 0.88, PNFI = 0.71, CFI = 0.98, IFI = 0.98, AGFI = 0.95, GFI = 0.97.
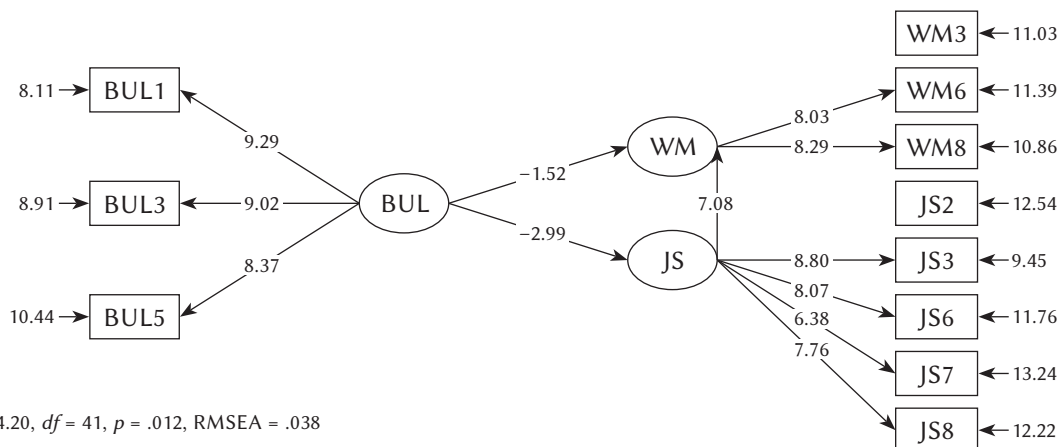
Figure 3 shows the magnitude of the influence of one independent variable (bullying) on the two dependent variables (job satisfaction and work motivation) which are known from the value of the standardized solution. The results of the standardized solution are then recapitulated in Table 4.

Table 4 displays the findings of the investigation that supported hypothesis 1, bullying does not affect job satisfaction (*p* = .201); hypothesis 2 shows that bullying does not affect work motivation (*p* = .125); hypothesis 3 shows that work motivation affects job satisfaction (*p* < .001).
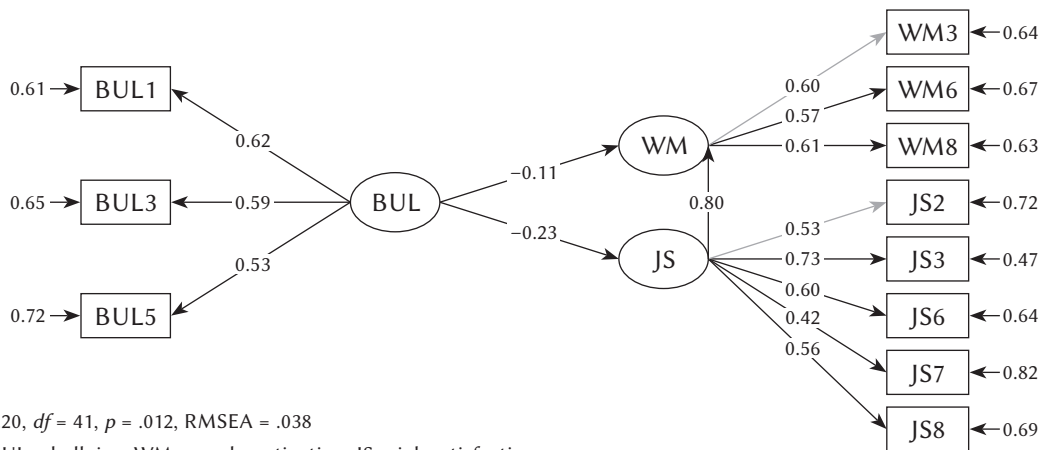
DISCUSSION

According to the findings of the first hypothesis, bullying does not have an effect on one's level of pleasure in one's employment. This result is startling and contradicts what was found in earlier research, which showed that when victims of bullying are targeted, it will generate low levels of job satisfaction, create absenteeism due to illness, and eventually create low levels of productivity and work performance (Galanaki & Papalexandris, 2013; Robert, 2018). The subsequent effect is that victims have a lower quality of life, a lower level of job satisfaction, and a higher level of stress than other employees who are not bul-

Table 4

Causal relations between variables

No.	Path	β	*t*	*p*	Significance
1	Bullying → Job satisfaction	−.11	−2.99	.201	Not significant
2	Bullying → Work motivation	−.23	−1.52	.125	Not significant
3	Job satisfaction → Work motivation	.80	7.08	< .001	Significant

Figure 2

Structural model (t-value)

χ^2 = 64.20, *df* = 41, *p* = .012, RMSEA = .038
Note. BUL – bullying; WM – work motivation; JS – job satisfaction.

Figure 3

Structural model (standardized solution)

χ² = 64.20, *df* = 41, *p* = .012, RMSEA = .038
Note. BUL – bullying; WM – work motivation; JS – job satisfaction.

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lied (Power et al., 2013). Continuing the results of the first hypothesis, it also aligns with the second hypothesis, where bullying does not affect work motivation. The results of this study are certainly not in line with the consequences for the organization such as higher absenteeism and motivation to resign due to bullying (Power et al., 2013; Yokoyama et al., 2016).

The results of the author's analysis are that even though employees are bullied at work, they are used to being bullied from their childhood. Our analysis aligns with research conducted by Einarsen et al. (2017), where victims who have been bullied for a long time cannot defend themselves against these actions or escape from the situation. Sometimes they may not even realize they are being disturbed until the process has been going on for some time (Chipps et al., 2013). Furthermore, UNICEF data for 2020 show that 45% of children aged 14-24 have experienced cyber-based bullying (Utami, 2022). Research conducted by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) as part of the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) in 2018 contributed to the improvement of our analysis as well, which revealed that as many as 41.1% of students in Indonesia said they had experienced bullying (Kasih, 2021). Our second analysis is that victims of bullying want to prove that they want to be successful to their competitors. Our analysis is in line with several phenomena of victims of bullying which show their existence and show that they do not dampen their motivation and want to prove that they are successful (Belinda, 2020).

The results of the third hypothesis show that job satisfaction affects work motivation. These results align with previous studies where the satisfaction experienced by employees at work creates motivation (Galanaki & Papalexandris, 2013; Robert, 2018). Forms of motivation that arise from employees due

to satisfaction include low absenteeism, no intention to switch and to improve employees' quality of work (Power et al., 2013; Yokoyama et al., 2016); however, the results of our study did not show the effect of bullying on job satisfaction and work motivation. Bullying at work seriously impacts organizations because it reduces the likelihood of achieving company goals with low job performance. In addition, psychologically safe organizations are organizations that are free from bullying and harassment. Therefore, a strong strategy must exist to eradicate the immoral phenomenon of bullying in the workplace to get optimal results from the organization's employees (De Cieri et al., 2019; Etienne, 2014). Negligence against bullying in the workplace can interfere with an employee's personal and professional life (Robert, 2018).

Furthermore, continued bullying is extremely detrimental to physical and mental health (Gardner et al., 2016). Organizations have the ability to implement a number of policies, the first of which is the establishment of rules, laws, and improved organizational policies that shield workers from intimidation and look out for their best interests (Akella, 2016). The second is prevention of intimidation by providing training. Third, there is the provision of services, such as counseling services, occupational health services, bullying helplines, and a group of professional mediators (Woodrow & Guest, 2014).

CONCLUSIONS

The findings of this study come as a surprise due to the fact that they contradict the findings of earlier studies, which found that harassed employees do not have a direct impact on the job satisfaction and motivation of their coworkers. Because it has been going on for so long, bullied workers already perceive

their treatment to be the standard in the workplace; furthermore, this bullying triggers employees who are bullied into excelling. This research has implications that regardless of the results of this study, bullying must become a company concern to make strict rules for bullies and provide education about bullying to all employees. This is important for a conducive work environment and company progress. On the other hand, the impact that employees feel from their job satisfaction will drive employees to work harder once again.

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DATA AVAILABILITY

Disclosures

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