

Working Experience and Gender in Workplace Bullying and Work Engagement and Intention to Leave: a Study on Chinese Hrps

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Abstract: Workplace bullying is negative social phenomena to be reckoned with individual and organisational development. It produces grave consequences on employees' physical and mental well-being condition, as well as on cooperation's performance and achievements in the long-term. The intention to leave and work engagement are two classic consequences of workplace bullying. They are also two coping strategies victims could select when exposing to negative acts. This paper intends to research the impact of gender and working experience on the relationship between workplace bullying and the two outcomes among Chinese human resource professionals.

1. Introduction

The purpose of this paper is to examine the hypothesis of the length of working experience and gender impacts the result of workplace bullying on Chinese human resource professionals (HRPs). Workplace bullying is a prevalent research subject. At present, there are articles investigated the workplace bullying phenomenon on Chinese migrant worker, teachers, healthcare professionals, and manufacturing employees, yet Chinese Human Resource Professionals (HRPs) are untouched. HRPs answer for internal and external stakeholders' interests. Conflicting interests and continuation workload added stresses onto HRPs and increased their risks of exposing to bullying behaviours.

Workplace bullying is a negative workplace phenomenon which impacts individual, group, and organisation's well-being. Bullying at workplaces covers all aggressive physical and non-physical behaviours that direct or indirect aiming at a specific person or group of people [1]. Based on Einarsen et al. (2003), continually and escalating undesired aggressive behaviours targeting on disadvantaged groups are classified as bullying. Victims of workplace bullying usually experience individual instances of bullying repeatedly during a length of time [2]. It the most quoted and the most widely accepted definition.

Antecedents of workplace bullying range from individual personalities to differences in social backgrounds. Consequences of workplace bullying are unquestionable toxic to individual and organisational well-being. Existing researches have proved that bullying jeopardises employees' health, common physical problems are musculoskeletal disorders and eyestrain [3]. Furthermore, exposure in bullying working environment increases the risk of mental uncomfortableness [4]. Workplace bullying is one of the stressors which generate mental vulnerability conditions, like

anger, frustration, and loss of confidence [5]. Studies have shown that the level of job satisfaction positively links to work engagement and negatively links to employee's intention to leave [6]. The intention to leave is one of the most typical consequences of workplace bullying. Intention to leave is the final psychogenic condition before the actual exit action [7]. It is a positive correlation between the intention to leave and the possibility of final turnover, and an unequivocal linkage between the intention to leave and the commitment [8], loyalty, and motivation [9]. As the first paper to examine workplace bullying on Chinese HRPs, test the intention to leave and work engagement are suitable for this research.

Gender differences is a worldwide hot topic. All countries promote gender equality as a solution to resolve gender differences; however, the prejudices against women in the workplace still exist [10]. Report states that male HRPs have more promotion opportunities and female employees are disadvantaged at gender pay-gap. Chinese females are encouraged to find a stable job and be a nice lady toward all others instead of being workaholic and competitive by traditional Chinese culture [11]. This paper will control gender as a moderator to test its impacts on workplace bullying and the chosen consequences. Another moderator is working experience. Prior researches have proven that age is a critical influencer to workplace bullying. Employees age between 35-44 reported a higher risk of exposing to workplace bullying compares to the age group of under 25 and over 45 [12]. Specify to HRPs in China, HR is an industry with low entry requirements and a shorter average of working length. Since working experience is strongly positively related to age, this paper uses working experience as the second moderator to examine the causality of workplace bullying and its consequences.

2. Methods

As above discussed, age and gender are partial related to workplace bullying and its outcomes. This paper aims to test the relationship among all factors.

Hypothesis 1a: longer years of working experience reduce victims' intention to leave when exposing to workplace bullying

Hypothesis 1b: longer years of working experience lower victims' work engagement when exposing to workplace bullying

Hypothesis 2: females have a lower intention to leave (a) and lower work engagement (b) than males

Hypothesis 3: females present lower intention to leave (a) and lower work engagement (b) than males under workplace bullying

Samples were only targeted at age 18 and above Chinese HRPs with more than one year of working experience. Sample data collection design was processed by online questionnaires distributed by the author and gatekeepers' social networks. Measurement scales are retrieved from well-developed and well-studied instruments. The Negative Acts Questionnaire - Reversed was employed to measure the degree of bullying behaviours at workplaces. The intention to leave scale employed Cammann's 1979 scale. The Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES) was employed to test employees' level of commitment [13]. Participation was voluntarily and anonymously collected online.

3. Results

The total number of responded questionnaires was 179, 146 responses were valid. Following tables presented the result of the analysis of Chinese HRPs and findings based on the dissection of results.

Table 1 Comparison of Gender Difference on Workplace Bullying

Variable	Mean	SD	t	df	p
Workplace Bullying			1.53	63.76	0.024
Male	24.91	3.01			
Female	24.12	2.34			
Intention to Leave			1.98	63.09	0.008
Male	14.77	3.08			
Female	13.73	2.35			
Work Engagement			0.14	145	0.253
Male	63.60	19.20			
Female	63.14	16.53			

Above table was a comprehensive summary of Levene's test results. Three variables were compared with male and female, correspondingly. Statistically significant results indicated that it is significant that females receive more bullying than males, as well as females have a lower intention to leave. The difference on the average work engagement score was not statistically significant means that the discrepancy exists yet not significant enough to generate impacts on the result. On the analysis of the above table, hypothesis 2a was tested positive but hypothesis 2b was tested negative in this research.

Table 2 Moderation Analysis Of All Variables

Variable	B (95% CI)	t	p	R ²	R ² Change
Intention to Leave					
Workplace Bullying	4.67 (3.72 - 6.02)	8.34	0.00		
Working Experience	-.01 (-.04 - .01)	-1.05	0.30		
Gender	-0.16 (-.41 - .08)	-1.31	0.19		
Workplace Bullying * Working experience	-.07 (-.39 - .27)	-0.37	0.71		0.01
Workplace Bullying * Gender	-1.03 (-3.62 - 1.57)	-0.78	0.44		0.04
Variable Interaction				0.48***	
Work Engagement					
Workplace Bullying	-5.92 (-6.99 - -4.86)	-11.02	0.00		
Working Experience	0.00 (-.02 - .03)	0.24	0.81		
Gender	-.19 (-.47 - .09)	-1.36	0.18		
Workplace Bullying * Working experience	0.25 (-.05 - .54)	1.63	0.11		0.01
Workplace Bullying * Gender	0.96 (-.91 - 2.82)	1.01	0.31		0.00
Variable Interaction				0.47***	

*p < .05, **p < .01, ***p < .001

The last test was to examine the impact of moderations on the assumed relationship. Within the above table, the p values in the working experience and gender column are not statistically significant, which confirmed that neither working experience nor gender generate differences on the original correlation. The R² change explained the extent of the impact of moderators on the original relationship coefficient. It is clear that this value on the above table was not big enough to produce

differences in the outcomes. To summarize, Hypothesis 1 and 3 were not confirmed due to that moderators were proved not able to impact the relationship by this paper.

4. Value

Workplace bullying is a significant social phenomenon which requires public attention; however, it has not received reasonable awareness. No doubt that workplace bullying exists within the Chinese HR industry. Furthermore, the gender difference was partially confirmed by this study. The conclusion of female employees is not influenced more compare to males so that corroborate verdict that females are less likely to leave their jobs. This paper limited at distinguishing the gender differences on the types of workplace bullying behaviours, the analysis could not present the otherness on coping strategies (specifically refers to the intention to leave and work engagement in this paper). Other restrains within this research were primarily subjected to limited sample size. Additionally, the self-reporting system risen bias and risk of misapprehending questions. The research on the causality of workplace bullying and its consequences are well-developed, yet not very popular in China. Relating researches are extremely lacking at the HRP industry. This paper filled the gap of existing knowledge background. To further the findings from this paper, later research can focus on the gender differences on specific workplace bullying behaviours. Moreover, journals have concluded that female victims receive more verbal abuse compared to males; likewise, more likely to be unfairly treated by colleagues and supervisors[2]. Future study can employ a combined research methodology to ascertain the types of bullying behaviours each gender receives, as well as the rate of the incident of different bullying behaviours in both sexes.

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