

# WORKPLACE BULLYING OCCURRENCE IN ALTERNATIVE ORGANIZATIONAL MILIEUS



IDENTIFYING RISK GROUPS AMONG DISTINCT OCCUPATIONS FROM  
THE ORGANIZATIONAL BEHAVIOR AND MANAGEMENT PERSPECTIVE



NOEL M. MUNIZ RODRIGUEZ

DOCTORAL THESIS  
UNIVERSITY OF CORDOBA

**TITULO: *WORKPLACE BULLYING OCCURRENCE IN  
ALTERNATIVE ORGANIZATIONAL MILIEUS: IDENTIFYING RISK  
GROUPS AMONG DISTINCT OCCUPATIONS FROM THE  
ORGANIZATIONAL BEHAVIOR AND MANAGEMENT  
PERSPECTIVE***

**AUTOR: *Noel Martín Muñiz Rodríguez***

---

© Edita: UCOPress. 2017  
Campus de Rabanales  
Ctra. Nacional IV, Km. 396 A  
14071 Córdoba

[www.uco.es/publicaciones](http://www.uco.es/publicaciones)  
[publicaciones@uco.es](mailto:publicaciones@uco.es)

---





UNIVERSIDAD DE CÓRDOBA

**UNIVERSIDAD DE CÓRDOBA**

**Programa de Doctorado**

**CIENCIAS JURÍDICAS Y EMPRESARIALES**

TESIS DOCTORAL

**WORKPLACE BULLYING OCCURRENCE IN ALTERNATIVE  
ORGANIZATIONAL MILIEUS: IDENTIFYING RISK GROUPS  
AMONG DISTINCT OCCUPATIONS FROM AN  
ORGANIZATIONAL BEHAVIOR AND MANAGEMENT  
PERSPECTIVE**

**EL ACOSO LABORAL EN ENTORNOS ORGANIZACIONALES  
DISÍMILES: IDENTIFICANDO GRUPOS DE RIESGO ENTRE  
DISTINTAS OCUPACIONES DESDE UNA PERSPECTIVA DE  
COMPORTAMIENTO Y GESTIÓN ORGANIZACIONAL**

**Autor**

Noel Martín Muñiz Rodríguez

**Directores:**

Prof. Dr. D. José Antonio Ariza Montes

Prof. Dr. D. Horacio Molina Sánchez

Prof. Dr. D. Pablo Pombo González



UNIVERSIDAD DE CÓRDOBA



UNIVERSIDAD DE CÓRDOBA

Programa de Doctorado Ciencias Jurídicas y Empresariales

TESIS DOCTORAL

**Workplace Bullying Occurrence in Alternative Organizational  
Milieus: Identifying Risk Groups Among Distinct Occupations  
From the Organizational Behavior and Management  
Perspective**

**El Acoso Laboral en Entornos Organizacionales Disímiles:  
Identificando Grupos de Riesgo Entre Distintas Ocupaciones  
Desde la Perspectiva del Comportamiento y Gestión  
Organizacional**

Tesis doctoral presentada por Noel Martín Muñoz Rodríguez, en satisfacción de los requisitos necesarios para optar al grado de Doctor por la Universidad de Córdoba con mención de Doctorado Internacional, dirigida por los Drs. D. José Antonio Ariza Montes, D. Horacio Molina Sánchez y D. Pablo Pombo González de la Universidad de Córdoba.

**Los Directores: El Doctorando:**

J.A. Ariza Montes

H. Molina Sánchez

P. Pombo González

N.M. Muñoz Rodríguez



**Córdoba, Septiembre 2016 (September, 2016)**

~ ~



**TÍTULO DE LA TESIS:** WORKPLACE BULLYING OCCURENCE IN ALTERNATIVE ORGANIZATIONAL MILIEUS: IDENTIFYING RISK GROUPS AMONG DISTINCT OCCUPATIONS FROM THE ORGANIZATIONAL BEHAVIOR AND MANAGEMENT PERSPECTIVE

**DOCTORANDO/A:** NOEL MARTÍN MUÑIZ RODRÍGUEZ

### **INFORME RAZONADO DEL/DE LOS DIRECTOR/ES DE LA TESIS**

El trabajo realizado por el doctorando Noel Martín Muñiz Rodríguez tiene por objeto indagar en un tema tan complejo, a la vez que delicado y sensible, como es el acoso en el contexto laboral. Por un lado, la susceptibilidad del tema provoca que resulte extremadamente arduo obtener información válida acerca de la prevalencia del acoso, en general, y en ciertos contextos específicos, en particular. Por otro, la complejidad del asunto proviene de diferentes cuestiones metodológicas que enredan el análisis de este fenómeno, partiendo de que ni tan siquiera existe un acuerdo universal en torno a la definición de acoso laboral, aunque sí se vislumbra algo de consenso acerca de que la mejor forma de delimitarlo es como una serie de actos sistemáticamente negativos, que derivan en problemas sociales, psicológicos y psicosomáticos para el destinatario (Einarsen y otros, 2003). Así, aunque las definiciones tienden a centrarse en la persistencia y duración como criterios clave de este fenómeno, en la presente tesis doctoral se discrepa de dicha perspectiva, ya que el acoso laboral tiene un fuerte componente de naturaleza psicológica. De hecho, una condición indispensable del acoso laboral es que el acto debe ser percibido como hostil por el destinatario (Einarsen, 1999; Einarsen y Skogstad, 1996).

Pese a la dificultad que plantea el estudio de este fenómeno, el doctorando ha sabido sortear con acierto todas las trabas que ha encontrado en el camino,



demostrando una gran pericia investigadora. En este marco, y en colaboración con otros doctores de tres universidades diferentes (Universidad de Córdoba, Universidad de Sevilla y Universidad Loyola Andalucía), el doctorando ha planificado, ejecutado y concluido satisfactoriamente el trabajo correspondiente a la tesis doctoral que es objeto del presente documento.

En concreto, D. Noel Martín Muñoz Rodríguez ha profundizado, desde la perspectiva del comportamiento y la gestión organizacional, en la identificación de grupos de riesgo en diferentes sectores de profesionales (profesionales de la sanidad, de la docencia y directivos) que presentan, a priori, mayor potencial de ser acosados en sus entornos laborales.

En la valoración del trabajo del doctorando en sus aspectos de fondo se deben considerar los siguientes elementos:

1. Una revisión bibliográfica exhaustiva y meticulosa en torno al fenómeno objeto de estudio.
2. Una formulación de hipótesis clara y relevante para el avance de la investigación en materia de comportamiento organizacional.
3. Una metodología amplia, innovadora y ajustada al propósito de la investigación, así como bien enfocada hacia la demostración de las hipótesis de trabajo.
4. Una adecuada elección de variables críticas y fundamentales para el análisis de acuerdo a los objetivos perseguidos.
5. Una muestra de amplio espectro que justifica el alcance de las conclusiones obtenidas.

El correcto diseño, planificación y ejecución de esta tesis doctoral queda constatado en los resultados obtenidos por el doctorando a nivel de difusión y publicación de su labor investigadora en revistas indexadas en JCR y Scopus, así como en presentaciones en congresos de ámbito nacional e internacional. La dimensión internacional de la tesis doctoral se completa con la estancia que el doctorando realizó en el departamento de Comportamiento Organizacional del ISCTE-Instituto Universitario de Lisboa (Portugal), donde pudo contrastar su línea de investigación con la de otros autores que trabajan en el mismo campo de conocimiento.

Aunque hay otros muchos, los trabajos que se incluyen en esta tesis –y que habilitan para su defensa, todos ellos incluidos en el Journal Citation Reports–, son los siguientes:

Ariza-Montes, A., Muniz, N. M., Montero-Simó, M. J., & Araque-Padilla, R. A. (2013). Workplace bullying among healthcare workers. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 10(8), 3121-3139.

G. (2014). Workplace bullying among managers: A multifactorial perspective and understanding. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 11(3), 2657-2682.

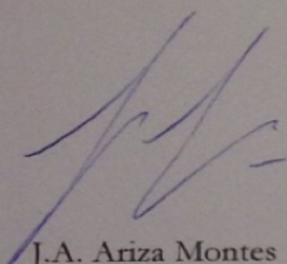
Ariza-Montes, A., Muniz R, N. M., Leal-Rodríguez, A. L., & Leal-Millán, A. G. (2016). Workplace bullying among teachers: An analysis from the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) model perspective. *Journal of Occupational and Environmental Medicine*, 58(8), 818-827.

Muniz R, N. M., Ariza-Montes, A., & Leal-Rodríguez, A. L. (2016). A purposeful approach for implementing preventive measures among European teaching professionals: Bullying, deteriorated organizational factors, and the mediating role of job dissatisfaction in poor health perception. *International Journal of Human Resource Management*, (Under second review).

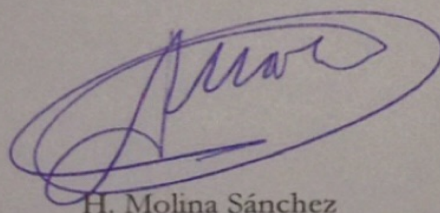
En definitiva, consideramos que esta tesis reúne los requisitos de originalidad y rigor científico necesarios y cuenta con los avales para su presentación, a fin de que pueda ser defendida ante el tribunal correspondiente.

Córdoba, 19 de Septiembre de 2016

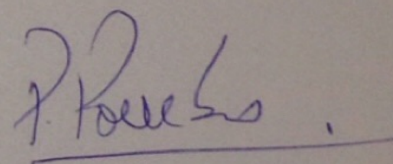
Firma del/de los director/es



J.A. Ariza Montes



H. Molina Sánchez



P. Pombo González



*To God, everyone's God, for those of whom we have nurtured from and will remain in, for our time and circumstances, for your unconditional love, for the hand in time, for our curiosity and perseverance, for the provided patience, for the causality of things, for giving us faith and hope, for being the path to all truth.*

*For putting us all here today...*

*Infinite thanks.*

~ ~



## Table of Contents

Summary -English and Spanish statements-	17
General introduction, objectives, and hypotheses	25
<b>Chapter 1. <i>Workplace bullying among healthcare workers</i></b>	39
Abstract	39
1. Introduction	39
1.1 Factors influencing workplace bullying	41
1.2 Individual factors for workplace bullying	42
1.3 Organizational factors for workplace bullying	43
1.4 Contextual factors in workplace bullying	45
2. Methods	46
3. Results	48
4. Discussion	50
5. Conclusions	52
<b>Chapter 2. <i>Workplace bullying among managers: A multifactorial perspective and understanding</i></b>	63
Abstract	63
1. Introduction	63
1.1 Power in the organization and bullying	63
1.2 Delimitation and effects of workplace bullying	64
1.3 Factors influencing workplace bullying	66
2. Methods	72
2.1 Hypothesis for modeling workplace bullying among managers	72
2.2 Empirical study	73
3. Results	76
3.1. Bivariate analysis	76
3.2. Multivariate Analysis	76
4. Discussion	80
5. Conclusions	82
<b>Chapter 3. <i>Workplace bullying among teachers: An analysis from the job demands-resources (JD-R) model perspective</i></b>	93

- Abstract .....93
- 1. Introduction .....93
  - 1.1 Workplace bullying, a heterogeneous phenomenon .....93
  - 1.2 Workplace bullying among teachers.....95
  - 1.3 Teachers’ workplace bullying from the Job Demands-Resources perspective.....98
- 2. Methods .....100
  - 2.1 Data collection and sample .....100
  - 2.2 Measures.....101
  - 2.3 Data Analysis .....102
- 3. Results .....102
  - 3.1. Measurement model .....102
  - 3.2. Structural model .....104
- 4. Discussion .....105
- 5. Limitations of the study .....108
- 6. Conclusions .....109

**Chapter 4. *A purposeful approach for implementing preventive measures among European teaching professionals: Bullying, deteriorated organizational factors, and the mediating role of job dissatisfaction in poor health perception* .....121**

- Abstract .....121
- 1. Introduction .....121
- 2. Theoretical background .....123
  - 2.1 Weighing workplace bullying on poor health perception .....123
  - 2.2 An examination of working conditions research in detrimental health perception .....125
  - 2.3 Poor job satisfaction and its effects on negative health self-appreciation at work .....127
- 3. Methods .....130
  - 3.1. Data collection and sample .....130
  - 3.2. Measures.....131
  - 3.3. Data analysis .....132

4. Results .....	133
4.1. Measurement model .....	133
4.2. Structural model .....	135
5. Discussion .....	138
6. Conclusions .....	140
<b>Conclusions and further research .....</b>	<b>153</b>
<b>JCR papers derived from the thesis project .....</b>	<b>161</b>

## List of figures

<b>Chapter 1. <i>Workplace bullying among healthcare workers</i></b> (none)	
<b>Chapter 2. <i>Workplace bullying among managers: A multifactorial perspective and understanding</i></b> (none)	
<b>Chapter 3. <i>Workplace bullying among teachers: An analysis from the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) Model perspective</i></b>	
Figure 1. Structural model results .....	104
<b>Chapter 4. <i>A purposeful approach for implementing preventive measures among European teaching professionals: Bullying, deteriorated organizational factors, and the mediating role of job dissatisfaction in poor health perception</i></b>	
Figure 1. Hypotheses of the research framework .....	130
Figure 2A. Model with direct effects (Model 1) .....	137
Figure 2B. Model with indirect effects (Model 2) .....	137

## List of tables

<b>Chapter 1. <i>Workplace bullying among healthcare workers</i></b>	
Table 1. Distribution of both bullied and non-bullied healthcare workers in their labor environments according to sociodemographic and working characteristics.....	49
Table 2. Logistic regression for factors that may determine workplace bullying (confidence intervals for odds ratios) .....	50
<b>Chapter 2. <i>Workplace bullying among managers: A multifactorial perspective and understanding</i></b>	
Table 1. Explanatory variables: coding and frequency .....	75
Table 2. Logistic regression: factors that determine workplace bullying .....	77
Table 3. Logistic regression: factors that determine workplace bullying	



(Confidence intervals for the odds ratio of Model 1) .....78  
 Table 4. Logistic regression: factors that determine workplace bullying  
 (Confidence intervals for the odds ratio of Model 2) .....79  
 Table 5. Logistic regression: factors that determine workplace bullying  
 (Confidence intervals for the odds ratio of Model 3) .....80

**Chapter 3. *Workplace bullying among teachers: An analysis from the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) Model perspective***

Table 1. Measurement model .....103  
 Table 2. Discriminant validity .....104  
 Table 3. Structural model results .....105

**Chapter 4. *A purposeful approach for implementing preventive measures among European teaching professionals: Bullying, deteriorated organizational factors, and the mediating role of job dissatisfaction in poor health perception***

Table 1. Occupational sub-group 23 (ISCO-08) .....131  
 Table 2. Variables and constructs examined.....132  
 Table 3. Measurement model .....134  
 Table 4. Discriminant validity .....134  
 Table 5A. Individual/direct statistical predictive power of DWC on PHP hierarchical ranking .....135  
 Table 5B. Individual/direct statistical predictive power of DWC on JD hierarchical ranking .....135  
 Table 6. Structural model results .....136  
 Table 7. Indirect effect assessment (VAF) .....137

# Summary

In their development, people often seek their personal fulfillment –more physical rather than spiritual-, becoming part of collectives that allow them to reaffirm their existence in society and thus satisfy, somehow, their particular expectations in life; being work perhaps, in the times we currently live, the most important facet of this individual and primordial longing. However, working environments are not always what we expect.

In our workplace converge different situations typically linked to the logic interaction between individuals; peers that, despite belonging to the same community, enjoy different ranges and functions: an authentic and unique kingdom with particular and very specific networking and organizational characteristics.

These *job characteristics* are established in any economic unit through a joint but differentiating process that distinguishes those who determine the functions to be performed from those who have to materialize them. Such functioning substantially entails a series of contingent procedures in which, by means of mechanisms and combinations of "demand control" or "effort and reward" or "demand and resources," certain impulses known as "stressors" exert their influence among those involved; giving rise to what is generally known as working conditions.

*Working conditions* therefore define the facilities or contingencies that could be found in the realization of our daily work activity. Its proper balance in the organization allows us to cultivate our capacity for learning, innovating and socializing, to name a few; however, when this balance is negatively broken on any tier of the organization, it can stimulate the emergence of certain relational tensions associated to the manifestation of abuse of power or authority, isolation and intentional exclusion, lack of support and labor solidarity, and many other forms of unfair treatment that sometimes we suffer, observe or even perform to our colleagues in the workplace, labeling them with some familiarity under the English terminology of *bullying* or mobbing.

Indeed, several types of *bullying* have been studied: intimidation, harassment, victimization, aggression, emotional abuse, and psychological harassment or mistreatment at workplace, among others; this variation in definitions may hinder the conceptualization of the workplace-*bullying* phenomenon in a more consistent way, inhibiting effective contributions among researchers and practitioners. Furthermore, *bullying* is commonly defined by its social manifestations, which are clearly classifiable under the same umbrella as aggressive behavior that generally occurs during interpersonal interactions in work settings. Regarding the extent of its manifestation, there is a strong disagreement about the prevalence of *bullying*; recent estimates range from 4%

to 5% in Northern European Countries to 15% in Southern European nations. Certain factors, such as cultural characteristics and social changes, seem to explain the variations in these prevalence rates, as do issues related to the lack of a consensual definition for the event -previously mentioned- and certain research methodologies. For instance, studies on workplace *bullying* have utilized a wide variety of measurement methods, instruments, and research designs, to the extent that it appears reasonable to consider certain methodological procedures to be biased with respect to their reported prevalence rates.

*Bullying* is undoubtedly the most perverse expression that may arise from the constant human interactions within organizations; particularly for the innumerable psychosocial risks it embodies and the harmful health effects unfortunately caused at short, medium, and long term to those involved.

Because of the exponential occurrence of workplace *bullying* in contemporary world, its research has been rated as urgent, not only in the field of organizational behavior and management, but also in arenas such as health and psychology; being supported with increasing determination by the leading governments worldwide, including the European Union.

The present doctoral dissertation, as the continuation of the research line initiated by our late professor Alfonso Carlos Morales Gutierrez at ETEA-Universidad of Cordoba's Business School in organizational behavior and revived by Professor Antonio Ariza Montes at present, proposes to study through a corpus of four JCR papers (three already published and one under second review) the potential identification of latent "*risk groups*" -in different occupational and professional populations- from the perspective of the *contextualization of subjects* in behavioral and organizational management research, evidencing the prevailing dimensions in these dissimilar organizational environments through statistical samples that include all member countries of the European Union and other Partner Nations in the region.

This thesis is divided into four chapters which contents are described succinctly below:

In *Chapter 1* are identified the determinants of workplace bullying, among *healthcare professionals*, that emerge from personal variables, working conditions, and contextual factors, singling out those healthcare workers who are prone to being bullied at work as individuals, positing that workplace bullying involves a strong psychological component in its materialization, and contributing to the development and implementation of measures to prevent bullying in the health sector. The methodology employed to accomplish the objectives for this chapter was based on the binary logistic regression model, a specific type of regression model intended for dichotomous variables; this statistical technique is used to determine the probability that an event will

happen (workplace bullying, in this case) compared to the opposite probability - that it will not happen. This research work have valuable and pertinent implications for those institutions that primordially aim to optimize the overarching organizational performance, improve the level of physical and mental healthiness among its personnel, and enthrone the harmony in the organizational interrelations.

In *Chapter 2* are studied certain determinant factors for workplace bullying appearance that might affect active *managers* in organizations. This group of professionals, with a recognized and privileged position to exercise power, is analyzed intending to identify senior and middle managers that are prone to being bullied at work as subjects, adopting the individual perspective, and contributing to the development and implementation of measures to prevent bullying in employees that hold managerial positions within organizations. The methodology utilized for the fulfillment of the research goals is grounded on the binary logistic regression model with the intention of dichotomizing the responses obtained, uncovering the odd for an occurrence to occur -to feel bullied in this case- in comparison with the contrary fact. The study findings have valuable and pertinent implications for institutions, organizations, and corporations that aim to thrive and enhance organizational performance throughout all the levels, adjusting certain working conditions that negatively affect managers who are especially susceptible of being bullied, given their personal characteristics.

In *Chapter 3*, taking into account the Job Demands-Resources model, workplace bullying is pondered as a complex phenomenon that arises due to the dynamic interactions of work stress and motivation in *teachers*. Being focused on the prediction of dependent variable – the occurrence of a *bullying* action in the workplace-, this study contributes, with substantial implications, to the procurement of preventive measures against bullying in education. In order to test the research model and hypotheses, this study relies on the use of partial least squares (PLS-SEM) -a variance-based structural equation modeling method- which is a suitable technique to use in this study due to the following reasons: the sample (n = 261 cases) is relatively small, the study is focused on the prediction of the dependent variables, and the research model is considerably complex with regard to the type of relationships in the hypotheses. The paper findings sustain the much cited work environment hypothesis linked to bullying and stressful work environment, providing implications for school administrators to reduce organizational levels of workplace bullying by adjusting certain working conditions to those teachers especially susceptible to be bullied.

Finally, in *Chapter 4* is explored how bullying, certain prevalent organizational variables, and job dissatisfaction might directly or indirectly elicit the materialization of poor health self-perception in *teaching professionals*. Through a sample mostly comprised of public early childhood/primary and

secondary teachers-, and relying on the use of Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) – which enable the simultaneous assessment of the liability and validity of the theoretical construct’s measurement (outer model), the estimation of the relationships hypothesized between the distinct latent variables or constructs (inner model), and the exposure of complex systems in associations and causal relationships that could be otherwise tough to determine-, it is proposed a structural global model -as a combination of constructs- to contribute to provide more evidences for the design and implementation of promising guidelines in the prevention and alleviation of adverse wellness perception among educators, enriching thus the comprehension of this actual predicament and helping directors/principals facilitate well-adjusted environments and relationships in educational settings.

The general conclusions of this thesis highlight an array of outcomes that propose, within the usual course of events, that workplace bullying could be reduced if job demands were fairly limited and job resources were suitably increased.

## Resumen

En su desarrollo el ser humano busca con frecuencia su propia realización personal -más física que espiritual- formando parte de colectivos que le permitan reafirmar su existencia en la sociedad y llenar así, de alguna manera, sus expectativas particulares en la vida; siendo el trabajo quizás, en los tiempos que hoy tocan vivir, la faceta más relevante de este anhelo individual y primordial. Sin embargo, los entornos laborales no siempre resultan ser lo esperado.

En los lugar de trabajo convergen diferentes situaciones propias de la lógica interacción entre personas; miembros que, pese a pertenecer a un mismo colectivo, poseen rangos y funciones diferenciadas. Un verdadero reino, único y con características organizacionales y de redes de contactos particulares y muy concretas.

Estas *características del trabajo* son establecidas en cualquier unidad económica a través de un proceso conjunto pero diferenciador que distingue a aquellos que determinan las funciones a realizar de aquellos que deben materializarlas. Dicha gestión substancialmente implica una serie de procedimientos contingentes en los que, por medio de mecanismos y combinaciones de “demanda y control” o de “esfuerzo y recompensa” o de “demanda y recursos”, ciertos impulsos conocidos como “estresores” ejercen su influencia entre los involucrados, dando lugar así a lo que generalmente se conoce como *condiciones de trabajo*.

Las *condiciones de trabajo*, por tanto, definen las facilidades o contingencias

que podríamos encontrar en la realización de las actividades laborales diarias. Su adecuado balance en la organización permite desarrollar capacidad de aprendizaje, de innovación y de socialización, por mencionar algunas; sin embargo, cuando este equilibrio se rompe de manera negativa en cualquier estamento de la organización, puede estimular el surgimiento de ciertas tensiones relacionales que conlleven la manifestación de abuso de poder, de aislamiento y exclusión intencional, de falta de apoyo y solidaridad laboral, y de otras tantas formas de trato injusto que en ocasiones son observadas o no en los centros de trabajo, identificadas con cierta familiaridad bajo la terminología anglosajona de *bullying* o acoso laboral.

En este sentido, se han estudiado varios tipos de eventos que bien pueden ser definidos como *bullying*: la intimidación, el acoso, la persecución, la agresión, el abuso emocional, el acoso psicológico o maltrato en el lugar de trabajo, entre otros; esta variación en las definiciones puede dificultar la conceptualización del fenómeno para entornos laborales de una manera más consistente, inhibiendo efectivas contribuciones entre investigadores y profesionales. Por otra parte, el *bullying* se define comúnmente por sus manifestaciones sociales las cuales son claramente clasificables bajo un mismo paraguas como un comportamiento agresivo que generalmente ocurre durante las interacciones interpersonales en el trabajo. En cuanto a la extensión de su manifestación, hay un fuerte desacuerdo sobre su prevalencia; las estimaciones recientes oscilan entre el 4% y el 5% en los países del norte de Europa y el 15% en los países del sur de Europa. Ciertos factores, como las características culturales y los cambios sociales, parecen explicar las variaciones en las tasas de prevalencia del *bullying*, al igual que las cuestiones relacionadas con la falta de una definición consensuada del evento – discusión antes abordada- y ciertas metodologías de investigación; por ejemplo, los estudios sobre el acoso laboral han utilizado una amplia variedad de métodos de medición, instrumentos y diseños de investigación, hasta el punto que parece razonable considerar ciertos procedimientos metodológicos como sesgados con respecto a sus tasas de prevalencia.

En todo caso, el *bullying* es sin duda alguna la expresión más perversa que pueda surgir de las constantes interrelaciones humanas en las organizaciones; sobre todo por los innumerables riesgos psicosociales a los que expone y los nocivos efectos en la salud que lamentablemente acarrea a corto, mediano y largo plazo para los implicado.

Debido a la exponencial presencia de casos de *bullying* en el mundo laboral contemporáneo, su investigación ha sido catalogada como urgente no sólo en el campo del comportamiento y gestión organizacional sino también en ciencias como la salud y la psicología; y apoyada con determinación por los principales gobiernos del mundo, incluyendo la Unión Europea.

La presente tesis doctoral, como resultado de la continuación de la línea de investigación sobre el comportamiento organizacional iniciada por nuestro

recordado profesor Alfonso Carlos Morales Gutiérrez de la Escuela de Negocios ETEA-Universidad de Córdoba y revivida por el profesor Antonio Ariza Montes en la actualidad, propone estudiar la potencial identificación de “*grupos de riesgo*” latentes -en diferentes profesiones u ocupaciones- desde la perspectiva de *la contextualización del sujeto* en la investigación del comportamiento y la gestión organizacional, evidenciando las dimensiones prevalentes en estos entornos organizacional disímiles a través de muestras estadísticas que incluyen a todos los países miembros de la Unión Europea y algunos otros países socios de la región.

Este documento se estructura entorno a cuatro capítulos cuyo contenido se describe de manera sucinta a continuación:

En el *Capítulo 1* se identifican los determinantes del acoso laboral entre los *profesionales de la salud* a partir de una serie de variables personales, condiciones de trabajo y factores contextuales. En el mismo se distinguen a aquellos trabajadores de la salud que son propensos a ser acosados en el trabajo desde un plano individual, postulando que el acoso laboral implica un fuerte componente psicológico en su materialización, y contribuyendo al desarrollo e implementación de medidas para prevenir la intimidación y agresividad laboral en el sector de la salud. La metodología empleada para llevar a cabo los objetivos de este capítulo se basa en el modelo de regresión logística binaria, un tipo específico de modelo de regresión previsto para las variables dicotómicas; esta técnica estadística se utiliza para determinar la probabilidad de que ocurra un evento (acoso laboral, en este caso) en comparación con la probabilidad contraria -que la acción no vaya a suceder. Los hallazgos del estudio tienen implicaciones valiosas y pertinentes para aquellas instituciones que se plantean como objetivos primordiales optimizar el desempeño general organizacional, mejorar los niveles de bienestar en la salud física y mental de sus trabajadores y regenerar la armonía en las relaciones internas de la organización.

En el *Capítulo 2* se estudian ciertos factores determinantes para la aparición del acoso laboral que pueden afectar a los *gerentes o directivos* activos en organizaciones. Este grupo de profesionales, con una posición reconocida y privilegiada para ejercer el poder, es analizado con el propósito de identificar a directivos y mandos intermedios que son propensos a ser acosados en el trabajo como sujetos, adoptando la perspectiva individual y contribuyendo al desarrollo y aplicación de medidas que lleven a evitar el maltrato de aquellos trabajadores que ocupan puestos de dirección en las organizaciones. La metodología utilizada para el cumplimiento de los objetivos de la investigación se basa en el modelo de regresión logística binaria con la intención de dicotomizar las respuestas obtenidas, descubriendo la posibilidad de que un suceso acontezca -el sentirse intimidado en este caso- en comparación con el hecho contrario. Los hallazgos del estudio tienen implicaciones valiosas y pertinentes para las instituciones, organizaciones y corporaciones que tienen como objetivo prosperar y mejorar el

desempeño organizacional a todos los niveles, ajustando determinadas condiciones de trabajo que afectan negativamente a los gerentes especialmente susceptibles de ser acosados dadas sus características personales.

En el *Capítulo 3*, se adopta como perspectiva de análisis el modelo de Demandas-Recursos en el trabajo. En este sentido, el acoso laboral se considera como un fenómeno complejo que se presenta debido a las interacciones dinámicas de estrés laboral y de motivación en el gremio de los *profesores* en diferentes etapas educativas. Centrado en la predicción de la variable dependiente –la ocurrencia de una acción de *bullying* en el entorno laboral–, este estudio contribuye, con implicaciones sustanciales, a la implementación de medidas preventivas contra el acoso laboral en el sector de la educación. Con el fin de contrastar el modelo de investigación y las hipótesis, este estudio se apoya en el uso de los mínimos cuadrados parciales (PLS-SEM) –un método en el que se modelan ecuaciones estructurales basadas en la varianza– constituyendo una técnica adecuada para ser usada en este estudio debido a las siguientes razones: la muestra (n = 261 casos) es relativamente pequeña, el estudio se centra en la predicción de las variables dependientes y el modelo de investigación es considerablemente complejo con respecto al tipo de las relaciones en las hipótesis. Estos resultados sustentan la hipótesis sobre el ambiente laboral actualmente más citada y vinculada a la intimidación y al estrés, proporcionando implicaciones útiles –para los administradores de centros educativos– relacionadas a la reducción de los niveles organizacionales de acoso laboral mediante el reajuste de determinadas condiciones de trabajo en aquellos profesores especialmente susceptibles a ser acosados.

Finalmente, en el *Capítulo 4* se explora cómo el *bullying*, ciertas variables organizacionales prevalentes y la insatisfacción laboral podrían provocar directa o indirectamente la materialización de una pobre percepción personal de la salud entre los *profesionales de la enseñanza*. A través de una muestra compuesta en su mayoría de educadores públicos pertenecientes a niveles infantiles o de temprana edad, primarios y secundarios, y auxiliado en el uso del modelo de ecuaciones estructurales de mínimos cuadrados parciales (PLS-SEM) –que permiten la evaluación simultánea de la carga y la validez de la medición del constructo teórico (modelo externo), la estimación de las relaciones hipotéticas entre las variables latentes distintas o constructos (modelo interno), y la exposición de los sistemas complejos en asociaciones y relaciones causales que podrían ser de otro modo difíciles de determinar–, se propone un modelo global estructural –como combinación de constructos– con el fin de contribuir a proporcionar más evidencias para el diseño e implementación de guías promisorias en la prevención y mitigación de la percepción adversa de la salud entre los profesionales de la enseñanza, enriqueciendo así la comprensión de esta situación real y ayudando a los directores de centros educativos a facilitar interrelaciones y entornos educativos bien adecuados.



Las conclusiones generales de esta tesis ponen de relieve una serie de resultados que proponen, dentro del curso normal de los acontecimientos, que el acoso laboral podría reducirse si las demandas en el trabajo fueran correctamente limitadas y los recursos convenientemente incrementados.

# General Introduction, Objectives, and Hypotheses

---

*“If you are neutral in situations of injustice, you have chosen the side of the oppressor. If an elephant has its foot on the tail of a mouse and you say that you are neutral, the mouse will not appreciate your neutrality”.*

Desmond Tutu (1931-)

## General Introduction

### A job characteristics approach to explain workplace bullying

During the last two decades, numerous researchers in the organizational behavior and management arena –among many other academic fields- have dedicated their scientific attempts to help explain how certain dimensions, either at the individual or the organizational level, might potential trigger the appearance of bullying in occupational settings (Coyne et al., 2000; Zapf, 1999). In this regard, and as a sort of example, it is suggested that individuals with limitation to socialize or with specific personality traits could bear higher chances to become victims of workplace bullying (Mikkelsen & Einarsen, 2002). In spite of this, current research on individual antecedents has not firmly demonstrated coherent outcomes (Giorgi & Majer, 2008).

In this vein, the general framework for the present thesis is found on the proposition that workplace bullying turns to be inherently coupled to contingent **organizational conditions** (Leymann, 1990; Bowling & Beehr, 2006) and job design (Giorgi & Majer, 2008); that is why, according to Leymann (1996), employers –or their surrogates- should permanently guarantee “non-bullying provoking” situations in their own occupational settings.

The point is that working conditions, as work-related antecedents of workplace bullying, are usually encapsulated as particular job traits deeply rooted in the **Job-Characteristic Model and Work Redesign** claimed by Hackman and Oldham (1976), where these job characteristics and the subject’s traits mingle to shape an environment that whether tend or not to constructive behaviors - *enhanced milieu*- or imminent exposure to occupational abuses -*poor milieu*- (Baillien & De Witte, 2009; De Cuyper et al., 2009; Notelaers et al., 2010), essential tenets for the statement of the **Work Environment Hypothesis**. Likewise, this perspective integrates and explains to some extent the fundamental roles of the bully, the team synergy, and the target notions on

bullying events (Zapf, 2001; Notelaers, 2013). In spite of this, Hauge et al., (2007) allege that knowledge of the association between working conditions and bullying is still fractional.

The work environment hypothesis, thus, is based on the premise that job settings, where stress and paucity of competent organization, may bring up some critical drivers for the surfacing of workplace bullying, contending that certain traits of the work environment could have some direct bearing on maltreatment at work, providing a stressful organizational climate where this kind of negative acts might burgeon (Bowling & Beehr, 2006) and health turns totally detrimental (Mikkelsen & Einarsen, 2002).

In this vein, deleterious consequences and occupational strain has been inextricably intertwined on subject's health, and utilized as essential constituents to formulate one of the most relevant and leading theories in occupational stress: the *Job Demand–Control (JDC) Model* (Karasek, 1979; Karasek & Theorell, 1990).

According to Karasek (1979), excessive job demands and the dearth of job control lead to nurture emotional drainage, stress, and frustration; spawning tensions and frictions among personnel, hampering adaptive coping mechanisms, and snowballing into the violation of norms, habits, expectations, values, violent behaviors and finally bullying -*the strain hypothesis* (Ballien et al., 2011). However, as a stimulus-response approach, JDC-Model may conversely lead to the recreation of a learning and motivational atmosphere, with new behaviors and abilities, by concurrently incrementing job demands and job control -*the learning hypothesis*-. Indeed, JDC model may provide a fertile field for the comprehension of bullying phenomenon on subjects (Ballien et al., 2011).

In the view of the strain hypothesis, on one hand, target's reports of bullying in extant research have been positively correlated to adverse working conditions such as high workload and low autonomy (Einarsen et al., 1994; Zapf et al., 1996), role conflict and lack of constructive leadership behavior (Einarsen et al., 1994), unbalanced social climate and poor working conditions (Vartia & Hyyti, 2002); being lumped all together, thus, as potential predictors, while job satisfaction significantly behaves negatively associated to this regrettably event (Hauge et al., 2007). On the other hand, the association between occupational stress, workplace bullying, and subject's health seem to be concatenated in physical ramifications. In this regards, it is remarkable the number of cases liking psychological exhaustion, depletion of energy, fear, anxiety, depression, sleep problems, posttraumatic stress syndrome, suicide thoughts, cardiopathies, and burnout -among several others- to the multiple forms of harassment and violent at work (Mathiessen & Einarsen, 2004), yet resulting in bullying "targetization" for targeted employees (Hoel & Salin, 2003).

Another approach linked to job strain and violent behaviors is the *Effort-Reward Imbalance (ERI) Model* (Siegrist & Peter, 1996). From this standpoint, it is presupposed that job tensions and strain happen as a disproportion between extrinsic job demands/intrinsic motivations to cope with demands -*effort*- and a collection of drivers such as esteem, status, salary, job security and other opportunities -*reward*-. The premise enacts that inappropriate balance might potentially trigger occupational stress.

Finally, it is remarkable to underline that all the former theoretical frameworks have been ultimately abridged into a well-known assumption in organizational behavior and management, claimed by professors Bakker and Demerouti and dubbed as the *Job Demand-Resources* model (Bakker et al., 2003; Demerouti et al., 2001). According to this proposition, job characteristics (encapsulated in job demands or job resources) bear latent effects on occupational health and, therefore, on personnel welfare and institutional robustness.

Thus, on the foregoing, job demands allude to any either physical/psychological or social/organizational workplace characteristics, which entail constant efforts or competences -not only cognitive but emotional- in connection with particular detriment of physiological and/or psychological nature: unbalance between work and family life, poor physical working conditions, occupational pressure, unpleasant experiences with customers or users (Demerouti et al., 2001). When the convergence of demands implies excessive subject's involvement from which he/she is not prepared to endure, those demands could ultimately become job stressors (Meijman and Mulder, 1998), vindicating once again the destructive advent of workplace bullying.

However, JD-R model may engender motivational drivers among personnel - intrinsically and extrinsically speaking - since job resources could potentially induce to depleted cynicism, job commitment, learning eagerness, work excellence, and the achievement of personal and organizational aspirations.

### **Identifying bullying “risk groups” among distinct occupations: Working conditions and psychosocial risks**

The current line of research, which here stands as a doctoral thesis, pursues to identify, in four different large samples of European professionals, the latent “*target groups*” with the potentially precise attributes to experience and suffer from workplace bullying, examining a compendium of personal characteristics, working conditions, and sectoral traits that might help define, to some extent, potential predictors for the appearance of these unjustifiable events.

In the study of workplace bullying, the comprehension of “risk group” arrangement turns significantly essential for the establishment of reliable internal measures of prevention in occupational settings (Schat et al., 2006; Notelaers, 2011). However, Hauge et al., (2007) state that only certain studies in

extant research have been conducted relying on representative samples of concrete working populations. The following paragraphs illustrate the most relevant findings in professional milieus plus some of the most relevant personal characteristics within each sector, both in connection with bullying target groups.

### ***The manifestation of bullying target groups within professionals sectors***

Bullying research seems to indicate that victimization risk happens to be more salient in the **public sector**, compared to the **private** one (Salin, 2001; Zapf et al., 2003; Piirainen et al. 2000); for instance, in the public administration (Zapf, 1999), health and educational sectors (Mikkelsen et al., 2001; Zapf, 1999), education employees (Hubert & van Veldhoven, 2001), police officers (Waddington & Braddock, 1991), among many others. Within the private sector, trade and commerce (Einarsen & Skogstad, 1996), as well as hotel and restaurant industry (Mathisen et al., 2008) report noteworthy outcomes in this arena. Similarly, white-collar, supervisory, and service employees, exhibit more significant bullying rates than blue-collar jobholders (Zapf et al., 2011).

In this vein, Zapf et al. (2011) posit that the highest prevalence rate of occupational bullying can be found amongst industrial workers, and frequently identify among graphical-work jobholders, hotel and restaurant employees, and banking and insurance sectors; while lower ratios are registered for psychologists, farming and university employees, and building industry.

In this regard, Zapf et al., (2011) deduce that working in public-service sector, for instance, makes professionals more vulnerable to workplace harassment because of the elevated degree of personal interactions and involvement, as well as the long-term nature of public job contracts prevailing in European countries; broadening the chances for continual and permanent hostilities. However, this last circumstance could paradoxically help emerge jobholders' resilience to harassment at work due to the sense of a secured lifelong job and a considerable difficulty of applying the acquired skills in a new private-sector post, compensating this fact to some extent the bad attitude of colleagues and superiors (Zapf et al., 2011) and its adverse consequences on job satisfaction and health (Arenas et al., 2015).

### ***Personal traits and job characteristics for bullying “targetization” within sectors***

Some studies have centered their attention to the importance of personal traits or variables within the different lines of research on bullying.

One of the most studied personal traits regarding occupational bullying is **gender**. In this vein, research seems to prove that there are more bullied females than males at workplace. Nevertheless, on the word of professors Zapf et al. (2003), just a 27% of the research gives an account of more female targets

after contrasting gender distribution in bullied subjects with the complete gender distribution in observed samples.

For various reasons, women hold less powerful positions in organizations. Consequently, women are even less able than men to defend themselves when bullying emerges – e.g. in managerial or supervisory positions (Davidson and Cooper, 1992). In weighing percentages relating to sample, the results depict a 62.5% of women as victims, while a 37.5% happens to be men (Zapf et al., 2011). According to Zapf et al. (2011), these results might indicate that part of the overarching explanation could be found in the overrepresentation of women among targeted subjects given the overrepresentation of women in concrete collectives, concluding that workplace bullying turns acute for certain sectors and professional groups due to their overrepresentation of women.

Another widespread explanation is based on *minority groups*, which -owing to their differences in significant traits compared to the core fraction of peers- bear higher risk of exclusion (Schuster, 1996), such as the police force (Nuutinen et al., 1999), the collective of assistant nurses (Eriksen and Einarsen, 2004), among others. It seems clear that further research is still needed on this personal characteristic not just to identify whether or not gender prevalence exists within a specific sector, but also to help explain why it may appear and how to tackle its development and progression.

*Age* has been, as well considered by various researchers, as another potential personal characteristic that might cause subjects to be prone to triggering bullying emergence. In this sense, some studies unfold certain exposure to ill treatment not only for senior members of the personnel (Einarsen et al., 1996; Painter, 1991), but also for novel colleagues holding lower levels of formal or informal authority (Einarsen & Raknes, 1997; Paoli, 1997) since as beginners it could take time for the rest of the collective to accept them.

As stated by professor Notelaers (2011), middle-aged workers from public sector appear to bear an appreciably salient risk of bullying victimization while young jobholders with temporary contracts seem to exhibit a slight risk. In the view of the foregoing, staff with stable contracts and no shift work at night is less inclined to suffer from harassment.

Similarly, *organizational position* seems to be -to some extent- a fair job characteristic that could expose employees to workplace bullying as potential risk driver; however, Notelaers (2011) asserts that research in this arena turns rather insufficient and inconsistent in term of its findings: less bullying at higher levels of the organization (Salin; 2001), comparable bullying propensity for lower-level jobholders, supervisors, and middle/senior management (Hoel et al., 2001); significant exposure for white-collar staff compared to the lower level registered for blue-collar peers (Puurainen et al., 2003), while male personnel and supervisors seem to be more prone than women at both levels to suffering from

harassment even when at the management level the ratios happen to be divergent (Zapf et al., 2011).

Likewise, *work process* is considered a critical job characteristic for bullying risk among professionals. In this vein, Ortega et al. (2009) affirm that there exists substantial dissimilarity when it comes to harassment prevalence at work as comparing this job characteristic with *organizational position or status*. For instance, it seems that the propensity to suffer from bullying escalates when jobholders happen to be inexperienced, contrary to the occurrences for managers or supervisors that turn rather inferior; moreover, among male-dominated and female-dominated professions, studies give an account of a more elevated maltreatment exposure compared to those who deal with clients and symbols (Ortega et al., 2009).

Accordingly, Hoel and Cooper (2000) argue that *employment contract*, as a job characteristic, represents a latent risk driver for bullying incidence at workplace. Based on this argumentation, short-term staff seems to be more inclined to suffer from abuses due to a wrong appreciation of these as potential intrusion to general job stability and teamwork unity (Baron & Neuman, 1996).

### **The organizational prerogative of contextualizing bullying research in management theory**

A significant observation to context as been conducted and assessed during the last four decades in scientific research, being extensively validated by the copious demands of a more critical reflection of *contextualizing* subjects in management theory (Johns, 2006), in the view of a further overarching comprehension and explanation of human behavior in concrete organizational settings or contexts; thus, contextualization may help exploit *generalizability* and study crucial observable fact and social interconnections thoroughly (Bamberger, 2008).

In an attempt to conceptualize context, numerous academics have incorporated their approaches to the general theorization. In this regard, professor Johns (2006) describe context as a field of *situational opportunities and constraints* that might come to influence on the materialization of an event, organizational behavior, or functional association among measures –such as physical workplace conditions (Elsbach & Pratt, 2007), normative environments, or organizational climate (Bamberger & Biron, 2007). Additionally, at a major level, behavior of organizations could be affected by internal regulations or particular structures pertaining to specific regimes (Rowley et al., 2000).

However, according to Ross and Nisbett (1991), it appears that relevant contextual triggers might eventually exert minor repercussions on subject' conduct, while conversely minor contextual stimuli might ultimately cause remarkable effects.

Furthermore, today development in statistical approaches and software applications has turned to be essential for accelerating the evolution from contextualization to context theory formation and assessment; in this vein, studying how setting or occasional group of variables arises and mediates mechanisms to elicit their influence on subjects happens to be of the highest interest in behavior and management theory (Bamberger, 2008).

In the present thesis, it is examined the organizational context in three different occupations –healthcare workers, managers, and teaching professionals- and one subgroup –teachers- within educational professionals in order to identify bullying “risk groups” of exposure. In line with the previous paragraphs, the research in the contextual milieu of these collectives turns reasonable since they might help explain under which conditions certain context-related variables shape the configuration of these targeted employees within both health and education sectors, where it is factually assumed the existence of salient bullying prevalence. For the case of managers, these deleterious behaviors have been barely studied and contextualized in this sort of staff and status position.

## **General Objectives and Hypotheses**

Therefore, the main objectives of this thesis are:

- i. To identify consistent bullying predictors for European healthcare workforce, assessing certain key elements in a set of job-related organizational contexts.
- ii. To single out European healthcare workers who are prone to being bullied at work as individuals.
- iii. To contribute to the understanding of workplace bullying and its development, and the potential implementation of measures to prevent this deleterious behavior in the European healthcare sector.
- iv. To study certain factors that may be determinant in the emergence of workplace bullying among European managers -employees with a recognized and privileged position to exercise power-, adopting the individual perspective of the subject: the bullied manager.
- v. To identify senior and middle European managers that are prone to being bullied at work as individuals.
- vi. To contribute to the development and implementation of measures to prevent bullying in European employees that hold managerial positions within organizations.
- vii. To confirm that limiting job demands and increasing job resources may reduce workplace bullying in European teachers.
- viii. To assess the impact of both processes entailed in Job Demands-Resources



(JD-R) model -*effect of job resources on work stress and effect of job demands on motivation-* on European teachers' overall welfare and their bullying perception.

- ix. To contribute, with substantial implications, to the procurement of preventive measures against bullying in education sector, and more precisely, among European teachers.
- x. To examine and help understand how workplace bullying, a collection of predominant organizational factors, and job dissatisfaction -as mediating construct- might conjointly exert direct and indirect influence on the emergence of negative health perception among European teaching professionals in organizational setting.
- xi. To underpin the current body of knowledge implemented for the design of preventive wellness policies among European teaching professionals in educational institutions.
- xii. To assist, on account of its findings, those responsible for the coordination of human resource in establishing and monitoring internal guidelines in learning centers, facilitating custom support, harmonious relationships, and balanced environments for European teaching professionals.

Based on these premises, the general proposition for the integral corpus of hypotheses is the following:

- i. Certain personal and family factors -*gender, age, level of education, marital status, and children at home-*, in European healthcare workers are correlated to latent risk drivers for bullying exposure.
- ii. Some working conditions factors -*length of service, type of contract, working hours, work at night, work on Sundays, working day, shift work, monotonous tasks, complex tasks, rotating tasks, team work, flexibility in work methods, work stress, working conditions satisfaction, pay satisfaction, likely to be dismissed, expectation of career growth, and motivation-* in European healthcare workers are connected to latent risk drivers for bullying exposure within this collective.
- iii. Specific organizational/contextual factors -*type of sector and size-* in European healthcare workers are linked to latent risk drivers for bullying exposure.
- iv. European *women* in management positions are more vulnerable to bullying.
- v. The more *senior*, the less likely to be bullied in European managers.
- vi. The greater the *job insecurity*, the more likely to be bullied in European managers.
- vii. The probability of being a bullied manager in Europe increases when there are *poor working conditions (night work, shift work, or job stress)*.
- viii. *Unsatisfied* managers in Europe are more likely to be bullied.

- ix. European managers in the *service sector* and in *public institutions* are more likely to be bullied.
- x. Certain *work demands* that European teachers have to face result in work stress.
- xi. The *resources* available to European teachers act as predictors of their motivation in the workplace.
- xii. *Resources can soften the impact of the demands* on work-related stress, mitigating its harmful effects in European teachers.
- xiii. Work resources take on greater importance and have greater impact on *motivation* when demands are high in European teachers.
- xiv. Stress generates *bullying sensation*, and teacher's *degree of motivation* contributes to *reduce this effect* in European teachers.
- xv. European teaching professionals, who label themselves as having been *bullied*, bear a much greater likelihood of self-reporting poor *health perception*.
- xvi. European teaching professionals are inclined to consider their *health perception* as poor on account of their elevated occupational level of *stress*, their unfavorable *work and family balance*, their excessive number of *work assignments/overload*, their irregular amount of *complex tasks*, their continual lack of *motivation*, their significant accomplishment of *monotonous tasks*, their restricted level of *autonomy*, and their augmented participation in *shift or night work*.
- xvii. European teaching professionals, exposed to workplace *bullying* behaviors and *unsatisfied* with their jobs, tend to self-report poor *health perception*.
- xviii. European teaching professionals that label themselves as suffering from significant work *stress*, disapproving actual *work and family balance*, facing excessive burden/*workload*, handling a higher amount of *complex tasks*, experiencing depleted *motivation*, dealing with *monotonous tasks*, undergoing lack of *autonomy*, participating more in *shift or night work*; and additionally report reduced job *satisfaction*, are prone to bearing poor *health perception*.

## References

- Arenas, A., Giorgi, G., Montani, F., Mancuso, S., Perez, J. F., Mucci, N., & Arcangeli, G. (2015). Workplace bullying in a sample of Italian and Spanish employees and its relationship with job satisfaction, and psychological well-being. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 6, 1912.
- Baillien, E., De Cuyper, N., & De Witte, H. (2011). Job autonomy and workload as antecedents of workplace bullying: A two-wave test of Karasek's Job Demand Control Model for targets and perpetrators. *Journal of Occupational and*

*Organizational Psychology*, 84, 191-208.

Baillien, E., & De Witte, H. (2009). Why organizational change is related to workplace bullying: Role conflict and job insecurity as mediators. *Economic and Industrial Democracy*, 30(3), 348-371.

Bakker, A.B., Demerouti, E., & Schaufeli, W.B. (2003). Dual processes at work in a call centre: An application of the Job Demands-Resources model. *European Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology*, 12, 393-417.

Bamberger, P. (2008). Beyond contextualization: Using context theories to narrow the micro-macro gap in management research. *Academy of Management Journal*, 51(5), 839-846.

Bamberger, P.A., & Biron, M. (2007). Group norms and excessive absenteeism: The role of peer referent others. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*, 103, 179-196.

Baron, R.A., & Neuman, J.H. (1996). Workplace violence and workplace aggression: Evidence on their relative frequency and potential causes. *Aggressive Behavior* 22, 161-73.

Bowling, N. A., & Beehr, T. A. (2006). Workplace bullying from the target's perspective: A theoretical model and meta-analysis. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 91, 998-1012.

Coyne, I., Seigne, E., & Randall, P. (2000). Predicting workplace victim status from personality. *European Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology*, 9, 335-349.

Davidson, M. J., & Cooper, C. L. (1992) *Shattering the glass ceiling*. London: Paul Chapman.

De Cuyper, N. Baillien, E. & De Witte, H. (2009). Job insecurity and workplace bullying among targets and perpetrators: Moderation by employability. *Work and Stress*, 23, 206-224.

Demerouti, E., Bakker, A. B., Nachreiner, F., & Schaufeli, W. B. (2001). The job demands-resources model of burnout. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 86(3), 499-512.

Einarsen, S., & Raknes, B.I. (1997). Harassment in the workplace and the victimization of men. *Violence and Victims*, 12, 247-263.

Einarsen, S., Raknes, B., & Matthiesen, S. B. (1994). Bullying and harassment at work and their relationships to work environment quality: An exploratory study. *The European Work and Organizational Psychologist*, 4, 381-401.

Einarsen, S., & Skogstad, A. (1996). Bullying at work: Epidemiological findings in public and private organizations. *European Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology*, 5, 185-201.

- Elsbach, K.D., & Pratt, M.G. (2007). The physical environment in organizations. *Academy of Management Annals*, 1, 181-224.
- Eriksen, W., & Einarsen, S. (2004). Gender minority as a risk factor of exposure to bullying at work: The case of male assistant nurses. *European Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology*, 13 (4), 473-492.
- Giorgi, G. & Majer, V. (2008). “Il mobbing in Italia. Uno studio condotto presso 21 organizzazioni (Mobbing in Italy. A study in 21 Italian organizations)”. *Risorsa Uomo*, 14(3), 171-188.
- Hackman, J. R., & Oldham, G. R. (1976). Motivation through the design of work: Test of a theory. *Organizational Behavior and Human Performance*, 16(2), 250-279.
- Hauge, L.J., Skogstad, A., & Einarsen, S. (2007). Relationships between stressful work environments and bullying: Results of a large representative study. *Work & Stress*, 21(3), 220-242.
- Hoel, H., & Cooper, C.L. (2000). *Destructive conflict and bullying at work*. Manchester, UK: University of Manchester Institute of Science and Technology.
- Hoel, H., Cooper, C.L., & Faragher, B. (2001). The experience of bullying in Great Britain: The impact of organizational status. *European journal of work and organizational psychology*, 10, 443–465.
- Hoel, H. & Salin, D. (2003). Organisational antecedents of workplace bullying. In: S. Einarsen, H. Hoel, D. Zapf, & C.L. Cooper (Eds.), *Bullying and emotional abuse in the workplace: International perspectives in research and practice* (pp. 203–218). London: Taylor and Francis.
- Hubert, A. B., & van Veldhoven, M. (2001). Risk sectors for undesired behaviour and mobbing. *European Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology*, 10, 415-424.
- Johns, G. 2006. The essential impact of context on organizational behavior. *Academy of Management Review*, 31, 396-408.
- Karasek, R.A. (1979). Job demands, job decision latitude, and mental strain: Implications for job redesign. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 24, 285-308.
- Karasek, R.A. & Theorell, T. (1990). *Healthy work: Stress, productivity, and the reconstruction of working life*. New York: Basic books.
- Leymann, H. (1990). Mobbing and psychological terror at workplaces. *Violence and Victims*, 5, 119-126.
- Leymann, H. (1996). The content and development of mobbing. *European Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology*, 5, 165-184.
- Mathisen, G. E., Einarsen, S., & Mykletun, R. (2008). The occurrences and

correlates of bullying and harassment in the restaurant sector. *Scandinavian Journal of Psychology*, 49(1), 59-68.

Matthiesen, S. B., & Einarsen, S. (2004). Psychiatric distress and symptoms of PTSD among victims of bullying at work. *British Journal of Guidance and Counselling*, 32, 335-356.

Meijman, T.F., & Mulder, G. (1998). Psychological aspects of workload. In P.J. Drenth, H. Thierry, & C.J. de Wolff (Eds.), *Handbook of Work and Organisational Psychology* (2nd ed.; pp. 5–33). Hove, UK: Erlbaum.

Mikkelsen, G. E., & Einarsen, S. (2001). Bullying in Danish work-life: Prevalence and health correlates. *European Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology*, 10, 393-413.

Mikkelsen, E., & Einarsen, S. (2002). Basic assumptions and symptoms of post-traumatic stress among targets of bullying at work. *European Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology*, 11, 87-111.

Notelaers, G., Baillien, E., De Witte, H., Einarsen, S., & Vermunt, J. K. (2013). Testing the strain hypothesis of the Demand Control Model to explain severe bullying at work. *Economic and Industrial Democracy*, 34(1), 69-87.

Notelaers, G. De Witte, H. & Einarsen, S. (2010). Workplace bullying: A job characteristics approach. *European Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology*, 19, 487-504.

Notelaers, G., Vermunt, J. K., Baillien, E., Einarsen, S., & De Witte, H. (2011). Exploring risk groups workplace bullying with categorical data. *Industrial health*, 49(1), 73-88.

Nuutinen, I., Kauppinen, K., and Kandolin, I. (1999) Tasa-arvo poliisitoimessa [Equality in the police force]. Helsinki: Työterveyslaitos, Sisäasiainministeriö.

Ortega, A., Høgh, A., Pejtersen, J.H., & Olsen, O. (2009). Prevalence of workplace bullying and risk groups: A representative population study. *International Archives of Occupational and Environmental Health*, 82(3), 417-426.

Painter, K. (1991). Violence and vulnerability in the workplace: psychosocial and legal implications. In M.J. Davidson & J. Earnshaw (Eds.), *Vulnerable workers: Psychosocial and legal issues* (pp. 160–178). New York: John Wiley and Sons.

Paoli, P. (1997). *Second European Survey on Working Conditions in the European Union*. European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions, Dublin.

Piirainen, H., Elo, A.L., Hirvonen, M., Kauppinen, K., Ketola, R., Laitinen, H., Lindström, K., Reijula, K., Riala, R., Viluksela, M., & Virtanen, S. (2000). *Työ ja Terveys -Haastattelututkimus v. Taulukkoraportti*; Finland: Finnish Institute of Occupational Health.

- Piirainen, H., Hirvonen, M., Elo, A.L., Huuhtanen, P., Kandolin, I., Kauppinen, K., Ketola, R., Lindström, K., Salminen, S., Reijula, K., Riala, R., Toivanen, M., Viluksela, M., & Virtanen, S. (2003). Työ ja terveys -haastattelututkimus 2003. Taulukkoraportti [Work and health interview survey 2003. Table report]. Helsinki: Finnish Institute of Occupational Health.
- Ross, L., & Nisbett, R.E. (1991). *The person and the situation: Perspectives of social psychology*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press.
- Rowley, T., Behrens, D., & Krackhardt, D. (2000). Redundant governance structures: An analysis of structural and relational embeddedness in the steel and semiconductor industries. *Strategic Management Journal*, 21, 369-386.
- Salin, D. (2001). Prevalence and forms of bullying among business professionals: A comparison of two different strategies for measuring bullying. *European Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology*, 10(4), 425-441.
- Schat, A.C.H., Frone, M.R., Kelloway, E.K. (2006). Prevalence of workplace aggression in the U.S. workforce: Findings from a national study. In E.K. Kelloway, J. Barling, & J.J. Hurrell (Eds.), *Handbook of Workplace Violence* (pp. 47-89). Thousand Oaks, California: Sage.
- Schuster, B. (1996). Rejection, exclusion, and harassment at work and in schools. *European Psychologist*, 1, 293-317.
- Siegrist, J., & Peter, R. (1996). *Measuring effort-reward imbalance at work: Guidelines*. Düsseldorf, Germany: Heinrich Heine University.
- Vartia, M., & Hyyti, J. (2002). Gender differences in workplace bullying among prison officers. *European Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology*, 11, 113-126.
- Waddington, P. A., & Braddock, Q. (1991). 'Guardians' or 'Bullies'? Perceptions of the Police amongst adolescent black, white and Asian boys. *Policing and Society: An International Journal*, 2(1), 31-45.
- Zapf, D. (1999). Organisational, work group related and personal causes of mobbing/bullying at work. *International Journal of Manpower*, 20, 70-85.
- Zapf, D. (2001). European research on bullying at work. In P. McCarthy, J. Rylance, R. Bennet, & H. Zimmerman (Eds.), *Bullying: From backyard to boardroom* (pp. 11-22). Sydney: Federation Press.
- Zapf, D., Einarsen, S., Hoel, H., & Vartia, M. (2003). Empirical findings on bullying in the workplace. In S. Einarsen, H. Hoel, D. Zapf, & C.L. Cooper (Eds.), *Bullying and emotional abuse in the workplace. International perspectives in research and practice* (pp.103-126). London: Taylor & Francis.
- Zapf, D., Escartin, J., Einarsen, S., Hoel, H., & Vartia, M. (2011). Empirical findings on prevalence and risk groups of bullying in the workplace. In S. Einarsen, H. Hoel, D. Zapf, & C.L. Cooper (Eds.), *Bullying and harassment in the*

*workplace: Developments in theory, research, and practice* (pp. 75–106). Boca Raton, FL: Taylor and Francis Group.

Zapf, D., Knorz, C., & Kulla, M. (1996). On the relationship between mobbing factors, and job content, social work environment, and health outcomes. *European Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology*, 5, 215-237.

# Chapter 1

---

*“My pain may be the reason for somebody's laugh. But my laugh must never be the reason for somebody's pain.*

Charlie Chaplin (1889-1977)

## Chapter 1. *Workplace bullying among healthcare workers*

### **A**bstract

This paper aims to assess consistent predictors through the use of a sample that includes different actors from the healthcare work force to identify certain key elements in a set of job-related organizational contexts. The utilized data were obtained from the 5th European Working Conditions Survey, conducted in 2010 by the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions. In light of these objectives, we collected a subsample of 284 health professionals, some of them from the International Standard Classification of Occupations -subgroup 22- (ISCO-08). The results indicated that the chance of a healthcare worker referring to him/herself as bullied increases among those who work on a shift schedule, perform monotonous and rotating tasks, suffer from work stress, enjoy little satisfaction from their working conditions, and do not perceive opportunities for promotions in their organizations. The present work summarizes an array of outcomes and proposes within the usual course of events that workplace bullying could be reduced if job demands were limited and job resources were increased. The implications of these findings could assist human resource managers in facilitating, to some extent, good social relationships among healthcare workers.

**KEYWORDS:** European Working Conditions Survey-2010; healthcare workers; regression model; working conditions; workplace bullying

### **1. Introduction**

Organizations are never neutral; rather, they become a means to crystallize specific socioeconomic interests. In the contexts of maximizing profit and exploiting centrality within work processes, workplace bullying might even be considered an event that can be expected to occur with a certain regularity and frequency. This reality drives researchers to pay special attention to the sources, means, and dynamics generated by power inequality in labor settings [1].

In this line of thought, the phenomenon of workplace bullying has a detrimental effect on both individuals and organizations (e.g., managerial costs and turnover



escalate and productivity declines) as the number of witness distractions and the emotional/physical health of the victims increase. Such cases become exponentially worse when a potential lawsuit for unjust dismissal or work compensation/disability is added to an already unfavorable situation. Other economic pitfalls, with a significant negative impact on profits, can sometimes be difficult to measure and clearly define. These pitfalls may include a reduction in the quality, negative impacts on the organization's reputation, the escalation of mistakes and absenteeism, and the corrosion of customer relationships due to a lack of attention paid to their objectives and commitments, among others [2]. This assertion becomes even more significant for those organizations mainly composed of employees providing particular assistance in a close and direct way to patients (e.g., healthcare workers).

This paper was written in accordance with previous studies that clarify how workplace bullying among healthcare workers has become a persistent phenomenon within organizations. In this sense, Rowell states that, at present, workplace bullying has particularly increased in the health and community care sectors and that such behavior is four times more prevalent in this sector than sexual harassment [3]. In line with these findings, DuHart reports that physicians and nurses are occasionally victims of workplace hostility [4]. The physical violence rates against doctors and nurses are 16.2 per 1,000 and 21.9 per 1,000, respectively. In the European Union, 52% of healthcare jobholders have experienced some sort of aggression at work, followed by 39% of social care workers and 25% of service workers [5].

In the scientific literature, several types of bullying have been studied [6]: intimidation, harassment, victimization, aggression, emotional abuse, and psychological harassment or mistreatment at workplace, among others. The variation in definitions may hinder the conceptualization of the workplace-bullying phenomenon in a more consistent way, inhibiting effective contributions among researchers and practitioners [7]. Bullying is commonly defined by its social manifestations, which are clearly classifiable under the same umbrella as aggressive behavior [8] that generally occurs during interpersonal interactions in work settings [9]. Similarly, there seems to be a consensus that bullying, as a behavior, can be defined in terms of intentionality, frequency (e.g., weekly) or duration (e.g., approximately six months), the targets' reaction(s), perceived imbalance and misuse of power between the perpetrator and target, inadequate support, and the target's inability to defend himself from such aggression [10–13], as well as having to cope with negative and constant social interactions [13], physical or verbal badgering, insulting remarks [12], and intense pressure [14].

Regarding the extent of its manifestation, there is a strong disagreement about the prevalence of bullying; estimates range from 4% to 5% in Northern European Countries [15,16] to 15% in Southern European nations [17]. Certain

factors, such as cultural characteristics and social changes, seem to explain the variations in these prevalence rates, as do issues related to research methodology [15]. For instance, studies on workplace bullying have utilized a wide variety of measurement methods, instruments, and research designs [18,19], to the extent that it appears reasonable to consider certain methodological procedures to be biased with respect to their reported prevalence rates [20].

Statistics paint a bleak picture regarding the exposure of healthcare employees to hostility, mostly because bullying at work in the context of healthcare services includes interactions among such varied groups as co-workers, supervisors, patients, families, visitors, and others [21].

Although previous definitions shown a propensity to combine the persistence and duration of the bullying into the same key construct of this phenomenon, the present paper posits that workplace bullying involves a strong psychological component in its materialization. Thus, the main objective of this research was to identify the determinants of workplace bullying among healthcare professionals that emerge from personal variables, working conditions, and contextual factors. In fact, an essential condition of bullying is that the act itself must be perceived as a hostile situation by the target [10,22]. From this point of view, the pernicious effects of workplace bullying (e.g., anxiety, depression, absenteeism, and lack of organizational commitment) are externalized with a greater magnitude at the moment the victim perceives the unpleasant condition, independently of the persistence or duration of the bullying action.

### **1.1. Factors Influencing Workplace Bullying**

Given the negative consequences of workplace bullying on the mental health and wellbeing of employees and, hence, on the performance of any organization, it is vitally important to understand the reasons that trigger the emergence and development of this social phenomenon [23]. In this respect, the psychologists currently leading this specific research approach have mostly focused on victim and/or bullying pathologies.

From a humanistic perspective, this predominantly psychological scope has been utilized to address workplace bullying at an individual level, and many of the studies conducted have been clearly linked to emotional effects and therapeutic practices. This concrete research field has provided a sufficiently broad view and a group of scholars that study the influence of micro-organizational factors (e.g., role conflict, leadership, political aspects, or organizational culture) on individual conduct [12].

Given the above, it appears that research on workplace bullying has evolved towards a multi-causal understanding. In this respect, Hoel and Cooper identified five core areas of focus: subjects, social interaction, group dynamics, working environment, and organizational, societal and political levels [24].

Nevertheless, a considerable number of experts agree that workplace bullying happens as the result of specific interactions among the factors that influence the individual, organizational, or contextual milieu of the people involved [25–28].

## 1.2. Individual Factors for Workplace Bullying

Some personal characteristics of the victims might constitute potential workplace bullying triggers. In fact, early studies on the subject indicated that employees who experienced conflict at work also experienced similar situations in other contexts, such as with their partners, family, and friends [29]. The perspective of individual antecedents related to workplace bullying has been a controversial topic, as the results are often interpreted as “blaming the victim” [30]. However, studies aiming to identify personality types that are specifically inclined to bullying are far from conclusive [31]; the majority of researchers believe that a personal predisposition for playing the role of victim or bully might not exist [32,33].

Nonetheless, some studies have attempted to identify a selection of individual factors (e.g., gender, age, and seniority) that may increase the risk of becoming a victim or bully [27,32]. The presence or absence of these variables could influence bullying ratios [34], i.e., when bullies weigh the potential costs and personal benefits of their actions based on the particular characteristics of their victims. In this sense, certain groups are considered more vulnerable than others (e.g., women or junior employees).

One of the crucial factors that may be utilized to study bullying on the individual level is gender, although the current results of empirical studies do not quite seem categorical. Some authors have observed a higher frequency of bullying among women compared to men [26,35–38], while other large-scale studies indicate that, except for sexual harassment, both men and women are equally prone to being bullied at work [19,39–42].

In any case, Einarsen et al. suggest that the gender differences found by some researchers are in fact consequences of the discrimination that both genders can suffer as a result of their position within an organization [12]. From this perspective, one bullying action could perfectly correspond to a concrete behavior oriented toward a specific minority at work, regardless of the gender of this minority. In research concerning nursing staff in Norway, a profession in which men are underrepresented, Eriksen and Einarsen found that female bullying actions reached 4.3%, while this parameter among males escalated to 10.2% [43].

Findings related to a different personal factor, such as the victim’s age, have not identified a clear association with workplace bullying. Referring to this lack of association, Rayner reports that bullying victims are normally under 25 [40];

similarly, Hoel and Cooper find that young people are more likely to experience a greater level of bullying in comparison with older employees [39]. The exact opposite findings are reported by Einarsen et al. and Einarsen and Skogstad, who observed a higher incidence of bullying among senior employees [22,44]. This conclusion is also reached by Vartia and Piirainen et al. in subsequent research [45,46].

### **1.3. Organizational Factors for Workplace Bullying**

The conceptualization of any organization as a whole entity is essential to understand the phenomenon of bullying; it seems quite complicated to imagine a labor context as excessively independent or as non-influential enough to impede internal workplace bullying. Therefore, although early studies have focused mainly on the psychological characteristics of bullies and their victims, several scholars have more seriously pondered the influence of the specific working and structural characteristics of organizations on people. In this paper, we present a brief bibliographical review of the core studies in which the relationships among a number of internal dynamics (e.g., job stability, job design, and human resources practices) and workplace bullying is analyzed.

#### **1.3.1 Job Stability**

The level of labor stability might influence the degree of vulnerability to bullying, not only because unstable and temporary jobs are frequently held by lower-status professional employments but also because insecurity reduces the perceived power of employees vis-à-vis their superiors. An empirical exploration among university employees at a specific academic center was conducted in a noteworthy effort to demonstrate that flexible working arrangements can contribute to the prevalence of bullying [47]. In fact, one of the reasons given to explain the increase of bullying within 21st century organizations is that the organizational restructuring processes and higher levels of outsourcing have enlarged the power gap between managers and employees [48,49].

In this scenario, we could take for granted that the bullying rates among employees with temporary contracts would be higher than rates registered among their colleagues with permanent contracts. However, Kivimäki, Elovainio, and Vahtera do not observe any difference between these two groups, or between full-time and part-time employees [50]. In reference to these differences, the research results seem to be conflicting as well; while Baron and Neumann find a positive relationship between part-time employment and bullying, Hoel and Cooper report the same finding, but among full-time employees [39,51].

#### **1.3.2 Intrinsic Characteristics of Job Position**

The empirical research on workplace bullying and the intrinsic characteristics of

job position is also extensive. Previous studies have identified certain variables, such as workload [26,39,44], control [36,41,52–54], role ambiguity [44,55], role conflict [44,56], leadership behavior [41,44], social support from co-workers and supervisors [36,57], social climate [36,39,41,44,53,58], and organizational change [39,59–61], as the key elements predicting the occurrence of bullying within organizations.

A large investigation conducted in the United Kingdom on 5,200 subjects reveals that victims of workplace bullying, compared to non-bullied individuals, are distressed by their workload, rarefied working environment, greater organizational change, unsatisfactory relationships at work, and a more consistent intention to resign [39]. Similarly, a study on Norwegian employees by Einarsen et al. reports a significant correlation between the variables described above and workplace bullying (i.e., workload, control, role ambiguity, role conflict, leadership behavior, social climate, and organizational change) [44]. Similarly, Salin finds that bullying appears to be correlated with politicized and competitive organizational climates and even slightly more strongly with workload [26]. Correspondingly, in a sample of 400 employees from five Swedish organizations, Hansen et al. observe a negative correlation between bullying and the support given to employees by their colleagues and their superiors [57].

Bowling and Beehr's meta-analysis, which reviewed over 90 studies published between 1987 and 2005, makes a remarkable contribution to the investigation of workplace bullying by compiling and organizing the extant empirical research [31]. Regarding the characteristics of a job position, these authors report that bullying tends to emerge in occupational settings where other stressors, such as role conflict ( $r = 0.44$ ), role ambiguity ( $r = 0.30$ ), overload ( $r = 0.28$ ), and work limitations ( $r = 0.53$ ), are often simultaneously identified. Likewise, they confirm that autonomy at work is negatively associated with bullying ( $r = -0.25$ ).

Further organizational variables that have been studied for their associations with bullying include monotony, complexity, and teamwork. Zapf et al.'s research makes evident that monotonous and repetitive tasks are more frequent among bullying victims [36]. Correspondingly, in a subsequent investigation, Zapf does not corroborate any association between bullying and work complexity [28]. Similarly, Zapf et al. realize that, during activities requiring teamwork, bullying among peers seems to be more likely to occur [36]. According to those authors, the social environment generated within these groups contributes to the search and selection of scapegoats among the less powerful members to redirect team aggressiveness.

Moreover, numerous analyses have validated the connections between workplace bullying and individual perceptions within organizations, such as job satisfaction and commitment. The former has been amply studied by Vartia and Hyyti and constitutes an additional and plausible alternative variable related to

bullying [53]. Job dissatisfaction, which causes victims emotional distress, can be considered a condition necessarily linked to affective commitment. However, quite a few authors have reported a negative relationship between these two variables [39,62]. Employees who are highly committed to their organizations may be more vulnerable to stressors in their working environment precisely due to their emotional ties their social structures [63].

### 1.3.3 Occupation and Bullying

The academic literature is expanding with a prolific number of studies concerning bullying in specific types of occupations. On this subject, certain authors report that 44.0% of nursing staff members have been bullied at some point in their working lives [64]. Other occupations with high incidences of bullying include restaurant employees [65], teachers [66], university professionals [34,67,68], business professionals [69], transportation workers [68], and police officers [70]. Diverse investigations have identified multiple occupations within the same studies: blue-collar workers, clerks and service workers, associate professionals, managers and professionals, among others [71,72].

Related to this issue, Woodman and Cook report interesting results in the UK utilizing a sample of 512 managers; 39.0% of the respondents affirmed that they had been bullied in the past three years [73]. Bullying appears to have detrimental effects at all management levels; middle managers, as an example, appear only slightly more prone to suffer workplace bullying, representing 49.0% of the reported cases during the past three years. This figure may support the phenomenon known as “management squeeze”, in which middle managers are subjected to the particular pressures of being required to implement unpopular policies as a result of the decisions made at more senior levels. In previous studies, Ariza, Morales, and Menor identify assorted factors that may contribute to the emergence of workplace bullying within managers [74]. Apparently, the likelihood of a manager being bullied increases when job insecurity is present, when people are dissatisfied with their work and salary, when employees are predominantly in the public sector, and when work activities are very emotionally demanding.

### 1.4. Contextual Factors in Workplace Bullying

In addition to the factors related to the internal dynamics of organizations, bullying may also occur as a result of the context in which the organization operates. Research on this subject reveals that bullying is more frequent in the service sector than in any other industry, particularly in health, public service, education, and financial service [34,52]. Furthermore, Leymann argues that bullying most commonly occurs in the health care sector, especially among nurses, due to their work overload and the double supervision they are subjected to by doctors and chief nurses, which violates the Unity of Command

Principle [42]. Supporting this argument, Yildirim and Yildirim affirm that 87.0% of nurses in Turkey have experienced some form of bullying, especially those in the public sector [75].

High levels of bureaucracy, the existence of very strict norms, and excessively high job security may generate environments amenable to the occurrence of bullying, as these settings make bullies invisible and victims less likely to resign [69]. In this sense, Zapf et al. provide a wide-ranging summary of European studies and conclude that the prevalence of bullying is higher for the public sector, service, health, education, and assistance fields than for private industry [19]. A similar conclusion is presented by Giorgi, Arenas, and Leon-Perez in Italy [17] and by Hoel and Cooper in the United Kingdom [39]. These authors report more significant bullying activity within public services (e.g., education or correctional assistances) and a lower prevalence of bullying in the retail and industrial sectors. Similarly, Soares' research shows that 4.4% of public education and health care employees have been bullied occasionally by their patients or students while completing their daily tasks [76].

Furthermore, LaVan, Katz, and Jedel suggest that public sector jobholders should manage their employment relationships differently than do workers in the private sector. This difference may lead to an alternative form of workplace bullying [77]. Although there are some research papers suggesting that bullying might be higher within the public sector [19,39,69,78], LaVan, Katz, and Jedel firmly believe that this actually occurs because countless jobs in the public sector entail a great deal of emotional labor rather than instrumental work [19,77,79]. Public sector employees enjoy a special type of employment status; they are protected by civil service rules and regulations, by unions with internal grievance procedures, and by statutes that provide protection against retaliation for whistle blowing.

For the purpose of the present work, a comprehensive workplace-bullying model is proposed in the following section. Then, the most relevant empirical results obtained through a logistic regression analysis are presented, followed by the main conclusions and limitations of the study.

## 2. Methods

The data utilized for this research were obtained from the 5th European Working Conditions Survey, conducted in 2010 by the *European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions*. This survey provides insight into to the working environment and employment conditions of the 27 EU Member States, including Albania, Croatia, Kosovo, Macedonia, Montenegro, Norway, and Turkey. The target population includes workers aged 15 years and over (16 and over in the case of Spain, the UK, and Norway) who are employed and reside in the country being surveyed. This was a multi-stage investigation using a

stratified random sample. Over 43,000 interviews were collected in 2010. The study found that the prevalence rate of workplace bullying was 11.3% among healthcare workers. Given the objective of this research, we gathered a subsample of 284 health professionals, including members of the International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO-08) subgroup 22 (e.g., medical doctors, nursing and midwifery professionals, traditional and complementary medicine professionals, dentists, ophthalmic opticians, and physiotherapists). In total, 41.2% of these health professionals claim to have experienced workplace bullying (N = 117), while 58.8% indicate that they have not (N = 167).

The subjects in this sample are medical doctors (66.9%), nursing and midwifery professionals (21.5%), or other health professionals (11.6%). They are drawn from both the public (67.6%) and private sectors (32.4%), are 60.9% female and 39.1% male, and have an average age of 44.1 years. Finally, 11.3% completed secondary education, and 88.7% completed their university studies. The term “secondary education” is used to categorize individuals with either high school study or vocational/technical training.

The dependent variable for this analysis is bullying at work. Respondents were asked to answer just one question based on their individual experience: *Over the past 12 months, during the course of your work, have you been subjected to bullying/harassment?*

Bullied professionals are codified as 1, while those who claim not to have felt bullied are coded as 0. Two main approaches are used in the bullying research questionnaires were implemented: the self-labeling and operational approaches. The limitations and advantages of these methods are discussed in Nielsen et al. [80].

Workplace bullying is considered in this study to be a complex phenomenon that arises due to the dynamic interactions of labor environment variables and individual factors. Taking into account preceding studies on bullying at work, this study is arranged in three sets of independent variables grouped into three categories: personal and family factors, working conditions factors, and organizational/contextual factors. The codes and classification of explanatory variables are as follows:

*Individual characteristics:* Gender (0: Male; 1: Female), Age (0: 15–24; 1: 25–39; 2: 40–54; 3: 55 or over), Level of education (0: University education, 1: Secondary education), Marital status (0: Partnered; 1: Single), and with Children at home (0: Yes; 1: No).

*Working conditions:* Length of service (0: more than 10 years; 1: more than 5 up to 10; 2: more than 1 up to 5; 3: up to one year), Type of contract (0: A permanent contract; 1: A temporary contract), Working hours (0: More than 40 h; 1: 20 to 40 h; 2: Less than 20 h), Work at night (0: No; 1: Yes), Work on Sundays (0: No; 1: Yes), Working day (0: Full time; 1: Part time), Shift work (0: No; 1: Yes),



*Monotonous tasks* (0: No; 1: Yes), *Complex tasks* (0: Yes; 1: No), *Rotating tasks* (0: No; 1: Yes), *Team work* (0: No; 1: Yes), *Flexibility in work methods* (0: Yes; 1: No), *Work stress* (0: No; 1: Yes), *Working conditions satisfaction* (0: Yes; 1: No), *Pay satisfaction* (0: Yes; 1: No), *Likely to be dismissed* (0: No; 1: Yes), *Expectation of career growth* (0: Yes; 1: No) and *Motivation* (0: Yes; 1: No).

*Organizational context*: *Type of sector* (0: Private; 1: Public) and *Size* (0: Micro enterprise (1–9 employees); 1: Small enterprise (10–49 employees); 2: Medium-large enterprise (50+ employees)).

The IBM SPSS 20 (Statistical Package for Social Science) software application was utilized to measure the variables. The methodology employed to accomplish the objectives was based on the binary logistic regression model, a specific type of regression model intended for dichotomous variables. This statistical technique is used to determine the probability that an event will happen (workplace bullying, in this case) compared to the probability that it will not.

### 3. Results

Table 1 lists some of the main sociodemographic characteristics of both the healthcare workers who reported that they were bullied (N = 117) and those who did not (N = 167).

Furthermore, some statistical differences were observed regarding the array of variables. Workplace bullying emerges as even more acute among female healthcare workers (72.6% compared to 52.7%;  $\chi^2 = 11.507$ , d.f. = 1,  $p = 0.001$ ) young workers (46.2% compared to 27.3% between 25–39 years old;  $\chi^2 = 17.107$ , d.f. = 3,  $p = 0.001$ ), workers who did not attend university (21.4% compared to 4.2%;  $\chi^2 = 20.301$ , d.f. = 1,  $p = 0.000$ ), workers with a permanent contract (85.0% compared to 78.8%;  $\chi^2 = 3.568$ , d.f. = 1,  $p = 0.042$ ), workers not in management positions (84.2% compared to 66.9%;  $\chi^2 = 10.485$ , d.f. = 1,  $p = 0.001$ ), workers in the public sector (66.7% compared to 55.7%;  $\chi^2 = 8.182$ , d.f. = 1,  $p = 0.004$ ), workers who are not satisfied with their jobs (32.8% compared to 12.0%;  $\chi^2 = 17.927$ , d.f. = 1,  $p = 0.000$ ), and workers who experience stress in their daily work (89.7% compared to 77.2%;  $\chi^2 = 7.408$ , d.f. = 1,  $p = 0.004$ ), compared to healthcare professionals who do not consider themselves as bullied in their workplaces.

Table 2 shows the results for the estimations calculated by logistic regression that were derived from the factors determining the level of workplace bullying within health professional settings. The statistical tests applied to assess the validity of the model (Hosmer-Lemeshow analysis; Chi-square test: 5.444; Sig. 0.709) largely suggested enough basis to acknowledge its validity; that is, they affirmed that the set of job-related variables considered for the general model of

this research may potentially explain in a satisfactory manner whether a health professional is prone to experiencing bullying at work.

**Table 1.** Distribution of both bullied and non-bullied healthcare workers in their labor environments according to sociodemographic and working characteristics.

Characteristic	Sociodemographic and work-related factors among health care workers who were bullied in their workplaces (N = 117)		Sociodemographic and work-related factors among health care workers who were not bullied in their workplaces (N = 167)	
	Number (n)	Percentage (%)	Number (n)	Percentage (%)
<b>Gender</b>				
Male	32	27.4%	79	47.3%
Female	85	72.6%	88	52.7%
<b>Age</b>				
15–24 years	2	1.7%	2	1.2%
25–39 years	54	46.2%	45	27.3%
40–54 years	50	42.7%	75	45.5%
55 years or older	11	9.4%	43	26.1%
<b>Level of education</b>				
Secondary education	25	21.4%	7	4.2%
University education	92	78.6%	160	95.8%
<b>Employment contract</b>				
Long-term contract	91	85.0%	83	78.8%
Temporary contract	16	15.0%	28	25.2%
<b>Management position</b>				
Yes	18	15.8%	54	33.1%
No	96	84.2%	109	66.9%
<b>Sector</b>				
Public	78	66.7%	93	55.7%
Private	22	18.8%	60	35.9%
Other	17	14.5%	14	8.4%
<b>Job satisfaction</b>				
Yes	78	67.2%	146	88.0%
No	38	32.8%	20	12.0%
<b>Stress</b>				
Yes	105	89.7%	129	77.2%
No	12	10.3%	38	22.8%

We should also highlight that the chosen variables allow the model to be generalized, indicating its possible utility for predictive purposes. The logistic regression model integrates individual and organizational factors and estimating that the likelihood of workplace bullying is 80.8% (87.6% for bullied healthcare workers and 71.6% for non-bullied ones).

In general, the model brings to light the extent to which the probability of a health sector employee considering him/herself bullied is higher among younger and less educated women who have small children at home, are unsatisfied with their working conditions (e.g., working in shifts or performing monotonous and

rotational assignments), and suffer from work stress and lack of promotion opportunities within their organizations.

**Table 2.** Logistic regression for factors that may determine workplace bullying (confidence intervals for odds ratios).

Variables in the model	B	S.D.	Wald	Sig.	Odds ratios 95% C.I. for OR		
					OR	Lower	Upper
Gender (0: Male; 1: Female)	1.020	0.364	7.829	0.005	2.772	1.357	5.662
Age (0: 15–24; 1: 25–39; 2: 40–54; 3: 55 or over)	-0.466	0.253	3.393	0.065	0.627	0.382	1.030
Level of education (0: University education, 1: Secondary education)	1.706	0.574	8.843	0.003	5.507	1.789	16.951
Children at home (0: Yes; 1: No)	1.053	0.428	6.058	0.014	2.867	1.239	6.632
Shift work (0: No; 1: Yes)	0.986	0.348	8.024	0.005	2.682	1.355	5.307
Monotonous tasks (0: No; 1: Yes)	0.790	0.353	5.009	0.025	2.202	1.103	4.397
Rotating tasks (0: No; 1: Yes)	0.956	0.371	6.627	0.010	2.602	1.256	5.388
Work stress (0: No; 1: Yes)	1.602	0.546	8.622	0.003	4.962	1.703	14.456
Working condition satisfaction (0: Yes; 1: No)	0.889	0.417	4.554	0.033	2.434	1.075	5.509
Expectation of career growth (0: Yes; 1: No)	1.508	0.393	14.691	0.000	4.517	2.089	9.765
Constant	-4.408	1.020	18.683	0.000	0.012		

As a consequence, the personal and organizational variables appeared reliable for predicting the development of certain attitudes, such as workplace bullying, and for identifying critical constructs for the understanding of the phenomenon under study. Each of the personal and job-related significant factors that measure the probability of workplace bullying have a different degree of impact, as indicated by the analysis of the confidence intervals obtained in the corresponding odds ratios (see Table 2). Accordingly, the most influential variables related to workplace bullying are the level of education (OR 5.507; CI 1.789-16.951), work stress (OR 4.962; CI 1.703-14.456), and expectation of career growth (OR 4.517; CI 2.089-9.765). These factors could prove to be strong predictors of whether an employee is exposed to bullying or not.

The odds ratio coefficients for other variables (gender, children at home, shift work, monotonous tasks, rotating tasks, and working condition dissatisfaction) remain over 2.0, with the exception of age, with an odds ratio coefficient of 0.627 and a confidence interval ranging from 0.382 to 1.030.

#### 4. Discussion

Advances in understanding the primary circumstances that precede workplace bullying take on great importance in the development of more effective prevention and intervention tools to remedy this social problem [81,82]. Workplace violence in healthcare settings occurs four times more often than in all other private-sector industries combined [83], with the highest incidences in psychiatric wards, accident and emergency departments, and high-dependency

units [84]. The bullying prevalence varies significantly from one country to another and even within the same country. In Europe, for example, even though the inferences may vary depending on the measurement and estimation methods being utilized [15,85], studies of the occurrence of workplace bullying report rates of approximately 4–10% [19]. For the present research, the prevalence rate happens to be slightly higher: 11.3% of healthcare workers labeled themselves as bullied in their professions. Nevertheless, this ratio is still far from the results obtained in the U.S., where 38% of the healthcare employees report psychological harassment [86]. This relationship is similar to that described by Dellasega, who finds that 44.0% of nurses experience episodes of bullying at some point during their working lives [64].

These results indicate that the rate of workplace bullying for health professionals is larger than the predicted average calculated from similar parameters for employees laboring in any other occupational sector. Regarding this point, Zapf et al. provide an extensive summary of European studies and conclude that the prevalence of bullying is higher in the public sector (e.g., service, health, education, and assistance) than in the private sector [19]. A similar conclusion is reached by Hoel and Cooper in the United Kingdom, who report a higher incidence of bullying within public services, such as education or correctional assistance, and a lower incidence in the retail and industrial sectors [39]. Similarly, Soares' research shows that 4.4% of public education and health care employees have been occasionally bullied by their patients or students while completing their daily tasks [76].

A body of literature has emerged describing the possible triggers of workplace bullying within healthcare staff and has focused primarily on two areas. The first area pertains to the personal and individual differences among those involved in the bullying incidents, while the second pertains to the characteristics of the surrounding organizational settings in which these circumstances occur. Similar to the present paper, many authors currently embrace the concept that both individual and organizational factors are important to understanding bullying behaviors. For instance, healthcare workers under 40 are the most frequent victims of violent events [87]. Researchers have also observed that older workers experience significantly less violence than young workers [88–92]. Other characteristics of healthcare workers that have been associated with an increased risk of workplace bullying include gender and marital status. Furthermore, a greater percentage of female physicians fear a potentially violent encounter at work compared to male physicians [93]. Lin and Liu's study reports that unmarried workers are significantly more likely to experience workplace violence compared to married employees [94]. In the European Union, these results suggest that there are specific sociodemographic features that may influence the phenomenon of workplace bullying. Regarding this concern, the current regression analysis outcomes indicate a tendency for young female healthcare workers with only secondary education and with children at

home to suffer bullying. The group described above is certainly in a position of greater weakness in relation to the other groups that have greater power, for example, men with university degrees or higher seniority in their organizations. Additionally, regarding concrete cases related to female jobholders, persistent and predominant sexist attitudes should be noted, as well as structural barriers that inhibit women's careers to a certain extent compared to their male colleagues. These circumstances make these groups particularly more vulnerable; therefore, they are more likely to end up as victims of workplace bullying.

Furthermore, some organizational factors are found to increase the odds of workplace bullying against healthcare workers. For instance, with respect to working conditions, McAnaney and Shaw report that violent events in long-term care are more likely to take place during the evening and night hours [95]. It has been claimed in recent meta-analyses that there are some specific organizational variables (e.g., workplace bullying antecedents) that are worth noting, such as conflict and role ambiguity [31], work overload, stress, lack of autonomy, and absence of organizational fairness [56]. Zapf et al.'s research shows that performing monotonous and repetitive tasks is more common among bullying victims [36]. At the organizational level, this study emphasizes that the propensity for a healthcare worker to experience bullying escalates among those who work on a shift schedule, perform monotonous and rotating tasks, suffer from work stress, experience a lack of satisfaction due to their working conditions, and do not perceive any opportunity for promotion within their organization. This unpredictable environment, characterized by insecurity, role conflict, and tension, allows few opportunities for socialization and even less time for conflict resolution; both of these factors may indirectly contribute to the emergence of aggressive behaviors and bullying. Ultimately, a stressful social climate and precarious work atmosphere create a breeding ground for workplace bullying, as reflected in the results of the present empirical study.

Finally, it seems accurate to say that the contextual variables of an organization do not influence workplace bullying. Given this finding, it is possible to deduce that workplace bullying is prevalent with the same degree of intensity in both public and private organizations, regardless of their size.

## **5. Conclusions**

Workplace bullying has become a serious and growing problem that affects a significant proportion of healthcare professionals. As a result of its negative consequences on the mental health and well-being of employees, and hence on the performance of the organizations, the importance of understanding the factors that contribute to the emergence and development of bullying is vital [23]. In this regard, the present study aims to contribute to the development and implementation of measures to prevent bullying in the health sector.

The multidimensional model created in the present research is intended to identify healthcare workers who are prone to being bullied at work as individuals; the study findings have valuable and pertinent implications for institutions that aim to thrive and to enhance organizational performance.

This work provides reasonable evidence that could be of significant benefit in the implementation of human resource policies: responsible managers could reduce the organization-wide levels of workplace bullying by adjusting certain working conditions that negatively affect employees who are especially susceptible to being bullied, given their personal characteristics.

This research paper offers an empirical basis for further studies related to health sector issues in Europe. Attracting and retaining the most qualified and experienced professionals has become essential for successful and competitive organizations in the healthcare industry; organizations are urged to implement strategies oriented toward reducing workplace bullying. Consequently, the labor force in this economic sector has specific traits that should not be ignored.

From a practical standpoint, the present findings could assist practitioners in facilitating harmonious social relationships among healthcare workers. Particularly, the results suggest that limiting job demands and increasing job resources could reduce workplace bullying. Specific attention should be paid to young women who feel dissatisfied with their working conditions, as they constitute a group with an increased risk of experiencing bullying.

Despite the significant findings of this study, its intrinsic methodological limitations must be considered. First, the phenomenon of bullying was measured by self-report, which might increase the risk of common method variance, forcing us to assume a corresponding bias in the key variables. Exploring the experiences of 385 self-identified Canadian nurses, we showed that when targets identify themselves as victims, they report decreased job satisfaction, escalation of their level of burnout, and greater psychological distress in comparison with those exposed to bullying but who do not label themselves as sufferers [96]. Second, by utilizing self-identification without a strict definition, bullying is measured in broad terms, and consequently, there is a risk of overestimating its prevalence, as the respondents could report incidents that would not qualify as bullying according to the researchers' understanding of the phenomenon [20]. Third, a related methodological problem could be social desirability; previous scholars have analyzed the repercussions of desirability in workplace bullying studies. Given the particular understanding of the phenomenon under investigation, it seems probable that any given prevalence rate would exceed the rates obtained in this type of research, as many of the present victims took a large amount of time to acknowledge and accept that they were subjected to aggression of this nature. This predicament is particularly acute among certain population groups that are considered more vulnerable, such as women, young people, and employees with temporary interrelations. To

correct this problem, some authors propose to make use of multi-method data and utilize objective measures that may reinforce workplace-bullying research. Examples of this type of data include managerial reports and scores from third parties (e.g., researchers) [97]. It should be noted, however, that assessing third party scores of workplace bullying without trying to counteract these behaviors raises ethical concerns due to the many negative consequences of workplace bullying for the parties involved, as well as for the work unit and the organization [98]. Fourth, the observed correlations between bullying and the variables analyzed in this study should be assessed cautiously, as the data are cross-sectional and not experimental. Finally, this study represents only a partial perspective of this phenomenon: the point of view of the victim but not of the bully.

## References

1. Ironside, M.; Seifert, R. Tackling bullying in the workplace: The collective dimension. In *Bullying and Emotional Abuse in the Workplace: International Perspectives in Research and Practice*; Einarsen, H., Hoel, H., Cooper, C., Eds.; Routledge: New York, NY, USA, 2003; pp. 383–398.
2. Gumbus, A.; Lyons, B. Workplace harassment: The social costs of bullying. *J. Leadersh. Account. Ethics* **2011**, *8*, 72–90.
3. Rowell, P. Being a “target” at work or William Tell and how the apple felt. *J. Nurs. Adm.* **2005**, *35*, 377–379.
4. DuHart, D.T. *Violence in the Workplace*; Bureau of Justice Statistics: Washington, DC, USA, 2001.
5. Momberg, M.A. *The Prevalence and Consequences of Workplace Bullying in South Africa*. Ph.D. Thesis, Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University: Port Elizabeth, South Africa, 11 January 2011.
6. Aquino, K.; Lamertz, K. Relational model of workplace victimization: Social roles and patterns of victimization in dyadic relationships. *J. Appl. Psychol.* **2004**, *89*, 1023–1034.
7. Anjum, A.; Yasmeen, K.; Yasmeen, K. Bullying at work: A comprehensive definition and consequences based on an empirical study. *Int. J. Hum. Resour. Stud.* **2011**, *1*, 80–88.
8. Razzaghian, M.; Shah, A. Prevalence, antecedents, and effects of workplace bullying: A review. *Afr. J. Bus. Manag.* **2011**, *5*, 13419–13427.
9. Zapf, D.; Einarsen, S. Bullying in the workplace: Recent trends in research and practice -an introduction. *Eur. J. Work Organ. Psychol.* **2001**, *10*, 369–373.
10. Einarsen, S. The nature and causes of bullying at work. *Int. J. Manpow.* **1999**, *20*, 16–27.
11. Einarsen, S. *Bullying and Harassment at Work: Epidemiological and Psychosocial Aspects*. Ph.D. Thesis, University of Bergen: Bergen, Norway, 2 December 1996.
12. Einarsen, S.; Hoel, H.; Zapf, D.; Cooper, C.L. The concept of bullying at work. In *Bullying and Emotional Abuse in the Workplace: International Perspectives in Research and Practice*; Einarsen, H., Hoel, H., Zapf, D., Cooper, C., Eds.; Taylor & Francis: London, UK, 2003; pp. 3–30.
13. Einarsen, S.; Hoel, H.; Zapf, D.; Cooper, C.L. The concept of bullying and harassment at work: The European tradition. In *Bullying and Harassment in the Workplace*; Einarsen, H., Hoel, H., Zapf, D., Cooper, C., Eds.; CRC Press: Boca Raton, FL, USA, 2011; pp. 3–40.
14. Sandmark, H. Job mismatching unequal opportunities and long-term



- sickness absence in female white-collar workers in Sweden. *Scand. J. Public Health* **2009**, *37*, 43–49.
15. Nielsen, M.B.; Skogstad, A.; Matthiesen, S.B.; Glaso, L.; Aasland, M.S.; Notelaers, G.; Einarsen, S. Prevalence of workplace bullying in Norway: Comparisons across time and estimation methods. *Eur. J. Work Organ. Psychol.* **2009**, *18*, 81–101.
16. Nielsen, M.B.; Hetland, J.; Matthiesen, S.B.; Einarsen, S. Longitudinal relationships between workplace bullying and psychological distress. *Scand. J. Work Environ. Health* **2012**, *38*, 38–46.
17. Giorgi, G.; Arenas, A.; Leon-Perez, J.M. An operative measure of workplace bullying: The negative acts questionnaire across Italian companies. *Ind. Health* **2011**, *49*, 686–695.
18. Agervold, M. Bullying at work: A discussion of definitions and prevalence, based on an empirical study. *Scand. J. Psychol.* **2007**, *48*, 161–172.
19. Zapf, D.; Einarsen, S.; Hoel, H.; Vartia, M. Empirical findings on bullying in the workplace. In *Bullying and Emotional Abuse in the Workplace: International Perspectives in Research and Practice*; Einarsen, H., Hoel, H., Zapf, D., Cooper, C., Eds.; Taylor & Francis: London, UK, 2003; pp.103–126.
20. Nielsen, M.B.; Matthiesen, S.B.; Einarsen, S. The impact of methodological moderators on prevalence rates of workplace bullying. A meta-analysis. *J. Occup. Organ. Psychol.* **2010**, *83*, 955–979.
21. McPhaul, K.; Lipscomb, J. Workplace Violence in Health Care: Recognized but not Regulated. *Online J Issues Nurs*, 2004, 9, Manuscript 6. Available online: <http://www.nursingworld.org/MainMenuCategories/ANAMarketplace/ANAPeriodicals/OJIN/TableofContents/Volume92004/No3Sept04/ViolenceinHealthCare.html> (accessed on 12 March 2011).
22. Einarsen, S.; Skogstad, A. Bullying at work: Epidemiological findings in public and private organizations. *Eur. J. Work Organ. Psychol.* **1996**, *5*, 185–201.
23. Bond, S.A.; Tuckey, M.R.; Dollard, M.F. Psychosocial safety climate, workplace bullying, and symptoms of posttraumatic stress. *Organ. Dev. J.* **2010**, *28*, 37–56.
24. Hoel, H.; Cooper, C.L. Origins of bullying: Theoretical frameworks for explaining workplace bullying. In *Building a Culture of Respect: Managing Bullying at Work*; Tehrani, N., Ed.; Taylor & Francis: London, UK, 2001; pp. 3–20.
25. Hoel, H.; Salin, D. Organizational antecedents of workplace bullying. In *Bullying and Emotional Abuse in the Workplace: International Perspectives in Research and Practice*; Einarsen, H., Hoel, H., Zapf, D., Cooper, C., Eds.; Taylor & Francis: London, UK, 2003; pp. 203–218.

26. Salin, D. Ways of explaining workplace bullying: A review of enabling, motivating and precipitating structures and processes in the work environment. *Hum. Relat.* **2003**, *56*, 1213–1232.
27. Coyne, I.; Seigne, E.; Randall, P. Predicting workplace victim status from personality. *Eur. J. Work Organ. Psychol.* **2000**, *9*, 335–349.
28. Zapf, D. Organisational, work group related and personal causes of mobbing/bullying at work. *Int. J. Manpow.* **1999**, *20*, 70–85.
29. Skjorshammer, M.; Hofoss, D. Physician in conflict: A survey study of individual and work-related characteristics. *Scand. J. Caring Sci.* **1999**, *13*, 211–216.
30. Finne, L.B.; Knardahl, S.; Lau, B. Workplace bullying and mental distress – a prospective study of Norwegian employees. *Scand. J. Work Environ. Health* **2011**, *37*, 276–287.
31. Bowling, N.A.; Beehr, T.A. Workplace harassment from the victim's perspective: A theoretical model and meta-analysis. *J. Appl. Psychol.* **2006**, *91*, 998–1012.
32. Zapf, D.; Einarsen, S. Individual antecedents of bullying: Victims and perpetrators. In *Bullying and Emotional Abuse in the Workplace: International Perspectives in Research and Practice*; Einarsen, H., Hoel, H., Zapf, D., Cooper, C., Eds.; Taylor & Francis: London, UK, 2003; pp. 165–184.
33. Rayner, C.; Hoel, H.; Cooper, C.L. *Workplace Bullying: What We Know, Who Is To Blame, and What Can We Do?* Taylor and Francis: London, UK, 2002.
34. Bjorkqvist, K.; Osterman, K.; Lagerspetz, K.M. Sex differences in covert aggression among adults. *Aggress. Behav.* **1994**, *20*, 27–33.
35. Cortina, L.M.; Magley, V.J.; Williams, J.H.; Langhout, R.D. Incivility in the workplace: Incidence and impact. *J. Occup. Health Psychol.* **2001**, *6*, 64–80.
36. Zapf, D.; Knorz, C.; Kulla, M. On the relationship between mobbing factors, and job content, social work environment, and health outcomes. *Eur. J. Work Organ. Psychol.* **1996**, *5*, 215–237.
37. Niedl, K. Mobbing/Bullying at Work: An Empirical Analysis of the Phenomenon and of the Effects of Systematic Harassment on Human Resource Management. 1995. Available online: <http://www.dandelon.com/servlet/download/attachments/dandelon/ids/AT001EBC5C41F301E4475C12571FE002D7281.pdf> (accessed on 22 July 2013).
38. Björkqvist, K.; Osterman, K.; Hijelt-Back, M. Aggression among university employees. *Aggress. Behav.* **1994**, *20*, 173–184.
39. Hoel, H.; Cooper, C.L. *Destructive Conflict and Bullying at Work*; University of Manchester, Institute of Science and Technology: Manchester, UK, 2000.

40. Rayner, C. The incidence of workplace bullying. *J. Community Appl. Soc. Psychol.* **1997**, *7*, 199–208.
41. Vartia, M. The sources of bullying -psychological work environment and organizational climate. *Eur. J. Work Organ. Psychol.* **1996**, *5*, 203–214.
42. Leymann, H. The content and development of mobbing at work. *Eur. J. Work Organ. Psychol.* **1996**, *5*, 165–184.
43. Eriksen, W.; Einarsen, S. Gender minority as a risk factor of exposure to bullying at work: The case of male assistant nurses. *Eur. J. Work Organ. Psychol.* **2004**, *13*, 473–492.
44. Einarsen, S.; Raknes, B.I.; Matthiesen, S.B.; Hellesoy, O.H. *Mobbing og Harde Personkonflikter: Helsefarlig Samspill på Arbeidsplassen. (Bullying and Interpersonal Conflict: Interaction at Work with Negative Implications for Health)*; Sigma Forlag: Bergen, Norway, 1994.
45. Vartia-Väänänen, M. *Workplace Bullying: A Study on the Work Environment, Well-Being and Health*; Academic Dissertation, Faculty of Arts: University of Helsinki, Helsinki, Finland, 2003.
46. Piirainen, H.; Elo, A.L.; Hirvonen, M.; Kauppinen, K.; Ketola, R.; Laitinen, H.; Lindström, K.; Reijula, K.; Riala, R.; Viluksela, M.; *et al.* *Työ Ja Terveys – Haastattelututkimus v. Taulukkoraportti*; Finnish Institute of Occupational Health: Helsinki, Finland, 2000.
47. Lewis, D. Workplace bullying—interim findings of a study in further and higher education in Wales. *Int. J. Manpow.* **1999**, *20*, 106–119.
48. Vaez, M.; Ekberg, K.; LaFlamme, L. Abusive events at work among young working adults: Magnitude of the problem and its effect on self-rated health. *Ind. Relat.* **2004**, *59*, 569–584.
49. Hearn, J.; Parkin, W. *Gender, Sexuality and Violence in Organizations*; Sage Publications: London, UK, 2001.
50. Kivimäki, M.; Elovainio, M.; Vahtera, J. Workplace bullying and sickness absence in hospital staff. *Occup. Environ. Med.* **2000**, *57*, 656–660.
51. Baron, R.A.; Neuman, J.H. Workplace violence and workplace aggression: Evidence on their relative frequency and potential causes. *Aggress. Behav.* **1996**, *22*, 161–173.
52. Omari, M. *Towards Dignity and Respect: An Exploration of Antecedents and Consequences of Bullying Behavior in the Workplace*; Final Report Curtin-IPAA Fellowship Program: Brisbane, Australia, 2003.
53. Vartia, M.; Hyyti, J. Gender differences in workplace bullying among prison officers. *Eur. J. Work Organ. Psychol.* **2002**, *11*, 113–126.

54. Rayner, C.; Sheehan, M.; Barker, M. Theoretical approaches to the study of bullying at work. *Int. J. Manpow.* **1999**, *20*, 11–15.
55. Jennifer, D.; Cowie, H.; Anaiadou, K. Perceptions and experience of workplace bullying in five different working populations. *Aggress. Behav.* **2003**, *29*, 489–496.
56. Topa, G.; Depolo, M.; Morales, J.F. Acoso laboral: Meta-análisis y modelo integrador de sus antecedentes y consecuencias. *Psicothema* **2007**, *19*, 88–94.
57. Hansen, A.M.; Hogh, A.; Persson, R.; Karlson, B.; Garde, A.H.; Ørbæk, P. Bullying at work, health outcomes, and physiological stress response. *J. Psychosom. Res.* **2006**, *60*, 63–72.
58. Agervold, M.; Mikkelsen, E.G. Relationships between bullying, psychosocial work environment and individual stress reactions. *Work Stress* **2004**, *18*, 336–351.
59. O'Moore, M.; Seigne, E.; McGuire, L.; Smith, M. Victims of bullying at work in Ireland. *Occup. Health Saf.* **1998**, *14*, 569–574.
60. Sheehan, M. Restructuring: Rhetoric *versus* reality. In *Bullying: Causes, Costs and Cures*; McCarthy, P., Sheehan, M., Wilkie, S., Wilkie, W., Eds.; Beyond Bullying Association: Nathan, QLD, Australia, 1998; pp. 153–166.
61. McCarthy, P. When the mask slips: Inappropriate coercion in organisations undergoing restructuring. In *Bullying: From Backyard to Boardroom*; McCarthy, P., Sheehan, M., Wilkie, W., Eds.; Millennium Books: Alexandria, NSW, Australia, 1996; pp. 47–65.
62. McCormack, B.; Dewar, B.; Wright, J.; Garbett, R.; Harvey, G.; Ballantine, K. *A Realist Synthesis of Evidence Relating to Practice Development: Executive Summary*; NHS Quality Improvement Scotland and NHS Education for Scotland: Edinburgh, UK, 2006.
63. Irving, P.G.; Coleman, D.F. The moderating role of different forms of organizational commitment in role ambiguity-job tension relations. *Can. J. Adm. Sci.* **2003**, *20*, 97–106.
64. Dellasega, C.A. Bullying among nurses. *Am. J. Nurs.* **2009**, *109*, 52–58.
65. Mathisen, G.E.; Einarsen, S.; Mykletun, R. The occurrences and correlates of bullying and harassment in the restaurant sector. *Scand. J. Psychol.* **2008**, *49*, 59–68.
66. Smith, P.K.; Cowie, H.; Olafsson, R.F.; Liefoghe, A.P. Definitions of bullying: A comparison of terms used, and age and gender differences, in a Fourteen-Country international comparison. *Child Dev.* **2003**, *73*, 1119–1133.
67. McKay, R.; Arnold, D.H.; Fratzl, J.; Thomas, R. Workplace bullying in academia: A Canadian study. *Empl. Responsib. Rights J.* **2008**, *20*, 77–100.

68. Mayhew, C.; McCarthy, P.; Chappell, D.; Quinlan, M.; Barker, M.; Sheehan, M. Measuring the extent of impact from occupational violence and bullying on traumatised workers. *Empl. Responsib. Rights J.* **2004**, *16*, 117–134.
69. Salin, D. Prevalence and forms of bullying among business professionals: A comparison of two different strategies for measuring bullying. *Eur. J. Work Organ. Psychol.* **2001**, *10*, 425–441.
70. Waddington, P.A.; Braddock, Q. “Guardians” or “Bullies”? Perceptions of the Police amongst adolescent black, white and Asian boys. *Polic. Soc.* **1991**, *2*, 31–45.
71. Ortega, A.; Høgh, A.; Pejtersen, J.H.; Olsen, O. Prevalence of workplace bullying and risk groups: A representative population study. *Int. Arch. Occup. Environ. Health* **2009**, *82*, 417–426.
72. Niedhammer, I.; David, S.; Degioanni, S. Economic activities and occupations at high risk for workplace bullying: Results from a large-scale cross-sectional survey in the general working population in France. *Int. Arch. Occup. Environ. Health* **2007**, *80*, 346–353.
73. Woodman, P.; Cook, P. *Bullying at Work: The Experience of Managers*; Chartered Management Institute: London, UK, 2005.
74. Ariza, J.A.; Morales, A.C.; Menor, E. The “Bullied” manager: An empirical study of individual, organizational and contextual factors. *Int. Bus. Manag.* **2011**, *2*, 6–23.
75. Yildirim, A.; Yildirim, D. Mobbing in the workplace by peers and managers: Mobbing experienced by nurses working in healthcare facilities in Turkey and its effect on nurses. *J. Clin. Nurs.* **2007**, *16*, 1444–1453.
76. Soares, A. *Bullying: When Work Becomes Incident*; Université du Québec: Montréal, QC, Canada, 2002.
77. LaVan, H.; Katz, M.; Jedel, M.J. The public sector manager as a bully: Analysis of litigated cases. *J. Bus. Behav. Sci.* **2011**, *23*, 96–119.
78. Lewis, D.; Gunn, R. Workplace bullying in the public sector: Understanding the racial dimension. *Public Adm.* **2007**, *85*, 641–665.
79. Hochschild, J.L. *Thirty Years after Brown*; Joint Center for Political Studies: Washington, DC, USA, 1985.
80. Nielsen, M.B.; Notelaers, G.; Einarsen, S. Measuring exposure to workplace bullying. In *Bullying and Harassment in the Workplace: Developments in Theory Research and Practice*, 2nd ed.; Einarsen, H., Hoel, H., Zapf, D., Cooper, C., Eds.; Taylor & Francis: London, UK, 2011; pp. 149–174.
81. Saam, N.J. Interventions in workplace bullying: A multilevel approach. *Eur. J. Work Organ. Psychol.* **2010**, *19*, 51–75.

82. Einarsen, S.; Hauge, L.J. Antecedentes y consecuencias del acoso psicológico en el trabajo: Una revisión de la literatura. *Revista de Psicología del Trabajo y de las Organizaciones*. 2006. Available online: <http://www.redalyc.org/pdf/2313/231317121002.pdf> (accessed on 22 July 2013).
83. Gillespie, G.L.; Gates, D.M.; Miller, M.; Howard, P.K. Violence against healthcare workers in a pediatric emergency department. *Adv. Emerg. Nurs. J.* **2010**, *32*, 68–82.
84. Hesketh, K.L.; Duncan, S.M.; Estabrooks, C.A. Workplace violence in Alberta and British Columbia hospitals. *Health Policy* **2003**, *63*, 311–321.
85. Notelaers, G.; Einarsen, S.; de Witte, H.; Vermunt, J. Measuring exposure to bullying at work: The validity and advantages of the latent class cluster approach. *Work Stress* **2006**, *20*, 288–301.
86. Dunn, S. *What's Going on with Mobbing, Bullying and Work Harassment Internationally?* Workplace Bullying Institute: Bellingham, WA, USA, 2003.
87. Ayranci, U.; Yenilmez, C.; Balci, Y.; Kaptanoglu, C. Identification of violence in Turkish health care settings. *J. Interpers. Violence* **2006**, *21*, 276–296.
88. Camerino, D.; Estryng-Behar, M.; Conway, P.M.; van der Heijndend, B.I.; Hasselhorn, H.M. Work-related factors and violence among nursing staff in the European NEXT study: A longitudinal cohort study. *Int. J. Nurs. Stud.* **2008**, *45*, 35–50.
89. Thomas, N.I.; Brown, N.D.; Hodges, L.C.; Gandy, J.; Lawson, L.; Lord, J.E. Risk profiles for four types of work-related injury among hospital employees. *Am. Assoc. Occup. Health Nurses J.* **2006**, *54*, 61–68.
90. Hegney, D.; Plank, A.; Parker, V. Workplace violence in nursing in Queensland, Australia: A self-reported study. *Int. J. Nurs. Pract.* **2003**, *9*, 261–268.
91. Hegney, D.; Eley, R.; Plank, A.; Buikstra, E.; Parker, V. Workplace violence in Queensland, Australia: The results of a comparative study. *Int. J. Nurs. Pract.* **2006**, *12*, 220–231.
92. Lawoko, S.; Soares, J.J.F.; Nolan, P. Violence towards psychiatric staff: A comparison of gender, job and environmental characteristics in England and Sweden. *Work & Stress* **2004**, *18*, 39–55.
93. Tolhurst, H.; Talbot, J.; Baker, L.; Bell, P.; Murray, G.; Sutton, A. Rural general practitioner apprehension about work related violence in Australia. *Aust. J. Rural Health* **2003**, *11*, 237–241.
94. Lin, Y.H.; Liu, H.E. The impact of workplace violence on nurses in South Taiwan. *Int. J. Nurs. Stud.* **2005**, *42*, 773–778.

95. McAnaney, C.M.; Shaw, K.N. Violence in the pediatric emergency department. *Ann. Emerg. Med.* **1994**, *23*, 1248–1251.
96. Out, J.W. Meanings of Workplace Bullying: Labeling *versus* the Experiencing and the Belief in a Just World. Ph.D. thesis, University of Windsor, Ontario, Canada, 25 January 2005.
97. Baillien, E.; de Cuyper, N.; de Witte, H. Job autonomy and workload as antecedents of workplace bullying: A two-wave test of Karasek's Job Demand Control model for targets and perpetrators. *J. Occup. Organ. Psychol.* **2011**, *84*, 191–208.
98. Einarsen, S.; Matthiesen, S.B.; Hauge, L.J. Bullying and harassment at work. In *The Oxford Handbook of Personnel Psychology*; Cartwright, S., Cooper, C.L., Eds.; Sage Publications: London, UK, 2009; pp. 464–495.

# Chapter 2

---

*“Our lives begin to end the day we become  
silent about things that matter”*

Martin Luther King Jr. (1929-1968)

## Chapter 2. *Workplace bullying among managers: A multifactorial perspective and understanding*

### **A**bstract

The aim of this paper is to study certain factors that may be determinant in the emergence of workplace bullying among managers—employees with a recognized and privileged position to exercise power—adopting the individual perspective of the subject, the bullied manager. Individual, organizational, and contextual factors integrate the developed global model, and the methodology utilized to accomplish our research objectives is based on the binary logistic regression model. A sample population of 661 managers was obtained from the micro data file of the 5th European Working Conditions Survey-2010 (European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions) and utilized to conduct the present research. The results indicate that the chance for a manager to refer to him/herself as bullied increases among women that hold managerial positions and live with children under 15 at home, and among subjects that work at night, on a shift system, suffering from work stress, enjoying little satisfaction from their working conditions, and not perceiving opportunities for promotions in their organizations. The present work summarizes an array of outcomes and proposes, within the usual course of events, that workplace bullying could be reduced if job demands were limited and job resources were increased. The implications of these findings could assist directors/general directors in facilitating, to some extent, good social relationships among managers.

**KEYWORDS:** Workplace bullying; working conditions; regression model; European Working Conditions Survey-2010; satisfaction; work stress

### 1. Introduction

#### 1.1. Power in the Organization and Bullying

Organizational structure and organizational culture are not neutral. In this sense and in the context of profit maximization and centrality of exploitation during the work process, workplace bullying would be, from a Marxist perspective, normal in the day-to-day management, which forces to pay special attention to



sources, meaning, and dynamics originated by power inequalities in the workplace [1].

Although rare, the presence of those critical perspectives in the organizational analysis and, particularly, some labor achievements in developed countries have permitted awareness of certain limits in the organizational demands, acknowledging workplace bullying as a reiterated and irrational behavior that causes damage or has the potential to do it [2,3]. Today, some authors even consider workplace bullying as one of the most devastating problems for employees, to the extent of considering it as probably the severest ways of stress at work [4–6].

Bullying has a detrimental effect on both individuals and organizations; outlays to the organization are high when lost productivity, turnover, distraction of witnesses, and emotional and physical health costs of targets are measured. This number exponentially increases when a potential lawsuit for unjust dismissal or workers compensation and disability are added. Costs that are harder to calculate but are negatively impacted are reduced work quality, errors, absenteeism, or poor reputation and customer relationships that result from loss of work focus and commitment [7].

In the context of Industrial Psychology, international research has shown a growing interest in workplace bullying [8]; more precisely, the investigation into bullying experienced by managers, although still in its infancy, has become part of a modest but emerging body of literature on this realm [9]. The aim of this paper is to study certain determinant factors for workplace bullying that might affect this group of employees with a recognized and privileged position to exercise power—managers—adopting the individual perspective of the subject—the manager bullied—regardless of the frequency or duration of the action: managers, as common subjects, are in the most personal position to judge whether they are bullied at work or not because if they perceive they are, the adverse effects that arise from the experience would manifest independently of the presence of solid fundamentals in that perception.

Having said that, we begin our paper conceptualizing and defining the workplace bullying phenomenon, followed by the description of some pertinent research on bullying to managers and a revision of the main empirical findings that will allow us to establish a global model of workplace bullying. Later, the most relevant results of the empirical study obtained through a logistic regression analysis are presented, and finally, the discussion and conclusion sections are elucidated.

## **1.2. Delimitation and Effects of Workplace Bullying**

The concept of workplace bullying, that in principle may seem plain, has in practice many nuances that should be analyzed. On the one hand, any study on

this phenomenon should start from the basic premise of difficulty involved in providing any digit on the prevalence of this event since the revision done by Zapf et al., which reveals that the range may fluctuates between 5% and 30% [10]. In fact, the prevalence of bullying varies significantly from one country to another and even within the same country. In Europe, prevalence studies have reported workplace bullying rates of approximately 4%–10% [10], although approximations may vary depending on method of measurement and estimation [11,12].

On the other hand, different concepts have been explored and related to bullying by researches [13]: Intimidation, harassment, victimization, aggression, emotional abuse, psychological harassment, or mistreatment at the workplace, among others [14]. This definition proliferation has hindered the ability to conceptualize the phenomenon of workplace bullying in a clear and consistent way, and obscured effective collaboration among researchers and practitioners [15–18].

Based on the prevailing academic paradigms, this concept entails a type of interpersonal aggression at work, characterized by features of intensity, frequency, duration, and power disparity [3,19,20]; according to Lutgen-Sandvik et al., intensity specifies the number of multiple negative acts [21], while a weekly frequency of these acts over a period of six months has been considered as an operational definition for bullying: severe cases of workplace bullying are differentiated from a less intense bullying, as for example some kind of stress at work [3,20,22–25]. Furthermore, researchers often apply a six-month duration criterion to differentiate bullying from other negative lower intensity acts [4,25–27]. Nevertheless, the first bullying act at work implies a breaking point that will affect both bully and victim from then on. It does not need to be reiterated in order to produce its negative effects [28]. In this vein, our approach is consistent with Leymann's research, which characterizes mobbing as a unique negative act. Finally, power disparity between bully and victim is central for the definition of bullying [3], that is to say, those who are bullied feel unable to protect themselves, as they have little chance of taking revenge on their aggressors [29].

Workplace bullying encapsulates a series of systematically negative acts that derive into social, psychological, and psychosomatic problems for the victim [3]. Therefore, although definitions tend to focus on persistence and duration as key criteria of the phenomenon, the present paper disagrees on this perspective, as workplace bullying has a strong psychological component. In fact, an essential condition for bullying is that the act must be perceived as hostile by the target [30,31]: During these sort of incidents, it is perceived an imbalance and misuse of power between the perpetrator and the target, an inadequate support, and a target's inability to defend him/herself from such aggression [3,30–33], as well as a need to cope with negative and constant social interactions [33], physical or

verbal badgering, insulting remarks [3], and intense pressure [34]. From this viewpoint, noxious effects of workplace bullying (anxiety, depression, absenteeism, lack of organizational commitment...) would actually spring out the very moment the target perceives the hostile conduct, independently of persistence or duration of the act; from that moment on, worker's behavior will change substantially. As Einarsen and Raknes point out, victims' resentment will affect performance at work causing an unpleasant work environment [35]. In this regard, Hoel et al. suggest that workplace bullying reduces organizational efficiency, as it decreases employee morale, productivity, and motivation, at the time that absenteeism and employee turnover increase [36].

The harmful effect of workplace bullying have been recently identified in different levels of the organization, demonstrating that bullying influences can be conveyed to various directions; that is, horizontally within the same level (among co-workers) [25,37], upwardly from a lower to a higher level (from subordinates to managers), and downwardly from a higher to a lower level (from managers to subordinates) [38]. Specifically, there is an escalating amount of studies on upwards bullying—as opposed to downwards bullying—that illustrates how subordinates in an organization can bully constantly on a senior person or an authority [37,39]. In a research conducted by Branch [37], utilizing an unstructured interview that involved 16 managers within a public organization, it is revealed that all of the interviewees have either personally experienced or witnessed upwards bullying within that organization. According to Branch et al. [39] upward bullying, in general terms, has to be considered a multidimensional concernment that includes a problematic work environment, noted conflicts within the workgroup, inappropriate expressions of emotion, and power imbalances. Beside, while the gender incidence of aggressors and victims of bullying is generally equal, there is some evidence that the targets of upward bullying are more often women [40,41].

Despite these investigations, it has been obtained very limited information about the perpetrators of bullying and their perspective on bullying, as there are both practical and ethical considerations that make it difficult both to approach and study this group [42]. With respect to subjects that hold a managerial position, managers might behave both destructively and constructively, exhibiting dissimilar behaviors and combinations of behaviors in relation to the subordinates, who again may react in a particular way [42].

### **1.3. Factors Influencing Workplace Bullying**

#### **1.3.1 Towards a Multifactorial Understanding of Workplace Bullying**

Due to the severe negative consequences of workplace bullying on mental health and well-being of employees, and, hence, on the performance of the organization, it is vitally important to understand the factors that contribute to

the emergence and development of this phenomenon [43]. In this sense, there is a research trend led by psychology that focuses on victim and/or bully pathology. From a humanist perspective, this dominant line of thought highlights workplace bullying at the individual level, producing much research linked with psychological effects and therapeutic practice in support of victims. However, the bullying research field has always provided a sufficiently broad approach, with groups of researchers considering the influence of micro-organizational factors—such as role conflict, leadership, political aspects, or organizational culture—as relevant [3].

As a result, research on workplace bullying has evolved towards a multi-causal understanding; in this line, Hoel and Cooper identify five main areas of analysis depending on where the main focus could be: On the individual, on the social interaction between two (or more) people, on group dynamics, on working environment (dealt with in our research), or on a wider context at the level of organization, society, and political scene [44]. Nevertheless, most researchers agree that workplace bullying turns out from the result of the interaction of some factors that manifest in the individual, organizational, and contextual ambits [17,45–47].

The following section will first offer a compilation of the main empirical findings on workplace bullying and a synthesis, later, of the hypotheses that have configured the theoretical model for this research, which could be used to derive some specific characteristics for the case of employees with managerial responsibilities.

### 1.3.2 Workplace Bullying Individual Factors

Some personal characteristics of victims could constitute, in principle, a workplace bullying antecedent. In fact, first studies suggest that those employees who suffer conflict at work used to experiment it in other contexts such as within the couple relation, in the family, and with friends [48]. The perspective of individual antecedents to workplace bullying has been a controversial issue as “blaming the victim” may result [49]. Yet, research on a personality inclined to bullying is far from being conclusive [50]. Most researchers conclude that a personality predisposed to play the role of victim or bully may not exist [20,51].

However, some studies have attempted to identify certain individual factors—gender, age, and seniority—that could increase the risk of becoming victim or bully [47,51]. Presence or absence of these factors affects bullying ratio [52]. This happens as bullies estimate costs and potential profits of bullying in terms of specific features of victims, as certain groups (e.g., women or junior employees) seem to be more vulnerable.

One of the key factors that could be used to study bullying at the individual level is gender. However, results of empirical studies that have analyzed this

aspect do not seem to be very conclusive. Thus, some authors have observed a higher frequency of bullying among women [4,5,45,53,54], while other large-scale studies conclude that, except for sexual harassment, both men and women are equally prone to be bullied at work [9,31,55–58].

In view of the aim of our paper, it is especially relevant the research conducted by Veale & Gold, which reveals that women in management positions are more vulnerable to bullying [59]. According to the authors, the explanation can be found in still predominant sexist attitudes as well as in structural barriers that inhibit women's careers as compared with their male colleagues'.

In any case, Einarsen et al. suggest that gender differences found by some researchers are, in fact, consequence of the discrimination that both genders may suffer due to their position at work [3]. From this perspective, incidence of bullying would correspond to the fact of being part of a minority at work, independently of the gender of this minority.

Findings related to another personal factor such as victim age do not show a clear relation. Thus, Rayner reports that bullying victims are normally under 25 [56]; later, Hoel and Cooper find that young people are more likely to experience a greater level of bullying than older employees [55]. However, Einarsen et al. [60] just report the opposite situation, and Einarsen and Skogstad [31] come across with a higher incidence of bullying among senior employees. This same conclusion is found in later research [61,62].

### 1.3.3 Workplace Bullying Organizational Factors

Considering organization as a whole is essential to understand the phenomenon of bullying, as it is quite difficult to imagine the labor context as independent or not influencing, and thus, triggering bullying at work. Therefore, although first studies focus mainly on psychological characteristics of bullies and their victims, since the 90s, researchers have considered with higher emphasis the influence of some labor and structural characteristics of the organization. We will present, hereafter, a brief bibliographical revision of the main studies that have analyzed the relation among some internal dynamics—such as job stability, job design, or human resources practices—and workplace bullying.

#### *Job Stability*

The level of employee stability at work can influence the degree of vulnerability towards bullying, not only because less stable and eventual employment is common among lower-status professional jobs, but also because insecurity reduces the power of employees (no matter the level held) vis-à-vis their superiors. Empirical research carried out among employees of a university centre sustains that flexible working arrangements contribute to the prevalence of bullying [63]. This circumstance is due to the fact that flexibility context implies less job security, fewer opportunities for socialization, and less time for conflict

resolution, which could contribute indirectly to aggression and bullying [45]. In fact, one of the reasons given to explain the increase of bullying in 21st century organizations is precisely the organizational restructuring process, which has enlarged the power gap between management and employees [64,65] with a high rate of outsourcing. Workers are more inclined to feel intimidated in those chaotic and unpredictable environments marked by insecurity, role conflict, or tension [66,67].

Against these antecedents, it could be assumed that rates of bullying among employees with temporary contracts would be higher than that among their colleagues with permanent contracts. However, Kivimäki, Elovainio, and Vahtera do not observe any difference between them, neither between full-time and part-time employees [68]. In reference to this aspect, research results are also conflicting. While Baron and Neumann find a positive relation between part-time and bullying [69], Hoel and Cooper observe that same relation among full-time employees [55].

#### *Intrinsic Characteristics of the Job*

Empirical research on the relation between workplace bullying and intrinsic characteristics of the job position is also extensive. Prior studies have identified and examined many of these elements, such as workload [46,55,60], control [4,57,70–72], role ambiguity [60,73], role conflict [60,74], leadership behavior [57,60], social support from co-workers and supervisors [4,75], social climate [4,55,57,60,71,76], and organizational change [55,77–79].

A large investigation conducted in United Kingdom among 5,200 people reveals that bullying victims, as compared with non-bullied, suffer from workload, rarefied working environment, greater organizational changes, unsatisfactory relations at work, and greater intention to resign [55]. Likewise, in a study on Norwegian employees, Einarsen et al. discover a significant correlation between the variables mentioned above and bullying: workload, control, role ambiguity and role conflict, leadership behavior, social climate, and organizational change [60]. In a similar line, Salin notices that bullying correlates with politicized and competitive organizational climate, and more slightly with workload [46]. Vartia's research identifies, as significant variables of bullying, the precarious social climate, internal communication problems, and the prevalence of a competitive work atmosphere [57]. In the same way, with a sample of 400 employees from five Swedish organizations, Hansen et al. find a reverse correlation between bullying and support given to employees by their colleagues and their superiors [75].

Bowling and Beehr's meta-analysis—carried out over a total of 90 studies on bullying published between 1987 and 2005—contributes with some coherence to the investigation on this phenomenon, compiling and organizing the empirical research existing at that time [50]. Relating to characteristics of job

position, these authors inform that bullying tends to disclose in work environments where other stressors, such as role conflict ( $r = 0.44$ ), role ambiguity ( $r = 0.30$ ), overload ( $r = 0.28$ ), and work limitations ( $r = 0.53$ ) are present. Likewise, they confirm that autonomy at work is negatively associated with bullying ( $r = -0.25$ ).

Further organizational variables studied for their potential relation with bullying are monotony, complexity, or teamwork. Zapf et al.'s research evidences that monotonous and repetitive tasks are more usual among bullying victims [4]. In a later investigation, Zapf does not corroborate any association between bullying and work complexity [18]. Zapf et al. state that in those activities where teamwork is present, bullying among equals is more likely to occur [4]. According to these authors, the climate generated by these groups contributes to the search of scapegoats, generally among less powerful members, to whom team aggressiveness is targeted.

Some investigations reveal connections between bullying and other individual perceptions on the organization, such as job satisfaction and commitment. In the first case, job dissatisfaction constitutes another phenomenon related to bullying [71]. Regarding the second case, as bully victims are affected emotionally, this phenomenon is necessarily linked to affective commitment. Several authors point out a negative relation between the two variables [55,80]. Moreover, employees highly committed with their organizations could be more vulnerable to stressors in the work environment, due to precisely the emotional link with the organization [81].

### *Occupations and Bullying*

Scientific literature contains a variety of studies on bullying related to subjects that hold specific types of occupations. Some studies suggest that 44.0% of nurses have been bullied during the course of their working activities [82]. Other occupations in which there is evidence of bullying include restaurant employees [83], teachers [84], university professionals [52,85,86], business professionals [23], transportation workers [86], and police officers [87].

There are some studies that have examined as well multiple occupations in the same research: Blue-collar workers, clerks and service workers, associate professionals, managers, and professionals [40,88].

Indeed, the perspective of the current study focuses on a privileged group of employees within the company structure: managers. The incidence of workplace bullying among managers is a topic scarcely touched upon in scientific literature. Using a sample of 512 managers in the UK, Woodman and Cook obtain interesting results [89]; to this respect, 39.0% of the respondents report having been bullied in the past three years. Bullying affects individuals at all management levels. Middle managers appear slightly more likely to be affected,

with 49.0% reporting having been bullied in the past three years. This may reflect the phenomenon known as management squeeze: where middle managers can be subjected to particular pressures if they are required to implement unpopular policies as a result of decisions having been taken at more senior levels. Directors are least likely to suffer from bullying, but 29.0% still report having been bullied over the previous three years. Further analyses show that these circumstances reflect significant differences between the average scores for private and public limited companies, and organizations in the public sector where a higher level of bullying is reported.

In a previous study, Ariza et al. identify different factors that seem to favor the emergence of bullying among managers [90]; according to this research, the probability for a manager to be bullied increases with job insecurity, and bullying is found to a greater extent among people dissatisfied with their jobs and salaries; among those who work predominantly in the public sector—especially those who are not partnered—and among those whose activity is very emotionally demanding.

### *Human Resources Practices*

Through their policies, culture, and practice, organizations can originate a promising breeding ground for the appearance and development of bullying. In this line of thought, Bowling and Beehr indicate that personal traits of victims could be found in the origins of bullying, but these victims can consider organizational climate and practices of Human Resources partially responsible of it (recruitment, formation, and remuneration schemes) due to the effects on their jobs (presence of other stressors and presence of bullies) [50]. Roscigno's research examines thoroughly the incidence of remuneration schemes, pointing out that workers who receive low payment are likely to be exposed to bullying, while well-paid employees are usually better protected as their professional situations put them closer to their superiors [91].

Güneri goes further when he indicates that the most important reason for bullying lies on organizational factors, such as compensation schemes and labor agreements, job position design, culture and organizational climate, leadership and organizational changes, or sector dynamism. We will deal with this last aspect in the following section [92].

#### 1.3.4 Contextual Factors in Workplace Bullying

In addition to factors related to internal dynamics of organizations, bullying rates can also be affected by the context in which the organization operates; a context that could be characterized by the sector of activity, nature, or size of the organization.

Research on this subject reveals that bullying is more frequent in the service sector, especially in health, public service, education, and financial services



[54,70]. Leymann argues as well that the most common bullying occurs in health, especially among nurses, due to work overload and to the double supervision they receive (by doctors and chief nurses), breaking the Unity of Command Principle [58]. Supporting this argument, Yildirim and Yildirim evidence that 87% of nurses in Turkey are submitted to some form of bullying, especially those in the public sector [93].

High bureaucracy, existence of very strict norms, and high level of job security generate a pertinent environment for the development of bullying, as this environment makes the bully invisible and the victim less likely to resign [23]. In this sense, Zapf et al. offer a summary of European studies concluding that in the public sector—public service, health, education, and public assistance—the prevalence of bullying is higher than in the private sector [10]. A similar conclusion is obtained by Hoel and Cooper in the United Kingdom [55], who illustrates a higher incidence of bullying in public services such as education or correctional assistance, and a lower prevalence in the retail market and in the industrial sector. Likewise, Soares' research shows that 4.4% of the employees in Public Health and Education Services are bullied by their patients or students [94].

LaVan, Katz and Jedel consider that public sector employees are dissimilar in their employment relationships, which may lead to a distinct form of workplace bullying [14]. Although there are some studies that suggest that bullying may be greater in public sector [10,23,55,95], LaVan, Katz and Jedel think that this actually happens because many public sector jobs have a great deal of emotional labor rather than instrumental roles [10,14,96]. Public sector employees are likely to have a special type of employment status in that they are typically protected by civil service rules and regulations, may well have unions representing them and internal grievance procedures, and/or are likely to be covered by statutes that provide for protection against retaliation for whistle blowing.

## **2. Methods**

### **2.1. Hypothesis for Modeling Workplace Bullying among Managers**

As indicated in the introduction, the object of the present investigation is to examine certain determinant factors that seem to be related to the appearance of workplace bullying among managers. In this sense, the prevalence of this deleterious experience is expected to be higher among lower-status professional employees, as there is a reverse relation between the possibility of being a victim and the position in the organization [66]. Therefore, managers should have a perception of bullying lower than those employees with no managerial responsibilities. In this regard, Salin's research, with a sample of professional employees, reveals that only 2.0% of managers have experimented bullying,

while 17.5% of employees have suffered it in the last 12 months [23]. However, these results are not decisive, as other empirical studies point out that the ratio of bullying victims happens to be similar among employees, middle, and senior managers [26,35].

As studies on bullying among managers are scarce and the most relevant findings focus on those investigations that discuss this problem in general terms, for the present investigation our assumptions will be based on a broad perspective, assuming initially a model similar to that observed in regular employees, independently of the responsibility held in the organization.

Under this premise, the hypotheses to be contrasted in our empirical study are the following:

(1) At the individual level, one personal factor is considered determinant for workplace bullying, therefore:

*Hypothesis 1:* Women in management positions are more vulnerable to bullying.

(2) At the organizational level, we set up the following hypotheses:

*Hypothesis 2:* The more senior, the less likely to be bullied.

*Hypothesis 3:* The greater the job insecurity, the more likely to be bullied.

*Hypothesis 4:* The probability of being a bullied manager increases when there are poor working conditions (night work, shift work, or job stress).

*Hypothesis 5:* Unsatisfied managers are more likely to be bullied.

(3) Finally, at the contextual level, we formulate the following hypothesis:

*Hypothesis 6:* Managers in the service sector and in public institutions are more likely to be bullied.

Insofar as the model confirms these hypotheses, we could confirm the existence of a specific profile of bullying to an employee with managerial responsibilities, or, on the contrary, the prevalence of the same pattern described by the general models on bullying in the scientific literature.

## **2.2. Empirical Study**

### **2.2.1 Methodological Design and Data**

As we pointed out in the previous section, workplace bullying is a phenomenon whose causes have to be found in different personal, organizational, and social factors. This is the approach that leads the empirical research dealt with in this section, in which the methodological explanation is addressed in accordance with its multidimensional character, the source of used data, the nature of variables, and the obtained results.

The methodology utilizes for the fulfillment of our objectives in this paper is

based on the binary logistic regression model, a specific type of dichotomous response regression model. This statistical technique determines the probability of the occurrence of an event—to feel bullied in this case— compared to the probability of the occurrence of the opposite event.

Data used in this research have been obtained from the 5th European Working Conditions Survey, carried out in 2010 by the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions. The survey provides insight into the working environment and employment situation throughout the 27 EU Member States as well as in Turkey, Croatia, Norway, Macedonia, Montenegro, Albania, and Kosovo. The target populations under study are those aged 15 years and over (16 and over in Spain, the UK, and Norway) who are employed and reside in the country being surveyed. The sample is a multi-stage, stratified, random sample. The total number of interviews in 2010 is 43.816.

In light of the objectives that sustain this investigation, we obtain a sub-sample of 661 managers and middle managers, of which 49.5% report feeling bullied at work, while 50.5% admit not feeling like being bullied. All the subjects of the sample are senior or middle managers, from the public sector (23.0%) and private sector (77.0%). 64.1% are men and 35.9% women. The average age of the surveyed is 43.14 years (43.62 in men and 42.51 in women). Finally, 5.8% declare not having formal qualifications or having just completed primary education; 58.7% state having finished secondary education while 35.5% completed studies at university.

### 2.2.2 Used Variables

#### *Dependent Variable*

Two different approaches have been mainly used in the bullying research when questionnaires have been used: The self-labeling approach and the operational approach. The limitations and benefits of these methods are discussed in Nielsen et al. [97] and amply argue in the discussion section of this paper. The dependent variable of this study is bullying at work. Respondents are asked only one question on their individual perception regarding this topic: Over the past 12 months, during the course of your work have you been subjected to bullying/harassment? Bullied senior and middle managers are codified as 1, while those who do not feel bullied are codified as 0.

#### *Independent Variables*

We consider workplace bullying as a complex phenomenon that results from the interaction of work environment variables and individual factors. Having into account prior studies on workplace bullying, we employ three sets of independent variables grouped into three categories: factors at the personal and familiar level, working conditions, and finally organizational contextual factors.

The codification of variables to be considered is presented in Table 1.

**Table 1.** Explanatory variables: coding and frequency.

Variable and Coding	Frequency			
	Value 0	Value 1	Value 2	Value 3
<b>1. Personal and familiar level</b>				
Gender (0: male; 1: female)	424	237		
Age (0: 15–24; 1: 25–39; 2: 40–54; 3: 55 or over)	21	231	302	98
Education (0: higher education; 1: secondary education or lower)	318	340		
Status (0: partnered; 1: single)	452	206		
Children under 15 at home (0: Yes; 1: No)	238	423		
Children of 15 or older at home (0: Yes; 1: No)	181	480		
<b>2. Working conditions</b>				
Seniority (0: Up to one year; 1: more than 1 up to 5; 2: more than 5 up to 10; 3: more than 10 years)	29	196	137	286
Type of contract (0: An indefinite contract; 1: A temporary contract)	430	47		
Working hours (0: Less than 20 hours; 1: 20 to 40 hours; 2: More than 40 hours)	11	382	242	
Work at night (0: No; 1: Yes)	474	173		
Work on Sundays (0: No; 1: Yes)	412	238		
More than 10 working hours a day (0: No; 1: Yes)	313	310		
Working day (0: Full time; 1: Part time)	582	53		
Shift work (0: No; 1: Yes)	546	110		
Capacity to decide timetable (0: Flexibility; 1: No flexibility)	374	279		
Harmony between working hours and personal matters (0: Yes; 1: No)	479	178		
Monotonous tasks (0: No; 1: Yes)	367	290		
Complex tasks (0: Yes; 1: No)	473	184		
Rotating tasks (0: Yes; 1: No)	330	325		
Team work (0: Yes; 1: No)	446	209		
Autonomy on the content (0: Yes; 1: No)	588	68		
Autonomy on the pace of work (depending on people) (0: No; 1: Yes)	362	240		
Autonomy on the pace of work (depending on automated systems) (0: No; 1: Yes)	515	143		
Emotional involvement (0: Yes; 1: No)	442	210		
Work stress (0: No; 1: Yes)	130	524		
Working condition satisfaction (0: Yes; 1: No)	519	139		
Payment satisfaction (0: Yes; 1: No)	333	319		
Likely to be dismissed (0: No; 1: Yes)	492	125		
Promotion opportunities (0: Yes; 1: No)	304	322		
Motivation (0: Yes; 1: No)	412	212		
<b>3. Organizational context</b>				
Sector/Industry (0: agriculture; 1: industry; 2: construction; 3: services)	9	84	45	510
Type of sector (0: Private; 1: Public)	470	140		
Size (0: Micro enterprise (1-9 employees); 1: Small enterprise (10-49 employees); 2: Medium-large enterprise (50+ employees))	257	176	215	

### 3. Results

#### 3.1. Bivariate Analysis

The main objective of this research is to examine certain potential determinants that might explain the emergence of workplace bullying amongst senior and middle managers. To this end, we use an analysis of contingency table and a Pearson's chi-square test in order to examine the bivariate relationship between the dependent variable—to feel bullied or not—and a set of independent variables grouped into the three categories mentioned above. This estimate assumes a preparation for subsequent multivariate analysis, as the logistic regression model should only include those independent variables with a statistically significant predictability.

The application of Pearson's contrast at a 0.05 level of significance leads us to exclude from the analysis some variables initially under consideration; first, at the individual level, those variables related to the age of respondents (Sig. 0.658) and to the presence of children above 15 at home (Sig. 0.361) are discarded. Second, at the organizational level, working conditions related to seniority (Sig. 0.163), type of contract (Sig. 0.283), working hours a week (Sig. 0.261), working day—full-time or part-time—(Sig. 0.383), task monotony (Sig. 0.440), team work (Sig. 0.275), autonomy on the pace of work depending on people (Sig. 0.507), and autonomy on the pace of work depending on automated systems (Sig. 0.069) are also excluded. Finally, at a contextual level, we discard the variables related to sector or industry (Sig. 0.632) and to size (Sig. 0.137).

#### 3.2. Multivariate Analysis

Following the initial analysis, we present a logistic regression model to determine to what extent the different categories of variables used in this investigation can explain bullying. To prove the effect of every group of variables, we reproduce up to three different models where the addition of each block is treated as a new separate model. To estimate the model, we opt for a step forward method using all the predicting variables of each model to assess the most efficient variable combination in the explanation of workplace bullying to senior and middle managers.

##### 3.2.1 Incidence of Personal and Familiar Factors (Model 1)

As stated above in the literature review, during the last few decades several investigations have pointed out that possible antecedents of bullying might range from organizational factors to personality features [18,47]. In this sense, we can see in Model 1 of Table 2 that female managers, with lower education, who are not living with children under 15 at home, perceive bullying to a greater degree. All the findings presented are significant at 1% level. Therefore, the probability of being bullied at work decreases among male managers with higher

education who are living with children under 15 at home. For this level of significance, the logistic regression model indicates that living as a couple it is not related—neither positive, nor negatively—to bullying perception.

**Table 2.** Logistic regression: factors that determine workplace bullying.

Variables	Odds Ratios		
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
<b>1. Factors at a personal and familiar level</b>			
Gender (0: male; 1: female)	0.600	0.471	0.545
Education (0: higher education; 1: secondary or lower)	0.331	n.s.	n.s.
Status (0: partnered; 1: single)	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.
Children under 15 at home (0: Yes; 1: No)	0.524	0.554	0.653
<b>2. Working conditions</b>			
Work at night (0: No; 1: Yes)	0.701	0.706	0.701
Work on Sundays (0: No; 1: Yes)	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.
More than 10 working hours a day (0: No; 1: Yes)	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.
Shift work (0: No; 1: Yes)	n.s.	0.669	n.s.
Capacity to decide timetable (0: Flexibility; 1: No flexibility)	0.499	n.s.	0.499
Harmony between working hours and personal matters (0: Yes; 1: No)	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.
Complex tasks (0: Yes; 1: No)	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.
Rotating tasks (0: Yes; 1: No)	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.
Autonomy on the content (0: Yes; 1: No)	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.
Emotional involvement (0: Yes; 1: No)	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.
Work stress (0: No; 1: Yes)	1.295	1.537	1.295
Working condition satisfaction (0: Yes; 1: No)	1.361	1.265	1.361
Payment satisfaction (0: Yes; 1: No)	1.247	1.068	1.247
Likely to be dismissed (0: No; 1: Yes)	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.
Promotion opportunities (0: Yes; 1: No)	n.s.	0.545	n.s.
Motivation (0: Yes; 1: No)	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.
<b>3. Organizational context</b>			
Type of sector (0: Private; 1: Public)			n.s.
Constant	-0.613	-2.835	-3.106
$\chi^2$ Efficiency test—Added category	25.435	133.84	1.864
Degrees of freedom	3	4	1
Level of significance	0.000	0.000	0.000
$\chi^2$ Efficiency test—Global Model	25.435	159.275	161.139
Degrees of freedom	3	7	8
Level of significance	0.000	0.000	0.000
% Correct prediction			
Global	58.6	72.5	74.8
Bullied	59.8	74.0	78.4
Non-bullied	57.5	70.4	70.9

Despite this, the impact of each significant variable on the probability of feeling bullied at work is not the same in all the cases, as it is stated by the analysis of confidence intervals obtained for the corresponding odds ratios (see Table 3). In this sense, there is a slightly higher effect on the variable gender, as the probability of feeling bullied among women practically doubles that of men

(OR: 1.822), with a confidence interval that varies from 1.312 to 2.530. Meanwhile, the presence of small children at home increases the probability of bullying by 1.689 times (1.393 in managers with lower education).

**Table 3.** Logistic regression: factors that determine workplace bullying (Confidence intervals for the odds ratio of Model 1).

Variables in the model	B	S.D.	Wald	P	Odds Ratios 95% C.I. for OR		
					OR	Lower	Upper
Gender	0.600	0.168	12.809	0.000	1.822	1.312	2.530
Education	0.331	0.161	4.253	0.039	1.393	1.017	1.908
Children under 15 at home	0.524	0.167	9.900	0.002	1.689	1.219	2.342
Constant	-0.749	0.175	18.401	0.000	0.473		

The contrast statistic applied to assess the validity of the model in general points out that there are enough reasons to accept its validity, that is to say, to affirm that a set of variables -personal and familiar- taken into account in the first model of our research, can satisfactorily explain if a manager is exposed to bullying at work and to what degree. The omnibus test of the model, used for this purpose, presents the following results: Chi Square: 25.435; Sig. 0.0000. However, the suitability of the model to be widely available—considering only personal and familiar variables—is limited, as 58.6% of the considered individuals are classified correctly knowing their real situation (see Table 2) in advance. Moreover, there exists disparity between the percentages related to bullied (59.8%) and non-bullied (57.5%) managers, what suggests that the former are easier to be identified. These results indicate that there are further factors, apart from those presented in this first model, that contribute to explain the perception of bullying at work.

### 3.2.2 Joint Impact of Factors at the Personal-familiar Level and Working Conditions (Model 2)

The second model incorporates personal and familiar variables as well as those related to working conditions—seniority, autonomy, contract type, timetable, etc.—enjoyed by the senior and middle managers of our sample. As can be seen in the last rows of Table 2, when these variables are included, the percentage of bullying prediction increases by 13.9 percentage points, from 58.6% to 72.5%. The validity of the global model improves when the group of variables related to working conditions is added, increasing  $\chi^2$  up to value 159.175 (Sig. 0.0000). The improvement in the general model comes with a higher balance in the predictability between both groups. Therefore, the capacity of generalization for the group of bullied managers rises at 74.0%, while among non-bullied managers reaches 70.4%.

In Table 4 we can see that, when introducing working conditions in a new

combined model, the only personal variables that explain workplace bullying are: being woman (OR: 1.602) and having children under 15 and under their care (OR: 1.740). In this sense, senior and middle managers who work at night (OR: 2.016), without the possibility to decide timetables (OR: 1.647), who work in a stressful job (OR: 3.649), who aren't satisfaction with their working conditions (OR: 3.900), and who are little satisfied with their payment (OR: 3.479) are more likely to feel bullied. The remaining variables—status, shift work, working on Sundays, promotion opportunities, etc.—acting together, do not explain the perception of workplace bullying among managers.

**Table 4.** Logistic regression: factors that determine workplace bullying (Confidence intervals for the odds ratio of Model 2).

Variables in the model	B	S.D.	Wald	P	Odds Ratios 95% C.I. for OR		
					OR	Lower	Upper
Gender	0.471	0.218	4.675	0.031	1.602	1.045	2.455
Children under 15 at home	0.554	0.218	6.434	0.011	1.740	1.134	2.670
Work at night	0.701	0.241	8.456	0.004	2.016	1.257	3.234
Capacity to decide timetable	0.499	0.211	5.574	0.018	1.647	1.088	2.493
Work stress	1.295	0.301	18.527	0.000	3.649	2.024	6.580
Working condition satisfaction	1.361	0.293	21.631	0.000	3.900	2.198	6.922
Payment satisfaction	1.247	0.211	34.914	0.000	3.479	2.301	5.262
Constant	-2.835	0.357	63.083s	0.000	0.059		

### 3.2.2 Joint Impact of Factors at the Personal-familiar Level, Working Conditions, and Organizational Context (Model 3)

In the third model, only a variable of the organizational context has been added: the public or private nature of the organization where the manager works. As recommended by the bivariate analysis, two variables of this category have been excluded: size and activity sector.

Table 2 confirms that the effect of these variables on the capacity of generalization of the model increases the percentage of global prediction slightly (from 72.5% to 74.8%): 78.4% in bullied managers and 70.9% in non-bullied managers. Therefore, the inclusion of organizational variables improves the capacity of prediction of the model, as with the validity of the model (Chi-square: 161.139; Sig. 0.000).

The influence of those variables regarding organizational context in the model of workplace bullying introduces some alterations that result in the final model presented in Table 5. Thus, the probability for a manager to feel bullied increases among women (OR: 1.725; CI: 1.092–2.727) with small children at home (OR: 1.922; CI: 1.223–3.020), who work at night (OR: 2.025; CI: 1.178–3.483), on a shift system (OR: 1.951; CI: 1.036–3.676), who suffer from work stress (OR: 4.65; CI: 2.439–8.862), who feel little satisfied with their working conditions (OR: 3.543; CI: 1.911–6.569) and with their payment (OR: 2.908; CI:



1.854–4.562), and who don't see opportunities for promotion within their organizations (OR: 1.725; CI: 1.087–2.736).

**Table 5.** Logistic regression: factors that determine workplace bullying (Confidence intervals for the odds ratio of Model 3).

Variables in the model	B	S.D.	Wald	P	Odds Ratios 95% C.I. for OR		
					OR	Lower	Upper
Gender	0.545	0.234	5.451	0.020	1.725	1.092	2.727
Children under 15 at home	0.653	0.231	8.026	0.005	1.922	1.223	3.020
Work at night	0.706	0.277	6.515	0.011	2.025	1.178	3.483
Shift work	0.669	0.323	4.280	0.039	1.951	1.036	3.676
Work stress	1.537	0.329	21.806	0.000	4.650	2.439	8.862
Working condition satisfaction	1.265	0.315	16.119	0.000	3.543	1.911	6.569
Payment satisfaction	1.068	0.230	21.607	0.000	2.908	1.854	4.562
Promotion opportunities	0.545	0.235	5.357	0.021	1.725	1.087	2.736
Constant	-3.106	0.397	61.267	0.000	0.045		

#### 4. Discussion

As a result of its negative consequences on mental health and well-being of employees, and hence on the performance of the organizations, the understanding of the factors that favor the emergence and advance of bullying is vital [43]; specially in the development of more effective prevention and intervention tools to remedy this social problem [98,99].

In this line, bullying prevalence varies notably from one country to another, even within the same nation; in Europe, for example, even though the inferences may differ depending on the measurement and estimation methods being utilized [11,12], studies of the occurrence of workplace bullying report rates of approximately 4%–10% [10].

For the present research, the prevalence rate obtained happens to be significantly higher: 49.5% of senior and middle managers label themselves as bullied in their professions. However, this relation is similar to that described by Woodman and Cook where 49.0% of middle managers report having been bullied in the last three years [89]; comparable but in other professions, Dellasega finds that 44.0% of nurses experience episodes of bullying at some point during their working lives [82]; and more recently Mintz-Binder and Calkins reveal that the 32.8% of program directors affirm having been exposed to bullying—due to the influence of students and faculty—within the last 12 months [9].

These results indicate that the rate of workplace bullying for professionals in managerial positions is larger than the predicted average calculated, with similar parameters, for employees laboring in any other occupational level and sector. Regarding this point, Zapf et al. provide an extensive summary of European

studies and conclude that the prevalence of bullying results higher in the public sector (e.g., service, health, education, and assistance) than in the private sector [10]. A similar inference is reached by Hoel and Cooper in the United Kingdom, who report a higher incidence of bullying within public services, such as education or correctional assistance, and a lower incidence in the retail and industrial sectors [55]. Similarly, Soares' research shows that 4.4% of public education and health care employees have been occasionally bullied by their patients or students while completing their daily tasks [94].

A body of literature has emerged describing the possible triggers of workplace bullying within employees and has focused primarily on two areas. The first area pertains to the personal and individual differences among those involved in the bullying incidents, while the second pertains to the characteristics of the surrounding organizational settings in which these circumstances occur. Similar to the present paper, many authors currently embrace the concept that both individual and organizational factors are important to understand bullying behaviors. For instance, researchers have observed that older workers experience significantly less violence than young workers [100,101]. Other characteristics that have been associated with an increased risk of workplace bullying include gender and marital status; a greater percentage of female physicians, for example, fear a potentially violent encounter at work compared to male physicians [102]. Lin and Liu's study reports that unmarried workers are significantly more likely to experience workplace violence compared to married employees [103]. In the European Union, these results suggest that there are specific sociodemographic features that may influence the phenomenon of workplace bullying.

Regarding this concern, the current regression analysis outcomes seem to indicate a tendency for female managers (*Hypothesis 1*), who are living with children under 15 at home -at the individual level- to suffer bullying. According to the statistical results, the group described above seems somehow to be in a position of greater likelihood to suffer from bullying in relation to the other identified groups, for example, men with or without children under their care. Additionally, regarding those concrete cases related to female jobholders, one possible reason that might explain the observed statistical predominance of this group could be the presence of certain sexist attitudes in their surroundings, as well as structural barriers that could inhibit women's careers to a certain extent compared to their male colleagues. If presented, these circumstances could definitely make the subjects of this group particularly more vulnerable and likely to end up as victims of workplace bullying. This could be a promising ground for further research.

Furthermore, some organizational factors are found to increase the odds of workplace bullying against employees. For instance, with respect to working conditions, it has been claimed in recent meta-analyses that there are some

specific organizational variables (e.g., workplace bullying antecedents) that are worth noting, such as conflict and role ambiguity [50], work overload, stress, lack of autonomy, and absence of organizational fairness [74]. Zapf et al.'s research shows that performing monotonous and repetitive tasks is more common among bullying victims [4]. At the organizational level, this study emphasizes that the propensity for a worker in a managerial position to experience bullying escalates among those who work in poor working conditions, such as working at night and on a shift system, and suffer from job stress (*Hypothesis 4*); they experience a lack of satisfaction due to their working conditions and payment (*Hypothesis 5*), and do not perceive any opportunity for promotion within their organization.

This unpredictable environment, characterized by insecurity, role conflict, and tension, allows few opportunities for socialization and even less time for conflict resolution; both of these factors may indirectly contribute to the emergence of aggressive behaviors and bullying. Ultimately, a stressful social climate and a precarious work atmosphere create a breeding ground for workplace bullying, as reflected in the results of the present empirical study.

Finally, seniority (*Hypothesis 2*), job insecurity (*Hypothesis 3*), and type of sector (*Hypothesis 6*) seem to have no effect on workplace bullying among managers. Thus, it could be accurate to say that the contextual variables of an organization do not influence workplace bullying. Given this finding, it is possible to deduce that workplace bullying may be prevalent with the same degree of intensity in both public and private organizations, regardless of their size.

With these outcomes, the present work might contribute, on the one hand, to shed light on certain latent factor that seem to be linked to the appearance of workplace bullying among managers and, on the other hand, to join to the previous literature on this field that has so far validated the prevalence of these variables among bullied subjects and highlighted the extension of this concern to higher levels of organizations. Additionally, we have identified two more factors that have been virtually absent from the bibliographic review; the study has revealed that the probability for a manager to feel bullied increases among those who are living with children under 15 at home—at the individual level—and among those who do not perceive opportunities for promotion within their organizations—at an organizational level.

## 5. Conclusions

Workplace bullying has become a serious and growing problem that affects a significant proportion of professionals. The serious detriments that workplace bullying causes on health, social, and personal stability of employees, and the general performance of organizations have drawn attention to the comprehension of its appearance and progression [43]. In this regard, the

present study aims to contribute to the development and implementation of measures to prevent bullying in employees that hold managerial positions within organizations.

The multidimensional model created in the present research is intended to identify senior and middle managers that are prone to being bullied at work as individuals; the study findings have valuable and pertinent implications for institutions, organizations, and corporations that aim to thrive and to enhance organizational performance throughout all the levels. This work provides reasonable evidence that could be of significant benefit in the implementation of human resource policies: Responsible directors/general directors could reduce the organization-wide levels of workplace bullying by adjusting certain working conditions that negatively affect managers who are especially susceptible to being bullied, given their personal characteristics.

This research paper offers an empirical basis for further studies, related to bullying among employees with a recognized and privileged position to exercise power—managers—adopting the individual perspective of the subject—the bullied manager—in Europe. Attracting and retaining the most qualified and experienced professionals has become essential for successful and competitive organizations; corporations are urged to implement strategies oriented toward reducing workplace bullying. Consequently, the labor force has specific traits that should not be ignored.

From a practical standpoint, the present findings could assist directors/general directors in facilitating harmonious social relationships among managers and subordinates. Particularly, the results suggest that limiting job demands and increasing job resources could reduce workplace bullying. Specific attention should be paid to women in managerial positions who feel dissatisfied with their working conditions, as they constitute a group with an increased risk for experiencing bullying.

Despite the significant findings of this study, its intrinsic methodological limitations must be considered. First, the phenomenon of bullying is measured by self-report, which might increase the risk of common method variance, forcing us to assume a corresponding bias in the key variables. Second, by utilizing self-identification without a strict definition, bullying is measured in broad terms, and consequently, there is a risk of overestimating its prevalence, as the respondents could report incidents that would not qualify as bullying according to the researchers' understanding of the phenomenon [104]. Third, a related methodological problem could be social desirability; previous scholars have analyzed the repercussions of desirability in workplace bullying studies. Given the particular understanding of the phenomenon under investigation, it seems probable that any given prevalence rate would exceed the rates obtained in this type of research, as many of the present victims took a large amount of time to acknowledge and accept that they were subjected to aggression of this

nature. This predicament is particularly acute among certain population groups that are considered more vulnerable, such as women, young people, and employees with temporary interrelations. To correct this problem, some authors propose to make use of multi-method data and utilize objective measures that may reinforce workplace-bullying research. Examples of this type of data include managerial reports and scores from third parties (e.g., researchers) [104]. It should be noted, however, that assessing third party scores of workplace bullying without trying to counteract these behaviors raises ethical concerns due to the many negative consequences of workplace bullying for the parties involved, as well as for the work unit and the organization [105]. Fourth, the observed correlations between bullying and the variables analyzed in this study should be pondered cautiously, as the data are cross-sectional and not experimental. Finally, this study represents only a partial perspective of the phenomenon: the point of view of the victim, not of the bully.

Adjusting job demands and improving job resources and conditions may lessen workplace bullying. To this respect, one option could be to orientate general directors about “internal marketing” as a way to sell the company culture internally to employees and senior/middle managers and to somehow help prevent these negative organizational experiences [106,107].

## References

1. Ironside, M.; Seifert, R. Tackling Bullying in the Workplace: The Collective Dimension. In *Bullying and Emotional Abuse in the Workplace: International Perspectives in Research and Practice*; Einarsen, H., Hoel, H., Cooper, C., Eds.; Routledge: New York, NY, USA, 2003; pp. 383–398.
2. Preventing and Dealing With Workplace Bullying: A Guide for Employers and Employees. Available online: <http://trove.nla.gov.au/work/33974124?selectedversion=NBD43048986> (accessed on 27 December 2013).
3. Einarsen, S.; Hoel, H.; Zapf, D.; Cooper, C.L. The Concept of Bullying at Work. In *Bullying and Emotional Abuse in the Workplace: International Perspectives in Research and Practice*; Einarsen, S., Hoel, H., Zapf, D., Cooper, C., Eds.; Taylor & Francis: London, UK, 2003; pp. 3–30.
4. Zapf, D.; Knorz, C.; Kulla, M. On the relationship between mobbing factors, and job content, social work environment, and health outcomes. *Eur. J. Work Organ. Psychol.* **1996**, *5*, 215–237.
5. Niedl, K. *Mobbing/ Bullying At Work: An Empirical Analysis of the Phenomenon and of the Effects of Systematic Harassment On Human Resource Management*; Hampp: Munich, Germany, 2008.
6. Wilson, C.B. US businesses suffer from workplace trauma. *Pers. J.* **1991**, *70*, 47–50.
7. Gumbus, A.; Lyons, B. Workplace harassment: The social costs of bullying. *J. Leadersh. Account. Ethics.* **2011**, *8*, 72–90.
8. Agervold, M. Bullying at work: A discussion of definitions and prevalence, based on an empirical study. *Scand. J. Psychol.* **2007**, *48*, 161–172.
9. Mintz-Binder, R.D.; Calkins, R.D. Exposure to bullying at the associate degree nursing program director level. *Teach. Learn. Nurs.* **2012**, *7*, 152–158.
10. Zapf, D.; Einarsen, S.; Hoel, H.; Vartia, M. Empirical Findings on Bullying in the Workplace. In *Bullying and Emotional Abuse in the Workplace: International Perspectives in Research and Practice*; Einarsen, H., Hoel, H., Zapf, D., Cooper, C., Eds.; Taylor & Francis: London, UK, 2003; pp.103–126.
11. Nielsen, M.B.; Skogstad, A.; Matthiesen, S.B.; Glaso, L.; Aasland, M.S.; Notelaers, G.; Einarsen, S. Prevalence of workplace bullying in Norway: Comparisons across time and estimation methods. *Eur. J. Work Organ. Psychol.* **2009**, *18*, 81–101.
12. Notelaers, G.; Einarsen, S.; de Witte, H.; Vermunt, J. Measuring exposure to bullying at work: The validity and advantages of the latent class cluster approach. *Work Stress* **2006**, *20*, 288–301.

13. Aquino, K.; Lamertz, K. Relational model of workplace victimization: Social roles and patterns of victimization in dyadic relationships. *J. Appl. Psychol.* **2004**, *89*, 1023–1034.
14. LaVan, H.; Katz, M.; Jedel, M.J. The public sector manager as a bully: Analysis of litigated cases. *J. Bus. Behav. Sci.* **2011**, *23*, 96–119.
15. Anjum, A.; Yasmeen, K.; Yasmeen, K. Bullying at work: A comprehensive definition and consequences based on an empirical study. *Int. J. Hum. Resour. Stud.* **2011**, *1*, 80–88.
16. Hoel, H.; Beale, D. Workplace bullying, psychological perspectives and industrial relations: Towards a contextualized and interdisciplinary approach. *Br. J. Ind. Relat.* **2006**, *44*, 239–262.
17. Einarsen, S.; Mikkelsen, E.G. Individual Effects of Exposure to Bullying At Work. In *Bullying and Emotional Abuse in the Workplace: International Perspectives in Research and Practice*; Einarsen, H., Hoel, H., Zapf, D., Cooper, C., Eds.; Taylor & Francis: London, UK, 2003; pp. 127–144.
18. Zapf, D. Organisational, work group related and personal causes of mobbing/bullying at work. *Int. J. Manpow.* **1999**, *20*, 70–85.
19. Rayner, C.; Keashly, L. Bullying at work: A perspective from Britain and North America. In *Counterproductive Work Behavior*; Fox, S., Spector, P., Eds.; American Psychological Association: Washington, DC, USA, 2005; pp. 271–296.
20. Rayner, C.; Hoel, H.; Cooper, C.L. *Workplace Bullying: What We Know, Who Is To Blame, and What Can We Do?* Taylor and Francis: London, UK, 2002.
21. Lutgen-Sandvik, P.; Tracy, S.J.; Alberts, J.K. Burned by bullying in the American workplace: Prevalence, perception, degree and impact. *J. Manag. Stud.* **2007**, *44*, 837–862.
22. Saunders, P.; Huynh, A.; Goodman-Delahunty, J. Defining workplace bullying behaviour professional lay definitions of workplace bullying. *Int. J. Law Psychiatry* **2007**, *30*, 340–354.
23. Salin, D. Prevalence and forms of bullying among business professionals: A comparison of two different strategies for measuring bullying. *Eur. J. Work Organ. Psychol.* **2001**, *10*, 425–441.
24. Einarsen, S.; Hoel, H. The Negative Acts Questionnaire: Development, Validation and Revision of a Measure of Bullying at Work. Presented at the 10th European Congress on Work and Organisational Psychology, Prague, Czech, 16–19 May 2001.
25. Leymann, H. Mobbing and psychological terror at workplaces. *Violence Vict.* **1990**, *5*, 119–126.

26. Hoel, H.; Cooper, C.L.; Faragher, B. The experience of bullying in Great Britain: The impact of organizational status. *Eur. J. Work Organ. Psy.* **2001**, *10*, 443–465.
27. Mikkelsen, E.G.; Einarsen, S. Bullying in Danish work-life: Prevalence and health correlates. *Eur. J. Work Organ. Psy.* **2001**, *10*, 393–413.
28. Lee, D. Gendered workplace bullying in the restructured UK Civil Service. *Pers. Rev.* **2002**, *31*, 205–222.
29. Zapf, D.; Einarsen, S. Mobbing At Work: Escalated Conflicts. In *Counterproductive Work Behaviors*; Fox, S., Spector, P., Eds.; American Psychological Association: Washington, DC, USA, 2005; pp. 237–270.
30. Einarsen, S. The nature and causes of bullying at work. *Int. J. Manpow.* **1999**, *20*, 16–27.
31. Einarsen, S.; Skogstad, A. Bullying at work: Epidemiological findings in public and private organizations. *Eur. J. Work Organ. Psychol.* **1996**, *5*, 185–201.
32. Einarsen, S. Bullying and Harassment at Work: Epidemiological and Psychosocial Aspects. Ph.D. Thesis, University of Bergen, Bergen, Norway, 2 December 1996.
33. Einarsen, S.; Hoel, H.; Zapf, D.; Cooper, C.L. The Concept of Bullying and Harassment at Work: The European Tradition. In *Bullying and Harassment in the Workplace. Developments In Theory, Research, and Practice*; Einarsen, S., Hoel, H., Zapf, D., Cooper, C., Eds.; CRC Press: Boca Raton, FL, USA, 2011; pp. 3–40.
34. Sandmark, H. Job mismatching unequal opportunities and long-term sickness absence in female white-collar workers in Sweden. *Scand. J. Public Health.* **2009**, *37*, 43–49.
35. Einarsen, S.; Raknes, B.I. Harassment at work and the victimization of men. *Violence Vict.* **1997**, *12*, 247–263.
36. Hoel, H.; Einarsen, S.; Cooper, C. Organizational Effects of Bullying. In *Bullying and Emotional Abuse in the Workplace: International Perspectives In Research and Practice*; Einarsen, H., Hoel, H., Zapf, D., Cooper, C., Eds.; Taylor & Francis: London, UK, 2003; pp. 145–161.
37. Branch, S.; Sheehan, M.; Barker, M.; Ramsay, S. Perceptions of Upwards Bullying: An Interview Study. In Proceedings of the 4th International Conference on Bullying and Harassment in the Workplace, Bergen, Norway, 28–29 June 2004; pp. 28–29.
38. Branch, S.; Ramsay, S.; Barker, M. Causes of Upward Bullying Managers' Perspectives. In Proceedings of the 20th ANZAM Conference Management: Pragmatism, Philosophy, and Priorities; Central Queensland University: Queensland, Australia, 2006.



39. Branch, S.; Ramsay, S.; Barker, M. Contributing factors to workplace bullying by staff— An interview study. *J. Manage. Organ.* **2007**, *13*, 264–281.
40. Ortega, A.; Høgh, A.; Pejtersen, J.H.; Olsen, O. Prevalence of workplace bullying and risk groups: A representative population study. *Int. Arch. Occup. Environ. Health* **2009**, *82*, 417–426.
41. Wallace, B.; Johnston, L.; Trenberth, L. Bullying the boss: The prevalence of upward bullying behaviours. *Aust. New Zeal. J. Organ. Psychol.* **2010**, *3*, 66–71.
42. Rayner, C.; Cooper, C.L. The black hole in “bullying at work” research. *Int. J. Manage. Decision Making* **2003**, *4*, 47–64.
43. Bond, S.A.; Tuckey, M.R.; Dollard, M.F. Psychosocial safety climate, workplace bullying, and symptoms of posttraumatic stress. *Organ. Dev. J.* **2010**, *28*, 37–56.
44. Hoel, H.; Cooper, C.L. Origins of Bullying: Theoretical Frameworks for Explaining Workplace Bullying. In *Building A Culture of Respect: Managing Bullying at Work*; Tehrani, N., Ed.; Taylor & Francis: London, UK, 2001; pp. 3–20.
45. Hoel, H.; Salin, D. Organizational Antecedents of Workplace Bullying. In *Bullying and Emotional Abuse in the Workplace: International Perspectives in Research and Practice*; Einarsen, H., Hoel, H., Zapf, D., Cooper, C., Eds.; Taylor & Francis: London, UK, 2003; pp. 203–218.
46. Salin, D. Ways of explaining workplace bullying: A review of enabling, motivating and precipitating structures and processes in the work environment. *Hum. Relat.* **2003**, *56*, 1213–1232.
47. Coyne, I.; Seigne, E.; Randall, P. Predicting workplace victim status from personality. *Eur. J. Work Organ. Psychol.* **2000**, *9*, 335–349.
48. Skjorshammer, M.; Hofoss, D. Physician in conflict: A survey study of individual and work-related characteristics. *Scand. J. Caring Sci.* **1999**, *13*, 211–216.
49. Finne, L.B.; Knardahl, S.; Lau, B. Workplace bullying and mental distress— A prospective study of Norwegian employees. *Scand. J. Work Environ. Health* **2011**, *37*, 276–287.
50. Bowling, N.A.; Beehr, T.A. Workplace harassment from the victim’s perspective: A theoretical model and meta-analysis. *J. Appl. Psychol.* **2006**, *91*, 998–1012.
51. Zapf, D.; Einarsen, S. Individual Antecedents of Bullying: Victims and Perpetrators. In *Bullying and Emotional Abuse in the Workplace: International Perspectives in Research and Practice*; Einarsen, H., Hoel, H., Zapf, D., Cooper, C., Eds.; Taylor & Francis: London, UK, 2003; pp. 165–184.
52. Bjorkqvist, K.; Osterman, K.; Lagerspetz, K.M. Sex differences in covert

- aggression among adults. *Aggress. Behav.* **1994**, *20*, 27–33.
53. Cortina, L.M.; Magley, V.J.; Williams, J.H.; Langhout, R.D. Incivility in the workplace: Incidence and impact. *J. Occup. Health Psychol.* **2001**, *6*, 64–80.
54. Bjorkqvist, K.; Osterman, K.; Hijelt-Back, M. Aggression among university employees. *Aggress. Behav.* **1994**, *20*, 173–184.
55. Hoel, H.; Cooper, C.L. *Destructive Conflict and Bullying at Work*; University of Manchester: Manchester, UK, 2000.
56. Rayner, C. The incidence of workplace bullying. *J. Community Appl. Soc. Psychol.* **1997**, *7*, 199–208.
57. Vartia, M. The sources of bullying—Psychological work environment and organizational climate. *Eur. J. Work Organ. Psychol.* **1996**, *5*, 203–214.
58. Leymann, H. The content and development of mobbing at work. *Eur. J. Work Organ. Psychol.* **1996**, *5*, 165–184.
59. Veale, C.; Gold, J. Smashing into the glass ceiling for women managers. *J. Manage.* **1998**, *17*, 17–26.
60. Einarsen, S.; Raknes, B.I.; Matthiesen, S.B.; Hellesoy, O.H. *Mobbing og Harde Personkonflikter.: Helsefarlig Samspill. pa Arbeidsplassen. (Bullying and Interpersonal Conflict: Interaction at Work with Negative Implications for Health)*; Sigma Forlag: Bergen, Norway, 1994.
61. Workplace Bullying: A Study on the Work Environment, Well-Being and Health. Available online: <https://helda.helsinki.fi/bitstream/handle/10138/19884/cover.pdf?sequence=4> (accessed on 27 December 2013).
62. Piirainen, H.; Elo, A.L.; Hirvonen, M.; Kauppinen, K.; Ketola, R.; Laitinen, H.; Lindstrom, K.; Reijula, K.; Riala, R.; Viluksela, M.; *et al.* *Työ Ja Terveys—Haastattelututkimus, Taulukkoraportti*; Finnish Institute of Occupational Health: Helsinki, Finland, 2000.
63. Lewis, D. Workplace bullying—Interim findings of a study in further and higher education in Wales. *Int. J. Manpow.* **1999**, *20*, 106–119.
64. Vaez, M.; Ekberg, K.; LaFlamme, L. Abusive events at work among young working adults: Magnitude of the problem and its effect on self-rated health. *Ind. Relat.* **2004**, *59*, 569–584.
65. Hearn, J.; Parkin, W. *Gender, Sexuality and Violence in Organizations*; Sage Publications: London, UK, 2001.
66. Hodson, R.; Roscigno, V.J.; Lopez, S.H. Chaos and the abuse of power: Workplace bullying in organizational and interactional context. *Work Occup.* **2006**, *33*, 382–416.

67. Lawrence, C. Social Psychology of Bullying In the Workplace. In *Building a Culture of Respect: Managing Bullying At Work*; Tehrani, N., Ed. Taylor & Francis: London, UK, 2001; pp. 61–76.
68. Kivimaki, M.; Elovainio, M.; Vahtera, J. Workplace bullying and sickness absence in hospital staff. *Occup. Environ. Med.* **2000**, *57*, 656–660.
69. Baron, R.A.; Neuman, J.H. Workplace violence and workplace aggression: Evidence on their relative frequency and potential causes. *Aggress. Behav.* **1996**, *22*, 161–173.
70. Omari, M. *Towards Dignity and Respect: An Exploration of Antecedents and Consequences of Bullying Behavior in the Workplace*; Final Report Curtin-IPAA Fellowship Program: Brisbane, Australia, 2003.
71. Vartia, M.; Hyyti, J. Gender differences in workplace bullying among prison officers. *Eur. J. Work Organ. Psychol.* **2002**, *11*, 113–126.
72. Rayner, C.; Sheehan, M.; Barker, M. Theoretical approaches to the study of bullying at work. *Int. J. Manpow.* **1999**, *20*, 11–15.
73. Jennifer, D.; Cowie, H.; Anaiadou, K. Perceptions and experience of workplace bullying in five different working populations. *Aggress. Behav.* **2003**, *29*, 489–496.
74. Topa, G.; Depolo, M.; Morales, J.F. Workplace harassment: Meta-analysis and integrative model of antecedents and consequences. *Psicothema* **2007**, *19*, 88–94.
75. Hansen, A.M.; Hogh, A.; Persson, R.; Karlson, B.; Garde, A.H.; Orbak, P. Bullying at work, health outcomes, and physiological stress response. *J. Psychosom. Res.* **2006**, *60*, 63–72.
76. Agervold, M.; Mikkelsen, E.G. Relationships between bullying, psychosocial work environment and individual stress reactions. *Work Stress* **2004**, *18*, 336–351.
77. O'Moore, M.; Seigne, E.; McGuire, L.; Smith, M. Victims of bullying at work in Ireland. *Occup. Health Saf.* **1998**, *14*, 569–574.
78. Sheehan, M. Restructuring: Rhetoric *versus* Reality. In *Bullying: Causes, Costs and Cures*; McCarthy, P., Sheehan, M., Wilkie, S., Wilkie, W., Eds.; Beyond Bullying Association: Nathan, Queensland, Australia, 1998; pp. 153–166.
79. McCarthy, P. When the Mask Slips: Inappropriate Coercion In Organisations Undergoing Restructuring. In *Bullying: From Backyard to Boardroom*; McCarthy, P., Sheehan, M., Wilkie, W., Eds.; Millennium Books: Alexandria, New South Wales, Australia, 1996; pp. 47–65.
80. McCormack, B.; Dewar, B.; Wright, J.; Garbett, R.; Harvey, G.; Ballantine, K. *A Realist Synthesis of Evidence Relating to Practice Development: Executive Summary*;

NHS Quality Improvement Scotland and NHS Education for Scotland: Edinburgh, UK, 2006.

81. Irving, P.G.; Coleman, D.F. The moderating role of different forms of organizational commitment in role ambiguity-job tension relations. *Can. J. Adm. Sci.* **2003**, *20*, 97–106.

82. Dellasega, C.A. Bullying among nurses. *Am. J. Nurs.* **2009**, *109*, 52–58.

83. Mathisen, G.E.; Einarsen, S.; Mykletun, R. The occurrences and correlates of bullying and harassment in the restaurant sector. *Scand. J. Psychol.* **2008**, *49*, 59–68.

84. Smith, P.K.; Cowie, H.; Olafsson, R.F.; Liefoghe, A.P. Definitions of bullying: A comparison of terms used, and age and gender differences, in a Fourteen-Country international comparison. *Child. Dev.* **2003**, *73*, 1119–1133.

85. McKay, R.; Arnold, D.H.; Fratzl, J.; Thomas, R. Workplace bullying in academia: A Canadian study. *Empl. Responsib. Rights J.* **2008**, *20*, 77–100.

86. Mayhew, C.; McCarthy, P.; Chappell, D.; Quinlan, M.; Barker, M.; Sheehan, M. Measuring the extent of impact from occupational violence and bullying on traumatised workers. *Empl. Responsib. Rights J.* **2004**, *16*, 117–134.

87. Waddington, P.A.; Braddock, Q. “Guardians” or “Bullies”? Perceptions of the police amongst adolescent Black, White and Asian boys. *Polic. Soc.* **1991**, *2*, 31–45.

88. Niedhammer, I.; David, S.; Degioanni, S. Economic activities and occupations at high risk for workplace bullying: Results from a large-scale cross-sectional survey in the general working population in France. *Int. Arch. Occup. Environ. Health.* **2007**, *80*, 346–353.

89. Woodman, P.; Cook, P. *Bullying at Work: The Experience of Managers*; Chartered Management Institute: London, UK, 2005.

90. Ariza, J.A.; Morales, A.C.; Menor, E. The “bullied” manager: An empirical study of individual, organizational and contextual factors. *Int. Bus. Manag.* **2011**, *2*, 6–23.

91. Roscigno, V.J. *The Face of Discrimination: How Race and Gender Impact Work and Home Lives*. Rowman and Littlefield Publishers: Maryland, MD, USA, 2007.

92. Guneri, B. A review of organizational antecedents of bullying. *J. Bus. Res.* **2009**, *9*, 100–106.

93. Yildirim, A.; Yildirim, D. Mobbing in the workplace by peers and managers: Mobbing experienced by nurses working in healthcare facilities in Turkey and its effect on nurses. *J. Clin. Nurs.* **2007**, *16*, 1444–1453.

94. Soares, A. *Bullying: When Work Becomes Incident*, Universite du Quebec:

Montreal, QC, Canada, 2002.

95. Lewis, D.; Gunn, R. Workplace bullying in the public sector: Understanding the racial dimension. *Public Adm.* **2007**, *85*, 641–665.

96. Hochschild, J.L. *Thirty Years after Brown*; Joint Center for Political Studies: Washington, DC, USA, 1985.

97. Nielsen, M.B.; Notelaers, G.; Einarsen, S. Measuring Exposure to Workplace Bullying. In *Bullying and Harassment in the Workplace: Developments in Theory Research and Practice*, 2nd ed.; Einarsen, H., Hoel, H., Zapf, D., Cooper, C., Eds.; Taylor & Francis: London, UK, 2011; pp. 149–174.

98. Saam, N.J. Interventions in workplace bullying: A multilevel approach. *Eur. J. Work Organ. Psychol.* **2010**, *19*, 51–75.

99. Einarsen, S.; Hauge, L.J. Antecedents and consequences of psychological bullying at work: A review of the literatura. *Rev. Psicol. Trab. Organ.* **2006**, *22*, 251–273.

100. Camerino, D.; Estryn-Behar, M.; Conway, P.M.; van der Heijden, B.I.; Hasselhorn, H.M. Work-related factors and violence among nursing staff in the European NEXT study: A longitudinal cohort study. *Int. J. Nurs. Stud.* **2008**, *45*, 35–50.

101. Lawoko, S.; Soares, J.J.F.; Nolan, P. Violence towards psychiatric staff: A comparison of gender, job and environmental characteristics in England and Sweden. *Work Stress.* **2004**, *18*, 39–55.

102. Tolhurst, H.; Talbot, J.; Baker, L.; Bell, P.; Murray, G.; Sutton, A. Rural general practitioner apprehension about work related violence in Australia. *Aust. J. Rural Health.* **2003**, *11*, 237–241.

103. Lin, Y.H.; Liu, H.E. The impact of workplace violence on nurses in South Taiwan. *Int. J. Nurs. Stud.* **2005**, *42*, 773–778.

104. Nielsen, M.B.; Matthiesen, S.B.; Einarsen, S. The impact of methodological moderators on prevalence rates of workplace bullying. A meta-analysis. *J. Occup. Organ. Psychol.* **2010**, *83*, 955–979.

105. Einarsen, S.; Matthiesen, S.B.; Hauge, L.J. Bullying and Harassment at Work. In *The Oxford Handbook of Personnel Psychology*; Cartwright, S., Cooper, C.L., Eds.; Sage Publications: London, UK, 2009; pp. 464–495.

106. Sanchez-Hernandez, M.I.; Miranda, F.J. Linking internal market orientation and new service performance. *Eur. J. Innov. Manage.* **2011**, *14*, 207–226.

107. Sanchez-Hernandez, I.; Grayson, D. Internal marketing for engaging employees on the corporate responsibility journey. *Intang. Cap.* **2012**, *8*, 275–307.

# Chapter 3

---

*“This is how it is today: The teachers are afraid of the principals. The principals are afraid of the superintendents. The superintendents are afraid of the board of education. The board is afraid of the parents. The parents are afraid of the children. The children are afraid of nothing!”*

Milton Berle (1908-2002)

## Chapter 3. *Workplace bullying among teachers: An analysis from the job demands-resources (JD-R) model perspective*

### **A**bstract

This paper adopts the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) model to analyze workplace bullying among teachers. The data used for this research is obtained from the 5th European Working Conditions Survey. Given the objective of this work, it is collected a sub-sample of 261 education employee: 48.7% of these teachers report having experienced workplace bullying (N=127), while 51.3% indicate not considering themselves as bullied at work (N=134). In order to test the research model and hypotheses this study relies on the use of partial least squares (PLS-SEM), a variance-based structural equation modeling method. The study describes a workplace bullying prevalence rate of 4.4% among education employees. This work summarizes an array of outcomes with the aim of proposing, in general, that workplace bullying may be reduced by limiting job demands and increasing job resources.

**KEYWORDS:** Workplace bullying, Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) model, teachers, work stress, motivation

### **1. Introduction**

#### **1.1. Workplace Bullying, a Heterogeneous Phenomenon**

Workplace bullying is a serious, often unrecognized workplace issue, with tremendous psychological, social and organizational costs for organizations and their employees. It is not only a legal issue, but also impacts the health and welfare of workers.<sup>1, 2</sup> The workplace bullying has a detrimental effect on both individuals and organizations, e.g., managerial costs and turnover escalate and productivity declines.<sup>3</sup> Other economic consequences, with a significant

negative influence on profits, can sometimes be difficult to measure and hard to define clearly: e.g., quality reduction, negative impacts on the organization's reputation, the escalation of mistakes and absenteeism, and the deterioration of relationships with customers due to a lack of attention paid to their objectives and commitments.<sup>4</sup> This statement becomes even more significant for those organizations that are mainly composed by employees who provide particular assistance to citizens in a close and direct way, such as teachers. Teaching presents certain peculiarities nowadays – loss of social status, direct contact with customers who do not always wish to receive the service, rivalry and competition among colleagues, etc. – that generate a suitable breeding ground for the development and propagation of bullying. Bullying has become a true pandemic of harmful effects, which are accentuated by the greater vulnerability of many teachers who are subdued to the tyranny that the labor market dictates in a context of crisis and job instability; it explains why at present some researches, in determining the negative consequences of bullying, particularly study the potential additional effects that current economic meltdown may exert over bullied subjects.<sup>5</sup> More precisely, this paper is drawn up in accordance with former studies that have shed light on how workplace bullying among teachers has become a generalized phenomenon in the academic context.<sup>6,7</sup> In this sense, some authors indicate the highest prevalence of workplace bullying in social and health sectors, public administration, and education.<sup>8</sup>

Scientific literature has explored bullying via different conceptions:<sup>9</sup> intimidation, harassment, victimization, aggression, emotional abuse, psychological harassment, or mistreatment at workplace. Despite the proliferation of definitions, there seems to be a common consent on the fact that bullying could be defined in terms of the intentionality of the behavior, its frequency (e.g. weekly) or duration (e.g. about six months), the targets' reaction(s) toward the situation, a perceived imbalance and misuse of power between perpetrator and target, inadequate support, and the target's inability to defend him/herself from such predicaments,<sup>10,11,12,13</sup> having to face negative and constant social interactions,<sup>10</sup> physical or verbal badgering, insults remarks,<sup>11</sup> and intense pressure,<sup>14</sup> among others.

With respect to the extent of its manifestation, there is a strong disagreement regarding bullying prevalence: from 4% to 5% in Northern European Countries<sup>15, 16</sup> versus 15% in Southern European nations.<sup>17</sup> Certain factors, such as cultural characteristics and societal changes, may contribute to explain variations in prevalence rates. Issues related to research methodology ought to be taken into consideration as well: <sup>16</sup> studies on workplace bullying are performed utilizing an array of diverse measurement methods, instruments, and study designs,<sup>18,8</sup> beyond what it seems reasonable to consider some methodological procedures as influences on observed prevalence rates.<sup>19</sup> As will be shown in subsequent paragraphs, statistics paint a bleak picture of teachers' exposure to hostility, mostly because bullying at work, in the context of

educational institutions, also includes interactions between co-workers, school administrators, students, parents, and others.

Although definitions have a propensity to converge persistence and duration as the key construct of the phenomenon, it is further substantiated in the present paper that workplace bullying has a strong psychological component for its materialization. In fact, an essential condition of bullying is that the act itself has to be perceived by the target as a hostile circumstance.<sup>12,20</sup> From this point of view, the pernicious effects of workplace bullying (anxiety, depression, absenteeism, lack of organizational commitment, etc.) will be externalized with a greater magnitude at the moment the target perceives this objectionable situation,<sup>21</sup> independently of the persistence or duration of the bullying act.<sup>20</sup> Adopting this focus and taking into account that the academic environment has a number of organizational and work features that increase the likelihood of hostile interpersonal behaviors,<sup>22,23</sup> the main objective of this research is to analyze the effect of the work stress-motivation relationship on the workplace bullying from the perspective of the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) model,<sup>24</sup> in such a way that it is possible to anticipate the teachers' degree of well-being and job performance.

## 1.2. Workplace Bullying Among Teachers

The studies on harassment began in the decade of the eighties at the Nordic countries, as a result of the innovative investigations on school bullying at that time.<sup>25,26</sup> Precisely, Leymann,<sup>25</sup> a German psychiatrist, is currently considered as the pioneer in this type of works.<sup>27</sup> His initial interest in bullying was subsequently extended to the harassment at work (that he labeled "mobbing"), as he identified similar dynamics in adult patients.<sup>28</sup>

Despite its origin, linked to the educational environment, and that occupations such as teaching have been suggested to be particularly susceptible to bullying,<sup>29</sup> research on the workplace bullying experienced by teachers is not sufficiently developed, something that is confirmed by the significant prevalence rates obtained by different studies. Therefore, Keashly and Neuman<sup>30</sup> carry out a review of the works on bullying at the University context and conclude that the rates of bullying seem relatively high when compared to those noted in the general population, which range from 2% to 5% in Scandinavian countries, 10% to 20% in the UK, and 10% to 14% in the United States.<sup>31,32</sup> Moreover, there is evidence of the high incidence of bullying within the education sector in many countries: Australia,<sup>33,34</sup> Finland,<sup>35</sup> the Netherlands,<sup>36</sup> the UK,<sup>37,38</sup> the USA.<sup>39</sup> Furthermore, it has been demonstrated that school teachers in China,<sup>40</sup> Ireland,<sup>41</sup> the UK<sup>42,43</sup> and the USA<sup>44</sup> have been targets of workplace bullying. In some countries, such as Turkey, research shows that 50% of the Turkish primary school teachers had experienced bullying.<sup>45</sup>

But, what is this higher incidence of bullying in the education sector due to?



The causes must be sought in different areas:

At a *contextual level*, the teaching profession has experienced a deterioration of its traditional social status and prestige in western countries, which has resulted in a lower authority that converts teachers in victims much more vulnerable to potential bullying situations.<sup>46,47</sup> This loss of credit and reputation comes from the establishment of post-materialist values in many of these societies, values that attach greater importance to individualism, independence or freedom, in contrast to more traditional ones like order, obedience, hierarchy, power and respect for authority.<sup>48,49,50</sup> This situation of greater fragility has been accentuated by the severe economic crisis suffered by the European economy from several years ago and that has meant important budget cuts in sectors that are so critical to social welfare such as healthcare and education.

At the *Organizational level*, several investigations reveal that certain innate characteristics to the teaching profession and to the work environment in which this one develops, generate an ecosystem favorable to the arise of attitudes and behaviors that can derive in workplace bullying. In this way, in the academic context, ideological confrontation, professional rivalry, personal animosity, power struggles and antipathies between colleagues, etc., are more likely to occur. This conflict is emphasized by the deep network of social relations that are manifested in this type of institutions (some of which may play a pivotal role for the promotion and development of the teaching career), to the extent that some authors consider the quality of personal relationships as an important factor in retention of faculty.<sup>51</sup> According to Korkmaz and Cemaloğlu,<sup>52</sup> workplace bullying is especially problematic when it occurs in places where social relations are dense, such as in educational institutions. In this sense, Keashly and Neuman<sup>30</sup> warn that academia may be a particularly vulnerable setting for such persistent aggressions as a result of tenure, which has faculty and some staff in very long-term relationships with one another. To this must be added that the deeply rooted value of academic freedom may cause an adverse effect, which hinders the authorities interference within the teachers' interpersonal disputes, even when circumstances so advise it in order to gain in transparency. For instance, at the departmental level, where people have "issues" with each other and are often in competition for scarce resources (money, equipment, space, power, high-caliber students, etc.), hidden agendas can abound.<sup>53</sup> This circumstance allows conflicts to escalate, resulting in a toxic climate and an increased likelihood of aggression and bullying.<sup>30</sup> This atmosphere of labor relation deterioration within the education sector is even more intense at the University level, especially in those universities where a market-orientation philosophy is deeply imbued and, therefore, where the value of competitiveness is something not only accepted but also promoted by academic authorities.<sup>54,55</sup> This competitiveness, encouraged by accreditation processes, which in turn determine the access to increasingly scarce jobs and the promotion on the hierarchical scale, creates a scenario conducive to the sprout

of bullying actions; this issue is addressed by Zabrodska and Kveton<sup>56</sup> who indicate that newly reformed neoliberal universities, with their micro-management of ever-increasing productivity, competitiveness, and individualization, create conditions that incite workplace bullying and other form of employee abuse. The competitiveness of the academic context is accompanied by a strong sense of hierarchy and high degrees of regulation and bureaucracy. As a result, some of the core causes of inappropriate behavior in academia are institutional norms, organizational structures, academic culture and systemic change.<sup>22</sup> In the same line, Hubert and van Veldhoven<sup>36</sup> sustain that a possible explanation for the relatively high rate of workplace bullying among schoolteachers lies in the nature of teacher output; specifically, its quality and quantity are difficult to measure, resulting in a high emphasis being placed on interpersonal relationships with both colleagues and superiors in performance appraisals. In a similar way, both Keashly and Neuman,<sup>30</sup> and Tigrel and Kokolan,<sup>57</sup> consider that other potential bullying drivers are the high performance expectations typical of academia that are combined with subjective and vague criteria for performance evaluation. The ambiguity of evaluation processes may cause a feeling of injustice and, thus, a greater perception of harassment, especially because superiors have greater opportunities to make decisions in an arbitrary manner that negatively influence their subordinates' lives. Even when evaluators operate with good intentions, commenting the performance of colleagues belonging to other fields of knowledge is complicated and contentious, and can generate a sense of injustice, real or imagined. It should not be forgotten that bullying, in educational environment, is possibly more indirect (prevent access to key resources, undermine the authority, damage the professional prestige, etc.) than direct (threats, physical assaults, insults, etc.). Therefore, it is a subtler, less detectable, even questionable harassment. Within the academic culture of reasoned discussion and debate, such behaviors can be justified by the bully as normative, that is, part of the "cut and thrust" of academic discourse (Nelson and Lambert, 2001).<sup>58</sup>

Finally, at the *individual level*, many academic workers aspire to work in a highly vocational profession, in which they have deposited great expectations about the level of autonomy available in their work-related activities, recognition, participation opportunities, power and influence, a strong sense of entitlement, etc. Accessing to the profession makes many of them to face a very different reality: academic hierarchies more rigid than expected, excessive bureaucracy, overexertion in coordination with the rest of the team mates (and even of subjugation to the dictates of the more veterans, that limits the possibilities of contributing with their own criterion), irregular distribution of the work time, that combines periods of overload, which generate conflict with personal life, with others of less activity, etc. When expectations are not matched, it may result in a breach of the psychological contract and the emergence of feelings of frustration, disappointment or injustice that, ultimately,

and given the subjectivity component associated with the phenomenon investigated, may result in a greater sense of bullying among teachers.

The fact that workplace bullying is a problem with a higher prevalence among teachers than in other sectors seems to be a fact as unquestionable as worrying. Studying in depth this matter turns out to be critical, since teachers are erected in models, becoming the driving belt of values and conducts for the future generations. It is sure that the quality of service and the type of messages transmitted to students is affected by the teacher's level of well-being. Therefore, it is easy to imagine how complicated it must be to teach and transmit values when one feels harassed at its own workplace. Aware of this fact, this paper deals with the problem of teachers' workplace bullying from a novel and little investigated approach, the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) model.

### **1.3. Teachers' Workplace Bullying from the Job Demands-Resources Perspective**

During the last decades, researchers of the human behavior have raised about what factors generate positive or negative reactions among employees. The different elements to consider include job design, since many of the individual reactions in the organizational context arise in response to the working conditions offered by the organization. From this perspective, scholars trying to find out what are the characteristics that make people feel satisfied with their work and motivated to achieve organizational goals or, on the contrary, what are the causes of the negative reactions of employees.

This paper adopts as main analysis focus the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) theory, which is an extension of the model of work demands and resources and that, in turn, is inspired by the theories of work design and work-related stress.<sup>59</sup> Thereby, the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) model is a theoretical framework that tries to integrate two fairly interdependent research traditions: the stress research tradition and the motivation research tradition.<sup>24</sup> These authors are trying to overcome the limitations of the classical research about design of the job, showing the direct and indirect effect of job demands and resources on work-related stress and motivation, in such a way that it is possible to understand, explain, and predict the level of well-being of employees and their working efficiency.

This approach assumes that every job is subject to a series of demands and specific resources that change between different positions (for example, the physical demands of some jobs are not likely to be as relevant for teachers, which, conversely, might be more subject to important demands of cognitive nature) or between equal jobs performed in different organizations (e.g. the combination of a public University Professor demands-resources may be different from those of a private University). According to Demerouti and

Bakker,<sup>24</sup> job demands refer to those physical, psychological, social, or organizational aspects of the job that require sustained physical and/or psychological (cognitive and emotional) effort or skills and are therefore associated with certain physiological and/or psychological costs. Direct interaction with students, the overload of work or the role conflict constitute a buton of sample of the proper demands that teachers face in their daily activities. Moreover, job resources refer to those physical, psychological, social, or organizational aspects of the job that are either/or: a) functional in achieving work goals; b) reduce job demands and the associated physiological and psychological costs; and c) stimulate personal growth, learning, and development. Having the support of colleagues, feeling useful to society by teaching young people or having some autonomy to decide on the teaching provided are clear examples of highly valued resources by teachers. From this paradigm, demands that teachers have to face in their daily activity, as well as resources that are equipped for the development of their work, condition and determine their degree of well-being and, therefore, their job performance. Even more in an activity such as teaching, where the quality of the service greatly depends on the teacher's mood.

This is why it is highly interesting to assess the demands that teachers have to face in their daily work, as well as the available resources, in order to analyze the effect of such conditions on certain result variables. Regarding this last issue, an important proposition of this theory is that the job demands and resources are triggers of two processes that are initially relatively independent, such as the processes of deterioration of health (energy) and motivational processes.<sup>60</sup> On the one hand, empirical evidence suggests that teachers are exposed to considerable workloads, which results in stress and frustration, and that at least one third of teachers suffer from overstress and fatigue.<sup>45,61,62</sup> Whatever are the causes (remuneration below expectations, role conflict, management style, low status of the profession leading to increasing workloads and working hours, work intensification, additional responsibilities, etc.), *this work expects that certain work demands that teachers have to face will result in work stress (Hypothesis 1)*. On the other hand, *the resources available to teachers act as predictors of their motivation in the workplace (Hypothesis 2)*. These effects are because work demands efforts and consumes energy resources, while the resources satisfy basic human needs like those of autonomy, relation and auto-efficacy.<sup>63,64,65</sup>

A second proposal of the JD-R theory is that, although demands and resources originate distinct processes, they also interact with each other at the time of predicting the labor well-being. On the one hand, *resources can soften the impact of the demands on work-related stress, mitigating its harmful effects (Hypothesis 3)*. On the other hand, demands amplify the impact of work resources, to the extent that *work resources take on greater importance and have greater impact on motivation when demands are high<sup>60</sup> (Hypothesis 4)*. For example, having the support of coworkers can temper the pressures of time that at certain times the teaching

activity involves. Enjoying of great autonomy for the development of the activity is also a highly valued resource, for instance, when performing a complex task that requires a permanent updating of knowledge.

A final hypothesis of this research is to ascertain the outcome of this model on the likelihood that teachers feel harassed in their jobs. Numerous studies have highlighted the relationship between stress and bullying at work, although this effect could be mitigated by the degree of motivation of the teachers as a result of the resources available for the exercise of their profession. There is a significant relationship between the bullying experienced by workers within organizations and their stress levels.<sup>66,67,68,69,70,71</sup> All these studies find a relation between bullying and stress in organizations, with resultant psychological and psychosomatic disorders in victims of bullying, such as stress, depression, and limited productivity.<sup>72</sup>

This relationship between stress and bullying has been less studied within the educational environment, despite the fact that these phenomena are characteristic of educational institutions. Concretely, research in this topic emphasizes that a great majority of teachers experience high levels of stress and anxiety.<sup>52</sup> According to these authors, common variables in the organizational environment that contribute to teachers' stress and job dissatisfaction include organizational health, organizational culture, leadership style of the manager, workload, and workplace bullying.<sup>45,73,74,75,76,77,78,79,80</sup> Considering these premises, **Hypothesis 5** posits that *stress generates bullying sensation, and that the teacher's degree of motivation contributes to reduce this effect (Hypothesis 6).*

## 2. Methods

### 2.1. Data collection and sample

The data utilized for this research is obtained from the 5th European Working Conditions Survey, conducted in 2010 by the *European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions*. This survey provides insight related to the working environment and employment situation of the 27 EU Member States, as well as Turkey, Croatia, Norway, Macedonia, Montenegro, Albania, and Kosovo. The target population under study comprises those aged 15 years and over (16 and over for the case of Spain, the UK, and Norway), employed and residing in the country being surveyed. The sample is a multi-stage and stratified random sample. The total number of interviews is over 43,000, being gathered in 2010.

Out of a total 2,873 teaching professionals who have been surveyed in the V European Survey on Working Conditions, 127 respondents reported having suffered from harassment at work sometime during the last 12 months, denoting a prevalence workplace-bullying rate of 4.4%. These subjects were confronted to another sample of education employees with similar size who had

not experienced harassment in their jobs. The sample was balanced to prevent the classifier from including all subjects in the majority class when an imbalance in the size of learning classes was present. Given the objective of this work, thus, it is examined a sub-sample of 261 teaching professionals from the International Standard Classification of Occupations ISCO-08 (sub-group 23) where 48.7% of teachers report having experienced workplace bullying (N=127), while 51.3% indicate not considering themselves as bullied at work (N=134).

The sample comprised 211 teachers in government schools (80.8%) and 50 teachers in non-government schools (19.2%). It covered 181 females (69.3 per cent) and 80 males (30.7 per cent). There were 95 female teachers (74.8 per cent) and 32 male teachers (25.2 per cent) between workplace bullying participants while there were 86 female teachers (64.2 per cent) and 48 male teachers (35.8 per cent) between non-workplace bullying professionals. The average age of the participants was 41.7 years (standard deviation (SD) = 10.8 years). The average tenure was 12.3 years (SD = 10.3). For workplace bullying teachers, the average age was 43.5 years (SD = 10.6), and the average tenure was 12.5 years (SD = 10.1). For non-workplace bullying teachers, the average age was 40.1 years (SD = 10.9), and the average tenure was 12.2 years (SD = 10.6).

## 2.2. Measures

The dependent variable of this analysis is bullying at work. Respondents are asked to answer just one question on their individual perception regarding the following matter: *Over the past 12 months, during the course of your work, have you been subjected to bullying/harassment?* Bullied teachers are codified as 1, while those who claim not to have felt bullied are codified as 0. Two different approaches are mainly used in bullying research when questionnaires are implemented: the self-labeling and the operational approach; the limitations and advantages of these methods are discussed in Nielsen et al.<sup>81</sup>

Workplace bullying is pondered in this work as a complex phenomenon that arises due to the dynamic interaction of work stress and motivation. Taking into account the Job Demands-Resources model, it is arranged two sets of independent variables grouped into two categories: Job Demands factors and Job Resources factors. The codes and classification of explanatory variables are presented below:

**Job Demands:** D1. *Work overload* (0: No; 1: Yes), D2. *Working to tight deadlines* (0: No; 1: Yes), D3. *Work on weekends* (0: No; 1: Yes), D4. *Monotonous tasks* (0: No; 1: Yes), D5. *Complex tasks* (0: No; 1: Yes), D6. *Rotating tasks* (0: No; 1: Yes), D7. *Learning new things* (0: No; 1: Yes), D8. *You know what is expected of you at work (role ambiguity)* (0: Yes; 1: No), D9. *Your job involves tasks that are in conflict with your personal values (role conflict)* (0: No; 1: Yes), D10. *High emotional demand of the work* (0: No; 1: Yes), D11. *Handling angry clients* (0: No; 1: Yes).

**Job Resources:** R1. *Autonomy over the content of the work* (0: No; 1: Yes), R2. *Capacity to decide the timetable* (0: No; 1: Yes), R3. *Colleagues support* (0: No; 1: Yes), R4. *Supervisor support* (0: No; 1: Yes), R5. *Feeling of work well done* (0: No; 1: Yes), R6. *Feeling of doing useful work* (0: No; 1: Yes), R7. *Supervisor feedback* (0: No; 1: Yes), R8. *Expectation of career advancement* (0: No; 1: Yes), R9. *Organizational commitment* (0: No; 1: Yes), R10. *Training paid by the employer* (0: No; 1: Yes), R11. *Possibility of choosing the partners* (0: No; 1: Yes), R12. *Payment satisfaction* (0: No; 1: Yes).

### 2.3. Data Analysis

In order to test the research model and hypotheses this study relies on the use of partial least squares (PLS-SEM), a variance-based structural equation modeling method. PLS is a suitable technique for use in this study due to the following reasons:<sup>82</sup> (1) the sample (n = 261 cases) is small; (2) the study is focused on the prediction of the dependent variables; and (3) the research model is considerably complex with regard to the type of relationships in the hypotheses. In order to perform the measurement and structural model analysis we used the SmartPLS software.<sup>83</sup>

## 3. Results

A PLS model is assessed and interpreted in two phases: (1) the evaluation of the reliability and validity of the measurement model (outer model), and (2) the evaluation of the structural model (inner model). This sequence guarantees that the constructs' measures are valid and reliable before attempting to obtain conclusions with regard to the relationships between constructs.<sup>82</sup>

### 3.1. Measurement Model

The assessment of formative measurement models involves the test for potential multicollinearity between items and the analysis of weights.<sup>84</sup> We used the IBM-SPSS software to perform a collinearity test. The maximum variance inflation factor (VIF) values for the manifest variables that shape the formative constructs JD and JR are well below the threshold of 3.385 (Table 1). On the other hand, weights provide information about how each item contributes to the construct measurement. Hence, they give rise to a ranking of these indicators according to their contribution.<sup>84</sup> Table 1 reveals that indicators D11 (*handling angry clients*; 0.542), D1 (*work overload*; 0.331), D9 (*role conflict*; 0.322), D10 (*emotional demand*; 0.235), D4 (*monotonous tasks*; 0.201) and D3 (*work on weekends*; 0.197) represent the most significant dimensions in the composition of the JD construct. R12 (*payment satisfaction*; 0.595), R7 (*supervisor feedback*; 0.441), R11 (*possibility of choosing the partners*; 0.288), R8 (*expectation of career advancement*; 0.146) and R3 (*colleagues support*; 0.107) represent in turn the most significant items while measuring the JR construct.

**Table 1.** Measurement model.

Construct/Indicator	VIF	Weight	Loading	Composite Reliability (CR)	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
<b>Workplace Bullying</b> (reflective construct)				1	1
WB			1		
<b>Stress</b> (reflective construct)				1	1
S			1		
<b>Motivation</b> (reflective construct)				1	1
M			1		
<b>Job Demands</b> (formative construct)				N.A.	N.A.
<i>D1. Work overload</i>	1.332	0.331			
<i>D2. Working to tight deadlines</i>	1.010	-0.157			
<i>D3. Work on weekends</i>	1.331	0.197			
<i>D4. Monotonous tasks</i>	1.114	0.201			
<i>D5. Complex tasks</i>	1.120	0.034			
<i>D6. Rotating tasks</i>	1.054	-0.031			
<i>D7. Learning new things</i>	1.067	0.047			
<i>D8. Role ambiguity</i>	1.030	0.167			
<i>D9. Role conflict</i>	1.029	0.322			
<i>D10. Emotional demand of the work</i>	1.020	0.235			
<i>D11. Handling angry clients</i>	1.075	0.542			
<b>Job Resources</b> (formative construct)				N.A.	N.A.
<i>R1. Autonomy over the content of the work</i>	1.053	-0.182			
<i>R2. Capacity to decide the timetable</i>	1.002	-0.032			
<i>R3. Colleagues support</i>	2.175	0.107			
<i>R4. Supervisor support</i>	2.828	-0.023			
<i>R5. Feeling of work well done</i>	1.185	0.065			
<i>R6. Feeling of doing useful work</i>	1.165	-0.109			
<i>R7. Supervisor feedback</i>	1.778	0.441			
<i>R8. Expectation of career advancement</i>	1.212	0.146			
<i>R9. Organizational commitment</i>	1.333	0.097			
<i>R10. Training paid for by the employer</i>	1.004	0.044			
<i>R11. Possibility of choosing the partners</i>	1.208	0.288			
<i>R12. Payment satisfaction</i>	1.062	0.595			
N.A.: not applicable.					

Evaluating reflective measurement models comprise assessing its reliability and validity. The results show that the measurement model meets all common requirements. First, all the reflective indicators are reliable because all standardized loadings surpass the 0.7 level (Table 1). Consequently, the individual item reliability is adequate.<sup>86</sup>



Second, all the reflective constructs –Workplace Bullying (WB), Stress (S) and Motivation (M) – meet the construct reliability requirement, since their composite reliabilities ( $\rho_c$ ) are greater than 0.7<sup>87</sup> (Table 1). In addition, these latent variables achieve convergent validity because their average variance extracted (AVE) measures are greater than 0.5<sup>88</sup> (Table 1). Finally, all variables reach discriminant validity. Confirmation of this validity comes from the comparison of the square root of AVE versus reflective latent variables correlations (Table 2). For satisfactory discriminant validity, the diagonal elements should be significantly greater than the off-diagonal elements in the corresponding rows and columns.<sup>82</sup>

**Table 2.** Discriminant validity.

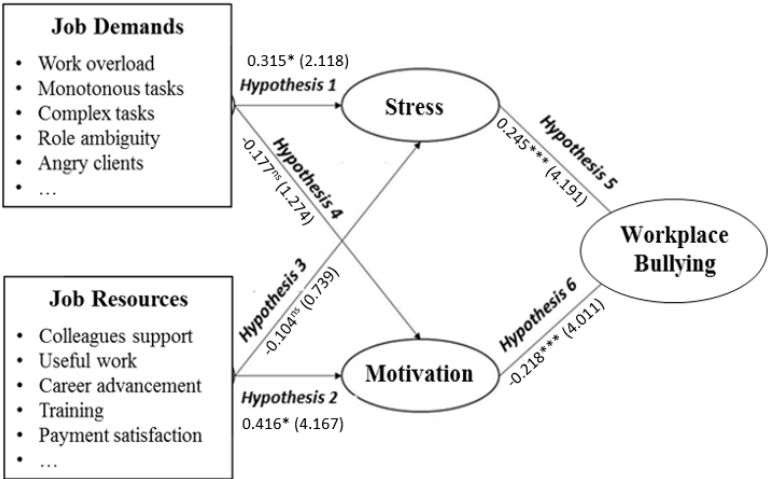
	<b>WB</b>	<b>S</b>	<b>JD</b>	<b>JR</b>	<b>M</b>
<b>WB</b>	<b>1</b>	0	0	0	0
<b>S</b>	0.2548	<b>1</b>	0	0	0
<b>JD</b>	0.3677	0.3456	<b>N.A.</b>	0	0
<b>JR</b>	-0.2683	-0.197	-0.296	<b>N.A.</b>	0
<b>M</b>	-0.2292	-0.0468	-0.3003	0.4688	<b>1</b>

Note: Diagonal elements (bold) are the square root of variance shared between the constructs and their measures (AVE). Off-diagonal elements are the correlations among constructs. For discriminant validity, the diagonal elements should be larger than the off-diagonal elements. N.A.: not applicable.

### 3.2. Structural Model

Table 3 shows the explained variance (R<sup>2</sup>) in the endogenous variables and the path coefficients for the hypotheses posited in the model under study. Bootstrapping (5,000 resamples) provides t-values that allow the evaluation of the statistical significance of the relationships included in the research model.<sup>82</sup>

**Figure 1.** Structural model results.



Therefore, for the current data sample H1, H2, H5 and H6 have proven to be significant, whereas we have failed to prove significance for H3 and H4 (Figure 1).

**Table 3.** Structural model results.

Relationships	Significance
	R <sup>2</sup> <sub>Stress</sub> = 0.129
	R <sup>2</sup> <sub>Motivation</sub> = 0.248
	R <sup>2</sup> <sub>Workplace Bullying</sub> = 0.112
H1: JD→S	0.315* (2.118)
H2: JD→M	-0.177 <sup>ns</sup> (1.274)
H3: JR→M	0.416*** (4.167)
H4: JR→S	-0.104 <sup>ns</sup> (0.739)
H5: S→WB	0.245*** (4.191)
H6: M→WB	-0.218*** (4.011)

Note: *t* values in parentheses. ns, not significant. \*\*\* *P* < 0.001; \*\* *P* < 0.01; \* *P* < 0.05; [based on (4999), one-tailed test] *t* (0.05, 4999) = 1.645; *T* (0.01, 4999) = 2.327; *t* (0.001, 4999) = 3.092.

#### 4. Discussion

Bullying is a dangerous toxic gas that, similarly to the firedamp in mines, silently expands throughout the entire organization. The problem is that once it is detected it could be late, and their effects irreversible for the firm's health; following to Giorgi,<sup>89</sup> once a workplace has an entrenched pattern of negative interaction, it can be difficult if not impossible to disrupt. For this reason, the advances in terms of the understanding of those previous circumstances that surround workplace bullying become of great importance in order to develop more effective lines of prevention and intervention.<sup>90,91</sup> The rates of bullying in the context of educational institutions seem relatively high when compared to those noted in the general population. Our study denotes a prevalence workplace-bullying rate of 4.4% among teachers, a very different result from other studies.<sup>92,93,94,95,96,35</sup> This variation might arise from the diverse methodologies researchers utilize to assess their own workplace-bullying ratios. According to these authors, it is estimated that workplace-bullying rate for education employees arises larger than the predicted average when comparing the same parameter for the employees laboring in any other occupational activity or sector.<sup>8,97,38</sup> Academic literature is witnessing a prolific production of studies concerning bullying on specific types of occupations. Some occupations with bullying evidences include restaurant employees,<sup>98</sup> teachers,<sup>99</sup> university professionals,<sup>1,100,35</sup> healthcare workers,<sup>101,102</sup> business professionals,<sup>103</sup> transportation workers,<sup>100</sup> police officers<sup>104</sup> and managers.<sup>105</sup>

The causes that drive workplace-bullying development within a concrete working cluster lead researches to the consideration of an intra-active flows perspective of dimensions;<sup>106</sup> conceptualizing any organization as a comprehensive entity results essential to conceive the phenomenon of bullying.

It seems quite complicated to imagine one labor context as excessively independent or non-influential to trigger workplace bullying; therefore, although early studies focused mainly on psychological characteristics of bullies and their victims, since the decade of the nineties several scholars have weighed more strongly the influence of some labor and structural characteristics of the organization on the individuals. In this line, the meta-analysis of Bowling and Beehr<sup>107</sup> has pointed out certain organizational variables, as workplace bullying antecedents, worth to highlight: conflict and role ambiguity,<sup>107</sup> work overload, stress, lack of autonomy, and absence of organizational fairness.<sup>108</sup> Zapf et al.'s research<sup>70</sup> evidences that monotonous and repetitive tasks happen to be more common among bullying victims.

Building upon the prior literature, this paper develops a research model that links Job Demands, Job Resources, Work Stress, Motivation and Workplace Bullying. The most known and cited model of Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) in this research field is the one proposed by Demerouti and Bakker,<sup>24</sup> in which they theorize that the demands inherent to each job characteristics and the resources available for the employees are the drivers of two processes initially independent: ones that result in a general deterioration of health and others comprising a motivational incentive for the employee. Our model extends this idea by focusing on the effect of job resources on work stress and job demands on motivation. Additionally, as a core purpose of our study, we aim to assess the impact of both processes on the employees' overall welfare and their bullying perception.

After testing our hypotheses, the results reveal that teaching activity is under several tension focuses, which are rooted accentuated demands that teachers must face nowadays. These demands result in direct impacts on the employees' health, concretely on the stress level developed during their work (Hypothesis H1). Following our results, the main stressors within the academic environment are having to deal daily with angry customers that neither value nor respect the teacher's effort, the work overload, the performance of tasks that come into conflict with personal values, the high emotional demand of work, the accomplishment of monotonous tasks and having to take work to home during weekends. All of this generates feelings of anguish and frustration that, sooner or later, can lead to work-related stress. This conclusion is in line with the studies that adopt Organizational Health models as their core focus. These studies identified the defining characteristics of unhealthy schools: aggressions from the pressure groups surrounding the school, incompetent school administrators, communication gaps between teachers, conflict, and low academic expectations.<sup>109</sup> At the same time, our second hypothesis (H2) posited that the high vocational component of the teaching profession, coupled with the availability of certain resources that are unique and idiosyncratic of the teaching activity, generates among these a motivational process that can counterbalance the demands tied to it. In this way, our analysis indicates that job

resources (such as perceiving a good salary, receiving feedback from the supervisor about the performance reached, the possibility of choosing the coworkers, career opportunities and the support from colleagues) have an important influence on motivation. As Nahrgang et al.<sup>64</sup> indicate, job resources motivate employees towards engagement and mitigate burnout. By creating a supportive environment, organizations are not just achieving a safe workplace but are potentially increasing the motivation and health of their employees.

We could not find support for the impact of JR on work-related stress (Hypothesis 3), neither the effect of JD on the employees' motivation (Hypothesis 4). The refutation of hypotheses 3 and 4 calls into question at least in the education sector, the interactive effect of demands and resources on the welfare of employees proposed by Bakker and Demerouti,<sup>59</sup> in the sense that personal resources are important predictors of motivation and can cushion the adverse effects of job demands. Therefore our results fail to provide evidence to support the view of Hakanen et al.<sup>110</sup> who posited that certain resources such as support and recognition from superiors, innovation, and organizational climate may help teachers to face the exigent demands inherent to their jobs, to the extent that may soften the negative relationship between pupils' bad behavior and teachers' involvement.

On the other hand, we found support for the main focus of this research: the teachers' workplace-bullying perception. In this vein, as posited in hypotheses H5 and H6, When teachers are more stressed they are more likely to perceive a feeling of harassment, while among the more motivated ones this feeling gets reduced. From this perspective, bullying among teachers would result from an unstable set of balances between the stress experienced by these as a result of the demands that must be faced and the degree of intrinsic motivation that they raise due to the resources provided by the institution. The result of this dilemma is not random, but depends largely on the management carried out by academic authorities – responsible principals, deans/rectors, and general directors. School administrators are expected to act fairly and to be balanced towards teachers the creation of healthy school environments.<sup>45</sup> With regard to the purpose of this study, academic managers could incline the balance towards the side of the motivational processes, introducing changes in the design of jobs. For instance, they could reduce the working hours or avoid the most monotonous and complex tasks, by the demands side, either they could improve certain resources such as salary, feedback or interpersonal relationships among peers. The quality of interpersonal relations in educational organizations is such a critical issue that some authors assume that teachers' job satisfaction and their performance depend of it.<sup>45</sup> Performance evaluation systems could be also introduced in order to provide a clear and systematic feedback that helps to identify areas of improvement, or designing training policies and plans that allow employees acquire new technical skills and knowledge, thus expanding the catalogue of resources at its disposal to achieve a better performance of the functions and

tasks in the workplace.

This research suggests that only those work environments in the education sector where resources have more weight than the demands can generate a healthy organizational environment conducive to reduce the negative effects of workplace bullying. For instance, Dollard and Bakker<sup>111</sup> found that psychological safety climate (PSC) was related to change in both job demands and resources overtime, and that work conditions respectively mediated the relationship between PSC and psychological health problems and work engagement. This way, it contributes to enhance the employees' welfare, which may in turn improve service quality, efficacy, efficiency, and hence, organizational performance and productivity within a strategic and crucial sector for a nation's development such as education sector.

## 5. Limitations of the Study

Despite the significant research findings identified in this study, it has to be prudently considered to take into account the latent methodological limitations inherently present in it. Firstly, bullying phenomenon has been measured through self-awareness, which might increase the risk of common method variance, forcing to assume the corresponding bias in key variable. Secondly, by utilizing self-labeling without a method definition, bullying comes to be measured in broad terms with the consequent risk of overestimating the prevalence rates as the respondents could report incidences that would not be qualified as bullying according to researchers' comprehension of the phenomenon.<sup>19</sup> Thirdly, a related methodological problem could be social desirability; the repercussion of desirability in studies regarding workplace bullying has been analyzed by previous scholars. Given the especial sensitivity of the phenomenon under investigation, it seems probable that the prevalence rate could exceed those obtained in this class of research since many victims are slow to acknowledge they have been subjected to an aggression of this nature. This predicament is particularly acute among certain collectives in a situation of vulnerability, such as women, youth or employees with temporary connections, among others. To correct this condition, some authors propose to take the most from multi-method data and objective measurements for enhancing workplace-bullying research. The various examples include managerial reports and scores from third parties (e.g., researchers).<sup>112</sup> It should be noted, however, that assessing third party scores on workplace bullying without trying to counteract such behavior raises ethical concerns, as workplace bullying yields many negative consequences for the parties involved as well as for the work unit and the organization.<sup>113</sup> Fourthly, the casual relation between bullying and those variables observed in our study has to be relativized, as the data under study are cross-sectional and not experimental. Fifthly, the research represents only a partial perspective of the phenomenon: the point of view of the victim and not

of the bully. Finally, on the one hand, the used questionnaire fails to identify the origin of the bullies: superiors, colleagues, students, etc; assessing the relationships between the different types of perpetrators and teachers' workplace bullying constitutes a future research line to be tackled in next works. On the other hand, this study does not employ the Negative Acts Questionnaire<sup>114</sup> for measuring perceived exposure to bullying and victimization, but affirmative or negative self-reported statements (yes/no) collected from the largest survey conducted in Europe on working conditions, which might be perceived as a possible limitation. On this regard, two different approaches are mainly used in bullying research when questionnaires are implemented: the self-labeling and the operational approach; the limitations and advantages of these methods are discussed in Nielsen et al.<sup>81</sup> Nevertheless, we consider the use of this questionnaire as a potential line for further research, particularly in those issues related to delving into other demand factors and resources accessible to educators, using the Negative Acts Questionnaire-NAQ to segment the sample of teachers as demands and resources may differ from one educational level to another.

## **6. Conclusions**

Workplace hostility stems as a serious and growing problem affecting a significant proportion of teachers. A victim of workplace bullying suffers in ways that may ultimately have serious consequences, such as depression; anxiety, fear or even panic when going to work; stress and, in some grave cases, could even lead to suicidal thoughts or acts.<sup>115</sup> As a result of the severe negative consequences of workplace bullying on mental health and well-being of employees, and, hence, on the performance of the organization, it has evolved into a vital importance to understand the factors that contribute to its emergence and development.<sup>116</sup> In this regard, the present study may contribute, with substantial implications, to the procurement of preventive measures against bullying in education.

The research model obtained in the present paper is focused on the prediction of the dependent variable, in this case the workplace bullying among teachers. These findings sustain the much cited work environment hypothesis, which links bullying to a stressful work environment.<sup>117</sup> Taking into account the Job Demands-Resources model, workplace bullying is pondered as a complex phenomenon that arises due to the dynamic interaction of work stress and motivation. Its findings enclose valuable implications to those organizations thriving and enhancing organizational performance. This work provides reasonable evidences that may be of significant applications for the responsible of human resource policy implementation; these school administrators might reduce organizational levels of workplace bullying by adjusting certain working conditions to those teachers especially susceptible to be bullied.

The research paper offers an empirical basis for further studies concerning education sector issues in Europe. In order to successfully compete in education industry, attracting and retaining the most qualified and experienced professionals, it turns relevant for organizations to implement strategies oriented to reduce workplace bullying. Consequently, the labor force in this economic sector denotes specific personality traits that should not be ignored: extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, and openness to experience.<sup>118</sup>

From a practical standpoint, the present findings may assist school administrators in facilitating harmonious social relationships amongst teachers. Specifically, and as a general conclusion, it should be noted that this study has uncovered that to ameliorate workplace bullying it is essential to reduce stress levels teaching professionals may suffer and fuel as well their level of motivation. This objective is achieved by increasing the resources available to teachers while the demands inherent in the teaching profession are reduced.

Finally we would like to emphasize that even when there is great sensitivity in Europe about harassment in students yet, it would also be of great importance to give a comparable prominence to teacher harassment; current national regulations are partially in charge of this awareness, although it still requires more transnational homogeneity and enforcement at European level.

## References

1. McKay R, Arnold DH, Fratzl J, Thomas R. Workplace bullying in academia: a Canadian study. *Employ Responsib Rights J*. 2008; 20: 77-100.
2. Arenas A, Giorgi G, Montani F, et al. Workplace bullying in a sample of Italian and Spanish employees and its relationship with job satisfaction, and psychological well-being. *Front Psychol*. 2015; 6: 1912. <http://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2015.01912>
3. Gonzalez-Mulé E, DeGeest DS, Kiersch CE, Mount MK. Gender differences in personality predictors of counterproductive behavior. *J Manage Psychol*. 2013; 28: 333-353.
4. Gumbus A, Lyons B. Workplace harassment: the social costs of bullying. *J Leadership Accountability Ethics*. 2011; 8: 72-90.
5. Giorgi G, Arcangeli G, Mucci N, Cupelli V. Economic stress in the workplace: the impact of fear of the crisis on mental health. *Work*. 2015; 51: 135-142.
6. Terry AA. Teachers as targets of bullying by their pupils: a study to investigate incidence. *Brit J Educ Psychol*. 1998; 68: 255-268.
7. Kauppi T, Pörhölä M. Teachers bullied by students: forms of bullying and perpetrator characteristics. *Violence Vict*. 2012; 27: 396-413.
8. Zapf D, Einarsen S, Hoel H, Vartia M. Empirical findings on bullying in the workplace. In: Einarsen S, Hoel H, Zapf D, Cooper CL, editors. *Bullying and Emotional Abuse in the Workplace: International Perspectives in Research and Practice*. London: Taylor & Francis; 2003: 103-126.
9. Aquino K, Lamertz K. Relational model of workplace victimization: social roles and patterns of victimization in dyadic relationships. *J Appl Psychol*. 2004; 89: 1023-1034.
10. Einarsen S, Hoel H, Zapf D, Cooper CL. The concept of bullying and harassment at work: the European tradition. In: Einarsen S, Hoel H, Zapf D, Cooper CL, editors. *Bullying and Harassment in the Workplace*. Boca Raton, Florida: CRC Press; 2011: 3-40.
11. Einarsen S, Hoel H, Zapf D, Cooper CL. The concept of bullying at work: the European tradition. In: Einarsen S, Hoel H, Zapf D, Cooper CL, editors. *Bullying and Emotional Abuse in the Workplace: International Perspectives in Research and Practice*. London: Taylor & Francis; 2003: 3-30.
12. Einarsen S. The nature and causes of bullying at work. *Int J Manpower*. 1999; 20: 16-27.
13. Einarsen S. *Bullying and harassment at work: epidemiological and psychosocial aspects*. Doctoral thesis. University of Bergen, Norway; 1996.



14. Sandmark H. Job mismatching unequal opportunities and long-term sickness absence in female white-collar workers in Sweden. *Scand J Public Health*. 2009; 37: 43-49.
15. Nielsen MB, Hetland J, Matthiesen SB, Einarsen S. Longitudinal relationships between workplace bullying and psychological distress. *Scand J Work Env Hea*. 2012; 38: 38-46.
16. Nielsen MB, Skogstad A, Matthiesen SB, et al. Prevalence of workplace bullying in Norway: comparisons across time and estimation methods. *Eur J Work Organ Psy*. 2009; 18: 81-101.
17. Giorgi G, Arenas A, Leon-Perez JM. An operative measure of workplace bullying: the negative acts questionnaire across Italian companies. *Ind Health*. 2011; 49: 686-695.
18. Agervold M. Bullying at work: a discussion of definitions and prevalence, based on an empirical study. *Scand J Psychol*. 2007; 48: 161-172.
19. Nielsen MB, Matthiesen SB, Einarsen S. The impact of methodological moderators on prevalence rates of workplace bullying. A meta-analysis. *J Occup Organ Psych*. 2010; 83: 955-979.
20. Einarsen S, Skogstad A. Bullying at work: epidemiological findings in public and private organizations. *Eur J Work Organ Psy*. 1996; 5: 185-201.
21. Lee D. Gendered workplace bullying in the restructured UK civil service. *Pers Rev*. 2002; 31: 205-227.
22. Twale DJ, De Luca BM. Faculty Incivility. The Rise of the Academic Bully Culture and What to Do About It. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass; 2008.
23. Neuman JH, Baron RA. Aggression in the workplace. In: Giacalone R, Greenberg J, editors. *Antisocial Behavior in Organizations*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage; 1997: 37-67.
24. Demerouti E, Bakker AB. The job demands-resources model: challenges for future research. *J Ind Psychol*. 2011; 37: 01-09.
25. Leymann H. Bullying and psychological terror at workplaces. *Violence Vict*. 1990; 5: 119-126.
26. Matthiesen SB, Raknes BI, Røkkum O. Bullying in the workplace. *J Norm Psychol Assoc*. 1989; 26: 761-774.
27. Rayner C, Hoel H, Cooper C. *Workplace Bullying: What We Know, Who Is to Blame, and What Can We Do?* London: Taylor & Francis; 2002.
28. Lutgen-Sandvik P, Tracy JS, Alberts JK. Burned by bullying in the American workplace: prevalence, perception, degree and impact. *J Manage Stud*. 2007; 44: 837-862.

29. Randall P. *Bullying in Adulthood: Assessing the Bullies and Their Victims*. New York: Brunner-Routledge; 2001.
30. Keashly L, Neuman JH. Faculty experiences with bullying in higher education. Causes, consequences, and management. *Admin Theor Prax*. 2010; 32: 48–70.
31. Keashly L, Jagatic K. North American perspectives on workplace hostility and bullying. In Einarsen S, Hoel H, Zapf D, Cooper CL, editors. *Bullying and Harassment in the Workplace: Developments in Theory Research and Practice*. London: Taylor & Francis; 2011: 41-71.
32. Rayner C, Cooper CL. Workplace bullying. In: Kelloway EK, Barling J, Hurrell J, editors. *Handbook of Workplace Violence*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage; 2006: 121–146.
33. McCarthy M, Mayhew C, Barker M, Sheehan M. Bullying and occupational violence in tertiary education: risk factors, perpetrators and prevention. *J Occup Health Safety – Aust NZ*. 2003; 19: 319–326.
34. Vickers MH. Bullying as unacknowledged organizational evil: a researcher’s story. *Employ Responsib Rights J*. 2001; 13: 205–217.
35. Björkqvist K, Osterman K, Hijelt-Back M. Aggression among university employees. *Aggressive Behav*. 1994; 20: 173-184.
36. Hubert AB, Van Veldhoven M. Risk sectors for undesirable behaviour and mobbing. *Eur J Work Organ Psy*. 2001; 10: 415–424.
37. Lewis D. Voices in the social construction of bullying at work: exploring multiple realities in further and higher education. *Int J Manag Decis Making*. 2003; 4: 65–81.
38. Hoel H, Cooper CL. *Destructive Conflict and Bullying at Work*. Manchester, UK: University of Manchester, Institute of Science and Technology; 2000.
39. Dake JA, Price JH, Telljohann SK. The nature and extent of bullying at school. *J Sch Health*. 2003; 73: 173-180.
40. McCormack D, Casimir G, Djurkovic N, Yang L. The concurrent effects of workplace bullying, satisfaction with supervisor, and satisfaction with co-workers on affective commitment among schoolteachers in China. *Int J Confl Manage*. 2006; 17: 316-331.
41. O’Moore M, Lynch J, Nic Daeid N. The rates and relative risks of workplace bullying in Ireland, a country of high economic growth. *Int J Manag Decis Making*. 2003; 4: 82-95.
42. Edelmans RJ, Woodall L. Bullying at work. *Occup Psychol*. 1997; 32: 28–31.
43. National Association of Schoolmasters and Union of Women Teachers. *No*

*Place to Hide: Confronting Workplace Bullies*. Birmingham: NASUWT; 1996.

44. Blase J, Blase J. The phenomenology of principal mistreatment: teachers perspectives. *J Educ Res*. 2003; 41: 367–422.
45. Cemaloğlu N. The exposure of primary school teachers to bullying: an analysis of various variables. *Soc Behav Personal*. 2007; 35: 789-802.
46. Kyriacou C, Zuin A. Cyber bullying of teachers by students on YouTube: Challenging the image of teacher authority in the digital age. *Res Pap Educ*. 2016; 31: 255-273.
47. Bounds C, Jenkins LN. Teacher-directed violence in relation to social support and work stress. *Contemp School Psychol*. 2016; 1-9. Doi: 0.1007/s40688-016-0091-0
48. Inglehart R, Welzel C. *Modernization, Cultural Change, and Democracy: The Human Development Sequence*. New York: Cambridge University Press; 2005.
49. Inglehart, R. *Mass Values and Social Change: Findings from the Values Surveys*. Boston: Brill Academic; 2003.
50. Inglehart R. *Modernization and Postmodernization: Cultural, Economic, and Political Change in 43 Societies*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press; 1997.
51. Norman M, Ambrose S, Huston TA. Assessing and addressing faculty morale: cultivating consciousness, empathy, and empowerment. *Rev High Educ*. 2006; 29: 347-379.
52. Korkmaz M, Cemaloğlu N. Relations between Organizational Learning and Workplace Bullying in Learning Organizations. *Educ Res Quart*. 2010; 33: 2-38.
53. Higgerson ML, Joyce TA. *Effective Leadership Communication: A Guide for Department Chairs and Deans for Managing Difficult Situations and People*. Bolton, MA: Anker; 2007.
54. Zabrodska K, Linnell S, Laws C, Davies B. Bullying as intra-active process in neoliberal universities. *Qual Inq*. 2011; 17: 709-719.
55. Morley L. Troubling intra-actions: gender, neo-liberalism and research in the global academy. *J Educ Policy*. 2016; 31: 28-45.
56. Zabrodska K, Kveton P. Prevalence and forms of workplace bullying among university employees. *Employ Responsib Rights J*. 2013; 25: 89-108.
57. Tigrrel YE, Kokolan O. Academic mobbing in Turkey. *Int J Behav Cog Educ Psychol Sci*. 2009; 1: 91-99.
58. Nelson ED, Lambert RD. Sticks, stones and semantics: the ivory tower bully's vocabulary of motives. *Qual Sociol*. 2001; 24: 83-106.
59. Bakker A, Demerouti E. Job demands-resources model. *J Work Organ*

Psych. 2013; 29: 107-115.

60. Bakker AB, Demerouti E. Job demands–resources theory. In: Cooper C, Chen P, editors. *Wellbeing: A Complete Reference Guide*. Chichester, UK: Wiley-Blackwell; 2014: 37-64.
61. Dick RV, Wagner U. Stress and strain in teaching: a structural equation approach. *Brit J Educ Psychol*. 2001; 71: 243-259.
62. Boyle GJ, Borg MG, Falzon JM, Baglioni AJ. A structural model of the dimensions of teacher stress. *Brit J Educ Psychol*. 1995; 65: 49-67.
63. Bakker AB. An evidence-based model of work engagement. *Curr Dir Psychol Sci*. 2011; 20: 265–269.
64. Nahrgang JD, Morgeson FP, Hofmann DA. Safety at work: a meta-analytic investigation of the link between job demands, job resources, burnout, engagement, and safety outcomes. *J Appl Psychol*. 2011; 96: 71-94.
65. Deci EL, Ryan RM. The “what” and “why” of goal pursuits: human needs and the self-determination of behavior. *Psychol Inq*. 2000; 11: 227–268.
66. Mikkelsen EG, Einarsen S. Relationships between exposure to bullying at work and psychological and psychosomatic health complaints: the role of state negative affectivity and generalized self-efficacy. *Scand J Psychol*. 2002; 43: 397-405.
67. Einarsen S. Harassment and bullying at work: a review of the Scandinavian approach. *Aggress Violent Beh*. 2000; 4: 371-401.
68. Hoel H, Rayner C, Cooper CL. Workplace bullying. *Int Rev Ind Organ Psychol*. 1999; 14: 195-230.
69. Einarsen S, Matthiesen SB, Skogstad A. Bullying, burn out and well-being among assistant nurses. *J Occup Health Safety – Aust NZ*. 1998; 14: 563-568.
70. Zapf D, Knorz C, Kulla M. On the relationship between mobbing factors and job content, social work environment, and health outcomes. *Eur J Work Organ Psy*. 1996; 5: 215-237.
71. Brodsky C. *The Harassed Worker*. Toronto: Lexington Books, DC Heath and Company; 1976.
72. Çobanoğlu S. *Mobbing ve Başa Çıkma Yöntemleri*. İstanbul: Timaş Yayıncılık; 2005.
73. Carmeli A, Meitar R, Weisberg J. Self-leadership skills and innovative behavior at work. *Int J Manpower*. 2006; 27: 75-90.
74. Carmeli A, Tishler A. The relative importance of the top management team's managerial skills. *Int J Manpower*. 2006; 27: 9-36.

75. Korkmaz M. The relationship between organizational health and student achievement in primary school. *Educ Admin Theor Pract.* 2005; 44: 529-548.
76. Bakker AB, Schaufeli WB, Sixma H, Bosveld W, Van Dierendonck D. Patient demands, lack of reciprocity, and burnout: a five-year longitudinal study among general practitioners. *J Organ Behav.* 2000; 21: 425-441.
77. Beehr TA. *Psychological Stress in the Workplace.* New York: Routledge; 1995.
78. Podgurski TP. *School Effectiveness as it Relates to Group Consensus and Organizational Health of Elementary Schools.* Unpublished doctoral dissertation. Rutgers University: New Brunswick; 1990.
79. Duxbury ML, Armstrong GD, Drew DJ, Henly SJ. Head nurse leadership style with staff nurse burnout and job satisfaction in neonatal intensive care units. *Nurs Res.* 1984; 33: 97-101.
80. Fliegner HR. *School leadership and organizational health: a simulated teaching unit.* Dissertation Abstracts International; 45: December 1984.
81. Nielsen MB, Notelaers G, Einarsen S. Measuring exposure to workplace bullying. In: Einarsen S, Hoel H, Zapf D, Cooper CL, editors. *Bullying and Harassment in the Workplace: Developments in Theory Research and Practice.* London: Taylor & Francis; 2011:149-174.
82. Roldán JL, Sánchez-Franco MJ. Variance-based structural equation modelling: guidelines for using partial least squares in information systems research. Mora M, et al. editors. *Research Methodologies, Innovations and Philosophies in Software Systems Engineering and Information Systems.* Hershey, PA: IGI Global; 2012:193-221.
83. Ringle CM, Wende S, Will A. *SmartPLS 2.0 (M3) Beta.* Hamburg, Germany; 2005. Available at: <http://www.smartpls.de>. Accessed March 11, 2015.
84. Henseler J, Ringle CM, Sinkovics RR. The use of partial least squares path modeling in international marketing. *Adv Int Marketing.* 2009; 20: 277-320.
85. Diamantopoulos A, Riefler P, Roth KP. Advancing formative measurement models. *J Bus Res.* 2008; 16: 1203-1218.
86. Carmines EG, Zeller RA. *Reliability and Validity Assessment.* Beverly Hills, CA: Sciences Sage; 1979.
87. Nunnally JC, Bernstein IH. *Psychometric Theory, Third edition.* New York: McGraw-Hill; 1994.
88. Fornell C, Larcker DF. Evaluating structural equation models with unobservable variables and measurement error. *J Marketing Res.* 1981; 18: 39-50.
89. Giorgi G. Workplace bullying partially mediates the climate-health relationship. *J Manage Psychol.* 2010; 25: 727-740.

90. Saam NJ. Interventions in workplace bullying: a multilevel approach. *Eur J Work Organ Psy.* 2010; 19: 51-75.
91. Einarsen S, Hauge LJ. Antecedentes y consecuencias del acoso psicológico en el trabajo: una revisión de la literatura [Antecedents and consequences of psychological bullying at work: a review of the literature]. *Rev Psicol Trab Organ.* 2006; 22: 251-273.
92. Keashly L, Neuman JH. *Final report: Workplace behaviour (bullying) project survey.* Mankato: Minnesota State University; 2008. Available at: [http://www.mnsu.edu/csw/workplacebullying/workplace\\_bullying\\_final\\_report.pdf](http://www.mnsu.edu/csw/workplacebullying/workplace_bullying_final_report.pdf). Accessed May 25, 2016.
93. Herranz Bellido J, Reig Ferrer A, Cabrera García J. La prevalencia del estrés laboral asistencial entre los profesores universitarios [The prevalence of assistance work stress among university professors]. *Anal Modif Conduct.* 2006; 32: 743-766.
94. Jennifer D, Cowie H, Anaiadou K. Perceptions and experience of workplace bullying in five different working populations. *Aggressive Behav.* 2003; 29: 489-496.
95. Lewis D. Workplace bullying—interim findings of a study in further and higher education in Wales. *Int J Manpower.* 1999; 20: 106-119.
96. Spratlen LP. Interpersonal conflict which includes mistreatment in a university workplace. *Violence Vict.* 1995; 10: 285-297.
97. Soares A. *Bullying: When Work Becomes Incident.* Montréal, Canada: Université du Québec; 2002.
98. Mathisen GE, Einarsen S, Mykletun R. The occurrences and correlates of bullying and harassment in the restaurant sector. *Scand J Psychol.* 2008; 49, 59-68.
99. Smith PK, Ananiadou K, Cowie H. Interventions to reduce school bullying. *Can. J. Psychiatry.* 2003; 48, 591-599.
100. Mayhew C, McCarthy P, Chappell D, Quinlan M, Barker M, Sheehan M. Measuring the extent of impact from occupational violence and bullying on traumatised workers. *Employ Responsib Rights J.* 2004; 16: 117–134.
101. Giorgi G, Mancuso S, Fiz Perez F, et al. Bullying among nurses and its relationship with burnout and organizational climate. *Int J Nurs Pract.* 2016; 22: 160–168.
102. Ariza-Montes JA, Muñiz NM, Montero-Simó MJ, Araque-Padilla RA. Workplace bullying among healthcare workers. *Int J Environ Res Publ Health.* 2013; 10: 3121-3139.
103. Salin D. Prevalence and forms of bullying among business professionals: a comparison of two different strategies for measuring bullying. *Eur J Work Organ*

*Psy.* 2001; 10: 425-441.

104. Waddington PA, Braddock Q. Guardians or Bullies? Perceptions of the Police amongst adolescent black, white and Asian boys. *Polic Soc.* 1991; 2: 31-45.

105. Ariza-Montes JA, Muñiz NM, Leal-Rodríguez AL, Leal-Millán AG. Workplace bullying among managers: a multifactorial perspective and understanding. *Int J Environ Res Publ Health.* 2014; 11: 2657-2682.

106. Barad K. *Meeting the Universe Halfway*. London: Duke University Press; 2007.

107. Bowling NA, Beehr TA. Workplace harassment from the victim's perspective: a theoretical model and meta-analysis. *J Appl Psychol.* 2006; 91: 998-1012.

108. Topa G, Depolo M, Morales JF. Acoso laboral: meta-análisis y modelo integrador de sus antecedentes y consecuencias [Workplace harassment: Meta-analysis and integrative model of antecedents and consequences]. *Psicothema.* 2007; 19: 88-94.

109. Hoy WK, Feldman JA. Organizational health: the concept and its measure. *J Res Dev Educ.* 1987; 20: 30-38.

110. Hakanen JJ, Bakker AB, Schaufeli WB. Burnout and work engagement among teachers. *J School Psychol.* 2006; 43: 495-513.

111. Dollard MF, Bakker AB. Psychosocial safety climate as a precursor to conducive work environments, psychological health problems, and employee engagement. *J Occup Organ Psych.* 2010; 83: 579-599.

112. Baillien E, De Cuyper N, De Witte H. Job autonomy and workload as antecedents of workplace bullying: a two-wave test of Karasek's Job Demand Control model for targets and perpetrators. *J Occup Organ Psych.* 2011; 84: 191-208.

113. Einarsen S, Matthiesen SB, Hauge LJ. Bullying and harassment at work. In Cartwright S, Cooper CL, editors. *The Oxford Handbook of Personnel Psychology*. London: Sage Publications; 2009: 464-495.

114. Einarsen S, Hoel H. *The Negative Acts Questionnaire: development, validation and revision of a measure of bullying at work*. Oral presentation at the 10th European Congress on Work and Organizational Psychology. Prague; 16-19 May, 2001.

115. Campos ICM, da Cruz Serafim A, Custódio KV, da Silva L, Cruz RM. Moral harassment of public schools teachers. *Work.* 2012; 41: 2001-2007.

116. Bond SA, Tuckey MR, Dollard MF. Psychosocial safety climate, workplace bullying, and symptoms of posttraumatic stress. *Organ Dev J.* 2010; 28: 37-56.

117. Notelaers G, De Witte H, Einarsen S. A job characteristics approach to explain workplace bullying. *Eur J Work Organ Psy.* 2010; 19: 487-504.

118. Buttner S, Pijl SJ, Bijstra J, Van den Bosch E. Personality traits of expert teachers of students with behavioural problems: a review and classification of the literature. *Aust Educ Res.* 2015; 42: 461-481.





# Chapter 4

---

*“Nothing can prepare you for living or working with a sociopathic serial bully. It is the most devastating, draining, misunderstood, and ultimately futile experience imaginable”.*

Tim Fields (1952-2006)

## ***Chapter 4. A purposeful approach for implementing preventive measures among European teaching professionals: Bullying, deteriorated organizational factors, and the mediating role of job dissatisfaction in poor health perception***

### **Abstract**

This research aims to examine and help understand how workplace bullying, a collection of predominant organizational factors, and job dissatisfaction -as mediating construct- might conjointly exert direct and indirect influence on the emergence of negative health perception among teaching professionals in organizational setting. The methodology utilized for testing the hypotheses of research is statistically based on partial least squares structural modeling, relying on a sample population of 2,328 educators in Europe. Results vindicate that negative health perception escalates when there is a direct conditioned correlation between this and either bullying or the working conditions construct here studied. Additional indirect effects on health perception are unveiled when dissatisfaction comes into picture as mediating construct. From a theoretical perspective, this research intends to contribute to the current body of knowledge implemented for the design of preventive wellness policies in educational institutions. From a practical standpoint, the implications arising from this study pretend to assist those responsible for the coordination of human resource in establishing and monitoring internal guidelines in learning centers, facilitating custom support, harmonious relationships, and balanced environments.

**KEYWORDS:** Health perception, teaching professionals; workplace bullying; organizational factors; job dissatisfaction; PLS-SEM

### **1. Introduction**

Organizations are intricate ecosystems where individuals evidence to each other their behavioral patterns through complex interconnections, ultimately giving

rise to either constructive, indeterminate, or even unpleasant assessments on recipient subjects, and eventually triggering psychosomatic manifestations that make poor health perception emerge on peers (Danna & Griffin, 1999). This personal observation of deteriorated health is mainly notorious among service personnel, registering teaching professionals –namely, early childhood, primary school, secondary school, vocational, university, and higher education teachers– one of the highest rates (Ortega et al., 2009; Travers & Cooper, 1993).

In social and organizational terms, thus, research on detrimental health from elementary through high school teachers has currently become regarded as a critical large-scale necessity (Aloe et al., 2014) not only for its repercussions on private and public schoolteachers' wellness, but also for its impact on social security systems, national and household economy, knowledge transmission, personnel replacement, teacher attrition and absenteeism, substitutes allocation and payment, teacher transfers, among others (e.g., Lee et al., 2015).

In the interests of shedding light on its appearance, a notable body of studies, focused on teachers health perception, currently dispenses a significant importance to occupational settings even though it seems to be still needed further comprehension of its subtle associations to work demands/limited resources and work-related health outcomes (Tadić, 2013; Kovess-Masféty, 2006). It sounds pivotal, thus, to delve further into the examination of certain and concrete workplace constituents that might directly or indirectly boost the likelihood of its manifestation in teaching professionals.

In this sense, de Wet (2010) and Türküm (2011) state that bullying at work singles out as one of the major reasons that might unchain poor wellness conditions among public primary and secondary teachers. Both researches asseverate as well that the exploration and awareness of teacher ill-treatment turn even insufficient and limited due to the more extensive present of reports based on student incidents rather than on educators, and the further need of linking these events to other contextual features –such as the lack of job satisfaction– as bridging predictor to assess its mediating effects on subjects.

Job dissatisfaction, indeed, has been directly associated –and reasonably argued– with a collection of psychosomatic health manifestations in elementary and middle schoolteachers (e.g., Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2009), but its indirect mediation and correlation derived from organizational variables as constructs has been limitedly examined.

In this sense, occupational stress, work overload, and motivation have certainly drawn most of the attention in academic research concerning public early childhood, primary, secondary, and university teachers' health in educational institutions (e.g., Chaplain, 2008; León-Rubio et al., 2011; Masari et al., 2013), while other organizational stressors such as monotony, work and family balance, autonomy, complex and monotonous tasks, and shift and night work have been

little observed either directly or indirectly in public elementary, secondary, and high school teachers (e.g., Fernet et al., 2012; Sadeghi et al., 2013).

In this regard, Aloe et al. (2014) suggest to consider other underlying causal relationships that may be embedded in diverse structural designs, in an attempt to identify connecting factors –such as job dissatisfaction- linked to the onset of negative health manifestations in public and private schoolteachers (Badri et al., 2013).

Based on this scope and relying on personal self-perspective, this paper proposes to address these gaps in literature and explore in an European sample -mostly comprised of public early childhood/primary and secondary teachers- and through a structural global model -as a combination of constructs-, how bullying, certain prevalent organizational variables, and job dissatisfaction might directly or indirectly elicit the materialization of *poor health perception* in teaching professionals.

With its results, this research pursues as well to contribute to provide more evidences for the design and implementation of promising guidelines in the prevention and alleviation of adverse wellness perception among educators, enriching thus the comprehension of this actual predicament and helping directors/principals facilitate well-adjusted environments and relationships in educational settings.

The present research paper is organized as follows: the succeeding section reviews the previous research on the potential weight of bullying, dissatisfaction, and unfavorable organizational variables on subject's health perception; and exposes proposed hypotheses. This part is followed by the method exposition, the description of research sample, and the data analysis. The paper concludes with the account of the results, the elucidation of discussion section, and the explanation of main conclusions with its implications, limitations and further research on the field.

## **2. Theoretical Background**

### **2.1. Weighing Workplace Bullying on Poor Health Perception**

In the context of organizational psychology, worldwide research has shown a growing interest in occupational bullying and health (Agervold, 2007).

Distinguished by concrete attributes -such as intensity, frequency, duration, and power disparity (Einarsen et al., 2003)-, this sort of incidents embodies specific hostile events among subjects cohabiting labor settings -intimidation, harassment, victimization, aggression, emotional abuse, psychological harassment, or mistreatment- (Salin, 2003). It has not necessary to be a recurring conduct to regularly deliver detrimental consequence on victim's physical and psychological health (Lee, 2002), but to be understood as a hostile behavior by the injured party (Einarsen & Skogstad, 1996).

Based on this scope, detrimental responses -nervousness, anxiety, sadness, depression, etc.- would essentially surface just when the victim recognizes the aggressive attitude; that explains why research in occupational bullying and health has been conventionally associated with self-reports (Hansen et al., 2011). This fact acknowledges workplace bullying as an irrational behavior that may cause health damages or has the potential to do it on jobholders.

At present, various researchers even regard bullying as one of the most alarming predicaments for personnel; for instance, in Southern-European countries, where bullying appears to be more widespread, Giorgi (2012) not only identifies a high bullying prevalence of 19% among administrative staff from Italian public university, but a direct and indirect bullying effects on health via organizational climate; while in countries with typical collectivistic culture, Giorgi et al. (2013) find a 15% prevalence rate of workplace bullying in a sample of Japanese labor-unions employees from different occupations where repercussions on health appear significant.

Thus, bullying is considered as the severest ways of stress at work (Niedl, 1996). In this regard, numerous symptoms of posttraumatic stress and general anxiety disorder have been identified among victims/patients (Nielsen et al., 2015) and linked as well to psychosomatic stress manifestations in organizations (Hoel et al., 2003), causing more severe health effects among targets, such as chronic neck pain (Kääriä et al., 2012), musculo-skeletal symptoms (Gemzøe-Mikkelsen & Einarsen, 2002), cardiovascular diseases (Kivimäki et al., 2003), depression, and suicidal thoughts (Roland, 2002). Scientific research reveals as well that bullying seems to be more frequent in service sectors (Zapf et al., 2011), particularly in public education and among teaching professionals (Ortega et al., 2009).

On this basis, studies worldwide unveil that a great number of public and private teachers from elementary to high schools are often bullied by their students (e.g., Chen & Astor, 2008), being typically manifested through both offensive verbal statements -obscene and inappropriate comments, name-calling, deliberate insolence, mocking, etc.- (Türküm, 2011) and non-verbal means (Kauppi & Pörhölä, 2012). At university context, Fadda et al. (2015) observe a prevalence rate of 10% in a sample that includes university lectures, researches, fellows, and PhD students from Southern Italy; where mental health problems through a curvilinear model approach happen to be more explanatory of the deteriorating bullying-health liaison.

Bullying prevalence in teaching professionals seem to arise due to certain subcultural or professional traits that characterize this concrete collective as risk group. In this regard, Zapf et al., (2011) affirm that working in the education sector, for instance, makes teachers more vulnerable to workplace harassment because of the elevated degree of personal interactions and the long-term nature of public job contracts prevailing in European countries; broadening the

chances for continual and permanent hostilities. However, this last circumstance could paradoxically help emerge teachers' resilience to harassment at schools due to the sense of a secured lifelong job and a considerable difficulty of applying the acquired skills in a new private-sector post, compensating this fact to some extent the bad attitude of colleagues and superiors (Zapf et al., 2011) and its adverse consequences on job satisfaction and health (Arenas et al., 2015).

As a physiological response to workplace bullying, teaching professionals appear to develop emotional imbalance that leads to depression, which is largely rated as one of the most frequent workplace bullying consequences among teachers from primary to high school (Blase & Blase, 2002), and further mental deteriorating conditions (Blase & Blase, 2007).

For directors of primary and secondary schools, teacher victimization has become an increasing issue of concern not only for its adverse consequences on teaching professionals, but also for its institutional impact on organizational expenditures related to short-term absences -sick leave- (Ervasti et al., 2012), long-term sickness absence, and ill health retirement (Bowers, 2001).

Under these premises, the first research hypothesis raised in this paper suggests that:

**H1:** *Teaching professionals who label themselves as having been bullied bear a much greater likelihood of self-reporting poor health perception.*

## **2.2. An Examination of Working Conditions Research in Detrimental Health Perception**

Another body of research has focused attention on the correspondence analysis between poor health perception and certain working conditions that educational organizations eventually make available to its employees. In this sense, **occupational stress** –which is not considered a disease *per se* but a *working condition*- registers the most significant correlation values in connection with poor health perception among teaching professionals from early childhood to high school education (e.g., Kyriacou & Sutcliffe, 1978; Travers & Cooper, 1996; Chaplain, 2008), currently regarded as one of the most stressful occupations worldwide (Johnson et al., 2005).

As a cumulus of unpleasant experiences and emotions, stress in the workplace may prompt the appearance of serious health conditions in personnel, such as exhaustion, depression (Weinberg & Creed, 2000), psychiatric disorders, psychological distress, anxiety and blood pressure instability (Girdano et al., 1993), and cardiovascular disease and hypertension (McEwen, 1998); being the majority of cases generally registered by subject's self-rated health (Nixon et al., 2011).

These undesirable responses are commonly associated as well to a protracted job-related syndrome mostly known as burnout, which is, according to Van

Droogenbroeck et al. (2014), the last step in a succession of counteractions to chronic occupational stress.

Teacher burnout, as a result of health deterioration in learning setting, may similarly bears a close correlation to other key constituents linked to work environment like lack of *work and family life balance*, *work overload*, *complex tasks*, *motivation*, *monotony*, *autonomy*, and *shift and night works* (e.g., Fernet et al., 2012); however, their examinations in connection with joint direct or indirect predictive influences on teachers' occupational healthiness has been particularly limited.

Indeed, *work and family life balance*, as capital organizational component, seems to be directly connected to deleterious health among teaching professionals. Nowadays, teachers experience less time for rest and recovery, and minimum time for personal matters (Lindqvist & Nordänger, 2006), resulting in a higher occurrence of burnout and vindicating -in terms of wellness at work- the relevance of its further research (Greenhaus et al., 2003).

Similarly, *work overload* appears to exhibit a strong liaison as well to burnout (León-Rubio et al., 2011). Moreover, when burnout dimensions are separately analyzed, work overload behaves positively correlated with intense emotional exhaustion (Kokkinos, 2007). Precisely, those educational programs, mainly loaded with extracurricular activities or excessive number of regular tasks, are regarded as primary sources of health deterioration for high school teachers (Shirom et al., 2009).

Teaching professionals seem to be also prone to suffering from burnout due to the accelerated spiral of *complex tasks* within academic programmes in primary and secondary education (Verešová & Malá, 2012) –e.g. adapting the level of instruction to students' needs, providing individual attention to pupils, etc.-, consequently provoking health degeneration (Shirom et al., 2009); furthermore, teacher burnout has been negatively related to teacher self-efficacy in coping with complex and multiple tasks through intrinsic motivation- (Schwarzer & Hallum, 2008).

Correspondingly, work *motivation* appears to evidence a strong correlation with workplace healthiness; on this point, the continual lack of motivation –e.g. reduced job control, limited access to information, unpleasant social climate, etc.- in teachers from public elementary, secondary and vocational school may influence the arising of burnout (Hakanen et al., 2006). Thus, teacher motivation is assessed as a personal resource with the potential to moderate the correlation between job demands and teachers' wellness (Tadić, 2013), being determined by both intrinsic –say needs, attitudes, and values-, and extrinsic – e.g. salary, performance standards, and institutional criteria- factors (Masari et al., 2013).

For its part, when it concerns to the “erosion of engagement” (Demerouti et al.,

2001), *monotonous tasks* have been directly associated as well to psychological distress and detrimental health in schoolteachers -among other employees from different occupational fields- since they develop gradually over time, rising negative attitudes toward work object, content, and performance (Loukidou et al., 2009). Additionally, there seems to be positive associations between certain indices of anxiety/depression and boredom proneness (Sommers & Vodanovich, 2000). In this line, Zuckerman (1979) states that people get more easily bored when they face uninteresting, repetitive, and monotonous situations or tasks; that is why individuals who cope successfully with boredom in organizations appear to experience better workplace healthiness (Game, 2007).

Other working conditions such as decision-making or *autonomy* have been oppositely linked to emotional exhaustion in senior teachers (Van Droogenbroeck et al., 2014); thus, no wonder that autonomy -in turn- seems to be negatively related to burnout among primary and middle secondary school teachers (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2009). In this vein, research brings together epidemiological evidence, but not conclusive, on the relationship between *shift work* and risk of burnout, major chronic conditions, cancer, and cardiovascular diseases -including metabolic syndrome (Wang et al., 2011); while *night work* appears to be linked to an increased risk of breast cancer (Wang et al., 2011). However, as key workplace variables, its inclusions in more comprehensive structural approaches turn rather scarce in teacher contemporary research.

Therefore, we test the subsequent hypotheses with reference to the chosen deteriorated organizational factors:

**H2:** *Teaching professionals are inclined to consider their health perception as poor on account of their elevated occupational level of stress (H2-1), their unfavorable work and family balance (H2-2), their excessive number of work assignments/overload (H2-3), their irregular amount of complex tasks (H2-4), their continual lack of motivation (H2-5), their significant accomplishment of monotonous tasks (H2-6), their restricted level of autonomy (H2-7), and their augmented participation in shift (H2-8) or night work (H2-9).*

### **2.3. Poor Job Satisfaction and Its Effects on Negative Health Self-Appreciation at Work**

Mortimer and Lorence (1989) define job satisfaction as a positive emotional state that comes from the individual's evaluation of work experience, with the potential to move to disapproving appraisal as personal evaluative judgment (Weiss, 2002).

This intimate assessment has been remarkably explored in service sector, with a noteworthy emphasis on healthcare workers and schoolteachers (Robbins & Judge, 2013). As stated by Pietarinen et al. (2013), this condition has been generally considered an organizational aspect closely associated to health, being utilized as accurate criterion to measure the degree to which teachers may or



may not enjoy or hate their posts.

Although the majority of schoolteachers finds its works rewarding and satisfying (Borg & Riding, 1991), a generous body of today research in this field focuses on how job satisfaction influences teachers' psychological health (Singh & Billingsley, 1996).

In this regard, studies seem to indicate that teachers in primary and secondary schools may suffer from emotional exhaustion (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2011) and burnout when lower levels of job satisfaction are experienced (Parker et al., 2012). Furthermore, poor satisfaction in teachers appears to be associated to an increased risk of suffering from low back pain (Bandpei et al., 2014), anxiety (Deci et al., 2001), reduced mental health (Nagai et al., 2007), posttraumatic stress, and psychiatric disorders (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2009).

These findings clearly explain why further examination of this mutual correlation reasonably turns crucial for the assessment of school educators' quality of life (Michaelowa, 2002); however, insufficiently explored and more inclusive approaches need to be taken under consideration, particularly those that may unitedly embrace the mediating effects of job dissatisfaction –as latent indirect influencer on teacher occupational healthiness- with regard to alternative working conditions.

In this sense, concerning employees from different sectors, Loh et al. (2010) argue that negative associations may be found from the relation between workplace bullying and job satisfaction since bullied workers will tend to identify job settings as progressively adverse and detrimental, expediting the affirmative association of this predicament to job dissatisfaction (Bowling & Beehr 2006), and escalating its consequences -from job dissatisfaction to some emotional or physical disorders- in teachers from primary to secondary schools (de Wet, 2010). Despite this assertion, Giorgi et al. (2015a) state -in an notable study among Italian workers relating to potential curvilinear relationship- that suffering from harassment may give way to detrimental effects on health regardless of subjects' job satisfaction due to divergences in cultural tolerance to bullying behaviors. Certainly, the association between workplace bullying and job satisfaction still arouses the interest for further research.

In connection with the foregoing, other organizational concepts are jointly coupled with job satisfaction and health in education research. **Occupational stress**, for instance, is affirmatively linked to job dissatisfaction and the surfacing of burnout, particularly when teachers get to assume disproportionate desk assignment and demands involving high responsibilities (van Droogenbroeck et al., 2014). Similarly, according to Nagai et al. (2007), degraded job satisfaction levels and shortage of time for **family and personal life** seem to considerably escalate the chances of experiencing mental exhaustion in elementary and junior high school Japanese teachers; while Smith

and Bourke (1992) confirm that **workload** and occupational satisfaction may lead to burnout syndrome among secondary teachers in public schools. In this vein, teachers can happen to feel dissatisfied at work if they perceive as demanding to tackle and achieve **complex tasks**; their positive adjustment to stressful requests, consequently, may restrain the appearance of burnout symptoms (Verešová & Malá 2012).

Other researchers, such as Leung and Lee (2006), claim that **motivation**, workplace satisfaction, and wellness in public schoolteachers may bear sound implications highly related to burnout, as certain social recognitions could positively lessen its deleterious repercussions on teacher health (Travers & Cooper, 1996).

On the other hand, decision-making and **autonomy** are variables closely allied; that is because letting schoolteachers to co-decide how working schedule is prearranged may stimulate occupational satisfaction, and hence hinder emotional exhaustion or burnout (van Droogenbroeck et al., 2014). As found by Sadeghi et al. (2013) in a sample of secondary teachers, the more a school milieu encourages professors' autonomy, the more they will enjoy satisfaction.

Finally, the theoretical corpus of occupational satisfaction and **monotony**, **shift** and **night work** has been limitedly examined in the field of teacher health.

Indeed, research in teacher discontent at schools becomes an imperative for many reasons. Job dissatisfaction constitutes a core feature for teaching stability, directly influencing teaching quality and attrition: nearly half of novice school teachers were leaving the profession within their first five years in the United States (Ingersoll & Smith, 2003), as the 10% of these professionals, who began teaching in public schools during 2007 or 2008, were no longer teaching in 2008–2009, escalating this figure to 12% in that country for the next two years (Kaiser, 2011).

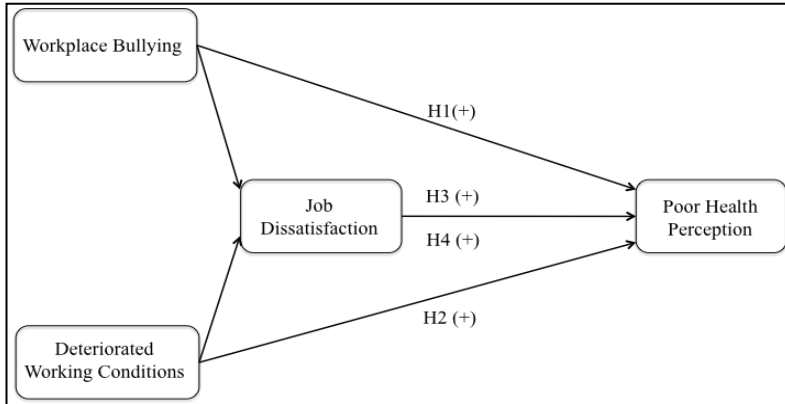
Grounded on this final basis, the hypotheses to be examined are:

**H3:** *Teaching professionals, exposed to workplace bullying behaviors and unsatisfied with their jobs, will tend to self-report poor health perception.*

**H4:** *Teaching professionals that label themselves as suffering from significant work stress (H4-1), disapproving actual work and family balance (H4-2), facing excessive burden/workload (H4-3), handling a higher amount of complex tasks (H4-4), experiencing depleted motivation (H4-5), dealing with monotonous tasks (H4-6), undergoing lack of autonomy (H4-7), participating more in shift (H4-8) or night work (H4-9); and additionally report reduced job satisfaction, are prone to bearing poor health perception.*

The following illustration, as research framework, helps elucidate the connection among this compendium of latent organizational occurrences and workplace wellness (see Figure 1).

**Figure 1.** Hypotheses of the research framework.



### 3. Methods

#### 3.1. Data Collection and Sample

The data utilized for this research is obtained from the 5th European Working Conditions Survey, which was conducted in 2010 by the *European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions* (Parent-Thirion et al., 2012). This survey -currently the largest one at Europe on working conditions, being expected the next one in 2016/2017- provides insight with regard to the working environment and employment situation of the 27 EU Member States, including Turkey, Croatia, Norway, Macedonia, Montenegro, Albania, and Kosovo. The target population under study embraces those individuals employed and residing in the countries being examined. The research comprises a multi-stage and stratified random sample with a number of interviews that exceeds the 43,000 subjects. Given the objective of this work, it is collected a sub-sample of 2,328 education employees that includes the International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO-08) sub-group 23: teaching professionals.

This occupational sub-major group is categorized into five minor groups; its denominations, codes, frequencies, and percentages obtained from the studied sample are depicted in Table 1.

The sub-group 23 gives the figure of teaching professionals (2,328 subjects) for the entire population, from which is obtained sub-samples of early childhood/primary (1048), secondary (650), vocational (102), and academic teachers (167). It is revealed as well the presence of “other teaching professionals” (361) as clustered collective. The total population unveils that 91.4% and 8.6% are from public and private sector respectively, while a 69.8% happens to be women and a 30.2% men. Most of the sample is comprised of early childhood/primary and secondary teachers with a 72.9%. The surveyed

subjects register an average age of 44.3 years for men and 42.9 for women; of whom 21.7%, 29.3%, and 49% happen to be novice (from 0 to 3 years of seniority), junior/pre-senior (from 4 to 10 years of seniority), and senior teaching professionals (more than 10 years of seniority) respectively.

**Table 1.** Occupational sub-group 23 (ISCO-08).

Minor Groups	Classification	Frequency	Percentage
Early Childhood and Primary School Teachers	234	1048	45%
Secondary Education Teachers	233	650	27.9%
Vocational Education Teachers	232	102	4.4%
University and Higher Education Teachers	231	167	7.2%
Other Teaching Professionals	235	361	15.5%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>2,328</b>	<b>100%</b>

Geographically speaking, and following the alphabetical list of subregions in the United Nations geoscheme for Europe (United Nations Statistics Division, 2013), 12.5% percent of the sample corresponds to teaching professionals who perform their service activity in Eastern European countries, while a 26.4%, 38.2% and 22.9% works in countries of the Northern, Southern, and Western Europe correspondingly.

Finally, in terms of professional background, the 0.2% of the teachers declares not having formal qualifications or just having completed primary education, the 8.7% state having finished secondary education, and the 91.1% confirm having completed studies in universities.

### 3.2. Measures

In the proposed model, the single *workplace bullying* feature (BUL) and the *deteriorated working conditions* (DWC) concept –which encapsulated the selected nine variables *occupational stress, work and family life balance, work overload, complex tasks, motivation, monotonous tasks, work pace control (autonomy), and shift/night work-* are considered as independent variable and construct respectively; while *job dissatisfaction* notion -formed by the constituents *dissatisfaction with working conditions, salary dissatisfaction, and promotional dissatisfaction-* is utilized as mediating construct. *Poor Health Perception* (PHP) construct embodies the dependable factor of this integral approach, which is grounded on two main ideas *occupational health/safety at risk* and *work impact on personal health*.

In obtaining this comprehensive proposal, respondents were asked to answer fifteen questions during the questionnaire completion, which are thoroughly summarized in Table 2.

**Table 2.** Variables and constructs examined.

<b>Examined Variables</b>	<b>Questions</b>	<b>Code</b>
<b>Work Health Perception</b>	<i>Do you think your health or safety is at risk because of your work?</i>	<b>PHP<sub>1</sub></b>
	<i>Does your work affect your health, or not?</i>	<b>PHP<sub>2</sub></b>
<b>Workplace Bullying</b>	<i>During the course of your work, have you been subjected to bullying?</i>	<b>BUL</b>
<b>Deteriorated Working Conditions</b>		
Occupational Stress	<i>Do you experience stress in your work?</i>	<b>DWC<sub>1</sub></b>
Work and Family Life Balance	<i>Do your working hours fit in with your family/ social commitments outside work?</i>	<b>DWC<sub>2</sub></b>
Work Overload	<i>How many times a month do you work more than 10 hours a day?</i>	<b>DWC<sub>3</sub></b>
Complex Tasks	<i>Does your main paid job involve complex tasks?</i>	<b>DWC<sub>4</sub></b>
Motivation	<i>Does your organization motivate you to give your best job performance?</i>	<b>DWC<sub>5</sub></b>
Monotonous Tasks	<i>Does your main paid job involve monotonous tasks?</i>	<b>DWC<sub>6</sub></b>
Work Pace Control -Autonomy-	<i>Is the pace of your work dependent on the direct control of your boss?</i>	<b>DWC<sub>7</sub></b>
Shift Work	<i>Do you work on shifts?</i>	<b>DWC<sub>8</sub></b>
Night Work	<i>How many times a month do you work at night, for at least 2 hours between 10.00 pm and 05.00 am?</i>	<b>DWC<sub>9</sub></b>
<b>Job Dissatisfaction</b>		
Dissatisfaction with working conditions	<i>Are you, not very, or not at all satisfied with your working conditions in your main paid job?</i>	<b>JD<sub>1</sub></b>
Salary dissatisfaction	<i>Are you well paid for the work you do?</i>	<b>JD<sub>2</sub></b>
Promotional dissatisfaction	<i>Does your job offer good prospects for career advancement?</i>	<b>JD<sub>3</sub></b>

### 3.3. Data Analysis

In order to test the research model and hypotheses, this study relies on the use of Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM), which is a variance-based structural equation modeling method. The PLS technique enables the simultaneous assessment of the liability and validity of the theoretical construct’s measurement (outer model), as well as the estimation of the relationships hypothesized between the distinct latent variables or constructs (inner model). PLS-SEM allows the revealing of complex systems in associations and causal relationships that could be otherwise tough to determine (Schubring et al., 2016). PLS-SEM is primarily utilized for exploratory analyses and prediction purposes (Ringle et al., 2012). The modeling technique underlying PLS uses “[...] latent variable scores as exact linear combination of the observed indicator variables. As a consequence, PLS-SEM is particularly useful when subsequent analyses employ these scores” (Hair et al., 2011, p. 143).

The PLS methodology is suitable for conducting studies within the social sciences research field due to the following reasons: (i) data sets tend to be small. Our data set (n= 2,328 cases) is relatively small; (ii) measurement scales are frequently poorly developed; (iii) the phenomena investigated are relatively new or in progress and theoretical frameworks lack from a solid development; (iv) data tend to be non-normally distributed; (v) there are plenty of ordinal and categorical data; (vi) the interest is certainly focused more on the prediction of the dependent variables than in the confirmation and fit of the model; and (vii) the research model happens to be considerably complex for the type of

relationships stated in the hypotheses (Roldán & Sánchez-Franco, 2012). The SmartPLS 2.0 software is here utilized to statistically test the measurement and structural models (Ringle et al., 2005), as the IBM-SPSS software is employed to perform the necessary collinearity tests on examined data.

## 4. Results

Assessment of the comprehensive PLS model comprises two stages: verifying the reliability/validity of the measurement model and weighing the significance of the structural model.

### 4.1. Measurement Model

Appraising reflective measurement models involves evaluating model reliability and validity. In this regard, results seem to indicate that the measurement model here proposed meets all the common requirements. First, the evaluation of formative measurement models at the indicator level comprises the test for potential multicollinearity between items, as well as the analysis of weights (Henseler et al., 2009), performing the pertinent collinearity assessment. The maximum values of variance inflation factor (VIF), registered for the observed variables in the formative construct DWC, are all respectively well placed within the theoretically acceptable threshold of 5 (Hair et al., 2011) (see Table 3). In this sense, weights provide information about how each formative dimension individually contributes to the configuration of DWC construct, consequently yielding a rank of dimensions (Henseler et al., 2009); the study results reveal that *Occupational Stress* (0.577), *Motivation* (0.513), and *Work and Family Life Balance* (0.325) represent the most significant dimensions in the composition of DWC construct; while *Night Work* (0.047), *Autonomy* (0.067), and *Work Overload* (0.119) register the lowest values respectively (see column “Weight” in Table 3). In accordance with its irrelevant value of influence obtained in preliminary tests, the variable *Monotonous Tasks* is excluded from this and further statistical analysis.

Second, reflective individual items behave reliably, as all standardized loadings mark digits greater than 0.7 (see these values in Table 3); consequently, individual item reliability happens to be considered as adequate (Carmines & Zeller, 1979). Third, all reflective constructs appear to meet the requirement of construct reliability since their composite reliabilities ( $\rho_c$ ) turn to be greater than 0.7 (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994); additionally, these latent variables reach convergent validity since their average variance extracted (AVE) surpasses the 0.5 level (Fornell & Larcker, 1981).

Finally, all variables seem to meet the requirements of discriminant validity; its confirmation comes from the comparison of the AVE square root versus the corresponding latent variable correlations: for satisfactory discriminant validity, the diagonal elements in the corresponding rows and columns, should be

significantly greater than the off-diagonal ones (Roldán & Sánchez-Franco, 2012), as pinpointed in Table 4.

**Table 3.** Measurement model.

Variables and Constructs	VIF	Weight	Loading	Composite	Average variance
				Reliability (CR)	Extracted (AVE)
<b>PHP</b> (Poor Health Perception)				0.8626	0.7583
<b>PHP</b> <sub>1</sub> : WH. Perception			0.867		
<b>PHP</b> <sub>2</sub> : WH. Perception			0.875		
<b>BUL</b> (Workplace Bullying)				1	1
<b>BUL</b> : Workplace Bullying			1		
<b>DWC</b> (Working Conditions)				N.A.	N.A.
<b>DWC</b> <sub>1</sub> : Occupational Stress	1.005	0.577			
<b>DWC</b> <sub>2</sub> : Work and Family Life Balance	1.004	0.325			
<b>DWC</b> <sub>3</sub> : Work Overload	1.011	0.119			
<b>DWC</b> <sub>4</sub> : Complex Tasks	1.003	0.124			
<b>DWC</b> <sub>5</sub> : Motivation	1.007	0.513			
<b>DWC</b> <sub>6</sub> : Monotonous Tasks	---	---			
<b>DWC</b> <sub>7</sub> : W. Pace Control - <i>Autonomy</i> -	1.007	0.067			
<b>DWC</b> <sub>8</sub> : Shift Work	1.008	0.122			
<b>DWC</b> <sub>9</sub> : Night Work	1.010	0.047			
<b>JD</b> (Job Dissatisfaction)				0.7336	0.5194
<b>JD</b> <sub>1</sub> : W.C. dissatisfaction			0.732		
<b>JD</b> <sub>2</sub> : Salary dissatisfaction			0.702		
<b>JD</b> <sub>3</sub> : Promotional dissatisfaction			0.641		
<b>N.A.: Not applicable.</b>					
<b>P &lt; 0.001 (based on <math>\chi^2(4999)</math>, two-tailed test)</b>					

**Table 4.** Discriminant validity.

	<b>BUL</b>	<b>JD</b>	<b>PHP</b>	<b>DWC</b>
<b>BUL</b>	<b>1</b>	0.047	0.074	0
<b>JD</b>	0	<b>0.721</b>	0.190	0
<b>PHP</b>	0	0	<b>0.871</b>	0
<b>DWC</b>	0	0.389	0.273	<b>N.A.</b>

Note: Diagonal elements (bold) are the square root of variance shared between the constructs and their measures (AVE). Off-diagonal elements are the correlations among constructs. For discriminant validity, the diagonal elements should be larger than the off-diagonal elements. Note: N.A.: not applicable.

Additional statistical steps are taken to obtain a hierarchical ranking. For the variables that comprise DWC construct, sorted this time according to its individual and direct statistical predictive power on both poor health perception (PHP) and job dissatisfaction (JD), Tables 5A and 5B display those constituents with the most highly impact on PHP, which are *Occupational Stress* (14.546), *Complex Tasks* (7.308), and *Work Overload* (6.239); as *Shift Work* (0.418), *Motivation* (0.745), and *Night Work* (2.633) register the lowest impact ratios respectively. Meanwhile, the highest impact ratios obtained in relation to JD construct correspond to the variables *Motivation* (15.126), *Occupational Stress* (12.062), and *Work and Family Life Balance* (6.934), as *Autonomy* (0.419), *Night*

*Work* (2.210), and *Work Overload* (2.706) reveal the smallest impact figures.

**Table 5A.** Individual/direct statistical predictive power of DWC on PHP hierarchical ranking.

<b>Deteriorated Working Conditions (DWC)</b> Variables impact ranking on PHP	<b>Relationship</b>	<b>T Statistics</b> Predictive power ranking on PHP
<b>DWC<sub>1</sub></b> : Occupational Stress	<b>DWC<sub>1</sub>→PHP</b>	<b>14.546</b>
<b>DWC<sub>4</sub></b> : Complex Tasks	<b>DWC<sub>4</sub>→PHP</b>	7.308
<b>DWC<sub>3</sub></b> : Work Overload	<b>DWC<sub>3</sub>→PHP</b>	6.239
<b>DWC<sub>2</sub></b> : Work and Family Life Balance	<b>DWC<sub>2</sub>→PHP</b>	5.400
<b>DWC<sub>7</sub></b> : W. Pace Control - <i>Autonomy</i> -	<b>DWC<sub>7</sub>→PHP</b>	4.999
<b>DWC<sub>9</sub></b> : Night Work	<b>DWC<sub>9</sub>→PHP</b>	2.633
<b>DWC<sub>5</sub></b> : Motivation	<b>DWC<sub>5</sub>→PHP</b>	0.745
<b>DWC<sub>8</sub></b> : Shift Work	<b>DWC<sub>8</sub>→PHP</b>	0.418

**Table 5B.** Individual/direct statistical predictive power of DWC on JD hierarchical ranking.

<b>Deteriorated Working Conditions (DWC)</b> Variables impact ranking on JD	<b>Relationship</b>	<b>T Statistics</b> Predictive power ranking on JD
<b>DWC<sub>5</sub></b> : Motivation	<b>DWC<sub>5</sub>→JD</b>	<b>15.126</b>
<b>DWC<sub>1</sub></b> : Occupational Stress	<b>DWC<sub>1</sub>→JD</b>	12.062
<b>DWC<sub>2</sub></b> : Work and Family Life Balance	<b>DWC<sub>2</sub>→JD</b>	6.934
<b>DWC<sub>4</sub></b> : Complex Tasks	<b>DWC<sub>4</sub>→JD</b>	3.055
<b>DWC<sub>8</sub></b> : Shift Work	<b>DWC<sub>8</sub>→JD</b>	2.707
<b>DWC<sub>3</sub></b> : Work Overload	<b>DWC<sub>3</sub>→JD</b>	2.706
<b>DWC<sub>9</sub></b> : Night Work	<b>DWC<sub>9</sub>→JD</b>	2.210
<b>DWC<sub>7</sub></b> : W. Pace Control - <i>Autonomy</i> -	<b>DWC<sub>7</sub>→JD</b>	0.419

## 4.2. Structural Model

Consistent with Hair et al. (2011), a bootstrapping technique (5000 re-samples) is utilized in order to generate standard errors and t-statistics, which enable the assessment of the statistical significance for the links contemplated in the models. In Table 6 the coefficient of determination ( $R^2$ ) is assumed as primary criterion for the explained variance, which is shown in the dependent constructs, as path coefficients are depicted in the different considered models. These results confirm that the structural model has acceptable predictive relevance for the two endogenous constructs: job dissatisfaction (JD) and poor help perception (PHP). Table 6 summarizes the pertinent liaisons and its test values that explicitly explain and validate the two considered models for the research.

The first model only includes the direct links  $BUL \rightarrow PHP$  and  $DWC \rightarrow PHP$ , reproducing its test values as straight-through influences. The Model 2, for its part, takes account of both direct and indirect links that relate workplace



bullying and deteriorated working conditions with JD (BUL→JD/JD→PHP; DWC→JD/→JD→PHP), employing the latter as a mediator construct.

**Table 6.** Structural model results.

Relationship	Path coefficient	Path coefficient	Support
	Model 1	Model 2	
	<b>R<sup>2</sup> PHP = 0.157</b>	<b>R<sup>2</sup> JD = 0.158</b> <b>R<sup>2</sup> PHP = 0.166</b>	
<b>H1: BUL→ PHP</b>	0.131*** (3.287)	0.131*** (3.361)	Yes
<b>H2: DWC→ PHP</b>	0.388*** (20.721)	0.358*** (15.931)	Yes
<b>H3: BUL→ JD</b>		0.101* (2.102)	Yes
<b>JD→ PHP</b>		0.305*** (8.355)	Yes
<b>H4: DWC→ JD</b>		0.395*** (17.439)	Yes
<b>JD→ PHP</b>		0.305 ***(8.355)	Yes

Notes: t values in parentheses:\*\*\* p < 0.001; \*\* p < 0.01; \* p < 0.05; ns: not significant -based on (4999), one-tailed test- t (0.05, 4999) = 1.645; T (0.01, 4999) = 2.327; t (0.001, 4999) = 3.092.

Bootstrapping (5000 resamples) statistical procedure provides the t-values that allow the evaluation for the statistical significance of relations (Roldán & Sánchez-Franco, 2012). According to the test values obtained from the research data, all the hypotheses lastly considered for the primary proposed model seem to provide enough significance (H1/H2).

Concurrently, as recommended by Preacher and Hayes (2008), indirect effects are quantified and contrasted with the mediator construct (JD), facilitating the verification of mediation hypotheses H3/H4 (Taylor et al., 2008) –see Table 7. Additionally, following Williams and MacKinnon (2008) statistical method, we use the bootstrapping technique to test the latent mediation effect.

In this line, Chin (2010) recommends a two-steps procedure to evaluate indirect effects on PLS. The first step is mainly based on three actions: utilizing the specific model in question -including both direct and indirect paths-, performing N-bootstrap resampling, and finally multiplying the direct paths that configure the indirect one under evaluation. The second step relies on estimating the significance and size of the indirect effect in relation to the total effect through the assessment of the *Variance Accounted For* (VAF). Thus, it is possible to determine, via the mediator variable  $VAF=(b1*c)/(b1*c+a1)$ , the extent to which the variance of the dependent variable results indirectly reasonable.

In this vein, VAF values under 20% imply both that the direct effect is very strong and that there is no mediation; conversely, values among 20% and 80% reveal the existence of partial mediation. Consequently, when VAF values reach over 80%, the existence of a strong mediating effect happens to be confirmed (Hair et al., 2014); in this case, both hypotheses H3 and H4 fully mediate the examined direct associations since VAF values clearly surpass the critical rate of

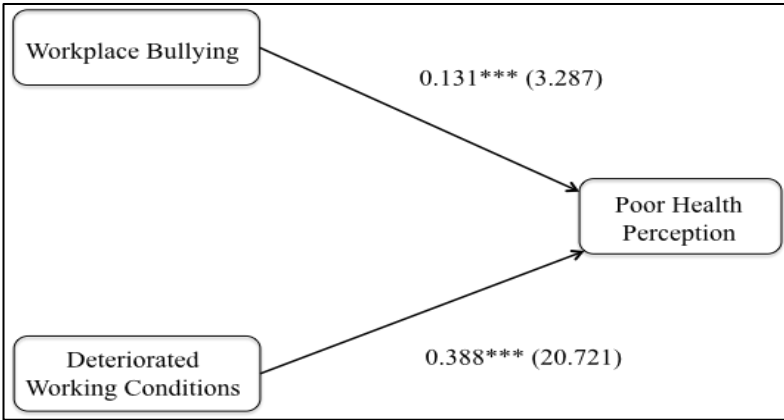
80% -see Table 7.

By way of a summary, Figure 2A illustrates how both BUL-PHP and DWC-PHP direct links similarly behave with significance, while Figure 2B portrays the final model once introduced the mediating variable and values.

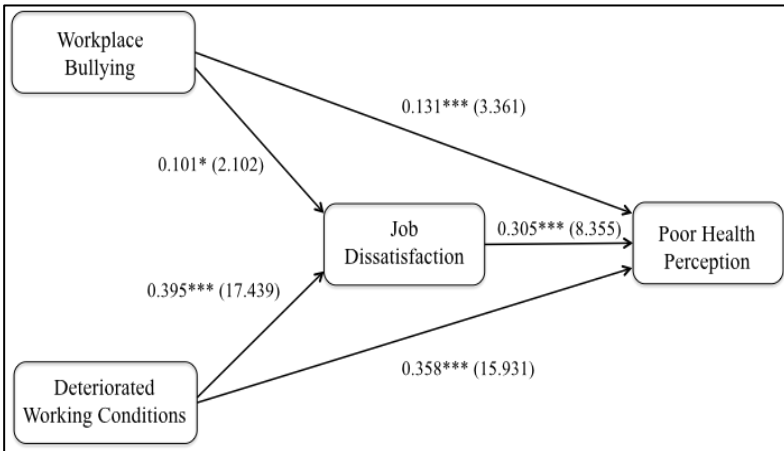
**Table 7.** Indirect effect assessment (VAF).

	VAF	VAF %	Mediation
<b>H3</b>	0.84	96%	Strong mediation
<b>H4</b>	0.90	83%	Strong mediation

**Figure 2A.** Model with direct effects (Model 1).



**Figure 2B.** Model with indirect effects (Model 2).



## 5. Discussion

The following paragraphs reason about the obtained results on the basis of those pivotal research conceptions previously explored in the literary corpus related to self-reported signs of detrimental health in teaching professionals. Adopting this individual perspective, this work aims to examine and help understand how workplace bullying, a collection of predominant organizational factors, and job dissatisfaction -as a mediating construct- might conjointly exert direct and indirect influence on the materialization of negative health perception among teachers in organizational setting across European countries. This work might shed light on the characterization of risk profile for teachers, with potential externalization of poor health perception, according to his/her predictable reactions to certain demanding and scarcely examined stimuli at work; and contribute to the design and implementation of preventive wellness guidelines and policies by those responsible for the coordination of human resource in learning centers.

The structural approach here utilized confirms the four hypotheses initially proposed. First, the model exhibits a strong predictive connection between self-reported bullying and detrimental health perception in teachers - hypothesis **H1**-, which makes the exposition to episodes of occupational harassment an evident distress signal for future emotional and physical complications in victims. On this finding, and being consistent with those obtained by Kivimäki et al. (2003) and Rugulies et al. (2012) in hospital and eldercare employees, it is worth emphasizing that owing to PLS-SEM method, workplace bullying here acts as a predictive predecessor of health deterioration; in essence, its early detection might substantially facilitate the implementation of internal precautionary actions in educational organizations.

Undoubtedly, despite de above, commissioning preventive measures to effectively tackle aggressive behaviors toward teachers represents not only facing a tremendous contemporary challenge but also dealing with bullying particularities in a novel additional uncertainty of today teaching professionals management; indeed, valuable evidences have recently surged on anti-bullying policy and on other issues highly related to concomitant questions such as poorly implemented human resource practices (Woodrow & Guest, 2014), trust in handling bullying complaints efficiently (Harrington et al., 2012), destructive leadership and high levels of team conflicts (Gardner et al., 2016), influence of managerial design/procedure on bullying behaviors (Hurley et al., 2016), and incorporation of gender mainstreaming in planned managerial actions -given the high percentage of women in professional education- (Heikkilä, 2013).

Secondly, findings on the formative dimensions of deteriorated working conditions construct seem to corroborate that teachers might tend to grade their own health perception as negative mostly under the premise of having experienced intense stress levels, recurrent absence of motivation, and

inadequate work-family balance; while involvement in complex tasks, shift work, copious amount of assignments, limited grades of autonomy, and further inclusion in night work do not seem to prove a significant relevance - hypothesis **H2**-. Furthermore, when the individual influence on health is modeled, occupational stress, complex tasks, and work overload emerge as the utmost powerful conditions; others such as work-family balance, autonomy, night work, and motivation denote moderated significance, while performing monotonous tasks happens to behave irrelevantly.

Consistent with these relations, Kokkinos (2007) posits that occupational stress, on account of interpersonal relations at primary school teachers, behaves as an overpowering predictor for emotional exhaustion; as Fernet et al. (2012), Cinamon et al. (2007), and Hakanen, et al. (2006) correspondingly contend that unfavorable differences in motivational factors, salient stressors of work-family balance, and work overload might foretell burnout and other emotional depletions appearance in public elementary and high school teachers.

Third, findings on job dissatisfaction as mediating construct appear to evidence a higher probability of health deterioration when teachers report having been exposed to bullying episodes -hypothesis **H3**-; particularly, personal dissatisfaction with working conditions, salary, and promotion result intrinsically related to bullying by mediating and hardening its effects on teachers' health impairment. In a similar result, albeit in a multisectoral sample, Arenas et al. (2015) suggest that job satisfaction as mediating component might positive or negatively mediates the predictive relation between occupational bullying and psychological health, which particular tolerance could depend on country idiosyncrasy. Allying both composed concepts could be helpful to impinge upon human resource management practices that might address these concrete fields of satisfaction, cushioning consequently the latent effects of mistreatment at work. These latent associations might unfold a page for promising investigation in human resource managerial solutions at schools.

Finally, the association of both deteriorated working conditions and job dissatisfaction constructs seemingly reveals that displeased teachers who additionally report suffering from intense stress, inadequate work-family balance, copious amount of assignments, unusual involvement in complex tasks, recurrent absence of motivation, limited grades of autonomy, and further inclusion in shift or night work, are more predisposed to perceive health deterioration; while performing monotonous tasks behaves irrelevant - hypothesis **H4**. Furthermore, motivation, stress, and work-family balance represent the most significant variables with positive predictive power on dissatisfaction; as autonomy, night work, and work overload hold the lowest ratios respectively.

Focused on this mediating effect, it seems that both working conditions and occupational health tend to exhibit correlations when job satisfaction declines in

teachers; this clarifying assertion sheds light on latent positive associations of indirect path from specific working conditions to occupational health through job satisfaction, and reinforce the need for close and pertinent surveillance of school environment for potential tuning of educators' job contentment. However, owing to the scarcity of studies addressing this specific role of job satisfaction intermediation on teacher management, further research should be conducted on this domain.

Furthermore, future explorations on this subject could be oriented as well to the examination of additional environmental factors that may jointly help elaborate organizational policies to better working conditions and infrastructures in learning settings, fostering appropriate surroundings for school mentors (Sadeghi et al., 2013). The implementation of these measures may similarly involve other managerial actions such as lessening teacher-student proportion, adjusting class sizes, and reframing teaching practices, among many others (e.g., Jin et al., 2008).

Additionally, and continuing the line of findings, further research may derive from both the delimitation of teaching professionals' subcategories –even by country and sector-, and the utilization of other ways to collect and obtain subject's information -such as the Negative Acts Questionnaire Revised (Giorgi et al., 2011; Vukelić et al., 2015)- in order to assess potential variations in constructs responses and health perception.

## **6. Conclusions**

From a utilitarian perspective, the research findings referenced herein encapsulate promising implications not only for teaching professionals but also for learning centers and educational institutions that pursue the continual improvement of educators' health and organizational performance. Its results could be implemented within organizations via dynamic and integral policies primarily leaded by the responsible principals/general directors and aimed at facilitating healthy and harmonious social relationships among teaching professionals, students, administrative staff, and other members of the organization.

In the approach and application of these measures on teaching professionals, those responsible could ground their strategies in certain guiding principles prevailing in educational settings, such as fairly limiting job demands, properly increasing job resources, managing conflict through problem solving (Leon-Perez et al., 2015), enhancing social resources of school environment -such as opportunities to receive professional recognition or social support (Kokkinos, 2007; Stoeber & Rennert, 2008).

Furthermore, upgrading teaching professionals' interests, adjusting variables -presumably connected to job dissatisfaction, adverse working conditions, and

teaching professionals' health (especially of those susceptible of being bullied)-, nurturing group cohesion/ organizational climate (Giorgi et al., 2013), and fostering organizational culture may increase organizational health promotion and a more proactive teaching professionals' implication at schools (Hosseinkhanzadeh et al., 2013).

The execution of these potential solutions may bring benefits to educational organizations in enhancing teaching professionals' welfare and school management, as well as contributing to a higher quality of education (Papanastasiou & Zembylas, 2005). Its effects could have a concurrent impact on parents, local school boards, and even regional or national governments as well (Papanastasiou & Zembylas, 2005).

Despite the relevance of the study findings, they should be pondered with cautions before assuming conclusive stances on teaching professionals, particularly for its inherent methodological limitations regarding sample and self-reporting method here utilized to gather information (Podsakoff & Organ, 1986). Firstly, sample data give account of health perceptions feebly influenced by the effects of economic crisis in Europe, which according to Giorgi et al., (2015b) appear as a relevant construct for studying psychological distress and job dissatisfaction in today organizations. Additionally, although most of the subjects are public early childhood/primary and secondary teachers, the spectrum of teaching professionals across countries and sectors (ISCO-08 classification) makes results difficult to generalize since factors that affect poor health perception may be different among subcategories.

Secondly, measuring by self-reporting tools might add certain risk related to common method variance, driving researcher to presume a resultant bias for the fundamental variables (Podsakoff et al., 2003). Thirdly, by making use of self-labeling categorization, certain variables -such as workplace bullying- are determined with a non-consensual definition in scientific terms, affording the overestimation risk of prevalence when subjects report events that would not meet the specific criteria established for the study of the phenomenon (Nielsen et al., 2010). Fourthly, another similar concern turns to be social desirability; in the comprehension of the examined variables, prevalence value could surpass the registered rates as some of the respondents usually take longer than the time needed to recognize their destructive exposure to aggression (Baillien et al., 2011). Fifthly, the identified interconnections among the variables here examined should be considered with prudence since the implemented data are not experimental but cross-sectional (Hetland et al., 2011). Finally, this research exposes just the fractional teaching professional's perception of the experience on account of his/her merely subjective criterion.

## References

- Agervold, M. (2007). Bullying at work: A discussion of definitions and prevalence, based on an empirical study. *Scandinavian Journal of Psychology*, 48(2), 161-172.
- Alliance for Excellent Education. (2005, August). *Teacher attrition: A costly loss to the nation and to the states*. Issue Brief. Washington, DC: AEE.
- Aloe, A. M., Shisler, S. M., Norris, B. D., Nickerson, A. B., & Rinker, T. W. (2014). A multivariate meta-analysis of student misbehavior and teacher burnout. *Educational Research Review*, 12, 30-44.
- Arenas, A., Giorgi, G., Montani, F., Mancuso, S., Perez, J. F., Mucci, N., & Arcangeli, G. (2015). Workplace bullying in a sample of Italian and Spanish employees and its relationship with job satisfaction, and psychological well-being. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 6, 1912.
- Badri, M. A., Mohaidat, J., Ferrandino, V., & El Mourad, T. (2013). The social cognitive model of job satisfaction among teachers: Testing and validation. *International Journal of Educational Research*, 57, 12-24.
- Baillien, E., De Cuyper, N., & De Witte, H. (2011). Job autonomy and workload as antecedents of workplace bullying: A two-wave test of Karasek's Job Demand Control Model for targets and perpetrators. *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology*, 84(1), 191-208.
- Bandpei, M. A. M., Ehsani, F., Behtash, H., & Ghanipour, M. (2014). Occupational low back pain in primary and high school teachers: Prevalence and associated factors. *Journal of Manipulative and Physiological Therapeutics*, 37(9), 702-708.
- Blase, J., & Blase, J. (2002). The dark side of leadership: Teacher perspectives of principal mistreatment. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, 38(5), 671-727.
- Blase, J., & Blase, J. (2007). School principal mistreatment of teachers: Teachers' perspectives on emotional abuse. *Journal of Emotional Abuse*, 4 (3-4), 151-175.
- Borg, M. G., & Riding, R. J. (1991). Towards a model for the determinants of occupational stress among schoolteachers. *European Journal of Psychology of Education*, 6(4), 355-373.
- Bowers, T. (2001). Teacher absenteeism and ill health retirement: A review. *Cambridge Journal of Education*, 31(2), 135-157.
- Bowling, N. A., & Beehr, T. A. (2006). Workplace harassment from the victim's perspective: A theoretical model and meta-analysis. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 91(5), 998-1012.
- Carmines, E. G., & Zeller, R. A. (1979). *Reliability and validity assessment*. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.

- Chaplain, R. P. (2008). Stress and psychological distress among trainee secondary teachers in England. *Educational Psychology*, 28(2), 195-209.
- Chen, J. K., & Astor, R. A. (2008). Students' reports of violence against teachers in Taiwanese schools. *Journal of School Violence*, 8(1), 2-17.
- Chin, W. W. (2010). How to write up and report PLS analyses. In V.E. Vinzi, W.W. Chin, J. Henseler, & H. Wang (Eds.), *Handbook of partial least squares: Concepts, methods and applications in marketing and related fields* (pp. 655-690). Berlin: Springer.
- Cinamon, R. G., Rich, Y. & Westman, M. (2007). Teachers' Occupation-Specific Work-Family Conflict. *The Career Development Quarterly*, 55 (3), 249–261.
- Danna, K., & Griffin, R. W. (1999). Health and well-being in the workplace: A review and synthesis of the literature. *Journal of Management*, 25(3), 357-384.
- De Wet, C. (2010). The reasons for and the impact of principal-on-teacher bullying on the victims' private and professional lives. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 26(7), 1450-1459.
- Deci, E. L., Ryan, R. M., Gagné, M., Leone, D. R., Usunov, J., & Kornazheva, B. P. (2001). Need satisfaction, motivation, and well-being in the work organizations of a former Eastern bloc country: A cross-cultural study of self-determination. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 27(8), 930–942.
- Demerouti, E., Bakker, A. B., Nachreiner, F., & Schaufeli, W. B. (2001). The job demands-resources model of burnout. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 86(3), 499-512.
- Einarsen, S., Hoel, H., Zapf, D., & Cooper, C. (2003). The concept of bullying at work: The European tradition. In S. Einarsen, H. Hoel, D. Zapf, & C.L. Cooper (Eds.), *Bullying and emotional abuse in the workplace: International perspectives in research and practice* (pp. 3–30). London: Taylor & Francis.
- Einarsen, S., & Skogstad, A. (1996). Bullying at work: Epidemiological findings in public and private organizations. *European Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology*, 5(2), 185-201.
- Ervasti, J., Kivimäki, M., Puusniekka, R., Luopa, P., Pentti, J., Suominen, S., Vahtera, J., & Virtanen, M. (2012). Association of pupil vandalism, bullying and truancy with teachers' absence due to illness: A multilevel analysis. *Journal of School Psychology*, 50(3), 347-361.
- Fadda, S., Giorgi, G., Benitez Muñoz, J. L., Justicia Justicia, F., & Solinas, G. (2015). Do negative acts in Italian academia have a quadratic relationship with determinants of health? *International Journal of Educational Management*, 29(2), 158-166.
- Farber, B. A. (1991). *Crisis in education: Stress and burnout in the American teacher*. San



Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Fernet, C., Guay, F., Senécal, C., & Austin, S. (2012). Predicting intraindividual changes in teacher burnout: The role of perceived school environment and motivational factors. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 28(4), 514-525.

Fornell, C., & Larcker, D. F. (1981). Evaluating structural equation models with unobservable variables and measurement error. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 18(1), 39-50.

Game, A. M. (2007). Workplace boredom coping: Health, safety, and HR implications. *Personnel Review*, 36(5), 701–721.

Gardner, D., O'Driscoll, M., Cooper-Thomas, H. D., Roche, M., Bentley, T., Catley, B., Teo, S.T.T., & Trenberth, L. (2016). Predictors of workplace bullying and cyber-bullying in New Zealand. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 13(5), 448.

Gemzøe Mikkelsen, E., & Einarsen, S. (2002). Relationships between exposure to bullying at work and psychological and psychosomatic health complaints: The role of state negative affectivity and generalized self-efficacy. *Scandinavian Journal of Psychology*, 43(5), 397-405.

Giorgi, G. (2012). Workplace bullying in academia creates a negative work environment. An Italian study. *Employee Responsibilities and Rights Journal*, 24(4), 261-275.

Giorgi, G., Ando, M., Arenas, A., Shoss, M. K., & Leon-Perez, J. M. (2013). Exploring personal and organizational determinants of workplace bullying and its prevalence in a Japanese sample. *Psychology of Violence*, 3(2), 185.

Giorgi, G., Arenas, A., & Leon-Perez, J. M. (2011). An operative measure of workplace bullying: The negative acts questionnaire across Italian companies. *Industrial Health*, 49(6), 686-695.

Giorgi, G., Leon-Perez, J. M., & Arenas, A. (2015a). Are bullying behaviors tolerated in some cultures? Evidence for a curvilinear relationship between workplace bullying and job satisfaction among Italian workers. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 131(1), 227-237.

Giorgi, G., Shoss, M. K., & Leon-Perez, J. M. (2015b). Going beyond workplace stressors: Economic crisis and perceived employability in relation to psychological distress and job dissatisfaction. *International Journal of Stress Management*, 22(2), 137-158.

Girdano, D.A., Everly, G.S., & Dusek, D.E. (1993). *Controlling stress and tension: A holistic approach*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.

Greenhaus, J. H., Collins, K. M., & Shaw, J. D. (2003). The relation between work–family balance and quality of life. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 63(3), 510-

531.

Hair, J. F., Ringle, C. M., & Sarstedt, M. (2011). PLS-SEM: Indeed a silver bullet. *Journal of Marketing Theory and Practice*, 19(2), 139-152.

Hair, J.F., Sarstedt, M., Hopkins, L., & Kuppelwieser, V.G. (2014). Partial least squares structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM): An emerging tool in business research. *European Business Review*, 26(2), 106-121.

Hakanen, J. J., Bakker, A. B., & Schaufeli, W. B. (2006). Burnout and work engagement among teachers. *Journal of School Psychology*, 43, 495-513.

Hallberg, L. R., & Strandmark, M. K. (2006). Health consequences of workplace bullying: Experiences from the perspective of employees in the public service sector. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies on Health and Well-being*, 1(2), 109-119.

Hansen, Å. M., Høgh, A., & Persson, R. (2011). Frequency of bullying at work, physiological response, and mental health. *Journal of Psychosomatic Research*, 70(1), 19-27.

Harrington, S., Rayner, C., & Warren, S. (2012). Too hot to handle? Trust and human resource practitioners' implementation of anti-bullying policy. *Human Resource Management Journal*, 22(4), 392-408.

Haynes, M., Maddock, A., & Goldrick, M. (2014). *On the path to equity: Improving the effectiveness of beginning teachers*. Washington, DC: Alliance for Excellent Education (Report).

Heikkilä, M. (2013). Challenges and areas of interest when developing gender mainstreaming teaching. *He Kupu, The Word*, 3(3), 75-88.

Henseler, J., Ringle, C. M., & Sinkovics, R. R. (2009). The use of partial least squares path modeling in international marketing. In R. R. Sinkovics & P. N. Ghauri (Eds.), *New Challenges to International Marketing (Advances in International Marketing, Volume 20)* (pp. 277-319). Bingley, U.K: Emerald Group Publishing Limited.

Hetland, H., Hetland, J., Schou Andreassen, C., Pallesen, S., & Notelaers, G. (2011). Leadership and fulfillment of the three basic psychological needs at work. *Career Development International*, 16(5), 507-523.

Hoel, H., Einarsen, S., & Cooper, C. (2003). Organisational effects of bullying. In S. Einarsen, H. Hoel, D. Zapf, & C. Cooper (Eds.), *Bullying and emotional abuse in the workplace: International perspectives in research and practice* (pp. 145-161) London: Taylor & Francis.

Hosseinkhanzadeh, A. A., Hosseinkhanzadeh, A., & Yeganeh, T. (2013). Investigate relationship between Job satisfaction and organizational culture among teachers. *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 84, 832-836.

- Hurley, J., Hutchinson, M., Bradbury, J., & Browne, G. (2016) Nexus between preventive policy inadequacies, workplace bullying, and mental health: Qualitative findings from the experiences of Australian public sector employees. *International Journal of Mental Health Nursing*, 25(1), 12–18.
- ILO (2008), *International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO)*, available at: [www.ilo.org/public/english/bureau/stat/isco/index.htm](http://www.ilo.org/public/english/bureau/stat/isco/index.htm) (accessed 11 Mach 2015).
- Ingersoll, R. M., & Smith, T. M. (2003). The wrong solution to the teacher shortage. *Educational leadership*, 60(8), 30-33.
- Jin, P., Yeung, A. S., Tang, T. O., & Low, R. (2008). Identifying teachers at risk in Hong Kong: Psychosomatic symptoms and sources of stress. *Journal of Psychosomatic Research*, 65(4), 357-362.
- Johnson, S., Cooper, C., Cartwright, S., Donald, I., Taylor, P., & Millet, C. (2005). The experience of work-related stress across occupations. *Journal of Managerial Psychology*, 20(2), 178-187.
- Kääriä, S., Laaksonen, M., Rahkonen, O., Lahelma, E., & Leino-Arjas, P. (2012). Risk factors of chronic neck pain: A prospective study among middle-aged employees. *European Journal of Pain*, 16(6), 911-920.
- Kaiser, A. (2011). Beginning teacher attrition and mobility: *Results from the first through third waves of the 2007-08 beginning teacher longitudinal study* (NCES 2011-308). U.S. Department of Education. Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics. Retrieved from <http://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch>.
- Kauppi, T., & Pörhölä, M. (2012). Teachers bullied by students: Forms of bullying and perpetrator characteristics. *Violence and Victims*, 27(3), 396-413.
- Kyriacou, C., & Sutcliffe, J. (1978). Teacher stress: Prevalence, sources, and symptoms. *British Journal of Educational Psychology*, 48(2), 159-167.
- Kivimäki, M., Elovainio, M., & Vahtera, J. (2000). Workplace bullying and sickness absence in hospital staff. *Occupational and Environmental Medicine*, 57(10), 656-660.
- Kivimäki, M., Virtanen, M., Vartia, M., Elovainio, M., Vahtera, J., & Keltikangas-Järvinen, L. (2003). Workplace bullying and the risk of cardiovascular disease and depression. *Occupational and Environmental Medicine*, 60(10), 779-783.
- Kokkinos, C. M. (2007). Job stressors, personality and burnout in primary school teachers. *British Journal of Educational Psychology*, 77(1), 229-243.
- Kovess-Masféty, V., Sevilla-Dedieu, C., Rios-Seidel, C., Nerrière, E., & Chan Chee, C. (2006). Do teachers have more health problems? Results from a French cross-sectional survey. *BMC Public Health*, 6, 101.

- Kyriacou, C. (1987). Teacher stress and burnout: An international review. *Educational Research*, 29(2), 146–152.
- Lee, D. (2002). Gendered workplace bullying in the restructured UK civil service. *Personnel Review*, 31(2), 205-227.
- Lee, M., Goodman, C., Dandapani, N., & Kekahio, W. (2015). *Review of international research on factors underlying teacher absenteeism (REL 2015–087)*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance, Regional Educational Laboratory Pacific.
- Leon-Perez, J. M., Medina, F. J., Arenas, A., & Munduate, L. (2015). The relationship between interpersonal conflict and workplace bullying. *Journal of Managerial Psychology*, 30(3), 250-263.
- León Rubio, J., Cantero, F., & León Pérez, J. (2011). Working conditions and differences in the role that self-efficacy plays in the burnout perceived by University staff. *Annals of Psychology*, 27(2), 518-526.
- Leung, D.Y.P., & Lee, W.W.S. (2006). Predicting intention to quit among Chinese teachers: Differential predictability of the components of burnout. *Anxiety, Stress, and Coping*, 19(2), 129-141.
- Lindqvist, P., & Nordäng, U. K. (2006). Who dares to disconnect in the age of uncertainty? Teachers' recesses and 'off-the-clock' work. *Teachers and Teaching: Theory and Practice*, 12(6), 623-637.
- Locke, E. A. (1976). The nature and causes of job satisfaction. In M. Dunette (Ed.), *Handbook of industrial and organizational psychology* (pp. 1297-1350). Chicago: Rand McNally.
- Loh, J.M.I., Restubog, S. L. D., & Zagenczyk, T. J. (2010). Consequences of workplace bullying on employee identification and satisfaction among Australians and Singaporeans. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, 41, 236–252.
- Loukidou, L., Loan-Clarke, J., & Daniels, K. (2009). Boredom in the workplace: More than monotonous tasks. *International Journal of Management Reviews*, 11(4), 381-405.
- Masari, G. A., Muntele, D., & Curelaru, V. (2013). Motivation, work-stress and somatic symptoms of Romanian preschool and primary school teachers. *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 84, 332-335.
- Maslach, C., & Jackson, S. E. (1981). The measurement of experienced burnout. *Journal of Occupational Behaviour*, 2, 99–113.
- McCormick, J., & Barnett, K. (2011). Teachers' attributions for stress and their relationships with burnout. *International Journal of Educational Management*, 25(3), 278-293.

- Macdonald, D. (1999). Teacher attrition: A review of literature. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 15(8), 835-848.
- McEwen, B. S. (1998). Protective and damaging effects of stress mediators. *New England Journal of Medicine*, 338(3), 171-179.
- Michaelowa, K. (2002). *Teacher job satisfaction, student achievement, and cost of primary education in Francophone Sub-Saharan Africa. HWWA Discussion Paper*, 188. Hamburg, Germany: Hamburg Institute of International Economics.
- Mortimer, J. T., & Lorence, J. (1989). Satisfaction and involvement: Disentangling a deceptively simple relationship. *Social Psychology Quarterly*, 52(4), 249-265.
- Nagai, M., Tsuchiya, K. J., Touloupoulou, T., & Takei, N. (2007). Poor mental health associated with job dissatisfaction among school teachers in Japan. *Journal of Occupational Health*, 49(6), 515-522.
- Niedl, K. (1996). Mobbing and well-being: Economic and personnel development implications. *European Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology*, 5(2), 239-249.
- Nielsen, M. B., Matthiesen, S. B., & Einarsen, S. (2010). The impact of methodological moderators on prevalence rates of workplace bullying: A meta-analysis. *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology*, 83(4), 955-979.
- Nielsen, M. B., Tangen, T., Idsoe, T., Matthiesen, S. B., & Magerøy, N. (2015). Post-traumatic stress disorder as a consequence of bullying at work and at school. A literature review and meta-analysis. *Aggression and Violent Behavior*, 21, 17-24.
- Nixon, A. E., Mazzola, J. J., Bauer, J., Krueger, J. R., & Spector, P. E. (2011). Can work make you sick? A meta-analysis of the relationships between job stressors and physical symptoms. *Work & Stress*, 25 (1), 1-22.
- Nunnally, J. C., & Bernstein, I. H. (1994). *Psychometric theory* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.). New York: McGraw Hill.
- Ortega, A., Høgh, A., Pejtersen, J. H., & Olsen, O. (2009). Prevalence of workplace bullying and risk groups: A representative population study. *International Archives of Occupational and Environmental Health*, 82(3), 417-426.
- Papanastasiou, E. C., & Zembylas, M. (2005). Job satisfaction variance among public and private kindergarten school teachers in Cyprus. *International Journal of Educational Research*, 43(3), 147-167.
- Parent-Thirion, A., Vermeylen, G., van Houten, G., Lyly-Yrjänäinen, M., Biletta, I., & Cabrita, J. (2012). *Fifth European working conditions survey*. Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union.
- Parker, P. D., Martin, A. J., Colmar, S., & Liem, G. A. (2012). Teachers'

workplace well-being: Exploring a process model of goal orientation, coping behavior, engagement, and burnout. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 28(4), 503-513.

Pietarinen, J., Pyhältö, K., Soini, T., & Salmela-Aro, K. (2013). Reducing teacher burnout: A socio-contextual approach. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 35, 62-72.

Podsakoff, P. M., MacKenzie, S. B., Lee, J. Y., & Podsakoff, N. P. (2003). Common method biases in behavioral research: A critical review of the literature and recommended remedies. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 88(5), 879-903.

Podsakoff, P. M., & Organ, D. W. (1986). Self-reports in organizational research: Problems and prospects. *Journal of Management*, 12(4), 531-544.

Preacher, K. J., & Hayes, A. F. (2008). Asymptotic and resampling strategies for assessing and comparing indirect effects in multiple mediator models. *Behavior research methods*, 40(3), 879-891.

Ringle, C. M., Wende, S., & Will, A. (2005). *SmartPLS 2.0.M3*. Hamburg: SmartPLS. Retrieved from [www.smartpls.de](http://www.smartpls.de).

Ringle, C. M., Sarstedt, M., & Straub, D. (2012). A critical look at the use of PLS-SEM in MIS Quarterly. *MIS Quarterly (MISQ)*, 36(1), 3-14.

Robbins, S. P., & Judge, T. A. (2013). *Organizational behavior (15th ed.)*. New Jersey: Prentice Hall.

Roland, E. (2002). Bullying, depressive symptoms and suicidal thoughts. *Educational Research*, 44(1), 55-67.

Roldán, J. L. & Sánchez-Franco, M. J. (2012). Variance-based structural equation modeling: Guidelines for using partial least squares in information systems research. In M. Mora, O. Gelman, A. Steenkamp, & M. Raisinghani (Eds.), *Research Methodologies, Innovations and Philosophies in Software Systems Engineering and Information Systems* (pp. 193–221). Hershey, PA: Information Science Reference.

Rugulies, R., Madsen, I.E.H., Hjarsbech, P. U., Hogh, A., Borg, V., Carneiro, I. G., & Aust, B. (2012). Bullying at work and onset of a major depressive episode among Danish female eldercare workers. *Scandinavian Journal of Work, Environment & Health*, 38(3), 218-227.

Sadeghi, K., Amani, J., & Mahmudi, H. (2013). A structural model of the impact of organizational culture on job satisfaction among secondary school teachers. *The Asia-Pacific Education Researcher*, 22(4), 687-700.

Salin, D. (2003). Ways of explaining workplace bullying: A review of enabling, motivating and precipitating structures and processes in the work environment. *Human Relations*, 56(10), 1213–1232.

- Schubring, S., Lorscheid, I., Meyer, M., & Ringle, C. M. (2016). The PLS agent: Predictive modeling with PLS-SEM and agent-based simulation. *Journal of Business Research*. In press; <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2016.03.052>.
- Schwarzer, R., & Hallum, S. (2008). Perceived teacher self-efficacy as a predictor of job stress and burnout: Mediation analyses. *Applied Psychology: An International Review*, 57, 152-171.
- Shirom, A., Oliver, A., & Stein, E. (2009). Teachers' stressors and strains: A longitudinal study of their relationships. *International Journal of Stress Management*, 16(4), 312-332.
- Singh, K., & Billingsley, B. S. (1996). Intent to stay in teaching: Teachers of students with emotional disorders versus other special educators. *Remedial and Special Education*, 17(1), 37-47.
- Skaalvik, E. M., & Skaalvik, S. (2009). Does school context matter? Relations with teacher burnout and job satisfaction. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 25(3), 518-524.
- Skaalvik, E. M., & Skaalvik, S. (2011). Teachers' feeling of belonging, exhaustion, and job satisfaction: The role of school goal structure and value consonance. *Anxiety, Stress, & Coping*, 24(4), 369-385.
- Smith, M., & Bourke, S. (1992). Teacher stress: Examining a model based on context, workload, and satisfaction. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 8(1), 31-46.
- Sommers, J. & Vodanovich, S.J. (2000). Boredom proneness: Its relationship to psychological -and physical- health symptoms. *Journal of Clinical Psychology*, 56(1), 149-155.
- Stoeber, J., & Rennert, D. (2008). Perfectionism in school teachers: Relations with stress appraisals, coping styles, and burnout. *Anxiety, Stress, & Coping*, 21, 37-53.
- Tadić, M., Bakker, A. B., & Oerlemans, W. G. (2013). Work happiness among teachers: A day reconstruction study on the role of self-concordance. *Journal of School Psychology*, 51(6), 735-750.
- Taylor, A. B., MacKinnon, D. P. & Tein, J. Y. (2008). Test of the three-path mediated effect. *Organizational Research Methods*, 11(2), 241-269.
- Travers, C. J., & Cooper, C. L. (1993). Mental health, job satisfaction and occupational stress among UK teachers. *Work & Stress*, 7(3), 203-219.
- Travers, C. J., & Cooper, C. L. (1996). *Teachers under pressure: Stress in the teaching profession*. London: Routledge.
- Türküm, A. S. (2011). Social supports preferred by the teachers when facing school violence. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 33(5), 644-650.

United Nations Statistic Division (UN). (2013). Composition of Macro Geographical (Continental) Regions, Geographical Sub-regions, and Selected Economic Groupings. Retrieved from <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/methods/m49/m49regin.htm#europe>.

Van Droogenbroeck, F., Spruyt, B., & Vanroelen, C. (2014). Burnout among senior teachers: Investigating the role of workload and interpersonal relationships at work. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 43, 99-109.

Verešová, M., & Malá, D. (2012). Stress, proactive coping and self-efficacy of teachers. *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 55, 294-300.

Vukelić, M., Čizmić, S., Petrović, I. B., Tenjović, L., & Giorgi, G. (2015). Psychometric properties of the Serbian version of the negative acts questionnaire-revised. *Psihologija*, 48 (1), 19-33.

Wang, X-S., Armstrong, M. E. G., Cairns, B. J., Key, T. J., & Travis, R. C. (2011). Shift work and chronic disease: The epidemiological evidence. *Occupational Medicine*, 61(2), 78-89.

Weinberg, A., & Creed, F. (2000). Stress and psychiatric disorder in healthcare professionals and hospital staff. *Lancet*, 355(9203), 533-537.

Weiss, H. M. (2002). Deconstructing job satisfaction: Separating evaluations, beliefs and affective experiences. *Human Resource Management Review*, 12(2), 173-194.

Williams, J., & MacKinnon, D. P. (2008). Resampling and distribution of the product methods for testing indirect effects in complex models. *Structural Equation Modeling: A Multidisciplinary Journal*, 15(1), 23-51.

Woodrow, C., & Guest, D. E. (2014). When good HR gets bad results: Exploring the challenge of HR implementation in the case of workplace bullying. *Human Resource Management Journal*, 24(1), 38-56.

Zapf, D., Escartin, J., Einarsen, S., Hoel, H., & Vartia, M. (2011). Empirical findings on prevalence and risk groups of bullying in the workplace. In S. Einarsen, H. Hoel, D. Zapf, & C.L. Cooper (Eds.), *Bullying and harassment in the workplace: Developments in theory, research, and practice* (pp. 75–106). Boca Raton, FL: Taylor and Francis Group.

Zapf, D., Knorz, C., & Kulla, M. (1996). On the relationship between mobbing factors, and job content, social work environment, and health outcomes. *European Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology*, 5(2), 215-237.

Zuckerman, M. (1979). *Sensation seeking: Beyond the optimal level of arousal*. Hillsdale, NJ: L. Erlbaum Associates.





# Conclusions and Further Research

---

*“A manager of people needs to understand that all people are different. This is not ranking people. He needs to understand that the performance of anyone is governed largely by the system that he works in, the responsibility of management.”*

William Edwards Deming (1900-1993)

## Conclusions

From a utilitarian perspective, the conclusions referenced below encapsulate promising implications not only for healthcare workers, managers, teachers, and teaching professionals, but also for hospitals, clinics, companies, schools, educational institutions, and any other public or private organization that pursues the continual improvement of their own occupational health, internal networking harmony, and organizational performance. Its outcomes could be implemented within organizations via dynamic and integral policies primarily led by the responsible and aimed at facilitating healthy and harmonious social relationships among professionals and other closely linked stakeholders.

Those people in charge could ground their strategies in certain guiding principles positively prevailing in their own sectoral settings, such as fairly limiting job demands, properly increasing job resources, managing conflict through problem solving (Leon-Perez et al., 2015), enhancing social resources of institutions -such as opportunities to receive professional recognition or social support (Kokkinos, 2007; Stoeber & Rennert, 2008)-, among others.

Furthermore, upgrading professionals' interests, adjusting variables -presumably connected to job dissatisfaction, adverse working conditions, and jobholders' wellbeing (especially of those susceptible of being bullied)-, nurturing group cohesion and organizational climate (Giorgi et al., 2013), and fostering organizational culture could increase organizational health promotion and a more proactive implication at work (Hosseinkhanzadeh et al., 2013).

The execution of these potential solutions could certainly bring benefits to organizations in enhancing professionals' welfare, motivation, and management; as well as contributing to a higher quality of knowledge curiosity and transfer. Its effects could have a concurrent impact on families, local communities, and even regional or national governments as well (Papanastasiou & Zembylas, 2005).

Having said that, the next paragraphs summarized the research conclusions by

chapter.

In *Chapter 1*, the research on European *healthcare workers* reveals a prevalence rate of 11.3%, labeling themselves thus as bullied in their specific professions; nevertheless, this ratio is still far from the results obtained in the U.S., where 38% of the healthcare employees report psychological harassment (Dunn, 2003). This relationship is similar to that described by Dellasega (2009), who finds that 44.0% of nurses experience episodes of bullying at some point during their working lives. Additionally, the regression analysis outcomes indicate a tendency for young female healthcare workers with only secondary education and with children at home to suffer bullying; the group described above is certainly in a position of greater weakness in relation to other groups that have greater power, for example, men with university degrees or higher seniority in their organizations: these women, therefore, are more likely to end up as victims of workplace bullying.

Furthermore, some organizational factors are found to increase the odds of workplace bullying against healthcare workers. At the organizational level, this study emphasizes that the propensity for a healthcare worker to experience bullying escalates among those who work on a shift schedule, perform monotonous and rotating tasks, suffer from work stress, experience a lack of satisfaction due to their working conditions, and do not perceive any opportunity for promotion within their organization. These settings seem to be characterized by insecurity, role conflict, and tension, allowing few opportunities for socialization and even less time for conflict resolution, and contributing to the emergence of aggressive behaviors and bullying where a stressful social climate and precarious work atmosphere create a breeding ground for workplace bullying, as reflected in the present study.

For its part, in *Chapter 2*, the research unveils a prevalence rate of 49.5% in European senior and middle *managers* who have labeled themselves as bullied within their respective professions. This relation is similar to that described by Woodman and Cook (2005) where 49.0% of middle managers report having been bullied in the last three years. Comparable but in other professions, Dellasega (2009) finds that 44.0% of nurses experience episodes of bullying at some point during their working lives; and more recently Mintz-Binder and Calkins (2012) reveal that the 32.8% of program directors affirm having been exposed to bullying—due to the influence of students and faculty—within the last 12 months. These results indicate that the rate of workplace bullying for professionals in managerial positions is larger than the predicted average calculated, with similar parameters, for employees laboring in any other occupational level and sector.

On the other hand, the regression analysis here utilized seems to indicate -at the individual level- a tendency for female managers, who are living with children under 15 at home, to suffer from bullying; this group appears somehow to be in

a position of greater likelihood to suffer from bullying in relation to the other identified groups, for example, men with or without children under their care. These circumstances could definitely make the subjects of this group particularly more vulnerable and likely to end up as victims of workplace bullying.

Furthermore, some organizational factors are found to increase the odds of workplace bullying against managers. For instance, with respect to working conditions, this study emphasizes that the propensity -at the organizational level- for a worker in a managerial position to experience bullying escalates among those who work in poor working conditions -such as working at night and on a shift system-, suffer from job stress, experience a lack of satisfaction -due to their working conditions and payment-, and perceive reduced opportunity for promotion within their organization. Moreover, seniority, job insecurity, and type of sector seem to have no effect on workplace bullying among managers.

Adjusting job demands and improving job resources and conditions may lessen workplace bullying among managers. To this respect, one option could be to orientate general directors about “internal marketing” as a way to sell the company culture internally to employees and senior/middle managers and to somehow help prevent these negative organizational experiences (Sanchez-Hernandez & Miranda, 2011; Sanchez-Hernandez & Grayson, 2012).

On the other hand, *Chapter 3* discloses some noteworthy research conclusions. This study paper detects a prevalence workplace bullying rate of 4.4% among European *teachers*, which turns to be a very different result from other contemporary studies (Keashly & Neuman, 2008; Herranz Bellido et al., 2006; Jennifer et al., 2003; Lewis, 1999; Spratlen, 1995; Björkqvist et al., 1994); this variation might arise from the diverse methodologies researchers utilize to assess their own workplace bullying ratios. However, this value reveals that teaching activity is under several tension foci, which are rooted in accentuated demands that teachers must face nowadays.

In this line, following the research conclusions, these demands certainly result in direct impacts on subject’ health, concretely on the stress level developed during his/her work; indeed, the main stressors within the academic environment are having to deal daily with angry customers that neither value nor respect the teacher’s effort, the work overload, the performance of tasks that come into conflict with personal values, the high emotional demand of work, the accomplishment of monotonous tasks and having to take work to home during weekends. All of this generates feelings of anguish and frustration that, sooner or later, can lead to work-related stress.

Additionally, the high vocational component of the teaching profession, coupled with the availability of certain resources that are unique and

idiosyncratic of the teaching activity, generates among these a motivational process that can counterbalance the demands tied to it. In this way, the analysis indicates that job resources (such as perceiving a good salary, receiving feedback from the supervisor about the performance reached, the possibility of choosing the coworkers, career opportunities and the support from colleagues) have an important influence on European teachers' motivation. Conversely, it was neither possible to find support for the impact of JR (*Job-Resource relation*) on work-related stress, nor the effect of JD (*Job-Demands relation*) on the employees' motivation.

On the other hand, this academic work finds support for the main focus of this research -the teachers' workplace bullying perception-, as teachers happen to be more stressed when they are more likely to perceive a feeling of harassment; while, among the more motivated ones, this feeling gets reduced. From this perspective, bullying among teachers would result from an unstable set of balances between the stress experienced as a result of the demands that must be faced and the degree of intrinsic motivation that they raise due to the resources provided by the institution. Accordingly, this research suggests that only those work environments in the education sector where resources have more weight than the demands can generate a healthy organizational environment conducive to reduce the negative effects of workplace bullying.

Finally, *Chapter 4* denotes a structural model that exhibits a strong predictive connection between self-reported bullying and detrimental health perception in European *teaching professionals*, which makes the exposition to episodes of occupational harassment an evident distress signal for future emotional and physical complications in victims. According to this propositional approach, workplace bullying here acts as a predictive predecessor of health deterioration; in essence, its early detection might substantially facilitate the implementation of internal precautionary actions in educational organizations. This academic work corroborates as well that teachers might tend to grade their own health perception as negative mostly under the premise of having experienced intense stress levels, recurrent absence of motivation, and inadequate work-family balance; while involvement in complex tasks, shift work, copious amount of assignments, limited grades of autonomy, and further inclusion in night work do not seem to prove a significant relevance.

Furthermore, when the individual influence on health is modeled, occupational stress, complex tasks, and work overload emerge as the utmost powerful conditions; others such as work-family balance, autonomy, night work, and motivation denote moderated significance, while performing monotonous tasks happens to behave irrelevantly.

Additionally, this research reveals that job dissatisfaction, as mediating construct, appears to evidence a higher probability of health deterioration when teachers report having been exposed to bullying episodes; particularly for the

personal dissatisfaction associated with working conditions, salary, and promotion, resulting intrinsically related to bullying by mediating and hardening its effects on teachers' health impairment.

Finally, the association of both deteriorated working conditions and job dissatisfaction constructs seemingly reveals that displeased teachers who additionally report suffering from intense stress, inadequate work-family balance, copious amount of assignments, unusual involvement in complex tasks, recurrent absence of motivation, limited grades of autonomy, and further inclusion in shift or night work, are more predisposed to perceive health deterioration; while performing monotonous tasks behaves irrelevant.

Focused on this mediating effect, it seems that both working conditions and occupational health tend to exhibit correlations when job satisfaction declines in teachers; this clarifying assertion sheds light on latent positive associations of indirect path from specific working conditions to occupational health through job satisfaction, and reinforce the need for close and pertinent surveillance of school environment for potential tuning of educators' job contentment.

## Further Research

The present collection of scientific papers, compiled in the here presented PhD thesis, has spawned a bundle of new questions, which represent a non-negligible source of potential future research on the prediction of workplace bullying risk groups within professional occupations; the general proposition is arranged as follows:

In *Chapter 1*, the research paper offers an empirical basis for further studies related to *healthcare workers* and health sector issues in Europe. For instance, it is suggested to examine in more depth matters related to managerial function such as attracting and retaining the most qualified and experienced professionals for successful and competitive healthcare organizations, urging them to implement strategies oriented toward reducing workplace bullying.

In *Chapter 2*, this scientific exploration on European *managers* proposes a promising ground for further research. First, it is recommended a further examination of potential sexist attitudes in occupational settings, as well as other structural barriers that could inhibit women's careers to a certain extent compared to their male colleagues; this examination could definitely contribute to the definition of this and other groups as particularly more vulnerable ones in which people are likely to end up as victims of workplace bullying.

In *Chapter 3* research on bullied *teachers* in Europe invites for further exploration on the utilization of other methodological tools that may certainly identify the origin of the bullies or bullying perpetrators in this arena -superiors, colleagues, students, etc.-, assessing the relationships between the different types of perpetrators and teachers' workplace bullying, and constituting a clearly

future research line to address in next works. In this regard, Negative Acts Questionnaire (Einarsen & Hoel, 2001) is considered as a potential line for further research, particularly in those issues related to delving into other demand factors and resources accessible to educators, segmenting the sample of teachers as demands and resources may differ from one educational level to another.

In *Chapter 4*, the research here conducted on European *teaching professionals* suggests for further research the examination of the specific role of job satisfaction intermediation on teacher management, mainly for the scarcity of studies on this domain. Indeed, future explorations on this subject could be oriented as well to the examination of additional environmental factors that may jointly help elaborate organizational policies to better working conditions and infrastructures in learning settings. Moreover, further research may derive from both the delimitation of teaching professionals' subcategories – even by country and sector-, and the utilization of other ways to collect and obtain subject's information -such as the Negative Acts Questionnaire Revised (Giorgi et al., 2011; Vukelić et al., 2015)- in order to assess potential variations in constructs responses and health perception.

## References

- Björkqvist K, Osterman K, Hijelt-Back M. Aggression among university employees. *Aggressive Behav.* 1994; 20: 173-184.
- Dellasega, C.A. Bullying among nurses. *Am. J. Nurs.* **2009**, 109, 52–58.
- Dunn, S. *What's Going on with Mobbing, Bullying and Work Harassment Internationally?* Workplace Bullying Institute: Bellingham, WA, USA, 2003.
- Einarsen S, Hoel H. *The Negative Acts Questionnaire: development, validation and revision of a measure of bullying at work.* Oral presentation at the 10th European Congress on Work and Organizational Psychology. Prague; 16-19 May, 2001.
- Giorgi, G., Ando, M., Arenas, A., Shoss, M. K., & Leon-Perez, J. M. (2013). Exploring personal and organizational determinants of workplace bullying and its prevalence in a Japanese sample. *Psychology of Violence*, 3(2), 185.
- Giorgi, G., Arenas, A., & Leon-Perez, J. M. (2011). An operative measure of workplace bullying: The negative acts questionnaire across Italian companies. *Industrial Health*, 49(6), 686-695.
- Herranz Bellido J, Reig Ferrer A, Cabrera García J. La prevalencia del estrés laboral asistencial entre los profesores universitarios [The prevalence of assistance work stress among university professors]. *Anal Modif Conduct.* 2006; 32: 743-766.
- Hosseinkhanzadeh, A. A., Hosseinkhanzadeh, A., & Yeganeh, T. (2013). Investigate relationship between Job satisfaction and organizational culture among teachers. *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 84, 832-836.
- Jennifer D, Cowie H, Anaiadou K. Perceptions and experience of workplace bullying in five different working populations. *Aggressive Behav.* 2003; 29: 489-496.
- Keashly L, Neuman JH. *Final report: Workplace behaviour (bullying) project survey.* Mankato: Minnesota State University; 2008. Available at: [http://www.mnsu.edu/csw/workplacebullying/workplace\\_bullying\\_final\\_report.pdf](http://www.mnsu.edu/csw/workplacebullying/workplace_bullying_final_report.pdf). Accessed May 25, 2016.
- Kokkinos, C. M. (2007). Job stressors, personality and burnout in primary school teachers. *British Journal of Educational Psychology*, 77(1), 229-243.
- Leon-Perez, J. M., Medina, F. J., Arenas, A., & Munduate, L. (2015). The relationship between interpersonal conflict and workplace bullying. *Journal of Managerial Psychology*, 30(3), 250-263.
- Lewis D. Workplace bullying—interim findings of a study in further and higher education in Wales. *Int J Manpower.* 1999; 20: 106-119.
- Mintz-Binder, R.D.; Calkins, R.D. Exposure to bullying at the associate degree



nursing program director level. *Teach. Learn. Nurs.* **2012**, 7, 152–158.

Papanastasiou, E. C., & Zembylas, M. (2005). Job satisfaction variance among public and private kindergarten school teachers in Cyprus. *International Journal of Educational Research*, 43(3), 147-167.

Sanchez-Hernandez, I.; Grayson, D. Internal marketing for engaging employees on the corporate responsibility journey. *Intang. Cap.* **2012**, 8, 275–307.

Sanchez-Hernandez, M.I.; Miranda, F.J. Linking internal market orientation and new service performance. *Eur. J. Innov. Manage.* **2011**, 14, 207–226.

Spratlen LP. Interpersonal conflict which includes mistreatment in a university workplace. *Violence Vict.* 1995; 10: 285-297.

Stoeber, J., & Rennert, D. (2008). Perfectionism in school teachers: Relations with stress appraisals, coping styles, and burnout. *Anxiety, Stress, & Coping*, 21, 37-53.

Vukelić, M., Čizmić, S., Petrović, I. B., Tenjović, L., & Giorgi, G. (2015). Psychometric properties of the Serbian version of the negative acts questionnaire-revised. *Psihologija*, 48 (1), 19-33.

Woodman, P.; Cook, P. *Bullying at Work: The Experience of Managers*; Chartered Management Institute: London, UK, 2005.