PERSONALITY AND ORGANIZATIONAL FACTORS AS PREDICTORS OF WORKPLACE BULLYING IN SELECTED UNIVERSITIES IN NIGERIA

*Peter O. Olapegba *Peter O. Famakinde *Onyinye C. Okeke

Abstract

The study investigated personality and organizational factors that predict workplace bullying among university employees. Using the cross-sectional ex-post facto survey design, data were collected from 368 employees of the University of Ibadan and the University of Lagos. A battery of psychological tests consisting workplace violence, personality factors, job autonomy, organizational structure and demographics was used for data collection. It was hypothesized that university culture will encourage bullying while increased autonomy will reduce such. Results revealed that workplace bullying has a significant positive correlation with neuroticism (r=.141, p<.01) and organizational culture (r=.176, p<.01) and a significant inverse relationship with job autonomy (r= -.214, p<.01). Personality and organizational factors jointly accounted for 11.3% of the variation observed in university workplace bullying (R²=.113; F(7,350)=7.49; p<.01), and the

*Peter O. Olapegba
Department of Psychology, University of Ibadan, Nigeria.
*Peter O. Famakinde
Department of Psychology, University of Ibadan, Nigeria.
*Onyinye C. Okeke
Department of Psychology, University of Ibadan, Nigeria.

*independent contribution of openness to experience (â=-.190;t=-3.60; p<.05), job autonomy (â=-.170;t=-3.25; p<.01) and organizational culture (â=.139;t=-2.67; p<.01) to workplace bullying was significant. Employee educational qualification significantly differentiat*ed the experience of workplace bullying (F (3, 360) = 10.99, p<.01) with SSCE and Primary school certificate holders (X=28.70) having the highest experience. Work-place bullying was also found to be significantly different among the two universities sampled (t (362)=3.985, p<.01), higher among the employees of the University of Ibadan employees (X=32.93, SD=11.0) than among the employees of the University of Lagos (X=28.43, SD=7.9). The study noted that the organizational culture of the selected universities seem to fuel bullying but increased job autonomy. It also identified that an open-to-experience personality can help employees cope in such work environment.

INTRODUCTION

The concept of workplace bullying (WPB) refers to a persistent exposure to negative and aggressive behaviors primarily of a psychological nature (Leymann, 1996). Bullying at work occurs when an individual is harassed, offended, socially excluded, or negatively affected in terms of their work or tasks. It has to occur repeatedly and regularly (e.g., weekly) and over a period (e.g., at least six months). Bullying is an escalating process in the course of which the person confronted ends up in an inferior position and becomes the target of systematic negative social acts. (Einarsen, Hoel, Zapf, & Cooper, 2003). Workplace bullying is a term, which describes situations where hostile behaviors are directed systematically at one or more colleagues or subordinates leading to the victimization of the recipients (Björkqvist, Österman, &Hjelt-Bäck., 1994). When these negative and aggressive behaviors are directed frequently and persistently towards the same employee, they become a serious source of stress (Zapf, 1999),

with a range of negative consequences for both the victim and the organization (Vartia, 2001).

Workplace bullying encompasses subtle and/or obvious negative behaviors embodying aggression, hostility, intimidation, and harm. It is generally characterized by persistence displayed by an individual and/or group to another individual and/or group at work, privately and/or publicly, in real and/or virtual forms, in the context of an existing or evolving unequal power relationship (D'Cruz and Noronha 2013; Einarsen et al. 2011; Hoel and Beale 2006; Tracy et al. 2006). It refers to repeated, unreasonable actions of individuals (or a group) directed towards an employee (or a group of employees), which is intended to intimidate and create a risk to the health and safety of the employee(s).

Workplace bullying often involves an abuse or misuse of power. Bullying behavior creates feelings of defenselessness in the target and undermines an individual's right to dignity at work. Bullying is different from aggression. Whereas aggression may involve a single act, bullying involves repeated attacks against the target, creating an on-going pattern of behavior. "Tough or "demanding" bosses are not necessarily bullies, as long as their primary motivation is to obtain the best performance by setting high expectations. Many bullying situations involve employees bullying their peers, rather than a supervisor bullying an employee.

In the 1990s, researchers began to discuss, and explore, bullying among adults in work settings (Leymann, 1990). For the better part of the past two decades, a growing number of researchers (Aftab, & Javeed, 2012; Ang & Goh, 2010; Aquino & Thau, 2009 & Johnson & Rea, 2009) have been conducting research on this and related phenomena (e.g., workplace aggression and violence, mobbing, emotional abuse, etc.). Surprisingly, university-based researchers have paid relatively little attention to bullying in their own environment. This interesting oversight, as noted by other researchers, has been appraised for a number of reasons. First, it stands in contrast to reliable evidence of other forms of hostile and demeaning behaviors on campus such as student and faculty incivility in the classroom (e.g., Braxton & Bayer, 2004). Second, the quality of interpersonal relations, such as collegiality, is an important factor in the reten-

tion of faculty (Norman, Ambrose, & Huston, 2006). Third, the extensive literature on conflict and misconduct in higher education (Cameron, Meyers, & Olswang, 2005; Euben & Lee, 2006; Holton, 1998) highlights the structural and interpersonal opportunities for disagreement and potentially for hostility in such settings. Finally, the academic environment has a number of organizational and work features that increase the likelihood of hostile interpersonal behaviors (Neuman & Baron, 2005; Twale & De Luca, 2008).

Workplace bullying in academia is a problem but at the same time, there may be an exaggeration among the general public and academic researchers regarding the prevalence of bullying in academia. It could be because of a bandwagon effect, a tendency for people in social situations to align themselves with the majority opinion and believe things because many other people do or believe the same (American Psychological Association, 2009). This is reflected in the popular perception that universities are hotbeds of conflict and hostility. This is due, in part, to particular contextual variables associated with academic settings. Higher education institutions are unusual workplace environments. Given the practice of tenure and the loosely coupled organizational structure of academic units (Bolman and Deal, 1997; Meyer, 2002), they differ from other types of workplace environments. Some argue that these organizations are particularly vulnerable to fostering a culture of bullying behavior (Price Spratlen, 1995; Westhues, 2002; Westhues 2004 & 2006).

Research indicates that higher education organizations are at risk of encouraging bullying behaviors (Björkqvist, et al., 2012). The unique characteristics of higher education workplaces suggest that it is important to understand how employees interact within this environment. There is evidence that workplace bullying is related to employee performance (Barling, Rogers &Kelloway,2001; Einarsen, 2000) and retention (Sofield & Salmond, 2003) and that colleges and universities are over-represented in groups of bullying targets (Leymann, 1996). It is also important to identify factors within the university work environment that precipitates workplace bullying with a view to reverse or buffer such tendencies via its instrumentality. The autonomy that employees enjoy with their works, their personality

traits as well as the culture of the university organization are factors thought to be central to workplace bullying in Nigerian universities.

Work autonomy is considered as one of the most important characteristics of work (Cordery& Wall, 1985) and perhaps one of the most widely studied work characteristics (Morgeson& Humphrey, 2006). Several studies (Cuyper, Nele De & Witte, Hans De, 2006; Denton & Lawrence, 2001; Finn, 2001) have been conducted to investigate how work autonomy is related to certain work outcomes. The concept of employee autonomy has obtained increased focus in research, as well as in management implementation. This is due to the perceived overall benefit that it brings, not only to the individuals, but also to the corporate bodies that strive for low-cost management, flexibility and agility, effective and efficient operations. This is because provision of work autonomy would mean less middle managers (Benson &Lawler, 2005). Hackman and Oldham (1980) define autonomy as 'the degree to which the job provides substantial freedom, independence, and discretion to the individual in scheduling the work and in determining the procedures to be used in carrying it out'. According to them, the characteristic of work autonomy elicits the psychological states of experienced responsibility.

Personality is a dynamic and organized set of characteristics possessed by a person that uniquely influences his or her cognitions, motivations, and behaviors in various situations (Ewen, 1998). It can also be thought of as a psychological construct-a complex abstraction that encompasses a person's unique genetic background (except in the case of identical twins) and learning history as well as the ways in which these factors influence his or her responses to various environments or situations (Ewen, 1998). It accounts for why and how people react uniquely, and often creatively, to various environmental or situational demands" (Rckyman, 2000). So many investigators regard the study of personality as primarily the scientific analysis of individual differences.

Organizational Culture relates to the informal aspects of organizations rather than their official elements. These aspects focus on the values, beliefs, and norms of individuals in the organization as well as how these individual perceptions coalesce into shared meanings. Culture is manifested by sym-

bols and rituals rather than through the formal structure of the organization. Beliefs, values, and ideology are at the heart of organizations. Individuals hold certain ideas and value-preferences, which influence how they behave and how they view the behavior of other members. These norms become shared traditions, which are communicated within the group and are reinforced by symbols and ritual (Bush, 2003).

In relation to workplace bullying, this was explained by work environment and social environment problems in the organization (Einarsen et al., 1994, Keashly & Neuman, 2010). "The causal model of bullying and harassment at work that has received most public attention in Scandinavia, emphasizes the quality of the organization's work environment as the main determinant of such misconduct" (Einarsen et al. 1994). As stated by Hoel & Salin and (cited in Keashly & Neuman, 2010) bullying was prevalent in organizations that were characterized as competitive, highly politicized, with autocratic or authoritarian leadership.

 Organizational culture and the hierarchical organizational nature could also contribute to victims' inability to protect themselves, thereby leading to workplace bullying (Björkqvist et al, 1994; Keashly & Neuman, 2010). Organizational culture is the set of shared values, beliefs, and norms that influence the way employees think, feel, and behave in the workplace (Schein, 2011). Culture is transmitted to an organization's members by means of socialization and training, rites and rituals, communication networks, and symbols. Organizational culture has four functions: it gives members a sense of identity, increases their commitment, reinforces organizational values, and serves as a control mechanism for shaping behavior (Nelson & Quick, 2011). Hostile work environments, which allow aggressiveness in social interactions, are likely contexts for bullying to occur (Agervold & Mikkelsen, 2004; Branch et al., 2007; Einarsen, 1999, 2000). These environments can be self-perpetuating as group members match their behavior to that of the group (Glomb & Liao, 2003; Robinson &Greenberg, 1998), to the extent that bullying becomes normalized and self-perpetuating (Branch et al., 2007; Hoel & Beale, 2006).

To buttress this point, from the research on workplace bullying conducted in the Canadian university environment by McKay, Huberman Arnold,

Fratzl, and Thomas (2008), the following were the impacts of workplace bullying on employees: stress, frustration, powerlessness, demoralization, and anxiety. The respondents also reported that because of workplace bullying, there was a change of interest in the work, their view of the university, and change in their abilities to deal with people amidst other challenges. The studies documented that different forms of psychological disorders were common consequences of workplace bullying in universities (McKay et al, 2008).

First, 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 (Rayner & Keashly, 2005). The presence of witnesses is notable as an indicator of the climate within an organization. It shows that others in the environment are aware of and harmed by these experiences. These individuals could play a very helpful role in the prevention and management of aggression and bullying, as discussed below. The nature of the relationship between actors and targets is also notable. As power differences can be a defining feature of bullying, it is not surprising to find supervisors and administrators often identified as actors. However, in our recent study conducted with university employees (Keashly & Neuman, 2008), colleagues were more likely to be identified as bullies by faculty (63.4%), while superiors were more likely to be identified as bullies by frontline staff (52.9%). Contrary to the current emphasis on student incivility, faculty concern about workplace harassment was more likely to be associated with colleagues (especially senior members of the faculty) and superiors more frequently than with students. These findings support the importance of focusing on faculty behaviors in understanding bullying in academic settings.

Another observation is that the experiences reported involved two or more actors that is, mobbing. Westhues (2004), in discussing the mobbing of professors by their colleagues and administrators, has argued that the experience of being mobbed is very different from the experience (however upsetting) of being harassed by a single actor. In our 2008 sample, we found that rates of mobbing differed as a function of the occupational

group being studied. Faculty members were almost twice more likely than others to report being the victims of mobbing by three or more actors (14.5% vs. 8%, respectively). Frontline (nonacademic) staff members, on the other hand, were 1.5 times more likely to be bullied by a single perpetrator. These occupational group differences, and the possibility of some differences in antecedents, consequences, and dynamics, support our focus on faculty experiences for this article.

When bullying/mobbing occurs, it tends to be long-standing. McKay et al (2008) found that 21% of their sample reported bullying that had persisted for more than five years in duration. In our 2008 study, 32% of the overall sample (faculty, administrators, and other members of staff etc.) reported bullying lasting for more than three years. This percentage increased to 49% when we focused on members of faculty. It may be that the academia is a particularly vulnerable setting for such persistent aggression because of tenure, which has faculty and some other members of staff in very long-term relationships with one another. Research has shown that (Jawahar, 2002) the longer and more interactive the relationship, the greater the opportunity for conflict and potential for aggression. Further, while ensuring a "job for life," tenure may also restrict mobility such that once a situation goes bad; there are few options for leaving.

Zapf and Gross (2001) observe that the number of actors was linked to the duration of bullying. They found that the more people who joined in the situation, the longer it went on, concluding that it may become increasingly difficult for witnesses/bystanders to remain neutral as bullying proceeds and intensifies. Given the preceding discussion, once bullying begins, and the longer it is permitted to continue, the more likely it is that other colleagues will be drawn into the situation—possibly accounting for the higher incidence of mobbing among faculty (Westhues, 2006).

Of all the types of bullying discussed in the literature (e.g., Einarsen & Mikkelsen, 2003), the behaviors most frequently cited in academia involve threats to professional status as well as isolating and obstructional behavior (i.e., thwarting the target's ability to obtain important objectives). Such findings "make sense" because of the critical importance placed in the academia on one's accomplishments, intellectual rigor, and reputation.

If one wished to harm someone in this context, then behaviors designed to undermine their professional standing, authority, and competence, or impede access to key resources for their work (such as money, space, time, or access to strong students), may be the weapons of choice. 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 & Lambert, 2001). Thus, it is less likely that hostility would be expressed by insults, swearing, shouting, or threats of physical harm that would openly contravene such norms and run the risk of sanction from colleagues as a result.

From the extant literature on bullying in both academic and non-academic settings, including extensive interviews and personal accounts from targets (e.g., Vickers, 2001; Westhues, 2004), we know that the consequences of bullying can be quite damaging. To individuals it may lead to physical, psychological, and emotional harm while amongst groups, there could be destructive political behavior, lack of cooperation and interpersonal aggression). In organizations, bullying may generate organizational withdrawal behaviors, theft, lowered organizational commitment, and sabotage.

Of particular relevance to discussions of bullying among faculty is the impact on job satisfaction, productivity/performance, and turnover as well as abrasive interactions with students. Job satisfaction is well established as a key predictor of productivity and turnover in all employment settings (Sirota, Mischkind, & Meltzer, 2005) and as such can be an early signal of a problem.

In terms of productivity, if faculty members withdraw from or notably reduce the efforts they put in scholarship, not only will their chances for tenure, promotion, or merit be seriously undercut, it will also affect their ability to mentor graduate students and shift the advising load to their colleagues. If they reduce their investment in teaching, the students and the quality of their learning experience will suffer, not to mention raising the ire of their colleagues and the department chair. Similarly, withdrawal from the service of the institution places a heavier burden on other faculty and staff and reduces the amount and quality of work necessary to keep the institution moving forward (Ambrose, Huston, & Norman, 2005). The

literature on work withdrawal is rich in the discussions of ways that people can "exit" the situation while remaining physically present (Boswell & Olson-Buchanan, 2004). Thus, when we consider the effects of bullying on faculty, we need to consider the more subtle ways in which faculty may remain employed but disengaged—essentially, "retiring on the job."

In sum, the studies reviewed here suggest that workplace aggression, bullying, and mobbing are part of the academic landscape, and their impact may not only be damaging to the targets and bystanders, but could also adversely affect the learning environment and the institution itself. Importantly, it should be noted that we are not suggesting that bullying is unique to higher education; rather, we are suggesting that the academy represents a somewhat unique context in which bullying may thrive. Consistent with recent calls for an increased emphasis on the role of context in organizational research (e.g., Johns, 2006), we believe that a focus on aggression and bullying in higher education is certainly justified. To that end, we now turn our attention to the causes of aggression and bullying, paying particular attention to institutions of higher education as our context.

Bullying among university employees was previously studied by mostly Scandinavian researchers (Björkqvist et al., 1994). Further studies on bullying in the academia were conducted in UK, United States, New Zealand, and Canada (Keashly & Neuman, 2010). As summarized by Keashly and Neuman (2010) rates of experienced bullying in university settings varied depending on the country: 20.5% in Finland (Björkqvist et al, 1994), 18% Wales (Lewis, 1999), 32% United States (Keashly & Neuman, 2008). It was also important to keep in mind that rates of bullying received from previous studies could differ in respect to sample size, work environment within the given organization, and the way bullying was measured (Agervold & Mikkelsen, 2004). As classified by Keashly and Neuman (2010) studies of bullying in academic settings were characterized by relatively high rates of bullying between 18-67.7%, depending on the country involved. These rates seem to be higher in comparison to the rates of workplace bullying in the general population, as outlined above. It was also observed that different bullying measurements instruments were used (Björkqvist et al, 1994; Zabrodska & Kveton, 2013), which further

reduced the possibility of comparing rates of bullying. In addition, their findings showed that the position of an employee was related to harassment and that individuals in subordinate positions are harassed less often than are individuals in superior positions. Not surprisingly, their findings reported that victims of bullying experienced higher levels of depression and anxiety than others did.

Another research on bullying among university employees was conducted in Czech Republic (Zabrodska & Kveton, 2013). The study of Zabrodska & Kveton (2013) was one of few on bullying conducted in Central Eastern European countries. Over the past decade, a growing number of Anglo-American and Scandinavian researchers have documented the extent to which the university environment provides opportunities for workplace bullying (Zabrodska & Kveton, 2013). Their results showed similar percentage of bullying prevalent in to Scandinavian countries. Among the respondents " 7.9 % of employees reported to be bullied during 12 months at least occasionally and 0.7% reported that they had been bullied at least weekly" (Zabrodska&Kveton, 2013, p. 96). Findings showed that, the most commonly reported negative acts experienced by the respondents on a weekly basis were work-related. In particular, the respondents reported being ordered to do work below their level of competence (5.8 % of the respondents had experienced this negative behavior at least weekly), being exposed to unmanageable workload (3.3%), and having their options and views ignored (2.2%). (Zabrodska & Kveton, 2013). In their research of faculty experiences with bullying in higher education, Keashly and Neuman (2010) also stated that negative behaviors found "in academia involve threats to professional status and obstructional behavior (i.e., thwarting the target's ability to obtain important objects)" (Keashli & Neuman, 2010, p.53). As an explanation to such behavior in pedagogical settings, the authors mentioned one's accomplishments, intellectual rigor, and reputation. In their opinion, if one wished to harm someone in this context, then behaviors designed to undermine their professional standing, authority, and competence, or impede access to key resources for their work (such as money, space, time, or access to strong students), may be the weapons of choice. (Keashli & Neuman, 2010)

In a similar research on bullying conducted in Canadian university by McKay, Huberman Arnold, Fratzl, and Thomas (2008), the following were identified as impacts of bullying on employees: stress, frustration, powerlessness, demoralization, and anxiety. The respondents also reported that because of bullying there was a change of interest in the work, their view of the university, as well as change in their abilities to deal with people and challenges. The studies documented that different forms of psychological disorders were common consequences of bullying in universities (McKay et al, 2008).

The issue of workplace bullying should be addressed to the root cause, so that we can have healthier members of staff experiencing reduced stress and comfortable workplace environment.

METHOD

DESIGN

The study utilized a cross-sectional survey design to achieve its objectives .The dependent variable of the study is workplace bullying. The independent variables of the study are gender, personality and organizational factors (job autonomy and organizational culture). The demographic variables were; age, marital status, educational qualification, job status, and length of service.

SETTING

The setting of the study was the University of Ibadan and the University of Lagos. Both are federal universities in southwestern Nigeria and are quite reputable. Both universities run undergraduate, postgraduate, and professional programmes with the aid of their sound staff strength and a well-structured organogram. The similarity and proximity of both federal universities to one another encouraged their choice in this study.

PARTICIPANTS

Three hundred and sixty-eight respondents participated in this study. These respondents were categorized according to their age, gender, marital sta-

tus, educational qualification, job status, and length of service. The participants were categorized according to their locations; two hundred and forty eight (248) i.e. 67.4% were from the University of Ibadan, while a hundred and twenty (120) i.e. 32.6% were from the University of Lagos. Participants were classified according to their gender, two hundred and forty-five (245) i.e. 66.6% were males and a hundred and twenty-three (123) i.e. 33.4% were females. In the categorization by marital status, fifty-four (54) i.e. 14.7% were single, three hundred and seven (307) i.e. 83.4% were married, five (5) i.e. 1.4% were separated or divorced and two (2) i.e. 5% were divorced. Participants were also classified by their educational qualification; a hundred and thirty-nine (139) i.e. 37.8% had MSc/PhD, a hundred and twenty (120) i.e. 32.6%, had BSC/HND, forty-seven (47) i.e. 12.8% had OND/NCE/Diploma, sixty-two (62) i.e. 16.8% had SSCE/Primary. Finally, the participants were grouped according to their respective status, which are PhD/MSc, BSC/HND, OND/NCE/Diploma, and SSCE/Primary.

SAMPLE AND SAMPLING TECHNIQUE

The sample of the population was determined using the sample size calculator. The sample studied were university employees of the University of Ibadan and the University of Lagos. The sampling technique deployed was accidental sampling technique, in which case the questionnaire was administered to university employees met at the faculties, departments, and offices.

INSTRUMENTS

A questionnaire comprising five sections A to E was used to obtain data for study variables. It also obtained some demographic information. Sectional details of the questionnaire are as follows:

DEMOGRAPHIC VARIABLES

The demographic characteristics of the participants were as follows; age, gender, marital status, educational qualification, job status, religion, and length of service.

NEGATIVE ACTS QUESTIONNAIRE (NAQ-R)

The NAQ-R was used to study the prevalence of workplace bullying and poor mental health (NAQ-R: Einarsen & Hoel, 2001).The NAQ-R consists of 22 items measures, using 5- point Likert response format ranging from 1(never) to 5 (daily). The authors of the scale reported a Cronbach alpha of 0.91-0.95, but in this present study the Cronbach alpha was .86 and the split half reliability was .85. A higher score on this scale means that the individual is experiencing workplace bullying and a low score means the individual is not experiencing workplace bullying.

BIG FIVE-PERSONALITY INVENTORY (BFI-10)

This scale was used to measure the personality factors of the university employees. It was constructed by Rammsted, B. & John, O.P. (2007). The 10 items scale employed a 5- Likert response format ranging from 1 (disagree strongly) to 5 (agree strongly). The internal consistency has been reported using Cronbach alpha, with these correlations for extraversion- 0.89, agreeableness -0.74, conscientiousness -0.82, neuroticism -0.86 and openness to experience -0.79. In the study, the Cronbach alpha was .24 and the split half reliability was .64. The reversed items were extraversion -1R, agreeableness -7R, conscientiousness -3R, neuroticism - 4R, and openness to experience -5R. A high score on any of the items means that the individual is high on that item and a low score means that the individual is low on the item.

WORK DESIGN QUESTIONNAIRE

This was used to measure job autonomy of the university employees. It was constructed by Frederick, P.M & Stephen, E.H (2006). This instrument has sub dimensions, were work autonomy has nine items, and were rated in 5-point Likert format ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The authors reported a coefficient alpha of .87 but in this study, the Cronbach Alpha was .89 while the split half reliability was .74. Work design questionnaire is a mix of existing items -17%, adapted items- 33%, and new items -50%. A high score on this instrument shows that the individual has a control of his/her job while a low score on the instrument shows low job autonomy.

HUMMING CORPORATE CULTURE QUESTIONNAIRE (HCCQ)

This was used to measure organizational culture. This questionnaire was designed to provide incumbent management groups with a view of the organization that enlightens on the subject of corporate culture. The components of culture are business focus, discipline, values, behaviors, communications, and workplace harmony/socialization. It was a litmus test questionnaire. This instrument has 22 items and the rating scale is in Likert form of 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The authors reported a Cronbach alpha Coefficient ranges from 0.55 - 0.95. In this study, the Cronbach alpha was .87 while the split half reliability was .72. The items were not reversed; they are in their original form. An employee who scores high on this scale is high on organizational culture and a low score means that the individual is low on organizational culture.

PROCEDURE

Before carrying out the study, the researcher obtained a letter of introduction from the Department of Psychology, University of Ibadan, which enabled her to seek permission from the universities where the study took place. The researcher also visited the selected universities where the research took place. Upon a formal introduction of herself and completion of other administrative protocol, the purpose of the study was explained to Heads of departments. The questionnaires were administered personally to the participants in various departments and units within the Universities of interest. Four hundred (400) questionnaires were administered, but only 368 were returned.

RESULTS

The data collected in the study were analyzed using the statistical package for social science (SPSS) software. The first hypothesis was tested with Pearson Product Moment Correlation, the second was tested using the Hierarchical Multiple Regression Analysis, hypothesis three was tested with T-test for independent sample, analysis of variance was used to test hypothesis four and hypothesis five was tested with T-test of independent sample.

Hypothesis 1 stated that there would be a significant relationship between personality characteristics, job autonomy, organizational culture, and work place bullying. This was tested with a Pearson Product Moment Correlation as presented in the correlation matrix in table 1.

Table 1: Correlation Matrix Showing Relationship between the Dependent Variables and Independent Variables of the Study

S/N	Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Mean	SD
1	Bullying	-								31.45	10.3
2	Conscientiousness	-.126*	-							7.98	2.1
3	Agreeableness	-.147**	.403**	-						7.48	2.2
4	Extraversion	-.068	.039	-.053	-					5.83	2.0
5	Neuroticism	.141**	-.271**	-.314**	-.153**	-				5.29	2.1
6	Openness	-.168*	.141**	.079	-.263**	.057	-			6.69	1.7
7	Job Autonomy	-.227**	.045	.106*	-.015	.170*	.009	-		41.22	13.3
8	organizational Culture	.176**	-.003	-.121*	-.060	.004	.073	-.214**	-	54.30	14.1

The result from table 1 shows that organizational culture and neuroticism have a significant positive correlation with work place bullying ($r = .176$, $p < .01$ and $r = .141$, $p < .01$ respectively). On the other hand, job autonomy, conscientiousness, agreeableness and openness to experience have a significant inverse relationship with work place bullying ($r = -.227$, $p < .01$; $r = -.126$, $p < .05$; $r = -.147$, $p < .05$; $r = -.168$, $p < .05$ respectively). However, extraversion is not significantly correlated with work place bullying ($r = -.068$, $p > .05$). Further, job autonomy correlates inversely to organizational culture ($r = -.214$, $p < .01$). Thus, the stated hypothesis is partially confirmed.

Hypothesis 2 states that personality factors and organizational factors will predict work place bullying both jointly and independently. This hypoth-

esis was tested with a hierarchical multiple regression analysis as presented in table 2 below.

Table 2: Summary of Hierarchical Multiple Regression showing Prediction of Work Place Bullying by Personality and Organizational factors

	Variables	B	T	P	R^2	$R^2\Delta$	F	FΔ	P	PΔ
Personality ors	Conscientiousness	-.031	-.536	>.05						
	Agreeableness	-.101	-1.76	>.05						
	Extraversion	-.098	-1.81	>.05	.060	.073	5.56	5.56	<.01	<.01
	Neuroticism	.110	1.98	<.05						
	Openness	-.181	-3.33	<.01						
Organizational ors	Conscientiousness	-.042	-746	>.05						
	Agreeableness	-.069	-1.21	>.05						
	Extraversion	.098	-1.85	>.05						
	Neuroticism	.084	1.15	>.05	.113	0.57	7.49	11.47	<.01	<.01
	Openness	-.190	-3.60	<.01						
	Job Autonomy	-.170	-3.25	<.01						
	organizational Culture	.139	2.67	<.01						

Model 1 of table 2 shows that personality factors significantly jointly predicted work place bullying [(R^2 = .060; F (5,352) = 5.56; p < .01)]. This infers that the personality factors jointly accounted for only about 6% of the variance observable in work place bullying, with other variables not considered in this study accounting for a larger chunk of work place bullying. Further, the independent contribution of neuroticism and openness to experience were significant [(b = .110; t = 1.98; p< .05) and (b = -.181; t = -3.33; p< .01) respectively].

In model 2, when organizational factors were added to the regression model, organizational and personality factors significantly jointly predicted work place bullying [(R^2 = .113; F (7,350) = 7.49; p < .01)]. This infers that personality and organizational factors jointly accounted for about 11.3%

of the variance observable in work place bullying, while other variables not considered in this study account for a larger portion of work place bullying. Hence, organizational factors would be said to significantly account for about 5.7% of the change observable in work place bullying $[(R^2" = .057; F" (2,350) = 11.47; p" < .01)]$. In addition, the independent contribution of openness to experience, job autonomy and organizational culture were significant $[(b = -.190; t = -3.60; p < .05); (b = -.170; t = -3.25; p < .01)$ and $(b = .139; t = 2.67; p < .01)$ respectively]. The hypothesis was partially confirmed.

Hypothesis 3 states that the experience of work place bullying will be significantly differentiated by educational qualification. The hypothesis was tested with a one-way analysis of variance as seen in table 3.

Table 3: Summary of analysis of variance showing the influence of Education on Work Place Bullying

	Source	SS	DF	MS^2	F ratio	P
Work Place Bullying	Between Groups	3244.707	3	1081.569	10.999	<.01
	Within Groups	35399.194	360	98.331		
	Total	38643.901	363			
Person-Work Bullying	Between Groups	1789.444	3	596.481	9.823	<.01
	Within Groups	21859.223	360	60.720		
	Total	23648.668	363			
Physical and Psychological Intimidation	Between Groups	126.083	3	42.028	11.837	<.01
	Within Groups	1292.393	364	3.551		
	Total	1418.476	367			
Occupational Devaluation	Between Groups	14.717	3	4.906	3.477	<.05
	Within Groups	513.533	364	1.411		
	Total	528.250	367			

Table 4: Showing the multiple comparison of Education on Work-Place Bullying

S/N	Education	1	2	3	4	Mean	SD
1	MSc/PhD	-				29.12	7.8
2	BSc/HND	-.1.18	-			30.29	7.8
3	OND/NCE/Diploma	-4.79*	-3.62*	-		33.91	12.6
4	SSCE/Primary	-8.18*	-7.01*	-3.39	-	37.30	12.6

Table 5: Showing the multiple comparison of Education on Person-Work Bullying

S/N	Education	1	2	3	4	Mean	SD
1	MSc/PhD	-				26.68	6.2
2	BSc/HND	-.67	-			23.34	6.3
3	OND/NCE/Diploma	-3.46*	-2.79*	-		26.13	9.9
4	SSCE/Primary	-6.02*	-5.36*	-2.57	-	28.70	11.3

Table 6: Showing the multiple comparison of Education on Physical and Psychological Intimidation

S/N	Education	1	2	3	4	Mean	SD
1	MSc/PhD	-				3.81	1.4
2	BSc/HND	-.20	-			4.01	1.6
3	OND/NCE/Diploma	-.94*	-.74*	-		4.75	2.2
4	SSCE/Primary	-1.58*	-1.38*	-.64	-	5.4	2.9

Table 7: Showing the multiple comparison of Education on Occupational Devaluation

S/N	Education	1	2	3	4	Me
1	MSc/PhD	-				2.6
2	BSc/HND	-.31*	-			2.9
3	OND/NCE/Diploma	-.49*	-.19	-		3.1
4	SSCE/Primary	-.46*	-.16	-.03	-	3.1

Results from table 3 reveal that the work place bullying and its sub-dimensions (person-work bullying, physical and psychological intimidation, and occupational devaluation) were significantly influenced by education [$(F (3, 360) = 10.999, p < .01)$; $(F (3, 360) = 9.823, p < .01)$; $(F (3, 364) = 11.837, p < .01)$ and $(F (3, 364) = 3.477, p < .05)$ respectively].

Further observations of means and mean differences in table 4 reveal that employees who work with SSCE and Primary school certificate experience the highest level of work place bullying (X = 37.30, S.D= 12.6), followed by those with OND/NCE and Diploma (X = 33.91, S.D= 12.6), then those with BSc and HND (X = 30.29, S.D= 7.8). Thus, employees with MSc and PhD are the least bullied (X = 29.12, S.D= 7.8). This trend is similar for the sub-dimensions of work place bullying namely, person-work bullying (table 5), occupational devaluation (table 6) and physical and psychological intimidation (table 7). Hence, the hypothesis is confirmed.

Hypothesis 4 states that there will be significant institutional differences in work place bullying. The hypothesis was tested with an independent sample t-test as seen in table 8.

Table 8: T-Test Showing the Difference in institutional differences in Work Place Bullying

DV	Institution	N	X	SD	Df	T	P
Work Place Bullying	U I	244	32.93	11.0			
					362	3.985	<.01
	Unilag	120	28.43	7.9			
Person-Work Bullying	U I	244	25.35	8.6			
					362	3.535	<.01
	Unilag	120	22.22	6.4			
Physical and Psychological Intimidation	U I	248	4.57	2.2			
					366	4.465	<.01
	Unilag	120	3.62	1.2			
Occupational devaluation	U I	248	3.01	1.2			
					366	3.094	<.01
	Unilag	120	2.60	1.1			

Results from table 8 show that the work place bullying and its sub-dimensions (person-work bullying, physical and psychological intimidation, as well as occupational devaluation) are significantly different in the two institutions studied [(t (362) = 3.985, p<.01); (t (362) = 3.535, p<.01); (t (366) = 4.465, p<.01) and (t (366) = 3.094, p<.01) respectively].

Further observation of means reveal that work place bullying is higher in University of Ibadan (X = 32.93, S.D= 11.0), than in University of Lagos

(X = 28.43, S.D= 7.9). This trend is similar for the sub-dimensions of work place bullying namely, person-work bullying, occupational devaluation and physical and psychological intimidation. Hence, the hypothesis is confirmed.

DISCUSSION

The main objective of the study was to examine, gender, personality and organizational factors that predict workplace bullying among university employees. Four hypotheses was tested and confirmed.

Hypotheses one, which states that there will be a significant relationship between personality factors, job autonomy, organizational factors and workplace bullying, was confirmed. The results revealed that organizational culture and neuroticism had significant positive relationship with workplace bullying while job autonomy, conscientiousness, agreeableness, and openness to experience had a significant inverse relationship with workplace bullying. In addition, job autonomy correlates inversely with organizational culture, this result aligns with Coyne et al., (2003) which proposes that as far as personality is concerned, neuroticism has been the major focus, and has been found to be a potentially important factor in bullying. Warr (2007) opines that the idea of a differential reactivity to environmental stressors is high with those who exhibit neuroticism traits, which could increase their risk of becoming victims of bullying. Bowling et al., (2010), explains that under distressing working conditions, highly neurotic employees may engage more in annoying behaviors, which could lead potential perpetrators to bully them.

Hypothesis two which states, that personality factors and organizational factors will predict workplace bullying both jointly and independently was confirmed. The results show that personality factors significantly jointly predicted workplace bullying. The independent contribution of neuroticism and openness to experience were significant. In addition, the contribution of openness to experience, job autonomy, and organizational culture were significant. The independent contribution of agreeableness, extraversion, and openness to experience were substantial. The workplace bullying literature strongly suggests that an organization's culture and re-

lated climate play an important role in the manifestation of hostile behaviors at work. This is because they influence how members define and perceive the nature of interpersonal interaction as well as how they respond and manage such interactions (Lester, 2009). According to (Hoel & Salin, 2003), cultures that "breed" bullying and hostility are variously characterized as competitive, adversarial, and highly politicized, with autocratic or authoritarian leadership that does not tolerate nonconformity. Varita (1996) in a survey in Finland reported that victims of workplace bullying were higher in neuroticism than were non-victims. However, when work environment and climate were controlled, the relation was reduced.

Hypothesis 3, which states that the experience of workplace bullying will be significantly differentiated by educational qualification, was confirmed. The results revealed that workplace bullying and its sub-dimensions were significantly influenced by education. From the results, it showed that employees who work with SSCE and primary school certificate experience the highest level of workplace bullying, followed by those with OND/NCE, then those with BSc and HND. Employees with MSc and PhD are the least bullied. These findings align with, Bernado Moerno-Jimenez et.al (1994), stating that, bullying and its sub-dimensions show a significant result in relation to educational level. In their research, the group with an elementary level of education reported significantly more bullying than either the group with a medium (secondary) level of education or the group with higher education.

Hypothesis 4, which states that, there will be significant institutional differences in workplace bullying, was confirmed. The result shows that workplace bullying and its sub-dimensions are significantly different in the two institutions studied. Workplace bullying is higher in the University of Ibadan, than the University of Lagos. This observed difference has not been reported in any literature. Hence, the reason for this observed difference might be unclear unless a qualitative approach is employed for further inquiry into the differences inherent in the two universities.

CONCLUSION

From its findings, this study concludes that agreeableness, conscientiousness, and openness to experience had significant inverse relationship with workplace bullying. This shows that the more cooperative and polite an employee is, while also being task focused, orderly, and having broader range of interest for new skills, the less they perceive workplace bullying. This is because an agreeable person is supportive and respectful to the organization, so will not see any set down rule as bully. A conscientious person is attentive, committed, and organized; therefore, a bully's behavior might not mean anything to him/her. An employee with enough experience to work is likely to want to know more with the organization, there is interest to novelty; such individual will have a low perception of workplace bullying. Neuroticism had a significant relationship with workplace bullying, neurotic individuals are emotionally unstable which makes them prone to negative emotions like anxiety, depression, irritation etc. this behavior will make an employee to be too sensitive and easily offended, thereby increasing the perception of workplace bullying.

In addition, organizational culture was significantly correlated with workplace bullying. This established that some ideologies, code of conducts, traditions etc. practiced in the universities breed and support workplace bullying. Traditions such as power play between the university staff, and the highly ranked system that placed the academic staff above non-academic staff regardless of qualification, age and experience, increase workplace bullying. Job autonomy and organizational culture had a significant positive relationship; this suggests that the degree of freedom a university employee has to carry out his/her job promotes shared values, beliefs, and norms of the university. In addition, findings help to reveal that the gender of a university employee will not influence or elicit bullying behavior. This implies that being a male or female does not expose one to being bullied in the workplace.

Moreover, this study affirmed that the educational qualification of university employees affects the likelihood of their being bullied, that is: university employees who have a higher qualification do not perceive bullying while employees with lower educational qualification do so. Also from the

study, employees of the University of Ibadan experience bullying in workplace more than the employees of University of Lagos do.

As a reason of the results obtained, it is recommended that university councils develop or design a programme that will reduce workplace bullying among university employees. An organizational culture that is friendly, which does not stifle and shock employees should be practiced. Leaders should be trained to understand people and their situations. That is, managers and leaders in the university should be sensitive to the personality of their employees. These checks and balances are expected to ameliorate workplace bullying and enhance a better cohesion among university employees.

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