

Abstract: Prevalence of workplace cyberbullying and its mediating role in the associations between work stressors and outcomes.

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Introduction: Workplace bullying (WB) is defined as a long-term process in which an employee can be frequently confronted with negative behavior over a period of time and unable to defend. Recently workplace cyberbullying (WCB), an online form of workplace bullying, has gained more attention. Essentially, this WCB is defined as all the negative behaviors (i.e., person-related, work-related, and intrusion) occurring through using information and communication technology. Empirical studies emphasize that WCB forms a real problem in organizations through their negative outcomes (i.e., at individual level, and organizational level). Studies have also assumed that work related antecedents might relate to WCB. Despite the review from the literature, there is a lack of integrated overview regarding the association of WCB with work stressors at one end and the association of workplace cyberbullying with their negative outcomes at the other end, in the comprehensive manner. Furthermore, there is also need to know the current scenario of the WCB in the working population to direct the preventive measures.

Study aims: To find the prevalence rate of WCB. To explore the mediating role of WCB in the association between work stressors (i.e., workload, role conflict, role ambiguity, and job insecurity) and their outcomes (i.e., emotional exhaustion, detachment, general unwell-being, intention to leave, and job satisfaction).

Method: A cross-sectional dataset was collected through an external research bureau. A standardized questionnaire, developed from validated measurement scales (i.e., ICA-W, UBOS, GHQ-12, SIMPH, and WOCCQ), was used among 1001 Belgian working population during October 2018. The data were analyzed in the statistical software SPSS version 25.0. The association between independent variables and dependent variables were tested using correlation matrix and HMRA. Finally, statistical significance for the mediation (Baron and Kenny mediation) was tested by Sobel test.

Results: About 9.0% of study participants had experienced WCB. While, about 4.1% respondents had both types (offline and online) of negative experiences in the same timeframe. The results indicate the rise in role stressors (role conflict and role ambiguity) and job insecurity associated to increase experience of WCB. Similarly, increase in experiences of WCB is found to be statistical significant with increase level of emotional exhaustion, detachment, general unwell-being, lower job satisfaction and consequently high intention to leave.

In the mediation model, WCB mediates the increase in exposure to work stressors (i.e., role stressors and job insecurity) associated with increase amount of detachment and general unwell-being among target.

Conclusion: The significant findings emphasize that the prevention of WCB as important as WB, to promote health and well being of the working population. This

study recommends the targeted preventive measures (i.e., training, coping strategies) to tackle WCB.

Key Words: Workplace cyberbullying, workplace bullying, WCB, WB, Work stressors, mediation, hierarchical regression analysis.