EPH-International Journal of Business & Management Science

WORKPLACE BULLYING AMONG FEMALE FACULTY MEMBERS IN HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS: AN EXPLORATORY STUDY FROM HARYANA

[1*]Kirti, [2]Dr. Hawa Singh, [3]Dr. Shweta Mittal

[1]Research Scholar, Department of Management, Gurugram University, Gurugram,*
Email: kbagri83825@gmail.com
[2]Assistant Professor, Department of Management, Gurugram University, Gurugram
Email: hawasingh@gurugramuniversity.ac.in
[3]Faculty, Indian Institute of Public Administration
Email: f12shwetam@iima.ac.in

Corresponding Author:*Kirti, kbagri83825@gmail.com*

Article History
Received:*2026-03-15*
Revised:*2026-05-11*
Accepted:*2026-06-07*
Published:*2026-06-30*

Abstract
Workplace bullying has become a serious organizational and human resource management concern because it negatively affects employees' psychological well-being, workplace relationships and institutional effectiveness. The objective of the current study is to determine the main aspects of workplace bullying among female faculty members employed by particular Haryana higher education institutions. For the study, a descriptive research approach was chosen. A sample of 260 respondents was chosen using proportionate stratified selection from the population of 4,136 female faculty members from ten chosen universities. A systematic questionnaire with a five-point Likert scale from Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree was used to gather primary data. The underlying aspects of workplace bullying were determined using Principal Component Analysis (PCA) with Varimax Rotation. Person-Related Bullying, Work-Related Bullying, Career-Related Bullying, Social Exclusion and Intimidation-Related Bullying were the five main dimensions identified by the research. The findings show that bullying at work is a complex problem that involves intimidation, exclusionary behavior, career-related limitations, job pressure and interpersonal animosity. The report emphasizes how important it is for universities to provide encouraging work environments, strong anti-bullying regulations, counselling programs and open grievance procedures. Resolving workplace bullying can boost institutional efficacy, develop relationships at work and promote employee well-being.

Keywords: *Workplace Bullying, Female Faculty, Higher Education Institutions, Organizational Climate, Human Resource Management*

Vol. 12 Issue 6 (June 2026)
ISSN: 2208-2190 Pages- 102-108
DOI: https://doi.org/10.69980/6k62vf65

1.Introduction

Bullying at work is now a significant workplace and human resource management problem for workers in various industries and countries. It is an ongoing pattern of negative acts, intimidation, harassment and hostile behaviour towards an employee who cannot effectively defend himself or herself. (Einarsen et al., 1994). These consist of verbal abuse, humiliation, lack of information, too much criticism, social exclusion and overloading workloads, among others (Keashly, 2002; Zapf et al., 1996). Typically, workplace bullying is broken down into two classifications: work-related workplace bullying and person-related workplace bullying. The difference between work-related and person-related bullying is that the former includes unfair workloads, excessive monitoring and unreasonable deadlines, while the latter includes teasing and insulting comments and spreading rumors (Einarsen & Hoel, 2001). Bullying in the workplace has been a growing concern in recent years, due to the negative impact it has on individuals and on the functioning of organisations (Zapf & Einarsen, 2001).

The negative impact of workplace bullying on the psychological health of employees is not only significant but also has an impact on organizational commitment, employee engagement and institutional effectiveness. A number of previous studies have identified the emotional abuse, aggression and psychological stress that can result from bullying among staff (Cox et al., 2010; Hoel et al., 2001). Victims of bullying frequently suffer from anxiety, emotional exhaustion, depression and low self-esteem, which have a bad impact on their professional and personal life (Vartia-Väänänen, 2003). Employees' emotional stability and confidence at work are decreased by fear, frustration and nervousness due to bullying. Furthermore, workplace bullying has been linked with physical complaints, mental stress and poor quality of work life which has a negative impact on organizational relationships and employee morale.

There are several studies that have focused on the link between workplace bullying, job satisfaction and job performance. Bullying victims typically complain of decreased job satisfaction, poor morale and dissatisfaction with supervisors and co-workers (Lapierre et al., 2005). In addition, workplace bullying leads to absenteeism, intention to leave the company and to lower productivity, which makes the organization less effective (Leymann, 1996). Oghojafor et al. (2012) noted that the adverse effect of bullying on employee engagement and organizational performance. Bullying can lead to an unhealthy work environment, to a decrease in collaboration and to a decrease in the efficiency of the institution in knowledge-oriented institutions like university. Bullying can have a negative impact on the well-being of faculty members and the climate of higher education institutions they work in, as it relies heavily on faculty commitment, teamwork and faculty interaction.

There are also strong links between psychological resilience and self-esteem and workplace bullying. Victim may experience emotional fatigue, stress and lack in confidence. In recent years, the importance of self-compassion and one's own psychological resources in reducing the negative impact of bullying has been highlighted (Luo et al., 2019). In a similar way, Thimm (2017) proposed that self-efficacy helps employees to better manage their work stressors and helps to lower their levels of anxiety and depression in the workplace. Bullying behaviours are often associated with low work engagement and psychological distress and employee performance in high stress job settings (Paul & Kee, 2020; Park & Ono, 2017). Workplace bullying can be considered one of the most significant stressors in the workplace, causing employees to lose their psychological reserves, as well as their engagement and productivity, according to Bakker et al. (2014). Even though the topic of workplace bullying is gaining momentum, there are few studies that have explored the workplace bullying dimensions at the organizational management perspective among female faculty members of higher educational Institutions in Haryana.

It is essential to have an understanding of workplace bullying in the context of Higher Education Institutions to create effective Human Resource Policies, Grievance Procedures and supportive organizational environments. Colleges and universities where employee dignity, fairness and professional respect are encouraged will more likely enhance employee engagement, institutional harmony and long-term organizational effectiveness. Hence, it is important to explore workplace bullying among female faculty members to enhance the overall well-being of employees and sustainability of the institution.

Objectives of the Study

1. To find out the dimensions of workplace bullying among the female faculty members of higher education institutions of Haryana.
2. To analyze organization and psychological effects of workplace bullying on female faculty members.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Workplace Bullying

Vol. 12 Issue 6 (June 2026)
ISSN: 2208-2190 Pages- 102-108
DOI: https://doi.org/10.69980/6k62vf65

Bullying in the workplace is now a significant problem in organizations in a variety of industries and countries. It is defined as repeated negative actions, including harassment, intimidation, humiliation, verbal abuse and social exclusion, toward an employee who is unable to protect himself or herself effectively (Einarsen et al., 1994; Leymann, 1996). Keashly (2002) described workplace bullying as emotional abuse and unhealthy interpersonal relationships, which adversely impact on the psychological health of workers. Likewise, Zapf et al. (1996) highlighted the systematic and persistent nature of bullying, which leads to the harm done to employees' dignity and work environment. Workplace bullying has attracted much research interest in the scholarly literature because of the negative consequences it has on employees' health, job satisfaction and organizational commitment (Hoel et al., 2001).

Bullying at work has been broken down into various aspects by researchers. According to Einarsen and Hoel et al. (2001) bullying can be divided into work-related and person-related types. Excessive monitoring, workloads (unfair) and information (withholding) are forms of work-related bullying while insults, teasing, humiliation and gossiping are forms of person-related bullying. Salin (2003) also noted that organizational structure, leadership behaviour, power differences and stressful working environments are also significant factors in bullying behaviours.

2.2 Workplace Bullying and Organizational Climate

The climate of an organization is important in the prevalence of workplace bullying. Vartia-Väänänen (2003) identified various factors which lead to bullying incidents, such as poor communication, conflict oriented environments and weak psychological workplace conditions. Likewise, Hoel et al. (2001) posited that destructive conflict, poor leadership and organizational injustice are linked to the occurrence of bullying behaviours in organizations. Research in developing countries has also confirmed that the factors contributing to workplace bullying include the weak institutional practices and poor organizational culture (Oghojafor et al., 2012; Ahmer et al., 2009). An unhealthy institutional culture can negatively impact professional relationships and employee engagement and/or institutional harmony within higher education institutions.

2.3 Workplace Bullying, Stress and Burnout

The psychological effects of workplace bullying have been extensively discussed in earlier studies. According to Cox et al., (2010) workplace stress is a situation that occurs when the demands of the workplace exceed the coping capacity of the employee. Workplace bullying often causes anxiety, emotional exhaustion, depression and psychological stress. Go to Vartia-Väänänen, (2003) who also noted that bullying can have a negative impact on the psychological well-being and emotional health of employees. Deery et al. (2011) found that workplace harassment has a negative impact on employee morale and stress.

Bullying in the workplace also leads to burnout and poor performance in the organisation. Schaufeli and Bakker (2004) found three important components of work engagement, namely vigor, dedication and absorption. Bakker et al. (2014) found that continued contact with hostility in the workplace negatively impacts employee engagement and productivity. Park and Ono (2017) found that bullying has negative impacts on employee commitment and intentions to leave. The significance of self-compassion, resilience and mindfulness on decreasing the psychological effects of workplace bullying has also been emphasized in recent literature (Luo et al., 2019).

2.4 Research Gap

Workplace bullying has been the subject of significant attention in the west, but there is less research in developing countries and higher education institutions. Past research primarily focuses on psychological issues and only a few studies have addressed organizational climate and management aspects. Further, the empirical evidence on workplace bullying related to female faculty members in higher education institutions of Haryana is also limited. Hence, the current study aims to investigate the main dimensions of workplace bullying and organizational consequences of workplace bullying among female faculty members.

3. Research Methodology

3.1 Research Design

This study used a descriptive research design to investigate the salient aspects of workplace bullying among female faculty members of the higher education institutions in Haryana. The descriptive design was considered appropriate as it helps in systematically describing and analyzing behavioural and organizational issues associated with workplace bullying. The study focused on identifying the important dimensions of bullying experienced by female faculty members in their workplace environment.

Vol. 12 Issue 6 (June 2026)
ISSN: 2208-2190 Pages- 102-108
DOI: https://doi.org/10.69980/6k62vf65

3.2 Population and Sampling

The selected population of the study was the female faculty members in selected state, central and private universities of Haryana. The data in the population framework has been prepared after the information available in the official website of the University Grants Commission (UGC), to assure authenticity and accurate information. The identified total number of female faculty members in 10 universities were 4136.
The respondents were selected from the identified universities by using proportionate stratified sampling technique. The sampling method provided good representation of female faculty members across various Higher Education Institutions that were part of the study. A final number of 260 respondents was selected for data collection based on the proportions of female faculty members in the selected Universities.

3.3 Data Collection and Instrumentation

Data for the study was primary data which were obtained from the structured questionnaire. The survey comprised of statements pertaining to workplace bullying among women faculty of Higher Educational Institutions. The instrument was designed to assess various aspects of workplace bullying such as person-related bullying, work-related bullying, social exclusion, intimidation and career-related bullying.
Responses were measured on a five point Likert scale with 1 indicating “Strongly Agree” and 5 indicating “Strongly Disagree.” The Likert scale was deemed suitable as it allowed the respondents to systematically express their perceptions and experiences on workplace bullying.

3.4 Data Analysis Techniques

In order to identify the many aspects of workplace bullying, the gathered data was statistically evaluated using the appropriate method. Prior to factor analysis, the adequacy and suitability of the data were assessed using Bartlett's Test of Sphericity and Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) Measure of Sampling Adequacy. Additionally, the characteristics associated with workplace bullying among female faculty members were identified using PCA with Varimax Rotation. The primary causes of workplace bullying in HEIs were identified with the use of factor analysis.

4. Analysis and Findings

The present study has focused on the major dimensions of workplace bullying among female faculty members of selected higher education institutions of Haryana. To discover the underlying factors of workplace bullying, KMO Measure of Sampling Adequacy, Bartlett's Test of Sphericity and PCA with Varimax Rotation were used. Use of analysis assisted in the consideration of the appropriateness of data and in the identification of key aspects of workplace bullying that employees experienced in the organizational context.
The validity of the data obtained for factor analysis was first checked by KMO and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity. The tests were run to check if the variables were highly correlated enough to proceed with factor extraction using PCA.

Table 1. KMO and Bartlett’s Test for Workplace Bullying

KMO and Bartlett's Test		
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy		.847
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	5427.708
	df	253
	Sig.	.000

As shown in the Table 1, the KMO value is 0.847, which is high and it indicates that sampling is adequate and it can be used for the factor analysis. The value is higher than the recommended value (0.70), so the correlation between the variables was taken as sufficiently compact to be able to extract reliable factors. Bartlett’s Test of Sphericity was also found to be statistically significant with a Chi-square value of 5427.708 and significance level of 0.000. The big, meaningful result is one that shows that there are meaningful relationships between the variables. So, the data were deemed suitable for the PCA.
PCA was used to determine the dimensions of workplace bullying that are important. The number of extracted factors and the percentage of variance explained by each factor was determined using the Total Variance Explained table.

Table 2. Total Variance Explained for Workplace Bullying

Vol. 12 Issue 6 (June 2026)
ISSN: 2208-2190 Pages- 102-108
DOI: https://doi.org/10.69980/6k62vf65

Component	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	9.098	39.559	39.559
2	3.094	13.452	53.011
3	2.361	10.264	63.274
4	1.698	7.384	70.658
5	1.271	5.528	76.186

Table 2 shows that five components having an eigenvalue of more than one were extracted from the analysis. The five components accounted for 76.186 percent of the variance, suggesting that the extracted dimensions provide a good representation of the construct of workplace bullying. The first component accounted for the most variance (39.559 percent) and the other components were also significant in explaining the overall construct.

Further analysis was done using Rotated Component Matrix with Varimax Rotation to determine the factor loading and communalities of all workplace bullying variables.

Table 3. Rotated Component Matrix for Workplace Bullying

Codes	Communalities	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Factor 4	Factor 5
PRW5	.813	.827				
PRW4	.788	.814				
PRW6	.751	.810				
PRW3	.789	.799				
PRW1	.810	.752				
PRW2	.717	.724				
WRB1	.857		.886			
WRB2	.707		.827			
WRB5	.724		.823			
WRB6	.784		.801			
WRB4	.731		.776			
WRB3	.736		.749			
CWB4	.832			.863		
CWB1	.752			.820		
CWB2	.790			.796		
CWB3	.716			.775		
SOE3	.868				.821	
SOE2	.800				.804	
SOE1	.868				.803	
SOE4	.771				.781	
IWB2	.799					.889
IWB1	.786					.880
IWB3	.734					.850

From the results presented in the table 3 it can be seen that all communalities were in the range 0.707 to 0.868 which means that a significant amount of variance in each variable was attributed to the factors extracted. Through PCA, 5 major dimensions of workplace bullying were identified. Verbal aggression, teasing and insulting communication were all aspects of Person-Related Bullying. Excessive monitoring, criticism and unreasonable work pressure was considered Work-Related Bullying. Career-Related Bullying was indicative of denial of recognition and restriction on career advancement. Social Exclusion was characterised by isolation and by unfair treatment, while Intimidation-Related Bullying was equivalent to threatening and aggressive behaviour in the workplace. The overall results of the factor extracted are suitable for explaining the multi-dimensionality of workplace bullying among female faculty members in higher education institutions.

5. Discussion

The result of the study shows that workplace bullying among female faculty members is not just a problem of two people in an organization but it is a multidimensional problem of an organization. The five factors

Vol. 12 Issue 6 (June 2026)
ISSN: 2208-2190 Pages- 102-108
DOI: https://doi.org/10.69980/6k62vf65
extracted (person related bullying, work related bullying, career related bullying, social exclusion and intimidation related bullying) demonstrate that there are other types of bullying behaviors and managerial responses in HEIs. This substantiates the idea that repeated negative behaviors have an impact on the workplace and employees' dignity (Einarsen et al., 1994; Leymann, 1996).

With the rise of person-related bullying as a significant issue, it is a clear concern that personal attacks, insults, teasing and verbal aggression are still a concern for female faculty members. These actions could affect employees' self-esteem, confidence and professional image. This is in line with previous research that included emotional abuse and problematic interpersonal relationships as core components of workplace bullying (Keashly & Harvey, 2005; Zapf et al., 1996). Person related bullying can have negative effects in academic institutions, where respect and intellectual collaboration are a key factor and relationships between colleagues are crucial.

Another significant dimension was identified as work-related bullying, suggesting that unreasonable deadlines, excessive monitoring, workloads and criticism may cause pressure for faculty members. This demonstrates the influence of the organizational systems and managerial practices on bullying experiences. The Job Demands-Resources approach suggests that overstimulating job demands and insufficient job resources can result in strain, burnout and decreased engagement (Bakker et al., 2014; Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004). Thus, bullying in the workplace should not be limited to the individual's actions but also be considered as a symptom of poor workload management, supervision and HR practices.

A factor connected to career bullying points out the bad impact of not getting recognition, restricting advancement and career opportunities. Such behaviours can have an impact on the motivation, job satisfaction and long-term commitment to the profession for female faculty members. Previous studies have found that the general level of job satisfaction can be diminished and negative organizational outcomes can occur when workplace aggression occurs (Lapierre et al., 2005). In higher education, career-related bullying can also impact on research productivity, on academic involvement and on institutional performance.

Workplace bullying can also be silent and aggressive as evidenced by social exclusion and intimidation related bullying. Issues of isolation, gossip, non-inclusion and unfair treatment have a negative impact on organizational climate, as do threats and intimidation, which cause fear and insecurity. These results are consistent with the results of the studies indicating that bullying is related to the poor quality of the work environment, psychological distress and a decrease in well-being (Vartia-Väänänen, 2003; Hoel et al., 2001). This can make employees feel less involved and make faculty more likely to leave their jobs (Park & Ono, 2017; Paul & Kee, 2020).

The results as a whole highlight the importance of having higher education institutions consider workplace bullying as a strategic human resource and organizational management issue. The identified dimensions indicate that the institutions should make an anti-bullying policy, grievance redressal system, supportive leadership practices and counselling system transparent. Tackling workplace bullying can have a positive impact on the quality of the organizational climate, on employee wellbeing and on the effectiveness of the institution.

6. Conclusion

The present study examined the major dimensions of workplace bullying among female faculty members working in selected higher education institutions of Haryana. The findings confirmed that workplace bullying is a multidimensional organizational issue that affects employees' psychological well-being, professional relationships and overall workplace climate. The factor analysis identified five major dimensions of workplace bullying: Person-Related Bullying, Work-Related Bullying, Career-Related Bullying, Social Exclusion and Intimidation-Related Bullying. The results indicate that female faculty members may experience bullying in the form of verbal aggression, insulting behaviour, excessive monitoring, unreasonable work pressure, denial of recognition, limited career opportunities, isolation, gossip and intimidation. These behaviours not only affect individual confidence and emotional health but also weaken organizational trust, employee engagement, morale and institutional effectiveness. The high communalities and factor loadings further indicate that the extracted factors adequately represent the workplace bullying construct. The study highlights the need for higher education institutions to treat workplace bullying as an important human resource and organizational management concern. Institutions should develop clear anti-bullying policies, transparent grievance redressal systems, counselling support, awareness programs and fair leadership practices. Promoting dignity, respect and inclusiveness at the workplace can help improve faculty well-being, strengthen organizational climate and enhance institutional performance. Overall, addressing workplace bullying is essential for creating a healthy, supportive and productive academic work environment.

Vol. 12 Issue 6 (June 2026)
ISSN: 2208-2190 Pages- 102-108
DOI: https://doi.org/10.69980/6k62vf65

References

1. Ahmer, S., Yousafzai, A. W., Siddiqi, M., Faruqui, R., Khan, R., & Zuberi, S. (2009). Bullying of trainee psychiatrists in Pakistan: a cross-sectional questionnaire survey. Academic Psychiatry, 33(4), 335-339.
2. Bakker, A. B., Demerouti, E., & Sanz-Vergel, A. I. (2014). Burnout and work engagement: The JD–R approach. Annual review of organizational psychology and organizational behavior, 1(2014), 389-411.
3. Cox, T., Griffiths, A., & Rial, E. (2010). Work related stress. Occupational health psychology, 31-56.
4. Deery, S., Walsh, J., & Guest, D. (2011). Workplace aggression: The effects of harassment on job burnout and turnover intentions. Work, employment and society, 25(4), 742-759.
5. Einarsen, S. (2001). The Negative Acts Questionnaire: Development, validation and revision of a measure of bullying at work. In Proceedings of the 10th European Congress on Work and Organizational Psychology, Prague, May 2001.
6. Einarsen, S., Raknes, B. R. I., & Matthiesen, S. B. (1994). Bullying and harassment at work and their relationships to work environment quality: An exploratory study. European journal of work and organizational psychology, 4(4), 381-401.
7. Hoel, H., Sparks, K., & Cooper, C. L. (2001). The cost of violence/stress at work and the benefits of a violence/stress-free working environment. Geneva: International Labour Organization, 81, 327-337.
8. Keashly, L., & Harvey, S. (2005). Emotional Abuse in the Workplace.
9. Keashly, L., & Jagatic, K. (2002). By any other name: American perspectives on workplace bullying. In Bullying and emotional abuse in the workplace (pp. 49-79). CRC press.
10. Lapierre, L. M., Spector, P. E., & Leck, J. D. (2005). Sexual versus nonsexual workplace aggression and victims' overall job satisfaction: a meta-analysis. Journal of occupational health psychology, 10(2), 155.
11. Leymann, H. (1996). The content and development of mobbing at work. European journal of work and organizational psychology, 5(2), 165-184.
12. Luo, Y., Meng, R., Li, J., Liu, B., Cao, X., & Ge, W. (2019). Self-compassion may reduce anxiety and depression in nursing students: a pathway through perceived stress. Public health, 174, 1-10.
13. Oghojafor, B. E. A., Muo, F. I., & Olufayo, T. O. (2012). Perspective of bullying problem at workplace in Nigeria: the experience of workers. International Journal of Arts and Commerce, 1(3), 1-18.
14. Park, J. H., & Ono, M. (2017). Effects of workplace bullying on work engagement and health: The mediating role of job insecurity. The International Journal of Human Resource Management, 28(22), 3202-3225.
15. Paul, G. D., & Kee, D. M. H. (2020). HR, workplace bullying and turnover intention: The role of work engagement. Journal of Environmental Treatment Techniques, 8(1), 23-27.
16. Salin, D. (2003). Workplace Bullying among Business Professionals-Prevalence, Organizational Antecedents and Gender Differences (summary section only). Swedish School of Economics and Business Administration.
17. Schaufeli, W. B., & Bakker, A. B. (2004). Job demands, job resources and their relationship with burnout and engagement: A multi-sample study. Journal of Organizational Behavior: The International Journal of Industrial, Occupational and Organizational Psychology and Behavior, 25(3), 293-315.
18. Thimm, J. C. (2017). Relationships between early maladaptive schemas, mindfulness, self-compassion and psychological distress. International Journal of Psychology and Psychological Therapy, 17(1), 3-17.
19. Vartia-Väänänen, M. (2003). Workplace bullying: A study on the work environment, well-being and health.
20. Zapf, D., & Einarsen, S. (2001). Bullying in the workplace: Recent trends in research and practice− an introduction. European Journal of work and organizational psychology, 10(4), 369-373.
21. 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.