Workplace Bullying and Counterproductive Work Behavior: The Mediation Role of Emotional Labor

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Abstract. Bullying in the workplace is a negative behavior and has many harmful consequences for the organization, including counterproductive work behaviors. The present study explores the above causal relationship while examining the mediating role of emotional labor. Both qualitative and quantitative research methods are used. Qualitative research was carried out with two phases of group discussion with 10 employees working in enterprises in Vietnam and expert interviews with 6 experts in business administration. Quantitative research is carried out through a pilot test and formal research. The pilot test collected 207 answer sheets, and the data were analyzed by SPSS software to check the scale's reliability. The formal research collected 1,206 questionnaires; then, the data was analyzed using SPSS and Smart PLS software. The results found a significant positive effect of employees being bullied at the workplace on their counterproductive work behaviors. At the same time, emotional labor acts as a mediator in this relationship, in which surface acting increases this positive effect, but deep acting attenuates it. Based on the results, the study proposes managerial implications for reducing workplace bullying, improving employees' emotional labor performance, and limiting counterproductive work behaviors.

Keywords: workplace bullying, surface acting, deep acting, emotional labor, workplace behavior, counterproductive work behavior.

1. Introduction

Studies have proven that workplace bullying is common worldwide, with widespread and pronounced global prevalence. It damages countries and organizations, and workplace bullying is physically and emotionally draining for the person being bullied (Einarsen & Skogstad, 1996). Given the pernicious and rapidly increasing nature of bullying, the World Health Organization has classified it as a major public threat requiring immediate attention and action (Spence & Nosko, 2015). Workplace bullying has a wide variety of consequences for employees, which is a significant threat to leaders, managers, and employees when they carry out their primary goals of ensuring their organizations operate at peak efficiency and secure a competitive advantage.

Being a victim of workplace bullying is also associated with several negative work-related attitudes, such as reduced job satisfaction, affective commitment, engagement, and intention to quit (Nielsen & Einarsen, 2012). Furthermore, workplace bullying is associated with reduced perceptions of equity, justice, and social support. As mental health declines as a result of exposure to workplace bullying, it is not surprising that victims have repeatedly found reduced job satisfaction (Bowling & Beehr, 2006; Nielsen & Einarsen, 2012; Loh et al., 2010; Olsen et al., 2017). In addition, being a victim of workplace bullying has been linked to a reduced perception of fairness and justice within the organization (Bowling & Beehr, 2006) and other forms, such as psychological contract violations (Rai & Agarwal, 2017). There is a growing body of evidence that links exposure to workplace bullying and an increase in deviant and counterproductive workplace behaviors, such as lying, damaging property, and being aggressive with other members or degrading the organized citizenship behavior (Ayoko et al., 2003; Bowling & Beehr, 2006; Naseer et al., 2018; Sarwar et al., 2020).

Researchers on the consequences of workplace bullying have focused on stressors and fatigue (Bowling & Beehr, 2006; Nielsen & Einarsen, 2012). Exposure to bullying in the workplace can be considered as the strongest and most frequent stressor in the workplace (Hauge et al., 2010). Furthermore, studies of work stress have consistently suggested that workplace stressors lead to adverse work attitudes (Nielsen & Einarsen, 2012). Keashly (2001) pointed out that exposure to workplace bullying can lead to a strong negative emotional response by the target. Indeed, Bowling & Beehr (2006) found in their meta-analysis that workplace bullying was significantly associated with a decrease in positive emotions and an increase in negative emotions in the workplace. As such, emotions are thought to play an important role in the meaningful relationship of workplace bullying.

Studies on workplace bullying have shown different results in different cultural and national characteristics (León-Pérez et al., 2021). While studies in Western countries find mostly negative outcomes, in contrast, studies in Eastern countries find a low negative, even beneficial, relationship with its victims. This is explained by a higher level of acceptance of bullying of victims in these countries (Majeed & Naseer, 2019; Naseer & Raja, 2021; Liang et al., 2020). Vietnam is a developing country with its culture and working environment diversity. With the characteristics of an Eastern country and the high Confucian ideology in Vietnam, this is an interesting research context that needs to be explored. The current study examines the relationship between workplace bullying and counterproductive work behavior. This relationship has been studied before and will be further discussed in the current study. However, the present study also examines the mediating role of emotional labor (surface acting and deep acting) in this relationship according to the stressor-emotion model of the counterproductive work behavior model of Spector & Fox (2005) with the research context of Vietnam. This is a new contribution to the theory about workplace bullying.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Workplace bullying

Workplace bullying is when employees face ongoing abuse, teasing, and insults, including unpleasant and unnecessary behaviors that occur regularly within the organization. Researchers have classified

workplace bullying using various terms, such as mobbing, emotional abuse, occupational stressor, workplace violence, workplace abuse, and harassment. However, these terms have something in common. Bullying is basically considered psychological violence (Namie R. and Namie G., 2009) and is expressed in behavior that lowers the target, such as threats, humiliation, criticism, etc. (Brotheridge & Lee, 2010). Bullying can be seen as repetitive and frequent behavior (Saam, 2010; Mathisen et al., 2011) directed at one or more members of an organization (Stogstad et al., 2011).

In this study, workplace bullying as a negative behavior is presented with the definition by Einarsen et al. (2020). Accordingly, workplace bullying is "harassing, offending, socially excluding someone or negatively affecting someone's work tasks. For the label of bullying to be applied to a particular activity, interaction, or process, it has to occur repeatedly and regularly (e.g., weekly) and over some time (e.g., about six months). Bullying is an escalating process in which the person confronted ends up in an inferior position and becomes the target of systematic negative social acts". This is the most common definition used in most research on workplace bullying.

2.2. Counterproductive work behavior

Counterproductive work behavior " intentionally harms the organization's health" (Rotundo & Sackett, 2002). This definition covers many specific acts, such as theft, vandalism, violence, etc. Counterproductive work behaviors include deviant behaviors concerning people (arguing with co-workers) and organizations (absence, late coming to work). These deviant behaviors are associated with negative consequences at the individual (Aubé et al., 2009) and organizational levels (Rogers & Kelloway, 1997).

The main feature of counterproductive work behaviors is that their actions must have a purpose. This means that the employee decides to behave in a way specifically intended to cause harm. If there are no purposeful efforts from employees to perform poorly and cause harm to the organization, the action is not counterproductive work behavior. A further feature is that counterproductive work behaviors are an observable harmful effect rather than unobservable antecedent factors such as motivation (e.g., intent to harm) or some other construct (e.g., social norms, deviance, etc.). It also includes off-duty behaviors, complaining, improper task performance, abuse of privileges, and other behaviors (Koopmans et al., 2011). The counterproductive work behaviors reduce the overall performance of employees (Koopmans et al., 2016; Binod et al., 2023).

2.3. Emotional labor

Businesses often display rules to ensure politeness, order, or organizational culture. Studies on workplace bullying have shown that employees also face bullying, abuse, and aggression from supervisors or co-workers (Tepper, 2000). Therefore, they need to perform emotional labor (surface acting and deep acting) to have emotional expressions that conform to these display rules and also to be able to maintain a positive working environment or better relationships (Carlson et al., 2012).

The process by which employees must manage their own or others' emotions as part of their job role is what researchers call "emotional labor." Over the years, researchers have paid great attention to emotional labor in the workplace (Hochschild, 2012; Cropanzano et al., 2004). Grandey (2000) has defined the term as the process of aligning both emotions and performance toward organizational goals. Meanwhile, Pizam (2008) said this is expressing or suppressing one's emotions to please others. According to Hochschild (2012), workers actively regulate their emotions to produce publicly observable facial and body expressions and produce desirable emotional states in others (i.e., clients) as part of their job role. This is performed through the surface and deep acting (Hochschild, 2012). These two components are positively correlated (Brotheridge & Lee, 2003), so employees can combine both strategies to comply with the display rules.

Pizam (2008) concluded that surface acting expresses or suppresses one's emotions to please others. In order to display the right emotions at work, individuals sometimes have to hide or fake their feelings (appearance). Employees performing surface acting simulate emotions they do not feel (e.g., fake smiles

at an upset customer) (Grandey, 2000). Surface acting also arises when internal emotions are in a state of "discomfort," but employees try to express external emotions that are acceptable to others (Grandey et al., 2013). For example, employees try to hide anger and frustration by showing humor and enthusiasm (Trigwell, 2012).

In many types of work, employees are subject to expectations about how they are supposed to behave with others. Some of those expectations relate specifically to the emotions appropriate for people to express or elicit in others. Employees manage their own emotions as part of their job responsibilities. According to Hochschild (2012), these behaviors create an emotional expression on the body and face. Deep acting is the employee's attempt to express genuine and acceptable emotions by internally and externally regulating emotions (Grandey, 2000). For example, flight attendants deal with misbehaving passengers by treating them as frightened children (Hochschild, 2012). In this study, bullied employees acted deeply to regulate their emotions and then expressed them outwardly so that internal and external emotions were roughly the same.

2.4. The stressor-emotion model of counterproductive work behavior
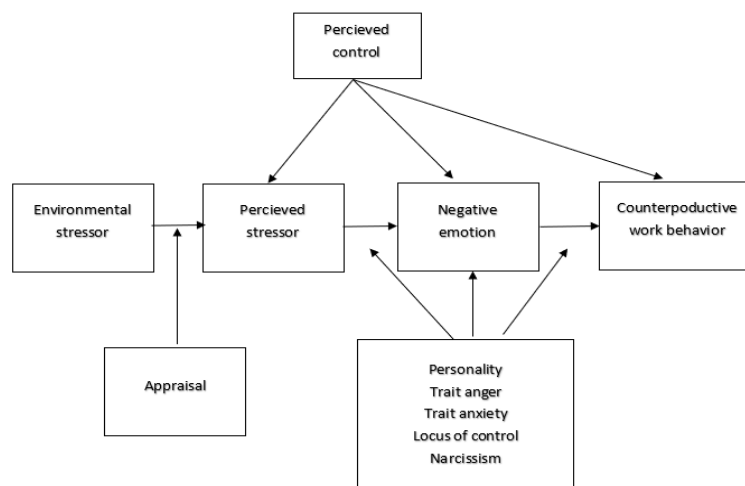

Fig.1: The stressor-emotion model of counterproductive work behavior

The stressor-emotion model of counterproductive work behavior was presented by Spector & Fox (2005). It shows a causal flow from the environment to environmental perception, assessment, emotion, and behavior. Perceived control and personality are important moderators of perceived stressors, negative emotions, and behavioral responses (counterproductive work behavior). At the heart of the model is the connection from the environment to perceptions, negative emotions, and counterproductive work behaviors. The process of counterproductive work behaviors begins on the left with work stressors. Stressors are caused by environmental conditions and cause negative emotional responses (Spector, 1998). Perceived stressors are considered the most important (Perrewe & Zellars, 1999) because they lead to negative emotional responses and counterproductive work behaviors.

Because workplace bullying behavior causes the victim to feel stress and fatigue (Bowling & Beehr, 2006; Nielsen & Einarsen, 2012), according to the above theoretical model, it affects the employees' emotions and leads to subsequent counterproductive work behaviors. Therefore, the present study uses the above model to explain the mediating role of emotion regulation and expression; here is emotional labor (surface acting and deep acting) in the relationship between workplace bullying and counterproductive work behavior.

2.5. Workplace bullying and counterproductive work behavior

Spector & Fox (2005) found the impact of social stressors (e.g., interpersonal conflict) on

counterproductive work behaviors and revealed that employees who experience negative emotions or dissatisfaction would retaliate through counterproductive work behaviors to combat the "hostile" agents that cause these negative feelings. In a meta-analysis, Bowling & Beehr (2006) found a significant positive effect of workplace harassment on counterproductive work behaviors and intention to quit. Furthermore, Ayoko et al. (2003) found that higher levels of workplace bullying and accompanying negative emotional reactions were associated with higher levels of counterproductive behaviors in the workplace. These results are consistent with the model of Spector & Fox (2005); internal status, including affective, emotional, or mental states inferred from employees' assessment or experience of the work environment (e.g., job characteristics, stressors). It then affects many employee activities and behaviors and counterproductive work behaviors. Devonish (2013) found that workplace bullying is responsible for work-related depressive symptoms and increases deviant workplace behaviors. Workplace bullying also leads to more deviant, inappropriate, or retaliation behaviors by employees (Sarwar et al., 2020; Naseer et al., 2018). Based on the above arguments, the following research hypothesis is proposed:

Hypothesis 1 (H1): Employee bullying in the workplace has the effect of increasing counterproductive work behaviors.

2.6. The mediation role of emotional labor

Most display rules in the workplace generally require employees to maintain a tirelessly positive, polite, and friendly expression (Grandey, 2003). When being bullied in the workplace, employees often have negative emotions, such as anger, that lead to inappropriate behavior, but they must personally follow the rules of emotional expression in the workplace (Diefendorff et al., 2006). This motivates them to perform surface and deep acting to regulate and express their emotions.

Surface acting is the immediate action of manifesting emotions that meet workplace display rules. Because the majority of bullying behavior is from superiors to employees (Hoel et al., 2010), and in Eastern cultures, employees often do not dare to display negative attitudes or emotions in response to these behaviors. As a result, victims of workplace bullying will often perform surface acting to instantly get the right relevant displays. Gou et al. (2021) also found that when ostracized, employees experience increased surface actings.

Since genuine emotions are not the same as expressed emotions, surface acting creates dissonance, a form of stressful role conflict (Hill et al., 2020). For this reason, employees may perceive the surface as a negative work experience that causes a negative assessment of the organization. As a result, employees may engage in behaviors that harm the organization. Bechtoldt et al. (2007) have also suggested that counterproductive work behaviors may provide a possibility of escape from emotional dissonance, a state found in performing surface acting. According to Spector & Fox's (2005) model, when experiencing workplace bullying, employees who make surface acting try to express positive emotions and suppress negative ones. The conflict in their emotions and behaviors will compromise their authenticity, making them more susceptible to mental fatigue and other negative psychology, thereby easily giving rise to counterproductive work behaviors (Wang & Lian, 2015). Thus, the proposed research hypothesis is as follows:

Hypothesis 2 (H2a): Surface acting acts as a mediator in the relationship between employee bullying in the workplace and counterproductive work behaviors by them.

When employees experience bullying, they experience feelings of stress. Performing deep acting helps victims regulate their internal and external emotions to conform to workplace displacement norms, and more importantly, the inner and outer emotions are unified. Raman et al. (2016) also concluded that deep acting unifies internal and external emotions as a mechanism for dealing with bullying behaviors. This makes employees not need to have more counterproductive work behaviors and relieves the stress they are experiencing. Unlike surface acting, depth acting is associated with more positive attitudes toward the organization (Hulsheger & Schewe, 2011; Kammeyer-Mueller et al., 2013). This is

completely consistent with Spector & Fox's (2005) model; when dealing with workplace bullying (a cause of stress) from deep acting, more positive emotions counteract the emergence of negative emotions, thereby can reduce negative behaviors. Based on the above arguments, the following research hypothesis is proposed:

Hypothesis 2 (H2b): Deep acting is a mediator in the relationship between employee workplace bullying and counterproductive work behaviors.

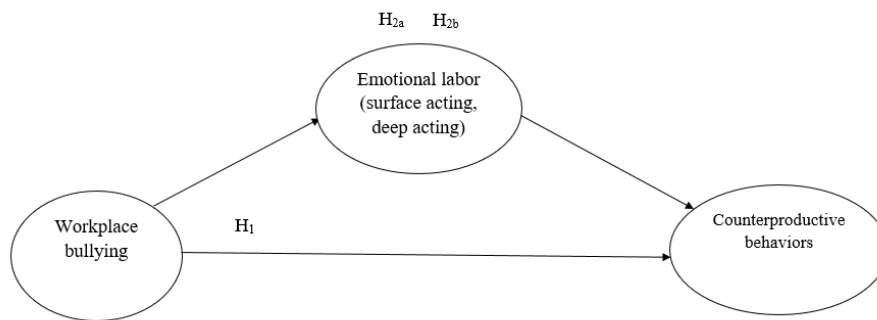Hence, this study proposed the research model in Figure 2.

Fig.2: Theoretical model

3. Methodology

Scale: Workplace bullying is measured by 22 items in the Negative Behavior Questionnaire-Revised (NAQ-R) by Einarsen et al. (2009). The surface and deep acting are measured by 4 items and 3 items by Brotheridge & Lee (2003) and Grandey (2003). At the same time, counterproductive work behaviors are measured by the 5 items by Koopmans et al. (2016). The scale is designed according to the Likert 5-point scale. The workplace bullying scale was rated from 1 to 5 with "1-Never", "2-Now and then", "3-Monthly ", "4-Weekly", and "5. Daily". Other scales were rated with "1-Totally disagree", "2-Disagree", "3-Neutral ", "4-Agree", and "5. Totally agree."

Research design: The study used qualitative and quantitative research methods. The first is implementing qualitative research to adjust the scale to suit the current research context. Qualitative research was carried out with two phases of group discussion with 10 employees working in enterprises in Vietnam and interviews with 6 experts in business management. Quantitative research is carried out through a pilot test and formal research. Before entering formal research, the pilot test checks the scale's reliability and convergence.

Qualitative research: At the group discussion stage, after editing the words, the study added 9 items, in which the scales of workplace bullying were added 3 items, surface acting scale was added 1 item, deep acting scale was added 2 items, and counterproductive work behaviors scale were added 3 items. At the end of the expert interview stage, the study removed 01 items from the workplace bullying scale, 3 items of the counterproductive work behavior scale and added 1 more item. The items eliminated at this stage were all supplemented by the group discussion stage. After qualitative research, the preliminary research scale have 40 items.

Quantitative research: In the pilot test stage, the preliminary questionnaire was designed, printed on paper and created a google form and then sent to employees who are working at enterprises in Vietnam. The study collected 207 answer sheets. Then, the scale was checked for reliability and discriminant by using SPSS software. The test results have excluded 04 observed variables of the workplace bullying scale because the total correlation is less than 0.3. The official scale of the study includes 36 observed variables.

In the formal research, the questionnaire after being printed and created in google form was sent and supported by members of the Vietnam Young Entrepreneurs Association for data collection. Paper answer sheets will be collected, while google form answers will be recorded. Paper answer sheets will be sealed and confidential so as not to reveal information of survey participants

4. Research results

4.1. Descriptive statistics of the study sample

The study obtained 1307 responses from the participants, of which 521 were online and 786 were on paper. After removing incomplete or invalid responses, 1206 responses were included in the data analysis.

Table 1. Descritptive statistics of the study sample

		N= 1206	
		Frequency	**Percentage (%)**
Gender	Male	493	40.9
	Female	713	59.1
Age	18-25 years old	379	31.4
	26-35 years old	515	42.7
	36-45 years old	212	17.6
	Above 46 years old	100	8.3
Monthly income (USD)	< 425 USD	133	11.0
	425-850 USD	630	52.2
	850-1275 USD	335	27.8
	> 1275 USD	108	9.0
Education	Eelementary to high school	76	6.3
	College	221	18.3
	University	581	48.2
	Postgraduate	328	27.2

Gender: There are 753 female employees at enterprises in Vietnam participating in the study, accounting for 59.1%. The remaining number of male employees accounts for a smaller proportion of 40.9%.

Age: There are two groups of employees that make up the majority of the study sample, which are 18 to 25 years old and 26 to 35 years old with 31.4% and 42.7% respectively. The oldest group of employees, aged 46 and older, accounted for the smallest share at 8.3%. The rest is a group of employees aged from 36 to 45 years old.

Monthly income: The majority of the sample is a group of employees with a monthly income of between $425 and $850, accounting for 52.2%. The group with the highest income, with a monthly income of more than $1275, accounts for the lowest proportion with only 9%. The group with the lowest income (under $425/month) also accounted for a low proportion with 11%. The remaining group of employees with income from $850 to $1250 with a rate of 27.8%

Education: The majority of staff participating in the study have undergraduate and graduate degrees, with a total number of more than 75% of the study sample. In which, the group with university degree accounted for nearly half of the sample with 48.2%. The group of employees with low qualifications, from eelementary to high school, accounted for the smallest proportion with 6.3%. The rest are the group with college degrees

4.2. Descriptive statistic of observed variables

Table 2. Descriptive statistic of observed variables

Code	Content	Source	Mean	Min	Max	Stan.Dev.
Workplace bullying						
In last 6 months:						
WPB1	Being humiliated or ridiculed in connection with your work	Einarsen et al. (2009)	3.347	1	5	1.173
WPB2	Having key areas of responsibility removed or replaced with more trivial tasks.		3.338	1	5	1.139
WPB3	Spreading of gossip and rumors about you.		3.284	1	5	1.157
WPB4	Being ignored or excluded.		3.239	1	5	1.123
WPB5	Having insulting or offensive remarks made about your person, attitude, or private life		3.384	1	5	1.133
WPB6	Hints or signals from others that you should quit your job.		3.350	1	5	1.128
WPB7	Repeated reminders of your errors or mistakes.		3.349	1	5	1.143
WPB8	Being ignored or facing a hostile reaction when you approach.		3.307	1	5	1.156
WPB10	Practical jokes carried out by people you do not get along with.		3.357	1	5	1.137
WPB11	Having allegations made against you.		3.255	1	5	1.053
WPB12	Being the subject of excessive sarcasm.		3.356	1	5	1.156
WPB13	Someone withholding information which affects your performance.		3.357	1	5	1.164
WPB15	Having your opinions ignored.		3.319	1	5	1.172
WPB16	Being given tasks with unreasonable deadlines.		3.353	1	5	1.154
WPB17	Excessive monitoring of your work.		3.299	1	5	1.159
WPB19	Being exposed to an unmanageable workload.		3.348	1	5	1.171
WPB20	Asking to complete work with higher results than usual	Qualitative research	3.335	1	5	1.144

Code	Content	Source	Mean	Min	Max	Stan.Dev.
WPB21	Being not recognized for your work achievements		3.351	1	5	1.169
WPB22	Being shouted at or being the target of spontaneous anger.	Einarsen et al. (2009)	3.250	1	5	1.221
WPB23	Intimidating behavior such as finger-pointing, invasion of personal space, shoving, blocking your way.	Einarsen et al. (2009)	3.306	1	5	1.228
Emotional labor						
Surface acting						
SA1	Resist expressing my true feelings		3.548	1	5	0.997
SA2	Pretend to have emotions that I don't really have	Brotheridge & Lee (2003) and Grandey (2003)	3.523	1	5	1.016
SA3	Hide my true feelings about a situation		3.556	1	5	0.972
SA4	Put on an act in order to deal with customer in an appropriate way		3.566	1	5	1.064
SA5	I outwardly express emotions that are opposite (different) from my thoughts and feelings	Qualitative research	3.570	1	5	1.101
Deep acting						
DA1	Make an effort to actually feel the emotions that I need to display to others	Brotheridge & Lee (2003) and Grandey (2003)	3.867	1	5	1.029
DA2	Try to actually experience the emotions that I must show		3.927	1	5	0.968
DA3	Work hard to feel the emotions that I need to show to others		3.834	1	5	0.997
DA4	I express the right feelings for each situation and context	Qualitative research	3.761	1	5	1.110
DA5	I care about the feelings of those around me to act accordingly		3.823	1	5	1.062
Counterproductive work behaviors						
CWB1	I complained about minor work-related issues at work		3.517	1	5	0.937
CWB2	I made problems at work bigger than they were	Koopmans et al. (2016)	3.502	1	5	1.021
CWB3	I focused on the negative aspects of situation at work instead of the positive aspects		3.448	1	5	0.990

Code	Content	Source	Mean	Min	Max	Stan.Dev.
CWB4	I talked to colleagues about the negative aspects of my work		3.432	1	5	0.982
CWB5	I talked to people outside the organization about the negative aspects of my work		3.443	1	5	1.075
CWB6	I often blame others	Qualitative research	3.389	1	5	1.080

The mean value of the observed variables in the *workplace bullying* scale is greater than 3, which proves that enterprises's employees in Vietnam report being bullied every month at work with many different manifestations. In which, receiving rumors and insults about their person, attitudes and private life are the most common.

In general, the mean value of *surface acting* scale is greater than level 3 (neutral). And there is not much difference with an approximate value of 3.5 for all variables. This proves that enterprises's employees in Vietnam act their surface acting at an average level. Meanwhile, the mean value of the observed variables belonging to the *deep acting* are higher than the level 3 (neutral) and close to the level 4 (agree). Therefore, enterprises's employees in Vietnam often perform deep acting. In which, the mean value reaches a maximum value of 3.927 at variable DA2, so employees try hard to get the emotions they express.

4.3. Reliability of scale and Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA)

To check the reliability of the scale, this study first tests the Cronbach's alpha coefficient (De et al., 2023). The test results show that the Cronbach Alpha coefficient of the factors are all greater than 0.7. At the same time, the corrected item-total correlation of each observed variable in the factor scale is also greater than 0.3. According to Nunnally & Bernstein (1994), the research scale is reliable.

Table 3. Cronbach's Alpha coefficients

Factor/Cronbach's Alpha coefficients	Observed variable	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
Workplace bullying					
Workplace bullying/Cronbach's Alpha = 0.943	WPB1	63.138	380.318	0.899	0.943
	WPB2	63.146	381.887	0.891	0.943
	WPB3	63.201	380.921	0.899	0.943
	WPB4	63.245	382.315	0.894	0.943
	WPB5	63.100	381.833	0.897	0.943
	WPB6	63.134	382.173	0.894	0.943
	WPB7	63.135	381.802	0.890	0.943
	WPB8	63.177	380.988	0.898	0.943
	WPB10	63.127	381.953	0.891	0.943
	WPB11	63.229	385.523	0.875	0.943
	WPB12	63.129	381.217	0.893	0.943
	WPB13	63.127	380.742	0.897	0.943
	WPB15	63.165	380.498	0.896	0.943
	WPB16	63.131	380.838	0.903	0.943
	WPB17	63.185	380.659	0.903	0.943
	WPB19	63.136	380.541	0.896	0.943
	WPB20	63.149	381.422	0.898	0.943
	WPB21	63.133	380.755	0.893	0.943

Factor/Cronbach's Alpha coefficients	Observed variable	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
	WPB22	63.235	385.926	0.738	0.945
	WPB23	63.178	385.579	0.741	0.945
Emotional labor					
Surface acting /Cronbach's Alpha = 0.919	SA1	14.216	12.943	0.857	0.888
	SA2	14.240	13.082	0.812	0.897
	SA3	14.207	13.325	0.820	0.896
	SA4	14.197	13.249	0.736	0.913
	SA5	14.194	12.961	0.746	0.911
Deep acting / Cronbach's Alpha = 0.914	DA1	15.345	12.754	0.830	0.884
	DA2	15.285	13.216	0.819	0.888
	DA3	15.378	13.254	0.780	0.895
	DA4	15.451	12.732	0.751	0.902
	DA5	15.390	13.146	0.732	0.905
Counterproductive work behaviors					
Counterproductive behaviors / Cronbach's Alpha = 0.926	CWB1	17.214	19.345	0.831	0.907
	CWB2	17.229	18.947	0.797	0.910
	CWB3	17.284	18.917	0.833	0.906
	CWB4	17.299	19.095	0.817	0.908
	CWB5	17.289	19.127	0.722	0.921
	CWB6	17.342	19.044	0.728	0.920

The EFA result show that the KMO coefficient is 0.981 and the sig. of Bartlett's test is 0.000 < 0.05 (Table 4). Besides, the eigenvalue coefficient greater than 1 and the total variance extracted greater than 50%. According to Hair et al. (2019), all observed variables in these factors have a high degree of correlation and cohesion, as well as the factor analysis is appropriate.

Table 4. KMO test result

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		0.981
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	48046.952
	df	630
	Sig.	0.000

Table 5. Rotated matrix

Pattern Matrix[a]				
	Component			
	1	2	3	4
WPB2	0.934			
WPB5	0.926			
WPB6	0.915			
WPB16	0.912			
WPB1	0.911			
WPB13	0.909			
WPB21	0.907			
WPB17	0.906			
WPB3	0.904			
WPB8	0.904			
WPB12	0.902			
WPB4	0.900			
WPB20	0.899			

Pattern Matrix[a]				
	Component			
	1	2	3	4
WPB15	0.898			
WPB19	0.898			
WPB11	0.897			
WPB10	0.895			
WPB7	0.890			
WPB22	0.759			
WPB23	0.739			
CWB1		0.897		
CWB3		0.891		
CWB4		0.879		
CWB2		0.863		
CWB5		0.807		
CWB6		0.796		
SA1			0.920	
SA3			0.885	
SA2			0.880	
SA4			0.828	
SA5			0.827	
DA1				0.894
DA2				0.892
DA3				0.856
DA4				0.845
DA5				0.823
Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.				
Rotation Method: Promax with Kaiser Normalization.				
a. Rotation converged in 6 iterations.				

4.4. Reliability, Convergent and Discriminant validity

The scale's reliability, convergent and discriminant validity is further tested by data analysis by SmartPLS software. The results show that all AVE coefficients > 0.5, all outerloading coefficient > 0.7, so the research scale reachs reliability and convergent validity (Hair et al., 2019).

The HTMT indexes, which range from 0.043 to 0.4822, are all smaller than 0.85. The scale also reachs discriminant validity (Henseler et al., 2015).

Table 6. Reliability and Convergent results

Factor	Number of Observed variable	Outerloading		Composite Reliability (CR)	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
		Min	Max		
Workplace bullying					
WPB	20	0.757	0.913	0.987	0.797
Emotional labor					
SA	5	0.829	0.915	0.941	0.761
DA	5	0.829	0.897	0.937	0.748
Counterproductive behavior					
CWB	6	0.802	0.890	0.943	0.735

Regression Assessment

All endogenous variables and exogenous variables have VIF values from 1.000 to 1.490 < 2, so the phenomenon of multicollinearity does not occur (Hair et al., 2019). The model fit is accepted with SNMR is 0.022 < 0.08 (Henseler et al., 2015).

The CWB has a suitable level of explanation from WBP, SA, DA (the adjusted R2 =0.141). While the SA and DA are explained by WBP with adjusted R2 =0.211 and 0.164 respectively. The f2 coefficients > 0.02 and the blindfolding results with Q2 > 0. So there is a predictive relationship of the model to the endogenous variables (Cohen, 2013; Hair et al., 2019).

Analysis Results

The study performed boostrapping with 5000 samples to test the study's hypotheses. All the research hypothesis (H1, H2a, H2b) are accepted at the 1% significance level (p-value < 0.01).

Table 7. Research hypothesis test results

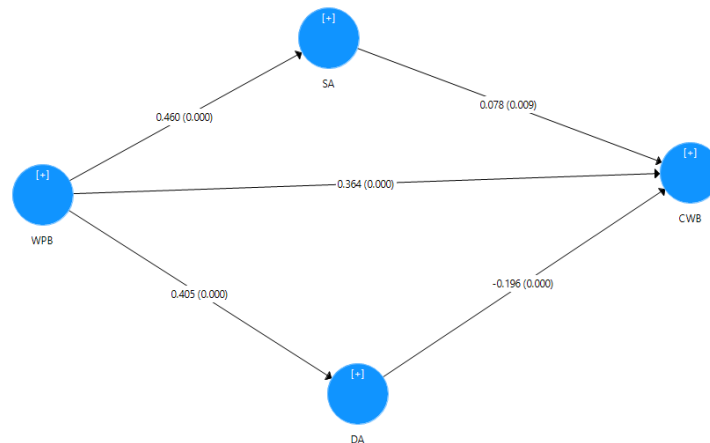| H	Relationship	β	Stand.	t-value	p-value	Result
H1	WPB -> CWB	0.364	0.032	11.511	0.000	Accept
H2a	WPB->SA->CWB	0.036	0.014	2.622	0.009	Accept
H2b	WPB->DA->CWB	-0.079	0.013	6.094	0.000	Accept

Fig.3: Path model result

The study found a relationship between *employees being bullied at workplace (WPB)* and their *counterproductive work behaviors (CWB)* with β coefficient = 0.364 and p-value = 0.000. Hypothesis H1 is accepted at 99% confidence level and this is a positive relationship. This means that employees who are bullied in the workplace are more likely to have counterproductive work behaviors. The present study results are found to be similar to the studies of Sarwar et al. (2020), Naseer et al. (2018), Devonish (2013), Bowling & Beehr (2006) when they also found bullying also resulted in more deviant, inappropriate or retaliation behaviors by employees in workplace. This result is also believed to be consistent with the stressor-emotion model of counterproductive work behavior by Spector & Fox (2005). Bullying in the workplace acts as a source of stress and creates counterproductive work behaviors through negative emotions. Victims of workplace bullying may commit acts harmful to the organization voluntarily, such as complaining or focusing on negative aspects of the organization.

The statistical results also find that victims of bullying in the workplace perform a variety of surface acting (SA) (with β coefficient = 0.460, p-value = 0.000) and deep acting (DA) (with β coefficient = 0.405, p-value = 0.000). The surface acting is easier to implement and are timely compared to the deep acting that require effort and training from victims of bullying who are already under a lot of stress and fatigue. While surface acting increase employees' counterproductive work behaviors, and this is not a strong effect with β coefficient = 0.078 and p-value=0.009. Then deep acting reduces employee's counterproductive work behaviors with a greater impact (β coefficient = 0.196 and p-value=0.000). As can be seen, victims of workplace bullying perform more on the surface acting than deep acting. However, deep acting was more effective in reducing their counterproductive work behaviors. Deep acting makes victims have consistency between feelings and expressions (Hobfoll, 2002), they experience less negative emotions that prevent them from engaging in counterproductive work behaviors (Spector & Fox, 2005) to harm other individuals in particular and the organization in general. Employees who perform surface acting reduce their personal sense of authenticity and are prone to role

conflicts at work (Hill et al., 2020). Thus, it creates a negative emotional experience that leads to a negative assessment of the organization and ultimately to the implementation of counterproductive work behaviors (Spector & Fox, 2005). However, the impact was found to be small, which could be explained that in the Vietnam's working environment, despite feeling emotionally drained, the victim still has reservations and fears towards the manager, thus not daring to engage in many behaviors that are harmful to the organization.

The results of the analysis show that surface acting (with β coefficient = 0.036, p-value = 0.000) and deep acting (with with β coefficient = -0.079, p-value = 0.000) play a mediating role in *employee being bullied at workplace* (WPB) and their *counterproductive work behavior* (CWB). Both hypothesis H2a and H2b are accepted. The study results found that emotional labor (with both components surface acting and deep acting) was found to mediate the relationship between workplace bullying and counterproductive work behavior. Victims of workplace bullying have different ways of dealing with its effects, where emotional labor is an emotional approach, which is covered by Spector & Fox's (2005) model. The perform of surface acting increases the counterproductive work behaviors of victims of workplace bullying, while deep acting acts as a mediator to reduce these negative behaviors. This result is consistent with Spector and Fox's (2005) theory, where emotions play a mediating role in the relationship between stressors and counterproductive work behavior. Specifically, in this study, employees who were bullied made many long-term surface acting that caused emotional exhaustion, created negative emotions, and from there they have more counterproductive behaviors. Meanwhile, deep acting help victims of bullying improve their emotional resources, generate positive emotions and thereby reduce counterproductive work behaviors. Deep acting is more difficult to implement for victims of bullying, however, it is more effective in dealing with the negative effects of workplace bullying.

5. Conclusions and managerial implications

5.1. Conclusions

With mixed methods (including qualitative research and quantitative research), this study has explored the relationship of employees being bullied at workplace and their counterproductive work behaviors. Besides, the study also evaluates the mediating role of surface acting and deep acting in the above relationship. At the group discussion stage of the qualitative research, the research revised and supplemented the research scale with the participation of 10 respondents who are employees of enterprises in Vietnam. Then, after interviewing 6 experts in business administration, the study adjusted and gave the preliminary scale of the study. This scale was then tested for reliability and convergence by SPSS software in a pilot test with a sample of 207 employees in enterprises. The formal study collected 1307 responses, of which 1206 were valid. Research data were analyzed using SPSS and Smart PLS software. The results of the study found a positive relationship between employees being bullied at workplace and their counterproductive work behaviors. At the same time, the emotional labor (surface acting and deep acting) act as mediators in this relationship.

Research results show that employees who are bullied in the workplace have more counterproductive work behaviors, in which the surface acting mediates the positive influence of employees being bullied at workplace on their counterproductive work behaviors. Victims of bullying may have to express or suppress emotions to please others, which increases their counterproductive work behaviors. Concealing or faking feelings to express appropriate emotions in the workplace will in the long run cause victims to engage voluntarily in behaviors that are harmful to the organization. Meanwhile, trying to express genuine and acceptable emotions by regulating emotions both internally and externally helps employees to combat the negative effects of bullying in the workplace. This explains the fact that deep acting plays a mediating role in reducing the negative impact in the relationship between employees being bullied at workplace and their counterproductive work behaviors.

5.2. Managerial implications

Workplace bullying generally significantly increases employee counterproductive work behaviors. Since the majority of workplace bullying is from superiors, therefore, in order to reduce workplace bullying, managers need to focus on fostering positive leadership styles, which can limit their occurrence. For example, human resource managers need to train transformational leadership and transformational leadership styles for leaders. Besides, because workplace bullying can be seen as a stressor. So, managers need to first limit stressors from the work environment such as focusing on in resolving conflicts in roles or jobs, creating a psychologically safe environment, etc.

Emotions labor act as an important mediator, and can be viewed as an individual strategy for dealing with the negative effects of workplace bullying. Therefore, human resource managers need to foster skills in managing and regulating employees' emotions with training courses on emotion management, so that employees can better understand and improve their ability to manage and regulate their emotions. In particular, the training program can focus on the skill of performing deep acting. Finally, managers need to implement action plans to stabilize and heal employees who show signs of mental fatigue or emotional exhaustion.

5.3. Limitation and future research
First, the sample of the study is employees at enterprises, so future research can continue in other types of organizations. The influence of workplace bullying on counterproductive work behaviors can be further investigated in other research contexts, especially the Eastern countries. The present study only studied victims, future studies may continue with samples of perpetrators of bullying.

The present study only examines the mediating role of surface acting and deep acting, future studies may explore other variables such as emotional intelligence, emotional exhaustion, etc. in the causal relationship. In addition to exploring the mediating role of emotions, future studies may consider other factors with a moderator role such as emotional intelligence, emotion regulation, etc. Finally, personality factors can also be considered in this moderator role.

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