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Research Article

The Dynamics of Workplace Bullying: Behavioral Indicators and Organizational Implications Among Non-Teaching Personnel in the Schools Division Office of the Department of Education, City Schools Division of Cabuyao

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ABSTRACT

The research entitled “The Dynamics of Workplace Bullying: Behavioral Indicators and Organizational Implications among Non-Teaching Personnel in the Schools Division Office of the Department of Education, City Schools Division of Cabuyao” explores how bullying happens in an educational workplace and among non-teaching personnel. The main goal was to understand what were the behavioral aspects that ignites to bullying in workplace setting and how these affect the people who experience it as well as its organizational implication, while indeed, identifying strategies or interventions to promote a healthy and safe working environment within the workplace in mitigation to bullying. The study used descriptive-explanatory sequential mixed- methods research design and gathered data from 77 respondents through an online survey questionnaire followed by a semi-structured interview among 10 non-teaching staff. Findings showed that behavioral indicators of workplace bullying such as verbal and psychological abuse; social exclusion or isolation; work-related harassment; and cyberbullying and digital harassment have a significant impact and implication to the organization in as much as job satisfaction and morale, psychological well-being and stress, team collaboration and organizational climate, and employee retention and turnover intention were concerned. Results also highlighted that these variables were contributory for the organizations efficiency in general. Workplace bullying, though rarely experienced, still exhibited in various injurious forms that significantly affect employee well-being and organizational performance. This underscored the significance of instigating proactive policies and support systems to ensure a healthy,

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safe, respectful, and productive work environment for employees and people in the organization.

Keywords: Workplace bullying, Organizational implication, Behavioral indicator, Work productivity, Safe and balance work environment, Organizational performance

Introduction

Workplace bullying is a continuous mistreatment pattern that not only destroys a person's reputation but also adversely affects mental health and job productivity. The abuse can be verbal, physical, psychological, or online. It usually does occur between people of different ranks due to power imbalance and it can happen in any part of the organization, thus making the victims feel powerless and also very much alone. In the Philippines' education sector, even in government offices, bullying affects the whole gamut of an individual, even the non-teaching staff, by means of verbal abuse, social exclusion, and even misuse of power. The Philippine cultural values of *hiya*, *pakikisama*, and *utang na loob* may prevent the victims from speaking out, hence leading to their suffering in silence and causing them emotional distress. Institutions, as well as offices, lacking clear anti-bullying policies and complaint systems not only allow bullying to continue but also reveal the need for culturally appropriate strategies to help promote accountability and provide support.

Workplace bullying refers to a series of unreasonable actions directed towards an employee that could lead to their intimidation, humiliation, or degradation, even if such actions are not overtly prohibited by the institution or office policies (University of Michigan, Human Resource, 2025). The primary bullying behaviors include making constant criticism, being exclusionary, setting unrealistic demands, and seizing others' work credits, which might be carried out by managers, coworkers, or even the employees themselves. The educational sector's high-stress environment and ongoing transformation render staff most likely to be bullied by leaders, and colleagues (NASUWT, 2023). Although 9% of educational staff claim that bullying has had a detrimental effect on their mental health, the increasing consciousness is pushing the institutions and offices to

come up with measures like anti-bullying policies and support systems. Furthermore, legal remedies and training are getting more widespread as methods to deal with bullying and to foster a healthier workplace.

In the Philippines, workplace bullying is a major problem for organizations as it negatively affects employees' mental health, morale, and productivity. Legal safeguards for employees include Republic Act No. 6713, the Philippines' Labor Code, DOLE's Department Order No. 183-17, and Republic Act No. 10627 that together require respectful conduct and a harassment-free workplace (DOLE, 2017; RA 6713; RA 10627). Organizations need to have a very clear anti-bullying policy in place and also open communication across all levels and to promote leadership accountability in order to build a respectful and inclusive work environment. Fabre et al. (2024) emphasize how motivation and organizational conditions significantly influence job performance among government personnel, highlighting the importance of a healthy and supportive work environment. This directly connects to your study, as workplace bullying is known to diminish employee motivation, lower morale, and negatively affect overall performance and organizational productivity. By showing how workplace factors shape employee outcomes, the findings of Fabre et al. (2024) reinforce the need to understand and address bullying behaviors to maintain a positive organizational climate for non-teaching personnel in DepEd.

The study's purpose was to investigate the occurrence of bullying in educational offices of Department of Education (DepEd), with emphasis on its behavioral signs, the consequences on workers' happiness and productivity, as well as the organizational and cultural factors playing a role in it. Furthermore, it intended to unveil themes coming up from the accounts of the respondents and to suggest

measures or policy frameworks to equip organizations with the tools to effectively combat and stop bullying in as much as the workplace setting is concerned.

This study aimed to examine the dynamics of workplace bullying by identifying its behavioral indicators and analyzing its organizational implications among non-teaching personnel in the Schools Division Office of the Department of Education, City Schools Division of Cabuyao. Specifically, the study sought to determine the socio-demographic profile of employees in terms of age, sex, length of service, employment status, and position or rank. It further aimed to identify the behavioral indicators of workplace bullying that are experienced or observed by employees, particularly in the areas of verbal and psychological abuse, social exclusion or isolation, work-related harassment, and cyberbullying or digital harassment. Moreover, the study endeavored to dig deeper on the organizational implications of bullying that happens in a workplace setting with respect to job satisfaction, morale, psychological well-being,

stress, team collaboration and organizational climate, as well as employee retention and turnover intention. In addition, the study aimed to ascertain whether a significant connection envelops from identified behavioral indicators of workplace bullying and its organizational implications. It also sought to explore the lived experiences of non-teaching personnel who have encountered bullying in the workplace. Finally, the study intended to propose strategies or interventions to mitigate workplace bullying and to promote a healthy, respectful, and safe working environment within the Schools Division Office of the City Schools Division of Cabuyao.

The objective of this research study was to uncover the processes through which bullying takes place in workplace environments and the input of behavioral, cultural, and individual factors in its occurrence. Furthermore, it scrutinized the influence of bullying on workers' productivity in line with organizational objectives.

Research Paradigm

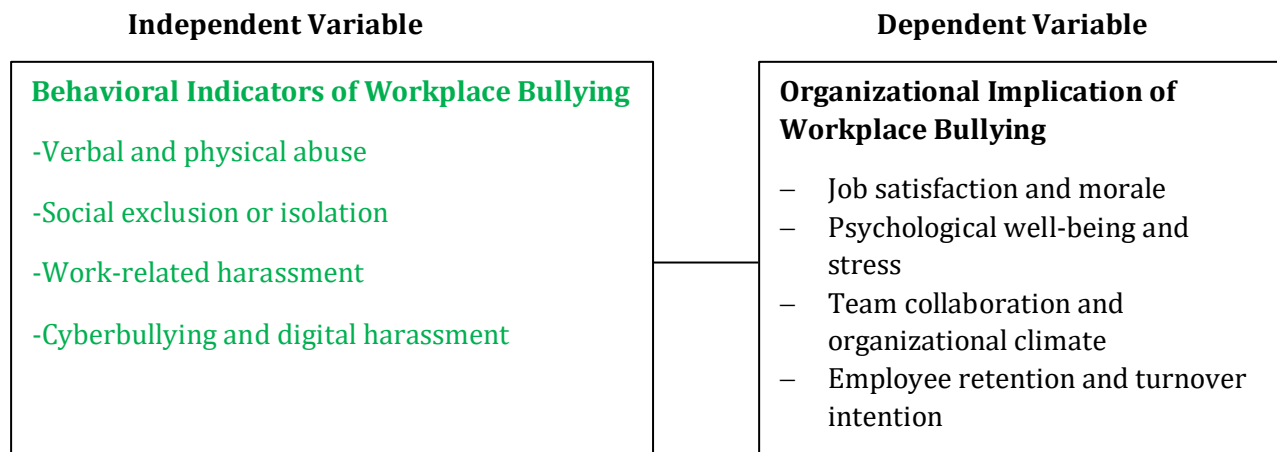


Figure 1. The Independent and Dependent Variables of the Study

Statement of the Hypothesis

There is no significant relationship between the identified behavioral indicators of workplace bullying and its organizational implications.

The study focused among the personnel who are not related to teaching in the Schools Division Office of the Department of Education,

City Schools Division of Cabuyao. It examined how workplace bullying happens within the organization's behavioral indicators such as verbal and psychological abuse, social exclusion or isolation, work-related harassment, and cyberbullying and digital harassment; and organizational implications such as job satisfaction and morale, psychological well-being and

stress, team collaboration and organizational climate, and employee retention and turnover intention were the variables treated in the study.

The findings would benefit the employees for they would not experience bullying at their workplace anymore, administrators / management for they would be able to have good relationship with their co-employees and the organization itself for it would be able to foster healthy environment among its employees that would eventually lead to efficient work productivity and image / reputation of the organization.

Methodology

This cogitation exploited a mixed methods research methodology which allowed the researchers to gather and examine quantitative and qualitative information about the dynamics of workplace bullying at ease, indeed, it encapsulates behavioral indicators and organizational implications among non-teaching personnel in educational offices. By advantageously applying both the approaches of quantitative and qualitative study, this methodical procedure permitted the researchers to validate a fence of empirical points and draw relational link among the intricate and multifarious levels of the interdimensional research understanding questions harnessing both approaches qualitatively and quantitatively (Damyanov, 2023).

A descriptive-explanatory sequential design was employed in this study which generally aimed to gather comprehensive information about a phenomenon through descriptive methods initially to detect patterns or trends. The first stage, the quantitative gathering of data, was then succeeded by an explanatory stage, investigating the main reasons or causes of the detected patterns, which was the qualitative gathering of information. This design offered a thorough comprehension of the intricate problems by linking what was happening to why it was happening (Creswell & Creswell, 2022).

Study, as mentioned above, involved 77 non-teaching personnel from different departments of the Division Office of Cabuyao City, Laguna specifically from the Office of the Schools

Division Superintendent (OSDS), Schools Division Superintendent Office, Assistant Schools Division Superintendent Office, Administration Offices, Personnel Unit, Cash Unit, Records Unit, Supply Unit, Legal Unit, ICT, Accounting Unit, Budget Unit, Curriculum Implementation Division (CID), and Governance and Operations Division (SGOD).

Universal sampling was the sampling technique applied in this study because the entire population was small and researchers have the convenient access to it, thus making it possible for them to select every member of the population as their sample. This method guaranteed total representation, which minimized sampling bias and enhanced the credibility of the results.

Online survey questionnaire (via Google form) and semi-structured interview were the data gathering instruments employed in this research study. For the quantitative data gathering instrument, the researchers used and divided the online survey questionnaire into four parts in accordance with the sub-problems of the study. The crafted questionnaire was guided by the legal safeguards for employees stipulated in (1) Republic Act No. 6713 or the "Code of Conduct and Ethical Standards for Public Officials and Employees"; (2) DOLE's Department Order No. 183-17 understood as "Philippines' Labor Code on employment practices" and (3) Republic Act No. 10627 proclaimed as "Anti-Bullying Act of 2013". Furthermore, the questionnaire was validated by three (3) experts of the field, Doctor of Education to be exact, who have given their suggestions for its betterment.

Before conducting the study, a formal request was drafted through a letter to the Cabuyao City Division Superintendent soliciting authorization to carry out study. For notification purposes, the signed documents were distributed respectively. The researchers then requested the list of all non-teaching personnel and gathered them in the function hall and oriented them about the scope of their study and their significant participant into it. Short after the brief orientation, the link of the online survey questionnaire was sent to the respondents via email and Facebook messenger.

The researchers informed responders that their data would be kept classified. Next was the researchers' one-on-one interview with 10 non-teaching staff who were randomly selected from the 77 for the qualitative phase. Researchers used statistical equations and theme analysis to sort, scrutinize, and explicate the online survey questionnaire and interview session data under the supervision of the statistician and research writing professor. Presenting the results in tables and narratives was next.

Standard Deviation through Microsoft Excel were used to elucidate the convened data to determine the behavioral indicators and organizational implications of bullying among the respondents. Additionally, correlation analysis and p-value computation were conducted to test the significance of the relationships between the variables. These statistical methods allowed the researchers to interpret the data accurately and validate the connections between the aforementioned variables tested in the study.

Result and Discussion

Table 1. Behavioral indicators of workplace bullying as experienced by employees in terms of Verbal and psychological abuse

Indicative Statements	Mean	SD	Verbal Interpretation
1. I have been subjected to insulting or demeaning remarks at work.	2.10	1.17	<i>Seldom Experienced</i>
2. I have witnessed colleagues being humiliated or belittled during meetings.	2.51	1.19	<i>Seldom Experienced</i>
3. Sarcasm or ridicule is used to undermine competence.	2.33	1.05	<i>Seldom Experienced</i>
4. I have received veiled threats or intimidating comments.	1.94	1.14	<i>Seldom Experienced</i>
5. I am blamed publicly for issues beyond my control.	1.96	1.10	<i>Seldom Experienced</i>
Composite	2.17	1.13	<i>Seldom Experienced</i>

Legend: 1.00-1.49=Not Experienced, 1.50-2.49=Seldom Experienced, 2.50-3.49=Sometimes Experienced, 3.50-4.49=Often Experienced, 4.50-5.00=Always Experienced

Table 1 shows the behavioral indicators of workplace bullying as experienced by employees in terms of verbal and psychological abuse. Indicative statement number 2 which states "I have witnessed colleagues being humiliated or belittled during meetings" got the topmost mean of 2.51, with an sd of 1.19 and was deciphered as seldom experienced. On the other hand, the Indicative statement number 4 which states "I have received veiled threats or intimidating comments" got the bottommost mean of 1.94, with a standard deviation of 1.14 and was translated as seldom experienced. The composite mean was 2.17 with an sd of 1.13 and was construed as seldom experienced. Data above

signified that most of the respondents experienced workplace bullying through verbal and psychological abuse brought by people who utter words that are hurtful especially in front of other people or during meetings which made them feel so incapable of such office tasks and works at some point but not at all times. Furthermore, the verbal interpretation "seldom experienced" implied that work environment was accustomed and encapsulated by the cultural factors "hiya" and "pakikisama" that led to underreporting of such bullying behaviors despite anonymity in as much as verbal and psychological abuse was concerned.

Table 2. Behavioral indicators of workplace bullying as experienced by employees in terms of Social exclusion or isolation

Indicative Statements	Mean	SD	Verbal Interpretation
1. Important work-related information is deliberately withheld from me.	2.23	1.29	<i>Seldom Experienced</i>
2. I am excluded from meetings or group chats that affect my tasks.	1.82	1.05	<i>Seldom Experienced</i>
3. Colleagues intentionally ignore or avoid me.	1.85	1.05	<i>Seldom Experienced</i>
4. I am left out of opportunities for collaboration or recognition.	1.79	1.04	<i>Seldom Experienced</i>
5. Key decisions that affect my role are made without informing me.	1.99	1.15	<i>Seldom Experienced</i>
Composite	1.94	1.11	<i>Seldom Experienced</i>

Legend: 1.00-1.49=Not Experienced, 1.50-2.49=Seldom Experienced, 2.50-3.49=Sometimes Experienced, 3.50-4.49=Often Experienced, 4.50-5.00=Always Experienced

As reflected by Table 2, the indicative statement number 1 which states “Important work-related information is deliberately withheld from me” got the preeminent mean of 2.23, and was deemed as seldom experienced. On the other hand, the indicative statement number 4 which states “I am left out of opportunities for collaboration or recognition” got the mean as slightest as 1.79, with and was interpreted as seldom experienced. The composite mean was 1.94 and was portrayed as seldom experienced. A culture of cliques, favoritism or non-inclusive practices at the workplace is the main cause of isolation or social exclusion for most employees according to the data above. Strong

leadership and intentional inclusion can, however, make employees feel less norm and therefore more connected and valued. Personality differences, remote work setups or being new or different in some way can also lead to being unintentionally left out. Moreover, the verbal interpretation “seldom experienced” suggested that the workplace environment was shaped and constrained by the Filipino cultural values of “*hiya*” and “*pakikisama*”, which may have contributed to the underreporting of bullying behaviors, even under conditions of anonymity in as much as social exclusion or isolation was concerned.

Table 3. Behavioral indicators of workplace bullying as experienced by employees in terms of Work-related harassment

Indicative Statements	Mean	SD	Verbal Interpretation
1. My workload or deadlines are set at unrealistic levels.	2.46	1.21	<i>Seldom Experienced</i>
2. I receive unfair or excessively critical performance feedback.	2.09	1.17	<i>Seldom Experienced</i>
3. My tasks or responsibilities are changed without valid justification.	2.03	1.16	<i>Seldom Experienced</i>
4. I am assigned demeaning tasks unrelated to my role.	2.10	1.22	<i>Seldom Experienced</i>
5. My requests for resources or support are unreasonably denied.	2.06	1.07	<i>Seldom Experienced</i>
Composite	2.15	1.17	<i>Seldom Experienced</i>

Legend: 1.00-1.49=Not Experienced, 1.50-2.49=Seldom Experienced, 2.50-3.49=Sometimes Experienced, 3.50-4.49=Often Experienced, 4.50-5.00=Always Experienced

Table 3 reveals the behavioral indicators of workplace bullying as experienced by employees in terms of Work-related harassment, wherein the indicative statement number 1 which states “My workload or deadlines are set at unrealistic levels” got the mean on its loftiest at 2.46, and was viewed as seldom experienced. On the other hand, the indicative statement number 3 which states “My tasks or responsibilities are changed without valid justification” got the minimum mean of 2.03, and was translated as seldom experienced. The composite mean was 2.15 and was seen as seldom experienced.

Data above signified that power discrepancies provide a shield for the superiors or colleagues to use their power in a negligent way without the fear of being held accountable, this is the case in most of work harassment situa-

tions experienced by the employees. The absence of clear anti-harassment policies or ineffective enforcement methods in many workplaces has rendered the reporting of incidents by the victims unsafe and thus difficult. The prevalence of aggressive behavior in toxic or highly competitive environments might make harassment appear as an accepted or ignored behavior. Furthermore, the fear of retaliation or being branded as a troublemaker is a major reason why employees choose to remain silent rather than speak up.

Likewise, the interpretation “seldom experienced” indicated that the work environment was influenced by the Filipino cultural norms of *hiya* and *pakikisama*, which likely resulted in the underreporting of bullying behaviors, even with anonymity assured in as much as work-related harassment was concerned.

Table 4. Behavioral indicators of workplace bullying as experienced by employees in terms of Cyberbullying and digital harassment

Indicative Statements	Mean	SD	Verbal Interpretation
1. I have received offensive or harassing messages via email or chat.	1.82	1.15	<i>Seldom Experienced</i>
2. I have been shamed or undermined in group chats or online platforms.	1.78	1.15	<i>Seldom Experienced</i>
3. Work-related information about me has been shared online to discredit me.	1.58	0.99	<i>Seldom Experienced</i>
4. I am pressured or threatened through digital channels outside office hours.	1.59	1.06	<i>Seldom Experienced</i>
5. My online contributions are mocked or dismissed without fair consideration.	1.55	1.04	<i>Seldom Experienced</i>
Composite	1.66	1.08	<i>Seldom Experienced</i>

Legend: 1.00-1.49=Not Experienced, 1.50-2.49=Seldom Experienced, 2.50-3.49=Sometimes Experienced, 3.50-4.49=Often Experienced, 4.50-5.00=Always Experienced

It can be gleaned from Table 4 the behavioral indicators of workplace bullying as experienced by employees in terms of cyberbullying and digital harassment; wherein the indicative statement number 1 which states “I have received offensive or harassing messages via email or chat” got the mean at its upmost at 1.82, and was annotated as seldom experienced. On the other hand, the indicative statement number 5 which states “My online contributions are mocked or dismissed without fair consideration” got the subminimal mean of 1.55; “seldom experienced” was its elucidated

meaning. The composite mean was 1.66 and was delineated as seldom experienced.

The vast majority of workers feel dehumanizing treatment over the internet when they communicate with each other through the computer messages, mainly because the bullies can easily target somebody simply by speaking through a computer and without feeling any immediate consequences. The absence of proper policies or supervision regarding online conduct in numerous organizations enables the communication or actions of the toxicity to continue. Employees working under a lot of stress

and competition may even experience negative interactions that get transferred to digital platforms. In addition, the victims are often reluctant to bring up the issue of cyberbullying as they fear either reprisals or not being believed.

More so, the interpretation “seldom experienced” reflected that the work environment

was shaped by the Filipino cultural norms of *hiya* and *pakikisama*, which may have contributed to the underreporting of bullying behaviors, even when anonymity was assured, particularly in matters related to cyberbullying and digital harassment.

Table 5. Organizational implications of workplace bullying in terms of Job satisfaction and morale

Indicative Statements	Mean	SD	Verbal Interpretation
1. My job satisfaction has decreased because of negative interpersonal dynamics.	2.23	1.18	<i>Less Affective</i>
2. My motivation to perform well has declined.	2.09	1.14	<i>Less Affective</i>
3. I feel less valued and appreciated at work.	2.26	1.20	<i>Less Affective</i>
4. I am still proud to belong to my workplace.	2.97	1.32	<i>Moderately Affective</i>
5. My sense of belonging has weakened.	2.15	1.22	<i>Less Affective</i>
Composite	2.34	1.21	<i>Less Affective</i>

Legend: 1.00-1.49=Least Affective, 1.50-2.49= Less Affective, 2.50-3.49= Moderately Affective, 3.50-4.49= Highly Affective, 4.50-5.00= Extremely Affective

Table 5 shows the organizational implications of workplace bullying in terms of job satisfaction and morale, wherein the indicative statement number 4 which states “I am still proud to belong to my workplace” got the mean on its maximal at 2.97, and was enacted as moderately affective. On the other hand, the indicative statement number 2 which states “My motivation to perform well has declined” got the irreducible value of 2.09, and was depicted as less affective; 2.34 as its composite as inferred to less affective.

Workplace bullying is one of the most significant reasons for employees' dissatisfaction

with their jobs as they are treated in a way that makes them feel undervalued, unsafe, and emotionally drained in a hostile work environment. It causes to team-wide decreased morale and thus a fear-culture, an existence of mistrust and total staff disengagement. With low morale, there is less collaboration and productivity, and the employee's motivation and loyalty to the organization are less likely to be affected positively. All this will eventually lead to an organization with a high turnover rate, absenteeism, and a bad reputation.

Table 6. Organizational implications of workplace bullying in terms of Psychological well-being and stress

Indicative Statements	Mean	SD	Verbal Interpretation
1. I experience frequent work-related stress due to mistreatment or conflict.	2.26	1.27	<i>Less Affective</i>
2. I feel emotionally drained after interacting with certain colleagues.	2.55	1.15	<i>Moderately Affective</i>
3. Work issues negatively affect my personal life or sleep.	2.60	1.23	<i>Moderately Affective</i>
4 I feel psychologically safe to speak up at work.	2.64	1.27	<i>Moderately Affective</i>
5. Fear of retaliation prevents me from raising concerns.	2.44	1.32	<i>Less Affective</i>
Composite	2.50	1.25	<i>Moderately Affective</i>

Legend: 1.00-1.49=Least Affective, 1.50-2.49= Less Affective, 2.50-3.49= Moderately Affective, 3.50-4.49= Highly Affective, 4.50-5.00= Extremely Affective

A closer examination of Table 6 highlighted the organizational implications of workplace bullying on psychological well-being and stress. Indicative statement 4, “I feel psychologically safe to speak up at work,” received a mean of 2.64, interpreted as moderately affective, suggesting that employees feel only somewhat secure in voicing concerns. Conversely, statement 1, “I experience frequent work-related stress due to mistreatment or conflict,” recorded the lowest mean of 2.26, categorized as less affective, indicating that while work-related stress is present, it may not be fully acknowledged or reported by all respondents. The composite mean of 2.50 reinforced the moderately affective impact of bullying on employees’ mental health.

These findings underscored that workplace bullying significantly affects employees’ psychological well-being, often manifesting as anxiety, emotional exhaustion, depression, and diminished self-esteem. Persistent stress from bullying can escalate to burnout and even physical health challenges, which in turn impair concentration, decision-making, and overall job performance. The cumulative effect of these stressors can lead to absenteeism, reduced productivity, and increased organizational costs related to healthcare and support services.

More importantly, cultural factors appeared to moderate the perception and reporting of workplace bullying and its psychological consequences. In the Filipino context, the value of *hiya* (shame) may discourage employees from openly acknowledging stress or mistreatment, while the principle of *pakikisama* (maintaining group harmony) may suppress complaints to avoid conflict with colleagues or superiors. These cultural pressures likely contribute to the “moderately affective” score of 2.64 for psychological safety, suggesting that employees may underreport discomfort or stress to preserve social cohesion.

Consequently, the moderately affective interpretation may reflect not only actual levels of stress but also the influence of cultural norms that inhibit open expression, masking the full impact of bullying on mental health. In a work environment guided by *hiya* and *pakikisama*, employees may prioritize maintaining harmony over addressing personal grievances, leading to silent suffering. These norms can create a culture of tolerance toward subtle or systemic bullying, where individuals endure mistreatment rather than risk shame or social disapproval. As a result, organizational interventions must consider these cultural dynamics to effectively promote psychological safety and encourage reporting of workplace harassment.

Table 7. Organizational implications of workplace bullying in terms of Team collaboration and organizational climate

Indicative Statements	Mean	SD	Verbal Interpretation
1. Trust among team members is low.	2.38	1.24	<i>Less Affective</i>
2. Collaboration suffers because of interpersonal tensions.	2.44	1.11	<i>Less Affective</i>
3. Conflicts are not handled fairly or promptly.	2.49	1.24	<i>Less Affective</i>
4 Our unit has a supportive and respectful culture.	3.00	1.22	<i>Moderately Affective</i>
5. Miscommunication is common because of strained relationships.	2.71	1.24	<i>Moderately Affective</i>
Composite	2.60	1.21	<i>Moderately Affective</i>

Legend: 1.00-1.49=Least Affective, 1.50-2.49= Less Affective, 2.50-3.49= Moderately Affective, 3.50-4.49= Highly Affective, 4.50-5.00= Extremely Affective

A cursory look at Table 7 reveals the organizational implications of workplace bullying in terms of team collaboration and organizational climate, wherein the indicative statement number 4 which states “Our unit has a supportive

and respectful culture” dominated the 3.00 mean, and was surmised as moderately affective. On the other hand, the indicative statement number 1 which states “Trust among

team members is low” minutest 2.38 value, “less affective” was its value in conjuncture.

Prevalent information illuminates that workplace bullying hurts teamwork because it makes people distrust each other, feel scared, and not talk openly. Employees stop sharing ideas or working together. Teams fall apart and

don't do as well. A bad mood can spread through an organization. Instead of helping each other and being friendly, employees are mean and negative. This stops new ideas from popping up, makes everyone feel down, and hurts the organization's future and image.

Table 8. Organizational implications of workplace bullying in terms of employee retention and turnover intention

Indicative Statements	Mean	SD	Verbal Interpretation
1. I have considered requesting a transfer due to workplace climate.	2.18	1.35	<i>Less Affective</i>
2. I have thought of resigning because of persistent mistreatment.	2.13	1.31	<i>Less Affective</i>
3. I actively explore other job opportunities.	2.40	1.36	<i>Less Affective</i>
4. I intend to stay in this division for the next two years.	2.85	1.34	<i>Moderately Affective</i>
5. I feel secure and supported enough to stay long-term.	2.83	1.23	<i>Moderately Affective</i>
Composite	2.48	1.32	<i>Less Affective</i>

Legend: 1.00-1.49=Least Affective, 1.50-2.49= Less Affective, 2.50-3.49= Moderately Affective, 3.50-4.49= Highly Affective, 4.50-5.00= Extremely Affective

Table 8 analyzes the organizational implications of workplace bullying in terms of employee retention and turnover intention, wherein the indicative statement number 4 which states “I intend to stay in this division for the next two years” towered the 2.85, and was rationalized as moderately affective. On the other hand, the indicative statement number 2 which states “I have thought of resigning because of persistent mistreatment” infinitesimal the 2.13, and was interpolated as less affective.

Facts above demonstrated the idea that bullying at work makes employees want to quit because nobody wants to be stuck in a bad place. If there's a lot of bullying, employees don't like their jobs and don't feel loyal, so good workers leave. This messes up how things get done, and it costs more to hire and train new folks, plus the organization isn't as stable, after some time, all this makes the organization not work so well and look bad to future employees.

Table 9. Test of significant relationship between the identified behavioral indicators of workplace bullying and its organizational implications

Behavioral indicators of workplace bullying	Organizational implications of workplace bullying			
	Job satisfaction and morale	Psychological well-being and stress	Team collaboration and organizational climate	Employee retention and turnover intention
Verbal and psychological abuse	0.405**	0.457**	0.527**	0.237*
Social exclusion or isolation	0.495**	0.562**	0.638**	0.370**
Work-related harassment	0.666**	0.633**	0.656**	0.408**
Cyberbullying and digital harassment	0.527**	0.464**	0.505**	0.294*

** Significant at .001 level

* Significant at .05 level df= 76

Shown above is the presentation of the test of significant relationships between the identified behavioral indicators of workplace bullying and its organizational implications. Across all categories, the findings demonstrate significant positive correlations, indicating that as instances of workplace bullying behaviors increase, negative organizational outcomes also intensify. Work-related harassment showed the strongest correlations with all organizational implications—particularly with job satisfaction and morale ($r = 0.666$, $p < .001$), psychological well-being and stress ($r = 0.633$, $p < .001$), and team collaboration and organizational climate ($r = 0.656$, $p < .001$). This suggests that harassment linked to job tasks or workload has a substantial detrimental impact on employees' attitudes, emotional health, and group dynamics, and is moderately related to employee retention and turnover intention ($r = 0.408$, $p < .001$). The results implied that task-oriented or "professional" bullying was particularly disruptive for this group, exerting greater negative effects than personal attacks. Consequently, employees frequently exposed to such behaviors were more likely to experience reduced engagement and increased occupational strain. These patterns highlighted the need for organizational policies and interventions aimed at preventing harassment and promoting a healthier workplace climate.

Social exclusion or isolation also shows high positive correlations with all organizational factors, particularly with team collaboration and organizational climate ($r = 0.638$, $p < .001$) and psychological well-being and stress ($r = 0.562$, $p < .001$). This implies that exclusionary behaviors within the workplace severely affect interpersonal relations, the general work atmosphere, and employees' mental health.

Meanwhile, verbal and psychological abuse is moderately correlated with all organizational implications, the strongest being with team collaboration and organizational climate ($r = 0.527$, $p < .001$), suggesting that abusive

language and intimidation erode teamwork and morale.

Lastly, cyberbullying and digital harassment also exhibit significant positive correlations, notably with job satisfaction and morale ($r = 0.527$, $p < .001$) and psychological well-being and stress ($r = 0.464$, $p < .001$), indicating that even virtual forms of bullying contribute to reduced satisfaction and heightened stress among employees.

The results indicate that for non-teaching personnel, workplace bullying extends beyond verbal abuse and social slights; it is often manifested through the misuse of administrative power, particularly via excessive workloads, unrealistic deadlines, and work-related harassment. Work-related bullying showed the strongest correlations with all organizational implications, suggesting that "professionalized" forms of bullying have a more pervasive impact on job satisfaction, psychological well-being, team collaboration, and employee retention than verbal or social forms. This type of bullying is inherently more difficult to report, as it is embedded in everyday job tasks and often perceived as part of managerial authority, making employees hesitant to formally raise concerns. Consequently, professionalized bullying may remain underreported despite its significant detrimental effects on employees' attitudes, health, and organizational functioning.

The data indicated that all forms of workplace bullying were significantly associated with adverse organizational outcomes, therefore, the hypothesis expressed in null form, was rejected. Among the behavioral indicators, work-related harassment and social exclusion or isolation emerge as the most damaging, particularly affecting teamwork, morale, and employee well-being. These results underscored the need for organizations to implement strong anti-bullying policies and support systems to preserve a healthy and productive workplace climate.

Table 10. Annotated exemplars describing any workplace bullying experience or observation that affects productivity or morale.

Participant	Responses	Researcher's Observation	Superordinate Themes
Participant 1	"Pag paparinig" or indirect bullying and workplace faction.	Participant 1 observed the existence of factions in the workplace, which are tiny groups that establish alliances while quietly excluding others. Because they encourage gossip and validate unpleasant speech, these cliques frequently support "pagpaparinig."	Many Faces of Workplace Bullying
Participant 7	"I have observed instances where some employees speak harshly or exclude others from discussions"	Participant 7 disclosed that subtle types of bullying, such exclusion and "pagpaparinig," frequently take place during everyday interactions. As one participant put it, "I have seen situations where certain employees use harsh language or shut others out of conversations." This conduct is an example of indirect animosity that impacts not just the individuals who are targeted but also the team environment as a whole.	

As shown in the Table 10, bullying at work can take both overt and covert forms, frequently disguising itself as informal comments or social dynamics. The existence of workplace factions—small groups that form alliances while covertly excluding others—was mentioned by Participant 1. These cliques usually promote "pagpaparinig," or indirect bullying, which is the practice of making caustic or provocative comments about particular people without mentioning them by name. As an example of how indirect hostility can arise in everyday interactions, Participant 7 also added, "I have witnessed instances where some employees speak harshly or exclude others from discussions." The impacted individuals are not only isolated by these covert forms of exclusion and negative communication, but an atmosphere of mistrust and low morale is also fostered. Overall productivity suffers as a result, and collaboration becomes strained. When taken as a whole, these stories demonstrate that bullying at work occurs not just in face-to-face interactions but also in the context of quiet

divisions, exclusionary behaviors, and the unwritten "pagpaparinig" culture.

In connection, recent studies have demonstrated the substantial negative effects that subtle and indirect types of workplace bullying, like gossip, exclusion, and implied criticism, can have on worker morale and output. Employee motivation, engagement, and sense of belonging are all negatively impacted by workplace bullying, even when it is communicated indirectly, according to Humza (2023). These behaviors contribute to a toxic work environment that discourages collaboration and trust among colleagues. Similarly, Gomez and Quintos (2023) found that workplace bullying negatively affects teamwork and overall productivity in the Philippine workplace context. Their study revealed that employees who experience or witness exclusionary behaviors and verbal hostility tend to withdraw from group interactions, resulting in decreased efficiency and weakened team dynamics.

Collectively, the findings of Humza (2023) and Gomez and Quintos (2023) affirm that

indirect bullying—such as “pagpaparinig” and workplace factions—undermines morale, fosters division, and reduces productivity. These insights align with the participants’ experiences in the present study, where subtle acts of exclusion and negative communication created

silent barriers to collaboration and overall workplace harmony.

Table 11 shows the annotated exemplars of how bullying influenced motivation, teamwork and desired to stay.

Table 11 Annotated Exemplars of how bullying influenced motivation, teamwork and desired to stay.

Participant	Responses	Researcher’s Observation	Superordinate Themes
Participant 2	“I got irritated”	Participant 2 stated, “I got irritated,” indicating an immediate emotional reaction that negatively influenced their motivation to perform tasks and engage in teamwork.	Impact on Emotional Well-being
Participant 9	“It lowered my motivation and made me less comfortable working with the team”	This statement reflects how bullying whether direct or indirect can erode an individual’s sense of belonging and willingness to participate in group tasks.	
Participant 1	“Yes, planning to resign or transfer of agency.”	The persistent discomfort and lack of support within the work environment pushed some participants to consider resignation or transfer to another agency as a coping mechanism.	Reduced Motivation and Productivity

Table 11 displays the participants’ behavioral and emotional reactions to bullying events at work. According to the research, bullying, whether it is done directly or indirectly, has a significant negative impact on workers’ motivation, emotional health, and organizational loyalty. Participant 2’s comment, “I got irritated,” demonstrates an instantaneous emotional response to unfavorable contacts at work. Bullying can lead to emotional stress and frustration, which can interfere with focus and teamwork, as this annoyance illustrates.

Similarly, Participant 9’s statement, “It lowered my motivation and made me less comfortable working with the team,” reflects how subtle or indirect bullying diminishes an individual’s enthusiasm and sense of belonging. Such feelings of discomfort hinder collaboration and reduce the quality of group performance.

Participant 1 also mentioned the long-term effects of persistent workplace bullying when she said, “Yes, planning to resign or transfer of agency.” When workers are continuously subjected to exclusion, animosity, or a lack of

support, their motivation to stay with the company declines. As emotional weariness and demotivation can result in lower work efficiency and even turnover intentions, this scenario is in line with the superordinate theme “Reduced Motivation and Productivity.”

In connection, Galanis et al. (2024) examined the effects of workplace bullying on job burnout and turnover intention among nursing staff in Greece. Their findings revealed that employees who frequently experienced bullying exhibited higher levels of emotional exhaustion, frustration, and disengagement, leading many to consider resignation or job transfer. The study highlighted that even subtle or indirect bullying behaviors could generate prolonged stress and loss of motivation, similar to the participants’ accounts in the present study, where irritation and discomfort reduced teamwork and productivity.

Moreover, in a related study, Malola et al. (2024) investigated the connection between workplace bullying, psychological distress, and

turnover intention, emphasizing the moderating role of supervisory support. The authors found that when employees received little to no support from their supervisors, the negative effects of bullying intensified—resulting in lower motivation, greater emotional fatigue, and stronger intentions to leave the organization. These findings mirror the current study’s observations, where participants expressed feelings of irritation, demotivation, and a desire to

transfer agencies due to persistent workplace hostility and exclusion. Collectively, these studies affirm that bullying, whether direct or indirect, can undermine employees’ emotional health, weaken team cohesion, and increase turnover tendencies.

Figure 2 shows the emerging themes gathered from the thoughts and experiences of the participants.

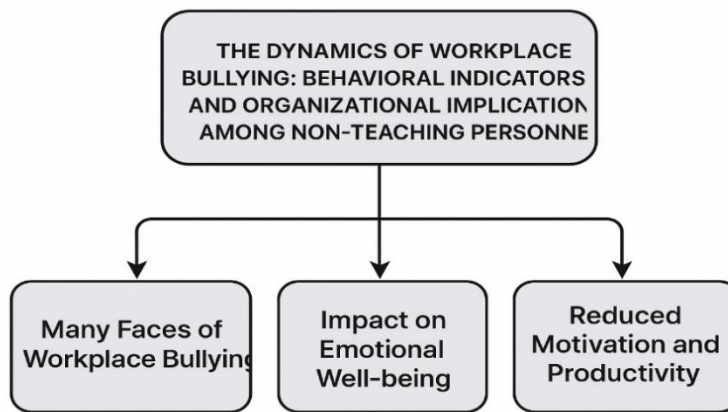


Figure 2. Emerging Themes

The themes that emerged were: **Many Faces of Workplace Bullying, Impact on Emotional Well-being and Reduced Motivation and Productivity**

Thematic Chart A

Many Faces of Workplace Bullying

Participant	Responses	Subordinate Themes
Participant 1	“Pag paparinig” or indirect bullying and workplace faction.	Many Faces of Workplace Bullying
Participant 2	Backstabbing is the worst.	
Participant 4	Posting negative comments in social media	Betrayal and Interpersonal Conflict Perceived Inequity and Unfair Treatment
Participant 5	Favoritism to co worker	

The participants’ perceptions of partiality and unfair treatment at work are highlighted by this theme. The statement from Participant 5, “Favoritism to co-worker,” illustrates how employees may feel unfairly treated and excluded as a result of bosses’ biased recognition and preferential behavior. Such perceptions undermine morale and create divisions within the team, as those who feel overlooked may lose motivation and trust in the organization’s

leadership. Over time, this sense of inequity contributes to decreased productivity and increased emotional strain, as employees struggle with diminished engagement and job satisfaction.

According to Tian and Peterson (2021) found that when employees perceive unfair treatment such as favoritism or unequal recognition they experience higher levels of emotional exhaustion and lower organizational

commitment. This sense of inequity reduces motivation and trust, leading to decreased job satisfaction and productivity. The findings align with Participant 5's experience, where fa-

voritism created feelings of exclusion and dissatisfaction, reflecting how perceived injustice can harm morale and overall workplace performance.

Thematic Chart B

Impact on Emotional Well-being

Participant	Responses	Subordinate Themes
Participant 2	I got irritated	Emotional Frustration
Participant 5	Demoralizing	Loss of Morale and Self-Worth
Participant 9	It lowered my motivation and made me less comfortable working with the team	Decreased Motivation and Team Engagement

This theme captures how experiences of workplace bullying can lead to reduced enthusiasm, participation, and collaboration among employees. Participant 9's statement, "It lowered my motivation and made me less comfortable working with the team," reflects the emotional withdrawal that often follows persistent

negative interactions. When employees feel excluded or disrespected, their sense of belonging and willingness to contribute to group tasks diminishes. Over time, this loss of motivation weakens teamwork, decreases productivity, and contributes to a strained organizational climate.

Thematic Chart C

Reduced Motivation and Productivity

Participant	Responses	Subordinate Themes
Participant 1	Yes, planning to resign or transfer of agency.	Turnover Intention as a Coping Mechanism
Participant 4	Bullying makes me feel demotivated at work.	

This theme illustrates how bullying undermines an employee's motivation and excitement to complete assignments. "Bullying makes me feel demotivated at work," said Participant 4, illustrating how ongoing unfavorable treatment can erode a person's sense of dedication and for employees who experience animosity or exclusion often become disinterested in making meaningful contributions, which decreases productivity and job satisfaction levels overall. With time, this demotivation reduces involvement at work and might lead to emotional tiredness or retreat.

According to Kakar and Khan (2022), bullying at work dramatically lowers employees' motivation by diminishing their sense of belonging and job satisfaction. According to the study, persistent exposure to hostile behaviors—like verbal hostility, exclusion, or criticism—decreases zeal and output. This study demonstrates how unfavorable interpersonal

dynamics can erode commitment and overall performance, supporting Participant 4's experience, where bullying resulted in demotivation at work.

Limitation of the Study

Although the results are applicable to the Schools Division Office of Cabuyao, they may not be representative of the entire Department of Education (DepEd) across the Philippines. Despite employing universal sampling, the total of 77 respondents is relatively small for a Division Office, which may limit the generalizability of the findings to larger educational contexts. Furthermore, variations in organizational culture, regional practices, and staff composition across other divisions may produce different patterns of workplace bullying and its organizational impacts. Future studies with larger and more diverse samples are necessary to validate these findings on a broader scale.

Additionally, longitudinal research could provide deeper insights into how workplace bullying evolves over time and affects employee well-being and organizational outcomes.

Conclusion

This study demonstrates that workplace bullying within the Schools Division Office of Cabuyao, while quantitatively rated as “seldom experienced,” manifests in meaningful and often disruptive ways. Beyond verbal abuse and social exclusion, bullying frequently assumes a “professionalized” form, taking the shape of work-related harassment, excessive workloads, and unrealistic deadlines. These behaviors, embedded within the structure of job responsibilities, are particularly insidious as they are harder to identify, report, or challenge, yet they exert a profound negative impact on employees’ psychological well-being, team collaboration, job satisfaction, and overall organizational climate. Professionalized bullying often blurs the line between legitimate managerial expectations and coercive or abusive practices, making it difficult for employees to distinguish when behavior crosses ethical or organizational boundaries. Many employees may tolerate or normalize these behaviors, perceiving them as part of the job, which further perpetuates a culture of silence.

Qualitative insights into employees’ lived experiences reveal that even infrequent instances of bullying can produce disproportionate organizational damage, causing emotional fatigue, stress, and lowered morale. Cultural factors such as *hiya* (shame) and *pakikisama* (group harmony) further suppress reporting and open acknowledgment of these experiences, suggesting that quantitative measures may underrepresent the true psychological and operational consequences of bullying. The data indicate that the moderately affective perception of psychological safety is likely shaped by these cultural norms, where employees prioritize social cohesion over personal grievance, thereby masking the full extent of the harm.

The study concludes that interventions aimed at fostering a healthier workplace must address both the structural and cultural dimensions of bullying, incorporating preventive policies, support systems, and culturally sensitive

strategies that empower employees to safely report and resist both overt and professionalized forms of harassment.

Based on the summary of findings, the researchers recommend the following to foster healthy working environment and eradicate workplace bullying:

1. To establish a clear and detailed policy that defines all forms of workplace bullying, outlines reporting procedures, and states disciplinary actions for violations, the organization may develop and enforce a comprehensive anti-bullying policy.
2. In order to provide mandatory workshops and seminars for all employees / management and recognize, prevent, and address workplace bullying behaviors, the organization may conduct regular training and awareness programs and implement leadership / management training among supervisors and managers regarding ethical leadership, emotional intelligence, and conflict resolution to prevent bullying from leadership roles.
3. To foster a positive workplace culture that is encouraging mutual respect, diversity, teamwork, and open communication across all levels that is also offering access to professional counseling and mental health services in supporting employees affected by bullying and workplace stress, the organization may provide psychological support services to promote a culture of respect and inclusion and encourage peer support as well as mentorship programs.
4. To ensure that all reported cases of bullying are thoroughly investigated and that consequences are consistently applied to deter future incidents and be able to create confidential, anonymous, and easily accessible channels for reporting bullying incidents without fear of retaliation, the organization should strengthen reporting and feedback mechanisms and take immediate and consistent disciplinary actions at all times.
5. To address sources of work-related harassment and ensure fair workload distribution, clear job descriptions, and realistic performance expectations, the organization may review and adjust workloads and

role expectations and monitor / evaluate workplace climate regularly.

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