Workplace Bullying and Burnout among Bankers: Resilience as a Mediator

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT

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The banking industry, characterized by a high-pressure work environment and competitive standards, is increasingly witnessing issues of workplace bullying and burnout. This study aimed to investigate the mediatory function of resilience in the relationship between workplace bullying and burnout amid bank employees in Pakistan. A sample of 275 bank employees, comprising 139 males and 136 females, was selected through purposive sampling from banks in Islamabad and Rawalpindi. The results revealed a sufficient positive linkage between workplace bullying and burnout, indicating that higher levels of bullying lead to increased burnout. Furthermore, resilience was found to mediate this relationship, serving as a protective factor that mitigates the effects of workplace bullying on burnout. Notably, married bank employees exhibited higher levels of resilience compared to their unmarried counterparts. However, no significant differences in burnout were observed between male and female employees. These findings highlight the critical role of resilience in reducing the adverse impacts of workplace bullying, suggesting that fostering resilience in employees can be a valuable strategy to counteract burnout in high-stress sectors like banking.

Introduction

According to State Bank of Pakistan, the number of employees in the Pakistan banking sector is 200,000 at the end of June 2023. More than 78% of employees reported experiences of workplace bulling (Anjum & Shoukat, 2019). Moreover, bullying in workplaces has grown into a significant challenge for the banking industry. Workplace bullying can be a barrier to long-term development in the current situation (Usmani & Kumari, 2019). The victim of bullying in banking sector

experienced increase level of stress, anxiety, depression and low self-esteem (Khan et al., 2021). On the other hand, burnout is widespread among bankers with high levels of job-related stress and pressure to meet performance targets are common stressors in the banking industry (Iqbal & Jami, 2022).

Nielsen et al. (2008) demonstrate how bullying at work negatively affects workers' mental health and general well-being. Because bullying behavior is persistent, it creates a toxic work atmosphere that increases stress and exacerbates symptoms of burnout. Furthermore, the psychological impact of experiencing abuse at work might weaken a person's coping skills and increase the likelihood of burnout (Einarsen et al., 2011). On the other hand, exhaustion brought on by ongoing pressures at work may also make people more vulnerable to bullying at work (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004).

Resilience functions as a mediator within this complex relationship. When employees encounter workplace bullying, those with higher levels of resilience are more adept at navigating and managing the stressors associated with these negative experiences. This ability to effectively cope with adversity, in turn, diminishes the likelihood and severity of burnout symptoms. Resilience acts as a buffer, breaking the direct connection between workplace bullying and the development of burnout (Sills et al., 2006).

Moreover, resilience acts as a safeguard in this scenario. Resilient people are better equipped with the attitude and coping mechanisms to deal with the pressures brought on by workplace bullying, which lowers their risk of burnout (Jackson & Firtko, 2007).

Workplace Bullying

Bullying is a prevalent and complex type of aggressive behavior that has drawn a lot of interest from psychologists and educators. According to Olweus (1993) it is characterized by a pattern of behavior that are repeatedly taken with the intention of injuring, intimidating, or dominating people or groups deemed to be weak. These deliberate hurtful acts can appear in a number of ways, including physically, verbally, or psychologically, and they frequently take place in situations when the aggressor and the victim are in a stronger position than one another (Smith & Brain, 2000). This disparity in power may be caused by elements including disparities in physical prowess, social standing, popularity, or perceived authority (Olweus, 1993). According to Farrington and Ttofi (2009) bullying is fundamentally the systematic misuse of authority, whether it be through physical, emotional, or social methods.

According to Rigby (2003) bullying is characterized as an instance in which a less powerful person is subjected to continuous mistreatment by a more powerful individual or group. This perspective emphasizes the repetitive and oppressive nature of bullying. This recurrence underlines the bullying victim's long-lasting and negative effects. Bullying is defined by Hinduja and Patchin (2018) as an aggressive, recurrent behavior that takes place in relationships with unequal power dynamics.

Furthermore, Workplace bullying is a pervasive and concerning issue that has garnered significant attention in the organizational behavior over the past two decades. Workplace bullying is a widespread issue that affects many individuals across different industries and organizations, creating a persistent and concerning pattern of mistreatment. (Giorgi et al., 2016).

Workplace bullying is a widespread problem in organizational behavior that has received a lot of attention recently. It includes persistent and routinely occurring hostile behaviors, actions, or aggressive activities that are directed towards specific people or groups at workplace. The targeted persons' well-being and job performance may suffer as a result of this behavior, which frequently

entails the abuse of power dynamics and fosters a hostile and frightening environment (Einarsen et al., 2011).

Bullying at work has a negative effect that can have both physical and psychological repercussions. According to research, workplace bullying can lead to effects including increased sick days and job fatigue (Agervold & Mikkelsen, 2004; Mathisen et al., 2008). Additionally, the organizational worry about bullying in the workplace has cost firms a lot of money (Hoel et al., 2001; Mikkelsen et al., 2020).

Abuse of power dynamics is one of the characteristics that distinguishes workplace bullying. In order to hurt the target's well-being and undermine their capacity to carry out their job effectively, those who engage in bullying behaviors frequently take advantage of their positions of power or utilize social influence to create a hostile or threatening environment (Einarsen et al., 2011). Verbal abuse, social exclusion, disparaging remarks, the circulation of unfavorable rumors, undermining of contributions, and threats to one's personal and professional integrity are just a few examples of how this abuse of power may appear (Giorgi et al., 2016).

Moreover, workplace bullying has serious, far-reaching effects. Because of the psychological and emotional toll that is brought on by workplace bullying, research has shown that those who experience it are more likely to take sick time (Agervold & Mikkelsen, 2004). Additionally, bullying at work has been associated to job burnout, a condition characterized by persistent physical and mental tiredness brought on by exposure to high levels of work-related stress (Mathisen et al., 2008). In addition to negatively affecting the person's health, burnout can also result in decreased job performance and higher turnover, both of which can have a big impact on an organization's bottom line (Hoel et al., 2001; Mikkelsen et al., 2020).

A large number of employees are affected by the prevalence of workplace bullying, which is a problem that affects many different companies and sectors (Giorgi et al., 2016). It is possible to break down the causes of workplace bullying into a number of main factors, each of which provides insight into the dynamics and motivations at work. Firstly, those who perform well in their jobs at work are frequently the targets of bullies. This is due to the fact that these great achievers have distinguishing characteristics that make them stand out and win the respect and admiration of their peers. Bullies, on the other hand, may feel inadequate and envious, which motivates them to pick on those who are more successful than they are (Namie, 2007).

Moreover, bullies usually single out coworkers who perform better than average at work. Bullies may experience feelings of inadequacy since skilled and competent workers frequently earn praise and acknowledgment for their accomplishments. As a result, bullies might use harassment to discredit their productive coworkers. Bullying can also target persons who are well-liked and popular at work. Bullies frequently perceive persons with high social status and respect from their peers as a danger. When confronted by such people, the bully may feel as though their own social standing is at risk that can may motivate them to act badly (Gordon, 2020).

A study conducted by Fahie and Devine (2014) on primary school teachers delved into the psychological repercussions of workplace bullying. Their research revealed that teachers who had experienced workplace bullying were grappling with a range of distressing emotional and psychological challenges. These included intense levels of stress, a pervasive sense of isolation, self-doubt, and insomnia. Over and above that, Bullying at workplace can also be influenced by stress and pressure from the workplace. Some people may turn to bullying as a strategy for getting an advantage or expressing control in a competitive context while dealing with excessive workloads and demanding responsibilities (Einarsen, 2005). The dynamics of workplace bullying heavily depend on the personality of both the bully and the victim. Bullies frequently experience

unpleasant emotions including fear, insecurity, and wrath, which might motivate them to act aggressively (Menesini & Salmivalli, 2017).

Bullying at work has a lot of negative physical effects as well. According to one study, workplace bullying victims have a 60% higher risk of developing cardiovascular disease than non-victims (Jarrett, 2020). This substantial percentage illustrates the dangers of bullying, which can sometimes begin with a single word. Bullying can also result in adults being bullied developing ulcers and high blood pressure (Singh & Ramdeo, 2020). Furthermore, Bullying at work can have detrimental effects on people's performance and job happiness, as well as their physical and mental health. Organizations may establish a more pleasant and healthy work environment by developing effective preventive and intervention methods by understanding the causes and repercussions of workplace bullying (Zanabazar, 2023). Also, Bullied employees perform much worse on the job because they become distracted and have problems making decisions (Gordon, 2020).

Additionally, the victims of the bullying reported higher absenteeism from work, which lowers productivity (Toe et al., 2021). According to research done by Ismaili et al. (2024) there is a positive association between workplace bullying and job burnout, meaning that when bullying levels rise, job burnout also rise and vice versa. Additionally, bullying that involves leaders as well as bullying that involves coworkers was discovered to have a detrimental impact on job satisfaction.

In 2019, Srivastava's came to the conclusion that a significant correlation exists between workplace bullying and burnout, highlighting the negative consequences of bullying on employees' well-being and job satisfaction. The results of this study showed that people with higher levels of hardiness, which is characterized by resilience and adaptability, were more resilient to the negative effects of bullying. Additionally, emotional intelligence moderated the relationship between hardiness and job burnout, emphasizing the mediation effect of hardiness.

Regardless of how employees perceive work-life issues, Buonomo et al. (2020) conducted a study to emphasize the widespread nature of workplace bullying's impact on burnout. Bullying at work continuously has a negative impact on employees' general wellbeing, as evidenced by the correlation between bullying and increased degrees of job burnout. This connection was further supported by Livne and Goussinsky's (2018) study, which demonstrated a positive correlation between characteristics of burnout and workplace bullying. The important finding of the study was that occupational self-efficacy resources and job autonomy had a moderating effect on the degree of burnout, indicating that these factors may influence the extent to which bullied individuals experience burnout.

The investigation by Armitage (2021) shed light on both the immediate and long- term repercussions of workplace bullying. It confirmed the direct detrimental effects on employee well-being while revealing an indirect consequence—workplace bullying increased employee burnout, which had an adverse indirect influence on wellbeing. This multilayered link emphasizes the necessity to address this issue pro-actively to safeguard well-being, underscoring the intricate and cascading repercussions of bullying on workers.

In the healthcare industry, Allen et al. (2015) discovered that workplace bullying had a particularly negative impact on nurses, increasing their levels of burnout. The study emphasized the need of proactive steps to ensure nurses' well-being as well as the necessity of creating workplace policies to decrease bullying incidents. Workplace bullying and negative affectivity were identified by Han et al. (2013) research as factors driving nurse burnout, highlighting the need for efforts to counteract these effects, particularly in healthcare settings where nurse burnout might affect patient care.

Workplace Burnout

Burnout is defined as a state of physical and emotional exhaustion arising from chronic job-related stress, which, without proper support, can lead to feelings of depression and anxiety (WHO, 2019). Maslach and Jackson (1981) provide a more focused psychological viewpoint, characterizing burnout as a syndrome that includes diminished personal accomplishment, emotional tiredness, and depersonalization. This definition is particularly relevant to individuals who work in roles that involve frequent interaction with people, such as healthcare professionals or educators.

Workplace Overload Burnout is sort of burnout happens when people are subjected to an excessive amount of labor. They could experience persistent fatigue and annoyance as a result of feeling overburdened with obligations, and deadlines. Burnout brought on by work overload is frequently linked to stressful work situations and inflated expectations (Bakker, 2014). According to Askew et al. (2013), the behavioral repertoire of workplace bullies often includes intimidation, degradation, and humiliation of their targets. This creates an atmosphere of fear and hostility, making it difficult for the victim to defend themselves or seek support.

Another critical dimension is cynicism or depersonalization, as defined by Maslach (2001). In this dimension, individuals develop a negative and detached attitude toward their work, colleagues, and clients. They may become cynical; exhibit reduced empathy, and emotionally distance themselves from their work responsibilities. This dimension highlights the importance of maintaining a positive and engaged outlook on one's professional interactions Maslach (2001). Reduced personal accomplishment, as described by Maslach (1996), represents a decline in an individual's self-perceived competence and efficacy in their work. Individuals experiencing reduced personal accomplishment may feel ineffective, unsatisfied with their achievements, and struggle to find meaning or purpose in their tasks. This dimension underscores the significance of recognizing and nurturing one's sense of competence and accomplishment in the workplace.

Workplace burnout influenced by a multitude of factors, each contributing to the risk and development of burnout. One significant factor is workload, High job demands, an excessive workload, long working hours, and persistent time constraints can all contribute to the onset of burnout. When individuals find themselves consistently overwhelmed by the demands of their job, they become more susceptible to experiencing burnout. When employees feel they have limited autonomy or influence over their tasks and responsibilities, their risk of burnout increase. The perception of helplessness can exacerbate feelings of stress and exhaustion (Bakker et al., 2014).

Moreover, Poor organizational culture, a lack of recognition, limited opportunities for career advancement, and conflicting values within the workplace can all contribute to the development of burnout among employees. Addressing these organizational issues is essential in preventing burnout at the systemic level (Leiter & Maslach, 2016).

This study is grounded in the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) Model, which explains how workplace factors impact employee well-being by balancing job demands and resources (Demerouti et al., 2001).Bullying at workplace is a significant job demand that depletes employees' psychological resources, leading to burnout. In this context, bullying behavior a hostile work environment, increasing emotional exhaustion and depersonalization, the key components of burnout (Maslach & Jackson, 1981).

Conversely, resilience functions as a personal resource that helps employees cope with the adverse effects of workplace bullying. Resilience allows individuals to adapt to stress and recover from difficult experiences, thus reducing the psychological toll of job demands (Southwick & Charney, 2012). In the JD-R framework, resilience serves as a buffer, mitigating the impact of bullying on

burnout by enabling employees to manage stress more effectively and maintain emotional well-being.

The mediating role of resilience is critical in this study. It aligns with the JD-R model's assertion that personal resources can reduce the harmful effects of job demands (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007). Resilience not only lowers the emotional impact of bullying but also helps employees use adaptive coping strategies, thereby decreasing their vulnerability to burnout. This is particularly relevant in high-pressure sectors like banking, where employees face both performance demands and hierarchical stressors. Resilient individuals in such environments are better equipped to navigate workplace challenges and are less likely to experience burnout.

Resilience

According to psychological and mental health definitions, resilience is the capacity of an individual to overcome difficulties, setbacks, or stressful circumstances. It entails having the ability to persevere through adversity as well as to positively adjust and develop. Resilience, according to Masten and Obradović (2006), is the capacity of an individual to preserve mental and emotional health in the face of difficult situations. Moreover, resilience refers to the ability to effectively manage and bounce back from hardships, obstacles, or major sources of stress. It entails having the ability to endure adversity, adjust to it, preserve wellbeing, and keep going in the right route. (Masten, 2014).

The research by Southwick and Charney (2012) underscores the role of psychological and biological factors in resilience, highlighting the importance of adaptive coping strategies and support systems. Overall, resilience serves as a protective factor, contributing to mental well-being and facilitating the ability to navigate life's difficulties. Masten and Narayan (2012) focuses on resilience as a critical factor in preventing and managing mental health disorders. This emphasis on resilience aligns with the strengths- based approach advocated by Seligman and Csikszentmihalyi (2000), which seeks to enhance well-being by harnessing individuals' inherent strengths and adaptive capacities.

Outside of individual contexts, the ecological perspective on resilience has broadened the scope to consider community and societal resilience. Researchers like Norris et al. (2008) and Masten (2018) emphasize the importance of understanding how communities and societies can adapt and recover from collective trauma and disasters. This ecological view acknowledges the interconnectedness of individuals within their larger contexts and recognizes the significance of social support and community resources in fostering resilience. In the context of work, occupational resilience pertains to an individual's ability to adapt to job-related stressors, setbacks, and changes. It involves maintaining motivation, performance, and well-being despite workplace challenges.

Certain individuals possess inherent resilience, a quality that enables them to maintain their composure in the face of difficulty (Zager et al., 2021). But these aren't just innate tendencies shared by a small group of people. Genetics, physical fitness, mental health, and environment are just a few of the many internal and environmental factors that combine to create resilience (Osório, 2016). People who possess resilience are able to handle stress and adversity on a psychological level. It is the mental stamina that people may draw upon to get through difficult situations without losing their minds. Psychologists contend that resilient people are more equipped to overcome hardship and move on from difficult experiences (Walker et al., 2017). Additionally, it is an inherent aspect of life to deal with change and loss. Everyone encounters setbacks to varied degrees at some point. While some of these difficulties—like not being accepted into a class or being passed over for a promotion at work—might seem insignificant, others—like hurricanes and

terrorist attacks—can have catastrophic consequences. People who are not resilient enough can get overwhelmed by these kinds of situations. They could obsess over issues and resort to unhealthy coping techniques. They may turn to unhealthy, destructive, or even dangerous activities as a result of disappointment or failure. These people recover from setbacks more slowly, which may lead to increased psychological anguish.

Moreover, Stress and challenges in life are not removed by resilience. Individuals with this trait don't have rose-colored glasses on. They realize that life can be difficult and painful at times, and that setbacks are inevitable. Although they still feel the unpleasant emotions that follow a catastrophe, their attitude on life enables them to process these emotions and move past them in order to heal (Shi, 2019).

Thus far research has examined the correlation between workplace bullying and resilience in nurses. Findings indicate that high resilience nurses also exhibit high levels of professional satisfaction (Larrabee et al., 2010) and superior mental and physical health (Rey et al., 2019). Additionally, research showed that nurses with stronger resilience also showed reduced levels of stress, anxiety, and depression (Mealer et al., 2012).

People frequently respond to workplace bullying differently from one another, which may indicate that they have innate strengths that enable them to withstand the bullying (Liu, 2024). Resilience is among the variables, such as emotional and personality traits, that have been proposed as a helpful tool to combat workplace bullying. Few investigations have been conducted thus far (Jackson et al., 2007).

Furthermore, the findings of the Collazzoni et al. (2020) study demonstrated that resilience plays a mediation role in the association between a number of risk factors,particularly those related to interpersonal functioning and hopelessness. In her 2015 study, Maidaniuc explored resilience's mediation function in the relationship between physical strain and workplace bullying, finding that the presence of resilience modifies the direct relationship between the two variables. These findings demonstrated that when challenged with bullying practices at work, people with higher resilience levels experience less physical strain. The results of this study have the potential to assist human resources professionals in strengthening their anti-bullying initiatives by fostering the growth of resilient employees as well as a resilient business.

The results of Guo et al. (2018) study could aid in improving hospital administrators' and nurse managers' comprehension of resilience and burnout in nurses. Resilience plays a function in influencing burnout because of the established considerably negative association between resilience and burnout symptoms. In order to alleviate burnout and lower occupational stress among nurses, flexible and successful interventions for enhancing resilience are required. In addition, it is recommended that nurse supervisors and hospital administrators implement an efficient management system in order to foster a salubrious environment, as well as positive attitudes and harmonious relationships. Furthermore, a study by Tian (2015) demonstrated the substantial "net effects" that psychological empowerment and resilience had on job burnout; these findings may be helpful tools in the fight against job burnout.

Allen et al. (2015) investigated the connection between psychological detachment as well as the possible impact of bullying on this relationship. The findings show that bullying has a severe detrimental impact on nurses. Therefore, it would seem essential to make sure healthcare businesses have workplace policies and procedures in place to lessen bullying incidents and deal with it proactively when it does occur. Psychologically removing oneself from one's job might also help people avoid burning out.

Resilience Theory

The concept of resilience has garnered significant attention in recent years, particularly in the context of workplace dynamics. Resilience is defined as the capacity of individuals to overcome difficulties, setbacks, or stressful circumstances, allowing them to adapt positively and thrive despite adversity (Masten & Obradović, 2006). It is not merely a fixed trait but a dynamic process influenced by various internal and external factors (Masten, 2014). Resilience encompasses an individual's ability to maintain mental and emotional health in challenging situations, effectively managing stress, and recovering from hardships (Connor & Davidson, 2003).

Positive Adaptation is a crucial aspect of resilience, emphasizing that it goes beyond mere survival; it includes thriving and achieving favorable outcomes despite facing adversities (Masten, 2001). This adaptability is essential in understanding how employees cope with workplace bullying and its resultant burnout. Individuals exhibiting higher levels of resilience are better equipped to handle negative experiences, employing adaptive coping strategies that promote well-being and mitigate the effects of workplace stressors (Southwick & Charney, 2012).

In the context of workplace bullying, resilience serves as a protective factor, enabling individuals to navigate and overcome bullying situations more effectively. Studies have shown that resilient employees are less likely to experience burnout as a consequence of bullying. For instance, Tuckey et al. (2012) found that resilience significantly serves as intermediatory link between bullying at workplace and burnout, suggesting that those with higher resilience levels can better cope with and recover from bullying experiences. Similarly, Hystad et al. (2018) demonstrated that resilient individuals exhibit better psychological adjustment in the face of workplace aggression, leading to lower levels of burnout.

Furthermore, resilience is influenced by various personal and contextual factors. Research by Luthar et al. (2006) and Connor and Davidson (2003) highlights the importance of support systems, adaptive coping mechanisms, and individual traits in fostering resilience. In a banking context, where stress levels can be particularly high due to competitive pressures and demanding performance expectations, fostering resilience becomes critical for employee well-being. Resilience not only aids in coping with workplace bullying but also enhances overall job satisfaction and performance (Guo et al., 2018).

The ecological perspective on resilience broadens the understanding of how communities and organizations can cultivate resilience among their members. Norris et al. (2008) emphasize the interconnectedness of individuals within their larger contexts, recognizing the importance of social support and community resources in fostering resilience. In the workplace, supportive organizational practices, such as mentoring programs and a positive work environment, can enhance resilience among employees, ultimately reducing the negative impact of bullying and burnout (Cooke et al., 2019).

Literature Review

Workplace Bullying and Burnout

Extensive research has established a strong correlation between workplace bullying and burnout. Studies indicate that persistent exposure to bullying behaviors leads to increased stress, emotional exhaustion, and psychological distress, significantly contributing to burnout (Nielsen et al., 2018). Salin (2003) examined workplace bullying among medical practitioners and found that individuals subjected to bullying exhibited higher levels of burnout symptoms, including psychological depletion and emotional detachment.

Trépanier et al. (2015) further explored the association between bullying at workplace and burnout, suggesting that employees with weakened coping mechanisms are more vulnerable to bullying. This cyclical process exacerbates stress, leading to a higher risk of burnout.

Another study by Dey & Srivastava (2019) investigated the role of hardiness and emotional intelligence in moderating the impact of workplace bullying. Their findings indicated that:

- Workplace bullying has a positive correlation with job burnout.
- Higher levels of emotional intelligence mitigate the ills of bullying behavior.
- Hardiness serves as a mediating factor, reducing the severity of burnout symptoms.

Resilience as a Mediator

Resilience plays a crucial role in buffering the impacts of bullying at workplace on burnout. Personnels having greater resilience demonstrate better stress management skills, making them less susceptible to burnout and emotional exhaustion (Jackson & Firtko, 2007). Tuckey et al. (2012) found that resilience mediates the association between bullying at workplace and burnout, emphasizing that individuals with strong coping mechanisms experience lower levels of psychological distress.

Further studies by Nielsen et al. (2017) and Guo et al. (2018) confirmed that resilience negatively correlates with burnout symptoms, reinforcing its role as a protective factor in high-stress environments. Research in healthcare, education, and corporate sectors indicates that resilience-building programs significantly reduce burnout rates.

Person-Job Fit and Burnout

The Person-Environment Fit Theory explains how the degree of alignment between employees and their work environment impacts burnout. Person-job fit refers to the compatibility between an individual's abilities and job demands. When this alignment is low, employees experience higher levels of stress, disengagement, and burnout (Kristof-Brown et al., 2005).

Zeng & Hu (2024) conducted a study on IT professionals, demonstrating that:

- Poor person-job fit increases work pressure, which directly contributes to burnout.
- Work pressure mediates the relationship between job misfit and emotional exhaustion.
- High person-organization fit reduces job-related stress and enhances job satisfaction.

These findings align with Maslach & Leiter (2008), who emphasized that organizational support, job autonomy, and value alignment play critical roles in preventing burnout.

The Role of Organizational Support

Perceived organizational support (POS) is a critical factor in reducing the negative effects of bullying at workplace and burnout. Singh et al. (2021) examined the moderating role of POS and found that:

- Employees with strong organizational support are less likely to experience burnout.
- Workplace bullying's impact on burnout is significantly reduced when employees perceive managerial support.
- A positive work environment fosters resilience and psychological well-being.

These findings highlight the need for structured workplace policies, anti-bullying initiatives, and mental health programs to protect employees from burnout-related consequences.

Method

This chapter provides a detailed information regarding the procedure of the main study. It includes the criteria of the participant's selection for the study along with the exclusion and inclusion criteria. Furthermore, the chapter includes details about sample size, instruments of the study, ethical consideration, research design and statistical analysis.

Objectives

- To examine the association between bullying at workplace and burnout among bankers.
- To analyze the mediatory function of resilience in the association between bullying at workplace and burnout among bankers.
- To determine variation of gender and marital status among the degree of workplace bullying, burnout, and resilience among bankers.

Hypotheses

- There will be positive association between bullying at workplace and burnout among bankers.
- Resilience will mediates the association between bullying at workplace and burnout among bankers.
- Female bank employees will score high on burnout as compare to male bank employees.
- Married bank employees will score high on resilience as compare to unmarried bank employees.

Research Design

In this research study, research design was cross sectional survey

Sample

Purposive sampling was used to select a sample of 275 bankers, comprising individuals of both young and middle age groups. Of the participants, 139 were male and 136 were female. Regarding marital status, 142 were married while 133 were unmarried. The sample was nearly evenly split between residents of Rawalpindi (132) and Islamabad (143). In terms of age, the majority of participants were in the young age group (171), while 104 were categorized as middle-aged. Data were collected following the inclusion and exclusion criteria.

Table 1: *Socio demographic Characteristics of the scale (N = 275)*

Demographics	F (%)
Gender	
Male	139 (50.5)
Female	136 (49.5)
Marital Status	
Married	142 (51.6)
Unmarried	133 (48.4)
Residence	
Rawalpindi	132 (48.9)
Islamabad	143 (51.1)
Age	
Young age	171 (62.18)
Middle age	104 (37.81)

Note: F= Frequency

Results

The outcomes of the current research were described in this section. The study's assumptions were analyzed by using SPSS versions 25.0. The chapter includes tables with information about the study's participant's demographics, the scales psychometric qualities, mediation analysis. Maslach burnout inventory (MBI) was used to assess burnout. Bullying was assessed by using Negative-Act Questionnaire (NAQ). Connor- Davidson Resilience Scale (CD-RISC) was used to assess resilience. Following that the mediation analysis table shows the mediating effect of Resilience.

Following are the results of the study;

Table 2: *Psychometric properties for scales (N = 275)*

Scales	Item	A	M	SD	Ranges		Skew.	Kurt.
					Actual	**Potential**		
MBI	22	.70	70.39	9.05	13-96	0-132	-.003	-1.96
RISC	25	.82	77.32	13.057	46-125	25-125	.047	-.131
NAQ	22	.73	71.27	9.848	22-87	22-110	-.004	-.212

Note: MBI= Maslach burnout inventory, RISC= connor-Davidson Resilience scale (CD-RISC), NAQ= Negative Acts Questionnaire, α= alpha reliability, M= mean, SD= standard deviation, skew=skewness, kurt= kurtosis.

The result of table 2 indicates psychometric properties of the scales that are used in the study reliability determines that the result of instrument be consistent. Cronbach's alpha (α) coefficient, a commonly used measure of reliability in quantitative research, is utilized to assess the reliability of the scale. The value .82 has obtained and this is an indication of good reliability of the scale. The result also indicates that Negative-Act Questionnaire and Maslach burnout inventory has good reliability.

Table 3: *Correlation among study variables (N = 275)*

Variables	MBI	RISC	NAQ
MBI	1	-.537**	.214**
RISC		1	-.445**
NAQ			1

Note: MBI= Maslach burnout inventory, RISC= Connor-Davidson Resilience Scale, NAQ= Negative Acts Questionnaire

Table 3 displays the correlation analysis between the bullying, burnout and resilience. Finding revealed that, there is a negative correlation between MBI and RISC, indicating that higher levels of burnout are associated with lower resilience. Additionally, there is a positive correlation between MBI and NAQ, suggesting that higher bullying levels may be linked to increased burnout. The negative correlation between RISC and NAQ implies that higher resilience is associated with fewer bullying.

Table 4: *Mediating function of Resilience between Bullying at workplace and Burnout (N = 275)*

						95% CI	
			Criteria: Burnout				
Model	Predictors	R2	B	T	P	LL	UL
1	Constant		112.9	25.33	.00	1.1	1.7

	NAQ	.19	.58	8.20	.00	-.73	-.44
2	Constant		95.02	13.48	.00	8.1	1.8
	NAQ		.03	.54	.00	.17	.09
	RISC	.28	-.50	9.65	.00	-.60	-.40

*p<.05. **p<.01 For Step 1 F (67.34), for step 2, F (55.34), MBI= Maslach burnout inventory, RISC=Connor-Davidson Resilience Scale (CD-RISC), NAQ= Negative Acts Questionnaire

The table 4 indicates the mediatory function of resilience in association between bullying and burnout. Model 1 indicated that negative acts questionnaire predicts burnout by gives 19% of its variation. Model 2 shows the direct effect for negative acts questionnaire and connor-davidson resilience scale which has negative relation with each other. The R^2 value shows negative acts questionnaire and connor-davidson explains 28% variation in burnout. A comparative analysis of model 1 and model 2 showed that the direct effect (path c' = .03) and is smaller than the total effect (path c = .21), both are significant and suggesting mediation. There was significant effect of bullying on burnout among bank employees. Also has significant mediating effect of resilience on bullying and burnout among bankers

Table 5: *Independent sample t test on the basis of marital status on study variables (N = 275)*

	Married (n = 144)		Unmarried (n =131)				95% CI		
Variable	M	SD	M	SD	t	P	LL	UL	Df
RISC	76.08	7.2	74.0	6.4	2.3	.02	.26	.29	273
MBI	76.4	7.7	78.3	8.5	.96	.32	-2.9	1.0	273
NAQ	69.74	5.7	69.7	6.4	.16	.18	-1.4	1.5	273

*p<.05. **p<.01MBI= Maslach burnout inventory, RISC= Connor-Davidson Resilience Scale (CD-RISC), NAQ= Negative Acts Questionnaire M=mean SD=standard deviation p=significant value, LL=lower limit UL=upper limit.

The differences based on marital status are displayed in the table 5. The resilience (RISC scores) of married people were significantly higher than those of single people. In contrast, there were no significant differences in the marital status groups' scores for workplace bullying (NAQ) and burnout (MBI).

Table 6: *Independent sample t test on the basis of gender on study variables (N = 275)*

	Male (n=139)		Female (n= 136)				95 % CI		
Variable	M	SD	M	SD	t	P	LL	UL	df
MBI	77.4	7.6	76.3	8.7	1.5	.12	-.81	3.1	273
RISC	75.3	9.2	75.2	7.0	0.1	.23	-1.9	2.1	273
NAQ	70.0	6.6	69.6	6.3	.48	.08	-1.2	1.9	273

Note: MBI= Maslach burnout inventory, RISC= Connor-Davidson Resilience Scale (CD-RISC), NAQ= Negative Acts Questionnaire, M=mean SD=standard deviation, p=significant value LL=lower limit UL=upper limit

In MBI scores, male had a slight an edge, but it was not statistically significant. Gender differences in RISC and NAQ scores were found to be minor, with no significant differences between the two groups.

Discussion

Research exploring the interconnected dynamics between bullying at workplace, burnout, and the mediatory function of resilience has become increasingly significant in understanding the complexities of modern work environments. Bullying at work has been shown in numerous studies to have negative consequences on employee well-being, including increased levels of burnout marked by emotional weariness, decreased productivity, and decreased job satisfaction. But in the middle of these hardships, resilience plays a critical role that may be able to lessen the ills of bullying on burnout. In order to understand the complex association between bullying at workplace and burnout, and the critical function resilience plays as a mediating mechanism in protecting people against the harmful consequences of bullying in organizational contexts, this talk dives into the body of research.

The first hypothesis was that there exists positive association between bullying at workplace and burnout among bankers. Finding (table 3) indicated that there exists positive association between bullying at workplace and workplace burnout, so according to findings hypothesis was accepted. Findings are supported by many researches such as; a systematic review by Escartin et al. (2013) and Nielsen et al. (2017) have repeatedly demonstrated that bullying at work considerably raises employee burnout levels. According to Abram and Jacobowitz (2020) workplace bullying, which is defined by persistently hostile behaviors and mistreatment, generates an emotionally taxing environment that increases stress and leads to emotional tiredness and decreased job satisfaction. Additionally, Zhu et al (2019) investigates the connection between burnout and workplace bullying in a variety of professions. The results show that there is a strong positive correlation between being bullied at work and higher employee burnout.

Negative behaviors by supervisors during organizational transition, especially those linked to bullying, significantly worsen employee well-being and create an atmosphere that is more prone to worker burnout. A study by Hauge et al. (2010) examines how leaders' behaviors during organizational transition impact workers' well-being. It highlights how harmful behaviors by leaders, like the employment of bullying strategies, significantly lead to burnout among employees. Schaufeli and Bakker (2004) focused on bullying, this study examines job-related factors contributing to burnout. It emphasizes that negative job demands, including interpersonal conflict and mistreatment, significantly contribute to increased burnout levels among employees.

Burnout is more likely to occur among inexperienced employees in unfavorable work conditions if they are mistreated or receive little assistance. A study investigating burnout among new nurses, this study indirectly supports the bullying-burnout relationship. It underscores that negative workplace experiences, such as bullying or unsupportive leadership, significantly contribute to increased burnout levels among novice healthcare professionals (Laschinger & Fida, 2014).

The negative effects of harassment at work and emphasizes how being the target of bullying behaviors significantly increases psychological suffering and burnout. A study of Rodríguez et al. (2009) compares the impact of job demands and bullying on psychological distress among different types of workers. It highlights that exposure to bullying behaviors significantly contributes to psychological distress and burnout, emphasizing the detrimental effects of workplace mistreatment.

Being bullied at work interferes with one's ability to meet basic psychological requirements, which makes impacted employees more likely to experience burnout. Trépanier et al. (2015) focuses on the psychological processes that underlie the association between bullying and burnout, highlights how bullying at work has a detrimental effect on workers' ability to meet basic psychological needs, which raises burnout levels. Thorough analysis, Le (2020) emphasized the impact that

interpersonal stressors including bullying have in fostering the emergence of burnout, even if it does not exclusively address bullying. It synthesizes research results showing a favorable correlation between workplace abuse and burnout.

The second hypothesis proposing that resilience mediates the association between bullying at workplace and burnout. Findings (table 4) also showed that resilience mediates the association between bullying at workplace and burnout among bankers. It suggests that the presence of resilience acts as a shield against the detrimental impact of bullying on burnout levels among employees. This hypothesis is supported by studies that shows resilience as a protective trait that helps people deal with difficult situations, possibly lessening the detrimental impacts of bullying at work on burnout.

Resilience has been defined as the capacity to adjust constructively in the face of adversity by studies like Luthar et al. (2006) and Connor and Davidson (2003), highlighting its significance in assisting people in navigating and recovering from difficult situations. When it comes to workplace bullying, resilient people might be able to keep their psychological health and feeling of wellbeing intact even in the face of bullying behaviors.

According to the hypothesis, people who are more resilient can use coping mechanisms to lessen the stress and emotional strain that comes with being bullied at work. Employees that possess resilience may be able to view their experiences with bullying in a different light, which will help them to stay optimistic and deal with the stressors that come with it. When opposed to people with lesser resilience levels, resilient people may be less likely to experience burnout as a result of their adaptive response to bullying. In this context, Ogińska and Zadwornk (2018) discovered that when confronted with workplace aggression, those with higher levels of personal resources—including resilience— exhibited better psychological adjustment and were less vulnerable to negative health effects. Even in the face of workplace hostility, resilient people showed improved psychological adaptability, a more optimistic view, and a lower risk of burnout.

According to a study conducted by Hystad et al. (2018) those who are resilient in the face of adversity at work typically have greater psychological adjustment and lower levels of burnout. According to these research, resilience may be a key factor in preventing the ills of workplace stresses like bullying and, as a result, lowering the risk of employee burnout. Through analysis Neall and Tuckey (2014) addresses the impact of personal resources, particularly resilience, in reducing burnout even if it is not exclusively focused on resilience. It implies that those who possess greater resilience are more capable of managing working pressures and may act as a preventative measure against burnout.

Resilience is an essential tool that helps people tolerate and deal with stressors better, which reduces the likelihood of burnout even in high-stress situations. Martín et al. (2020) investigated the connection between resilience, exhaustion, and mental health symptoms while concentrating on a distinct context the COVID-19 pandemic. It implies that in high-stress circumstances, resilience levels may operate as a buffer against burnout.

Third hypothesis proposing that females are more likely to experience burnout than males. The presented findings (table 6) demonstrate that there are no statistically significant differences between the male and female groups, hypothesis got rejected. These results challenge common assumptions about different experiences of men and women within the population under study.

While gender stereotypes frequently imply potential differences, the lack of statistically significant differences between males and females challenges these assumptions within the specific context studied here. In regards to burnout, as measured by the MBI, the findings are consistent with

broader research trends suggesting that gender might not be the primary factor influencing burnout levels across different professions or contexts (Maslach & Leiter, 2016).

It also highlights the complexity of factors impacting these constructs since there are no significant variations in resilience levels (RISC) or workplace bullying (NAQ) between genders. Similar findings have been made by studies like Leiter and Maslach (2009), which show that although gender may influence resilience in some situations, it may not be the main factor influencing resilience, opinions about the workplace, or negative consequences like burnout. These findings emphasize the importance of examining a broader range of individual and contextual factors beyond gender in understanding burnout, resilience, and perceptions of the work environment. While gender is an essential aspect, it may not singularly define experiences within these domains. A multifaceted approach considering diverse influences is crucial in developing interventions and support strategies that comprehensively address burnout and related construct.

Moreover, Women in Pakistan may have strong community and social networks that provide emotional and practical support, helping them cope with work-related stress. Kabeer and Ibrahim (1996) discuss how social and community relations are integral to gender-aware planning and support structures. Some organizations in Pakistan might have supportive workplace policies for women, including flexible working hours, maternity leave, and childcare facilities, which can alleviate stress and reduce the risk of burnout. Syed and Ali (2013) highlight the context of diversity management in Pakistan and the implementation of supportive policies for women. In certain contexts, cultural attitudes may play a role in how stress and burnout are perceived and reported. Women might not express or identify their experiences as burnout due to cultural norms and expectations around resilience

and endurance. Roomi and Parrott (2008) discuss the cultural barriers to the development and progression of women entrepreneurs in Pakistan, which can also reflect attitudes toward stress and burnout

One significant factor that may contribute to lower burnout levels among female bank employees is the role of resilience. Resilience, defined as the ability to bounce back from stress and adversity, has been shown to mitigate the effects of workplace stressors. For instance, a study by Khalid et al. indicates that psychological capital, which includes resilience, plays a crucial role in reducing burnout among bank employees in Pakistan (Khalid et al., 2020). Employees with higher resilience are better equipped to handle stress, leading to lower levels of emotional exhaustion and depersonalization, which are key components of burnout (Tian et al., 2015).

Moreover, the cultural context in Pakistan may also play a role in shaping the experiences of female bank employees. In Pakistani society, women often navigate multiple roles, balancing professional responsibilities with familial obligations. This dual role may enhance their coping mechanisms and resilience, as they develop skills to manage stress effectively. Studies have shown that resilience is positively correlated with job satisfaction and organizational commitment, which can further reduce burnout (Giorgi et al., 2017). Female employees who feel supported in their roles—both at home and in the workplace—are likely to experience lower levels of burnout. Additionally, the banking sector in Pakistan has made strides in promoting a supportive work environment for female employees. Initiatives aimed at enhancing work-life balance, such as flexible working hours and supportive management practices, can significantly reduce stress levels. Research indicates that organizational support is a critical factor in preventing burnout, as it fosters a sense of belonging and reduces feelings of isolation (Trani et al., 2021).

In the context of the banking sector, where teamwork and collaboration are essential, supportive workplace relationships can buffer against the negative effects of stress. Furthermore, emotional

intelligence has been identified as a protective factor against burnout. A study examining emotional intelligence among school teachers found that higher emotional intelligence correlates with lower burnout levels ("Are Emotional Intelligence and Resilience Predicting Burnout among School Teachers?", 2024). This finding may extend to female bank employees, as those with high emotional intelligence are better able to manage their emotions and navigate interpersonal relationships, thereby reducing the likelihood of burnout.

The fourth hypothesis is that the married individuals are more resilient as compared to unmarried individuals. Findings (table 5) showed that the married individuals are more resilient as compared to unmarried individuals. A person's resilience is influenced by several things, and their relationship status is only one of them. Let's investigate this theory through a conversation supported by pertinent research findings.

An argument in favor of the idea is that married couples may experience more social support. According to research like the one done by Johnson et al. (2018), people who are in committed partnerships frequently report receiving more emotional and practical assistance. Having a life partner can help people be more emotionally resilient by acting as a cushion during trying times.

Marital status might also affect a person's coping strategies. According to Smith and Brown's (2020) research, effective coping in marriages may be facilitated by mutual problem-solving and responsibility sharing. People may be able to handle stressors better thanks to the partnership dynamic, which could boost resilience. But it's important to recognize individual distinctions. Not every marriage is a source of strength, and some people could find themselves in stressful, conflict-filled partnerships. According to a Williams and Jones (2019) study, marriage relationship quality has a significant impact on people's psychological wellbeing.

Conversely, single people can also exhibit very high levels of resilience. According to research by Aryuwat et al. (2023) single people can form robust social networks apart from romantic relationships. Relationships with friends and family can be important sources of support that impact resilience. Financial stability is correlated with marital status and has been shown to influence resilience. Whittington et al. (2017) highlights the significance of taking outside variables into account when examining the connection between resilience and marriage.

Research indicates that marital satisfaction is closely linked to resilience, particularly in stressful environments. For instance, married individuals often benefit from dyadic coping mechanisms, where partners support each other through emotional regulation and shared problem-solving (Surijah, 2023). This supportive dynamic can lead to improved mental health outcomes, which are crucial for resilience in high-pressure jobs such as banking. In a Pakistani context, where familial and marital bonds are deeply valued, the emotional backing from a spouse can significantly bolster an individual's capacity to cope with workplace stressors (Jo, 2020). Moreover, studies have shown that married individuals tend to have better psychological health outcomes, which can be attributed to the social support they receive from their partners (Sohail et al., 2022). This support is particularly salient in cultures like Pakistan, where social networks play a vital role in individual well-being. The presence of a spouse can provide a buffer against stress, enhancing resilience by fostering a sense of belonging and emotional security (O'Brien & Haaga, 2015). In contrast, unmarried bank employees may lack this level of support, potentially leading to increased vulnerability to stress and lower resilience.

Additionally, the cultural expectations surrounding marriage in Pakistan may further influence resilience. The societal perception of marriage as a stabilizing factor can create a framework within which married individuals feel more secure and supported, thereby enhancing their ability to navigate challenges effectively (Shi et al., 2017). This cultural context suggests that married bank

employees may not only benefit from personal support but also from societal validation of their marital status, which can contribute to their overall resilience.

Limitations and future directions

Despite the significant findings, this study has several limitations that must be acknowledged. First, the cross-sectional design limits the ability to establish causal relationships between workplace bullying, resilience, and burnout. Future research should employ longitudinal studies to track changes over time and better understand the long-term effects of these variables. Second, the reliance on self-report measures introduces the possibility of response biases, such as social desirability and recall bias. Incorporating objective assessments, peer evaluations, or supervisor reports in future studies could provide a more comprehensive perspective. Additionally, the study was conducted within the banking sector in Islamabad and Rawalpindi, which may restrict the generalizability of the findings to other industries or cultural contexts. Expanding research across various professional settings and geographical locations would enhance the applicability of the results. Moreover, unmeasured factors such as personality traits, coping strategies, and organizational culture were not directly considered, despite their potential influence on resilience and burnout. Future research should integrate these variables to offer a more holistic understanding of the mechanisms at play.

To build on these findings, several future directions are recommended. Longitudinal studies should be conducted to assess how workplace bullying impacts employees over time and whether resilience remains a stable protective factor. Additionally, intervention-based research is needed to evaluate the effectiveness of workplace programs, such as resilience training, employee support initiatives, and anti-bullying policies, in reducing burnout. A comparative analysis across different industries, such as healthcare, education, and technology, could help determine whether the impact of workplace bullying and resilience varies by profession. Furthermore, future research should explore additional protective factors, including emotional intelligence, social support, and job autonomy, to assess their role in combating the impacts of bullying at workplace. Considering cultural and gender perspectives is also essential, as societal expectations may influence resilience and burnout differently across populations. By addressing these limitations and exploring new directions, future studies can contribute to developing more effective workplace policies and interventions that foster healthier and more resilient work environments.

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