Workplace Bullying and Unethical Behaviors …… Testing the Moderating and Mediating Effects of the Relationship in Banking Sector of Jordan Northern Region

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ABSTRACT

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Unethical behaviors is costly problem to all organizations, it causes physical, emotional and financial harms to the organization, a better understanding for this phenomenon, its antecedents and consequences, and the variables that affect it will enhance the managers' ability to curtail this phenomenon and reduce its negative impact.

In our research we developed a model that examine the mediation and moderation effect of certain variables on the relationship between bullying and unethical behaviors, more specifically we tested the direct effect of bullying on the unethical behaviors, also we tested the mediation effect of psychological ownership of the relationship, we hypothesize that exchange ideology moderates the relationship between bullying and psychological ownership, as we hypothesized that need for revenge moderates the relationship between psychological ownership and unethical behaviors, the sample consisted of 295 of banking sector in the Jordan northern region, we found that there is a direct effect of bullying on ethicality of employees behaviors, the results also showed that there is a significant mediation effect of psychological ownership in the mentioned
relationship, the research findings also supported what we hypothesized about the moderating effect of the social exchange ideology between bullying and psychological ownership, furthermore the results clarified that there is a moderating effect of the need for revenge on the relationship between psychological ownership and the unethical behaviors.

Key words: Bullying, Psychological Ownership, Unethical Behaviors, The Exchange Ideology, Need for Revenge.
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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

People spend a long time in their workplace, so how people behave at workplace is a major concern for researchers and organizations as well. Although, some of organizational behaviors are desirable and functional to achieve organizational effectiveness, like organizational citizenship behaviors (Organ, 1997) and commitment-related behaviors (Nehmeh, 2009) empathy (Diss, 2008), there is another set of behaviors that may be undesirable and dysfunctional.

Bullying is one of these behaviors, it has been defined as "all those repeated actions and practices that are directed to one or more workers, which are unwanted by the victim, which may be done deliberately or unconsciously, but clearly cause humiliation, offence and distress, and that may interfere with job performance and/or cause an unpleasant working environment" (Einarsen, 1999, p. 2) Because these behaviors contribute negatively to both individual behaviors and organizational effectiveness, it is a well-recognized and widely researched topic.

Bullying is costly at both individual and organizational level, it may cause mental and emotional harm, physical illness, and career damage for the victims of bullying. It also has a huge effect on organizations; it may reduce productivity, profit, increase absenteeism and attrition, and loss of customers, (Einarsen et al, 2003; Namie, G., 2003), one important aspect that left unattended in bullying literature is its effect on unethical behaviors, so this study came to fill this gap. Being a victim of bullying might make employees feel powerless to restore justice or sense of control,
so if employees felt powerless they may be engaged in an unethical behaviors or deviant behaviors, (Salin, 2003).

Moreover, this study will examine the potential moderating effect of some individual variables on the relationship between bullying and unethical behaviors, this type of study will help us to identify conditions under which bullying has more or less effects on unethical behaviors, consequently this investigation will yield practical results for organizations.

1.2 Research problem

Workplace bullying is a serious problem that can occurs in any organization, it has damaging effects on organization as it causes physical, emotional and financial harms to the organization. By the same taken, it may lead employees to adopt some negative behaviors, such as higher absenteeism and turnover, reduced productivity of the organization and may force employees to behave in a deviant way which is not good to the organizations.

The purpose of this study is to explore the direct and indirect effect of workplace bullying on unethical behaviors, which received little attention of researchers. Figure (1) illustrates the research model.

Figure 1: process model