

**Bullying as a Predictor with Personality Traits as a Moderation of Employees' Burnout at
the Workplace in Lebanese Corporations**

Haigazian University

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Table of Contents

Abstract	8
Burnout	11
Bullying	11
Personality Traits	12
Lebanese Context	13
Purpose of the Study	14
Rationale of the Study	14
Research Questions	16
The Professional Significance of the Study	16
Chapter 2	18
Literature Review	18
Bullying and Employee Mental Health	18
Bullying and Burnout	19
Bullying and Personality Traits	20
Personality Traits and Burnout	21
Chapter 3	25
Methodology	25
Research Design	25
Participants	25
Ethical Considerations	27
Instruments	27
Demographic Form	30
Procedure	30
Data Analysis	31
Chapter 4	32
Results	32
Reliability Testing	32
Sample Characteristics and Demographics	33
Scale Descriptive	34
Correlation Matrix	36
Hypothesis Testing	37
Model summary	38
Chapter 5	46
Discussion	46

	6
The Role of Workplace Bullying	46
The Role of Neuroticism	47
The Role of Extraversion	48
Conclusion	49
Clinical Implications	51
Strengths and Limitations	51
Future Recommendations	52
References	53

List of Tables

Table 1: Cronbach of Scales & Subscales.....	33
Table 2: Sociodemographics	34
Table 3: Scale descriptive.....	35
Table 4: Correlation Matrix	37
Table 5: Model Summary.....	38
Table 6a: Hypothesis 1 Model Summary.....	39
Table 6b: Hypothesis 1 ANOVA.....	39
Table 6c: Hypothesis 1 Regression	39
Table 7a: Hypothesis 2 Model Summary.....	41
Table 7b: Hypothesis 2 ANOVA.....	42
Table 7c: Hypothesis 2 Regression	42
Table 8a: Hypothesis 3 Model Summary.....	43
Table 8b: Hypothesis 3 ANOVA.....	43
Table 8c: Hypothesis 3 Regression	44

Abstract

The workplace can impose significant pressures on employees that can lead to unprecedented outcomes that have significant impact on their psychological well-being. Studies have suggested that workplace bullying is one of the pressures faced by employees, whereby they are exposed to several offenses, physical and verbal. Investigations in that regard have shown that workplace bullying is an indicator of burnout in employees, which is a work-related stress characterized by physical or emotional tiredness, as well as a sense of diminished achievability and self-worth. Moreover, literature has briefly attempted to integrate personality factors into understanding how it affects the relationship between workplace bullying and burnout. To further extend the research to Lebanon, the study at hand investigated personality as a moderator between workplace bullying and burnout, specifically the personality traits of neuroticism and extraversion. In a form that combined three questionnaires - Maslach Burnout Inventory, Negative Acts Questionnaire, and Big Five inventory – data was collected from 115 employees in diverse Lebanese corporations. Using hierarchical multiple regression, the results found that workplace bullying was directly related to burnout. However, neuroticism and extraversion were not found to be moderators between workplace bullying and burnout. Nevertheless, an interesting finding highlighted how neuroticism had a significant effect on burnout and extraversion had a significant negative relationship with workplace bullying. Despite the limitations accompanied with the small sample size, this is the first study to discuss this complicated relationship in Lebanon. Further research should focus on the relationship between workplace bullying and personality factors.

Key words: workplace bullying, burnout, personality, neuroticism, extraversion.

Bullying as a Predictor with Personality Traits as a Moderation of Employees' Burnout at the Workplace in Lebanese Corporations

With the advancement taking place in the business world and the expansion of corporations, employees are being exposed to additional stressors. While some are common problems that employees face in modern workplace environments, others are the result of specific contextual factors created because of workplace tension. The accumulation of multiple stressors has been suggested in the research field to be associated with burnout. Researchers who discussed the contextual factors of these stressors highlighted that high job requirements, work pressure, ambiguous job roles, peer pressure and work-life imbalance were found to be positively associated with employees' burnout (Vandebroek et al., 2017). Moreover, mistreatment and bullying by coworkers were also related to the experience of burnout by employees (Miller, 2019). These stressors not only impact employees' job productivity, but also the prolonged exposure to them contribute to burnout in the workplace which ultimately affects the individual's mental health status (Johnson et. al, 2018).

Additional research was conducted on individual traits that could contribute to the development of burnout. The literature suggests that specific personality traits can influence the contextual stress experienced by employees, which, in turn, increases the employees' symptoms of burnout (Schimpf, 2009). Previous research suggests the moderating role of personality traits in how individuals perceive workplace stress. This study focused on the relationship between bullying and specific personality traits, on one hand, and burnout (dependent variable), on the other. The proceeding paragraphs will first define the concept of burnout.

Burnout

Burnout is the final occupational exhaustion level that employees experience. Job dissatisfaction, lack of commitment and several absences were found to be antecedents to burnouts (Stalker & Harvey, 2002). Burnt-out employees will experience somatic symptoms that include a wide spectrum ranging from pain and disturbances attributed to organ dysfunction (e.g., dizziness, cardiovascular, gastrointestinal, or sensorimotor complaints) to fatigue and exhaustion (Li et al., 2016).

Burnout consists of three factors: emotional exhaustion, depersonalization and reduced competence. Emotional exhaustion implies the deficiency of a person's emotions making him feel drained (Vandebroeck et al., 2017; Islam et. al, 2020). Emotional exhaustion resulting from a prolonged period of bullying affirms a strong negative relation with employee well-being, medication use, absenteeism, and turnover. Depersonalization refers to impersonal feelings towards the work environment. Reduced personal competence is a self-perception of not being good enough to conduct the work. These three factors will affect employee's quality of work, decrease commitment, career satisfaction and performance at work, and increase sickness absence and job turn over (Vandebroeck et al., 2017; Dias & Angelico, 2018). Such a negative working environment results in energy depletion and job dissatisfaction (Vandebroeck et al., 2017). Additional research found that burnout causes detrimental health effects on the employees, like the development of psychoneurotic and pain disorders (Dias & Angelico, 2018).

Bullying

A very significant stressor in a work environment is bullying, which is the independent variable that predicts burnout in this study. Bullying is a progressive act of verbal or physical aggression that lasts for a long period of time (Makarem et al., 2018). It is mainly characterized

by an imbalance of power between the bullies and those who are acting out the aggressive behaviors and the victims who are receiving the adversary acts without being able to defend themselves (Nielsen & Knardahl, 2015). It was described by Vartia (2001, p.63) as “situations in which someone is subjected to long-lasting, recurrent, and serious negative or hostile acts and behaviors that are annoying and oppressing”.

Bullying at workplace not only affects the organizational environment by impacting its reputation, but also employees’ productivity. Thus, a fearful culture becomes salient and employees become dissatisfied to the extent they start leaving their jobs or increase the number of their absentees (Makarem et al., 2018). According to Miller (2019), workplace bullying, a growing problem in today’s business world, is among the most vital stressors to organizations. Bullying humiliates employees on the personal and professional level and makes them feel excluded. In 2017, the Workplace Bullying Institute declared that almost 60% of staff get bullied at work and 61% get bullied by their managers. Additionally, when employees disclosed the bullying behavior, it was found that they are faced with opposing behavior and might be threatened to lose their jobs 71% of the time (Nelson, 2020).

Personality Traits

Personality traits in this study assumed to play a moderating role between bullying in the workplace and burnout. Bolger and Zuckerman (1995) indicated that individual factors determine burnout. He identified that people’s perception determines their reaction to a situation more than the situation itself. Zuckerman’s idea overlapped with Hamama-Raz and Solomon’s (2006) study where they highlighted the importance of cognitive appraisal to stressful events. They argued that perception is more important than the specific incident experienced. Furthermore, Fejgin et al. (2005) implicated that individual’s perception of a situation is what determines individual’s

reaction. Thinking, feeling and actions that form up individual's perceptions and attitudes are determined by one's personality traits (Pervin, 1993). A personality trait is the tendency to act in a set of expected behavior patterns in different situations; such behaviors are considered consistent over the lifetime of the individual (Parent-Lamarche & Marchand, 2019). Therefore, personality traits may be a factor influencing burnout. Personality traits were also among other factors that were found to influence stress experienced by individuals. These traits have a significant impact on the choices taken for coping mechanisms during stressful situation such as burnout (Schimpf, 2009). Therefore, extraversion and neuroticism were predicted to act as moderators between workplace bullying and burnout in the study at hand.

Lebanese Context

In Lebanon, a country that has faced several wars and experienced economic instability, employees have and continue to experience stressful events which make them more vulnerable to developing mental health conditions (Talih et al., 2016). Most of the organizations in Lebanon are family owned. Strategies of the companies are built around managing political and debt compositions of the organization. It is significant to mention that little to no attention is given to employees' satisfaction (Skaff, 2012). Hence, most Lebanese managers prioritize tasks delivery rather than employee's well-being even if this will predict a decrease in employees' satisfaction and interest to achieve a healthy workplace environment (Skaff, 2012). As explained by Nielsen et al. (2017), when managers are inattentive to organizational environment, confused employees will suffer from high adverse events which will reflect on their performance. Workplace bullying is reported to be among the most stressful events to the organizational environment. In fact, research revealed that 15% of employees are subject to workplace bullying and 11% identify themselves as victims of bullying (Nielsen & Knardahl, 2015). Also, in their study Makarem

et al., (2018) showed that 15.7% of bullied employees reported that managers were the source of bullying while 13.7% indicated that bullying was from co-workers. Only 4.2% reported being bullied by clients (Makarem et al., 2018). In Lebanon, which is the context of this study, studies revealed that 62% of nurses were exposed to verbal bullying (Alameddine et al., 2011).

Purpose of the Study

Based on the above brief literature review, the purpose of this study was to investigate the role of bullying as a predictor and specific personality traits as a moderator of burnout at workplaces in Lebanon. Specifically, the study attempted to look at whether the personality trait neuroticism enhanced the burnout of employees when they were bullied. On the other hand, the study examined whether the personality trait extraversion was a suppressive factor for decreasing the degree of getting burned-out by employees.

Rationale of the Study

Generally, the research available on bullying at the workplace and burnout is still limited. In their study, Makarem et al. (2018) suggested the need for studying workplace bullying in Lebanese corporations, since bullying is more expected in cultures like Lebanon. Power distance is prevalent as a management style in Lebanese institutions, especially with the dominance of family businesses. The hierarchy structure that is set in companies in the Arab region and in Lebanon promotes a stressful work environment and advocates for bullying at the workplace. Bullying degrades employees, makes them feel excluded, and leads to personal and professional exhaustion with prolonged exposure. Prolonged exposure to these symptoms will make employees start to suffer from drained emotion, become impersonal towards their work environment, feel less competent doing their job roles, and consequently lead to burnout. Moreover, Swider and Zimmerman (2010) advised that further research is recommended to study

the moderation role of personality traits and its relation to burnout. In this study, the focus will be on a thorough understanding of this relation. Additionally, the investigation will look at the personality traits of the employees and how it will strengthen or weaken the relation between bullying and burnout. Neurotic individuals are expected to amplify their experience when being bullied and experiencing burnout, while extroverts might have a positive interpretation of others and thus their perception of workplace bullying might be less impacted.

The scope of literature suggests that this is the first research to be conducted in Lebanon on workplace bullying and burnout, where neuroticism is studied as an enhancing factor, and extraversion is considered as suppressive in the relation between workplace bullying and burnout. Alameddine et al. (2015) studied the impact of workplace violence in Lebanon. A survey conducted on a sample of 915 registered nurses revealed that 54.1% reported being emotionally exhausted and 28.8% being depersonalized. In comparison to another sample that was not exposed to bullying, this sample reported being high on emotional exhaustion, depersonalization and having the will to quit their jobs thus being burnout. The research questions mentioned below focused on the relation between workplace bullying and burnout, in addition to personality traits and its impact on this relation. These variables were crucial to study in the Lebanese context for better understanding of bullying at the workplace and the importance of the personality traits, particularly neuroticism and extraversion, in determining the understanding of this relation. This should help Lebanese organizations to develop a leaner management style and adopt policies and procedures to protect employees that stand to be companies' main assets.

Research Questions

Based on the above, the present study aimed to ask the following:

Research Question 1

Do higher levels of bullying at the workplace predict higher levels of employee's burnout?

Research Question 2

Does the personality trait of neuroticism enhance the relation between bullying and burnout for employees?

Research Question 3

Does the personality trait of extraversion suppress the relation between bullying and burnout for employees?

The Professional Significance of the Study

Bullied employees lose their commitment to their jobs and in turn minimize their efforts in providing quality performance (Wilson & Nagy, 2017). Research has demonstrated that the mere existence of any form of bullying in the workplace can lower employees' self-confidence and job satisfaction, reduce commitment, and can affect interpersonal relationships (Wilson & Nagy, 2017).

From a theoretical perspective, the presented study I relied on existing literature conducted on workplace bullying and its relation to burnout for Lebanese employees. Moreover, I discussed the impact of the personality traits neuroticism and extraversion on the relation of

workplace bullying and burnout. These results allow for further researchers to build on this discussion, and either to conflict or approve.

From a practical aspect, organizations can use these results to better understand how to implement policies and procedures that can protect against bullying in the workplace which in turn ease the burnout outcome. With the increasing demand on industrial psychology shedding light on human capital at the workplace, this study allows managers to better understand how personality traits fit not only job performance but also for employees' coping mechanisms and agility when being faced with burnout. Thus, training is tailored to serve the needs of these employees to help them in boosting their coping mechanisms and controlling adverse events at the workplace.

Understanding the way personalities may influence burnout helps recognize those employees who are at a higher risk to establish burnout symptoms. In addition, understanding how personality traits are affected by bullying at the workplace helps anticipate those employees that might be victims of such a behavior. This helps companies promote a healthier organizational culture that has an open eye on employees which might be at a higher risk of being bullied and thus develop higher burnout symptoms. Equipped with this knowledge, management can remove unnecessary stress, encourage open communication, and promote lean management structure (Wilson & Nagy, 2017). This study sheds more light on workplace bullying and the impact it can have on mental health that is caused by employees' burnout.

Acknowledging this and being aware of personality trait's role that affect burnout levels, employees and organizations might take precautions through developing effective preventative methods for preventing workplace bullying and raising awareness on burnout.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

The purpose of this chapter is to discuss previous literature that tackled the three concepts of this study, mainly workplace bullying, burnout, and personality. Different connections between the concepts were presented in order to further understand the diverse areas of the study at hand as well as come up with the hypotheses.

Bullying and Employee Mental Health

Workplace bullying has negative implications on employees, including mental and physical health concerns. Concerning the mental health aspect, a study conducted by Tehrani (2004) revealed that 44% of those who were bullied experienced anxiety and PTSD symptoms. The study extended over a two-year period where she surveyed 165 care professionals CPs who might have experienced workplace bullying. Those CPs were attending psychological occupational training awareness over the mentioned period and were asked to complete a questionnaire at the end of each training session regardless if they are a victim of bullying or not (Tehrani, 2004).

Another longitudinal research was done by Kivimäki et al. (2002) to test whether bullying has an impact on physiological and psychological factors, such as cardiovascular disease and depression. The researchers collected data from 10696 hospital employees over a period of two years. The method of the study required the employees to fill out two surveys. Moreover, the authors divided the sample to three categories. A control group was present that included employees that did not report bullying at both surveys. The second category included those who reported bullying in one of the surveys while the last category included those who had prolonged

experience of bullying and thus reported it in both surveys. The results of the study indicated that prolonged exposure to bullying can be an onset for both depression and cardiovascular diseases (Kivimäki et al., 2002).

Workplace bullying can be associated with employees' psychosomatic symptoms including muscle tension, back pain and headaches (Wilson & Nagy, 2017). Both sexes experienced insomnia, back pain, and chronic fatigue, whereas women reported more tension headache. Furthermore, the latter symptoms predicted the employees' burnout. Therefore, this suggested that bullied employees are more likely to take sick leaves than those who are not.

Bullying and Burnout

The presence of bullying in the workplace creates a negative environment that could eventually predict the development of burnout symptoms among the victims. Burnout due to bullying in the workplace might not be explicitly revealed in one form, but rather seen in demanding jobs, workload, unclear job description and work-life imbalance (Rossiter & Sochos, 2018). Eventually, the employees' coping strategies facing the prolonged difficult work environment that includes bullying affects the degree of burnout that they will experience (Schimpf, 2009).

Bullying accelerates the burnout cycle of employees, especially if it is being exerted by managers (Rossiter & Sochos, 2018). In their descriptive cross-sectional research, Kim et al. (2019) targeted 324 nurses who are directly involved with patients in Seoul, Gyeonggi, and Chungnam's general hospitals to assess the relation between workplace bullying and burnout. Newly employed nurses were excluded. The researchers used a self-administered questionnaire to collect the data intended for the study after debriefing the nurses and obtaining their consent. The study revealed that workplace bullying had a major impact on emotional exhaustion and

depersonalization. The burnout experienced by nurses was particularly due to prolonged stress and imbalance of power especially when exposed to rude behavior. This study revealed a mean of workplace bullying of 39.29% which was similar to that of another study conducted at South Korea's general hospital (Kim et al., 2019).

Laschinger and Grau (2010) in a cross-sectional study selected a sample of 165 nurses from the College of Nurses of Ontario's who have one year or less experience in their jobs. The nurses were asked to complete a survey questionnaire after they have read a letter that explained to them the intent of the study. The results revealed that psychological capital, defined as an individual's level of hope, resilience, and capability to execute tasks under pressure, determines the level of burnout. It was found that psychological capital plays a protective factor against stressors that employees face at the workplace. Moreover, the findings showed that psychological capital was a buffer against emotional exhaustion for fresh graduate nurses. Nurses who recorded high on psychological capital were able to engage and felt more belonging to the work environment. This minimized work struggle among employees and thus decreased the exposure to bullying. Leiter and Maslach's study suggested as well that psychological capital is correlated with bullying and burnout (Laschinger & Grau, 2011).

Bullying and Personality Traits

Before discussing the personality traits as a moderation between bullying in the workplace and burnout, it was important to shed light on the relationship between personality and bullying. In their longitudinal research, Nieleasn and Knardahl (2015) studied 3066 Norwegian employees that were recruited from 91 companies across different industries to determine if their personality traits had a role in being subject to workplace bullying. The study showed that individuals who scored high on consciousness were bullied more than others. The

authors explained that those individuals tend to be envied due to their high achievement at work, which in turn makes them more vulnerable to bullying behavior. Additionally, individuals measured high on neuroticism at baseline were positively correlated with being bullied two years later (Nielsen & Knardahl, 2015).

Balducci et al. (2011) in their cross-sectional study on employees in non-managerial positions in a public administration company in Italy aimed to study where personality traits and the work environment were antecedents to bullying and if post-traumatic stress symptoms are an outcome of being bullied. The candidates who voluntarily participated were asked to fill out a questionnaire for the study. Approximately 600 employees completed all the data requested. The study concluded that those who reported high on neuroticism, defined as emotional instability, were more exposed to bullying. Thus, neurotic characters may display conflicted behaviors that may foresee them to be bullied by others. Moreover, based on the Job-demand model, they reached a conclusion that a bad work environment is strongly related to bullying which in turn predicts PTSD symptoms to those bullied employees' candidates. Balducci et al. (2011) controlled for traumatic events for the past year. They split the participants into two groups, those who have experienced traumatic events, as death of family members or illness or divorce and those who didn't. However, it was still determined that exposure to repetitive and prolonged bullying was positively related to PTSD symptoms.

Personality Traits and Burnout

In the study at hand, certain personality traits were considered a moderator for developing burnout. Personality consists of a set of traits that define how individuals think, feel and behave (Nielsen & Knardahl, 2015). These traits tend to be stable over individual's life time and can have an influence over his life (Costa & McCrae, 1992). Individuals' personality determines the

way people interact with each other (Wilson & Nagy, 2017). In the literature, there are different theories that provide a building block for the understanding of personality traits, such as the PEN model, the three-factor model, the Cloninger's temperament model and the Miller and Lynam five-factor model. These models of personality are the most used in research due to their high validity. The terms in how these models were built distinguish one model from the other (Schimpf, 2009). Although these different models exist, recent modern psychology research is influenced by the five-factor model FFM (Nielsen & Knardahl, 2015). The FFM model is derived from the lexical hypothesis that explains individual differences in likes, interests and connotation depending on language (Schimpf, 2009). Researchers adopting the lexical hypothesis used adjectives from the dictionary to explain the different dimensions of personality. The FFM model considered personality traits as long-term broad dimensions that distinguish individuals from one another. These traits are individualistic in nature where people think, feel and behave uniquely in a different situation (Schimpf, 2009). Based on this model, the personality structure is composed of five traits: extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, neuroticism and openness. These five personality traits have cultural dominance and are biological in nature (Nielsen & Knardahl, 2015).

To study the relationship between personality traits and burnout, Tasic et al. (2020), in a cross-sectional study, targeted 1588 nursery teachers in a Belgrade preschool. The results conceded that personality traits are attributes to burnout symptoms for the preschool profession (Tasic et al., 2020). Additionally, a study conducted by Hurt et al. (2013) on a sample of 113 therapists who worked with autistic individuals on one-to-one basis showed a positive correlation between neuroticism and burnout. On the other hand, extraversion and conscientiousness were negatively related with depersonalization and positively correlated with reduced competence. Moreover, agreeableness was positively related with reduced competence (Hurt et al., 2013).

In another study conducted by Chung and Harding (2009), the researchers found that nursing employees that work with intellectually disabled clients came to identify a positive relation between burnout symptoms, high neuroticism, and conscientiousness traits, and a negative relation between burnout symptoms and lower extraversion traits. These results concurred with the meta-analysis of Swider and Zimmerman that showed that agreeability, conscientiousness, neuroticism and extraversion personality are related to burnout (2010). There was a positive relation between neuroticism and burnout and a negative relation between burnout and agreeability, conscientiousness and extraversion (Swider and Zimmerman, 2010).

Moreover, Fornens-Vives et. al (2019) investigated the role of neuroticism as a moderator in predicting a form of workplace bullying, psychological harassment, whereby they found that their findings indicated a strong link between neuroticism and psychological harassment. Furthermore, a direct influence of neuroticism on psychological harassment was discovered. This supports the hypothesis posed in the study at hand for Fornes-Vives et. al (2019) found that neurotic traits and emotional coping have been proven to predict chronic stress in nurses, such as burnout. Identifying individual traits linked to workplace harassment would give valuable information for identifying suitable interventions to minimize chronic stress and improve nurses' well-being.

Bolger and Zuckerman in their cross-sectional study of psychology students concluded that personality traits impact individuals' reaction to unpleasant work events which in turn influenced these individuals' burnout symptoms (1995). The study looked at 94 psychology students and addressed neuroticism trait in its reaction to stressful events. Students were asked to record daily diaries concerning their interpersonal problems so that links can be analyzed between conflicts and coping mechanisms to these distresses. The results showed that students

who are high on neuroticism are at a greater risk of reactivity and exposure to adversary events (Bolger & Zuckerman. 1995).

Based on the above review of literature, the study investigated the following hypotheses:

Hypothesis 1

Higher levels of bullying at the workplace predict higher levels of employee's burnout among a sample of Lebanese working adults

Hypothesis 2

The personality trait of neuroticism enhances the relation between bullying and burnout among a sample of Lebanese employees.

Hypothesis 3

The personality trait of extraversion suppresses the relation between bullying and burnout among a sample of Lebanese employees

Chapter 3

Methodology

The following chapter discusses the methodology that is applied in this study. It includes a description of the participants, an elaboration of the used measurements, the procedure steps that were adopted, and an overview of the data analysis.

Research Design

The objective of this quantitative study was to examine whether workplace bullying conditions and specific personality types affect the individual's susceptibility to employee burnout. Moreover, it aimed at investigating if workplace bullying predicted employee burnout, while assessing if the personality type plays a role in enhancing or suppressing the development of employee burnout. This study resorted to an online cross-sectional survey platform that was used to distribute a questionnaire package consisting of a demographic form as well as three different self-administered instruments in addition, to the research purpose and consent forms. This study is cross-sectional due to the gathering of data from different age groups at one point in time. The data evaluation was achieved through a hierarchical multiple regression analysis using SPSS.

Participants

A sample of Lebanese employees from different corporations within the industry sector in Beirut were targeted for the study at hand. More specifically, the conveniently chosen companies were 6 from different sectors in Beirut, Lebanon, namely, Mazen Pharmacy, Bank Audi, Al Jadeed, Zaatara w Zeit, Al Oumara, and Middle East Airlines. Since I have been working in the corporate sector for the past seventeen years, as a relationship corporate manager,

my position allowed me to work on different portfolios for these specific companies; in other words, open channels of communication with these specified companies is already established. However, I left the sector one year ago which clarifies how there are no close ties that prevent any conflict of interest from taking place. In addition, these companies were specifically chosen to reflect different types of business sectors for diversity purposes in the research results. Moreover, the process of gathering the needed participants who work for these mentioned companies was convenient sampling as well as snowballing. Since the study consisted of seven variables, it needed a sample size of 800 employees to achieve a small effect as calculated through Field's table (Field, 2017). However, taking the current economic situation including the electricity cuts in Lebanon these days, it seemed impossible to reach a sample size of 800 employees. Therefore, a reduction in the sample size was recommended. A small to medium effect size was utilized, ranging from 800 employees to a minimum number between 100 and 200 to comply with a medium effect as conferred by Field (2017). A study conducted on how personality traits affect the vulnerability of an individual to workplace bullying resorted to a sample of 324 employees, which is within the range of the small to medium effect that the investigation at hand is aiming for (Daderman & Basinska, 2021).

The study did not have any gender specifications which aided in further validating the results without having gender limitations. Moreover, the inclusion criteria stressed on the age range, from 18 to 65, the age appropriate as legal to work in Lebanese corporations according to national legislation. The wide age range was to avoid any age limitations in the study and aim at getting generalizable results. Furthermore, the study required the participants to have been employed for more than 6 months and carry Lebanese nationality. This inclusion criterion was chosen because according to the Lebanese law, a Lebanese employee is on probationary period during the first six months (Employment Law in Lebanon, n.d). Moreover, the employee is still

without his full occupational rights and may leave the institution without prior notice, which may interfere with the internal validity. The employee was not included in the study if they have been in the company for less than 6 months and exceed the age of 65.

Participants were additionally required to give informed consent regarding their contribution to this study. Ethical approval was obtained from the ethics committee of the Faculty of Social and Behavioral Sciences at Haigazian University.

Ethical Considerations

A written consent form attached to the survey was given to the participants at the beginning of the study. The consent form included the purpose of the study and the procedure the participants will be undergoing. Additionally, it clearly stated that the collected participant data will remain anonymous and confidential. The consent asserted that participation is optional, and they could leave the study at any point if they wished not to continue. Those who expressed distress in sharing their experience of bullying were offered contacts of nongovernmental organizations like Be Brave Beirut where they can become beneficiaries and receive psychological first aid.

Instruments

The tools used were accessible to the employees via a WhatsApp message provided to them by their administration. They were chosen based on previous literature that asserted their validity and credibility in assessing the variables at hand. A demographic information form was administered after the surveys (See Appendix A). Additionally, as previously mentioned, a written consent form was given to the participants at the beginning of the study (See Appendix B). Moreover, three self-administered questionnaires were utilized to tackle the variables at

hand: the Maslach Burnout Inventory (See Appendix C), the Revised Negative Acts Questionnaire (See Appendix D), and the Big Five Inventory (See appendix E).

Maslach Burnout Inventory – General Survey

The Maslach Burnout Inventory- General Survey (MBI-GS) is an introspective psychological tool consisting of 16 items that test for occupational burnout (Maslach, Jackson, & Leiter 1997). This form of the Maslach Burnout Inventory is directed to companies in the customer services, management, banking sector and other business related. It measures frequency of experience on a 7-point Likert-scale ranging from 0(never) to 6(daily) and organized in three subscales, emotional exhaustion (Ex), cynicism (Cy), and professional efficacy (PE). The Factorial Validity of the MBI-GS was found to be consistent amongst different occupational groups (Schutte et. al, 2000). Internal consistency results of the measurement indicate a statistically significant with a Cronbach alpha of $\alpha = 0.7$. It takes 10–15 minutes to complete the MBI and it can be administered in groups or individually. Despite the multidimensional factor of MBI, the inventory is the leading measure in research pertaining to burnout. However, literature suggests that when assessing how high or low individuals are in burnout, it is preferred to use a unidimensional approach (Brenninkmeijer & VanYperen, 2003). Therefore, a unidimensional approach was used to approach the concept of burnout in this research study. The translated-into-Arabic version of the MBI was also provided to the participants in case of language preference, which was shown to have satisfactory reliability and validity (0.8) (Abu-Hilal & Salameh, 1992).

Revised Negative Acts Questionnaire

The Revised Negative Acts Questionnaire (NAQ-R) is a widely used measure of workplace bullying consisting of 22 items that review 3 underlying types of bullying (work-related, person-related, and physically intimidating) (Einarsen & Raknes, 1997). Items are measured on a Likert scale from 1 (never) to 5 (daily). Studies suggest that the questionnaire has good reliability, construct validity against measures of mental health, psychosocial work environment and leadership, and criterion validity against measures of perceived victimization (Notelaers et. al, 2019). The satisfactory psychometric properties are ensured with a Cronbach's α of $\alpha=0.915$ (Charilaos et. al, 2015). The translated-into-Arabic version of the NAQ-R was also provided to the participants in case of language preference, which was shown to present good reliability, concurrent validity, and construct validity (ranged from 0.63 to 0.9) (Makarem et. al, 2018).

Big Five Inventory

The Big Five Inventory (BFI) is a self-report scale that consists of 44-items adapted to measure the five personality dimensions (extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, neuroticism, and openness) (John, Donahue, & Kentle 1991). The inventory uses a 5-point scale that ranges from 1 (disagree strongly) to 5 (agree strongly). It is divided into five scales of the personality dimensions respectively, and the scale scores are calculated as the sum of relevant items. Studies support the validity and reliability of the BFI as adequate in measuring personality traits (Hee, 2014). The BFI-NEU (Neuroticism Subscale) and the BFI-EXT (Extraversion Subscale) will be the focus in this study's statistical analysis. For the subscales of interest, research presents acceptable alpha Cronbach coefficients: neuroticism $\alpha = 0.55$ and extraversion $\alpha = 0.45$ (Balgiu, 2018). The translated-into-Arabic version of the BFI (ABFPI) was also

provided to the participants in case of language preference, which was shown to have significantly high alpha coefficients ($\alpha = 0.75$) of internal consistency (Abdel-Khalek, 2019).

Demographic Form

A form was sent to the participants along with the questionnaires in order to collect the necessary demographic data: age, marital status, years of employment, and educational level (See Appendix A).

Procedure

Before commencing the investigation at hand, a pilot study was utilized on 30 employees to ensure the internal reliability of the scales that were chosen. Once the Cronbach alphas were approved by the advisor, the actual study began.

The researcher of this study targeted different local corporations in Beirut, Lebanon, as explained in the above paragraphs. Specifically, the communication liaison was the different managers of these companies. The managers were provided with the SurveyMonkey links which they then shared with their employees via email or WhatsApp. The company managers were motivated through the rationale of the study that aimed at suggesting solutions and preventative measures to deal with workplace bullying and employee burnout. The suggested solutions could be implemented through deploying policies and procedures and commencing training programs. The administration of each institution sent a WhatsApp message to their employees that explained the rationale of the study, specified the necessary information, and provided them with the SurveyMonkey links that included the demographic form and the three instruments that were elaborated on above. The use of WhatsApp and SurveyMonkey was due to their ease in application and their ability to reach a large group of people. The WhatsApp message was sent to

all the employees because the study depended on a convenience sampling method. Each link included all the three questionnaires, the demographic sheet as well as the letter that described the purpose of the research and the letter of consent. The estimated time for finishing the whole survey was 30 minutes. Those who were interested in participation were asked to send a confirmation reply and fill out the questionnaires through the links provided. Once they finished the surveys, SurveyMonkey automatically saved the answers under the specific link, where I could access the data in order to conduct the data analysis.

Data Analysis

The study at hand resorted to a hierarchal multiple regression using SPSS for the statistical analysis of the data collected. Hierarchal multiple regression is a form of linear regression analysis that is used when additional variables are employed in the study. This type of statistical instrument is used to statistically control for specific variables. It is used in the study at hand to assess whether adding the personality variable will notably improve the model's prediction. Therefore, this study used hierarchal multiple regression analysis to evaluate the relationship between the two variables workplace bullying and burnout. Moreover, it added the variable personality to measure the relationship between personality and burnout.

Chapter 4

Results

The purpose of this study was to investigate the role of bullying as a predictor of burnout at workplaces in Lebanon as well to investigate the moderating effect of both personality traits neuroticism and extraversion on this relationship. The data collected were analyzed using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) to reach probable conclusions. This method of statistical analysis was used to analyze the data gathered from 115 respondents to the three research questionnaires. Values from the respondents of the participant pool came from three sources: the Maslach Burnout Inventory, Revised Negative Acts Questionnaire, and the Big Five Inventory.

Reliability Testing

To ensure the internal consistency of the scales used for the research at hand, a reliability analysis was conducted. Using SPSS, Cronbach alpha was determined for the three scales used in the study. Regarding the Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI-GS), the reliability analysis yielded a Cronbach Alpha of $\alpha = 0.77$, meaning it has acceptable internal reliability. Its subscales yielded the following Cronbach alpha values: emotional exhaustion ($\alpha = 0.82$), cynicism ($\alpha = 0.86$) and personal efficacy ($\alpha = 0.81$). Additionally, the Negative Acts Questionnaire (NAQ-R) presented a Cronbach Alpha of $\alpha = 0.95$, indicating very satisfactory internal consistency. Moreover, the Big Five inventory also yielded a satisfactory Cronbach alpha of $\alpha = 0.95$. The reliability score achieved by each subscale is as follows: Neuroticism ($\alpha = 0.83$), Extraversion ($\alpha = 0.85$), Conscientiousness ($\alpha = 0.90$), Openness ($\alpha = 0.75$), and Agreeableness ($\alpha = 0.79$).

Table 1 presents a comparison of the Cronbach Alpha value for the scales in the study at hand and those determined prior. In comparison to previous studies conducted using the three scales

mentioned, the NAQ-R and the BFI-44 presented similar Cronbach alphas whereas the MBI-GS had a lower Cronbach alpha but still considered acceptable (see Table 1).

Table 1

Previous and Current Cronbach's Alphas of the Scales and Subscales

Scales and Subscales	Previous Cronbach's Alpha	Current Cronbach's Alpha
MBI-GS	0.81	0.77
Emotional Exhaustion	0.90	0.82
Cynicism	0.91	0.86
Personal Efficacy	0.89	0.81
NAQ-R	0.97	0.95
BFI-44	0.96	0.95
Neuroticism	0.90	0.83
Extraversion	0.86	0.85
Conscientiousness	0.76	0.90
Openness	0.76	0.75
Agreeableness	0.78	0.79

Sample Characteristics and Demographics

Regarding the demographics of the participant pool that this research managed to reach, the highest percentage of respondents were dispersed between 22 years old and 42 years old ($M=35.3$, $SD=9.43$). This ensured that the respondents were working-aged individuals that were exposed to workplace environments. The gender percentages showed a notable difference between females and males, whereby females represented over 64% of the responses. Additionally, the highest level of education was either doctorate degree or master's degree. Moreover, the industries mentioned in the participants' responses were highly variable, ranging from business corporations to Non-profit organizations. Manual workers (6 respondents) like

wood-traders and power generation also contributed to the research questionnaires. Almost all (except for 10 participants that declared managerial positions) respondents were Lebanese and had employee posts, which meant that they reported to a superior. The information mentioned above helped the discussion of the research reach conclusions (see Table 2) for the provided demographics.

Table 2

Sociodemographic characteristics of the participants

Sample Characteristics		N	%
Gender	Female	77	63.6
	Male	42	34.7
	Other	2	1.7
Level of Education	Bachelor's degree	52	43
	College Graduate	3	2.5
	High School	3	5.8
	Master's Degree	0	38
	Ph.D.	1	1.7
	Prefer Not to Answer	1	4.1
	Vocational Degree	0	3.3
Religion	Atheist	2	1.7
	Catholics	1	0.8
	Druze	2	1.6
	Muslim	84	69.9
	Prefer Not to Answer	2	1.7
	Christian	20	16.5

Scale Descriptive

The table below (table 3) describes the means and standard deviations of the scales used in the study. With regards to the Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI-GS), the mean was 39.86, presenting that the participants had a low indication of burnout ($M=39.86$, $SD=9.75$).

Additionally, the Negative Acts Questionnaire (NAQ-R) also presented a below average level,

indicating that the participants did not experience significant negative acts in their workplace ($M=44.14$, $SD=17.71$). Moreover, the Big Five Inventory (BFI) showed that the mean score was 140.61, indicating that the participants averaged all the personality traits present ($M=140.61$, $SD= 26.22$) (See table 3).

Table 3

Scale descriptive

	N	Min	Max	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
MBI-GS	115	21.00	59.00	39.86	9.75
NAQ-R	115	53.00	102.00	44.14	17.71
BFI	115	117.00	182.00	140.61	26.22

Raw data collected from responses to the Maslach Burnout Inventory – General Survey showed that more than 50% of the respondents feel emotionally exhausted several times during the month. Additionally, a dispersion in the percentage were shown regarding feeling worn out, whereby 20% feel it at least once a month and 19% feel it every day. Moreover, most respondents claimed that they can easily understand the actions of their colleagues (22.6% several times a month and 19.1% everyday). Very few individuals displayed that working with people the whole day is stressful for them and the majority (79.1%) believe that they can deal with other people’s problems successfully. With regards to burnout, the data were notably dispersed, with the highest percentage (21.7%) of respondents asserting that they feel burnt out because of their work several times a month. Moreover, a more than half of participants feel that they are working too hard on their job very regularly (56.5%).

The second questionnaire was the Negative Acts Questionnaire – Revised, where (71%) of the respondents presented that rarely does anyone gets humiliated or ridiculed at work. Additionally, more than half of respondents feel that their performance is occasionally affected by someone withholding information from them. Moreover, (approximately 70%) of the

participants did not experience intimidating behaviors or got signals from others that they should quit their job. The highest percentage distribution was related to workload and work-related tasks, whereby the responses were dispersed between never and daily. Nevertheless, 84.7% of the participants never experienced threats of violence or physical abuse in their workplace.

The last questionnaire used to understand the relation between burnout, personality, and workplace bullying is the Big Five Inventory. The response of this questionnaire was notably variable since it described the personalities of the 115 participants. Generally, almost three quarters of the participants (73%) disagreed strongly that they are depressed, aggressive, or lazy. On the other hand, the majority (81%) strongly agreed that they have a forgiving nature, are generally trusting, tend to be persevere until the task is finished, and do things efficiently.

Correlation Matrix

The hypotheses were tested using correlation analysis, which looked for any connections between the dependent variable burnout and the independent factors. A significant positive correlation was established between burnout and workplace bullying at the two-tailed level ($r=0.001$). Additionally, a further significant two-tailed value of ($r=0.000$) was established between burnout and neuroticism. A significant negative correlation at the value of ($r=0.031$) level two-tailed was found between burnout and personality extraversion. As for bullying and neuroticism it yielded a significant positive correlation at the value of ($r=0.000$) level two-tailed. However, there was no correlation between bullying and personality extraversion ($r = 0.443$) (see Table 4).

Table 4*Correlation Matrix between the Independent Variables and the Dependent Variable*

		NAQ-R (Bullying)	Extraversion	Neuroticism	BFI	MBI-GS (Burnout)
NAQ-R (Bullying)	Pearson Correlation	--	--			
	N	114				
Extraversion	Pearson Correlation	-0.075				
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.443				
	N	108	108			
Neuroticism	Pearson Correlation	0.380**	-0.051	--		
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.608			
	N	108	105	109		
BFI	Pearson Correlation	-0.030	0.505**	0.135	--	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.769	0.000	0.181		
	N	100	100	100	100	
MBI-GS (Burnout)	Pearson Correlation	0.575**	-0.208*	0.480**	-0.112	--
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.001	0.031	0.000	0.268	
	N	114	108	109	100	115

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Hypothesis Testing

To test the three hypotheses pertaining to the study at hand, a multiple regression as well as a hierarchical multiple regression were conducted to understand the relation between workplace bullying, personality, and burnout. The purpose of the study was to determine whether bullying is a predictor of burnout in Lebanese corporations, while considering personality traits as a moderator.

Model summary

The three models conducted yielded a value of R squared that showed how much of the variability in the dependent variable was due to the independent variable. The first model presented that 22.1% of the variability in burnout was explained by workplace bullying ($p = .001$, R squared, .221, R Squared adjusted= .215). The second model found that 10% of the variation in burnout was explained by neuroticism in the participants ($p = .025$, R squared= .10, R squared adjusted= .155). The third model found that 21.9% of the variation in burnout was explained by extraversion in the participants ($p = .002$, R squared= .219, R squared adjusted= .089) (See table 5).

Table 5

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.470a	.221	.215	15.69660
2	.102a	.100	.155	15.48520
3	.468a	.219	.089	19.75444

Hypothesis 1

Higher levels of bullying at the workplace predict higher levels of employee's burnout among a sample of Lebanese working adults.

To test this hypothesis on SPSS a correlational and multiple regression analysis was used to show the effect of bullying at workplace on burnout, after having controlled for the demographic variables of gender, age and educational level, for Lebanese employees (see Tables 6 a, b, c).

Table 6a*Model Summary of the Regression Analysis of burnout as the dependent variable*

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.702 ^a	.492	.435	9.34812

a. Predictors: (Constant), Openness, NAQ-R (Bullying), Gender, Conscientiousness, Extraversion, Highest Level of Education, Age, Neuroticism, Agreeableness

Table 6b*ANOVA Table of Burnout as dependent variable*

	Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	6774.006	9	752.667	8.613	.000 ^b
	Residual	6990.982	80	87.387		
	Total	13764.989	89			

a. Dependent Variable: MBI-GS (Burnout)

b. Predictors: (Constant), Openness, NAQ-R (Bullying), Gender, Conscientiousness, Extraversion, Highest Level of Education, Age, Neuroticism, Agreeableness

Table 6c*Regression Coefficients of Burnout as the Dependent Variable*

Model	Unstandardized B	Standardized Coefficients Beta	coefficients Std. Error	t	Sig.
1 (Constant)	38.964		10.078	3.866	.000
Age	-.144	-.112	.122	-1.182	.241
Gender	.795	.031	2.490	.319	.750
Highest Level of Education	.811	.077	.931	.871	.386
NAQ-R (Bullying)	.326	.454	.065	4.998	.000
Extraversion	-.335	-.114	.246	-1.359	.178
Neuroticism	.755	.294	.253	2.981	.004
Agreeableness	-.260	-.101	.282	-.922	.359
Conscientiousness	-.058	-.023	.258	-.224	.823
Openness	-.095	-.035	.266	-.357	.722

a. Dependent Variable: MBI-GS (Burnout)

According to Table 6, the significant values indicate that the dependent variable (Burnout) is determined by the independent variable (workplace bullying). Workplace bullying was measured using the NAQ-R and personality was measured with BFI-44. Based on this Table and looking at all the Beta values as well as the values of significance, we notice that the independent variable (workplace bullying), predict the dependent variable, burnout. Specifically, workplace bullying contributed to burnout by 45.4% with a significance value of $<.000$. Therefore, the results indicated that presence of workplace bullying assessed using the Negative Acts Questionnaire in the population of Lebanese employees affects the levels of burnout experienced by them. Hypothesis 1 was therefore supported. It is also worth mentioning, that one of the personality scales (trait of neuroticism) contributed to burnout by 29.4% with a significance value of $<.004$ making it the second highest predictor after bullying.

Hypothesis 2

The second hypothesis stated that personality trait of neuroticism enhances the relation between bullying and burnout among a sample of Lebanese employees. Since neuroticism is hypothesized as a moderator to the relationship between workplace bullying and burnout, to test this hypothesis, hierarchical multiple regression analysis was used to show the effect of this interaction (See Tables 7 a, b, c, and d). Looking at Table 7b, we notice that when bullying is entered alone in the first model, it is a significant predictor of burn out ($F= 55.308$ at $p= 0.0$). However, when bullying was entered in combination with neuroticism (NAQxNEU), to show if they had an interaction effect on the dependent variable burn out (Table d), the result was insignificant as the Beta showed a value of $\beta = -0.789$ with $p= 0.665$. Moreover, in the second model when bullying was supposed to predict burn out, but this time by controlling for neuroticism and the interaction (NAQxNEU), the significance stopped. We can conclude that

although neuroticism on its own is not significant, and neither is the interaction (Table 7d), it is eliminating the significance of the whole model. In other words, the model was significant when neuroticism was apparently playing a role but once it was controlled, this significance stopped; this means that neuroticism is somehow playing a role, and this could be the role of a covariate.

Based on the above, we can conclude that neuroticism had no moderating effect on the relationship between workplace bullying and burnout on Lebanese employees, however, this should not indicate that it did not play a certain role. That role could be the role of a covariate. Therefore, the second hypothesis was partially accepted.

Table 7a

Model Summary of the Regression Analysis of Burnout as the dependent variable

Model	R	R Squared	Adjusted R Squared	Std. Error of the Estimate
	.928 ^a	.861	.723	5.90329

Predictors: (Constant), NAQxNEU, Neuroticism, NAQ

Table 7b

ANOVA table of burnout as a dependent variable

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	5885.717	1	5885.717	55.308	.000 ^b
	Residual	11918.774	112	106.418		
	Total	17804.491	113			

a. Dependent Variable: MBI-GS (Burnout)

b. Predictor: Bullying

Table 7c*ANOVA table of Burnout as the dependent variable*

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	649.168	3	216.389	6.209	.084 ^b
	Residual	104.547	3	34.849		
	Total	753.714	6			

a. Dependent Variable: MBI

b. Predictors: (Constant), NAQXNEU, Neuroticism, NAQ

Table 7d*Regression Coefficients of Burnout as dependent variable*

Model		Unstandardized B	Coefficients Std. Error	Standardized Coefficients Beta	T	Sig.	95% Confidence Lower Bound	Interval for B Upper Bound
1	(Constant)	-34.272	64.908		-.528	.634	-240.838	172.294
	NAQ	.852	.771	1.618	1.105	.350	-.1.601	3.305
	Neuroticism	.123	.195	.595	.634	.571	-.496	.743
	NAQxNEU	-.001	.002	-.789	-.479	.665	-.009	.006

Hypothesis 3

The third hypothesis stated that personality trait of extraversion suppresses the relation between bullying and burnout among a sample of Lebanese employees. Since extraversion is hypothesized as a moderator to the relationship between workplace bullying and burnout, to test this hypothesis, hierarchical multiple regression analysis was used to show the effect of this interaction (See Tables 8 a, b, c and d). Looking at Table 8b, we notice that when bullying is

entered alone in the first model, it is a significant predictor of burn out ($F= 55.308$ at $p= 0.0$).

However, when bullying was entered in combination with extraversion (NAQxEXT), to show if they had an interaction effect on the dependent variable burn out (Table 8d), the result was insignificant as the Beta showed a value of $\beta = - 0.33$ with $p= 0.231$.

Based on the above, we can conclude that extraversion had no moderating effect on the relationship between workplace bullying and burnout on Lebanese employees, and therefore, the second hypothesis was not confirmed.

Table 8a

Model Summary of the Regression Analysis of Burnout as the dependent variable

Model	R	R Squared	Adjusted R Squared	Std. Error of the Estimate
	.954 ^a	.911	.844	4.10546

Predictors : (Constant), NAQxEXT, Extraversion, NAQ

Table 8b

ANOVA table of burnout as a dependent variable

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	5885.717	1	5885.717	55.308	.000 ^b
	Residual	11918.774	112	106.418		
	Total	17804.491	113			

a. Dependent Variable: MBI-GS (Burnout)

b. Predictor: Bullying

Table 8c*ANOVA table of Burnout as the dependent variable*

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	686.581	3	228.860	13.578	.015 ^b
	Residual	67.419	4	16.855		
	Total	754.000	7			

a. Dependent Variable: MBI

b. Predictors : (Constant), NAQxEXT, Extraversion, NAQ

Table 8d*Regression Coefficients of Burnout as dependent variable*

Model		Unstandardized B	Coefficients Std. Error	Standardized Coefficients Beta	T	Sig.	95% Confidence Lower Bound	Interval for B Upper Bound
1	(Constant)	-65.018	67.585		-.962	.391	-252.662	122.627
	NAQ	1.543	.786	2.929	1.964	.121	-.638	3.724
	Extraversion	.206	.181	.982	1.139	.318	-.296	.708
	NAQxEXT	-.003	.002	-.033	-1.41	.231	-.009	.003

Summary of Results

In summary, the results of the analysis conducted showed that the first hypothesis was accepted, the second partially accepted and the third one was not confirmed. In other words, workplace bullying was found to have an effect on burnout amongst Lebanese employees. In addition, neuroticism and extraversion were not considered as moderators in the relationship between workplace bullying and burnout. However, neuroticism once controlled for, rendered the relationship between bullying and burn out as insignificant indicating its role as a covariate.

Finally, it is worth mentioning, that neuroticism in the multiple regression test showed an independent value by itself; it was the second highest predictor to explain burnout after bullying. Extraversion, on the other hand, correlated negatively with burn out; this was however just a significant negative correlation between the two variables and not a prediction.

Chapter 5

Discussion

The study conducted at hand aimed to examine whether bullying as a predictor and personality as a moderator lead to burnout among employees in Lebanese corporations. More specifically, the purpose of the study was to investigate the role of bullying as a predictor of burnout among Lebanese adults. Moreover, it attempted to also look at whether the personality trait neuroticism enhanced the burnout of employees when they were bullied, and whether extraversion suppressed the relationship between bullying and burnout. The results presented in Chapter 4 will be discussed in the following chapter, while relating the information found to previous literature. Moreover, the chapter at hand will tackle clinical implications, limitations of the current study, and future recommendations for following research.

The Role of Workplace Bullying

The study at hand's first hypothesis aimed at predicting whether bullying in Lebanese corporations leads to burnout in the employees. Using correlational regression relying on SPSS for data analysis, it was found that, after controlling for demographic variables, higher levels of bullying at the workplace predicted higher levels of employee burnout among a sample of Lebanese working adults. Therefore, the first hypothesis of this study was accepted, and this was aligned with previous research. According to D'Antonio (2014), bullying has been linked to self-reported burnout and a proclivity to leave in hospitals and other institutions. Moreover, in a more recent study by Kim et. al (2019) on hundreds of nurses in Portugal, the researchers established that rude behavior and imbalance of power that were imposed on the participants led to characteristics of burnout, such as emotional exhaustion and depersonalization. Therefore, data

in both the Middle East and Europe confirm the relationship between bullying and burn out that was successfully asserted in the study at hand.

The Role of Neuroticism

The second hypothesis of the study at hand examined whether neuroticism acts as a moderator in the relationship between workplace bullying and burnout. It was predicted that neuroticism will enhance the relationship between workplace bullying and burnout. However, the interaction effect yielded insignificant, indicating that neuroticism had no moderating effect on the relationship between workplace bullying and burnout on Lebanese employees. Unlike previous studies (Nielsen, Glaso, & Einarsen, 2017 and Fornes-Vives et. al, 2019) that confirmed the role of neuroticism as a moderator between bullying and burnout, our study results were aligned with another set of other studies. For instance, in a study conducted by Siddique (2018) that examined the impact of neuroticism on workplace bullying and emotional exhaustion (which is a factor of burnout), it was found that neuroticism did not mitigate the relationship between bullying and emotional exhaustion. However, the multiple regression conducted in the study at hand found a noteworthy result that yielded a significant effect on burnout, making neuroticism the second highest predictor after bullying. In other words, neuroticism turned out to be a significant independent predictor of burn out. Sulea et, al (2012) conducted a study on teachers to assess the link between impersonal treatment at work and burnout. The results found that neuroticism is related to the development of burnout. Neuroticism was notably linked to cynicism and personal inefficacy, which are factors of burnout.

Moreover, Djurkovic, McCormack and Casimir (2006) discovered that neuroticism had no effect on the link between bullying and bad affect. Bullying and neuroticism were discovered to have separate effects on unpleasant affect. The findings supported the psychosomatic

hypothesis of bullying. This aligned with the results found in our study about the power of neuroticism as an independent variable. Another study also found that neuroticism had a strong relationship with the three burnout dimensions, which was explained by how neuroticism predisposes individuals to vulnerability to stress (Gueens, Bogaert & Franck, 2017). Therefore, neuroticism as a moderator has been rejected in our study, however, its effect on burnout could be considered as a covariate, a variable with its own independent power.

The Role of Extraversion

The third hypothesis in this study examined whether extraversion acted as a moderator in the relationship between workplace bullying and burnout. It was predicted that extraversion will suppress the relationship between workplace bullying and burnout. However, unlike previous literature (Nielsen, Glaso, & Einarsen, 2017), the interaction effect yielded insignificant, indicating that extraversion had no moderating effect on the relationship between workplace bullying and burnout on Lebanese employees. However, a notable finding was concluded from the results, whereby extraversion showed a negative significant relationship with bullying. In other words, although it did not show a significant effect by suppressing the relationship between bullying and burnout, it still negatively correlated with bullying. An interesting study supporting this finding is conducted by Daderman and Basinka (2021) which suggested that people with high levels of extraversion and openness are viewed as agentic (dominant, 'self-interested,'); they also seek attributes that attract the best partners and friends. Hence, employees with high extraversion tend to have more social contacts inside the workplace as well as more diverse professional opportunities. Moreover, Daderman and Basinka, found a negative relationship between extraversion and bullying indicating that extraverted employees utilize their carefully cultivated relationships to initiate strategic rivalry with others. Lastly, in a very recent study,

Cakirpaloglu et. al (2022) confirmed a positive relationship between workplace bullying and neuroticism and a strong negative relationship between workplace bullying and extraversion.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the purpose of the study at hand was to examine the relationship between workplace bullying and burnout with personality as a moderator in a sample of Lebanese adults due to the scarcity of national research in this regard. The chosen personality traits that were predicted to act as moderators were extraversion and neuroticism. The primary aim was to examine the direct relationship between workplace bullying and burnout, whereby the hypothesis asserted that workplace bullying leads to burnout. This aligned with multiple previous researchers, including that of Rossiter and Sochos (2018), Kim et. al (2019), and Laschinger and Grau (2011).

The second aim of the research at hand examined whether the personality trait neuroticism enhanced the relationship between workplace bullying and burnout. The hypothesis was partially accepted. Despite the rejection of neuroticism role as a moderator variable, it was found to have a significant independent variable power, whereby it predicted burnout. This aligned with previous research, making it a notable and valid finding (Siddique et. al, 2018; Sulea et. al, 2012; Gueens, Bogaert & Franck, 2017). As for the third aim, it investigated whether the personality trait extraversion suppressed the relationship between workplace bullying and burnout. The hypothesis was rejected; however, extraversion did show a negative significant association with bullying. Research conducted by Bashir and Hanif (2019) aligned with the conclusion reached.

In addition to the mentioned above, it is important to note the following. Neuroticism playing a role in the relation of workplace bullying and burnout leading to the partial acceptance

of the hypothesis from one side and the rejection of extraversion being a suppressor on the other makes us assume that personality types have a moderator effect on the relationship of the variables of the study at hand. There were efforts in the literature to reveal how different personalities are affected with bullying and burnout. Employees who tend to be high on consciousness might be subjected to bullying as one of the studies revealed. This is due to being envied for high achievement and thus being more vulnerable to bullies. As well, being emotionally unstable as in the case of neurotic personalities exposes employees to bullying. As those employees display conflicted behaviors, other bully them. Worth mentioning that neurotic traits and emotional coping have shown to predict chronic stress, such as burnout. Identifying individual traits would give valuable information for identifying suitable interventions to minimize burnout and improve well-being of Lebanese employees and the working environment. That said, it is important to emphasize that although personalities are playing a role in accelerating the bullying or burnout, yet no blame must be put on the victims who are receiving the act of being bullied. It is for most the responsibility of the bullies and the organizational culture to have a safe environment that is free of bullying and take in consideration different procedures in maintaining preventions of employees' burnout.

Finally, studies on workplace bullying and burnout have not been investigated well in the Middle East, which made this study a significant contributor to the literature. It allowed an understanding of the following points: workplace bullying in Lebanese corporations and how it is related to employee burnout, and personality types, specifically neuroticism which has a significant effect on the development of burnout amongst Lebanese employees.

Clinical Implications

The findings of the study at hand offer significant advice to Lebanese corporations in terms of clinical implications to mitigate the effects of both workplaces bullying and burnout. Its results allow professionals to trace burnout in employees back to a possibility of a bullying environment at the workplace, hoping they can eventually tackle the underlying cause. An understanding of the effect of workplace bullying on Lebanese employees is vital in assisting individuals in voicing out what is leading to their emotional exhaustion.

Preventative measures can be developed from the studies of this research through identifying workplace bullying and implicating methods that can reduce unhealthy environments as such. Moreover, it can also assist in identifying that burnout exists in Lebanese corporations, which affects their productivity and overall wellbeing. This allows institutions to develop measures that enhance their caliber's wellbeing for the sake of their productivity and welfare.

Strengths and Limitations

The present study's results should be interpreted considering several limitations, despite the number of strengths. The strength of the study is highlighted in conducting it in the unique Lebanese context that has not been approached before. Being the first to consider personality as a moderator in Lebanon in the relation between workplace bullying and burnout makes it a reliable reference for future stronger research. However, the research process faced several limitations that could have affected the results of the statistical analysis. Firstly, the population gathered was 115 respondents despite needing a higher number to ensure validity and reliability. Moreover, reaching out several companies and institutions during an economic crisis in the country and receiving rejections to participate in the study caused drawbacks. It is notable to mention that the country has faced numerous unfortunate circumstances in the past two years, both economically

and emotionally, that played a significant role in affecting workplace environments and the mental health of Lebanese individuals. Future research regarding the topic should focus on several research aspects that can be interpreted from the limitations.

Future Recommendations

Future recommendations stemming from the present study include beginning a thorough investigation between personality traits and workplace conditions in Lebanon. Studying this topic can pave a research path for including variables like bullying and burnout. In reference to the scarcity of research on the three variables at hand in Lebanon, future studies should take place and aim at covering the differences in sociocultural patterns as well. Moreover, studies should be conducted during more stable economic times, because these unfortunate circumstances could be significantly affecting individual's perceptions of workplace issues and people's actions towards them. Moreover, taking gender into consideration can significantly clarify the results of future studies regarding this topic due to ample literature that discusses the difference between men and women in the workplace.

In summary, the current study investigated bullying as a predictor and personality as a moderation leading to burnout amongst employees in Lebanese corporations. The results of this study demonstrated that bullying has a predictive value with regards to Lebanese employees developing burnout at their workplace. Additionally, it shed light on the predictive value of neuroticism in developing burnout amongst these employees. It aligned with previous research and asserted that bullying is predictive of burnout in workplace environments, whereas refuted that personality is a moderator in the relationship between workplace bullying and burnout.

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Appendix ADemographic Form

1. Select your age range:

- 21 – 32
- 32 – 43
- 43 – 54
- 54 – 65

2. Gender

- Male
- Female
- Other
- Prefer not to say

3. Highest level of Education:

- High School
- Vocational Degree
- Master's Degree
- College Graduate
- Bachelor's degree
- Ph.D.
- Prefer not to answer

4. Ethnicity:

5. Religion:

6. Job Position:

Appendix B

Consent form

I agree to take part in the study at hand and for the information I provided to be shared with the research. I understand that the information gathered about me will remain anonymous and confidential. I know that my participation is voluntary, and I can choose to withdraw from the research at any point.

Participant Name: _____

Signature: _____

Appendix C

Maslach Burnout Inventory - General Survey (MBI-GS)

0 = Never

1 = At least a few times a year 2 = At least once a month

3 = Several times a month

4 = Once a week

5 = Several times a week

6 = Every day

	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
01 - I feel emotionally exhausted because of my work							
02 - I feel worn out at the end of a working day							
03 - I feel tired as soon as I get up in the morning and see a new working day stretched out in front of me							

04 - I can easily understand the actions of my colleagues/ supervisors							
05 - I get the feeling that I treat some clients/ colleagues impersonally, as if they were objects							
06 - Working with people the whole day is stressful for me							
07 - I deal with other people's problems successfully							
08 - I feel burnt out because of my work							
09 - I feel that I influence other people positively through my work							
10 -I have become more callous to people since I have started doing this job							

11. I worry that this job is hardening me emotionally.							
12. I feel very energetic.							
13. I feel frustrated by my job.							
14. I feel I'm working too hard on my job.							
15. I don't really care what happens to some patients/clients							
16. Working with people directly, puts too much stress on me.							

Appendix D

These statements describe your interactions with your coworkers. For each statement please rate the frequency with which you experience the interactions on a scale from 1 to 5 (1: Never – 2: Occasionally – 3: Monthly – 4: Weekly – 5: Daily)

Negative Acts Questionnaire-revised (NAQ-R)

1. Someone withholding information that affects your performance
2. Being humiliated or ridiculed in connection with your work
3. Being ordered to do work below your level of competence
4. Having key areas of responsibility removed or replaced with more
5. trivial or unpleasant tasks
6. Spreading of gossip and rumors about you
7. Being ignored or excluded
8. Having insulted or offensive remarks made about your person, your
9. attitudes, or your private life
10. Being shouted at or being the target of spontaneous anger
11. Intimidating behaviors such as finger-pointing, invasion of personal
12. space, shoving, blocking your way
13. Hints or signals from others that you should quit your job

14. Repeated reminders of your errors or mistakes
15. Being ignored or facing a hostile reaction when you approach
16. Persistent criticism of your errors or mistakes
17. Having your opinions ignored
18. Practical jokes carried out by people you don't get along with
19. Being given tasks with unreasonable deadlines
20. Having allegations made against you
21. Excessive monitoring of your work
22. Pressure not to claim something to which by right you are entitled
23. Being the subject of excessive teasing and sarcasm
24. Being exposed to an unmanageable workload
25. Threats of violence or physical abuse or actual abuse

Appendix E

The Big Five Inventory (BFI)

Here are a number of characteristics that may or may not apply to you. For example, do you agree that you are someone who likes to spend time with others? Please write a number next to each statement to indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with that statement.

Disagree strongly 1

Disagree a little 2

Neither agree nor disagree 3

Agree a little 4

Agree Strongly 5

I see Myself as Someone Who...

___ 1. Is talkative

___ 23. Tends to be lazy

___ 2. Tends to find fault with others

___ 24. Is emotionally stable, not easily upset

___ 3. Does a thorough job

___ 25. Is inventive

___ 4. Is depressed, blue

___ 26. Has an assertive personality

___ 5. Is original, comes up with new ideas

___ 27. Can be cold and aloof

___ 6. Is reserved

___ 28. Perseveres until the task is finished

___ 7. Is helpful and unselfish with others

___ 29. Can be moody

- ___ 8. Can be somewhat careless
- ___ 9. Is relaxed, handles stress well
- ___ 10. Is curious about many different things
- ___ 11. Is full of energy
- ___ 12. Starts quarrels with others
- ___ 13. Is a reliable worker
- ___ 14. Can be tense
- ___ 15. Is ingenious, a deep thinker
- ___ 16. Generates a lot of enthusiasm
- ___ 17. Has a forgiving nature
- ___ 18. Tends to be disorganized
- ___ 19. Worries a lot
- ___ 20. Has an active imagination
- ___ 21. Tends to be quiet
- ___ 22. Is generally trusting
- ___ 30. Values artistic, aesthetic experiences
- ___ 31. Is sometimes shy, inhibited
- ___ 32. Is considerate and kind to almost everyone
- ___ 33. Does things efficiently
- ___ 34. Remains calm in tense situations
- ___ 35. Prefers work that is routine
- ___ 36. Is outgoing, sociable
- ___ 37. Is sometimes rude to others
- ___ 38. Makes plans and follows through with them
- ___ 39. Gets nervous easily
- ___ 40. Likes to reflect, play with ideas
- ___ 41. Has few artistic interests
- ___ 42. Likes to cooperate with others
- ___ 43. Is easily distracted
- ___ 44. Is sophisticated in art, music, or literature