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WORKPLACE HARASSMENT/VIOLENCE AND JOB OUTCOMES: ITS CONSEQUENCES AMONG FEMALE EMPLOYEES IN THE HIGHER EDUCATION SECTOR

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INTRODUCTION

Women in the workplace faces the issue of violence and many most does not proceed with legal redress due to fear of embarrassment arising from the exposure of the incident. Women belonging to every field and anywhere in the world face harassment or violence with developed nations having formulated the rules to curb the incidents and implemented the same in their countries. Literature emphasises that both academicians and practitioners have emphasised on the impact of workplace violence on ***job outcomes***.[1] Studies have also acknowledged the occurrence of stress, psychological and mental health disorders and deterioration in the quality of work due to workplace violence.[2] According to the study by Jafree,[3] workplace violence undermines the performance of women at work while other studies also revealed that it leads to psychological disorders, physical illnesses, eating disorders and even emotional distress.[4] Increase in absenteeism and intention to leave the organisation are also the negative consequences ensuing from workplace violence.[5]

Previous studies have also mentioned that workplace violence is a major reason for health problems among employees such as stress disorders and heart problems that again results in reduction of employee's productivity and even an increase in job burnout, turnover intention and early retirement.[6] In relation to this, in 2015 the World Health Organisation's report indicated that approximately 30% to 50% of workers report lethal exposure to physical violence. However, very few studies have contributed towards the theory of knowledge about workplace violence and its effects on ***job outcomes*** in developing countries. It is a fact that female employees from every filed of life face the issue of workplace violence. Likewise, teachers with the vast majority being female, directed workplace violence as prevalent problem in the education sector with the students as the most common type of perpetrators.

According to Occupational Health Psychology 2012, that there are many dimensions of workplace violence such as verbal abuse, psychological distress and physical endangerment and these practices can even lead to the death of the employee.[7] Howard found that employees in the education sector consider physical assault to be more representative of workplace violence rather than other types of damages such as psychological, emotional and individual or institution's property damage.[8] Gregory, Cornell, and Fan conducted an interesting study in which they tried to find the victimisation of teachers with authoritative school environment, discipline of students and support of students regarding study matters.[9] They found that schools with higher level of student support and structure has the lowest tendency of workplace violence. Similarly, workplace violence also leads towards health problems and higher level of stress in individuals. Despite the emerging focus on workplace violence, unfortunately little is known about the workplace violence and its consequences in the developing countries. It is undeniable that the suffering among female employees from workplace violence among the developing nation continues and its increasing with time. Such increasing trend of violence is due to the lack of studies focusing on the workplace violence and role of legal environment towards women related issues and ***job outcomes***, government focus and implementation of the law at ground level.

Studies have also signified that there is a growing need of attention required by researchers, practitioners, policy makers and even government to eliminate the hideous act of workplace violence. Unfortunately, previous studies

were either concerned with health sector or they were lacking in identifying the **_job outcome_** perspectives in relation to workplace violence. As mentioned earlier, many studies have contributed to the literature of job consequences and workplace violence such as, the effect of workplace violence activities on sleep patterns, familial problems, fear, organisational citizenship behaviour, job engagement, job satisfaction, job burnout, organisational commitment, and turnover intention. This condition is also observed in the survey by the European Agency for Safety and Health at Work 2016, but there is no comprehensive study that has seen the implications of workplace violence practices on **_job outcomes_** cumulatively while conferring to the education sector. The role of the legal environment in regulating this atrocious crime is also sporadic to the extent that there is hardly any study that has discoursed over such a critical factor. In addition to that, literature on workplace violence and job consequences is rare for developing countries. Hence, this study will contribute to the understanding of workplace violence and its influence on the key work outcomes in the education sector in the context of Pakistan through the buffer role of legal environment.

WORKPLACE VIOLENCE

The European Commission defined workplace violence as "'incidents where persons assaulted in circumstances related to their work, involving an explicit or implicit violence'.[10] It affects employees from all ages and genders, but also has a direct impact on the organisations involved such as costs in increasing security, repairs, loss of productivity, negative publicity, lawyer's fees, and importantly loss of employees/turnover. Several studies have shown that each year millions of employees are affected by workplace violence which results in adverse outcomes such as higher turnover, burnout, lower productivity, lack of organisational commitment, lessened morale, fear etc.[11] Verbal abuse (verbal attack or verbal assault) occurs when employee puts false accusation towards one's character,[12] evaluates in a negative way, or show anger.[13] Workplace violence can be categorised in many behaviours such as psychological abuse, threat to individual, verbal demoralisation, physical assault and any other behaviour that generate a sense of discomfort in individuals.[14] Unfortunately, workplace violence exists in almost all the workplaces such as transportation, health care, law enforcement and education sector, among others. Workplace violence can also be categorised as workplace aggression, workplace bullying and workplace injustice.

Workplace aggression is defined as the behaviour of retaliation by an individual or group towards someone or organisation in response to any unfair situation or policy and especially when it is causing some type of harm, whether emotional or physical in nature, to the individual or group.[15] It can also be described as a process in which an individual, whether intentionally or unintentionally, try to deliberately harm the other individual physically or emotionally.[16] Meanwhile, workplace bullying occurs when an individual is subject to repeated negative social acts that places the target in an inferior position. Past research in the area of workplace bullying has shown far-reaching effects on the target of bullying, such as workplace withdrawal,[17] physical health,[18] and suicidal ideation,[19] as well as bystanders.[20] Many studies have intensely exemplified the agony, mental distress, discomfort, physical illness, emotional harm, and career damage suffered by victims (targets) of bullying.[21]

Lastly, workplace injustice refers to the situation in which an individual or group of individuals perceive that the decisions of the organisation which either directly or indirectly effects those individuals are not being taken on a fair basis.[22] Workplace injustice consists of three further types namely, the distributive injustice, procedural injustice and interactional injustice. Distributive injustice is the situation when the employee or the group of employees perceive that there is inequality and unfairness in distribution of ones or a group of individual's outcomes. The fairness theory explains that the co-workers analyse either the injustice was an incidental injustice, or it is because of the poor decision-making process adopted by the organisation, the latter is considered as the procedural injustice.[23] Procedural injustice has negative effects on the physical condition of a person, when the employee suffers from work stress, the strain can trigger a psychosomatic condition.[24] Interactional injustice can be explained as the degree to which the people are affected by decision and are treated by dignity and respect.[25] The theory focuses on the interpersonal treatment people receive when procedures are implemented. It is the situation where the employees perceive that they are being treated appropriately and believe that their respect and dignity level is being kept in mind by the organisation during the interaction of the co-workers with them and they perceive that the required level of communication from appropriate level by the competent authority was being made at right time to explain the decision regarding those employee's.[26]

WORKPLACE VIOLENCE: EMPLOYEE'S WORK OUTCOMES

One of the major situational factors for workplace aggression is distributive injustice. As stated earlier, distributive injustice is the perception of individuals about the unfairness of outcomes compared to the referent employees in the organisation. Individuals try to retaliate to such policies by restoring justice. Individuals adopt different methods to restore justice such as, to reduce or waste inputs ie, organisation targeted aggression or to engage in counterproductive work behaviours and deviance, among others.[27] Organisation can also adopt techniques to remove such perception of distributive injustice such as rebalancing the input-output ratio. However, a more common approach in literature is that whenever individuals feel that there is distributive injustice held against them, they find out the source from where such decision is being made and thus target such individuals in the organisation which mostly leads to other situational factor known as supervisor targeted aggression.[28] Similar is the case with procedural injustice. Perceived injustice means the unfairness in procedures while developing the outcomes or goals for individuals.[29] These stressors enhance the propensity of the employees to engage in aggression as such activities are one way to cope with the situation.[30]

It is an undisputable fact that mistreatment and ill-behaviour affect the atmosphere of the organisation resulting in higher rates of turnover.[31] Research shows that perceptions of injustice mediate the relationship between sexual harassment and organisational commitment, withdrawal intentions, and job performance abusive supervision and subsequent employee aggression; and working in a climate of workplace incivility and intention to remain with the organisation. To date, research and theory suggest that experiences of mistreatment are related to perceptions of injustice and, as a result, to declines in employees' well-being.

The rapid intensification in female teachers' turnover is putting the future generation's opportunities at risk. Female teachers turnover in the workplace is indicative of the fact that employees are prone to various from of workplace violence/harassment which includes physical and verbal abuse. Previous studies have conferred to the consequences or outcomes of job burnout among employees such as employee's turnover, productivity of individuals or organisation, absenteeism and lack of sense of commitment by individual towards the job or organisation.[32] However, one thing that has been neglected over the years are the antecedents or factors that affect job burnout in organisations. Previous studies have considered two types of factors namely, individual and contextual factors. Individual's factors include employee's traits such as personality traits and emotionality. Contextual factors refer to factors that are imposed by the organisation or its management such as, behaviours of leaders or supervisors, goals or stressful job activities. Another important contextual factor is co-worker's behaviours, their personality traits, how emotionally sound they are as co-workers always play an important role in an employee's job life. Seemingly, co-worker's behaviours towards the other individuals, especially a discriminatory one, are one of the major factors that employees tend to leave the organisations. This can also be considered as workplace violence/harassment or its part thereof. Such psychological breach of contract enhances the stressors and thus promotes negative actions from the aggrieved one as well such as deliberate lack of goal achievement, anger and decrease in organisational commitment.[33] These reactions can also be related to the turnover intention among employees.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In this study, positivism philosophy and deductive approach have been utilised and this includes collecting the data from educational institutions in Pakistan and the cross-sectional survey technique. For this purpose, stratified random sampling techniques have been considered as different strata were developed according to the provinces of Pakistan namely, Punjab, Sindh, KPK and Baluchistan. A holistic sampling frame was developed by contacting Higher Education Commission and from the sampling frame according to the provinces. Based on random selection, different universities were selected for the data collection. The sample size of this study was calculated through Cohen's formula (1983) which was 110. However, 650 questionnaires were distributed through which 600 were collected and 474 were useable. The questionnaires of this study variables were adopted, and detail is given in the following table. This study utilises the SPSS 21 to perform the descriptive analysis, regression and moderation analysis of process technique. Ethical considerations are regarded as a vital part of the research process.

The study below describes the relationship among the current study variables while relating it with the education sector. This study also shed light on the role of the legal environment, which is the proposed moderator of the

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study. In this study, the quantitative analysis was done through SPSS 21.

DESCRIPTIVE ANALYSIS

Table 1.1

Respondent's Demographics	Frequency	Percentage
Gender (N=474)		
Male	0	0
Female	474	100.0
Age (N=474)		
21–30 Years	312	65.8
31–40	133	28.1
41–50	27	5.7
51 & Above	2	.4
Marital Status (N=474)		
Married	178	37.6
Single	296	62.4
Experience (N=474)		
Year	82	17.3
>1–5 Years	262	55.3
>5–10 Years	79	16.7
>10–15 Years	37	7.8
>15–20 Years	11	2.3
>20–25 Years	2	.4
>25 Years	1	.2

It is shown in the above that data is collected from the female employees where the total number of female respondents were 474. Table 1.1 above also show the age of the respondents. There were 312 (65.8%)

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respondents who fall in the range of 21–30 years of age, 133 (28.1%) respondents were in the category of 31– 40 years, 27 (5.7%) respondents were in the age category of 41-50 years and only 2 (0.4%) respondents were in the age category of 51 & above. Similarly, 37.6% of the respondents were married whereas single were 62.4%. Further, 42 (8.9%) respondents who belong to public sector and 432 (91.1%) respondents were from private sector. Apart from the above, 82 (17.3%) of the total respondents were having the experience of less than a year, 262 (55.3%) respondents were having the experience of 1-5 years, 79 (16.7%) respondents were having the experience of 5-10 years, 37 (7.8%) respondents were having the experience of 10-15 years, 11 (2.3%) respondents were having the experience of 15-20 years, 2 (0.2%) respondents were experienced of 20-25 years and only 1 (0.2%) respondent was having the experience of more than 25 years.

To ensure that this study fulfil the adequacy and suitability of sampling standards, the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) criteria must be tested and its value should be greater than 0.5 or 0.6[34] and that the Bartlett's test assures the suitability of the sample.[35]

Table 1.2 below shows the validity of this study variable. The results in table 1.2 mentions the validity of this study variables as it meets the standard criteria of validity (KMO>0.50, Bartlett's test of Sphericity; P<0.05).

Table 1.2

Constructs	KMO	Approx. Chi Sq.	Bartlett's Test
Job Satisfaction	.903	2423.891	.000
Organization Commitment	.874	7096.819	.000
Turnover Intention	.830	1027.502	.000
Job Burnout	.838	4081.706	.000
Workplace Injustice	.876	5147.384	.000
Workplace Bullying	.868	1354.271	.000
Workplace Aggression	.913	2119.912	.000

Table 1.3 below shows the results of reliability of the variables. The results reveal that Cronbach's Alpha value of all the variables of this study meet the standard criteria (α>0.70) of reliability. So, the questionnaires of this study variables are reliable. Correlation value also mentions the strength of the relationship among the study variables.

Table 1.3

	Cronbach's Alpha	JS	OC	TI	JB	WI	WB	WA
JS	.883	1						

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OC	.907		.083	1				
TI	.884		-.129**	-.378**	1			
JB	.822		-.165**	-.068	-.033	1		
WI	.886		-.110*	-.172**	.059	.084	1	
WB	.844		-.207**	-.117*	.315**	.226**	.185**	1
WA	.961		-.299**	-.171**	.320**	.263**	.194**	.719**	1

Table 1.4 below shows the regression results of the workplace violence and work outcomes. The results reveal that workplace injustice, workplace bullying and workplace aggression has significant association with job satisfaction. Similarly, workplace injustice, workplace bullying and workplace aggression has significant relationship with organisational commitment. However, workplace injustice has insignificant relationship with turnover intention and burnout. Further, workplace bullying and workplace aggression has significant relationship with turnover intention burnout.

Table 1.4

	Sig.	**Result**
WI → JS	.016	Supported
WB → JS	.000	Supported
WA → JS	.000	Supported
WI → OC	.000	Supported
WB → OC	.011	Supported
WA → OC	.000	Supported
WI → TI	.202	Unsupported

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	Sig.	**Result**
WB → TI	.000	Supported
WA → TI	.000	Supported
WI → BO	.068	Unsupported
WB → BO	.000	Supported
WA → BO	.000	Supported

Lastly, Table 1.5 below mentions the moderating role of legal environment between workplace violence (workplace injustice, aggression and burnout) and work outcomes (job satisfaction, organisational commitment, turnover intention and burnout). The results noted that legal environment moderates the relationship of workplace bullying with job satisfaction, organisational commitment and turnover intention. Further, legal environment also moderates the relationship of workplace aggression and turnover intention. However, legal environment conditionally moderates the relationship of workplace injustice with job satisfaction and organisational commitment. Similarly, legal environment also conditionally moderates the relationship of workplace bullying with burnout, workplace aggression's relationship with job satisfaction, organisation commitment and burnout. On the other hand, legal environment does not moderate the relationship of workplace injustice with turnover intention and burnout.

Table 1.5

	Sig.	Result
WI → LE → JS	0.036	Conditionally Moderate
WI → LE → OC	0.021	Conditionally Moderate
WI → LE → TI	0.447	Unsupported
WI → LE → BO	0.557	Unsupported
WB → LE → JS	0.003	Supported
WB → LE → OC	0.028	Supported
WB → LE → TI	0.002	Supported
WB → LE → BO	0.000	Conditionally Moderate
WA → LE → JS	0.000	Conditionally Moderate
WA → LE → OC	0.000	Conditionally Moderate
WA → LE → TI	0.022	Supported
WA → LE → BO	0.000	Conditionally Moderate

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DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Prevalence of violence is increasing for academic professionals in developing countries which includes injustice, bullying and aggression. Thus, academicians experiencing the issues of work outcomes and ultimately affect the organisation's efficiency. Further, absence of the legal environment in the academic institutions in developing countries raises the issue of work outcomes and becomes the reason of employee's suffering. As mentioned earlier, this study investigates the influence of workplace violence (workplace injustice, workplace bullying and workplace aggression) on work outcomes (job satisfaction, organisational commitment, and turnover intention and job burnout) through the moderating role of legal environment.

The results show that workplace injustice has negative significant relationship with job satisfaction. Similarly, it shows that workplace injustice has negative significant relationship with organisational commitment. These results are in line with the previous findings.[36] Further, workplace injustice has insignificant relationship with turnover intention and job burnout. The reason behind this insignificant relationship of violence with job behaviours is that the data was collected from the Universities in Lahore which may raise the issue of generalisability and injustice is also the norm in the private universities in developing countries. Further, job opportunities are also rare, so the individuals avoid the intention to leave the organisation and negative behaviours.

In relation to workplace bullying, it has negative significant relationship with job satisfaction and organisational commitment. However, workplace bullying has positive significant relationship with turnover intention and job burnout.[37] Furthermore, workplace aggression has negative significant relationship with job satisfaction and organisational commitment. Contrary to this, workplace aggression has positive significant relationship with turnover intention and job burnout.[38] The legal environment however has key importance to shape the required attitude and behaviours of employees. The legal support from the organisation in the presence of workplace violence plays an important role to attain the positive work outcomes. In this study, legal environment does not moderate the relationship of workplace injustice with job satisfaction, turnover intention and job burnout. However, legal environment conditionally moderates the relationship of workplace injustice and organisational commitment.

It is also established that workplace bullying has significant association with work outcomes. Legal environment significantly moderates the relationship of workplace bullying with job satisfaction, organisational commitment and turnover intention. However legal environment conditionally moderates the relationship of workplace bullying and job burnout. On the other hand, legal environment mderates the relationship of workplace aggression and turnover intention. However, legal environment conditionally moderates the relationship of workplace aggression with job satisfaction, organisational commitment and job burnout.

In relation to the above outcome, it is suggested that the academic institutions should emphasise on the provision of the legal environment so that the incidents of violence can be eliminated, and proper implementations of actions can be ensured. Teachers were asked to clarify their response regarding the effect on outcome of the jobs because of any workplace harassment or violence activity. Any respondent who faced such violence clearly mentioned that it affected their behaviours, performance and attitude at some level. Victims faced fear, lack in self-confidence, mental instability, depression, self-doubt, dignity, turnover and job burnout. This also results in psychological pressure even if the grievance gets resolved because the female staff must face the same colleagues and environment that lead to such incivility. Finally, the respondent also indicated that if the victim has knowledge of the laws and procedures, she may be able to cope up with the incident in a good manner.

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