Workplace Bullying as Correlate of Job Performance, Work Commitment and Job Satisfaction of Technical Workers in Power Distribution Company in Ekiti State, Nigeria

by
Dr Hyginus Osita Omeje & Popoola Oyeyemi
DEPARTMENT OF INDUSTRIAL TECHNICAL EDUCATION, FACULTY OF VOCATIONAL AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION, UNIVERSITY OF NIGERIA, NSUKKA
Correspondence: hyginus.omeje@unn.edu.ng

Abstract

The study was carried out to investigate the influence of workplace bullying on workers' commitment and job satisfaction of technical workers in power distribution companies in Ekiti State, Nigeria. Three research questions were answered while three null hypotheses formulated were tested at 0.05 level of significance. The study adopted correlational research design. The population for the study was made up of 126 technical workers in power distribution offices in all the three Senatorial Districts in Ekiti State, Nigeria. The instrument used for collecting data was a questionnaire tagged 'Technical Workers' Workplace Bullying, Work Commitment and Job Satisfaction questionnaire. The instrument for data collection was face validated by three experts. Cronbach Alpha Reliability technique was used to determine the internal consistency of the questionnaire items. A reliability coefficient of 0.84 was obtained for the questionnaire. The statistic used to analyze the data for answering research questions and for testing hypotheses were Pearson product moment correlation method and regression analyses. The findings of the study revealed that a moderate and negative relationship exists between workplace bullying and technical workers' job performance in power distribution companies. The hypotheses tested revealed a significant relationship between workplace bullying and technical workers' job performance in power distribution companies. Also, a significant relationship exists between workplace bullying and technical workers' work commitment in power distribution companies. Based on the findings of the study, it was recommended among others that workshops and intervention programmes should be organized for technical workers by the power distribution companies on how they can cope with workplace bullying. Also, authorities of power distribution companies should increase the job satisfaction of their technical workers by putting in place adequate resources for them.

Keywords: Bullying, Workplace, Workers, Commitment, Job Satisfaction, Power distribution

Introduction

Power Electricity Distribution Company in Ekiti plays a vital role in the region's economic development. Its contributions to the power sector are crucial for the growth of Ekiti and its surroundings. Electricity, essential for state development, has become more affordable over the past two decades (Joskow, 2015). In Nigeria, hydroelectric power, generated from falling water driving turbines, is a major electricity source. This power is transmitted to the grid station in Kaduna and then distributed to the Power Electricity Distribution Company in Ekiti. Technical workers at the Power Electricity Distribution Company focus on converting, delivering, and using electrical energy. Their training includes electro mechanics, large-scale power systems, and power electronics, covering both technical and business aspects of the power industry (Okoye, 2016). These workers must keep pace with evolving communication and control technologies. BEDC Electricity Plc.

(BEDC), a major distribution company formed from the privatization of Power Holding Company of Nigeria Plc, serves Delta, Edo, Ekiti, and Ondo States. Covering 57,353 square kilometers, BEDC operates from 27 districts with around 350 offices, serving approximately 18 million people and 1.3 million customers as of September 2023. It is the 5th largest Disco by distribution capacity and 3rd in households. These technical workers in power distribution companies often go through different experiences in their place of work, one of such experiences is workplace bullying.

Workplace bullying refers to frequent, undesired activities directed at one or more employees that create embarrassment, offense, and misery. Bullying according to Agervold and Mikkelsen (2019), often consists of unpleasant and hostile verbal and/or nonverbal communication directed at the receiver's personal or professional position. Victims of workplace bullying see this communication as a danger to their self-esteem or competence. Abusive language, insults, gossip, detrimental initiation practices, physical assault, unlawful threats, heavy workloads, unreasonable deadlines, duties beyond capabilities, disregarding the employee, and restricting access to critical information are all examples of workplace bullying (Adewale, 2023). Smith and Johnson (2020) stated that bullying in the workplace has an impact on employee well-being and organizational performance worldwide. Technical personnel are always confronted with considerable obstacles which may be link to bullying. According to Slade et al. (2017), bullying disrupts mental serenity and emotional stability, particularly in service industries with frequent employee-customer interactions. Workers who experience workplace bullying may become less focused and productive, resulting in lower client satisfaction. Bullying is associated with decreased performance, dedication, and task participation (Oluwaseun, 2023). Thus,

technical personnel that are bullied may exhibit diminished motivation and engage in counterproductive actions which may affect their performance.

Performance is a yard-stick to measure an accomplished goal. In the view of Rue and Byars (2017) performance implies how well an employee meets the requirements and demands of his or her job. In the real sense, the employee's performance is determined by three main factors: effort, ability, and direction (Jackson, 2023). Effort entails how hard a person works; ability implies an effort that matches one's ability, and direction has to do with how well the individual understands what the job expects from him/her. This implies that the performance will be realized when the process of achievement is supported by these three factors that function together. If the worker fails to possess any of these factors, his or her job performance will be low. Job performance can be identified as the level of task or role performance of an employee and, technically, refers to the quantity and quality of what an employee does or contributes to the overall output (Unguren & Arslam, 2021). It also involves the effort and time that an employee dedicates to their job well-being (Aribaba et al., 2019; Robert, 2018). These power distribution company workers well-being has a significant direct or indirect effect on individual and organisational performance (Yilmaz & Konaklioglu, 2022). There is a link between workplace bullying to lower job performance (Maidaniuc-Chirila, 2015). Bullying is associated with poorer job performance when it occurs frequently. More importantly, bullying not only affect the workers' job performance but also reduce workers' commitment to work.

Commitment involves a person's dedication, comfort, loyalty, and effort to fulfill duties or goals, with active participation and emotional attachment (Williams, 2023). Performance measures success in a role through goals, productivity, and quality, and it is directly

related to commitment; dedicated individuals perform better (Nguyen, 2023). Committed individuals stay focused on their objectives, enhancing performance (Adeleke, 2022). Work commitment is an individual's responsibility towards an organization's mission and goals, reflecting enthusiasm for tasks and willingness to ensure the company's success (Hough, 2015). Technical workers' job commitment significantly impacts their performance in achieving power generation goals. Affective commitment, or emotional attachment to organizational values, greatly benefits performance through active engagement and a proactive work ethic (Eze, 2022). The Three-Component Model (TCM) includes affective, continuance, and normative commitment. Continuance measures willingness to stay with the organization, while normative involves feelings of obligation (Udoh, 2023). Affective commitment is higher when personal and organizational values align, enhanced through strategies promoting corporate values (Olawale, 2022). Work commitment encompasses behaviors with expected organizational value, directly facilitating high task accomplishment of distribution workers as dedicated employees strive to achieve goals efficiently (Johnson, 2016).To maximize productivity, power distribution organizations need their technical workers performing at their best. Workplace bullying can negatively impact task accomplishment. Studies show that bullying reduces performance, with lower levels of bullying associated with better outcomes and job satisfaction

Job satisfaction reflects employees' emotional response to their roles and is crucial for technical workers' motivation and performance. According to Spielgler (2018), job satisfaction encompasses psychological, physiological, and environmental factors that lead employees to feel content with their jobs. Satyavathi (2017) noted that dissatisfaction can foster a rebellious attitude towards management, which may spread among employees and

harm morale and the organization's reputation. Both job satisfaction and dissatisfaction are influenced by factors such as the work environment and workplace bullying (Okonkwo, 2023). Globally, about 15% of workers experience systematic bullying, with 11% feeling like victims (Nielsen, Matthiesen, & Einarsen, 2020). Countries, including China, are increasingly focusing on raising awareness and preventing workplace bullying to protect employee health and work performance, as well as to safeguard organizational integrity. Workplace bullying is a significant issue in various organizations, including power distribution companies. In Nigeria, electricity was introduced by British colonial authorities in 1896 to provide illumination and preserve food and drugs (Sule, 2020). If not properly managed, workplace bullying in these companies can disrupt operations. Addressing workplace bullying requires a systematic and sustained approach. Organizations must protect employees from psychological harassment to maintain profitability and achieve their goals (Keashly & Jagatic, 2013). Judith (2018) demonstrated that workplace bullying negatively impacts job satisfaction and productivity, affecting employee morale and organizational performance. Hence, victims of bullying may even choose to leave due to the adverse working conditions in power distribution distribution

In Ekiti State, BEDC staff make up about 7% of the workforce, with a significant number being technical workers. These employees often face harsh conditions, including extreme weather, height work, emergency repairs, hazardous materials, and confined spaces. Additionally, they encounter workplace bullying from senior colleagues and customers. This bullying manifests in various forms, including derogatory language, aggressive behavior, exclusion, sabotage, and unrealistic deadlines. Workplace bullying severely impact workers' commitment, task

accomplishment, job performance, and job satisfaction. Victims may feel demoralized, leading to decreased motivation and performance. Bullying cause stress, anxiety, and impaired cognitive functioning, affecting task efficiency. Despite efforts to address these issues through leadership involvement, feedback, monitoring, and sanctions, the problem persists. This study aims to examine how workplace bullying correlates with workers' commitment, task accomplishment, job performance, and job satisfaction among technical workers in Ekiti's power distribution sector.

Statement of the Problem

One of the main aims of any company is to have workers who are satisfied with their job, committed to their job, performing well and always accomplish their task. Technical workers in power distribution companies are expect to achieve these aims, but to be satisfied, committed and performing well in their job it is expected that they work in a conducive environment, an environment that is free from negative experiences such as workplace bullying. If the technical workers do not experience workplace bullying the will be satisfied with their job and their performance will be high.

However, it has been observed that workplace bullying, particularly in power distribution companies, manifest in various forms, such as derogatory language, aggressive behavior, threats, physical gestures, deliberate exclusion from work-related activities, criticizing and sabotaging coworkers' work, setting unrealistic deadlines, and assigning excessive workloads without justification. Workplace bullying can significantly diminish workers' commitment, task accomplishment, job performance, and job satisfaction. It can lead to decreased motivation levels, decreased job dedication, and increased stress levels, anxiety, and fear of making mistakes. These negative emotions can impair cognitive functioning and hinder task completion efficiency.

To address these gaps, literature has shown that research was tilted towards the use of countries outside Nigeria. As far as the researcher knows, studies have not addressed the problem workplace bullying, workers' commitment, task accomplishment, job performance, and job satisfaction of technical workers in power distribution companies in Ekiti State. This study therefore examined workplace bullying as a correlation between workers' commitment, job performance, and job satisfaction of technical workers in power distribution company in Ekiti State, Nigeria.

Purpose of the Study

The general purpose of this study was to investigate the influence of workplace bullying on workers' commitment, job performance and job satisfaction of technical workers in power distribution company in Ekiti State, Nigeria. Specifically, this study determined the relationship between:

1. workplace bullying and technical workers' job performance in power distribution company.
2. workplace bullying and technical workers' work commitment in power distribution company.
3. workplace bullying and technical workers' job satisfaction in power distribution company.

Research Questions

The following questions are raised to guide the study:

1. What is the relationship between workplace bullying and technical workers' job performance in power distribution company?
2. What is the relationship between workplace bullying and technical workers' work commitment in power distribution company?
3. What is the relationship between workplace bullying and technical workers' job satisfaction in power distribution company?

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses will guide the study and will be test at the 0.05 level of Significance:

1. There is no significant relationship between workplace bullying and technical workers'

job performance in power distribution company.

2. There is no significant relationship between workplace bullying and technical workers' work commitment in power distribution company.

3. There is no significant relationship between workplace bullying and technical workers' job satisfaction in power distribution company.

Methodology

The study adopted a correlational design. The study area was Ekiti State. Three objectives, three research questions and three hypotheses guided the study. The population for the study was 126 technical workers in power distribution offices in all the three Senatorial Districts in Ekiti State, Nigeria. The instrument used for collecting data for the study was an adapted questionnaire tagged 'Technical Workers' Workplace Bullying, Work Commitment, Job Performance and Job Satisfaction questionnaire (TWWBWCTAJPJSQ). The questionnaire was divided into two parts, I and II. Part I contained items that elicited the demographic information of the respondents. Part II was divided into five sections (A, B, C and D) which are: work commitment, workplace bullying, job performance, job satisfaction.

Section A measures work commitment. The instrument consists of 18 items on a five-point Likert scale of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Undecided (U), Disagree (D), and Strongly Disagree (SD) with values of 5, 4, 3, 2, and 1 respectively.

Section B consisted of 18 items and five response options of strongly agree, agree, undecided, disagree and strongly disagree.

Section C is job performance questionnaire adapted from Gizzi (2014). It consists of 13 items and seven response options of excellent, good, satisfactory, sometimes unsatisfactory, unsatisfactory, unable to rate and, not applicable. However, the researcher added more items and also

modified some of the sentences to fit the present study. The response options after modifications were Strongly Agree, Agree, Undecided, Disagree and Strongly Disagree.

Section D was a job satisfaction scale adapted from Smith, (2013). It was made up of 12 items having six response options. However, the researcher modified the response options to strongly agree, agree, undecided, disagree and strongly disagree.

The instrument was validated by three experts. Two from the Department of Industrial Technical education and one from the Department of Computer and Robotics Education, University of Nigeria, Nsukka.

Cronbach alpha coefficient method was used to ascertain the internal consistency of the questionnaire items. It was obtained by administering the questionnaire on ten technical workers in power distribution company in Ondo State which is outside the study area but have similar features to the studied area. A reliability coefficient of 0.84 was obtained for the instrument used.

The copies of the questionnaire were administered in the various power distribution company by the researcher with the help of research assistants. The research assistants were briefed on the purpose of the study and how to administer the instruments to the respondents. Data collected for this study were analyzed using Pearson Correlations and Regression analyses. Bivariate correlations and regression analyses were carried out using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS v.22). Bivariate correlations were used to answer the research questions while regression was used to test the hypothesis at 0.05 level of significance.

Results

The presentations were organized in tables according to the research questions and the formulated hypotheses that guided the study.

Table 1: Correlation between workplace bullying and job performance

Variables	WB	JP
1. Workplace Bullying (WB)	1	
2. Job Performance (JP)	-.547**	1

*Key: **- Correlation is significant*

The result in Table 1 shows the relationship between workplace bullying and job performance. It was observed that there is a negative relationship between workplace bullying and technical workers' job performance in power distribution company, however the correlational coefficient -.547 shows that the correlation between workplace bullying and technical workers' job performance is moderate. This implies thatworkplace bullying has a moderate relationship on job performance of technical workers in power distribution company. The negative correlation depicts the direction of the relationship, this implies that the variables move in opposite direction to each other, this implies that an increase in workplace bullying can decrease the job performance of technical workers in power distribution company.

Table 2: Correlation between workplace bullying and work commitment

Variables	WB	WC
1. Workplace Bullying (WB)	1	
2. Work Commitment (WC)	-.482**	1

*Key: **- Correlation is significant*

The result in Table 2 shows the relationship between workplace bullying and work commitment. It was observed that there is a negative relationship between workplace bullying and technical workers' work commitment in power distribution company, however the correlational coefficient -.482 shows that the correlation between workplace bullying and technical workers' work commitment is moderate. This implies thatworkplace bullying has a moderate relationship on work commitment of technical workers in power distribution company. The negative correlation depicts the direction of the relationship, this implies that the variables move in opposite direction to each other, this implies that an increase in workplace bullying can decrease the work commitment of technical workers in power distribution company and vice versa.

Table 3: Correlation between workplace bullying and job satisfaction

Variables	WB	JS
Workplace bulling	**1**	**-292****
Job satisfaction	**-292****	**1**

*Key: **- Correlation is significant*

The result in Table 3 shows the relationship between workplace bullying and job satisfaction. It was observed that there is a negative relationship between workplace bullying and technical workers' job satisfaction in power distribution company, however the correlational coefficient -.292 shows that the correlation between workplace bullying and technical workers' job satisfaction is weak. This implies thatworkplace bullying has a weak relationship on job satisfaction of technical workers in power distribution company. The negative correlation depicts the direction of the relationship, this implies that the variables move in opposite direction to each other, this implies that an increase in workplace bullying can decrease the job satisfaction of technical workers in power distribution company and vice versa.

Table 4: Model Summary of Regression Analysis between workplace bullying and job performance

| Unstandardized Coefficients | | Standardized Coefficients | | | | |
B	Std. Error	Beta	T	Sig.	R	R^2
60.566	1.995		30.354	.000	.547	.300
.323	.044	.547	7.283	.000		

Table 4 highlights the model summary of Regression analysis between workplace bullying and technical workers' job performance in power distribution company. It shows the value of correlation coefficient that is R and coefficient of determination that is R^2. The value of R^2 is .300 which means that 30% variation in the job performance of technical workers in power distribution companyis explained by the workplace bullying they experience. The Table also provides details of models' parameters (Beta values) and significance of these values. It is clear from the table that the value of unstandardized Beta is .323 which represents the gradient of regression line. Therefore, if the value of predictor variable (workplace bullying) is increased by one unit, there is .323 unit increase in the outcome variable (job performance). This relationship is statistically significant because sig. value $p < .000$ which is less than .05 (95% confidence interval). Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected. It may be concluded that there is a significant relationship between workplace bullying and technical workers' job performance in power distribution company

Table 5: Model Summary of Regression Analysis between workplace bullying and work commitment

| Unstandardized Coefficients | | Standardized Coefficients | | | | |
B	Std. Error	Beta	T	Sig.	R	R^2
47.836	1.440		33.228	.000	.482	.232
.228	.040	.482	5.769	.000		

Table 5 highlights the model summary of Regression analysis between workplace bullying and technical workers' work commitment in power distribution company. It shows the value of correlation coefficient that is R and coefficient of determination that is R^2. The value of R^2 is .232 which means that 23.2% variation in the work commitment of technical workers in power distribution companyis explained by the workplace bullying they experience. The Table also provides details of models' parameters (Beta values) and significance of these values. It is clear from the table that the value of unstandardized Beta is .228 which represents the gradient of regression line. Therefore, if the value of predictor variable (workplace bullying) is increased by one unit, there is .228 unit increase in the outcome variable (work commitment). This relationship is statistically significant because sig. value $p < .000$ which is less than .05 (95% confidence interval). Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected. It may be concluded that there is a significant relationship between workplace bullying and technical workers' work commitment in power distribution company.

Table 6: Model Summary of Regression Analysis between workplace bullying and job satisfaction

Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients			R	R^2
B	**Std. Error**	**Beta**	**T**	**Sig.**		
64.852	2.419		26.804	.000	.292	.085
-.187	.056	-.292	-3.333	.001		

Table 6 highlights the model summary of Regression analysis between workplace bullying and technical workers' job satisfaction in power distribution company. It shows the value of correlation coefficient that is R and coefficient of determination that is R^2. The value of R^2 is .085 which means that 8.5% variation in the job satisfaction of technical workers in power distribution companyis explained by the workplace bullying they experience. The Table also provides details of models' parameters (Beta values) and significance of these values. It is clear from the table that the value of unstandardized Beta is -.187 which represents the gradient of regression line. Therefore, if the value of predictor variable (workplace bullying) is increased by one unit, there is -.187 unit increase in the outcome variable (job satisfaction). This relationship is statistically significant because sig. value p < .001 which is less than .05 (95% confidence interval). Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected. It may be concluded that there is a significant relationship between workplace bullying and technical workers' job satisfaction in power distribution companies

Discussion of Findings

The findings of this study are discussed based on research questions and hypotheses as follows:

It was found out from the study that a moderate and negative relationship exists between workplace bullying and technical workers' job performance in power distribution company. The study also found a significant relationship between workplace bullying and technical workers' job performance in power distribution company. This is in agreement with Judith (2018) who found out in a study that bullying behavior affects an individual's ability to perform their jobs, which can impact the morale of employees and the financial performances of an organization. The study is also in line with Shahrin (2015) who carried out a research study investigating the relationship among workplace bullying, employees' work performance. The study found that the person related bullying was predicted as a strong contributor toward job performance Equally the findings of this study is in line with Odunjo-Saka (2023) who investigated the influence of workplace bullying on the performance of hotel employees, the study revealed that workplace bullying significantly and negatively influences an employee's performance. These findings, as mentioned above proves that there is negative relationship between workplace bullying and job performance. The reason behind might be because workplace bullying causes a negative pressure on the routine working life of an individual, if such pressure persists for a long time, then the individual naturally develops negative feelings towards his work which might hinder his job performance.

It was found out from the study that a moderate and negative relationship exists between workplace bullying and technical workers' work commitment in power distribution company. The study also found a significant relationship between workplace bullying and technical workers' work commitment in power distribution company. This is in agreement with Ramezesh, (2022) who in his study on the effects of workplace bullying on faculty productivity and work commitment, observed that workplace bullying negatively impacts employee

productivity and commitment. The study is also in line with Arifin, Nirwanto, & Manan (2019) who found that perceived bullying, particularly "professional understating," predicts a decrease in work commitment and work performance among academics. Park and Ono (2017) found that workplace bullying significantly decreased workers' commitment at work and exacerbated health problems. These findings, as mentioned above proves that there is a relationship between workplace bullying and workers' commitment. This implies that when workers experience workplace bullying, they may lose the eagerness for the job and their commitment towards the work may become reduced due to the workplace bullying being experienced.

It was found out from the study that a weak and negative relationship exists between workplace bullying and technical workers' job satisfaction in power distribution company. The study also found a significant relationship between workplace bullying and technical workers' job satisfaction in power distribution company. This is in agreement with Nazim, Ihsan, and Ahmad (2021) who conducted a study among academics at Pakistani universities, they observed that workplace bullying had a negative link with job satisfaction and performance. The study is also in line with Livne & Gossinsky, (2018) who observed that undesirable behaviour in organisations like workplace bullying can easily lead to several detrimental developments among affected employees, such as health-related problems and decreased job satisfaction. Sheehan, McCabe, and Garavan (2018) also confirmed that the most common results of bullying at work are poor job performance, more absences, greater intentions to quit, and lower job satisfaction. These findings, as mentioned above proves that there is a relationship between workplace bullying and workers' job satisfaction. This implies that when technical workers in power distribution company experience workplace bullying, they may become unhappy, fearful and develop health related issues like stress,

these negative feelings can lead to the technical to decreased satisfaction.

It was found out from the study that a weak and positive relationship exists between work commitment, and technical workers' job performance and job satisfaction in power distribution company. The study also found a significant relationship between work commitment and technical workers' job performance and job satisfaction in power distribution company. This agrees with Martic (2022) who observed a relationship between work commitment and task accomplishment. However, it was observed that there is a paucity of literature in this area, therefore the findings of this study filled the observed gap.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of this study, it could be concluded that workplace bullying, workers' commitment, task accomplishment and job performance are related to job satisfaction. It was noted that there was a negative relationship between workplace bullying and technical workers' job performance. A negative relationship also exists between workplace bullying and technical workers' work commitment, workplace bullying and job satisfaction. Reduced workplace bullying can lead to increased workers' commitment, job performance and job satisfaction of technical workers in power distribution company in Ekiti State.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study and conclusions drawn from the study, the following recommendations are made:
1. Since a negative relationship was observed between workplace bullying and job performance it was recommended that workshops and intervention programmes should be organized for technical workers by the power distribution company on how they can cope with workplace bullying.
2. The findings revealed that a relationship was observed between job satisfaction and job performance of technical workers in power distribution company, therefore power distribution company should try to increase the job satisfaction of their technical workers

by putting in place adequate resources for them.

3. Since workplace bullying is a significant predictor of job satisfaction, it was recommended that technical workers in power distribution companies should be trained by occupational therapists on how to manage and cope with workplace bullying.

4. The findings revealed that metalwork instructors work commitment has a relationship with job performance, therefore

power distribution company should establish counselling centers that will develop or adopt strategies that will help to improve their work and organizational commitment.

5. It was observed that a relationship exists between workplace bullying and task accomplishment, therefore the power distribution company should devise ways to make sure that workplace bullying is adequately punished.

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