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Survey Analysis on Workplace Bullying in Korea

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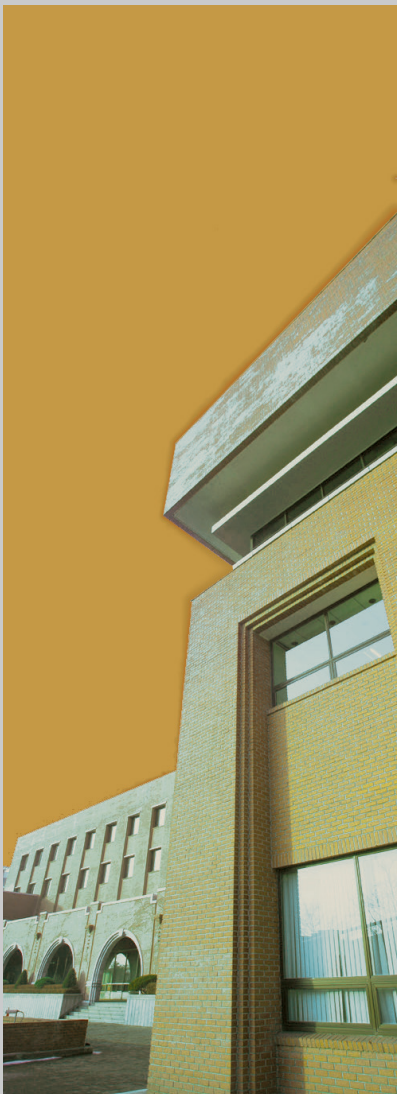

Korean Women's Development Institute

Survey Analysis on Workplace Bullying in Korea

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Survey Analysis on Workplace Bullying in Korea[1)]

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Je Yeong Cheon
Yoo Jeong Seo

Ⅰ. Outline of survey

1. Subjects of survey

The questionnaire survey is aimed at understanding and analyzing the current status of workplace bullying experienced by workers in the service industry in general from the gender perspective. The objective of the survey was set in consideration of the lack of previous studies on the overall status of workplace bullying in Korea[2)].

For the study, a questionnaire survey was conducted with workers in six types of occupation in the service industry for an accurate analysis of the current status and impact of workplace bullying. It was attempted to limit the subjects of the survey to a specific industry based on the findings of a previous study that conditions differ in disparate business types and occupation types due to influence

1) The report in English is a translated excerpt of the survey analysis part (chapter 3) from Gu Mi-yeong, Cheon Je-yeong, Seo Yoo-jeong, "Prevention of Workplace Bullying among Women Workers: Survey Analysis and Policy Suggestions," 2015.

2) The objective of the survey was set by reflecting the opinion of the expert advisory committee that understanding the overall status of workplace bullying and examining and analyzing the status of occurrence and damages of bullying on female workers based on this understanding can lead to a more accurate identification of the gender characteristics of workplace bullying.

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from the nature and characteristics of work, management methods, organizational structure, etc. at relevant workplaces (Salin & Hoel, 2011). The service industry was chosen considering the fact that the issue of mental health and stress of workers in the service industry including those in emotional labor is emerging as a social problem and that a comparison can be made to the result of a previous study on workers in the manufacturing industry (Seo Yoo-jeong et al., 2014).

Occupation types of the subjects were selected regarding the gender ratio of workers in an attempt to analyze the status of workplace bullying from the gender perspective. Accordingly, the survey was conducted on 1,000 workers in male and female dominated occupations and those in which the gender ratio is relatively balanced[3]. For male dominated occupations, IT-related occupations and machine-related occupations were chosen, and for female dominated ones, healthcare-related occupations and sales-related occupations were selected. Occupations related to finance and insurance were selected for their relatively balanced gender ratio. In addition, workers at public institutions were included among the subjects considering the fact that few studies have been conducted on workplace bullying in the public sector in Korea.

Gender ratio of the population was reflected on the quota sampling for different occupation types (<Table Ⅰ-1>). Regarding IT-related jobs and healthcare-related jobs, oversampling of minority gender groups (women in IT-related jobs and men in healthcare-related jobs) was made intentionally to examine the gender difference within the occupation type.

3) Male dominated occupations, female dominated occupations and occupations with balanced gender ratio were determined according to the gender ratio.

〈Table Ⅰ-1〉 Respondents' profile[4)]

Occupation type		Sample			Composition of population			Other
		Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	
Private sector - male dominated	College graduate dominated (IT-related)	160	110	50	279,335 (100)	238,322 (85.3)	41,014 (14.7)	Min. of Employment and Labor, 2014 Survey on Labor Conditions by Employment Type
	High school graduate dominated (machine-related, car repair)	160	154	6	41,832 (100)	40,354 (96.5)	1,478 (3.5)	
Private sector - female dominated	College graduate dominated (healthcare-related, nurses)	160	30	130	323,701 (100)	7,443 (2.3)	316,258 (97.7)	Korea Nurses Association (2014)
	High school graduate dominated (Marketing and sales-related, sales clerks)	160	57	103	200,649 (100)	70,926 (35.3)	129,722 (64.7)	Min. of Employment and Labor, 2014 Survey on Labor Conditions by Employment Type
Private sector - balanced gender ratio	Jobs related to finance and insurance	160	84	76	220,647 (100)	115,235 (52.2)	105,411 (47.8)	Min. of Employment and Labor, 2014 Survey on Labor Conditions by Employment Type
Public sector	Public offices-central/local governments	100	57	43	976,453 (100)	556,479 (57.0)	419,974 (43.0)	Statistics Korea, Statistics on National Public Officials (Dec. 2013)
	Public offices-other public institutions	100	75	25	279,423 (100)	209,069 (74.8)	70,354 (25.2)	All Public Information System in One: Alio (2014)[5)]
Total		1,000	567	433	-	-	-	-

4) Shaded rows: Occupation types where oversampling of minority gender groups (male or female) was made to examine gender difference in one occupation type. Other occupation types were excluded because oversampling was unnecessary (e.g. marketing and sales) or highly difficult (e.g. machine-related jobs).

5) All Public Information System in One (Alio) http://www.alio.go.kr/stat1.do (Searched on Mar. 27, 2015.)

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Characteristics of respondents excluding gender and occupation types shown in <Table Ⅰ-1> are presented in <Table Ⅰ-2>.

〈Table Ⅰ-2〉 Characteristics of respondents

Classification		No. of respondents (%)
Age group	20-29	191(19.1)
	30-39	305(30.5)
	40-49	319(31.9)
	50 and above	185(18.5)
Rank	Executives	47(4.7)
	Middle managers	418(41.8)
	Rank-and-file workers	535(53.5)
Education	High school (vocational) graduates	125(12.5)
	High school (academic, arts) graduates	66(6.6)
	Junior college dropouts/graduates	236(23.6)
	College dropouts/graduates	506(50.6)
	Graduate school or above	67(6.7)
Work type	Public sector	276(27.6)
	Private sector	724(72.4)
Employment type	Non-regular workers	187(18.7)
	Regular workers	813(81.3)
Military status (men)	Full-time discharge	471(83.1)
	Reservist status	46(8.1)
	Exception cases	11(1.9)
	Exemption	32(5.6)
	No response	7(1.2)
Service period	Less than 1 year	136(13.6)
	1 year ~ less than 5 years	376(37.6)
	5 years ~ less than 10 years	198(19.8)
	10 years or more	290(29)
Work week (actual)	Less than 30 hours	24(2.4)
	30 hours ~ less than 40 hours	53(5.3)
	40 hours ~ less than 50 hours	607(60.7)
	50 hours or more	316(31.6)
Monthly wage	1,5000,000 won or less	171(17.1)
	More than 1,500,000 ~ 2,500,000 won	363(36.3)
	More than 2,500,000 ~ 4,000,000 won	274(27.4)
	More than 4,000,000 won	192(19.2)

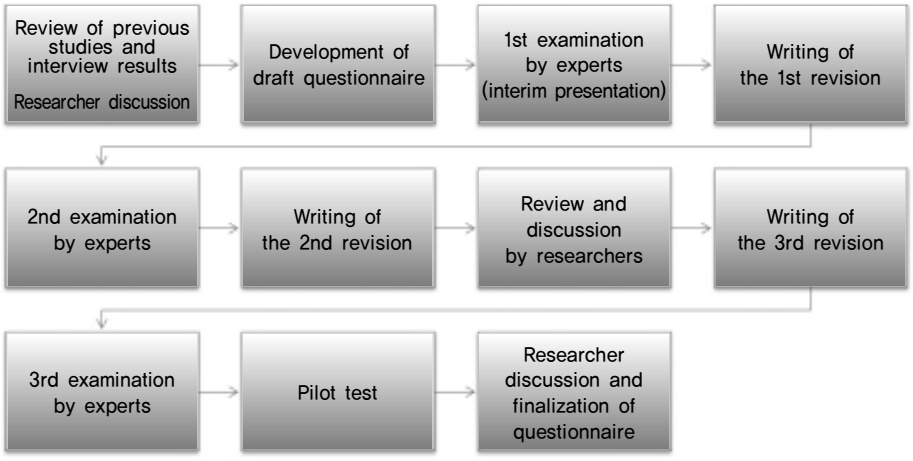
As there were differences between the distribution of the collected sample and that of the actual population, weighted values were used for disparate occupation types and genders to carry out the analysis (See <Table Ⅰ-3>).

〈Table Ⅰ-3〉 Weighted values for disparate occupation types and genders

	IT	Healthcare	Finance/ insurance	Marketing /sales	Machine-related	Central/local governments	Public institutions
Men	2166.56	248.10	1379.04	1254.06	261.45	9764.53	2787.59
Women	820.28	2432.75	1379.04	1254.06	261.45	9764.53	2814.16

2. Survey methods

A draft questionnaire was developed based on the examination of previous studies, interviews and discussion between the researchers. It was finalized after three meetings with expert advisors, consideration by the researchers and pilot test, according to the procedure shown in the following [Figure Ⅰ-1].



[Figure Ⅲ-1] Questionnaire development procedure

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<Table Ⅰ-4> enumerates components of the finalized questionnaire by identifying the characteristics of respondents shown through the background questionnaire (BQ) and listing questions related to working conditions, work ethics and job satisfaction. Then come the questions on workplace bullying, which consist of those on objective bullying mainly based on bullying behaviors and subjective bullying based on self-reports by respondents. These questions were developed based on previous studies that divide between victims of objective bullying and subjective bullying to identify the ratios of workers who had experienced workplace bullying and those who perceived they were victims of workplace bullying (e.g. Salin, 2001; Seo Yoo-jeong et al., 2014). Objective victims were defined as 'respondents who experienced bullying behaviors repetitively more than once a week for the past 6 months' and subjective victims were defined as 'respondents who feel that they were bullied more than once a month for the past 6 months.' To obtain the ratio of the victims of objective bullying, 21 questions developed for the Korean Interpersonal Conflict Questionnaire (KICQ) in the study by Seo Yoo-jeong et al. were utilized.[6] KICQ is an assessment tool developed by putting together and eliminating redundancies from existing assessment tools widely used in previous overseas studies on workplace bullying such as NAQ-R, LIPT and Quine and adding questions written based on the interviews with the victims (Seo Yoo-jeong et al., 2014:81-84). The questions in KICQ can be divided into "three sub-categories of work-related bullying, personal offenses, and exclusion/isolation" (Seo Yoo-jeong et al., 2014:81).

6) As the KICQ questions were developed for the working conditions of workers in the manufacturing industry, some modifications were made to reflect the characteristics of those in the service industry in the study.

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Questions designed to figure out the status of gender-related discriminatory bullying, or gender-related bullying, were also incorporated. They were written with reference to the results of previous studies on gender-related bullying in Korea and abroad (Shino Naito, 2015; Kim Jeong-hye et al., 2011, etc.).

The last part of the questionnaire shows questions on the damages of workplace bullying on victims and the organization as a whole as well as those on the personal and organizational response to bullying.

〈Table Ⅰ-4〉 Construction of questionnaire items

Classification	Contents
Characteristics of respondents	BQ: Characteristics and background of respondents (occupation type, gender, age, weekly working days and work week, career, rank, work location, military status (men), employment type, work type (public/ private), education, size of workplace and ratio of female workers, number of turnover, average annual wage)
Working conditions	1(①～⑤), 1-1, 1-3～1-6
Work ethics of respondents	1(⑦～⑪): Work ethics of respondents
Job satisfaction	1(⑥)
Objective experience of workplace bullying	3, 3-1: KICQ (Seo et al., 2014) and questions on gender-related bullying 3-3: Ranks and gender of main aggressors 3-4: Experience of witnessing bullying behaviors 3-5: Experience of engaging in bullying behaviors
Subjective experience of workplace bullying	4, 4-1: Experience of becoming a victim of subjective bullying 4-2: Aggressors and witnesses 5: Experience of bullying in previous workplaces 7: Types of bullying behaviors most difficult to endure
Damages of bullying	2: Depression (Recited from K6: Kessler et al., 2010; Min & Lee, 2015) 3-2: Amount of suffering caused by bullying behaviors 4-4: Symptoms caused by bullying
Reaction to bullying	4-3: Methods, results, etc. of coping on the personal level 6: Existence or lack of response measures on the organizational level 8: Preferred bullying prevention measures

Note: The questionnaire survey was conducted online for one month in July 2015.

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II. Present status of workplace bullying

1. Victims of objective bullying and subjective bullying

Distinction between objective victims and subjective victims was made to obtain the ratios of people who experienced workplace bullying and those who perceived that they experienced workplace bullying among 1,000 workers in the service industry (e.g. Salin, 2001; Seo Yoo-jeong et al., 2014). Objective victims were defined as 'respondents who experienced bullying behaviors repetitively more than once a week over the past 6 months,' whereas subjective victims were defined as 'respondents who feel that they were bullied more than once a month over the past 6 months'.

The ratio of objective victims, ratio of subjective victims and average number of experiences of being bullied were estimated with a focus on the social demographic characteristics of the respondents. The average number of experiences of being bullied over the past 6 months was estimated based on the respondents' answers to 21 questions from the Korean Interpersonal Conflict Questionnaire developed by Seo Yoo-jeong et al. (2014) by converting the results into the numbers of actual experiences over the past 6 months and adding them up.

〈Table II-1〉 Basis of estimation of average number of experiences

(Unit: Number of experiences)

	None	1-2 times in 6 months	1 time a month	1 time a week	Everyday
Average no. of experiences	0	1.5	6	26	133.12*

* Average weekly working days of respondents for the past 6 months: 26 weeks

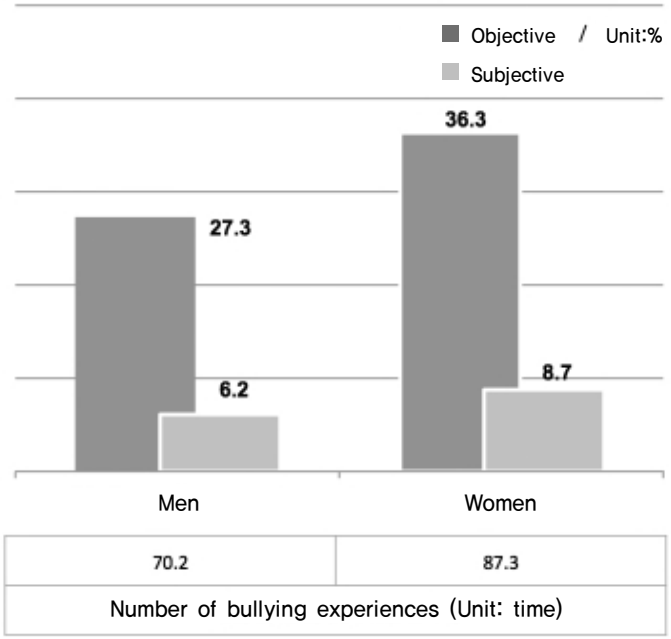
2. Differences based on personal characteristics

Among all respondents, 31.5% experienced objective bullying, whereas 7.4% appeared to be subjective victims; this indicates that the bullying victims were exposed to workplace bullying four times more than they perceived themselves.[7] In other words, a large number of workers were experiencing workplace bullying but did not realize that they were victims. The number of the experiences of being bullied over the past 6 months was 78.2 on average, which corresponds to about three times a week.

[Figure II-1] Overall ratio of bullying victims

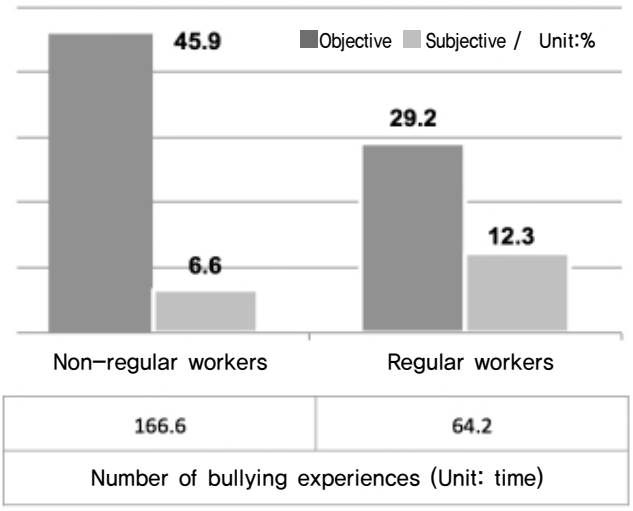
7) The Work Environment Research conducted by the Occupational Safety and Health Research Institute includes questions that shed light on the status of workplace bullying. They are questions on experiences of verbal violence, threatening or humiliating behaviors, physical violence and bullying (Q.70-71). Considering that these questions are answered based not on actual experience of wrongful behaviors but on their perception of it, they have similarity with 'subjective victim' questions used in the study. According to the results of the 4th Work Environment Research Survey conducted on 50,007 employees, 6.6% of the respondents experienced verbal violence, 0.1% experienced bullying, 1.8% experienced humiliating behaviors, and 0.5% experienced physical violence (Occupational Safety and Health Research Institute, 2014).

Concerning the gender difference, 36.3% of female respondents and 27.3% of male respondents had objective experience of bullying, while only 8.7% of women and 6.2% of men reported subjective perception of bullying; these figures show that the ratio of subjective victims is much lower than that of objective victims. As noted in the analysis of the overall ratio of bullying victims, both men and women appeared not to recognize bullying in the analysis of gender difference. There was even a larger gap between the ratios of objective victims and subjective victims among women than men. This suggests that women tend to receive more workplace bullying than men.



[Figure Ⅱ-2] Gaps between ratios of victims and numbers of bullying experiences by gender

The ratio of bullying victims was higher among non-regular workers than regular workers, and this corresponds to the results of previous studies (e.g. Seo Yoo-jeong, 2015). Non-regular workers showed higher ratio of objective victims and lower ratio of subjective victims compared to regular workers. This indicates that the type of employment may influence the level of perception of unfairness when workers face similar bullying behaviors.



[Figure II-3] Prevalence rate of workplace bullying by the type of employment

Concerning the ranks of the respondents, the ratio of victims and average number of bullying experiences appeared to increase in lower ranks.

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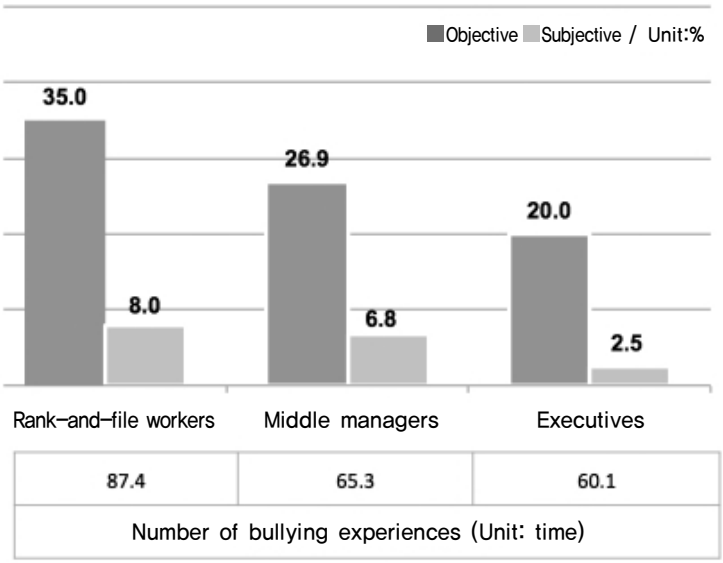
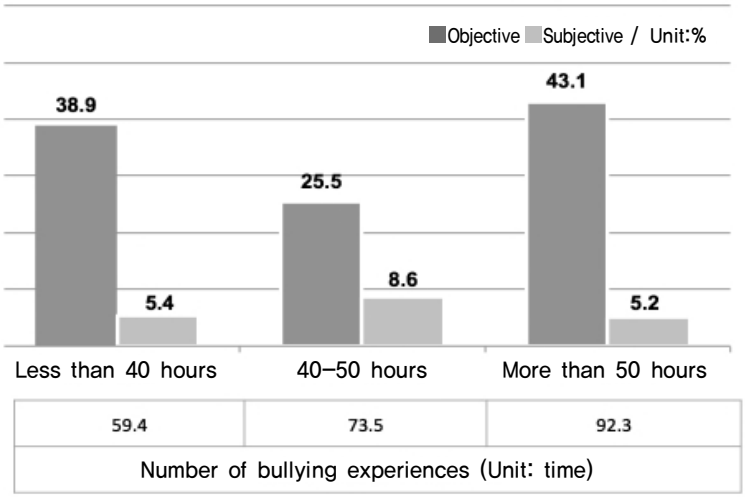


[Figure II-4] Prevalence rate of workplace bullying by the ranks of victims

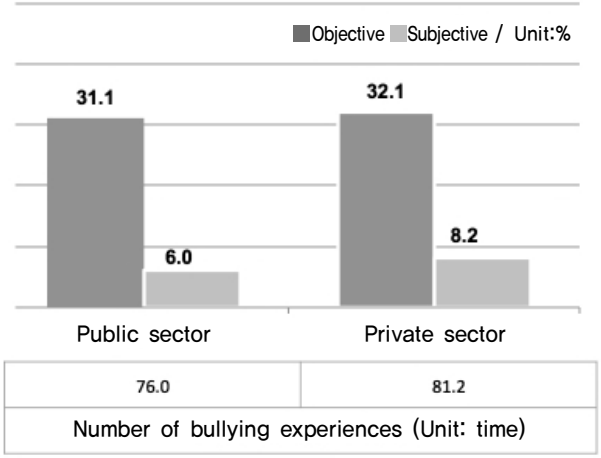
In terms of the ratio of victims according to work week, the group working more than 50 hours a week had the highest ratio of objective victims (43.1%). In addition, the ratio of objective victims in the group working less than 40 hours a week was higher than that of the group working 40 to 50 hours a week. An analysis of the characteristics of the respondents in the group working less than 40 hours a week revealed that the group had higher percentage of non-regular workers and shorter average service period. This indicates that the reason for higher percentage of bullying victims in the group, in spite of the shorter work week, is the unstable position of the workers in the companies they belong to.



[Figure II-5] Prevalence rate of workplace bullying by work week

3. Differences based on organizational characteristics

There were only slight differences between the ratios of victims and average numbers of bullying experiences in the public and private sectors.



[Figure II-6] Prevalence rate of workplace bullying in public and private sectors

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Among different types of occupation, the ratio of objective victims was highest among sales clerks and the ratio of subjective victims was highest among nurses. The finding of the study that there are higher ratios of bullying victims among sales clerks and machine-related workers may contradict the results of previous studies indicating that workplace bullying is more serious in healthcare-related workplaces, and thus requires further in-depth analysis (Han Mi-ra et al., 2014).

〈Table Ⅱ-2〉 Prevalence rate of workplace bullying by the type of occupation

(Unit: %)

Classification		Objective victims	Subjective victims
Total		31.5	7.4
Male dominated organizations	IT	24.0	6.9
	Machine-related	39.4	6.2
Female dominated organizations	Nurses	36.4	12.2
	Sales clerks	41.3	10.6
Gender-balanced organizations	Finance/insurance	32.5	10.0
-	Public employees/public institutions	29.9	5.3

To identify the prevalence rates in different occupation types more accurately, cross analysis of occupation types and bullying experiences was made regarding cases in which the main aggressors were not customers but members of the workplace. This was based on the hypothesis that the higher ratio and average number of bullying experiences among sales clerks were due to bullying behaviors by customers. The result of the analysis showed that the ratio of objective victims was highest among nurses when the aggressors were members of the workplace, whereas nurses were the second highest occupation

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type in terms of the ratio of subjective victims, following sales clerks.

〈Table Ⅱ-3〉 Prevalence rate of workplace bullying by the type of occupation in the cases aggressors were members of the workplace

(Unit: %)

Classification			Objective victims	Subjective victims
Cases in which aggressors were members of the workplace	Total		33.3	13.4
	Male-dominated organizations	IT	24.4	12.6
		Machine-related	43.2	10.5
	Female-dominated organizations	Nurses	46	22.1
		Sales clerks	42.9	22.9
	Gender-balanced organizations	Finance/insurance	34.3	17.2
	-	Public employees/ public institutions	30.7	9.6

On the contrary, cross analysis of cases in which aggressors were customers showed that the ratio of objective victims was highest among sales clerks at 36.6% and was merely 0.4% among nurses. The ratio of subjective victims was highest among workers in finance and insurance.

〈Table Ⅱ-4〉 Prevalence rate of workplace bullying by the type of occupation in the cases aggressors were customers

(Unit: %)

Classification			Objective victims	Subjective victims
Cases in which aggressors were customers	Total		20.5	12
	Male-dominated organizations	IT	19	25
		Machine-related	21.4	18.2
	Female-dominated organizations	Nurses	0.4	14.3
		Sales clerks	36.6	7.7
	Gender-balanced organizations	Finance/insurance	20	33.3
	-	Public employees/ public institutions	24.3	7.2

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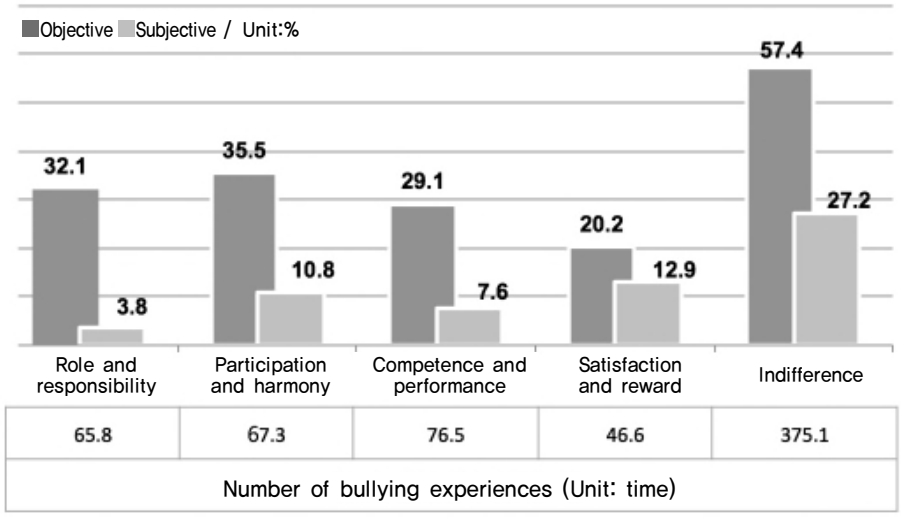
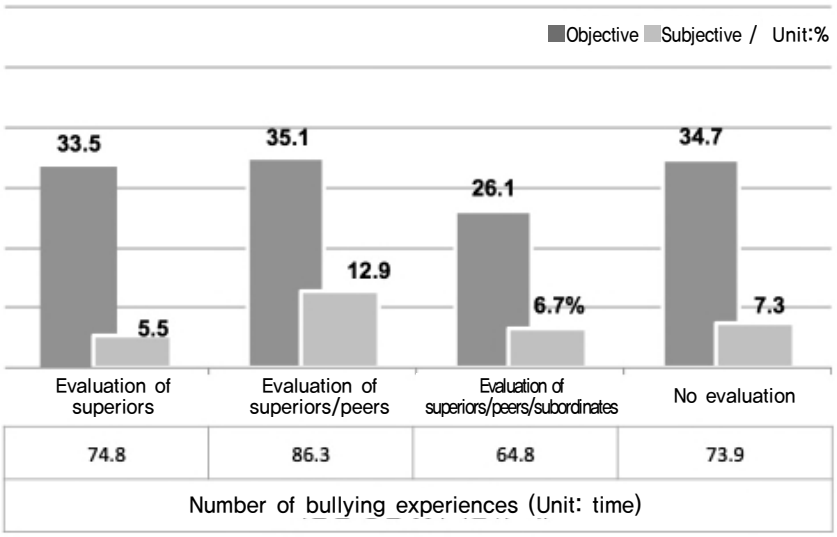
The leadership of superiors at workplaces was pointed out as one of the background factors that affect the occurrence of workplace bullying in a previous study (Seo Yoo-jeong et al., 2014:31). The ratio of bullying victims and average number of bullying experiences were highest when the leadership belongs to the indifferent type.



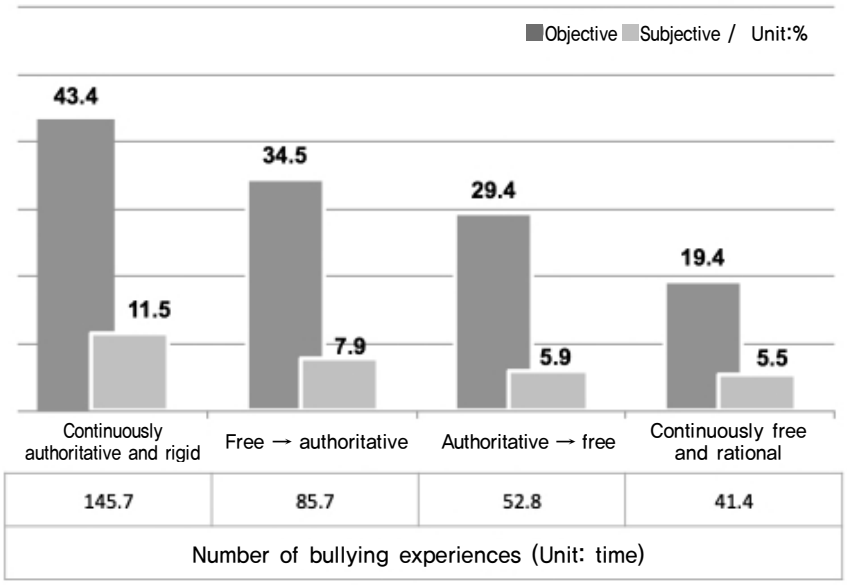
[Figure II-7] Prevalence rate of workplace bullying by the type of leadership

Concerning the difference based on the evaluation method within the organization, the ratio of objective victims was lowest in organizations that applied multidimensional evaluation.



[Figure II-8] Prevalence rate of workplace bullying and evaluation method within the organization

The ratio of victims and average number of bullying experiences were higher in organizations with an authoritative and rigid organizational culture than in organizations with free and rational culture. The ratios of objective and subjective victims were lower in the group where respondents answered that their culture was changing into a free and rational one. The ratios of objective and subjective victims were highest in the group where respondents pointed that their culture continued to be authoritative and rigid, followed by the group where the organizational culture was changing into a more authoritative and rigid one.



[Figure II-9] Prevalence rate of workplace bullying and organizational culture

Cross analysis of the degrees of competitive organizational culture and top-down atmosphere was made to identify the relationship between organizational culture and prevalence rate of workplace bullying. The result confirmed that higher ratios of objective victims appeared in organizations recognized to have a strong top-down system. Among workers who belonged to workplaces with strong top-down organizational culture, 36.2% answered that they had experienced workplace bullying, whereas the ratio fell to 26.1% in workplaces with moderately top-down organizational culture and to 22.2% in those with weak top-down culture. This result proves that workplace bullying is observed more frequently in authoritative and oppressive organizations with top-down atmosphere.

〈Table Ⅱ-5〉 Prevalence rate of workplace bullying and top-down organizational culture

(Unit: %)

Classification		Objective victims	Subjective victims
Top-down atmosphere (all respondents)	Total	31.5	7.4
	None	22.2	7.0
	Moderate	26.1	8.1
	Very strong	36.2	7.2

As organizational culture concerns members of an organization, cross analysis was made on respondents excluding those whose aggressors were customers. The result showed that there was higher ratio of respondents who answered that they had experienced objective or subjective bullying as a whole. Notably, the ratio of those with subjective bullying experiences was about 1.5 to 2 times higher than in the case of the respondents as a whole.

〈Table Ⅱ-6〉 Prevalence rate of workplace bullying and top-down organizational culture in cases where aggressors were members of the organization

(Unit: %)

Classification		Objective victims	Subjective victims
Top-down atmosphere (cases where aggressors were members of organization)	Total	33.3	13.4
	None	26.3	15.7
	Moderate	28	17.4
	Very strong	36.8	11.9

The result of cross analysis carried out to identify the prevalence rate of workplace bullying according to the degree of competitiveness within the organization is as follows.

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〈Table Ⅱ-7〉 Prevalence rate of workplace bullying and degree of competitiveness within the organization

(Unit: %)

Classification		Objective victims	Subjective victims
Degree of competitiveness within organization (all respondents)	Total	31.5	7.4
	None	25.9	6.9
	Moderate	33.2	6.6
	Very strong	34.8	8.7

The result of cross analysis on respondents whose aggressors were members of the organization revealed that there were higher ratios of objective and subjective victims in the group. The ratio of subjective victims was seen to be about 1.5 to 2 times higher than that of the respondents as a whole.

〈Table Ⅱ-8〉 Prevalence rate of workplace bullying and degree of competitiveness within the organization in the cases where aggressors were members of the organization

(Unit: %)

Classification		Objective victims	Subjective victims
Degree of competitiveness (cases where aggressors were members of organization)	Total	33.3	13.4
	None	27.8	14.6
	Moderate	35.3	11.9
	Very strong	35.7	14.1

Ⅲ. Damages of workplace bullying

1. Classification of victims

Damages of workplace bullying were examined from three perspectives: psychological and social perspective, working life perspective and gender perspective. From the psychological and social perspective, questions on mental health (depression), suicidal thoughts and aggression towards others were included, while questions on job commitment and organizational commitment[8] were incorporated from the working life perspective.

To analyze the influence of workplace bullying according to different types of involvement in bullying, respondents were divided into victims and non-victims. Victims refer to objective or subjective victims among the questionnaire respondents (Seo Yoo-jeong et al., 2014:105). Respondents who were not victims were classified as non-victims.

〈Table Ⅲ-1〉 Number of respondents by the type of involvement in bullying

	Victims	Non-victims
Cases where weighted value is not applied	383	617
Cases where weighted value is applied	350	650

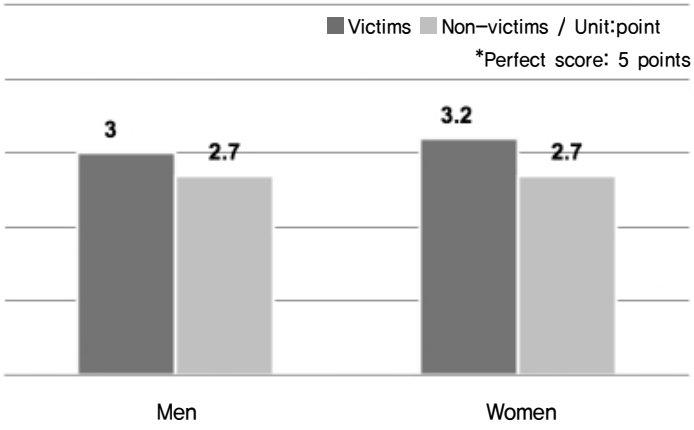
*All respondents: 1,000 persons

2. Damages on the personal level

Damages related to the victims' mental health were evaluated by identifying their level of depression. The result of analysis of their

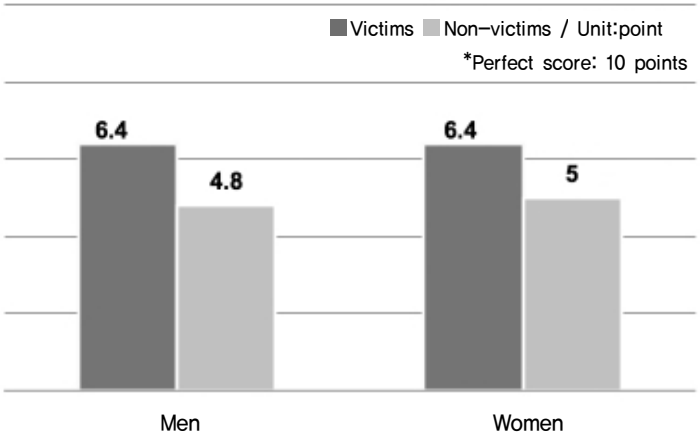
8) Organizational citizenship behavior signifies "behaviors of organization members willingly intended by individual members to contribute to the effective implementation of the functions of the organization, even when they are not convinced about formal rewards or punishment from the organization" (Park Gyeong-gyu and Choi Hang-seok, 2007:53).

level of depression using the K6 scale showed that the depression level was consistently higher among the victims than among non-victims.



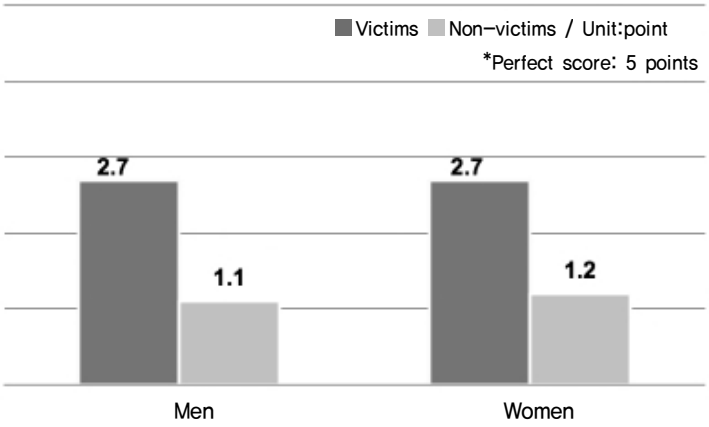
[Figure Ⅲ-1] Mental health of respondents: depression

The result of analysis of suicidal thoughts also revealed that bullying victims had consistently higher levels of these thoughts compared to non-victims.



[Figure Ⅲ-2] Suicidal thoughts of respondents

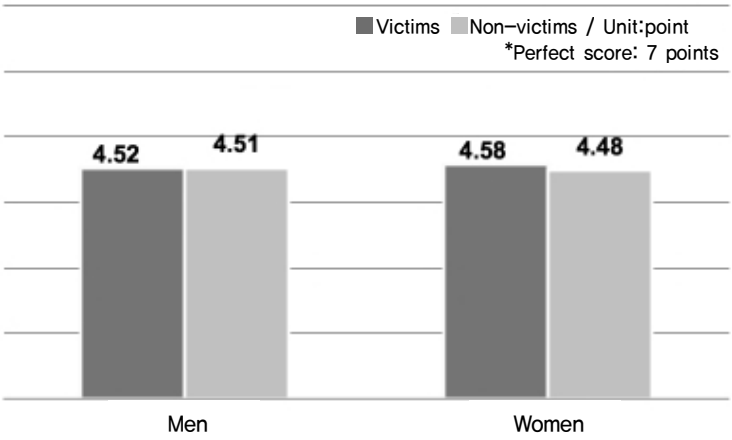
Victims also appeared to have a higher level of aggression towards others.



[Figure Ⅲ-3] Aggression toward others

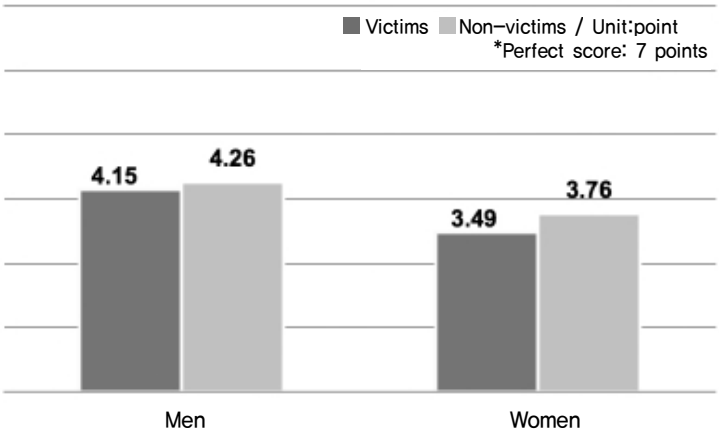
3. Damages on the organizational level

The results of estimation of job commitment and organizational commitment according to different types of involvement in workplace bullying showed that victims had a slightly higher level of job commitment compared to non-victims.



[Figure Ⅲ-4] Damages according to different types of workplace bullying: job commitment

However, victims showed lower organizational commitment than non-victims.

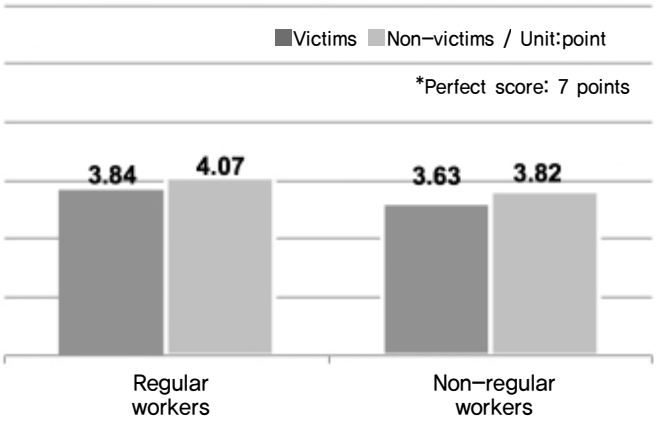


[Figure Ⅲ-5] Damages according to different types of workplace bullying: organizational commitment

To figure out the reason for the slightly higher job commitment of victims compared to non-victims, analysis of job commitment and organizational commitment was made on victims and non-victims according to different types of employment. The analysis result indicated that the job-commitment of victims was lower than that of non-victims among regular workers, and higher than that of non-victims among non-regular workers.

[Figure Ⅲ-6] Job commitment of victims by type of employment

Conversely, concerning organizational commitment, regular workers who were non-victims had the highest level of commitment, followed by regular working victims, non-regular non-victims and non-regular working victims. This is an interesting finding that suggests that the damages of bullying can occur in different ways based on the victims' type of employment.



[Figure Ⅲ-7] Organizational commitment of victims by type of employment

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Ⅳ. Reaction to and relief for workplace bullying

The answers to our questions on the reactions to workplace bullying by subjective victims (those who answered that they experienced workplace bullying) are as follows.[9] The most common reaction was to endure alone or accept the situation, followed by personal reaction of telling family members or friends. The fewest number of respondents chose the answer that they used the grievance resolution process in the workplace or requested the support of external organizations including labor offices.

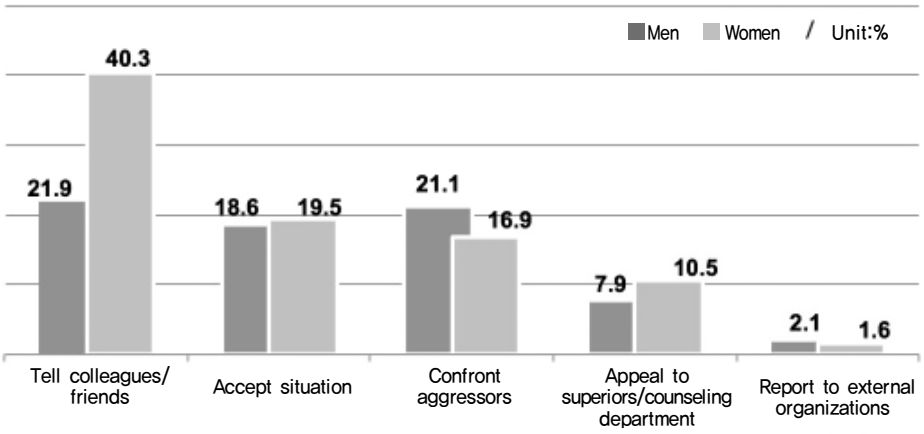
〈Table Ⅳ-1〉 Reactions of subjective victims

Reaction	Valid percentage (%)
Endure alone or accept that there is nothing that can be done	47.1
Tell close people about the bullying incident (colleagues, family members, friends, etc.)	30.7
Confront the aggressor directly	19.1
Appeal to superiors or counseling department in the workplace	9.1
Request support of the Ministry of Employment and Labor or other external organizations	1.9

According to the result of the analysis of reactions by bullying victims of different genders, the fewest respondents answered that they would report or appeal to external institutions such as the Ministry of Employment and Labor, superiors or counseling department. It means that the number of respondents who were willing to use the internal or external grievance resolution process was very low.

9) As objective victims include those who do not recognize workplace bullying, only subjective victims were targeted for the analysis of reactions to workplace bullying.

Instead, many victims just complained to colleagues or friends, or accepted the situation helplessly. Although they recognized their experience of workplace bullying, their reactions tended to be limited to informal reactions such as complaint or acceptance. Concerning the gender difference, women showed much higher percentage of telling colleagues or friends, whereas far more men tended to confront the aggressors directly than women.



[Figure Ⅳ-1] Reactions of subjective victims by gender

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V. Conclusion

Concerning previous studies conducted in Korea, “The survey questions often asked subjective opinions of workers on whether they felt that they had been bullied, and in some cases, researchers did not conduct their own surveys but studied media materials without defining the concept of bullying (Seo Yoo-jeong, 2015:77)”. Surveys also tended to be carried out on specific types of occupation such as nurses, and thus had limitations for understanding of the status of bullying in an overall industry or sector. The questionnaire survey used in the study was developed in consideration of recurrence and duration of bullying, and could estimate the ratio of bullying victims more accurately by employing both the objective method of using assessment tools and subjective method of asking respondents directly if they had experienced bullying. In addition, identification of industry-wide characteristics was made by conducting the survey on seven different occupation types that belong to the service industry.

After the analysis of average frequency of bullying behaviors experienced for 6 months, 31.5% of the respondents were classified as objective victims and 7.4% as subjective victims. The comparison of the results with those of a previous survey on the manufacturing industry conducted using a similar assessment tool, in which 7.1% of the respondents were objective victims and 6.6% were subjective victims (Seo Yoo-jeong et al., 2014), indicates that workplace bullying is much more serious in the service industry than in the manufacturing industry. Considering that the average number of bullying experienced by the respondents was 78.2, workers in the service industry appear to experience three incidences of bullying per

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week on average. The ratio of the respondents who experienced bullying behaviors repetitively and were thus classified into victims is very high, and bullying behaviors occurred frequently even among those who are not classified into victims. The ratio of objective victims was higher than in foreign surveys in which the ratio of objective victims was between 8 and 25% and that of subjective victims was between 2 and 8%, although a strict comparison cannot be made due to differences in assessment tools and target periods. Further studies are recommended to examine the reasons for this difference.

The results of analysis on the impact of workplace bullying on individual workers and organization as a whole demonstrate the seriousness and social repercussions of the issue of workplace bullying. Concerning depression, suicidal thoughts and aggressive drive of the bullying victims, they showed the highest level of depression and higher levels of aggressive drive and suicidal thoughts compared to other groups. The result of estimation of organizational commitment according to different types of involvement in workplace bullying revealed that victims had lower commitment than non-victims. With regards to job commitment, regular-working non-victims had the highest commitment, followed by regular-working victims, non-regular non-victims and non-regular working victims. This implies that the job commitment of bullying victims may differ according to their types of employment.

By putting the above research results together, it was verified that workplace bullying is not a new and exceptional phenomenon but it is widespread in all areas of the service industry, and that it is an issue that influences the safety and health of workers as well as organizational efficiency.

Finally, an emphasis is put on the impact of organizational culture on the occurrence of workplace bullying. Survey results have shown that there is high prevalence of workplace bullying in organizations with a competitive, authoritative and top-down organizational culture. Therefore, workplace bullying should not be regarded and handled as deviant behaviors by individual aggressors but as a structural problem rooted in organizational culture, employment structure and gender hierarchy.