MEDIATION ROLES OF RESILIENCE AND COPING STRATEGIES ON THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN WORKPLACE BULLYING AND ROMANIAN EMPLOYEES’ DEPRESSIVE SYMPTOMS

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Abstract

The present empirical study proposes a multi-mediation model of the relationships between workplace bullying, coping strategies, resilience and employees’ depressive symptoms. A total of 172 Romanian employees participated in this study by completing questionnaires measuring exposure to workplace bullying, coping strategies, resilience and depressive symptoms.

The results showed that workplace bullying significantly correlated with resilience, and focus on and venting of emotions and depressive symptoms. Furthermore, resilience significantly correlated with depressive symptoms and focus on and venting of emotions, while focus on and venting of emotions significantly correlated with depressive symptoms. Moreover, the present research proposes a multi-mediation model of the relationships between workplace bullying, coping strategy (i.e., focus on and venting of emotions), resilience and employees’ depressive symptoms. The multi-mediation model states that the more employees are exposed to workplace bullying, the more focused they are on their emotions, the less resilient they are, and the more depressed they feel.

These results suggest that employees exposed to workplace bullying will probably employ coping strategies focused on emotions, their resilience levels will decrease and their levels of depressive symptoms will increase.

The results have practical implications because they suggest human resources employees implement training programmes focused on developing employees’ workplace resilience.

Cuvinte cheie: expunerea la bullying-ul la locul de muncă, strategii de coping, reziliență, simptome depresive, model de multimediere

Keywords: exposure to workplace bullying, coping strategies, resilience, depressive symptoms, multi-mediation model

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1. INTRODUCTION/THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Managing organizational resources is an important issue in the success of an organization in today’s business world. Further, it is established that human resources are the most important factor among organizational resources (Mousavi Davoudi, Fartash, Allahyari, & Yarahmadi, 2013); as Nadiri and Tanova (2010) stated, human resources play a central role and demand special attention. Human resources are known as the major differentiating success factor for most organizations especially for the service industry. Further, the challenge facing most organizations today is to recruit, retain, manage and satisfy their human resources who affect the competitiveness of organizations (Mousavi Davoudi et al., 2013).

Workplace bullying is an important factor which can affect employees’ satisfaction. This phenomenon is known as a negative and unethical issue in the workplace and according to Leymann (1996), workplace bullying is hostile and unethical communication that occurs frequently and over a long period of time.

The phenomenon of workplace bullying has been recognized in the last 20 years as being a social factor with an uncontrollable source causing stress and other health problems among exposed employees (Zapf & Einarsen, 2010). This phenomenon is new to Romanian organizational contexts and has only been studied for ten years, so it remains an under-explored topic. At present there are few research projects carried out in Romania in order to investigate workplace bullying prevalence rates (Andronache et al., 2010; Chirilă, 2012; Gheondea et al., 2010; Maidaniuc-Chirilă, 2014). These Romanian studies identified prevalence rates of between 2% and 15% among employees. These prevalence rates are similar to those obtained in Europe (Salin, 2005; Vartia, 2001; Zap & Einarsen, 2010).

The last 30 years have been dedicated to finding a comprehensive definition of workplace bullying, a definition that can highlight its main characteristics and can discriminate it from the usual case of workplace conflict. Over time there have been many definitions in the literature but it seems that the one accepted by all researchers is the one stated by Salin in 2001 as cited in Salin (2005): “The workplace bullying phenomenon consists of negative acts that are systematically targeted towards one or more employees and can create a hostile work environment. The targeted employee ends up in an inferior position from which he can’t defend himself anymore.” Einarsen, Hoel and Cooper (2003) mentioned that these negative acts consist of psychological harassment, humiliation, social
exclusion practices or sabotage of someone’s work performance. Leymann (1996) said that it is a workplace bullying situation only if these acts last for at least six months, if they are systematic, persistent and if they are targeted toward employees in order to produce harm. Perpetrators aim to harm their target through a relentless barrage of behaviours that may escalate over time and include being harassed, tormented, ignored, sabotaged, put down, insulted, ganged-up on, humiliated and daily work life made difficult (Smith, 2011). What is worse is that these acts do not affect only the employees, but also the entire organization (Chirilă & Constantin, 2013).

2. BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF WORKPLACE BULLYING

Studies interested in understanding organizational causes for the appearance of workplace bullying have identified that aspects such as role ambiguity, role conflict, work-overload, high levels of competition and organizational changes are responsible for the appearance of workplace bullying (Chirilă, 2013; Chirilă & Constantin, 2014b; Salin, 2005; Zapf & Einarsen, 2010). Theories from social psychology explained this phenomenon through frustration-aggression theory (Berkowitz, 1989) which stated that acts of workplace bullying appear as a consequence of blocking employees’ professional goals. Later, Wilkie (1996) explained workplace bullying behaviours as a consequence of the bully’s nervous breakdown. According to Wilkie (1996), if the employee experiences a nervous breakdown when he works under high and constant workplace pressure he will discharge his negative emotions on other colleagues. Salin (2005) proposes a social-interaction theory. In this theory, the author states that workplace bullying is a consequence of three categories of situational factors such as motivational factors, accelerating factors and facilitating factors. One of the most comprehensive models of understanding and managing workplace bullying was given by Einarsen (as cited in Zapf & Einarsen, 2010). This model is presented bellow (see Figure 1).
Figure 1. Management model of workplace bullying (Einarsen, 2004; as cited in Zapf & Einarsen, 2010)

According to Einarsen (2004), this theory shows the most comprehensive framework of workplace bullying displayed in organizations. As can be seen there are mutual relationships between the bully’s aggressive behaviours and the victims’ reactions to them. The organizational context also has an indirect effect on victims through the tolerant attitudes and behaviours of the management which also have a negative influence on victims' own personality. This framework largely explains workplace bullying triggers and consequences and can be easily used by managers in order to prevent this phenomenon within their organizations.

The importance of studying this phenomenon was demonstrated by its negative impact on employees’ mental, psychological and physical health. So far, studies interested in identifying the health consequences of workplace bullying highlighted problems such as confusion, self-doubt, mental and physical strain, anxiety, depression, eating and drinking problems, sleep disorders, cardiovascular and gastro-intestinal diseases (Chirilă & Constantin, 2014b; Hansen, Hogh, Persson, Garde, & Orbaek, 2006; Hyung-Park & DeFrank, 2010; Kivimaki, Elovainio, Vartia, Vahtera, & Keltikangas-Jarvinen, 2003; Lee & Brotheridge, 2006; Niedhammer et al., 2006).

According to these studies, victims of workplace bullying usually present symptoms of anxiety, muscular and cognitive strain, low levels of self-esteem and
self-efficacy, a decrease in task performances, higher frequencies of job absenteeism and higher frequencies of medical appointments and sick leave. All of these consequences negatively affect the entire organization. In these cases, the organizations have to pay for medical appointments, sick leave, recruitment processes, psychological counselling and personnel retention.

2.1. WORKPLACE BULLYING AND DEPRESSIVE SYMPTOMS

Workplace bullying can have severe effects both for the health of those alarmed (Einarsen, 1999; Tehrani, 2004) and their job satisfaction (Einarsen, Raknes, & Matthiesen, 1994) as well as distressing organizations with increased intention to leave the organization, higher incomes and earlier retirements (Leymann, 1996; Rayner, 1997; Tehrani, 2004). Bullying can have severe effects on individual targets. At this level, the results of workplace bullying include lower self-esteem, more negative emotion, anxiety, stress, fatigue, burnout and depression (Agervold & Mikkelsen, 2004; Cassitto, Fattorini, Gilloli, Rengo, & Gonik, 2004; Hauge, Skogstad, & Einarsen, 2010; Lovell & Lee, 2011).

Studies interested in clarifying the relationship between workplace bullying and employees’ depressive symptoms have used not only cross-sectional designs (Hansen et al., 2006; Maidaniuc-Chirilă & Gherasim, 2014), but also longitudinal designs (Kivimaki et al., 2006). In their study, Hansen et al. (2006) evidenced that workplace bullying is a predictor of depressive symptoms among affected employees and, moreover, this relationship was even stronger when victims perceived higher levels of stress in their environment (Maidaniuc-Chirilă & Gherasim, 2014).

Furthermore, Kivimaki et al. (2006), using a two-wave longitudinal design, managed to evidence that workplace bullying predicted employees’ depressive symptoms and that higher levels of depression predicted exposure to further workplace bullying. In other words, workplace bullying was responsible for depressive symptoms among victims and that depressed victims were bullied even more, probably in order to urge them to overcome their emotional state and to work harder. Previous research (Maidaniuc-Chirilă, 2015a; Maidaniuc-Chirilă, 2015b) has shown that not only resilience but also the coping strategy named focus on and venting of emotions mediated the relationship between workplace bullying and the Romanian employees’ strain. According to the results of these studies, the victims
of workplace bullying whose levels of resilience were higher had lower levels of strain compared with the victims of workplace bullying whose resilience levels were lower. Furthermore, workplace bullying victims who used focus on and venting of emotions as a coping strategy to face workplace bullying had higher levels of strain comparing to victims who did not use this coping strategy to face the phenomenon of workplace bullying. The present article tests the indirect relationship between exposure to workplace bullying and employees’ depressive symptoms through resilience and coping strategies (i.e., focus on and venting of emotions).

The present articles tries to find if the relationships discovered by previous research (Maidaniuc-Chirilă, 2015a; Maidaniuc-Chirilă, 2015b) have the same pattern for employees’ depressive symptoms. This research tries to answer the research questions: Does resilience act as a protective factor for victims of workplace bullying? Furthermore, does the coping strategy named focus on and venting of emotions act like a risk factor for victims of workplace bullying?

2.2. WORKPLACE BULLYING AND COPING STRATEGIES

Literature in the field highlighted that there is a discrepancy in what employees say they would do in the case of experiencing acts of workplace bullying and what they actually did when they were confronted with these negative behaviours (Olafson & Johannsdottir, 2004). In their study, Olafsson & Johannsdottir (2004) asked people what they would do if they were confronted with acts of workplace bullying. The results showed that employees state they would cope actively with workplace bullying. Based on these preliminary responses, the above researchers chose only those employees saying they would employ active coping strategies (i.e., directly talking with the bully, trying to solve the situation through direct communication and using several types of assertive techniques). In the second phase of their study, the selected employees had to specify a long-lasting conflict in which they were involved at their work and to mark their answers to the questionnaires, showing what they actually did to solve the problem. The results showed that people said they would cope actively with workplace bullying if they were confronted up with such situations, but when they were asked about what they actually did in such cases they rated more passive coping strategies (i.e., avoidance of the perpetrator and positive reinterpretation of
the situation) than active coping strategies (i.e., talking with the bully, trying to solve the conflict through assertive strategies of communication).

Other studies showed that the most preferred coping strategies were denial (Hyung-Park & DeFranks, 2010), avoidance (Olafsson & Johansson, 2004), psychological detachment from the work situation (Hogh & Dofraddottir, 2001) and behavioural and mental disengagement (Chirilă, 2013; Hyung-Park & DeFrank, 2010). Furthermore, Scarpa, Haden and Hurley (2006) showed that the relationship between exposure to workplace bullying and health outcomes was better understood through the use of coping strategies. They have shown that those employees using passive coping strategies also presented more health problems than those using active coping strategies. This relationship was later confirmed by Maidaniuc-Chirilă (2015b) who showed that the use of emotions as a coping strategy increased employees’ strain. The present study investigates if this coping strategy also has an impact on employees’ depressive symptoms.

**2.3. WORKPLACE BULLYING AND RESILIENCE**

Resilience was defined as being a person’s ability to bounce back after experiencing adversity with new force and showing personal growth (Ungar, 2011). In an organizational context, resilience is viewed as employees’ capacity to overcome workplace adversity without showing any psychological or mental disorder, without decreasing work performance and without losing too much time in the recovery process (Maidaniuc-Chirilă, 2015b).

Wagnild (2009) described resilient persons as being persistent, independent, having a clear scope in life and eager to constantly and positively adapt to adversity. It seems that resilience may act as a protective factor for victims of workplace bullying. Sauer (2013) investigated the mediation role of resilience on the relationship between exposure to workplace bullying and health care employees’ emotional states. The results showed that resilience mediated this relationship and that resilient nurses presented higher levels of emotional stability. This relationship was tested and confirmed by Maidaniuc-Chirilă (2015a, 2015b). The researcher showed that resilience mediated the relationship between exposure to workplace bullying and employees’ strain in that resilient employees facing acts of workplace bullying had lower levels of strain compared with those exposed employees whose resilience levels were lower.
3. OBJECTIVE AND HYPOTHESES

3.1. OBJECTIVE

• The present study aims at identifying the best multi-mediation model explaining the relationship between workplace bullying and employees’ depressive symptoms.

3.2. HYPOTHESES

• The coping strategy named focused on and venting of emotions will mediate the relationship between workplace bullying and employees’ depressive symptoms.
• Resilience will mediate the relationship between workplace bullying and employees’ depressive symptoms.

4. METHOD

4.1. PARTICIPANTS/SUBJECTS

The study was composed of 172 (114 female; 58 male) Romanian employees who completed online questionnaires (between August 2014 and January 2015) measuring workplace bullying, coping strategies, psychological resilience and depressive symptoms. Their ages ranged from 22 to 62 years (M = 33.25; SD = 8.92). Their work experience ranged from 3 to 240 months (M = 44.06; SD = 49.72) and their highest level of education included a bachelor’s degree (63), master’s degree (74) and doctoral degree (21). Their employers included public institutions (47), private institutions (47), private firms (61) and non-governmental institutions (11). Their employers varied in size: under 10 employees (37 participants), 10–40 employees (42), 41–200 employees (41), 201–1,000 employees (23), and over 1,000 employees (24).
4.2. INSTRUMENTS/APPARATUS/STIMULI/MATERIALS

The instruments measuring workplace bullying, coping strategies and depressive symptoms were translated into Romanian using the back-translation procedure. The authors of the original instruments were contacted through email in order to get the permission to use the instruments.

Measuring workplace bullying. We measured workplace bullying with the Romanian version of Einarsen, Hoel and Notelaers’ (2009) Negative Acts Questionnaire-Revised (Chirilă & Constantin, 2014b). The Negative Acts Questionnaire-Revised (NAQ-R) has 22 items referring to 22 acts of negative behaviour grouped in three dimensions (i.e., context-related bullying, person-related bullying and intimidation). The response to this questionnaire was given on a five-point Likert scale ranging from never (1) to daily (5). The Cronbach’s alpha for the entire questionnaire is $\alpha = .92$, with $\alpha = .78$ for person-related bullying, $\alpha = .80$ for context-related bullying, and $\alpha = .82$ for intimidation.

Measuring coping strategies. To measure the coping strategies employed in cases of exposure to workplace bullying, the COPE Inventory (Carver, Scheier, & Weintraub, 1989) was used. This inventory includes 15 different types of coping strategies from which only focus on and venting of emotions ($\alpha = .78$) was measured. The response was given on a four-point Likert scale ranging from “I usually don’t do this” (1) to “I usually do this” (4).

Measuring resilience. In order to measure resilience the Resilience Scale developed by Wagnild (2009) was used. This questionnaire is formed from 14 items measured on a seven-point Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (7). Cronbach’s alpha for the entire scale is $\alpha = .86$.

5. PROCEDURE

The questionnaires were placed in a specific order. The first questionnaire was the Romanian version of the Negative Acts Questionnaire-Revised; the second was the COPE Inventory measuring all coping strategies; the third was the Resilience Scale, and the fourth was the item referring to depressive symptoms.
Participants were told to answer these items in the context of being exposed to or encountering negative acts in their workplaces.

Only those employees with work experience at their present job of more than six months were selected. They were contacted through e-mail. Personal e-mails were sent to them explaining the scope of the present study. A total of 5,000 personal e-mails were sent to employees all over the country between August 2014 and January 2015 and only a total of 172 employees responded positively to the request.

6. RESULTS

Table 1. The Descriptive statistics for the independent and dependent variables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Workplace bullying</td>
<td>1.74</td>
<td>.59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Resilience</td>
<td>5.88</td>
<td>.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Focus on and venting of emotions</td>
<td>2.38</td>
<td>.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Depressive symptoms</td>
<td>1.76</td>
<td>.62</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2. The correlation matrix of the variables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>1.</th>
<th>2.</th>
<th>3.</th>
<th>4.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Workplace bullying</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Resilience</td>
<td>-1.81*</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Focus on and venting of emotions</td>
<td>.351**</td>
<td>-.280**</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Depressive symptoms</td>
<td>.228***</td>
<td>-.282**</td>
<td>.325**</td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*p < .05, **p < .01

The results presented in Table 2 show that there are significant correlations among the variables in that workplace bullying negatively and significantly correlates with resilience and positively and significantly correlates with focus on and venting of emotions and depressive symptoms. Furthermore, resilience negatively and significantly correlates with focus on and venting of emotions and depressive symptoms. Moreover, focus on and venting of emotions positively and significantly correlates with depressive symptoms.

The above correlations show that the more people are faced with workplace bullying the less resilient they are, the more focused on their emotions they are, and the more depressive symptoms they experience. Furthermore, less resilient people cope with workplace bullying by employing coping strategies centred on their emotions and they experience more depressive symptoms. Moreover, the more
people cope with adversity by employing coping strategies centred on their emotions, the more depressive they feel. These relationship can be seen in Figure 2.

![Figure 2. The multi-mediation model proposed](image)

\[ \chi^2(7) = 12.459, \ p = .086; \ NFI = .975; \ IFI = .989; \ CFI = .988; \ RMSEA = .068[.001; .127] \]

The model proposed presents good absolute and relative fit indices meaning that this model fits the data.

Table 3. Un-standardized and standardized effects

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Un-standardized and standardized effects</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>( \beta )</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Workplace bullying -&gt; focus on and venting of emotions</td>
<td>( .529^{***} )</td>
<td>( .364^{***} )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Workplace bullying -&gt; resilience</td>
<td>( -.264^{**} )</td>
<td>( -.193^{**} )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Workplace bullying -&gt; depressive symptoms</td>
<td>( .165 )</td>
<td>( .133 )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Focus on and venting of emotions -&gt; depressive symptoms</td>
<td>( .192^{**} )</td>
<td>( .225^{**} )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Resilience -&gt; depressive symptoms</td>
<td>( -.174^{**} )</td>
<td>( -.195^{**} )</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*, \( p<.05 \); **, \( p<.01 \); ***, \( p<.001 \)

As can be seen in Table 3 there are significant un-standardized and standardized direct effects among all the direct relationships except for the direct relationship between workplace bullying and depressive symptoms.

Even though the preliminary analyses (i.e., correlations) showed that there are significant relationships between workplace bullying and depressive symptoms, when introducing all the variables into the multi-mediation model the direct effect of workplace bullying and depressive symptoms is not statistically significant (\( B = .165; \ \beta = .133 \)).
The more people are faced with workplace bullying, the less resilient they are, and the more depressed they feel. Furthermore, when employees face workplace bullying acts, they concentrate on their emotions, and they feel more depressive symptoms.

Table 4. Direct and indirect effects

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Direct and Indirect effects</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>β</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Direct effects</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Workplace bullying -&gt; resilience</td>
<td>-.268</td>
<td>-.193</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Workplace bullying -&gt; focus on and venting of emotions</td>
<td>.529</td>
<td>.369</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Workplace bullying -&gt; depressive symptoms</td>
<td>.165</td>
<td>.133</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Indirect effect</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workplace bullying -&gt; depressive symptoms (i.e. Resilience and focus on and venting of emotions as mediators)</td>
<td>.148</td>
<td>-.120</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* p<.05; ** p<.01; *** p<.001

The results presented in Table 4 show that the direct effect of workplace bullying on depressive symptoms is bigger (B = -.165; β = -.133) than the indirect effect (B = -.148; β = -.120) meaning that the mediation model proposed better explains the relationship between workplace bullying and depressive symptoms through coping strategies employed by the targeted employee and by his own level of personal resilience.

The multi-mediation model proposed presents a full-mediation model having as mediators employees’ resilience and the coping strategy named focus on and venting of emotions. These two mediators fully mediated the direct relationship between workplace bullying and depressive symptoms. Not only is the direct relationship not significant (B = -.165; β = -.133) but the indirect effect is also smaller than the direct effect (B = -.148; β = -.120).

The model proposed showed that we can better understand the relationship between employees’ exposure to workplace bullying and their depressive symptoms through mediators such as resilience and the focus on and venting of emotions coping strategy. When employees are faced with workplace bullying, their levels of resilience will decrease and their focus on their own emotions will increase, but this will negatively impact on their depressive symptoms.

Workplace bullying victims whose levels of resilience are low and who tend to face workplace bullying acts by employing the coping strategy named focus on and venting of emotions will experience more depressive symptoms compared with those victims whose levels of resilience are high and who do not present a tendency for coping with workplace bullying by using focus on and venting of emotions as a
preferred coping strategy. This model shows that focus on and venting of emotions is an inefficient coping strategy because it brings on more depressive symptoms, thus acting like a risk factor. Furthermore, resilience mediated the relationship between exposure to workplace bullying and employees’ depressive symptoms in that those employees whose levels of resilience were higher had lower levels of depressive symptoms.

7. CONCLUSIONS

The present articles focused on the relationships among workplace bullying, resilience, coping strategies and Romanian employees’ depressive symptoms.

So far, the literature has showed that employees exposed to workplace bullying became less resilient (Maidaniuc-Chirilă, 2015a) and employed more passive coping strategies such as denial, avoidance, mental and behavioural disengagement, workplace absenteeism and focus on their emotions (Chirilă, 2013; Hyung-Park & DeFrank, 2010; Maidaniuc-Chirilă, 2015b; Scarpa, Haden, & Hurley, 2006). Furthermore, when faced with these negative acts in their workplaces, employees became more stressed (Maidaniuc-Chirilă, 2014; Vartia, 2001), more anxious (Salin, 2005; Zapf & Einarsen, 2010), more strained (Hyung-Park & DeFrank, 2010; Maidaniuc-Chirilă, 2015a, 2015b) and more depressed (Salin, 2005; Zapf & Einarsen, 2010).

The results of the present research confirmed the results already existing in the literature by showing that the more employees are exposed to more workplace bullying acts, the more depressive symptoms they experience. Furthermore, the results showed that, indeed, exposed employees cope with this workplace adversity by employing passive coping strategies (i.e., focus on and venting of emotions), and they become less resilient. These actions also have a negative impact on employees’ levels of depressive symptoms in that they will experience higher levels. In other words, they become more depressed.

This article shows that employing passive coping strategies (i.e., focus on and venting of emotions) is inefficient because it brings on more depressive symptoms. Furthermore, it shows that the more employees are faced with workplace bullying the less resilient they became so the more vulnerable they became. According to these results, resilience can act as a protective factor, and focus on and venting of emotions can act as a risk factor for victims of workplace bullying.
8. PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS

The present research also has a practical implication. These results can aid human resources practitioners to develop more efficient training programmes designed to develop employees’ workplace resilience by employing efficient coping strategies.

9. LIMITS OF THE PRESENT RESEARCH

The present research has also some limits in that it presents cross-sectional data and make causal assumptions. This causal relationship should be better understood with the aid of longitudinal designs (Chirilă, 2013; Kivimaki et al., 2006). The present research gathered its data with the aid of online questionnaires so that it could not control for any other variables that could interfere in these relationships. Further research should employ an experimental or quasi-experimental design in order to better clarify the relationship between workplace bullying and exposed employees’ depressive symptoms.

10. ACKNOWLEDGMENT

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REZUMAT

Studiul empiric prezentat în cadrul acestui articol propune un model de multimediere a relațiilor dintre bullying-ul la locul de muncă, strategiile de coping, reziliența și simptomele depresive ale angajaților români. Un lot de 172 angajați români au participat la acest studiu completând chestionarele referitoare la bullying-ul la locul de muncă, strategiile de coping, reziliență și simptome depresive.

Rezultatele au arătat că bullying-ul la locul de muncă corelează semnificativ cu reziliența, cu strategia de copin centrarea pe emoții și exprimarea lor și cu simptomele depresive. Mai departe, reziliența corelează semnificativ cu simptomele depresive și cu centrarea pe emoții și exprimarea lor, în timp ce aceasta din urmă corelează și cu simptomele depresive.

Modelul de multimediere propus arată că nivelul simptomelor depresive crește pe măsură ce persoana este expusă tot mai mult comportamentelor de bullying iar aceasta se centrează pe exprimarea emoțiilor, înregistrând totodată nivele tot mai scăzute ale rezilienței.

Cu alte cuvinte, cu cât este expus mai frecvent comportamentelor de bullying la locul de muncă, cu atât nivelul tău de reziliență scade, nivelul simptomelor depresive crește dacă apelezi la strategia de centrare pe emoții și exprimarea lor.

Aceste rezultate au importante implicații practice deoarece ele pot sta la baza unor programe de training eficiente menite să dezvolte reziliența angajaților expuși comportamentelor de bullying la locul lor de muncă.