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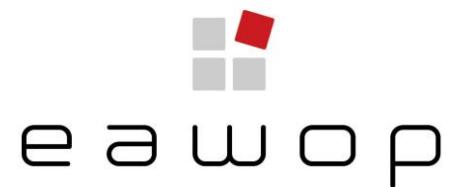


Patterns of workplace bullying involvement and its link to personality, power and social status

EAWOP Congress 2023: The future is now: The changing world of work

Symposium: Moving science on workplace bullying into the future (I)

Katowice, 2023, May 26th



Introduction

Groups involved in workplace bullying

- Workplace bullying researchers typically assume four groups of employees (e.g., Zapf & Einarsen, 2020)
 - Uninvolved
 - Victims
 - Perpetrators
 - Victim-perpetrators (Bully-victims)
- Empirical evidence supporting these four groups is lacking so far
- Strong focus on victim perspective (Einarsen et al., 2020; Gupta et al., 2020)
- Since a few years: increasing number of studies on perpetrators (e.g., Özer et al., 2022; Vranjes et al., 2021)

Introduction

Previous studies

- Some studies include both perspectives (e.g., Baillien et al., 2016; Fernández-del-Río et al., 2021; Linton & Power, 2013; Sischka et al., 2021; Vranjes et al., 2021)
 - Variable-centered approach (victimization and perpetration as separate variables)
 - Tell us little about the unique profiles of victimization and perpetration
- Some studies employed a person-centered approach (e.g., LCA) but included only victim-related indicators (e.g., Notelaers et al., 2019)
- Some older studies used the self-labelling method to identify the four groups (e.g., Matthiesen & Einarsen, 2007)
 - Establish groups that match this configuration
 - Subjective, low reliability, low information content (e.g., Nielsen et al., 2020)

Introduction

Importance of identifying workplace bullying groups

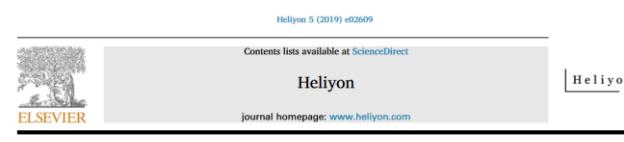
- In the workplace bullying context the concept of *bully-victims* only exists in theory
 - Bully-victim group in school bullying research showed unique relations to other variables (Chung & Lee, 2020; Cook et al., 2010)
- Variable-centered approaches have led to some debated results



The personality traits of workplace bullies are often shared by their victims: Is there a dark side to victims?

Daniel K. Linton*, Jacqueline L. Power¹

Research initiated at Brandon University, 270 18th Street, Brandon, Manitoba, Canada R7A 6A9



Research article

Workplace bullies, not their victims, score high on the Dark Triad and Extraversion, and low on Agreeableness and Honesty-Humility

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- Studies investigating “the perpetrator perspective” might miss that these employees may also suffer from workplace aggression

Study aims and research questions

Aims of the study

- Identification and investigation of different workplace bullying groups with mixture modeling (latent class analysis)
 - R1: What groups of employees (non-)involved in workplace bullying exists?
- Explore relationship to other variables (latent class structure analysis)
 - R2: Do the different groups show unique relations to other variables (i.e., personality, power, social status, well-being)?

Method

Survey design and participants

- Survey design
 - Amazon MTurk sample ($n = 1,632$)
 - Removed from analysis
 - non-employed ($n = 42$)
 - insufficient effort responding ($n = 92$)
 - missing on workplace bullying items ($n = 6$)
- Effective sample ($n = 1,492$)
 - 53.8% females, ($n = 802$)
 - Age: 19 to 77 years ($M = 40.2$, $SD = 10.7$)
 - Wide range of occupations

Method

Measures (I)

Scale	# Items	Reference	Rel. (ω)	Example item	Answer categories	
Workplace bullying exposure (WBE)	9	Notelaers et al., 2019	-	Being ignored or excluded.	1 (= <i>never</i>)	5 (= <i>daily</i>)*
Workplace bullying perpetration (WBP)	9	Notelaers et al., 2019 (adapted)	-	Ignoring or excluding others.	1 (= <i>never</i>)	5 (= <i>daily</i>)*
Power	6	Yu et al., 2019	.92	I can provide rewards to others at my own discretion.	1 (= <i>strongly disagree</i>)	7 (= <i>strongly agree</i>)
Status	6	Yu et al., 2019	.94	People look up to me because I am good at my work.	1 (= <i>strongly disagree</i>)	7 (= <i>strongly agree</i>)
Dominance	4	Alden et al., 1990	.78	I argue with other people too much.	1 (= <i>not at all</i>)	5 (= <i>very much</i>)
Relatedness	6	Longo et al., 2016	.67	I feel I'm perfectly integrated into a group.	1 (= <i>strongly disagree</i>)	7 (= <i>strongly agree</i>)
Trait aggression	12	Webster et al., 2014	.76	I have trouble controlling my temper.	1 (= <i>extremely uncharacteristic of me</i>)	5 (= <i>extremely characteristic of me</i>)

Notes. Mean scores were employed for scale scoring. * Answer categories 4 (= *weekly*) and 5 (= *daily*) were aggregated due to their low frequency and to reduce convergence problems.

Method

Measures (II)

Scale	# Items	Reference	Rel. (ω)	Example item	Answer categories	
BFI Agreeableness	4	Donnellan et al., 2006	.82	I am not really interested in others. (r)	1 (= very inaccurate)	5 (= very accurate)
BFI Conscientiousn.	4	Donnellan et al., 2006	.77	I like order.	1 (= very inaccurate)	5 (= very accurate)
BFI Extraversion	4	Donnellan et al., 2006	.86	I am the life of the party.	1 (= very inaccurate)	5 (= very accurate)
BFI Neuroticism	4	Donnellan et al., 2006	.80	I have frequent mood swings.	1 (= very inaccurate)	5 (= very accurate)
BFI Openness	4	Donnellan et al., 2006	.78	I have a vivid imagination.	1 (= very inaccurate)	5 (= very accurate)
Work-related burnout	7	Kristensen et al., 2005	.90	Is your work emotionally exhausting?	1 (= never)	5 (= always)
Vigor	3	Schaufeli et al., 2006	.91	At my job, I feel strong and vigorous.	1 (= never)	7 (= always)

Notes. Mean scores were employed for scale scoring.

Results

Latent class solution (I)

Fit indices suggested different class solutions.
Thus, 2-7 classes were inspected in greater detail.

Table 1. Latent class analysis models fit statistics.

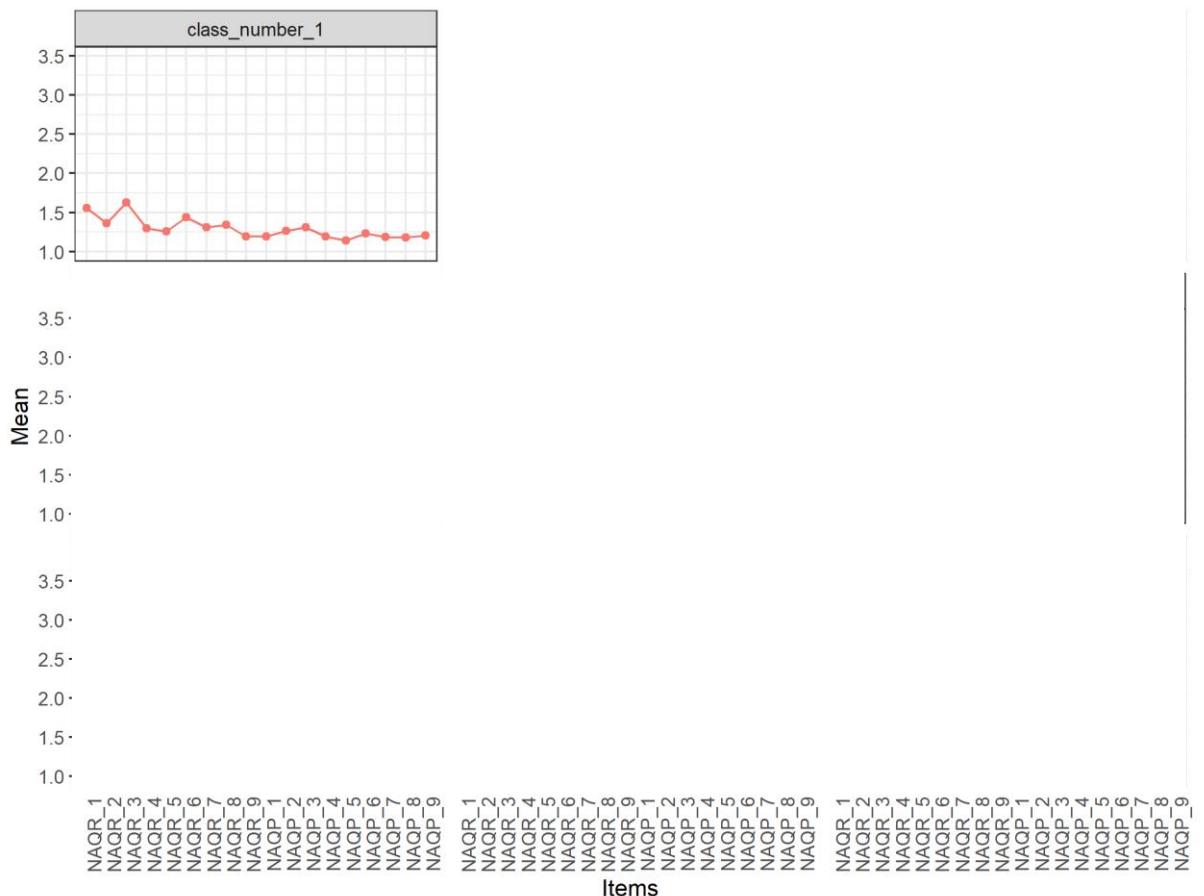
K	LL	#FP	Scaling	AIC	CAIC	BIC	SABIC	AWE	LMR-LRT (p)	BF	cmP	Entropy
1	-17499	54	1.000	35106	35110	35393	35221	35949	NA	0.000	0.000	NA
2	-14678	109	1.094	29575	29592	30154	29807	31277	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.926
3	-13974	164	1.118	28276	28317	29147	28626	30837	0.802	0.000	0.000	0.908
4	-13659	219	1.071	27756	27832	28919	28223	31176	0.829	0.000	0.000	0.917
5	-13439	274	1.139	27426	27550	28881	28010	31705	0.762	150.000	1.000	0.897
6	-13289	329	1.064	27235	27422	28981	27936	32372	0.760	150.000	0.000	0.883
7	-13171	384	1.076	27109	27376	29147	27928	33105	0.760	150.000	0.000	0.859
8	-13078	439	1.057	27033	27401	29364	27969	33888	0.762	150.000	0.000	0.863
9	-12998	494	1.058	26984	27474	29606	28037	34698	0.761	NA	0.000	0.861

Notes. K = number of classes; LL = log-likelihood; #FP = Number of free parameters; Scaling = Scaling factor associated with MLR loglikelihood estimates; AIC = Akaike Information Criterion; CAIC = Consistent AIC; BIC = Bayesian Information Criterion; SABIC = Sample-size adjusted BIC; AWE = approximate weight of evidence; BF = Bayes factor; cmP = approximate correct model probability; LMR = Adjusted Lo-Mendel-Rubin likelihood ratio test. Bolded values indicate best fit for each respective statistic.

Results

Latent class solution (II)

Figure 1. Profile plots for different class solutions.



Qualitatively different classes until 4-class solution.

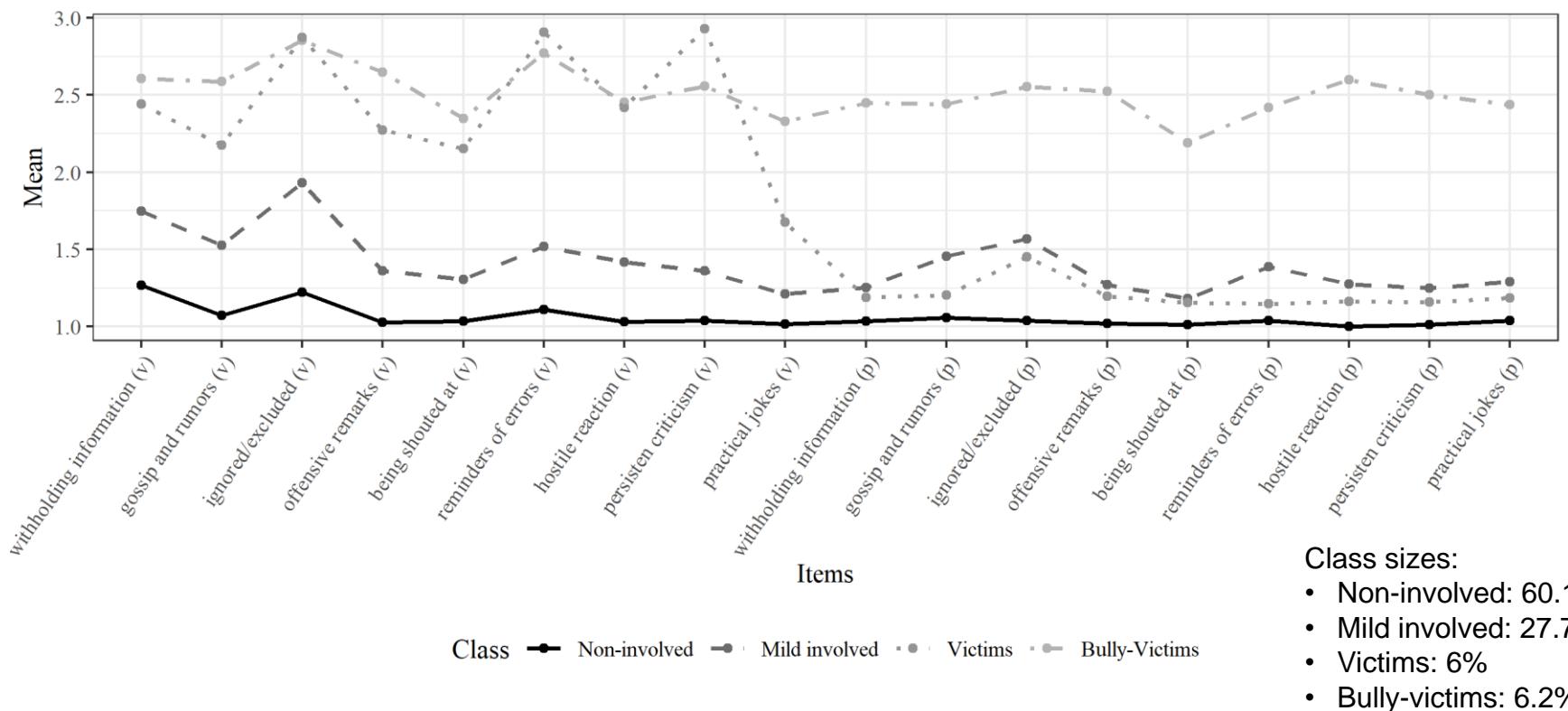
Further added classes:

- only differences in the absolute level of the indicators (quantitative differences)
- not in their shape (qualitative differences)

Results

Latent class solution (III)

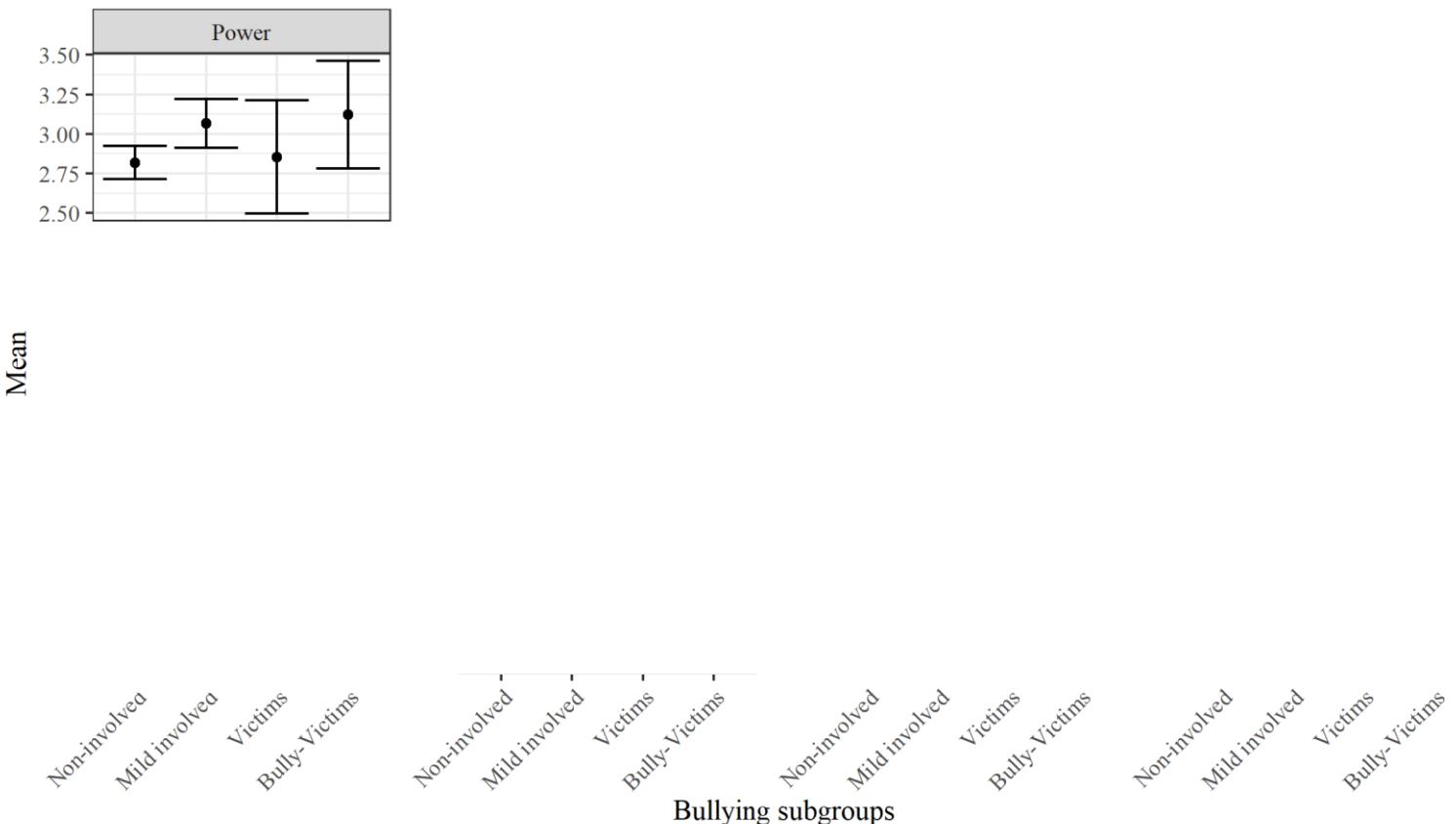
Figure 2. Profile plot of the 4-class solution.



Results

Association between latent classes and different outcomes

Figure 3. Associations between latent class membership and the outcomes.



Notes. Mean comparison with 95% confidence intervals.

Discussion

Summary & implications

- (a) Workplace bullying groups showed unique links to personality, power, social status and well-being
 - WB research should include the perpetrator perspective to get a better picture
 - Victims and bully-victims show unique personality profiles
 - The dominant victim perspective in WB research mixes two different groups
- (b) No pure perpetrator group was identified
 - Aggression always leads to a certain level of counter-aggression
→ pure perpetrators are (very) rare (Olivier et al., 2021)
 - Social desirability effect
 - Perpetrators have wrong perceptions regarding their behavior
 - Supports the theory that workplace bullying occurs due to an escalating conflict (Einarsen et al., 2020)

Discussion

Study strengths, limitations, and outlook

- Strength: Large sample size
- Limitations: Only self-reports; cross-sectional data
- Future studies:
 - *Replication, replication, replication!* of these classes (across countries, occupations, time ...)
 - Extending the nomological network (behavior, attitudes, emotions, personality...)

Thank you for your attention!

Any questions?

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