SOCIUS Working Papers

**Workplace Bullying, Power
and Organizational Politics:
A study of the Portuguese
Banking sector**

Ana Teresa Verdasca

N° 06/2011

Workplace Bullying, Power and Organizational Politics: A study of the

Portuguese Banking sector

Ana Teresa Verdasca
Phd Economic Sociology
Centre of Research in Economic Sociology
Technical University of Lisbon
Rua Miguel Lupi, 20
LISBON

This paper tries to shed light about the political dimension of workplace bullying, through the quantitative analysis of work environment factors, like perceptions of organizational politics, work overload and internal competition and the qualitative analysis of accounts of respondents, to a questionnaire launched in the Portuguese banking sector. Our sample is made up of 561 valid responses containing 64 stories of bullying episodes and, in the qualitative data, political behaviours occur associated with organizational practices, perceived as bullying, which may reinforce the connexion between political behaviours and Workplace Bullying. The organizational practices indentified were: "Being left idle", "The denying of promotion" and "Staff Appraisal for Performance". A deeper analysis of power was carried out to identify the main sources of power (reward, coercive, legitimate, expert and reference) embedded in accounts of bullying behaviours. The main sources of power identified were coercive and negative reward power. These results reinforce the previous findings about the power dimension of bullying and open new directions for future research concerning the different sources of power behind bullying behaviours.

1 – Introduction

The subject of workplace bullying has received much media and academic attention in recent years. Through different but confluent ways, in a stream of increasing awareness, managers, personnel staff, trade unions officials, worker representatives and employees have begun to focus attention upon this phenomenon (Hoel & Salin, 2003; Einarsen, Hoel, Zapf & Cooper, 2003). Whether bullying is a new issue, born from the surrounding recent socio-economic realities and labour market developments, or whether it has always been present in work situations, is debatable as are the dynamics and causation of bullying at work. Anyone in any organization can be the victim of bullying (Brodsky, 1976).

Workplace bullying (WB) has been described as a hostile and unethical communication systematically directed by one or more individuals, mainly towards one individual, who is pushed into a helpless and defenceless position by persistent actions (Leymann, 1996). These negative behaviours include verbal aggression, criticism, rumours, humiliations, i.e., in a broad sense, persistent acts that place the victim in a disadvantaged position and are used with the aim of persistently humiliating, intimidating, frightening or punishing the victim (Zapf & Einarsen, 2001). The severe outcomes related to workplace bullying and related aggressive behaviours have led a growing number of researchers to study them in UK (e.g. Hoel & Cooper, 2000; Rayner, 1997:2000), in Germany (Zapf, 1999b; Niedl, 1996), in the Nordic countries (Leymann, 1996; Vartia, 1996:2003; Einarsen & Mikkelsen, 2001) and also in other countries and continents (Keashly & Jagatic, 2003; Baron & Neuman, 1996;1998). Results from a European Survey (Thirion, Macias & Vermeylen, 2007) showed that 5% of workers in Europe report having been subjected to bullying and harassment in the workplace in 2005. Nevertheless wide variation in the reported prevalence of bullying in different European countries emerges from the data. Such differences may reflect different levels of cultural awareness and sensitivity to this phenomenon, as well as differences in actual incidence. Some researchers have even

tried to get a clearer picture of this problem by calculating the costs associated with the occurrence of bullying (Giga, Hoel & Lewis, 2008; Hoel, Einarsen & Cooper, 2003). Hence, in a report commissioned by the Dignity at Work Partnership, costs of violence/stress at work are discussed and broadly assessed, not only on the individual level (e.g. mental, psychological and economic) but also for the organizations (e.g. sickness absence, high staff turnover, productivity lost, legal expenses).

In this study, a particular emphasis will be given to the organizational and psychosocial work environment potentially related to the occurrence of bullying (Einarsen, Raknes & Matthiesen, 1994; Vartia, 1996; Leymann, 1996) and to the power element which often appears in definitions (Salin, 2003b; Hoel & Cooper, 2000; Liefooghe & Mackenzie Davey, 2001). I will take a political approach to organizations and intend to analyze the role played by political behaviours, power, conflict and internal competition in the occurrence of workplace bullying. Organizational climate is influenced by the degree of political activity found in an organization and how employees perceive and react to organizational politics in the work environment around them (Kacmar, 1997). Additionally, we want further explore the instrumental dimension of bullying behaviours. Indeed, in recent years, several researchers have emphasized the relationship between bullying and organizational changes (Hoel & Cooper, 2000; McCarthy, 1996; Sheehan, 1996; Baron & Neuman, 1996; Skogstad, Mathiesen & Einarsen, 2007), arguing that restructuring and downsizing lead to the elimination of organizational layers, thereby increasing internal competition and workload, and create a fertile ground for bullying to occur.

Thus, the main purpose of this paper is to explore the meanings of bullying behaviours in terms of power, political behaviours, internal competition and conflicts. Secondly, we want to explore in what extent workplace bullying is perceived as being an instrumental activity prosecuted in order to promote efficiency and reduce organizational costs. We will try to accomplish this through both a quantitative and qualitative methodology. Our study has been

conducted in the Portuguese banking sector, through a self-fulfilled questionnaire. At the end of the questionnaire, respondents were asked to describe events that they perceive as bullying, in order to complement quantitative data and to get additional meanings of bullying. Our aims are to find in these stories elements of bullying, power and political behaviours, "in terms of the meanings people bring to them" (Denzin and Lincoln, 2001). We also intend to analyze more deeply which elements of power (reward, coercive, legitimate, expert and reference) (French & Raven, 1959) are embedded in accounts of bullying behaviours.

2 – The Portuguese banking sector

The Portuguese banking sector is the most modern and efficient industry in the country and broadly comparable with the western European peers. From liberalization to technological innovation, many were the factors that contributed to the sector´s modernization: the impulse of new private banks, the abolishment of administrative interest rates and bank credit ceilings, a deeper connection to the European Community, the deregulation and globalization of markets, the introduction of the new information and communication technologies (ICT) in the banking activities, amongst others. To face the challenges of fierce domestic and international competition, reorganizations, restructuring, mergers and acquisitions have taken place to give financial institutions the competitive advantage they needed in the increasing competitive environment. Additionally financial and banking institutions have diversified its products and services portfolio to keep fidelity of customers (Ferreira & Barata, 2005). Currently, the Portuguese banking sector is dominated by five major banking groups, which hold about 80% of the market and control around 80% of total banking assets, indicating intense consolidation. The largest bank, Caixa Geral de Depósitos (CGD), is state-owned and the other four are private-owned. Santander Totta is controlled by Spain´s Group Santander. The other three are Millennium BCP, Banco Espírito Santo and Banco BPI.

The introduction of ICT in banking and the increased complexity of products and services supplied, in constantly mutational organizational structures, have required increasing skills and competencies from workers and have promoted the recruitment of a more sophisticated and skilled workforce and new contractual arrangements. As a result, a focus on flexibility at work emerged (increased competencies, short term contracts, temporary work, part-time work and flexible pay policies). Flexibility at work can be either a necessary prerequisite to survival in the global market or a means by which the rights of workers are eroded (Almeida, 2001). As far as part-time, temporary and subcontracted workers are concerned, such types of contingent work have been associated with increasing job insecurity (OECD, 1999). Also the intense merger activity may not only threaten job security of workers in the sector, but also lead to high levels of work-related stress, demotivation and declining organizational commitment (ILO, 2001). In a tight and precarious labour market coupled with weak collective response capacity, due to weakened union movement, banking employees face increasing difficulties to defend their rights, fearing to loose their jobs. Such factors may indirectly act as antecedents of bullying by influencing cost-benefit considerations (Björkqvist, Ősterman & Hjelt-bäck, 1994) and, therefore, management behaviour, as the risk of retaliation from targets under such considerations is likely to be reduced (Hoel & Salin, 2003).

Regarding previous empirical evidence on this particular sector of activity, it is worth to mention the findings of Maciel, Cavalcante & Matos (2007), in a sample of Brazilian banking employees (n=2.609). In this study, 7,9% of respondents have been the target of bullying, at least once a week in the last 6 months[1], being the most frequent bullying behaviors "You are exposed to an unmanageable workload", "Your work damages your mental and/or physical health" and "You are given confusing or unclear guidelines". In another study, carried by Yilmaz & Soydas (2006), in a sample of 200 Turkish banking employees, 15,9% of respondents have been victims of bullying according to the definition presented, during the last 6 months[2]. In this study the most frequent bullying behaviours reported were:"You are ordered to do work

---

[1] This percentage increases to
[2] This incidence rate increases to 33,89%, if we consider the previous working life.

clearly below your level of competence" and "Someone withholding information which affects your performance", that is behaviours directly related to the work performed. Finally, Almeida (2003), in a sample of 384 banking employees, has found an incidence rate of 56,3% during previous working life. According to the findings presented in this study, victims of bullying referred that "frequently" or "occasionally" the Head of department did not promoted them deliberately", 47,1% referred that "frequently" or "occasionally" they did not dare to defend their rights anymore (for example, being paid for overtime or take sick leave), 76,4% referred that "frequently" or "occasionally" they were given constantly new tasks and 4,7% referred that they were given unreasonable or unnecessary tasks.

3 – Workplace bullying, power and organizational politics

3.1 - Instrumentality and bullying

In the European literature about workplace bullying, both work environmental factors and individual factors, related to the personality of the victim or the bully, have been associated with the emergence of bullying situations. Some researchers have argued that the environmental and work conditions are the fundamental causes of bullying, being the characteristics of the victim irrelevant (Leymann, 1996). The environmental view on the antecedents of workplace bullying emphasizes the role played by contextual factors and features of leadership as its causes. Bullying is seen as a symptom of organizational dysfunction. Empirical evidence has shown that the onset of bullying situations was related to role conflicts, low work control, heavy workload, low satisfaction with leadership, poor social climate, conflicts in the work unit and organizational restructuring or changes of management (Einarsen, Raknes & Matthiesen, 1994; Vartia, 1996; Baron & Neuman, 1996; Hoel & Cooper, 2000). Victims of bullying have reported that their superiors are autocratic and the environment competitive, strained and stressful (O´Moore, Seigne, McGuire & Smith, 1998).

Theoretically, at least two frameworks can explain the role of environmental factors as antecedents of bullying: the frustration-aggression theory (Berkovitz, 1989) and the social-interaction approach (Felson & Tedeschi, 1993). The first theory emphasizes the role of external circumstances in causing aggression and negative affect; the second one maintains that stressful events and environments indirectly affect aggression through their effect on the victim's behaviour. Stressful events and environments may cause people to behave in ways that make others to attack them. In a bullying situation, a person distressed by an unsatisfactory or stressful work situation may annoy others and, for this reason, provoke aggressive or hostile behaviour. Despite these theories differ as to subjacent mechanisms through which the aggressive behaviour emerges, both argue that it assumes the nature of a biological stimulus or urge. That's saying, the factor that bursts the aggressive act is of biological nature and does not constitute a reward or goal achieved through the aggressive behaviour. Alternatively, the rational choice perspective assumes that aggressive behaviour has a purpose or goal. People harm others if it will help them achieve some outcome that they value (the reward) and if the costs are not too high. From this perspective all aggression is instrumental behaviour. Notwithstanding, rationality is bounded and actors may be in a state of mind in which they do not even consider the costs at any time. But, the behaviour is still goal-oriented and the actor is still making decisions (Felson, 2006).

Much of the work on adult and workplace bullying has revealed that bullying behaviour does appear to have a strong instrumental component. Correlations have been found between bullying and insufficient work control and high levels of role conflict (Einarsen et al., 1994). This implies that bullies may see their activities as maintaining control over their colleagues or staff. Therefore as instrumental aggression is usually used to established or maintain some form of power over others (Tedeschi, 1983), it appears likely that bullying behaviour can be understood instrumentally. For this reason it can be argued that, for some managers, the use of bullying tactics to achieve organizational goals is simply perceived as a mean to an end. The use of bullying to achieve some goal indicates the extent to which bullying behaviour can be seen as an instrumental activity (Lawrence. 2001).

At the individual level, there are several instances where it might be individually "rational" to bully a colleague or a subordinate, namely: internal competition, a politicized climate and performance related reward systems (Salin, 2003b; Vartia, 1996). Lee (2002) explores this issue by demonstrating how workplace bullying may be played out through the experiences of staff appraisal, the denial of promotion and performance related pay awards and, sometimes by driving workers out of their jobs. Otherwise, Liefooghe & MacKenzie Davey (2001) argued that, in a critical sense, bullying could be attributed to organizations and its practices. These authors refer that employees use this term to voice their discontent regarding employee-employer relationship in the organization. As such, globalization, work intensification and new management practices may actually be at the heart of this so-called "Organizational bullying". D´Cruz & Noronha (2009), explored further the concept of organizational bullying by defining it as: "the routine subjugation, both covert and overt, of employees by contextual, structural and process-related elements of organizational design, which are implemented as required by supervisors and managers". Organizational policies, practices, structures, technology, control and leadership styles coalesce to subjugate employees, ensuring their deference to organizational expectations.

3.2 - Organizational politics and bullying

The gradually increasing disappointment with the traditional rational approach to organizations has led to a growing interest in the search for alternative organizational models (Drory, 1993). The consensus among contemporary researchers is that there are severe limitations to the application of the rationality principle in organizations. Such limitations are due to the individual need for power, conflicting interests and competition for limited resources. These limitations are better accounted for within the framework of Organizational Politics, which has been largely accepted as a key concept in understanding organizations. Some authors have suggested the political model as an alternative to the traditional approach (Narayanan and Fahey, 1982; Sunesson, 1985). They argued that, in reality, organizational decisions reflect a

process of power struggle among conflicting individuals and groups, attempting to further their own self-serving goals. As such, workplace bullying could be understood as a political behaviour, emerging as a "rational choice" to improve one´s own position, by sabotaging the performance of others or by getting ride of persons considered threats or burdens. For instance, Salin (2003b) found positive association between workplace bullying and perceptions of organizational politics. Also, Vartia (1996) found that at bullying workplaces the atmosphere was often experienced as strained and competitive, with everyone pursuing their own interests.

3.3 - Power and Bullying

Despite no general agreements exists regarding a definition of workplace bullying, power has always been regarded as a core element of the concept. Power has been understood in relative terms, as an imbalance or asymmetry of power between the perpetrator of the negative behaviours and the target.(Einarsen, 1996). The power imbalance here doesn´t refer strictly to formal power differences or to situations of vertical aggression between supervisors and subordinates, but may include also informal power differences or other individual, situational or contextual factors (Leymann, 1996; Vartia, 1996). That's saying, informal power sources, like personal contacts, network of organizational relationships, organizational standing or expertise knowledge, are also valuable references points for the occurrence of bullying (Hoel, Rayner & Cooper, 1999; Hoel & Cooper, 2000). Despite never explicit from the items included in questionnaires, the general view that "bullying is a bad thing" has implicit that the power used in bullying instances is illegitimate power, as opposed to the power that would be regarded as legitimate, or the prerogative to manage and to get things done (Liefooghe & MacKenzie Davey, 2001).

An appropriate approach of workplace bullying has to include a deeper analysis of power and techniques of influence, through which the perpetrator exercises its power in order to restrict the

behaviour of the victim, affecting its position and even his integrity. Hence, it is important to master the particularities of each source of power in order to be able to delineate strategies to counteract successfully the behaviour of the aggressor. Power can be defined as "A has power over B to the extent that he can get B to do something that B would not do otherwise" (Dahl, 1957). From this concept we can extract three core elements related to the process of workplace bullying. Thus, in first place who owns the power has a ***potential:*** power doesn't have to be exercised to exist. Power is the ability to influence others. To have power means that one has the ability to restrict the resources of the other part but it doesn´t mean that effectively he restricts it. Power, as a potential, tends to maintain a steady equilibrium between the two parties despite, in bullying situations, the power, as a potential, is almost equivalent to the exercise of power, given that the perception of perpetrator power inhibits the victim to react in a effective way. In second place, there is a ***dependency*** relationship between the parties, because of the perpetrator control over the resources the victim needs. Lastly, the victim owns, at least in the beginning of the process, a ***given span of control***. In reality, what happens is that, given the subtle nature of the behaviours, the victim only recognizes the situation when is already too late, suffering already of distress and negative consequences with the process. From the three elements above mentioned, the one most relevant in bullying situations is the dependency between the victim and the perpetrator given his control over the resources the victim needs.

In this context, it is important to do a reference to the sources of power, elaborated from the study of influence process (French & Raven, 1959). These authors distinguish five sources of power: Coercive, Legitimate, Reward, Expert and Referent. *Coercive Power* is based on fear of negative consequences associated with disobeying rules or not complying with the norms of conduit. The ultimate goal of coercion is compliance. This kind of power is exercised through punitive sanctions: the power to dismiss, the power to act disciplinarily against an employee, though it may also be exercised more subtlety through critics to performance, assigning unpleasant tasks or exclusion from the social group. French & Raven (1959) state that "other forms of power can also be used in coercive ways, such as when reward or expertise power is

withheld or referent power is used to threaten social exclusion". In bullying situations, coercive power may involve behaviours like: ""Hints or signals from others that you should quit"; "Being left idle";"Persistent criticism of your work and effort";"Systematically being required to carry out tasks which clearly fall outside your job description (e.g. private errands)":"Being excluded from social events". *Legitimate Power* results from the formal organizational standing, conferring its owner the authority to make decisions affecting the subordinates. Legitimate power is typically based on one´s role. The effective exercise of legitimate power depends on its acceptance from subordinates. People obey the person holding this power solely based on their position or title rather than the person specifically as a leader. Rewarding and Punishing subordinates is generally seen as a legitimate part of the formal or appointed leadership role and most managerial positions carry with them some degree of expected reward and punishment. In bullying situations this kind of power can be exercised through: "You are given tasks with unreasonable or impossible targets or deadlines";"Key areas of responsibility are removed or replaced with trivial or meaningless tasks"; "Your work is excessively monitored"; "You are exposed to an unmanageable workload". *Reward Power* occurs when someone has control over resources that the other needs or values. For supervisors in an organizational setting is the ability to present subordinates with outcomes that are valued in a positive manner. This power is based on the idea that people are more prone to do things and to do them well when we are getting something out of it. The most popular forms of reward power are offering raises, promotions or simply compliments. It could be manifested negatively trough the following behaviours: ""Somebody causes you economic or material damages"; "Your opinions and views are ignored" "You are systematically required to perform tasks to carry out tasks which clearly fall outside your job description". *Referent Power* is an informal power source resulting from one being admired and respected. This power is strong enough so that the power holder is often looked up to as a role model, deriving the power from one having an overall likability leading people who strongly identify with them. The person who owns this power has usually a lot of influence. This power could be negatively exercised through behaviours like: "Being ignored or excluded or being "sent to Coventry""; "Spreading of gossip and rumours about you"; "You are

excluded from social events". *Expert Power* results from the access or control over vital information for the organization or for people working in it; is the ability to administer to another information, knowledge or expertise. This source of power is not exclusive to management but is also owned by people in key positions in the informational flow of information inside the organization. In a bullying situation it could be manifested negatively through the following behaviours: "Someone withholding information that affects your performance"; "Being ordered to do work below your level of competence".

4 - Methodology

4.1 - Instruments

In this study workplace bullying was measured by using two complementary strategies. First, respondents were asked how often they have experienced a set of 38 negative and potentially harassing acts within the past 12 months; secondly, respondents were introduced to a definition of bullying, based on prior research (Einarsen & Skogstad, 1996; Einarsen et al, 2003):

> *Bullying consists of repeated and persistent <u>negative political behaviours</u>, including harassing, offending, socially excluding, towards one or more individual, involving a perceived power imbalance and affecting someone's work tasks or social work environment. Bullying is an escalating conflict process in the course of which the target of the aggressive behaviours finds it difficult to defend him (her) self and ends up in an inferior position. A conflict cannot be called bullying if the incident is an isolated event or if the two parties have approximately equal strength.*

This definition emphasizes the negative, persistent and long-term nature of the bullying experience and ads up to it the hypothetical political nature of the behaviours.

For those considering themselves bullied there were follow-up questions regarding the perpetrator(s) and the duration of bullying, mental or physical consequences of being bullied, absenteeism and losses of productivity. Coping strategies employed by targets were also included, the majority of them being taken out from the Unison (1997: 2002) and the UMIST (2000) studies. Finally, respondents were asked about their view on the significance of the subject to the existing unions in the banking sector and to the society, in general. The scale used to measure Workplace Bullying was constructed primarily drawing on the NAQ – R (Negative Acts Questionnaire-Revised) (Hoel, Cooper and Faragher, 2001) and LIPT (Leymann Inventory of Psychological Terrorization) (Leymann, 1990b), with some additional items related to the Portuguese banking sector.

Political climate at work was measured with the Perceptions of Organizational Politics Scale (Kacmar & Ferris, 1991), consisting of 12 items. Responses were rated on a Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (strongly agree) to 5 (strongly disagree). The degree of internal competition was measured with 5 items selected from literature review and work overload was measured with five items taken from Reichel and Neuman (1993). Respndents were asked to rate the statements on a Lickert-type scale, ranging from 1 (Never) to 5 (Always). The general climate at work was measured by asking respondents a single question with five fixed response choices (strained and competitive, encouraging and supportive, prejudiced and clinging to old ways, easy going and pleasant to work with, quarrel-some and sullen); The way of solving conflicts at work and differences of opinion were also measured by asking respondents to choose one alternative from 5 fixed responses presented to them (respectively, the items were taken from Björkqvist & Ősterman (1992) and from Vartia (1996)).

4.2 - Sample

Our sample has been collected through a snow-ball process and we collected 561 valid responses containing 64 stories of bullying episodes. It consists of 65,6% men and 34,4%

15

women, being the mean age 42 years old. The majority is post-graduated (53,1%) and 48,5% are technical staff.

5- Results

5.1 – Quantitative data analysis

We will first present the quantitative results of this study, regarding incidence levels, most frequent bullying behaviours, political behaviours, internal competition and stress, or work overload. During the past 12 months, 25% of these 64 respondents perceived themselves as being frequently bullied and 50% as being occasionally bullied. From those, 12,5% left their job as a result and 65,6% have witnessed bullying situations at work. The most frequent bullying behaviours found in this sample were, by decreasing order of frequency, "Having your opinions or views ignored" (69,7%), "Being exposed to an unmanageable workload" (57,6%) and thirdly "Excessive monitoring of your work" (54,5%), for frequent bullied targets.

Regarding the emergence of conflicts at work, 32,8% of respondents referred that "there are quite harsh conflicts and it appears difficult to find a solution" and 32,8% referred that "there are some conflicts, but solutions are usually found", what seems contradictory. However, if we analyze simultaneously the "way to settle differences at work", we find that 29,7% of respondents argue that "Who has authority takes advantage of one´s position" comparing to only 18,8% saying that "People talk over the matter and negotiate", what seems to preclude a strained work environment. This fact is confirmed by 45,3% of respondents who state that the general climate at work is "strained and competitive". As far as political behaviours are concerned, we have 51, 6% of respondents referring that "Some build up themselves by tearing others down", 45,3% referring that "Policy changes help only a few", 37,5% referring that "Favouritism, not merit, gets people ahead" and 34,4% referring that "Don´t speak up for fear of retaliation", which indicates a high frequency of political behaviours in the work environment.

16

At the beginning of this paper, it was suggested that there is a positive relationship between a high degree of organizational politics and bullying. As shown below, the results suggest the existence of a positive statistically significant relationship between the perception of political behaviours and workplace bullying; there is also a positive and statistically significant relationship between a high work load and the perception of being the target of workplace bullying. Regarding internal competition, a positive statistically significant relationship was found for victims of bullying according to the definition presented.

(Take in Table 1)

Additionally, we will look for statistical significant differences between victims of bullying, non-victims and observers, according to the subjective perceptions of workplace bullying (definition) and also according to the mean level of bullying behaviours (objective criterion). In order to verify the existence of differences in the mean level of perceived organizational politics between victims and non-victims, according to the subjective perception, a t-test was performed. The differences between the two groups (3,475 versus 3,084, respectively) were statistically significant (t=-7,846; df=559; $p<0,001$). The same procedure was carried on for victims and non-victims according to the objective criterion of measuring workplace bullying and, once again, the differences in the mean level of perceived organizational politics for victims and non-victims (3,228 versus 2,965) were statistically significant (t=-3,146; df=559; $p<0,002$). Finally, this analysis was repeated for observers and non-observers (nor victims) of workplace bullying. The differences between the two groups (3,493 versus 3,116, respectively) were statistically significant ((t=-6,869; df=559; $p<0,001$). Thus, these results let us to conclude that there is a positive relationship between a high degree of organizational politics and workplace bullying.

Regarding work overload, there is also positive statistically significant relationship between work overload and workplace bullying. Once again, we will look for statistical significant differences in the mean level of work overload between observers, victims of bullying and non-victims, according to the subjective perceptions of workplace bullying (definition) and also according to the mean level of bullying behaviours (objective criterion). The differences between the two groups (3,343 versus 2,936), victims and non victims according to the subjective perception of being the target of workplace bullying, were statistically significant (t=-5,715; df=559; p<0,0001). The same was verified when used the objective criterion for classifying victims and non victims; thus the differences regarding the mean level of work overload (3, 0887 versus 2,784) were statistically significant (t=-2,637; df=559; p<0,009). Finally, concerning observers of bullying, we found that the differences between the two groups (3,458 versus 2, 9395) were statistically significant (t=-6,747; df=559; p<0,0001).

Lastly, regarding internal competition, we looked for statistically significant differences between victims, non victims, according to the subjective perception and to the objective criterion, and observers. The differences in the mean level of internal competition were statistically significant only for victims of bullying, according to the definition presented; for the other groups, the differences in the mean level were not statistically significant.

The data let us conclude that the occurrence of political behaviours, a high workload and internal competition are factors which contribute to the occurrence of workplace bullying, in a strained and competitive work environment. Hence, according to these results it seems that the work environment studied is prone to the emergence of workplace bullying. In order to further study the relationship between these variables and bullying, giving a special attention to political behaviours, an analysis of respondents' accounts of bullying situations will be carried out.

5.2– Qualitative data analysis

The focus is on accounts by employees. The data presented here is restricted to the passages which highlight examples of bullying, political behaviors and organizational practices perceived as bullying. The results are based on three main themes that emerged from a discursive analysis of results (political behaviours perceived as bullying, bullying behaviours perceived as instrumental and organizational practices, such as performance appraisals and denying of promotion, framed as bullying by employees). The accounts will be presented according to the frequency of the political behaviours identified.

5.2.1 – Political behaviours perceived as bullying

The most frequent political behaviours found, by order of priority, were: "Influential groups, no one crosses", "Don´t speak up for fear of retaliation", "Some build up themselves by tearing others down" and "Favoritism, not merit gets people ahead". We will give now specific examples of incidents regarded as bullying by employees and that have also a political dimension:

1) "**Influential groups, no one crosses"**

M1: "The bullying situation I will go to write down has happened in the organization I currently work in, but in another Department. I had recently joined the organization and <u>my Supervisor, started to feel left behind in</u> some issues which he didn´t master; that made him <u>reacting aggressively against me</u>, during discussions related to theses subjects. Later on, he has even <u>physically threatened me,</u> due to my intervening stance, also because I put up some issues, regarding some colleagues of mine, who were also bullied. <u>Despite his behavior, he never succeeded in letting me down.</u>

Some years later, I was victimized by an erroneous interpretation of the Code of Conduct and <u>I was refused a promotion based on merit</u>. I went to the Workers Representative and I was told that the issued could be solved in favor of me: When I confronted my Director, he <u>reacted aggressively</u> till the point of <u>threaten to retaliate through approaching Middle Management</u>".

<div align="right">(Male, Graduate, Clerical)</div>

Besides the political behaviour above identified the following behaviour "Some build up themselves by tearing others down" is also present in this account. In terms of bullying behaviours: **"**Intimidating behaviour such as finger pointing, invasion of personal space shoving, blocking / baring your way" and "Threats of violence or Physical abuse" were identified. In this account bullying is perceived as an interpersonal issue, between a supervisor and an employee, being the denying of promotion perceived as bullying. Internal competition and the instrumental dimension of bullying are also perceived by the employee when he states, respectively: "…**my supervisor started to feel left behind in some issues**…" and "**Despite his behavior, he never succeeded in letting me down."** The coercive dimension of power is also an element of bullying as perceived by the employee, when he states: "…**threaten to retaliate through approaching Middle Management."**. The aggressive behaviors are overt and directed to a specific target.

2) Don´t speak up for fear of retaliation

This behaviour is the second most frequent political behaviour**,** identified in the following accounts:

M2: "The Director of my Department boycotted I system I´ve elaborated in favour of another one acquired outside; my colleagues, despite not agreeing, <u>have been publicly threatened to be target of disciplinary sanctions</u> in case they were caught using the old system"

<div align="right">(Male, Graduate,Supervisor)</div>

and:

M3: "Some fellow workers have been and still <u>are persecuted</u> for political reasons, with negative consequences for career advancement purposes. This situation has started 4 years ago and resulted in the <u>"racking" of a manager, in a dismissal of a colleague and also in disciplinary procedures</u> moved against another two colleagues".

<div align="right">(Male, Graduate, Technical Staff-Senior)</div>

The following bullying behaviours: "You are left idle"; "Insulting comments or behaviour with reference to your religion or political convictions" are also implicit in this account. Additionally, these examples of bullying situations let us see, once again, the coercive nature of power behind bullying, namely through the use of disciplinary procedures as coercion. In theses accounts bullying is perceived as an organizational issue, enacted to pursue the achievement of organizational goals. The bullying behaviours are overt, direct and aggressive.

3) "Some build up by tearing others down"

M4: "The main bullying situation I has been involved in was <u>humilliation and making fun</u> of myself as a way <u>to tear me down and to demotivate me</u>.

Nowadays, I feel stronger, and if it happened again I would defend myself and pay in the same coin. Sometimes, <u>people humilliate or make fun of others as a way of acquiring power</u> and stepping on them for career advancement purposes. This is a serious issue and today I would not allow it to happen again".

(Male, Graduate, Technical Staff-Junior)

M5: "There are meetings where people are <u>insulted, threatened</u> of transference to another Department and of loosing the annual bonus, if they don´t achieve the goals defined. There are even situations of <u>crying and dressing down</u> workers publicly".

(Male, UnderGraduate, Middle Manager)

In theses accounts, besides the political behaviour above mentioned, we identify the following bullying behaviour: "Insulting or offensive remarks about your person (eg., habits and background) or your private life" and "Being shouted at or being the target of spontaneous anger or rage", "Threats of making your life difficult, e.g. overtime, night work, unpopular tasks", "Being moved or transferred against your will", "Somebody causes you economic or material damages". The employee clearly perceives the behaviours as instrumental in order to ensure compliance and achieve the desired goals. Additionally he refers consequences of bullying. "…**to tear me down and to demotivate me."** Bullying is perceived both as interpersonal and as an organizational practice. The bullying behaviours identified are clearly aggression overt, direct and active. In terms of sources of power, we have coercive power and negative reward power, both instrumentally enacted to ensure compliance and the achievement of goals.

5.2.2 – Organizational practices perceived as bullying

1) Stay at work after timetable (and not being paid for overtime)

M6: "The Director usually stood at work until late in the evening, convoking the employees to meeting, for instance, at 11p.m., <u>forcing them to stay at work after the time-schedule (16:30)</u>. The same happened during weekends, when employees were called together a meeting and <u>not allowed to be absent</u>, in any circumstance, risking to be put aside Usually, <u>supervisors stay at work until late at night expressly to force the same behavior from workers</u>".

(Male, Graduate, Supervisor)

M7: "All the employees are obliged to work after their time schedule because normally the branches function just with the <u>minimal resources in terms of Human Resources.</u> They have to work after their standard time-schedule without being paid for overtime".

(Male, Undergraduate, Technical Staff Senior)

In the accounts above, employees find the practice of overtime, in order to achieve targets, a bullying practice. Overtime is referred in impersonal terms, directed to all employees as a result of an organizational system and not as an interpersonal issue. The lack of negotiation and the forced compliance are regarded as bullying; workers also perceive bullying as a "rent-seeking strategy", namely in the second account. Thus, the achievement of targets dehumanizes and depersonalizes the work experience, not leaving employees any degree of freedom to behave differently from expected.

2) Denying of promotion

This practice is evident in the following accounts:

M8: "I assisted to the destruction of work documents concerning overtime and, also, to the overtime time records. <u>I was told that it was better, regarding my own interests, not to speak up.</u> I spoke up and, as a result, I think, did not get a promotion from then on".

<div align="right">(Male, Graduate, Technical Staff Senior)</div>

And:

F1: "There are promotions to the "Yes man", with no merit"

<div align="right">(Female, Post-Graduate, Technical Staff Senior)</div>

And:

F2: "In the staff appraisal performance I was passed over in favour of colleagues who were close to some Board´s members"

<div align="right">(Female, Post-Graduate, Technical Staff Junior)</div>

Here, the denying of promotion is also perceived as bullying, not in interpersonal terms but has an organizational practice.

3) Being left idle

F3: "I have been a bank employee for 24 years; three years ago my access to the internal support system was blocked (without being given notice). I was wondering if that happened because of having been on a sick leave for 5 years, being appointed for early retirement As the proposal I got was just 60% of my salary, I could not afford all my expenses, and I had to refuse. From then on I have no tasks assigned, being completely idle. Should not be condemned this organizational behavior? I am 47 years, I have been already the Sub-Director of the branch. I was "bestial" and now I am a beast".

(Female, Undergraduate, Clerical)

The bullying behaviours identified in this account were: "Someone withholding information which affects your performance", "You are left idle", "Pressure not to claim something which by right you are entitled to (e.g. sick leave, holiday entitlement, travel expenses and so on)".

And:

M10: "A colleague of mine is idle for 3 years; I mean no work tasks assigned at all".

(Male, Post-graduate, technical Staff Senior)

And:

M11: "I was left idle in my office, without phone and no work tasks assigned for a year, in order to force me to retire"

This situation damaged my health, mainly psychologically, and I had to seek help from a psychiatrist, In the end I moved a legal procedure against my employer, helped by the Union. The same happened to several colleagues of mine"

(Male, Graduate, Middle Management)

In these accounts bullying is regarded as an instrumental behaviour, at the organizational level, being the removal of work tasks, or "Being left idle", a way of removing employees identity in order to force them to leave.

4) Staff Performance Appraisal

F4: The employee doesn´t fit the demands of the work tasks assigned (Unsatisfactory)

Appraisal for performance: Reasons appointed: Due to her psychological profile e uneasiness in social relationships at work, the way she deals with clients is inoperative. She doesn´t meet the characteristics needed to deal with clients. May be due to her prolonged absence from and the reasons that caused it, She has trouble in dealing with the day-to-day pressures inherent to a commercial activity. These factors may it unreasonable to keep her in the current duties attending also to her complete recovering process.

Answer from employee: I do not agree to this performance appraisal; I will present a document containing the specific reasons, after discussing the matters with my personal lawyer.

(Female, Post-Graduate, Technical Staff Senior)

Another example follows:

M12: In October / November 2005, I was informed about my performance appraisal by my Supervisor, concerning the current year. I was told that my rank in the appraisal performance was really good.(94%), but they were not willing to let me know the assumptions of the appraisal.

When I come to know the assumptions, I realized that I was classified in a range from 0 – 200%. I was immediately forced to sign the form, what I didn´t do. As a result I got offensive remarks from my Supervisor. As I recorded all the conversation I was able to write it down and to make a grievance to HRM, refuting aa the allegations made in my performance appraisal.

(Male, UnderGraduate, Supervisor)

These are clearly examples of how the staff appraisal for performance is a key event in which line managers bully subordinates. Both the employees interpret the situations as bullying, due to the misuse of subjective psychological characteristics and unfair low markings for performance appraisal issues.

Organizational politics involves intentional acts of influence to enhance or protect the self-interest of individuals and groups. Deliberately improving, or aiming to improve one´s own position through bullying or harassment can be seen as negative examples of organizational politics, since they have negative effects on both job satisfaction and physical and psychological health of victims of these behaviours. Organizational politics seem to flourish in hectic and strained work environments and where opportunities for career advancement are limited. In this study, the quantitative results revealed a positive relationship between a high degree of perceived organizational politics and bullying and also a positive relation between a high degree of internal competition and bullying. Additionally, 45, 3% of respondents classified their work environment as "strained and competitive", 32,8% referred that there are quite harsh conflicts at work and 29,7%% of respondents argue that "Who has authority takes advantage of its own position". Thus it seems that bullying thrives in competitive and hectic work environments where, also, organizational politics find the ideal conditions to flourish. This means that bullying is more frequent in these environments, as supported by previous studies. In a finish study (Vartia, 1996), bullying has also been associated with a strained and competitive climate at work, with everybody pursuing their own interests. Regarding conflicts at work, they have been seen as one of the main causes associated with the occurrence of workplace bullying, indeed, Vartia(1996) found that solving conflicts by taking advantage of one´s position of authority was positively related to the occurrence of workplace bullying. Additionally, according to Hauge et al. (2007), interpersonal conflicts were revealed as one of the strongest predictors of workplace bullying.

Also, in line with Salin (2003), the written stories collected also showed that bullying has a political and instrumental dimension and is seen as a deliberate attempt to drive workers out of their jobs. As such, bullying could be seen as a deliberate strategy to improve organizational efficiency by getting rid of people considered as threats or burdens.

The short stories written down by respondents reveal both examples of bullying as an interpersonal issue and as an organizational practice, while showing an ambiguous notion of the concept. Thus, through the accounts made, we can infer that in this particular work environment there is an ambiguous notion of bullying, being sometimes a negative behaviour enacted through the aggressive and autocratic attitudes of line managers and other times subtle embedded in staff appraisal for performance. Also, according to Liefooghe (2001), in a study carried on in a UK High Street Bank, there isn't also an homogeneous concept of bullying at work. In this study, despite showing awareness of bullying as an interpersonal phenomenon, employees give examples of organizational practices which constitute bullying for them (e.g. the denying of promotion as a way of getting compliance, the practice of staying at work long after timetable, being overtime not paid) to voice their discontent with employer – employee relationship. The routine subjugation of employees by organizational practices may, in itself, be seen to constitute bullying. "Being left idle" is the most remarkable example of bullying as an organizational practice. This may be specific of the banking sector, as in previous studies this behaviour did not draw attention of researchers.. Here, it seems to reveal the extent to which bullying can be used as a policy, being the removal of professional identity a tactic to force workers out of the workplace.

One interpretation of employees accounts is that neo-taylorist developments, work intensification, new job design and new management practices may be the most important reason for labeling the organization as the bully (Liefooghe & MacKenzie Davey, 2001). The annual staff appraisal for performance related pay and promotion is clearly a key event in which Bank managers bully subordinates. These are examples of how WB is currently conceptualized. Line managers are using appraisal for performance to try to keep people in their places as subordinates. Thus, the changing nature of work and management practices have meant extended degree of autocratic management rather than workers empowerment. In terms of power we have seen, through the analysis of the short stories, that bullying is mainly enacted through coercive measures, namely disciplinary procedures, and negative reward power, through performance related pay and promotions policies. This issue should be further explored as power is a core element of bullying.

Almeida, P.P. (2001). *"1º Diagnóstico à situação contratual e expectativas dos Bancários Portugueses",* Sindicato dos Bancários do Sul e Ilhas, ISCTE. Oeiras. Celta Editora.

Almeida, P.P. (2003). *O Assédio Moral no sector bancário*, Relatório de Pesquisa para o IDICT, Lisboa, Ministério do Trabalho e da Solidariedade Social.

Baron, R.A., & Neuman, J.H. (1996). Workplace violence and workplace aggression: Evidence on their relative frequency and potential causes, *Aggressive Behaviour, 22*, 161-173.

Baron, R.A. & Neuman, J.H. (1998). Workplace Agression – The iceberg beneath the tip of workplace violence: Evidence on its forms, Frequency and Targets. *Public Administration Quarterly*, *21*, 446-464.

Berkowitz, L. (1989). The Frustration-Aggression hypothesis: An Examination and Reformulation. *Psychological Bulletin*, *106*, 59–73.

Bjorkqvist, K., Osterman & Hjelt-Back (1994). Aggression among university Employees, *Aggressive Behaviour*, *20*, 173 -184.

Brodsky, C.M., (1976). *The Harassed Worker*, Toronto, Lexington Books, DC Heath & Company.

Dahl, R. (1957). The concept of power. *Behavioural Science*, *2*, 201-215.

D'Cruz, P., & Noronha, E. (2009). Experiencing depersonalised bullying: A study of Indian call centre agents. *Work Organisation, Labour and Globalisation,* 3 (1), pp.26-46.

Denzin, N & Lincoln, (2001). *Handbook of Qualitative research.* 2nd Edition. Thousand Oaks. Sage Publications.

Drory, A. (1993). Perceived political climate and job attitudes. *Organization Studies, 14*, 59-71.

Einärsen, S., Raknes, B. & Mattiensen , S. (1994). Bullying and harassment at work and their relationship to work environment quality: an exploratory study, *European Journal of Work and Organizational Psycholo*gy, *4 (4),* 381-401.

Einärsen, S & Skogstad, A. (1996).Bullying at work: Epidemiological Findings in Public and Private Organizations, *European Journal of Work and Organizational Psycholo*gy, *4 (4),* 185-201.

Einärsen, S., Hoel, H., Zapf, D. & Cooper, G. (2003). The concept of bullying at work.: The European tradition. In Einärsen, S., Hoel, H., Zapf, D. & Cooper, C. (Eds): *Bullying and*

Emotional Abuse in the workplace: International Perspectives in Research and Practice. London: Taylor and Francis.

Einärsen, S. & Hoel, H. (2001). The Negative Acts Questionnaire: Development, validation and revision of a measure of bullying at work. Paper presented at the 10th European Congress at work and Organizational Psychology.

Einärsen, S. & Mikkelzen, E. (2003). Individual effects of exposure of bullying at work", In Einärsen, S., Hoel, H., Zapf, D. & Cooper, C. (Eds): *Bullying and Emotional Abuse in the workplace: International Perspectives in Research and Practice. London*: Taylor and Francis.

Felson, R. & Tedeschi, J.T. (1993). *Aggression and Violence: Social Interactionist Perspectives.* Washington DC: American Psychological Association.

Felson, R. (2006). Violence as instrumental behaviour. In E.K.kelloway, J.Barling & J.J.Hurrell, Jr. (Eds.). *Handbook of Workplace Violence*, pp.47-89. Thousand Oaks, CA. Sage.

Ferreira, F. & Barata, J. M. (2005); "Recent Strategic, Structural and Technological Trends of the Portuguese Banking Sector"; Proceedings of the IADIS International Conference www/Internet 2005; Vol. I; October; Lisbon, 130–134.

French & Raven (1959), Bases of Social Power. Journal of applied psychology, 74, 561-567.

Giga, S. (2001). *The Implied Employment Relationship: Investigating the Effects of Psychological Contract Violations on Employee Wellbeing,* a thesis submitted to the University of Manchester Institute of Science and Technology for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

Giga, S. & Hoel, H. (2003). Violence and stress at work in financial services. Working Paper. Sectoral Activities Programme. International Labour Office, Geneva.

Giga, S. Hoel, H. & Lewis, D. (2008), The costs of workplace bullying. London: Unite the union/Department for Business, Enterprise and Regulatory Reform.

Hauge, L.J., Skogstad, A. & Einarsen, S. (2007). The relationship between stressful work environments and bullying: Results of a large representative study. *Work and Stress, 21 (3),* 220-242.

Hoel, H., Rayner, C., & Cooper, C.L. (1999). Workplace Bullying. *International Review of Industrial and Organizational Psychology*, 14, 189-230

Hoel, H. & Cooper, C. (2000). Destructive Conflict and Bullying at work Manchester School of Management. Manchester: University of Manchester Institute of Science and Technology (UMIST).

Hoel,H., Cooper,C.L., Faragher, B. (2001). The experience of Bullying in Great Britain: The impact Organizational Status, The European Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology, 10 (4), 443 –465.

Hoel, H., Einärsen, S., Cooper, G. (2003). Organizational effects of bullying. In Einärsen, S., Hoel, H., Zapf, D. & Cooper, C. (Eds): Bullying and Emotional Abuse in the workplace: International Perspectives in Research and Practice. London: Taylor and Francis.

Hoel, H. & Salin, D. (2003): Organisational antecedents of workplace bullying. In Einarsen, S., Hoel, H., Zapf, D. & Cooper, C. (Eds): Bullying and Emotional Abuse in the workplace: International Perspectives in Research and Practice. London: Taylor and Francis.

Kacmar, M.L. & Ferris, G.R. (1991), Perceptions of Organizational Politics Scale (POPS), *Educational & Psychological Measurement*, 51 (3), 821 – 829.

Kacmar, M.l. (1997). Further validation of the Perceptions of Politics Scale: a multiple sample investigation, Journal of Management, Sept – Oct, 1997.

Keashly, L.,& Jagatic, K.(2003). By another name: American Perspectives on Workplace Bullying. In Einärsen, S, Hoel, H. & Cooper, G. (Eds.). *Bullying and Emotional Abuse in the Workplace: International Perspectives in Research and Practice* . London: Taylor & Francis.

ILO (2001). *Note on the Proceedings: Tripartite Meeting on the Employment Impact of Mergers and Acquisitions in the Banking and Financial Services Sector,* International Labour Office, Geneva.

Lawrence, C. (2001). Social Psychology of Bullying in the workplace. In Tehrani, N. (Eds): *Building a culture of respect. Managing Bullying at work*. London: Taylor and Francis.

Lee, D. (2002). Gendered Workplace bullying in the restructured UK Civil Service, *Personnel Review,* 31 (1/2), 205-227.

Leymann, H. (1990b). Mobbing and psychological terror at workplaces", *Violence and Victims*, 5(2), 119-126.

Leymann, H. (1996): "The content and development of mobbing at work", *European Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology,* 5 (2), 251-275.

Levoska, S. & Keinanen-KiuKaanniemi, S. (1994). Psychological Stress and Job Satisfaction in Female Employees with and without neck-shoulder symptoms, Work and Stress, 8(3), 255-262.

Liefooghe,A.P.D., MacKenzie Davey, K. (2001). Accounts of Workplace Bullying: The Role of the Organization, *The European Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology* , 10 (4), 375 –392.

Liefooghe, A. P.D. (2003). Employees Accounts of bullying at work. *International Journal of Management and Decision Making*, 4 (1), 24-34.

Maciel, R.H., Cavalcante, R., Matos, T.C.R. (2007). Auto-Relato de situações constrangedoras no trabalho e Assédio Moral nos bancários: Uma fotografia. *Psicologia e sociedade, 19* (2), 121-128.

McCarthy, P. (1996). *When the mask slips: inappropriate coercion in organizations undergoing restructuring.* In McCarty P., Sheehan, M. and Wikie, W. (Eds): *Bullying: From Backyard to Boardroom*. Alexandria: Millennium Books.

Narayanan, V.K. & Fahey, L. (1982): "The micro-politics of strategic formulation", *Academy of Management Review*, 7 (1), 25-34.

Niedl, K. (1996). Mobbing and well-being: economic and personnel development implications. *European Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology*, 5 (2), 239-249.

OECD (1999). Implementing the OECD Job Strategy: Assessing Performance and Policy. Paris. OECD.

O´Moore, M., Seigne, E., McGuire, L. & Smith, M. (1998). Victims of Bullying at work in Ireland. *Journal of Occupational Health and Safety*: Australia and New Zeland, 14 (6), 568-574.

Rayner, C. (1997). Unacceptable behaviour: the UNISON Workplace Bullying Survey. Staffordshire University Business School.

Rayner, C. (2000). Unacceptable behaviour: the UNISON Workplace Bullying Survey. Staffordshire University Business School.

Salin, D. (2003b)**.** Bullying and Organizational Politics in competitive and rapidly changing work environments", *International Journal of Management and Decision Making,* 4, (1), 35-36.

Sheehan, M. (1996). Case Studies in Organizational Restructuring. In McCarty P., Sheehan, M. and Wikie, W. (Eds): *Bullying: From Backyard to Boardroom*. Alexandria: Millennium Books.

Skogstad, A., Matthiesen, S. & Einarsen, S. (2007). "Organizational Changes: a precursor of bullying at work? *International Journal of Organization Theory and Behavior,* 10 (1), 58-94.

Smith, M.J., Conway, F.T. & Karsh, B. (1999). Occupational Stress in Human Computer Interaction, *Industrial Health, 37,* 157-173.

Sunesson, S.(1985). "Outside the goal paradigm: power and structured patterns of non-rationality", *Organization Studies*, 6 (3), 239-246.

Thirion, A.P., Macías, E.F., Hurley, J. & Vermeylen, G. (2007). *Fourth European Survey on Working Conditions. Luxembourg*. European Foundation for the Improvement of Live and Working Conditions.

Toivanen, H, Lansimies, E. Jokela, V. & Hanninen, O. (1993). Impact of Regular Relaxation Training on the Cardiac Autonomic Nervous System of Hospital Cleaners and Bank Employees, *Scandinavian Journal of Work and Environmental Health*, 19 (5), 319-325.

Zapf, D. (1999b). Organizational, work group related and personal causes of mobbing / bullying at work", *International Journal of Manpower*, 20 (1/2), 70-85.

Zapf,D & Einärsen, S (2001). Bullying in the Workplace: Recent Trends in Research and Practice – An Introduction", *The European Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology, 10* (4), 369-373.

UNIFI (2002). "The four Bug Bears": UNIFI homepage, available at: http://www.unifi.org.uk
Vartia, M. (1996). The sources of Bullying – Psychological Work Environment and Organizational Climate, European Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology, (2), 203-214.

Vartia, M. (2003). *Workplace Bullying – a Study on The Work Environment, Well-Being and Health.* Doctoral Dissertation. People and Work Research Reports 56. Helsinki: Finnish Institute of Occupational Health.

Yilmaz, G. & Sodas, A.U. (2006). Bullying among Turkish bank employees and its relations with sick leave. Presentation made during the 7th Asia Pacific management Conference, Bangkok.

Table 1 – Correlations coefficients between bullying, political behaviours, internal competition, work overload and Restructuring and downsizing

Behaviour	Victims (Obj. Criteria) N=510	Victims (Subj. Criteria) N=172	Observers N=131
Political Behaviours	0,136* (p=0,001)	0,306* (p=0,001)	0,261* (p=0,001)
Work Overload	0,095* (p=0,024)	0,234* (p=0,001)	0,266* (p=0,001)
Internal Competition	0,023 (p=0,580)	0,142* (p=0,001)	0,061 (p=0,148)