

Adaptation and Validation of a French-Language Measurement Scale for Workplace Harassment (HMT)

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Abstract

Harassment at work, and more broadly the mental health of employees, is a major concern today. Indeed, labor law provides for an obligation for employers to take care of the physical and mental health of their employees. Currently, the field of French occupational psychology has few tools related to workplace harassment. This article presents the results of two studies establishing the psychometric properties of a French translation of the “Work Harassment Scale” (WHS) developed by Björkqvist, Osterman & Hjelt-Bäck (Björkqvist et al., 1992, 1994). Study 1 describes the steps involved in translating the questionnaire and verifies factor structure, internal consistency, and item quality among nonclinical participants. Study 2 aims to evaluate the factor structure of the scale through confirmatory factor analysis and to evaluate the temporal stability of the scale. Overall results indicate that the HMT scale exhibits good psychometric properties among a non-clinical adult population. Participant recruitment was carried out via a completely anonymous online questionnaire. In total, 631 people voluntarily participated in our study. The results of our study revealed a 13-item harassment scale. This tool proves to be an excellent instrument for clinicians, psychologists and researchers seeking to quickly and effectively identify the risks of harassment at work.

Keywords

Workplace Harassment, Adults, Professional Life, Psychometric Properties, Validation

1. Theory

The theme of workplace bullying is currently at the forefront of research for the

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prevention of occupational accidents and professional illnesses. Indeed, it is one of the risks present in today's companies, among other risks related to organization, management, individual characteristics, or even the nature of work. These psychosocial risks are increasingly recognized and are part of the second Health at Work Plan implemented by the government since 2010. This plan aims to actively prevent these professional risks. Its objective is to improve health and well-being at work, as well as working conditions (Ministère du Travail, 2010).

The issue of workplace bullying is not new, although this concept has only appeared in the Labor Code (Radé & Dechristé, 2010) and the Penal Code (Mayaud & Gayet, 2010) since 2002. This social modernization law on workplace bullying aims to combat and punish bullying in both the public and private sectors. According to the 2003 Sumer survey conducted among 25,000 French employees, approximately 6.5% would be victims of "disrespectful behaviors" within their organization, and nearly 9% would be victims of disregard for their work. Workplace bullying is, therefore, a phenomenon at the heart of current concerns. It is now recognized as a real professional risk.

Workplace bullying is defined by the terms "mobbing" (Leymann, 1996) or "bullying" in Anglo-Saxon countries. The term "bullying" refers more to the behavior of the bully, who acts physically aggressively towards one or more targets, while the term "mobbing" refers more to the experiences of the victims of bullying and is also used to describe a less direct and more subtle form of aggression. Although there are some nuances between these terms, authors agree to use these expressions interchangeably (Zapf & Einarsen, 2005).

Research on workplace bullying is primarily based on the work conducted by Olweus in the 1970s on aggression and bullying among children at school. They introduced the concept of "school bullying." Björkqvist, Osterman, and Hjelt-Bäck (Björkqvist et al., 1994) characterize bullying as a type of aggression leading to victimization of one or more individuals. Workplace bullying, not to be confused with sexual harassment, is defined as long-term aggression toward a person who cannot defend themselves. This social situation would gradually lead to a loss of self-esteem and increasing psychological stress in the victim. Leymann (Leymann, 1987) defines workplace bullying as a kind of "psychological terrorism" manifested by hostile behaviors of one or more individuals toward a third person. The repetition of these behaviors over a fairly long period, at least six months, has harmful effects. These behaviors (Leymann, 1996) aim to prevent the victim from expressing themselves, isolate them, discredit them among their colleagues, and undermine their health. For Einarsen, Hoel, Zapf, and Cooper (Einarsen et al., 2003), workplace harassment is characterized by behaviors that occur repeatedly and regularly over a certain period, aiming to harass, offend, socially exclude the individual, and negatively affect their work.

These definitions allow us to observe a consensus on certain characteristics of bullying behavior. We can see that workplace bullying manifests as negative behaviors towards an individual, affecting their physical or mental health, and occurring over a significant period of time. Workplace bullying, therefore, has

temporal characteristics; it is a repetitive and prolonged behavior.

Studies attempting to describe the characteristics of bullies show that they are more often men than women. In the vast majority of cases, the bully is a hierarchical superior with a relatively high level of education (Viaux & Bernaud, 2001). The leader is considered to be actively or passively involved in bullying, meaning that in the first case, they participate by initiating or contributing to the bullying behavior, and in the second case, they act as if this behavior does not exist in the workplace while knowing that it does (Leymann, 1992); they essentially deny the existence of this phenomenon. Bullying behavior is considered a stable personality trait of an individual (Olweus, 1979). A “bully” is seen as an aggressive person who lacks empathy for others and may even derive some satisfaction from seeing their victims suffer (Björkqvist et al., 1982). Studies on the personality of bullied individuals, on the other hand, have not revealed the existence of a stable personality trait in bullying victims. According to the situation and context, any individual can become a victim of bullying; there is no single profile (Olweus, 1978). However, although there is no real consensus on the characteristics of bullying victims, some trends can be identified among victims of workplace bullying; they are more often women (Björkqvist et al., 1994), have a relatively high level of education, are in their forties, and are relatively socially well-integrated (Viaux & Bernaud, 2001).

Workplace bullying leads to detrimental consequences for the employee who is a victim of it, including disengagement or overinvestment in work, which can lead to burnout, as well as isolation, reduced concentration, or job satisfaction.

Consequences are also evident at the individual level, with the emergence of psychological and somatic disorders, such as anxiety, depression, apathy, decreased concentration, and even the development of social phobias. Symptoms of post-traumatic stress (Leymann, 1992) have also been observed in some victims of bullying. These disorders can also affect the individual’s family life; sometimes, bullied individuals become disengaged from their family and conflicts may arise with family members. Workplace bullying, therefore, has individual, family, and organizational repercussions. It can lead to higher rates of absenteeism, accidents, and sick leave, as well as lower productivity within the organization. The overall social climate of the company can be affected by workplace bullying behaviors. These various disruptions within companies result in significant financial costs according to INRS (Institut National de Recherche et de Sécurité, 2010).

Therefore, workplace bullying is of significant interest in current research due to its multiple detrimental consequences on both individual and organizational levels.

The causes of workplace bullying are multiple, including power struggles within the organization leading to interindividual competition. De Ferranti and Tuckey (De Ferranti & Tuckey, 2007), for example, observe that certain “informal distributions of power” within the company, such as a better understanding of the organizational culture or a larger social network, contribute to the devel-

opment of bullying behaviors in the worker. The individual can then use this “power” to gain advantages over their colleagues. The power imbalance between the bully and the victim is a fundamental factor in bullying. Workplace bullying allows the bully to assert and maintain power over others (Craig & Pepler, 2003). It is therefore not surprising that the bully is in the vast majority of cases a hierarchical superior (Viaux & Bernaud, 2001).

The type of organization can also have consequences for the likelihood of bullying behavior. An organization with a significant hierarchical division, rather autocratic leadership, and poor communication between individuals predicts bullying behavior (Leymann, 1992). Moreover, there is a positive relationship between dissatisfaction with the leader and workplace bullying behavior, especially among individuals working in the administrative sector (Einarsen et al., 1994). These studies highlight the importance of organizational factors in the emergence of workplace bullying, but we can also see the role of the industry sector as an influencing factor in the presence of bullying behaviors; for example, Björkqvist and colleagues’ study (Björkqvist et al., 1994) shows that individuals working in administration, economics, or service companies score higher on workplace bullying. According to a study conducted by Bué and Sandret (Bué & Sandret 2007), 22% of employees working in public-facing roles (postal workers, bank employees, security agents, and healthcare professionals) reported verbal aggression in their workplace in the year preceding the study. These two studies have congruent results and demonstrate that the type of job an individual holds can influence the likelihood of being bullied in the workplace.

Work organization plays a real role in the frequency of workplace aggression, especially when employees have night shifts, intense work rhythms that require high speed, or when employees lack the means, information, or sufficient support to meet the demands of their work. These conditions can generate competition within the organization. Internal competition within the company is based on the culture of performance. The performance-reward system promotes the allocation of rewards based on performance. This system increases the likelihood of observing workplace bullying behaviors (Lee, 2000). Internal competition would increase motivation, which could be a factor that increases bullying behaviors (Salin, 2003). Competition related to status and position is mentioned by individuals as one of the main causes of workplace bullying (Björkqvist et al., 1982).

The studies described above have highlighted various factors that can impact workplace bullying situations, such as power distribution, the type of company and job, leadership style, and the type of work organization within the company. Some factors that may play a role in bullying behaviors are not fully identified, and new research perspectives need to be explored, such as the link between bullying and individual factors, such as individuals’ motivation and their strategies for performance (Salin, 2003). Studies regarding psychosocial factors in the work environment, such as competition for success and performance at work, are mentioned as potential causes of bullying according to Björkqvist and colleagues (Björkqvist et al., 1994). They note that more than 50% of the individuals

surveyed believe that competition among employees for status is one of the reasons that can lead to bullying, making it the most important reason according to those surveyed. Competition for achievement is a characteristic of the work environment that, according to Tuckey, Dollard, Hosking & Winefield (Tuckey et al., 2009), should be further researched due to its potentially significant impact on bullying behaviors.

Based on this observation, in this study, we aim to assess the psychometric properties of a French translation and validation of the “Work Harassment Scale” instrument developed by Björkqvist, Osterman & Hjelt-Bäck (Björkqvist et al., 1992). The authors developed this scale to simply and reliably measure workplace bullying perceived by individuals over the past six months at work.”

2. Study 1: Psychometric Standards in the Context of Scale Validation

This study outlines the steps involved in translating the “Work Harassment Scale” (WHS) by Björkqvist, Östermarn & Hjelt-Bäck, (Björkqvist et al., 1992) and assesses the factorial structure, internal consistency, and item quality of the scale among non-clinical adult participants.

2.1. Method

Translation of the “Work Harassment Scale” by Björkqvist, Östermarn & Hjelt-Bäck, (Björkqvist et al., 1992):

The translation from English to French was conducted by a group of student researchers specialized in the field of work psychology, assisted by three linguist translators. As recommended by Vallerand (Vallerand, 1989), the translated version was then back-translated into English by two other bilingual individuals and compared to the original. No differences in meaning were detected, so this translation was retained. A pilot study was conducted with 30 French participants to validate the content of our French version of the questionnaire.

Instrument Used:

The “Work Harassment Scale” by Björkqvist, Östermarn & Hjelt-Bäck, (Björkqvist et al., 1992), designed specifically to measure workplace bullying, consists of 24 items inspired by situations commonly associated with workplace harassment. Examples of situations in the items include “being yelled at,” “being subjected to derogatory comments,” and “being subjected to direct threats.” Participants are instructed as follows: “Have you been exposed to degrading or oppressive situations by your coworkers in the past 6 months? These situations must clearly involve a form of workplace harassment and not normal communication or exceptional circumstances.” Responses are rated on a 4-point Likert scale.

Participants:

The sample comprises 597 working individuals aged 18 to 61. The average age is 44.61 years (SD = 4.78). The sample consists of 268 women (44.9%), with an average age of 43.70 (SD = 4.98), and 329 men (55.1%), with an average age of 45.52 (SD = 4.37). Most participants are either married or in a civil partnership

(68%) or single (19%). A small percentage are divorced (11%) or widowed (2%). Regarding employment contracts, 75% of the sample works in the private sector, 82% have permanent contracts, 92% work full-time, and 83% work in small or medium-sized enterprises. Concerning occupational sectors, 44% of participants are employees, 24% are in higher intellectual professions (or are executives), 19% are blue-collar workers, 10% are in intermediate professions, and 3% are self-employed, traders, or business owners.

Procedure:

Recruitment of participants in our study was carried out via a completely anonymous online questionnaire. Free and informed consent was presented to each participant in instructions before starting the study. All participants were voluntary and unpaid. They were contacted via posters and they all participated spontaneously.

A total of 631 professionally employed people aged 18 and over participated in our study.

The usable response rate was 94%. Incomplete questionnaires were not taken into account in this study.

2.2. Results

Descriptive Statistics and Assumption Checking for Analyses:

Table 1 presents a summary of descriptive statistics. For each item on the harassment scale, means and standard deviations were calculated for each gender, as well as for the total sample. The overall mean score for the total sample is 36.78. This corresponds to a moderate level of workplace harassment (36.78/96). Nine items score higher than or equal to 2, nine items score higher than 1, and six items score lower than 0. The item means range from 2.88 for the item “Devaluation of your ideas” (SD = 0.82) to 0.24 for the item “Accusations of being mentally retarded” (SD = 0.12). Standard deviations range from 1.22 for “Being yelled at” to 0.12 for “Accusations of being mentally retarded.” Regarding the comparison of the two groups, a t-test reveals no significant differences between the two genders [$t(595) = 1.31, p = 0.421$]. The workplace harassment situation most expressed by men is “Excessive criticism” (mean = 2.82; SD = 0.89), and the least expressed workplace harassment situation is “Being assigned degrading tasks” (mean = 0.12; SD = 0.78). Women report experiencing more workplace harassment situations than men, with 9 out of 24 items scoring higher than or equal to 2, including 1 item with a score higher than 3, while for men, 6 out of 24 items score higher than or equal to 2, and none reach a score of 3. No gender differences per item are significant.

To confirm the validity of the one-factor structure of the scale according to Björkqvist and colleagues’ (Björkqvist et al., 1992) theoretical model, a factor analysis was conducted based on the responses of 597 participants to the 24 items.

The examination of factor loadings leads to the conclusion that a two-factor solution is representative of the collected data. The results, summarized in **Table 2**,

Table 1. Means and standard deviations of raw scores on the Workplace Harassment Scale (HMT).

	Means			standard deviations		
	M	F	Score	M	F	Score
1. Restriction in your speaking time	1.06	1.62	1.34	0.99	1.1	1.04
2. Lies about you reported by your colleagues to your family	0.18	0.34	0.26	1.05	1.14	1.1
3. Being interrupted in your work	2.28	3.12	2.7	0.67	0.54	0.6
4. Being yelled at	1.28	1.36	1.32	1.11	1.33	1.22
5. Excessive criticism	2.82	2.7	2.76	0.89	1.07	0.98
6. Unpleasant comments about your personal life	0.22	0.62	0.42	1.02	1.1	1.06
7. Isolation	1.26	0.98	1.12	1.42	0.78	1.1
8. Intimate disclosures about your private life	0.3	0.5	0.4	0.57	1.03	0.8
9. Direct threats	2.64	2.28	2.46	1.25	0.91	1.08
10. Intimidating glances or humiliating gestures	2.3	2.46	2.38	1.03	1.07	1.05
11. Accusations or reproaches	2.1	2.22	2.16	0.88	0.96	0.92
12. Mockery	1.56	1.16	1.36	1.03	1.23	1.13
13. Refusal to communicate with you	1.4	1.64	1.52	0.94	1.1	1.02
14. Devaluation of your ideas	2.78	2.98	2.88	0.66	0.98	0.82
15. Refusal to listen to you	1.72	2.72	2.22	1	0.92	0.96
16. Being considered insignificant	0.98	2.22	1.6	1.32	1.23	1.12
17. Hurtful remarks	1.06	1.34	1.2	1	0.8	0.9
18. Being assigned unimportant tasks	0.58	1.1	0.84	0.92	0.98	0.95
19. Being assigned degrading tasks	0.12	0.72	0.42	0.78	0.34	0.56
20. Rumors behind your back	1.68	1.4	1.54	0.69	0.65	0.67
21. Public ridicule	0.92	1.52	1.22	0.79	1.23	1.01
22. Insulting judgments about your work	1.9	2.46	2.18	1.09	1.31	1.2
23. Questioning your judgment	1.98	2.5	2.24	0.91	1.43	1.17
24. Accusations of being mentally impaired	0.2	0.28	0.24	0.14	0.1	0.12
Average Score	1.38	1.67	1.53	0.92	0.97	0.94

highlight the findings. The minimum average loading of the items included in this analysis is 0.60.

The first factor, which we will name “Devaluation”, loads 8 items and explains 37% of the total variance. The loadings obtained for each of the 8 items range from 0.63 for “Being interrupted in your work” to 0.80 for “Accusations or reproaches”. As for the second factor, “Isolation”, 5 items are loaded by this factor (loadings range from 0.61 for “Restrictions on your speaking time” to 0.72 for “Refusal to converse with you”) and account for 16% of the total variance. The results from this initial analysis suggest the presence of a 13-item scale divided into two factors, explaining 53% of the total variance.

Table 2. Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA, Study 1) and Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA, Study 2) of the Workplace Bullying Scale (Average Loadings > 0.60).

	EFA		CFA
	Factor 1 Bullying - Devaluation	Factor 2 Bullying - Isolation	
11. Accusations or Blame	0.80		0.64
10. Intimidating Looks or Humiliating Gestures	0.68		0.56
5. Excessive Criticisms	0.67		0.65
14. Devaluation of Your Ideas	0.66		0.61
17. Hurtful Comments	0.66		0.52
23. Questioning Your Judgment	0.66		0.55
21. Public Ridicule	0.64		0.61
3. Interruption in Your Work	0.63		0.49
13. Refusal to Engage with You	0.12	0.72	0.52
7. Isolation	0.27	0.70	0.61
15. Refusal to Listen	0.43	0.68	0.67
16. Being Considered Insignificant	0.31	0.62	0.61
1. Restriction in Speaking Time	0.22	0.61	0.60
20. Rumors Behind Your Back	0.46	0.24	0.56
22. Insulting Judgments About Your Work	0.32	0.27	0.59
12. Mockery	0.23	0.12	0.41
4. Yelling or Shouting at You	0.11	0.15	0.55
9. Direct Threats	0.23	0.11	0.61
18. Assigned Unimportant Tasks	-0.10	0.17	0.64
19. Assigned Degrading Tasks	-0.13	0.07	0.56
6. Disparaging Comments About Your Personal Life	0.06	0.12	0.64
2. Lies About You Reported to Your Family	0.25	0.35	0.55
8. Humiliating Personal Revelations	0.20	0.12	0.55
24. Accusations of Mental Retardation	0.19	0.17	0.52
Study 1 Mean of Items Saturated by Factor	0.67	0.66	
Standard Deviation	0.09	0.08	
Study 2 Mean of Items Saturated by Factor	0.66	0.68	
Standard Deviation	0.07	0.10	
<i>Expl. Var.</i>	7.80	5.27	
<i>% Explained Var.</i>	37%	16%	

GFI 0.89, AGFI 0.87, χ^2 : 594.011 (dl = 187), RMSEA 0.09.

The item means for the factors are 0.67 for the “Devaluation” factor (SD = 0.09) and 0.66 for the “Isolation” factor (SD = 0.08). Women report experiencing

more “Isolation”-type harassment (1.37) compared to “Devaluation” harassment (1.02), while men are more sensitive to “Devaluation” harassment (1.18) compared to “Isolation” harassment (1.07). Regarding gender comparison, a t-test does not reveal any significant differences between the two genders [$t(595) = 1.43, p = 0.213$].

Reliability of the Instrument:

To assess the questionnaire’s reliability, we calculated the internal consistency of the 13 items previously identified through exploratory factor analysis, as well as the internal consistency for each of the 2 identified factors. The results are presented in **Table 3**.

- **Internal Consistency of the 13 Items:** The Cronbach’s alpha coefficient obtained for all the items retained by the exploratory factor analysis is 0.93 for the total sample. The removal of items does not increase the internal consistency of the instrument.
- **Internal Consistency by Factor:** A Cronbach’s alpha coefficient is calculated for each of the factors. The internal consistency for the “Devaluation” factor is 0.92, and for the “Isolation” factor, it is 0.91. It is noteworthy that at this stage of the analysis, no items were eliminated.

The “Workplace Harassment Scale” (HMT) is therefore comprised of 13 items divided into 2 factors.

3. Study 2: Confirmatory Analysis of the Structure of the Workplace Harassment Scale (HMT) and Assessment of Temporal Stability of the Tool

This second study aims to achieve two objectives. The first objective is to confirm the factorial structure of the HMT scale through confirmatory factor analysis. This analysis will allow us to validate the two-factor structure identified in Study 1. The second objective is to assess the temporal stability of our scale.

3.1. Method

Participants and Procedure:

Participants in Study 2 voluntarily responded to the study. Our sample comprised 87 women (52%) and 81 men (48%). The average age of the participants was 42.5 years ($SD = 3.40$). The data collection conditions were similar to those in Study 1.

Instruments:

Table 3. Internal consistencies and test-retest correlations for Study 1/Study 2 of the HMT scale.

		Factor 1 Devaluation	Factor 2 Isolation
Alpha de Cronbach	Study 1 (n = 597)	0.92	0.91
	Study 2 (n = 168)	0.91	0.89
Correlations	Study 1/Study 2	0.89	0.87

- **Workplace Harassment Scale (HMT):** The Workplace Harassment Scale (HMT), consisting of 13 items, was used in Study 2. Its description and properties were developed in Study 1.

3.2. Results

The “Devaluation” factor obtained an average score of 0.66 (SD = 0.07), and the “Isolation” factor obtained an average score of 0.68 (SD = 0.10).

To verify the factorial structure of the HMT scale, we conducted a confirmatory factor analysis testing the two-factor structure. Based on the goodness-of-fit indices presented in **Table 2**, the model is satisfactory, albeit with some limitations. We observe a GFI value of 0.89, an adjusted GFI (AGFI) of 0.87, and a χ^2 of 594.011 (df = 187). The RMSEA value is 0.09. All these results support the confirmation of the two-dimensional structure of the scale (see **Table 2**).

To assess the temporal stability of our tool, we calculated the correlations between the factors of Study 1 and Study 2. The correlation results are shown in **Table 3**. As noted, the correlations are high, ranging between 0.89 and 0.87. These results demonstrate the temporal stability of the instrument for both factors. The results of Cronbach’s alpha values are also presented in **Table 3**. These results reveal very high alpha values. Particularly noteworthy are the indices for the “Devaluation” factor, which are 0.92 for Study 1 and 0.91 for Study 2, and 0.91 and 0.89 for the “Isolation” factor. These results support the scale’s reliability, both in terms of internal consistency and temporal stability.

3.3. Discussion

These studies aimed to evaluate the psychometric properties of a French translation of the “Workplace Harassment Scale” developed by Björkqvist, Osterman & Hjelt-Bäck (Björkqvist et al., 1992). Two studies were carried out among a French working population. Participants were all volunteers and unpaid. Free and informed consent was presented before starting to fill out the online questionnaire. The first study aimed to verify the factorial structure of the scale and the reliability of the instrument. The second study aimed to confirm the structure of the scale and assess its temporal stability. The results conclude that the translated scale has good psychometric qualities within a non-clinical French adult population. Our HMT scale, composed of 13 items, meets the standards for adaptation and validation of scales.

Specifically, exploratory factor analysis of our results revealed the presence of two factors, which we named “Devaluation” (8 items) and “Isolation” (5 items). These factors account for 53% of the total variance. This structure is very similar to that established by Björkqvist, Osterman & Hjelt-Bäck (Björkqvist et al., 1992) in an American population, but it nuances two possible forms of harassment in a French population. In our study, expressed through an exploratory analysis, harassment is organized in two dimensions. The “Devaluation” dimension includes 8 items and encompasses bullying and emotional harm behaviors. Examples in-

clude things like “Intimidating Stares,” “Verbal Remarks Meant to Hurt You,” or “Public Ridicule.” The psychological injury resulting from the loss of a loved one or a change in their emotional bond (social or professional) is called emotional injury. This type of injury causes emotional distress in the person who suffers it.

Bullying is a type of aggressive behavior that intentionally and repeatedly causes injury or discomfort to another person, as defined by the American Psychological Association. This behavior can manifest in a variety of ways, including physical contact, verbal abuse, or more covert actions.

Although bullying and emotional and moral harm are both illegal and unethical in today’s society, subtle forms of discrimination, as highlighted in studies by Meertens and Pettigrew in 1997 and Pettigrew and Meertens in 1995, as well as direct microaggressions, as identified by Sue et al. in 2007, continue to exist in the world of work. These actions have negative consequences for the target of such behavior.

The “Isolation” dimension includes 5 items and concerns exclusionary behaviors, with items such as “Refusal to listen” or “Restrictions on speaking time”. Ostracism is characterized by the neglect and exclusion of a co-worker, such as being left out of conversations, not having an exchange of ideas, or even being ignored in hallways. This is a form of abuse that can be difficult to remedy. According to a study published in the journal *Organization Science*, being ignored in the workplace is a harmful experience, just like moral and emotional harassment, and can have a negative impact on the sense of belonging and well-being at work. Ostracism leads to a very high resignation rate.

In the second phase, the confirmatory factor analysis conducted supports the model’s consistency, although it shows slight deviations from the model. Goodness-of-fit indices (GFI and AGFI) indicate a good fit when they exceed 0.90 (Schumacker & Lomax, 2004). In our study, the obtained results are slightly below this threshold (GFI 0.89 and AGFI 0.87) but remain reasonable to defend the psychometric qualities of our study. As for RMSEA, the observed value in our study is very close to the recommended threshold of 0.08, with a value of 0.09 (MacCallum & Browne, 1993). Thus, the tested model meets the quality standards for fit. We can conclude that this model is satisfactory. It might be possible to further improve these indices by removing certain variables, but from a theoretical standpoint, this model demonstrates a reasonable fit with the empirical model.

All the analyses conducted allow us to confirm the reliability and validity of the Workplace Harassment Scale. This measuring instrument could be used and further developed in other research contexts. We plan to conduct additional studies, including convergent analysis with a work engagement scale, which will enhance the scale’s validation quality and highlight its merits.

From a practical professional standpoint, given its quick administration and proven properties, the HMT scale is an excellent choice for clinicians, psychologists, and researchers who want to quickly and effectively detect workplace ha-

rassment. Verbally expressing one's professional discomfort and testifying to their workplace relationship difficulties are not easy behaviors and are often unacceptable to many individuals. Although workplace harassment is a crime punishable by law, victims of workplace harassment often internalize their distress and rarely report their workplace relationship difficulties. Workplace harassment is a process of mental destruction that, through frequency and repetition over time, can lead a person to mental illness and, in extreme cases, suicide. It endangers not only personal well-being but also the victim's mental health.

Productivity was at the center of the major structural changes that took place at the end of the 20th century in the professional sphere. This productivity is linked to both technical and human efficiency. According to Einarsen and colleagues (Einarsen et al., 2003), the industry faces great pressure to survive. There is constant pressure to downsize and restructure in order to maintain a competitive dimension in an increasingly globalized economy. As a result, a smaller number of employees have to cope with a greater amount of work in a climate of uncertainty, which is compounded by the increasing number of temporary contracts. This insecurity at work creates a professional environment where conflicts are possible. Lack of safety at work promotes harassment and interpersonal conflicts. Ever-increasing demands lead to pressure and violence in the workplace. One of these forms of violence is psychological harassment at work, which refers to a process in which a person finds themselves in an inferior position and becomes the target of systematic negative social acts by one or more people. In fact, it has been estimated that around 15% of employees worldwide are victims of workplace bullying. In France, 9.5% of employees reported having been harassed.

While many recent studies focus on jurisprudence (Lerouge, 2021) or the psychopathological consequences of harassment (Duarte, 2019), few scientific tools allow us to measure and identify the markers of harassment.

The use of the HMT can offer individuals who are victims of workplace harassment the opportunity to more easily express their relationship difficulties and social and professional pressures, thus enabling better management of their mental health.

Conflicts of Interest

The author declares no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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