

## Causes and the Intensity of Workplace Bullying

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This study aimed to describe the problem of workplace bullying, the intensity, and its causing factors. This exploratory descriptive study was conducted through a survey of 123 participants working in Surabaya who experienced workplace bullying. The questionnaire used to measure the intensity of the workplace bullying was an adaptation of Negative Act Questionnaire Revised (Matthiesen, 2000). The description, the intensity, and the causing factors of workplace bullying are discussed.

*Keywords:* bullying, workplace, intensity, causing factors

Penelitian ini bertujuan mendeskripsikan masalah pembulian di tempat kerja (PTK= workplace bullying), intensitas PTK yang terjadi, dan faktor penyebab terjadinya PTK. Studi deskriptif eksploratif ini dilakukan dengan cara survei pada 123 partisipan yang bekerja di Surabaya dan mengalami PTK. Angket untuk mengukur intensitas PTK merupakan adaptasi angket Negative Act Questionnaire Revised (Matthiesen, 2000). Didiskusikan hasil penelitian tentang deskripsi, intensitas, dan faktor-faktor penyebab terjadinya PTK.

*Kata kunci:* pembulian (bullying), tempat kerja, intensitas, faktor penyebab

Bullying is still regarded as a common act (Peyton, 2003). It is considered as a means of mental training. Hence bullying is still strongly rooted until now (Yayasan Semai Jiwa Amini, 2008). Consequently, bullying is found everywhere, such as at school (school bullying), at home, and at work (workplace bullying).

Workplace bullying has been an on going problem (Meek, 2004). The national violence survey by the United States Department of Justice (as cited in Arifin, 2008) found 1.7 million incidents of workplace bullying happened during 1993-1999 period. 95% were simple but very disturbing form of violence. Workplace Bullying Institute of America found that 37% workers in America had experienced workplace bullying. The victim percentage is higher among women (57%) than men (43%) (Workplace Bullying Institute, 2007).

Workplace bullying refers to a negative act per-

formed repeatedly by certain parties involving power imbalance in the form of harassment, abuse, assault, and mistreatment, resulting the bullying targets or victims to feel inferior and unable to defend themselves (Matthiesen, 2006).

Bullying can occur in form of physical, verbal, or psychological abuse. However, psychological abuse is the most common to occur (Lavan & Martin, 2008). Workplace bullying is a serious problem and the occurrence requires immediate action. A study of 500 cases found that the stress experienced by the victims led to sleep deprivation and mild depression. After a six-month period, it led to PTSD. After one year, the victims were diagnosed with GAD (General Anxiety Disorder). Between 2-4 years later, the condition became more severe and grew to psychiatric disease. The most severe impact is suicide (Leyman, as cited in Peyton 2003).

Considering the severity of the effects and the lack of concerns towards workplace bullying in Indonesia, the author aimed to examine the description of workplace bullying in Surabaya, the intensity of the occurrence, and the driving factors of workplace bullying. According to literature stu-

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