

**Assessing the relationship between workplace
harassment and personal and professional self-
esteem: A quantitative study**

Britt Tackenberg

S1000113

Content

| | |
|----------------------------------|----|
| Introduction..... | 3 |
| Theoretical framework | 6 |
| Methods | 11 |
| Results | 18 |
| Discussion..... | 24 |
| Conclusion | 28 |
| Bibliography | 29 |
| Appendix 1: Questionnaire..... | 32 |
| Appendix 2: Factor analyses..... | 38 |

Introduction

In October 2017, the Me-Too movement went viral on Twitter to raise awareness on the issue of sexual harassment and abuse of women in the workplace. While the Me-Too movement was originally founded in 2006, its sudden popularity had everything to do with a string of allegations of sexual abuse by American producer Harvey Weinstein (Bhattacharyya, 2018). Many women went on to share their stories of how they were harassed in the workplace by using the hashtag #MeToo. So, while the Me-Too movement has been actively around for 6 years, people are still surprised that workplace harassment happens daily and that many people face the consequences of it every day.

Workplace harassment is not a new phenomenon, there has been research on it in the past. Workplace harassment has been defined as “repeated activities, with the aim of bringing mental (but sometimes also physical) pain, and directed toward one or more individuals who, for one reason or another, are not able to defend themselves” (Astrauskaite & Kern, 2011, p. 421). Looking at more recent literature, this definition remains the same (Henning et al., 2017; Naezer et al., 2019; Węziak-Białowolska et al., 2020). Workplace harassment has been found to be a great stressor on victims, affecting work attitudes and work quality (Węziak-Białowolska et al., 2020). Within the concept of workplace harassment, several dimensions have been defined. For example, sexual harassment, emotional abuse, exclusion, denigration, and physical violence (Naezer et al., 2019) are all dimensions that are categorized under workplace harassment. One could argue, however, that these dimensions do not cover every dimension that workplace harassment has.

A limitation lies within the definition and conceptualization of workplace harassment. When reviewing the definition of workplace harassment critically, one could question if the concept is complete in its definition and conceptualization. All definitions in the existing literature as mentioned before (Henning et al., 2017; Naezer et al., 2019; Węziak-Białowolska et al., 2020) presume a certain intent of the harasser to hurt the victim with one’s actions. Lewis et al. (2002) even state that a key element that makes workplace aggression workplace harassment is that workplace harassment has the intention to negatively impact the target. One could argue that not all workplace harassment is done with intent. A key example and argument for this is microaggression. Basford et al. (2013, p. 341) define gender microaggressions as “intentional or unintentional actions or behaviors that exclude, demean, insult, oppress, or otherwise express hostility or indifference toward women.” The unintentionality behind these actions does not mean that they cannot be classed as harassment. Furthermore, victims of microaggressions can experience the same mental health issues as

victims of workplace harassment can experience, such as depression and other mental health issues (Nadal et al., 2014)

A second limitation can be found in the lack of research on specific mental consequences that the victims of workplace harassment experience. Even though workplace harassment is a well-researched topic, certain possible psychological outcomes remain underdeveloped (Henning et al., 2017; Hersch, 2015; Trepanier et al., 2013). Experiencing forms of psychological harassment at work can lead to depression, anxiety, and decreased life satisfaction (Trepanier et al., 2013). Lewis et al. (2002) have found that workplace harassment can also lead to low self-esteem. The research showed that counselors can help rebuild the self-esteem of victims by validating their experience, implying that the experience of workplace harassment has deteriorated their self-esteem (Lewis et al., 2002). Yet, despite the influence (Lewis et al., 2002) claim workplace harassment has on self-esteem, there is no real evidence of the relationship and we know relatively little about it. Moreover, Carmel (1997) shows that professional self-esteem does differ from personal self-esteem. Therefore, it is important to make that distinction when looking at occurrences of harassment in the workplace specifically.

As mentioned, there is some limitation in existing research in determining if workplace harassment influences self-esteem. Self-esteem is a widely known psychological trait that people often assume to be highly important in different situations in life (Orth & Robins, 2014). Self-esteem refers to the subjective evaluation of his or her worth as a person. It involves feelings of self-respect and self-acceptance (Orth & Robins, 2014). Self-esteem can be dependent on many different factors, such as how one looks, how one performs, and how one interacts with other people, but can also be influenced by one's environment, other people's opinions, and actions. Self-esteem can manifest itself in different situations in one's life. Lewis et al. (2002) state that workplace harassment can lead to low self-esteem but do not further specify what type of self-esteem is meant. As mentioned before, according to Carmel (1997), professional and personal self-esteem are two different concepts. One might argue that professional self-esteem is of high value in the workplace because low professional self-esteem might lead to low motivation, work ethic, satisfaction, or happiness in one's job and work environment (Carmel, 1997). Because of this, it is important to find out how much influence workplace harassment has on self-esteem, both personal and professional.

The goal of this research is to gain insight into the relationship between workplace harassment and personal and professional self-esteem in order to provide a more

comprehensive and accurate understanding of the different types of mental consequences workplace harassment can have. Subsequently, the research question is:

To what extent does the level of workplace harassment influence the personal and professional self-esteem of the victims of such harassment?

This research is scientifically relevant because little to no research has been done on the effects of workplace harassment on self-esteem, especially when making a distinction between personal and professional self-esteem. The result of this research gives knowledge and insight into the relationship between workplace harassment and self-esteem, enhancing our comprehension of the broader mental health implications of workplace harassment. Combining both personal and professional self-esteem in one study means the two can be compared and analyzed side by side. This builds on literature on different dimensions of self-esteem and helps to understand the concept of self-esteem. Lastly, the revision of the definition of workplace harassment is done by being critical of the assumption that workplace harassment is always done with intent. Critical analysis of existing definitions helps to further research to be more accurate and precise in the future.

Recent commotion in media and the Me-Too movement has made more people aware of how much harassment happens in the workplace and how detrimental the consequences can be. Awareness of such issues can help make people more mindful at work and be able to hold harassers accountable for their actions. This research contributes to research on workplace harassment by raising more awareness, but also gives employers a better view of the effects of possible harassment incidents that are happening in their company. It is important to motivate employers to be diligent in addressing issues of workplace harassment and to make them able to effectively approach and consult victims, with the care, knowledge, and empathy that is needed in those situations. Besides this, doing research on workplace harassment without the assumption that the harasser has the intent to harm the victim, adds nuance to the relationship between the harassers and their victims, as they do not always have to be as hateful as we might imagine. It is important to recognize harassment in the work environment, even when it is not as overt as one might expect.

In the upcoming study, a comprehensive theoretical framework will be developed in order to investigate the variables and propose relationships between them. Subsequently, the method section will explain what research decisions were made in the thesis process and their justifications. The result section will explain all relevant results, while the discussion and

conclusion will interpret these results, provide insights into their origin, and reflect on the overall research process.

Theoretical framework

In the theoretical framework, the main concepts of this research are discussed. First, the independent variable workplace harassment will be discussed, looking deeper into the different dimensions of this variable. Next, the dependent variable self-esteem will be discussed, making the distinction between personal and professional self-esteem. Next, the relationship between these two variables will be hypothesized. Lastly, an additional hypothesis is constructed about the possible mediating influence the two dimensions of self-esteem have on the relationship between workplace harassment and the respective dimension of self-esteem.

Workplace harassment

As mentioned before, workplace harassment has many different dimensions. Naezer et al. (2019, p. 9) studied manifestations, facilitating factors, effects, and solutions of harassment in Dutch academia and define harassment as “unwanted verbal, non-verbal or physical conduct, that has the purpose or effect of violating the dignity of a person, and that produces an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment.” This definition could be used in all work environments, not just in Dutch academia. The research by Naezer et al. (2019) highlighted six different dimensions of harassment: 1) scientific sabotage, 2) sexual harassment, 3) physical and verbal threats, 4) denigration, 5) exclusion, and 6) problematizing “special needs” (Naezer et al., 2019). To understand what workplace harassment entails, these dimensions will be elaborated on. Scientific sabotage will be left out of this elaboration, as it is specific to academic environments.

Sexual harassment is one of the most pervasive forms of harassment on the work floor (Hersch, 2015). Naezer et al. (2019) define sexual harassment as: "any verbal, non-verbal or physical behavior with sexual connotations that has the aim or effect of violating a person's dignity, especially when it contributes to the creation of an intimidating, hostile, offending, humiliating, or hurtful working environment". It is a violation of human rights and is highly condemned, yet it is still extremely prevalent and underreported (Hersch, 2015). The consequences of sexual harassment are great, for the employee but also for the employer. When sexual harassment occurs in an organization, absenteeism rates are higher, turnover rates are higher and job satisfaction rates are lower (Hersch, 2015). However, the consequences for victims of harassment are much more severe, including emotional and

psychological issues, such as experiencing decreased satisfaction in their lives, tension, nervousness, and persistent anger and fear (Alrawadieh et al., 2021).

Another form of harassment that is highlighted in Naezer et al. (2019) is psychological and emotional abuse such as denigration, exclusion, and problematizing "special needs". This could be in the form of negative glances, isolation, microaggressions, and unsubstantiated criticism (Lewis et al., 2002). Trepanier et al. (2013) showed that psychological harassment has a negative effect on psychological health and the functioning of victims at work. Poor psychological health can be expressed in forms of depression, anxiety, and decreased life satisfaction (Trepanier et al., 2013). How one functions at work is expressed in job satisfaction, commitment, burn-out symptoms, and turnover rates (Trepanier et al., 2013).

Lastly, Naezer et al. (2019) mention the prevalence of physical and verbal threats as a dimension of workplace harassment and they define it as "verbal and physical behaviors that have the aim and/or effect of intimidating people". Working in an environment where you are threatened may induce fear, stress, and anxiety (Mento et al., 2020). Threats can often lead to violence, which in its turn comprises the safety, well-being, and health of the harassed. In conclusion, workplace harassment in all its known dimensions is likely to cause negative psychological consequences and may even cause physical consequences to its victims.

When reviewing literature and finding definitions of workplace harassment, the intent of the harassers is always of high significance, regardless of what dimension of harassment is mentioned. Węziak-Białowolska et al. (2020, p. 2) define workplace harassment as "interpersonal behavior intending to harm another employee in the workplace that takes the form of verbal abuse, violence or sexual harassment and has unequivocally detrimental effects on physical health, mental health, and work performance." Lewis et al. (2002) also state that workplace harassment often involves dysfunctional interactions between individuals by means of intimidating and abusing the target. The assumption is that harassment only happens between two individuals who have a dysfunctional social relationship and that there is a clear intent to hurt the other person when exhibiting acts of harassment. The definition that Naezer et al. (2019) propose is already more based on the behavior of the harassers instead of interpersonal relationships, yet they still assume there is an intent to hurt the other person. This study argues that workplace harassment does not always involve intent, nor does it have to involve a dysfunctional social relationship between the harasser and harassed. Daily comments in the form of jokes, compliments, or criticism can be classified as harassment if they are insensitive to the victim's culture, person, appearance, or beliefs.

To fully understand how workplace harassment manifests itself in daily life, it is important to consider all forms of harassment and acknowledge that not all forms of harassment are intentional. A prime example of harassment without intent is microaggressions which are very prominent in the workplace (Nadal et al., 2014). With microaggression, individuals are very unaware of their biased behavior and some might even have good intentions, yet this is not perceived in such a way (Nadal, 2019). Drawing on the research of Naezer et al. (2019) and adding the aspect that harassment can be unintentional, the following definition of workplace harassment is used in the current study: “unwanted verbal, non-verbal or physical conduct, *intentionally or unintentionally* violating the dignity of a person, and that produces an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment.”

Self-esteem

As mentioned before, self-esteem can be defined as the subjective evaluation of one’s self-worth as a person (Orth & Robins, 2014). For this research, a division will be made between self-esteem in two different forms: personal self-esteem and professional self-esteem. Carmel (1997) makes this distinction based on the assumption that professional self-esteem, as opposed to personal self-esteem, is more subjected to change based on outside influences, or time and phases of life. Personal self-esteem refers to self-esteem in the context of everyday, general life. Professional self-esteem refers to self-esteem when put in the specific context of a work environment. In most research on this topic, self-esteem is not usually divided into multiple dimensions, however, there is research on specific elements of self-esteem, such as personal self-esteem (Heatherton & Polivy, 1991; Orth & Robins, 2014; Orth & Robins, 2022) and the professional self-esteem (Carmel, 1997; Iqbal et al., 2016; Khezerlou, 2017). Instead of researching one of the two, this research will address both dimensions by means of comparing and testing if the two dimensions differ enough to make the distinction in future research as well. Pullmann and Allik (2008) examined the impact of academic self-esteem as opposed to general self-esteem on academic success in an earlier study. They found that high academic self-esteem was a strong and accurate predictor of academic success (Pullmann & Allik, 2008). Low general self-esteem was found to be a significant predictor of academic success as well (Pullmann & Allik, 2008). The distinction that was made is comparable to the distinction that will be made in this research, as it’s a separation of how people feel about themselves in their everyday life versus in an environment where there is an expectation to perform. As shown in Pullmann and Allik (2008), different dimensions of self-esteem don’t always function in the same way when

studying its relationship with outcome variables. This logic is applied to the current study, as while it is expected that the two dimensions of self-esteem will react the same when influenced by workplace harassment, this may not be the case.

Personal self-esteem

Personal self-esteem can be rooted in different aspects of oneself, such as appearance, general performance in life, and social environments (Heatherton & Polivy, 1991; Khezerlou, 2017). There has been some discussion about the benefits of having high self-esteem over the years, but Orth and Robins (2022) have found that having high self-esteem is beneficial for all domains of life. Having high self-esteem means having better relationships with others, performing better at work, having better mental and physical health, and showing less anti-social behavior (Orth & Robins, 2022). From this, it can be concluded that having positive self-esteem is an important factor in having a satisfactory life. It is important to note that while personal self-esteem is derived from within the person, this does not mean outside factors are impossible to influence the view one has of themselves. For example, when people are bullied, their self-esteem declines (Vanderbilt & Augustyn, 2010).

It can be argued that the occurrence of workplace harassment forms a very negative environment for individuals dealing with the harassment, but also for bystanders of the harassment. The negative effects that workplace harassment can have include job dissatisfaction, sickness, emotional exhaustion, and even suicide (Anasori et al., 2019; Astrauskaite & Kern, 2011). Luong and Green (2022) show that workplace harassment has great influence on the mental health of victims. Low mental health can cause issues in their job, in their performance, in their personal life, and so on (Luong & Green, 2022). Therefore, it can be argued that the negative consequences workplace harassment has on one's mental health also extends into one's self-esteem. Based on this, the following hypothesis is constructed:

H1: The level of workplace harassment has a negative effect on the personal self-esteem.

Professional self-esteem

Professional self-esteem is another dimension of self-evaluation. Carmel (1997) defines professional self-esteem as “*an individual's attitude about personal professional competence, performance, and worth along a positive-negative dimension.*”

Work-specific contexts and the abilities that are needed to survive in that context require a level of self-esteem that is not required in any other situation. The pressure of having

to perform, interact with colleagues, answer to superiority and hierarchy, working under strict deadlines, and making sure communication is spot on so nothing goes wrong requires a high level of confidence and self-esteem. Professional self-esteem is related to the importance and values people give to their work and is related to professional adaptation and satisfaction, according to Khezerlou (2017). The effects of low professional self-esteem can be detrimental to one's mental health and their position in the workplace, as is the case with personal self-esteem (Carmel, 1997). Khezerlou (2017) states that individuals with low professional self-esteem have a higher chance of being emotionally vulnerable and are less capable of interacting with colleagues in the workplace. Besides this, they seem to be searching for validation instead of trusting themselves to be able to do their work correctly. The results of the research of Khezerlou (2017) show that low professional self-esteem is also highly correlated with burnouts. It can be said that the effect of low professional self-esteem has a big influence on the course of one's professional life. However, reports of high professional self-esteem have shown to have positive effects on individuals. In a professional context, people are more likely to take risks and challenges, they feel good about themselves, and their work and they are less likely to be shaken up by stressful situations.

Subsequently, the following hypothesis is constructed:

H2: *The level of workplace harassment has a negative effect on the professional self-esteem.*

The correlation between personal and professional self-esteem

While personal and professional self-esteem are two different dimensions of self-esteem, little is known about the relationship between the two. Carmel (1997) assumes that professional self-esteem correlates with global self-esteem and even that professional self-esteem is influenced by global self-esteem. This could mean that if an individual's personal self-esteem is affected by workplace harassment, their professional self-esteem could be negatively impacted because they might feel less competent as a person. If this is the case, it could also be the other way around. This would mean that individuals who experience workplace harassment may perceive themselves as less competent and less valued in their professional role, which in turn can negatively affect their personal self-esteem like any outside factor would. Because the two dimensions are expected to correlate, but because of the unclarity of how the two are correlated, two additional hypotheses are constructed in this research.

H3a: *The relationship between workplace harassment and personal self-esteem is mediated by professional self-esteem.*

H3b: *The relationship between workplace harassment and professional self-esteem is mediated by personal self-esteem.*

Conceptual model

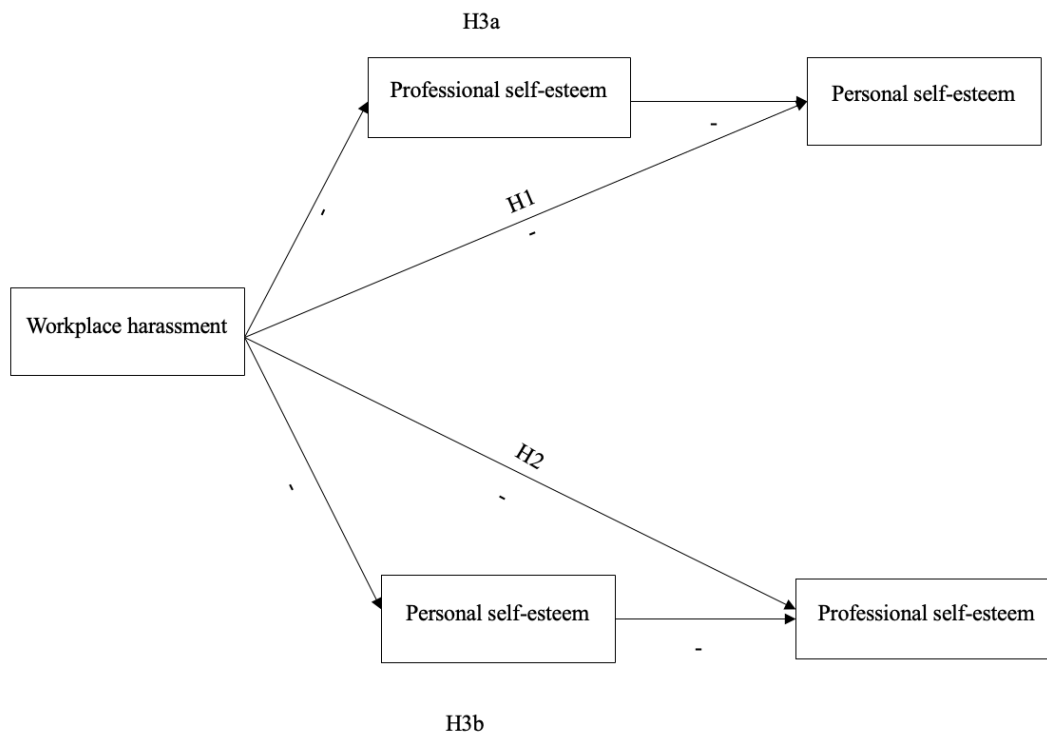


Figure 1: Conceptual model

Methods

In the following section, the research design is explained, as well as the method for data collection, the selected sample, used method of data analysis, and the limitations of the research. Lastly, research ethics are considered.

Research design

To answer the research question and test the hypotheses, a cross-sectional quantitative study was conducted. The reason for this choice is that all concepts are to be statistically tested to find a correlation between them. Workplace harassment is hypothesized to be

influencing different dimensions of self-esteem. Because the interest lies in finding causal relationships between these concepts, quantitative research is the most appropriate (Field, 2018). The measurement has taken place at a single point in time, meaning it has measured the relationship between the variables at that specific point in time.

Sample

The survey was constructed in Qualtrics. It was distributed through a direct link via social media, text, a professional intra-net, and e-mail. The aim was to get a diverse sample of respondents that could provide an intersectional view of the data. In total, 180 respondents filled in the survey. Not all respondents filled in the questionnaire entirely. Respondents that filled in less than 90% of the survey were deleted from the dataset. That led to the final number of respondents of 146 used in the analysis. The average age of the respondents was 32 and their sexual orientation was predominantly heterosexual (78.2%, $N = 115$). Over half of the respondents were women (69.4%, $N = 102$) and the rest were men (29.9%, $N = 44$). 92.5% ($N = 136$) of the respondents recorded no previous physical or mental limitations in their work, 4.1% reported mental limitations ($N = 6$), 2.7% reported a physical limitation ($N = 4$) and one person reported having both a mental and physical limitation in their job (.7%). Most respondents were Dutch (99.3%, $N = 145$). 6.1 % of respondents recorded they had a migration background. Backgrounds included Afghan, Antillean, Curacao, Italian Cape Verdean, and Moroccan. Lastly, the current employment situation, the sector they work in, and the position they have in the company were questioned. Most respondents work a part-time job (1-39 hours a week) (76.9%, $N = 113$). Healthcare (27.9%, $N = 41$) was the predominant sector, and employee (59.2%, $N = 87$) was the most frequent position held at their companies. In Table 1 an overview of the descriptive statistics of the sample can be found.

Table 1

Descriptive statistics of the sample

| Characteristics | | Frequencies | Percentage (%) |
|--------------------|---------|-------------|----------------|
| Gender | Male | 44 | 29.9 |
| | Female | 102 | 69.4 |
| Sexual orientation | Gay | 8 | 5.4 |
| | Lesbian | 3 | 2.0 |

| | | | |
|------------------------------|--------------------------------|-------|------|
| | Bisexual | 14 | 9.5 |
| | Pansexual | 2 | 1.4 |
| | Heterosexual | 115 | 78.2 |
| | I don't know yet | 3 | 2.0 |
| | Other | 2 | 1.4 |
| Age | Mean | 32.13 | |
| | SD | 12.13 | |
| Limitations in one's work | Mental | 6 | 4.1 |
| | Physical | 4 | 2.7 |
| | Both | 1 | .7 |
| | Neither | 136 | 92.5 |
| Nationality | Dutch | 146 | 99.3 |
| | Dutch/ Taiwanese | 1 | .7 |
| Migration background | Yes | 9 | 6.1 |
| | No | 138 | 93.9 |
| Employment situation | Job, 1-39 employed | 113 | 76.9 |
| | Job, 40 hours or more employed | 25 | 17.0 |
| | No job, searching | 5 | 3.4 |
| | No job, not searching | 2 | 1.4 |
| | Pensioned | 1 | .7 |
| Position held at the company | Manager / CEO | 25 | 17 |
| | Employee | 87 | 59.2 |

| | | |
|-------------------------|----|-----|
| Assistant / Student job | 22 | 15 |
| Intern | 6 | 4.1 |
| Other | 6 | 4.1 |

Measuring instrument

To measure the different concepts, an online questionnaire was used, which was constructed in Qualtrics (Appendix 1). This questionnaire consisted of an aggregate of multiple different well-established measuring scales (see below). Three main variables were central in this research: workplace harassment, personal self-esteem, and professional self-esteem. Besides this, multiple demographical and control variables were considered and questioned in the questionnaire. Respondents also had the option to leave a comment at the end of the survey. All scale items were translated into Dutch, as the data was collected among Dutch respondents. To establish validity within the scales, exploratory factor analysis was conducted on the scale of workplace harassment as this scale was constructed of a validated scale with the addition of items from a microaggression scale. Additionally, exploratory factor analyses were conducted on the scales of personal- and professional self-esteem as these scales were used as they were validated.

Workplace harassment

The measure for workplace harassment was partly constructed through the Negative Acts Questionnaire–Revised (Erwandi et al., 2021). The NAQ-R (Erwandi et al., 2021) is a validated list of twenty-two items that covers the psychological and physical aspects of workplace harassment. It is one of the most widely used scales to measure workplace harassment and it was constructed to encompass work and person-related bullying (Erwandi et al., 2021). It covers exclusion, humiliation, physical abuse, and subtle aggressions in the form of jokes. The intent of the harasser is not always clear, meaning it could be intentional or unintentional behavior. The twenty-two questions items are posed as answers to the question “Over the last six months, how often have you been subjected to the following negative acts at work?”. A five-point scale is presented ranging from never to daily. An example of an item is: “Hints or signals from others that you should quit your job”. The scale has been used in over 100 different studies in at least 40 different countries (Erwandi et al., 2021) and has been validated repeatedly in those studies.

Besides the NAQ-R (Erwandi et al., 2021), the intended measurement needed to cover unintentional harassment, such as microaggressions. To cover this, twelve items from the

Multiracial Microaggressions scale (Meyers et al., 2020) were used. The scale originally has 16 items, some of which were not appropriate to use in a study about harassment in the workplace specifically, because they were constructed around the concept of family. Some items were adjusted to fit the current study better. For example, “Made to feel I did not belong because of my multiracial appearance” was adjusted to “Made to feel I did not belong because of my race, gender, sexuality, or ability. The reason for the adjustment was to include other minorities who might experience microaggressions. As such, adding this scale to the NAQ-R (Erwandi et al., 2021) to measure workplace harassment as one concept, made that once validated scales are now adjusted in such a matter that they have to be validated again. This was done by a factor and reliability analysis. In total thirty-four items were tested in one exploratory factor analysis. All communalities were above 0.20, ranging from 0.40 to 0.80. Based on the eigenvalue and the scree plot, the component analysis provided six different components. Items Q26_1, Q26_8, Q17_2, Q17_4, and Q17_9 had to be deleted because they were either a double loader on two components or they had a loading of $< |0.40|$ on any of the components. The output of this analysis can be found in Table 5 of the appendix.

Each of the component’s reliability was analyzed through SPSS. Component one was constructed of fifteen items had had a Cronbach’s α of .86, indicating high reliability. Component two was constructed of five items and had a Cronbach’s α of .80, indicating high reliability. Neither of the reliability scores would increase upon deleting one or more items. Component three (four items; $\alpha = 0.58$), component four (two items; $\alpha = 0.52$), component five (one item), and component six (two items, $\alpha = 0.07$) were all found to be extremely unreliable, excluding them from further analysis. After the factor and reliability analysis, the mean score of the fifteen items for component one and the five items for component two were calculated to be included in the analysis as the independent variables. An overview of the factors can be found in Table 2. Factor one seems to be a clear descriptor of workplace harassment in the original concept of the scale. Factor two seems to be a descriptor of microaggressions.

Personal self-esteem

The dependent variable Personal self-esteem was measured by using The Rosenberg self-esteem scale as mentioned in Pullmann and Allik (2008). The Rosenberg self-esteem scale (Pullmann & Allik, 2008) contains ten items that are questioned on a four-point Likert scale on how one feels about themselves by proposing positive and negative statements. The answers range from strongly agree to strongly disagree. An example of one item is: “On the

whole, I am satisfied with myself'. Some items (i.e., 2, 5, 6, 8, and 9) were worded negatively, which meant that the answer options of these items had to be reverse-coded in SPSS before conducting a factor analysis.

By conducting a factor analysis, it was found that all communalities were above 0.20, ranging from 0.50 to 0.80. Based on the eigenvalues and the scree plot, the factor analysis provided two different factors in this scale. The first factor describes the negative side of personal self-esteem, and the second factor describes the positive side of personal self-esteem. Because the explained variance was unclear on some factor loadings and the assumption that there was a theoretical correlation between the two factors, the axis of the factor analysis was rotated with the Oblimin rotation method. This also revealed two factors, yet with a much clearer distinction of which items loaded on which factors. All items loaded significantly on one factor, meaning that no items were deleted before the reliability analysis was conducted. An overview of this analysis, including the factor loadings before and after rotation can be found in Appendix 2. For the first factor, consisting of six items, Cronbach's α was .86, concluding a high internal consistency for these items. For the second factor, which consisted of four items, the Cronbach's α was .79, which is just below being internally consistent, yet not low enough to disregard the factor entirely. No items had to be deleted to strengthen the internal consistency. Lastly, the mean of the items was calculated for both factors, resulting in two variables that were used for the analysis. An overview of both factors can be found in Table 2. The output of this analysis can be found in Table 6 in the appendix.

Professional self-esteem

For the dependent variable Professional self-esteem, a 16-item scale was used, The Professional self-esteem scale (Khezerlou, 2017). The scale questions respondents on their self-esteem in a professional environment by presenting a four-point Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree. An error was made in the construction of the questionnaire, resulting in the use of only the first 13 items of the scale. Because the scale is missing three items, it is even more important to ensure the scale's construct validity. Therefore, exploratory factor analysis is appropriate.

All communalities were above 0.20, ranging from 0.20 to 0.65. Based on the scree plot and the eigenvalues, three factors were extracted after the rotation of the axis with the Oblimin rotation method. The first factor, consisting of six items, had a relatively high internal consistency with a Cronbach's α of 0.760. No items had to be deleted to strengthen the internal consistency. The other two factors, both consisting of two items, had a very low

internal consistency with a Cronbach's α of 0.50 for the second factor and a Cronbach's α of 0.48 for the third factor. Both factors were left out of any further analyses. Lastly, the mean of the six items of the first factor was calculated, resulting in a variable fit to use for the analysis. The full output of the factor analysis can be found in Table 7 of the appendix. An overview of all factors that resulted from the factor analyses can be found in Table 2.

Table 2

Overview of factors

| Factor | Reliability (Cronbach's α) | Mean |
|---|---|-------------|
| Factor one: Workplace harassment | .86 | 1.28 |
| Factor two: Microaggressions | .80 | 1.07 |
| Factor one: Negative personal self-esteem | .86 | 3.01 |
| Factor two: Positive personal self-esteem | .79 | 3.42 |
| Professional self-esteem | .79 | 3.18 |

Control variables

As mentioned, when describing the sample, several demographical items were added to the questionnaire, making it possible to do any additional analyses and check for any other unexpected effects. The control variables were gender, sexual orientation, age in years, nationality, mental or physical limitations in their work, whether the respondent had a migration background and if so, what background that was, and lastly employment status and position in the company. The aim of the control variables was to be able to check for intersectionality in the data and in the analysis. For example, a respondent's migration background may influence their experience with microaggressions.

Research ethics

Workplace harassment can be a sensitive topic for some respondents, and it is important to ensure respondents that the sensitive information they are disclosing when filling out the questionnaire is completely anonymous. Measures were taken to ensure the ethical side of this research is addressed properly (Sekaran, 2016). Before filling out the questionnaire, respondents had to give an informed consent. This was done by the respondents reading the introduction with an explanation about the research and agreeing that if they went on to fill out the survey, they had given informed consent. Upon opening the link to the

questionnaire, a short summary of the research is given. To ensure the respondents knew what was expected of them as well as being aware of the relevance of the research, the summary of the research contains information on workplace harassment and its possible effects.

Respondents were given the opportunity to leave a comment if they had any and they also received my university e-mail address, should they have had any complaints or comments they wanted to address to me directly. No substantive comments were made, as they were all informal comments by means of wishing the researcher good luck. Lastly, they were made aware that they are able and allowed to stop at any given time during the questionnaire, without consequences as well as being able to leave any question unanswered if they felt uncomfortable in doing so.

Analysis

The analysis of the data started with a check for missing values and outliers within the variables. Most items either had the option to leave the questions unanswered or an option of 'prefer not to answer'. These all had to be coded as missing values. For the unanswered question, a choice was made to include responses where at least 90% of the questions were answered, to be able to perform the measurements across all the variables. 'Prefer not to say' was coded as a missing value in all items, to make sure these values were left out of the analyses. To test if the dependent and independent variables are correlated, three separate multiple regression analyses were conducted. One for each of the separate dependent variables. After performing these analyses, additional analyses were conducted to determine whether personal- and professional self-esteem had a mediating effect on the correlation between workplace harassment and respectively professional- and personal self-esteem. Besides this, the control variables were used in exploratory analyses to find any additional results.

Results

The following paragraph will discuss the results of the current study. To give a better view of the data that was used in the analyses, the means and standard deviations of the main variables will be discussed. Besides this, some noteworthy intersectional information about the variables is discussed. Afterward, the tested hypotheses and the additional analyses are discussed.

Descriptive statistics

The following paragraph presents the results of the current study. Descriptive statistics were initially examined to provide a better understanding of the data used in the analyses. The mean and standard deviation for each variable were calculated, as well as the correlations of all variables, which can be found in Table 3 below. Workplace Harassment had a mean of 1.28 (SD = 0.32) and Micro Aggressions had a mean of 1.07 (SD = 0.26). In total, 83.7% of respondents reported having experienced some form of workplace harassment. Only 17% of respondents reported having experienced microaggressions. For Personal self-esteem, the Negative Personal Self-Esteem variable had a mean of 3.01 (SD = 0.61) and the Positive Self-Esteem variable had a mean of 3.42 (SD = 0.46). Additionally, the mean of Professional Self-Esteem was found to be 3.18 (SD = 0.45). On average, men reported more experiences with workplace harassment with $M = 1.33$ for men and $M = 1.26$ for women. This was also the case for Microaggressions with $M = 1.14$ for men and $M = 1.04$ for women. Besides this, men also reported higher levels of confidence than women. On Negative Personal Self-Esteem, men reported a mean of 3.16, whereas women reported a mean of 2.96. On Positive Personal Self-Esteem, men reported a mean of 3.57, whereas women reported a mean of 3.35. Lastly on Professional Self-Esteem, men reported a mean of 3.24, whereas women reported a mean of 3.15. Also, respondents who report to be homosexual have also reported higher levels of experiencing microaggressions with a mean of 1.5, as opposed to respondents who reported to be lesbian ($M = 1.07$), pansexual ($M = 1.1$), bisexual ($M = 1.03$), heterosexual ($M = 1.05$), unknowing ($M = 1.0$) or any other sexuality ($M = 1.0$). Finally, there seems to be no significant differences in groups based on limitations in one's work, migration background, position at work, or sector one works in. Tested hypotheses and additional analyses are discussed to further explore the relationships between the variables.

Table 3: Means, standard deviations and correlations of the included variables

| | M | SD | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 7 | 9 | 10 | 12 |
|---|------|-----|---------|--------|--------|--------|-------|-------|------|------|----|
| 1. Workplace harassment | 1.28 | .32 | 1 | | | | | | | | |
| 2. Microaggressions | 1.07 | .26 | .211* | 1 | | | | | | | |
| 3. Negative personal self-esteem | 3.01 | .61 | -.235** | -.084 | 1 | | | | | | |
| 4. Positive personal self-esteem | 3.42 | .46 | -.130 | .008 | .475** | 1 | | | | | |
| 5. Professional self-esteem | 3.18 | .45 | .005 | -.042 | .248** | .449** | 1 | | | | |
| 7. Physical or mental limitations in one's work | 3.83 | .62 | -.118 | -.010 | .018 | -.068 | .128 | 1 | | | |
| 9. Migration background | 1.94 | .24 | .056 | -.062 | .064 | -.124 | -.111 | .113 | 1 | | |
| 10. Current employment situation | 1.31 | .67 | .279** | .332** | -.004 | -.033 | .013 | -.005 | .076 | 1 | |
| 12. Position in company | 3.18 | .91 | .058 | .172* | -.146 | -.183* | -.100 | .044 | .084 | .066 | 1 |

Note: * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$

Testing the hypotheses

Two hypotheses were tested in several separate tests through multiple regression analysis. The mediation effects were tested through the PROCESS macro model on SPSS (Hayes, 2017).

Workplace Harassment and Microaggressions on Personal Self-Esteem

The first hypothesis was: *The occurrence of workplace harassment has a negative effect on the personal self-esteem.* To test this hypothesis, two multiple regression analyses were conducted, the first one with Negative Personal Self-Esteem as the dependent variable and the second one with Positive Personal Self-Esteem as the dependent variable. For the first analysis, Workplace Harassment and Microaggressions were tested as the independent variables that predict Negative Personal Self-Esteem. According to the results of the regression analysis, Workplace Harassment had a significant negative effect on Negative Personal Self-Esteem 1 ($\beta = -.429$, $t(144) = -2.748$, $p = .007$). However, Microaggressions had no significant effect on Negative Personal Self-Esteem 1 ($\beta = -.084$, $t(144) = -.431$, $p = .667$). Similarly, Workplace Harassment showed no significant effect on Positive Personal Self-Esteem 2 ($\beta = -.199$, $t(144) = -1.635$, $p = .104$), as did Microaggressions ($\beta = .066$, $t(144) = .435$, $p = .664$).

Concluded can be that only psychological workplace harassment has a slight negative effect on the negative dimension of personal self-esteem. Therefore, hypothesis one can be partly accepted.

Workplace Harassment and Microaggressions on Professional Self-Esteem

The second hypothesis was: *The occurrence of workplace harassment has a negative effect on the professional self-esteem.* To test this hypothesis, a multiple regression analysis was conducted to test if Workplace Harassment and Microaggressions had a direct effect on Professional Self-Esteem. The analysis showed no significant effect of Workplace Harassment on Professional Self-esteem ($\beta = .020$, $t(140) = .170$, $p = .866$), as well as no significant effect of Microaggressions on Professional Self-Esteem ($\beta = -.076$, $t(144) = -.045$, $p = .606$). Therefore, hypothesis two is rejected.

Workplace harassment to professional self-esteem to personal self-esteem

The first part of the third hypothesis was: *The relationship between workplace harassment and personal self-esteem is mediated by professional self-esteem.* To test this hypothesis, four multiple regression and mediation analyses were conducted through the PROCESS model on

SPSS (Hayes, 2018) to test if professional self-esteem might mediate the relationship between workplace harassment and personal self-esteem.

First, the mediation model with Workplace Harassment as the independent variable, Professional Self-Esteem as the mediating variable, and Negative Personal Self-Esteem as the dependent variable was tested. The analysis showed significant result in the overall model ($R^2 = 0.111$, $F(2, 140) = 8.737$, $p = .000$), however, the indirect effect of Workplace Harassment through professional self-esteem on Negative Personal Self-Esteem is insignificant as evidenced by the 95% bias-corrected bootstrap confidence interval including zero ($[-.086, .079]$). Therefore, the mediation model is rejected.

Second, the mediation model with Workplace Harassment as the independent variable, Professional Self-Esteem as the mediating variable, and Positive Personal Self-Esteem as the dependent variable was tested. The analysis showed significant result in the overall model ($R^2 = 0.218$, $F(2, 140) = 19.461$, $p = .000$), however, the indirect effect of Workplace harassment on Professional Self-Esteem on Positive Personal Self-Esteem is insignificant as evidenced by the 95% bias-corrected bootstrap confidence interval including zero ($[-.113, .102]$). Therefore, the mediation model is rejected.

Third, the mediation model with Microaggressions as the independent variable, Professional Self-Esteem as the mediating variable, and Negative Personal Self-Esteem as the dependent variable was tested. The analysis showed insignificant result in the overall model ($R^2 = .006$, $F(1, 141) = .813$, $p = .369$). The indirect effect is also insignificant, as evidenced by the 95% bias-corrected bootstrap confidence interval including zero ($[-.100, .238]$). Therefore, the mediation model is rejected.

Lastly, the mediation model with Microaggressions as the independent variable, Professional Self-Esteem as the mediating variable, and Positive Personal Self-Esteem was tested. The analysis shows insignificant result in the overall model ($R^2 = .000$, $F(1, 141) = .042$, $p = .838$). The indirect effect is also insignificant, as evidenced by the 95% bias-corrected bootstrap confidence interval including zero ($[-.117, .343]$). Therefore, the mediation model is rejected.

As shown by the analyses, hypothesis 3a is rejected.

Workplace harassment to personal self-esteem to professional self-esteem

The second part of the third hypothesis was: *The relationship between workplace harassment and professional self-esteem is mediated by personal self-esteem.* To test this hypothesis, two multiple regression and mediation analyses were conducted through the

PROCESS model on SPSS (Hayes, 2017) to test if personal self-esteem might mediate the relationship between workplace harassment and professional self-esteem.

First, the mediation model with Workplace Harassment as the independent variable, Negative Personal Self-Esteem, and Positive Personal Self-Esteem as the mediating variables, and Professional Self-Esteem as the dependent variable was tested. The analysis showed insignificant result in the overall model ($R^2 = .000$, $F(1, 141) = .004$, $p = .950$). The separate indirect effects of Workplace Harassment on Negative Personal Self-Esteem and Positive Personal Self-Esteem to Professional Self-Esteem are also insignificant as evidenced by the 95% bias-corrected bootstrap confidence interval including zero ($[-.088, .032]$) for Negative Personal Self-Esteem as mediator and ($[-.187, .011]$) for Positive Personal Self-Esteem as mediator. Therefore, the mediation model is rejected.

Second, the mediation model with Microaggressions as the independent variable, Negative Personal Self-Esteem, and Positive Personal Self-Esteem as the mediating variables, and Professional Self-Esteem as the dependent variable was tested. The analysis showed insignificant result in the overall model ($R^2 = .002$, $F(1, 141) = .245$, $p = .622$). The separate indirect effects of Microaggressions to Negative Personal Self-Esteem and Positive Personal Self-Esteem to Professional Self-Esteem are also insignificant as evidenced by the 95% bias-corrected bootstrap confidence interval including zero ($[-.070, .023]$) for Negative Personal Self-Esteem as mediator and ($[-.126, .273]$) for Positive Personal Self-Esteem as mediator. Therefore, the mediation model is rejected.

As shown by the analyses, hypothesis 3b is rejected.

Additional analyses

The direct effect of workplace harassment and microaggressions on personal and professional self-esteem was mostly found insignificant. To rule out any other explanation, some additional analyses were conducted. In these analyses, the direct effects of the two main hypotheses were reversed. This meant taking Negative and Positive Personal Self-Esteem, and Professional Self-Esteem as the independent variables to see if they have an effect on the dependent variables of Workplace Harassment and Microaggressions.

The first analyses included Negative and Positive Personal Self-Esteem, and Professional Self-Esteem as the independent variables and Workplace Harassment as the dependent variable. While the overall model is significant ($R^2 = .056$, $F(3, 142) = 2.723$, $p = .047$), only Negative Personal Self-Esteem has a significant effect on Workplace Harassment

($\beta = -.114$ $t(142) = -2.280$, $p = .024$). This means that when someone has fewer negative thoughts about themselves, their self-esteem is higher, and workplace harassment goes down.

The second analysis included Negative and Positive Personal Self-Esteem, and Professional Self-Esteem as the independent variables and Microaggressions as the dependent variable. The analysis showed no significant result in the overall model ($R^2 = .012$ $F(3, 142) = .552$, $p = .648$), as well as in the separate coefficients. Therefore, no effect could be found.

Discussion

The aim of this research was to gain insight into the relationship between workplace harassment and personal and professional self-esteem in order to provide a more comprehensive and accurate understanding of the different types of mental consequences workplace harassment can have. The following research question was addressed: "To what extent does the level of workplace harassment influence the personal and professional self-esteem of the targets of such harassment?". By further elaborating on the findings of the current study in this chapter, insight can be gained into the impact of workplace harassment on the self-esteem of individuals who experience such treatment in the workplace. Interpretations of the result will be discussed as well as practical implications of the results. Additionally, recommendations for future research will be provided. Although there are few significant results from this study, the scientific relevance still exists in the refining of existing theories and the challenging of existing assumptions, providing valuable insight for researchers to advance scientific understanding of the concepts of workplace harassment and self-esteem and the relationship between those concepts.

Interpretations of the result and contributions to theory

The results of this study provide valuable insight into the relationship between workplace harassment, personal self-esteem, and professional self-esteem. Respondents reported moderate levels of workplace harassment, with psychological harassment occurring slightly more on average than microaggressions. In terms of self-esteem, respondents reported having moderate to very high self-esteem ($M = 3.42$ and $M = 3.01$), as well as a very high level of professional self-esteem ($M = 3.18$).

For the first hypothesis, the results indicated that workplace harassment had a significant negative effect on the negative dimension of personal self-esteem, supporting the first hypothesis. The additional analyses showed that this effect can also be reversed. However, the effect of workplace harassment on the positive dimension of personal self-esteem was not significant. This means that negative feelings one might have about

themselves are directly affected and made worse by the experience of workplace harassment. However, there is no evidence that workplace harassment diminishes any positive feelings one has about themselves. This result might be explained by self-verification theory (Booth et al., 2019), which states that individuals have a desire for consistency in their self-concept and when that is challenged, they might defend themselves against outside influences. Workplace harassment is perceived as an act that attacks the negative sides of one's self-esteem. When one already thinks negatively about oneself, it might be easier to provoke stronger emotional responses with workplace harassment, as it might be more difficult to defend oneself internally against the negative self-concept one already has. In contrast, individuals that have a positive self-concept might find that workplace harassment does not verify the concept they have of themselves, rather it challenges it. When one has a strong sense of positive self-regard, it might not be as easily undermined by external factors such as workplace harassment.

The same logic can also be applied when interpreting the result of the reversed analysis of personal self-esteem on workplace harassment. Results show that negative personal self-esteem correlates negatively with workplace harassment. This means that when someone's self-esteem is higher because they have fewer negative thoughts about themselves, workplace harassment goes down. When one has high self-esteem, they might not perceive certain actions as harassment, but others may perceive it as harassment. A strong sense of positive self may influence the perception of the actions of others against oneself.

For the second hypothesis, there were no significant effects found of workplace harassment or microaggressions on professional self-esteem. This means that there is no evidence that the experience of workplace harassment, affects the way one feels about themselves professionally in any way. Additionally, the mediation analysis revealed that neither professional self-esteem nor personal self-esteem mediated the relationship between workplace harassment and the respective self-esteem dimensions. As mentioned in Carmel (1997), professional self-esteem and general self-esteem are assumed to be correlated. This study shows no evidence of that assumption. However, based on this study alone, it cannot be concluded that there is no such correlation. Further testing would have to be done, as this study was conducted on a small scale and the measure for professional self-esteem was incomplete in the survey. Further explanations for the insignificant effect of workplace harassment on professional self-esteem might be that the harassment people experience at work might not be targeted at work-related tasks. If the harassment is targeted at the person, not their work, professional self-esteem might not be compromised.

These findings suggest that while workplace harassment may influence the negative aspect of self-esteem, its impact on the positive aspect of self-esteem and on professional self-esteem appears to be limited. The results contribute to existing theory in that the relevance of considering different dimensions of self-esteem is questionable and requires further research. Besides this, a methodical and theoretical contribution has been made to the advancement of the definition and measurement of workplace harassment. By adding microaggressions as a dimension of workplace harassment, this study has developed a more well-rounded definition and measuring construct for workplace harassment. By acknowledging that workplace harassment does not always have to happen with intent and adding microaggression as a dimension to the construct, this study has built upon existing literature to develop a new definition, construct, and measuring scale for workplace harassment.

Limitations and directions for future research

There are several limitations in this study that must be taken into consideration when interpreting the results. First of which is the sample size of this study. The total sum of respondents amounted to 146, which is relatively small for the conceptual model that is being measured, especially when measuring mediation models. This could explain why only half of one hypothesis measured a significant effect. Suggestion for future research would be to take a much greater sample size, especially when making a distinction between different dimensions of self-esteem.

The second limitation is the method of sampling. In this study, convenience sampling was used to find suitable respondents. This means that the survey was distributed through the researcher's own network and in the network of people surrounding them. This non-random sampling style had a great effect on the intersectionality of this study. Most respondents were Dutch, had no physical or mental limitations in their work, and had no migration background. As such, the intersectionality was found to be very low. Not much could be said about minority groups and their experience with workplace harassment and self-esteem. However, on average, gay men do report higher levels of microaggressions. It would be interesting to research this further. A suggestion for further research would be to critical review of intersectionality in workplace harassment experiences. Later research might build on that to link self-esteem back to the experience of workplace harassment in minority groups.

The next limitation is in the questionnaire. The questionnaire was constructed out of four main scales, where the workplace harassment scale was added to the microaggression scale. The microaggression scale was adjusted to fit the current study better, adjusting

sentences and removing items that seemed to be irrelevant to the current study. Besides this, when joining two scales together, they are no longer validated. While the professional self-esteem scale was validated, an error was made in the construction of the scale on QUALTRICS, resulting in the use of only 13 out of 16 items, also making this scale no longer validated. Lastly, the entire questionnaire was translated into Dutch. Any translation error or misunderstanding of the intended items might have led to incorrect or inconsistent answers. This could also explain why almost no significant results were found. A suggestion for future research is to construct and validate a scale for workplace harassment, where the acts of harassment are not always intentional.

Scientific and societal relevance

Understanding the impact of workplace harassment on the self-esteem of individuals does not only have scientific relevance but also some practical implications for organizations as well as societal relevance. The following section will elaborate on the scientific relevance and on two practical implications that highlight the societal relevance. This can help to guide the development and implementation of interventions and policies that aim to create work environments free of behavior such as workplace harassment.

Scientifically, this research contributes to the advancement of the construct of workplace harassment. As was mentioned in the contribution to theory, the incorporation of unintentional harassment expands the understanding and measurement of workplace harassment, providing a more comprehensive perspective. This addition allows for a more nuanced assessment of workplace harassment experiences, leading to a better understanding of its effects on individuals' self-esteem.

Regarding the distinction between different dimensions of self-esteem, the study's results do not demonstrate a significant relevance. However, considering the study's limitations, it is important to note that this does not definitively indicate a lack of relevance. The importance lies in conducting future research with an adequate sample, to find significant results to prove whether the two dimensions react differently to the same independent variables. This exploration would further contribute to the understanding of the different dimensions of self-esteem and how they act in relationship with external factors such as workplace harassment.

While the results show no significant effect of unintentional workplace harassment, mainly microaggressions, on self-esteem in any form, it is important to note its existence. This study helps deepen the knowledge and awareness of different types of workplace harassment,

which in its turn helps to develop comprehensive anti-harassment policies and training. Raising awareness of such harassment can only help to create an environment where employees feel safe and valued.

Next, the knowledge that workplace harassment negatively influences any negative feelings one might already have about themselves, emphasizes the importance of well-being in the workplace. Fostering a positive and inclusive organizational culture should be leadership's top priority in any company. By promoting diversity, teamwork, and collaboration, leaders can create an environment where employees feel supported, respected, valued, and, most of all, safe. This can ultimately contribute to higher levels of self-esteem among employees as well.

The practical implications of these results shine a light on the importance of tackling issues of workplace harassment proactively. The societal relevance lies in promoting broader awareness and social responsibility. Preventing and addressing issues that arise appropriately can mitigate any negative effects that may arise when experiencing workplace harassment. By prioritizing a safe work environment, organizations can create a positive work climate that promotes the professional and personal self-esteem of all employees.

Conclusion

This study aimed to answer the question: *“To what extent does the level of workplace harassment influence the personal and professional self-esteem of the targets of such harassment?”*. Three hypotheses were constructed to answer this question. The first hypothesis, workplace harassment has a negative influence on personal self-esteem, was only partly accepted. Workplace harassment was found to have a negative impact on negative personal self-esteem. The second hypothesis, workplace harassment has a negative influence on professional self-esteem, was rejected. No significant results were found. The third hypothesis had two parts. Part one, the relationship between workplace harassment and personal self-esteem mediated by professional self-esteem, was rejected. No significant results were found. The second part of the third hypothesis, the relationship between workplace harassment and professional self-esteem is mediated by personal self-esteem, was also rejected. No significant results were found. In the additional analyses, it was found that negative personal self-esteem also has a significant effect on workplace harassment. While this was not hypothesized, it does give insight into the relationship between workplace harassment and self-esteem. In conclusion, this research sheds light on the impact workplace

harassment can have on self-esteem and provides valuable insight for the future development of theory.

Bibliography

- Alrawadieh, Z., Demirdelen Alrawadieh, D., Olya, H. G. T., Erkol Bayram, G., & Kahraman, O. C. (2021). Sexual harassment, psychological well-being, and job satisfaction of female tour guides: the effects of social and organizational support. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, 30(7), 1639-1657.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/09669582.2021.1879819>
- Anasori, E., Bayighomog, S. W., & Tanova, C. (2019). Workplace bullying, psychological distress, resilience, mindfulness, and emotional exhaustion. *The Service Industries Journal*, 40(1-2), 65-89. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02642069.2019.1589456>
- Astrauskaite, M., & Kern, R. M. (2011). A lifestyle perspective on potential victims of workplace harassment. *Journal of Individual Psychology*, 67(4), 420-431.
- Basford, T. E., Offermann, L. R., & Behrend, T. S. (2013). Do you see what I see? Perceptions of gender microaggressions in the workplace. *Psychology of Women Quarterly*, 38(3), 340-349. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0361684313511420>
- Bhattacharyya, R. (2018). # Metoo movement: An awareness campaign. *International Journal of Innovation, Creativity and Change*, 3(4).
- Booth, J. E., Shantz, A., Glomb, T. M., Duffy, M. K., & Stillwell, E. E. (2019). Bad bosses and self-verification: The moderating role of core self-evaluations with trust in workplace management. *Human Resource Management*, 59(2), 135-152.
<https://doi.org/10.1002/hrm.21982>
- Carmel, S. (1997). The professional self-esteem of physicians scale, structure, properties, and the relationship to work outcomes and life satisfaction. *Psychological Reports*, 80, 591 - 602.
- Erwandi, D., Kadir, A., & Lestari, F. (2021). Identification of workplace bullying: Reliability and validity of Indonesian version of the Negative Acts Questionnaire-Revised (NAQ-R). *Int J Environ Res Public Health*, 18(8). <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph18083985>
- Field, A. (2018). *Discovering statistics using IBM SPSS Statistics*. SAGE Publications.
- Hayes, A. F. (2017). *Introduction to mediation, moderation, and conditional process analysis: A regression-based approach*. Guilford publications.

- Henning, M. A., Zhou, C., Adams, P., Moir, F., Hobson, J., Hallett, C., & Webster, C. S. (2017). Workplace harassment among staff in higher education: a systematic review. *Asia Pacific Education Review, 18*(4), 521-539. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12564-017-9499-0>
- Hersch, J. (2015). Sexual harassment in the workplace. *IZA World of Labor*. <https://doi.org/10.15185/izawol.188>
- Iqbal, H. M., Bibi, F., & Gul, A. (2016). Adaptation and validation of Aricak's Professional Self-Esteem Scale for use in the Pakistani context. *The European Journal of Social & Behavioural Sciences, 16*(2), 111-121. <https://doi.org/10.15405/ejsbs.185>
- Khezerlou, E. (2017). Professional self-esteem as a predictor of teacher burnout across Iranian and Turkish EFL teachers. *Iranian Journal of Language Teaching Research, 5*(1), 113-130.
- Lewis, J., Coursol, D., & Wahl, K. H. (2002). Addressing issues of workplace harassment: counseling the targets. *Journal of Employment Counseling, 39*(3), 109-116. <https://doi.org/10.1002/j.2161-1920.2002.tb00842.x>
- Luong, A. D., & Green, C. A. (2022). Mental health and harassment in the workplace. *J Emerg Nurs*. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jen.2022.09.011>
- Mento, C., Silvestri, M. C., Bruno, A., Muscatello, M. R. A., Cedro, C., Pandolfo, G., & Zoccali, R. A. (2020). Workplace violence against healthcare professionals: A systematic review. *Aggression and Violent Behavior, 51*. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.avb.2020.101381>
- Meyers, C., Aumer, K., Schoniwitz, A., Janicki, C., Pauker, K., Chang, E. C., Gaither, S. E., & Williams, A. (2020). Experiences with microaggressions and discrimination in racially diverse and homogeneously white contexts. *Cultur Divers Ethnic Minor Psychol, 26*(2), 250-259. <https://doi.org/10.1037/cdp0000293>
- Nadal, K. L. (2019). A Decade of Microaggression Research and LGBTQ Communities: An Introduction to the Special Issue. *J Homosex, 66*(10), 1309-1316. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00918369.2018.1539582>
- Nadal, K. L., Griffin, K. E., Wong, Y., Hamit, S., & Rasmus, M. (2014). The Impact of racial microaggressions on mental health: Counseling implications for clients of color. *Journal of Counseling & Development, 92*(1), 57-66. <https://doi.org/10.1002/j.1556-6676.2014.00130.x>
- Naezer, M., Van Den Brink, M., & Benschop, Y. (2019). *Harassment in Dutch academia: Exploring manifestations, facilitating factors, effects and solutions*.

- Orth, U., & Robins, R. W. (2014). The development of self-esteem. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, 23(5), 381-387. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0963721414547414>
- Orth, U., & Robins, R. W. (2022). Is high self-esteem beneficial? Revisiting a classic question. *Am Psychol*, 77(1), 5-17. <https://doi.org/10.1037/amp0000922>
- Pullmann, H., & Allik, J. (2008). Relations of academic and general self-esteem to school achievement. *Personality and Individual Differences*, 45(6), 559-564. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.paid.2008.06.017>
- Sekaran, U., & Bougie, R. (2016). *Research methods for business: A skill building approach*. John Wiley & sons.
- Trepanier, S. G., Fernet, C., & Austin, S. (2013). Workplace psychological harassment in Canadian nurses: a descriptive study. *J Health Psychol*, 18(3), 383-396. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1359105312443401>
- Vanderbilt, D., & Augustyn, M. (2010). The effects of bullying. *Paediatrics and Child Health*, 20(7), 315-320. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.paed.2010.03.008>
- Węziak-Białowolska, D., Białowolski, P., & McNeely, E. (2020). The impact of workplace harassment and domestic violence on work outcomes in the developing world. *World Development*, 126. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.worlddev.2019.104732>

Appendix 1: Questionnaire

Geachte deelnemer,

Alvast bedankt voor uw bereidheid om deel te nemen aan mijn onderzoek. In het kader van mijn masterscriptie doe ik onderzoek naar intimidatie op de werkvloer. Naar aanleiding van #metoo en de misstanden bij The Voice of Holland en NOS Sport, is dit een onderwerp dat veel besproken is. Helaas is er nog weinig onderzoek gedaan naar intimidatie en de gevolgen voor medewerkers in contexten anders dan de televisie. Intimidatie op het werk kan in vele vormen voorkomen en de effecten daarvan zijn nog niet in zijn volledigheid bekend. In dit onderzoek ga ik daarom dieper in op wat de invloed is van verschillende vormen van intimidatie op het werk op medewerkers. In deze vragenlijst vindt u vragen die hierop betrekking hebben. Het invullen van de vragenlijst kost maximaal 8 minuten.

Alle verzamelde gegevens uit deze vragenlijst worden vertrouwelijk behandeld. Antwoorden kunnen niet te herleiden zijn en anonimiteit wordt in mijn onderzoek gewaarborgd. Door de vragenlijst in te vullen gaat u hiermee akkoord. Ten slotte, heb ik deze vragenlijst met zorg samengesteld. Mocht u zich echter niet prettig voelen bij een vraag, dan kunt u deze open laten. Aan het einde van de vragenlijst kunt u bovendien nog op- of aanmerkingen aan mij meegeven.

Alvast heel veel dank voor uw deelname en uw bijdrage aan mijn afstudeeronderzoek. Voor vragen kunt u contact opnemen met mij via: britt.tackenberg@ru.nl.

PAGE BREAK

Algemene vragen

Om te beginnen willen we u wat algemene vragen stellen om een beeld van uw situatie te krijgen.

Wat is uw geslacht?

- Man
- Vrouw
- Non-binair

- Zeg ik liever niet
- Anders, namelijk:

Wat is uw leeftijd in jaren?

Heeft u een fysieke of mentale arbeidsbeperking?

- Fysieke
- Mentale
- Beide
- Geen van beide
- Anders

Hoe zou u uw seksuele oriëntatie omschrijven?

- Homoseksueel
- Lesbisch
- Biseksueel
- Aseksueel
- Panseksueel
- Heteroseksueel
- Weet ik(nog)niet
- Anders, namelijk: _

Wat is uw nationaliteit?

Heeft u een migratie achtergrond?

- Ja
- Nee

Zo ja, welke achtergrond heeft u?

PAGE BREAK

Wat is uw huidige arbeidssituatie?

- Baan, 1-39 uur per week werkzaam
- Baan, 40 uur of meer per week werkzaam
- Geen baan, werkzoekend
- Geen baan, NIET werkzoekend
- Gepensioneerd
- Gehandicapt, kan niet werken

In welke sector bent u werkzaam?

- Gezondheidszorg en welzijn
- Handel en dienstverlening
- ICT
- Justitie, veiligheid en openbaar bestuur
- Milieu en Agrarische sector
- Media en communicatie
- Onderwijs, cultuur en wetenschap
- Techniek, productie en bouw
- Toerisme, recreatie en horeca
- Transport en logistiek

Welke positie heeft u in het bedrijf waar u werkt?

- Eigenaar/ CEO
- Leidinggevende/ manager
- Medewerker
- Assistente/ Bijbaan
- Stagiaire
- Anders, namelijk:

PAGE BREAK

Zoals in de inleiding vermeld, gaat mijn onderzoek over intimidatie op het werk. De volgende vragen hebben hier betrekking op. Kies het antwoord dat het meest van toepassing is. (Nooit; Af en toe; Maandelijks; Wekelijks; Dagelijks)

1. Iemand houdt informatie achter die je prestaties beïnvloedt
2. Vernederd of belachelijk gemaakt worden in verband met je werk
3. Opdracht krijgen om werk te doen onder je niveau
4. Het wegnemen of vervangen van belangrijke verantwoordelijkheden door meer triviale of onaangename taken
5. Het verspreiden van roddels en geruchten over jou
6. Genegeerd of buitengesloten worden
7. Beledigende opmerkingen over je gewoonten, achtergrond, houding of privéleven
8. Uitgescholden worden of het doelwit zijn van spontane woede
9. Intimiderend gedrag zoals met de vinger wijzen, inbreuk op je persoonlijke ruimte, duwen of fysiek in de weg staan
10. Hints of signalen van anderen dat je je baan moet opzeggen
11. Herhaalde herinneringen aan je fouten of vergissingen
12. Genegeerd worden of vijandige reactie krijgen als je dichterbij komt
13. Aanhoudende kritiek op je werk en inspanning
14. Je meningen en standpunten werden genegeerd
15. Grappen uitgevoerd door mensen waar je niet mee op kunt schieten
16. Taken krijgen met onredelijke of onmogelijke doelen of deadlines
17. Beschuldigingen tegen je hebben

PAGINA BREAK

18. Overmatig toezicht op je werk
19. Druk om geen aanspraak te maken op iets waar je van rechtswege recht op heeft (bijvoorbeeld ziekteverlof, recht op vakantie, reiskosten)
20. Het onderwerp zijn van buitensporige plagerijen en sarcasme
21. Blootgesteld worden aan een onbeheersbare werklust
22. Dreigen met geweld of fysiek misbruik of daadwerkelijk misbruik
23. Buitengesloten door collega's vanwege mijn huidskleur, geslacht, seksualiteit of bekwaamheid
24. Het gevoel gekregen dat ik er niet bij hoor vanwege mijn huidskleur, geslacht, seksualiteit of bekwaamheid

25. Mensen hebben naar mij gestaard, vanwege mijn huidskleur, geslacht, seksualiteit of bekwaamheid
26. Mensen hebben een foto van mij willen maken of aan mijn haar of huid willen voelen vanwege mijn huidskleur, geslacht, seksualiteit of bekwaamheid
27. Kreeg te horen dat mijn etnische achtergrond me "exotisch", "uniek" en/of "speciaal" maakte
28. Gevraagd "wat ben je?" in verwijzing naar mijn huidskleur of bekwaamheid
29. Ik kreeg te horen dat ik het mis had of me vergiste toen ik iemand mijn achtergrond vertelde
30. Mensen in mijn omgeving voelden zich ongemakkelijk omdat ze mijn achtergrond niet kenden
31. Mensen in mijn omgeving lijken de voorkeur te geven aan mensen met andere huidskleur
32. Ik heb mij schuldig gevoeld omdat ik een cultureel aspect van mijn raciale achtergrond niet ken
33. Door iemand ondervraagd over de legitimiteit van mijn huidskleur, geslacht, seksualiteit of bekwaamheid
34. Mensen negeren of bagatelliseren vaak de discriminatie die ik ervaar op basis van mijn huidskleur, geslacht, seksualiteit of bekwaamheid

PAGINA BREAK

Om te onderzoeken wat de invloed van intimidatie kan zijn, vindt u hieronder een lijst met uitspraken die gaan over uzelf. Kies het antwoord dat het meest van toepassing is. (Zeer mee eens; Mee eens; Niet mee eens; Zeer mee oneens)

1. Over het algemeen ben ik tevreden met mezelf
2. Soms denk ik dat ik niet helemaal goed ben
3. Ik vind dat ik een aantal goede kwaliteiten heb
4. Ik kan dingen net zo goed als de meeste andere mensen
5. Ik heb het gevoel dat ik niet veel heb om trots op te zijn
6. Ik voel me zeker soms nutteloos
7. Ik voel dat ik een persoon van waarde ben, tenminste op gelijke voet met anderen
8. Ik wou dat ik meer respect voor mezelf had

9. Al met al ben ik geneigd te voelen dat ik een mislukking ben
10. Ik neem een positieve houding aan tegenover mezelf

PAGINA BREAK

De volgende stellingen hebben betrekking op jouw persoonlijke gevoelens over jouw werk. Geef aan hoe sterk je het eens of oneens bent met elke uitspraak. (Zeer mee eens; Mee eens; Onbeslist; Niet mee eens; Zeer mee oneens)

1. Ik ben een professional die zich heel goed voorbereidt op het werk dat ik doe
2. Ik kan zonder al te veel moeite wijzigingen in mijn werk aanbrengen
3. Ik ben enthousiast om nieuwe vaardigheden te leren die nodig zijn voor mijn werk
4. Ik ben blij met mijn baan
5. Ik ben in staat en enthousiast om wat ik weet aan anderen door te geven
6. Ik maak me nooit zorgen over veranderingen in mijn werk
7. Ik studeer regelmatig om mijn kennis up-to-date te houden
8. Ik word vaak ontmoedigd door wat ik doe
9. Ik doe soms onderzoek om de kwaliteit van mijn werk te verhogen
10. Het duurt lang voordat ik gewend ben aan iets nieuws in mijn werk
11. Ik vind het niet erg als iemand mijn werkervaring en kennis nodig heeft
12. Er zijn veel momenten waarop ik mijn baan zou willen verlaten
13. Ik heb het gevoel dat ik niet het beste werk doe dat ik kan

PAGINA BREAK

Hartelijk bedankt voor het invullen van mijn afstudeeronderzoek. Mocht u nog op- of aanmerkingen hebben mag u die hier invullen. Als u mij direct wil bereiken kan dat via britt.tackenberg@ru.nl

Appendix 2: Factor analyses

Table 4

| <i>Factor analysis 'Workplace Harassment.</i> | | Factor score | | | | | |
|--|------|--------------|---|---|---|-------|--|
| Item | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | |
| Q26_2 Vernederd of belachelijk gemaakt worden in verband met uw werk | .605 | | | | | | |
| Q26_3 Opdracht krijgen om werk te doen onder u niveau | .444 | | | | | | |
| Q26_4 Het wegnemen of vervangen van belangrijke verantwoordelijkheden door meer triviale of onaangename taken | .522 | | | | | | |
| Q26_5 Het verspreiden van roddels en geruchten over u | .648 | | | | | | |
| Q26_6 Genegeerd of buitengesloten worden | .678 | | | | | | |
| Q26_7 Beledigende opmerkingen over uw gewoonten, achtergrond, houding of privéleven | .603 | | | | | | |
| Q26_9 Intimiderend gedrag zoals met de vinger wijzen, inbreuk op uw persoonlijke ruimte, duwen of fysiek in de weg staan | | | | | | .472 | |
| Q26_10 Hints of signalen van anderen dat u uw baan moet opzeggen | .728 | | | | | | |
| Q26_11 Herhaalde herinneringen aan uw fouten of vergissingen | .703 | | | | | | |
| Q26_12 Genegeerd worden of vijandige reactie krijgen als u dichterbij komt | | | | | | -.447 | |
| Q26_13 Aanhoudende kritiek op uw werk en inspanning | .543 | | | | | | |

| | | |
|--|------|-------|
| Q26_14 Uw meningen en standpunten werden genegeerd | .539 | |
| Q26_15 Grappen uitgevoerd door mensen waar u niet mee op kunt schieten | .634 | |
| Q26_16 Taken krijgen met onredelijke of onmogelijke doelen of deadlines | .524 | |
| Q26_17 Beschuldigingen tegen u hebben | .579 | |
| Q17_1 Overmatig toezicht op uw werk | .545 | |
| Q17_3 Het onderwerp zijn van buitensporige plagerijen en sarcasme | .643 | |
| Q17_5 Dreigen met geweld of fysiek misbruik of daadwerkelijk misbruik | | -.493 |
| Q17_6 Buitengesloten door collega's vanwege mijn huidskleur, geslacht, seksualiteit of bekwaamheid | .684 | |
| Q17_7 Het gevoel gekregen dat ik er niet bij hoor vanwege mijn huidskleur, geslacht, seksualiteit of bekwaamheid | .585 | |
| Q17_8 Mensen hebben naar mij gestaard, vanwege mijn huidskleur, geslacht, seksualiteit of bekwaamheid | .593 | |
| Q17_10 Kreeg te horen dat mijn etnische achtergrond me "exotisch", "uniek" en/of "speciaal" maakte | | .425 |
| Q17_11 Gevraagd "wat bent u?" in verwijzing naar mijn huidskleur of bekwaamheid | | .486 |
| Q17_12 Ik kreeg te horen dat ik het mis had of me vergiste toen ik iemand mijn achtergrond vertelde | .463 | |

| | |
|--|------|
| Q17_13 Mensen in mijn omgeving voelden zich ongemakkelijk omdat ze mijn achtergrond niet kenden | .588 |
| Q17_14 Mensen in mijn omgeving lijken de voorkeur te geven aan mensen met andere huidskleur | .546 |
| Q17_15 Ik heb mij schuldig gevoeld omdat ik een cultureel aspect van mijn raciale achtergrond niet ken | .654 |
| Q17_16 Door iemand ondervraagd over de legitimiteit van mijn huidskleur, geslacht, seksualiteit of bekwaamheid | .558 |
| Q17_17 Mensen negeren of bagatelliseren vaak de discriminatie die ik ervaar op basis van mijn huidskleur, geslacht, seksualiteit of bekwaamheid | .613 |

Table 5a.

| <i>Factor analysis "Personal self-esteem" before rotation.</i> | | |
|---|--------------|------|
| Item | Factor score | |
| | 1 | 2 |
| Q27_1 Over het algemeen ben ik tevreden met mezelf | .676 | |
| Q27_2 Soms denk ik dat ik niet helemaal goed ben | .698 | |
| Q27_3 Ik vind dat ik een aantal goede kwaliteiten heb | | .717 |
| Q27_4 Ik kan dingen net zo goed als de meeste andere mensen | .465 | |
| Q27_5 Ik heb het gevoel dat ik niet veel heb om trots op te zijn | .789 | |
| Q27_6 Ik voel me zeker soms nutteloos | .641 | |

| | |
|---|------|
| Q27_7 Ik voel dat ik een persoon van waarde ben, tenminste op gelijke voet met anderen | .689 |
| Q27_8 Ik wou dat ik meer respect voor mezelf had | .656 |
| Q27_9 Al met al ben ik geneigd te voelen dat ik een mislukking ben | .769 |
| Q27_10 Ik neem een positieve houding aan tegenover mezelf | .674 |

Table 5b

*Factor analysis "Personal self-esteem" after
rotation.*

| | Factor score | |
|---|--------------|------|
| | 1 | 2 |
| Q27_1 Over het algemeen ben ik tevreden met mezelf | | .670 |
| Q27_2 Soms denk ik dat ik niet helemaal goed ben | .778 | |
| Q27_3 Ik vind dat ik een aantal goede kwaliteiten heb | | .888 |
| Q27_4 Ik kan dingen net zo goed als de meeste andere mensen | | .595 |
| Q27_5 Ik heb het gevoel dat ik niet veel heb om trots op te zijn | .790 | |
| Q27_6 Ik voel me zeker soms nutteloos | .718 | |
| Q27_7 Ik voel dat ik een persoon van waarde ben, tenminste op gelijke voet met anderen | | .650 |
| Q27_8 Ik wou dat ik meer respect voor mezelf had | .678 | |
| Q27_9 Al met al ben ik geneigd te voelen dat ik een mislukking ben | .795 | |
| Q27_10 Ik neem een positieve houding aan tegenover mezelf | .650 | |

Table 6a

| | Factor score | | |
|--|--------------|------|-------|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| Q28_1 Ik ben een professional die zich heel goed voorbereidt op het werk dat ik doe | .639 | | |
| Q28_2 Ik kan zonder al te veel moeite wijzigingen in mijn werk aanbrengen | .673 | | |
| Q28_3 Ik ben enthousiast om nieuwe vaardigheden te leren die nodig zijn voor mijn werk | .708 | | |
| Q28_4 Ik ben blij met mijn baan | .569 | | -.540 |
| Q28_5 Ik ben in staat en enthousiast om wat ik weet aan anderen door te geven | .734 | | |
| Q28_6 Ik maak me nooit zorgen over veranderingen in mijn werk | .343 | .342 | .305 |
| Q28_7 Ik studeer regelmatig om mijn kennis up-to-date te houden | .377 | | |
| Q28_8 Ik word vaak ontmoedigd door wat ik doe | | .346 | |
| Q28_9 Ik doe soms onderzoek om de kwaliteit van mijn werk te verhogen | .447 | | |
| Q28_10 Het duurt lang voordat ik gewend ben aan iets nieuws in mijn werk | | .458 | |

Table 6b

| | Factor score | | |
|---|--------------|---|---|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| Q28_1 Ik ben een professional die zich heel goed voorbereidt op het werk dat ik doe | .767 | | |

| | | |
|---|------|-------|
| Q28_2 Ik kan zonder al te veel moeite wijzigingen in mijn werk aanbrengen | .594 | |
| Q28_3 Ik ben enthousiast om nieuwe vaardigheden te leren die nodig zijn voor mijn werk | .618 | |
| Q28_4 Ik ben blij met mijn baan | | -.781 |
| Q28_5 Ik ben in staat en enthousiast om wat ik weet aan anderen door te geven | .662 | |
| Q28_6 Ik maak me nooit zorgen over veranderingen in mijn werk | | .569 |
| Q28_7 Ik studeer regelmatig om mijn kennis up-to-date te houden | .468 | |
| Q28_8 Ik word vaak ontmoedigd door wat ik doe | | -.414 |
| Q28_9 Ik doe soms onderzoek om de kwaliteit van mijn werk te verhogen | .502 | |
| Q28_10 Het duurt lang voordat ik gewend ben aan iets nieuws in mijn werk | | .627 |
