

**The moderating role of resilience in the relationship between transgression-  
related interpersonal motivations and bullying and harassment among  
Ph.D. scholars.**

Dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of  
Master of Science in Psychology

By

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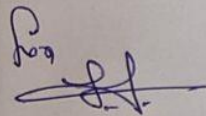
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## CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the dissertation entitled, "The Moderating Role of Resilience in the Relationship between Transgression-related Interpersonal Motivations and Bullying and Harassment among Ph.D. Scholars", is a bonafide record submitted by Jewel Mariya Shaju, Reg.no. SM22PSY009, of St. Teresa's College, Ernakulam under the supervision and guidance of Ms. Jisha Sekhar, and that it has not been submitted to any other university or institution for the award of any degree or diploma, fellowship, title, or recognition before.

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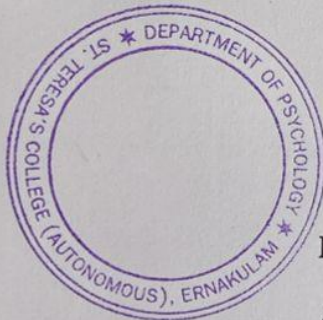


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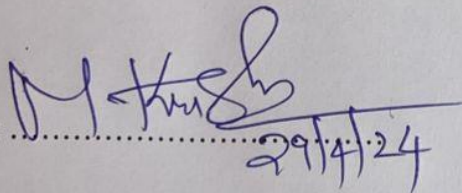
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## **DECLARATION**

I, Jewel Mariya Shaju, do hereby declare that the work represented in the dissertation embodies the results of the original research work done by me in St. Teresa's College, Ernakulam under the supervision and guidance of Ms. Jisha Sekhar, Assistant Professor, Department of Psychology, St. Teresa's College, Ernakulam, it has not been submitted by me to any other university or institution for the award of any degree, diploma, fellowship, title or recognition before.

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## **Abstract**

This study investigates the moderating role of resilience in the relationship between bullying and harassment and transgression-related interpersonal motivations (TRIM) among Ph.D. scholars in India. The objectives include understanding the relationships between bullying & harassment, resilience, and TRIM, along with investigating the moderating effect of resilience. A sample of 170 Ph.D. scholars across India participated in the study, using correlational and moderation analyses. Results supported the hypotheses, indicating a positive relationship between bullying & harassment and TRIM, a negative relationship between resilience and TRIM, and a moderating effect of resilience on the relationship between bullying & harassment and TRIM. Findings underscored the importance of addressing bullying and harassment in academic settings while promoting resilience to understand its adverse effects on individuals' psychological motivations. This study contributes to understanding the dynamics of interpersonal behavior in academic settings and suggests interventions aimed at fostering a culture of professional development and ethical conduct.

*Keywords:* Bullying and harassment, transgression related interpersonal motivations, PhD scholars.

## **CHAPTER 1**

### **INTRODUCTION**

PhD scholars, seen as intellectual pioneers, undertake a profound academic journey spanning several years. Their doctoral program involves coursework, practicals, exams, and a focus on original research. From foundational learning to specialized exploration, each year presents challenges and opportunities for growth. In the pursuit of a Ph.D., resilience is a critical trait that is integral to success, particularly when faced with challenges relating to interpersonal conflicts, bullying, and harassment. Navigating the intricate landscape of research and academic environments can prove to be a laborious task for doctoral candidates, who often encounter a multitude of obstacles throughout their journey. While resilience can aid individuals in bouncing back from difficulties, the prevalence of transgressions, bullying, and harassment can pose considerable risk to their holistic well-being and academic advancement. In recent times, there has been a growing recognition among the academic community about the prevalence of transgression-related interpersonal motivations among Ph.D. scholars. These motivations encompass academic bullying and harassment, which can manifest in various ways such as exclusionary practices, verbal abuse, and exploitation of power dynamics. A study conducted by Forbes and colleagues (2020) revealed the increasing frequency of bullying and harassment experienced by Ph.D. students, thereby underscoring the urgent need for an academic culture that is supportive and encourages resilience.

Research scholars often face significant challenges, including instances of bullying and mental pressure within academic settings. Unfortunately, some scholars face unwarranted harassment and mental torture from their guides and colleagues, creating a distressing atmosphere that can impede their progress. Moreover, the mental strain of working on the same research topic for a long period adds another layer of difficulty. The prolonged focus on a single subject can lead to burnout and a sense of isolation. Despite these adversities, research scholars demonstrate remarkable resilience. Their efforts are commendable as they navigate through the complexities of their study, putting in years of dedicated work. These

scholars endure mental pressures, often pushing the boundaries of their intellectual capabilities, to make valuable contributions to their respective fields. The completion of their study not only signifies academic achievement but also reflects their determination to overcome adversities and contribute meaningfully to the scholarly community.

### **Resilience**

According to recent media reports, Ph.D. scholars have been subjected to bullying and harassment by academic advisors who misuse their power, creating a hostile environment. Such incidents not only adversely affect the mental well-being of the victims but also hinder their academic progress, underlining the pressing need for systemic reforms within academia (Smith, 2023). It is essential to explore the intersection between resilience, transgression-related interpersonal motivations, and the specific challenges faced by Ph.D. scholars. Understanding these dynamics is crucial for creating supportive academic environments that empower doctoral candidates to overcome adversity and reach their full potential to contribute to their field effectively. Ph.D. scholars face a unique set of challenges during their academic journey, and several factors influence their resilience as well.

### ***Factors affecting resilience***

Individual factors, including personality traits such as a growth mindset, and adaptability significantly impact a scholar's ability to bounce back from difficulties. Coping mechanisms, like effective stress management and seeking social support, play a vital role in maintaining resilience.

The academic environment is very crucial, with a supportive, peaceful, clear mentorship research culture, clear mentorship, and accessible resources cherishing resilience. The relationship with the advisor is very important, positive mentorship can increase resilience, while strained relationships can contribute to academic stress and decreased

performance of the subject. Institutional support, encompassing mental health policies, support, flexible structures, and resources, is also essential for promoting resilience among Ph.D. scholars. Social factors, such as peer support and a strong social network, contribute significantly, mitigating the isolation often felt by scholars. Additionally, societal norms, cultural expectations, and mental health awareness also impact resilience, with the stigma surrounding mental health potentially affecting scholars' willingness to seek support and assistance.

### ***Theories associated with resilience***

The Broaden-and-Build Theory of Positive Emotions, proposed by Barbara Fredrickson in 1998, posits that positive emotions play an important role in enhancing an individual's resilience. According to this theory, positive emotions broaden one's mental state and encourage diverse thought-action stocks, ultimately building abiding personal resources over time. In the academic context, resilience is considered an essential attribute for navigating all the challenges associated with research, setbacks, and the rigorous demands of doctoral studies. Fredrickson's theory provides a conceptual framework that emphasizes the importance of positive emotions, such as peace, joy, hope, pride, and gratitude, in fostering well-being and resilience in the face of adversity (Fredrickson, 1998).

Transactional Model of Stress and Coping (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984): This model emphasizes the dynamic interplay between individuals and their environment in coping with stressors. It suggests that individuals engage in cognitive appraisal processes to evaluate the stressor and their resources for coping. Resilience is viewed as the outcome of effective coping strategies and adaptive appraisal.

Theoretical Model of Resilience (Werner & Smith, 1992): Werner and Smith conducted longitudinal research on at-risk children and identified factors contributing to

resilience. Their model emphasizes the importance of protective factors such as positive temperament, supportive relationships, and opportunities for mastery experiences in promoting resilience.

Ecological Systems Theory (Bronfenbrenner, 1979): Bronfenbrenner's theory posits that resilience is influenced by multiple systems within an individual's environment, including the microsystem (immediate surroundings), mesosystem (interactions between microsystems), exosystem (external environments indirectly impacting the individual), and macrosystem (cultural values and norms). Resilience emerges from the interaction between these systems.

### **Transgression-related interpersonal motivations**

In the academic context, transgression-related interpersonal motivation refers to the dynamics of how individuals within academic circles interact and the motivations that drive certain behaviors, such as favoritism, discrimination, or exclusion. The construct is intricately linked to the broader dynamics of social identity, group cohesion, and the prevailing academic culture within the institutions. When institutional structures prioritize fostering healthy competition, and inclusivity, they create an environment that is less conducive to negative interpersonal motivations. Healthy competition can drive innovation and excellence, while collaboration brings up a sense of collective achievement. Inclusivity ensures that individuals feel valued, appraised, and included, reducing the likelihood of engaging in transgressions based on social identity differences.

### ***Factors affecting transgression-related interpersonal motivations***

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Environments characterized by a lack of diversity, unequal power distribution, and competitive academic cultures may contribute to transgressions. In such settings, power imbalances can lead to favoritism, bullying, harassment, or exclusionary practices, creating an environment where certain individuals or groups feel marginalized or isolated. Highly competitive cultures, without proper mechanisms for care, collaboration, and support, may inadvertently lead to a sense of rivalry and undermine positive interpersonal issues.

The role of faculty leadership is very crucial in shaping the academic culture as well. Faculty members, as influential figures within academic institutions, can set the tone for inclusive and respectful interactions with scholars. Mentorship programs contribute by providing support and guidance to individuals navigating the complex academic landscape. These programs can foster a sense of belonging, and self-worth and help to overcome the negative effects of transgression-related interpersonal motivations.

### ***Theories associated with transgression related interpersonal motivations***

Social Identity Theory, developed by Henri Tajfel and John Turner in 1979, delves into how individuals categorize themselves and others into social groups, influencing interpersonal motivations. In scholarly settings, transgressions can be rooted in intergroup

dynamics, where conflicts arise from the categorization of individuals into distinct academic groups. The theory posits that people derive a sense of identity self-esteem and self-worth from their group memberships, contributing to a range of behaviors, including favoritism, bullying, discrimination, and transgressions. Tajfel and Turner's theory provides insights into the social processes underlying interpersonal motivations and conflicts within academic fields. (Tajfel & Turner, 1979).

Social Exchange Theory, developed by George C. Homans and later expanded upon by Peter Blau, suggests that individuals engage in interpersonal relationships based on a rational calculation of rewards and costs. When applied to transgression-related motivations, this theory posits that individuals assess the potential benefits of violating norms or rules against the associated risks. In this context, transgressive behaviors may be perceived as offering rewards such as increased social status, gratification, or fulfillment of desires. Conversely, individuals consider the potential costs of transgression, including punishment, social rejection, or damage to relationships. By weighing these rewards and costs, individuals make decisions about whether to engage in transgressive behaviors within their interpersonal interactions. Therefore, Social Exchange Theory provides a framework for understanding how individuals navigate transgression-related motivations based on the perceived benefits and consequences of their actions within social relationships.

According to Self-Determination Theory (SDT) by Edward L. Deci and Richard M. Ryan, individuals possess intrinsic psychological needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness, which are fundamental for their well-being and motivation. When these needs are thwarted or unmet, transgression-related interpersonal motivations may arise. For instance, if individuals feel powerless or disconnected in a relationship, their intrinsic needs for autonomy and relatedness could be compromised. In response, they may engage in



transgressive behaviors as a means of asserting autonomy or establishing a connection with others. These transgressive acts serve as attempts to regain a sense of control or to fulfill their need for connection, albeit through unconventional means.

### **Bullying and harassment**

Heinz Leymann's Power Imbalance Theory, initially introduced in 1996, highlights the significance of power differentials in workplace bullying. According to Leymann's theory, bullying takes place when individuals with high power exploit and beat up those with less power. In an academic setting, this theory underscores how hierarchical structures within advisors, faculties, and scholars can lead to bullying and harassment. Recognizing the power dynamics within the academic environment is vital in preventing and addressing bullying incidents while fostering a more equitable and respectful academic setting (Leymann, 1996). Smith et.al (2015) contributed to the literature by reviewing the long-term consequences of bullying and harassment and transgression-related interpersonal motivations. Studies concluded that individuals who experienced bullying and harassment were more prone to engage in transgressive behavior. Taylor and Anderson (2020) contributed to the literature by investigating the developmental trajectory of resilience with transgression-related interpersonal motivations. Their study suggested that early interventions aimed at enhancing resilience could have lasting effects in reducing engagement in transgressive behaviors.

### ***Factors affecting bullying and harassment***

Bullying and harassment within academic settings often find their roots in a complex interplay of factors which include, power imbalances, individual attitudes, and institutional tolerance. A hierarchical academic structure can make worse such issues, as those in positions of authority may exploit their power, and rules, leading to a culture of bullying. Ambiguous reporting mechanisms further impede the resolution of incidents, creating an environment

where misconduct can persist unchecked. A lack of awareness or training on recognizing and addressing bullying allows these behaviors to go unchallenged. Effective interventions are critical in facing bullying and harassment, requiring a mixed and complicated approach. This involves addressing power differentials, promoting respectful communication with each other, and fostering a culture of accountability. Institutional commitment plays a crucial role in shaping the academic environment; by prioritizing inclusivity, care, respect, and support, institutions can actively influence the prevalence of all these negative behaviors that individuals can have. A collective effort to address these factors not only enhances the overall resilience of academic communities but also contributes to the creation of a supportive and positive environment where all individuals can excel in their academic pursuits.

### ***Theories associated with bullying and harassment***

**Social Learning Theory:** Developed by Albert Bandura, this theory suggests that individuals learn behaviors, including aggressive ones, through observation, imitation, and reinforcement. In the context of bullying and harassment, individuals may learn these behaviors from observing others or from past experiences where such behaviors were rewarded or reinforced.

**Social Identity Theory:** This theory, proposed by Henri Tajfel and John Turner, suggests that individuals categorize themselves and others into social groups, and they strive to maintain a positive social identity by comparing their group favorably with other groups. Bullying and harassment can arise from intergroup dynamics, where individuals target others perceived as different or inferior to establish dominance and strengthen their group identity.

**Cognitive Dissonance Theory:** Developed by Leon Festinger, this theory posits that individuals experience discomfort when their attitudes and behaviors are inconsistent. In the context of bullying and harassment, perpetrators may justify their actions to reduce cognitive

dissonance by dehumanizing the victim, blaming the victim for their own actions, or minimizing the harm caused.

**Attribution Theory:** Attribution theory focuses on how individuals interpret the causes of behavior, either attributing it to internal factors (such as personality traits) or external factors (such as situational factors). In cases of bullying and harassment, perpetrators may attribute their behavior to factors such as the victim's behavior or characteristics, rather than acknowledging their own responsibility.

### **Statement of the problem**

The study aimed to investigate the moderating role of resilience in the relationship between transgression-related interpersonal motivations and the occurrence of bullying and harassment within the PhD scholars. Recognizing the occurrence of bullying and harassment in academic environments, particularly among individuals pursuing doctoral degrees, this study seeks to understand how the underlying motivations for transgressive behavior in interpersonal relationships may contribute to such a negative phenomenon. The study aimed to explore the protective function of resilience, examining whether higher levels of resilience act as a buffer, mitigating the impact of transgression-related motivations on the likelihood and severity of bullying and harassment incidents among Ph.D. scholars. By addressing this relationship, the main objective of the study is to provide valuable insights into potential intervention strategies, care, and support mechanisms to create healthier and more productive academic environments for the well-being of Ph.D. scholars.

### **Rationale of the study**

The rationale for this study is grounded in the recognition of the unique challenges faced by PhD scholars during their academic journey. Beyond the complexities of their research study, scholars often encounter instances of bullying and harassment in academic

settings, which can significantly affect their well-being and academic performance as well.

This study seeks to look into the connections between experiences of bullying and harassment and the development of transgression-related interpersonal motivations among PhD scholars. By focusing on the key variable of resilience, the research aims to understand its potential function as a moderating factor that can mitigate the negative consequences of such experiences. Resilience is figured as a psychological shield that may empower Ph.D. scholars to navigate adversity, preventing these encounters from affecting their academic and personal growth and well-being. The use of specific measurement scales in the study aims to quantitatively examine these relationships, providing valuable insights for the development of interventions and support systems. Ultimately, the goal is to contribute to the cultivation of a more supportive, and peaceful academic environment, fostering the well-being and success of PhD scholars by deducting the detrimental consequences of bullying and harassment that they face throughout their academic journey.

## **CHAPTER II**

### **REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

A literature review discusses published information in a particular subject area, and sometimes information in a particular subject area within a certain period. A literature review can be just a simple summary of the sources.

Anasori, De Vita, and Küçükergin's study in the *Service Industries Journal* (2023) examines “the links between workplace bullying, harassment, psychological distress, job performance, and employee creativity”. It specifically investigates how psychological resilience moderates all these relationships. The sample in this study consists of employees and supervisors from 4 – and 5-star hotels. The hypothesis tested was psychological resilience moderates the relationship between workplace bullying and employee creativity. The study draws from existing research on workplace bullying, emphasizing its adverse effects on well-being and job outcomes. The focus on psychological resilience suggested an exploration of its potential to understand the adverse consequences of bullying. It also highlights the role of resilience in stress coping.

Lin, Chien, Chen, Wu, and others (2022) explored “the moderating role of resilience on the relationship between bullying experiences and depression in adolescents”. From the existing research on adolescent mental health, the study concluded that resilience is a very crucial and protective factor against depression for adolescents who have experienced bullying. Regardless of the type of bullying, higher resilience levels are associated with better mental well-being, emphasizing the significance of promoting resilience as an intervention strategy to overcome the negative psychological effects of adolescent bullying experiences that they have.

In a cross-cultural examination, Kim (2022) conducted a research on the title “resilience and transgression-related interpersonal motivations by examining potential cultural variations.” extended the research to diverse populations, highlighting potential

cultural variations in the manifestation of resilience and its impact on transgression-related interpersonal motivations. The study aimed to test specific hypotheses: less resilient people would forgive less, more resilient people would forgive more, and resilience and transgression severity would interact to influence victims' responses. The sample in the paper includes a community sample of adults in Study 1 and an undergraduate sample in Study 2, with sample sizes of 171 and 204 respectively. The research aimed to unveil potential cultural variations in the manifestation and impact of resilience on interpersonal motivations related to transgression.

Flaspohler (2021) conducted a study on “The effects of peer and teacher support in mitigating the impact of bullying on quality of life” argued that resilience alone might not be sufficient and that interventions should focus on building a supportive social environment in which they live. Their study demonstrated that the presence of a strong support system could enhance the effectiveness of resilience in mitigating the impact of bullying and harassment. The study consisted of 4,331 elementary and middle school children. The research design was the observational study. The study states that individuals who have a very supportive atmosphere easily overcome all the difficulties than the others.

The study titled “STEM the Bullying: An Empirical Investigation of Abusive Supervision in Academic Science” by Sherry E. Moss and Morteza Mahmoudi (2021) showcases the issue of abusive supervision within academic science, focusing on STEM which means (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) disciplines. Data were collected from 2006 individuals whose participation was solicited through various means including advertisements in Science and Nature magazines and the American Chemical Society. The study refers to existing research on workplace dynamics, particularly within academic environments, to understand the effect and impact of abusive supervision. The

study concludes that the research sheds light on the prevalence and detrimental effects of abusive supervision within academic science.

Taylor and Anderson (2020) contributed to the literature by studying the “long-term consequences of bullying and harassment on transgression-related interpersonal motivations in adulthood”. The study hypothesized that individuals who experienced bullying and harassment during their formative years would demonstrate altered transgression-related interpersonal motivations in adulthood compared to those who did not face such experiences. The sample consists of adults who experienced bullying and harassment during childhood or adolescence. Participants were recruited from various sources, such as community organizations, schools, or online forums. This study indicated a lasting impact, showing that individuals who experienced bullying and harassment in earlier stages of life were more prone to engage in transgressive behaviors later on.

A study conducted by Lin Ma (2020) on the topic of empathy mediates the relationship between motivations after transgression and forgiveness. Data were collected from 445 junior and senior high school students (188 males, 257 females) ages 12-17. All students were asked to complete paper-and-pencil questionnaires individually or in class groups. The participants were compensated with a small gift after completing the questionnaires. An independent sample t-test was used to analyze the possible gender differences in these variables using the current data. In general, the study proves that transgression-related motivations can not only directly influence forgiveness but also indirectly affect forgiveness through empathy. The current study extends previous findings concerning transgression-related motivations and forgiveness among Chinese adolescents and provides evidence that empathy plays an important mediating role in the path of motivation and forgiveness.



The study titled Gender on the Factors of Transgression-Related Interpersonal Motivation (2015) by M. Kalaimathi and K. Saraladevi aimed to determine the impact of gender on various factors related to transgression-related interpersonal motivation. The hypothesis tested was There would be no significant differences in trans prejudice between participants exposed to interactionist beliefs and those in the control condition. The sample consisted of 132 Chinese, mostly heterosexual college students. The results of the study showed that individual has an impact on state-trait personality, Shame and Guilt, Rumination, Empathy, and Jealousy as factors of transgression-related interpersonal Motivation among higher secondary school students.

Javier Cabanyes Truffino (2010) conducted a study on Resilience. Resilience is thought to be an important component of successful psychosocial adjustment and is associated with mental health as well. The paper provides a summary of the concept of resilience and its implications for healthcare, and mental health emphasizing the factors promoting positive adaptation and the potential role of personality, environment, and neurobiology in determining resilience and overcoming all the adversities of life. The hypothesis tested Personality and neurobiology's potential role in determining resilience. The main findings include the dynamic nature of resilience, its importance for positive adaptation and mental health, and its implications for healthcare.

A study conducted by Haddadi and Ali (2010) on resilience, vulnerability, and mental health, investigated the association of resilience with indices of vulnerability including psychological distress, depression, and anxiety; and mental health in a sample of students. 214 (97 boys, 114 girls) were included in this study. All participants completed the Connor-Davidson Resilience Scale (CD-RISC), Mental Health Inventory (MHI), Beck Depression Inventory (BDI), Beck Anxiety Inventory (BAI), and General Health Questionnaire (GHQ). The study tested the hypothesis that resilience is positively associated with psychological well-being and negatively associated with psychological distress, depression, and anxiety. Additionally, the study hypothesized that different levels of resilience influence psychological health and vulnerability indices through various factors. The study concluded that resilience was positively associated with psychological well-being and negatively associated with psychological distress, depression, and anxiety.

## **CHAPTER III**

### **METHODS**

**Aim**

The study aims to find out the moderating role of resilience in the relationship between bullying and harassment and transgression-related interpersonal motivations in research scholars.

**Objectives of the study**

1. To study the relationship between bullying & harassment and Transgression related interpersonal motivation.
2. To study the relationship between resilience and TRIM (transgression-related interpersonal motivation).
3. To study the moderating effect of resilience on the relationship between bullying & harassment and Transgression-related interpersonal motivation.

**Hypotheses**

H1 There is a relationship between bullying & harassment and Transgression related interpersonal motivation.

H2 There is a relationship between resilience and TRIM (transgression-related interpersonal motivation).

H3 Resilience will moderate the relationship between bullying & harassment and Transgression-related interpersonal motivation.

**Operational definition**

The term bullying and harassment is operationally defined as the "Bullying is defined as the repeated unethical and unfavorable treatment of one or more employees by others in

the workplace that is perceived as a threat to their well-being." (Einarsen, Hoel, & Notelaers, 2009)

Transgression related interpersonal motivation is operationally defined as "Transgression-related interpersonal motivations refer to the psychological states that follow when one person intentionally commits an act that is experienced by another as a transgression and that affects the victim's welfare." (McCullough et al., 1998, p. 1587)

"Resilience is defined as the ability to bounce back or recover from stress." (Smith et al., 2008)

### **Research design**

A research design is simply a structural framework of various research methods as well as techniques that are utilized by a researcher.

**Correlational analysis:** Correlational analysis is a statistical technique used to measure the degree of association or relationship between two or more variables. Here, correlational analysis is used to examine the relationship between the variables bullying and harassment, TRIM and resilience

**Moderation analysis:** It examines the influence of a third variable on the relationship between two other variables. Specifically, it seeks to understand whether the strength or direction of the relationship between two variables changes depending on the level of a moderating variable. Here Moderation analysis is used to examine the moderating effect of resilience on bullying and harassment and TRIM.

### **Sample and Sampling**

#### **Population**

Ph.D. scholars doing their study across India

**Sample Size**

170 Research Scholars were taken for the study.

**Sampling Design**

Convenience sampling: The sampling method used in this study is Convenience sampling. It is a non-probability sampling method widely used in research for its simplicity and practicality. Participants were selected based on the ease of access and proximity. This method was particularly used because of the time and resources limited, which allowed quickly gather data.

**Inclusion criteria & Exclusion Criteria:****Inclusion criteria**

1. The sample must be aged 22 and above scholar currently pursuing Ph.D. in an Indian institution.
2. They must be an Indian citizen
3. Research scholars who have completed at least one year of their research study.

**Exclusion criteria**

1. Non – Indians were excluded

**Tools used for data collection****Negative Acts Questionnaire- revised ( NAQ- r)**

Negative Acts Questionnaire- Revised (NAQ-R) is a 22-item measure of workplace bullying exposure. The measure covers three underlying factors: personal, work-related, and physically intimidating forms of bullying. The Negative Acts Questionnaire-Revised (NAQ-R) is a widely used instrument designed to assess experiences of workplace bullying. It measures the frequency and severity of negative

behaviors encountered in the workplace, such as verbal abuse, social isolation, and undermining of work efforts. Reliability studies of the NAQ-R have consistently demonstrated high internal consistency, indicating that the questionnaire items reliably measure the construct of workplace bullying. Additionally, validity studies have provided evidence supporting the questionnaire's ability to accurately capture experiences of workplace bullying, as indicated by correlations with other measures of workplace aggression and psychological well-being. The NAQ-R is suitable for use with adults in various occupational settings and age ranges, typically ranging from young adults (18 years old and above) to older adults, as long as they are actively engaged in the workforce. However, it may not be appropriate for use with individuals who are not employed or who do not have workplace experiences. The Authors are Einarsen, S., Hoel, H., & Notelaers, G. (2009).V

#### The brief resilience scale

The Brief Resilience Scale is a tool that measures an individual's capacity to rebound from stressful situations. To compute your overall score, you must determine the average of your scores for all six items. Please note that items 2, 4, and 6 are scored in reverse, which means that you need to flip their scores. The authors of this scale are Smith, B.W., Dalen, J., Wiggins, K., Tooley, E., Christopher, P., and Bernard, J., and they created it in 2008. In summary, the Brief Resilience Scale is used to assess a person's ability to cope with stress and can help individuals identify their strengths and weaknesses in this area.

#### Transgression-related interpersonal motivation scale

The TRIM, or Transgression-Related Interpersonal Motivations, is a self-report instrument designed to help individuals better understand their motivations for forgiving others. It consists of 12 questions that assess a person's current thoughts and feelings about the person who wronged them. These questions are scored on a 5-point Likert-type scale,

where users indicate the extent to which they agree or disagree with each statement. The TRIM was developed by a team of researchers, including Michael E. McCullough, K. Chris Rachal, Steven J. Sandage, Everett L. Worthington Jr., Susan Wade Brown, and Terry L. Hight. The authors based the tool on theories of forgiveness and interpersonal motivations, and they designed it to be a reliable and valid measure of forgiveness tendencies. By using the TRIM, individuals can gain insight into their motivations for forgiving others, which can help them develop more effective strategies for coping with transgressions and promoting interpersonal healing. The tool has been widely used in research and clinical settings, and it has been shown to have good psychometric properties, meaning it is a reliable and valid measure of forgiveness tendencies.

### **Procedure**

The study engaged participants through the completion of forms, cohering to ethical standards and procedures. Before participation, an individual's consent to the study was taken, understanding its nature and implications. The data was collected from 170 Ph.D. scholars. Special consideration was given to Ph.D. scholars across various institutions in India, ensuring the ethical handling of data, confidentiality, and participant well-being. Participants were instructed to fill out surveys comprising scales measuring bullying and harassment, TRIM (Transgression-related interpersonal motivations), and resilience. To accommodate the diverse geographical spread of participants, forms were disseminated through both phone calls and circulation. This methodology aimed to gather comprehensive data while upholding ethical principles and inclusivity across the research sample. The confidentiality of the data collected was ensured all the time.



**Statistical analysis**

Statistical analysis is the science of collecting, exploring and presenting large amounts of data to discover underlying patterns and trends.

Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 29 was used for analysis. The data was collected using physical forms and entered into Excel and the coding was also done in the same. A test of normality Kolmogorov-Smirnova test was done to check if the data was parametric or not and based on the nature of the data the appropriate statistical tools were selected. Spearman's rank correlation was used to find relationships between variables. Moderation analysis was used to find out the moderating effect of resilience on bullying and harassment and TRIM.

**Ethical consideration**

The study adhered to all ethical principles and procedures. Informed consent was obtained from the participants and a short briefing about the nature of the study was provided.

Participation in the study was voluntary and the participants had complete freedom to opt out at any point in time without any negative consequences. The participants were not subjected to any physical or mental harm during the study, and anonymity of the individuals was ensured and the data collected was used only for academic and research purposes. Steps were taken to protect the privacy of participants throughout the research process, including data collection, storage, and analysis.

## Normality Analysis

**Table 1**

*Summary of Kolmogorov-Smirnova of Bullying and Harassment, Transgression related interpersonal motivation and Resilience*

Variable	Kolmogorov-Smirnov
	Sig.
Bullying and harassment	.0000
TRIM	0.005
Resilience	0.001

Table 1 shows the results of the normality test using the Kolmogorov-Smirnova. Since the p-values of bullying and Harassment, Transgression interpersonal motivation, and Resilience scale are less than the level of significance 0.05, ( $p < 0.05$ ), it can be inferred that the data are not normally distributed.

## **CHAPTER IV**

### **RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

Research scholars often confront significant challenges, including instances of bullying and mental pressure within their environment. Unfortunately, some scholars face unwarranted harassment or mental torture from their guides and colleagues, creating a distressing atmosphere that can impede their academic performance. The study aims to find out the moderating role of resilience in the relationship between bullying and harassment and transgression-related interpersonal motivations in research scholars. The study was conducted on 170 Ph.D. scholars who are currently doing their research in their respective fields. Here, correlational analysis is used to examine the relationship between the variables bullying and harassment, TRIM and resilience and Moderation analysis is used to examine the moderating effect of resilience on bullying and harassment and TRIM.

**Table 2**

*Mean and standard deviation of bullying and harassment, TRIM and resilience*

	Mean	SD	N
Bullying and harassment	45.06	18.785	170
TRIM	31.55	8.300	170
Resilience	17.95	3.125	170

Table 2 shows the mean and standard deviation of variables among 170 respondents doing their Ph.D. For the variable bullying and harassment the mean obtained is 45.06 and the standard deviation is 18.785

For the variable transgression-related interpersonal motivation, the mean obtained is 31.55 and the standard deviation is 8.300

Mean obtained for the variable resilience is 17.95 and the standard deviation is 3.125 respectively.

Hypothesis 1: There is a relationship between bullying & harassment and Transgression related interpersonal motivation.

**Table 3**

*the correlation between bullying and harassment and TRIM among PhD scholars.*

Correlation Matrix	
	Bullying and harassment
TRIM	.224**

---

\*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2 tailed)

Table 3 shows Spearman's correlation between between bullying & harassment and TRIM, among Ph.D. scholars. From the result obtained in Table 3, the p-value is less than the

level of significance (0.01), so it can be interpreted that the correlation is significant at 0.01. hence the hypothesis is accepted. Since the coefficient correlation is positive, it can be inferred that there is a positive relationship between bullying & harassment and transgression-related interpersonal motivations. The spearman coefficient correlation is 0.224 which indicates that there is a low correlation between the variables. So it is inferred that there is a significant weak positive relationship between bullying and harassment and transgression-related interpersonal motivation.

The present study is consistent with the previous study that has indicated that there is a positive relationship between the two variables bullying and harassment and transgression-related interpersonal motivations. (Kalaimathi & Saraladevi, 2015) The study concluded that individual has an impact on state-trait personality, Shame and Guilt, Rumination, Empathy, and Jealousy as factors of transgression-related interpersonal Motivation among students. Another study conducted by Christian Berger (2018) concluded that Machiavellianism predicted bullying after controlling for baseline scores, and classroom prestige norms for relational aggression increased the association between Machiavellianism and bullying. This study also supports the hypothesis Therefore, the acceptance of the hypothesis underscores the importance of providing a better work and academic environment for promoting a healthier balance between professional and personal spheres, consistent with existing literature.

Hypothesis 2: Resilience will moderate the relationship between bullying & harassment and Transgression-related interpersonal motivation.

**Table 4**

*The correlation between the variables transgression related interpersonal motivations and resilience*

Correlation Matrix	
	Resilience
TRIM	-0.095*

\*\*. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 4 shows Spearman's correlation between TRIM and resilience among Ph.D. scholars. From the table, it is clear that there is a negative relationship between the variables transgression-related interpersonal motivations and resilience as the correlation coefficient obtained is -0.095 respectively. The p-value is less than the level of significance (0.01), so it can be interpreted that the correlation is significant at 0.01. hence the hypothesis is accepted. Here the relationship is negative, which means that when resilience increases transgressive behaviours of an individual decrease. The Spearman coefficient correlation is 0.226 which indicates that there is a low correlation between the variables. Hence it is inferred that there is a significant weak negative relationship between transgression-related interpersonal motivation and resilience.

The present study is consistent with the previous study that has indicated that there is a negative relationship between these variables. The earlier work of (Kim, 2022), It was a cross-cultural examination, highlighting potential cultural variations in the manifestation of resilience and its impact on transgression-related interpersonal motivations. The study was

conducted on adults. In conclusion, the research study established a negative relationship between resilience and transgression-related interpersonal motivations.

(Javier,2010) also conducted a study on resilience. The paper summarizes the concept of resilience and its implications and effects on transgression-related interpersonal motivation, healthcare, and mental health, concluding that individuals might experience negative motivation to engage in unethical behaviors even though their resilience is moderate. The main findings include the dynamic nature of resilience that can affect the behaviours of an individual. Hence the hypothesis is accepted.

Hypothesis 3 : Resilience will moderate the relationship between bullying & harassment and Transgression-related interpersonal motivation.

**Table 5**

*indicates the moderating role of resilience in the relationship between bullying and harassment and TRIM*

Model	R <sup>2</sup>	R <sup>2</sup> Change	F	t	Sig.	Coeff.
Model summary			6.0777		.0006	
Bullying and harassment*resilience	.1017	.0159	2.8470	51.0433	.0935	
Int_1					.0935	-.0183

\*Product of independent and moderator variables.



The table represents the values of moderation analysis that shows the moderating role of resilience in the relationship between bullying and harassment and TRIM. The statistical analysis gave a p-value of 0.006, which is below the conventional significance level of 0.05. This indicates that the hypothesis is accepted. Therefore, it can be concluded that there is a significant moderating effect of resilience in the relationship between bullying, harassment, and transgression-related interpersonal motivation. The interaction index, with a significance level of 0.0935, indicates a notable impact in the study. The coefficient value of -0.0183 suggests that resilience acts as a moderating role in the relationship between bullying and harassment and transgression-related interpersonal motivations. This indicates that individuals with higher levels of resilience are less likely to engage in transgressive motives in response to experiences of bullying and harassment. These findings highlight the protective role of resilience in interpersonal dynamics influenced by negative behaviors such as bullying, emphasizing the importance of fostering resilience in addressing and mitigating the adverse effects of such behaviors on individuals' motivations and interactions.

In a previous study conducted by (Lin et. al,2022), the moderating role of resilience in the context of bullying and harassment was studied. The findings of their study provide a foundation for this research as well by giving a basis for understanding the significance of resilience in understanding the impact of adverse experiences. The study concluded that regardless of the type of bullying, higher resilience levels are associated with better mental well-being, emphasizing the significance of promoting resilience as an intervention strategy to overcome the negative psychological effects of adolescent bullying experiences that they have.

**CHAPTER V**  
**CONCLUSION**

## Conclusion

The study looked into the relationship between bullying, harassment, resilience, and transgression-related interpersonal motivation (TRIM) among Ph.D. scholars in Indian academic settings. Through various statistical analyses, the research supported the hypothesis (H1) that a positive relationship exists between bullying and harassment and transgression-related interpersonal motivation. This implies that individuals subjected to bullying or harassment from authoritative figures may develop a psychological inc

lination toward engaging in unethical behaviors. The study confirmed the hypothesis (H2) regarding the negative relationship between resilience and transgression-related interpersonal motivation (TRIM). This suggests that individuals with higher levels of resilience demonstrate a decreased attitude towards unethical behaviors, even in the face of adversity. The significance of resilience in mitigating the negative effects of challenging circumstances underscores the importance of fostering psychological strength and coping strategies among Ph.D. scholars.

The research findings reveal the crucial moderating effect of resilience, as given in hypothesis (H3), in the relationship between bullying and harassment and transgression-related interpersonal motivation. The statistical analysis demonstrated that resilience acts as a protective buffer, attenuating the adverse impact of bullying and harassment on individuals' psychological motivations.

By promoting resilience and addressing issues of bullying and harassment, academia can cultivate a culture of ethical behavior and professional excellence, ultimately enriching the scholarly community and advancing knowledge dissemination in Indian institutions.

## **Findings of the study**

### **1. Positive Relationship between Bullying/Harassment and TRIM:**

The study supported hypothesis (H1) indicating a positive relationship between bullying and harassment and transgression-related interpersonal motivation (TRIM). This suggests that Ph.D. scholars subjected to bullying or harassment may be more inclined toward engaging in unethical behaviors.

### **2. Negative Relationship between Resilience and TRIM:**

The research confirmed hypothesis (H2) showing a negative relationship between resilience and transgression-related interpersonal motivation (TRIM). Individuals with higher levels of resilience exhibit a decreased propensity towards unethical behaviors, even when faced with adversity.

### **3. Moderating Effect of Resilience:**

Hypothesis (H3) regarding the moderating role of resilience in the relationship between bullying and harassment and TRIM was validated. Resilience acts as a protective buffer, mitigating the adverse impact of bullying and harassment on individuals' psychological motivations.

## **Limitations**

1. Sample size: The study was conducted on a population of 170 PhD scholars, all over India.

2. Limited financial resources and access to data due to very few previous studies done on the subject.

3. Cultural differences: Data are collected from different states where culture influences the academic environment, interpersonal relationships, and individual perception.

4. The busy academic schedules might have influenced the scholars and resulted in data manipulation.

5. Time constraints

### **Implications**

1. Acknowledging resilience as a crucial component in reducing the negative consequences of interpersonal offenses that creates opportunities for preventive actions in communities, business, and educational settings.

2. Resilience training combined with staff development programs and strengthened anti-bullying regulations in the workplace can help create a more positive and welcoming work environment.

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**APPENDICES****APPENDIX A – Informed consent form****ST. TERESA'S COLLEGE (AUTONOMOUS), ERNAKULAM****Nationally re-accredited at 'a++' level (4th cycle)****Affiliated to Mahatma Gandhi university**

Greetings,

My name is Jewel Mariya Shaju, MSc Psychology student, at St. Teresa's College, Ernakulam, Kerala. I am doing my study under the supervision of Ms. Jisha Shekar (Assistant professor, St. Teresa's College, Ernakulam, Kerala) I am conducting a study to understand the moderating role of resilience in the relationship between bullying and harassment and transgression-related interpersonal motivations as part of my research.

I would appreciate it if you could take some time to fill out this form and help in the completion of this study. It will take only a few minutes to fill out the questionnaire.

Kindly fill out the form only if you are an Indian citizen currently doing your research in any of the universities in India, and must be 22 and above.

**General instructions** - The study will involve you filling out this form. You need to respond to each statement in each given section. Please answer each statement as it most relates to you.

The information provided will be kept confidential and used for research purposes only.

Thanks in advance!

Jewel Mariya Shaju

[Jewelmariya2001@gmail.com](mailto:Jewelmariya2001@gmail.com)

Informed consent : I have read the above information. I agree to participate in this study. I understand my participation is voluntary and that my name will not be associated with the responses. I provide my consent voluntarily to participate in this research.

- Agree
- Disagree

## **Appendix B**

### **Socio-Demographic Details**

Name (Optional): \_\_\_\_\_

Age: \_\_\_\_\_

University: \_\_\_\_\_

Department: \_\_\_\_\_

Year of Study: \_\_\_\_\_

**Appendix C – RESILIENCE****Please respond to each item by marking one box per row**

	<b>Strongly disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>
I tend to bounce back quickly after hard times					
I have a hard time making it through stressful events					
It does not take me long to recover from a stressful event					
It is hard for me to snap back when something bad happens.					
I usually come through difficult times with little trouble					
I tend to take a long time to get over set backs in my life					



## **Appendices**

### **Appendix D – Transgression related interpersonal motivation**

#### **Transgression-Related Interpersonal Motivations Scale--12-Item Form (TRIM-12)**

For the following questions, please indicate your current thoughts and feelings about the person who

hurt you. Use the following scale to indicate your agreement with each of the questions.

1= Strongly Disagree 2 = Disagree 3 = Neutral 4 = Agree 5 = Strongly Agree

1. I'll make him/her pay.
2. I keep as much distance between us as possible.
3. I wish that something bad would happen to him/her.
4. I live as if he/she doesn't exist, isn't around.
5. I don't trust him/her.
6. I want him/her to get what he/she deserves.
7. I find it difficult to act warmly toward him/her.
8. I avoid him/her.
9. I'm going to get even.
10. I cut off the relationship with him/her.
11. I want to see him/her hurt and miserable.
12. I withdraw from him/her.

## Appendices

### Appendix E – Bullying and harassment

#### Response Options:

Never

Now and then

Monthly

Weekly

Daily

#### Work-related bullying

1. Someone withholding information which affects your performance
2. Being ordered to do work below your level of competence
3. Having your opinions ignored
4. Being given tasks with unreasonable deadlines
5. Excessive monitoring of your work
6. Pressure not to claim something to which by right you are entitled (e.g. sick leave, holiday entitlement, travel expenses)
7. Being exposed to an unmanageable workload

#### Person related bullying

8. Being humiliated or ridiculed in connection with your work
9. Having key areas of responsibility removed or replaced with more trivial or unpleasant tasks
10. Spreading of gossip and rumors about you
11. Being ignored or excluded
12. Having insulting or offensive remarks made about your person, attitudes or your private life
13. Hints or signals from others that you should quit your job

14. Repeated reminders of your errors or mistakes
15. Being ignored or facing a hostile reaction when you approach
16. Persistent criticism of your errors or mistakes
17. Practical jokes carried out by people you don't get along with
18. Having allegations made against you
19. Being the subject of excessive teasing and sarcasm

Physically intimidating bullying

20. Being shouted at or being the target of spontaneous anger
21. Intimidating behaviors such as finger-pointing, invasion of personal space, shoving, blocking your way
22. Threats of violence or physical abuse or actual abuse



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