

# HUMAN RESOURCE PROFESSIONALS' PERCEPTION OF WORKPLACE BULLYING IN SRI LANKA

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This paper aims to explore how human resource professionals understand bullying and the perceptions and beliefs they hold about the concept, as a proper and comprehensive understanding of the concept is the backbone of any preventive and handling measured with regard to bullying that is introduced in companies. Using qualitative research methodology, we have carried out in-depth, in-person interviews with 30 human resource professionals, representing diverse industries. The findings indicated that the participants were not adequately aware of what bullying is and that they tend to confuse bullying with other types of negative workplace behaviours such as aggression, incivility and sexual harassment. The participants also commonly did not understand who can be bullies and who can be victims. This lack of understanding of what bullying is and the many misperceptions that carry will inevitably result in ineffective prevention and handling of bullying in their organisations. The implications of these findings for management are discussed.

**Keywords:** *Bullying; Workplaces; Negative workplace behaviours; Human resource professionals; Perception*

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