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Examining the relationship between organizational coaching and workplace counterproductive behaviours in the United Arab Emirates

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Abstract

Purpose – The purpose of this study is to establish both the validity of Western theories within the Middle East, namely, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), and to further improve and extend our understanding of the effect of organisational coaching on counterproductive behaviours, such as bullying and alienation.

Design/methodology/approach – A sample size of 656 participants from 29 organisations and 14 different industries was employed. A research model was proposed, refined and tested through a quantitative paradigm using one dimension nonlinear principal components analysis, linear structural equation modelling (SEM) and MANOVA.

Findings – The correlation analysis results show non-significant negative correlations between coaching and all of the organisational counterproductive behaviour dimensions but not certainty. It was found that a significant weak relationship exists between most of the mediator dimensions, while a strong relationship exists between job alienation and workplace bullying. Results of the linear SEM provide support that coaching is related to certainty. Furthermore, the results reveal that certainty mediates a significant link between coaching and organisational counterproductive work behaviours (job alienation and bullying).

Originality/value – The study is considered the first in the UAE to investigate organisational counterproductive work behaviours (bullying and job alienation). The main contribution of this study is to quantify the relationship between organisational coaching and bullying and job alienation mediated by organisational climate dimensions.

Keywords Structural equation modelling, Coaching, Organizational climate, Counterproductive behaviours, MANOVA, United Arab Emirates

Paper type Research paper

1. Introduction

In spite of the growth and importance of coaching, in general, and managerial coaching, in particular, the coaching literature base has been criticised for being largely prescriptive, with few examples of substantive research and empirical studies available

(Ellinger *et al.*, 2008; Hamlin *et al.*, 2008; Passmore and Gibbes, 2007). While much has been written on organisational coaching, research on this topic in an Arab context has not kept pace with its counterparts in the Western areas of the world (Noer *et al.*, 2007). More specifically, empirical literature tackling these topics has been criticised for being mostly narrow in focus and context, as insufficient research has been conducted in non-Western economies, in general, and the United Arab Emirates (UAE), in particular (Elbanna, 2010). Regardless of its orientation and its types, the foundations of coaching seem to be rooted in modern USA and western Europe (Noer *et al.*, 2007).

The UAE is a fast-growing economy (Siddique, 2012; Tlaiss and Kauser, 2011). Therefore, it is necessary for organisations to understand employee attitudes and behaviours in such a diversified culture. UAE organisations, where this study took place, are facing the need to increase efficiency due to rising costs and global competition (Elbanna, 2010; Al-Shammari and Hussein, 2008) and deal with a significant reduction of foreign employees due to the Emiratisation programme (Forrest, 2003). From a strategic human resource standpoint, existing human resource management practices, such as performance appraisal and training professional development activities, are not seen by decision-makers as adequately preparing organisations and their people for these challenges (Behery, 2011). Seeking to quickly remedy this situation, human resource managers are considering managerial coaching as a means to facilitate necessary employee development in order to contend with the new business climate (Trathen, 2011).

Thus, the present study attempts to establish both the validity and the effectiveness of Western approaches within the Middle East and to further improve our understanding of the effect of organisational coaching on counterproductive behaviours, such as bullying and alienation.

According to a preliminary review of the literature, there are no studies on the relationship of UAE managerial culture to coaching behaviour (Trathen, 2011). Therefore, in our paper, a theoretical framework is developed supported by empirical underpinnings to test these relationships. This article is organised into the following sections: overall literature on organisational coaching, workplace bullying and alienation and the organisational climate. The study then discusses the research results and analysis. Finally, research implications and limitations along with the future research intent are presented (Figure 1).

2. Literature review and hypotheses development
2.1 Coaching
Coaching has been generally described as a one-on-one approach to facilitate individual learning and behavioural change (Noer *et al.*, 2007; Walker-Fraser, 2009). It involves the use of a wide variety of behavioural methods and techniques, such as building self-awareness, learning and practicing new skills thorough role-playing, behaviour modelling and intensive feedback (DeMeuse *et al.*, 2009; Trathen, 2011). These coaching behavioural activities assist individuals to increase productivity and avoid the entrapment of counterproductive behaviours (Bond and Seneque, 2013; Ellinger *et al.*, 2008).

Ellinger *et al.* (2008) and Feldman and Lankau (2005) define coaching as a process for improving an organisation's work performance. In addition, it has been recognised as a daily practical strategy for helping individuals develop and improve their capabilities to
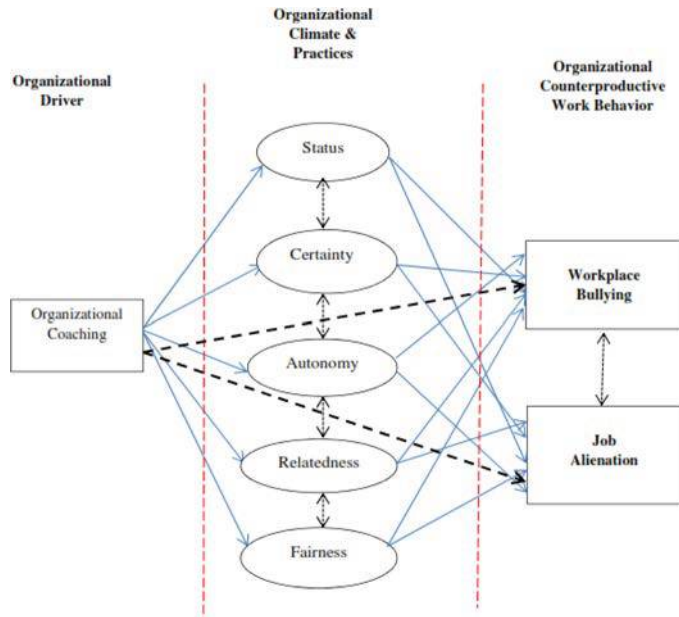
Figure 1.
Research model &
hypotheses

exceed prior levels of performance and go beyond their organisation's expectations
(Baron and Morin, 2009; Ellinger *et al.*, 2008; Fillery-Travis and Lane, 2006; Gettman,
2008). Coaching has also been referred to as the process of developing workplace
individuals or teams and the ability to customise individuals to the needs of an
organisation (Kampa and White, 2002; Gettman, 2008). From a human relations and
social exchange theory perspective, coaching is a process of establishing a relationship
between two parties, i.e. the coach and the people being coached. The ultimate purpose
of this relationship is to make it easier for individuals to learn quickly and to improve
their professional behaviour and personal satisfaction (Allen and Eby, 2008; Boyce *et al.*,
2010; Gyllensten and Palmer, 2007). Considering this abovementioned relationship,
some recent research efforts have begun to establish a more robust base of literature on
effective (positive) managerial coaching behaviours (Hamlin *et al.*, 2006, 2008; Ellinger
et al., 2008). However, empirical research exploring ineffective (negative) and
counterproductive behaviours has received little scholarly attention (Bond and Seneque,
2013; Hamlin *et al.*, 2006; Ellinger *et al.*, 2008).

Despite the fact that there is still no universally agreed definition of coaching in
business contexts, or indeed a clear consensus on how it should be labelled in
cross-cultures (Bond and Seneque, 2013), coaching is a distinct activity from other
organisational development and human resource management practices (Bond and
Seneque, 2013; Hamlin *et al.*, 2008). It is noteworthy that coaching is not a synonym for
the concepts of counselling and mentoring, despite the fact that many studies use these
terms interchangeably as stressed by Cowan (2013), Ellinger *et al.* (2008) and Hackman
and Wageman (2005).

In widening the lens on career counselling, this paper provides an overview of
managerial coaching as a leadership development intervention that can be readily

incorporated into current career counselling practices (Trathen, 2011). This type of coaching includes five approaches (sub-domains): career/life, strategy, organisational change, leadership development and behavioural coaching (Morgan *et al.*, 2004; Hamlin *et al.*, 2008).

2.1.1 Career coaching. The introduction of career coaching draws upon the growing appreciation of one's current job role as merely one segment of a multi-career employment history. Therefore, career coaching takes a holistic approach to executive coaching (Feller *et al.*, 2005).

2.1.2 Strategy coaching. Managerial coaches specialising in strategy coaching are usually employed as reliable partners of the decision-maker during a strategy building process (Morgan *et al.*, 2004).

2.1.3 Coaching for organisational change. Addelson *et al.* (2005, p. 34) state that:

[…] the object of organizational coaching is to enable people first to see new possibilities for action, especially in terms of how they work and how they work together, and then to initiate conversations that generate aligning.

Trathen (2011) argues that coaching for organisational change involves the systematic consideration of the organisational culture and shared values held by individuals comprising an organisation.

2.1.4 Coaching for leadership development. Morgan *et al.* (2004, p.30) suggest leadership development executive coaches "work to instill a capability in the leader or leadership team to bring the organisation to another level of effectiveness". This type of coaching focusing on leadership development requires a solid understanding of the concepts and theories of leadership and the multiple forms and styles leadership takes in practice (Trathen, 2011).

2.1.5 Behavioural coaching. Trathen (2011) proposes that the role of the executive coach is to identify personal managerial habits that are annoying to co-workers and help eliminate them – so as to retain their value in the organisation.

As the UAE changes economically and invests in leadership and career development competencies to foster regional leadership, opportunities for managerial coaching are competitively expanding (Behery, 2011; Trathen, 2011).

The popularity of managerial coaching for workforce and organisational effectiveness is a relatively new paradigm and literature on defining the role of human resource in coaching activities is underdeveloped (Dagley, 2006; Walker-Fraser, 2009). So for this study, a meta-analysis of coaching evaluation research was not feasible, given the absence of comparative and cross-culture studies (Dagley, 2006; Passmore and Gibbes, 2007; Walker-Fraser, 2009).

2.2 Organisational climate
Organisational climate includes employees' perception of the values and expectations essential to the culture (Schein, 1985). Organisational climate is found in the literature to be one of the critical success factors for increasing the effectiveness and efficiency of today's organisations (Ceyda and Sevinc, 2012). Organisational climate is an outcome of many years of consistent operations. It is, therefore, characterised by many different features that represent the various realms of human being work-related knowledge and experiences, as discussed by Arslan (1997) and Rock and Cox (2012). The current study uses five different organisational pillars that reflect an organisation's climate, i.e. status,

certainty, autonomy, relatedness and fairness (see Rock, 2008, 2010). Research strongly suggests these five pillars normally have positive rewarding or negative threatening consequences that influence work-related attitudes and behaviours (Gordon, 2000; Lieberman and Eisenberger, 2008; Rock and Cox, 2012). A brief description of each of these organisational climate pillars follows:

2.2.1 Status. The core concept of employee status is positional power and organisational power, compared to their peers within a group (Domagalski and Steelman, 2007). It is how people perceive their relative influence on other's attitudes and behaviours (Rostamy *et al.*, 2008).

2.2.2 Certainty. This pillar focuses on the chances of errors that result from lacking knowledge about what is happening in one's daily business life (Gerekova and Schuller, 2005). Thus, it is the mental condition of being totally secure (Parker, 2005). Generally, the more certainty one has, the more the threat produced by uncertainty is reduced (York and Venkatraman, 2010).

2.2.3 Autonomy. Job autonomy is the degree to which individuals have freedom to decide the way they do assigned tasks (Fuller *et al.*, 2010). In addition, it is the degree to which employees can adapt to or take control over their daily business environment (Hornung and Rousseau, 2007).

2.2.4 Relatedness. Workplace relatedness concerns the organisational social relationships between subordinates and their line managers among team members and between all the employees in their organisation (Kaufman and Dodge, 2009; Pehrsson, 2010). It is about working with and through people in a manner that greatly increases one's, and even the group's, productivity levels (Bugeja *et al.*, 2009).

2.2.5 Fairness. Workplace fairness or organisational justice refers to the atmosphere where everyone feels a sense of balance between their efforts and outcomes (Griffith *et al.*, 2006). Hornibrook *et al.* (2009) argue that fairness can be conceptualised into two components: the fairness of outcome distributions, known as distributive justice, and procedural justice, which is the fairness of the processes that led to such outcomes.

2.2.6 The relationship between coaching and organisational climate. In order for the coaching process to be successful, organisations must develop a climate committed to improving an employee's performance (McGibben, 1994). Consequently, to succeed with coaching, an organisational climate must be perceived as one of trust, respect and cooperation through which information is freely exchanged (Kinlaw, 1989; McGibben, 1994). Both the manager and employees must mutually understand the other's expectations, hopefully resulting in measurable performance goals. Most importantly, for coaching to be successful, the climate must be a supportive one in which the employee is stimulated to ask questions, take risks and learn from mistakes (Ottele and Schaefer, 1991). More recently, Whisenant and Smucker (2009) have explored organisational climate perceptions within high school athletic departments from the point of view of coaches. They have emphasised the need for maintaining a fair operating and organisational climate in order for coaching to have a positive impact on the organisation's performance and reduce the undesired negative behaviours:

H1. Organisational coaching is positively related to organisational climate (*H1-A*. Status, *H1-B*. Certainty, *H1-C*. Autonomy, *H1-D*. Relatedness, *H1-E*. Fairness).

2.3 Counterproductive behaviours

This study focuses exclusively on two types of workplace counterproductive behaviours: namely, workplace bullying and job alienation. The rationale behind this choice is because these behaviours are quite sensitive issues in the UAE's conservative culture and research on these two topics is very limited and almost non-existent.

2.3.1 Workplace bullying. No consistencies are found in the definition of workplace bullying (Ortega *et al.*, 2009), but workplace bullying does involve tenacious negative behaviours directed to a specific target. It includes a perceived power disparity that creates an intimidating work environment where the targets or victims find themselves unable to defend themselves (Hoel and Cooper, 2000; Hoel *et al.*, 2003). Therefore, workplace bullying is considered to be a form of social aggression or hostile, anti-social behaviour in an organisational setting (Salin, 2001, 2003; Zapf *et al.*, 1996).

In addition, workplace bullying is defined as repetitive inappropriate behaviour, direct or indirect, whether verbal, physical or otherwise, carried out by one or more persons against another or others, in the workplace and/or in the course of employment, which undermines the individual's right to dignity at work (Namie and Namie, 2004). LaVan and Martin (2008) define bullying as psychological, emotional or even physical violence, typically covert and occasionally explicit. Therefore, one can argue that workplace bullying is an accepted terminology for many of the harassing behaviours that can exist in an organisation that lead to unfriendly and unwelcomed confrontations between workers (Gumbus and Lyons, 2011).

Various harmful and undesirable behaviours constitute workplace bullying, as discussed in many studies (Agervold and Mikkelsen, 2004; Branch *et al.*, 2007; Zapf and Einarsen, 2005; Hoel and Cooper, 2000; Einarsen *et al.*, 2003; Keashly, 1998; O'Moore *et al.*, 1998; Zapf *et al.*, 1996) such as social isolation or silent treatment, gossip or rumours, practical jokes, attacking the victim's private life or attitudes, excessive criticism or monitoring of work, withholding information or depriving responsibility, verbal aggression, unreasonable deadlines, unmanageable workloads and meaningless tasks.

2.3.1.1 The relationship between coaching and workplace bullying. Over the past three years, the term "bullying" has entered the language of the workplace. It is used to describe a certain type of behaviour – an abuse of power or inflicting emotional and psychological pain. To remedy the problem, some organisations are turning to coaching. Many see it as a suitable way to change either the bully's or the victim's behaviour, or both (Sparrow, 2006). The type of coaching required is defined as person-centred behavioural coaching (Röhrig and Röttgen-Wallrath, 2012). Coaching to combat bullying or victim-like behaviours is similar to other coaching methods: it cannot work in isolation and has to be supported by other activities within a company (Jenkins *et al.*, 2011). Maccoby (1998) argues that in the case of ineffective managers who are seen as autocratic or bullying, provoking fear and stressing other people, they may seek coaching to alleviate the stress and develop themselves to better cope with their challenges. Osif (2010) argues that when the bullying culture is deeply rooted, it is easy to assume that the situation is beyond repair. However, any organisation can change the bullying culture through effective development of staff and management via continuous programmes involving organisational coaching and mentoring (Röhrig and Röttgen-Wallrath, 2012).

Coaching is now well-established, especially as a means for improving management performance and for dealing with specific issues, such as bullying and weak interpersonal skills and alienation (Charlton, 2006; Keashly and Neuman, 2010; Salin, 2001, 2003; Styhre, 2008).

2.3.2 Job alienation. Although there are few references to the concept of workplace or job alienation in organisational studies (Nair and Vohra, 2010; Banai and Reisel, 2007; Passmore and Brown, 2009; Passmore and Gibbes, 2007), a variety of definitions of job alienation have been set around the state or the feeling of powerlessness or social isolation among employees due to many causes (Halbesleben and Clark, 2010; Passmore and McGoldrick, 2009; Rogers, 1995). Workplace alienation refers to a state in which individuals may not be able to satisfy their organisational social needs (Nasurdin *et al.*, 2005). In addition, alienation shows a discrepancy state between an objective and fair workplace and employee interests, values and beliefs (Mendoza and Lara, 2007).

In trying to understand the possible causes of alienation, many previous studies (see Nair and Vohra, 2010; Rogers, 1995, 2000; Sulu *et al.*, 2010; Valadbigi and Ghobadi, 2011) discuss the reasons behind workplace alienation, such as an organisation's centralisation and formalisation attitudes, the nature of the task itself, individual differences and personal characteristics, the nature of relationships between subordinates and their line managers and an organisation's atmosphere of unfairness and uncertainty.

2.3.2.1 The relationship between coaching and workplace alienation. In the past decade, coaching has been expanding as a personal and professional growth and development methodology in the organisational environment (Cavicchia, 2010; Styhre, 2008). The loneliness and lack of candid feedback from coaches, peers and subordinates tend to generate alienation, lack of sensibility and diminished capacity to perceive the impact of executives' words and acts in organisational cultures where distrust, indifference, lack of involvement and resistance to change are often present (Krausz, 2005; Whisenant and Smucker, 2009). When an executive's problems stem from undetected or ignored psychological difficulties, coaching can actually make a bad situation worse (Styhre, 2008). Seen from this viewpoint, Cavicchia (2010) argues that coaching is not a universal remedy aimed at curing all kinds of organisational and managerial malaises, but something which must be carefully designed, executed, monitored and evaluated to accomplish managerial objectives. Otherwise, failing to run a coaching programme professionally may lead to disappointment, cynicism or job alienation (Styhre, 2008). In his paper, Cavicchia (2010) discusses a number of examples that illustrate the ways in which shame and alienation can arise in the coach–coachee relationship, such as feeling sensitivity of shame and potential negative behaviours that may accompany failure and encompassing relational dynamics as a source of both data and experimentation in the service of individual and organisational change.

Many studies have examined the possible sequences of alienation. Work alienation separates an individual from the task and the workplace. It displays itself in the form of reduced job involvement and a shortage of organisational identification (Armstrong-Stassen, 2006). It represents such work characteristics as limited decision latitude and minimal skill usage (Berger *et al.*, 2008). An alienated person has a lack of involvement and commitment in daily organisational activities.

H2. Organisational coaching is negatively related to counterproductive work behaviours (1.workplace bullying and2. job alienation).

H3. Organisational climate (*H3-A.* Status, *H3-B.* Certainty, *H3-C.* Autonomy, *H3-D.* Relatedness, *H3-E.* Fairness) are positively related to counterproductive work behaviours (1. workplace bullying and 2. job alienation).

3. Methodology

3.1 Sample and procedures

The data for this study were drawn from a random sample from 14 sectors (chemicals; construction/real estate; transportation; employment business; communication; banking; health care; retail sales; tourism; automotive; consumer products; legal; education; and water and electricity) in an equally likely base. The majority of respondents was female (59.3 per cent), between 20 and 30 years of age (52.7 per cent), foreigners (67.2 per cent), with less than five years' experience (54.6 per cent); from information technology departments (35.4 per cent) and varying employee job levels (48.8 per cent). Of the respondents, 51.2 per cent described their work status as temporary.

The questionnaire employed was self-administered, having gained prior corporate approval, via inter-organisational mailing systems. Potential respondents were given the researchers' contact details, along with a cover letter in case of any questions regarding procedure, understanding and confidentiality. Anonymity and confidentiality were assured, as previously emphasised by Podsakoff *et al.* (2003) and Podsakoff and Organ (1986). Potential respondents were assured that participation was voluntary. Completed questionnaires were returned via a sealed envelope to a secured drop-off box for collection by the researchers only. The survey was conducted over 13 months, excluding uncompleted questionnaires (each questionnaire with 20 per cent missing responses was not considered). The final sample size was 656 respondents, with an overall response rate of 47 per cent.

3.2 Measures

Efforts were made to minimise bias as per McGrath's (1986) recommendations. A single blind technique was used, and no information was provided on the specific objectives of the research to the respondents. Other strategies for minimising stress included: the negative ordering of some of the items in the measurement scales; the scales were randomly structured within the questionnaire; and most of the measurement scales were selected from previously established scales. A summary of the scales used to measure each construct follows:

3.2.1 The measure of coaching. The coaching scale was adapted from different instruments used by previous studies, including Bono *et al.* (2009), Passmore (2007a, 2007b, 2008, 2010) and Passmore and Fillery-Travis (2011). This nine-item scale was answered on a five-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

3.2.2 The measure of organisational climate. This scale used the ideas of Rock (2008, 2010) and Rock and Cox (2012). However, it was originally created by the authors. This 20-item scale addressed the five dimensions of status, certainty, autonomy, relatedness and fairness. Respondents evaluated organizational climate on a five-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

3.2.3 The measure of bullying. A wide range of previous studies that address bullying in different workplaces and contexts was consulted to create this scale. These studies include: Baron *et al.* (1999), Coyne *et al.* (2000), Einarsen *et al.* (1994), Einarsen and Skogstad (1996), Escarton *et al.* (2010) and Quine (1999). This ten-item scale was answered on a five-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

3.2.4 The measure of job alienation. The job alienation scale was adopted from studies by Nair and Vohra (2009a, 2009b, 2010). This eight-item scale was measured using a five-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

3.3 Statistical techniques
The study employed a combination of statistical techniques to analyse the data and to test the research hypotheses, such as nonlinear principal components analysis (NLPCA), Explanatory Factor Analysis (EFA), structural equation modelling (SEM) and multivariate ANOVA (MANOVA) analysis. The results of the study are shown below.

4. Data analysis
4.1 Reliability, validity and data reductions
In the first stage of data analysis, one dimension NLPCA was used. The NLPCA method is used for dimension reduction problems when the items are of ordinal scale (Ferrari and Manzi, 2010). The NLPCA was performed to the data set. Each item with component loading less than 0.5 suggests an existence of some problems with the corresponding items; therefore, such items were removed from the analysis (See Figures 2-4). The analysis suggested removing three items out of the nine items in the coaching dimension and one item each from the status, certainty and fairness dimensions. It should be noted that all items always have the same component loadings sign that indicate the measure fits the data well.

The reliability coefficient Cronbach's alpha for data consistency was computed after dropping the weak items from all factors (See Table I). Item reliabilities for organisational coaching were acceptable with Cronbach's alpha value equal to 0.74. All organisational and climate dimensions showed partly lower to acceptable reliabilities ranging from 0.601 to 0.623, but not Fairness which had an unacceptable Cronbach's alpha value (0.57). This factor was no longer considered for farther analysis and was dropped from the research model. The organisational counterproductive work behaviour dimensions showed excellent reliability coefficients that exceeded 0.93 in both dimensions. For construct validity additional to the NLPCA, we used different trials of EFA. For validity testing, and based on the standardised loading and the error variance associated with each observed variable, two different indicators were used. The average variance extracted (AVE) (which should be more than or equal to 0.5) for convergent validity:

$$AVE = \frac{\Sigma\lambda^2}{(\Sigma\lambda^2 + \Sigma(1-\lambda^2))}$$

The composite reliability (CR) to determine the internal consistency of a set of measures (Fornell and Larcker, 1981) should be more than 0.7:
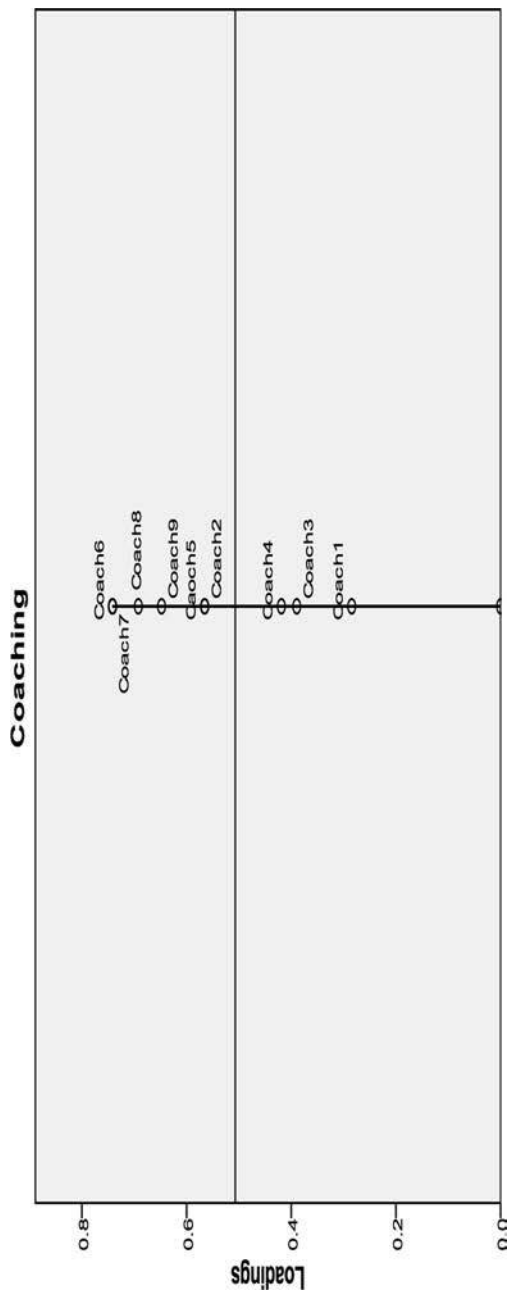
Figure 2.
Component loadings
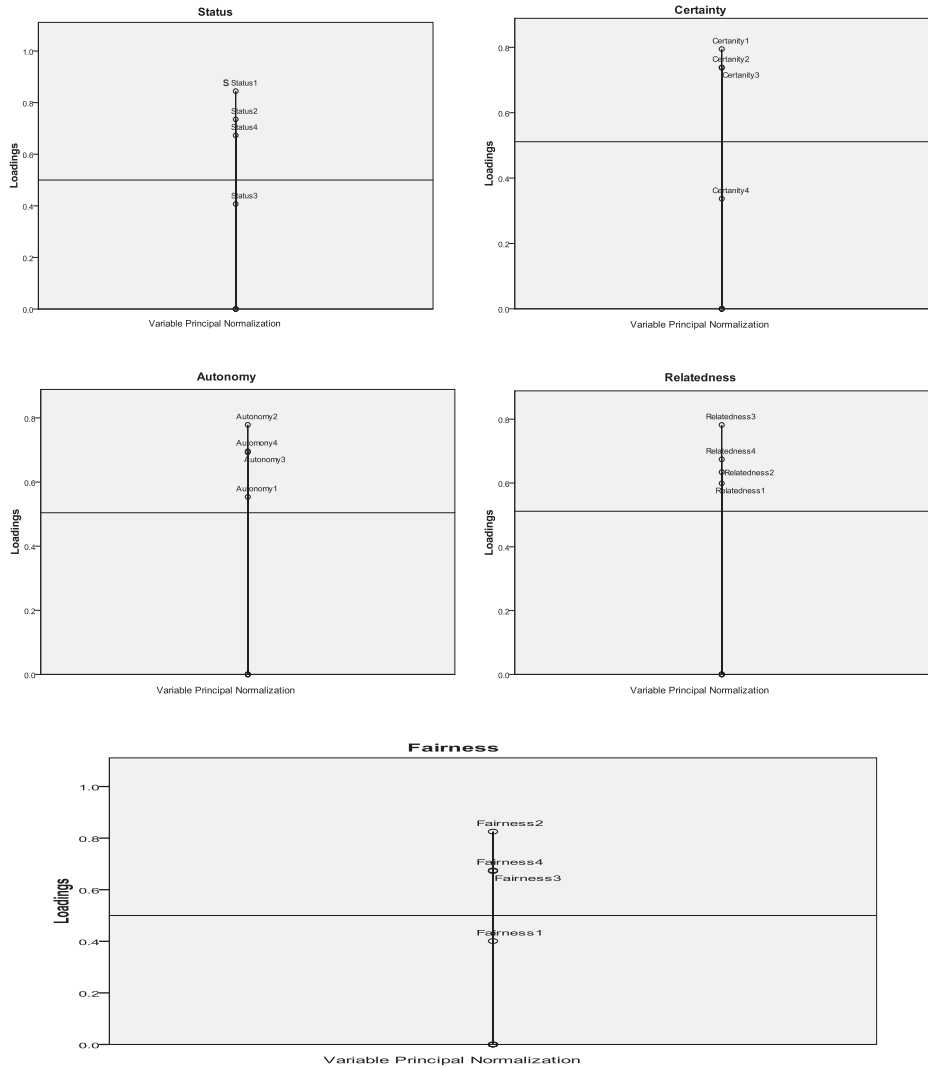of NLPCA:
organizational driver

Figure 3.
Component loadings
using NLPCA:
organizational
climate & practices

$$CR = \frac{(\Sigma\lambda)^2}{((\Sigma\lambda)^2 + \Sigma(1 - \lambda^2))}$$

Where λ is the standardised loading for each observed variable, and $1 - \lambda^2$ is the error variance associated with each observed variable. The convergent validity testing showed that the reliability scores of the latent constructs ranged between 0.75 (certainty) and 0.95 (alienation). The AVE values ranged between 0.491 (coaching) and 0.709 (alienation). It could be concluded that the AVE and construct reliability for all constructs a majority of the variance in the indicators is shared with the construct.
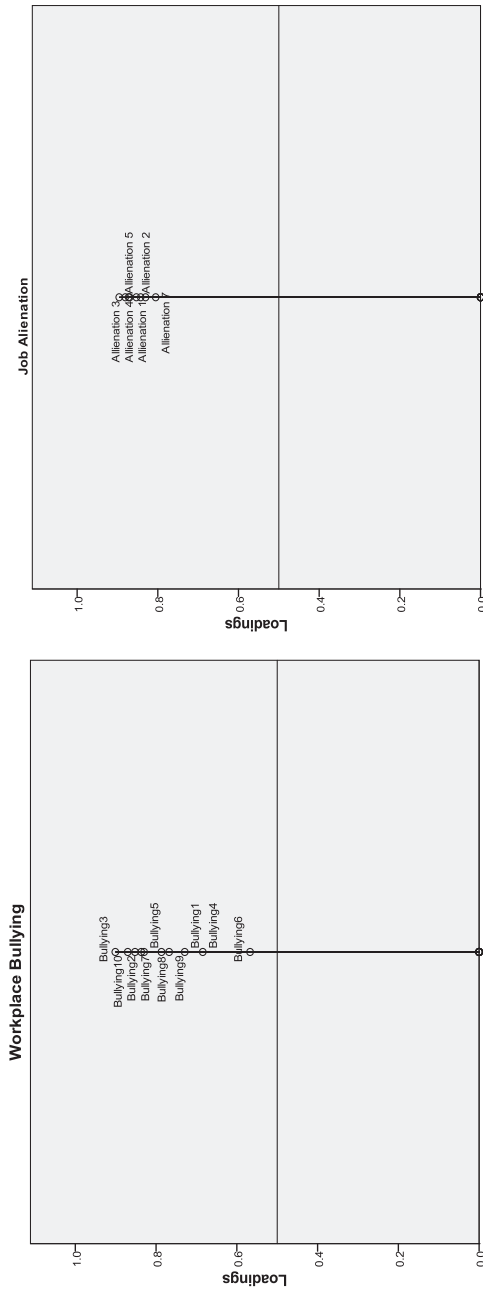
Figure 4.
Component loadings
using NLPCA:
organizational
counterproductive
work behaviour

Dimension	No. of cases	Initial items	No. removed of items	Final no. of items	% of variance	Cronbach's alpha	Component loading range	AVE	CR
Coaching	633	9	3	6	49.13	0.756	0.566-0.740	0.491	0.83
Status	651	4	1	3	56.80	0.621	0.673-0.845	0.568	0.79
Certainty	652	4	1	3	52.99	0.601	0.739-0.950	0.529	0.75
Autonomy	646	4	0	4	52.79	0.623	0.554-0.778	0.528	0.77
Relatedness	649	4	0	4	51.28	0.604	0.599-0.782	0.513	0.76
Fairness	645	4	1	3	54.72	0.571	0.672-0.825	0.547	0.78
Bullying	656	10	0	10	55.34	0.932	0.567-0.901	0.553	0.81
Alienation	656	8	0	8	70.91	0.940	0.830-0.896	0.709	0.95

Table I.
Per cent of variance,
reliability, validity
statistics and loading
range

Moreover, discriminant validity was tested by comparing the AVE with the squared correlation coefficients (Table II). The AVE was found to be higher than the squared correlation coefficient for each pair of the constructs. Also, it is worth mentioning that significant pairwise relationships exist between the constructs when the absolute correlation coefficient is more than 0.101 at significant level 0.05. These results indicated initial evidence of good convergent validity. The mean, standard deviation and the correlation coefficient of all the factors in the proposed model are computed and tabulated in Table II.

4.2 Model analyses and hypotheses results
The research model was tested using linear SEM with latent variables, which is well suited to highly complex predictive models (Jöreskog, 1973). SEM has several strengths that make it appropriate for this study, including its ability to handle both reflective and formative constructs. SEM analyses were performed using a covariance matrix as input to the Analysis of Moment Structure software package (Arbuckle and Wothke, 2003), using maximum likelihood estimation. The missing data were replaced by using the expectation maximisation approach prior to analysis. Moreover, to evaluate the model, residual means squared error approximation (RMSEA), standardised root mean square residual (SRMR), normed fit index (NFI), incremental fit index (IFI), comparative fit index (CFI) and goodness of fit index (GFI) values were taken into consideration. It is noted that a fit index value more than 0.90 and means squared error less than 0.08 would indicate a close fit of the model.

Testing the proposed linear structural model, the chi-square for the model was significant ($\chi^2(7) = 954.555$; $p = 0.000$); the mean squared error was (SRMR = 0.031; RMSEA = 0.212); and the statistical fit indexes were (NFI= 0.908; IFI= 0.910; CFI = 0.909; and GFI = 0.965), which indicate an excellent model. For the proposed model, *H1* had unexpected results, *H3* was partially supported and *H2* was not supported. The data indicates that (See Table III) there is a negative significant relationship (unlike the hypothesis) between coaching and only one dimension (*H1-B*) (Certainty: $\beta = -0.107$, $p = 0.006$) out of four dimensions of the organisational and climate practices factor. However, there is a positive significant relationship between Certainty and organisational counterproductive work behaviour (workplace bullying (*H3/D1*): $\beta = 0.106$, $p = 0.007$; job alienation (*H3/D2*): $\beta = 0.084$, $p = 0.031$). Also, there is a positive significant effect of "Status" on job alienation (*H3/A2*) ($\beta = 0.090$, $p = 0.020$). However,

Variables of the study	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1	3.2459	0.81035	0.491						
2	3.6773	0.75163	0.002	0.568					
3	3.7840	0.69478	0.011	0.089	0.529				
4	3.6856	0.60732	0.001	0.044	0.182	0.528			
5	3.7207	0.62088	0.000	0.102	0.183	0.199	0.513		
6	2.4959	0.79688	0.002	0.010	0.018	0.005	0.004	0.553	
7	2.1877	0.86506	0.001	0.013	0.013	0.003	0.003	0.544	0.709

Notes: 1 (coaching); 2 (status); 3 (certainty); 4 (autonomy); 5 (relatedness); 6 (bullying); 7 (alienation)

Table II.
AVE on the diagonal and squared correlation coefficients on the off diagonal

Hypotheses of the study	Hypotheses no.	Endogenous variable		Exogenous variable	Standardised estimate	SE	t	p
H1	H1-A	Status	←	Coaching	0.046	0.036	1.185	0.236
	H1-B	Certainty	←	Coaching	−0.107	0.033	−2.759	0.006
	H1-C	Autonomy	←	Coaching	0.031	0.029	0.785	0.433
	H1-D	Relatedness	←	Coaching	−0.006	0.030	−0.153	0.878
H2	H2-1	Bullying	←	Coaching	−0.036	0.038	−0.911	0.362
	H2-2	Alienation	←	Coaching	−0.031	0.042	−0.786	0.432
H3	H3-A-1	Bullying	←	Status	0.071	0.041	1.835	0.067
	H3-B-1	Bullying	←	Relatedness	−0.007	0.050	−0.187	0.851
	H3-C-1	Bullying	←	Autonomy	0.014	0.051	0.356	0.721
	H3-D-1	Bullying	←	Certainty	0.106	0.045	2.715	0.007
	H3-A-2	Alienation	←	Status	0.090	0.045	2.325	0.020
	H3-B-2	Alienation	←	Relatedness	−0.007	0.054	−0.174	0.862
	H3-C-2	Alienation	←	Autonomy	0.003	0.055	0.072	0.942
	H3-D-2	Alienation	←	Certainty	0.084	0.048	2.155	0.031

Table III.
Standardised
regression estimates

there is an indirect negative and significant effect of coaching on organisational counterproductive work behaviour dimensions via the mediator "Certainty" with indirect coefficient equal to $\beta = 0.009$ (job alienation) and $\beta = 0.011$ (workplace bullying).

5. Group comparisons in the perception of organisational factors using MANOVA

Because we collected data from different groups, we suggest a fourth hypothesis to be examined:

H4. There are significant differences between the participants in terms of their perception of organisational driver, counterproductive behaviours and organisational climate according to the independent variables (gender, age, experience, citizenship, department, job level and contract status).

A MANOVA was used to answer this hypothesis. The MANOVA assumptions are defined as the independence of the respondent ensured by the random argument in the sample plan. Two tests were performed to be sure of this assumption: Box's M tests (test equality of the covariance) and Levene's test (test equality of the variances). The results of Box's M test indicated that the equality of the covariances were met within three group variables: gender ($F(28, 1,098,540) = 0.457$; $p = 0.971$), age ($F(56, 516,850) = 1.327$; $p = 0.051$) and experiences ($F(56, 54,455) = 1.307$; $p = 0.061$). However, a significant Box's M test result occurred with citizenship ($F(28, 467,140) = 1.728$; $p = 0.01$), department ($F(168, 90,534) = 1.777$; $p < 0.001$), job level ($F(84, 238,662) = 1.623$; $p < 0.001$) and work status ($F(28, 1,444,910) = 1.824$; $p = 0.005$). The violation of covariance equality assumption within these groups made the group comparisons questionable. To avoid Type II error risk in the comparisons based on these grouping variables, they were not considered in our analysis.

The normality assumption was tested using Mardia's test. The results indicated that the normality assumption met within the considered variables. Moreover, Cohen's η^2, In MANOVA, Fisher's least significant difference (LSD) test was used for multiple

comparisons whenever the common variance assumption was met. Otherwise, Temahane's test was employed. The main effect results indicate that there are differences in coaching in relation to employee age ($F(6,490) = 4.903$; $p = 0.008$). The analysis yielded a Cohen's η^2 of 0.015, indicating that the difference is very small (Cohen, 1988). Based on the multiple comparison tests, coaching has different perception between participants aged less than 30 years and participants more than 30 years old ($M = 2.91$; $SD = 0.76$). Also, there are no statistical differences between employees with less than 30 years' experience (both groups) and experts with more than 30 years' experience ($M = 2.72$; $SD = 0.82$). Moreover, there is a significant effect of gender on workplace bullying ($F(1, 490) = 4.175$, $p = 0.041$), indicating that female employees have fewer attitudes towards workplace bullying ($M = 2.40$; $SD = 0.78$) than males ($M = 2.55$; $SD = 0.79$). The analysis yielded a Cohen's η^2 of 0.007, indicating that the difference is very small.

Interaction results between age and gender showed that there is a significant result with coaching ($F(2, 631) = 3.561$; $p = 0.029$) and certainty ($F(2, 631) = 3.688$; $p = 0.026$) based on the multiple comparisons LSD results (Figure 5). These effects occur significantly with better tendency for males aged less than 30 years. Also, there are significant results caused by the interaction of age and experience on coaching ($F(4, 631) = 2.439$; $p = 0.046$) where older employees showed better coaching if they had 10 years or more of experience. Finally, in considering interaction between the three variables, it appears there are significant results with autonomy ($F(3, 631) = 2.715$; $p = 0.044$), indicating that (Figure 2) males with 10 years or more of experience have a better perception of autonomy than females with the same experience.

6. Research implications, research limitations and future research intent

This study introduced unexpected results regarding organisational performances. For example, we found the organisational climate to be negatively related to coaching via the certainty dimension, which contradicts previous research (Whisenant and Smucker, 2009). An explanation might be that local people own all non-governmental organisations in the UAE, but these organisations are managed and directed by foreigners. This might subsequently spoil their commitment to the organisation and subsequently increase their intentions to leave the organisation (Marescaux et al., 2013). Also, in UAE organisations, and it seems the results are the same within the Arabs Gulf countries, there are no statistical differences between the experts and non-experts in their perception of organisational drivers, counterproductive behaviours and organisational climate.

The findings from the current study provide an influential empirical support for the soundness, validity and generalisability of the effect of organisational coaching on the counterproductive behaviours of bullying and alienation within a non-Western context, namely, the UAE. Such influence could be profound in correcting extant leadership deficiencies in the global workplace and regional areas of the Middle East, and the UAE in particular. Doing so requires a conscious effort on the part of coaching and in promoting a list of organisational climate practices that would lead to a healthy business environment, as the opportunities and complexities of providing leadership and career competencies in the Middle East, and the UAE in particular, demands additional cross-cultural communication skills.

The implications of the preceding findings are well-defined. Managers and decision-makers should recognise the significant role of coaching, which is considered a building block of human resource development practices in today's business environment in
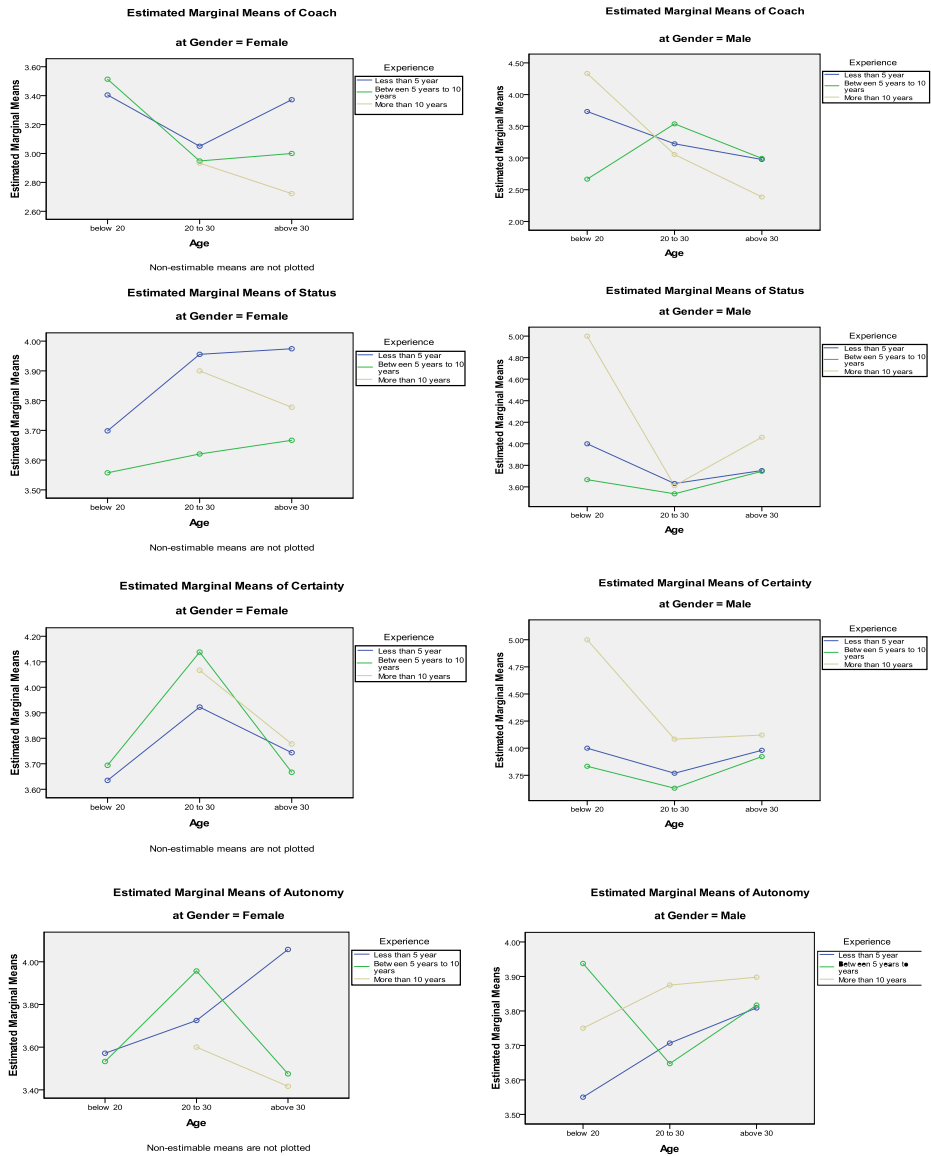
Figure 5.
Estimating mean
interactions between
gender, age and
experiences

(*continued*)

shaping the values and norms of organisational culture. To provide an open and supportive climate, senior leaders are encouraged to role model the benefits of effective coaching and communicate the value of the coaching to avoid counterproductive behaviours.

Furthermore, this study clearly illustrates the need for a process which effectively reinforces learned coaching skills. A standardised system that will continuously
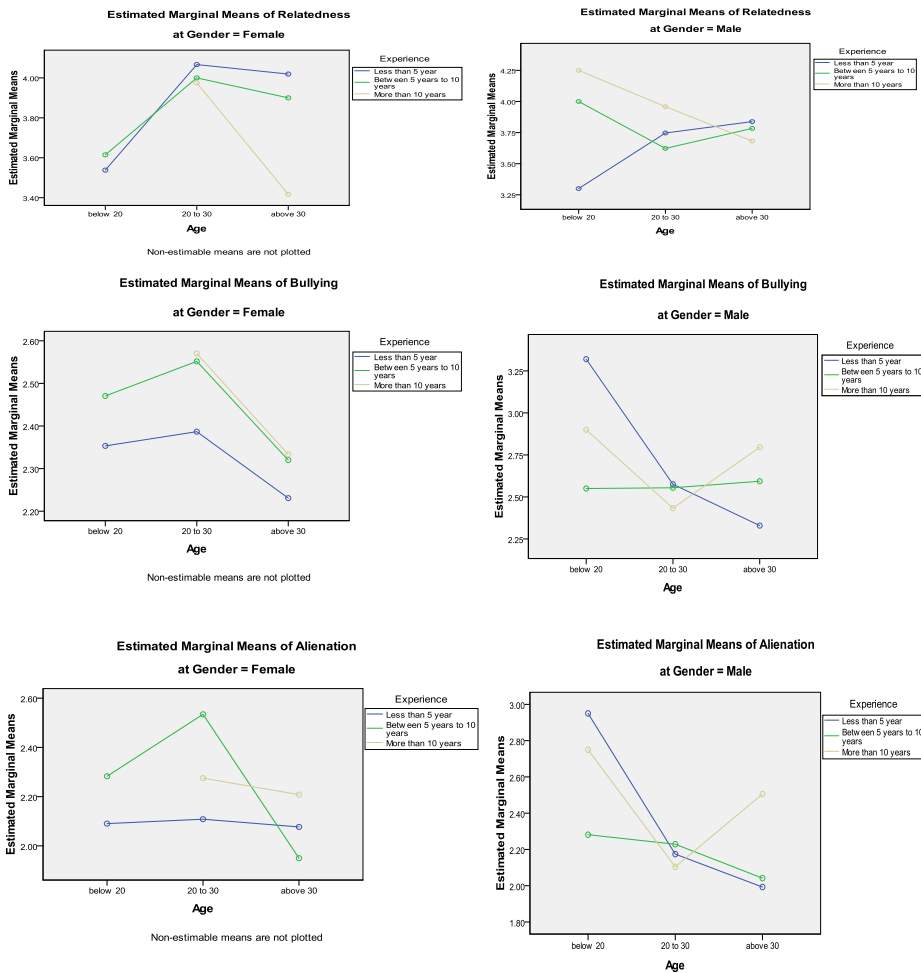
Figure 5.

motivate and reinforce coaching skills should develop managers who will coach throughout their management years.

This study was limited by the fact that all of the data were collected using cross-sectional, self-report questionnaires (Podsakoff and Organ, 1986). In addition, the study was limited to the UAE. Therefore, securing samples from different countries in the Gulf Council Countries, i.e. UAE, Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and Oman, might provide a basis for more robust results and findings. Future studies should examine whether younger managers really adopt the coaching style more readily than senior managers. As far as the UAE is considered, as multiculturalism and diversity have become key issues and more women are joining the workforce and reaching management levels, future coaching research should address how management coaching styles influence these groups, specifically.

7. Concluding remarks

All things considered, this study is considered a humble attempt to bridge the gap between the plethora of Western theories in Western contexts and under researched non-Western contexts and practices. This study empirically tests the effect of organisational coaching on counterproductive behaviours represented by bullying and alienation in a cross-culture context of the UAE mediated by an organisational climate. Using a random sample of 656 respondents from 14 different businesses, the study employed the NLPCA and the EFA. The final revised model is excellent fit in terms of goodness-of-fit indicators. Testing the proposed model and the research hypotheses using the SEM result, the study shows unexpected results for *H1*. However, *H3* is partially supported, while *H2* is not supported. More specifically, there is a negative significant relationship between coaching and certainty. However, there is a positive significant relationship between certainty and organisational counterproductive work behaviour. While there is a positive significant effect on status and job alienation, there is indirect negative and significant effect of coaching on organisational counterproductive work behaviour dimensions via the mediator certainty.

Furthermore the study used MANOVA analysis. Unlike gender, age and experience, there is a significant difference in Box's M test results with citizenship, department, job level and work status. Most notably, the study demonstrates a significant effect of gender on workplace bullying, showing that females pay less or even very little attention toward workplace bullying than males. This is attributed to the effect of the Emirate conservative culture (Behery, 2011; Fauzia *et al.*, 2015). Therefore, the findings suggest that an organisation in the UAE should consider managerial coaching as a valuable tool to facilitate essential employee improvement and to help in reducing the effect of workplace counterproductive practices, such as bullying and alienation. Last, but not least, the study emphasises the need for establishing best practices team-based organisational climate dimensions, such as status, certainty, autonomy and relatedness that can lead to a sustainable and productive workplace, as previously discussed by Cohen and Ledford (1994) and Hackman (2011).

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