REVIEWER 1

The issue is quite interesting but the presentation of the results is too generic.

The introduction is too long and boring for the reader. It seems to be more a "summa" on the topic than an introduction to the study(lines 36-62 and 77-85). I think that it should be shortened by choosing some few main issues as a background and going quickly to the goals of the study.

*Revision response: We have shortened and revised the introduction.*

Minor: line 27 p.3?; line 53 p.597?; the term "another" is use to frequently (Line 47, 49, ...). *Revision response: I believed this has been changed when the introduction was revised.*

Theory of coping: i suggest to short the definition and move this paragraph in the methods. *Revision response. The aim has been clarified, see line 208-212.*

I suggest to be more clear and precise about all the aims of the study. To what kind of working organization are you dealing with? *Revision response: The aim has been clarified, see line 117-118. Type of organizations have been added in the Method part, line 161-163.*

2. Methods
2.1 Partecipants:

line 134:please clarify what was the "strategic sampling procedure"

*Revision response: We have added a clarification of the strategic sampling procedure and how this procedure was applied. Lines 125 – 127.*

line 138 it is important to report here the definition of "Bullying" that is the main topic addressed. *Revision response: We have added the definition in lines 128-134.*

Lines 140-141 how many work organizations have you considered for the recruitment and how many agreed, the same data are important for the enrolled subjects 27 of ? Partecipants age: please furnish SD or SE and range.

*Revision response: information about the recruiting process has been added in lines 135-138. Additional information could be found on the excluded participants in lines 153-159.*

Table 1 Partecipants n.2 and 19 some data are missing, could you justify in the results and discussion? *Revision response: unfortunately, data was missing for age and number of employees the managers were responsible for. The information regarding background factors was not further analyzed and should not have affected our conclusions.*
Line 167: How long the participants had been working as managers?
Revision response: We unfortunately did not ask specific questions about how many years the managers had been managers. We see this as a limitation and have therefore added a sentence about this to the discussion. Lines 477-478.

Interviews: please provide more information on this and quantify how many at home, office or by telephone..... Give SD of time duration.

Revision response: There is now additional information on lines 189-191.

2.3 Data analysis:
line 188: what it means "qualitative content analysis"? This part is difficult to understand by the non expert readers. Try to simplify and summarize it.

Revision response: We have added a short explanation of the qualitative content analysis and have slightly reworded the paragraph describing the analysis procedure.

Lines 202-205: what "adjusted after discussion" means? How the "final version" was obtained?
Revision response: Yes, it's correct that the final version was obtained after the adjustments were made.

Table 2 reports probably an exemple. Please describe it better in the legend.
It would be great to have results in an additional table based on the exemple of table 2-
Revision response: As you so rightly point out, this is an example of analysis process (Line 216 and Table 2). I may have misunderstood you regarding an additional table, but I believe that it would be too much to add a table with all of the categories. This is why we decided just to give two examples.

Table 3 reports only an overview of the results. Could you provide an additional table with the results of aswers about 3.1. Factors which enable workplace bullying to occur?

Revision response: This was an error. 3.1 should be “Factors contributing to the occurrence of bullying”. Thank you for observing this. The categories are summed up in Table 3.

The discussion should be revised and more focused on your results
Revision response: the discussion part has been revised.

The methodological consideration should report more extensively the limitations of the study.
Revision response: We have added information regarding the study's methodological limitations. Line 475-483.