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Attention! Mobbing is Occurring at This School!

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Abstract

The purpose of this study is to determine the frequency of teachers' exposure to mobbing behaviors and the types of mobbing they encounter. Also it is determine whether the levels of teachers' exposure to mobbing behaviors vary according to the characteristics of the schools where they work. The data of the study were obtained from 491 teachers working in a province located in the central Black Sea region in Turkey. Negative Acts Questionnaire (NAQ) Developed by Einarsen and Raknes (1997) and adapted to Turkish by Cemaloğlu (2007) was used as data collection tool. According to study findings 27.9% of the teachers stated that they were exposed to at least one mobbing behavior in their schools with varying frequency. The rate of teachers indicating that they have been exposed to mobbing systematically is 5.5%. Furthermore, it was found that teachers working in private schools were exposed to mobbing significantly higher than teachers working in public schools; high school teachers' exposure level to mobbing were significantly higher than all pre-school, primary and secondary school teachers'; exposure levels to mobbing of teachers working in the schools located in the center were significantly higher than the teachers working in the schools in villages and districts. It was also determined that there was a low but significant increase in exposure levels to mobbing as the number of teachers increased in the school where teachers worked.

Keywords: Mobbing, schools, negative acts.



Introduction

The concept of mobbing comes from the root of 'mob' in English. Mob means a large, angry crowd, violence oriented community. The word mobbing, on the other hand, means siege, mass attack or distress (Tınaz, 2006). The concept of mobbing in work life refers to an element of psycho-social violence related to work life (Kudielka & Kern, 2004). Another definition of mobbing is a systematic and long-term behavior towards a direct employee, whose consequences may cause psychological and physiological harm (Browne and Smith, 2008).

Mobbing is the combination of all psychological factors leading to tension and conflict, and a negative working condition in the organization. Mobbing is a basic organizational problem affecting the job satisfaction and working peace of the employees negatively, and disrupts one's health. It is also a process in which a worker / employee harasses another employee in a workplace with disturbing, systematic words and behaviors, that is, psychological violence against others. (Cemaloğlu, 2007a; Çobanoğlu, 2005; Koç & Urasoğlu Bulut, 2009).

Emotional harassment in organizations is an important problem for employees of all ages and threatens employees of all ages and occupations. In other words, emotional harassment is an important organizational problem that is seen in almost all organizations where the effects of all employees are at risk of being affected (Aktop, 2006). Mobbing is considered as a problem that has serious impacts on the physical and psychological conditions of employees in modern societies (Kudielka & Kern, 2004). A limited number of studies were carried out on how much emotional harassment affects individuals in Turkey, though there are many studies on this subject in Western countries (Aktop, 2006).

The results of Leymann's (1995) study in Sweden in 1990, he points out that 3.5% of the workforce of 4.4 million people is a victim of mobbing at any time. According to Leymann's estimates, 15% of suicides in Sweden are directly related to mobbing behavior in the workplace (Davenport et. al, 2003). According to the 1998 ILO (International Labor Organization) report, the results of the 15800 meetings held in 15 European Union member countries in 1996, in the previous year, 4% of employees were subjected to physical violence, 2% were exposed to sexual harassment and 8% were exposed to mobbing. EUROFOUND, an institution of the European Commission, has published a report on mobbing increases in some EU countries. According to this, it is determined that 4,000% of the workers in Italy are exposed to mobbing (Girardi, 2007; Acar & Dündar 2008). According to 2007 data of ILO (International Labor Organization), in Finland, forty percent of mobbing victims experience high and very high levels of stress, and half of them feel exhausted at work. According to a study conducted in England, approximately half of the employees were exposed to mobbing; three quarters witnessed mobbing in the workplace (as cited in Acar & Dündar 2008). According to a study carried out by Alcal de Henares University in Spain, Fifteen percent of workers in the European Union are victims of emotional abuse (Tutar, 2004). According to a study examining the relationship between mobbing and stress in Bosnia and Herzegovina between 2004-2005, it was found that mobbing has negative effects on human health and ability to work. It was observed that mobbing causes stress and stress causes physical disturbances. it has increased

the frequency of drug use and medical consultations (Pranjić, Maleš-Bilić, Beganlić, & Mustajbegović, 2006).

As it can be seen, mobbing behaviors that are exposed to or witnessed by the majority of employees in different countries and types of organizations continue to affect employees' moods and health negatively. According to study results carried out by Cobanoğlu (2005), the rate of those exposed to mobbing in Turkey seems to be on the 20%. The study results carried out in schools in Turkey indicated the presence of mobbing faced by the teachers (Aytaç, 2015; Cemaloğlu, 2007a; Çelebi & Taşçı-Kaya, 2014; Çınar & Akpunar, 2017; Çivilidağ & Sargın, 2011; Daşçı & Cemaloğlu, 2015; Demirağ, 2017; Kış, 2016; Kurt & Kurt, 2015; Serin, 2017; Toker-Gökçe, 2012) and by school administrators (Akan, Yıldırım & Yalçın, 2013; Toker-Gökçe, 2012). Education and Science Workers' Union (2019) emphasizes that mobbing is more common in schools than expected. On the other hand, it is seen that the results of this study are mostly evaluated within the scope of personal characteristics of mobbing victims or people engaging in mobbing or other types of organizational behavior. In this study, it is aimed to evaluate what are the characteristics of schools where mobbing occurs.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study is to examine mobbing behaviors faced by teachers and the level of encountering these behaviors according to characteristics of the schools. For this purpose, the following questions were sought:

1. *What is the frequency of mobbing behaviors faced by teachers in schools?*
2. *What are the general assessments of teachers about whether they are a target of mobbing in their schools?*
3. *Do the levels of mobbing behavior faced by teachers show significant differences according to the characteristics of the school where they work (type of school, educational stage, settlement area, number of teachers in the school)?*

Methodology

Model of study

The study is a descriptive research designed as a general screening model (Karasar, 2004, 2.77) which aims to define a situation that exists in the past or present. The study aims to determine what the mobbing behaviors are faced by the teachers and define the teachers' exposure level to mobbing according to the characteristics of the schools where they work as it exists.

Study Group

The study group consists of 491 teachers working in primary, secondary and high schools affiliated to the state and private, located in a province in the Central Black Sea region. The study group included teachers who volunteered to participate in the study easily accessible. Table 1 shows the characteristics of the schools where the teachers in the sample work.

Table 1. The characteristics of the schools where the teachers in the sample work.

Characteristics of the Schools		n	%
Type of the school	Public	432	88
	Private	59	12
Educational stage	Pre-school	38	7.7
	Primary school	114	23.2
	Secondary school	232	47.3
	High school	107	21.8
Settlement	Village	90	18.3
	Town	41	8.4
	District	156	31.8
	Center	204	41.5

Number of the teacher

Min: 3, Max: 174, \bar{X} =31,0489,

As shown in Table 1, 432 (88%) of the teachers in the study group were in public schools; 232 (47.3%) of them were in secondary schools; 204 (41.5%) of them work in schools located in center. At least 3 and at most 174 teachers work in the schools where the teachers work, and the average number of teachers working in the schools is 31.04.

Data Collection Tool

The data of the study were obtained through a form of characteristics of the school which includes questions such as 'school type, educational stage, settlement unit and number of teachers in the school', which was created by the researcher to determine the characteristics of the schools in which the teachers in the study group were employed and Negative Acts Questionnaire (NAQ) which was developed by Einarsen and Raknes (1997) and adapted to Turkish by Cemaloğlu (2007a) in order to determine the mobbing behaviors and frequencies faced by teachers. The NAQ Turkish form consists of 21 items and a 5-point Likert-type scale which ranges from 'never: 1 - every day: 5' calculating the frequency %. At the end of the scale, the concept of mobbing is explained to participant and s/he was asked to assess the question 'Have you ever been bullied in the workplace?' created for whether the participant sees himself as a target of mobbing.

Analysis of Data

SPSS 22.0 software was used to analyze the data. Frequency (f), percentage (5), lowest (min.), Highest (max.), Mean score (), standard deviation (s) values were calculated and interpreted by t-test and one-way analysis of variance.

Results

1. The first sub-problem of the study is determined as 'What is the frequency of mobbing behavior faced by teachers in schools?' Mobbing behaviors calculated to solve this sub-problem and the frequency of exposing frequencies are given below.

Table 2. Frequency of mobbing behaviors faced by teachers (N=491).

<i>Mobbing Behaviors</i>	<i>never</i>		<i>sometimes</i>		<i>Once a month</i>		<i>Once a week</i>		<i>Every day</i>		<i>exposing</i>	
	<i>f</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>f</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>f</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>f</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>f</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>f</i>	<i>%</i>
Ignoring your ideas and opinions.	354	72,1	111	22,6	14	2,9	8	1,6	4	,8	137	27,9
Asking you to perform tasks below your level of mastery / proficiency.	392	79,8	85	17,3	8	1,6	2	,4	4	,8	99	20,2
Someone hiding information that will affect your success.	392	79,8	88	17,9	5	1,0	1	,2	5	1,0	99	20,2
spreading gossip and rumors about you	393	80,0	79	16,1	10	2,0	7	1,4	2	,4	98	20,0
excessive monitoring of your work	398	81,1	78	15,9	10	2,0	2	,4	3	,6	93	18,9
ignoring, excluding, neglecting.	403	82,1	71	14,5	9	1,8	3	,6	5	1,0	88	17,9
Giving work which is unreasonable or impossible to do	406	82,7	66	13,4	13	2,6	2	,4	4	,8	85	17,3
Endless criticism of your efforts and work.	417	84,9	61	12,4	9	1,8	2	,4	2	,4	74	15,1
Removing your responsibilities in important areas or replacing them with less important and unwanted tasks	417	84,9	63	12,8	5	1,0	4	,8	2	,4	74	15,1
Ignoring /disregarding your approaches or encountering hostile reactions.	418	85,1	66	13,4	6	1,2	1	,2	-	-	73	14,9
Always reminding / saying your mistakes and failures.	424	86,4	52	10,6	10	2,0	4	,8	1	,2	67	13,6
yelling at or being the target of instant anger (or ambition)	430	87,6	54	11,0	5	1,0	2	,4	-	-	61	12,4
Making jokes that you don't like by people with whom you don't get along	435	88,6	49	10,0	4	,8	2	,4	1	,2	56	11,4
being subjected to a workload that cannot be overcome	438	89,2	41	8,4	4	,8	4	,8	4	,8	53	10,8

Making pressure to prevent you from requesting certain things you are entitled to (eg sick leave, holiday allowance, travel allowance)	444	90,4	36	7,3	5	1,0	2	,4	4	,8	47	9,6
Making charges and accusations against you	450	91,6	32	6,5	5	1,0	3	,6	1	,2	41	8,4
Humiliation by working in jobs below your proficiency level	458	93,3	26	5,3	5	1,0	1	,2	1	,2	33	6,7
Implicit behavior of others to quit your job	461	93,9	24	4,9	5	1,0	-	-	1	,2	30	6,1
Saying insulting and humiliating words about your personality (eg habits and manners), your attitudes or your private life	466	94,9	19	3,9	4	,8	2	,4	-	-	25	5,1
Being subject of excessive ridicule and mockery	467	95,1	20	4,1	3	,6	-	-	1	,2	24	4,9
Intimidating behaviors as finger-pointing, attacking personal space, pushing, intercepting	471	95,9	17	3,5	1	,2	2	,4	-	-	20	4,1

When table 2 is examined, it has been determined that some of the teachers ranging from 27.9% to 4.1% faced with various mobbing behaviors. Five most common mobbing behaviors were determined as respectively “Ignoring your ideas and opinions.” (%27,9), “Asking you to do jobs below your level of mastery / proficiency.” (%20, 2), “Someone hiding information that will affect your success.” (%20, 2) “Spreading gossip and rumors about you” (%20) and “excessive monitoring of your work” (%18, 9).

Five least mobbing behaviors faced by teachers was ranged as “intimidating behaviors as finger-pointing, attacking personal space, pushing, intercepting.” (%4,1), “Be subject of excessive ridicule and mockery.” (%4,9), “Saying insulting and humiliating words about your personality (eg habits and manners), your attitudes or your private life.” (%5,1), “Implicit behavior of others to quit your job.” (%6,1) “Humiliation by working in jobs below your proficiency level.” (%6,7)

2. The second sub-problem of the study, what are the general evaluations of teachers about whether they are the target of mobbing in their schools or not? In order to solve this sub-problem, participants were asked to examine the given definition and according to this definition, and assess the question ‘have you been exposed to bullying in schools (workplaces)?’ Frequency (f) and percentage (%) values of teachers' evaluation of themselves as the target of mobbing are given below

Pre-School	38	1,0764	,18210	Between Group	2,224	3	,741		
Primary School	114	1,1717	,33268	Within Group	41,616	487	,085		
Secondary School	232	1,1307	,23248	Total	43,840	490		8,674	,000
High School	107	1,2897	,38113						

When Table 5 showing the teachers' exposure level to mobbing according to educational stage are examined it is seen that the highest is high school teachers (= 1,2897, S =, 38113), the lowest is pre-school (= 1,0764, S =, 18210) teachers. According to the results of one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) it was determined that the levels of mobbing faced by teachers differ significantly according to their educational stage ($F(3-487) = 8,674$, $p < .01$). In the groups observed significant difference, as a result of the homogeneity test (Levene's Test of Equality of Error Variances) to test the equality of variance, ($F = 6,681$, $p < .01$) it is calculated that variances were homogeneous. Accordingly, the results of the Tukey test to determine which groups differ from each other in terms of the levels of mobbing faced by teachers according to educational stage are examined are as follows

Table 6. One-way ANOVA / Tukey test results of the teachers' exposure level to mobbing according to educational stage.

Groups		Average Difference (*P<.05)	Standard Error
Pre-School	Primary School	-,09524	,05476
	Secondary School	-,05431	,05116
	High School	-,21328*	,05520
Primary School	Pre-School	,09524	,05476
	Secondary School	,04093	,03344
	High School	-,11804*	,03935
Secondary School	Pre-School	,05431	,05116
	Primary School	-,04093	,03344
	High School	-,15897*	,03416
High School	Pre-School	,21328*	,05520
	Primary School	,11804*	,03935
	Secondary School	,15897*	,03416

When Table 6 was examined, it was found that the levels of the mobbing faced by high school teachers were significantly higher than pre-school ($F \bar{X} =,21328$, $p < .05$), primary ($F =,11804$, $p < .05$) and secondary school ($F =,15897$, $p < .05$) teachers'.

Table 7. One-way ANOVA test results of the teachers' exposure level to mobbing according to settlement of the school.

Settlement	N	\bar{X}	S	Sum of the Square	Sd	A Mea n	F	P
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Village	90	1,1397	,26545	Between Group	2,186	3	,72 9		
Town	41	1,1940	,23723	Within Group	41,654	487	,08 6	8,518	,000
District	156	1,0891	,15373	Total	43,840	490			
Center	204	1,2421	,38100						

Table 7 showing the teachers' exposure level to mobbing according to settlement of the school where they work was examined, the highest is the teachers in central schools (= 1,2421, S =, 38100) and the lowest is the teachers in the district (= 1,0891, S =, 15373). According to the results of one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA), it was determined that the teachers' exposure level to mobbing differ significantly according to the settlement of the school where they work ($F(3-487)= 8,518, p<.01$). As a result of the homogeneity test (Levene's Test of Equality of Error Variances) in groups with significant differences, it was calculated that ($F=15,469, p<.01$) variances were homogeneous. Accordingly, the results of the Tukey test to determine which groups differ from each other in terms of the levels of mobbing faced by teachers according to settlement of the school are examined are as follows

Table 8. One-way ANOVA / Tukey test results of the teachers' exposure level to mobbing according to the settlement of the school.

Groups	Average Difference (* $p<.05$)	Standard Error
Village	Town	,05510
	District	,03871
	Center	,03701
Town	Village	,05510
	District	,05133
	Center	,05005
District	Village	,03871
	Town	,05133
	Center	,03111
Center	Village	,03701
	Town	,05005
	District	,03111

When Table 8 was examined, it was found that the exposure level to mobbing of the teachers working in the schools located in the center was significantly higher than those working in schools located in the villages ($F =, 10238, p <.05$) and in the districts ($F =, 15293, p <.05$).

Table 9. Pearson Moments Multiplication Correlation of the teachers' exposure level to mobbing according to number of teachers in school.

Variables	\bar{X}	S	Number of teachers	The level of mobbing
Number of teachers	31,0489	26,61183	1	,143**

The level of mobbing	1,1707	,29911	1
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** $p < ,01$

When Table 9 was examined, it was seen that there was a positive, low level, statistically significant relationship between mobbing exposure levels ($r = ,143$, $p < ,01$) and the number of teachers in schools of the teachers working in schools where average = 31,0489 teachers work and whose exposure level to mobbing = 1,1707. Accordingly, it can be said that as the number of teachers in the school increases, teachers' exposure to mobbing increases.

Discussion

According to research findings, 27.9% of the teachers stated that they were exposed to at least one mobbing behavior in their schools with varying frequency. The rate of teachers indicating that they have been exposed to mobbing systematically is 5.5%. According to study findings, one in three teachers think that s/he has been exposed to mobbing, and a considerable number of teachers states that s/he is exposed to mobbing systematically. As it can be understood, mobbing is not expressed in Turkey but it is a common psychological intimidation method. The results of this study show similarity with the studies on behaviors subjected to psychological abuse in education and health in Turkey (Yıldız, 2007; Yıldırım et al., 2007; Kutlu, 2006; Bilgel et al., 2006). Mobbing rate in Turkey is higher than most European countries. When we think that there may be people who hide their mobbing, this rate may be even higher. According to ILO data, mobbing rate in Finland is around 50% (Acar & Dündar, 2008). This rate is quite higher than the percentage of those who suffered bullying in Turkey. One reason for this situation is that some cases perceived as bullying in Finland can be perceived as normal and common in Turkey.

Toker-Gökçe (2012) determined that that teachers and school administrators who work in both private and public schools stated similarly that they most frequently encounter mobbing behaviors such as interruption, unfair criticism of his work and the underestimation of his/her achievements. However, the results of this study found that teachers working in private schools were exposed to significantly higher levels of mobbing than teachers working in public schools. With the neoliberal policies introduced with the 1980 military coup, education was opened to the market, given up seeing it as a service and turned into a commodity. With the commercialization of education, private schools have begun to multiply rapidly and the profit motive must be maintained above all else in these school. In these schools where the student turns into a customer, profit and 'customer satisfaction' may cause increase in economic and psychological mobbing on teachers.

As a result of the study on primary and secondary school teachers Arac & Okcu (2017) found that the level of the school did not cause significant differentiation on mobbing levels perceived by teachers. However, according to the results of this study high school teachers' exposure level to mobbing were found to be significantly higher than pre-school, primary and secondary school teachers'. In Turkey where numerous central exams are done finding a good job and creating a good life is only possible by getting into a good department of a good university. The result of university

entrance exam carried out in last grade of high school, the number of students getting into a university or even a good university or department can increase or decrease the value of high schools. Hence, this may have caused that teachers in high schools were exposed to more mobbing than teachers in other schools.

It is seen that teachers' exposure level to mobbing working in the schools located in center is significantly higher than the teachers working in schools in villages and districts. One of the reasons for this may be that the number of teachers working in schools located in villages and districts is less than the number of teachers working in schools located in city centers. In other words, we can say that as the number of teachers increases, mobbing also increases relatively.

Çelebi & Taşçı-Kaya (2014), as a result of their qualitative study, found that intimidation behaviors faced by teaching such as verbal threats, ignorance, humiliation, scorn, over-control, disregard of personal rights, job loading and sexual abuse of female teachers. Five most common mobbing behaviors were determined as respectively "Ignoring your ideas and opinions." (%27,9), "Asking you to do jobs below your level of mastery / proficiency." (%20, 2), "Someone hiding information that will affect your success." (%20, 2) "Spreading gossip and rumors about you" (%20) and "excessive monitoring of your work" (%18, 9). Five mobbing behaviors rarely encountered by teachers are ranges as "intimidating behaviors as finger-pointing, attacking personal space, pushing, intercepting." (%4,1), "Be subject of excessive ridicule and mockery." (%4,9), "Saying insulting and humiliating words about your personality (e.g. habits and manners), your attitudes or your private life." (%5,1), "Implicit behavior of others to quit your job." (%6,1) "Humiliation by working in jobs below your proficiency level." (%6,7) As it will be understood, it can be said that teachers can evaluate the behaviors exhibited against themselves as mobbing depending on the effect of the emotional world.

Mobbing is a variable that reduces the motivation of employees, negatively affects their performance and negatively affects the communication environment in organizations (Cemaloğlu, 2007b). It is important to establish a healthier working environment in schools which are at the center of human intensive relationships and to reduce the mobbing encountered in schools in order to increase the efficiency of teachers. In this context, it can be said that the administrators should focus more on the schools where mobbing is seen much more and it can be said that more attention should be paid to mobbing awareness and prevention activities.

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