

## The Evaluation of Mobbing Cases Which Teachers Experience In Middle Schools (Sample of Mersin Province)

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**Abstract:** This research aims to determine mobbing cases that the middle school teachers experience. Mobbing Cases of School Teachers Scale is used to collect data. In the research arranged according to descriptive research pattern, general survey model is used. The sample of 522 teachers is chosen from population including 2104 teachers working in middle schools at central counties of Mersin province in 2015-2016 educational year. Random Sampling Technique is used. The variables are gender, seniority and age. According to the results of the research, the female teachers are exposed to mobbing more than male teachers. Teachers having seniorities of 0-5 years are exposed to mobbing more than teachers having seniorities over 5 years. The teachers whose ages are between 22 and 30 are exposed to mobbing more than teachers whose ages are over 30. It can be said that the teachers are exposed to mobbing at schools at various levels.

**Keywords:** Mobbing, teachers, middle schools.

### INTRODUCTION

In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, which has the qualities of high competitiveness, the survival of the organizations depends on their increasing efficiency, their adaptation to highly changing and developing conditions of the world. The most important factor determining the efficiency of an organization is the "human factor".

The skills, capabilities, personalities, working habits, states of motivation, physical and psychological conditions which the people working in the organizations possess determine the efficiency and productivity of the organizations. Consequently, the organizations should attach importance to their organizations and create an environment that enables the efficiency of workers to rise to the highest level. In the organizations which centre on the workers and arrange their work life by considering physical and psychological health, the workers' organizational citizenship and job satisfaction will increase.

The most important component determining the efficiency of organizations are people working in the organizations. One of the most important topics which should be considered in the organizations giving importance to their workers are the human relationships and social relations. The social relationships between colleagues and superiors have a great effect on overall job satisfaction. The positive relationships established in the workplace reduce the stress in the workplace and the number of the workers who intend to quit the job decreases. Thus, the organization in which human relationships develop positively makes the work

environment attractive, enables the qualified workers to be employed and keep them in the organization.

The fact that the human relationships are positive in organizations provide very important benefits and plus value to all organizations including the schools, which are educational organizations. The teachers who are the most important workers of the schools spend most of their time in the schools. The school environment which has harmonious and friendly relationships enables very important job satisfaction. The teacher who is happy in the class can realize his potential better and wants to be more productive for the organization. Thus, the teacher whose morale is high has high degree of job satisfaction. One of the teachers' rights to work is related to the fact that their morale should be kept at a high level. The fact that the teachers' morale and job satisfaction are high influences the quality of education positively; therefore, they are very important. Moreover, working in a school in which human relations and social relations are positive is a human right.

Today, mobbing is experienced at varying degree in all organizations. Mobbing is a kind of violence, which is non-physical, which influences the

individual's health and psychology negatively, which saddens him, which causes him to feel pressure and threat. While the physical violence is accepted as a crime, there aren't enough legal arrangements related to mobbing, which is difficult to be detected and proved and which can wear the individual down emotionally? It is a relatively new topic in comparison with other topics in the academic field of educational administration and there aren't enough researches related to the topic. The main reason for deficiencies and problems in the field of law and academic field is that there are difficulties in the detection and verification of the phenomenon of mobbing. On the other hand, the concept of mobbing can be understood better and better results and findings related to the ways of coping with it can be found out as the research related to the topic increases. Recently, the number of scientific researches related to mobbing has increased. Moreover, up-to-datedness of the topic continues and the topic attracts more attention in the media and academic research. Furthermore, the mobbing cases that the teachers experience vary according to conditions and the teachers' qualities. Consequently, what the mobbing cases experienced in the middle schools are and whether these cases differ according to various variables such as gender, seniority and age will be determined in the research and the results of the research will contribute to the education quality, educational climate of the school and performance of the teachers. The mobbing cases that the teachers experience are analyzed in terms of the dimensions of social contacts, quality of life and occupational situation, personal reputation and communication.

### The Concept of Mobbing

The cases of emotional violence that the workers are exposed to in the business life and workplace are defined as the concept of mobbing [1]. Defines the concept of the mobbing as the fact that a person (rarely a few people) is systematically exposed to emotionally harmful behaviours everyday during a few months by a person or a few people (rarely more than four people). As Leymann defines the mobbing as a systematic offence, the offence is understood as the fact that the mobbing behaviours are regularly applied to the same person for a long period of time by the person who attacks [2], who indicates that mobbing is an emotional offence, states that the mobbing process starts with the fact that the person becomes a target of disrespectful and harmful behaviours. According to them, the mobbing is the fact that a person gathers other people around himself against another person with or without their own consent and forces him to quit the job by a continuous malicious intent and ill-intended behaviours, implications, sarcasm and by causing them to lose their dignity and creating offensive environment. According to [3], mobbing is a malicious and ill-intended behaviour which includes all kinds of utterances, actions and writing, which harms a person's personality, honour or physical and psychological state,

which endangers a person's work or spoils a person's work environment. Mobbing is a process in which a person feels exhausted and exploited, loses his self-confidence, feels hopeless and eventually resigns from his job. This process is related to state of belligerence which occurs by means of harassment, disturbing a person and bad behaviour which targets a person apart from a particular reason such as a person's age, race, gender, belief, nationality and social origin [4]. It is an ill-intended attempt by causing a person to lose his dignity and grace by accusing a person who is innocent, implication, allusion, gossiping, humiliation and harassment. When the definition of mobbing is analyzed, mobbing actions, which occur between workers, are consciously performed. Moreover, mobbing can be defined as the behaviours which the workers perform among themselves vertically and horizontally in terms of status and which cause psychological disturbance [5].

In the literature abroad, the concepts of emotional problems that the workers experience in the workplace are stated as the terms such as harassment, scape-goating, mobbing and psychological terror, petty tranny, bullying, health endangering leadership, workplace trauma [6]. In the literature in Turkey, the concepts for these emotional problems are emotional harassment, mobbing in the workplace, psychological violence, emotional violence at workplace, bullying and psychological harrasment [7]. There aren't common terms related to mobbing in abroad and domestic literature, which are accepted unanimously. It can say that the different terms used by the researchers define the same types of behaviours [8].

In Turkish and foreign literature, mobbing is regarded as human right violation. Moreover, in the literature, it is stated that mobbing influences teachers' life conditions and the quality of education negatively. As the education is based on human relations, understanding the quantity and quality of teachers' experiencing mobbing cases becomes very important. In this context, in the research, the middle school teachers' mobbing cases are tried to be determined in terms of gender, seniority and age.

### The Aim of the Research

The general aim of the research is to determine mobbing cases the middle school teacher's experience. To carry out this aim, the questions below are tried to be answered.

- What is the degree of the mobbing cases which the middle school teachers experience according to the middle school teachers' perceptions?
- Is there a significant difference among the middle school teachers' perceptions about the mobbing cases they experience in terms of gender?

- Is there a significant difference among the middle school teachers' perceptions about the mobbing cases they experience in terms of seniority?
- Is there a significant difference among the middle school teachers' perceptions about the mobbing cases they experience in terms of age?

## METHODS

It is aimed to determine whether there is a significant difference among the teachers' perceptions. As the research aims to determine the existing situation as it is, it is a descriptive research. Hence, a general survey model is used in the research. The different groups are compared in terms of the variables indicated above. Thus, this research is also a relational research [9].

### Population and Sample

The target population of the study includes the teachers working in the middle schools in the central districts of Mersin Province in 2015-2016 academic years. There are 2104 teachers in the target population. As it isn't possible to reach all of the teachers, a sample is chosen from the population. Accordingly, simple random technique is used and 522 teachers are determined as the sample.

### The Research Instruments

One scale has been used for collecting data. To collect the data related to the perceptions of middle school teachers about the mobbing cases they are exposed to, the scale which was developed by [10] was used in the study. The name of the scale is Mobbing Cases of School Teachers Scale. The scale is a Likert-type scale and its items are rated on 5 point scale which ranges from Definitely Disagree [1] to Definitely Agree [5]. The scale consists of four sub-dimensions. The sub-dimensions of the scale are Communication, Social Contact, Personal Reputation Quality of Life and Occupational Situation. Cronbach Alpha for the scale was found to be 0. 86. The scale was applied to a sample which is similar to a sample in this research while it was being developed. Therefore, it is decided that validity analysis needn't be done again. Based on the results of reliability analysis which is done for the data of this research, it is seen that that Cronbach Alpha for the scale is 0,90.

The participants indicate their perceptions by marking one of the categories, which are "definitely disagree", "disagree", "partially agree", "agree" and

"definitely agree" placed in the scale. Considering the intervals in the scale are equal (4/5), the bounds of the categories are organized in a way as it is shown below.

Categories	Code	Bounds
Definitely disagree	(1)	1.00-1.80
Disagree	(2)	1.81-2.60
Partially agree	(3)	2.61-3.40
Agree	(4)	3.41-4.20
Definitely agree	(5)	4.21-5.00

## DATA ANALYSIS

Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 17.0 is used to analyze the data. Before starting to analyze the data, data were analysed in terms of marginal values, missing value, normality and multicollinearity. In other words, the assumptions of the analyses are tested. Mean values and standard deviation were computed to determine teachers' perceptions. T-test was applied to determine whether there was a significant difference among the teachers' perceptions in terms of the variable of gender. One-way variance analysis was used to determine whether there was a significant difference among teachers' perceptions in terms of the variables of seniority. When the significant difference was determined, Tukey HSD Test was done to determine which groups differed and clarify which groups among the sample in specific had significant differences.

## RESULTS

The aim of the research is to determine the degree of mobbing cases which the middle school teachers experience and to determine whether there is a significant difference among the teachers' perceptions in terms of the variables of gender, seniority and age. Based on the aim indicated above, the findings that have been found are provided below.

When the teachers' perceptions are considered and the average score (total mean) of the means of the teachers' perceptions about the fact that each of the mobbing cases in the scale has been experienced by teachers (the teachers' perceptions about the degree of mobbing cases that they have experienced) is calculated, it is found out that the teachers perceive that they experience mobbing cases at a level of "agree" ( $\bar{x} = 3,44$ ). In other words, middle school teachers think that they experience the mobbing cases at a high level. The table related to this finding is shown below.

**Table-1: The total means of the means of the teachers' perceptions about the fact that degree of mobbing cases that they have experienced and standard deviation**

	N	Teacher $\bar{x}$	sd
Total Mean	1069	3.44	0,978

The results of the t-test, which is performed to determine whether there is a significant difference among the middle school teachers' perceptions about the

mobbing cases they experience in terms of the variable of gender, are shown in Table 2.

**Table-2: t-test, which is performed to determine whether there is a significant difference among the middle school teachers' perceptions about the mobbing cases they experience in terms of the variable of gender**

Dimensions	Gender	N	$\bar{x}$	Ss	sd	t	p
Communication	Woman	232	4.15	1.12	520	7.891	.000
	Men	290	3.32	1.25			
Social Contact	Women	232	2.64	.942	520	5.211	.000
	Men	290	2.25	.635			
Personal Reputation	Women	232	2.57	.923	520	4.263	.000
	Men	290	2.24	.631			
Quality of Life and Occupational Situation	Women	232	3.82	1.29	520	4.770	.000
	Men	290	3.21	1.19			

As it is seen in Table 2, there is a significant difference between the means of the points of the teachers' perceptions related to the Dimension of Communication [ $t_{(520)}= 7.89$   $p<.001$ ], the Dimension of Social Contact [ $t_{(520)}= 5.21$   $p<.001$ ], the Dimension of Personal Reputation [ $t_{(520)}= 4.26$   $p<.001$ ], the Dimension of Quality of Life and Occupational Situation [ $t_{(520)}= 4.77$   $p<.001$ ] in terms of the variable of gender. There is a significant difference between the perceptions of male and female teachers about the mobbing cases they experience in the dimensions of

communication, social contact, personal reputation and quality of life and occupational situation. According to these findings, the female teachers are exposed to mobbing more than male teachers in all of the dimensions.

The results of the one way variance analysis, which is performed to determine whether there is a significant difference among the middle school teachers' perceptions about the mobbing cases they experience in terms of the variable of seniority, are shown in Table 3

**Table-3: One way variance analysis, which is performed to determine whether there is a significant difference among the middle school teachers' perceptions about the mobbing cases they experience in terms of the variable of seniority**

Dimensions	Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	sd	Mean Squares	F	P
Communication	Between Groups	14.032	5	2.455	28.92	.000
	Within Groups	112.458	516	.314		
	Total	122.490	521			
Social Contact	Between Groups	4.772	5	1.237	23.14	.233
	Within Groups	91.212	516	.251		
	Total	94.984	521			
Personal Reputation	Between Groups	3.320	5	.454	16.31	.324
	Within Groups	68.798	516	.171		
	Total	71.118	521			
Quality of Life and Occupational Situation	Between Groups	2.864	5	.315	22.33	.436
	Within Groups	95.443	516	.251		
	Total	97.307	521			

As it is seen in Table 3, there is a significant difference among the means of the points of the teachers' perceptions related to the Dimension of Communication [ $F_{(5-516)}= 28.9$   $p<.01$ ] in terms of the variable of education level. The results of Tukey HSD test establish that the means of the teachers whose seniority is 0-5 year ( $\bar{x}=3.19$ ) significantly differ from the teachers whose seniority is 6-10 year ( $\bar{x}=2.68$ ), the teachers whose seniority is 11-15 year ( $\bar{x}=2.63$ ), the teachers whose seniority is 16-20 year ( $\bar{x}=2.51$ ), the teachers whose seniority is 21-25 year ( $\bar{x}=2.64$ ) and the teachers whose seniority is more than 25 year ( $\bar{x}$

=2.83). The teachers whose seniority is 0-5 year cause the source of variance. In other words, the teachers whose seniorities are 0-5 year are more exposed to mobbing cases than the teachers whose seniorities are more than 5 years. There isn't a significant difference among the means of the points of the teachers' perceptions related to the dimensions of social contacts [ $F_{(5-516)}= 23.1$ ,  $p>.05$ ], quality of life and occupational situation [ $F_{(5-516)}= 22.3$ ,  $p>.05$ ], personal reputation [ $F_{(5-516)}= 16.3$ ,  $p>.05$ ].

The results of the one way variance analysis, which is performed to determine whether there is a significant difference among the middle school teachers'

perceptions about the mobbing cases they experience in terms of the variable of age, are shown in Table 4.

**Table-4: One way variance analysis, which is performed to determine whether there is a significant difference among the middle school teachers' perceptions about the mobbing cases they experience in terms of the variable of age**

Dimensions	Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	sd	Mean Squares	F	P
Communication	Between Groups	11.212	5	3.712	50.91	.000
	Within Groups	112.278	516	.374		
	Total	123.490	521			
Social Contact	Between Groups	1.272	5	.439	33.22	.421
	Within Groups	94.712	516	.238		
	Total	95.984	521			
Personal Reputation	Between Groups	1.542	5	.485	29.11	.396
	Within Groups	68.576	516	.179		
	Total	70.118	521			
Quality of Life and Occupational Situation	Between Groups	1.864	5	.630	33.82	.411
	Within Groups	94.443	516	.240		
	Total	96.307	521			

As it is seen in Table 4, there is a significant difference among the means of the points of the teachers' perceptions related to the Dimension of Communication [ $F_{(5-516)}= 50.9$  p<.01] in terms of the variable of education level. The results of Tukey HSD test establish that the means of the teachers whose ages are between 22 and 30 ( $\bar{x} = 3.81$ ) significantly differ from the teachers whose ages are between 31 and 40 ( $\bar{x} = 3.51$ ), the teachers whose ages are between 41 and 50 ( $\bar{x} = 3.48$ ), the teachers whose ages are over 50 ( $\bar{x} = 3.45$ ). The teachers whose ages are between 22 and 30 cause the source of variance. In other words, the teachers whose ages are between 22 and 30 are more exposed to mobbing cases than the teachers whose ages are over 30. There isn't a significant difference among the means of the points of the teachers' perceptions related to the dimensions of social contacts [ $F_{(5-516)}= 33.2$ , p>.05], quality of life and occupational situation [ $F_{(5-516)}= 33.8$ , p>.05], personal reputation [ $F_{(5-516)}= 29.1$ , p>.05].

## CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

According to the results of the research, it is found out that the teachers are exposed to mobbing at varying degrees. It is found out that the middle school teachers think that they experience the mobbing cases at a high level. According to the variable of gender, the degrees of mobbing the teachers are exposed to significantly differ in terms of the dimensions of social contacts, quality of life and occupational situation, personal reputation, communication. Female teachers are exposed to mobbing more than male teachers in all of the dimensions. According to the results of study done by [11], 45 % of the male workers and 55% of female workers experience mobbing. The research report prepared in Social Research Institute in Germany states that women are exposed to psychological

violence more than men and women's exposure to mobbing is 75 percent more than men's exposure to mobbing [12]. According to the results of the research on the relationship between psychological violence and organizational climate done by [13], it is found out that women are exposed to psychological violence more than men. These results show that gender is a significant variable in terms of mobbing. The fact that women are more emotional than men, they experience the emotions more intensively than men and they form their confidence based on other people's opinion may cause them to be exposed to mobbing more than men [14].

According to the variable of seniority, the degrees of mobbing the teachers are exposed to significantly differ in terms of the dimensions of communication. The teachers whose seniorities are 0-5 year are more exposed to mobbing cases than the teachers whose seniorities are more than 5 years. According to the research done by [15], it is found out that most of the workers who are exposed to mobbing are composed of the workers whose seniorities between 1-5 years and the percentage of these workers whose seniorities between 1-5 years is 45 %. The research done by [16] determines that the degrees of being exposed to mobbing in the organization differ significantly according to the teachers' seniority. The same research finds out that the teachers whose seniorities are between 1-5 year are exposed to mobbing more than other teachers. The fact that the teachers whose seniorities are between 1-5 year are exposed to mobbing more than other teachers can be explained by the fact that these teachers have less experience in teaching and they don't have job security

During their internship. On the other hand, it is found that there isn't a significant difference among the perceptions of teachers in the dimensions of social contacts, quality of life and occupational situation, personal reputation in our research.

According to the variable of age, the degrees of mobbing the teachers are exposed to significantly differ in terms of the dimensions of communication. The teachers whose ages are between 22-30 are more exposed to mobbing cases than the teachers whose ages are over 30. According to the research done by [17], it is found out that the teachers who are working at secondary schools and whose ages are below 26 have been more exposed to mobbing than other teachers. Moreover, [18] found out that the workers whose ages were between 21 and 40 were more exposed to mobbing than the workers whose ages were over 40. According to [19]'s research, one of the reasons causing a person's exposition to mobbing is related to being young. The fact that the teachers didn't have experience in dealing with the behaviours of mobbing when they were young and that they were inexperienced in terms of their proficiency may have caused them to be more exposed to mobbing behaviours.

As a result, it can be said that the teachers are exposed to mobbing at varying degrees. The mobbing cases should be eliminated in order to increase the quality of education and its effectiveness. In this context, the school principals and vice-principals should be informed and educated about this phenomenon, namely mobbing, which is regarded as the life's new illness. The school principals shouldn't be the source of mobbing or shouldn't become a party to the mobbing and should try to solve the problems. In educational environment, aggressive behaviours should be analyzed well and these behaviours shouldn't be supported by the school principals. The conditions which can cause mobbing should be changed. The school principals should avoid from behaviours which can be perceived as mobbing. An environment which the workers feel valuable and important should be created. The teachers who are exposed to mobbing should claim their rights on the legal basis

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