

MOBBING EXPERIENCES IN TURKEY: ACTORS, PRACTICES AND SOCIAL
POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

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I hereby declare that all information in this document has been obtained and presented in accordance with academic rules and ethical conduct. I also declare that, as required by these rules and conduct, I have fully cited and referenced all material and results that are not original to this work.

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ABSTRACT

MOBBING EXPERIENCES IN TURKEY: ACTORS, PRACTICES AND SOCIAL POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

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The main aim of this study is to detect trends and patterns about mobbing experiences of highly educated, urban, middle-class mobbing victims in Turkey and correspondingly to recommend possible solutions and social policies on the issue of mobbing. For this purpose, current mobbing related literature and social policy practices of different countries and Turkey were reviewed. Moreover, semi structured in-depth interviews were conducted with 20 highly educated, urban, middle-class employees who consider themselves as mobbing victims and 2 mobbing experts. This study shows that there are significant legal and institutional deficiencies which negatively affect struggle against mobbing and make mobbing experiences of victims harder. Furthermore, some specific forms of mobbing are experienced in Turkey, which may be called as discrimination-based mobbing. This type of mobbing is based on a visible ground, such as physical appearance, gender, religion and sect or political view. In consequence of this study, some preventive policy recommendations were presented, on the basis of current literature and social policy expectations of respondents.

Keywords: Mobbing, Discrimination-based Mobbing, Decent Work, Social Policy, Turkey

ÖZ

TÜRKİYE'DEKİ MOBBING DENEYİMLERİ: AKTÖRLER, PRATİKLER VE SOSYAL POLİTİKA ÖNERİLERİ

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Bu tezin temel amacı Türkiye'deki yüksek eğitilmiş, kentli, orta sınıf mobbing mağdurlarının mobbing deneyimleriyle ilgili eğilim ve örüntüleri saptamak ve buna bağlı olarak mobbing konusunda olası çözümler ve sosyal politikalar önermektir. Bu amaçla mobbing konusundaki mevcut literatür ile farklı ülkelerin ve Türkiye'nin sosyal politika pratikleri incelendi. Ayrıca kendilerini mobbing mağduru olarak gören 20 yüksek eğitilmiş, kentli, orta sınıf çalışanla ve 2 mobbing uzmanıyla yarı yapılandırılmış derinlemesine mülakatlar gerçekleştirilmiştir. Bu çalışma, mobbinge mücadelede olumsuz yönde etkileyen ve mağdurların mobbing deneyimlerini daha da zorlaştıran önemli yasal ve kurumsal eksiklikler olduğunu göstermektedir. Dahası Türkiye'de, ayrımcılık temelli mobbing diye de anılabilecek, bazı özel mobbing formları yaşanmaktadır. Bu tip mobbing fiziksel görünüm, cinsiyet, din ve mezhep veya politik görüş gibi görünür bir temele dayanmaktadır. Bu çalışmanın neticesinde, mevcut literatürden ve katılımcıların sosyal politika beklentilerinden yola çıkarak bazı önleyici politika önerileri sunulmuştur.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Mobbing, Ayrımcılık Temelli Mobbing, İnsana Yakışır İş, Sosyal Politika, Türkiye

To My Family

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

According to C. W. Mills (1959) when people adopt some values and do not feel any threat to these values, what they experience is well-being. On the other hand, when people feel some threat about these values they adopt, it means there is a crisis. If this crisis is about an individual, this makes it a personal trouble. Mills argues that if this trouble becomes the crisis of significant number of people it turns into a public issue and problem of social science. Although mobbing considered as issue of psychology since 1990s when it was unveiled by Leymann (1990), today it should also be considered as the issue of sociology and social policy.

The literature of mobbing is predominately based upon psychology perspective and definitions of Swedish psychologist Heinz Leymann which were made in the early 1990s. Psychology perspective generally explains mobbing within the context of personality (Coyne et al., 2000; Zapf, 1999), psychosocial work environment (Lind et al., 2009; Einarsen et al., 2005) and psychological health related effects of mobbing (Leymann & Gustafsson, 1996; Bowling & Beehr, 2006). In recent years, mobbing has become widely known and discussed issue. Studies about this issue became varied and advanced. Still, it should be accepted that mobbing is still an under-represented issue in the academia. There are still huge gaps in the literature about social grounds and dimensions of mobbing. This thesis aims to fill this gap partially with the perspective of sociology and social policy.

The main aim of this study is to detect trends and patterns about mobbing experiences of highly educated, urban, middle-class mobbing victims in Turkey and correspondingly to recommend possible solutions and social policies on the issue of mobbing. For this purpose, semi structured in-depth interviews were conducted with 20 highly educated, urban, middle-class employees who consider themselves as mobbing victims and 2 mobbing experts.

The first chapter of the thesis is Introduction Chapter, which covers research questions, assumptions and arguments, operational definition of leading concepts about mobbing, significance and contributions of the study and structure of the thesis.

1.1 Research Questions

There are three research questions which will be tackled in this thesis. These are:

Research Question 1:

How does mobbing experience shape and influence highly educated, urban, middle-class employees' perception of mobbing actors?

Research Question 2:

What are the main forms of mobbing experienced by highly educated, urban, middle-class employees in Turkey and on which ground these practices are based?

Research Question 3:

What kind of solutions and social policy recommendations can be presented on the issue of mobbing?

1.2 Arguments of the Study

While planning and delimiting this study, some arguments were stated by the researcher. The first argument was that mobbing has a significant relationship with culture. In parallel with this argument, it was argued that this study will show us specific forms and practices of mobbing which can only be observed in today's Turkey. Because of this reason, questions about possible effects of certain personal characteristics on respondents' mobbing experiences were included in question set.

The second argument was that mobbing victims will regard mobber as primary responsible of mobber. Accordingly, it was argued that as most obvious and observable actor in mobbing process, mobber can easily be regarded as the only reason of mobbing. This emotional and immediate response of mobbing victim may enable other actors to elude from their responsibility on the issue.

The third argument was that employees are the passive side of the mobbing process. By extension, it was argued that high level of unemployment and legal uncertainty in Turkey are main reasons for this passiveness among employees. In Turkey, especially in private sector job security is not provided. Since job vacancies can easily be filled unemployed people, all employees became vulnerable against mobbing and any other workplace violence.

Lastly, the fourth argument was that mobbing is being used to remove women from labor market as a tool. It was also argued that female mobbing victims hesitate to return working life after mobbing experience. Moreover, it was argued that, since current women policies in Turkey regards social problems such as domestic violence, unemployment and divorce as related to the weakening of the community and the family and correspondingly define women only within family as care giver (Acar & Altunok, 2013); labor market will be tending to expel women from working life by means of mobbing and other negative attitudes. As a result of that situation, return of female mobbing victims to labor market will be much harder after that kind of experience.

1.3 Operational Definition

There are several concepts like “mobbing”, “discrimination”, “sexual harassment”, “decent work” and “job quality” which were used throughout this thesis. In this section, these guiding concepts of the study were defined. The concept of “mobbing” is the main concept of this thesis, while concepts of “discrimination” and “sexual harassment” are neighbouring concepts of mobbing. Understanding these three concepts is crucial to draw main distinctions between concepts of “mobbing” and “discrimination” and concepts of “mobbing” and “sexual harassment”. On the other hand, understanding “decent work” and “job quality” concepts is important to understand “mobbing” concept within the context of social policy literature.

Mobbing: The concept of mobbing first used by Heinz Leymann in the following way:

Hostile and unethical communication, which is directed in a systematic way by one or a few individuals mainly towards one individual who, due to mobbing, is

pushed into a helpless and defenseless position, being held there by means of continuing mobbing activities (Leymann, 1996).

Even though, different definitions were made in time, this definition generally used as the basis for other definitions. In this study it was also used as basis. However, in this definition Leymann (1990) focused on frequency and duration of the negative act. According to him mobbing should continue at least for 6 months and it should be repeated at least once a week. In this study, this necessity was not considered. I, as researcher, believe that this notion is not relevant for today's working life and employment understanding. Although, there should be limits or criteria for defining mobbing and making mobbing provable, I believe limits for neither frequency nor duration of the mobbing cases can easily be determined. This limits can only be determined with further social studies.

Discrimination: General definition of discrimination can be made as biased and unequal actions against a group or a person (Little et al., 2012). Moreover, Fishbein (2002) claims that, "discrimination involves harmful actions toward others because of their membership in a particular group". In other words, an action can be named as discrimination, only if it is based on a ground. The Law on Human Rights and Equality Institution of Turkey, which came into force on April 20, 2016, determines these grounds as following: gender, ethnicity, nationality, skin colour, language, religion, philosophical or political opinion, wealth, birth, marital status, medical condition, disability and age (Turkey | New law on mobbing and discrimination at workplace, 2016).

Sexual Harassment: According to MacKinnon (1979) sexual harassment can be defined as undesired imposition of sexual needs and expectations within context of unequal power relationship (cited in Hearn 2011, p. 302).

Decent Work: In 1999, in the Report of the Director-General to the International Labour Conference, the phenomenon of decent work was firstly used by ILO. In this study, this concept was used as ILO used it. Today, ILO describes decent work in the following way:

Decent work sums up the aspirations of people in their working lives. It involves opportunities for work that is productive and delivers a fair income, security in the workplace and social protection for families, better prospects for personal development and social integration, freedom for people to express their concerns, organize and participate in the decisions that affect their lives and equality of opportunity and treatment for all women and men (Decent Work, n.d)

Job Quality: The concept is related with effects of a job on an employee. According to Green (2006), there are two approaches in the literature considering job quality: subjectivist and objectivist approaches. Common assumption of these two approaches is that higher job quality positively effects on an employee than lower quality job (cited in Holman & McClelland, 2011). There are four key aspects of job quality. These are skills and discretion (including job discretion, cognitive demand and training); work risks (environmental risks, physical demands); work intensity (workload, task interdependence); and working time quality (Holman et.al., 2015).

1.4 Significance and Contributions

In social sciences, handling an issue from different perspectives and with different scientific methods provide broader understanding on that issue. All the significance and contributions of this thesis to the social sciences literature arise from this understanding. Studying mobbing within the context of social policy has a great significance for both social policy and mobbing literatures.

The most important contribution of this study to mobbing literature is social policy perspective which was used for the first time on the issue of mobbing. Since mobbing literature is mostly dominated by psychology perspective, social grounds and dimensions of mobbing are underrepresented in scientific studies. Mobbing has been understood and discussed as an individual problem of employees. However, it is important to understand that mobbing experiences have quite important cultural, political and structural similarities. Preventing mobbing can only be possible by understanding social dimensions of mobbing and generating solutions. Current studies on mobbing handled the issue in an explanatory way mostly. This study, on the other hand, tackles the issue of mobbing as a scientific fact to be analyzed and a social problem to be solved. Furthermore, this study is based on a field research. Since

findings of this field research is based on experiences of mobbing victims and experts from different socio-cultural backgrounds, it is significant for mobbing literature.

Moreover, this study is also significant for social policy literature. In recent studies on work and employment policies, decent work is a significant concept (Ghai, 2003; Servais, 2004; Ginneken 2003). With the understanding of decent work, not only quantity of available jobs but also quality of the employment is aimed to be ensured. This concept includes issues like fair income, security and protection of employees, freedom of expressing concerns, participate in decision making processes and gender equality (Decent Work, n.d). In this study, mobbing is handled within context of decent work. This study handled mobbing as lack of decent work conditions among the specific organization it occurs and in the society. Since stress-free workplace is the one of the main components of decent work and working with dignity, mobbing should be handled within decent work literature. Even though, workers' rights notion of decent work phenomenon covers discrimination as a workplace problem, other workplace problems such as mobbing are ignored. However, mobbing may also be considered within this dimension of decent work phenomenon. Mobbing and discrimination are quite similar in terms of their consequences and handling mobbing as a part of decent work literature is also significant for this literature.

1.5 Structure of the Thesis

This thesis is composed of six chapters. These chapters are introduction, literature review, methodology, two data analysis chapters and conclusion. In this part of the thesis structure of the thesis and contents of these chapters will be handled.

Following introduction chapter (Chapter1), in literature review chapter (Chapter 2), firstly general discussion on the issue of mobbing was analyzed. Then best practices about mobbing were tackled. Additionally, Turkish literature on mobbing and social and legal aspects of mobbing in Turkey were discussed and mentioned.

In methodology chapter (Chapter 3), firstly topic selection and design of the study were mentioned. Then methodology of the study was tackled. Following that part, main features of questionnaire and process of ethical permission were mentioned. Data

collection and data analysis processes were also analyzed. Main features and contributions of expert interviews were discussed as well. Lastly, strengths and limitations of this study were mentioned in this chapter.

Chapter 4 and Chapter 5 presents findings of field research conducted within the scope of this study. Chapter 4 is entitled as “Experiences and Perceptions of Mobbing Victims”. Perceptions about institutions, law system and mobber of the mobbing victims were analyzed and discussed in this chapter. Concluding remarks and discussions were also presented.

Chapter 5, which is entitled as “The Main Forms of Mobbing”, includes discussion about main forms of mobbing in Turkey. In this chapter, it is argued that a new type of mobbing was experienced by employees in Turkey, which is based on discrimination. The analysis covers mobbing experiences and practices which mobbing victims experienced due to their physical appearance, gender, religion and sect and political view. Each of these features constitute a part of this chapter.

Finally, in the conclusion chapter (Chapter 6), general arguments and discussions of the thesis were reviewed. In the light of what was discussed, possible social policy recommendations were presented in this chapter.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 General Discussion about Mobbing

The concept of mobbing was firstly used in 19th century, as a biology term in order to define behaviors of birds which fly around the attacker for protecting their nest (Tinaz, 2006). Afterwards, mobbing concept was used by ethologist Konrad Lorenz in 1960s for explaining collective attack of small animal groups to another animal or hunter for keeping that animal away and protecting themselves (Westhues, 2003). As a neighbouring phenomenon, bullying, refers aggressive behavior and victimization of adolescents caused by imbalanced power relation among peer groups (Olweus cited in Juvonen et al. 2003, p. 1231).

That was Swedish psychologist Heinz Leymann who studied mobbing as a phenomenon concerning bullying behavior of adults in 1990s. He contributed to the literature by revealing that bullying occurs in even highly professionalized, rule-bound, outwardly civilized workplaces (Westhues, 2003). In 1990, Leymann defined physical terror or mobbing as “hostile and unethical communication which is directed in a systematic way by one or a number of persons mainly toward one individual” (Leymann 1990, p. 120). In his subsequent study in 1996, Leymann extended and specified the phenomenon:

Hostile and unethical communication, which is directed in a systematic way by one or a few individuals mainly towards one individual who, due to mobbing, is pushed into a helpless and defenseless position, being held there by means of continuing mobbing activities (Leymann 1996, p. 168)

According to the definition of Leymann (1990) mobbing is different from personal conflict in terms of its high frequency and duration. He argues that mobbing should continue at least for 6 months and it should be repeated at least once a week. He also argues that in mobbing incidents activities are not necessarily negative. Even positive

activities can be considered as mobbing, due to its frequency and duration. The term “systematic” was used in mobbing definition, for this reason (Leymann, 1990).

Leymann did not only conceptualize mobbing, but also developed a typology of mobbing (1996). According to this typology, there are five types of mobbing behaviors, based on their targets and effects of them on targets. Those are:

1. Effects on the victims’ possibilities to communicate adequately (management gives you no possibility to communicate; you are silenced; verbal attack against you regarding work tasks; verbal threats; verbal activities in order to reject you; etc.).
2. Effects on the victims’ possibilities to maintain social contacts (colleagues do not talk with you any longer or you are even forbidden to do so by management; you are isolated in a room far away from others; you are “sent to Coventry”; etc.).
3. Effects on the victims’ possibilities to maintain their personal reputation (gossiping about you; others ridicule you; others make fun about your handicap, your ethnical heritage, or the way you move or talk; etc.).
4. Effects on the victims’ occupational situation (you are not given any work tasks at all; you are given meaningless work tasks; etc.).
5. Effects on the victims’ physical health (you are given dangerous work tasks; others threaten you physically or you are attacked physically; you are sexually harassed in an active way; etc.).

Following Leymann’s conceptualization, some other typologies about mobbing were proposed. One of them was proposed by Einarsen (1999), who used broader categories. Einarsen categorized negative acts as work related and person related negative acts. While work related negative acts cause difficulty in completing work, person related negative acts directly target that person. Work related negative acts may include excluding from work meetings, taking responsibilities away, hiding work related information. On the other hand, person related negative acts may include not

considering views and problems of that person, excluding his/her, mocking at that person, spreading rumors about him/her or labeling that person (Einarsen,1999). Einarsen (2000) argues that bullying only occurs, when some criteria are met. For instance, there should be unequal power relationship between bully and target and negative acts should continue for a while. While conceptualization of Leymann mainly focused duration and frequency of negative acts, power imbalance was not mentioned in the definition (1990). However, in some studies it was argued that when bully and target have approximately equal power or negative act happened only one time, this case cannot be categorized as bullying (Einarsen, Hoel, Zapf, & Cooper, 2003a, p. 15 as cited in Matthiesen & Einarsen, 2010). Einarsen also argues that bullying has at least four phases. These are aggressive behavior, bullying, stigmatization and severe trauma (Einarsen et al., 1994).

Mobbing is a legal concept as well as social one. Although, there is no direct law concerning mobbing problem in many countries, there are national mobbing definitions of countries (Öke & Yüçetürk, 2005). However, there is no universally agreed definition of mobbing (Carby-Hall, 2014). Still, international organizations like ILO and EU have definitions about mobbing in their reports and publications. For example, according to ILO publication entitled “Violence at work” mobbing has been defined as a type of violence (Chappell & Di Martino, 2006). Mobbing definition of ILO states that:

Offensive behaviour through vindictive, cruel, malicious or humiliating attempts to undermine an individual or groups of employees... It involves ganging up on or ‘mobbing’ a targeted employee and subjecting that person to psychological harassment. Mobbing includes constant negative remarks or criticisms, isolating a person from social contacts and gossiping or spreading false information (cited in Öke & Yüçetürk, 2005 p.63).

EU level definition of mobbing made by the Advisory Committee on Safety, Hygiene and Health Protection at Work of the European Commission in its “Opinion on Violence at the Workplace” which was adopted in 2001:

Mobbing is a negative form of behaviour, between colleagues or between hierarchical superiors and subordinates, whereby the person concerned is repeatedly humiliated and attacked directly or indirectly by one or more persons

for the purpose and with the effect of alienating him or her. (cited in Carby-Hall, 2014 p.8)

The term “mobbing”, which was firstly used by Leymann, is mostly adopted by German-speaking countries, the Netherlands and some Mediterranean countries. However, some other concepts have been used to describe more or less the same phenomenon. For example, while English-speaking countries mostly use the term “bullying”, in the US terms such as “emotional abuse in the workplace” (Keashly, 1998) and “workplace harassment” (Brodsky, 1976) are being used (Matthiesen & Einarsen, 2010).

As well as different countries, researchers used different concepts in order to refer more or less the same phenomenon. These concepts are “mobbing” (Leymann, 1996; Zapf et al., 1996), “emotional abuse” (Keashly, 1998), “harassment” (Björkqvist et al., 1994a; Brodsky, 1976), “bullying” (Einarsen and Skogstad, 1996; Rayner, 1997; Vartia, 1996), “mistreatment” (Spratlen, 1995) and “victimisation” (Einarsen and Raknes, 1997a; 1997b) (Einarsen, 1999).

According to Klára and Tünde, in order to maintain complete understanding about mobbing issue, a review of keywords previously used by mobbing experts is helpful. Therefore, they presented a review of terms used by scholars:

- Provoke (Einarsen, 1999), mistreat (Tehrani 2004), intimidate (Hodson, Roscignoand Lopez, 2006; Hoel & Einarsen, 2010), boycott (Ordinance Sweden, 1994), ganging up on (Leymann, 1996);
- Hurt (Wickers, 2004), harm (Wornham, 2003), (Tehrani 2004), insult (Ordinance Sweden, 1994; Yannis, 1998; Zapf and Einarsen, 2001; victimize, blame (Hodson, Roscignoand Lopez, 2006), harass (Leymann, 1996; Zapf și Einarsen 2001; Saam, 2009);
- Threat (Einarsen, 1999; Ordinance Sweden, 1994), inspire fear (Ordinance Sweden, 1994), attack (Zapf & Einarsen, 2001), frighten (Einarsen, 1999), scare (Wornham, 2003);

- Sanction (Ordinance Sweden, 1994), punish (Leymann, 1996);
- Oppress (Tehrani, 2004), mistreat (Tehrani, 2004), degrade (Wickers, 2004), humiliate (Tehrani, 2004; Wickers, 2001);
- Erode (Ordinance Sweden, 1994), ruin (Mikkelsen and Einarsen, 2002), destroy (Wickers, 2004); Expulse (Leymann, 1996), abuse (Zapf & Einarsen, 2001; Tehrani 2004; Matthiesen & Einarsen, 2004; Tehrani 2004; Wickers, 2004; Hodson, Roscigno & Lopez, 2004), stigmatize (Leymann, 1996; Wornham, 2003), degrade (Vickers, 2004), terrorize (Leymann, 1996), torture (Wickers, 2001), or kill (Leymann, 1996) (Klára and Tünde n.d., p. 4).

It should be noticed that mobbing gained importance in working life after 2000s with the effect of neoliberalism. According to Duménil & Levy (2009) neoliberalism can be defined in two ways. First one is defining the concept in a narrow sense, worded as follows:

The term neoliberalism can be used to designate a course of events, a set of ‘policies’, that occurred during the 1980s and 1990s, with the potential to lead to a new phase of development. It can be interpreted as an attempt, in the 1980s, by a class of capitalist owners, to restore, in alliance with top management, its power and income after a setback of several decades. (p. 53)

Second definition is broader one:

Neoliberalism can be used to designate a new capitalism, with certain characteristics of sustainability: the historical outcome of the restoration of the power and income of a class of capitalist owners in the context of advanced managerial capitalism. (p. 53)

With the effect of neoliberalism and individualization world of work seriously changed. Work contracts became fixed-term, temporary and insecure (Atkinson, 2010). When employment became insecure, unemployment started to be used as a tool to control labor costs and discipline workers (Duménil & Levy, 2009). Workers who are under the threat of being fired become vulnerable to oppression and ill treatment. Since this kind of repressive behaviors and acts may be consider as mobbing, mobbing became a considerable problem in working life.

As a social policy issue mobbing may be handled as lack of decent work conditions among the specific organization it occurs and in the society. Since, stress-free workplace is the one of the main components of decent work and working with dignity, mobbing should be handled within decent work literature. In 1999, in the Report of the Director-General to the International Labour Conference, ILO used the concept of decent work in the following way:

The primary goal of the ILO today is to promote opportunities for women and men to obtain decent and productive work, in conditions of freedom, equality, security and human dignity. In general terms decent work includes four main components, according to ILO report: employment, social protection, workers' rights and social dialogue (cited in Ghai, 2003 p.113).

According to the same report, employment component of decent work phenomenon includes both qualitative and quantitative aspects of employment. It covers adequate, remunerative, healthy working conditions. Social security dimension of decent work refers workers' protection in case of unemployment, sickness, disability, old age and maternity. Basic rights dimension includes prevention of workplace discrimination, forced labour and child labour and freedom of association. Lastly, social dialogue covers workers' participation in work related issues with employers and authorities (Ghai, 2003). Governments should carry out decent work policies, in order to ease negative effects of economic change and to ensure peace in working life (Servais, 2004).

The issue of mobbing can be considered within the scope of decent work, especially in terms of fundamental rights of workers' and social protection dimensions. Even though workers' rights notion of decent work phenomenon covers discrimination as a workplace problem only, mobbing may also be considered within this dimension, being a neighbouring phenomenon. Although mobbing is not necessarily based on any underlying reason, mobbing and discrimination are quite similar in terms of their consequences.

By implementing decent work policies such as: improving general conditions of employment, improving occupational safety and health (not only physically but also mentally and psychologically), enabling social security services to cover mobbing

related job losses and health problems and preventing mobbing in work places as both institution and government policy (Ghai, 2003); eliminating the problem of mobbing may be possible. Even in some studies, the issue of mobbing was addressed as a priority to develop decent work policies (Tevdovski, n.d.). Tevdovski suggests that labour unions and NGOs have to cooperate to educate employees on their legal rights, especially about mobbing.

Ghai (2003) presented an overall ranking about decent work by bringing four indicators of decent work together. He stated that Sweden, Denmark, Norway, Finland, Austria, Germany and Canada are countries which perform best according to decent work ranking. These countries are almost same with the ones which have best practices on the issue of mobbing. Considering this parallelism, it can be argued that internalization of decent work understanding may have positive effects on not only solutions of problems which mentioned within decent work definition, but also solutions of other work related problems.

Another concept which is related with decent work phenomenon is job quality. This concept is generally used in reports and researches of EU. The concept is related with effects of a job on an employee. According to Green (2006), there are two approaches in the literature considering job quality: subjectivist and objectivist approaches. Common assumption of these approaches is that higher job quality positively effects on an employee than lower quality job (cited in Holman & McClelland, 2011). There are four key aspects of job quality. These are skills and discretion (including job discretion, cognitive demand and training); work risks (environmental risks, physical demands); work intensity (workload, task interdependence); and working time quality (Holman et.al., 2015).

Beside decent work, mobbing policies can also be handled within the scope of job quality. Although job quality term does not include negative acts that employee experience in work place and psychological harm that employee may get as a result of these negative acts by definition, actually these points are not irrelevant to job quality phenomenon. Work risks aspect of job quality phenomenon may include psychological risks as well as environmental risks. Recent studies and reports handle psychological

risks as a part of Occupational Health and Safety Policies (Vartia-Väänänen, 2013; Coldwell, 2013). In psychology literature, there are many studies those argue that mobbing has serious psychological effects on victims, such as PTSD (Post-traumatic Stress Disorder), anxiety, depression, burnout and somatization (Leymann & Gustafsson, 1996; Bowling & Beehr, 2006; Nielsen & Einarsen, 2012). Therefore, mobbing and other work related psychological risks can be discussed as a part of job quality literature. By this means, solution of this significant problem may be easier.

2.2 Best Practices

Best policies and practices about mobbing from some developed countries will be analyzed to be able to suggest social policy applications for Turkey. EU is leading international organization in many social policy issues. Because of that position of EU, both EU and its member states should be discussed in the best practices section. On the other hand, Scandinavian countries, as the origin of first studies in mobbing literature, have great importance while discussing mobbing. Sweden and Finland are mostly referred Scandinavian countries in the literature about mobbing. Additionally, as the first country in the world which made a voluntary national standard for workplaces, Canada will also be discussed.

Although EU has no commonly accepted law or legislation about mobbing, it has the role of conducting researches and preparing important reports to help member states. According to report of the European Agency for Safety and Health at Work, 2010 some countries among the EU have specific legislation about workplace mobbing, workplace bullying or workplace harassment (depending on their way of defining the problem or concept they used for the problem)¹. These countries are Belgium, Denmark, Germany, Finland, France, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Sweden and the United Kingdom (Klára & Tünde, n.d.).

¹ In this part of the thesis, terms for referring mobbing, purposely left in the way they were used in legislations of that particular country. By this way, it was aimed to demonstrate mobbing perceptions of those countries.

Legal responsibility of maintaining healthy and safe working conditions and preventing employees from physical and psychological damage are given to employers throughout Europe. In accordance with the autonomous framework agreement on harassment and violence at work, which was signed by European social partners, ETUC/CES, BUSINESSEUROPE, UEAPME and CEEP in 2007, employers should prepare reasonable standards and control effectiveness of these standards in cooperation with employees and their representatives. This agreement aims to raise awareness of employers, employees and their representatives on the workplace harassment and violence issues (Vartia-Väänänen, 2013).

Legislation in France is based on the stand point of prevention culture. As in almost all legal systems, employers are obliged to maintain healthy and safe working conditions and prevent physical and psychological health of their employees. Mobbing policies of France focus on prevention rather than medical support after negative work experiences (Lerouge, 2013). They have a trinary prevention policy. First part includes prevention of moral harassment starting from its origins or sub-factors. Second part aims to prevent potential damage which may be caused by abuse or moral or sexual harassment at work. Third part includes damage limitation and caring of victims (Lerouge, 2013). Despite these preventive policies, abuse or moral or sexual harassment may still occur. In such a case, victim may choose internal process by contacting “trustworthy person” of the company or external prevention advisor or help from civil service department or taking legal action (Lerouge, 2013).

In Germany, both intervention and prevention of workplace bullying are tackled by company. They give priority to prevention responsibility, as prevention may dispense with the need for intervention. Employee or employer representatives indirectly get involved to these processes by training and advising. Responsibility on these issues is ensured via company agreements (Wolmerath, 2013). There is also a special hospital (Berus Hospital) on the issue of bullying in Germany. In this hospital, very positive results are taken as a result of inpatient therapeutic treatment (Schwickerath & Zapf cited in Vartia-Väänänen 2013, p.13).

There are two different bullying policies, in the UK. First one is basic bullying policy. Second one is combining bullying with harassment policies. These are bullying and harassment policy or a dignity at work policy, which are based on sex, race, disability or sexual orientation grounds. (Richards & Daley cited in Klára and Tünde n.d., p. 10)

In Belgium, employer is responsible from performing risk assessment and taking precautions. Bullying victims may also apply specialized consultant and trustworthy person. Burden of proof is issued to employer in case of a conflict. It is enough to present debatable cases for victim (Çukur, 2016).

Regarding Scandinavian countries, Sweden and Finland are mostly referred ones in the literature about mobbing. Sweden is the first EU member country which made specific legal arrangement on the issue of mobbing in early 1990s. This act is entitled Victimization at Work (Çukur, 2016). Second section of this act states that employer is responsible from taking precautions about prevention of victimization within reason. Zero tolerance understanding should be extended and victimization should be considered as unacceptable (Strandmark, 2013). As a part of this process, employer should provide support to employees by means of supervisors. Supervisors work with both employees and management in order to maintain peaceful work environment (Strandmark, 2013). However, legislation in Sweden is criticized by researchers due to its lack of bottom up approach. They argue that mobbing problem cannot be solved without combination of top down and bottom up approaches. It is argued that preventive policies should be complemented by legal sanctions. Moreover, role of mobbing victims, the voluntary organizations, and the trade unions should not be ignored in order to achieve mobbing-free workplaces (Strandmark, 2013).

In 2008 Finnish Quality of Work Life Survey conducted in order to specify commonly used measures to prevent mobbing in Finland. As a result of this survey it was concluded that these commonly used measures were: 1) good treatment or elimination of bullying had been taken into consideration in supervisory activity (45% of respondents), 2) prevention of bullying had been taken into account in occupational health and safety (39%), and 3) a set of rules for good treatment had been drawn up (33%) (Lehto & Sutela cited in Vartia-Väänänen 2013, p.21). According to Finnish

legislation on the issue of mobbing, employer is obliged to maintain occupational health care services in the workplace. Moreover, occupational health care personnel, especially specialized psychologists, provide support and advice and solve cases (Vartia-Väänänen 2013).

Besides these two countries, mobbing legislation in Norway is also considerable. Norway uses long-term active work to prevent mobbing. This system includes active researches, publishing reports and books, trainings, supports for organizations and nation-wide campaigns. Norway applied this system and according to national studies system resulted positively (Vartia-Väänänen, 2013).

Lastly, mobbing policies and legislations in Canada should also be referred. Canada is the first country in the world which made a voluntary national standard for workplaces, titled Psychological Health and Safety in the Workplace. So, federal and provincial legislation about occupational health and safety in workplace in Canada, covers both physical and psychological safety at work (Coldwell, 2013). Canada has an inclusive OHS legislation in both federal and provincial level. Not only sanctions but also preventive strategies of legislation in Canada may be important, while proposing new policies about mobbing. In order to achieve mobbing-free work environment, legislation in Canada gives responsibilities to employers, rather than mobber himself/herself. Employer should take precautions to maintain workplace peace and prevent mobbing in workplaces (Coldwell, 2013).

Moreover, in Canada, important stakeholders about workplace bullying or harassment are non-governmental organizations, academic arena and labor/trade unions. When considering 4 million (30%) workers in Canada is part of a union, this subject become more significant. For example, Nova Scotia Government and General Employees Union (NSGEU) argue that unions should responsible for workplace bullying to be accepted as a form of violence. In order to maintain workplaces without bullying or harassment, employers, employees and their representatives are working together (Coldwell, 2013).

2.3 Mobbing in Turkey

Mobbing is an issue which has been studied a lot in recent years, especially in European and Scandinavian countries. The issue draws attention in Turkey as well, since 2000s. In Turkey, mobbing studies are generally made with psychology and law perspective. Still it can be argued that mobbing is underrepresented issue in Turkey.

Mobbing studies in Turkey are predominantly descriptive, aiming at increasing awareness (Tınaz, 2006; Altuntaş, 2010; Yüçetürk, 2005). These studies are similar in terms of their perspectives and discussions. In parallel with international literature, they are mostly based on Leymann's (1990) definition of mobbing and analysis on the phenomenon. Since mobbing is not a familiar concept for Turkish society and language, it was crucial to explain concept and create awareness ten years ago. In Turkey, further researches and developments on the issue of mobbing are mostly based on these descriptive studies.

Moreover, in Turkish literature mobbing has been studied in different contexts. Health sector is a commonly used context for these studies (Dikmetaş et. al., 2011; Efe & Ayaz, 2010; Özdemir et. al., 2013). Since mobbing is highly common in health sector in Turkey, there are considerable studies on this specific context. According to report prepared by Ministry of Labor and Social Security of Turkey, more than 20% of reported mobbing incidents were experienced in Turkey are from health sector (ÇSGB, 2014). Mobbing studies about health sector are mostly descriptive. They are mostly focused on reasons and consequences of mobbing, which is experienced by health sector employees (Dikmetaş et. al., 2011; Efe & Ayaz, 2010).

Another context which is commonly used in mobbing studies in Turkey is education sector (Altunay et. al., 2014; Koç & Urasoğlu Bulut, 2009; Yaman et. al., 2010). According to report prepared by Ministry of Labor and Social Security of Turkey, more than 11% of reported mobbing incidents were experienced in Turkey are from education sector (ÇSGB, 2014). While some of these studies aim to show characteristics of mobbing experienced in education sector by means of quantitative research methods (Koç & Urasoğlu Bulut, 2009), other researches use qualitative

methods to analyze and describe main forms of mobbing experienced in education sector (Altunay et. al., 2014; Yaman et. al., 2010).

Mobbing in education sector is not limited with mobbing experienced by primary and secondary school teachers. Academic mobbing is also considerably common in Turkey. In the report of Ministry of Labor and Social Security of Turkey, it was mentioned that almost 7% of the reported mobbing incidents were experienced in Turkey are made by university employees (ÇSGB, 2014). In parallel with this prevalence, there are some important mobbing studies on the issue of academic mobbing in Turkey (Tigrel & Kokalan, 2009; Sert & Akkoyunlu Wigley, 2015; Şenerkal & Çorbacıoğlu, 2015).

Majority of aforementioned studies are based on psychology perspective. However, there are many important studies in Turkish mobbing literature, which are based on other perspectives. Considerable amount of studies in the literature analyze mobbing in terms of laws and legislations in Turkish law system (Temizel, 2013; Erdem & Parlak, 2010; Ilhan, 2010). According to these studies there is not a direct law concerning mobbing in Turkey. There are some laws and legislation indirectly protecting workers about mobbing (Erdem & Parlak, 2010). Prevalence of mobbing studies which are made with legal perspective in Turkey, can show us general position of Turkey on the issue of fighting against mobbing. In Turkey generally reactive and retributive perspective is dominant on the issue of mobbing, rather than proactive and preventive policies.

2.4 Social and Legal Aspects of Mobbing in Turkey

Mobbing is a controversial issue as well as important one. Proving, handling, solving and even understanding this problem are not easy. Without clear definition and certain coverage, this problem may become unsolvable. For this reason, in Turkey mobbing is a common problem. Nevertheless, large scaled social surveys are not that common. The most reliable information on the issue may be reached from reports prepared by public institutions (ÇSGB, 2014; Kadın Erkek Fırsat Eşitliği Komisyonu, 2011). These

reports use statistical information taken from hotline ALO 170 (Labour and Social Security Communication Center).

In 2011, Circular on Prevention of Psychological Harassment (Mobbing) in Workplaces was issued by Turkish Prime Ministry. In the Article 4 of the circular, it was stated that Labour and Social Security Communication Center will be established and provide support employees via hotline ALO 170. When ALO 170 was activated, they took 11.393 application from mobbing victims around Turkey from 19.03.2011 to 06.04.2014. As a result of this period ALO 170 hotline also provided statistical information about these applications (ÇSGB, 2014).

According to these information, 70% of the applicants were from private sector, while 30% of them are from public sector. In private sector, majority of the applications did not present any sector (42.90 %). Rest of them are from industrial sector (15.42%), store-restaurant-market sectors (9.84%), private health institutions (4%), tourism businesses (3.86%), service sector (2.97%), banking (2.76%), municipal employees (2.71%), communication services (2.61%), construction (2.03%) and private security services (1.72%) (ÇSGB, 2014).

In public sector 37.19 % of the employees did not specify any sector. Rest of them are from hospital (16.64%), Ministry of Education (11.53%), universities (6.85%), Turkish Armed Forces (4.41%), Police (2.5%), Ministry of Maritime Transport and Communications (1.94%), Ministry of Justice (1.56%), Ministry of Food Agriculture and Livestock (1.47%), Ministry of Energy and Natural Resources (1.47%) and Ministry of Finance (1.38%). While in Private Sector 42% of the applicants are female, in Public Sector this percentage is 50% (ÇSGB, 2014).

Considering age groups, age group 29-33 is the highest for both male (29.07%) and female (27.98%) employees. When considering sector/age ratio, again age group 29-33 is the highest. About educational background of applicant, it was stated that in public sector 41.23% of them are graduate, 26.10% of them are high school graduate and 16.06 % of them are post-graduate. In private sector, 38.93% of applicants are high school graduate, 27.82% of them are from primary education and 19.44% of them

are graduate. When we look at distribution of applications according to the provinces, it can be noticed that majority of the applications were made from big cities like İstanbul, Ankara, İzmir, Antalya and Bursa (ÇSGB, 2014).

When regarding legal aspects of mobbing, most importantly it should be mentioned that there was no law directly concerning mobbing in Turkey, when large part of this thesis was written. New law titled “Law on Turkish Human Rights and Equality Institution (No.6701)” was published in the Official Gazette and entered into force on April, 20 2016 (Turkey | New law on mobbing and discrimination at workplace, 2016). Because of that reason, this part of the study will cover indirect laws and legislations about mobbing first, and then content of new law will be analyzed.

As it was mentioned before, there was no direct mobbing law in neither Labour Law nor Turkish Criminal Law until a few months ago. There were some indirect laws and legislations in Turkish law system, which were related with mobbing in one way or another (Erdem & Parlak, 2010). These are: Code of Obligations No. 6098 Article 417; Labor Law No. 4857 Article 5, 22, 24 and 25; Civil Servants Law No. 657 Article 8 and 10; Prime Ministry's Circular on Prevention of Psychological Harassment (Mobbing) in Workplaces No. 2011/2 (ÇSGB, 2014).

Code of Obligations No. 6098 Article 417 titled “Protecting worker’s personality” states that:

The employer is obliged to protect worker’s personality and to behave respectfully during service relationship and to ensure an organization in the worksite based on honesty principles, to take necessary measures for workers not to come to psychological and sexual abuse and those who have suffered such abuses not to suffer any further damage.

In this code, notion of “psychological harassment” is firstly used in Turkish legal system. This is an important step about protection of worker’s rights in case of psychological harassment (ÇSGB, 2014).

There are also some articles in Turkish Labor Law No. 4857 which are indirectly related with mobbing. None of these articles include “mobbing” as a term, however they are applicable for mobbing cases in some way. According to Article 2 titled “The

principle of equal treatment”, no kind of discrimination is permissible in employment relationship. Even though mobbing and discrimination do not have same meaning, they are related concepts. Practices of mobbing and discrimination may share similarities in terms of their practices. Relationship between discrimination and mobbing will be discussed subsequent parts of the thesis in a detailed way. In the Article 22 titled “Change in working conditions and termination of the contract”, requirements of changing work condition are stated in the following way:

Any change by the employer in working conditions based on the employment contract, on the rules of work which are annexed to the contract, and on similar sources or workplace practices, may be made only after a written notice is served by him to the employee. Changes that are not in conformity with this procedure and not accepted by the employee in written form within six working days shall not bind the employee.

Since in many forms of the mobbing radical change in working conditions is used as a way of performing mobbing, this article is significant when evaluating conflicts about mobbing. Moreover, Article 24 titled “Employee’s right to break the contract for just cause” and Article 25 titled “The breaking of the employment contract by the initiative of the employer” are also considerable in terms of possible consequences of mobbing incidents (ÇSGB, 2014).

Although aforementioned laws are significant when evaluating conflicts about mobbing, they are only applicable in cases about mobbing incidents which are experienced in private sector. Since work related laws and legislations of public and private sectors are different, there are differences of application in terms of sectors. According to Civil Servants Law No. 657 Article 8 civil servants are obliged to behave in a respectful manner whether they are on duty or not. Besides, Article 10 states that civil servants who are in position of superior are obliged to behave subordinates on the basis of justice and equality. This article shows similarity with Code of Obligations No. 6098 Article 417.

In Turkey, there is also a circular concerning mobbing, which is directly refers this phenomenon. This circular was issued by Prime Ministry in 2011. Circular on Prevention of Psychological Harassment (Mobbing) in Workplaces No. 2011/2 defines

psychological harassment and presents significance of this phenomenon firstly. Then, it mentions about eight measures can be taken for protecting employees from psychological harassment (Minasyan & Bülent, 2014). This circular was the most important regulation for preventing mobbing and creating awareness about it, before Law on Turkish Human Rights and Equality Institution (No.6701) was enacted.

Moreover, some studies and reports argue that mobbing can be handled within Turkish Penal Code No.5237 (Erdem & Parlak, 2010; Kadın Erkek Fırsat Eşitliği Komisyonu, 2011). They argue that mobbing can be handled within Article 84 titled Suicide, Article 86 titled Felonious injury, Article 87 titled Consequential Heavy Injury, Article 96 titled Torment, Article 102 titled Sexual abuse, Article 105 titled Sexual harassment, Article 108 titled Violence, Article 123 titled Deterioration of peace and order and Article 125 titled Defamation (Erdem & Parlak, 2010; Kadın Erkek Fırsat Eşitliği Komisyonu, 2011).

Although, these laws and legislations gave a lead to fighting against mobbing, they were not direct solution to this problem. Still, there were many important deficiencies in legal system on the issue of mobbing. Even, definition and coverage of the phenomenon was not clearly presented. These deficiencies created problems in practice. For example, one of the major problems is verification problem. Since there was not a direct mobbing law, there was no regulation about burden of proof (Erdem & Parlak, 2010). Without defining mobbing within law system and determine coverage of the phenomenon, it was impossible to overcome this kinds of problems.

In recent years there were some initiatives trying to define mobbing among the Turkish law and generate some enforcements about it (ÇSGB, 2014). As a result of these initiatives, a law was enacted in Turkey in 2016. Name of this law is Law on Turkish Human Rights and Equality Institution (No.6701). For this law, principle of equal treatment is taken as baseline. According to law, each person may benefit from their legal rights and freedoms equally (Türkiye İnsan Hakları ve Eşitlik Kurumu Kanunu, 2016). The law prohibits all forms of discrimination on the basis of gender, ethnicity, nationality, skin color, language, religion, philosophical or political opinion, wealth, birth, marital status, medical condition, disability or age. The law also presents certain

special circumstances which are excluded from definition of discrimination (Turkey | New law on mobbing and discrimination at workplace, 2016).

Within the law nine types of discrimination were defined and mobbing is one of them. The law defines mobbing as “intentional actions to disinclose, to isolate and to make him/her wary of a person in the workplace based on the discrimination types listed in the Law under Article 2 § 1(g)” (Turkey | New law on mobbing and discrimination at workplace, 2016). This definition may be considered as problematic, due to its limitation about mobbing definition. Although some types of mobbing are based on discrimination, by definition mobbing is not necessarily based on any reason or ground. This definition excludes mobbing cases which are not based on any discriminative attitude or behavior.

The new law not only describes discrimination and mobbing, but also proposes solution for these problems. With this law Turkish Human Rights and Equality Institution has been established. Duties and authorities, organization, rules of procedures and responsibilities of the Institution were presented in the law (Türkiye İnsan Hakları ve Eşitlik Kurumu Kanunu, 2016). Moreover, the law also presents legal sanctions in case of violation of the law. According to law, an administrative fine of between TRY 500 and TRY 2.000 can be imposed in the following cases, where the Violator:

- Prevents the Institution from conducting an investigation,
- Prevents the Institution from visiting the places where the violation occurred,
- Prevents the Institution from taking a copy or example of related documents,
- Does not reply to the Institution’s questions, when it seeks information (Turkey | New law on mobbing and discrimination at workplace, 2016).

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

The main aim of this part is to present main characteristics of the field work which was conducted for this thesis. In order to present these characteristics in most comprehensive way, relationship between researcher and respondents will also be analyzed in a detailed way. For this, combination of field notes which I took during employee interviews and my personal experiences as researcher was used. Starting from subject choice to data analysis every part of the field work is explained in a detailed way in this part of the thesis. In addition to that, characteristics of the expert interviews which are complementary to employee interviews were also presented in this part. At the end of this part, strengths and limitations of the study were discussed.

3.1 Choosing Topic and Designing Study

When I started to planning my thesis subject, I was sure about my thesis will be about work policies. However specific subject of the thesis was not determined yet. Starting point of this research was a simple curiosity about mobbing and its position in Turkey. I did some research on position of Turkey about mobbing laws and policies. I have learned that there are new attempts on this issue and it is only a part of a development process. I thought that mobbing is still an under-represented issue and I have decided to write my thesis on mobbing.

Even so, I cannot deny that mobbing experience of a close friend of mine fostered my interest on this issue. She was a victim of academic mobbing. One of her superiors, who she had to work more closely than other superiors, behaved very badly to her for a year. When she could not find any other solution than leaving, she started to search for other job options. Luckily, she found a new job and resigned from her job. While I was following her experience and misery I started to think about mobbing victims. Incidentally, occurrence of curiosity about mobbing and observing experiences of a

mobbing victim closely happened at the same time in my life. It was very effective for me when determining this particular subject.

Then when I made a brief search on the issue I realized that there is no study which handles mobbing issue from social policy perspective in Turkey. Mobbing studies are mostly conducted from psychology perspective in Turkey as it is in rest of the World. Psychological perspective should not be underestimated; however, it is only one side of the issue. Mobbing has considerable social, economic and legal aspects. In this study, I aimed to cover all these aspects and to recommend a social policy on this issue.

Scope of the subject was planned after approximately 2 months of reading and discussion with thesis advisor and members of thesis discussion group. At this juncture, I have to admit that advantages of writing a thesis with support of a thesis discussion group cannot be underestimated. When different arguments and ideas of group members from different backgrounds come together with praiseworthy guidance of our thesis advisor, planning part of our thesis became easier and enthusing. By the help of these discussions, I wrote a proposal which made scope of the thesis more apparent.

3.2 Methodology of the Study

According to Krauss (2005), epistemology is closely related with ontology and methodology. While epistemology can be defined as how we come to know, ontology can be described as philosophy of reality. Methodology, on the other hand, refers certain practices used to obtain knowledge (Krauss, 2005, p. 758-759). Consequently, research methodology is a tool which is strongly related with how we perceive reality and how we obtain knowledge as researchers.

In social sciences, there are mainly two types of research methods. These are qualitative and quantitative researches. Needless to say, the main differences between these two methods come from difference of their epistemological and ontological assumptions (Krauss, 2005). While qualitative method uses constructivist, advocacy and participatory perspectives, quantitative method uses positivist claims (Creswell, 2003). According to quantitative approach, there is only one reality which is valid

independent of researcher's perception and this researcher cannot effect or be affected by respondent. The main aim of this researcher is assessment and evaluation of collected data with a value-free approach (Sale et al., 2002, p. 44). On the other hand, qualitative approach claims that there are more than one reality and truth according to researcher's construction of reality. Researcher and respondent are mutually connected to each other and findings of the study are common production of both parties (Sale et al., 2002, p. 44). While qualitative approach uses open-ended questions to obtain text or image data with emerging approaches; quantitative approach uses closed-ended questions to obtain numeric data with predetermined approaches (Creswell, 2003).

In this thesis, qualitative research methods have been employed. With the purpose of understanding patterns and trends about mobbing from a social policy perspective, in-depth interviews were used. In order to focus on experiences, perceptions, feelings and expectations of mobbing victims, conducting in-depth interviews was a necessity. Since qualitative research methods provide certain advantages such as collecting meanings of participants, adding personal values to the study, making interpretation of the data and creating an agenda for change or reform (Creswell, 2003); using these methods has positively affected the thesis.

3.3 Questionnaire and Ethical Permissions

For this research I prepared three sets of questions. These are question sets for employee interviews, for expert interview and for association interview. All three sets involve open ended questions, which were prepared by considering taking no more than 1 hour for each interview.

The first question set was for employee interviews which were conducted to 20 urban, middle class, highly educated employees who claim that they experienced mobbing in a period of their lives. The second question set was for expert interview which was conducted to Prof. Dr. Canan Sümer. The third question set was for association interview which was conducted to President of Association of Fighting against Mobbing, Mr. Hüseyin Gün.

Question set for employee interviews includes seven parts: demographic questions, questions about working life, questions about mobbing awareness, questions about mobbing experience, questions about solution seeking strategies and supports, questions about effects of mobbing and questions about suggestions for fighting against mobbing. While question set for employee interviews aims to cover different aspects of mobbing experiences of victims, question sets for expert interviews aims to support this study with knowledge and experiences of mobbing experts from different backgrounds.

After preparation of these question sets, I took advices of my thesis advisor. According to her advices, I revised question sets. Then I applied for approval of Middle East Technical University Human Research Ethics Committee. Questionnaires were examined by the committee and committee approved that this study will not cause any damage on the respondents. After getting this approval I started to conduct employee interviews. After conducting first 3 interviews, I shared some of my views with my thesis advisor. At the recommendation of her, I made minor changes on question set for employee interviews. After a while, we were convinced that some changes should be made on title of the research and scope of the research should be reduced as well. For this reason, I applied for revision of Human Research Ethics Committee approval. Committee approved revision as well.

Interviews which conducted for this study were semi-structured. I had a question set for every interview; but I added or skipped some questions according to comprehensiveness or clearness of the answers of respondents. For example, some respondents mentioned about personal characteristics of mobber when they explaining details of mobbing incident they experienced. In such cases, I skipped questions about personal characteristics of mobber. On the other hand, in some answers there were some blurred areas those should be clarified or some surprising parts I wanted to learn more about; I asked extra questions for making these parts clearer.

Moreover, since mobbing is a problematic subject which is hard to ask about or tell personal experiences about, I used some facilitating tactics. The most important of these questioning tactics was using own words of respondent used in previous answers,

while asking next questions. Aim of this tactic was to show respondent that I really care about his/her personal experience, misery, anger or ideas. I aimed to show respondents that taking those answers was only a necessity for the thesis, but sharing personal experiences was personally more significant for me. I believe that ability to feel empathy with respondent is a necessity for a researcher.

3.4 Data Collection Process

A qualitative methodology was used in this study in order to offer a more comprehensive description of mobbing in Turkey. I used semi-structured in-depth interviews. I interviewed with 20 highly educated, urban, middle-class respondents who claim that they are mobbing victims. Since I believe mobbing has strong cultural roots and in Turkey there is no widely accepted cultural and legal definition of mobbing yet, I did not select my respondents from mobbing victims. For my research it is enough to know that they admit themselves as mobbing victims. Mobbing perception of respondents is more important for me. This was aimed to answer an extremely important question: what kind of acts and behaviors are perceived as mobbing by employees in Turkey?

The reason why highly educated, urban, middle-class employees were chosen as respondents is that they are the group which were mostly effected from neoliberal labor market practices. Although they seem like they are strong in labor market, neoliberal labor market practices such as flexible work and contract based work agreements make this group fragile. Moreover, mobbing as a relatively new concept in labor market is underrecognized issue. Most likely, this highly educated group have higher awareness on the issue of mobbing. For them recognizing if they are experiencing mobbing or not is easier.

For employee interviews, I conducted 20 interviews in Ankara and İstanbul. The main reason why I chose these two cities is greatness of working population in them. According to TUIK statistics on employed population by employment status and sex in 2000, working population in Turkey is 25997141 people. 3471400 (13%) of these employees are from Istanbul, while 1378699 (5%) of them are from Ankara. These are

the two greatest cities in Turkey in terms of working population. (TUIK, 2000) Moreover, accessibility was also effective for me for choosing these cities. Since Ankara is the city which I live in and İstanbul is my hometown I have stronger networks in these cities. Even so it was very hard to find respondents for my research. I went to İstanbul two times to conduct İstanbul part of the interviews.

In this part of the thesis I interviewed with 10 women and 10 men respondents. It was very hard to ensure this balance in gender distribution. At the beginning I did not mention about gender while searching for new respondents. After a while I realize that there were very few male respondents, while majority of the respondents are females. Afterwards I started to search for male respondents specifically. Even then I mostly find female respondents. This unexpected situation may have 2 meanings: either men experience mobbing relatively less than women or men are less willing to express their mobbing experiences. Both possibilities are significant for this research. Moreover, it should also be considered that this situation may be result of female dominance in my social environment. After all the study covers a few respondents those I can reach as a researcher.

In order to reach respondents, firstly snowball sampling method was used in this research. Starting point of this sampling process was our thesis discussion group. One of the group members introduced one of her friends who experienced mobbing to me after taking her permission. This was my first interview and this little push was crucially important for me. After conducting interviews, I asked respondents if they knew anyone who is relevant with the study and willing to share their experiences. Secondly convenience sampling method was employed. I started to ask help from my close friends and relatives for finding new respondents. I could not deny that my friends generously helped me in this process. While some of them referred me to their connections, other shared their own experiences. With that method I reached almost half of the respondents. At one point, expectedly method became useless, because positive effect of my personal connections reached its limit. At that point, I consulted one of my co-workers who is expert of human resources. She announced my research in a mail list and founded four new respondents. After these interviews, there were still

a few interviews missing. Completing these missing interviews was very hard and took so much time. Eventually, all 20 employee interviews finished and collected data started to be transcribed and analyzed. General information about these 20 respondents can be seen in following table. (See Table 1)

Table 1 : Sociodemographic data of the respondents

NAME	CITY	OCCUPATION	PREVIOUS OCCUPATION	AGE	EDUCATION	SECTOR	MOBBER
Aslı	İstanbul	Project coordinator	University staff	33	University	Private	Superior
Birsen	İstanbul	Physiotherapist	Physiotherapist	35	University	Private	Superior
Ceyda	Ankara	HR Coordinator	Insurance salesman	33	University	Private	Superior
Dilek	Ankara	Assistant EU Expert	Assistant EU Expert	29	Graduate Student	Public	Superior
Ensar	Ankara	Expert	Expert	30	University	Public	Superiors
Fatma	İstanbul	Preschool teacher	Preschool teacher	31	University	Private	Employer
Gül	Ankara	Expert	Administrative affairs	50	Graduate Student	Public-Private Partnership	Superiors
Hasan	Ankara	HR Consultant	HR Consultant	24	University	Private	Co-worker
İpek	Ankara	Physician	Physician assistant	29	Master	Public	Superiors
Kenan	İstanbul	Psychologist	Human Resources	28	Doctoral Student	Private	Co-workers
Levent	Ankara	Civil Engineer	Civil Engineer	26	University	Private	Superior
Mustafa	Ankara	Social service specialist	Social service specialist	47	Master	Public	Superiors
Nilay	İstanbul	SME Expert	SME Expert	32	University	Public	Superior
Oylum	Ankara	Assistant HR Specialist	Assistant HR Specialist	27	University	Private	Superior
Pınar	Ankara	Human Resources	Human Resources	45	Master	Private	Superiors
Raşit	İstanbul	Civil Engineer	Civil Engineer	30	University	Private	Employer
Soner	Ankara	Social service specialist	Soldier	43	PhD	Public	Superiors
Tekin	Ankara	Human Resources	Accountant	33	University	Private	Subordinate
Ulaş	Ankara	Computer Engineer	Computer Engineer	32	University	Private	Superior
Vahit	Ankara	Computer Engineer	Computer Engineer	27	University	Private	Superior

Almost all interviews were conducted face-to-face. Only one interview was conducted by means of video talk, because respondent was living in another city and we had limited time. Places where interviews conducted were chosen according to the demand of respondents. As researcher I did not rescheduled or relocated any of the interviews. For only one interview, respondent asked to meet in her workplace, however the region where workplace located was far from center of the city and public transportation was not available to that location. In this case, I asked for alternative location and she kindly accepted to meet in a closer location. Meeting places were generally workplaces, coffee shops, restaurants according to demands of respondents. Two respondents asked to make the interview in my house, while one respondent who I knew before asked to make the interview in his house.

Informed consent form was signed by every respondent, except from one interview that made through video talk. Following that, I verbally take permission to use audio recorder during interview. All respondents accepted this request, only a few respondents wanted to be sure about confidentiality of these records. I gave further explanation to those respondents about process of data transcription and my ethical values. After interviews were conducted, some respondents requested to read the thesis when it is finished. I am planning to share my thesis with respondents, right after finalizing it.

3.5 Position and Personal Experiences of Researcher during Data Collection

This research was my first time as a single and fully responsible researcher on the field. That was both exciting and scary experience for me. To find a starting point I asked help from my friends and family. They generously helped me to find respondents. A very important conclusion which I reached in this research process is it is crucial to have strong social environment and social abilities to be successful in data collecting as a social scientist. In my case, it was very hard to find respondents, because most of my life was spent in İstanbul and in Ankara my only network is METU. It took so much time to find respondents and collect data for me.

As far as I saw in my data collection process, there are two main reasons for this. Firstly, people are so reluctant to interview on this issue for fear of risking their current jobs. For example, an employee that I scheduled an appointment with cancelled our appointment half an hour before, because she cannot get permission from her current job. Even though I specified that her name, her institution or any feature that can reveal her identity will not be included in the thesis or shared with any third person, she canceled it anyway. Secondly, people are not familiar with the concept of “mobbing”. Even though they are experiencing it, many people cannot name their experience as mobbing. On the other hand, some people are confused about the concept of “mobbing” and “sexual harassment”. In fact, these people assume that only women can experience mobbing. For example, one of my relatives referred to someone as mobbing victim. When I called him he stated that “I am not a mobbing victim”. I wondered and asked what he experienced. After he told me his story, I asked what can be named as mobbing for him. He gave me an example that a woman colleague of him experienced and they were pretty much the same with his experience. Then I shared my comment with him and asked if he still does not think his experience is mobbing. He insisted that he does not believe he experienced mobbing. I believe that, for these reasons, my data collection process took months. Another researcher with stronger and wider networks might finish this process sooner than me. Access issue was the biggest problem of mine in data collection process.

During data collection process, empathy was the most important approach for me. This made my responsibility as researcher both easier and harder at the same time. Respondents were more comfortable and straightforward when sharing their mobbing experiences; however, I found myself being angry or upset about mobbing and injustice they experienced time to time. I made a great effort to hide my feelings from respondents. It was very hard to remain unresponsive against misery and anger of victims. Due to my lack of experience, I sometimes lost my objectivity. Sometimes, I found myself while being upset about desperation or loneliness of the victims or seeking a way to solve their problems. In short, for me as researcher empathy was the

most useful tool for communicating with respondents, but at the same time the most dangerous factor on objectivity of the study.

Another important factor was my lack of work experience. During this study I have noticed that researching on the issue of mobbing or any other work related issues was very hard, without a certain level of work experience and business network. Since, highly experienced respondents can easily understand my situation, sometimes they felt obliged to give me extra information about work life. This was a disadvantage for me as researcher; but with sympathy and understanding of those respondents that disadvantage turned into advantage and good communication. Moreover, in first stages of the research I did not have comprehensive knowledge about the issue of mobbing. Having general knowledge and theoretical background was my priority, when I started the thesis.

Despite there were disadvantages I had as researcher, I also had some significant advantages. As it was mentioned before, empathy and understanding was my main approach, during interviews. I had a positive and sensitive approach about respondents, their feelings and their privacy. It was a great advantage when writing this thesis. In addition to this, my current job as a research assistant and being in academic environment all the time also provided advantage for me. In order to clarify, I should mention that I am working as a Research Assistant in Graduate School of Social Sciences at Middle East Technical University and I am working with social scientist from different backgrounds. That provided opportunity to discuss my concerns, ideas and questions for me. Different perspectives led me to find new ideas even in lunch breaks. It made development of the thesis easier for me.

3.6 Data Analysis Process

In both employee interviews and expert interviews I took voice records, after receiving permission from the respondents. I did not plan to ask help from anyone or get professional service for transcribing the data. In order to avoid from any ethical problem, I wanted those voice records to remain confidential. I started to transcribe records, after a while I realized that it took much longer than I expected. However, I

did not want to share data with a complete stranger. This is because I promised to respondents I interviewed that I will keep records confidential. At the end I chose to ask help from my mother Fatma Özten, who is retired after a long working life. She was not involved in academic life in any level, she had plenty of time for doing transcriptions and she was willing to help me about my thesis in some way. She was the most suitable person to help me in this problem. My mother transcribed more than half of the data and I transcribed rest of it. When she sent me data she transcribed, I checked them in terms of spelling and punctuation. After these corrections, transcription of the voice records was finalized.

Before explaining my mother's contribution to the research, I would like to say a few things about her. My mother was an accountant and she has 28 years of work experience. In 26 years of this time she worked for same company. She is retired in 2000 and she is not employed since 2008. In her working life she also experienced mobbing from her superior, but she did not know that she is experiencing "mobbing". When I started researching about mobbing, I made a brief definition of the concept to her. Even then she was not sure about exact meaning of mobbing. Only after starting transcription she realized that what she had experienced was mobbing.

My mother helped me by not only transcribing the data I collected for the research but also giving a second opinion about the data. Since I have very limited working life experience, her experiences in working life was very beneficial for me. Some of her opinions about working life and labor relations were quite parallel with mine and made me certain about my opinions. On the other hand, some of my slight ideas were encouraged by her unconstrained ideas. Both types of contributions were valuable.

Another contribution of my mother to the research was her comparisons between her mobbing experiences with respondents' in this study. Even if these comparisons seem like personal at first sight, actually they were comparisons between mobbing experienced in years she worked and mobbing experienced today. The most obvious example of these comparisons was about overtime. She never agreed that overtime is a part of mobbing. For her overtime is a necessity of working life. However, respondents in this research mostly include overtime without payment in mobbing.

Likewise, she stated the sentence “They name every insignificant incident as mobbing” countless time. This view of my mother was quite similar with views of respondents’ parents. In this situation, it can be argued that this is because of change in work understanding between generations. In sum, as a second eye my mother has contributed the research very much. When also considering perspective of my thesis advisor, this study includes views of 3 women from different ages and backgrounds.

After transcribing the data, I had almost 300 pages of data from 20 employees and 3 experts. I read it many times. With the guidance of my thesis advisor I categorized the data and determined strong argumentations of the study. The data I collected includes so many important points. Unfortunately, as a result of my lack of experience about field research, data covers too many aspects of mobbing issue. Only some of them are included in this thesis. Because of this limiting issue, associating my research questions with collected data and organizing them was a time consuming and challenging work.

3.7 Expert Interviews

In expert interviews part of the thesis, I made 2 interviews. These interviews were made with Prof. Dr. H. Canan Sümer from Middle East Technical University Psychology Department and Mr. Hüseyin Gün, President of Association of Fighting against Mobbing. Prof. Sümer is an industrial and organizational psychologist with more than 20 years of experience. She conducted many important researches and took part in many projects about workplace relations and problems throughout her career and mobbing is one of the areas she worked on. As to Mr. Gün, he is the president of a mobbing related association which is centered in Ankara. He is one of the well-known and frequently consulted people on the issue of mobbing in Turkey as president of this association. Both experts were chosen considering gaps in the study. While the interview with Prof. Sümer was expected to support study academically, the interview with Mr. Gün was significant in terms of legal and bureaucratic aspects of mobbing.

Question sets for both interviews were prepared separately. This is because their backgrounds, areas of expertise and point of views were different. In order to provide

maximum benefit from the interviews, almost each question in those question sets were prepared with a purpose of filling a gap in the study. Questions which were prepared for Prof. Sümer were generally about conceptualization of mobbing and mobbing literature. On the other hand, questions which were prepared for Mr. Gün were about Association of Fighting against Mobbing, legal processes about mobbing and recent developments on the issue of mobbing in Turkey.

Both interviews provided valuable contributions to the study. As an expert on Industrial and Organizational Psychology, Prof. Sümer helped me to find a proper place to this study within mobbing literature which is dominated by Psychology studies. Her perception was extremely encouraging and her points were enlightening. By the help of critics of Prof. Sümer which are based on Psychology perspective, I could see deficiencies of the study and tried to developed those parts or ideas. Mr. Gün, on the other hand, shared his experiences on the issue of mobbing. He is both a professional on human resources management and founder and president of Association of Fighting against Mobbing. His experiences and knowledge about place of mobbing in Turkish judicial system, characteristics and views of mobbing victims and cultural grounds of mobbing made a significant contribution to the study.

3.8 Strengths and Limitations of the Study

To begin with, since mobbing is an underrepresented issue in Turkey, the most significant strength of this study will be its contributions to the literature. In this thesis, the issue of mobbing has been studied from the point of social policy for the first time in Turkey. Actually, I cannot find any research on this issue from social policy perspective in literatures of other countries as well. However, claiming this research as the first and only research on this issue requires much deeper and wider literature research, which is not possible to conduct by a bilingual researcher.

Moreover, this study aimed to cover some very important and untouched parts of the issue of mobbing. Expectedly, this study will open new discussion areas about mobbing. Combination of sociology and social policy backgrounds helped me to

discover these new perspectives. With the guidance of my thesis advisor this, these different perspectives and approaches constituted a meaningful integrity.

Beside its strengths, this study also has important limitations. The first limitation was about generalizability of the study. Limited number of interviews and contexts in the study did not allow for generalizations on mobbing issue. Since a qualitative method was employed in this study, findings of the study can only refer trends and patterns about mobbing. Generalizing findings of this study to a wider population is not possible. A further research may be applied to a wider population and then findings of two studies may become meaningful in that sense.

Furthermore, information pollution about mobbing in the society made finding respondents for the research harder. Some respondents mistake mobbing for sexual harassment or incivility. Experiences of these respondents was not convincing as mobbing case. These interviews negatively affected validity of the research. However, this negative situation also provided a significant data for this thesis, which is prevalence of inaccurate naming and understanding about mobbing.

Lastly, my lack of work experience and my outsider position due to not being a mobbing victim were important limitations for this thesis. As researcher, it was not possible for me to completely understand experiences, misery and hopelessness of those victims. As previously discussed, my limited work experience was not enough to understand all aspects of working life. Even though my outsider position was a limitation for the study, it has also provided an advantage about keeping my distance with study. Since mobbing is a depressing issue and respondents I interviewed were vulnerable people, keeping this distance was crucially important for sake of objectivity of the study.

CHAPTER 4

EXPERIENCES AND PERCEPTIONS OF MOBBING VICTIMS

In this part of the thesis, collected data will be discussed and analyzed and found patterns and trends in the data will be presented. As it was discussed before, mobbing is highly common in Turkey. There are several reasons of this prevalence according to mobbing victims. In this part of the thesis these reasons will be analyzed from perspectives of mobbing victims and their arguments will also be supported by views of experts about mobbing.

First of all, it should be mentioned that mobbing definitions of almost all 20 respondents are based on their personal mobbing experiences. When they were asked about their mobbing definition of mobbing, they mostly started by exemplifying concept with their own experiences. Even so, there were some respondents who described mobbing almost in an academic way. These are usually the ones who had training or lecture about mobbing during a period of their lives. Following definition most of them mentioned about their feelings and moods during mobbing experiences. Mostly mentioned terms were “loneliness”, “unhappiness”, “loss of self-confidence”, “depression” and “anger”.

The data of the field research conducted with mobbing victims revealed that there is a dominant pattern which covers experiences of almost all 20 respondents in some degree. The pattern was also supported by views of experts about mobbing from different academic and professional backgrounds. It is about victims’ view about responsible of mobbing incidents they have experienced. As can be understood from collected data, victims are trying to give a reason to their mobbing experiences and try to determine some actors in mobbing process as responsible of these experiences. Their arguments can be categorized under three subtitles. These subtitles are also three actors of aforementioned dominant pattern.

First subtitle is victim's perception of institution. These interviews revealed that most of the institutions in Turkey are not institutionalized and employees are prone to mobbing and any other kind of workplace problems in these institutions. In case of mobbing institution or company, in which mobbing have occurred, ignores situation insistently. Immediate supervisors and their superiors take almost no action against ongoing mobbing. Taking action against mobbing and creating awareness about mobbing are not on their list of priorities. Even though this situation is perceived as personal position of superiors towards mobbing incident by some victims, it is actually about position of institution. Mobbing victims generally regard mobber and in some cases superiors as responsible for mobbing. They see mobbing as an individual problem. Unless number of victims is increased, victims do not see mobbing as an institutional problem.

Second subtitle is victim's perception of law. According to employee and expert interviews, current law system is not protecting employees enough. Employees are too vulnerable to mobbing and taking legal action is neither easy nor safe for them. Most of the respondents stated that they may lose their jobs in case of taking legal action about mobbing. When they are asked respondents said that economic and social positions of employees make them timid about taking legal action; however, the real reason of this timidity is inefficacy of law system. In Turkey, there is no direct law about mobbing and indirect laws are not protecting employees enough. Especially, absence of preventive laws and policies is one of the biggest problems about mobbing.

Lastly, the third subtitle is victim's perception of mobber. When institutions are not institutionalized and law system is not protecting mobbing victims enough, victims regard mobbers as the only responsible of their mobbing experience. Many of the respondents argue that mobbing is entirely personal and it originates from evil or personal problems of mobber. Individualization of mobbing is a very important problem. I believe that it makes struggle against mobbing harder. When mobbing is recognized as an individual problem, victims have difficulty in noticing structural problems. They believe that their experience is unique and they are alone in their struggle with mobbing.

This big picture shows us a clear pattern about current perceptions of mobbing victims in Turkey. Details of aforementioned pattern will be clarified in this part of the thesis. Observed patterns and trends will be discussed under three subtitles. These are namely experiences and perceptions of mobbing victims about institution, about law and about mobber.

4.1 About institution:

To start with it should be noted that, people in Turkey are generally unconscious about mobbing. Since it is a recently heard concept among employees and it is a borrowed word, even employees who know the concept by name are not aware internal mechanisms of mobbing. Outwardly, the only source and reason of mobbing is mobber according to victims. Under the circumstances, blaming institution or sharing responsibility of mobbing between mobber and institution is not an option for them. This situation works for advantage of institution. When victim appraise the situation with personal identity of mobber instead of institutional identity or position of him/her, position of the institution is not mentioned as responsible in any sense. Even so, some of the respondents are partially aware of this responsibility.

Respondents' perception of institution is generally about their position in or against institution. These views are mostly about general employment conditions of them; however, these conditions are also influential in their mobbing experiences. Respondents' views of institution can be handled under four subtitles: first one is problem of institutionalization, second one is indifference and unawareness of institution, third one is unsuccessful management and Human Resources (HR) processes and the last one is employees' risk of losing their job.

First of all, most of the respondents argued that lack of corporateness among institutions is one of the most important factors in mobbing. It can be argued that the underlying cause of all institution based problems mentioned by respondents is problem of institutionalization. Almost all the other problems are arising from this one. In other words, they are consequences of institutionalization problem. This is because

non-institutional practices are dominant among society and consequently institutionalization is something almost impossible to achieve.

According to interviews, employees distinguish institutional company from non-institutional one by some features. Paying salary on a timely basis, paying for overtime, opportunity to use week-end holiday, organizing trainings are some important points when making comparison. Even though these are rights of every employee according to Labor Law, in practice employees cannot use these rights most of the time. High level of unemployment and deficiencies of inspection are underlying reasons of this problem. In the present case, achieving institutionalization is not a necessity for institutions.

Especially in private sector, corporateness of the company determines employees' level of security in case of mobbing or any other type of workplace violence. Employees' possibility to seek and find solution in such kind of situations is higher in institutional companies than family-owned or single-owned companies (sole proprietorship, in Turkish "patron şirketi"). This is because level of awareness is very low in family-owned or single-owned companies. When I asked about corporateness of the company or institution they currently employed or they experienced mobbing, respondents often complained about this situation. For example, Tekin (Age 33, Accountant) argued that:

What should a person do who has an experience of mobbing? What matters is the time that you experience it, and the environment as well. If it happens in a corporate company, you might prevent these kinds of things. You have a unit superior, or you can seek your rights legally. I don't know but you might tell of these issues there, but mine was not such an environment. It is like a landlord system, the guy is the landlord, and the woman is his odalisque. You can't do anything in such an environment. You can just leave it, saying that it's not somewhere that suits you. But the person who is going to replace me will go through the same things.²

² Mobbing yaşayan bir insanın ilk önce ne yapmalı? Onu yaşadığı zaman, bir de ortam da önemli. Bu bir kurumsal firmada olursa, önüne geçebilirsin belki böyle şeylerin. Hani birim amirin olur, kanuni olarak haklarını arayabileceğin yerler olur. Ne bileyim bunları atlatabilirsin belki, ama benim yaşadığım böyle bir ortam değildi. Ağalık sistemi gibi, adam ağa, o kadın da cariyesi. Böyle bir ortamda bir şey yapamazsın. Ne yapabilirdim ki ben? Kendi adına o ortamdan uzaklaşırsın, burası bana göre değil der gidersin. Ama benim yerime gelecek kişi de aynı şeyi yaşayacak.

As can be seen from aforementioned words low level of institutionalization causes insecurity and despair for victims. They perceive these kinds of negative situations as normal or unimprovable.

In Turkey, lack of institutionalization is a general problem. It is not only limited with small companies, but also seen in holding companies and public institutions. While employees respond to mobbing and any other type of workplace violence normally in family-owned or single-owned companies, employees working in corporate companies admit that they have some advantages due to corporateness of the company. Working in an institutional company basically maintains access to knowledge about workplace ethic and work laws and a Human Resources department, that employee can communicate in case of mobbing. However, employees still experience similar situations with other employees who are employed in non-institutional companies. Some of the respondents underlined that they experienced mobbing in spite of greatness or corporateness of the company they worked in. Birsen (Age 35, Physiotherapist) exemplified one of the advantages of working in an institutional company in these words:

I was working in a highly institutional place. That's why I received some of the trainings even if just a tad. I knew what was happening to me, I was aware so that I behaved accordingly. I made my choices by myself in the end, whether to report it or not. But I did it knowingly, not unknowingly. It was my choice. But most people are not aware of it.³

In public sector, on the other hand, employees work in less corporate institutions. Public institutions have comprehensive and strict procedures and rules theoretically. However, practically these rules are not working in many cases. When it comes to applying these procedures and rules system fails due to arbitrary treatments of superiors. Respondents who experience these arbitrary treatments are naming these as mobbing. Finding a respondent in institution for complaining about mobbing is also a

³ Ben çok kurumsal bir yerde çalışıyordum o yüzden eğitimleri almıştım az da olsa. Başıma gelenin ne olduğunu biliyordum, farkındaydım ona göre hareket ettim. Sonunda tercihlerimi kendim yaptım. Şikayet edip etmemek gibi ama bilerek yaptım, bilmeden değil. Bu benim tercihimdi. Fakat çoğu insan bunun farkında değil.

big problem in public sector. Commonly used argument about this issue is “Kimi kime şikâyet edeceksin?” which means one cannot find any respondent when he/she complains about accused person, because respondent and accused are in the same party or in some cases they are same person. Even that is enough to show that these institutions are not corporate.

Secondly, position of the institution in case of mobbing is perceived as indifferent and unaware by some respondents. These respondents argued that institutions or employers are indifferent to problems of the employees. They also argued that institutions are not protecting employees’ rights in any level and they do not even care anything except from economic benefits of the institution. This opinion may be shared by some other respondents as well, however only a few respondents mentioned it specifically. I believe that, this opinion is internalized by majority of the employees in Turkey and it is accepted as permanent and even normal. On the other hand, some other respondents perceived this unawareness in a well-intentioned way. They take unawareness of the institution as lack of information. Aslı (Age 33, Project Coordinator), for instance, argued that institution in which she experienced mobbing is unaware about concept of mobbing, but if they know they would never give way to happen.

Not only is the person that commits it, but also even the institution is not informed about it. If it was aware, it wouldn’t work with such a person. If it was aware, it wouldn’t cause many people to lose their jobs through processes I’m going to talk about in a little while. We are talking about big institutions, like X University. It’s a very good university, a very big one. I enjoyed working there a lot though I was subjected to mobbing. Even though I had to quit, I was very pleased with the university. It was not aware, you know.⁴

On the other hand, some respondents argued that in some cases institution or employer allows mobbing incident to occur or use mobbing as a tool for discipline. Some arbitrary treatments, which perceived as mobbing by victims, are sometimes used for maintaining faster and harder working by managers and employers. Especially in

⁴ Zaten yapan kişi, kurum bile bilinçli değil. Bilincinde olsa zaten böyle bir insanla çalışmaz. Bilincinde olsa biraz sonra anlatacağım süreçlerde o kadar insanın işsiz kalmasına neden olmaz. Çok büyük kurumlardan bahsediyoruz yani, sabancı üniversitesi. Çok iyi bir üniversite çok büyük bir üniversite. Ben çalışmaktan çok büyük zevk aldım böyle mobbing maruz kaldığım halde. Yani ayrılmak zorunda olduğum halde çok memnun kaldığım bir üniversiteydi. Bilinçli değil yani.

project based works and time-limited projects these kinds of strategies are used frequently. Even though institution or employer does not apply these strategies directly to employee, employees are aware of main source of the pressure on them.

Since institutions take no part in or even worse negatively affect mobbing process, they hold harmless after mobbing incident. Most of the time mobbers also get no punishment or sanction. Only in some very obvious cases institution sacrifice mobber, but still they do not share responsibility. Generally, the only sufferer of the mobbing incident is victim. After this kind of experience victim feels resentment. Even they take radical decisions and leave sector or career permanently. Even though, ignoring previous work experiences, higher payment and advantageous positions is challenging, working in an unpeaceful work environment is more challenging for these respondents. Birsen (Age 35, Physiotherapist) is one of them and she stated that:

I gave up working at a corporate place. I got very exhausted, very upset. It's not something everyone would ask for; it's not something to be given up easily. But after going through the incident, no matter how much I strive, I continued for 7-8 months, 1 year with the new administration. After I was worn out for 3 months, I was very discouraged. That I realized. It didn't change even after the administrators have changed.⁵

Thirdly, some respondents mentioned that mobbing is a result of unsuccessful management and Human Resources (HR) processes. Once employees experience mobbing they seek solution through their immediate supervisors – if they are not involved in mobbing action. In 20 respondents I interviewed nobody found a solution to his/ her problem in this level. Because as supervisor, no one wants problem in the department or unit in which they are in charge. Facing with this kind of serious problem is a risk for supervisors, they generally do not want to face with the problem and they choose ignoring it. Shutting their eye to problem of the victim mostly makes problem bigger and long lasting. In some cases, mobber learns complains of victim and increases intensity of the mobbing attacks. It shakes faith of victim and some

⁵ Ben artık kurumsal bir yerde çalışmaktan vazgeçtim. Çok yıprandım, üzüldüm. Herkesin isteyeceği bir şey değil, kolay vazgeçilecek bir şey değil. Ama olayı yaşadıktan sonra fark ettim ki ne kadar çabalarsam çabalayayım, üstüne neredeyse 1 sene, 7-8 ay yeni yönetimle birlikte devam ettim. Ama 3 ay boyunca öyle örselenmek diyeyim, tamamen benim o isteğimi kırmış. Onu fark ettim. Yöneticilerin değişmesi bile bunu değiştirmedii.

victims end solution seeking process at that point. Immediate response of supervisor is covering up the occurred problem and softening victim's stance on mobber. At that point, supervisors mostly use words such as "be patient", "take it easy", "things like this happens", "maybe you misunderstood something". Even though these words seem calming, they are actually passivating and discouraging for employees. Hasan (Age 24, HR Consultant) experienced this when he complains about disturbing attitude of a co-worker:

I sensed it a bit. I warned them, I told them that there is such a term like mobbing, that it might be happening in our company. It wasn't a notion I knew a lot, but I still warned them. 2-3 weeks after that I told it not orally but in black and white this time, what she is doing to me. It might have looked like I'm jealous of her, so I didn't tell it completely. But I told them that I'm being hurt, I told them about the form incident. I told them that she is criticizing university graduates. What the boss said was that "It is just sour grapes". And also "I'm not a dumb man not to see it." He said "Everyone will know his/her place" and moved on. But same things are going on.⁶

Respondents also impeach Human Resources (HR) departments and management with lack of foresight. Some respondents argued that improvidence and unresponsiveness of HR department made problems unsolvable while they have authority and responsibility to solve them. Aslı (Age 33, Project Coordinator):

There is no other human resources process as imprudent as this. One of your employees who has been working there for a year, who knows the corporate culture already, and the processes. She shouldn't resign just in a day upon a signature, they should have talked, you know. I wanted to talk with the manager, they told me that he is not there; they didn't allow me to talk. Why don't you ask people why they are leaving, why don't you evaluate the process to see why those 5 people are quitting? Is it that easy to waste people?⁷

⁶ Ben hafiften sezdim. Uyardım, bakın böyle bir kavram var mobbing diye, şirketimizde de olabilir diye. Çok bildiğim bir kavram değil ama uyardım. Ondan sonra bir 2-3 hafta sonra yazılı değil sözlü olarak söyledim, böyle böyle yapıyor bana diye. Şimdi çekemiyormuş gibi olacak, hepsini de söylemedim. Ama kırıldığım noktalar var dedim, anlattım form olayını. Dedim üniversite mezunlarını eleştiriyor. Patronun dediği: "kedi ulaşamadığı çiğere mundar dermiş". Bir de, "ben onu görmeyecek kadar salak bir insan değilim" dedi. "Herkes haddini bilecek" dedi, geçti. Ama hala aynı şeyler devam ediyor.

⁷ Bu kadar basiretsiz insan kaynakları süreci olmaz. Bir çalışanın 1 sene emek vermiş ve artık bir kurum kültürü almış, süreçleri biliyor. Bir imzayla aynı gün içinde istifa etmemeli, bir konuşulmalı yani. Ben konuşmak istedim yöneticiyle, şu anda yok dediler konuşurmadılar beni. Bir sor neden ayrılıyor insanlar, süreci değerlendir neden o 5 kişi işten ayrılıyor. Bu kadar kolay mı insanları harcamak?

Since HR departments do not exist within the structure of small institutions, employees who are working in these small institutions should directly consult their supervisors instead of HR department. They also have same lack of foresight with HR departments. Some respondents argued that in case of a conflict HR department or supervisors would take side with employer instead of mobbing victim. Even some respondents stated that supervisors and employers are practically same people, because they are working for same purpose with same point of view.

This belief about common ground between institution and management creates mistrust towards organization chart and people in it. Employees avoid sharing their serious problems - in the circumstances mobbing experiences – with management or HR department, because they may take sides with mobber or institution against employee who is victim of mobbing. Since work relations intersect with personal relations most of the time, work ethic may be neglected. Gül (Age 50, Expert):

Let's say you have a superior who harasses you or doing mobbing to you. You are going to report it to the HR, let's say you are going there, you see that they leave for lunch together, and laugh out loud. If nothing else, it shakes the confidence. How much will that person listen to me if I tell anything? Would that person change his/her strategy and make the guy say something else? All of these are disconcerting. So there is a need for a different organizational chart.⁸

Lastly, taking legal action or even complaining about mobbing or any other work related problem is associated with loosing job. As a matter of fact, associating job loss with taking legal action should be regarded as problematic. However, in Turkey unemployment is a serious problem and employers regard replacing “troublemakers” with new ones as their rights. When finding a job is challenging and there are too many unemployed people are waiting to be employed, employees feel the risk of losing their job in most intense level. Fear of losing job is quite big and binding for employees; they cannot risk their future by complaining about mobbing or any other workplace

⁸ Mesela sizi taciz eden ya da size mobbing uygulayan bir amiriniz var. Siz bunu İK'ya şikayet edeceksiniz, oraya gideceksiniz mesela, bir bakıyorsunuz öğlen yemeğe çıkıyorlar, hahaha hihhi güle güle gidiyorlar. Bir kere güven sarsıcı bir durum, ben söylesem beni ne kadar dinleyecek, benim söyleyeceğime göre strateji geliştirip adama başka bir şey söylettirir mi? Bunların hepsi bir endişe. Dolayısıyla farklı bir organizasyon şeması oluşturmak gerekiyor.

problems. Even this fear is a huge psychological pressure on them. This fear is even bigger for public sector employees. While in private sector especially highly educated employees can find another job sooner or later in case of job loss, this is not easy for employees in public sector. Dilek (Age 29, Assistant EU Expert) states this pressure very clearly:

I think I know lot more about mobbing compared at least to the beginning. Yet I believe that I can't do anything if I experience mobbing as long as it is not very significant. For this purpose, the media can generate publicity. It can tell about our rights. I mean it can carry on lots of work about this issue. But one thing is also very important. I am obliged to this work; I need to work there. What if I want to do something about that and fail, I mean in my struggle, what will I do after that in my life? What will I do if I lose this job?⁹

Beyond fear of losing job, many respondents argued that if one takes a legal action about mobbing or any other problem they may face in work life against institution, he/she will not only become unemployed but also will not be able to find another job easily. Respondents and even lawyers they consulted believe that taking a legal action against one institution or a company will make employee undesirable in the eyes of other employers. Taking a legal action against an institution has an underlying meaning for employers: the person doing that is aware of his/her legal rights and he/she is a potential risk for company. Within this research I interviewed with 6 respondents who are employed in HR departments of their institutions in different levels. Almost all of these respondents confirmed that institutions prefer not informing employees about their legal rights. Also lawyers whom respondents consulted mentioned that taking legal action is not safe for them. For instance, the lawyer that Levent (Age 26, Civil Engineer) consulted stated that "Peace is always better than the best judgment". As it is seen from this example, even lawyers are warning employees against this potential stigmatization and motive them about not to taking legal action.

⁹ Ben şu anda mobbinge ilgili en azında ilk başa göre çok fazla bir şey bildiğimi düşünüyorum. Yine de mobbinge uğradığım zaman, şu andan itibaren de, çok büyük bir şey olmadığı sürece hiçbir şey yapabileceğimi zannetmiyorum. Bunun için medya çok büyük bir tanıtım yapabilir. Haklarımız anlatabilir. Yani bu konu ile ilgili çalışmalar yapabilir ama, şey de çok önemli kalıyor. Ben bu işe mecburum, bu işte çalışmaya mecburum. Eğer ben bu iş için bir şey yapıp başarısız olursam, yani mücadelede, sonradan ne yapacağım hayatımda. Bu işi kaybedersem ne yapacağım?

As far as I can see from employee interviews conducted in this research, especially in some specific sectors this stigmatization issue is common. For example, 2 computer engineers I interviewed mentioned this problem, while 2 civil engineers I interviewed did not. Another important issue is places. Since Ankara is relatively small and less developed about business opportunities than İstanbul, for employees in Ankara this fear is much more obvious. Apart from that, age and experiences of employees are also important. More experienced employees or employees who have professions are feeling this fear less, while young and newly graduated employees are feeling it more intense.

4.2 About law:

When writing this thesis, I have noticed that if one wants to deal with mobbing, law system and the state are more important than I thought at the beginning. Absence of a mobbing law in Turkish law system was the most frequently referred problem during interviews. Despite there are some important initiative and labor on this issue, we cannot see their reflections in our lives yet. When I asked victims about what kind of change in law system make them feel more secure in case of mobbing, they mostly answered that there should be serious deterrent punishments for mobbing. They believe that there should be precedents to encourage people about taking legal action about mobbing. Victims who can take legal action about mobbing and can continue their lives without any further social and economic harm may be pioneer for this encouragement process. Beyond that some respondents believe that deterrence of punishment and rules is more important than its execution. People or institution could not dare to do mobbing at first place. This awareness should be placed with attitude based trainings in institutions. Ensar (Age 30, Expert):

Always training the employees, this and this for employees. The employees are not doing mobbing to anyone. The employees are being mobbed. Things should be done to teach the managers what kinds of sentences the mobber will serve.

And the mobber should serve a sentence I mean. Some things should be corrected in the judicial system. It is not easy to make one's life miserable.¹⁰

Victims' perception of law can be analyzed under five subtitles. First one is absence of concrete definition of mobbing and lack of awareness. Second one is problem of finding evidence and witness. Third is long-lasting and expensive process of a lawsuit. Fourth is negative impact of lost cases. Fifth and the last one is discussion about defendant of a mobbing case.

First of all, one of the biggest deficiencies of law system about mobbing is absence of a clear-cut definition. When combining this absence of definition with lack of knowledge it becomes even bigger problem. Unless nowadays mobbing is a well-known and popular concept in work life, this knowledge is limited within a small group and with name only. Limits, coverage and details of mobbing are still very confusing for employees. Even highly educated employees, as respondents of this study, are not clear about definition of mobbing. For that reason, every single respondent made their own definition of mobbing when it was asked. Almost all of these definitions were referring their personal experience of mobbing. Since law works with concrete definitions and rules and for mobbing we have none of these, many cases result against victim.

Beyond definition problem, concept of "mobbing" has not Turkish equivalent. Using a term in another language for a concept from daily life puts a distance between concept and the people using it. Understanding, using and internalizing this concept become harder for these people, especially for monolingual people. Proposed Turkish equivalents for mobbing are also problematic. For example, "psikolojik taciz" (psychological harassment) is one of the most frequently used terms. "Harassment" is a problematic term in Turkey, because it only brings sexual harassment to mind of majority of the people. While people cannot distinguish sexual harassment and sexual assault from each other and they consider any type of harassment as sexual harassment,

¹⁰ Hep çalışanlara eğitim, çalışanlara bilmem ne. Çalışanlar kimseye mobbing yapmıyorlar. Çalışanlar mobbinge uğruyor. Yöneticilere karşı, mobbing yapan adamın çekeceği cezaları gösteren şeyler yapılmalı. Ve mobbing yapan adam da bir ceza çekmeli yani. Hukuk sisteminde de bir şeyler düzeltilmeli. Bir adamın hayatını karartmak öyle kolay değil yani.

using word “taciz” (harassment) for mobbing is misleading people about its meaning. Some of the respondents specifically mentioned that they did not experience any sexual harassment; they “only” experienced mobbing. This is an obvious sign of misinterpretation about “mobbing” term in Turkey. Levent (Age 26, Civil Engineer):

The definition of mobbing should be constitutionalized. Maybe with a Turkish word, I don’t know. If the employer or your superior at the work is doing mobbing to you, this should be stated in the labor law. Likeif he/she is doing this and this to you, then you can report this and file a claim for compensation. I think it has to be defined in a certain way.¹¹

Since mobbing has no concrete definition and employees are not conscious about mobbing, they are more prone to mobbing. In case of this kind of an experience it is hard to notice what is happening and to decide what position can be taken for victim. This hesitation eases mobbing to continue for a while and obstructs to seek and find solution for victim. Until victims feel certain about mobbing, the process of mobbing continues.

Secondly, in case of mobbing finding evidence and witness is huge problem. During employee interviews, for many times I heard that when they experienced mobbing, victims become helpless because of absence of evidence or witness. Since mobbing is basically a sum of behaviors and attitudes, victims mostly have no evidence about it. Among respondents only one public sector employee stated that mobbing can be followed from his registration file. Because his clear registry became filled with accusations after a specific event and this is obvious sign of mobbing according to him. Rest of the respondents had serious problems about finding evidence regardless of their position in the institution. Majority of the respondents could not take any legal action due to this problem.

As it was mentioned finding tangible evidence is almost impossible for mobbing victims. Moreover, finding a witness is also a very challenging. Since almost all

¹¹ Mobbing tanımının anayasaya girmesi lazım. Yani belki de Türkçe bir kelimeyle, bilmiyorum ama. Eğer işveren veya işyerindeki amirin sana mobbing uyguluyorsa iş kanununda yeri olması lazım. Sana maddeler halinde şunu şunu yapıyorsa sen bunu şikayet edip tazminat davası açabilirsin şeklinde. Yani kesin olarak tanımlanması lazım bence.

witnesses are also employees of the institution at the same time, convincing them to give testimony is very hard. Many respondents could not even ask witnesses to give testimony about their experiences, because they did not want to risk their job or their peace at work. Jeopardizing one's job for their own benefit is conscientiously not acceptable for most of the employees. Ceyda (Age 33, HR Coordinator):

I thought about how to prove this. They said it has to be in the written form. She didn't leave any written proof. That's why I think she did it purposefully. In the e-mails she sent... They were all oral, on the phone, in our face and always in a group. Not even in private, in order to offend you in the presence of someone else. I thought about whom to produce as a witness. The secretary sits in the hallway; she is the one who hears the most her conversations with us. But the girl is working there, how can I produce an employee as the witness?¹²

In our interview, Hüseyin Gün, President of Association of Fighting against Mobbing, mentioned that employees in private sector can prove mobbing more easily by means of witnesses. On the other hand, public sector employees cannot bring witness to court due to treatment and rule of administrative court, which is responsible from mobbing cases in public sector. Administrative court only accepts documents as evidence. This makes proving problem much bigger for public sector employees. Mr. Gün suggests taking hand-written petition from witness to overcome this problem.

Another important point about finding witness about mobbing comes from nature of mobbing process. In many cases mobbing incident starts with one single person and in time it is spread out among institution. The most immediate effect of this situation is isolation of victim from other employees. When victim is isolated and both work relations and personal relations with co-workers are seriously damaged, it is almost impossible to find a supporter. Even though victim asks to produce co-workers as witnesses, he/she cannot be sure their support against institution they employed in.

Thirdly, process of a lawsuit is long-lasting and expensive, especially for ones who experienced mobbing and most probably lost their job. If there is one well-known

¹² Düşündüm bunu nasıl ispatlayabiliriz. Dediler ki yazılı olması lazım. Hiç yazılı kanıt bırakmadı. O yüzden bilinçli yaptığını düşünüyorum. Attığı maillerde şeylerde... Hep sözlü, telefonda, yüzümüze ve hep topluluk içinde. Başbaşayken de değil, sizin yanınızda başka birisi varken sizi rencide edebilmek için. Dedim kimi şahit tutayım. Holde sekreter oturuyor, en çok duyan sekreter bizimle olan diyaloglarımı konuşmalarımı. E kız çalışıyor yani, çalışan bir kızını ben nasıl göstereyim şahit diye.

situation about labor courts in Turkey, it is long-lasting of pending actions among them. A case can last for several years and case expenses and attorney's fee are seriously expensive for a pursuer who is unemployed. Even though victims can be supported financially in informal ways, such as family members, it should not be a necessity in fact. Pinar (Age 45, Human Resources) stated that:

There is a giant company against you. They have legal advisers, lawyers. For example, I was confronted by a lawyer army in my lawsuit. But how can you cope with them? Oh all those monies I spent for those cases, I was sick and tired of it. I told my brother “how I would be able to pay all those monies without you”. The money I spent to file a claim is countless; I spent 3000-3500 TL (Approximately 1000-1200 \$).¹³

According to some of the respondents, in order to overcome this problem, unemployment insurance benefits can be used. However, almost all of them pointed to compelling requirements of this benefit. According to Unemployment Insurance Law no. 4447; one is entitled to unemployment pay if the employee:

- performed with the will to work, good health, talent and efficiency and lost his job without his/her own will and any fault committed.
- had filed unemployment application within the 30 day upon the termination of employment;
- had worked and paid the last 120 days of unemployment insurance premium besides having paid 600 days of unemployment insurance premium within the last 3 years. (Turkish Labor Law, 2013)

Respondents suggested that for mobbing victims or for victims who open a law suit about mobbing these requirements may be simplified. This may encourage victims to take legal action against mobbing. Another suggestion comes from respondents is a regulation of suspending case expenses to end of the case. They claimed that highly expensive case expenses are compelling for mobbing victims.

¹³ Karşınızda kocaman bir şirket var. Hukuk müşavirleri var, avukatları var. Mesela avukatlar ordusu çıktı karşıma benim davamda. Ama siz nasıl baş edeceksiniz? O davalar için verdiğim paralar var ya, illallah dedim ben. Kardeşime dedim ki ben “siz olmasaydınız ben bu paraları nasıl ödeyeceketim”. Dava açmak için ödediğim paraların haddi hesabı yok, 3000-3500 lira para ödedim ben.

Fourth view is about negative impact of lost cases on victims. While there is already an attitude which passivating employees against institution and employers, lost cases are making employees more timid. Employees have difficulties in believing and trusting law system, when they learned about lost mobbing cases. They choose not to start a fight which will be lost sooner or later. Many respondents in this research mentioned their despair when they asked about their reason of not bringing an action about their mobbing experience.

There in only 2 people among respondents I interviewed who took a legal action about mobbing. Both of them lost their cases. First one is Aslı (Age 33, Project Coordinator) was employed in a private university when she experienced mobbing. She and 3 other employees, who experienced mobbing in the very same position from same mobber in different times, opened a law suit. Aslı had a problem about time-out and could not directly involve as one of the prosecutors. She involved in case as witness and she followed case closely such as her own case. They wanted to sue mobber directly, but according to law system they could not do that. Instead they sued university. Although they had committee reports from university hospital which show they experienced mobbing they still lost the case; because university was too strong to struggle with. In first two trials judge is convinced in favor of victims. In third trial judge changed and in this trial they lost the case. Aslı stated that they believe that the change was happened because of strength of the university. Second respondent who opened a law suit about mobbing was İpek (Age 29, Physician). She and her 3 co-worker experienced mobbing form their two Professors when they were physician assistant. After a series of complains to higher authorities, Ministry of Health sent an inspector to the hospital. This inspector was convinced that there is a mobbing incident and he reported this situation. İpek and her co-workers opened a law suit relying on this report. However, court gave decision of non-prosecution, because concept of mobbing was not described in the law. These kinds of examples are very demotivating for victims who are planning or desiring to open law suits. Cases resulted in favor of victim are important to encourage victims. Number and recognition level of these cases should be increased.

Fifth and the last important issue about respondents' view of law is discussion about defendant of a mobbing case. According to current situation in law system about mobbing, one can bring a legal action against institution in case of mobbing. In my opinion, it is right thing to do. However, in the first interview I conducted with Aslı (Age 33, Project Coordinator) she told me that they brought an action against their institution about mobbing and they lost the case due to power of the institution. Despite this issue was not mentioned in question set, I started to ask subsequent respondents about their view about defendant of a mobbing case. Majority of them share same idea: defendant of a mobbing case should be mobber not institution. It can be assumed that underlying reason of that is hardness of winning a lawsuit against an institution with so many internal lawyers. As it is seen in example of Aslı, many cases are lost in this kind of situations.

When I asked this discussion to Hüseyin Gün, President of Association of Fighting against Mobbing, he mentioned economic reasons for this practice.

It's true that there is a disadvantage, but let's say the mobber does not have money, let's say he is bankrupt. Even if you win your damages claim in the lawsuit, there is no chance to collect it. For this reason, there is a need for a stronger interlocutor in the judiciary. The stronger interlocutor is the employer. It regards the employer as responsible. But in the lawsuit petition, it mentions the actions of the employee. The interlocutor seems to be the employer, but the real interlocutor is the mobber there. In compliance with the labor law, with the contract, the employer compensates the loss from that person.¹⁴

As can be understood from these words, opening law suit against institution is actually for advantage of mobbing victim if they win the case. However, victims who open law suit about mobbing have real difficulties before this stage. For them winning a law suit against a company or institution is almost impossible to achieve.

¹⁴ Dezavantaj olduğu doğru ama şimdi şahıs, mobbing yapan şahıs, diyelim ki parası yok, icralık. Sizin açtığımız tazminat davasını kazansanız bile tahsil etme imkanınız yok. Bundan dolayı daha güçlü bir muhattap lazım hukuk yargısında. Daha güçlü muhattap işverendir. İşvereni orada sorumlu tutuyor. Ama dava dilekçesinde şöyle, o şirketin çalışanının eylemlerinden söz ediliyor. Muhattap işveren gibi görünüyor ama asıl muhattap mobbing yapan kişi oluyor orada. İşveren zaten, iş kanunu gereğince, sözleşme gereğince uğradığı zararı o kişiden tazmin ediyor.

4.3 About mobber:

As can be seen from previous parts, institutionalization problem of institutions and deficiencies of law system about mobbing are two main problems of mobbing victims. In addition to institutionalization and enactment problems about mobbing, there is another significant problem: individualization of mobbing incidents. When institutions take no responsibility and laws do not protect victims' rights enough, victims suppose that mobbing they have been experienced is an individual problem. They assume that mobbing they experienced is only experienced by them and mobbing is caused by personal or psychological problems of mobber. This attitude makes institutional or legal struggle against mobbing harder.

As it is mentioned before, mobbing is predominantly associated with personal relations and problems occurred in these relations by victims. Since victims face with mobbers personally during mobbing process, they regard them as only responsible. They mostly do not seek for underlying reasons and leading mechanisms. Deficiencies of preventive mechanisms among institutions and law system are hardly noticed by victims. This situation distracts people who want to fight against mobbing from responsibilities of institution and increases individualization of mobbing problem.

The respondents, who argue that mobbers are the main source and reason of mobbing, mostly try to give a reason for these hostile positions of the mobbers. These reasons may help them to understand and accept injustice they face with. These reasons will be discussed under three subtitles, which are mobber who shares power of ruling person or ideology, mobber who sees victim as rival and mobber who is just evil or having personal or psychological problems.

First of all, some victims I interviewed argue that some mobbers are sharing power of ruling person or ideology and using this powerful position against them. Some employees are sharing similar world-view or interests with powerful people or dominant ideology. As it is in almost every part of daily life, this shared world-view and interests provide an advantage to these employees. In some cases, they are using

their advantageous position against other employees, especially those who work under them.

Shared world-view and interests are not the only way of using power of ruling person or ideology. Sometimes personal relations are also determinative on this issue. As I observed from employee interviews I conducted, in work life personal relations may open new doors to someone or make things difficult for someone. Some respondents argued they experienced mobbing because of people who have good relations with Superiors, who have personal problems with each other, may reflect their anger to employees who have close relationships with opposing superior. On the other hand, some respondents argued that they experienced mobbing by co-workers or superiors who have close relationships with employers or executives.

Respondents argue that even in some cases institution or employer allows mobbing incident to occur. In this kind of cases mobber may be someone who cannot be sacrificed easily or who is beneficial for institution in general. When the mobber is someone who cannot be sacrificed easily, victim cannot find any help or justice from institution. Institution may tolerate mobber in this kind of situations or sometimes institution uses aggressive behaviors of mobber for its own good. Tekin (Age 33, Accountant) stated that:

The woman dominates everyone thanks to her relationship with the guy. Everybody was afraid of her at the workplace, can you believe that? Even the shareholders were refraining from her. It was a family company; it had 6-7 shareholders. All of them were refraining from this particular shareholder, the one that she had a relationship with. She knew it and she made use of it. The guy also knew it; he was also taking advantage of her. He both had a relationship and got everything done by her. For this reason, everybody was refraining from her, no one was saying anything to her.¹⁵

Sharing power of management or employer is only a part of this important problem. This relatively small problem is limited with this specific company or institution. Even

¹⁵ Kadın o yaşadığı ilişkiden dolayı, adamla yaşadığı ilişkiden dolayı herkese hükmetmiş. İş yerinde herkes ondan korkuyordu, düşünün. Ortaklar bile ondan çekiniyordu. Aile şirketiymiş, yaklaşık 6 - 7 tane ortağı vardı. Bu ortaklardan hepsi çekiniyordu ilişki yaşadığı ortaklardan. Bunu da biliyordu o kadın kullanıyordu. Adam da bunu biliyordu, o da kadını kullanıyordu. Hem ilişkisi vardı hem de her işini o kadına yaptırıyordu. Ondandır dolayı herkes çekiniyordu, hiç kimse kadına bir şey diyemiyordu.

though it is distress for victim, the employee who is victim of mobbing can overcome this problem by changing institution. The real problem is mobbers who share same world-view with ruling ideology. These people regard performing mobbing to employees who are from dissenter opinion as their right. Mobbing is used a kind of management strategy by this people. As I understand from employee interviews, stigmatizing employees according to their world-view and behaving them in a way which can be named as mobbing are not regarded as mobbing by mobbers. These behaviors are regarded as strategies to maintain business life.

The second reason of mobbing performed by mobber according to victim is inefficacy and inadequacy of mobber. Almost every respondent I interviewed with stated that mobbers they faced with are people who are unsuccessful in their jobs or in their social skills. Many respondents argued that mobbers are inadequate even in simple tasks, such as communicating with other people, linguistic performance or organizing work environment. Some of the respondents even stated that they feel ashamed on behalf of mobber when they are together out of office for a business meeting or when they introduce mobber as their superior to a third person. Aslı (Age 33, Project Coordinator) mentioned this situation in this way:

I was ashamed of being with her when we went abroad. Foreigners were asking questions and she was unable to answer. I was very ashamed. She had an autistic manner. I don't say this to insult autistics. She was unable to work up a connection. I guess she was also a little bit introverted.¹⁶

Respondents generally using a contemptuous language while describing this type of mobber. They are belittling their skills, knowledge and appearances of them. They are not regarding them as appropriate to the position they are employed or institution they have worked in. I believe that this position of these respondents clearly shows difference between perception of mobber and perception of institution they experienced mobbing in. Blaming mobber is intersecting with justifying institution most of the time.

¹⁶ Ben yurduşına çıktıđımızda onun yanında olmaktan utanıyordum yani. Yabancı insanlar bir şey soruyorlardı cevap bile veremiyordu. Çok utanıyordum yani. Otistik bir tavrı vardı. Otistikleri aşıđılamak için söylemiyorum. İlişki kuramayan bir yapısı vardı. Biraz da içine kapanıktı sanırım.

Respondents, who argue that inefficacy and inadequacy of mobber is main reason for mobbing, believe that the reason why mobbers have targeted them is fear of losing their job. Mobbers are feeling apprehension about their inefficacy and trying to cross potential successor up via mobbing. According to some respondents, even though mobbers are quite successful at manipulating other people and hiding their inefficacies and inadequacies by this means, they are still anxious about losing their job. When they face with someone who is their potential successor, they are using any strategy to eliminate this person. The main aim is slander this person or damage self-confidence of this person. Mobbing is one of the most important tools for this aim. Oylum (Age 27, Assistant HR Specialist) is one of these victims:

Just then I turned into someone who doesn't have self-confidence, who cannot speak English, who cannot write in English, and who cannot put even the smallest file back to its place. Because her biggest fear was that I am going to replace her. Because she sent away her own manager and I was going to replace her.¹⁷

The third reason for mobbing is personal or psychological problems of mobber, according to respondents. Some of them argue that mobbers are performing mobbing because they are generally unhappy in their lives. These respondents are trying to refer personal condition of mobber, such as loneliness, difficult childhood, parental issues, previous work experiences and marital status. This interpretation effort is generally followed by a categorization and a generalization. For example, throughout employee interviews for many times I heard generalizations such as “Women who are single and have nothing to deal with aside from their job are doing mobbing more” or “Ones who experienced mobbing in their previous jobs are doing mobbing more”.

Some other respondents are trying to diagnose mobber with mental disorders. They believe that the only way of a person to give so much harm to another is having serious mental disorders. They also mentioned that reflections of these psychological problems can be traced from their way of performing mobbing. I think this is a way of

¹⁷ Derken ben artık kendine güveni olmayan, İngilizce konuşamayan, İngilizce yazamayan, küçücük bir dosyayı yerine kaldıramayan biri oldum. Çünkü tek korkusu onun yerine geçecek olmamdı. Çünkü kendi direktörünü kendisi göndermişti ve ben onun yerine geçecektim.

normalizing and legitimizing unfortunate events they experienced. This diagnosing effort mostly includes a pity and derision in it. İpek (Age 29, Physician):

The woman was more problem. The woman had obsessive compulsive personality disorder. I mean it was beyond being elaborative; she was messing with stupid things. She had a loose screw. And the guy was her husband, he was also narcissist, presenting as if no one else knows anything in the community but him. As if even the professors don't know anything. As if no other physician makes examinations as good as them.¹⁸

Another part of respondents who believe that performing mobbing is a result of personal and psychological problems of mobber argue that mobbing stems from evil of mobber. These respondents believe that if the reason of mobbing is evil of mobber, no one can do anything to deal with this problem. So they do not believe that any kind of law, policy or rule can prevent their negative behaviors. This way of thinking makes them more desperate. When victims believe this kind of a reason, they justify their helplessness by demonizing mobber. They even argue that the main reason they cannot find solution about mobbing is this evil of mobber. It is perceived as something separate from competency of laws. Some respondents mentioned that they name mobber as “devil”, “incarnational devil” or “possessed by devil”. This kind of naming can be seen as contemptuous at first sight, but in fact it has an exalter meaning. Word of “devil” evokes both evil and power. Victim unwittingly exaggerates and glorifies mobber by naming her/him as “devil”.

Moreover, as I perceived from interviews conducted for this thesis, victims who blame mobber only have some common views and feelings. One of them is ongoing and long lasting anger and even hate towards mobber. Aslı (Age 33, Project Coordinator): “Unbelievable feelings of anger and grudge linger on. I still hate that person. I still feel anger because she destroyed my career.¹⁹” They use only negative words while describing mobber. As it is mentioned earlier, they mentioned about problems,

¹⁸ Kadın olan kişi daha problemliydi zaten. Kadında obsesif kompulsif kişilik bozukluğu vardı. Yani ayrıntıcılığın da ötesinde, artık saçma sapan şeylerle uğraşıyordu. Keçileri kaçırma boyutundaydı kadın. Adam da eşi, o da narsistti işte camiada benden başka kimse bir şey bilmiyor. Hocalar bile bir şey bilmiyor. Hiçbir yerdeki doktorlar onlar kadar iyi bakamıyor.

¹⁹ İnsanda inanılmaz öfke ve kin duyguları devam ediyor. Ben hala o kişiden nefret ediyorum. O kişiye hala kızgınlık duyuyorum benim kariyerimi mahvettiği için.

deficiencies or evil of mobbers for demonstrating these negative sides of them. These negative attitudes of victims towards mobbers can also be traced from family members of them. According to employee interviews, close family members, especially who are sharing same house with victims, have been seriously affected from mobbing experience. Some respondents argued that their parents or spouse also hate mobber and their anger also last for years.

The other common view of victims who blame mobber only for mobbing is waiting for a divine retribution. Those who cannot find legal justice generally leave punishment to God. Phrases such as “İnşallah”, “Allah belasını versin”, “Lanet olsun” or “Allah’ından bulsun” were frequently used in employee interviews. Respondents who use these kinds of phrases are waiting for a divine retribution, because they do trust system in any level. I believe this is an obvious sign of desperateness. Further to that, this is a sign of not believing in laws and regulations. At that point, where people lost their belief about laws, they start waiting for divine intervention regardless of religious belief. Ceyda (Age 33, HR Coordinator):

I wish every mobber goes through the same thing. It’s still not late for anything. I hope, I wish from the bottom of my heart that whatever they did, be it physical violence or psychological violence, they experience the same thing and feel that feeling of hopelessness or blaming oneself. They will go through it one day, inshallah.²⁰

4.4 Conclusion:

During the expert interview which made with Prof. Dr. Canan Sümer, she argued that in psychology literature there are discussions which show importance of some social factors about occurrence of mobbing, besides personal factors. Following that, she mentioned about importance of organizational climate and culture:

There are a couple of factors contributing to the emergence of mobbing in psychology literature. The most fundamental of these, what you call structural, are organizational climate and culture. I mean if the organizational climate and

²⁰ Bütün yapanların, mobbing uygulamış olanların aynı şeyleri yaşamalarını diliyorum ben. Henüz hiçbir şey için geç değil. Umarım ne yaptılarsa kendileri, fiziksel şiddetse psikolojik şiddetse ayrılarını yaşayıp o duyguyu o çaresizliği ya da o kendilerini suçlama duygularını yaşamalarını gönülden diliyorum. İnşallah bir gün yaşarlar.

culture allow it, if the value system or national value system allow it... The reason of why the behaviors we encounter in Turkey and the ones we see in the Netherlands differ is that both the national culture and the organizational climate itself, which is not independent of national culture, contribute to the normalization or anormalization of that (mobbing). The literature shows this as well, the climate. But I think the climate feeds on macro factors too.²¹

Although a part of mobbing literature, which has organizational perspective, points important effects of organizational climate and culture; institutions, law system and even victims still regard mobbing as an individual problem. Yet experiences of mobbing victims have quite important cultural, political and structural similarities. Some specific contexts and cultures are more suitable for occurrence of mobbing and any other work related problems. So, if one wants to prevent mobbing first of all he/she needs to understand mobbing is a structural problem and victim is never alone. Same as victim, mobber is also never alone. Then solution of this problem may start with understanding and analyzing organizational deficiencies. On this issue Prof. Sümer claims that:

I think the fundamental deficiency is this: there is no any study that scrutinizes the cultural context and organizational climate together. You might have a potential to do mobbing, and I might have a potential to be mobbed and victimized. But what kinds of climates facilitate it? It's hard to fix my negative affect. If it was easy, then therapists wouldn't earn much. Fixing your authoritarian behavior, yes it is possible. You can follow leadership trainings, executive trainings. But even there the room for improvement is very limited. But what the organizations can do and to me what the most powerful tool they have is that to change the organizational climate and culture, and to be proactive. I really like this term. Once a person starts working there, he/she should already know what kind of a workplace it is. What are the social norms here? You cannot mock one person for his/her accent. This is unacceptable. That person should learn this via social observation, but also there should be written rules, ethical codes, and behavioral codes. There should be trainings to show that there is no

²¹ Psikoloji literatüründe mobbingin çıkmasına katkı yapan birkaç temel faktör var. Bunlardan en temeli, sizin yapısal dediğiniz şeye en yakın olanı, örgütsel iklim kültür. Yani bir örgütün iklimi ve kültürü buna meydan veriyor ise, değerler sistemi ya da ulusal değerler sistemi buna izin veriyor ise... Bu sebeple de zaten Türkiye'de gördüğümüz davranışların Hollanda'da gördüğümüz davranışlardan farklı olmasının bir sebebi hem ulusal kültürün hem de örgütün kendi ikliminin – ulusal kültürden bağımsız olmayan ikliminin – bunu normalleştirmede ya da anormalleştirmede bir katkısı var. Literatür de bunu gösteriyor zaten, iklim. Ama iklim makro faktörlerden de besleniyor bence.

tolerance for such a behavior. Things could be done to better the climate but what could be done to facilitate this climate is not that much studied.²²

According to views of Prof. Sümer, it can be argued that institutions should play the largest part when struggling with mobbing. There are some significant studies which support this view (Einarsen et al, 2005). However, institutions in Turkey mostly do not struggle against mobbing and do not try to raise awareness about this issue. It can be argued that absence of this effort and awareness among institutions and inefficacy of law system are two main obstacles which make struggle against mobbing harder.

Beside explanation of organizational perspective, which was discussed above, there may be some other underlying reasons for individualization of mobbing. First one is the fact that mobbing is perceived as individual problem in both academia and social life. At first “mobbing” was a biological term and then it started to be used as a psychological term. More than half of the mobbing literature is from psychology perspective. At the beginning that situation may be advantage for mobbing victims. Understanding perceptions, emotions and views of victims and mobbers was crucially important. Yet in time mobbing became widespread and some structural mechanism started to be seen more clearly. Now it is not enough to explain mobbing with only psychological perspective. Still, domination of psychological perspective on mobbing literature is influential in social life. In academia mobbing is considered as area of psychology and this view leads mobbing perception of society. I believe that this is one of the most important underlying reasons for individualization of mobbing.

²² Temel eksiklik şu galiba: kültürel bağlamı ve örgütsel iklimi çok iyi irdeleyen çalışmalar yok. Sizin mobbing yapmaya potansiyeliniz olabilir, benim de bundan etkilenmeye kurban olmaya potansiyelim olabilir. Ama hangi iklimler bunu kolaylaştırıyor? Çünkü ona müdahale edebilirsiniz. Benim negative affect’imi düzeltmeniz çok zor. Çok kolay olsaydı terapistler hiç para kazanamazdı. Sizin otoriter davranışınızı düzeltmek, evet mümkün. Liderlik eğitimine, yöneticilik eğitimlerine gidersiniz. Ama orada da room for improvement çok kısıtlı. Ama örgütlerin yapabileceği ve bence ellerindeki en kuvvetli araç örgüt iklimi ve kültürünü değiştirmek ve proaktif olmak. Ben bu lafı çok seviyorum. Hakikaten kişi geldiğinde nereye geldiğini bilecek. Buradaki normlar neler, sosyal normlar neler? Siz bir insanın aksanıyla alay edemezsiniz. Bu kabul edilemez bir şey. Bunu hem sosyal gözlemle öğrenecek hem de yazılı kurallar, etik kodlar, davranış kodları olacak. Eğitimler verilecek ve böyle bir davranışa tolerans gösterilmediği aslında gösterilecek. İklimi iyileştirici şeyler yapılabilir ama neler yapılabilirse bu iklim daha kolay ortaya çıkar çok fazla çalışılmıyor.

Secondly, individualization of mobbing creates an advantageous position for institutions in case of conflict; even victims do not regard them as responsible for mobbing. This is because, since victims face with mobbers during mobbing process, views and emotions about their mobbing experience are targeting mobber. Instead of recognizing mobber as a part of institution, victims individualize their problem. In this case, institutions get out of mobbing incident almost harmless. Institutions simply do not want to lose this advantageous position. The only way of maintaining this order is to prevent employees to reach further information about mobbing and about their legal rights. By taking no action and not rising awareness in institutions, they achieve this goal easily. Moreover, according to law system in Turkey, if one wants to take legal action about mobbing, it should be against institution in which they experienced mobbing. However, economical bounds of employees cause fear of taking legal action against institutions they are employed within. Employees do not risk their job, unless their mobbing experience become intolerable. This situation seriously reduces number of law suits about mobbing and people's trust for efficiency of any future laws and policies.

Third underlying reason is problem of lack of inspection and arbitrary treatments. Despite, general aim about efficiency of law system about mobbing in Turkey is critical, some respondents have full confidence in law system. However, even they do not have any trust about implementation of the rules and laws. According to them laws are protecting their rights theoretically, however superiors, employers and sometimes inspectors are manipulating them in accordance with their own advantage in Turkey. They believe that this situation leaves them unprotected and vulnerable in case of mobbing and violation of right in work place. When they were asked about their opinion about the way of preventing mobbing, these respondents answered in quite pessimistic way. According to them new policies and laws cannot solve this problem; new rules will also be exploited anyway.

CHAPTER 5

THE MAIN FORMS OF MOBBING

Mobbing and discrimination are closely related concepts and commonly confused with each other. Actually they are distinct concepts and different in terms of their key elements and legal systems they subject to (Çukur, 2009). Discrimination is widely used concept and consequently it has many various descriptions made by different thinkers. For example, it can be described as biased and unequal actions against a group or a person (Little et al., 2012). However, since all biased action cannot be named as discrimination, an alternative definition can be used. Fishbein (2002) claims that, “discrimination involves harmful actions toward others because of their membership in a particular group” and similar definitions were also used by Allport (1954) and Marger (1991) (p. 6). For considering a behavior as discrimination, it should be an action that cannot be explained with rational reasons and it should be based on a ground. Grounds of these biased actions may be wide-ranging. The Law on Human Rights and Equality Institution of Turkey, which came into force on April 20, 2016, determines these grounds as following: gender, ethnicity, nationality, skin colour, language, religion, philosophical or political opinion, wealth, birth, marital status, medical condition, disability and age (Turkey | New law on mobbing and discrimination at workplace, 2016). These grounds may differ from culture to culture and some of those features are more visible within society than others.

Discrimination may be experienced in almost every social area. However, workplaces, in which people spend largest part of their days, are one of the best places to observe this negative action. Acting unequally to employees when hiring, creating and applying positions, training, promoting, firing or in any other terms and conditions of employment is called as workplace discrimination (England, 2012). Discrimination violates equal treatment principle of Turkish Labor Law by creating inequality and it is unlawful (Kılıçoğlu, n.d). Even though discrimination is forbidden according to Turkish Law System, employees are still experiencing this in different forms.

Mobbing, on the other hand, refers “hostile and unethical communication, which is directed in a systematic way by one or a few individuals mainly towards one individual who, due to mobbing, is pushed into a helpless and defenseless position, being held there by means of continuing mobbing activities” (Leymann, 1996). As it is seen in the definition, mobbing is not necessarily based on certain grounds or reasons. Moreover, when mobbing operates with continuing activities and in a systematic way, discrimination may refer one single incident or behavior. In addition to these, discrimination generally operates with elimination of one person from work related processes, especially by not hiring that person from the beginning. On the contrary, in case of mobbing victim is hired in some way, but mobber or mobbers aim to force that person to give up and leave the job. Consequently, these two concepts are related but distinct concepts.

As a result of interviews conducted for this study, it is observed that employees are experiencing a new type of mobbing which is based on their otherness in Turkey. It may be called as discrimination-based mobbing. Employees in Turkey are experiencing mobbing based on their political views, religions or the way they live their religions, gender identities, physical appearances and some other visible characteristics they have. At first sight, this new type of mobbing is quite similar with discrimination, but these two concepts are different by definition. Employees are experiencing discrimination in form of mobbing. All the insulting, humiliating and depressing practices of mobbing are also used in this type of mobbing but it starts with discrimination on at least one type of identity of victim.

Inequalities are mostly invisible, especially for the ones who gain advantage by those inequalities (Acker, 2011). Even so, some personal characteristics and practices which create inequalities are visible. Some of these characteristics overlap and operate together, in case of discrimination or discrimination based mobbing. Practices such as labeling someone as “other”, marginalizing and discriminating those people may be seen in other cultures as well. However, performing mobbing to someone in form of discrimination or performing discrimination in form of mobbing are practices which are special to Turkey. Both victims and mobbers in Turkey normalized this kind of

behaviors in working life. They are not even surprised about that. Employers and superiors consider discrimination or mobbing to employees, especially to ones who are labeled as “other”, as normal and as their rights. This is because, awareness of normality of diversity was not created in the society and being other is something undesirable and even unacceptable.

According to employee interviews those conducted for this thesis, discrimination based mobbing is not a rare case²³. In 17 of the 20 employee interviews, it was stated that victims experienced mobbing due to at least one personal characteristic they have. As it can be seen in Table 2, out of 20 respondents, 13 argued that their gender, 9 argued that their political view, 8 argued that their physical appearance, 6 argued that their religion and 2 argued that their sect was effective on their mobbing experience. The reason why these four characteristics were chosen for explaining this phenomenon is their being visible practices of others. Although religion and political view do not seem as visible practices at first sight, they operate with their visible forms, such as Friday prayer, headscarf or fasting. Effects of some other characteristics were also asked to respondents. For example, they were asked if their ethnic identity was effective on their mobbing experiences. As a result of this question, ethnic identity is seen as insignificant for these experiences. Probably, because of that ethnic identity is

²³ In this present days Turkey is passing through a different and challenging time. In July, 15 2016 a coup trial occurred in Turkey. The trial was successfully suppressed. It was understood that members of an exclusive religious community in Turkish army attempted that trial. Although dangerousness of this community was seen for a few years, severity of the situation was understood after that attempt. It was understood that this community has been actively staffed in Turkish Armed Forces for at least 3-4 decades. In such serious environment a story was shared in Ekşi Sözlük (a Turkish website which works as an online alternative encyclopedia) by one of the writers (schroiesenberg) in July 22, 2016 (Retrieved from <https://seyler.eksisozluk.com/gulen-cemaati-yuzunden-hayati-kararan-eski-bir-harp-okulu-ogrencisinin-hikayesi> in August 8, 2016). In this story he shared his personal mobbing experience in military academy. He claimed that members of this community did mobbing and even torture to him and some other cadets until victims left the academy. This story received considerable attention first in Ekşi Sözlük, then in social media and at last in mainstream media (Retrieved from <http://www.hurriyet.com.tr/darbeciler-yillarca-askeri-ogrencilere-boyle-baski-yapmis-40162377> in August 8, 2016). Following that many other stories were shared in different platforms. Turkish society has shudderingly noticed that this exclusive religious community has used mobbing to force thousands of cadets to quit military academy. After the coup trial it was seen that members of this community had control over certain public institutions and completely excluded other views from these institutions. Under the light of these new discussions, an important public debate started about effects of this community on certain public institutions and accordingly on the society.

not a visible characteristic. Sexual orientation is also seen as insignificant for mobbing. This may be because of absence of people with LGBT identity among respondents.

Table 2 : Characteristics/identities which are effective on mobbing experiences of the respondents

NO	NAME	PHYSICAL APPEARANCE	GENDER	RELIGION & SECT	POLITICAL VIEW
1	Aslı				
2	Birsen	+	+		+
3	Ceyda	+	+		
4	Dilek	+	+		
5	Ensar		+		+
6	Fatma		+		
7	Gül		+	+	+
8	Hasan		+		
9	İpek				+
10	Kenan				
11	Levent	+	+		
12	Mustafa		+	+ / +	+
13	Nilay	+	+	+	+
14	Oylum	+	+		
15	Pınar	+	+	+ / +	+
16	Raşit	+		+	+
17	Soner			+	
18	Tekin				
19	Ulaş		+		
20	Vahit				+
TOTAL		8	13	6 / 2	9

It is important to understand that those characteristics handled in this chapter are overlapping and intersecting characteristics. Victims suffer from these characteristics because they are visible and collecting clues about these practices is easy. Mobbers are continuously collecting visible clues about personal characteristics of employees and this situation creates a serious pressure on those employees. Attributed meanings to

those clues may be various. This is why these characteristics are intersecting. For this reason, barriers between these groups should be seen as blurred and flexible.

In this part of the thesis, main forms of mobbing in Turkey will be discussed. The discussion will be held under four subtitles. The first subtitle is physical appearance, the second one is gender, the third one is religion and sect and the last one is political view. It should be considered that characteristics of other and visible practices about these characteristics are not universal, timeless or generalizable. They are strictly related to time and culture. Moreover, the fact that this study only covers 20 urban, highly educated, middle class employees in Turkey and their experiences should not be ignored. Collected data can only present a trend about mobbing experiences of similar group.

5.1 Physical Appearance:

The first dimension of discrimination-based mobbing is physical appearance. People or groups who hold power in their hand determine “other” in most formalistic way. Not only being different but also seeming like different is problematic in this kind of a work environment. When majority think a specific person is different from them or a specific person seems like he/she has a different identity, they may label him/her as “other” without questioning. Nilay (Age 32, SME Expert):

We were two women back then; the rest was all men. There was a problem with my older manager as well, he was simply misogynist. The other friend was headscarfed. I mean she was in a similar line of thought with him. That’s why while he was protecting her even though she didn’t want that, and he was behaving on the contrary to me. For example, he sent us to old experts for orientation, he sent her to a woman expert thinking that she might be bothered otherwise, but she didn’t have such a demand. I mean he was organizing things on behalf of her. Like “you are covered, this is better for you” (...) And he sent me to a man who was once indicted, who showed sexually explicit videos to other interns. I mean he started to behave on the contrary to me. We reached this huge situation just from looking at whether we were headscarfed or not.²⁴

²⁴ O dönemde iki kadındık kalan kişiler erkekti. Eski yöneticimde de bir sorun vardı, kadın düşmanıydı adeta. Diğer gelen arkadaş kapalıydı. Yani onun düşünce yapısında bir insandı. O yüzden onu tersine çok korurken, hatta o istemediği halde onu korurken, bana da tam tersiydi. Bizi mesela eski uzmanların yanına vermişti oryantasyon için, hani o rahatsız olur diye onu bir kadın uzmanın yanına verdi, ki onun

As can be seen from this example, mobbing can be based on physical appearance. People or groups, who are performing this kind of mobbing, are acting according to some basic clues. These clues are mostly well-known in Turkish society. For example, a woman wearing or not wearing head-scarf, a man with long hair or a man with specific form of mustache mostly has meaning according to society. Generally, they do not regard grounding their theory as necessary. However, to sit in judgment about someone by only considering his/her physical appearance is something problematic.

As it was mentioned before, there are some basic clues which reveal someone's identity in Turkish society. For example, there are some specific estimation about hair, mustache or beard type of a man. Some of these types are accepted as preferred according to dominant ideology of that time. Even sometimes, these preferred types are personal choices of authority figure of that time. Ones out of these preferred types are considered as "different" or "marginal" by majority of the society. In some cases, people may assign different meanings to those choices which create pressure on the relevant person. Raşit (Age 30, Civil Engineer):

The boss is gossiping behind my back. He is gathering with those headscarfed women, and telling things like "Go learn if he has a girlfriend or whether he is gay or not." ... Just because I have long hair, I was labeled as gay there. I had a girlfriend living in the Netherlands back then. I said "My girlfriend is coming from Holland. Would you give me a day off?" I felt the need to tell this even if I didn't need a vacation. I really wonder what would happen to me if I was really gay. They might have directly fired me.²⁵

Women, on the other hand, experience this marginalization over their femininity. In Turkish society women are always monitored and they are widely criticized about their appearance. They are under a huge pressure about their body, their outfits and in

öyle bir isteği yoktu. Yani onun yerine dizayn ediyordu. Sen kapalısın senin için şu daha iyi olur falan gibi. (...) Beni de daha önce hakkında soruşturma açılmış, başka stajeylere cinsel içerikli videolar göstermiş bir adamın yanına verdi. Yani bana da tam tersine bir şey uygulamaya başladı. Sen kapalısın sen açıksın durumundan böyle kocaman bir yere gittik biz.

²⁵ Patron geliyor dedikodu yapıyor arkamdan. O türbanlılarla bir araya geliyor, anlatıyor, 'Şunun öğrenin sevgilisi var mıymış? Gay miymiş?' bilmem ne... Uzun saçlıyım ya bir de otomatik gay olma yaftası yedim ben orada. - o zaman da Hollanda'dan bir kız arkadaşım var- "Hollanda'dan kız arkadaşım gelecek, işte bana bir gün tatil verin" dedim. Bak tatile ihtiyacım yokken sırf bunu söyleme ihtiyacı duyuyorum. Hakikaten gay olsam ne gelecek acaba başıma? Belki de direkt kovarlardı.

general their choices. After a while, this pressure generates an inner voice in women. Those women generally start questioning themselves under this kind of circumstances. After a while some of them develop a kind of self-control over their own physical appearances. Even, in order to protect themselves, they try to become invisible in majority. According to employee interviews, in some cases family members of female employees also start to control their physical appearances. Although their main aim is protecting that person, they actually create extra pressure on them. Nilay (Age 32, SME Expert):

My mother had such a thing. I mean she was physically looking up and down on me to see if the guy would find anything to say about the clothes I wear for work. But it turns into another form of domination after a while. You can't feel comfortable. There was such a process for example. (...) And there was a period where developed self-control for what I wear. When you have such an eye over you that always looks up and down on you... And as a woman, you were already taught that you are made up only of a body. So it becomes very hard if you go through such a process both in the family and at the workplace.²⁶

Analyzing effects of physical appearance on mobbing singly is not enough. These effects are also related with other dimensions as gender, politics or religion. Physical appearance gives clues for those other identities. Some sub-meanings are determined for elements of physical appearance. Because of that reason, when someone experience mobbing or any other type of negative behaviors due to his/her physical appearance, there is most probably another underlying reason.

5.2 Gender:

By its definition mobbing is a gender neutral concept and anybody may be victim of mobbing regardless of their gender (Leymann, 1990). The argument that statistically there is no meaningful relationship between mobbing and gender has been tested and confirmed for many times in different studies in both international literature (Einarsen

²⁶ Annemde böyle bir şey vardı. Yani beni bir bedensel olarak inceleme, işyerine giydiğim kıyafetlere acaba bir şey der mi diye. Ama o da bir süre sonra başka bir tahakküme dönüşüyor. Rahat olamıyorsunuz. Onda öyle bir süreç oldu mesela. (...) Ben de işte şunu giymeyeyim çok şey olur gibi, kendi içimde bir otokontrol geliştirdiğim bir dönem oldu. Üstünde böyle bir göz olunca dışarıdan devamlı süzen... Bir de zaten kadın olarak o yaşa kadar geldiğinizde, hep size bir bedenden ibaret olduğunuz söyleniyor. Sonra devamlı bu şekilde bir süreç yaşatılınca hem ailede hem işyerinde, çok zor oluyor.

& Skogstad 1996; Hoel & Cooper 2000; Vartia 1996) and Turkish literature (Acar & Dündar, 2008; Baş & Oral, 2012; ÇSGB, 2014). On the other hand, difference between types of mobbing experienced by male and female employees should not be ignored. Nevertheless, some studies show that gender is considerably effective on occurrence, severity and consequences of mobbing. (Salin, 2003; Sevinç, 2011). Reasons of mobbing, way of choosing victim, way of performing mobbing and effects of mobbing on victims can vary by gender of the victim or mobber. Needless to say, gender is not the only factor for those experiences, however according to employee interviews it is one of the most significant ones.

To begin with, gender difference revealed itself in earlier stages of this study. In data collection part of the research, reaching male respondents was much harder than reaching female respondents. At first, as researcher I thought that this situation may have 2 meanings: either men experience mobbing relatively less than women or men are less willing to express their mobbing experiences than women. However, considering statistical information about gender distribution of mobbing victims, this situation cannot be considered as a result of rarity of male mobbing victims. As it was mentioned earlier, according to different studies and reports, numbers of male and female mobbing victims are close to each other in Turkey. In this case, the situation may be interpreted as reluctance of male mobbing victims to express their experiences. This situation may be result of dominant patriarchal system in Turkey. Mobbing is still confused with sexual harassment in Turkey and accordingly men may be less willing to name themselves as mobbing victims. Even so, without a further study on the issue, this view is just subjective and suppositional.

Awareness of distinction between gender-based mobbing and sexual harassment is not common in Turkish society. Obviously, mobbing and sexual harassment are two distinct concepts by definition. However, when it comes to mobbing which is based on gender discrimination, people are confused about these two concepts. According to MacKinnon (1979) sexual harassment can be defined as undesired imposition of sexual needs and expectations within context of unequal power relationship (cited in Hearn 2011, p. 302). Mobbing is more general concept, while sexual harassment is

seen as a form of mobbing by some thinkers (Richman, 1999; Hearn, 2011). Moreover, mobbing is mostly understood as gender-neutral issue (Zippel, 2006), when sexual harassment is considered as gender issue which is understood as inappropriate behavior of men towards women (Hearn, 2011). In some cases, mobbing and sexual harassment may be reasons of each other. For example, sometimes mobbing process starts with sexual harassment or unwanted sexual attention and it goes forward with psychological harassment as punishment in return for reluctance (Altuntaş, 2010). Both mobbing and sexual harassment are considered in their relation with power relations. Especially for sexual harassment, these are gendered power relations. Consequently, in male-dominated works women are more likely to be perceived as “other” and they easily experience these kinds of negative behaviors (Salin, 2003).

According to employee interviews, gender may affect mobbing experience in two ways: having same gender identity with mobber and having different gender identity than mobber. According to employee interviews, mobbing experiences caused by having same gender identity are generally perceived as they result from personal reasons. The most common reason of this kind of mobbing is seeing victims as rival because of their personal or occupational superiority. Although this kind of mobbing does not necessarily have gender dimension, there is a common belief among some respondents about effect of gender on the issue. Also Salin (2003) argues that women are more likely to consider personal problems of the mobber as main reason of mobbing, especially which is based on jealousy or envy (p. 40). On the other hand, experiencing mobbing because of having different gender identity than mobber is closer to discrimination and it is much more structural problem. For instance, some female respondents argued that they experienced mobbing from their male superiors because of their gender. Gül (Age 50, Expert):

I don't mean that if I was a man, they couldn't have done this to me, but rather they wouldn't. Why? Because there would be an authority situation. There is a man, and authority figure. His brother does something to his own authority figure in the workplace, but this figure is a woman. For one thing, we are scored off because of gender. And second, when it comes to administrative works, my task is seen as a manly one. They even usually hire retired soldiers for this job, so that they can build authority. So when they came, they might even have asked

why a woman is performing this task. The sub-staff can be woman, the secretary can be a woman, the assistant can be a woman, but if a woman holds the position itself, then it's problematic. And third, when my personal features are added to it, gender is hundred percent effective.²⁷

According to employee interviews male and female mobbing victims are experiencing different kinds of mobbing. While female employees are experiencing mobbing about their “weaknesses” in society, male employees are experiencing mobbing about their “advantages” in society. For instance, female employees are still underrepresented in many areas of working life and society in general. Although nature of work masks gendered nature of organizations out, organizations and professions are generally male dominated (Acker, 1990). This gendered nature of working life puts female employees in vulnerable position, while it maintains advantageous position for male employees (Salin, 2003). According to Reszke (1991), in working life, ideal womanhood is limited with stereotypical features, such as caring, emphatic and submissive nature of woman (cited in Judzinska 2014, p. 140). If woman switches her aim to male-dominated occupations, she most probably faces with glass ceiling (Judzinska 2014). In addition to this, when a woman wants to take part in male territory, she may face with marginalization and exclusion. Mobbing experiences of some female employees are based on this marginalization and exclusion. Pınar (Age 45, Human Resources): “It's not acceptable for them if a woman is a senior executive. For example, he says that “how can you open your mouth and say things like this?” There were conversations like this.²⁸” Moreover, female mobbing victims are experiencing mobbing on their physical appearances and their femininity. Even though, this topic will be tackled more deeply under Physical Appearance part of this chapter, it should

²⁷ Erkek olsaydım bana bunu yapamazlardı demiyorum, bana bunu yapmazlardı. Neden? Çünkü orada şöyle bir otorite durumu oldu. Bir erkek, bir otorite figure var. Onun kardeşi, koruyup kolladığı biri, iş yerinde kendisinin otorite figürüne karşı bir şey yapıyor ama bu figür kadın. Bir kere burada, cinsiyetten bir golü yedik. İkincisi zaten idari işler dendiğinde, benim yaptığım iş bir erkek işi olarak görülür. Hatta çoğunlukla da emekli askerlere yaptırılır bu iş, otorite sağlayabilsin diye. Dolayısıyla onlar geldiğinde, bu işi zaten niye kadın yapıyor ki bile demiş olabilirler. Alt kadro kadın olabilir, sekreter kadın olabilir, o pozisyonun yardımcısı kadın olabilir ama pozisyonun kendisinin kadın olması sıkıntılı. Üç, benim kişisel özelliklerim de bunun üstüne binince, evet cinsiyet yüzde yüz etkili.

²⁸ Bir bayanın mesela üst düzey bir yönetici olması onlar için kabul edilebilir bir durum değildir. Mesela şey diyor “sen ağzını açıp nasıl böyle konuşabiliyorsun”. Yani bu şekil diyaloglar oldu.

be underlined that they are mostly women who experience mobbing because of their physical appearance. Most of these experiences are based on patriarchal or religious views within community. Women, who define themselves out of dominant culture with their way of living, are almost always told in which way they should live in that society. They are experiencing different forms of this insisting in their working life as well. Sometimes this oppression shows itself in form of mobbing.

On the other hand, male employees are experiencing mobbing about their “advantages” in society. For example, according to employee interviews, a well-known and mostly experienced way of mobbing is the one includes indefinite working hours and excessive overtime without payment. Some male respondents argued that their “advantageous position” within society is used against them in case of mobbing. Since men have more freedom to go out or stay out of house in comparison to women, superiors or employers can use overtime as a way of mobbing against them more easily. Ensar (Age 30, Expert):

They are more courageous. For example, they cannot put that much pressure on women in terms of staying for the evenings. For example, this is an incident happened here, the husband of a woman just came unceremoniously saying “enough is enough, what the hell are you.” It’s not exactly positive discrimination but they do it because they are afraid. But just because I’m a man they randomly want me to go at the weekends as well or stay at nights. There is such a thing. I experience mobbing more.²⁹

There is an obvious effect of mobbing on male victims, which is reflection of negative emotions to female members of their family or romantic partner. Almost all 10 male respondents stated that they did this one way or another during their mobbing experiences. They show this situation as sign of their level of desperateness most of

²⁹ Daha cesur oluyorlar. Mesela akşam kalma konusunda kadınları bu kadar rahat bırakamıyorlar. Mesela burada yaşanmış bir olay, kadının kocası ‘yeter ulan siz nesiniz’ diye kalkmış gelmiş. Mesela bunlar yaşandığı için kadınlara biraz daha... pozitif ayrımcılık da değil de... bundan da korktukları için yapıyorlar. Ama ben burada erkek olduğum için haftasonu da gel, gece de gel. Böyle bir şey var. Daha çok mobbinge uğruyorum.

the time. Ensar (Age 30, Expert): “You need to yell at someone and because there is no one you yell at your wife.³⁰”

Hasan (Age 24, HR Consultant):

I became short-tempered. Yes, I always argue with my girlfriend. I reached the point of splitting up. It was indeed like that last week. Some things have happened. I was angry at the woman (mobber), I wrought my anger on my family and friends. I argued with my mother, I argued with my girlfriend.³¹

Undoubtedly that is not only limited with small arguments with female family members. Without learning views of these female members, knowing limits of these negative behaviors and effects is not possible. According to Hüseyin Gün (President of Association of Fighting against Mobbing) these negative behaviors of male mobbing victims to their female family members and romantic partners may lead to bigger family problems and eventually divorces. He argues that negative mood of mobbing victim may result communication disorders within family. He stated that:

Because the reason of divorces is that spouses start blaming each other after a point. They say enough is enough; I don't want to hear you anymore. They say am I going to listen to you everyday? They even start scolding the children. Now at home, we call it mobbing in reverse, they exclude the victim in a not-so positive and similar way to what is happening at the workplace either by not listening to him/her efficiently, or by silencing or saying that he/she is exaggerating and that he/she should see a doctor. He/she is being excluded at home as well.³²

The reason why gender identity is only handled as male and female in this part of the thesis is absence of LGBT representation among respondents. This is one of the most important weaknesses of this study. Obviously, mobbing experienced by LGBT people

³⁰ Birine bağırmam lazım ve kimse yok eşin var eşine bağıırıyorsun.

³¹ Asabi oldum. Evet, kız arkadaşım ile sürekli tartışıyorum. Ayrılma noktasına geldim. Geçen hafta öyleydi gerçekten. Bazı şeyler oldu. O da ben bayana (mobber) kızmıştım, sinirimi yakınlarımdan çıkardım. Annemle tartıştım, kız arkadaşım ile tartıştım.

³² Çünkü boşanmaların sebebi şu, eşler bir yerden sonra birbirlerini suçlamaya başlıyorlar. Yeter artık diyor, seni dinlemek istemiyorum artık diyor. Her gün seni mi dinleyeceğim diyor. Hatta çocukları azarlamaya başlıyor. Şimdi evde de tersine mobbing diyoruz, iş yerindekilerin bir benzerini ya etkili dinlemeyerek ya susturarak ya da abartıyorsun doktora git senin akıl sağlığın yerinde değil sen büyütüyorsun gibi mağduru hiç de olumlu bir yaklaşım olmayacak şekilde dışlıyorlar. Evde de dışlanıyor.

is different from afore-mentioned experiences. Mobbing victims with LGBT identity are likely to experience very harsh forms of both discrimination and discrimination-based mobbing. As researcher I tried to reach mobbing victims who experienced mobbing because of their sexual orientation, however reaching mobbing victims with LGBT identity was not possible for me. There is only one respondent who argued that her sexual orientation was influential in her mobbing experience. She experienced mobbing and sexual harassment together from her superior who have romantic interest to her. This cannot be considered as mobbing due to one's sexual orientation. A further research should be conducted on this issue.

5.3 Religion and Sect:

After 2002 general elections in Turkey, government has changed. Political ideology of new ruling party is conservative-democratic, which was developed from tradition of Islamism. Although the term "conservative democracy" has been used in relation to "an active civil society", "participation", "tolerance", "multiculturalism", "compromise" and "deliberation" by the government from the beginning (Doğanay, 2007), today dominant ideology is associated with social segregation by some segments of society. In this day and age, religion is one of the most significant characteristics of people in Turkey. Religion has also become a characteristic which subject to discrimination among society. As it was discussed before, there are many other factors and characteristics those subject to discrimination, however especially religion together with political view is the most effective characteristic about discrimination in Turkey. It is also an element of oppression on employees and a criterion of recruitment for employers. Discrimination which is based on religion is commonly being experienced by employees in society.

Beside discrimination, mobbing which is based on religious belief is also experienced by some employees. According to employee interviews there are three significant discussions about religion based mobbing: the first one is elimination of people, whose religion or sect is different from the majority, from working life, the second one is mobbing experiences of employees who live religion different than expectation of

dominant ideology and the third one is effect of some religious rituals on exposure of religious identity.

First of all, the ones, whose religion or sect is different from the majority, are not being preferred as employees in the first place. Although, it seems like this situation is not directly related to mobbing, it is a serious risk and oppression factor for employees who have already employed in some way. In this research, among 20 respondents there are a few non-believers and majority of them are Muslim. When they were asked, if their religion was effective on their mobbing experience, six respondents answered in the affirmative. Even some respondents found this question unnecessary. Hasan (Age 24, HR Consultant) for example argued that: “If I was Christian, I wouldn’t be able to work there anyway.”³³

Secondly, employees who live their religion different than expectation of dominant ideology have high risk of experiencing mobbing. Since religious belief does not necessarily bring worship together for all people, there are people who believe in a specific religion but do not worship all the time. For example, there are many people who believe in Islam but do not pray five times in a day. Although it should be considered as discrimination and accordingly as illegal, suppression of those people is almost perceived as normal by employers and superiors. This situation sometimes may lead to arbitrary practices of employers and superiors. These arbitrary practices show themselves in form of mobbing. Especially in public sector these arbitrary practices are pretty common. Ensar (Age 30, Expert):

I wanted to take a leave during Ramadan. “What are you going to do in Ramadan?” he replied. It’s none of your concern. I will stay at home and stare at the wall. Can’t I just take a leave and stare at the wall? What’s it to you? Things like that for example. Or prayer is a common topic there. He says “You don’t even go to prayers, keep on working.” What’s it to you? You go for praying but do you do that on behalf of me?³⁴

³³ Bir hristiyan olsaydım o şubede çalışamazdım zaten.

³⁴ Ramazan ayında izin almak istiyordum. ‘Ramazanda ne yapacaksın izni?’ diyor. Ya sana ne ne yapacaksam. Evde duvara bakacağım. Evde duvara bakamaz mıyım yani izin alıp? Sana ne! Mesela öyle şeyler. Ya da burada namaz muhabbeti çok olur mesela. ‘Zaten namaza gittiğin mi var otur çalış’ diyor. Sana ne, sen gidiyorsun da bana mı gidiyorsun?

Thirdly, some religious rituals are effective on exposure of religious beliefs. There are some religious rituals of Islam, in some special periods, such as the month of Ramadan, Friday prayer or five-time prayer. Joining or not to these prayers may reveal one's religious beliefs. A person's religious belief and level of religiousness can be easily observed through these kinds of rituals. Ramadan is the most important period for this. Employees who do not fast during Ramadan may experience mobbing, if their employer or superiors are religionist. Raşit (Age 30, Civil Engineer):

It was Ramadan. I was the only one who wasn't fasting. Anyway, they were ordering food regularly before that. They said "We will give you money for eating out", I said "OK, give me money." I, by the way, asked this on the first day of Ramadan. It was 11:00 am already but no one thought or maybe didn't want to think about that. Anyway, they were surprised and they scoffingly gave me 6 TL (Approximately 2 \$) per day for eating out. 6 TL per day. I would eat the lousiest chicken döner and drink ayran with that money. What was I doing instead? I was eating for 20-25 TL (Approximately 7-8 \$) and all on my own dime. I ate on my own dime for a month.³⁵

Beside fasting and prayer, for female employees, the most visible religious practice is veiling. Women who do not wear headscarf may experience mobbing due to their lack of religiousness in some work places, while women who wear headscarf may experience mobbing due to their religious belief. During employee interviews I interviewed some female respondents who experienced mobbing because of not wearing headscarf. However, there was not any respondent who experienced mobbing because of wearing headscarf among respondents of this research. Undoubtedly, it does not mean that women wearing headscarf do not experience mobbing. There are many studies which show veiled women perceived negatively in working life. For example, according to Azak, veiled employees are experiencing discrimination not only in public sector but also in private sector. She also argued that this discrimination also occurs in businesses which are operated by conservative people (Azak, 2008). As

³⁵ Ramazan oldu. Bir tek oruç tutmayan ben varım. Neyse... şey yaptılar, yemek geliyordu oraya düzenli. Dediler ki "para vereceğiz sana.", "iyi." dedim, "para verin." Ben bu arada ramazanın ilk günü sordum bunu, saat 11:00 oldu, düşünmemişler veya düşünmek istememişler belki. Neyse, öyle bir şaşırdılar falan. Sonra bana dalga geçer gibi günlük 6 lira para verdiler dışarıda git ye diye. Günlük 6 lira. En dandik tavuk döner ayranı yemem lazım yani bununla. Yani en dandik. Başka hiçbir şey yiyemem. Ben ne yapıyordum? Gidiyordum 20-25 liraya hepsi cebimden. 1 ay boyunca cebimden yedim yani.

it was discussed before, it is something related with women's position and perception in Turkish society. Discrimination or other kinds of negative experiences of women in working life are consequences of patriarchy.

In Islam there are some rituals which are obligatory only for men. Like all obligatory rituals, these are also making people's religious views visible. One of these rituals is Friday prayer. Muslim men pray this prayer together in mosques at Friday noon. Since noon is a part of work time, this ritual can be easily observed by co-workers. According to employee interviews, exposure of religiousness with this prayer may cause some conflicts in work places and afterwards some mobbing incidents. Levent (Age 26, Civil Engineer):

I believe that I am Muslim; I can say that I am Muslim. But they were gathering and going to Friday prayers with worksite shuttle, with a bit of showing off. Me and two or three other people weren't attending. We were eating out on Fridays. We were going to a kebab place or a place like that. And we were saying "C'mon it's Friday time" This might have cut a swath. They might have thought that I'm making fun of Friday prayers.³⁶

Although effect of sect on mobbing is almost as significant as religion among Turkish society, in this research it seems like insignificant. According to employee interviews, there are only two respondents who experienced mobbing due to their sect. The reason for this may be hesitation of respondents about sharing their identity in that sense or lack of extensiveness of the sample. Even so our limited data shows that some employees are experiencing mobbing due to their sect. For example, one of the respondents argued that he was accused for protecting Alevi people by superiors and experienced mobbing in parallel with this. Mustafa (Age 47, Social service specialist):

On the one side I was accused by being an Alawi, and with propagating Alawism, on the other side I was accused by atheism. The reason why I was accused by Alawism was that I stopped an old person swearing at an old Alawi. Or for example the employees were swearing at Kurds and Armenians by saying

³⁶ Ben müslüman olduğuma inanıyorum, müslümanım diyebilirim. Ama mesela onlar toplanıp Cuma namazına giderlerdi şantiye servisiyle, biraz şov yaparak. Ben ve iki üç kişi gitmezdik. Biz de mesela her Cuma dışarıda yedik öğle yemeğini. İşte bir kebaççıya giderdik, ne bileyim bir yere giderdik. Biz de ona derdik "hadi Cuma vakti geldi" diye. Belki o gözüne batmış olabilir. Bu çocuk Cuma vakti gidip eğleniyor falan göze batıyordur.

“Armenian bastards”. I was stepping in and saying that it was discrimination. All these became of concern for mobbing.³⁷

It is important to see that in Turkey, religion and religious rituals are also operating as visible practices of political view. Due to Islamist perception of dominant ideology, these characteristics cannot be handled separately.

5.4 Political View:

In recent years, political view has been one of the most important and also discriminating factors among Turkish society with the effect of political polarization. People determine their almost every single relationship or opinion based upon their political identity. Even the areas which were not defined as political before are now considered as political. This situation may be called as politicization of everyday life. Since dominant political power is based on conservative-democratic ideology, this politicization is also related with religion. Because of that reason more areas of everyday life have been affected from that politicization of society. This makes discrimination even more drastic and common.

As in discrimination, political view is also effective on discrimination-based mobbing. Employees are experiencing mobbing because of their political views which are not parallel with their superiors' views, employers' views or views of dominant ideology. This kind of mobbing is experienced in both public and private sector. While employees who work in public sector mostly experience this kind of mobbing because of their adverse views to dominant political ideology, employees in private sector experience it because of their adverse views to political views their superiors or employers. Discrimination-based mobbing caused by political view may be analyzed under five subtitles: the first one is normalization of mobbing against employees due to their political view, the second one is aloofness of other employees from mobbing victim of political mobbing, the third one is oppression about sharing on social media,

³⁷ Bir taraftan Alevilikle suçlandım, alevicilik yapmakla suçlandım, diğer taraftan ateizmle suçlandım. Alevilikle suçlanmamın nedeni, bir yaşlı alevi bir yaşlıya küfür ediyordu, onu engellediğim için. Veya çalışanlar işte Kürtlere, Ermenilere... ‘Ermeni dölü’ diye küfür ediyorlar mesela. Müdahale ediyorsun ‘bu ayrımcılıktır’ şeklinde. Bütün bunlar mobbinge malzeme oldu.

the forth one is negative effect of partisan staffing on mobbing processes, the fifth one is effects of political environment and changing political relations on mobbing processes. In addition to these discussions, as a natural consequence of political mobbing, employees' effort to hide their political views will be discussed.

Firstly, mobbing against employees due to their political view is perceived as almost normal by mobbers. Opposition between political views of people, institutions or groups is creating serious polarization among society. This serious polarization of society affects working relations as well as it affects other parts of social life. Difference is seen as a justification for mobbing in work places. People, institutions or groups, who share same world-view with dominant ideology, are defining people who are outsider for their own identity as "other". Performing mobbing or any other type of negative behaviors is seen as normal to those "other" by especially superiors and employers. Most of the time, victims are determined by means of assumptions, claims or even intuitions of mobbers. Mobbing is being used as a tool for punishment for those people who considered as "other". Nilay (Age 32, SME Expert):

I couldn't stand, and even went to him, and said "What is your problem with me? I can't do it anymore." Because I was really thinking about quitting my institution which I entered with great enthusiasm. "You know that we are not of like mind on politics" he said. As if we are talking about politics everyday. As if we ever talk about politics. As if he has the faintest idea about what my political view is. Based only on that I am "bareheaded." In other words, because I do not live like him. I could even be conservative, which I'm not, but I could have been. But just because I wasn't living like him, I couldn't be conservative in the eyes of him. He was expecting the others to be like the way he makes sense of the world.³⁸

Secondly, when the experienced mobbing is political based, co-workers keep their distance from the victim. Since labeling someone as "other" does not necessarily base

³⁸ Ben de hatta bir kere dayanamayıp gitmişim yanına, "sizin benimle derdiniz ne, sorunuz ne, ben artık yapamayacağım" diye. Çünkü ben artık gerçekten istifa etmeyi düşünüyordum çok özenerek, severek girdiğim kurumumdan. "Biliyorsun işte seninle ben aynı siyasi görüşte değiliz" dedi. Sanki biz her gün oturup siyaset konuşuyormuşuz gibi. Sanki siyaset konuşuyormuşuz gibi. Sanki benim siyasi görüşümün ne olduğu hakkında en ufak bir fikri varmış gibi. Sadece 'açık' olduğumdan yola çıkarak. Yani onun gibi yaşamadığım için. Muhafazakar bile olabilirdim, değilim ama olabilirdim. Ama sırf onun gibi yaşamadığım için yine de muhafazakar olmazdım onun için. Kendi anlamlandırdığı dünyası neyse onu bekliyordu karşı taraftan da.

on concrete reasons, every employee is a potential mobbing victim. Close relationship with mobbing victim, who is known as politically other by administration or employer, may risk ones' own job or workplace peace as well. This fear of being blacklisted does not about choices, beliefs or ideas; it is about one's own life standards, economic power and career expectations. In such cases, even people who share same world view with victim cannot take victim's side. Political based mobbing is a huge pressure on audiences as well. This makes mobbing victim even more isolated and desperate. Gül (Age 50, Expert):

The group that didn't want to make concessions in their positions was standing by me but then because of the fear, and concern of losing their jobs, or of the fear of being labelled, many people, who actually shared my worldview, came over. They started to talk with me and get in touch with me as less as possible. I mean it is so interesting. But our worldviews are the same, our perspectives are the same, we might be voting for the same party. But at that issue, what is important is the money we earn. It is very risky to lose the job at that point. It doesn't worth to take that risk for the sake of another person.³⁹

Thirdly, employees' sharing on social media is monitored strictly by employers and administration of institutions. One of the most obvious consequences of politicization of everyday life is strong oppression on people. In Turkey, people are feeling this oppression in their working life, as well as any other part of their lives. In both public and private sector this oppression can be felt, however employees working in public sector feel it more intensely. This is because, according to Civil Servants' Act No. 657 of 14 July 1965, civil servants are not allowed to declare something or do an act with political and ideological purpose in any shape or form. Since violating this law is strictly forbidden, civil servants mostly are afraid of being accused of this crime. In such an environment, in which almost all people and all social areas are politicized, it would be naive to think that employees do not experience this oppression in private sector. It may be lower in comparison with public sector, but the oppression can also

³⁹ Kendi pozisyonundan ödün vermek istemeyen insan grubu benim yanımda dururken işinden taviz vermek istemeyen, işini kaybetmekten korkan, aslında benim dünya görüşümde yaşayan pek çok insan korkudan, işini kaybetme endişesinden, yaftalanma endişesinden karşı tarafa geçti. Benimle mümkün olduğu kadar daha az konuşur daha az iletişim kurar oldu. Yani o kadar ilginç bir şey ki. Ama hayat görüşlerimiz aynı, bakış açılarımız aynı, aynı partiye oy veriyoruz belki. Ama artık orada önemli olan kazandığımız para. Orada o işi kaybetmek çok büyük bir risk. O riski biri için almaya değmez.

be traced in there. If it is relatively low in private sector, it may result from easiness of personnel selection and cancellation of labor contract in there. In present-day conditions, majority of people are in tendency to perceive any kind of idea as political or ideological. In this case, being accused for this kind of violation of law is only matter of personal conflict or misinterpretation for civil servants. Since social media is open to anyone who wants to control someone, shares on social media are very risky. Not only shares in social media accounts but also groups they joined, events they attended (or the ones just they signed as they will attend), pages or accounts they follow and even newspaper or news site they read may be seen as sign of political view in such an environment. This is a huge pressure on employees. For example, some respondents are being threatened with dismissal because of their shares in social media accounts. Ensar (Age 30, Expert):

Another superior of me threatened me by saying “Here are your Facebook and Twitter accounts. Look you shared this and this. We can fire you” And you know the processes. I closed my accounts on social media for example. Because the guy is telling you that he will fire you. And I never shared anything about any political party. On the contrary they are the ones who support a political party.⁴⁰

Fourthly, partisan staffing is effective on mobbing processes. As in almost every type of mobbing, discrimination-based mobbing also ends with victim’s leave of employment or cancellation of labor contract for most of the time. After mobbing victim left, employers or administration may easily choose someone who is closer to their world view. Even these people mostly claim this as their rights. This can be seen as justification and normalization of favoritism and patronage. Gül (Age 50, Expert): “Of course partisan staffing is the main aspect here. There might be different reasons for dismissing me but there is a bonus situation which is replacing the fired staff with the people they know, i.e. setting up their own cadre.⁴¹”

⁴⁰ Adam getirdi bana ‘bak bunlar senin facebook, twitte adreslerin. Bak sen bunu paylaşmışsın, seni işten atarız’ diye beni tehdit etti, başka bir amirim. Süreçleri biliyorsunuz. Kapattım ben mesela, sosyal medyayı. Çünkü adam seni işten atarım diyor. Ve ben hiçbir siyasi partiyle ilgili bir şey paylaşmadım. Tam tersi siyasi partiyi onlar savunuyor.

⁴¹ Tabii ki kadrolaşma burada temel unsur. Beni işten çıkarmanın farklı sebepleri olabilir ama bir bonus durum var o da giden personelin yerine kendi bildiği tanıdığı kişiyi işe almak, kadrolaşmak.

Lastly, political environment and changing political relations are also effective on mobbing processes. Since mobbing is a recently known and used concept in Turkey, all 20 respondents in this research experienced mobbing during the past 15-20 years. Marks of ruling party and their policies can be observed in stories of almost all respondents more or less. When the government was changed, world-view and priorities of new ruling party were quite new for society. Starting from these days, some significant events which happened in Turkey have been affecting all the parts of the social life, inevitably work life is one of them. For instance, change of the government, Gezi Park resistance and incidents which occurred with effects of certain exclusive religious community are some of the most significant events in recent years. These entire events and even more of them can be traced in mobbing experiences of respondents. These critical and immediate responses of work life in case of changes in political environment may be considered as distinguishing for mobbing cases in Turkey. Nilay (Age 32, SME Expert):

But there was something else; they lost their power. Because there was such an organization. We were complaining a lot to his superior who was the head of our institution. We got no news from him. He was saying “I trust him a lot”, and “I love him a lot.” Probably because they were part of the same organization. There is such a situation as well, for example that person was dismissed but not because of the things he did to us. But because he was branded as a member of the “Parallel”. Now when they tell us “We already got him dismissed”, it really annoys me. You didn’t dismiss him because of what he did to me. He could have continued if it didn’t end up like this. This never relaxes me. He is even aggrieved now.⁴²

All these five discussions are important for understanding political mobbing. In addition to these discussions, as a natural consequence of political mobbing, employees’ effort to hide their political views should be discussed. In such tense

⁴² Ama bir de şey oldu tabi, onlar gücünü de yitirdiler. Çünkü öyle bir yapılanma vardı. Biz çok şikayet ederdik, onun bir üstü olan, kurumumuzun başındaki kişiye. Oradan da bir ses gelmedi bize. ‘Ona çok güveniyorum’ diyordu, ‘onu çok seviyorum’ diyordu. Aynı yapılanmanın içinde olduklar için muhtemelen. Bir de öyle bir durum var, mesela şimdi o kişi görevden alındı ama bize yaptıkları şeylerden dolayı değil. Paralel diye damgalandığı için görevden alındı. Şimdi bize söylediklerinde ‘zaten aldık onu görevden’ dediklerinde ben sinir oluyorum. Bana bunları yaptığı için almadınız ki. Yine devam edebilirdi böyle olmasaydı. Bu beni hiçbir şekilde rahatlatmıyor, ki hatta mağdur durumuna düştü şimdi.

environment, employees have two options: taking the risk and promoting their own ideas or hiding their political views and becoming invisible. When taking first choice makes you potential mobbing victim or even unemployed person; taking second choice may keep you safe. The ones who are aware of this situation generally choose hiding their political views. This is the most obvious and well known survival strategy in working life in Turkey. It is also the most obvious sign of being intimidated and being under pressure. While some employees are hiding their political view for not losing their jobs, the others hide it as a tactic for sustaining their business relationships. Hasan (Age 24, HR Consultant):

I never mention my political view. And that's because when we were studying public administration, they told us not to reveal our political views... the ends justify the means. What I care about is the money I earn. When necessary I support AKP, when necessary I support HDP. But the genuine view that I hold is that I am Atatürkist. But because of my job... You know we are in central Anatolia. I put it loud and clear that the people in central Anatolia are blind. It's not like the Aegean or Mediterranean regions. I got into one or two discussions, but after I saw that it doesn't change anything, I just give a nod to them and move on. It's similar with her (the mobber), I just nod and move on.⁴³

5.5 Conclusion:

In conclusion, obviously there is a social segregation and in parallel with this a lack of peace among society. Due to this tense environment, people tend to exclude each other from some areas of social environment. Working life may be the most important of these areas. Social segregation shows itself very clearly in this area. It is important to mention that issues of segregation may change in time, but this study aims to show a trend about mobbing among Turkish society of present day. It should not be forgotten that this study is based on views of small amount of urban, middle class and highly educated professionals and it is not generalizable.

⁴³ Ben siyasi görüşümü hiçbir zaman belirtmem. O da okulda, kamu yönetimi okurken, siyasi görüşünüzü belli etmeyin diye demişlerdi... her yol mübahtır. Ben ekmeğime bakarım. Yeri gelir AKP'li olurum, yeri gelir HDP'li olurum. Ama gönlümde yatan görüş, ben Atatürkçüyümdür. Ama işimden dolayı... çünkü iç anadoludayız. İç anadolunun adamı açık ve net söylüyorum kördür. Ege gibi Akdeniz gibi değildir. Ondandır bir iki tartışmaya girdim, baktım olmuyor anlamıyorlar, he diyorum geçiyorum. Onunla da (mobber) öyle, he diyorum geçiyorum.

Discrimination-based mobbing is mostly about characteristics of people which they born in them and changing them is almost impossible for most of the time. It makes effects of discrimination-based mobbing more devastating. Degrading someone into some features of that person makes him/her feel like he/she is worthless. This feeling is very common among respondents. Nilay (Age 32, SME Expert):

For example, first thing I felt was derogation. I reached that position after passing through many exams with high grades but what I encountered there was that my manager was saying things like “You are worthless, you actually don’t deserve working here, you don’t deserve the money you get” ... Then I started to internalize this derogation. I didn’t regard myself as valuable. I started seeing myself in this way. Like I’m incompetent, I’m not that talented, I’m not that clever.⁴⁴

Employees who are victims of discrimination-based mobbing experience a different kind of alienation in their work places. Since superiors or employers may perceive friendship or any kind of communication with mobbing victim as support to those people, other employees in that institution cannot even communicate with victims. No matter what happens to those specific people, other employees keep their silence. As mentioned by one of the respondents, losing one’s job is a big deal and a third person do not worth it. Raşit (Age 30, Civil Engineer):

An unbelievable marginalization, an unbelievable loneliness... And I had recently moved to Istanbul. And because the European side is more conservative, I was asking myself where the hell I came. I was marginalized for all my choices starting with my appearance, my parlance, my thoughts and everything. Not even marginalization, I was left completely alone.⁴⁵

The only way of getting over this problem is maintaining workplace peace in institutions and social peace in general. Excluding specific people or specific groups

⁴⁴ Mesela ilk hissettiğim şey değersizleştirmeydi. Ben örneğin oraya birçok sınavdan geçerek gelmişim, yüksek puanlarla. Ama karşılaştığım şey, yöneticim tarafından, “sen değersizsin, sen aslında burada hak ederek çalışmıyorsun, hak ederek maaş almıyorsun.” gibi... Daha sonra ben o değersizleştirmeyi içselleştirmeye başladım. Kendimi değerli görmüyordum. Kendimi bu şekilde göremeye başladım. Ben yapamam edemem, o kadar da yetenekli değilim, o kadar da akıllı değilim gibi.

⁴⁵ İnanılmaz bir ötekileşme, inanılmaz bir yalnızlık... Ve İstanbul’a yeni gelmişim. Avrupa tarafında da muhafazakarlık daha fazla ya, dedim “ben nereye geldim?”. Bütün tercihlerimden dolayı, tipinden başlıyor, konuşma tarzın, düşüncelerine, her şeyine kadar ötekileştirildim. Ötekileştirilme ne, yapayalnız bırakıldım.

only makes problem bigger. This is because, oppressed and oppressor rotate over the time and the only thing that does not change is oppression itself. Unless we can maintain social peace as a society, exclusion, discrimination, mobbing and all kinds of negative relations will remain.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION

In this thesis, it was aimed to find trends and patterns about mobbing experiences of highly educated, urban, middle-class mobbing victims in Turkey and correspondingly to recommend possible solutions and social policies on the issue of mobbing. In order to reach these trends and patterns firstly a literature review was made. Then, 20 in-depth interviews were made with highly educated, urban, middle-class employees who consider themselves as mobbing victims and 2 in-depth interviews were conducted with experts of mobbing issue. In this last part of the thesis, main findings of the study will be presented and preventive policy recommendations will be shared. For recommending social policies on the issue of mobbing, both current literature and policy expectations of respondents will be used. In that part, not only policy level recommendations but also individual and organizational level prevention strategies will be presented.

Main findings of this thesis may be summarized as follows:

1. Turkish legislation on mobbing has serious deficiencies.
2. In Turkey, lack of institutionalization among firms (public and private) is one of the most important factors which make fighting against mobbing harder.
 - Lack of inspection and arbitrary treatments invalidate laws and legislations about mobbing.
3. Unsuccessful management and Human Resources (HR) processes have significant effect on mobbing cases. If management or HR do not intervene immediately and accurately, victimization may reach critic levels.
4. Employers and management in institutions are generally perceived as indifferent and unaware on the issue of mobbing by employees. Even in some

cases employer or management allow mobbing incident to occur or use mobbing as a tool for discipline.

5. Fear of losing job is quite big and binding for employees; they cannot risk their future by complaining about mobbing or any other workplace problems. In this case, taking legal action is almost impossible for mobbing victims in Turkey.
6. Mobbers are generally considered as main source and reason of mobbing by victims.
7. Mobbing is perceived as individual problem rather than structural one, in both academia and social life.
 - Although legally preventing mobbing is responsibility of employer, in practice employees do not consider situation in this way. According to employee interviews mobbing is perceived as individual problem. The main reason of this situation is weak labor market.
8. Mobbing is strongly related with culture and society.
 - In Turkey, a specific form of mobbing is experienced, which may be called as discrimination-based mobbing. This type of mobbing is based on a visible ground, such as physical appearance, gender, religion and sect or political view.

In consequence of this study and the results obtained, some preventive policy recommendations can be presented. For this purpose, both current literature and policy expectations of respondents will be used. These policies will be categorized into three parts, according to three main actors of mobbing: policy level, organizational level and individual level.

Vartia-Väänänen argues that beside distinction based on actors, a distinction can be made between primary, secondary and tertiary preventions (2013). Primary level preventions aim to prevent negative acts or impacts of them by minimizing the risk in a proactive way. Secondary level preventions aim either to reduce or slow progress of the negative act and its effects or to increase resources of individuals. Tertiary level

preventions aim to reduce negative effects caused by occupational risks, to restore employee's health and to improve safety and health conditions of workplace (Vartia-Väänänen 2013, p. 11). Policy recommendations can also be presented in accordance with this categorization. In some studies, a taxonomy was generated by using these two categorizations (Murphy & Sauter, 2004; Leka et. al. 2008b; Hoel, 2008 cited in Vartia-Väänänen 2013, p. 11-12). In this study preventive policy recommendations will also be categorized in the same way.

First of all, policy level preventive strategies play the most important part, when constituting basis for fighting against mobbing. Primary level preventions may include laws and regulations. In order to solve mobbing problem permanently, a direct mobbing law, which includes a certain definition and reasonable coverage, is compulsory. Only a complete law can both protect employees from mobbing and prevent occurrence of new incidents. Laws and regulations should be based on social researches and should correct deficiencies of previous ones. Especially, problems such as burden of proof should be solved in favor of victims.

Secondary level preventions may include court cases. As it was discussed in previous chapters, frequency of lost mobbing cases negatively affects victims, when they trying to take legal actions. Employees should see law system protects their rights both theoretically and in practice.

Tertiary level preventions may include free and privileged health care service opportunities. Within this study it was observed that many mobbing victims have difficulties about getting psychological support during and after mobbing process, due to unemployment and financial troubles. State should eliminate this problem by offering this services to mobbing victims free of charge.

When considering organizational level strategies, it should not be ignored that preventive workplace strategies are prerequisite for both right to dignity and right to integrity at work (Coldwell, 2013). In order to maintain decent work conditions and high-quality job opportunities organizations should prevent any kind of work place hazards. These preventive strategies are also obligatory when considering employer's

responsibility of prevention which was stated in Law on Turkish Human Rights and Equality Institution (No.6701).

Primary level organizational strategies should be based on organizational anti-bullying policies. In many studies it was mentioned that the most efficient policy is zero tolerance approach (Pate & Beaumont, 2010; Rayner & McIvor, 2008; Strandmark, 2013). This approach should include both traditional approach which seeks for definitions and frequencies as a tool for sanctions and restorative practices which focuses on possible damages and their recovery (Coldwell, 2013). Moreover, hostile organizational culture, in which all kinds of work place problems can easily occur, should be eliminated from all institutions. Psychological work environment should be designed in accordance with peaceful and respectful organizational culture. Complementarily, both zero tolerance approach and respectful organizational culture should be adopted by all employees, managers and employers by means of trainings and orientations. However, as Prof. Sümer mentioned in our interview these trainings should be proactive. A newcomer should both sense this culture in practice and learn from trainings. This aim can only be achieved with combination of top-down and bottom-up approaches in organization and management (Strandmark, 2013).

Secondary level organizational strategies may include careful and objective investigation of complaints. An effective and objective organization chart may be established in organizations. An uncommitted ethical committee may be included in especially big institutions. If it is not possible, an external expert may be invited for either mediation or investigation. Moreover, organizations should also raise awareness among institutions. Especially, issues such as general work place hazards, work place victimizations, ways of taking precautions and taking legal action and most importantly work ethic should be included in employee and management trainings.

Tertiary level preventions may include professional after-care programs or group recovery programs within institutions (Vartia-Väänänen 2013). These programs may be considered as a part of employer's responsibility to prevent mobbing. If prevention policies fail for some reason, organizations should intervene immediately and activate these programs.

Finally, individual level strategies are also significant. As primary level preventive strategies trainings have great importance. Employees should be aware of possible workplace hazards, ways of taking measures and ways of struggle.

Secondary level preventions may include social support from friends and family of victim. As many respondents mentioned mobbing victims mostly feel depressed and lonely during mobbing experience. Social support is essential for coming through this hard period with minimum damage. Moreover, legal counselling is also important when someone experience mobbing. Many respondents also complained about their lack of knowledge about legal aspect of mobbing. Yet still, preventive system cannot be established on support and caring, they cannot prevent ongoing mobbing. Support can only be complementary.

Tertiary level individual preventions may include therapy. Although in many studies and reports, it was argued that psychotherapy is needed for recovery of mobbing victims (Leymann, 1990; Tınaz, 2006; Kırrel, 2007, ÇSGB, 2014), psychological problems of mobber mostly ignored. Whenas, mobbing is a type of violence and people who perform this violence may have serious psychological problems. Compulsory psychotherapy should be issued for the ones who perform this violence. Only then this solution become inclusive and result oriented enough.

Consequently, this study showed that there are significant legal and institutional deficiencies which negatively affect struggle against mobbing and make mobbing experiences of victims harder in Turkey. The most important problems on this issue are lack of institutionalization among institutions, lack of inspection and arbitrary treatments which invalidate laws and legislations about mobbing. Any of these previously proposed policy recommendations can be achieved without solving these underlying problems. Moreover, considering mobbing as an individual problem is also problematic. Since labor organizations are weak and individualization is common in Turkey, employees trying to solve their work related problems unaided. However, these structural problems cannot be solved with individual effort. Mobbing should be tackled as a social problem, rather than individual conflict. Only then, this problem can be handled in a serious and solution oriented way.

Another consequence of this study is that mobbing is strongly related with culture. In Turkey, a specific form of mobbing is experienced, which may be called as discrimination-based mobbing. This type of mobbing is based on a visible ground, such as physical appearance, gender, religion and sect or political view. This much obvious relation between discrimination and mobbing is indigenous to Turkey. Although, new Law on Turkish Human Rights and Equality Institution (No.6701) clearly defines both discrimination and mobbing, problems which were mentioned in previous paragraph may also make solution of these problems almost impossible.

Finally, this study has a great significance within the context of today's Turkey. In the last few months, merit was reconsidered and became commonly discussed issue in Turkey. Recently, it was realized that in almost every stages of the working life, personal characteristics and identities of people are taken into consideration, rather than their merits. In the circumstances, at the first stage discrimination is being experienced by applicants at the recruitment process. Later on mobbing, especially discrimination-based mobbing, is being experienced by employees in different levels. Recently, importance of merit-based employment is started to be discussed, in order to eliminate these kinds of risks and problems in both working life and in other parts of the social life.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: IN-DEPTH INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Çalışan Soruları:

A. Demografik Sorular:

1. Yaşınız:
2. Eğitiminiz:
3. Mesleğiniz:
4. Medeni haliniz:
5. Çocuk sayısı:
6. Kaç yıldır çalışıyorsunuz?

B. İş Yaşamına İlişkin Sorular:

1. Şu anda çalışıyor musunuz? (Cevap “evet” ise)
 - a) Hangi sektörde çalışıyorsunuz?
 - b) Hangi pozisyonda çalışıyorsunuz?
 - c) Ne kadar süredir çalışıyorsunuz?
 - d) Çalışma ortamınızı nasıl tanımlarsınız?
2. Şu anda çalışıyor musunuz? (Cevap “hayır” ise)
 - a) Daha önce ne kadar süreyle ve hangi pozisyonlarda çalıştınız?
 - b) Çalışmamak kendi tercihiniz mi? Bundan sonra çalışmayı düşünüyor musunuz?
 - c) Çalışmamanızın daha önce yaşadığınız mobbing deneyiminizle ilgisi var mı?

C. Mobbing Farkındalığına İlişkin Sorular:

1. Mobbing kavramını ilk ne zaman duydunuz? Kimden/hangi kaynaktan duydunuz?
2. Mobbing’i nasıl tanımlarsınız?
3. Konu hakkında ne biliyorsunuz?
4. Çevrenizdeki insanlar mobbing konusunda yeterince bilgili mi?
5. İşyerinizdeki insanlar mobbing konusunda yeterince bilgili mi?
 - a) İş arkadaşlarınız:
 - b) Yöneticileriniz:

D. Mobbing Deneyimine İlişkin Sorular:

1. Olay ne? Tam olarak ne yaşadınız?
2. Yaşadığınız deneyimi nasıl yorumluyorsunuz?
3. Yaşadığınız deneyimi nasıl adlandırıyordunuz?
4. Uygulayan kişinin yaşı?
5. Uygulayan kişinin cinsiyeti?
6. Uygulayan kişinin pozisyonu:
7. Uygulayan kişinin kişilik özellikleri:
8. Bu özelliklerle mobbing arasında bir ilişki var mı sizce?
9. Tek bir olay mıydı yoksa devam eden bir süreç miydi?
10. Yaşadıklarınızın sonucunda ne oldu? Aynı yerde çalışmaya devam ettiniz mi?
11. Sizce neden bunu “siz” yaşadınız?

E. Çözüm arama yolları ve desteklere ilişkin sorular:

1. Yaşadıklarınızla ilgili iş yerinizde bir şikayette bulundunuz mu?
 - a) Kime?
 - b) Hangi aşamada?
 - c) Ne cevap aldınız?
2. Yaşadıklarınızla ilgili iş yeriniz dışında hukuki bir şikayette bulundunuz mu?
 - a) Kime?
 - b) Hangi aşamada?
 - c) Ne cevap aldınız?
3. Avukat görüşü aldınız mı? Nasıl bir cevap aldınız?
4. Herhangi bir sendikaya üye misiniz?
Evet ise: Bu süreçte sendikanın bir etkisi/yardıımı oldu mu?
5. Yaşadıklarınızla ilgili başka bir kurum ya da kuruluşa başvurduunuz mu? (Dernek vb.)
 - a) Kime?
 - b) Hangi aşamada?
 - c) Ne cevap aldınız?
6. Mobbing deneyiminiz süresince en çok kim ya da kimlerden destek aldınız:
Aile / Arkadaşlar / Profesyonel destek / İş arkadaşları / Yöneticiler / İşveren

F. Mobbingin Etkilerine İlişkin Sorular:

1. Mobbing deneyiminizin sizin üzerinizde nasıl etkileri oldu?

Sağlık / Psikolojik / İş verimi / Diğer ilişkiler

2. Mobbing deneyiminizin aileniz üzerindeki etkileri oldu mu? Olduysa nasıl?
3. Sizce aşağıdaki özelliklerinizden hangisi ya da hangilerine sahip olmanız/olmamanız mobbing'e maruz kalmanızda etkili oldu?

Cinsiyet / Etnik kimlik / Din / Mezhep / Cinsel yönelim / Siyasi görüş /
Hayat tarzı / Fiziksel görünüm

(Bunların dışında sizin etkili olduğunu düşündüğünüz kişisel özellikler)

G. Mobbing ile Mücadeleye İlişkin Öneriler:

1. Toplumdaki mobbing farkındalığının artırılmasına dair önerileriniz:
 - a) Farkındalığın artırılmasına medyanın nasıl bir katkısı olabilir?
 - b) Farkındalığın artırılmasına sosyal medyanın nasıl bir katkısı olabilir?
2. İş yerindeki mobbing farkındalığının artırılmasına dair önerileriniz:
3. Mobbing konusunda yasal yaptırımların geliştirilmesine dair önerileriniz:
4. Mobbing konusunda devletin sağlayabileceği desteğe dair önerileriniz:

Uzman Soruları:

1. Sizce mobbing nedir?
2. Mobbing konusuyla ilgilenmeye nasıl karar verdiniz?
3. Türkiye'de mobbing kavramının tanımlanması ve Türkçeleştirilmesi konusunda ne düşünüyorsunuz?
4. Tanımın toplumda yeterince anlaşıldığını düşünüyor musunuz?
(Anlaşılmadığını düşünüyorsanız) Bu konuda yaşanan sıkıntıların nedeni nedir?
5. Sizce dünyada iş yeri sorunları ne zaman mobbing diye adlandırılmaya başlandı? Türkiye'de ne zaman mobbing diye adlandırılmaya başlandı? Daha önce bu sorunlar nasıl adlandırılıyordu?
6. Dünyada mobbing konusuyla ilgili yapılan bilimsel araştırmalardan dikkatinizi çeken bakış açıları ve çalışmalara ne gibi örnekler verebilirsiniz?

7. Türkiye’de mobbing konusuyla ilgili yapılan bilimsel arařtırmalardan dikkatinizi çeken bakıř aıları ve çalıřmalara ne gibi örnekler verebilirsiniz?
8. Mobbing ile mücadelede çalıřanlara yardımcı olabilmek adına ne tür sosyal politikaların oluřturulmasını önerirsiniz?

Dernek Soruları:

1. Sizce mobbing nedir?
2. Mobbing konusuyla ilgilenmeye nasıl karar verdiniz?
3. Üyeleriniz mobbing’e maruz kaldıklarında onlara en çok hangi konularda destek sağlıyorsunuz? Nasıl?
4. Dava süreçleri nasıl işliyor?
5. Mobbing olduğuna karar verilen vakaların ortak özellikleri var mı? Varsa nelerdir?
6. Sizin dava süreçlerine etkiniz nasıl oluyor?
7. Takip ettiğiniz kadarıyla mobbing davaları çoğunlukla hangi tarafın lehine sonuçlanıyor?
8. Sizce mobbing ile ilgili mevcut yasalar yeterli mi?
9. (Yeterli olmadığı düşünülüyorsa) Ne gibi deęişiklikler ya da eklemeler yapılmasını önerirsiniz?
10. Mobbing ile mücadelede çalıřanlara yardımcı olabilmek adına ne tür sosyal politikaların oluřturulmasını önerirsiniz?

APPENDIX B: METU ETHICAL COMITEE APPROVAL PAGE

UYGULAMALI ETİK ARAŞTIRMA MERKEZİ
APPLIED ETHICS RESEARCH CENTER



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17 Ağustos 2015

Gönderilen : Doç.Dr. F. Umut Beşpınar Akgüner
Sosyoloji Bölümü

Gönderen : Prof. Dr. Canan Sümer
IAK Başkan Vekili

İlgili : Etik Onayı

Danışmanlığını yapmış olduğunuz Sosyal Politika Bölümü öğrencisi Ezgi Özten'in "Türkiye'de 2010-2015 Yılları Arasında Mobbing Sürecindeki Aktörlerin Mobbing Algısı ve Mobbing ile Mücadele Konusundaki Sosyal Politika Önerileri" isimli araştırması "İnsan Araştırmaları Komitesi" tarafından uygun görülerek gerekli onay verilmiştir.

Bilgilerinize saygılarımla sunarım.

Etik Komite Onayı

Uygundur

17/08/2015

Prof. Dr. Canan Sümer

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Sosyoloji Bölümü

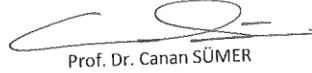
Gönderen: ODTÜ İnsan Araştırmaları Etik Kurulu (İAEK)

İlgi: İnsan Araştırmaları Etik Kurulu Başvurusu

Sayın Doç.Dr. Umut BEŞPINAR AKGÜNER;

Danışmanlığını yaptığımız yüksek lisans öğrencisi Ezgi ÖZTEN'in "Türkiye'de kentli, yüksek eğitilmiş, orta sınıf mobbing mağdurlarının mobbinge bakışları ve mobbing ile mücadele konusundaki sosyal politika önerileri" başlıklı araştırması İnsan Araştırmaları Etik Kurulu tarafından uygun görülerek gerekli onay 2016-SOS-132 protokol numarası ile 29.07.2016-30.12.2016 tarihleri arasında geçerli olmak üzere verilmiştir.

Bilgilerinize saygılarımızla sunarız.



Prof. Dr. Canan SÜMER

İnsan Araştırmaları Etik Kurulu Başkanı

Prof. Dr. Meliha ALTUNIŞIK

İAEK Üyesi



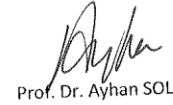
Prof. Dr. Mehmet UTKU

İAEK Üyesi



Yrd. Doç. Dr. Pinar KAYGAN

İAEK Üyesi



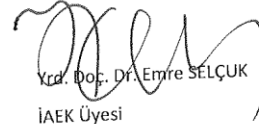
Prof. Dr. Ayhan SOL

İAEK Üyesi



Prof. Dr. Ayhan Gürbüz DEMİR

İAEK Üyesi



Yrd. Doç. Dr. Emre SELÇUK

İAEK Üyesi

APPENDIX C: TURKISH SUMMARY / TÜRKÇE ÖZET

GİRİŞ

Bu tezin temel amacı Türkiye’deki yüksek eğitilmiş, kentli, orta sınıf mobbing mağdurlarının mobbing deneyimleriyle ilgili eğilim ve örüntüleri saptamak ve buna bağlı olarak mobbing konusunda olası çözümler ve sosyal politikalar önermektir. Şimdiye kadar genellikle psikoloji literatürünün bir konusu olarak ele alınan mobbing, bu çalışmada sosyal politika ve sosyoloji literatürleri çerçevesinde incelenmiştir. Çünkü mobbing günümüzde çalışanların sıklıkla karşılaştığı ve mağdur olduğu sosyal bir sorundur.

Bu tez çalışması kapsamında 3 temel araştırma sorusu ele alınmıştır. Bunlardan ilki yüksek eğitilmiş, kentli, orta sınıf mobbing mağdurlarının mobbing deneyimlerinin mobbing aktörlerine dair algılarını nasıl dönüştürdüğünü araştırmaktadır. İkincisi, Türkiye’de yüksek eğitilmiş, kentli, orta sınıf mobbing mağdurlarının deneyimledikleri mobbing türlerini ve bunların temellerini araştırmaktadır. Üçüncüsü ise, mobbing sorununun çözümüne dair üretilebilecek sosyal politika önerilerini ele almaktadır.

Çalışma kapsamında “mobbing”, “ayrımcılık”, “cinsel taciz”, “insana yakışır iş” ve “iş kalitesi” gibi kavramlar kullanılmış ve bu kavramlar arasındaki ilişkilere değinilmiştir. Mobbing kavramı İsveç’li psikolog Heinz Leymann’ın tanımındaki haliyle kullanıldı. Bu tanımda mobbing “iş yaşamında bir veya daha fazla kişiye yönelik sistematik olan düşmanca ve etik dışı iletişim kurma yoluyla psikolojik terör” olarak kullanılmıştır. Leymann tanımlamasında ayrıca mobbing’in sıklığı ve devam süresine de işaret etmiştir. Ona göre iş yaşamında karşılaşılan negatif olayların mobbing sayılabilmesi için en az haftada bir kez tekrarlanması ve en az 6 ay boyunca sürmesi gerekmektedir. Ancak bu çalışmada Leymann’ın bu görüşü gözetilmemiştir. Çünkü mobbing’e böylesine net bir sınır koymak yerine daha esnek sınırların belirlenmesi gerektiği görüşü benimsenmiştir.

Sosyal bilimlerde bir konuyu farklı bakış açılarıyla ya da farklı yöntemlerle ele almak önemli katkılar sağlar. Bu tezin de sosyal bilimler literatürüne bazı önemli katkıları

olmuştur. Örneğin, tezin mobbing literatürüne en büyük katkısı mobbing'in Türkiye'de ilk defa sosyal politika bakış açısıyla çalışılmış olmasıdır. Ağırlıklı olarak psikoloji biliminin altında çalışılan bu konuyu sosyal politika bakış açısıyla çalışmak konunun çözülmesi gereken toplumsal bir sorun olarak algılanmasının yolunu açmaktadır. Tezin sosyal politika literatürüne katkısı ise mobbing'in insana yakışır iş kavramıyla birlikte çalışılmış olmasıdır. İnsana yakışır iş kavramı her ne kadar ayrımcılık ve iş kazaları gibi ciddi iş yeri sorunlarını ele alsada literatürde mobbing genellikle bu kavramın konusu olarak ele alınmaz. Bu çalışma mobbing'in de tıpkı diğer önemli iş yeri sorunları gibi ciddi ve çözülmesi gereken bir sorun ve insana yakışır iş kavramının bir gerekliliği olarak ele alınması gerektiğini savunmaktadır.

LİTERATÜR TARAMASI:

Mobbing ilk olarak küçük hayvan gruplarının davranışlarını ifade eden bir kavram olarak kullanılmıştır. Ancak kavramı bu çalışmada kullanıldığı anlamıyla, yani yetişkinlerin iş yerinde maruz kaldıkları zorbalık anlamıyla, ilk kullanan kişi Leymann'dır. Günümüzde de mobbing konusunda en çok faydalanılan tanımlama ve çalışmalar yine Leymann'a aittir. Leymann'ı takiben birçok çalışma ve tanımlamalar yapılmıştır. Özellikle psikoloji literatürü mobbing'i kişilik, psikososyal iş ortamı ve mobbing'in psikolojik sağlıkla ilgili sonuçları açısından sıklıkla ele almıştır. Bunun dışında sosyoloji, hukuk, işletme, cinsiyet çalışmaları gibi disiplinler de mobbing konusunda çalışmalar yürütmüştür.

Bu çalışmada mobbing olarak ifade edilen kavramı farklı ülkeler ve farklı düşünürler aynı ya da benzer anlamlı farklı kavramlarla ifade etmişlerdir. "Mobbing" Almanca konuşulan ülkeler, Hollanda ve bazı Akdeniz ülkelerinde kullanılmaktadır. İngilizce konuşulan ülkeler "zorbalık" kavramını kullanırken, ABD "iş yerinde duygusal taciz" ve "iş yerinde taciz" kavramlarını kullanmaktadır.

2000'li yıllarla birlikte mobbing çalışma yaşamında önemli bir sorun haline gelmiştir. Neoliberalizm ve bireysellik etkisiyle iş yaşamı ciddi şekilde değişikliğe uğramıştır. İş kontratları belirli süreli, geçici ve dolayısıyla güvencesiz hale gelmiştir. Bu durumda

işsizlik çalışanların ücretlerini kontrol altına almak ve işçileri disipline etmek için kullanılan bir araç haline geldi. Kovulma tehdidi altındaki işçiler her türlü baskıya ve kötü muameleye maruz kalmaktadırlar. Bu olumsuz davranışlar zaman içinde mobbing olarak nitelendirilmeye başlanmıştır.

Bir sosyal politika konusu olarak mobbing ise insana yakışır anlayışının bir gerekliliği olarak ele alınabilir. Mobbing özellikle işçilerin temel hakları ve sosyal koruma boyutlarıyla ele alınabilir. İnsana yakışır iş kavramının işçilerin haklarıyla ilgili boyutu ayrımcılık kavramını kapsasa da mobbing bu kavrama dâhil edilmemiştir. Oysa mobbing sebepleri bakımından ayrımcılıktan çok farklı olsa da, sonuçları açısından ayrımcılıkla oldukça benzerdir. İş sağlığı ve güvenliğinin hem fiziksel hem de zihinsel ve psikolojik açıdan sağlanması, sosyal güvenlik hizmetlerinin mobbing sebebiyle işini ya da sağlığını kaybedenleri de kapsaması ve mobbinge mücadelenin hem kurumsal hem de ulusal bir politika olarak eke alınması gibi insana yakışır iş politikalarının uygulanmasını sağlamak mobbinge mücadeleyi mümkün kılabilir.

Çalışma kapsamında yapılan literatür taramasının bir parçası olarak, bazı gelişmiş ülkelerin ve Avrupa Birliği gibi bazı çok uluslu organizasyonların mobbing konusundaki yasal uygulamaları da incelenmiştir. Fransa, Almanya, Belçika, İsveç, Finlandiya, Norveç ve Kanada bu çalışma kapsamında incelenen ülkelerdir. Yapılan araştırma sonucunda, mobbing'e dair önleyici kültürün örgütlerce benimsenmesi, yaşanan mobbing ve diğer iş ile ilgili problemlerden temelde işverenin sorumlu tutulması, mobbing'e tolerans tanımayan anlayışın geliştirilmesi, hem kurum içinden hem de kurum dışından mobbing vakalarını değerlendirmek üzere uzmanların görevlendirilmesi ve mobbing ile mücadelenin sadece kurumsal olarak algılanmayıp toplumsal bir boyutta çok yönlü olarak ele alınması gibi yaklaşımların bahsi geçen ülkeler tarafından uygulandığı görülmüştür.

Türkiye'deki mobbing çalışmaları ise mobbing'i genellikle tanımlayıcı bir bakış açısıyla ele almıştır. Bu çalışmaların temel amacı toplumun mobbing konusundaki bilgisini ve farkındalığını artırmaktır. Türkiye literatüründeki diğer çalışmlarsa meslek kolları ve sektörler bazında yürütülmüştür. En çok çalışılan sektörler ise sağlık, eğitim ve eğitim sektörü özelinde akademik mobbing'dir. Bunlar dışında Türkiye'de

mobbing ile ilgili geniş kapsamlı arařtırmaların yapılması mümkün olamamıřtır. Ancak alıřma ve Sosyal Gvenlik Bakanlıđı ve Aile ve Sosyal Politikalar Bakanlıđı gibi bazı bakanlıkların hazırladıđı raporlar bu konuya daha geniş apta aıklamalar getirmiřtir. Bu raporlarda kullanılan veriler ALO 170 alıřma ve Sosyal Gvenlik İletiřim Merkezi'nden alınmıřtır. Bu raporlarda ALO 170 ađrı merkezine yapılan bařvurular Őehir, sektr, iř kolu, yař, cinsiyet, eđitim gibi faktrlere gre oranlanmıřtır.

Trkiye'de mobbing'e dair yasal dzenlemelere gelince, bu tezin byk ođunluđunun yazıldıđı dnemde Trkiye'de mobbing'e dair direkt bir yasanın olmadıđını vurgulamakta fayda var. Bu dnemde mobbing'e dair mevzuat 6098 sayılı Trk Borlar Kanunu, 4857 sayılı İř Kanunu, 657 sayılı Devlet Memurları Kanunu, 2011/2 sayılı İřyerlerinde Psikolojik Tacizin (Mobbing) nlenmesi Genelgesi gibi direkt olmayan ve ya herhangi bir yaptırım belirtmeyen dzenlemelerden oluřmaktaydı. Ancak Nisan 2016'da kabul edilen 6701 sayılı Trkiye İnsan Hakları ve Eřitlik Kurumu Kanunu mobbing'i direkt olarak tanımlamıřtır. Bu yasada ayrımcılıđın ne olduđu tanımlanmıř ve her trl ayrımcılık yasaklanmıřtır. Mobbing ise dokuz ayrımcılık trnden biri olarak ele alınmıř ve tanımlanmıřtır. Bu yasanın mobbing'le mcadele konusunda nemli bir adım olduđu yadsınamaz. Ancak řunu da belirtmek gerekir ki, bu yasa sadece kiřilerin ayrımcılık sebebiyle maruz kaldıđı mobbing'e iřaret etmektedir. Bu durum birok mobbing trn kapsam dıřında bırakmaktadır.

METODOLOJİ:

Daha nce de belirtildiđi gibi bu tezin temel amacı Trkiye'deki yksek eđitimi, kentli, orta sınıf mobbing mađdurlarının mobbing deneyimleriyle ilgili eđilim ve rntleri saptamak ve buna bađlı olarak mobbing konusunda olası zmler ve sosyal politikalar nermektir. Bu amala mobbing konusundaki mevcut literatr ile farklı lkelerin ve Trkiye'nin sosyal politika pratikleri incelenmiř ve ayrıca kendilerini mobbing mađduru olarak gren 20 yksek eđitimi, kentli, orta sınıf alıřanla ve 2 mobbing uzmanıyla yarı yapılandırılmıř derinlemesine mlakatlar gerekleřtirilmiřtir.

Bu uzmanlar, ODTÜ Psikoloji Bölümü Öğretim Görevlisi Prof. Dr. Canan Sümer ve Mobbing ile Mücadele Derneği Başkanı Hüseyin Gün'dür.

Mülakatlar için üç farklı soru seti hazırlanmıştır. Bunlar çalışan görüşmeleri, uzman görüşmesi ve dernek görüşmesi için hazırlanmış soru setleridir. Mülakatlara başlamadan önce ODTÜ İnsan Araştırmaları Etik Kurulu onayına başvurulmuş ve mülakatlarda kullanılacak tüm soru setlerinin uygunluğuna dair bir onay alınmıştır. Bu onay çalışmanın katılımcılar üzerinde bir zarar sebebiyet vermeyeceğini göstermektedir.

Çalışan görüşmeleri Türkiye'nin en çok çalışan nüfüne sahip iki ili olan İstanbul ve Ankara'da yapılmıştır. Katılımcılar 10 kadın 10 erkek olmak üzere 20 kişidir. Katılımcılar en az üniversite mezunu ve 24-50 yaş aralığındadır. Her bir çalışanın farklı meslek kolundan olması sağlanamamış olsa da kişilerin mümkün olduğunca farklı meslek gruplarından ve sosyal çevrelerden seçilmesine dikkat edilmeye çalışılmıştır. Katılımcılara ulaşmak için öncelikle kartopu örneklem yöntemi daha sonra kolayda örneklem yöntemiyle ulaşılmıştır.

Çalışan görüşmeleri kapsamında ortalama 1 saat süren yüz yüze görüşmeler yapılmıştır. Bu görüşmelerde çalışanlara iş yaşamı ve mobbing deneyimlerine dair sorular sorulmuştur. Uzman görüşmelerinde ise kişilerin uzmanlıklarından faydalanarak araştırmanın zayıf kısımları desteklenmeye çalışılmıştır. Prof. Dr. Canan Sümer ile yapılan görüşmede amaç, çoğunluğu psikoloji temelli çalışmalardan oluşan mobbing literatürüne sosyal politika temelli bir mobbing çalışmasını nasıl eklemleyebileceğimiz konusunda, endüstri ve örgüt psikolojisi alanında 20 yıldan fazla süredir değerli çalışmalar yapmış bir akademisyenin görüşlerini almaktır. Mobbing ile Mücadele Derneği Başkanı Hüseyin Gün ile yapılan görüşmenin amacı ise dernek vasıtasıyla çok sayıda mobbing vakası ve mobbing'e dair yasal süreçle alakadar olmuş bir uzmandan mobbing'in ülkemizdeki hukuki boyutuyla ve uygulamalarıyla ilgili bilgi almaktır. Hem çalışan görüşmeleri hem de uzman görüşmeleri bu çalışmaya değerli katkılar sağlamıştır.

Bu çalışmanın bazı güçlü ve zayıf tarafları vardır. Çalışmanın güçlü yanları Türkiye’de mobbing’i bir sosyal politika konusu olarak işleyen ilk çalışma olması ve mobbing konusunun görece az çalışılmış alanlara değinerek ileride yapılması muhtemel çalışmalar için yeni tartışma alanları açmasıdır. Zayıf yanları ise sınırlı veriyle yapılan çıkarımların genellenmesinin mümkün olmaması, mobbing konusundaki bilgi kirliliği sebebiyle bazı katılımcıların mobbing kavramı konusundaki bilgilerinin yetersiz ya da yanlış olması ve araştırmacının iş tecrübesi sınırlı ve mobbing deneyimi olmayan bir kişi olarak katılımcılara göre öteki pozisyonunda olmasıdır.

TEMEL BULGULAR

Bu çalışma, mobbinge mücadeleyi olumsuz yönde etkileyen ve mağdurların mobbing deneyimlerini daha da zorlaştıran önemli yasal ve kurumsal eksiklikler olduğunu göstermektedir. Ancak bu etkileri incelemeyen önce her katılımcının mobbing’i kendilerince tanımladığını belirtmekte fayda var. Kendilerinde mobbing’den ne anladıkları sorulduğunda katılımcıların çoğu yaşadıkları deneyimden hareketle bir tanım ya da açıklama yapmaya çalıştılar. Ancak mobbing konusunda bir eğitim ya da ders almış olan bazı katılımcılar kavramı akademik tanıma yakın bir şekilde tanımladı. Katılımcıların mobbing’i tanımlarken sıklıkla kullandığı bazı terimler “yalnızlık”, “mutsuzluk”, “özgüven kaybı”, “depresyon” ve “öfke”.

Çalışmaya katılan mobbing mağdurlarının deneyimlerine gelince ise neredeyse 20 katılımcının hepsini kapsayan bir örüntü bulunmuştur. Bu örüntü yapılan uzman görüşmelerinden elde edilen bilgilerle de desteklenmiştir. Toplanan veriler göstermiştir ki mağdurlar genellikle yaşadıkları mobbing deneyiminin bir sebebi olduğu düşüncesindedir. Bu sebebi anlamaya çalışmanın yanı sıra bir de yaşadıklarının bir sorumlusunu bulmak eğilimindedir. Katılımcıların bu konudaki görüşleri de üç kategoride toplanabilir. Bu kategoriler aynı zamanda bahsi geçen örüntünün ayaklarını da oluşturmaktadır.

İlk kategori mağdurların kuruma dair algısı. Bu çalışmanın sonuçlarına göre Türkiye’deki kurumların çoğu kurumsallıktan uzak ve bu sebeple bu kurumlarda

çalışanlar mobbing'e maruz kalmaya daha yatkın oluyorlar. Mobbing yaşanması durumunda kurum ısrarla olayı yok saymayı seçiyor. İlk amirler ve hatta onların amirleri hiçbir şey yapmamayı tercih ediyorlar. Mobbing'e karşı mücadele etmek ya da bu konuda farkındalık yaratmak şirketlerin öncelik sırasında değil. Mağdurlar çoğunlukla bu durumu yöneticilerin şahsi görüşü ya da tavrı olarak algılasa da mobbing'e verilen ya da verilmeyen tepki aslında kurumun bakış açısını göstermektedir. Ancak mağdurlar genellikle mobbing'in sorumlusu olarak direkt mobbing uygulayan kişiyi ve bazen de yöneticileri görmektedir. Mobbing kişisel bir sorun olarak algılanmaktadır. Mağdur sayısı artmadıkça da mobbing şahsi bir sorun olarak algılanmaya devam etmektedir.

İkinci kategori mağdurun yasalara bakışını ele almaktadır. Hem çalışan görüşmeleri hem de uzman görüşmeleri göstermiştir ki mobbing konusundaki mevcut yasalar çalışanların haklarını yeterince korumamaktadır. Mobbing'in tanımını bile net olarak yapamayan, sınırlarını belirleyemeyen ve direkt olmayan bu yasalar çalışanları güvencesiz kılmaktadır. Bu güvencesizlik çalışanları mobbing'e açık hale getirmekte ve bu durumda mobbing davası açmak çalışanlar açısından kolay olmamaktadır. Türkiye'deki kurumlar birbirine çok yakın olduğundan, haberler şirketler arasında çok hızlı yayılmaktadır. Bu durumda bir şirkete dava açmak diğer şirketlere yapılacak iş başvurularında olumsuz görüş oluşturmakta ve mobbing mağdurlarını dava açma fikrinden uzaklaştırmaktadır. Bu durum her ne kadar mağdurlar tarafından ekonomik ve sosyal sebeplere bağlansa da aslında büyük ölçüde hukuk sisteminin yetersizliğinden kaynaklanmaktadır. Türkiye'de direkt bir mobbing yasası olmaması ve faydalanılan direkt olmayan yasaların mağdurları yeterince koruyamaması gibi ciddi bir sorun söz konusudur. Özellikle önleyici yasaların eksikliği çok ciddi sonuçlar doğurmaktadır.

Üçüncü kategori ise mağdurların mobbing uygulayan kişiye bakışıdır. Kurumların ve şirketlerin kurumsallıktan uzak olduğu ve hukuk sisteminin yeterince düzgün işlemediği bir ortamda, mağdurlar mobbing'in tek sorumlusu olarak uygulayan kişiyi görmektedirler. Birçok katılımcı mobbing'in sebebini tamamıyla kişisel algılamakta ve mobbing uygulayan kişinin kötülüğünden ya da kişisel sorunlarından

kaynaklandığını düşünmektedir. Mobbing'in sosyal ve yapısal bir sorun olarak algılanmak yerine kişiselleştirilmesi mobbing ile mücadeleyi çok zor bir hale getirmektedir. Çünkü çalışanlar sorunu kişisel olarak algıladıkça sorunlarını tek sanarak ve kendilerini yalnız hissederek kendilerini çözümsüzlüğe itmektedirler.

Bu çalışma Türkiye'deki mobbing aktörlerinin yanı sıra farklı mobbing formlarını da ortaya koymuştur. Türkiye'de, ayrımcılık temelli mobbing diye de anılabilecek, bazı özel mobbing formları yaşanmaktadır. Ayrımcılıktan farklı olarak bu mobbing türü ayrımcılığın temelini oluşturan sebeplerden birine dayanmakta ama devamında mobbing pratikleriyle işlemektedir. Yani kişi sahip olduğu bir kimlik ya da özellik sebebiyle mobbing'e maruz kalmaktadır. Bu tip mobbing fiziksel görünüm, cinsiyet, din ve mezhep veya politik görüş gibi görünür bir temele dayanmaktadır. Görünür özellikler kişileri kategorize etmek, ayırtırmak ve ötekileştirmek için bir araç olarak kullanılmaktadır. Din ve politik görüş gibi görünür olmayan özellikler ise görünür formlara indirgenerek yine aynı ötekileştirme gerçekleştirilmektedir. Bu özellikler çoğunlukla örtüşmekte ve birbirleriyle birlikte işlemektedirler.

Ayrımcılık davranışı hemen hemen her kültürde görülmesine rağmen ayrımcılık temelli mobbing Türkiye'ye özgü bir davranış gibi görünmektedir. Türkiye'de sosyal ve siyasal ortamdaki kutuplaşma, çalışma hayatındaki kurumsallaşma eksikliği ile bir araya gelince ayrımcılık temelli mobbing'e son derece uygun bir ortam hazırlanmış oluyor. Dahası böyle bir ortamda bu davranış hem işverenler hem de çalışanlar tarafından normalleştiriliyor. Kişiler bunu bir suç ya da problem olarak görmektense, işverenin çalışan üzerinde bir hakkı olarak görme eğilimindedir. Özellikle "farklı" ya da "öteki" olan çalışanlar üzerinde bu tip baskılar kurmak neredeyse bir hak olarak görülmekte. Bu durumun temel nedeni olarak, toplumda farklılığın normal algılanması gibi bir bilincin yerleşmemiş olması görülebilir.

Çalışma kapsamında yukarıda bahsi geçen dört özelliği, yani fiziksel görünüm, cinsiyet, din ve mezhep veya politik görüşün, ele alınması ise bunların görünür pratikler olmaları ya da görünür pratiklere indirgenebilecek kimlikler olmalarıdır. Bunlar dışında etnik kimlik ve cinsel yönelim gibi özellikler de soru setinde sorulmuştur. Ancak bu özelliklerle ilgili dikkate değer sonuçlar çıkmamıştır. Etnik

kimliğin dikkate değer sonuç vermemesinin sebebi görünür bir pratik olmamasıyken, cinsel yönelimin dikkate değer sonuç vermemesinin sebebi çalışmaya katılanlar arasında LGBTİ bireylerin olmamasıdır. Uygun gruplarla çalışıldığında bu özelliklerin de anlamlı sonuçlar çıkarma ihtimalleri vardır.

ÖNERİLER

Bu çalışmanın neticesinde, mevcut literatürden ve katılımcıların sosyal politika beklentilerinden yola çıkarak bazı önleyici politika önerileri sunulmuştur. Bu öneriler öncelikle aktörler boyutunda ele alınmış ve daha sonra da amaçlarına göre seviyelere ayrılmıştır. Aktörler boyutunda ele alınacak seviyeler politika boyutu, organizasyonel boyut ve bireysel boyuttur. Bu boyutlar birincil, ikincil ve üçüncül seviye olarak sınıflandırılmıştır. Birincil seviye önlemler negatif davranışları ve bunların etkilerini proaktif şekilde minimize etmeyi amaçlamaktadır. İkincil seviye önlemler ya negatif davranışları ve etkilerini azaltmayı ya da bireylerin olanaklarını artırmayı amaçlamaktadır. Üçüncül seviye önlemler ise mesleki risklerden dolayı oluşabilecek olumsuz etkileri azaltmayı, çalışanın sağlığına geri kavuşmasını sağlamayı ve işyerindeki iş sağlığı ve güvenliği koşullarını geliştirmeyi amaçlamaktadır.

Politika seviyesindeki önlemler mobbing ile mücadelede temel oluşturma potansiyelinde oldukları için bu alınabilecek önlemlerin en önemlileridir. Birincil seviye önlemler yasalar ve düzenlemelerden oluşmalıdır. Mobbing sorununu kalıcı olarak çözenin yolu konuyla ilgili direkt bir yasa ile sorunun net bir şekilde tanımlanması ve sınırlandırılmasıdır. Ancak tam ve düzgün bir yasa hem çalışanların haklarını koruyabilir hem de oluşabilecek sonraki sorunları engelleyebilir. Bu yasa hem bilimsel veriye dayanmalı hem de daha önceki yasalardaki boşlukları gidermelidir. İkincil seviye önlemler davalara dayanmalıdır. Dava süreçleri mağduriyetleri önleyecek nitelikte olmalıdır. Mağdur lehine sonuçlanan davaların fazlalığı çalışanları yasal haklarını aramak konusunda teşvik edebilir. Üçüncül seviye önlemler ücretsiz ve öncelikli sağlık hizmetlerini kapsayabilir. Bu çalışma birçok mobbing mağdurunun maddi sorunları sebebiyle psikolojik destek alamadığını

göstermiştir. Devletin görevi bu finansal sorunları elimine ederek mağdurlara öncelikli ve ücretsiz sağlık hizmeti verebilmektir.

Organizasyonel seviyedeki önlemler iş yerinde insana yakışır çalışma koşullarını ve yüksek kaliteli iş olanaklarını sağlamak adına kurumların alabileceği önlemlerdir. 6701 sayılı Türkiye İnsan Hakları ve Eşitlik Kurumu Kanunu'na göre iş yerlerinde çalışanların ayrımcılık ve mobbing gibi olumsuz davranışlarla karşılaşmasını engellemek adına önlemler almak işverenin, dolayısıyla kurumun sorumluluğudur. Birincil seviye önlemler mobbing karşıtı politikalara dayanmalıdır. Birçok çalışma göstermektedir ki sıfır tolerans yaklaşımı bu konudaki en etkili politikalandır. Bunun yanı sıra iş yeri kültürünün düşmanca olması da mobbing ve buna benzer diğer işyeri sorunlarının kolayca ortaya çıkabilmesi için uygun zemin hazırlamaktadır. Bunu engellemek adına psikolojik iş ortamının barışçıl ve saygılı olmasını sağlamak yine kurumların sorumluluğudur. Kurumlar bu politikaları ve anlayışları hem kural olarak çalışanlara bildirmeli hem de uygulamalı olarak çalışanlara hissettirmelidirler. İkincil seviye önlemler mobbing konusundaki şikâyetlerin dikkatli bir şekilde ve tarafsız olarak değerlendirilmesidir. Bu konuda etik kurul ya da dengi olacak birimin ana şemadan bağımsız olarak çalışabileceği yeni bir organizasyon şeması faydalı olabilir. Herhangi bir birime bağlı olmayan bu etik kurul ister kurum içinden ister dışarıdan sağlanabilir. Bunun dışında şirketler çalışanların mobbing'e dair farkındalığını artırmak için kurum içi eğitimler de planlamalıdır. Özellikle iş yerinde oluşabilecek tehlikeler, mağduriyetler, alınabilecek önlemler ve iş etiğiyle ilgili eğitimler hem çalışanlara hem de yöneticilere verilmelidir. Üçüncül seviye önlemler ise iyileştirici grup programlarını içerebilir. Önleyici politikaların yeterli olmadığı noktada kurum acilen devreye girmeli ve çalışanın ya da çalışanların mağduriyetlerini gidermek konusunda destek sağlamalıdır.

Bireysel seviyedeki önlemler kişinin kendi imkânlarıyla sağlayabileceği önlemler ve hazırlıklardır. Birincil seviye önlemler eğitimleri kapsayabilir. Kişiler iş yerlerinde karşılaşabilecekleri tehlikeler ve sorunlar konusunda hazırlıklı olmalıdır. Bilinçli olmak ve çıkabilecek sorunlarla başa çıkabilmek adına öz varlıklarını geliştirmek bireylere her zaman fayda sağlar. İkincil seviye önlemler yakın çevreden gelebilecek

sosyal desteęi kapsayabilir. Yalnızlık hissi mobbing mağdurlarının sıklıkla yaşadığı bir durumdur. Bunu önlemenin en etkili yolu ise kişinin iş hayatı dışında kalan hayatından, yani aile ve arkadaşlarından destek alabilmesidir. Bu zor süreci en az hasarla atlatabilmenin tek yolu sosyal destektir. Bunun yanında kişi profesyonel danışmanlık hizmetleri olarak bu zor süreçte alabileceği önlemler ve başvurabileceği kurumlar konusunda bilinçlenebilir. Üçüncül seviye önlemler kişilerin alabileceği terapilerdir. Birçok çalışma göstermiştir ki mobbing sürecinde mağdurlar psikoterapiye ihtiyaç duymaktadırlar. Bu ihtiyacı göz ardı etmek ciddi sonuçlar doğurabilir. Bunun yanı sıra mobbing'in bir şiddet türü olduğu göz önünde bulundurularak mobbing uygulayan kişiye de zorunlu psikoterapi önerilmesi sorunun devam etmesini önlemek konusunda önemli bir adım olabilir.

APPENDIX D: TEZ FOTOKOPİSİ İZİN FORMU

ENSTİTÜ

Fen Bilimleri Enstitüsü	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Uygulamalı Matematik Enstitüsü	<input type="checkbox"/>
Enformatik Enstitüsü	<input type="checkbox"/>
Deniz Bilimleri Enstitüsü	<input type="checkbox"/>

YAZARIN

Soyadı : Özten
Adı : Ezgi
Bölümü : Sosyal Politika Ana Bilim Dalı

TEZİN ADI (İngilizce) :

MOBBING EXPERIENCES IN TURKEY: ACTORS, PRACTICES AND SOCIAL
POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

TEZİN TÜRÜ : Yüksek Lisans Doktora

1. Tezimin tamamından kaynak gösterilmek şartıyla fotokopi alınabilir.
2. Tezimin içindekiler sayfası, özet, indeks sayfalarından ve/veya bir bölümünden kaynak gösterilmek şartıyla fotokopi alınabilir.
3. Tezimden bir bir (1) yıl süreyle fotokopi alınmaz.

TEZİN KÜTÜPHANEYE TESLİM TARİHİ: