



Mobbing and Its Effects on Employee Commitment in the Workplace

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Abstract

The concept of mobbing in the workplace refers to a situation where an individual is consistently subjected to negative behaviors by one or multiple individuals over a certain period. This phenomenon can severely impact the targeted individual, affecting both well-being and performance. A review of related literature reveals a limited number of studies specifically exploring the relationship between mobbing and organizational commitment. Given this research gap, the primary objective of this study is to examine whether a significant relationship exists between workplace mobbing and employees' organizational commitment. Understanding this connection could provide valuable insights into how negative workplace behaviors influence an employee's attachment and dedication to the organization and how these factors contribute to reduced job satisfaction, increased turnover intention, or decreased overall performance. Mobbing can manifest in various forms, such as verbal abuse, social exclusion, excessive criticism, or the deliberate undermining of an employee's work. These persistent negative behaviors create a hostile work environment, leading to emotional distress, burnout, and decreased motivation. Employees who experience mobbing often struggle with decreased organizational trust and loyalty, making them less committed to their roles. Consequently, they may disengage from their tasks, leading to declining productivity and efficiency. The negative impact of mobbing extends beyond the individual, affecting team dynamics, workplace morale, and overall organizational success. By investigating the link between mobbing and organizational commitment, this study aims to highlight the importance of fostering a positive and respectful workplace culture. Addressing mobbing behaviors through effective policies and interventions can help organizations enhance employee commitment, job satisfaction, and overall performance.

Keywords: Mobbing, Organizational Commitment, Workplace Behavior

JEL Codes: M12, J53, D23

1. INTRODUCTION

Research on social relations within the workplace has a long history, dating back to Elton Mayo's groundbreaking Hawthorne Studies, which shed light on how social dynamics influence productivity and worker satisfaction (Agervold, 2007). In the last decade or two, the concept of mobbing—also referred to as workplace bullying—has become a significant focus in the study of interpersonal relations in work environments. This growing interest is driven by the increasing recognition of how damaging mobbing can be to both individuals and organizations, particularly in terms of psychological well-being, job satisfaction, and organizational performance (Leymann, 1996; Zapf and Einarsen, 2001; Agervold, 2007; Girardi et al., 2007; Nolfé et al., 2007; Imran et al., 2021). Leymann (1996) and Zapf and Einarsen (2001) were among the first scholars to explore the concept of mobbing in depth. They sought to define it as a sustained pattern of negative behaviors targeted at an individual by one or more persons within a work setting. Leymann, in particular, described mobbing as a form of psychological terrorism that can severely impact the victim's mental health, self-esteem, and job performance. Zapf and Einarsen (2001) further explored the psychological dimensions of mobbing, distinguishing it from other forms of workplace conflict by its repetitive nature and the power imbalance between the perpetrator(s) and the victim.

Resch and Schubinski (1996) turned their attention to strategies for preventing mobbing in the workplace, highlighting the need for organizations to develop policies and interventions to reduce the occurrence of such behaviors. They emphasized the importance of creating a positive organizational culture that discourages mobbing and provides support for those affected. Mikkelsen and Einarsen (2001) contributed to the field by studying the prevalence of mobbing among Danish employees. They measured the incidence of mobbing in Danish workplaces and compared their findings with data from other countries. Their research revealed that mobbing is not confined to a single culture or region but is a widespread issue affecting workers across various sectors and nationalities. Their study also investigated the relationship between mobbing and psychological as well as psychosomatic symptoms, highlighting the severe stress that victims endure. Mobbing was shown to lead to anxiety, depression, and in some cases, long-term psychological trauma. In the United Kingdom, Hoel et al. (2001) conducted a large-scale study that explored the impact of mobbing on organizations and individuals. By surveying 5,288 employees across 70 organizations, they gathered valuable data on the prevalence of mobbing and its effects on organizational culture, employee morale, and productivity. Their research demonstrated that mobbing not only harms individuals but also has negative consequences for the organization, including increased absenteeism, turnover, and reduced job performance. Furthermore, Hoel et al. used the MMPI-2 (Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory) to assess the psychological impact of mobbing on both current and former victims, underscoring

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the lasting emotional scars mobbing can leave. Agervold (2007) extended the research by exploring the definition and boundaries of mobbing through a study involving 3,024 public sector employees. His work focused on distinguishing mobbing from other forms of workplace conflict, establishing clear criteria for identifying mobbing behavior, and exploring its prevalence in the public sector. His findings suggested that mobbing is not limited to the private sector but is a pervasive issue across different organizational settings. In addition to these studies, a broader body of literature has emerged, investigating mobbing in various regions. For instance, in Europe and Australia, researchers have extensively studied the presence, definition, severity, and measurement of mobbing (Hoel et al., 2001; Liefvooghe and Davey, 2001). These studies emphasize that mobbing is a global phenomenon, affecting workers in diverse industries and cultural settings. The research highlights the detrimental effects of mobbing, not only on individual mental health but also on overall organizational effectiveness and culture.

One of the critical findings of these studies is the strong correlation between mobbing and stress-related outcomes, such as anxiety, depression, burnout, and even physical health issues like cardiovascular problems. Victims of mobbing often experience a sense of isolation, helplessness, and humiliation, which can lead to long-term psychological damage. The cumulative impact of these negative behaviors is particularly harmful when they are sustained over long periods, making early intervention crucial. Moreover, the research underscores the importance of organizational responses to mobbing. Companies that fail to address mobbing risk creating toxic work environments where productivity, morale, and innovation suffer. On the other hand, organizations that proactively address mobbing through clear anti-bullying policies, employee support programs, and a culture of open communication are better positioned to mitigate its effects. The extensive body of research on mobbing highlights its significant impact on both individuals and organizations. From the early conceptual work of Leymann and Zapf to the large-scale empirical studies of Hoel and Agervold, it is clear that mobbing is a complex, multi-dimensional issue that requires continued attention and action. While much of the research has focused on Europe and Australia, the global nature of mobbing suggests that further investigation is needed in other regions and industries. The growing awareness of mobbing's harmful effects underscores the necessity for organizations to adopt comprehensive strategies to prevent and address workplace mobbing, ensuring healthier and more productive work environments.

In Turkey, the concept of mobbing has been widely studied by numerous researchers across various sectors. Kirel (2007) examined mobbing conceptually, focusing on preventive measures to manage or mitigate it, exploring factors that negatively impact performance, and identifying elements that reduce organizational and professional commitment. Cemaloğlu and Ertürk (2007) investigated mobbing among elementary school teachers and administrators, analyzing how gender plays a role in exposure to mobbing. Similarly, Aydın and Özkul (2007) explored the scope and extent of mobbing in the hotel industry, while Yıldırım and Yıldırım (2007) focused on the emotional, social, and psychological impacts of mobbing on nurses in the healthcare sector, also examining individual strategies for avoiding mobbing. In education, Aksu and Balcı (2009) studied the levels of mobbing faced by elementary school teachers and their perceptions of coping mechanisms. Yılmaz et al. (2008) conducted empirical research to determine the relationship between mobbing and organizational climate. Öztürk et al. (2008) worked on developing a mobbing scale specifically for academic nurses and explored the prevalence of mobbing in nursing colleges by drawing on the experiences of these nurses. Demirel (2009) examined whether mobbing behaviors differed among employees working in different public institutions, according to the specific institution. Meanwhile, Kılıç (2009) investigated the presence of mobbing in learning organizations, providing further insights into its prevalence in educational settings.

Tengilimoğlu and Mansur (2009) explored the relationship between mobbing and organizational commitment, but their study did not find any significant correlation between the two. In contrast, Demirgil (2008) identified a significant relationship between mobbing and organizational commitment, indicating that mobbing can have a profound impact on employees' loyalty and attachment to their organizations. Given these mixed findings, the primary objective of our study is to further investigate the relationship between mobbing and organizational commitment across different organizations in Turkey. By building on the existing research, we aim to deepen the understanding of how mobbing affects organizational commitment and what factors may contribute to varying outcomes in different organizational contexts. This study is particularly relevant for organizations seeking to improve employee well-being and retention by addressing the harmful effects of mobbing.

2. HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE MOBBING AND ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT

According to Leymann, mobbing in the workplace refers to unethical and hostile communication that is systematically and deliberately directed at one person by one or several individuals. The person subjected to mobbing often finds themselves in a vulnerable, helpless position, unable to defend themselves effectively. These behaviors, which are prolonged and frequently repeated, result in psychological, psychosomatic, and social distress for the victim. Leymann (1996) defines mobbing as a social interaction where an individual is placed in a defenseless position, facing a potentially high risk of mental and emotional harm. Zapf and Einarsen (2001) further elaborate on this concept, describing mobbing as a series of negative actions directed at a person over a certain period of time in the workplace. The target often struggles to defend themselves, owing to various factors such as power imbalances or organizational dynamics. According to their analysis, mobbing is not a one-off event but a continuous, deliberate effort to harm an individual within a work setting.

When analyzing various descriptions, mobbing refers to aggressive and hostile actions that are applied systematically to one or more individuals, ultimately leading to the victim's distress (Mikkelsen and Einarsen, 2001; Leymann, 1996; Zapf and Einarsen, 2001; Hubert and Veldhoven, 2001). It is distinct from normal workplace conflicts, as mobbing involves a power imbalance and a sustained, coordinated effort to undermine the victim. Salin (2001) emphasizes that mobbing is a

severe problem that must meet specific criteria, such as a power disparity between the aggressor(s) and the target, as well as the persistence of the hostile behaviors over time. Aydın and Özkul (2007) explain that the victim, due to this power imbalance, becomes increasingly incapable of defending themselves, thereby exacerbating the harmful effects of the mobbing. Mobbing behaviors often include rumors, innuendos, intimidation, humiliation, discrediting, and social isolation (Girardi et al., 2007; Matthiesen and Einarsen, 2001). These actions create an atmosphere of ongoing distress and infelicity for the targeted individual. In many countries, any negative behavior directed toward a particular person can be labeled as mobbing; however, researchers propose various criteria to define the phenomenon more precisely. For example, Leymann (1996) suggests that mobbing should continue for at least six months and occur at least once a week for it to qualify as mobbing. Zapf and Einarsen (2001) offer a slightly different perspective, proposing that mobbing may occur even if it is less frequent or spans a shorter period. Despite these differences, there is broad consensus that mobbing targets a specific individual, involves multiple harmful actions, and leaves the victim in a weakened position where self-defense becomes difficult (Zapf and Einarsen, 2001).

The concept of mobbing was first introduced by the renowned ethnologist Konrad Lorenz in 1991, who used the term to describe the behavior of animal groups. He observed that smaller animals would gang up on a larger predator to defend themselves, a behavior he referred to as mobbing. This concept was later applied to human social behavior when Swedish physician Heinemann studied the interactions between schoolchildren and used the term "mobbing" to describe the destructive behavior of groups of children targeting an individual child (Leymann, 1996; Aydın and Özkul, 2007). The workplace context of mobbing gained broader attention with the publication of Brodsky's 1976 book, *The Harassed Worker*. This book explored cases of workplace harassment for the first time, focusing on the damaging psychological and emotional effects of long-term exposure to hostile work environments. However, Brodsky did not directly analyze mobbing but instead framed these cases as workplace accidents, stress, and exhaustion resulting from extended work hours. Over time, this early work contributed to the stress research that now investigates the detrimental conditions faced by employees who endure mobbing (Leymann, 1996).

In sum, mobbing in the workplace is a harmful, sustained form of harassment that systematically targets an individual, placing them in a helpless position where defense becomes difficult. The long-term effects of mobbing include severe psychological, social, and emotional distress. Research by Leymann, Zapf, Einarsen, and others has expanded our understanding of mobbing, highlighting its complexity, its differences from ordinary workplace conflicts, and its damaging impact on both the victim and the workplace environment. Despite some variation in how researchers define mobbing's frequency and duration, there is agreement that it represents a severe problem requiring intervention to protect employee well-being. Since the introduction of the concept of mobbing, or workplace bullying, to Scandinavian and German communities by Leymann in the mid-1980s, a substantial number of studies have been conducted to better define the nature of workplace bullying. These studies aim to describe the prevalence and forms of bullying and identify both personality traits and organizational factors associated with mobbing (Salin, 2001; Hoel et al., 2001; Zapf and Einarsen, 2001). A key moment in the development of mobbing research occurred in 1996 when eight articles by researchers from six countries were published in a special edition of the *European Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology*. These papers, originally presented at the Seventh European Congress on Work and Organizational Psychology in Győr, Hungary, marked the beginning of a coordinated effort to explore mobbing on a wider scale. Following this, a series of symposia on mobbing were held in various European cities, including Verona (1997), Helsinki (1999), and Prague (2001). These symposia significantly influenced research on mobbing, contributing to its recognition as a widespread phenomenon across Europe (Zapf and Einarsen, 2001). Research shows that mobbing has become a significant issue in many countries. In Scandinavia, an estimated 3-4% of the working population has experienced mobbing. Finnish and British studies have reported even higher prevalence rates, with approximately 10% of workers affected by mobbing (Salin, 2001). Mobbing behaviors can take various forms, ranging from direct verbal or physical attacks to more subtle actions like excluding or isolating the victim from their workgroup. Organizational assessments highlight that common mobbing behaviors include taking away responsibilities, devaluing an employee's work, social isolation, exclusion, teasing, insulting remarks, and ridicule (Zapf and Einarsen, 2001). The effects of mobbing on organizations are considerable. Studies indicate that mobbing leads to increased absenteeism, higher turnover intentions, greater employee turnover, and earlier retirements (Salin, 2001; Leymann, 1996). In addition to its impact on employee retention, mobbing negatively affects employee performance (Kirel, 2007) and reduces organizational commitment (Demirgil, 2008). Employees subjected to mobbing often feel disengaged and disconnected from their organizations, leading to a decline in overall morale.

Mobbing also has severe implications for the psychological and physical health of the victims. Research by Mikkelsen and Einarsen (2001) highlights the negative effects of mobbing on both the well-being of the targeted individual and the productivity of their colleagues. Victims of mobbing often experience increased stress, anxiety, and depression, which can result in higher rates of negligence, staff turnover, and sick leave. Mobbing is also linked to decreased job satisfaction, further compounding the negative effects on the victim's health and performance (Salin, 2001). The growing body of research on mobbing illustrates its widespread presence and harmful impact on both individuals and organizations. Mobbing not only damages the psychological and physical health of its victims but also disrupts workplace dynamics, leading to reduced productivity, higher turnover, and overall organizational instability. As a result, addressing mobbing through preventative measures, such as promoting a positive organizational culture and establishing clear anti-bullying policies, is essential for protecting employee well-being and enhancing organizational performance.

The negative behaviors observed in workplaces, commonly referred to as mobbing or bullying, often begin as normal interactions but, when they persist over long periods and occur frequently, their nature changes and they become harmful.

It is crucial to distinguish mobbing from typical workplace conflicts. According to Leymann, mobbing behaviors can be categorized based on the specific effects they have on the victim. Some behaviors impact the victim's ability to communicate effectively, such as denying them opportunities to communicate with management, subjecting them to verbal attacks related to their work tasks, or rejecting them outright. Other behaviors affect the victim's social connections, where colleagues avoid them or are instructed not to engage with them, leading to isolation. The victim's personal reputation may also be undermined through gossip, ridicule, or humiliation, often targeting their perceived inadequacies. Furthermore, mobbing can disrupt the victim's occupational situation by depriving them of meaningful work or assigning them trivial or unnecessary tasks, diminishing their professional value. In some extreme cases, mobbing involves assigning dangerous tasks or even physical threats to the victim.

Research has shown that victims of mobbing often suffer from various psychological stresses, including anxiety, depression, irritability, and self-hatred. In addition to these psychological impacts, many victims exhibit psychosomatic symptoms, which further deteriorate their health. Mobbing not only harms the victim but also has a negative impact on the overall workplace environment, affecting the efficiency of other employees as well. As such, mobbing is recognized as a significant factor contributing to psychological stress in organizations. Studies highlight that mobbing can lead to increased absenteeism, higher turnover intention, greater employee turnover, and even early retirements. It also negatively impacts employee performance and organizational commitment, as employees subjected to mobbing often feel disconnected from their organizations, leading to lower morale and reduced productivity. Within the field of organizational psychology, the concept of organizational commitment has been an expanding area of interest since the 1960s. Research has consistently shown that organizational commitment correlates with key factors such as job satisfaction, organizational adaptability, and employee turnover. Other related factors include the scope and challenge of the job, role clarity, freedom from conflicts, organizational dependability, and participation in decision-making. Organizational commitment is also linked to lower absenteeism and improved organizational efficiency. Despite the increased focus on organizational commitment, debates continue regarding its exact definition, the nature of commitment, and how it affects employee behavior. Commitment can take various forms, including dedication to organizations, unions, professions, teams, leaders, goals, and personal careers. In the literature, organizational commitment is often conceptualized as an "affective attachment," where employees share the organization's values, desire to remain part of the organization, and are willing to exert effort on its behalf. However, the variety of definitions has caused some confusion in categorizing organizational commitment. For example, Buchanan used three measures—identification, involvement, and loyalty—to assess commitment. Other researchers, like Angle and Perry, examined the concept through subscales such as value commitment and commitment to stay within the organization. O'Reilly and Chatman proposed justification, identification, and internalization as key components, while Penley and Gould categorized commitment into moral, calculative, and alienative forms. A widely used model to conceptualize organizational commitment is the three-component model developed by Allen and Meyer, which defines organizational commitment as a psychological state that binds individuals to their organization. This model breaks down commitment into three types: affective commitment, which is an emotional attachment to and identification with the organization; continuance commitment, which is based on the perceived cost of leaving the organization; and normative commitment, which stems from a feeling of obligation to stay. This model has been extensively used in research over the last two decades, offering a comprehensive framework for understanding the different dimensions of commitment and their impact on employee behavior and organizational outcomes.

According to Meyer and Allen, affective commitment refers to the emotional attachment, identification with, and involvement that employees feel toward their organization (Meyer et al., 1998; Seymen, 2008). This form of commitment is characterized by employees sharing the organization's values, desiring to maintain membership, and working for the benefit of the organization without expecting anything in return (Meyer and Allen, 1988). Employees with strong affective commitment genuinely want to remain part of the organization, as their attachment is driven by intrinsic motivation (Dawley et al., 2005). Continuance commitment, on the other hand, relates to employees' awareness of the high costs associated with leaving the organization (Meyer and Herscovitch, 2001; Meyer et al., 1998). Employees with strong continuance commitment remain in their roles because they recognize the potential financial or career-related losses they would incur by quitting (Seymen, 2008). This form of commitment is less about emotional attachment and more about the perceived risks and costs of leaving the organization.

Normative commitment refers to the sense of obligation employees feel to continue working for their organization (Dawley et al., 2005). This sense of duty or loyalty often stems from cultural or familial pressures, where employees feel that they "ought" to stay in their jobs (Dawley et al., 2005; Seymen, 2008). Employees with strong normative commitment are driven by a sense of moral responsibility to stay with the organization, regardless of other personal factors. In this study, the organizational commitment model developed by Allen and Meyer is utilized to define and measure these three dimensions of commitment. This model is widely regarded as the most comprehensive and has been used in numerous studies to capture the complexities of organizational commitment, incorporating elements from other alternative models.

3. THE RELATIONSHIP OF MOBBING AND ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT

Mobbing in the workplace has been shown to lead to higher absenteeism, increased intent to leave the organization, higher turnover rates, and earlier retirements. In the face of economic slumps and changes in working conditions, it has become increasingly important for organizations to foster stronger feelings of commitment among employees. Within this context, mobbing is believed to be closely related to organizational commitment. While Demirgil's study revealed a weak but significant negative relationship between mobbing and organizational commitment, other studies, such as those

by Tengilimoğlu and Mansur, did not find any meaningful connection between the two. Taking these studies into account, this research seeks to explore whether a negative relationship exists between mobbing and organizational commitment. It is well-established that employees with a high degree of affective commitment are more likely to align themselves with the organization's goals and values. This alignment generally leads to lower turnover rates and greater employee retention. However, when employees are subjected to mobbing—whether through direct verbal or physical attacks or more subtle forms of exclusion or isolation—absenteeism tends to rise, and the intent to quit the organization increases. Thus, it is anticipated that mobbing may negatively affect employees' affective commitment, causing them to detach emotionally from the organization and consider leaving.

In the case of continuance commitment, research suggests that employees stay with an organization not necessarily because of emotional attachment, but because they recognize the high costs associated with leaving. This is especially relevant in countries like Turkey, where unemployment rates are high, and employees may feel compelled to endure negative workplace behaviors, including mobbing, to avoid losing their jobs. Despite experiencing mobbing, these employees may continue to invest in their roles, as leaving the organization may result in financial instability or difficulty finding new employment. Therefore, it is expected that continuance commitment will persist, even as mobbing increases. Normative commitment, on the other hand, is characterized by a sense of loyalty and obligation to remain with the organization. Employees with strong normative commitment often feel that staying with the organization is the right thing to do, driven by a sense of duty or moral responsibility. However, mobbing is likely to erode this sense of obligation. As employees face persistent negative behaviors, their feelings of loyalty and moral duty may diminish, leading to a decrease in their normative commitment. This suggests that mobbing could weaken the ethical and cultural ties that bind employees to their organization, causing them to question whether continuing to work in such an environment aligns with their values. Through this exploration, the research aims to understand how mobbing influences different aspects of organizational commitment— affective, continuance, and normative—and whether it contributes to an increased intention to leave the organization. Understanding these relationships will provide valuable insights into the ways in which negative workplace behaviors impact employee loyalty, retention, and overall organizational health.

4. METHOD OF THE RESEARCH

The private hospitals in the downtown area of Balıkesir were selected as the sample for this research, which is based on a survey methodology. Considering the nature of hospital work in Turkey, hospital employees typically engage in intense communication with their supervisors, colleagues, and patients. This makes private hospitals an ideal setting to more precisely measure the prevalence and impact of mobbing in the workplace. The management teams of four hospitals in downtown Balıkesir were informed about the purpose of the research, and permission was sought to conduct the survey. Of these hospitals, three granted permission to proceed, while one declined. The total number of employees in the participating hospitals was 457. A total of 200 questionnaires were distributed randomly to employees across the three hospitals, along with necessary instructions and clarifications regarding the study. After three days, the completed questionnaires were collected, with 135 returned, resulting in a 67.5% response rate. Of these, 120 were deemed valid for use in the analysis of the research hypotheses.

The questionnaire was divided into three sections. The first section included demographic information about the employees, the second section contained questions designed to measure the level of mobbing to which the employees were exposed, and the third section focused on their organizational commitment. The variables in both the second and third sections were measured using a five-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (never) to 5 (always), to capture the frequency and intensity of mobbing and commitment levels. The data collected through the questionnaire was analyzed using SPSS 15.0, a statistical analysis software package. Descriptive statistics, such as frequency and percentage values, were used to evaluate the demographic characteristics of the respondents. Correlation analysis was performed to examine the relationships between the variables, and a categorical regression analysis was conducted to determine whether mobbing had an influence on organizational commitment. This analytical approach allowed for a detailed understanding of how mobbing impacts the commitment levels of hospital employees in the selected private hospitals.

5. RESULTS

The demographic profile in Table 1 provides insight into the background of employees who participated in the study on mobbing and its effects on employee commitment in the workplace. The majority of respondents were female (74.6%), with males comprising only 25.4%, indicating a gender imbalance that could influence both the perception and experience of mobbing. In terms of marital status, a slight majority were married (55.1%), which might suggest varying levels of social support and resilience, as previous research shows that marital status can moderate the effects of workplace stressors (Allen et al., 2000).

The age distribution reveals that most participants were relatively young, with 37.3% in the 21–25 age group, followed by 22.9% aged 31–40. These younger cohorts might be more vulnerable to mobbing due to less workplace experience or lower hierarchical power, as suggested by Zapf and Einarsen (2005). Regarding educational background, a large proportion of respondents had completed either high school (41.5%) or vocational high school (39%), with only a small percentage holding undergraduate or postgraduate degrees. This may reflect a workforce with limited upward mobility and professional training, factors often correlated with higher exposure to workplace bullying (Salin, 2003).

The tenure of office data shows that more than half of the employees (50.8%) had worked for 1–5 years, while 31.4% had less than one year of experience. This trend indicates that newer employees are more prevalent in the sample, and according to Leymann (1996), they may be at higher risk of mobbing due to their lower status and unfamiliarity with

workplace dynamics. Notably, a significant majority (83.9%) held temporary positions, which may exacerbate feelings of insecurity and vulnerability, conditions known to increase susceptibility to mobbing (Hoel & Cooper, 2000). These demographic insights suggest that mobbing may disproportionately affect younger, less experienced, and temporary workers, particularly females, highlighting the need for organizational strategies that promote equity, training, and support for at-risk groups.

Table 1: Demographic variables

Demographic Variables	f	%
Gender		
Female	88	74.6
Male	30	25.4
Marital Status		
Married	65	55.1
Single	53	44.9
Age		
20 and under	15	12.7
21–25 years	44	37.3
26–30 years	21	17.8
31–40 years	27	22.9
41 and over	11	9.3
Education		
Elementary	5	4.2
High School	49	41.5
Vocational High School	46	39.0
Undergraduate Degree	14	11.9
Master Degree / Doctorate	4	3.4
Tenure of Office		
Less than a year	37	31.4
1–5 years	60	50.8
6–10 years	11	9.3
11 years and over	10	8.5
Staff Status		
Permanent	19	16.1
Temporary	99	83.9

The correlation analysis presented in Table 2 reveals significant relationships between mobbing and various dimensions of organizational commitment and turnover intentions. A key observation is the positive correlation between mobbing and overall organizational commitment ($r = 0.242$, $p < 0.05$), which might seem counterintuitive. However, this may reflect a complex interaction where organizational loyalty persists despite negative experiences, possibly due to external pressures or lack of alternatives (Salin, 2003).

Mobbing shows a strong negative correlation with affective commitment ($r = -0.372$, $p < 0.01$), indicating that as experiences of workplace mobbing increase, employees' emotional attachment and identification with the organization decline significantly. This aligns with findings by Einarsen et al. (2011), who assert that mobbing deteriorates the psychological bond between employees and their workplace, reducing morale and emotional investment.

There is also a weak but significant positive correlation between mobbing and continuance commitment ($r = 0.291$, $p < 0.01$), suggesting that although mobbed employees may feel emotionally detached, they might remain with the organization due to perceived lack of employment alternatives or fear of economic insecurity (Meyer & Allen, 1991). Meanwhile, mobbing has no significant relationship with normative commitment ($r = 0.032$), implying that ethical or moral obligations to stay with the organization may not be influenced by negative social experiences like mobbing.

Importantly, mobbing has a significant positive correlation with employees' intention to leave the organization ($r = 0.375$, $p < 0.01$), corroborating previous literature that links workplace bullying with increased turnover intentions (Hoel & Cooper, 2000). This is further supported by the negative correlation between affective commitment and intention to leave ($r = -0.531$, $p < 0.01$), illustrating how decreased emotional attachment leads to higher exit intentions.

These findings emphasize that mobbing undermines the emotional and psychological dimensions of employee commitment and fosters disengagement and attrition risks, reinforcing the necessity for organizational interventions aimed at promoting a respectful and inclusive work environment.

Table 2: Correlation

	Ave.	Ss	1	2	3	4	5
1 The Mobbing	2.01	0.75	1				
2 Organizational Commitment	3.04	0.48	0.242*	1			
3 Affective Commitment	3.29	0.68	-0.372**	-0.218	1		
4 Normative Commitment	2.79	0.92	0.032	0.574**	0.061	1	
5 Continuance Commitment	3.08	0.91	0.291**	0.806**	-0.224*	0.301**	1
6 Intention to Leave the Organization	2.83	0.86	0.375**	0.719**	-0.531**	0.148	0.477**

* $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$

The regression results in Table 3 offer deeper insights into the predictive relationship between mobbing and various organizational commitment dimensions as well as employees' intention to leave. The model explains a modest but statistically significant portion of the variance in organizational commitment ($R^2 = 0.12$, $F = 4.925$, $p = .004$), with a positive standardized beta ($\beta = 0.338$), suggesting that as mobbing increases, employees' general commitment shifts, likely due to complex emotional and psychological responses, though this might also reflect commitment based on obligation or necessity rather than emotional attachment (Einarsen et al., 2011).

Affective commitment, however, is negatively impacted by mobbing with a stronger model fit ($R^2 = 0.203$, $F = 8.331$, $p < .001$) and a negative beta coefficient ($\beta = -0.462$). This aligns with previous literature indicating that employees subjected to hostile work environments tend to emotionally withdraw from the organization, weakening their identification and involvement with its goals (Meyer & Allen, 1991; Djurkovic et al., 2004).

Regarding employees' intention to leave, mobbing emerges as a significant positive predictor ($R^2 = 0.164$, $F = 4.539$, $\beta = 0.413$, $p = .001$), reinforcing the notion that hostile interpersonal experiences in the workplace can drive employees toward exiting their jobs (Hoel & Cooper, 2000).

In the case of continuance commitment, the model also shows significance ($R^2 = 0.148$, $F = 3.794$, $p = .006$), with a positive beta ($\beta = 0.355$). This indicates that despite experiencing mobbing, some employees may stay due to perceived high costs of leaving, such as economic dependence or lack of alternative employment, rather than positive work attachment (Allen & Meyer, 2000).

Normative commitment, however, does not yield significant results ($R^2 = 0.041$, $F = 2.142$, $p = .127$), showing that mobbing may not influence employees' moral obligation to remain in the organization. This aligns with the idea that ethical responsibility to stay is shaped more by personal values and socialization than by workplace conditions alone (Meyer & Parfyonova, 2010).

In summary, the findings reinforce the multifaceted ways mobbing shapes employee commitment and turnover intention. It negatively affects affective commitment, increases exit intentions, and complicates continuance commitment, necessitating proactive organizational measures to counteract its effects.

Table 3: Regression Analysis

Variable	R^2	F	β	p
Organizational Commitment	0.12	4.925	0.338	.004
Affective Commitment	0.203	8.331	-0.462	.000
Intention to Leave the Organization	0.164	4.539	0.413	.001
Continuance Commitment	0.148	3.794	0.355	.006
Normative Commitment	0.041	2.142	0.196	.127

6. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

Mobbing, recognized internationally as a growing and serious problem in the workplace, negatively impacts the physical and mental health, efficiency, performance, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment of employees, which are crucial sources of competitive advantage for organizations (Salin, 2001; Mikkelsen and Einarsen, 2001; Demirgil, 2008). In this study, it was found that 5 of the 120 participants (0.04%) were subjected to high levels of mobbing, 20 participants (17%) to mid-level mobbing, and 95 participants reported no mobbing at all. This indicates that 21% of the participants experienced some form of mobbing in the workplace. When comparing these findings to the broader literature, it becomes clear that mobbing is a widespread issue in many countries. For instance, in Scandinavia, approximately 3-4% of employees are affected by mobbing, while in Finland and England, the prevalence can exceed 10% (Salin, 2001). The results from this study, with a mobbing exposure rate of 21%, are considerably higher than those seen in other regions, signaling that workplace bullying may be a particularly pressing issue in the context of the study sample. One surprising outcome of this research was the observed relationship between mobbing and organizational commitment. Although the literature commonly suggests that mobbing has a negative effect on organizational commitment, a positive relationship was identified in this study. This result could be explained by the high level of continuance commitment exhibited by the employees. Many workers remain with their organizations out of necessity, especially in times of economic difficulty,

which may explain why mobbing did not diminish their organizational commitment. A key finding was the negative and significant relationship between mobbing and affective commitment, which supports the findings of Demirgil (2008) and Tengilimoğlu and Mansur (2009). The average affective commitment score of participants was 3.37, indicating a relatively high level of emotional attachment to their organizations. Further analysis revealed a negative and significant relationship between affective commitment and the intention to leave the organization, meaning that as employees' emotional commitment increases, their desire to quit decreases. Conversely, the study found a positive and significant relationship between mobbing and the intention to leave the organization, reinforcing existing literature on this issue. However, while employees may express a desire to leave their organizations due to mobbing, they often do not act on these intentions due to economic constraints, particularly in the face of rising unemployment. In Turkey, especially following the 2008 economic crisis, employees have shown high levels of continuance commitment, driven by a lack of alternative employment opportunities. The average continuance commitment score in this study was 3.01, suggesting that even when employees are subjected to increased levels of mobbing, they tend to stay with their organizations out of economic necessity. This dynamic was further supported by the research findings. On the other hand, no significant relationship was found between mobbing and normative commitment, which aligns with the results of Demirgil (2008). This suggests that while mobbing may affect employees' emotional and financial considerations, it does not significantly influence their sense of moral obligation or loyalty to the organization.

One of the main challenges in conducting this research was determining whether employees were willing to report their experiences of mobbing. Many participants hesitated to share the mobbing behaviors they were subjected to, often due to fear of losing their jobs. Even though privacy was ensured, some employees may have responded inaccurately to protect themselves, which could have influenced the results. Additionally, the findings may not be generalizable beyond the scope of this study, as the research was limited to private hospitals in Balıkesir. Typically, mobbing is thought to be initiated by executives toward subordinates. Future research could explore whether subordinates also engage in mobbing behaviors toward their superiors. Expanding the sample to include different industries and organizational structures could provide a broader understanding of mobbing in various management contexts.

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