



Elementary school teachers' exposure to mobbing

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Abstract. Frequency of exposure to mobbing among elementary school teachers working in central Uşak was investigated in the study. In total 347 elementary school teachers who are working in centre of Uşak voluntarily participated in the study. As data collection tool "Mobbing Scale" second version developed by Demirci (2014) was administered. Nonparametric Test was carried out to analyse non-parametric data set. Mann Whitney U-test and Kruskal Wallis H-test were used in the study. Marital Status and Mobbing Level did not show statistically significant relationship. The factor named as Quality of Life and Professional Status and gender show statistically significant relationship; male elementary school teachers face to mobbing more frequently than female classroom teachers. As for teaching experiences, 6-10 years experienced elementary school teachers' exposure to mobbing frequency higher than 16-20 years, 21-25 years, 26-30 years, and 31-35 years experienced teachers. Elementary school teachers with 26-30 years teaching experiences have lower mobbing frequency than other groups.

Keywords: Mobbing, psychological pressure, classroom teachers, demographic variables

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INTRODUCTION

The term "mobbing" has been defined and translated into Turkish differently in the literature. For Field (2004), mobbing is a continuous brutal attack on sufferers' self-confidence and self-respect. Mobbing is also an attempt to destroy one's self (cited in Cemaloğlu & Ertürk, 2008). According to Tinaz (2006), mobbing is a psychological terror in the form of repeated attacks by other employees or employers in the workplace. The concept of mobbing includes all kinds of behaviours such as maltreatment, threat, violence and oppression exhibited against employees.

Mobbing is about the harassment of certain individuals in the work environment by other employees or managers. It can be observed in the form of offending, humiliation, harassment and so on (Gülle, 2013). In the simplest terms, mobbing is a form of emotional assault and harassment. The mobbing process, which involves the attacker's actions of attrition, is a series of taunts causing an aggressive, stressful and tense environment, eventually leading to the dismissal of the target individual (Alparslan & Tunç, 2010). Not all behaviours in the workplace can be regarded as mobbing. Tutar (2015) clarifies some of the distinctive elements of mobbing. Accordingly, the act of mobbing should be experienced in the work environment and should be systematic. It can be exhibited by the supervisor or by colleagues with equal responsibility, and done consciously. The purpose of mobbing should be to eliminate the individual and to ensure that he/she quits the job. Behaviours that have a negative impact on the sufferer may be out in the open or implicit.

Individuals who perform mobbing have certain common characteristics. In general, they are intolerant, prejudiced, inclined to aggression, narcissistic, self-righteous and oppressive people who like to criticise others but cannot tolerate self-criticism (Tutar, 2004; Tinaz, 2006). On the other hand, the fact that sufferers have some different characteristics compared to other employees in the workplace may cause them to be selected as a victim of mobbing. With regard to the characteristics of mobbing victims, they seem to be intelligent, resourceful, sociable and reliable individuals who love their work, and have creative ideas and an innovative understanding (Davenport et al., 2003; Yuceturk, 2006; Zapf & Holz, 2006). Newly recruited

individuals who do not have any prior experience can be more exposed to mobbing, and are likely to remain silent due to the fear of losing their jobs (Peyton, 2004).

Leymann (1996) identified 45 mobbing behaviors, and classified them into five dimensions in the Leymann Inventory of Psychological Terrorism, LIPT. The five dimensions explained by Leymann (1996) include self-expression and communication, social contacts, personal reputation, occupational situation and quality of life, and physical health. Mobbing behaviours described by Leymann may not be regarded as mobbing by themselves, and can often be foreseen. However, behaviours that show continuity in different ways turn into conscious psychological harassment (Davenport, Schwartz & Elliot, 2003). The aspects of mobbing behaviours, which also constitute the dimensions of the data collection tool used in this study, can be briefly explained as follows: 1. Self-Expression and Communication: The victim's ability to express him/herself is restricted by the superior, and his/her speech is often interrupted. The victim is constantly criticized, not only about their responsibilities. It can also be about his/her private life. 2. Social Contacts: The victim is not spoken to, and is prevented from speaking to others; he/she is sometimes ignored as if he/she does not exist. 3. Personal Reputation: Employees talk badly behind the victim's back, unfounded rumours about him/her are circulated, he/she is treated like mentally ill, and his/her movements, walk or voice are mimicked. 4. Occupational Situation and Quality of Life: The victim is given challenging tasks, assigned errands or no tasks at all, to cause his/her failure, and he/she is prevented to do the job efficiently and given new tasks all the time. These are tasks that affect the individual's self-respect. 5. Physical Health: The victim is forced to do a physically strenuous job. Deliberate psychological and physical actions are observed which lead to a financial damage for the victim. Threats of physical violence are made, and sometime such violence is applied. The victim may be subjected to sexual abuse.

Mobbing in Educational Institutions

Mobbing is a phenomenon that can be experienced in any organisation including schools. Mobbing may occur due to the stressful environment of schools, competition among teachers, unfair school administration, pressure, constantly increasing responsibilities, weakening powers, non-innovators' resistance to change, unfair sanctions, political groupings and personal reasons. Mobbing in schools arises between teachers and school administrators, and sometimes among teachers. In educational institutions, mobbing undermines organisational trust, weakens the organisational climate and causes a decrease in teachers' job satisfaction and life quality (Kış, 2016).

Gökçe (2008) lists some of the mobbing behaviours that teachers and administrators are exposed to in schools as follows: Jealousy, exclusion, interruption of conversations when the sufferer is present, disdain of achievements, discretion, lack of communication with school administration, humiliating teachers in front of parents, threatening them by investigation, disciplinary punishment or re-location, and discrimination based on gender, clothing style, major, political opinion and union. In addition, nepotism in the distribution of course load, extra course hours and watch duties is among the bullying behaviours in educational institutions.

In a study that aimed to determine the direction of mobbing behaviours that teachers and school administrators are exposed to in elementary education, Cemaloğlu and Ertürk (2008) found that school principals were exposed to more mobbing in terms of the dimensions "self-expression and communication", "social contacts", "personal reputation" and "occupational situation and quality of life", compared to assistant principals and teachers. They reported that teachers were mostly subjected to mobbing by the principal, and the mobbing behaviours were top-down, exhibited by the superiors.

Yıldırım (2010) investigated the mobbing behaviours performed by school principals towards elementary school teachers. The results revealed that divorced or single female teachers were exposed to some mobbing behaviour by the school principal. It was found that senior teachers, and female teachers with higher degrees of education had more mobbing than

inexperienced teachers, and those with lower degrees. Consequently, mobbing negatively affected teachers' performance and self-confidence.

Pakdemir (2010) examined teacher views on mobbing behaviours in elementary schools. The results showed that teachers rarely encountered mobbing behaviours, and male teachers were more exposed to mobbing compared to their female colleagues. Yücel (2011) had a look at the phenomenon of mobbing in the relationship between teachers and parents in elementary schools. The study reported that teachers exhibited mobbing behaviours towards parents. These behaviours included being rude, insisting on their professional knowledge, being ill-intentioned, giving unnecessary advice and humiliating. Acar (2013) comparatively investigated the effect of mobbing behaviours on teacher motivation in elementary schools. There was a negative relationship between teachers' exposure to mobbing and their motivation. Yumuşak (2013) examined the relationship between levels of experiencing mobbing and organisational commitment of teachers working in elementary schools, and reported a moderate negative relationship between mobbing levels of teachers and their emotional and normative commitment. Ercengiz (2013) focused on the relationship between elementary school teachers' perceptions of mobbing and submissive behaviours. Apparently, most of the teachers were subjected to mobbing, and there was a weak positive relationship between mobbing and submissive behaviours.

Mobbing is a process that emerges with disturbing behaviours, starts to cause pain in individuals gradually, and speeds up with events in a spiral manner (Tınaz et al., 2008). As a reality in any organisation, mobbing is frequently seen in educational institutions where human relations are intense. Teachers may be exposed to mobbing as a result of conflicts with school stakeholders while struggling with the heavy course load, large classes, disciplinary problems, financial conditions and career problems (Çivilidağ & Sargin, 2011). In this respect, mobbing that directly threatens the school climate reduces teachers' productivity and motivation. Some teachers are unaware that they are victims of mobbing, while others prefer to remain silent about the situation and choose to keep it to themselves as a coping strategy. Mobbing increases stress and professional burnout in teachers, and lead teachers to negative attitudes towards the school and students. Mobbing directly affects teachers, and thus has an indirect harm for students and the school. While mobbing psychologically affects teachers, it also poses an obstacle for students in their learning process. Teachers' mood in the classroom is reflected in their approach to students. Elementary school teachers who constitute the largest group among teachers have great importance for shaping students' future educational life. In this regard, the primary aim of this study was to determine elementary school teachers' levels of exposure to mobbing, and evaluate school administrators' views on mobbing. An examination of elementary school teachers' and school administrators' perceptions and experience of mobbing would have significance to raise awareness and have an in-depth understanding regarding this phenomenon. The findings are expected to provide insights to policy-makers, school administrators and teachers.

METHOD

Survey model was employed in this study. Survey models aims at describing a past or present situation as is. An event, individual or object that is the focus of research is defined in its own context and without and modifications (Karasar, 2013). The advantage of survey studies is that they reveal the relationship between many variables, and help obtain objective results (Gürbüz & Şahin, 2018). In short, this approach aims to describe individuals or objects that are the focus of research the way they exist without attempting to change them.

Population and Sample

Population refers to the all elements to which the research results are generalised (Karasar, 2013). The population of this study consisted of elementary school teachers working in schools affiliated with the Turkish Ministry of National Education in the Usak province in the 2017-2018 school year. Sample is a small cluster selected from a certain population according to set rules

and capable of representing the population (Karasar, 2013). In the present study, the sample is the same with the population. In the data collection process, all elementary schools in the Usak province were reached, the scale forms were distributed to voluntary teachers in sealed envelopes, and for those who were not at school at the time, and envelopes were left to the school administration. A total of 380 forms were distributed, and 355 returned. The return rate was about 93%. The scale forms with missing data were excluded from the analysis, and 347 forms were accepted as valid.

The frequency (f) and percentage (%) distributions regarding the demographic characteristics of the 347 teachers who participated in the study are presented in Table.1.

Table 1. Demographic characteristics of the teachers

Gender	N	%
Male	206	59.4
Female	141	40.6
Total	347	100.0
Marital Status	N	%
Married	280	80.7
Single	54	15.6
Other	13	3.7
Total	347	100.0
Experience	N	%
1-5 Years	18	5.2
6-10 Years	53	15.3
11-15 Years	81	23.3
16-20 Years	86	24.8
21-25 Years	65	18.7
26-30 Years	27	7.8
31-35 Years	11	3.2
36-40 Years	6	1.7
Total	347	100.0

Of the teachers participated in the study, 206 (59.4%) were male and 141 (40.6%) were female teachers. Two-hundred eighty participants (80.7%) were married, 54 (15.6%) were single, and 13 (3.7%) were either separated or widowed. As for experience in teaching, 18 participants (5.2%) had worked for 1-5 years, 53 participants (15.3%) 6-10 years, 81 participants (23.3%) 11-15 years, 86 participants (24.8%) 16-20 years, 65 participants (18.7%) 21-25 years, 27 participants (7.8%) 26-30 years, 11 participants (3.2%) 31-35 years, and 6 participants (1.7%) 36-40 years.

Data Gathering Tool

In order to determine the levels of mobbing experienced by elementary school teachers, the Leymann Inventory of Psychological Terrorism (LIPT), which was revised by Demirci (2014) and adapted to Turkish by Tınaz (2014), was used with a permission. Demirci (2014) created a different version of the scale. A personal information form (gender, marital status, age, graduation, experience, duration of service in that school) is included in the first part of the scale. For age, the year of birth was asked in this study to prevent any confusion by filled or passed years. There are 55 items across five dimensions in the second part of the scale. The five dimensions are self-expression and communication, social contacts, personal reputation, occupational situation and quality of life, and physical health.

The Cronbach's alpha values reported in Demirci's (2014) study and retrieved in the present study are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Scale dimensions and reliability analysis

	Number of Items	Cronbach's Alpha (Original)	Cronbach's Alpha (Present Study)
Self-Expression and Communication:	11	.89	.84
Social Contacts	7	.83	.85
Personal Reputation	17	.89	.89
Occupational Situation and Quality of Life	16	.88	.89
Physical Health	4	.73	.05

The dimension "physical health" did not retrieve reliable results. We had difficulty contacting the author who developed a newer version of the scale by excluding this dimension as it included statements like physical violence, and we obtained official permission for all dimensions and items without any modifications, considering the correlation between the items of the to-be-excluded dimension and other items.

Upon the official approval of the Usak Provincial Directorate of National Education, the scale was administered by the first author of this study in the second semester of the 2017-2018 school year after. In order to gather in-depth data through the scale, necessary explanations were made to the participants and they were informed about the purpose and significance of the study.

FINDINGS

Evaluation of Mobbing Based on Gender

The Mann-Whitney U test was performed to determine whether the elementary school teachers' behaviours related to the sub-dimensions of mobbing significantly differed based on gender. The results revealed a statistically significant difference in the dimensions "personal reputation" and "occupational situation and quality of life", and in the whole scale (see Table 3).

Table 3. Elementary school teachers' exposure to mobbing based on gender

Sub-Dimensions	Gender	N	Rank Mean	Rank Total	U	P
Self-Expression and Communication:	Male	206	179.27	36929.00	13438.000	.236
	Female	141	166.30	23449.00		
Social Contacts	Male	206	176.35	36327.50	14039.500	.586
	Female	141	170.57	24050.50		
Personal Reputation	Male	206	187.17	38557.50	11809.500	.003
	Female	141	154.76	21820.50		
Occupational Situation and Quality of Life	Male	206	190.12	39164.50	11202.500	.000
	Female	141	150.45	21213.50		
Physical Health	Male	206	173.53	35746.50	14425.500	.638
	Female	141	174.69	24631.50		
Whole Scale	Male	206	185.41	38194.50	12172.500	.010
	Female	141	157.33	22183.50		

A significant difference was found in the dimension "personal reputation", ($U=11809.5$; $p=.003<0.05$). The scores of the male teachers in the dimension "personal reputation" (Rank Mean=187.17) were higher than those of the female teachers (Rank Mean=154.76). In other words, the male teachers suffered from significantly more mobbing than the female teachers did in this dimension. The items that fall into the dimension "personal reputation" included "Unfair evaluation of your efforts and achievements" and "Negative words spoken about you behind your back".

In the dimension "occupational situation and quality of life", there was a statistically significant difference between the participants based on gender ($U=11202.5$; $p=.000<0.05$). The scores of the male teachers in this dimension (Rank Mean=190.12) were higher than those of the female teachers (Rank Mean=150.45). The items of this dimension included statements such as "your being put into the target by individuals around you" and "your being deprived of your right to occupational training".

No significant difference between the participants was found with regard to gender in the dimension "physical health", ($U=14425.500$; $p=0.638>0.05$).

As for the whole scale, the participants' scores significant differed based on gender ($U=12172.5$; $p=.01<0.05$). According to the data obtained through the scale, the scores of the male teachers (Rank Mean=185.41) were higher than those of the female teachers (Rank Mean=157.33). Accordingly, it can be argued that the male teachers were subjected to more mobbing.

Evaluation of Mobbing Based on Marital Status

The Kruskal Wallis-H test was performed to determine whether the elementary school teachers' means related regarding the sub-dimensions of the mobbing scale significantly differed based on marital status.

The results revealed no statistically significant difference between the participants' perceptions of mobbing in the dimension "self-expression and communication" [$\chi^2(2) = 5.512$; $p = .085$; $p > 0.05$], there was no statistically significant difference between the participants' perceptions of mobbing in the dimension "social contacts" [$\chi^2(2) = 2.820$; $p = .064$; $p > 0.05$], no statistically significant difference was reported between the participants' perceptions of mobbing in the dimension "personal reputation" [$\chi^2(2) = 5.369$; $p = .244$; $p > 0.05$]. In a similar vein, no statistically significant difference was found between the participants' perceptions of mobbing in the dimension "occupational situation and quality of life" [$\chi^2(2) = 2.008$; $p = .068$; $p > 0.05$]. Lastly, no statistically significant difference was reported between the participants' perceptions of mobbing in the dimension "personal reputation" [$\chi^2(2) = 5.578$; $p = .366$; $p > 0.05$].

Table 4. Findings of the Kruskal Wallis Test regarding the elementary school teachers' exposure to mobbing based on marital status

Sub-Dimensions	Marital Status	n	Average	SD	χ^2	p
Self-Expression and Communication	Married	280	170.57			
	Single	54	200.04	2	5.512	.085
	Other	13	139.73			
Social Contacts	Married	280	171.26			
	Single	54	192.95	2	2.820	.064
	Other	13	154.27			
Personal Reputation	Married	280	171.56			
	Single	54	196.89	2	5.369	.244
	Other	13	131.38			
Occupational Situation and Quality of Life	Married	280	173.06			
	Single	54	186.17	2	2.008	.068
	Other	13	143.77			
Physical Health	Married	280	172.86			
	Single	54	180.64	2	5.578	.366
	Other	13	171.00			
Whole Scale	Married	280	171.78			
	Single	54	195.63	2	4.942	.5578
	Other	13	131.88			

Evaluation of Mobbing Based on Professional Experience

The elementary school teachers' perceptions of mobbing in the dimension "self-expression and communication" showed a significant difference based on professional experience [$\chi^2(7) = 44.814$; $p = .000$; $p > 0.05$]. The Mann-Whitney U test which is performed on paired combinations was used to determine between which groups this difference existed. Accordingly, in the dimension "self-expression and communication", there were significant differences between the teachers who had varying professional experience: 31-35 years and 6-10 years, 31-35 years and 1-5 years, 26-30 years and 11-15 years, 26-30 years and 6-10 years, 26-30 years and 1-5 years, 21-25 years and 11-15 years, 21-25 years and 6-10 years, 21-25 years and 1-5 years, and 16-20 years and 6-10 years. The teachers who had an experience of 6-10 years had higher scores from the mobbing scale compared to those who had worked for 31-35 years, 26-30 years, 21-25 years and 16-20 years. The teachers who had an experience of 1-5 years in the profession reported higher perceptions of having exposed to mobbing compared to those with experience of 21-25 years, 26-30 years and 31-35 years. Lastly, the teachers who had taught for 11-15 years stated to be exposed to more mobbing than those with experience of 21-25 years and 26-30 years did. It can thus be argued that as experience increased, the level of perceived mobbing regarding self-expression and communication decreased.

The elementary school teachers' perceptions of mobbing in the dimension "social contacts" showed a significant difference based on professional experience [$\chi^2(7) = 34.978$; $p = .003$; $p > 0.05$]. The Mann-Whitney U test was used to determine between which groups this difference existed. Accordingly, the differences between 36-40 years and 6-10 years, 26-30 years and 6-10 years, and 21-25 years and 6-10 years of experience were statistically significant. The teachers who had taught for 6-10 years stated to be exposed to more mobbing than those with experience of 21-25 years, 26-30 years and 36-40 years did.

The elementary school teachers' perceptions of mobbing in the dimension "personal reputation" showed a significant difference based on professional experience [$\chi^2(7) = 24.743$; $p = .001$; $p > 0.05$]. The Mann-Whitney U test was used to determine between which groups this difference existed. The results revealed statistically significant differences between 26-30 years and 11-15 years, and 26-30 years and 6-10 years. The teachers with experience of 11-15 years and 26-30 years reported to be more exposed to mobbing compared to those with 26-30 years of experience.

The elementary school teachers' perceptions of mobbing in the dimension "occupational situation and quality of life" showed a significant difference based on professional experience [$\chi^2(7) = 26.804$; $p = .000$; $p > 0.05$]. The Mann-Whitney U test was used to determine between which groups this difference existed. In this regard, the results revealed statistically significant differences between 26-30 years and 6-10 years, and 21-25 years and 6-10 years of experience in the dimension "occupational situation and quality of life". The teachers who had taught for 6-10 years stated to be exposed to more mobbing than those with experience of 21-25 years, and 26-30 years did.

The elementary school teachers' perceptions of mobbing in the dimension "physical health" showed no significant difference based on professional experience [$\chi^2(7) = 518$; $p = .730$; $p > 0.05$].

Table 5. Evaluation of Mobbing Based on Professional Experience

Sub-Dimensions	Year of Experience	n	Average	SD	χ^2	p	Difference
Self-Expression and Communication	1-5 Years	18	230.08	7	44.814	.000	G-B
	6-10 Years	53	220.98				G-A
	11-15 Years	81	197.56				F-C
	16-20 Years	86	166.24				F-B
	21-25 Years	65	139.12				F-A
	26-30 Years	27	127.30				E-C
	31-35 Years	11	105.95				E-B
	36-40 Years	6	96.67				E-A D-B
Social Contacts	1-5 Years	18	202.81	7	34.978	.000	H-B F-B E-B
	6-10 Years	53	208.06				
	11-15 Years	81	189.51				
	16-20 Years	86	184.59				
	21-25 Years	65	143.95				
	26-30 Years	27	128.80				
	31-35 Years	11	112.73				
	36-40 Years	6	67.00				
Personal Reputation	1-5 Years	18	196.39	7	24.743	.001	F-C F-B
	6-10 Years	53	202.79				
	11-15 Years	81	192.19				
	16-20 Years	86	180.33				
	21-25 Years	65	146.42				
	26-30 Years	27	118.85				
	31-35 Years	11	148.91				
	36-40 Years	6	109.25				
Occupational Situation and Quality of Life	1-5 Years	18	202.53	7	26.804	.000	F-B E-B
	6-10 Years	53	207.46				
	11-15 Years	81	190.14				
	16-20 Years	86	177.59				
	21-25 Years	65	148.70				
	26-30 Years	27	130.59				
	31-35 Years	11	128.41				
	36-40 Years	6	76.50				
Physical Health	1-5 Years	18	171.00	7	6.185	.518	
	6-10 Years	53	180.82				
	11-15 Years	81	173.17				
	16-20 Years	86	173.01				
	21-25 Years	65	173.65				
	26-30 Years	27	171.00				
	31-35 Years	11	171.00				
	36-40 Years	6	171.00				
Whole Scale	1-5 Years	18	214.61	7	40.114	.000	B-H, F-C, F-B E-B E-C
	6-10 Years	53	213.79				
	11-15 Years	81	196.44				
	16-20 Years	86	177.02				
	21-25 Years	65	139.02				
	26-30 Years	27	119.48				
	31-35 Years	11	120.91				
	36-40 Years	6	76.17				

DISCUSSION and CONCLUSION

The primary aim of this study was to examine elementary school teachers' levels of exposure to mobbing in the Usak province of Turkey. The results were obtained based on the data collected from 347 teachers. The participants' reported levels of exposure to mobbing significantly differed in terms of gender. The male teachers stated to have been more subjected to mobbing compared to their female colleagues. There are similar findings in the literature; Serin, (2018), Nanto (2015), Bölükbaşı (2015), Koçak (2015), Zorgül (2014), Eken (2014), Çam (2013), Erdoğan (2012), Ekin (2012), Ertürk (2011) and Cemaloğlu and Ertürk (2007) reported that males were more exposed to mobbing. Socio-cultural values are thought to have an influence at this point. In organisations, administrators can be said to be more sensitive in their behaviours towards women. Yet, there are conflicting findings as well. Female teachers were reported to be more subjected to mobbing in Gezer (2015), Özçelik (2015), Akın and Karabacak (2014) and Yumuşak (2013). Variations across samples may have played a role in conflicting results. On the other hand, Bayraktar (2016), Öntürk (2015) and Çivilidağ and Sargın (2011) did not report any relationships in-between.

The results of the study did not show any relationship between the elementary school teachers' levels of exposure to mobbing and their marital status. Studies that revealed similar findings include Serin (2018), Atar (2017), Cansever (2017), Özkan (2016), Karakoç (2016), Aşık (2016), Tektaş (2015), Avcı (2015), Canbaz (2014) and Erdoğan (2012) that could not find any relationship between mobbing and marital status. The marital status of teachers does not seem to affect their relationships in the school environment. Bayraktar (2016), Özçelik (2015) and Hacıcaferoğlu (2013) found that single teachers were more exposed to mobbing compared to married teachers, whereas Çelik (2015) and Yıldırım (2015) concluded that married teachers were subjected to mobbing at higher levels. On the other hand, Yumuşak (2013) determined that widowed teachers experienced mobbing more than married and single teachers did.

In terms of professional experience, the elementary school teachers with less experience were exposed to mobbing more often in the dimensions "self-expression and communication", "social contacts", "personal reputation" and "occupational situation and quality of life". Similar findings were also reported in Bölükbaşı (2015) and Nanto (2015). According to the findings of Nanto (2015), teachers with 1-5 years of experience were exposed to more mobbing. Yet, Özçelik (2015) found that teachers with an experience of 11-20 years experienced mobbing at higher levels, while Canbaz (2014) discovered that teachers who taught for 16-20 years had more mobbing. These differences across studies can be due to the school culture and climate. Moreover, Yılmaz (2017) found that teachers who had at most nine years of experience were subjected to more mobbing compared to those who had worked at least 20 years. However, Karakoç (2016) and Akpunar (2016) did not reveal any statistically significant difference.

In the light of the findings reported in this study, the following suggestions can be offered:

1. Future research attempts can focus on preventive measures for raising school administrators and teachers' awareness of mobbing. Effective and deterrent methods can be developed to distinguish mobbing behaviours and to struggle against them.
2. The school administration and staff should strive to create a fair, tolerant, trustworthy and collaborative school climate. In this regard, in-service trainings can be organised by communication experts, and teachers of psychological counselling and guidance.
3. By developing different scales on mobbing, studies on the relationship between mobbing and qualitative and quantitative variables (e.g. working in the countryside, being a permanent-contracted-temporary teacher) can be conducted.
4. A national research project on mobbing can be implemented by determining a generalisable sample.
5. Teachers of different majors have responsibilities towards their students and institution. Guidance services can be provided to teachers regarding assignment processes, colleague support and interaction in interdisciplinary issues.

6. Screening tests for mobbing can be administered to all school teachers by Provincial Directorates for National Education.

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