

Research on Referees of Indoor Sports Exposed to Mobbing Behaviors in Their Classes in Turkey

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ABSTRACT The aim of this study is to identify the level of mobbing behaviors that referees of indoor sports are exposed to in terms of some demographic variables in Turkey and raise awareness on this issue. The population of the present research consists of 907 referees of indoor sports from different classes, and the sample comprises of 248 referees, selected through a random selection method. The required data for the research is obtained through the "Mobbing Scale for Referees of Indoor Sports". The results indicate that referees of indoor sports statistically perceive mobbing behaviors at a lower middle level, and A-class referees were exposed to mobbing behaviors more than international, B-class and C-class referees. It was also determined that there was no meaningful difference between mobbing behaviors and such variables as gender, marital status, education and classes.

INTRODUCTION

As the main source for an organization to reach its aims and goals, workers may be affected both materially and morally, and psychologically due to mobbing (Erol and Oztoprak 2015). The motivation of workers, exposed to direct or indirect mobbing behaviors, decreases (Kok 2006), and also affects the health and job performance of all the workers sociologically, psychologically and physically (Senerkal and Corbacioglu 2015).

Causing negative effects, mobbing is defined by Leymann (1996) as, 'One or more persons targeting an individual and systematically behaving in an unethical and hostile way towards him/her and as a result of these ongoing behaviors, the person is being pushed into a vulnerable and a helpless situation'. Davenport et al. (2003) define the term as, 'a person gathers around other people with their own will or involuntarily against another person and forcing him/her to quit his/her work by creating an aggressive environment and by continuous acts of malicious intention, hint, ridicule and by discrediting his/her social dignity'. For Sahin (2015), mobbing is a way of the workers' exposition to certain behavioral patterns physically and psychologically, and subdues the workers verbally and physically. Einarsen (2000) states that mobbing is often a long-term process, and showing such behaviors displays a high proliferation

tendency in time, finally, most people do not notice such increase.

An Australian scientist, Lorenz coined the term 'mobbing' during the 1960s in order to explain the behaviors of animals trying to mob a predator (Davenport et al. 2003). Swedish doctor Heinemann defines mobbing as aggressive behaviors of a group of children towards single and weak children (Tinaz 2011). For Ulug and Beydogan (2009), personal characteristics of children displaying such behaviors show a close relationship with people displaying mobbing behaviors. In professional life, mobbing was first used by Leymann in the beginning of 1980s, and publicized the seriousness of the term (Tinaz 2011).

In Turkey, mobbing has recently been a topical subject in the public and private sector, and has become an administrative and judiciary issue (Senerkal and Corbacioglu 2015). There was no legislation about mobbing before, however, it is now regulated under private law and penal codes (Taskin 2015). There are provisions about employment contracts in the 6th section of the new Turkish Code of Obligations Law No.27836 enacted in 2011, and a new regulation was accepted regarding mobbing with the title of Protection of the Worker's Personality as per Article 417 (Ozgun 2011).

The Prime Ministry prepared a memorandum in 2011, and this is exercised by the Ministry of Labor and Social Security by founding the Strug-

gle Committee for Psychological Harassment at the Workplace to raise awareness about mobbing. The Board of Labor and Social Security has created a hotline on the number of 170, which received a number of 11,393 applications about mobbing behaviors between 2011 and 2014. Seventy percent of the applications were received from the private sector, and the rest in the public sector. Additionally, of the applications received in the private sector, fifty-eight percent of them were from men and forty-two percent were from women. As for the public sector, the rate was equal (Gurhan 2015).

Individuals exposed to mobbing behaviors generally have distinguished professional characteristics, a high capability level, are creative, honest, success-oriented and hold a high commitment to the job. Such characteristics may disturb and draw the others' attention (Baltas 2009). Previous researches put forward that mobbing victims generally become oversensitive, skeptical, angry, foresighted and possess low self-confidence (Wornhamm 2003).

In the light of this information, the referees of indoor sports have to feel good both physically and mentally in order to function well. As specifically for refereeing, one of the risky occupational groups (Hancerlioglu 1992), one has to develop certain capabilities such as contacting, assessment, objective, giving right decisions. It is not enough for a referee to know the game's rules, regulations or mechanic of the refereeing, but it is also important to have experience and self-confidence, additionally, develop psychological capabilities and various acquisitions (Kaisidis and Ansel 2000) as well. Referees need to feel good both physically and mentally to function well, not get affected by outer negative factors, know how to manage stress, to give right decisions before huge crowds, and have expectations for their own sides. Referees should know well what behaviors may be considered as mobbing and how to struggle against them.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

The present research used the 'General Survey Model' as one of the descriptive survey methods. For Karasar (2010), the model is composed of several elements in order to make judgments about the population, and a survey method for the entire population or a part of it such as group, sample or sampling.

Purpose

The present research aims to identify the level of exposition to mobbing behaviors of referees of indoor sports regarding certain variables such as their genders, marital status, education and classification demographics, to guide referees about mobbing, and to raise the referees' awareness towards mobbing.

Population and Sampling

The population of the research comprises of a total number of 907 active referees of indoor sports in different classifications from professional and amateur leagues of federations (Basketball Federation 2013; Handball Federation 2013; Volleyball Federation 2013) of basketball (N=272), handball (N=81) and volleyball (N=554). The sampling consists of a number of 248 referees of indoor sports selected by a random selection method in different classifications from professional and amateur leagues of federations of basketball (N=70), handball (N=62) and volleyball (N=116). Sampling represents the population, as the minimum required number of small populations is twenty percent in descriptive researches (Arli and Nazik 2001).

Data Collection Tools

For necessary data for the research, a data collection form was used to identify the level of mobbing actions. The cases of referees whether they are exposed to mobbing behaviors that displays such behaviors were found by applying the Mobbing Scale for Referees of Indoor Sports, developed by Hacicaferoglu (2014).

The displaying single factor form was composed of 14 items, the Cronbach's alpha coefficient of the scale was found to be 0.82, and the factor load values of the scale ranged between 0.48 and 0.76. The scale was reliable since the Cronbach's alpha coefficient was over 0.70 (Arseven 2001). The answers given to the scale items by the referees depending on their demographic variables were calculated with the help of SPSS 20 statistics package software. The scale used in the present research comprised of 14 items with quintuple Likert-type responses such as, 'Never 1,00-1,79/Low Level', 'Rarely 1,80-2,59/Low Medium Level', 'Occasionally 2,60-3,39/Medium Level', 'Often 3,40-4,19/Upper Medium Level' and

'Always 4,20-5,00/Upper Level' (Cengiz et al. 2015).

Data Analysis

The frequency, percentage, standard deviation, arithmetic mean, t-test, and one-way variance analysis (ANOVA) was applied to analyze data in the present research. Statistical significance Alpha (α) is accepted as $p < .05$.

RESULTS

Data obtained from the referees of indoor sports who participated in the research and statistical findings regarding the data are included in this section.

It was determined in the research that there was statistically no meaningful difference ($F=1.062$; $p>.05$) among international and A, B, C class referees exposed to mobbing behaviors in terms of the one-way ANOVA (Table 1). This means that referees were exposed to similar mobbing behaviors. Compared to other referees, the A-class referees were the most exposed to mobbing behaviors with a score of 1.87 (25%). On the other hand, compared to other referees, international referees were the least exposed to mobbing behaviors with a score of 1.68 (3.2%).

In terms of the gender variable, there was statistically no meaningful difference in t-test analysis among international referees ($t=.350$;

$p>.05$), A ($t=-.092$; $p>.05$), B ($t=-.331$; $p>.05$) and C ($t=-.392$; $p>.05$) class referees in terms of the case referees exposed to mobbing behaviors (Table 2). Thus, it can be concluded that referees were exposed to either similar mobbing behaviors or in similar frequencies. It is also determined that the A-class women referees with a score of 1.89 (30.8%) were exposed more to mobbing behaviors than men or women referees in other groups.

In terms of the marital status variable, there was statistically no meaningful difference found in the t-test analysis among international referees ($t= -.698$; $p>.05$), A ($t= -.324$; $p>.05$), B ($t= -1.127$; $p>.05$) and C ($t= -.337$; $p>.05$) class referees in terms of the case referees exposed to mobbing behaviors (Table 3). Thus, it can be concluded that single or married referees were exposed to similar mobbing behaviors. It is also determined that married A-class referees with a score of 1.88 (27.9%) were exposed more to mobbing behaviors than single and married referees in other groups.

In terms of the education variable, there was statistically no meaningful difference found in the t-test analysis among classification referees holding associate ($F=362$; $p>0.05$), undergraduate ($F=.962$; $p>0.05$) and graduate ($F=1.791$; $p>0.05$) degrees in terms of the case referees exposed to mobbing behaviors (Table 4). Thus, it can be concluded that all referees in terms of the education variable were exposed to similar mob-

Table 1: The level of mobbing behaviours the referees exposed to as per their classifications

| Classification | N | % | Mean | Ss | Sd | F | p |
|------------------------|-----|------|------|-----|-----|-------|---------|
| International referees | 8 | 3.2 | 1.68 | .26 | 3 | 1.062 | .366 |
| A-class referees | 62 | 25 | 1.87 | .58 | 244 | | |
| B-class referees | 78 | 31.5 | 1.75 | .45 | 247 | | |
| C-class referees | 100 | 40.3 | 1.82 | .44 | | | |
| Total | 248 | 100 | 1.81 | | | | $p>.05$ |

Table 2: The case of referees exposed to mobbing behaviours in terms of gender variable

| Classifications | Gender | N | % | Mean | Ss | Sd | t | $p>.05$ |
|------------------------|--------|----|------|------|-----|----|-------|---------|
| International Referees | Man | 5 | 2.40 | 1.71 | .29 | 6 | .350 | .739 |
| | Woman | 3 | 7.70 | 1.64 | .25 | | | |
| A-class Referees | Man | 50 | 23.9 | 1.86 | .57 | 60 | -.092 | .927 |
| | Woman | 12 | 30.8 | 1.89 | .66 | | | |
| B-class Referees | Man | 68 | 32.5 | 1.74 | .44 | 76 | -.331 | .741 |
| | Woman | 10 | 25.6 | 1.79 | .53 | | | |
| C-class Referees | Man | 86 | 41.1 | 1.82 | .46 | 98 | -.392 | .696 |
| | Woman | 14 | 35.9 | 1.87 | .37 | | | |

Table 3: The case of referees exposed to mobbing behaviours in terms of marital status variable

| Classifications | Marital status | N | % | Mean | Ss | Sd | t | p>.05 |
|------------------------|----------------|----|------|------|-----|----|--------|-------|
| International Referees | Single | 2 | 1.9 | 1.57 | .40 | 6 | -.698 | .512 |
| | Married | 6 | 4.3 | 1.72 | .23 | | | |
| A-class Referees | Single | 23 | 21.3 | 1.84 | .61 | 60 | -.324 | .747 |
| | Married | 39 | 27.9 | 1.88 | .57 | | | |
| B-class Referees | Single | 37 | 34.3 | 1.68 | .47 | 76 | -1.127 | .263 |
| | Married | 41 | 29.3 | 1.80 | .43 | | | |
| C-class Referees | Single | 46 | 42.6 | 1.81 | .41 | 98 | -.337 | .737 |
| | Married | 54 | 38.6 | 1.84 | .47 | | | |

Table 4: The case of referees exposed to mobbing behaviours in terms of education variable

| Degree | Classifications | N | % | Mean | Ss | Sd | t | p>.05 |
|---------------|------------------------|----|------|------|-----|-----|-------|--------|
| Associate | A-class referees | 10 | 19.2 | 1.73 | .55 | 2 | .362 | .698 |
| | B-class referees | 18 | 34.6 | 1.67 | .43 | 49 | | |
| | C-class referees | 24 | 46.2 | 1.80 | .46 | 51 | | p>0.05 |
| Undergraduate | International referees | 6 | 3.60 | 1.59 | .22 | 3 | .962 | .412 |
| | A-class referees | 46 | 27.4 | 1.82 | .49 | 164 | | |
| | B-class referees | 49 | 29.2 | 1.74 | .39 | 167 | | |
| | C-class referees | 67 | 39.9 | 1.84 | .45 | | | p>0.05 |
| Graduate | International referees | 2 | 7.10 | 1.96 | .15 | 3 | 1.791 | .176 |
| | A-class referees | 6 | 21.4 | 2.54 | .89 | 24 | | |
| | B-class referees | 11 | 39.3 | 1.88 | .70 | 27 | | |
| | C-class referees | 9 | 32.1 | 1.78 | .42 | | | p>0.05 |

bing behaviors. It is also determined that the A-class referees with a score of 2.54 (21.4%) holding a graduate degree were exposed more to mobbing behaviors than the referees in other education groups.

DISCUSSION

It was determined that there was statistically no meaningful differences found among actively working referees of indoor sports, and those who participated in the present research about imposed mobbing behaviors. The arithmetic mean score of the level of referees' exposure to mobbing behaviors is 1.81 and at a lower medium level. The A-class referees were determined to be exposed more to mobbing behaviors than the referees in other classes. This may affect their objectivity, fairness and accuracy during matches. Gurpinar and Guven (2011) put forward that upper class referees (experienced) are exposed more to unsportsmanlike conduct than the referees in lower classes (inexperienced). Some scholars conducted research on mobbing behaviors that people were exposed to in their workplaces,

and found following results: 24.2 percent (Akca et al. 2014), 66.7 percent (Senerkal and Corbacioglu 2015), 29.8 percent (Ozler et al. 2008), 31.1 percent (Picakciefe et al. 2015), 33.8 percent (Somani et al. 2015) of the participants in the research conducted by the scholars were exposed to mobbing behaviors in their workplaces. Moreover, similar studies carried out on mobbing displayed similar results (Asanakutlu and Safran 2005; Cemaloglu 2007; Hacicaferoglu et al. 2012). Nevertheless, there are other studies stating that participants who were exposed to mobbing behaviors at lower levels (Aksu and Balci 2009; Sener 2013; Tuzel 2009; Ugurlu et al. 2012). It is clear that the level of mobbing behaviors can differ in terms of the occupational groups, institutions and organizations.

The level of exposure to mobbing behaviors of A-class and C-class women referees participated in the study was higher than men and women referees in other classes. Some studies show that women are exposed more to mobbing behaviors than men (Ayan 2011; Aydin and Ozkul 2007; Bulbul et al. 2013; Hacicaferoglu and Gundogdu 2014; Somani et al. 2015; Kelly 2005;

Kose and Uysal 2010; Ozler et al. 2008; Picakciefte et al. 2015; Turhan 2014), whereas others show just the opposite (Koc and Bulut 2009; Tuzel 2009; Zukauskas and Vveinhardt 2009). However, it should be noted that the reason for this case is that the number of women participants are lower than that of men or women referees are treated gently possibly due to their gender.

Leymann (1993) determined that an aggressive manner was maintained towards the weakness of women. It was confirmed that there was no meaningful difference between gender variable of the referees and mobbing behaviors, as well. Other related studies on this topic confirmed that there was statistically no meaningful difference (Ayan 2011; Erdemir and Murat 2014; Kaya et al. 2014; Sener 2013; Turhan 2014; Ugurlu et al. 2012; Yildirim and Eken 2014), whereas some studies showed that there was meaningful difference (Akinci and Guven 2015; Yildirim et al. 2014).

It was confirmed that there was no meaningful difference between the marital status variable of the referees and mobbing behaviors. It was also determined that married A, B and C class referees were exposed more to mobbing behaviors than single referees in other groups. Additionally, it was determined that married or single referees in international-class and B-class single referees were exposed less to mobbing behaviors. Other related studies showed that married workers were exposed more to mobbing behaviors than single workers (Hacicaferoglu and Gundogdu 2014; Tuzel 2009; Ugurlu et al. 2012). However, Yildirim and Eken (2014) stated that single participants were more likely to be exposed to mobbing behaviors than married participants. In literature, there are some study results showing that there was statistically no meaningful difference between the marital status variable and mobbing behavior (Ayan 2011; Aydin and Ozkul 2007; Erdemir and Murat 2014; Kose and Uysal 2010; Ugurlu et al. 2012). On the other hand, Sener (2013) puts forward that there was statistically meaningful difference between marital status variable and mobbing behavior.

It was determined in the present research that there was statistically no meaningful difference between the education variable of the referees and mobbing behaviors. It is also determined that the arithmetic mean of A-class referees holding a graduate degree and C-class referees holding an undergraduate and associate degree was higher

than that of referees in other classes. A high education level provides advantage to people in many respects. However, such advantages may lead to jealousy acts among the referees. Related studies showed that workers exposed to mobbing behaviors were the ones holding an undergraduate or associate degree (Aydin and Ozkul 2007; Crawford 1997; Gurpinar and Guven 2011). Davenport et al. (2003) and Hacicaferoglu et al. (2012) found out that workers holding an undergraduate or associate degree were exposed to mobbing behaviors the most. Another research suggested that there was statistically no meaningful difference between the education variable and mobbing behaviors (Dogan et al. 2011; Gurpinar and Guven 2011; Sener 2013).

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, aiming to identify the level of mobbing behaviors faced by referees in different classes of basketball, handball and volleyball in terms of some variables, the present study determined that the arithmetic mean of the referees of indoor sports in different classes was 1.81 and the level was lower medium. The A-class referees with the score of 1.87 (25%) were exposed more to mobbing behaviors than other international, B and C class referees. A-class women referees with the score of 1.89 (30.8%) in terms of the gender variable, A-class married referees with the score of 1.88 (27.9%) in terms of the marital status variable, and A-class referees holding a graduate degree with the score of 2.54 (21.4%) were exposed more to mobbing behaviors than the referees in other classes. It was confirmed that there was no meaningful difference between mobbing behaviours and referees' independent variables such as class, gender, education and marital status.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Ignorance of mobbing behaviors may be caused by misperception of the behavior or connivance of officials in the central referee board. Officials or the referees should be conscious of negative behaviors that may be mobbing or not. Seminars and psychological support are to be provided to referees who have psychological problems or are likely to have, against mobbing behaviors by experts on what mobbing behaviors are, how it occurs and how to be protected from such actions.

Authorities should be fair and objective, respect diversity among referees, be open to communication, intervene early in possible mobbing behaviors in the workplace, and prevent further harm to their workers and organization. Therefore, the rules applied in appointment and promotion of the referees should be objective, fair and far from mobbing. Furthermore, there should be a new regulation about preventing psychological violence in the act on Prevention of Violence and Disorder in Sport. Authorities need to work on the issue in order to fulfill the deficiency in the act and inform the public on this issue. Prevention or decrease of mobbing behaviors is significant in terms of enhancing efficiency of the referees during matches.

Generally, mobbing takes place in similar subjects. There are few studies carried out on sport workers. Researchers, who plan to do study mobbing, are advised to do research on workers in the sports field, and study whether they are exposed to mobbing behaviors in the workplace.

Questionnaires or scales are needed to conduct research through quantitative research on whether workers in the sport field are exposed to mobbing behaviors. Further precautions need to be taken in order to maintain motivation and work performance of all workers.

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