

A high-angle, blurred photograph of a crowd of people walking on a light-colored, paved surface. The motion blur gives a sense of a busy, crowded environment. The people are dressed in casual to business-casual attire.

Predicting workplace mobbing by workplace conditions

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Overview



- Definition
- Framework of mobbing
- Methods
- Main findings
- Conclusions



Workplace mobbing

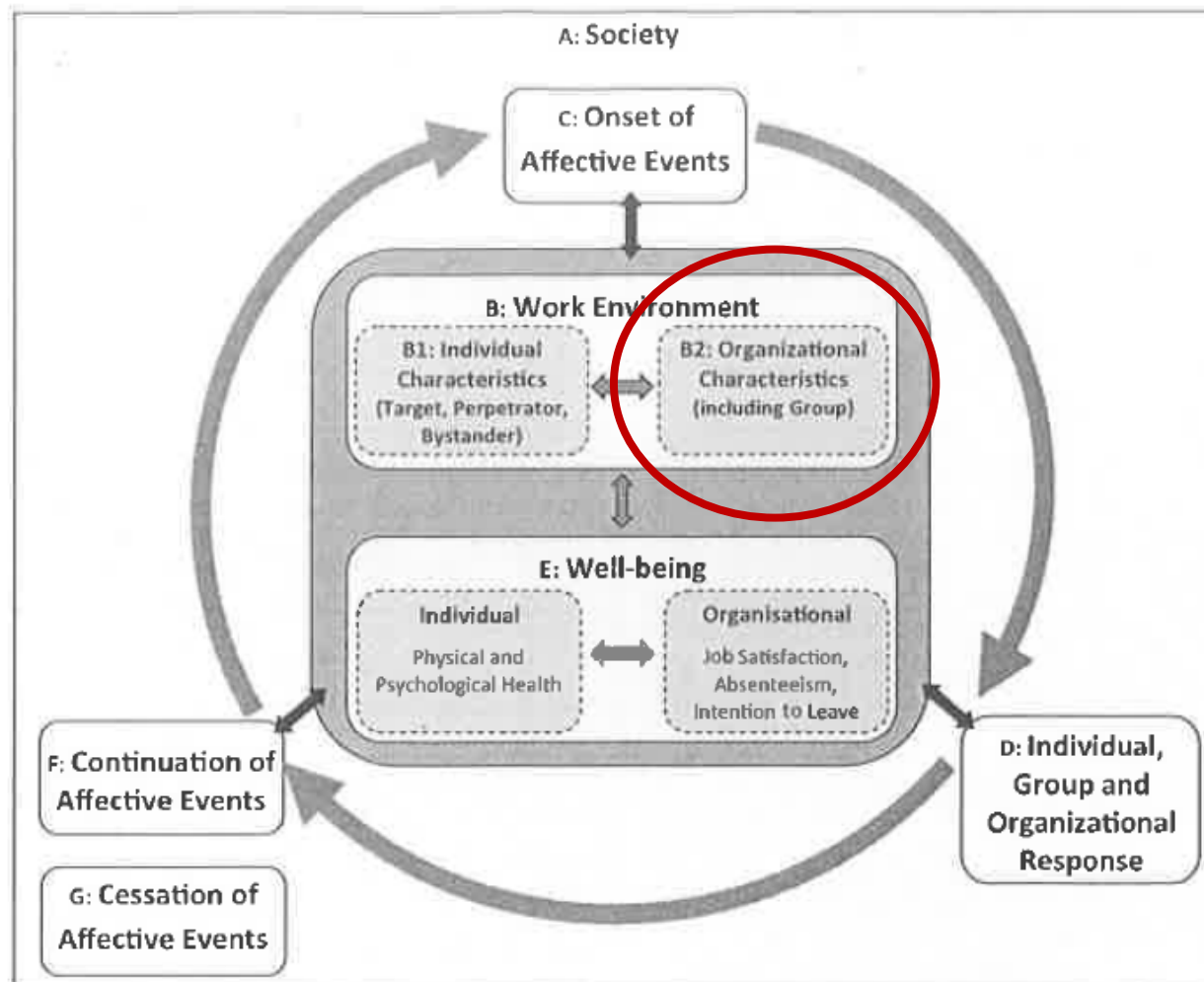


Workplace mobbing is a situation in which one or more persons *systematically and over a long period of time* perceive themselves to be on the receiving end of *negative treatment* on the part of *one or more persons*, in a situation in which the person(s) exposed to the treatment has *difficulty in defending themselves* against this treatment.

(Matthiesen & Einarsen, 2007)



Framework of workplace mobbing



(Branch, Ramsay, & Barker, 2012)



Work environment hypothesis

Inadequacies in leadership practices and **poorly organised working conditions**, as well as **low levels of morale** in departments, are the main **precursors** of mobbing in the workplace (Leymann, 1990)



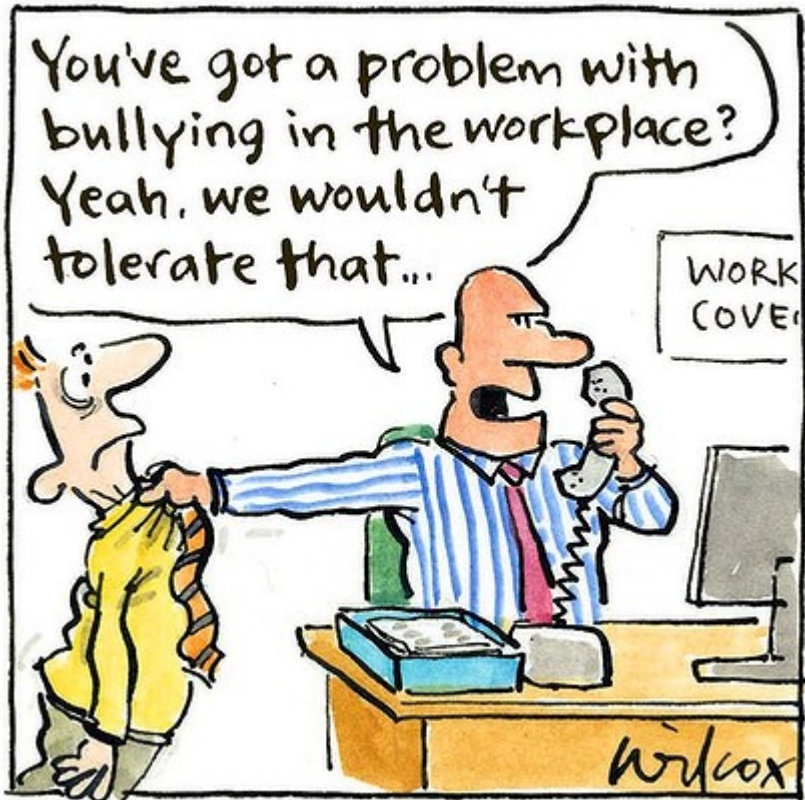
a poor **psychosocial work environment** is a common characteristic of work groups in which **mobbing prevails**

components: more competitive social climate, higher workload, less social support,

(Balducci, Fraccaroli & Schaufeli, 2011; Skogstad, Torsheim & Einarsen, 2011)



Aims



- Develop and validate a new short scale of **workplace mobbing**
- Investigate some working conditions as predictors of **workplace mobbing**



Participants



- **1529 employees** working in Luxembourg
- Living in Luxembourg and the border countries
- 58.5 % male
- Representative study
- Data collected by CATI





Sample

Characteristic	Total	Subsamples			Subsample diff
		Luxemb.	French	German	
N	1529	708	636	185	
Age (M; SD)	45.71; 8.37	46.10; 8.76 ^a	45.15; 7.97 ^a	46.13; 8.13 ^a	$F(2, 1526) = 2.43$
Gender					
Male (%)	58.5	58.5 ^a	58.0 ^a	60.0 ^a	$\chi^2(2) = .23$
Female (%)	41.5	41.5 ^a	42.0 ^a	40.0 ^a	
Nationality					
Luxembourgish (%)	46.2	93.6	5.0	5.9	$F(2, 1526) = 318.67^{**}$
French (%)	22.4	0.4	53.5	0.0	
German (%)	10.5	1.1	0.2	82.2.	
Educational Level					
Highschool dipl.(%)	20.9	22.6 ^a	18.9	21.6 ^a	$\chi^2(2) = 21.36^{**}$
Apprenticeship (%)	33.3	35.7 ^a	28.6	40.0 ^a	
Work sector					
Public sector (%)	12.2	22.3	3.3 ^a	3.8 ^a	$\chi^2(2) = 95.42^{**}$
Finance (%)	11.8	8.9	14.2 ^a	14.6 ^a	



Self-report instruments

- **Satisfaction and respect:** employee is satisfied and respected at work; five-point Likert scale ranged from 1 (“not at all”) to 5 (“absolutely”); (6 items; Cronbach’s $\alpha = .85$)
- **Mental strain at work:** divers tasks at once, working under pressure and doing intellectually demanding work; five-point Likert scale ranged from 1 (“never”) to 5 (“very often”); (3 items; Cronbach’s $\alpha = .65$)
- **Participation and feedback:** employee has ample opportunities to be involved in the decision-making process and received feedback from his company; five-point Likert scale ranged from 1 (“not at all”) to 5 (“absolutely”); (3 items, Cronbach’s $\alpha = .56$)
- **Cooperation:** employee cooperates with and gets social support from others at work; five-point Likert scale ranged from 1 (“not at all”) to 5 (“absolutely”); (2 items, Cronbach’s $\alpha = .65$)
- **Appraisal:** employee feels that his/her work is important and appreciated by his/her company; five-point Likert scale ranged from 1 (“not at all”) to 5 (“absolutely”); (2 items, Cronbach’s $\alpha = .54$)



Items

Workplace mobbing: [trilingual](#); mobbing behavior that are typically found do be more harmful then others; five-point Likert scale ranged from 1 ("never") to 5 ("very often"); (5 items)

			Correlations			
Total sample (N = 1529)	M	SD	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
1. Criticized by colleagues/superior	2.04	.80				
2. Ridiculed by colleagues/superior	1.33	.57	.34**			
3. Ignored by colleagues/superior	1.73	.86	.38**	.40**		
4. Assigned absurd duties	1.83	.99	.35**	.36**	.40**	
5. Conflicts at work	2.19	.85	.37**	.23**	.31**	.27**



Exploratory Factor Analysis

	Total	LUX	FRA	GER
Criticized by colleagues/superior	.71	.71	.71	.73
Ridiculed by colleagues/superior	.67	.69	.67	.63
Ignored by colleagues/superior	.74	.72	.75	.77
Assigned absurd duties	.70	.67	.70	.80
Conflicts at work	.60	.62	.60	.56
% variance explained	47.3	46.8	47.7	49.6
Cronbach α	.71	.70	.72	.73



Confirmatory Factor Analysis

	Factors	χ^2	df	RMSEA	SRMR	AIC
Total	1	4.35	2	.03	.01	22641.20
LUX	1	9.75*	3	.06	.02	10988.63
FRA	1	13.41**	4	.06	.03	10910.58
GER	1	7.08	4	.06	.04	2579.83



Inter-correlations

	Correlation				
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
1. Mobbing					
2. Satisfaction and Respect	-.57**				
3. Mental strain at work	.23**	-.17**			
4. Participation and Feedback	-.24**	.45**	.16**		
5. Cooperation	-.27**	.38**	.00	.25**	
6. Appraisal	-.37**	.58**	-.02	.36**	.31**



Hierarch. Regres. Analysis

	Total		LUX		FRA		GER	
	b	t	b	t	b	t	b	t
Step 1								
Age	.01	3.41**	.01	3.40**	.00	.62	.02	1.95
Gender	.15	2.84**	.22	2.86**	.06	.72	.18	1.34
Work sector	.00	1.06	.00	.14	.00	.74	.02	1.67
	R ² = .01; F = 7.23**		R ² = .03; F = 6.55**		R ² = .00; F = .60		R ² = .05; F = 3.08*	
Step 2								
Age	.02	2.31*	.02	2.30*	.00	.61	.01	1.33
Gender	.12	2.24*	.19	1.99*	.04	.65	.17	1.15
Work sector	.00	0.06	.00	.13	.00	.54	.01	.98
Satisfaction and respect	.47	16.64**	.52	11.75**	.43	10.25**	.34	4.02**
Mental strain at work	.15	6.78**	.15	4.58**	.16	4.71**	.13	2.01*
Participation and feedback	.01	.51	-.07	-.18	.04	1.25	.18	2.54*
Cooperation	.07	3.29**	.08	2.36*	.10	3.06**	-.09	-1.43
Appraisal	.06	2.48*	.02	.44	.16	3.67**	.12	1.67
	R ² = .36; F = 162.99**		R ² = .34; F = 66.49**		R ² = .41; F = 85.80**		R ² = .36; F = 16.61**	



Conclusions



- reliability of the mobbing scale given
- but low reliability of the predictors
- support to theoretical models; job characteristics are related to workplace mobbing
- social work environment hypothesis receives support! (Balducci, Fraccaroli & Schaufeli, 2011)

- ➔ **First**, employees who are facing less respect for their work can become targets of mobbing!
- ➔ **Second**, individuals reporting stressors/strain share these working conditions perhaps with perpetrators. These can encourage perpetrators to engage in mobbing!



Interventions



Focus of interventions should be on improving the **general quality of work** and the collective working environment!

- need to learn specific leadership styles ?
- reduce work stress / strain ?
- but as **multifaceted phenomenon** a need to examine the interaction between each of the levels!



Thanks for your interest and attention!

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