



Tracing the Effects of Mobbing on the Performance of Engineers: An Evidence of a Telecom Sector

Fazal Rehman^{1*}, Rosman Md Yusoff², Fadillah Ismail³

¹Universiti Tun Hussein Onn Malaysia,

Faculty of Technology Management, Universiti Tun Hussein Onn Malaysia, Parit Raja, Johor, Malaysia

²Universiti Tun Hussein Onn Malaysia,

TRANSFORM, Universiti Tun Hussein Onn Malaysia, Parit Raja, Johor, Malaysia

³Universiti Tun Hussein Onn Malaysia

TRANSFORM, Universiti Tun Hussein Onn Malaysia, Parit Raja, Johor, Malaysia

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Abstract: This study aims at investigating the effects of mobbing in losing the performance of engineers in the telecom sector of Pakistan. Precisely, it assesses the effects of mobbing on the job involvement, creativity, and efficiency of engineers. This study utilizes a quantitative approach to collect data through questionnaire based survey from the engineers of four telecommunication companies in urban areas of Pakistan. Data was analyzed by descriptive statistics and simple regression. Results indicate that mobbing has negative and significant relationship with the performance of engineers in the telecom sector of Pakistan. Mobbing has negative but significant relationship with job involvement, creativity and efficiency of engineers in the telecom sector of Pakistan. This study appraises to marketing and management professionals who are planning and implementing strategies in developed areas to enhance their services to control over mobbed behavior in working environment. The findings suggest that mobbing can lose the performance of engineers.

Keywords: Mobbing, Performance, Job Involvement, Creativity, Efficiency

1. Introduction

Mobbing is an activity where a group of employees are collectively exercise negative behavior against a person to pressurize and enforce in an unsecure spot that can cause to heave out of the organization. It is a biased character and very difficult to understand. Like, Yildirim and Yildirim (2007) has defined it as unseen and complicated notion that influence employees' performance in an organization. However, previous literature has discussed mobbing with various names.

For example, Leymann (1990) has called it mobbing as well as psychological terror, Hoel and Cooper (2001) have mention it as bullying, Keashly (1998) has named it as emotional abuse, and Bassman (1992) has mentioned it as work abuse. However, mobbing has derived from an English word “To Mob” which means oppress, attack or to invade someone and can be defined as “hostile and unethical communication being directed in a systematic way by one or a number of people mainly toward one individual” (Divincova & Sivakova, 2014). On the other hand, employee performance is the set of actions to fulfill the requirements of job description (Biswas & Varma, 2012). Precisely, it is a function to handle a specific task and comprises standard job description, absenteeism, maintenance of interpersonal relations, withdrawal behavior, substance abuse and other behaviors that maximize hazards in working environment (Murphy, 1989). Therefore, this study is investigating whether mobbing can loss the performance of engineers in the telecom industry (Private Sector) of Pakistan or not? as telecommunication is one of the fast growing industry in Pakistan (Rehman, Nawaz, Khan & Hyder, 2014). To get this aim, a study was conducted to assess the relationship between mobbing and the performance of engineers in the telecom sector of Pakistan due to high competition among companies in the urban areas. This study has highlighted some new dimensions of the knowledge area.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Construction of References

Mobbing has been extensively investigating since 1990 in various frameworks in different countries of the world due to variances in culture context and values. Therefore, this study has interest to assess previous literature to understand mobbing behavior at different levels and organizational settings. As in literature, considerable attention has given to the behavioral aspects of employees in organizations (Rehman, Yusoff, Zabri & Ismail, 2018). For example, Leymann (1992) has conducted a study to investigate mobbing behavior in educational sector. The study has interviewed 2428 employees and noted that 3.5 percent employees faced the issues of mobbing. It has noted that 40 percent employees faced the problems of mobbing from 2 to 4 colleagues and 1/3 percent employees from one and concluded that 6.5 percent employees were mobbed in educational institutions. Similarly, in a survey of Stanford University Business School (SUBS), it has noted that 53 percent employees were mobbed while 78 percent have declared that they witness to other in facing mobbing behavior (Andrea Adams Trust, 2010). Likewise, Aydan, Mustafa and Tuna (2012) have interviewed 280 instructors of educational institutes to investigate the mob behavior. The study has noted a high level mob behavior in the age group between 23 to 35 years. However, it was noted that mob behavior decreased with an increase in age. Celik and Peker (2010) have noted mob behavior in the sense of rumoring, non-appreciation and criticism in the high school teachers at Turkey. Later on, Celep and Eminoglu (2012) have assessed mobbing among administration and teaching staff. The study has concluded the results that the problems of mobbing can loss the efficiency of teachers and impact negatively. It has confirmed by the study that the young teachers in the age of 23-32 years faced many issues of mobbing rather than the teachers in 33-42 years of age.

Quine (1999) has conducted a quantitative study in the health sector of England and noted that 38 percent respondents were confronting with mobbing. Similarly, Sa and Fleming (2008) have accomplished a study in the health department of Portugal and noted that 13 percent nurses were exposed mobbing in the sense of degradation, unmanageable workload and unlikeable tasks. As a result, 1/3 percent nurses have shown intent to stop working in the concerned organization, many nurses clarified that they are unable to get proper sleep, 43 percent realized depression and 71 percent of the nurses have observed depraved toughened. However, Hoel and Cooper (2000) have ignored specific segment of employees and collected data from 5000 respondents among 70 departments in various sectors. It has found that 28 percent women and 22 percent men were exposed to mobbing in the last five years at that time. The study has noted that younger employees face higher level of mob behavior as compared to older employees but the case was opposite in Norway. DiMartino (2002) has shown interest to compare mobbing behavior among different nations and collected data from various international organizations. The study has collected data from “International Labor Office, International Council of Nurses and World Health Organization” and noted a difference in mobbing percentage in various societies. For example, the percentage of mobbing in Bulgaria was 30.9 percent, in South

Africa 20 percent, in Lebanon 22 percent, in Thailand 11 percent and in Brazil it was 15 percent. However, Matthiesen and Einarsen (2007) have noted 3 to 4 percent mobbing at workplace in Scandinavian countries. Further, Mikkelsen and Einarsen (2001) have conducted an empirical study in Denmark and noted a low level mobbing at workplace. The study has concluded that empirical findings do not capture the true picture of the story. The percentage in Turkey was quite different as 32 percent employees were exposing to mobbing (Gok, 2011) Likewise, Niedl, (1996) has noted that 7 to 27 percent people mobbed in Australian organizations.

2.2 Construction of References

Employee performance is a key concept within working environment and organizational psychology. During the last two decade, researchers have shown progress in clarifying the concept of performance (Campbell, McCloy, Oppler & Sager, 1993). Moreover, advances have been made in specifying major predictors and processes in regard of employee's performance. Due to ongoing changes in the working environment, the concept of performance and its requirement are getting change (Ilgen & Pulakos, 2013). However, Murphy and Kroecker (1988) have defined employee performance as a function of one performance on a specific task in regard of job description, but previous literature has mention some frequencies that may cause of decrease in one's performance. For example, the practices of unethical behavior, increase in absence, non-proper interaction and relations inside organization etc. may be cause of increasing hazard at workplace (Murphy, 1989). Carmeli (2003) has emphasized that intellectual employees are able to manage and control their emotions in sensitive work environment, and show positive expressions that could lead to get improvement in performance. Therefore, here are some relevant dimensions of employees' performance that get need to be reviewed.

2.2.1 Job Involvement

Job involvement and job commitment are the two important factors that have been a part of previous literature (Kanungo, 1982). However, Paullay, Alliger, and Stone–Romero (1994) have stated that job involvement is a cognitive and a psychological engagement in job. As the psychological engagement and inner values are the motives of job involvement (Lodahl & Kejner, 1965). Many times, academic researchers and management practitioners have linked job involvement with performance and assumed as the key of organizational output (Lawler, 1986). For example, some studies have noted a significant relationship between performance of employees and accomplishment of organizational goals (Brown, 1996; Diefendorff, Brown, Kamin, & Lord, 2002). However, all those employees who have higher involvement in their jobs can show greater efforts in their work and job performance (Brown & Leigh, 1996).

2.2.2 Creativity

The creativity of employees has a value and importance for the achievement and development of an organization, its innovation and market growth (Amabile, 1996). It is the fundamental motive towards achievement in working environment (Amabile, 1996; Shalley & Oldham, 1997). However, organizations often use different techniques and strategies to enhance the creativity of employees; for example, rewards system is often used in lot of organization to get the aim of creativity (Fairbank & Williams, 2001).

2.2.3 Efficiency

Getting efficiency in performance and operations is a desirable objective of each organization and its lake can create problems for management (Chang, Rosen & Levy, 2013). As the lake of efficiency in performance can increase the labor cost and affects the profit range of organization. To create efficiency in performance, organizations often using reward system to get inspired towards job. Likewise, investing in the wellbeing's of employees and corporate training may be cause of efficiency in performance. Some time, optimist's behavior and appreciation words can put a good impression and get increase the moral level of employees.

3. Relationship between Mobbing and Performance

A negative linkage has been observed between mobbing and performance of employees (Divincova & Sivakova, 2014). Likewise, Bilgel, Aytac and Bayram (2006) have concluded that, mobbing has negative influence on the employee’s performance as well as their physical health. This is further supported by a study that mobbing has a negative effect on employees’ performance and health, where health problems can consist of headache, stomach disorder, abdominal pain and mental disorders which leads up to 20 percent cases in suicide (Kozsr, 2006). This pressurized behavior is carried out by a clinical psychologist and concluded that 52 percent women and 62 percent men are victims of mobbing, which ultimately lose the job involvement as 82 percent employees have left their jobs due to mobbing (Divincova & Sivakova, 2014). The study has noted that mobbing is also a cause of deficiency as 37 percent employees have reduced job commitment, 28 percent have left jobs, 22 percent have decrease their performance at work place and 12 percent left work due to mobbing. Another British study has observed 80 percent diminution in performance at the work place (Rayner, Hoel & Cooper, 2002). Vveinhardt (2010) has assumed that mobbing is the cause of reduction in the productivity of workers and their temper. Due to the reason, companies are trying to handle this problem to avoid reduction in employee’s productivity (Divincova & Sivakova, 2014).

Notably, Rehman, Javed, Khan, Nawaz and Hyder (2015) have examined the effects of mobbing on organizational commitment along with affective commitment and intention to leave the organization in the educational sector of Pakistan. The study has noted that mobbing has negative effects on the organizational commitment in public sector and was limited only to Rawalpind and Islamabad regions of the country. The study has suggested investigating the mobbing behavior in private sector and in the other regions of the country to draw the true reflection of the issues in Pakistan. Turkan and Kilic (2015) have examined the effects of mobbing on burnout syndrome at workplace in the health department of Turkey. Meanwhile, Celep and Eminoglu (2012) have investigated the effects of mobbing on self-efficacy of the teachers. Sa and Fleming (2008) have examined the relationship between mobbing and burnout factors. In addition, Niedl (1996) has assessed the relationship of mobbing with depression, irritation, psychosomatic complaints, self-esteem and anxiety. Therefore, this study has noted a need of study conduction to examine the effects of mobbing in losing the performance along with job involvement, creativity and efficiency of engineers in the telecom sector (Private Sector) of Pakistan, where the pressure for workload is high due to intensive competition and lake of opportunities in job market. For the purpose, the study has formulated a theoretical framework of mobbing and performance of engineers which is given in Figure 1. It describes mobbing as independent variable, performance of engineers is dependent variable of the study. The following conceptual model has developed to assess the relationship of variables.

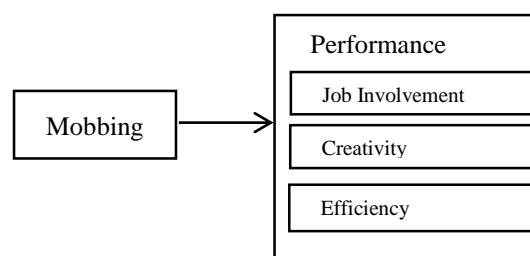


Fig. 1 - Research Model

Hypothesis of the Study

- H1.** Mobbing has negative effects on the performance of engineers in the telecom sector of Pakistan.
- H2.** Mobbing has negative effects on the job involvement of engineers in the telecom sector of Pakistan.
- H3.** Mobbing has negative effects on the creativity of engineers in the telecom sector of Pakistan.
- H4.** Mobbing has negative effects on the efficiency of engineers in the telecom sector of Pakistan

4. Methodology

This study has applied quantitative approach and collected data through self-administered questionnaires from a total 92 engineers in the telecom sector of Pakistan. Data was collected in Islamabad, Rawalpindi and Peshawar cities of Pakistan. These cities were selected due to main and regional head offices of telecommunication companies. The survey questionnaire was contained the demographic information's and other important factors of the main variables. It was assured that the collected information will be used only for research and publication purpose and will be keep it confidential. The study instrument was adopted from Vveinhardt & Andriukaitiene, (2015); Yun, Takeuchi & Liu, (2007); McCook, (1999); Rehman, Javed, Khan, Nawaz & Hyder, (2015). After completing the data collection process, this study applied descriptive statistics and regressions to find results. Regression analysis is an efficient procedure to determine association between dependent and independent variables of a study (Malhorta & David, 2003).

5. Results

The study uses descriptive statistic to understand the demographic information's of the respondents in term of gender, age and qualifications. Literature has shown wide interest in understanding the demographic factors of respondents (Rehman, Ilyas, Nawaz & Hyder, 2014), and play significant role in formulating the policies (Rehman, Yusoff, Zabri & Ismail, 2017). The demographic information's are presented in (table 1). The response rate of the respondents was 77 percent, where 78.2 percent includes male and 21.8 percent female. In term of age, 39.1 percent belongs to 21-28 years of age group, 31.5 percent belongs to 29-36, 19.5 percent belongs to 37-44, 7.6 percent belongs to 45-52 and 2.1 percent belongs to 53-60 years of age group.

Table 1 - Frequency and Percentage Dispersion of Demographic Factors

Demographic Variables	Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	72	78.2 %
	Female	20	21.8 %
Age	21 – 28	36	39.1%
	29 – 36	29	31.5%
	37 – 44	18	19.5%
	45 – 52	7	7.6%
	53 – 60	2	2.1%
Qualification	Bachelor	53	57.6%
	Master	24	26.0%
	Other	15	16.3%

In term of education, 57.6 percent have bachelor degrees, 26.0 percent have master degrees, while 16.3 percent have other levels of education. After descriptive statistics, this study has applied correlation statistic to clarify the linkage among defined variables. Table 3 display the results image of correlation among constructs. In table 3, the results of correlation represents that mobbing has positive correlation with the performance, job involvement, creativity and efficiency of engineers. Performance is positively correlated with job involvement, creativity and the efficiency of engineers in the telecom sector of Pakistan. Job involvement has also positive correlation with the creativity and efficiency. Similarly, creativity is positively correlated to efficiency in the telecom sector of Pakistan.

Table 2 - Means, Standard Deviation and Inter Correlation of Variables

	Mean	St.D	MB	EP	JI	CT	EF
MB	1.345	.331	1				
EP	1.32	.473	.04	1			
JI	2.432	.481	.02	.05	1		
CT	1.126	.381	.06	.02	.03	1	
EF	1.423	.483	.45	.03	.42	.52	1

*. significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed), **. significant at the 0.01 level (2-ailed).

*MB – Mobbing, *EP- Employee performance, *JI – Job Involvement, * CT – Creativity, *EF – Efficiency

5.1 Statistical Results

This is one of the most important and the integral part of study to get know about the impacts of mobbing in losing the performance of engineers in the telecom sector of Pakistan. The study has applied regression to assess the impacts of dependent on independent variables in the model and show the image of results. The below tables show the analysis:

Table 3 - Regression Analysis between Mobbing and Performance

	Beta Value	Standard Error	P Value
Mobbing	-.472	.051	.003

** P < 0.01, *P < 0.05

Table 3 provides the information of regression analysis. The results have shown a negative but significant (p = .003) relationship between the two variables. However, the results of this study are also verified by (Divincova & Sivakova, (2014). It can be inferred from the results that mobbing may be a cause of stress and mental war which influence the performance of engineers in the telecom sector of Pakistan.

Table 4 - Regression Analysis between Mobbing and Job Involvement

	Beta Value	Standard Error	P Value
Mobbing	-.341	.035	.002

** P < 0.01, *P < 0.05

Table 4 provides the information of regression analysis between mobbing and job involvement. The results have shown a negative but significant (p = .002) relationship between mobbing and the job involvement of engineers in the telecom sector of Pakistan. It can be said that mobbing at workplace may cause of inflexible environment that can affects the job involvement of engineers in the telecom sector of Pakistan. It can also be inferred on the basis of results that mobbing is the cause of depression which affect the peace of mind and physical health of employees that result in lack of job involvement.

Table 5 - Regression Analysis between Mobbing and Creativity

	Beta Value	Standard Error	P Value
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Mobbing	-.462	.037	.003
** P < 0.01, *P < 0.05			

Table 5 provides the information of regression analysis. The results have shown a negative but significant ($p = .003$) association within mobbing and the creativity of engineers in the telecom sector of Pakistan. It can be inferred from the results that mobbing at workplace may hurt badly and lack of fairness may cause of decrease in the creativity of engineers in the telecom sector of Pakistan.

Table 6 - Regression Analysis between Mobbing and Efficiency

	Beta Value	Standard Error	P Value
Mobbing	-.501	.031	.004
** P < 0.01, *P < 0.05			

Table 6 provides the information of regression analysis between two variables. The results have shown a negative but significant ($p = .004$) relationship between two variables. It can be infer based on results that mobbing may create pressurized work environment that might cause of decline in efficiency.

6. Discussion

This study was carried out to examine the influence of mobbing on the performance of engineers in the telecom sector of Pakistan. This study has selected positivist approach for data collection due to the nature of research objective and circulated questionnaire through self-administered survey among the engineers of telecommunication companies. The study has applied correlation and regression analysis to draw the bright picture of results. Results have shown that mobbing has negative but significant relationship with the performance of engineers in the telecom sector of Pakistan. However, this study is parallel to several studies which are the part of this chapter. The results have also significant implications for marketing research and contributed to the body of knowledge that mobbing should be minimizing to improve the performance of employees.

The study is parallel to Divincova and Sivakova (2014) which has assessed the impacts of mobbing on the employees performance in Slovak Companies. The study has circulated questionnaires for data collection and noted that mobbing has significant relationship with the employees' performance. This study is in line in the sense of mobbing and its effects on employees' performance. This study is also in line to Rehman, Javed, Khan, Nawaz and Hyder (2015), which has investigated the effects of mobbing on organizational commitment in the education industry at Pakistan. The study has applied questionnaires based survey to collect data from the employees of universities. Results have shown a negative but significant relationship among the constructs of the study. Yuksel and Tuncsiper (2011) have conducted a study to translate the impacts of mobbing on organizational commitment and collected data through self-administered questionnaire from Hospital employees at Turkey. The study has applied categorical regression analysis to determine results. The study has noted that mobbing has positive and statistically significant relationship with organizational commitment. Similarly, Pelit and Kilic (2012) have interpreted the effects of mobbing on the organizational commitment along with the application of city and resort hotels. The study has collected data through self-administered questionnaire from hotels employees in Turkey. The study has noted negative but statistically significant effects of mobbing perceptions on organizational commitment. However, in the context of managerial prospective, this study examines whether mobbing can influence the performance of engineers in the telecom sector of Pakistan. However, the results have confirmed that mobbing can influence the performance of engineers in the telecom sector of Pakistan.

Notably, Devonish (2013) has examined the workplace bullying, employee's performance and their behavior along with the mediating role of psychological well-being. The study was conducted with the intentions to investigate whether job satisfaction and work-related depression have any mediating role between workplace bullying as a social stressor and the dimensions of employees performance like task performance, individual targeted citizenship behavior and interpersonal counter productive work behavior. The study has collected

data from 262 employees through cross-sectional survey in several organizations of a developing country at Caribbean region. The study has noted that job satisfaction can partially mediate the relationship. Work-related depression also partially mediates the relationship between workplace bullying and organizational citizenship behavior. Likewise, job satisfaction and work-related depression partially mediate the relationship between workplace bullying and interpersonal counterproductive work behavior. However, the results of the study have verified the impacts of mobbing on employees performance.

In addition, Carnero, Martínez and Mangas (2012) have conducted an empirical study at Spain to assess the influence of mobbing on the health of workers. The study has noted that the probability of bad health is significantly higher among mobbed workers as compared to non-mobbed workers. It has assumed that, mobbing is the cause of health issues of workers and reduces productivity of them, which can influence the economic conditions of a business. The study is in line in the sense of mobbing and its effects on employee's productivities. Carroll and Lauzier (2014) have conducted a study to assess the workplace bullying and job satisfaction with the intentions of social support. The study has collected data from the workers of various organizations at Canada both in public and in private sector. It has noted that workplace bullying has negative effects on job satisfaction. However, the study has observed that social support is important to protect employees and their rights from the consequences of mobbing. Likewise, Akar, Anafarta and Sarvan (2011) have translated the impacts of mobbing on job satisfaction and turnover intentions in the agriculture sector of Turkey. The study has collected data from 248 white-collar employees of SMEs and noted that mobbing is the cause of losing involvement in job and their satisfaction. It has noted that most of the employees had the intentions to leave the organization due to mobbing. This study is in line in the sense of mobbing and its influence on employee's satisfaction and loyalty with organization. Hur, Moon & Jun (2016) have interpreted the influence of workplace incivility on the service employee's creativity along with the mediating role of emotional exhaustion and intrinsic motivation. The study has collected data through self-administered questionnaire in the hotel industry at South Korea. The study has applied structural equation modeling to find results and provide support to developed hypothesis. The study has noted that coworker and customer incivility can enhance emotional exhaustion in the context of a serial multiple mediator model and leads toward the reduction in employee's creativity. The study has noted a negative relationship between workplace incivility and creativity which was fully mediated by the emotional exhaustion and intrinsic motivation. Therefore, the results of this study have important managerial implications to establish a mobbing free culture in the telecommunication sector of Pakistan to avoid losing the performance, job involvement, creativity and efficiency of engineers. The management and policy makers can introduce prior policies, workshops and training material to control the mobbing behavior at work place.

7. Conclusion

The study has investigated the relationship of mobbing with the performance of engineers in the telecom sector of Pakistan by collecting data through self-administered questionnaire from the engineers of telecommunication companies at the urban areas of Pakistan. The study has applied descriptive statistics, correlation and regression to analyze data. In the light of findings, mobbing has negative but statistically significant relationship with the performance of engineers as well as job involvement, creativity and efficiency in the telecom sector of Pakistan. Therefore, the results of the regression analysis have accepted the hypothesis of this study. However, it is important to get know, that this study has collected data in the cities of only north regions at Pakistan and readers should be careful in generalizing the results. To further improve the knowledge area, the study therefore recommends that future research should assess the moderating effects of gender and education. Further, the study was limited to telecom sector only and future research can include other sectors of services as well as manufacturing.

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