

Mobbing in Tourism Industry: The Case of Tourist Guides

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Mobbing in workplace damages businesses in many ways and negatively affects organizational culture, business relationships, the quality of work tasks, and the quality of life of employees at the organization. In the tourism industry particularly and in the service industry in general, employees' nice behaviors to the customers play a significant role at the value-added part of the product. One of the important factors that will affect the quality of the service that visitors experience in a destination is the tourist guides. While the tourist guides are service providers, the satisfaction of the tourist guides with the working conditions is very important for the destinations and businesses in terms of image and profitability. This study examines the mobbing behaviors that tourist guides encounter in their work environments. Through the interviews with the tourist guides, it is aimed to determine the mobbing behaviors and resources that the tourist guides encounter in their complex and unusual working environments.

INTRODUCTION

Mobbing in workplace damages businesses in many ways and negatively affects organizational culture, business relationships, the quality of work tasks and the quality of life of employees at the organization. Mobbing is the concept that sometimes referred to as “bullying” is a common behavior in professional life all around the world and due to its importance businesses and academics pay attention to the issue. Bullying, physiological terror, physiological harassment and mobbing these terms can be used interchangeably and describe the behaviors performed by an individual or by a group that targets an individual in a workplace and which can be humiliating, deterrent and unfair.

Like other countries in the world, the development of the tourism industry and increasing the touristic revenue are primary concerns for Turkey (Eren, 2019). In the tourism industry particularly and the service industry in general, employees' nice behaviors to the customers play a significant role at the value-added part of the product (Chu & Murrmann, 2006; Schneider & Bowen, 1985). One of the important factors that will affect the quality of the service that visitors experience in a destination is the tourist guides. Tourist guides are in contact with the visitor all day, service providers and the visible face of the destination and the businesses. While the tourist guides are service providers, the satisfaction of the tourist guides with the working conditions is very important for the destinations and businesses in terms of image and profitability.

This study examines the mobbing behaviors that tourist guides encounter in their work environments. Through the interviews with the tourist guides, it is aimed to determine the mobbing behaviors and resources that the tourist guides encounter in their complex and unusual working environments. In order to reach to the purposes, this paper is systematical presents the definition of mobbing concept, identify the negative behaviors can be called as mobbing in the workplace, and the consequences of mobbing with the focus in the tourism industry and tourist guides, by this way it is aimed to identify the context of the interview to reach the real circumstances of tourist guides' work life.

1. BACKGROUND

1.1 The Conceptual Framework of Mobbing, Antecedents and Consequences

The term Mobbing firstly used by an ethologist Konrad Lorenz to describe an animal group behavior. Smaller birds with a group to protect their nests attack to a single bigger animal. Then this terminology adapted by Peter-Paul Heinemann in 1972 for schoolchildren's behavior that used to describe a destructive behavior of small groups often against a single child (Leymann, 1996). The word mobbing borrowed by Leyman in the 1980s when he found a long-term hostile behavior in workplaces. Leyman (1996) made the systematic definition of mobbing in his article and assumed that the term "bullying" is a different kind of behavior because the word bullying carries connotations like physical aggression and threat. Mobbing behavior at the workplace is characterized by sophisticated behaviors and contains humiliating, and malicious behaviors but physical violence is found rarely (Leymann, 1996).

Leymann (1996) identify mobbing activities in five different categories and gives examples. It is important to mention this negative behavior for conducting the research in an appropriate way.

- Effects on victims' communications. The victim gets more silenced by verbal attacks and threats; management blocks the victim from doing business and talking to managers. These behaviors create an isolated position for the victim, and he/she has fewer dialogues with management and other staff.
- Effects on victims' social life. The workplace is a social environment for coworkers. The victim is a forbidden staff by management and coworkers do not talk, eat or have time with the person.
- Effects on victims' personal reputation. People in the workplace gossip about the victim and ridicule about his/her personal characteristics.
- Effects on victims' job status. People do not want to work with the person; people do not give work tasks or given trivial works tasks.

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