

# An Investigation of Exposure of Attending Referee Training Hockey Referees to Mobbing Behaviors and Their Zest for Work Levels: Example of Referees Attending University Education

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## Abstract

In a study conducted for referees, it was concluded that existing training programs need to be complemented with content in the field of pedagogy and developmental psychology (Ploszaj et al., 2021). The aim of this study is to examine the zest for work levels of trained referees actively working for the Turkish Hockey Federation and the mobbing behaviors they are exposed to. A total of 99 hockey referees, 42 women and 57 men, participated in the study. The sample comprises of 5 International, 7 National, 45 Provincial and 42 Candidate referees. In the study, the “Mobbing Scale for Referees of Indoor Sports” developed by Hacicaferoğlu (2014) was used to measure the mobbing behaviors that referees are exposed to and the “The Zest for Work Scale for Referees” developed by Erdoğan (2013) and adapted for referees by Karaçam and Pular (2018) was used to measure the zest for work levels of referees. Shapiro-Wilk normality test was performed and it was seen that the data showed normal distribution. Frequency Analysis, Descriptive Statistics, Independent T-Test, One Way ANOVA and Correlation Analysis were used in SPSS 22.0 program to analyze the data. As a result of the study, it was determined that the referees’ zest for work scores and mobbing behavior scores were high. A statistically significant difference was found for female referees

in the analysis of mobbing behavior scores according to gender variable ( $t = -2.294$ ;  $p < .05$ ). According to the one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) results, the difference between the arithmetic means of the Mobbing Scale scores in terms of the referee classification variable was statistically significant ( $F = 4.876$ ;  $p < .05$ ). No significant difference was found as a result of the Pearson Correlation analysis performed to determine the direction of the relationship between the scales ( $r = .061$ ;  $p > 0.05$ ). As a result, it was seen that the zest for work scores of the referees were high, and female and candidate referees were more exposed to mobbing in terms of the exposure to the mobbing behaviors.

**Keywords:** Hockey, Mobbing, Zest for work, Referee training

## 1. Introduction

Valuing people in every aspect of our working life and making people feel that they are an important being is about making them feel these feelings. In this respect, intimidation behaviors such as pressure, disturbing behaviors and careless approaches that are performed directly towards people mean that they are not valued enough (Yaman, 2009). It is known that mobbing behaviors that almost everyone is exposed to directly or indirectly in business and working life affect the desire to work, job success and motivation level negatively (Kök, 2006). Psychological pressures experienced in the workplace and physical violence behaviors can cause unforgettable psychological damage in both work and private lives of employees. For this reason, it can be argued that the fact that people who spend most of their time in the working environment feel healthy and motivated to work is directly related to the presence of physical and psychological violence and safety concerns in the working environment (Küçükçayır, 2016).

The word mobbing which derived from the words “mobile vulgus”, which means “undecided crowd”, is of Latin origin and has survived to the present day. When we examine the emergence of mobbing, the personality and psychology of those who are in the position of supervisor or manager, the psychology and personality of the employee who is exposed to mobbing, the environment in interaction with each other, and the working environment are considered as the factors that create mobbing (Crawford, 1997). The concept of mobbing constitutes all kinds of ill-treatment, violence, threat and humiliation performed systematically towards people working in all areas of business life, in the same status as individuals or in a superior-subordinate relationship (Einarsen et al., 2003). The concepts of harassment and mobbing are close to each other. Harassment is used to mean systematic and continuous attempts to wear out another person with verbal or actual behaviors, to torture him/her in various ways, to restrict his/her behavior, to prevent his/her development or to disturb him/her to get a reaction (Lorho & Hilp, 2009). Mobbing can be caused by social and situational factors as well as personal factors. Social factors include unfair practices within the organization, events that disappoint individuals, increased diversity in the workforce, norm-based behaviors and strict adherence to rules, and intra-organizational power struggles; Among the situational factors are modern working conditions and environmental factors (Özdevecioğlu, 2003). Where there is a human factor, it is possible to talk about ego, self-centeredness, and damaging competition. From this point of view, we can summarize the

development of mobbing in three phases. These stages can be evaluated in the simplest way and gathered under the titles of beginning, development and conclusion (Çabuk, 2010).

The zest for work can also be defined as the desire for work, excitement and pleasure of work, being passionately committed to work and achieving satisfaction. Zest for work is a very essential factor for individuals working as professionals both to have a good psychological state and to increase the quality of their living standards. It should be given importance to increase the satisfaction that people who work as professionals get from the job they are dealing with. It is noticed that people who love their job do better work in their profession and make progress in specializing in the profession they are dealing with (Peterson et al., 2009).

For occupations in all work areas of life, the idea of zest can be associated with work and it predicts the zest, job satisfaction and life satisfaction (Hoy & Tarter, 2011). We can express the excitement, enthusiasm, joy, vitality and positive emotions felt by people as the biggest features that distinguish the zest for work from the concept of job satisfaction. We can distinguish the concept of vitality from the concept of happiness as it contains a lot of energy. At the same time, it differs from the feeling of well-being (Weinstein & Ryan, 2009).

According to Park and Peterson (2010), zest means not doing things reluctantly or unwillingly, but living with excitement by enjoying life, approaching events with energy, seeing life as an adventure and feeling full of energy. The feature that distinguishes the concept of the zest for work from job satisfaction is that it contains vitality.

People who have been specially selected in order to solve the problems that arise among people are those who are appointed as referees. In terms of sports, the referee is the person who applies the game rules suitable for the sports branch s/he is managing and aims to benefit from these rules to manage the competition, and is responsible for applying the necessary punishment to the players who do not obey the game rules (Durna, 1997). The referee, on the one hand, ensures that the game is played according to the rules of the game by considering the predetermined rules; on the other hand, s/he acts as a bridge between the opposing teams and between the spectator and the player (Orta, 2000). Refereeing is also a professional group and people who have sufficient knowledge, skills and equipment, including the ability to make decisions in a short time within certain game rules, act in harmony (Ekblom, 1994). Referees have to perform more than one task under pressure with the effort to act in harmony with the other referees to apply the rules of the game without any mistakes and to carry out their duties successfully during the match under the pressure of the fans, the pressure of the players, the pressure of the coaches, the stress of the game, and to complete a match without any problems (Tuero et al., 2002).

Referees are exposed to spectator, coach and club pressure, which starts before the game and continues during and after the game, especially in sports branches with a large number of spectators followed by everyone. Therefore, the work of the referees is quite difficult and wearisome. Here, the zest for work emerges as an emotional character trait that contains the will to achieve the intended goals in the face of internal or external difficulties faced by referees (Peterson et al., 2009).

When we look at the characteristics of the referees who are exposed to mobbing, it is apparent that they are honest, success-oriented, have advanced skills, love and care about their job, are connected with the sense of belonging to the institution they are in, have a protective structure in terms of their social lives, and have high self-confidence (Ergenekon, 2006). The concept of the zest for work for referees is a concept built from positive psychology, which includes positive emotional feelings such as interest, enthusiasm, vitality, happiness and excitement that referees have for the refereeing profession (Karaçam & Pulur, 2018).

If a referee gets less zest from refereeing, which s/he enjoys with great zest, s/he will experience a loss of motivation, problems in practice and work discipline will begin to appear and s/he will, therefore, start to make erroneous decisions. As a result of the feeling of not getting zest among the referees in this way, the referees come to a turning point which results in quitting the refereeing. As they are faced with constant pressure and violence due to the work they do, in order to overcome this situation, there is a desire for positive evaluation of their performance and the expectation of being appreciated (Ekmekçi, 2011). In the competitions; Since the responsibility of punishing the unsportsmanlike behaviors of athletes, coaches and spectators falls on the referees, the referee may be forced mentally and physically due to the increase in unsportsmanlike behavior (Doğan, 2005).

In this context, it is of great importance to know the referees' level of the zest of refereeing profession who are exposed to mobbing.

## **2. Methodology**

With this research, have university education it is aimed to examine the effect of mobbing behaviors that hockey referees are exposed to on their zest for work levels.

### *2.1 Universe and Sample*

The universe of the research consists of referees who are actively working for the Turkish Hockey Federation. The sample of the research consists of a total of 99 hockey referees; 5 International, 7 National, 45 Provincial and 42 Candidate referees, who attended the field hockey referee development seminar held in March 2022.

Hockey is a developing sport in our country. Hockey refereeing must be at a certain level in order to contribute to the development and dissemination of hockey sport, besides the factors such as players, coaches, facilities, club organization. The fair management of a game, the foregrounding of the viewing pleasure, meeting the expectations of the spectators and players are determined by the decisions of the referees who manage the game. Knowing the mobbing levels experienced by referees and their zest for work levels will contribute to the development of the refereeing profession. In this context, the main purpose of this study is to determine the mobbing levels that hockey referees are exposed to and to examine their zest for work levels.

## *2.2 Data Collection Tool*

### *2.2.1 Personal Information Form*

In the personal information form created by the researchers in order to collect information about the independent variables of the research, there are questions about the gender, marital status, age, educational status, classification and years of refereeing of the referees.

### *2.2.2 The Zest for Work Scale*

“The Zest for Work Scale for Referees” was used to determine the zest for work levels of the referees participating in the research. There are 7 items in the scale developed by Erdoğan (2013) and adapted for referees by Karaçam and Pular (2018). The scale is in 5-point Likert type and consists of a single sub-dimension. There is no reverse coded item in the scale. A high score from the scale indicates a high level of the zest for work in referees. During the scale development process, the internal consistency coefficient of the scale was found to be 0.83.

### *2.2.3 Mobbing Scale*

In order to determine the mobbing levels of the participants, the “Mobbing Scale for Referees of Indoor Sports” developed by Hacicaferoğlu (2014) was used. The scale consists of 14 items and a 5-point Likert-type system. It was determined that the total variance explained by the items in the scale was 43.721, and the factor loadings were between 0.48 and 0.76. Cronbach’s alpha internal consistency coefficient of the scale was calculated as 0.82. In the last part, there are 13 items that determine which people or institutions are mobbing the referees.

## *2.3 Data Analysis*

The data obtained in the research were analyzed using the IBM SPSS 22.0 program. Frequency analysis was used to determine the percentage distribution of personal information. Shapiro Wilk test of normality was used to determine whether the data showed a normal distribution. Before evaluating the scale scores according to demographic information and looking at the relationship between the scales, reliability analysis was performed. While Independent T-Test was used to analyze the two-category variables, One Way ANOVA analysis was used to compare the scale scores according to demographic variables with more than three categories. Pearson Correlation analysis was used to analyze the relationship between The Zest for Work Scale and Mobbing Scale scores. In the analyzes used, the level of significance was determined as  $p < 0.05$ .

### 3. Findings

Table 1. Frequency and percentage distributions of referees' demographic information

Variable	Subvariable	f	%
Gender	Female	42	42.4
	Male	57	57.6
Age	18-22	40	40.4
	23-27	22	22.2
	28-32	15	15.2
	33 and over	22	22.2
Marital status	Married	27	22.3
	Single	72	77.2
Refereeing Classification	Candidate	42	42.4
	Provincial	45	45.5
	National	7	7.1
	International	5	5.1

*Note.* When the table is addressed, it is noticed that the 18-22 age group (40.4%) is the highest in the age group, and when the gender and marital status are taken into consideration, it is noticed that the rate of males (57.6) and singles (77.2) is high. In the classification of the refereeing, it was determined that the majority (45.5%) were referees on a provincial basis.

Table 2. Mean scores of the zest for work and mobbing scales

Variables	N	$\bar{x}$	sd
The Zest for Work Scale	99	4.72	0.364
Mobbing Scale	99	4.51	0.513

*Note.* When the table is examined, we see that the mean zest for work score ( $\bar{X} = 4.72$ ,  $sd = .364$ ) is high. When we look at the mobbing scale scores of the referees, it is seen that they are exposed to mobbing to a large extent ( $\bar{X} = 4.51$ ,  $ss = .513$ ).

Table 3. Independent T-Test analysis of mobbing scale scores in terms of gender variable

Variables	Groups	N	$\bar{x}$	SD	$Sh_g$	T-Test	
						t	p
Gender	Male	57	4.423	0.553	0.073	-2.294	0.03
	Female	42	4.649	0.427	0.065		

*Note.* As can be seen in the table, the difference between the arithmetic means of the groups was found to be statistically significant as a result of the independent group T-Test, which was carried out to determine whether the Mobbing Scale scores of the referees in our sample for the indoor sports referees showed a significant difference according to the gender variable ( $t = -2.294$ ;  $p < .05$ ). This difference is due to the high average of female referees.

Table 4. One-Way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) results of mobbing scale scores in terms of refereeing classification variable

Variable	Groups	N	$\bar{x}$	SD	F	p
Refereeing Classification	Candidate	42	4.729	0.367	4.876	0.003
	Provincial	45	4.368	0.556		
	National	7	4.234	0.415		
	International	5	4.514	0.748		

*Note.* When the table is examined, as a result of one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) performed to determine whether the arithmetic averages of the Mobbing Scale for indoor sports referees show a significant difference according to the referee classification variable, the difference between the arithmetic averages of the candidate referees and other referee classifications was found to be statistically significant ( $F = 4,876$ ;  $p < .05$ ).

Table 5. Descriptive statistics and correlation analysis results for the zest for work and the mobbing scale

Variables	n	M	df	1	2
1. Zest for Work	99	4.7273	.36455	-	-
2. Mobbing	99	4.5195	.51374	.061	-

*Note.*  $*p < .05$ ;  $**p < .01$ . When the table was examined, it was concluded that there was no significant relationship between the zest for work scale for referees and the mobbing scale for indoor sports referees ( $r = .061$ ;  $p > 0.05$ ).

#### 4. Discussion and Conclusions

When we look at the reasons that negatively affect the zest for work of referees in general, the psychological pressure they feel due to both the sports environment and the social environment is too high to be ignored. The first condition necessary for the smooth completion of the games, which we describe as impartial and properly, is closely related to the love of the profession and commitment to the profession, as in other professional behaviors. Pleasurable or positive emotional states resulting from the appraisal of people's work or work experiences are called job satisfaction (Lent & Brown, 2006). It is an indisputable fact that the games are completed smoothly and properly in a refereeing profession where job satisfaction is high. In the study named "Examining basketball and soccer referees' levels of zest for work in terms of certain demographic variables", the zest for work scores of the referees were high in terms of some variables (Karaçam & Pular, 2018). In the study titled "The investigation of zest for work for referees' and levels of organizational identification of wrestling referees", it was concluded that their zest for work scores were high (Küçükibiş & Gül, 2019). In our study, the zest for work scores of the referees were found to be high as well. That is, the results of the study of Küçükibiş and Gül (2019) are in parallel with our study. Exposure of referees to mobbing is considered as an inevitable situation in sport games. Decisions and burnout as a result of this pressure have been expressed by the referees in many studies. In our study, when mobbing behaviors on referees were examined, especially in terms of gender and refereeing classification variables, a high and statistically significant result was found in favor of female referees and candidate referees.

In the study of Gürbüz (2017), in which he examined the mobbing behaviors that football referees are exposed to, it was determined that the statistical significance levels differ according to the sub-dimensions of the scale in the case of being exposed to mobbing behavior regarding the variable of refereeing time. According to Hughes (2001), it can be said that inexperienced referees who are new to the refereeing profession are not exposed to mobbing behaviors much. A significant relationship was found between the referees' experience of refereeing and the behavior perceptions of the referees. Gürbüz (2017) determined that female referees were exposed to mobbing at a higher rate than male referees.

In the study titled "Examination of levels of exposure to (intimidating) mobbing behaviors of basketball referees", it was revealed that the referees felt mobbing behaviors at a similar rate in terms of demographic variables such as age, gender, etc. (Hacıcaferoğlu, 2018). In another study, it was concluded that female referees were exposed to mobbing behaviors (Engin, Yüce, & Katırcı, 2019). Kuşgöz (2018), in his study examining the mobbing behaviors against volleyball referees, found out that gender does not have an effect on exposure to mobbing.

In this sense, in order to minimize the mobbing behaviors in the referee community, the agenda should be created by using the media and communication tools more, and the referees should be trained by experts in mobbing in the referee development seminars held before the season. Moreover, the federation officials and the central referee committee should take steps



to solve the problem by taking into account the frequency of mobbing behaviors referees are exposed to, and as the federation and the central referee board, they are required to show their support to the referees. In this context, the number of scientific studies should be increased and the results should be revealed. It is thought that this study will contribute to support the literature.

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