
The Victim's Experience as Described in Civil Court Judgments for Mobbing: A Gender Difference

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Abstract: The aim of this work is to provide a descriptive analysis of the mobbing phenomenon found in a sampling of Italian civil court judgments in the last fifteen years. The analysis was conducted according to the behaviors that characterize the mobbing, the type of workplace, the power differential between perpetrator and victim, the victim's and the perpetrator's typologies, the motives, and the consequences for the victim. Data were gathered from two free websites on civil judgments involving mobbing. An analysis of the 73 civil judgments showed 34 male victims (46.6%) and 39 female victims (53.4%) of mobbing. In 68 (93.2%) cases, the behavior that characterized the mobbing campaign was an attack on personal and professional life. Female victims of mobbing in particular indicated isolation and attack on reputation. About half of the sample worked in a private company, 16 (21.9%) in public administration, 11 (15.1%) in the educational sector, and nine (12.3%) in the health sector. The time from the beginning of the mobbing campaign to when it was reported was higher among men than women. Moreover, female victims are more prone than male victims to report suffering from an anxiety disorder as a consequence of mobbing, and they perceive the mobbing behavior to be caused by the perpetrator's personal characteristics. Men, on the other hand, more often than women consider the abusive acts casual and more frequently believe they are the "chosen victim" because of perceived personal weaknesses.

Keywords: mobbing, gender difference, workplace violence, coping strategy, court judgment

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