Chapter 1
Overcoming the Onslaught: A Tale of Woe from One Adjunct Professor

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ABSTRACT
This chapter seeks to explore and examine the phenomenon known as mobbing and more specifically academic mobbing. First, a brief introduction to bullying at the workplace as well as mobbing ensues. Second, the definitions of mobbing and academic mobbing as well as clear descriptions are delineated. Third, various topics surrounding academic mobbing are introduced such; the phases of mobbing, a description of the bully, a description of the “mobbers,” a description of the bystanders and a description of the target. Other topics are introduced as well such as statistics that surround the phenomenon of mobbing at the workplace as well as workplace engagement results of academic mobbing. Then the methodology is introduced. This research study is qualitative in nature. An autoethnography is utilized and the data is seen through a constructivist/interpretivist lens. The author than introduces her experience via narrative form, which is followed by a discussion and conclusion, limitations of the study, recommendations for future research, and a statement of conflict.

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INTRODUCTION

For centuries, workers have endured treatment that belittles their pride and robs the artistry from their craft. Stud Terkel (Murphy, 2016, p. 1).

The workplace is a seemingly important facet of one’s life (Osborne & Hammond, 2017; Pheko, 2018; Tigrel & Kokalan, 2009). Sigmund Freud once noted that working is an action that continues to be the strongest link to reality (Pheko, 2018). The social environment of a workplace is extremely important to establishing normalcy. “The emotional state of an employee also relates to motivation” (Osborne & Hammond, 2017, p. 52); and employee engagement is critical to any organization (Osborne & Hammond, 2017).

A positive social work environment where an employee is healthy and happy is necessary due to the fact that people spend a large amount of their time at the workplace (Tigrel & Koklan, 2009). This may be because “many scholars concur that organizational life, jobs and work are fundamental to the human condition, to human beings’ sense of identity […], and are central to establishing personally meaningful self-definitions […]” (Pheko, 2018, p. 1). It also important to point out that employee engagement is necessary for organizational productivity (Osborne & Hammond, 2017). An employee’s emotional state relates to motivation (Osborne & Hammond, 2017) - their “basic needs of satisfaction have been found to directly relate to the dedication of employees” (Osborne & Hammond, 2017, p. 52). It has become apparent that a byproduct of sound leadership is literally healthy employee engagement (Osborne & Hammond, 2017). Employees must be allowed to have psychological autonomy and be encouraged to be extrinsically motivated (Murphy, 2016; Osborne & Hammond, 2017). While workplace conflict is normal in small doses; it can also have detrimental effects to employees (Murphy, 2016). Nonetheless, normal conflict in the workplace is not equivalent by any means to the “art” of mobbing.

MOBBING

The term mobbing was first used in the 19th century by biologists to define/describe birds’ behaviors of protecting themselves and their needs by flying around their enemies (Tigrel & Kokalan, 2009). It is based on the premise of a mob, which is a lawless and disorderly crowd (Staub, 2015; Tigrel & Kokalan, 2009). The term
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