Mobbning i arbete
Arbetsorganiseringens inverkan på handlingsutrymmet och mobbningsprocessen

av

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Abstract


The aim of this dissertation is to identify and analyze organizational characteristics and interactional forces within the workplace organization that may affect the mobbing process. The empirical basis comprises 20 semi-structured interviews with victims, observers, and bullies. Organizational theory and workplace studies are theoretical influences, as are the concepts of negotiations and outsiders. A central concept is employee discretion: formal, informal, and real discretion.

Different parties in the mobbing process are identified and analyzed. It is confirmed that bullies create a negative perception of their victim and try to cause others to share this perception. Collaborators are those whom bullies potentially can recruit, and may include anyone who does not show open support for the victim. People who give open support to the victim are more likely to be bullied themselves, unless they have a strong position in the group. The mobbing process can begin for a large number of reasons. In this study, three main reasons are identified and discussed. First, mobbing can begin because the victim is seen as an outsider. Second, the mobbing process can begin with a change of position. The third main reason for a mobbing process to begin is a confrontation.

Mobbing occurs only in contexts where people meet regularly and often and hence can only leave at high cost. Regular interaction and proximity to the same people are the only conditions necessary for mobbing to occur in a context. There are, however, a number of aggravating and mitigating latent characteristics or qualities that have been raised in this dissertation that may affect the mobbing process. These are cooperation and coexistence, existence of a place of retreat, distribution of bureaucratic authority and employer participation, the double belongings within the organization (formal and informal), reorganization and changing workload, and the organization’s relations to stakeholders. The same quality may be an obstacle to mobbing in one situation and facilitate it in another.

Keywords: mobbing, bullying, exclusion, workplace, organization, discretion, negotiation, formal/informal, norms, outsiders.