Article

Level of workplace mobbing among university teaching staff An applied study on a sample of professors of the Department of Psychology at the University of M'sila

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Abstract:

This study aimed to assess the level of perceived mobbing in the workplace among university teaching staff in the Department of Psychology. Using a descriptive approach to suit the study's objectives, the researcher employed a validated, ready-made questionnaire comprising 34 items across five dimensions: obstruction of self-realization, obstruction of relationships, damage to reputation, damage to the quality of professional life, and damage to health. The tool was administered to a randomly selected sample of 29 participants. The results indicated that the staff experiences a moderate overall level of mobbing, with the highest perception reported in the dimension of damage to reputation, while other dimensions such as obstruction of self-realization, obstruction of relationships, damage to professional life quality, and health showed moderate levels.

Keywords: Mobbing, Workplace harassment, University teaching staff, Psychology department, Professional well-being

Introduction

Academic harassment is a form of workplace bullying that occurs in institutions of higher education (departments, colleges, universities). It is believed to be prevalent in a wide range of behaviors, and although it has not received as much attention from researchers as bullying in some other contexts, academic environments are highly competitive and have a well-defined hierarchical structure, with junior or lower-powered faculty members particularly at risk. While most universities have policies regarding workplace harassment, they claim to address workplace issues, but often leave victims without recourse.

Workplace harassment is a complex form of bullying that targets the victim through intimidation, unfounded accusations, humiliation, and general vexatious behavior. These behaviors are often invisible to others and difficult to prove, but victims of harassment may experience symptoms of stress, depression, and suicidal thoughts.

The work environment includes the individuals with whom the employees work, their positions, and their behaviors. Therefore, workplaces can become extremely challenging, whether mentally, emotionally, or physically, depending on whether the attitudes and behaviors of colleagues or supervisors are demeaning or abusive in nature.

These behaviors can also lead to bullying in the workplace. Workplace harassment is a persistent and unwelcome behavior that creates a hostile, intimidating, or toxic environment. Workplace harassment is any action that makes the targeted person feel unwelcome, attacked, aggressive, or hostile, or creates a work environment charged with feelings of hostility or unwelcomeness. Workplace harassment can lead to creating a toxic work environment in general, in addition to more negative consequences at an individual level. It can result in decreased productivity, job satisfaction, increased levels of stress, and mental health issues, such as anxiety, depression, panic attacks, or post-traumatic stress disorder, as well as causing concentration difficulties and the potential occurrence of physical disorders.

The goal of bullying and harassment is not only to affect the targeted individual, but it can also impact employees who are not the direct targets but are facing a hostile and toxic work environment that the bully has created as an experience for these consequences.

What distinguishes toxic workplaces from just a few bad colleagues is that these job frustrations are not individual, they are systemic and cultural within the workplace.

The systematic nature of a toxic work environment can manifest in several different ways. This could mean that individuals who engage in abusive behavior are routinely rewarded for their conduct, either through promotions, bonuses, and institutional power, or through gaining access

to soft power or personal relationships with individuals in positions of institutional authority.

The toxic culture of the workplace can manifest in mistreatment, taking various forms such as bullying, disrespect, or undermining of appreciation.

Mistreatment can also entail physical aggression, verbal assault, or harassment, rendering the toxic work environment an unsafe space due to personal abuse, whether physical or mental.

Thus, anyone who refuses to accept a toxic culture is subjected to mistreatment and is essentially pushed out. Toxic workplaces are also environments where there are no mechanisms to report abusive or inappropriate behavior, perhaps due to the absence of a framework for addressing such violations or because there is no one outside the problem to report to, or institutional leadership acts with deliberate ignorance and extreme negligence in handling complaints.

Typically, departmental and institutional leaders are drawn from the ranks of faculty members, most of whom have not received administrative training that would enable effective responses to such situations. No action is taken when reports are made, and there is retaliation for reporting an issue.

Most employees will not report the harassment they experience because they are not confident that the management will take their complaints seriously.

There are several factors that may prevent workers from speaking out about their experiences, including feelings of humiliation and shame, as well as a lack of trust in organizations. It is challenging to measure the various types of workplace harassment (psychological violence, physical violence, harassment, workplace discrimination, retaliation in the workplace, and other forms of violence and harassment).

The most common reasons for people not disclosing their experiences are wasting time and fearing for their reputation and social standing.Therefore, the hallmark of a toxic workplace is not just that it is bad, but that there is no place to turn to for redress or meaningful relief from the issues.

There is no sanctuary when it happens, and often the response is that misguided leadership believes it is better to protect the institution at all costs, repeatedly ignoring the concerns of the victims, due to fears of potentially damaging the institution's reputation.

Sometimes, the leaders responsible for harassment and bullying in the workplace are quietly isolated, and when they are removed from their positions of power, some of them remain in place as tenured faculty members instead of facing definitive isolation and departure.

These individuals continue to cover up, perpetuating a toxic work environment with gossip and rumors, and perpetuating a toxic work culture.

Harassment and bullying in an academic setting, also known as "academic mobbing," is a critically important issue both in terms of its prevalence and the increasing efforts required to

identify, address, and mitigate its effects. A large number of researchers in various academic positions are subjected to this mistreatment.

The key factors behind this violation include massive power differentials within the system, as well as the presence of entrenched hierarchical systems within universities. These systems afford a significant amount of power to their professors.

When toxic professors benefit from this power, they will employ a variety of covert or overt tactics to make those under their authority feel vulnerable during their programs, and due to fear and confusion, most individuals silently endure the abuse of power against them.

This research aims to shed light on the issue of workplace harassment, which has become widespread in academic settings, first by conducting a literature review, and secondly, through the findings of this study.

The issue of workplace harassment has become a wide and important area of research due to its societal significance, leading to constantly emerging new issues. Therefore, the concept of workplace harassment has been proposed as one of the most exhausting factors for working individuals.

Several studies have highlighted its detrimental effects on the mental and psychological health of the targeted group. For instance, a study by Sama Fayez Rasoul, et al. (2021) has indicated a direct relationship between a toxic work environment and employee engagement.

It has been established that if employees work in a toxic environment, they will spread negative feelings among their colleagues. Emotions such as harassment, bullying, and exclusion can accompany a toxic work environment, causing harm and leading to unnecessary stress, fatigue, depression, and anxiety among the workers.

In a study examining the relationship between toxic work environments, and considering harassment as a significant factor in the workplace, it can have a substantial impact not only on health, but also on individual performance at work. Additionally, a study by Platania et al. (2012) showed that high levels of occupational stress at work in the presence of harassment led to detrimental effects on employee well-being.

Harassment occurs in the workplace across all types of organizations and professions, with academic environments not being an exception. In fact, numerous studies indicate a higher prevalence of harassment in academic settings compared to other types of organizations.

Faculty members are subjected to various forms of harassment within departments, colleges, and universities, such as psychological violence, physical violence, harassment, workplace discrimination, retaliation, denial of promotions, grants, and research participation, hindering or stealing research projects, obstructing publication in journals, and various other forms of violence, harassment, and bullying that manifest in the work environment and its atmosphere, including

ostracism, information withholding, negative social climate, and abusive relationships in the workplace, where harassment and bullying come from senior staff.

Additionally, the presence of narcissism among leaders, along with aggressive behaviors and sarcasm, increases the risk of harassment in the workplace and directly contributes to the creation and sustenance of a toxic academic environment. Such an environment poses a significant detriment to the motivation and engagement of university faculty.

It is evident that with limited resources and a lack of clear solutions to improve working conditions, a toxic work environment can contribute to an unhealthy work life. In order to eliminate toxic work environments in departments, colleges, and universities, we need to have a certain understanding of these environments and articulate the issues within them.

It has become imperative for universities, colleges, and departments to comprehensively address these systemic issues and prevent all forms of harassment. The time has come to establish a culture of accountability in the workplace and within the academic community.

It is crucial to cultivate a relationship of trust among all members of the organization, as trust fosters a genuine sense of security. Faculty and students will feel secure when entering the campus every day, knowing that the university leadership supports them, regardless of the circumstances.

Despite the advancements made over the years in studying violence in local educational

environments, little attention has been given to the prevalence of workplace violence, particularly the issue of harassment in academic settings, affecting various categories of employees. In order to shed light on this matter, this study aims to provide an understanding of the extent and different forms of the problem, as well as investigate the factors and describe the work environments within departments, colleges, and universities.

The present study seeks to examine the level of perceived workplace mobbing among faculty members in the Department of Psychology at the University of M'sila. The central research question revolves around the extent to which these educators experience various forms of psychological and professional harassment in their academic environment. To explore this phenomenon comprehensively, the study addresses several sub-questions: the extent to which self-actualization is hindered, the degree of relational disruption among colleagues, the perceived damage to personal and professional reputation, the deterioration in the quality of professional life, and the impact on physical and mental health.

The objectives of the study are centered on identifying and analyzing the five core dimensions of workplace mobbing. Specifically, it aims to assess the levels of impediment to self-actualization, difficulty in establishing collegial relationships, damage to reputation, and the decline in both the quality of professional life and health. In addition to quantifying these aspects, the study seeks to enrich the existing body of literature on academic workplace harassment by offering

empirical findings based on a localized case study. This contribution is particularly valuable in contexts where such issues are underreported or insufficiently addressed.

The significance of this study lies in the critical nature of the topic—workplace mobbing—within the academic sphere. Faculty members in higher education often operate in competitive and high-pressure environments, which can foster unhealthy dynamics and toxic behaviors. By uncovering the presence and intensity of these behaviors, the study provides university leadership with essential insights that can guide policy reforms, preventive strategies, and support mechanisms. Ultimately, it aspires to improve workplace well-being and foster a healthier academic culture by addressing factors that contribute to psychological harm, bullying, and professional dissatisfaction.

The scope of the study was defined across several boundaries. On the human level, it targeted faculty members within the Department of Psychology at the University of M'sila. Spatially, the study was conducted exclusively within this department. Temporally, the data collection occurred during the months of June and July of the 2021 academic year. Scientifically, the study focused on the phenomenon of workplace mobbing and its perceived impact, measured through a structured tool encompassing five dimensions: self-actualization obstruction, relational difficulties, reputational damage, decline in professional quality of life, and health-related consequences.

Workplace harassment: Undesirable behaviors in the academic work environment by leadership in departments, colleges, and universities directed towards academic faculty, measured through the respondents' ratings on the dimensions of the Workplace Harassment Survey (After impeding self-realization, after impeding relationship building, after damaging reputation, after damaging professional quality of life, after damaging health), consisting of 34 items.

Academic faculty: The professors and lecturers at universities, and in our current study, we refer to the professors assigned to the Psychology Department at the University of M'sila for the academic year 2020/2021, totaling (50) professors.

1-Previous Studies

The nature of this study required the researcher to review previous studies related to the topic of workplace harassment, and to utilize them in discussing the study's results. These studies were classified according to their topics and chronological order as follows:

• The study by Sama Fayez Rasoul, Mansi Wang, Minzi Tang, Amir Saeed, and Javed Iqbal (2021) titled "How Does Workplace Environment Affect Employee Engagement: The Mediating Role of Organizational Support and Employee Well-being" aimed to explore the effects of a toxic workplace environment on employee engagement based on the conservation of resources theory and organizational support theory. This study proposed a research model in which the toxic workplace environment negatively impacted employee engagement, both directly and indirectly,

through organizational support and employee well-being. The study employed a quantitative research methodology, and data was collected from 301 employees working in small and medium-sized companies in China. Structural equation modeling using partial least squares (PLS-SEM 3.2.2) was used to estimate the proposed relationships in the research model. The results of this study confirmed that a toxic workplace environment has a negative impact on employee engagement. Furthermore, the findings of this research indicated that organizational support and employee well-being significantly mediate the relationship between a toxic workplace environment and employee engagement. The conclusions of this study are as follows: A toxic workplace environment has a direct and negative impact on employee engagement, as it fosters the spread of harmful emotions such as harassment, bullying, and social exclusion, which in turn contribute to increased stress, fatigue, depression, and anxiety among employees. Furthermore, the overall well-being of employees plays a crucial role in shaping their behavior and enhancing their engagement both with their work and the organization. Additionally, perceived organizational support significantly boosts employee engagement by strengthening their sense of belonging and commitment to the organization, confirming the importance of a supportive and healthy work environment.

• Mohammad Raihan Masum's (2021) research, titled "Teachers' Perceptions of Their Work Environment: Evidence from Primary and Secondary Schools in Bangladesh," examines favorable aspects of the work environment such as (1) organizational encouragement, (2) supervisory support, and (3) teamwork support, in addition to challenging conditions such as (4) teaching obstacles and (5) workload pressure. This research aimed to identify the elements and factors that teachers perceive as constituting a favorable or challenging environment. Furthermore, the study determined the effects of teaching experience and level on the specific factors.The study utilized a quantitative cross-sectional survey to analyze teachers' perceptions of their work environment. The questionnaire included basic demographic information and used 34 closed-ended questions to elicit responses. Approximately 368 teachers (230 male and 138 female) participated in the survey. Structural equation models were constructed, with the five aforementioned factors being part of two second-order formative constructs. Tests were conducted to determine differences between genders and teaching levels (primary and secondary), while Pearson correlation coefficients were calculated to verify whether experience was related to any of the perceived work environment factors. The research results indicated the following: It was found that the encouragement of teamwork, particularly having good relationships with the principal, is the most important factor in creating a favorable school environment. Physical facilities were the least important, while promoting positive behavior by avoiding conflicts and ensuring fairness was the most crucial aspect of organizational encouragement. Teaching obstacles were mostly formed through the frequency with which teachers were asked to deal with disruptive and violent students. Teachers perceived

many after-school meetings, unreasonable deadlines, and inspections conducted by office staff as increasing their workload pressure. The more experienced the teacher, the more positively they perceived the favorable school environment. The results could serve as evidence for educational policy makers and school administrators to identify the factors in the school environment that require urgent attention and adjustment.

• The study by Mahmoud Ali Al-Arid (2020) aimed to identify the level of perceived harassment among employees in some Syrian universities in the northern regions, while also exploring the extent of their engagement in counterproductive work behaviors towards the organization.The study also sought to clarify the impact of harassment in the work environment along its various dimensions through counterproductive work behaviors towards the organization. The researcher employed a descriptive-analytical methodology, conducting the study on a sample of 130 individuals, including faculty members and administrative staff, selected using an appropriate sampling method. A total of 110 questionnaires were retrieved, resulting in a response rate of approximately 84%. The researcher excluded 13 questionnaires due to insufficient data, and 97 questionnaires were utilized for statistical analysis.In order to test the hypotheses of the study, multiple linear regression analysis was employed. The results indicated a very low level of perceived harassment in the work environment among the employees, as well as a very low level of engagement in counterproductive work behaviors towards the organization. The study found that only one dimension of workplace harassment, which is the dimension of damaging reputation, had a significant impact on counterproductive work behaviors towards theorganization. The study did not reveal any significant impact of the other dimensions of workplace harassment (whether hindering self-fulfillment, obstructing relationship building, damaging professional quality of life, or harming health) on counterproductive work behaviors towards the organization.

• Raghad Naissa's (2017) study aimed to identify the level of perceived harassment among a sample of employees in the government educational sector. The study also examined the level of professional compatibility among a sample of employees in the Department of Education in Damascus, by studying the relationship between perceived harassment and professional compatibility. In addition, the study aimed to identify the level of significance in the differences of responses to the research sample items on the scale of perceived harassment and professional compatibility, according to the study variables (gender, social status). The study employed a descriptive-analytical methodology and used two instruments: a scale related to perceived harassment and a scale related to professional compatibility. The study sample included 144 male and female workers from the Department of Education in Damascus. One of the main findings was that both the level of perceived harassment and the level of professional compatibility among the workers in the Department of Education in Damascus were moderate. Furthermore, there was a statistically significant negative correlation between perceived harassment and professional

compatibility. Additionally, statistically significant differences were found in the average level of perceived harassment attributed to the gender variable, favoring male workers. Similarly, statistically significant differences were found in the average level of perceived harassment attributed to the social status variable, favoring single workers. Furthermore, statistically significant differences were found in the average responses of the research sample on the professional compatibility scale, attributed to the gender variable, favoring female workers. There were no statistically significant differences found in the average responses of the sample individuals on the professional compatibility scale based on the social status variable.

• Shahbazi et al. (2013) conducted a study in Iran to investigate the hypothesis suggesting a relationship between negative and positive leadership styles and the perception of harassment in the workplace. The study was conducted on a sample of 552 employees working in the banking sector, and the researchers utilized a scale for exposure to workplace harassment and a scale for leadership style developed by the researchers. Among the most important findings of the study were: A positive correlation between authoritarian leadership style and the perception of harassment in the work environment, a negative and inverse relationship between positive leadership style and the perception of harassment in the work environment, and that females are more exposed to harassment in the work environment compared to males.

• The study by Platania et al. (2012) aimed to explore the relationship between the perception of harassment, personality traits, and the organizational and managerial characteristics of the work environment in Italy. The study sample consisted of 674 workers, including 300 females and 374 males. The Minnesota Personality Scale and the Harassment Perception Scale were utilized. The results showed that high levels of occupational stress in the workplace, in the presence of exposure to harassment and inadequate coping strategies, can lead to depression, hysterical symptoms, and megalomania. There was a positive relationship between aggressiveness as a personality trait and exposure to high levels of harassment in the workplace. Males were found to be more exposed to harassment than females. The study concluded that although the relationship between stress, professional harassment, and personality traits remains controversial,... However, there is an association between the perception of harassment and mental health.

1-1 The similarities and differences between previous studies and the current study can be summarized as follows:

Previous studies have examined workplace harassment in conjunction with various closely related variables, whereas the current study focused exclusively on the harassment variable. While earlier research included diverse samples such as employees, workers, teachers, and academic staff, the present study specifically targeted university professors. In terms of research settings, previous studies were conducted across a range of institutions including elementary and high

schools, administrative offices, banks, and universities, while the current research was confined to the university environment. Methodologically, previous studies employed descriptive-analytical and survey approaches, whereas this study adopted a purely descriptive approach. Additionally, while earlier studies used a range of instruments such as scales and questionnaires, this study utilized a pre-established scale to assess the perceived level of workplace harassment among university faculty. Finally, although the findings of previous research varied across certain dimensions and aligned on others, these similarities and differences will be taken into account in the interpretation of this study's results.

1-2 The current study has benefited from previous studies in several ways, Including the following:

The current study benefited from previous studies in terms of understanding the theoretical literature on the topic of harassment in the workplace environment.The current study benefited from previous studies by utilizing a pre-existing tool (the scale presented by Gül et al., 2011) that was applied at Karamanolu University in Turkey, as it was found suitable for the local university environment and aligned with the objectives of the current study.

The current study benefited from previous studies in interpreting the results and reaching theoretical conclusions that enrich the theoretical literature on the topic of harassment in the academic environment.

2-The theoretical aspect of the study

Concept of workplace harassment: Davenport et al. (Schwartz, & Elliott, 1999, p. 34 Davenport) define harassment as:"The individual's exposure to continued, unreasonable aggressive behavior in the workplace by a group of colleagues, involving forms of physical and psychological humiliation, verbal and non-verbal abuse, whether in secret or in public, ultimately leading to the destruction of the individual's professional and social life."

The dimensions of workplace harassment: Gül et al. (2011) identified the dimensions of harassment in the workplace environment into five main categories, which are:

• Behaviors and situations aimed at obstructing self-fulfillment, including: managers and colleagues restricting an individual's potential and capabilities; continuous criticism of the individual's work results; verbal and written threats directed at the individual.

• Behaviors and situations aimed at obstructing establishing relationships with others, including: preventing the individual (victim) from speaking and communicating with others; compelling the individual (victim) to work in places where their colleagues are not present; preventing others from communicating with the victim.

• Behaviors and situations that undermine the individual's respect and reputation, including: Speaking ill of the individual at work, spreading rumors and false talk about the victim, mimicking the victim's behavior and discussing their private life with the intention of ridicule; forcing the individual to perform specific tasks that undermine their self-confidence, judging the individual's efforts at work in a humiliating and demeaning manner.

• Behaviors and situations that harm the quality of professional life, including: changing the duties and tasks assigned to the victim.

• Characteristics of victims of workplace harassment: There are diverse opinions regarding the image of the victim, as victimization does not usually seem to be motivated by race, age, or gender, but rather simply because a specific individual does not appeal to another person. However, other research sheds light on the fact that popular employees are potential targets for harassment. Therefore, several agreed-upon characteristics of the victim have been formulated, which are as follows: (Raineri, 2011, p. 23).

➲ The victim tends to possess positive characteristics and is often liked by others. Victims are often highly educated, as indicated by the report (Namie), which states that 21% of those exposed to bullying behavior hold advanced degrees or are professionals. Furthermore, 63% of the victims exhibit other positive traits such as confidence, kindness, excessive optimism, efficiency, and being liked by others. Due to these personal qualities and talents, the victim is often perceived as a threat by the perpetrator, and the rewards associated with the victim's talents can increase the intensity of bullying behavior.

➲ The victim is often identified by their ability to comprehend, being polite, kind, non confrontational, and rarely challenging the perpetrator. They tend to be quiet about the injustice they are subjected to. The perpetrator often seeks a victim who does not complain.

➲ The id^{2}entification of victims is based on their observability, and in some cases, the victim may be physically noticeable, representing a minority, in addition to having distinct behavioral traits and a mental and physical understanding challenge that makes them physically unattractive. In other instances, the victim may be noticeable due to their work or life circumstances.

2-1 Characteristics of Workplace Bullies: There are a set of characteristics of bullying behavior in the workplace that researchers have identified. Among these traits mentioned by Halley (2013: 10) are the following:

• Bullies are driven by self-interest.

• Bullies use others and often exploit subordinates to advance their own agendas.

• Low self-esteem, self-centered behavior, and a desire for attention and self-gratification all lead them to engage in bullying behaviors and tactics.

• They often feel helpless and have less influence in achieving their goals, so they employ this style to accomplish personal or organizational gains.

• They are indifferent to the impact of their actions and refuse to take responsibility.

• They avoid taking responsibility, therefore, they do not want any obligations to others.

• They are only concerned with themselves, and their lack of concern for others results in a lack of empathy.

• They spread rumors and gossip about targets and then attempt to exclude them from the group.

• They try to regain feelings of power by bullying others.

• Bullies effectively prioritize themselves over the community they seek to target. (Hussein Ali Abdullah, 2018, pp. 39-40)

2-3 Forms of Harassment in the Workplace: Einarsen (1999) classified behaviors of harassment and bullying in the workplace into five types:

Job-related behaviors such as altering job tasks or making them difficult to perform, social isolation by colleagues or supervisors where they avoid speaking to the victim, and personal attacks by intruding into the victim's personal life through mockery, spreading rumors, or verbal threats such as criticism, shouting, or public humiliation, or physical violence.

According to Thomas (2005), harassment can be categorized into four types: unjustified pressure to produce work, abuse of power, coercion, and withholding necessary information, all of which have an impact on task performance and, in the long run, a significant effect on the health of employees.

Nielsen et al. (2009) agreed with Thomas and identified two types of workplace harassment and bullying behaviors, which can either be job-related such as withholding crucial information, unjustified work pressure, excessive monitoring, unreasonable deadlines, or personality-related such as humiliation, continual criticism, spreading rumors in the workplace, and excessive monitoring.

As indicated by Giorgi (2012), there are three types of these behaviors that may be downward, such as when a manager bullies subordinates, upward, such as when subordinates bully a manager, or horizontal, through peer-to-peer bullying. Ultimately, workplace harassment and bullying behaviors in general reflect a form of personal aggression, which can be overt or covert and is primarily characterized by its long-term persistence (Al-Shawabkeh, 2019, pp. 20-21).

3. Materials And Methods

3-1 Study Methodology: To achieve the objectives of the current study and to measure the level of perceived harassment in the work environment among the professors in the Department of Psychology at the University of Msila, the researcher adopted the analytical methodology, which is most suitable for such descriptive studies.

This methodology describes and determines the conditions and relationships, compares and organizes the data, analyzes and derives the results, and interprets them, with the aim of generalizing them.

3-2 Study Population and Sample: The study population consists of all professors working in the Department of Psychology at the University of Msila during the academic year 2020/2021, totaling 50 male and female professors. The primary study sample was estimated at 29 individuals.

3-3.Study Instrument: To achieve the objectives of the study and to collect data from the study sample, a validated tool was adopted to measure the level of perceived harassment in the work environment among university faculty, specifically the scale presented by Gül et al. (2011) which was adapted to the Syrian university environment (translated into Arabic and studied for its psychometric properties by Mahmoud Ali Al-Areed, 2020).

The study instrument consists of 34 items distributed across five dimensions:
- Self-realization hindrance dimension (09 items).
- Interpersonal relationship hindrance dimension (05 items).
- Reputation damage dimension (10 items).
- Professional quality of life damage dimension (06 items).
- Health damage dimension (04 items).

4-4 Survey Study: The researcher conducted a survey study on a preliminary sample of 20 individuals in order to confirm the psychometric properties of the study instrument and ensure its suitability for final application and to achieve the study objectives.

Psychometric Properties of the Study Instrument:

Internal Consistency Reliability of the Study Instrument: To verify the reliability of the instrument, the researcher relied on the relationship between the dimension and the total score of the instrument using the Pearson correlation coefficient. The following results were obtained:

Table 1. Results of the internal consistency reliability of the dimensions of the study instrument and the instrument as a whole (Workplace Harassment).

Dimensions	Total Score
Self-realization hindrance	0,940**
Interpersonal relationship hindrance	0,906**
Reputation damage	0,915**
Professional quality of life damage	0,939**
Health damage	0,895**
Workplace harassment	1

From the previous table, it can be observed that the correlation coefficient values for the dimensions of the instrument and the total score ranged from (0.895 - 0.940), which are strong and statistically significant at a significance level of (0.01).

Therefore, the instrument demonstrates internal consistency reliability that allows it to measure what it was developed to measure in this study.

Instrument Stability: The researcher calculated the stability of the study instrument using the Cronbach's alpha method.

Cronbach's Alpha Method: To verify the stability of the study instrument, the stability was calculated using the Cronbach's alpha method, and the alpha coefficient value was estimated to be (0.997).

The stability coefficient values for the dimensions were as follows:

Table 2. Cronbach's alpha results for the dimensions of the study instrument, and for the instrument as a whole (Workplace Harassment).

Dimensions	Number of items	Alpha value
Self-realization hindrance	09	0.913
Interpersonal relationship hindrance	05	0.937
Reputation damage	10	0.915
Professional quality of life damage	06	0.942
Health damage	04	0.887
Workplace harassment	34	0.977

From the previous table, it is evident that the Cronbach's alpha values for the dimensions ranged from (0.887-0.942), indicating high values, which confirm the high stability of the instrument.

This demonstrates that the instrument can be relied upon to measure the level of perceived workplace harassment among university faculty.

Statistical Methods Used in the Study: The study relied on a set of statistical methods to analyze the data obtained from the study sample, including frequency, percentages, mean, standard deviation, Pearson correlation coefficient, and Cronbach's alpha coefficient

4- Results and discussion

4-1 Presentation, Analysis, and Interpretation of the Main Question Results:

What is the level of perceived harassment in the workplace among professors assigned to the Psychology Department at the University of M'sila?

To answer this question and to uncover the level of harassment in the workplace among professors assigned to the Psychology Department at the University of M'sila, frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations for the dimensions of workplace harassment and the total score for all dimensions (workplace harassment) were calculated. The results were as follows:

Table 03: Means and standard deviations of the dimensions of workplace harassment and the total score for all dimensions (workplace harassment).

Dimensions	Mean	Standard Deviation	Level
Self-realization hindrance	19.31	5.65	Moderate
Interpersonal relationship hindrance	11.24	3.67	Moderate
Reputation damage	22.37	5.70	High
Professional quality of life damage	13.10	4.42	Moderate
Health damage	9.03	2.95	Moderate
Workplace harassment	75.06	20.66	Moderate

From Table 03, it appears that the dimension of health damage has the lowest mean value at (9.03) with a standard deviation of (2.95). This is followed by the mean value of the dimension of interpersonal relationship hindrance at (11.24) with a standard deviation of (3.67), then the mean value of the dimension of professional quality of life damage at (13.10) with a standard deviation of (4.42), followed by the mean value of the dimension of self-actualization hindrance at (19.31) with

a standard deviation of (5.65), and finally the mean value of the dimension of reputation damage at (22.37) with a standard deviation of (5.70).

Looking at the level of perceived harassment in the workplace dimensions, most of them have a moderate level of perception, while the dimension of reputation damage has a high level.

The overall dimension of workplace harassment has an average mean of (75.06) and a standard deviation of (20.66), indicating a moderate level.

Table 04. Frequencies and Percentages of Total Scores (Workplace Harassment) by Level.

Level	Frequency	Percentage
Low	7	24.1
Moderate	8	27.6
High	14	48.3

Referring to Table 04, the results indicate that the majority of the sample participants perceive a high level of workplace harassment with a total frequency of 14 (48.3%), while the second group of sample participants perceive a moderate level of workplace harassment with a total frequency of 8 (27.6%), and the third group perceived a low level of workplace harassment with a total frequency of 7 (24.1%).

These results indicate that the majority of faculty members in the psychology department are experiencing a high level of workplace harassment.

The researcher may justify this by the professional discrimination within the work environment, leading to the exclusion of most faculty members and benefiting a select few. Consequently, they feel hindered in their professional growth and self-realization within the department and the university they work for.

The researcher perceives that the harassment may come from senior staff, as well as narcissistic

leadership, aggressive behaviors, and ridicule, which increase the risk of workplace harassment. These directly contribute to the creation and perpetuation of a toxic academic environment, causing significant harm to the mental and physical health of university faculty and hindering their academic motivation and engagement.

This study's findings align with those of Platania et al. (2012), which also indicated that the research sample members perceive high levels of occupational stress due to exposure to workplace harassment.

However, it differs from the results of Mahmoud Ali Al-Areed's study (2020), which pointed to a very low level of perceived workplace harassment among employees.

4-2 Presentation, analysis, and interpretation of the results of the first sub-question:

What is the level of hindrance to self-realization among the professors of the Psychology Department at the University of M'sila?

To answer this question and to assess the level of hindrance to self-realization among the rofessors of the Psychology Department at the University of M'sila, a process of calculating frequencies, percentages, as well as means and standard deviations for the items of the first dimension (hindrance to self-realization) was conducted. The results were as follows:

Table 05. Results of frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations for the items of the first dimension (hindrance toself-realization).

Phrase	Alternatives						Mean	Standard deviation	Level
	Agreed		Neutral		Opposed				
		F		F	F				
My superiors at work diminish my capabilities	2	1.4	1.4	2		7.2	.75	0.73	Moderate
I get confused while speaking at times		7.6	1		2	1.4	.13	0.83	Moderate
My colleagues at work limit my capabilities		7.6	7.9	1	0	4.5	.09	0.79	Moderate
I am scolded or shouted at in front of others		0.7	7.6		5	1.7	.31	0.80	Moderate
My work results are criticized		1	7.6		2	1.4	.01	0.85	Moderate
I receive verbal threats		4.1	7.6		4	8.3	.24	0.83	Moderate
I receive written threats		7.2	0.7		8	2.1	.44	0.73	High
I am forced to establish relationships with others through looks and					4	0.7	.27	0.79	Moderate

								0.	Mo
gestures									
Efforts I make to establish relationships with others are thwarted	2			(	1		.96	90	derate
Self-actualization hindrance						9.31		5. 65	Mo derate

Table 05 shows that the mean value of the first dimension (hindrance to self-realization) was estimated at (19.31) with a standard deviation of (5.65).

This result means that the individuals in the research sample feel an average level of hindrance to self-realization, with the mean values of the statements ranging from (1.37-2.44), all indicating an average level of perception.

Table 06. Frequencies and Percentages for the dimension of hindrance to self-realization.

Level	Frequency	Percentage
Low	8	27.6
Moderate	10	34.5
High	11	37.9

Based on Table (06), the results indicate that the first group of individuals in the research sample feel a high level of hindrance to self-realization with a total frequency of (11) and a percentage of (37.9%). The second group reported an average level of hindrance to self-realization with a total

frequency of (10) and a percentage of (34.5%), which is close to the percentage of the first group. The third group reported a low level of hindrance to self-realization with a total frequency of (08) and a percentage of (27.6%).

Interpreting these results means that a significant portion of the professors in the psychology department are experiencing a level of distress in the work environment related to hindrance to self-realization.

This might be attributed to internal conflicts and divisions within the psychology department's team, creating a professional atmosphere where some professors benefit from administrative and pedagogical positions, scientific grants, and research projects, thus easily achieving self-realization. Conversely, others are excluded, deprived of promotions, grants, and

participation in research, facing hurdles in their research projects or having their work plagiarized, encountering obstacles in

publishing in journals, or experiencing a lack of information flow, leading them to feel marginalized and excluded.

This result is consistent with the findings of a study (Gül et al, 2011), which showed that academic faculty members are more likely to experience harassment directed towards hindrance to self-realization.

However, this result differs from a study by Mahmoud Ali Al-Areed (2020), which indicated a very low level of perceived hindrance in the work environment among the employees regarding hindrance to self-realization.

4-3 Presentation, analysis, and interpretation of the results of the second sub-question:

What is the level of hindrance to establishing relationships among the professors in the Psychology department at the University of M'Sila?

To answer this question and assess the level of hindrance to establishing relationships among the professors in the Psychology department at the University of M'Sila, calculations were performed to determine frequencies, percentages, and means, in addition to standard deviations for the items in the first dimension (hindrance to establishing relationships). The results are as follows:

Table 7. Results of frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations for the items in the first dimension (hindrance to establishing relationships)

Phrase	Alternatives						Mean	Standard deviation	Level
	Agreed		Neutral		Opposed				
	%	RF	%	RF	%	RF			
Avoids speaking to colleagues	24.1	7	20.7	6	55.2	16	2.31	0.84	Moderate
Prevent communication and speaking with others	24.1	7	34.5	10	41.4	12	2.17	0.80	Moderate
Forced to work in places where my colleagues are not present	20.7	6	27.6	8	51.7	15	2.31	0.80	Moderate

My colleagues are prevented from communicating with me	24.1	7	31	9	44.8	13	2.20	0.81	Moderate
Act as if I am not at work	24.1	7	27.6	8	48.3	14	2.24	0.83	Moderate
Overall hindrance to establishing relationships							11.24	3.67	Moderate

From Table 07, it is apparent that the mean value of the second dimension (hindrance to establishing relationships) was calculated to be 11.24 with a standard deviation of 3.67. This result indicates that the individuals in the research sample perceive a moderate level of hindrance to establishing relationships.

The mean values for the items ranged from 2.17 to 2.31, all indicating a moderate level of perception.

Table 08. Frequencies and Percentages for the dimension (hindrance to establishing relationships).

Level	Frequency	Percentage
Low	7	24.1
Moderate	8	27.6
High	14	48.3

Looking at Table 08, the results indicate that the majority of the professors in the psychology department perceive a high level of hindrance to establishing relationships, with a total frequency of 14 and a percentage of 48.3%.

The second group of professors perceive a moderate level of hindrance to establishing relationships, with a total frequency of 8 and a percentage of 27.6%. The third group perceives a low level of hindrance to establishing relationships, with a total frequency of 7 and a percentage of 24.1%. Interpreting these results means that a significant portion of the professors in the psychology department experience discomfort in the work environment regarding the dimension of hindrance to establishing relationships.

This may be attributable to conflicts within the psychology department team, leading to a toxic professional atmosphere that divides the professors and deteriorates their working

relationships, replaced by toxic relationships and a negative social climate. This further leads to increased mistrust and negative assumptions about each other.

The result of this study differs from the findings of Mahmoud Ali Al-Areed (2020), which indicated a very low level of discomfort in the work environment among the workers regarding the hindrance to establishing relationships.

4-4 Presentation, analysis, and interpretation of the results of the third sub-question:

What is the level of reputation damage among the professors in the Psychology department at the University of M'Sila?

To answer this question and to reveal the level of reputation damage among the professors in the Psychology department at the University of M'Sila, a process of calculating the frequencies and percentages, along with the means and standard deviations, of the items related to the first dimension (reputation damage) was conducted. The results were as follows:

Table 09: Results of both frequencies and percentages, as well as the means and standard deviations, pertaining to the items of the first dimension (reputation damage).

Phrase	Alternatives						Mean	Standard deviation	Level
	Opposed		Neutral		Agreed				
	FR	%	FR	%	FR	%			
Talking about me in a negative way	8	27.6	13	44.8	8	27.6	2	0.75	Moderate
Hearing rumors about me at work:	8	27.6	12	41.4	9	31	2.03	0.77	Moderate
Acting like I have psychological problems	5	17.2	9	31	15	51.7	2.34	0.76	High
Being forced to accept psychological support	6	20.7	10	34.5	13	44.8	2.24	0.78	Moderate
Making fun of my disability	3	10.3	14	48.3	12	41.4	2.31	0.66	Moderate
Imitating my behavior to mock me	5	17.2	10	34.5	14	48.3	2.31	0.76	Moderate

Making fun of my political and religious views	6	20.7	8	27.6	15	51.7	2.31	0.80	Moderate
Making fun of my personal life	5	17.2	11	37.9	13	44.8	2.27	0.75	Moderate
Forcing me to do tasks that make me lose confidence in myself	4	13.8	12	41.4	13	44.8	2.31	0.71	Moderate
Judging my work efforts in a humiliating and insulting way	6	20.7	10	34.5	13	44.8	2.24	0.78	Moderate
Overall Reputation damage							22.37	5.70	High

It appears from table number (09) that the mean value for the third dimension (reputation damage) was calculated as (11.24) with a standard deviation of (5.70). This result indicates that the research sample individuals perceive a high level of sensitivity in the dimension of reputation damage, with mean values ranging between (2-2.34).

Most of the statements for this dimension were found to have a moderate level of sensitivity, while the statement "Acting as if I have psychological problems" was found to have a high level of sensitivity.

Table 10. Frequencies and percentages for the dimension of reputation damage.

Level	Frequency	Percentage
Low	6	20.7
Moderate	8	27.6
High	15	51.7

Based on table number (10), the results indicate that the majority of professors in the psychology department feel a high level of sensitivity in the dimension of reputation damage, with a total frequency of 15 and a percentage of 51.7%.

The second group of professors has a moderate level of sensitivity in the dimension of reputation damage, with a total frequency of 8 and a percentage of 27.6%.

The third group has a low level of sensitivity in the dimension of reputation damage, with a total frequency of 6 and a percentage of 20.7%. Interpreting these results means that a significant portion of the professors in the psychology department feel discomfort in the work environment regarding the dimension of reputation damage.

This feeling and perception may be a result of behaviors and situations that harm the individual's respect and reputation, whether from colleagues or from administration. Examples of such behaviors include:

Speaking poorly of others in the workplace, spreading rumors and false gossip about the victim, mimicking the victim's behavior, and intruding into the victim's personal life for the purpose of mockery; and continuously passing judgment on the efforts of others in a demeaning and humiliating manner.

These study findings align with the results of Mahmoud Ali Al-Areid's study (2020), which indicated that employees feel discomfort in the work environment in only one dimension, which is the dimension of reputation damage.

4-5 Presentation, analysis, and interpretation of the results of the fourth sub-question:

What is the level of damage to the quality of professional life among the professors of the Psychology Department at the University of Msila?

To answer this question and to determine the level of damage to the quality of professional life among the professors of the Psychology Department at the University of Msila, a process of calculating frequencies, percentages, as well as means and standard deviations of the statements of the first dimension (damage to the quality of professional life) was conducted. The results were as follows:

Table 11. Results of frequencies, percentages, as well as means and standard deviations of the statements of the first dimension (damage to the quality of professional life).

Phrase	Alternatives						Mean	Standard deviation	Level
	Opposed		Neutral		Agreed				
	FR	%	FR	%	FR	%			
Given work tasks below my abilities and capabilities	9	31	5	17	15	51.7	2.20	0.90	Moderate
My duties and tasks at work are constantly changing	6	20.7	12	41.4	11	37.9	2.12	0.75	Moderate
I am assigned job tasks that negatively affect my self-confidence	8	27.6	8	27.6	13	44.8	2.17	0.84	Moderate
I am assigned tasks and work that exceed my	9	31	7	24.1	13	44.8	2.13	0.87	Moderate

capacities and abilities								
My job situation negatively affects my personal life with my family	7	24.1	10	34.5	12	41.4	2.17	0.80	Moderate
Causes financial harm to my colleagues at work	7	24.1	8	27.6	14	48.3	2.24	0.83	Moderate
After the damage to the quality of professional life							13.1	4.42	Moderate

From table (11), it is evident that the mean value for the fourth dimension (damage to the quality of professional life) was calculated as (13.10) with a standard deviation of (4.42).

This result indicates that the research sample individuals feel a medium level of sensitivity in the dimension of damage to the quality of professional life. The calculated mean values for the statements ranged from (2.12-2.24), all indicating a medium level of sensitivity.

Table 12. Frequencies and percentages for the dimension of (damage to the quality of professional life).

Level	Frequency	Percentage
Low	9	31
Moderate	8	27.6
High	12	41.4

According to Table (12), the results indicate that the majority of psychology department professors feel a high level of sensitivity in the dimension of damage to the quality of professional life with a total frequency of (12) and a percentage of (41.4%).

The second group of professors feel a low level of sensitivity with a total frequency of (09) and a percentage of (31%). The third group of professors feel a medium level of sensitivity in the dimension of damage to the quality of professional life, with a total frequency of (08) and a percentage of (27.6%).

The interpretation of these results suggests that an important group of psychology department professors feel a high level of burden in the work environment related to damage to the quality of professional life.

This could be due to several factors such as restricted access to important information, undue work pressures, excessive monitoring, continuous criticism, or the spread of rumors in the workplace.

The results of this study differ from the findings of Mahmoud Ali Al-Areed's study (2020), which indicated a very low level of sensitivity to distress in the work environment among professionals in the dimension of damage to the quality of professional life.

4-6 Presentation, analysis, and interpretation of the results of the fifth sub-question:

What is the level of health impairment among the professors assigned to the Psychology Department at the University of M'sila?

To answer this question and to assess the level of health impairment among the professors assigned to the Psychology Department at the University of M'sila, a calculation process was conducted for the frequencies, percentages, as well as the mean scores and standard deviations related to the items of the first dimension (health impairment). The results were as follows:

Table 13. Results of the frequency values, percentages, as well as the mean scores and standard deviations related to the items of the first dimension (health impairment).

Phrase	Alternatives						Mean	Standard deviation	Level
	Opposed		Neutral		Agreed				
	FR	%	FR	%	FR	%			
I suffer from some physical damage	9	31	5	17.2	15	51.7	2.20	0.90	Moderate
I am threatened with physical violence	4	13.8	12	41.4	13	44.8	2.31	0.71	Moderate
I am threatened with violence to intimidate me	9	31	4	13.8	16	55.2	2.24	0.91	Moderate
I am forced to perform job duties that physically exhaust me	8	27.6	5	13.8	16	55.2	2.27	0.88	Moderate
Health Impairment Dimension							9.03	2.95	Moderate

The table (13) indicates that the arithmetic mean value for the fifth dimension (health impairment) is calculated as (9.03), with a standard deviation of (2.95). This result means that the research sample individuals have a moderate level of perceived health impairment.

The arithmetic means for the statements ranged from (2.20-2.37), all indicating a moderate level of perception.

Table 14. Frequencies and percentages for the dimension of (health impairment).

Level	Frequency	Percentage
Low	8	27.6
Moderate	5	17.2
High	16	55.2

Considering Table (14), the results indicate that the majority of the professors assigned to the psychology department perceive a high level of health impairment with a total frequency of 16 and a percentage of 55.2%.

This is followed by the second group of professors with a low level of health impairment with a total frequency of 8 and a percentage of 27.6%, and then the third group with a moderate level of health impairment with a total frequency of 5 and a percentage of 17.2%. Interpreting these results means that a significant portion of the professors in the psychology department feel a high level of distress in the work environment in terms of health impairment, potentially reflecting on their mental health with feelings of stress, anxiety, and depression.

This study's findings align with Platania et al.'s (2012) study, which revealed that individuals in the research sample experience high levels of occupational stress in the workplace under exposure to distress, and that there is a correlation between distress and mental health. In contrast, this study's result differs from the findings of Mahmoud Ali Al-Areed (2020), which indicated a very low level of distress among workers in the health impairment domain.

Conclusion

Although extensive research has been conducted on aggression in educational contexts over the past two decades, the issue of workplace harassment within universities, colleges, and academic departments has received comparatively limited scholarly attention. This article aims to address this gap by exploring the available literature on harassment in academic settings, with a particular focus on the perceptions and lived experiences of university faculty. Drawing on empirical findings from studies on workplace harassment and interpersonal aggression, the discussion highlights how academic culture, institutional climate, values, and work practices can both contribute to and result from harassment. The article also offers a series of specific recommendations for future research, emphasizing the need for deeper inquiry into the dynamics of harassment, bullying, and violence in academic institutions. In conclusion, it proposes actionable measures to prevent and manage these issues in higher education, including: conducting more focused research on the subject; employing indicators such as employees' psychological and social safety climate to evaluate institutional

performance; promoting safe work environments; providing leadership training on harassment and conflict resolution; equipping faculty with legal knowledge to navigate workplace challenges; encouraging swift and serious institutional responses to incidents; and advocating for stronger legal protections for academic staff.

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