

## TRACKING THE EFFECTS OF MOBBING IN LOSING THE PERFORMANCE OF SALES FORCE: AN EVIDENCE OF PHARMACEUTICAL INDUSTRY

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### ABSTRACT

*Mobbing is a bustle where a group of employees behave negatively against a person to enforce in an unsecured position to push out of the organization. This study aims at investigating mobbing behavior by collecting data through questionnaires based survey from the sale representatives of the Pharmaceutical companies in Pakistan. Questionnaires were circulated among 240 respondents but only 192 respondents provided data. Results indicate that mobbing has negative but significant relationship with the performance of sales force in of Pakistan. This paper addresses the need to examine the relationship of the Pharmaceutical industry of Pakistan. Mobbing has also negative but significant relationship with job involvement, creativity and efficiency of sales force in the pharmaceutical industry mobbing with the performance of sales force in the pharmaceutical industry in less developed areas of Pakistan where competition among companies and unemployment rate is high.*

**Keywords:** Mobbing , Performance, Sales Force

### INTRODUCTION

Mobbing is an activity where a group of employees are collectively exercise negative behavior against a person to pressurize and enforce in an unsecure spot that may cause to heave out of the organization. It may be a biased character and very difficult to understand. Like, Yildirim and Yildirim (2007), has defined it as unseen and complicated notion that influence employees' performance in an organization. However, Previous literature has discuss mobbing with various names. For example, Leymann (1990) has called it mobbing as well as psychological terror, Hoel *et al.* (2001) have mentioned it as bullying, Keashly (1998) has named it as emotional abuse, and Bassmann (1992) has mentioned it as work abuse. However, mobbing is derived from a English word "To Mob" which means oppress, attack or to invade someone and can be defined as "hostile and unethical communication being directed in a systematic way by one or a number of people mainly toward one individual" (Divincova and Sivakova, 2014). On the other hand, employee performance is the set of actions to fulfill the requirements of job description (Biswas and Varma 2012). Precisely, it is a function to handle a specific task and comprises standard job description, absenteeism, maintenance of interpersonal relations, withdrawal behavior, substance abuse and other behaviors that maximize hazards in working environment (Murphy, 1989). Therefore, this study is investigating whether mobbing has any relationship with the performance of sales force in the pharmaceutical industry of Pakistan or not? To get this aim, a study is conducting to assess the relationship between mobbing and the performance of sales force in the pharmaceutical industry of Pakistan due to its stable operations in less developed areas. This study may highlight some new dimensions of the knowledge area.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### Mobbing

Mobbing has been extensively investigated since 1990 in various phenomena in different countries of the world due to differences in culture context and values. Therefore, this study has interest to assess previous literature to understand mobbing behavior at different levels. For example, Leymann (1992) has conducted a study to investigate mobbing behavior in educational sector. The study has interviewed 2428 workers and noted that 3.5 percent workers were exposed to mobbing. It has noted that 40 percent workers were mobbed by 2 to 4 employees and 1/3 percent employees were mobbed by one and concluded that 6.5 percent employees were mobbed in educational institutions. Similarly, in a survey of Stanford University Business School (SUBS), it has noted that 53 percent employees were mobbed while 78 percent have declared that they are witness to other in facing mobbing behavior (Andrea Adams Trust, 2010). Likewise, Aydan *et al.* (2012) have interviewed 280 instructors of educational institutes to investigate mobbing behavior. The study has noted a high level mob behavior in the age group between 23 to 35 years. It has noted that mob behavior is decreasing with an increase in age. Celik and Peker (2010) have noted mob behavior in the sense of rumoring, non-appreciation and criticism in the high school teachers at Turkey. Later on, Celep and Eminoglu (2012) have assessed mobbing among administration and teaching staff. The study has concluded that mobbing has negative impacts on teacher's efficiency. It has confirmed by the study that teachers having age between 23 to 32 years are more confront with mobbing behavior as compared to age group between 33 to 42 years.

Quine (1999) has conducted a quantitative study in the health sector of England and noted that 38 percent respondents were confronting with mobbing. Similarly, Sa and Fleming (2008), have accomplished a study in the health department of Portugal and noted that 13 percent nurses were exposed mobbing in the sense of degradation, unmanageable work load and unlikeable tasks. As a result, 1/3 percent nurses have shown intention to quit the job, half nurses found it difficult to sleep, 43 percent nurses have demoralized and 71 percent have observed bad tempered. However, Hole and Cooper (2000) have ignored specific segment of employees and collected data from 5000 employees of 70 different organizations. It has found that 28 percent women and 22 percent men were exposed to mobbing in the last five years at that time. The study has noted that younger employees face higher level of mob behavior as compared to older employees but the case was opposite in Norway. (Di-Martino, 2002) has shown interest to compare mobbing behavior among different nations and collected data from various international organizations. The study has collected data from International Labour Office, International Council of Nurses and World Health Organization and noted a difference in mobbing percentage in various societies. For example, the percentage of mobbing in Bulgaria was 30.9 percent, in South Africa 20 percent, in Lebanon 22 percent, in Thailand 11 percent and in Brazil it was 15 percent. However, Metthiesen and Einnarsen (2007) have noted 3 to 4 percent mobbing at workplace in Scandinavian countries. Further, Mikkelsen and Einarsen (2001) have conducted an empirical study in Denmark and noted a low level mobbing at workplace. The study has concluded that empirical findings do not capture the true picture of the story. The percentage in Turkey was quite different as 32 percent employees were exposed to mobbing (Gok, 2011). Likewise, Niedl (1996) has noted that 7 to 27 percent people were mobbed in Australian organizations.

### Employees Performance

Employee performance is a key concept within working environment and organizational psychology. During the last two decade, researchers have shown progress in clarifying the concept of performance (Campbell, 1993). Moreover, advances have been made in specifying

major predictors and processes in regard of employee's performance. Due to ongoing changes in working environment, the concept of performance and its requirement are getting change (Ilgen and Pulakos, 2013). However, Murphy and Kroecker (1988) have defined employee performance as a function of one performance on a specific task in regard of job description, but previous literature has mention some frequencies that may cause of decrease in one's performance. For example, maintenance of interpersonal relations, absenteeism, withdrawal behaviors, substance abuse and other behaviors may be cause of increasing hazard at workplace (Murphy, 1989). However, Befort and Hattrup (2003) has noted that job performance relies on job demands, the goals, mission of organizations and the belief of behavioral values in organizations. Carmeli (2003) has emphasized that intellectual employees are able to manage their emotions in term of retaining positive mental state that could leads to get improvement in performance. Therefore, here are some relevant dimensions of employees' performance that may need to be reviewed.

### ***Job Involvement***

Job involvement and job commitment are the two important factors that have been a part of previous literature (Kanungo, 1982). However, Paullay (1994) has stated that job involvement is a cognitive and a psychological engagement in job. As the psychological engagement and inner values may be the motives of job involvement (Lodahl and Kejner, 1965). Many times, academic researcher and management practitioners have linked job involvement with performance and assumed as the key of organizational output (Lawler, 1986). For example, some studies have noted a significant relationship between performance of employees and accomplishment of organizational goals (Brown, 1996; Diefendorff *et al.*, 2002). However all those employees who have higher involvement in their jobs can put greater efforts in their work and job performance (Brown and Leigh, 1996).

### ***Creativity***

The creativity of employees has a value and importance for the achievement and development of an organization, its innovation and market growth (Amabile, 1996). It is the fundamental motive towards achievement in work environment (Amabile, 1996; Shalley and Oldham, 1997). However, organizations often use different techniques to influence the creativity of employees, for example, rewards system is often used in lot of organization to get the aim of creativity (Fairbank and Williams, 2001).

### ***Efficiency***

Getting efficiency in performance and operations is a desirable objective of each organization and its lake may create problems for management (Chang, 2013). As the lake of efficiency in performance may increase the labor cost and can affect the profit range of organization. To create efficiency in performance, organizations may often using reward system to get inspire towards job. Likewise, investing in the wellbeing's of employees and corporate training may be cause of efficiency in performance. Some time, optimists behave and appreciate words may put a good impression and get increase the moral level of employees.

## **RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN MOBBING AND PERFORMANCE**

A negative link has been observed between mobbing and performance of employees (Divincova and Sivakova, 2014). Like, Bilgel *et al.* (2006) has concluded that mobbing has negative influence on the employee's performance as well as their physical health. This is further supported by a study that mobbing has a negative effect on employees' performance and health, where health problems may consist of headache, stomach disorder, abdominal pain and mental disorders which lead up to 20 percent cases in suicide (Kozsr, 2006). This pressurized behavior is carried out by a clinical psychologist and concluded that 52 percent

women and 62 percent men are victims of mobbing, which ultimately loose the job involvement as 82 percent employees have left their jobs due to mobbing (Divincova and Sivakova, 2014). The study has noted that mobbing is also a cause of deficiency as 37 percent employees have reduced job commitment, 28 percent have left jobs, 22 percent have decrease their performance at work place and 12 percent left work due to mobbing. Another British study has observed 80 percent diminution in performance at the work place (Rayner *et al.*, 2002). Vveinhardt (2010) has assumed that mobbing is the cause of reduction in the productivity of workers and their temper. Due to the reason, companies are trying to handle this problem to avoid reduction in employee’s productivity (Divincova and Sivakova, 2014). Therefore, this study has interest to assess the relationship between mobbing behavior and the performance of sales force in the pharmaceutical industry of Pakistan, where the pressure for sale is high due to intensive competition and lake of opportunities in job market. For the purpose, the study has formulated a theoretical framework of mobbing and performance of sales force which is given in Figure 1. It describes that mobbing is independent variable, performance of sales force is dependent variable of the study. The following conceptual model is developed to assess the relationship of variables.

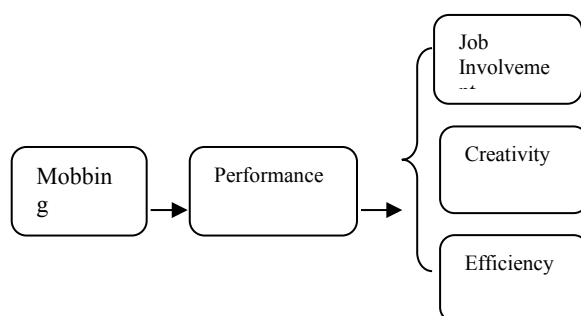


Figure 1: Research Model

### HYPOTHESIS OF THE STUDY

- H1: There is a negative relationship between mobbing and the performance of sales force in the pharmaceutical industry of Pakistan.
- H2: There is a negative relationship between mobbing and job involvement of sales force in the pharmaceutical industry of Pakistan.
- H3: There is a negative relationship between mobbing and the creativity of sales force in the pharmaceutical industry of Pakistan.
- H4: There is a negative relationship between mobbing and the efficiency of sales force in the pharmaceutical industry of Pakistan.

### METHODOLOGY

The study collected data through questionnaires based survey from total 192 sale representatives in the pharmaceutical industry of Pakistan. Data was collected in different regions of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan. Most of the respondents were under the age of 35 years. The survey instrument was comprised of demographic factors and questions about the variables of study. It was assured to the respondents that the information collected from them will be only for research purpose and will be keep it confidential. The study instrument was adopted from (Vveinhardt & Andriukaitiene, 2015; Yun *et al.*, 2007; McCook, 1999; Rehman *et al.*, 2015). A pilot study was conducted to check the reliability of adopted questionnaires. For the purpose, data were collected from 40 sales representatives. The following table indicates the result of pilot study.

**Table 1. Values of Cronbach Alpha of Pilot Study**

	Variables	Number of Items	Cronbach's Alpha
1	Mobbing	5	.83
2	Job Involvement	5	.78
3	Creativity	5	.81
4	Efficiency	5	.75

After data collection, the study applies descriptive statistics and stepwise regressions to find results. Regression analysis is an efficient procedure to determine association between dependent and independent variables of a study (Malhorta and David, 2003).

**RESULTS**

The study uses descriptive statistic to understand the demographic information's of the respondents in term of gender, age and qualifications. The information's are presented in the following table:

**Table 2. Frequency and Percentage Dispersion of Demographic Factors**

Demographic Variables	Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	112	58.3 %
	Female	80	41.6 %
Age	21 – 28	62	32.2%
	29 – 36	54	28.1%
	37 – 44	38	19.7%
	45 – 52	20	10.4%
	53 – 60	18	9.3%
Qualification	Bachelor	74	38.5%
	Master	85	44.2%
	Other	33	17.1%

The response rate of the respondents was 80 percent, where 73.7 percent includes male and 26.3 percent female. In term of age, 32.2 percent belongs to 21-28 years of age group, 28.1 percent belongs to 29-36, 19.7 percent belongs to 37-44, 10.4 percent belongs to 45-52 and 9.3 percent belongs to 53-60 years of age group. In term of education, 38.5 percent have bachelor degrees, 44.2 percent have master degrees, while 17.1 percent have other levels of education. After descriptive statistics, the study uses correlation to determine association among variables. Table 2 presents the results of correlation.

**Table 3. Means, Standard Deviation and Inter Correlation of Variables**

	Mean	St.D	MB	EP	JI	CT	EF
MB	1.345	.3903	1				
EP	1.42	.4386	.041	1			
JI	2.101	.4998	.023	.051	1		
CT	1.726	.3425	.062*	.024	.035	1	
EF	1.623	.4562	.469**	.039*	.425**	.263*	1

\*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed),  
 \*\*.Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

\*MB – Mobbing, \*EP- Employee performance, \*JI – Job Involvement,  
 \* CT – Creativity, \*EF – Efficiency

In the above table, correlation analysis indicates that mobbing is positively correlated with the performance of sales force, job involvement, creativity and efficiency. Performance of sales force is positively correlated with job involvement, creativity and the efficiency of sales force in the pharmaceutical industry of Pakistan. Job involvement is also positively correlated with creativity and efficiency. Similarly, creativity is correlated to efficiency in the pharmaceutical industry of Pakistan.

### Statistical Results

This is the integral part of study to determine the influence of mobbing on the performance of sales force in the pharmaceutical industry of Pakistan. The study applies regression to assess this influence and statistical results of the model. The following table shows the analysis:

**Table 4. Regression Analysis between Mobbing and Performance**

	<b>Beta Value</b>	<b>Standard Error</b>	<b>P Value</b>
Mobbing	-.351	.031	.004

\*\* P < 0.01, \*P < 0.05

The above table provides the information of regression analysis. The results indicate that there is a negative but significant ( $p = .004$ ) relationship between the two variables. The results of the study are also supported by (Divincova, Sivakova, 2014). It can be inferred from the results that mobbing may be a cause of stress and mental war which influence the performance of sales force in the pharmaceutical industry of Pakistan.

**Table 5. Regression Analysis between Mobbing and Job Involvement**

	<b>Beta Value</b>	<b>Standard Error</b>	<b>P Value</b>
Mobbing	-.263	.041	.001

\*\* P < 0.01, \*P < 0.05

The above table provides the information of regression analysis between mobbing and job involvement. The results indicate that there is a negative but significant ( $p = .001$ ) relationship between mobbing and the job involvement of sales force in the pharmaceutical industry of Pakistan. It can be said that mobbing at workplace may cause of inflexible environment that can affects the job involvement of sales force in the pharmaceutical industry of Pakistan.

**Table 6. Regression Analysis between Mobbing and Creativity**

	<b>Beta Value</b>	<b>Standard Error</b>	<b>P Value</b>
Mobbing	-.342	.037	.003

\*\* P < 0.01, \*P < 0.05

The above table provides the information of regression analysis. The results indicate that there is a negative but significant ( $p = .003$ ) association between mobbing and the creativity of sales force in the pharmaceutical industry of Pakistan. It can be inferred from the results that mobbing at workplace may hurt badly and lack of fairness may cause of decrease in creativity of sales force in the pharmaceutical industry of Pakistan.

**Table 7. Regression Analysis between Mobbing and Efficiency**

	<b>Beta Value</b>	<b>Standard Error</b>	<b>P Value</b>
Mobbing	-.426	.024	.002
** P < 0.01, *P < 0.05			

The above table provides the information of regression analysis between two variables. The results indicate that there is a negative but significant ( $p = .002$ ) relationship between two variables. It can be inferred from the results that mobbing may create pressurized work environment that might cause of decline in efficiency.

## DISCUSSION

This study has investigated the influence of mobbing on the performance of sales force in pharmaceutical industry of Pakistan. The study has applied quantitative approach to collect data from the sales representative of pharmaceutical companies through questionnaires based survey. The study has applied correlation and stepwise regression to analyze the data. Results indicate that mobbing has negative but significant relationship with the performance of sales force in pharmaceutical industry of Pakistan. This study is parallel to several studies which are the part of this chapter. The results of this study has important implication for marketing research and added to existing knowledge that mobbing should be minimized to improve the performance of sales force.

The study is parallel to (Divincova and Sivakova, 2014), which has assessed the impacts of mobbing on the employees performance in Slovak Companies. The study has used questionnaires based survey to collect data and noted that mobbing has significant relationship with the employees' performance. This study is in line in the sense of mobbing and its effects on employees' performance. This study is also in line to (Rehman *et al.*, 2015), which has investigated the effects of mobbing on organizational commitment in educational sector of Pakistan. The study has applied questionnaires based survey to collect data from the employees of universities. Results have indicated that mobbing has negative but significant effects on organizational commitment in educational sector of Pakistan. Likewise, (Yuksel and Tuncsiper, 2011) have conducted a study to assess relationship between mobbing and organizational commitment. The study applied questionnaires based survey to collect data from hospital employees in Turkey. The study has applied categorical regression analysis to determine results. The study has noted that mobbing has positive and statistically significant relationship with organizational commitment. This study is in line in the sense of mobbing at workplace. Similarly, (Pelit and Kilic, 2012) have conducted a study to investigate the relationship between mobbing and organizational commitment along with the application of city and resort hotels. The study has collected data through questionnaires based survey from hotels employees in Turkey. The study has noted that there is a negative but statistically significant relationship between mobbing perceptions and organizational commitment. However, the managerial prospective of the study is to assess whether mobbing can influence the performance of sales force in the pharmaceutical industry of Pakistan. However, the results have confirmed that mobbing can influence the performance of sales force in pharmaceutical industry of Pakistan.

## CONCLUSION

The study has investigated the relationship of mobbing with the performance of sales force in the pharmaceutical industry of Pakistan. The study has collected data through questionnaires based survey from the sales representatives of pharmaceutical companies. The study has applied descriptive statistics, correlation and stepwise regression to analyze data. In the light

of findings, mobbing has negative but statistically significant relationship with the performance of sales force as well as job involvement, creativity and efficiency in pharmaceutical industry of Pakistan. Therefore, the results of the stepwise regression accept the hypothesis of the study. However, while interpreting the results, it should be kept in mind that data used in this study was collected from a single state of Pakistan. Therefore, readers need to be cautious in generalizing the results. To further enrich the analysis, the study therefore recommends that future research should assess the moderating effects of gender and education. Further, the study was limited to pharmaceutical industry only and future research can include other sectors like telecom, education and other services as well as manufacturing sectors.

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