

## Diagnosis of Mobbing as Discrimination in Employee Relations

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*The concepts of mobbing and discrimination are discussed in the article; the notion of mobbing in employee relations is being defined. After the scientific literature analysis there was created a tool to diagnose the discrimination and mobbing in employee relations. Research shows the spreading of this phenomenon in different sectors and economy activities.*

*The growth of heterogeneity and variety as well as the variety itself, which we traditionally call a minority representative, increase the danger of conflicts between groups (cultural, racial, and national). The danger is hidden in negative attitude that can appear because of the society dominating traditions, stereotype thinking, and lack of tolerance to those who are different. Growing variety, the lack of tolerance, the aggressiveness of the society form is the mixture that explodes discrimination in the relations among employees.*

*Discrimination in the relations among employees consists of the processes that take place inside the organization. The main signs of discrimination in the relations of the employees are: group isolation from the community because of differences, negative acceptance of the isolated persons, social isolation, and oppression.*

*The creation of a variety or minority group is connected both with outer and psychological differences. The meaning of discrimination as a dysfunction of the employees' relations is marked by violence in order to get rid of the victim. At the same time taking to consideration the results of a long-lasting violence to the person, it should be understood as a physical violence the aim of which is to evoke pain, damage the individual.*

*It is important that dysfunctional relations are identified taking to consideration objective and subjective criteria, because interpersonal relations among employees is a variety of communication ways and forms, which create an unfriendly, oppressive atmosphere. Negative aspect of the relations can appear even as a purposeful relation negation, in other words social isolation and the isolation of the oppressed one. That is why it is wise to listen to the evaluation of the oppressed one about the relations he has.*

*In the article the researches of mobbing in Western countries and Lithuania are discussed. Mobbing is analyzed from the aspect of discriminative relations among the employees, the features, which show the transformation of chicanery to mobbing is singled out. An instrumentation to diagnose mobbing as discriminative employee relations was created, the reliability of which was proved by the expert evaluation and high weights of Cronbach alpha. With the help of questionnaire during the exploratory*

*research there were questioned 351 respondents from public and private sector organizations. It was diagnosed that most frequently the actions of mobbing were experienced by the respondents who work in public sector – in the spheres of education and social work and in some business organizations.*

Keywords: *employee, interpersonal relations, discrimination, mobbing, diagnosis of mobbing, jeer, victim, harassment.*

### Introduction

The phenomenon of mobbing is being analyzed for three decades in the West. Leymann (1990, 1993, 1996) – the scientist from Sweden is considered to be the initiator of the research. While analyzing the works devoted to discrimination, for example, (Burke, McKeen, 1992; Melamed, 1995; Myers, 2002; Lawthom, 2005; Giddens, 2005; Jureniene, 2007; Startiene, Remeikiene, 2008; Myers, 2008a, 2008b etc.) the connections between mobbing and discrimination actions become very clear. They presuppose the premises, that mobbing can be analyzed in the wider context, especially examining the reasons of this phenomenon. The research can also serve for the juridical regulation of the phenomenon in Lithuania, because the phenomenon of mobbing in contradiction to discrimination is not regulated by the Lithuanian law.

One of the first mobbing researches performed in Lithuania was done by Malinauskiene and Obelenis (2004). There was analyzed the frequency of school teachers' chicanery and its relation to the subjective evaluation of the personal health. The questionnaire "The Negative Acts Questionnaire" (NAQ) was used (Einarsen and Raknes, 1997 created the questionnaire; Einarsen, and Hoel, 2001). The results received were the following: 17% of the respondents have experienced psychological pressure at their work place, 13% of the total report about its occurrence on a constant basis.

Gruzevskis, Okuneviciute-Neveauskiene, Pocius (2004) carried out the research "The influence to the employee's productivity, safety and health that is done by illegal work, juridical law, that regulates work relations, the violation of the law acts, threats or any other psychological character". State work inspection's territorial department officers, the representatives of Trade Unions, company leaders took part in the research. The results have shown that psychological influence on a work place can have different forms, for example the misuse of the service position – 61% (TU), 50.4% (CL) and 46.2%

(TDO). Mikutyte (2008) has performed the research “The management of the psychological violence experienced by nursing specialists”. The questionnaire called “Violence at the work place in the health care sector” was used. Vasiljeviene’s (2000, 2004, 2006) study of mobbing ethic problem is very remarkable as well.

The retrospective of the research shows, that mobbing as discrimination in employee relations are orientated to a public sector, health care and education spheres. However, there is not enough information about this phenomenon in the private sector and the division among different sectors.

**The object of the research:** mobbing as discrimination in employee relations.

**The purpose of the research:** to diagnose mobbing as discrimination in employee relations and to find out how widely mobbing is spread in private and public sector.

**The methods of the research:** This article was written using the systematic method of scientific literature analysis, common and logical analysis, and comparison and generalization methods. Expert evaluation, questionnaire, the processing of the data with the help of SPSS set of statistic programs, the analysis of data have been applied. The sources that were used – the articles written by Lithuanian and foreign authors, books devoted to mobbing and discrimination.

### **Mobbing as discrimination in employee relations**

The first scientist who used the term “mobbing” to describe the dysfunctional relations and harassment among employees was Leymann from Sweden (1990). However, in the works of different scientists mobbing that is analyzed has no unanimous description.

For example, “bullying” is also known as “mobbing”, that is a moral harassment at work (Leymann, 1990; Bassman, 1992; Rodgers, Gago, 2006). Harassment can be called discrimination.

Myers (2002, 2008a, 2008b) states that discrimination is a negative behavior towards the group or its members. It means the creation of unequal conditions to people, activity that aims to take the possibilities from one group that are open to the other (Burke, McKeen, 1992; Melamed, 1995; Lawthom, 2005; Giddens, 2005; Myers, 2008). The negative reaction of other people is evaluated as a preconceived attitude to the whole minority group, which devaluates its meaning. This corresponds to the research data. If negative results are connected to exterior factors, the self-esteem is being protected. The open negative attitude that can be easily noticed hurts less than a delicate, hidden and lately very frequent, discrimination (Crocker, Major, 1989; Lemme, 2003).

Discrimination in employee relations means the escalation of conflicts, hostile behavior, physical and psychological violence, terrorism. The notion of discrimination is widely used in politics, economics and sociology. In the society, the most popular notion of the discrimination is used to define negative, humiliating social relationships. Usually while talking about discrimination the attributives “racial”, “national”, “gender” etc. are added (Zukauskas, Zakarevicius, 2007; Ciarniene, Sakalas, Vienazindiene, 2007; Zukauskas, Zakarevicius, 2008; Rees, Althakhri, 2008; Zukauskas,

Vveinhardt, 2008a; 2008b). The majority of authors (Leymann, 1993, 1996; Niedl, 1995; Einarsen, Skogstad, 1996; Knorz, Zapf, 1996; Zapf, 1999, 2002; Wickler, 2004; Sallin, 2005 etc.) use the same attributives of the discrimination to describe mobbing. Very often mobbing is described as intimidating. American scientists describe the actions of mobbing as employee abuse or workplace terrorism. The term mobbing is used for example in German speaking countries, in Sweden, Italy, and Australia. In the United Kingdom this phenomenon is defined as bullying (Lohro, Hilp, 2001; Hartig, Frosch, 2006) and is also used to describe the relations of students at school (Lohro, Hilp, 2001; Elliott, 2003; Davenport, Shwartz, Elliott, 2005). It is more often used than mobbing at the workplace and possesses the physical aggression features. In French literature because of the psychological nature mobbing is described as *harcèlement moral* (moral persecution of an enemy) (Lohro, Hilp, 2001). In different periods, mobbing and bullying were used to describe workplace relations in variation for emotional harassment, persecution, misuse, inappropriate behavior and/or harassment (Hartig, Frosch, 2006). In Lithuanian scientific literature it was impossible to find a unified notion of mobbing. Sometimes this notion is used to define the harassment of the employees by the employer (Vasiljeviene, 2000, Vasiljevas, Pucetaite, 2005 etc.) and the negative, hostile relations of the co-workers are called bullying (for example, Gruzevskis, Okuneviciute-Neveauskiene, Pocius, 2004; Malinauskiene, Obelenis, Sopagiene etc. 2005, 2007). The same term for the phenomenon can vary depending on existing traditions. These variations of the descriptions open a wide spectrum of the influence on the victim.

According to Leymann (1990), there were described 45 actions of attack (*Leymann Inventory of Psychological Terrorization – LIPT*). Knorz, Zapf (1996) named the most frequently repeated behavior of a mob, it is obvious that the person who is being mobbed can be discriminated because of his views, nationality, health condition, physical and psychological peculiarities etc. As Vasiljeviene (2004, 2006) states the notion of mobbing describes the spread of a conflict at work, this is the situation when bosses or colleagues constantly attack the person in order to make him leave the job or lower his status.

Mobbing is a psychological terrorism, work pressure, repeated action of specific processes, which exhaust the person and sometimes break him down (intrigue, conflicts, unfair accusations and the atmosphere of the non-effective work – is the expression of pathology in the company). Nevertheless, the difference between the harassment that takes place at work, non-ethic behavior and mobbing (Leymann, 1993; Knorz, Zapf, 1996, Kolodej, 2007 etc.) explain the criteria of time and frequency. Mobbing is described as purposeful, durable action that takes place regularly and lasts not shorter than half a year when the spheres of one’s personal and/or professional life are attacked.

## The study and results of mobbing as discrimination in employee relations

The diagnosis of mobbing as discrimination in employee relations was a component of an exploratory research, which claimed to state the link between the discussed phenomenon and the organization's climate. The research of mobbing as discrimination in employee relations was performed in four stages. With the use of operation method at the first stage, referring to scientific theory and the researches that were carried out earlier, there were revealed the structural components of the research subject, there was created a hypothetical model, which consisted of three parts. Moreover, there were performed two expert evaluations, which helped to clarify the questionnaire for the research (the fourth stage).

During the *first* expert evaluation the goal was to find out the most important factors of the research subject (subscales), with the help of which it would be possible to diagnose mobbing as the presence or absence of discrimination in the organization. In the expert evaluation ten experts took part (professors from Vytautas Magnus, Klaipeda, Siauliai, Kaunas technological universities, lawyers and the representatives of Trade Unions). Each answer category (they were 4: absolutely disagree, probably disagree, probably agree and absolutely agree) prescribed the factors evaluated by experts and summed them up. It was stated, which of the factors (subscales) is the most suitable for the creation of the questionnaire. When the factors were presented to the experts, they were told about the aim of the diagnosis, and which preliminary statements will form the factors offered for the evaluation. The factors that were chosen for the questionnaire about mobbing as discrimination in employee relations were singled out according to works by Leymann (1990), Knorz, Zapf (1996), Myers (2008) works. After bringing together all the evaluations of the experts, there was measured the weight of each factor. The factor weight balances from 3 to 4 and this means that the experts agree to the factors that have been singled out. According to these factors and the expert suggestions, which were given in the note column of the questionnaire, there was created a questionnaire for the second stage of the evaluation.

During the *second* expert evaluation, the aim was to find out the most important and the most true statements about the research subject, according to which it would be possible to state the condition of the organization's climate and to diagnose the presence or absence in the organization. Each answer category (they were 5) there was applied a coefficient (correspondingly 1 to 5). It was diagnosed which of the named statements is the most suitable for the research. The questionnaire was hosted on the site [www.mobingas.lt](http://www.mobingas.lt), which was specially created for it. In future in pursuance to carry out the quality research according to the chosen topic on this page there was foreseen a column for posting and analyzing personal stories of mobbing as a discrimination in employee relations. Questionnaires, which were filled in by using informational technologies, made one third of all the questionnaires. Two thirds of all the questionnaires were printed and distributed in different organizations.

The following two subscales of mobbing as discrimination in employee relations are suggested in the questionnaire: actions according to the possibility of attack that operate through social relations; the attack of social views of the worker; the attack in professional activity; attack in everyday day health sphere; attack because of physical features; health, views, work qualities, demographic features, psychological qualities are unrolled through the leaders' influence to the employee relations, unrecognized discrimination in employee relations, the intolerance of the employees that did not experience discrimination, but notice it.

The subscale consists of 110 statements. The spread of the factor was explained. Factor is the attributive that affects the result (Vaitkevicius, Saudargiene, 2006; Banyte, Salickaite, 2008). The authorized spread of the factor cannot be less than 10%. If it is less than 10%, it is necessary to look for the statement that can reduce the spread. For example, in the subscales of mobbing actions the least spread is 61.28% (actions according to the attack possibility), the biggest – 81.09% (attack in the everyday health sphere).

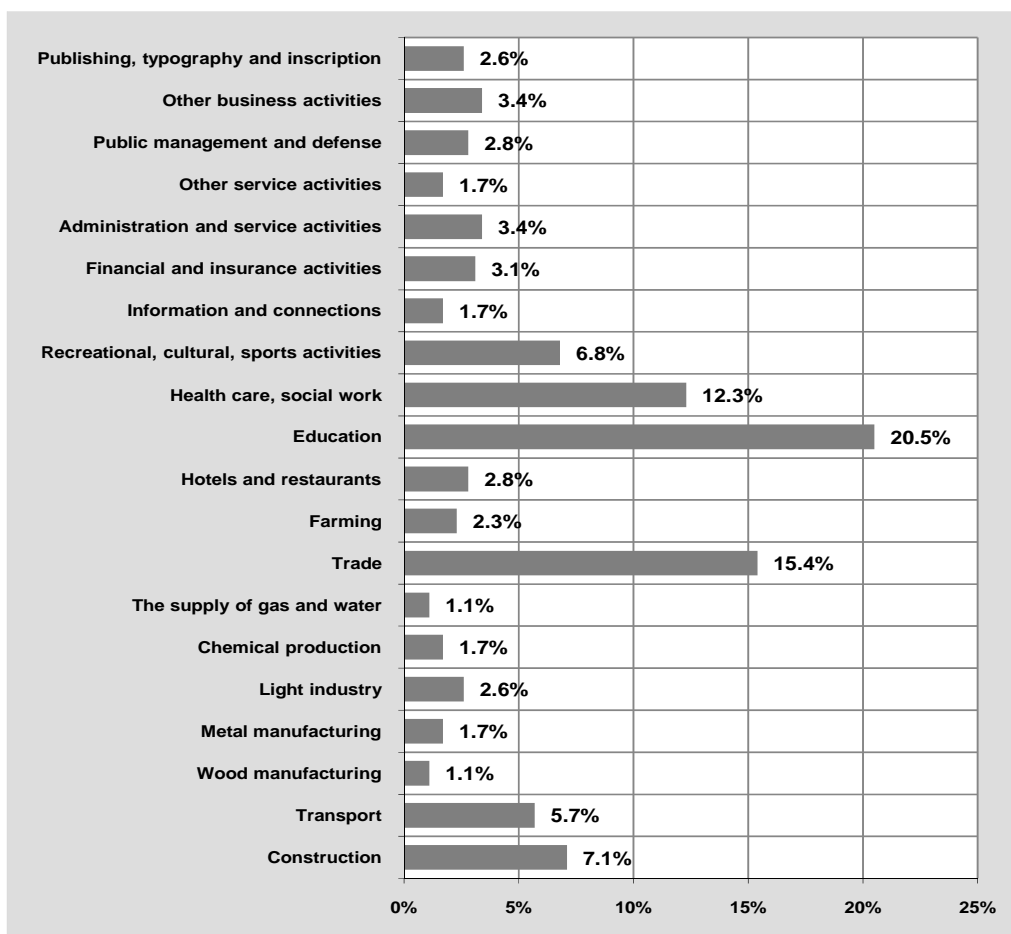
In order to evaluate the characteristics of the methodological quality of mobbing actions' subscales in the organization (N=342, items 36), there was measured *Cronbach alpha*, which balances from 0.87 to 0.96. The methodological quality characteristics of mobbing or discrimination in organization features' subscales are (N=344, items 38). *Cronbach alpha's* reliability value was changing from  $\alpha=0.79$  (discrimination based on psychological qualities) to  $\alpha=0.90$  (discrimination due to physical signs). Additional mobbing/discrimination factor subscales of methodological quality characteristics in the organization (N=343, items 36) – from  $\alpha=0.64$  (unrecognized discrimination in employee relations) to  $\alpha=0.97$  (the leader's influence to employee relations (Table 1).

The maximum *Cronbach alpha* – is 1. There were received high *Cronbach alpha* results that allow to state, that the discrimination actions brought to the questionnaire as well as subscales statements are closely connected and suitable to diagnose mobbing as discrimination in employee relations. 351 respondents from public and private sector took part in the research (private sector – 228 observation cases, public sector – 123 observation cases). The data was processed by SPSS program.

One fifth of all the respondents were represented by educational sphere workers. The others were the representatives of the economy sphere: the workers of commerce organizations (15.4%), the specialists of health care and social work (12.3%), construction workers (7.1%). The smallest number of the respondents was represented by manufacturing sphere (timber and metal industries) and the industry of building materials (Figure 1). Two thirds of the respondents (65%) were working in private sector. According to the gender, 32% of the respondents were men and 68% women. 61.2% of the respondents characterized themselves as the category of subordinates, the leaders of the lowest and middle level made around one third of all the respondents. The segment of top managers was not significant – 3.5%.

**Methodological quality characteristics of the questionnaire’s subscales**  
*Created by authors*

Subscales	Number of statements	The explained spread	Cronbach alpha
<b>The methodological characteristics of in the organization of mobbing as discrimination in employee relations (N = 342)</b>			
Actions according to the possibility of attack	9	61.28	0.92
Factors that act through social factors	5	76.04	0.92
The attack of the employee’s social views	14	67.09	0.96
The attack in the everyday professional life	5	66.53	0.87
The attack in the health sphere	3	81.09	0.88
<b>The subscales of factors of methodological quality characteristics of mobbing as discrimination in employee relations (N = 344)</b>			
Because of physical features	14	44.92	0.90
Because of the health	4	64.03	0.81
Because of the views	3	79.37	0.87
Because of the professional qualities	7	53.67	0.85
Because of demographical features	6	57.82	0.85
Because of the psychological qualities	4	62.17	0.79
<b>Additional mobbing as discrimination in employee relations, factors’ subscales of methodological quality characteristics in organization (N = 343)</b>			
Leader’s influence to the employee relations	16	72.12	0.97
Not recognized discrimination in employee relations	3	58.18	0.64
The employees that see discrimination, but never experienced it	12	54.74	0.92
Intolerance to the others	5	49.25	0.72



**Figure 1.** The division of the respondents according to the professional spheres of activity (N=351)

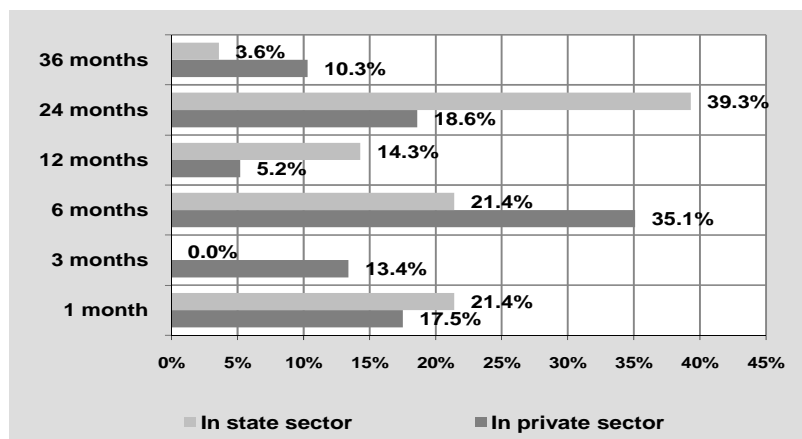
The majority of the respondents represented the 30-39 year old group (35.6%). This is the most active and already entrenched in life group, which has an experience of

interpersonal relations at the organization. About one fifth of all the respondents were represented by groups of 24-29 year old and 40-49 year old each.

The greatest part of the respondents has a higher education (64.4%). According to the education criteria, the rest of the respondents were divided in the following way: secondary – 1%, professional – 8%, upper education – 7.8%, other – 6.9%. The professional spheres division of the respondents can explain the fact that in the research the majority of the respondents have higher education. According to the nationality, the majority of the respondents were represented by Lithuanians – 91.9%. This is a bit more than the average of 2008 in Lithuania (84.3% of all the citizens). The Russians, which took part in the research, made 4.9% of all the respondents, and this relatively corresponds to the average of Lithuanian statistics (5% of all the citizens). The rest of the respondents

were Polish, Latvians, Germans and Hebrews.

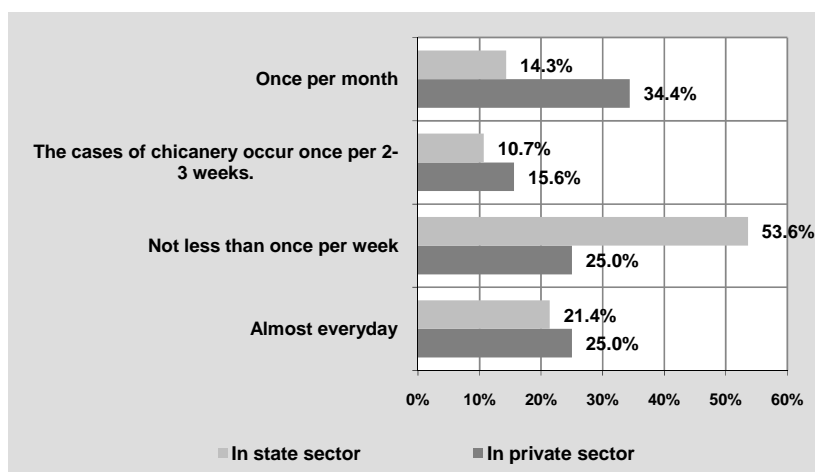
Jeer or sexual harassment have experienced about one third of the respondents (35.6%), where representatives of the private sector dominate (77.6% of all the jeer and sexual harassment cases). However, in the state sector there was noticed the longer period of jeer. For two years, one third of the respondents of the state sector (39.3%) suffered from sexual harassment. About one third (35.1% of the respondents from the private sector were going through jeer or sexual harassment for six months, which is shorter than in the state sector. It is possible to assume that people working in the state sector value their workplace more and that is why they tend to bear the harassment and jeer (Figure 2).



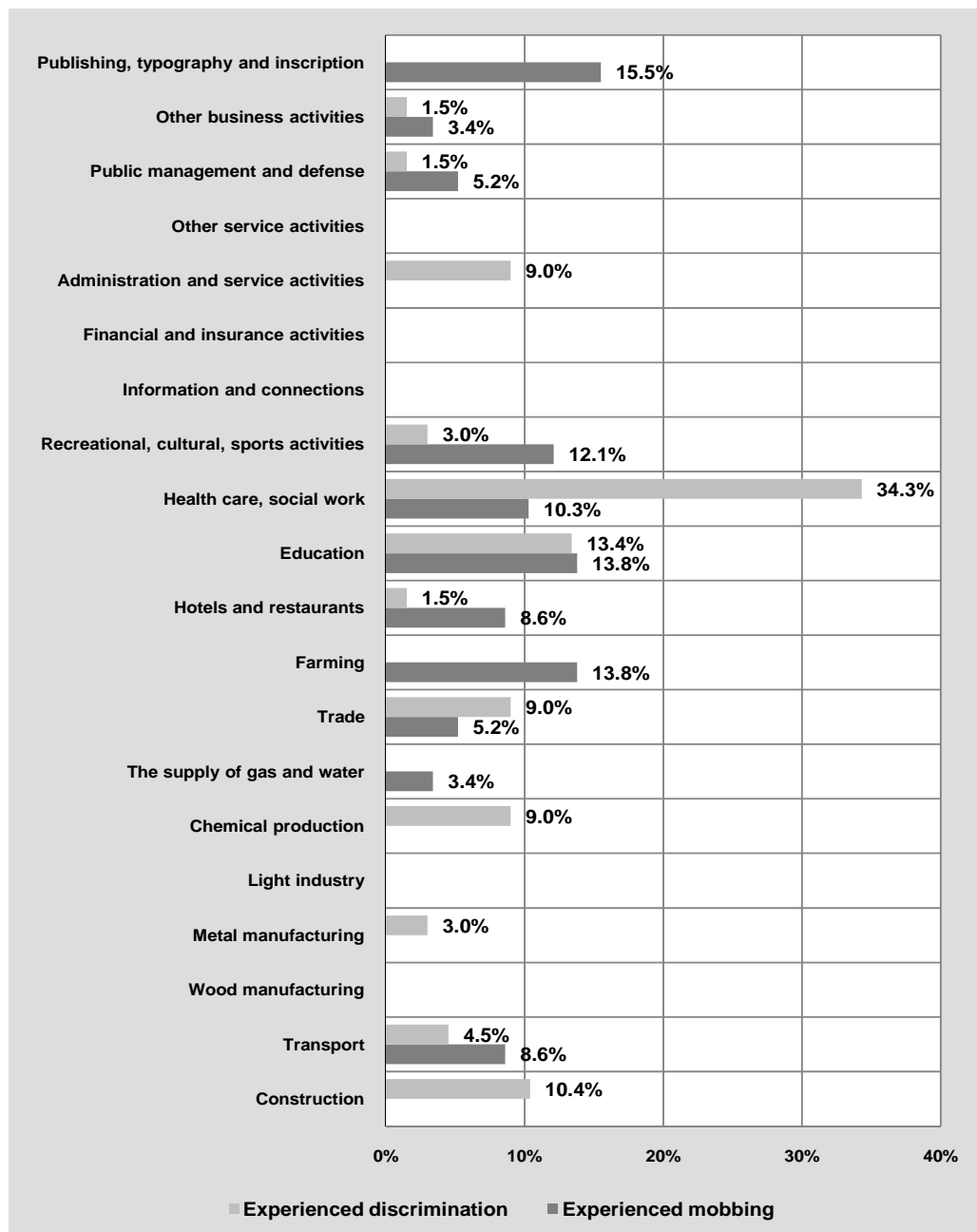
**Figure 2.** Division of respondents according to the length of discrimination

The frequency of jeer in the state sector and in private business was divided quite differently. However, the dominant, that the frequency of the jeer in state sector is more intensive becomes obvious. 53.6% of all the respondents experienced jeer more than one time per week. 21.4% of the respondents (in the state sector) experienced jeer almost every day. In private sector there are 34.4% of

the respondents that have experienced jeer and harassment one time per month. We should also pay attention to the fact that more than one fifth of the respondents (21.4%) from public sector and one fourth (25%) of the private sector state experience jeer more often than once per week (Figure 3).



**Figure 3.** Division of respondents according to the frequency of chicanery occurrence



**Figure 4.** Division of respondents who experienced discrimination / mobbing according to the sphere of activity

The difference between mobbing as discrimination in the relations of employees and the discriminative actions is shown with the help of time and frequency criteria. Repetition and length show that discriminative chicanery can grow to the discriminative actions of mobbing. The biggest amount of discriminative actions (34.7%) that were experienced by the respondents appeared in the spheres of health care, social work and education (13.4%). The indicator of mobbing is comparatively high in these spheres (10.3% and 13.8% correspondingly). In general mobbing as discrimination in employee relations is more noticeable in the spheres that provide service (health care, social work, education, and public management). There are also such types of activities as publishing, typography (15.5%) and farming (13.8%), that show a comparatively high occurrence mobbing, the explanation of which needs

a separate research. The tendency, that discrimination and mobbing actions are more often mentioned in the areas where traditionally is higher concentration of female workers is becoming more obvious. But it should be an object of a different research.

Subordinates are socially and according to hierarchy, the most vulnerable group, that directly depends on its leaders. About two thirds of the subordinates have experienced chicanery (73.1%) and the actions of discriminative mobbing (71.9%). From the leading group the most often the cases of chicanery and discriminative actions of mobbing are more often noticed among the medium level of executives (correspondingly 16.4% and 17.5%), that could be explained by greater level of competitiveness for the company's resources (Figure 5).

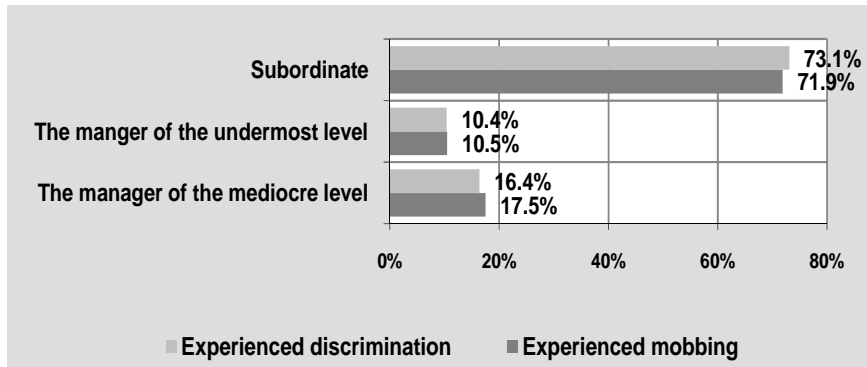


Figure 5. Division of respondents who experienced mobbing according to the office place

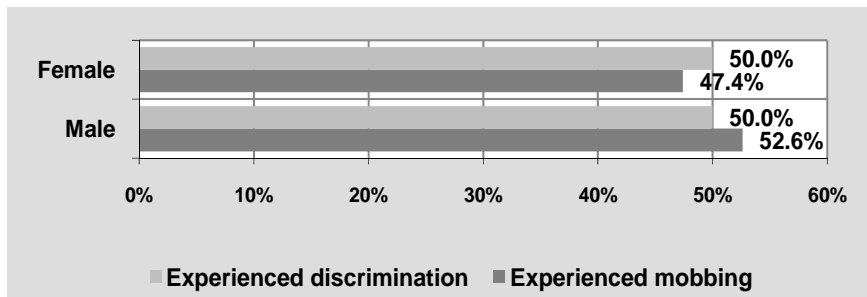


Figure 6. Division of respondents who experienced mobbing according to gender

The results show, that men, who are experiencing the discriminative actions of mobbing are about 5.2% more than women. As we can see from Figure 6, chicaneries that are not defined as mobbing actions were equally experienced by female and male representatives (50%).

The research has pointed out 3 groups of the respondents, who had gone through the most intense actions of mobbing: 30-39 year old (35.1%), 50-59 year old (22.8%) are 24-29 year old (21.1%).

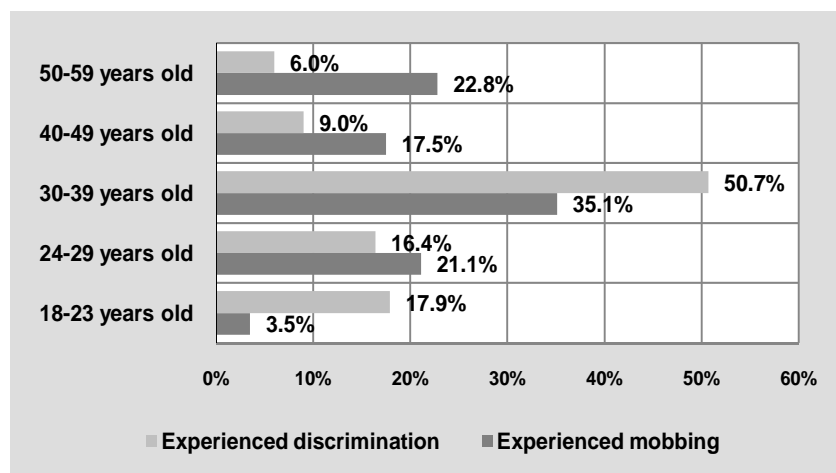


Figure 7. Division of respondents who have experienced discrimination / mobbing according to the age group

The most frequent chicanery has been experienced by the respondents who represent the group from 30-39 years of age (Figure 7). The result can be conditionally drawn by the intensity graph, the climax of which is reached on the border of the fourth decade of the respondents' age. During the adversative period of age, which is described by the

greater danger to lose the work, when the intensity of mobbing actions is growing, this tendency initially corresponds with the reasons of and early retirement that was studied by Leymann.

The discriminative actions of mobbing are the most frequent among the respondents who have higher

education. Education provides a greater possibility to compete for the higher position in organization and this

can determine collisions that are more frequent with the competitors (Figure 8).

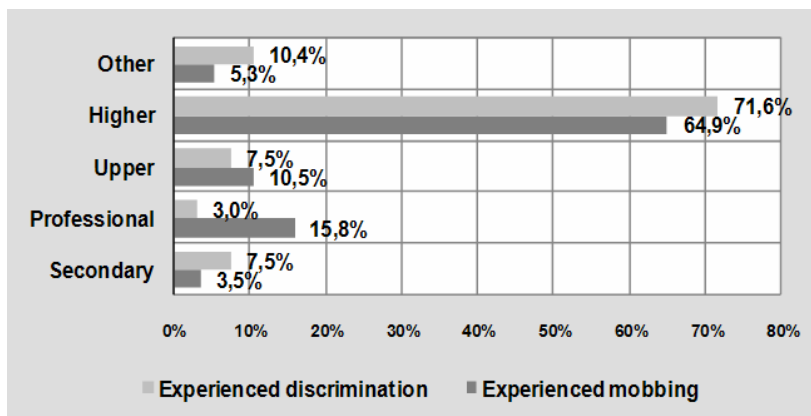


Figure 8. Division of respondents, who experienced discrimination and mobbing according to education

The results of the research allow making the following generalizations. Received high *Cronbach alpha* weights allow to state that, the discrimination action included in the questionnaire, subscales statements are closely connected and that the questionnaire can be applied to diagnose mobbing as discrimination in employee relations. During the research the mobbing, that has been diagnosed in different sectors and economic spheres, pointed out the difference between chicanery and discriminative mobbing actions.

## Conclusions

The actions of mobbing can be described as a phenomenon that goes along with discrimination and which has a discriminative nature. The factors of discriminative relations and mobbing coincide by nature. The reasons of attacks or jeer (chicanery) can be gender, race, and nationality, physical or psychological sign. In other words – any reason for the frustration which is caused by prejudices and stereotypes and other reasons that refer to the exclusiveness of the victim. The aim of the discriminative mobbing actions is to create discomfort by making psychological, emotional pressure and by causing pain to exclude the victim from the group or organization. All this is performed by using a special tactics – frequent and long-lasting attacks, that weary the victim, cause psychosomatic disorders. When mobbing is analyzed from the aspect of discrimination there appears a wide spectrum of possible actions and reasons. Discriminative relations, discrimination's factors-the appearance of prejudices and stereotypes signal about the favorable environment for mobbing. That is why the identification of discriminative relations should be a stimulus to diagnose a mobbing, especially when the mobbing relations are masked. Not all the actions, without the evaluation of context can be diagnosed as mobbing. For example, so frequent phenomenon in the organization as rumor is qualified by Leymann as one of the 45 possible actions of attack (Leymann, 1990). In creating the questionnaire to diagnose mobbing as discrimination in employee relations, the experts-evaluators of different spheres were involved-

management, psychology, work law etc., practitioners and theorists. This is aimed to check how it is possible to recognize the features of mobbing, which were singled out by Western scientists, adapt them in Lithuanian organizations. The methodological quality of questionnaire subscales *Cronbach alpha* characteristics differ from 0.72 to 0.96. In subscales of methodological quality characteristics in organization the signs of mobbing/discrimination reached (N=344, items 38) *Cronbach alpha* reliability weights were changing from  $\mu=0.79$  (discrimination based on psychological qualities) to  $\mu=0.90$  (discrimination based on physical qualities). Additional mobbing/discrimination factors' subscales of methodological quality characteristics in organization (N=343, items 36) – from  $\mu=0.64$  (not recognize discrimination in employee relations) to  $\mu=0.97$  (the influence of the leader to employee relations).

The high weights of *Cronbach alpha* allow to state, that the discrimination actions, which were included in the questionnaire, the subscales statements are closely connected, so the questionnaire can be applied to diagnose mobbing as discrimination in employee relations. Jeer (chicanery), sexual harassment makes a wide spectrum of discriminative actions. About one third (35.6%) of the respondents stated about the experience of discriminative actions, that dominate in the private sector (77.6%). But in the private sector the duration of jeer is stated to be shorter than in public. For example, about one third (35.1%) of the respondents from the private sector experienced jeer or sexual harassment for six months, which is shorter than in the public sector. The research shows similar division of jeer (chicanery) cases according to gender. This shows that the representatives of both genders are in danger to become the victim of a discrimination attack. But the developed tendency, that mobbing is more frequent in organizations, where traditionally the concentration of female workers is higher, would influence to perform a new research to find out the virtual reasons. The discriminative actions are more frequently found in health care (34.7%), social work (10.3%) and education (13.4%) spheres. In these spheres the index of mobbing is comparatively high (correspondingly 10.3% and 13.8%).



Other tendency that becomes obvious is that mobbing as discrimination in employee relations appears less in the spheres connected with the service providing activities (health protection, social work, education, leisure organization, cultural and sports activity, hotels and restaurants, transport, public management). This tendency is obvious for both public and private sectors. We also have to pay attention to publishing, typography. The results of the synoptical research show the link between the frequencies of mobbing with education. The higher is education, the bigger is the possibility of mobbing. It would be possible to explain by higher competition, which is influenced by higher education. The review of mobbing researches in Lithuania shows that the researchers received most of attention from public sector organization – education, health care. But other areas lack wider researches, especially in private sector. During the research there were pointed out the areas that need a special detailed research for mobbing relations, together with the analysis of the ways of influence and consequences. The mentioned areas for such researches are both for public and private sectors: service sphere and education, publishing and transport, public management, defense and etc.

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#### Mobingo kaip diskriminacijos darbuotojų santykiuose nustatymas

Santrauka

Straipsnyje apžvelgiami mobingo tyrimai Vakarų šalyse ir Lietuvoje. Mobingas analizuojamas diskriminuojančių darbuotojų tarpusavio santykių aspektu, išskiriami požymiai, rodantys, kada priekabės tampa mobingu. Mobingui kaip diskriminuojantiems darbuotojų santykiams nustatyti sudaryta anketa, kurios patikimumą patvirtino ekspertų vertinimai ir aukštos *Crobbach alpha* reikšmės. Atliekant žvalgomąjį tyrimą apklaustas 351 respondentas viešojo ir privataus sektoriaus organizacijose. Nustatyta, kad dažniausiai diskriminuojančius mobingo veiksmus yra patyrę viešajame sektoriuje dirbantys respondentai: švietimo, socialinio darbo ir kai kuriuose verslo organizacijose.

Straipsnyje aptariamos mobingo ir diskriminacijos sampratos, formuluojama mobingo kaip diskriminacijos darbuotojų santykiuose sąvoka. Išanalizavus mokslinę literatūrą sukurtos priemonės mobingui kaip diskriminacijai darbuotojų santykiuose nustatyti. Atliktas tyrimas rodo tyrinėjamo reiškinio sklaidą skirtinguose sektoriuose ir ekonominės veiklose.

Vakaruose mobingo reiškinys nagrinėjamas jau tris dešimtmečius. Šių tyrinėjimų pradininku laikomas švedų mokslininkas H.Leymannas (1990, 1993, 1996). Analizuojant darbus apie diskriminaciją (Burke, McKeen, 1992; Melamed, 1995; Myers, 2002; Lawthom, 2005; Giddens, 2005; Myers, 2008a, 2008b ir kt.), ryškėja sąsajos tarp mobingo ir diskriminacijos veiksmų. Tai suponavo prielaidą, kad mobingą galima analizuoti plačiau, ypač tiriant šio reiškinio priežastis. Be to, tyrimas gali padėti teisingiam reiškinio reglamentavimui Lietuvoje, nes mobingas, skirtingai nei diskriminacija, Lietuvos teisinėje sistemoje neišskiriamas.

Vieni iš pirmųjų Lietuvoje bulingo (mobingo) tyrimus atliko V.Malinauskienė ir V.Obelenis (2004). Tirtas Kauno miesto vidurinių mokyklų mokytojų priekabiavimo darbe dažnis ir jo sąsajos su subjektyviu savo sveikatos vertinimu. Naudotas „Negatyvus elgesys darbe“ (NAQ trumpoji versija) klausimynas (Einarsen, Raknes, 1997; Einarsen, Hoel, 2001). Rezultatai: 17 proc. respondentų darbo vietoje patyrė psichologinį spaudimą, iš jų 11,3 proc. – reguliariai. B.Gruževskis, L.Okunevičiūtė-Neverauskienė, A.Pocius (2004) atliko tyrimą „Nelegalaus darbo, teisės aktų, reglamentuojančių darbo santykius, pažeidimų, darbdavių atstovų grasinimų ar kitokio psichologinio pobūdžio įtaka darbuotojų rezultatams bei saugai ir sveikatai“. Tiriamieji: Valstybinės darbo inspekcijos teritorinių skyrių inspektoriai (VDI), profesinių sąjungų / darbuotojų atstovai (PS), įmonių vadovai (IV). Rezultatai parodė, kad psichologinis poveikis darbe reiškiasi įvairiomis formomis, pavyzdžiui, naudojimosi tarnybine padėtimi – 61 proc. (PS), 50,4 proc. (IV), 46,2 proc. (VDI). I.Mikutytė (2008) atliko tyrimą „Ligoninėje dirbančių slaugos specialistų patiriamą psichologinio smurto valdymas“. Naudotas „Smurtas darbe sveikatos priežiūros sektoriuje“ klausimynas.

Pažymėtinos N.Vasiljeviene (2000, 2004, 2006) etinės mobingo problemos studijos.

Tyrimai rodo mobingo kaip diskriminacijos darbuotojų santykiuose tyrimų Lietuvos organizacijose stygių, orientuojamasi į viešąjį sektorių, medicinos ir švietimo sritis. Be to, gana mažai duomenų apie tiriamąjį reiškinį privačiajame sektoriuje bei pasiskirstymą tarp skirtingų sektorių.

**Tyrimo problema** keliama klausimu, kaip mobingas paplitęs privačiajame ir viešajame sektoriuose.

**Tyrimo objektas:** mobingas kaip diskriminacija darbuotojų santykiuose.

**Tyrimo tikslas:** diagnozuoti mobingą kaip diskriminaciją darbuotojų santykiuose.

**Tyrimo metodai.** Straipsnis parengtas taikant sisteminės mokslinės literatūros, bendrosios ir loginės analizės, lyginimo ir apibendrinimo metodus. Taikomi ekspertinis vertinimas, anketinė apklausa, duomenų apdorojimas SPSS statistinių programų rinkiniu, duomenų analizavimas. Naudoti šaltiniai: lietuvių ir užsienio autorių moksliniai straipsniai, knygos mobingo ir diskriminacijos reiškinių analizės tematika.

Mobingo veiksmus galima įvardyti kaip lydinčią diskriminaciją reiškinių, kurių prigimtis yra diskriminuoti. Diskriminuojančių santykių ir mobingo veiksniai iš esmės sutampa. Užpuolama, arba priekabiuojama, gali būti dėl lyties, rasės, tautybės, fizinių ir psichologinių požymių. Kitaip tariant, bet koks frustraciją keliantis, dėl prietarų, stereotipų neigiamai konotuojamas aukos išskirtinumas. Diskriminuojančio mobingo veiksmo tikslas – darant psichologinį, emocinį spaudimą, sukelti diskomfortą, skausmą išstumti auką iš grupės ar organizacijos. Visa tai sąlygoja specifinę taktiką – dažnus ir ilgą laiką trunkančius užpuolimus, kurie vargina auką, sukelia psichosomatinius sutrikimus. Analizuojant mobingą diskriminacijos aspektu, atsiskleidžia įvairūs galimi veiksniai ir priežastys. Diskriminuojantys santykiai, diskriminacijos veiksniai (prietarai ir stereotipai) rodo, kad egzistuoja mobingui palanki aplinka. Todėl diskriminuojančių santykių identifikavimas turėtų būti paskata nustatyti mobingą, ypač tada, kai su mobingu susiję santykiai maskuojami. Juo labiau kad ne visi veiksniai, neįvertinant konteksto, gali būti įvardyti kaip mobingas. Pavyzdžiui, dažną organizacijoje reiškinių – gandus – H.Leymannas pateikia kaip vieną iš 45 galimų puolimo veiksnių (*Leymann Inventory of Psychological Terrorization* (LIPT) 1990).

Sudarant mobingui kaip diskriminacijai darbuotojų santykiuose nustatyti skirtą anketą pasitelkti įvairių sričių ekspertai: vadybos, psichologijos, darbo teisės ir kt., praktikai ir teoretikai. Tuo siekta patikrinti, kaip Vakarų mokslininkų išskirtus mobingo požymius galima atpažinti ir juos pritaikyti Lietuvos organizacijose. Anketos subskalių metodologinės kokybės charakteristikos organizacijoje (N = 344; 38 subskalės) *Cronbach alpha* patikimumo reikšmės kito nuo  $\mu = 0,79$  (diskriminacija dėl psichologinių savybių) iki  $\mu = 0,90$  (diskriminacija dėl fizinių požymių); papildomų mobingo / diskriminacijos faktorių subskalių metodologinės kokybės charakteristikos organizacijoje (N = 343; 36 subskalės) – nuo  $\mu = 0,64$  (neatpažinta diskriminacija darbuotojų santykiuose) iki  $\mu = 0,97$  (vadovo įtaka darbuotojų santykiams).

Didelės *Cronbach alpha* reikšmės leidžia teigti, kad diskriminacijos veiksnių, įtrauktų į anketą, subskalių teiginiai yra glaudžiai susiję ir anketa gali būti skirta mobingui kaip diskriminacijai darbuotojų santykiuose nustatyti.

Patyčios, seksualinis priekabavimas apima platų diskriminuojančių veiksnių spektrą. Patyrę diskriminuojančius veiksmus nurodė apie trečdalis respondentų (35,6 proc.), iš kurių dominuoja privatusis sektorius (77,6 proc.). Tačiau privačiajame sektoriuje patyčių trukmė nurodoma trumpesnė nei viešajame. Pavyzdžiui, apie trečdalis (35,1 proc.) privačiojo sektoriaus respondentų patyčias ar seksualinį priekabavimą kentė šešis mėnesius, t.y. trumpiau nei viešajame sektoriuje. Tyrimas rodo panašų priekabių pasiskirstymą pagal lytį. Tai rodo, kad abiejų lyčių atstovams kyla vienoda grėsmė tapti diskriminuojančio užpuolimo auka. Tačiau tendencija, kad mobingas dažnesnis organizacijose, kuriose tradiciškai daugiau moteriškos lyties darbuotojų, skatintų atlikti naujus tyrimus priežastims nustatyti.

Diskriminuojančius veiksmus daugiausia (34,7 proc.) patyrė sveikatos priežiūros ir socialinio darbo (10,3) bei švietimo (13,4 proc.) srityse dirbantys respondentai. Šiose srityse santykinai aukštas (atitinkamai 10,3 proc. ir 13,8 proc.) mobingo rodiklis. Mobingas kaip diskriminacija darbuotojų santykiuose dažnesnis su paslaugų teikimu susijusiose veiklose (sveikatos apsaugoje, socialiniame darbe, švietime, laisvalaikio organizavime, kultūrinėje ir sportinėje veikloje, viešbučiuose, restoranuose, transporte, viešajame valdyme). Ši tendencija ryški ir viešajame, ir privačiajame sektoriuose. Be to, dėmesys atkreiptinas į šias veiklos rūšis: leidybą, spausdinimą. Apžvalginio tyrimo rezultatai rodo, kad mobingo dažnumas sietinas su išsilavinimu. Kuo aukštesnis organizacijos respondentų išsilavinimas, tuo didesnė mobingo tikimybė. Tai būtų galima paaiškinti didesne konkurencija, kurią sąlygoja aukštesnis išsilavinimas.

Apžvelgus mobingo tyrimus Lietuvoje matyti, kad daugiausiai buvo tirtos viešojo sektoriaus organizacijos: švietimas, sveikatos apsauga. Mažiai išsamesnių tyrimų kitose srityse, ypač privačiajame sektoriuje. Atliekant tyrimą išryškėjo sritys, kuriose reikėtų detaliau ištirti diskriminuojančius mobingo santykius, aptarti priežastis, raiškos būdus ir pasekmes. Iš tokių galimų tyrimų kryptių paminėtinos viešojo ir privačiojo sektoriaus paslaugų ir švietimo sferos, leidyba, transportas, viešasis valdymas ir gynyba ir kt.

Raktažodžiai: *darbuotojai, tarpasmeniniai santykiai, diskriminacija, mobingas, mobingo nustatymas, patyčios, auka, priekabavimas.*

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