

Workplace Mobbing and Employee Well-being: Associations with Burnout, Job Satisfaction, and Organizational Climate

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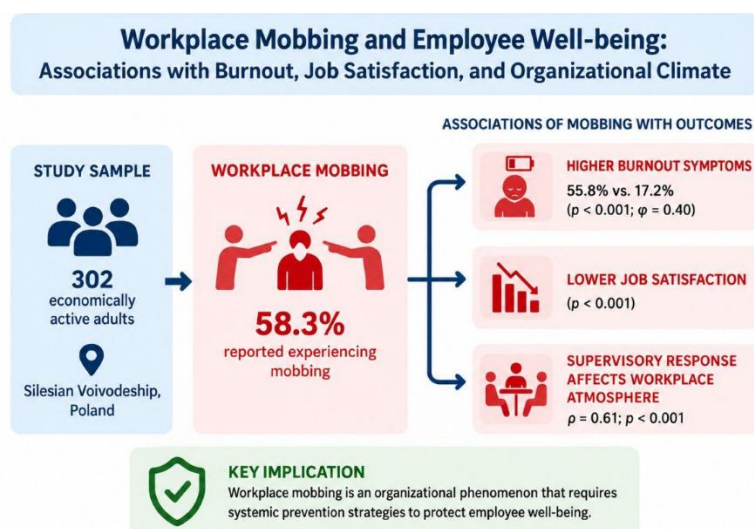
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Abstract

Workplace mobbing is an important psychosocial occupational risk associated with adverse employee outcomes. This study examined associations between exposure to workplace mobbing, burnout symptoms, job satisfaction, selected psychosomatic symptoms, and perceived team atmosphere among 302 economically active adults from the Silesian Voivodeship, Poland. Data were collected between October 2025 and January 2026 using an anonymous original 29-item questionnaire. Fisher's exact test, the Mann–Whitney U test, and Spearman's rank correlation were used. Mobbing experience was reported by 58.3% of respondents. Burnout symptoms were more frequent among respondents reporting public humiliation and criticism (55.8% vs. 17.2%; $p < 0.001$). Participants reporting mobbing consistently showed lower job satisfaction across all analysed dimensions (all $p < 0.001$). No statistically significant associations were found between mobbing experience and gender, age, or length of employment. Supervisors' effective responses to mobbing were strongly positively correlated with perceived team atmosphere ($\rho = 0.61$; $p < 0.001$). The findings highlight the organizational consequences of workplace mobbing and the importance of effective managerial responses.

Keywords: Workplace, Mobbing, Burnout, Well-being, job satisfaction



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1. Introduction

Contemporary transformations in work organizations have increased the importance not only of traditional issues related to employment conditions but also of the psychosocial dimensions of employees' functioning in the workplace. This topic forms part of the broader research on the quality of working life, in which the workplace is understood not merely as a setting for economic exchange but also as a social environment where interpersonal relationships, professional identities and organizational inequalities are created and reproduced [1]. The intensification of work processes, growing emphasis on economic efficiency, the expansion of flexible forms of employment and increasing job demands have made interpersonal relations and organizational power structures central subjects of sociological inquiry. Among the adverse phenomena observed in contemporary workplaces, mobbing occupies a particularly important position as a form of organizational violence with multidimensional consequences for both individual employees and the wider workforce.

Workplace mobbing is a complex phenomenon that cannot be reduced to an interpersonal conflict between a perpetrator and a target. Rather, it should be understood as a social process embedded in organizational relationships, in which both individual actions and the structural characteristics of the work environment play a decisive role [2]. Research indicates that the occurrence of mobbing is closely associated with broader organizational factors, including hierarchical structures, organizational culture, management practices and the degree of social tolerance for behaviours that violate employees' dignity [3,4]. Consequently, the analysis of workplace mobbing requires moving beyond an individualistic perspective that attributes the problem primarily to the personal characteristics of those involved. Instead, it calls for an organizational perspective that conceptualizes mobbing as a manifestation of broader social mechanisms operating within organizations.

The origins of systematic research on workplace mobbing are closely associated with the work of Heinz Leymann, who was the first to provide a comprehensive conceptualization of the phenomenon within the field of occupational psychology. Leymann defined mobbing as a process of prolonged psychological harassment in which repeated hostile behaviours gradually lead to the social exclusion of the targeted employee from the workplace community [5,6]. A key feature distinguishing mobbing from ordinary interpersonal disagreements or workplace conflicts is its persistent and systematic nature, accompanied by a clear imbalance of power between the parties involved. This asymmetry may arise from both formal hierarchical positions within the organization and informal patterns of social dependence and influence [7]. From a sociological perspective, workplace mobbing does not emerge in a social vacuum. Rather, organizations create structural conditions that may either reduce or increase the likelihood of abusive behaviours. Particular attention has been paid to hierarchical power structures, ambiguous divisions of responsibility, the absence of effective anti-bullying procedures and management styles based on excessive control and performance pressure [4,8]. Under such conditions, isolated acts of humiliation or demeaning behaviour may gradually evolve into a persistent mechanism of exclusion and victimization. This process frequently develops in the presence of passive bystanders and is reinforced by inadequate responses from individuals occupying formal leadership positions within the organization [9].

This issue becomes particularly significant because of the persistent difficulties associated with disclosing and formally reporting workplace mobbing. Evidence indicates that despite the considerable prevalence of psychological violence at work, a substantial proportion of affected employees do not seek formal intervention or report their experiences [10]. This reluctance can be attributed to fears of negative career consequences, limited trust in organizational reporting procedures and the unequal distribution of power between employees and those responsible for addressing complaints [2,11]. As a result, workplace mobbing remains a partially hidden phenomenon whose actual social consequences are likely to be considerably greater than those reflected in official statistics [12].

Increasing attention has recently been devoted to the consequences of workplace mobbing that extend beyond the immediate experience of psychological violence. One of the most frequently investigated outcomes of prolonged exposure to hostile workplace behaviours is occupational burnout. Chronic stress, the loss of psychological safety, reduced autonomy and the deterioration of social relationships at work gradually deplete employees' psychological resources, thereby increasing their vulnerability to burnout [13-15]. From this perspective, workplace mobbing may be regarded as an important risk factor for the development of burnout syndrome, while simultaneously contributing to lower job satisfaction, increased absenteeism and weakened organizational commitment [16,17].

The relationship between workplace mobbing and occupational burnout suggests that both phenomena should be examined within a broader sociological framework. Rather than representing solely individual

problems, they constitute outcomes of specific ways in which work is organized, power is distributed and social relationships are structured within organizations. Despite the growing body of research on workplace mobbing, further investigation is needed to better understand the mechanisms through which organizational environments contribute to the emergence and persistence of mobbing behaviours and their consequences for employees' health and well-being.

The aim of the present study was to examine the relationship between workplace mobbing and burnout symptoms, with particular attention to the health consequences of psychological violence and the role of job satisfaction. To achieve this objective, the study sought to: (1) determine the prevalence and forms of workplace mobbing in the study population, taking selected sociodemographic characteristics into account; (2) analyse the association between exposure to mobbing behaviours and psychosomatic health consequences, including the severity of burnout symptoms; and (3) assess the relationship between workplace mobbing and employees' levels of job satisfaction.

2. Materials and Methods

2.1. Study Design and Participants

The study was conducted between October 2025 and January 2026 using a cross-sectional survey design. The survey method enabled the collection of data on respondents' individual experiences, perceptions and attitudes towards workplace mobbing. Data were gathered through an anonymous self-administered questionnaire.

The study was carried out in the Silesian Voivodeship, one of the most highly urbanized regions in Poland, characterized by a diversified economic structure and a high concentration of employment across multiple sectors. These characteristics provided an appropriate context for examining employees' experiences in a variety of organizational settings.

The study sample consisted of 302 economically active adults residing in the Silesian Voivodeship. Of the respondents, 228 were women and 74 were men. Participants represented a broad range of economic sectors, allowing for the inclusion of diverse workplace experiences across different organizational environments.

Data were collected using an online questionnaire developed in Google Forms. Participation was voluntary and anonymous. Before completing the questionnaire, all participants received information about the purpose of the study, the data collection procedure and their right to withdraw from the study at any stage without providing a reason.

2.2. Research Tool

For the purposes of the present study, workplace mobbing was operationalized as respondents' reported experience of behaviours described in the questionnaire as psychological violence or mobbing. The assessed behaviours included, among others, public humiliation and criticism, as well as other forms of negative treatment occurring in the workplace. Importantly, respondents were not asked to make a formal legal or clinical determination of whether they were victims of mobbing. The classification was based on their self-reported experience and recognition of behaviours presented in the questionnaire. Therefore, the prevalence estimates should be understood as self-reported exposure to behaviours considered by the respondents to constitute workplace mobbing rather than as a formal diagnosis of mobbing.

The research instrument consisted of an original questionnaire comprising 29 closed-ended and semi-open-ended questions. The questionnaire was developed on the basis of a review of the literature concerning workplace mobbing, psychological violence at work, occupational burnout and the psychosocial determinants of employees' functioning.

The questionnaire was divided into several thematic sections. The first section collected respondents' sociodemographic characteristics, including gender, age, educational attainment and length of employment. The second section focused on respondents' experiences of workplace mobbing. Participants were asked whether they had experienced behaviors constituting psychological violence, to identify the perpetrator(s) of such behaviors and to indicate the most common forms of mobbing encountered in their workplace.

The subsequent section addressed the health consequences associated with exposure to workplace mobbing. Respondents reported the occurrence of self-perceived psychological and somatic symptoms,

including chronic stress, depressed mood, sleep disturbances, pain complaints, reduced work motivation and diminished occupational engagement. In addition, the questionnaire included items concerning symptoms indicative of occupational burnout.

The following section examined respondents' awareness of workplace mobbing and their attitudes towards this phenomenon. The questionnaire assessed participants' knowledge of the nature and mechanisms of workplace mobbing, their ability to recognize mobbing behaviors and their awareness of organizational procedures for reporting such incidents.

The next part of the questionnaire explored respondents' opinions regarding organizational measures aimed at preventing workplace mobbing. Participants evaluated the perceived effectiveness of existing anti-mobbing policies and identified potential forms of organizational support and preventive interventions.

The final section focused on job satisfaction and perceived working conditions. Respondents evaluated the extent to which their occupational expectations were fulfilled and provided an overall assessment of their work environment and professional experience.

The questionnaire was designed as a study-specific descriptive instrument rather than as a substitute for established psychometric scales such as the Leymann Inventory of Psychological Terror, the Negative Acts Questionnaire-Revised, or the Maslach Burnout Inventory. Its use was motivated by the exploratory aim of simultaneously assessing experiences of workplace mobbing, selected forms of psychological violence, self-reported health consequences, organizational responses, and job satisfaction within a single survey. Prior to its use in the study, the questionnaire underwent validation to assess its internal consistency. The overall questionnaire demonstrated good internal consistency, with a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.82. Accordingly, the findings concerning mobbing and burnout symptoms should be interpreted as associations based on self-reported responses to study-specific items and should not be regarded as equivalent to measurements obtained using established clinical or psychometric instruments.

The questionnaire also included an assessment of the duration of exposure to mobbing, categorized as less than 6 months, 6–12 months, and more than 1 year. However, frequency and systematicity of individual behaviours were not measured using a validated behavioural frequency scale. Consequently, the present study does not allow the frequency or persistence of individual acts to be quantified with the precision provided by standardized instruments such as the NAQ-R.

2.3. Statistical Analysis

The collected data were analyzed using IBM SPSS Statistics version 25. To examine the relationships between the analyzed variables, non-parametric statistical methods were applied, as they were appropriate for the nature and distribution of the obtained data.

The analyses included Fisher's exact test with cross-tabulations, the Mann–Whitney U test, and Spearman's rank correlation coefficient (ρ). Fisher's exact test was used to assess associations between categorical variables, the Mann–Whitney U test was applied to compare two independent groups, whereas Spearman's rank correlation analysis was conducted to determine the strength and direction of relationships between ordinal variables. No multivariable adjustment was performed. The analyses were based on bivariate associations between the variables specified in the study objectives. Consequently, the observed associations should not be interpreted as independent effects after controlling for employment sector, education, age, tenure, or other potential confounders. A statistical significance level of $\alpha = 0.05$ was adopted for all analyses.

3. Results

The first stage of the analysis examined whether respondents' sociodemographic characteristics, including gender, age and length of employment, were associated with experiences of workplace mobbing. For this purpose, a series of Fisher's exact tests accompanied by cross-tabulations were performed. Initially, the relationship between respondents' gender and the experience of workplace mobbing was analysed (Table 1).

Table 1. Association between respondents' gender and experience of workplace mobbing

Gender / mobbing experience	N Women (%)	N Men (%)	N All (%)
Experienced workplace mobbing	134 (58.8%)	42 (56.8%)	176 (58.3%)
Did not experience workplace mobbing	94 (41.2%)	32 (43.2%)	126 (41.7%)
Total	228 (100.0%)	74 (100.0%)	302 (100.0%)

N – number of observations; p – statistical significance; ϕ – effect size coefficient

The analysis demonstrated that the examined association was not statistically significant. The results showed that 58.8% of women and 56.8% of men reported having experienced workplace mobbing. In the next stage of the analysis, the relationship between respondents' age (Table 2) and length of employment (Table 3) and the experience of workplace mobbing was examined.

Table 2. Association between respondents' age and experience of workplace mobbing

Age / mobbing experience	<25 years	25-34 years	35-50 years	>51 years	N All (%)	p	Vc
Experienced workplace mobbing	10 (38.5%)	46 (74.2%)	88 (58.7%)	32 (50.0%)	176 (58.3%)	0.098	0.20
Did not experience workplace mobbing	16 (61.5%)	16 (25.8%)	62 (41.3%)	32 (50.0%)	126 (41.7%)		
Total	26 (100.0%)	62 (100.0%)	150 (100.0%)	64 (100.0%)	302 (100.0%)		

N – number of observations; p – statistical significance; Vc – effect size coefficient

Table 3. Association between respondents' length of employment and experience of workplace mobbing

Length of employment / mobbing experience	<1 years	1-5 years	6-10 years	>10 years	N All (%)	p	Vc
Experienced workplace mobbing	2 (20.0%)	28 (60.9%)	38 (67.9%)	108 (56.8%)	176 (58.3%)	0.267	0.17
Did not experience workplace mobbing	8 (80.0%)	18 (39.1%)	18 (32.1%)	82 (43.2%)	126 (41.7%)		
Total	10 (100.0%)	46 (100.0%)	56 (100.0%)	190 (100.0%)	302 (100.0%)		

N – number of observations; p – statistical significance; Vc – effect size coefficient

The analysis showed that the associations between age and length of employment and the experience of workplace mobbing were not statistically significant. Mobbing was reported by 38.5% of respondents aged up to 25 years, 74.2% of participants aged 25–34 years, 58.7% of respondents aged 35–50 years, and 50.0% of individuals aged 51 years and older. Additionally, exposure to workplace mobbing was reported by 20.0% of respondents with less than one year of work experience, 60.9% of participants with 1–5 years of employment, 67.9% of respondents with 6–10 years of employment, and 56.8% of those who had worked for more than 10 years.

In the next stage of the analysis, the association between experiencing public humiliation and criticism and burnout symptoms was examined. For this purpose, Fisher's exact test was applied and a contingency table was constructed (Table 4).

Table 4. Association between public humiliation and criticism and burnout symptoms

Public humiliation and criticism / burnout symptoms	No public humiliation and criticism	Public humiliation and criticism	N All (%)	p	ϕ
No burnout symptoms	164 (82.8%)	46 (44.2%)	210 (69.5%)	<0,001	0.40
Burnout symptoms present	34 (17.2%)	58 (55.8%)	92 (30.5%)		
Total	198 (100.0%)	104 (100.0%)	302 (100.0%)		

N – number of observations; p – statistical significance; ϕ – effect size coefficient

The analysis revealed that the examined association was statistically significant. Burnout symptoms were reported by 55.8% of respondents who had experienced public humiliation and criticism, compared with 17.2% of participants who had not been exposed to such behaviours. The strength of this association was moderate.

In the next stage of the analysis, it was examined whether there was an association between the duration of mobbing exposure and psychosomatic symptoms, including headaches, hypertension, and sleep

disturbances. For this purpose, exact Fisher's tests with contingency tables were performed, similarly to the analyses described above.

First, the association between the occurrence of headaches and the duration of workplace mobbing exposure was examined (Table 5).

Table 5. Association between the occurrence of headaches and the duration of workplace mobbing exposure

Headaches / duration of workplace mobbing exposure	<6 months	6-12 months	>1 year	N All (%)	p	Vc
Absent	30 (57.7%)	20 (34.5%)	38 (57.6%)	88 (58.3%)	0.13 5	0.2 2
Present	22 (42.3%)	38 (65.5%)	28 (42.4%)	88 (41.7%)		
Total	52 (100.0%)	58 (100.0%)	66 (100.0%)	176 (100.0%)		

N – number of observations; p – statistical significance; Vc – effect size coefficient

The analysis showed that the examined association was not statistically significant. Headaches were reported by 42.3% of respondents who had experienced mobbing for up to 6 months, 65.5% of participants exposed to mobbing for a period of 6–12 months, and 42.4% of those who had experienced workplace mobbing for more than one year.

Subsequently, an analogous analysis was performed for the occurrence of hypertension among respondents (Table 6).

Table 6. Association between the occurrence of hypertension and the duration of workplace mobbing exposure

Hypertension / duration of workplace mobbing exposure	<6 months	6-12 months	>1 year	N All (%)	p	Vc
Absent	40 (76.9%)	42 (72.4%)	50 (75.8%)	132 (75.0%)	0.907	0.04
Present	12 (23.1%)	16 (27.6%)	16 (24.2%)	44 (25.0%)		
Total	52 (100.0%)	58 (100.0%)	66 (100.0%)	176 (100.0%)		

N – number of observations; p – statistical significance; Vc – effect size coefficient

The analysis did not reveal a statistically significant association. Hypertension was reported by 23.1% of respondents who experienced mobbing for less than 6 months, 27.6% of participants who were exposed to mobbing for a period of 6–12 months, and 24.2% of respondents who experienced such practices for more than one year.

Subsequently, the relationship between sleep disturbances and the duration of mobbing exposure was examined (Table 7).

Table 7. Association between the occurrence of sleep disturbances and the duration of workplace mobbing exposure

Sleep disturbances / duration of workplace mobbing	<6 months	6-12 months	>1 year	N All (%)	p	Vc
Absent	22 (42.3%)	24 (41.4%)	28 (42.4%)	74 (42.0%)	1.000	<0,0 1
Present	30 (57.7%)	34 (58.6%)	38 (57.6%)	102 (58.0%)		
Total	52 (100.0%)	58 (100.0%)	66 (100.0%)	176 (100.0%)		

N – number of observations; p – statistical significance; Vc – effect size coefficient

The analysis showed that the examined relationship was not statistically significant. Sleep disturbances affected 57.7% of respondents who experienced mobbing for up to 6 months, 58.6% of participants who were exposed to workplace mobbing for a period of 6–12 months, and 57.6% of individuals who experienced mobbing for more than one year.

In the next stage of the analysis, the level of job satisfaction was compared between respondents who reported experiencing workplace mobbing and those who had not experienced such practices. Job satisfaction was assessed using five statements: *My job meets my expectations in most respects; The conditions of my work are close to the ideal I have imagined; I am satisfied with my job; I consider my previous work experience to be satisfactory; If I could choose again, I would take up employment in my current workplace once more.*

To test the hypothesis, the Mann–Whitney U test was applied. This non-parametric test was selected due to the ordinal scale of the analysed variables. The results are presented in Table 8.

Table 8. Comparison of job satisfaction according to experience of workplace mobbing practices

Variable		Experienced workplace mobbing (n=176)	Did not experience workplace mobbing (n=126)	Z	p	η^2
My job meets my expectations in most respects.	Mdn	5.00	6.00	-4.12	<0,001	0.11
	IQR	2.00	1.00			
	Average range	63.94	92.85			
The conditions of my work are close to the ideal I have imagined.	Mdn	4.00	5.00	-3.55	<0,001	0.08
	IQR	2.00	2.00			
	Average range	65.55	90.60			
I am satisfied with my job.	Mdn	5.00	5.00	-4.26	<0,001	0.12
	IQR	2.00	1.00			
	Average range	63.49	93.47			
I consider my previous work experience to be satisfactory.	Mdn	5.00	5.00	-3.16	<0,001	0.07
	IQR	2.00	1.00			
	Average range	66.82	88.82			
If I could choose again, I would take up employment in my current workplace once more.	Mdn	4.00	6.00	-4.46	<0,001	0.13
	IQR	2.75	1.00			
	Average range	62.43	94.06			

N – number of observations; Mdn – median; IQR – interquartile range; Z – test statistic value; p – statistical significance; η^2 – effect size measure

The analysis demonstrated that, for each of the examined items, higher levels of job satisfaction were reported by respondents who had not experienced workplace mobbing. The strength of these associations was moderate, as indicated by the values of the effect size measure η^2 .

In the final stage of the analysis, the relationship between the assessment of team atmosphere and supervisors' responses to workplace mobbing was examined. Due to the ordinal nature of the measurement scales, Spearman's rank correlation analysis was applied. The results indicated that the analysed correlation was statistically significant, positive and strong ($\rho = 0.61$; $p < 0.001$). Thus, the more effectively supervisors responded to manifestations of workplace mobbing, the more positively respondents evaluated the atmosphere within their team.

4. Discussion

The present study examined the relationships between workplace mobbing, burnout symptoms, job satisfaction and selected health consequences among employees from the Silesian Voivodeship. The findings indicate that exposure to psychological violence at work is associated with lower job satisfaction, a higher prevalence of burnout symptoms and poorer self-reported psychological well-being. These observations are consistent with the growing body of evidence suggesting that mobbing should be understood not merely as an interpersonal conflict but as a multidimensional organizational phenomenon with substantial consequences for employees, work teams and organizations [2,3,17].

The absence of statistically significant demographic differences may also reflect the characteristics of the contemporary Polish labour market and the regional composition of the sample. The Silesian Voivodeship is economically and occupationally heterogeneous, and employees are exposed to different organizational structures, management practices, and employment conditions. In such heterogeneous settings,

organizational factors may contribute more consistently to experiences of workplace psychological violence than demographic characteristics alone. This interpretation remains tentative, however, because the present study did not include a multivariable analysis and therefore cannot determine whether organizational characteristics independently explain the observed pattern.

One of the principal findings of the study concerns the absence of statistically significant associations between the experience of mobbing and the basic sociodemographic characteristics analysed, including gender, age and length of employment. These results suggest that the risk of experiencing workplace psychological violence may extend across different categories of employees rather than being limited to particular demographic groups. Such findings correspond with more recent studies emphasizing that organizational culture, leadership practices and the quality of interpersonal relations exert a stronger influence on the occurrence of mobbing than individual characteristics of employees [3]. From this perspective, workplace mobbing should be interpreted primarily as an organizational rather than an individual problem.

The lack of gender differences observed in the present study differs from some earlier reports indicating that women are more frequently exposed to workplace harassment [5]. Previous explanations have referred to gender inequalities in organizational hierarchies, occupational segregation and broader socio-cultural mechanisms that may increase women's vulnerability to psychological violence [12,18]. However, contemporary research increasingly demonstrates that these relationships are context-dependent and may vary according to organizational characteristics, employment sector and national labour market conditions [3]. Consequently, the absence of statistically significant gender differences in the analysed sample may reflect changing organizational realities, in which dysfunctional management practices affect employees irrespective of gender [11].

Although age was not significantly associated with mobbing, descriptive analyses indicated that the highest proportion of respondents reporting such experiences was observed among employees aged 25–34 years. Similar tendencies have been reported in previous studies, suggesting that younger employees and individuals in earlier career stages may face increased vulnerability due to lower organizational power, limited autonomy and weaker access to protective resources [4,12,19]. Since this relationship did not reach statistical significance in the present study, these findings should be interpreted cautiously and verified in larger and more diverse samples.

Likewise, no statistically significant relationship was identified between the experience of mobbing and seniority. Nevertheless, the relatively high prevalence of mobbing among respondents with six to ten years of professional experience suggests that workplace mobbing cannot be considered solely a phenomenon affecting newly employed staff. Rather, the findings support the interpretation that mobbing may emerge within organizational environments characterized by persistent interpersonal tensions, ineffective conflict management or inadequate leadership practices. Such an interpretation is consistent with sociological approaches emphasizing the structural determinants of workplace aggression rather than attributing responsibility exclusively to individual characteristics of perpetrators or victims [3,9].

An important contribution of the present study concerns the demonstrated association between public humiliation, unjustified criticism and burnout symptoms. Respondents reporting such experiences considerably more often declared symptoms indicative of occupational burnout. These findings correspond closely with Maslach's conceptualization of burnout as a response to chronic interpersonal stressors in the workplace [13]. Continuous exposure to degrading interactions may progressively diminish employees' emotional resources, undermine professional efficacy and contribute to emotional exhaustion, depersonalization and reduced occupational accomplishment. Similar relationships have been documented among healthcare professionals and other occupational groups exposed to sustained workplace aggression [20,21].

The observed associations may also be interpreted using Hobfoll's Conservation of Resources (COR) theory [22]. According to this framework, individuals continuously strive to acquire, maintain and protect personal resources, including psychological well-being, social support and professional competence. Persistent exposure to mobbing may initiate a gradual depletion of these resources, reducing employees' ability to cope with occupational demands and increasing vulnerability to burnout. The present findings therefore support theoretical models linking chronic organizational stressors with progressive deterioration of employees' psychological functioning.

Another important result concerns the consistent relationship between mobbing and reduced job satisfaction. Across all analysed dimensions, respondents who reported experiences of psychological violence evaluated their work significantly less favourably than individuals who had not experienced mobbing. In

particular, they declared substantially lower willingness to choose the same workplace again, indicating that workplace mobbing influences not only current occupational well-being but also employees' longer-term attitudes toward their organization.

These observations correspond with previous empirical studies demonstrating that mobbing reduces organizational commitment, emotional engagement and overall job satisfaction while simultaneously increasing intentions to leave the organization [17,23]. From an organizational perspective, such consequences may contribute to increased employee turnover, reduced productivity, deterioration of organizational climate and higher economic costs associated with staff replacement and sickness absence. Consequently, workplace mobbing should be viewed not solely as an individual health problem but also as an important organizational and managerial challenge.

The present study also explored selected health consequences of workplace mobbing. Although the duration of exposure was not significantly associated with individual somatic symptoms such as headaches, hypertension or sleep disturbances, a substantial proportion of respondents exposed to mobbing reported sleep problems regardless of the length of victimization. This observation may indicate that psychological violence exerts adverse health effects relatively early after exposure, while prolonged victimization primarily sustains rather than substantially intensifies these symptoms. Similar conclusions have been reported by Niedhammer et al. [24], Magnavita et al. [25] and Buhaug et al. [26], who demonstrated associations between workplace mobbing, sleep disturbances, musculoskeletal complaints and reduced psychological well-being.

The practical relevance of these findings is particularly timely in the Polish legal context. On 30 July 2026, the President of the Republic of Poland signed an amendment to the Labour Code and the Code of Civil Procedure introducing new provisions concerning workplace mobbing and discrimination. The new provisions are scheduled to enter into force on 5 November 2026 and strengthen the preventive responsibilities of employers. In particular, employers with at least 10 employees will be required to establish rules and procedures for preventing mobbing and related workplace misconduct in the relevant internal regulations. The present finding that effective supervisory responses to mobbing were strongly associated with a more positive assessment of team atmosphere ($\rho = 0.61$; $p < 0.001$) is consistent with the preventive emphasis of the new legislation and highlights the practical importance of organizational procedures and managerial responses. However, because the present study was conducted before the new provisions entered into force, it cannot evaluate their implementation or effectiveness.

Particular attention should also be paid to the role of organizational leadership. The strong positive correlation identified between supervisors' responses to reported mobbing and employees' assessment of workplace atmosphere suggests that managerial behaviour represents one of the key determinants of organizational climate. This finding supports previous observations indicating that passive managerial responses may reinforce employees' perceptions of organizational injustice, whereas prompt intervention contributes to restoring trust, psychological safety and social cohesion within work teams [9,27]. Consequently, effective anti-mobbing strategies should not rely exclusively on formal procedures but also include leadership development, conflict management training and systematic promotion of supportive organizational cultures.

4.1. Study Limitations and Future Implications

Several methodological limitations should be acknowledged when interpreting the present findings. First, the cross-sectional design precludes causal inference regarding the relationships between workplace mobbing, burnout and job satisfaction. Although statistically significant associations were identified, the directionality of these relationships cannot be established conclusively. Longitudinal studies are therefore needed to determine the temporal dynamics through which workplace mobbing affects employees' psychological functioning.

Second, the study was conducted exclusively among employees residing in the Silesian Voivodeship. Although this region represents one of Poland's largest labour markets, its economic structure and occupational profile may differ from those observed in other regions of the country. Consequently, caution should be exercised when generalizing the findings beyond the analysed population.

Third, the study relied on self-reported data collected using an original questionnaire. Although this approach enabled the collection of detailed information regarding respondents' subjective experiences, it may also have introduced reporting bias and common method variance. Future studies could therefore benefit from

incorporating standardized psychometric instruments, longitudinal research designs and multi-source organizational data, including managerial assessments or administrative indicators of workplace functioning. Fourth, the sample was characterized by a substantial gender imbalance, with women comprising 75.5% of participants. Although no statistically significant association between gender and reported mobbing experience was observed, this distribution limits the representativeness of the sample and the generalizability of the findings to the wider working population. The results should therefore be interpreted as describing the experiences of the analysed sample rather than as population estimates for Polish employees. The study also used a non-probability survey sample, which further limits generalizability.

Despite these limitations, the study contributes to the growing literature on workplace mobbing by simultaneously examining its relationships with burnout, job satisfaction and perceived health consequences within a single analytical framework. The findings reinforce previous evidence suggesting that workplace mobbing should be regarded as a multidimensional organizational phenomenon whose consequences extend beyond individual psychological distress and affect organizational functioning more broadly (Vveinhardt & Sroka, 2020; Ahmad et al., 2025).

From a practical perspective, the results underscore the importance of comprehensive organizational policies aimed at preventing workplace mobbing. Such policies should integrate transparent reporting procedures, regular monitoring of psychosocial working conditions, leadership training and accessible psychological support for employees. Interventions focused exclusively on legal compliance are unlikely to eliminate organizational conditions conducive to psychological violence unless accompanied by broader efforts to strengthen organizational culture, trust and constructive interpersonal communication (Warszewska-Makuch, 2020).

Future research should extend the present findings by employing longitudinal designs, nationally representative samples and validated measurement instruments. Particular attention should also be devoted to organizational mechanisms that may buffer or exacerbate the consequences of workplace mobbing, including perceived organizational support, leadership style, psychological safety and organizational justice. Such approaches would provide a more comprehensive understanding of the social processes underlying workplace mobbing and support the development of evidence-based interventions aimed at improving both employee well-being and organizational effectiveness.

6. Conclusions

The present study indicates that workplace mobbing constitutes a significant problem in The present study indicates that self-reported exposure to workplace mobbing behaviours is associated with more frequent burnout symptoms, lower job satisfaction, and poorer self-reported employee well-being. No statistically significant associations were found between reported mobbing experience and gender, age, or length of employment. The findings also highlight the organizational context of mobbing, particularly the relationship between managerial responses and perceived team atmosphere. Given the cross-sectional design, non-probability sample, self-reported data, and use of an original non-validated questionnaire, the findings should be interpreted as associations rather than causal effects or clinically validated assessments.

7. Practical implementation

In the context of the 2026 amendment of Polish labour law, organizations should ensure that anti-mobbing rules and reporting procedures are clearly communicated to employees and supported by appropriate managerial training. The present results suggest that formal preventive requirements should be accompanied by timely supervisory responses, transparent reporting mechanisms, and systematic monitoring of workplace climate.

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