Mobbing in the workplace
and the perception of working conditions
– a case study

Marta MACIEJASZ-ŚWIĄTKIEWICZ, Laura PŁATKOWSKA-PROKOPCZYK
Opole University

Abstract: In this article, the issue of mobbing in the workplace and the influence on perceived working conditions is discussed on the example of a case study carried out in the Opole region in Poland in 2010. The case study concerns a local public institution. The research confirms the negative influence of mobbing on perceived working conditions.

Keywords: human resource management, mobbing working conditions

1. Introduction

The human factor plays a crucial role in the activity of a company. The development and thereby survival of an organisation are more and more determined by human and intellectual capital (see Sowiński, 2009). It may be argued that a proper approach to human resource management and creating an organisational climate, which is appreciated by workers and contributes to satisfying their needs, are necessary conditions for success. A question is whether the importance of human factor is noticed by practitioners. If yes, what, then, is the influence of that fact on the human resources management?

We live and function in a more and more individualistic society. However, there is a paradox identified by the French researcher Marie-France Hirigoyen. She argued that although the individualisation of society proceeds, in the working environment there is a lack of space for
individual values (Hirigoyen, 2003: 179). In this context, the problem of mobbing should be dealt with care, as it can touch almost everyone and may have very serious consequences. Mobbing behaviour in the workplace can perturb all aspects of relations between the workers and the employer. Moreover, it can negatively influence someone's self-esteem and in this way have serious consequences for the social functioning of a person. The existing of mobbing is also likely to have a detrimental effect on the perception of working conditions.

The main aim of this paper is to present mobbing as a factor disrupting human resources management process and perturbing the perception of conditions in the workplace. This is done on the basis of a case study conducted in a public institution in the Opole region in Poland. First, a theoretical analysis of the mobbing phenomenon as a specific pathology in human resources management is discussed. Then, the results of the case study are presented and analysed.

2. Mobbing as a pathology in human resources management

Mobbing is a phenomenon which is neither simple nor unfolding according to a specific scenario. Furthermore, subjectivism, many immeasurable aspects of mobbing, unclear and subtle differences between disciplining (often negatively perceived by employees) and unfair treatment of workers, as well as the fact that it has entered scientific discussion only a few decades ago (Leymann, 1993) makes mobbing hard to define completely and unambiguously while hampering successful solving of this problem.

It may be in particular organisational dis-functioning, which in particular may be features of bureaucratic structures that increase the probability of the phenomenon of mobbing appearing. Examples are improper informal communication structures, many layers of management, an autocratic management style, informalism in information flows, family connections and pathologies in division of tasks. It may be the high transaction costs of management in hierarchic organisational structures that strengthen the incentives for mobbing as a feature of opportunistic behaviour (compare Williamson, 1985). However, this does of course not imply that mobbing does not appear in less hierarchical organisations.

One of the first to use the notion of mobbing in literature was Leymann (1993). The word is derived from the English word *mob*, meaning crowd, mass, throng (Leymann, cited in: Bartkowiak, 2009: 61). Being a Swedish psychiatrist and psycho-sociologist, Leymann, described mobbing as “psychological terror in working life, involving hostile attitude and unethical
communication (the use of slurs, abominations, curses, smears, falsehoods, bellows etc. in everyday working contacts), which is directed in a systematic way, by one or a few individuals mainly towards one individual who, due to mobbing, is pushed into a helpless or defenceless position, being held there by means of continuing mobbing activities. These actions occur on a very frequent basis (at least once a week) and over a longer period of time (at least 6 months of duration). In terms of the duration and the frequency this abuse results in disturbances in the sphere of mental and physical health as well as social acting of the victim (Leymann, 1996: 168, cited in: Bartkowiak, 2009: 61).”

Mobbing is a process which, when its intensity increases, leads to a decreasing self-esteem and social and professional competencies accompanies by a feeling of increasing helplessness (Kulczyka, 2008: 390).

Mobbing, understood as worse treatment of a worker, is undoubtedly an undesirable phenomenon in organisations. In contrast to discrimination, it is not necessarily related to a worker’s membership of a group (e.g., women/men, older/younger people, handicapped people, people of a given race, nationality, confession, ethnic origin, belonging to trade unions, etc.). Mobbing does not have a sporadic and infrequent character, but it involves long-lasting behaviour (Kędziora and Zima, 2010: 9). Thus, features of mobbing are constancy and obstinacy. As mentioned, mobbing is supposed to exist when lasting at least 6 months. However, generalising the duration of mobbing may be pointless, as every case unique. The particular conditions under which a worker experiences mobbing should be evaluated as well as whether during the analysed period a worker suffered negative effects of mobbing as described in the Labour Code (psychical destruction and alienation in a group) (Kozdęba, 2005: 140).

Leymann, on the basis of observations, distinguished 45 features of mobbing and classified them into 5 groups (Litzke and Schuh, 2007: 135):

1. influence disturbing the possibility of communication,
2. influence disturbing social relations,
3. activities aimed at perturbing the social perception of a person,
4. activities influencing the quality of life and professional situation,
5. activities affecting the health of a victim.

Factors which may contribute to the appearance of mobbing behaviour are, inter alia (Marciniak, 2004: 44-53):
1. social causes (labour market situation, unemployment, inflexible social structures, acceptation of an autocratic management style),

2. features of a manager (high self-esteem, lack of acceptance of criticism, submission, susceptibility to blarney, low self-esteem and willingness to eliminate everybody who would turn out to be better because of their competences),

3. organisational causes (organisational culture, which tolerates mutual slanders or blandishing superiors, bad management, over discipline or wrong understood discipline, strategic planning based solely on economic criteria, high pressure on productivity, hermetic personalities, overdeveloped organisational structure, lack of constructive approach to problem solving, unqualified managers, underestimation of teamwork, neglecting some alarming situations, approval of unethical activities while disciplining workers, restructuring in the company),

4. specific social position of a victim.

The causes presented shows that the way in which an organisation functions as well as the way the authority is exercised may play a significant role for mobbing to appear.

The causes of mobbing are complex and affect a lot of persons and environments. The most important consequences may be divided into four categories, depending on who is the victim of mobbing (Bechowska-Gebhardt, 2004: 56-60):

1. consequences affecting a mobbing victim,

2. consequences affecting the family of a mobbing victim,

3. consequences affecting the organisation,

4. consequences affecting the whole society.

A person, who is exposed to mobbing, may feel continuous stress which leads to the worsening of health, morale, motivation and devotion to work, as well as to a decrease in effectiveness and professional achievements resulting from a sense of wrong, unfairness and social isolation. Simultaneously, a mobbing victim may transfer their frustration and stress to private ground. As a result, these negative feelings are experienced by the whole family. This situation may be in particular painful for children, because the mobbing victim, exposed to stress at work, cannot assure them a sense of security. Consequences of mobbing for an organisation are not only financial costs resulting from a lower quality of mobbing victims’ work, from more frequent absence at work or accidents at work, but also costs of legal proceedings or
compensations for people who were fired without a reason, higher costs due to excess fluctuation of workers, lower motivation and morale of workers as well as creation of organisational culture which is not conductive for creativity and friendly working conditions. All negative effects for an organisation, where mobbing is practiced, also influence its public image and relations with clients. The whole society suffers from mobbing in the form of financing early retirement, increase in costs of health maintenance and social insurance, increase in unemployment, disseminating of critical attitudes towards the existing order and growing aggression or totally passive attitudes (Bechowska-Gebhardt, 2004: 56-60).

Though laws against mobbing have been in force in Poland since 2004, this phenomenon is still present in many organisations. Besides the causes discussed above, a reason for this is, first of all, a lack of knowledge and awareness, implying insufficient education on forms of discrimination, mobbing and ways to prevent such phenomena. Employers and trade unions should play an important role in preventing mobbing in the workplace. An employer’s responsibility is to make regulations on equal treatment in an organisation accessible in written form, disseminating it or ensuring access to these regulations in other form. The labour code and other legal regulations give labour unions within companies certain rights enabling them to exert influence on management regarding the application of relevant anti-mobbing legislation (Kędziora, 2010: 30-31).

Concluding, creating the possibility of development not only on the individual, but also on the team level, contributes to shaping an organisational culture characterised by a friendly atmosphere, partnership relations, commitment of workers to company business and mutual tolerance. An autocratic management style, not paying attention to individuality and independence, smothering creativity and innovation, will not contribute to this (Zientara, 2009: 223). Ensuring such conditions should be considered a fundamental issue. The minimum is creating at least neutral working conditions, where a worker can easily do his / her tasks. Each disturbance of this equilibrium should be perceived in categories of disruption of the process of human resources management.
3. Empirical verification of relations between mobbing behaviour and the perception of existing working conditions

In order to identify and verify the extent in which mobbing behaviours occur and its influence on perceived working conditions, a case study conducted based on questionnaires among workers of one of the public administration institution in the city of Opole (Poland). The study was conducted on the 18th of November 2010 and the 13th of December 2010. On the basis of preliminary conversations with the management of the institution researched before the study conducted, a thesis was developed what mobbing occurs and that the influence on perceived working conditions will be rather negative than positive.

The first question from the questionnaire analysed in this article was aimed at defining whether in the workplace mobbing behaviour exists or existed. The second question concerned the general conditions in the workplace and diagnosing whether there are some problem areas which should be especially taken into consideration in the process of mobbing prevention. In this task a semantic differential was used.

It should be emphasised, that the formula of the conducted study has some disadvantages, because a questionnaire is an instrument to obtain respondents’ opinions, but not objective facts. Thus, respondents could have given unreal information, not fully real information or they could have not given it at all. For this reason, study results should be interpreted with care.

Out of 157 employees, 144 filled out the questionnaire. Age and gender structure of respondents are presented in Fig. 1. The working environment is characterised by a large number of women, which can be observed in many administrative units in Poland.
Figure 1. Age and gender structure of respondents

Source: authors' own elaboration

An important factor in analysing the existence of mobbing and perceived working conditions may be the number of jobs an employee had before working in the researched organisation as well as the working experience within the organisation. Experience creates the possibility for comparison of situations. For the majority of the respondents, the work in the administration is the first or second one (52%). A large part has experienced three to five workplaces (39%) and only 6% had the opportunity to work in six or more places. Four persons (3%) did not provide any information.

Most of the respondents have been working in the present workplace for more than 5 years (63%), 24% have been working for one to five years and only 9% have been employed for less than one year. Six persons (4%) did not provide any information. The respondents’ structure referring years of working experience is similar. As many as 88% of the sample has been present on the labour market for more than 5 years, 6% for one to five years and 2% for less than one year. Five persons (4%) did not provide any information.

Regarding the first question on whether there were or are any mobbing behaviours in the workplace, respondents assess the statement: “It happened, that there are / were the following behaviours in my workplace.” Respondents could choose from the following options: I don’t remember (1), there are / were no such behaviours (2), they occur sporadically (3), they occur often (4), they occur every day (5). The results are presented in Table 1.
Table 1. Frequency of answers for the question on mobbing behaviour in the workplace*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>Average</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Reduction of the possibility of expressing own opinion by an employee or a superior</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Interruption of conversation / talk of an employee or a superior at any time</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Reacting with bellow against remarks made by an employee or a superior</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2.22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Using humiliating gestures by an employee or a superior</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Avoiding contact with an employee or a superior</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Isolating an employee or a superior from other workers</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Ignoring an employee or a superior and suggestions made by them</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Hampering or forbidding contacts with workers or superiors</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Slandering an employee or a superior and disseminating gossip on them, e.g., using Internet, sending anonymous messages etc.</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Jeering at or ridiculing an employee or a superior</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Using expressions which are humiliating for an employee or a superior</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Assessment of an employee or a superior on the basis of the subjective impressions and not work effects</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2.41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Criticising work outcomes</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Using threats of salary reduction</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Salary reduction without a reason, e.g., depriving of a premium</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Criticising appearance / outlook</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Parodying the way of talking, walking or gesticulation</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Discriminating a superior or workers because of differences in opinion</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Criticising the private life of a superior or an employee</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Neglecting an employee with task assignment</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Taking away tasks assigned earlier to an employee</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>Assignment of tasks which are below the qualifications of an employee</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>Assignment of tasks which exceed the qualifications of an employee</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>Assignment of tasks to an employee which are useless</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>Assignment of too many tasks to an employee</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>Assignment of tasks to an employee which are beneath one's dignity</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.60</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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The second question analysed tasks concerned the identification of the general conditions existing in the workplace and diagnosing in this way, whether there are some problem areas which should be especially taken into consideration in the process of mobbing prevention. The results are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Frequency of answers to the question on working conditions*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task Description</th>
<th>Frequency Distribution</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Median</th>
<th>Mode</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assignment of tasks harmful for health</td>
<td>72 54 9 1 1 1.58</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Using threats of physical violence towards an employee or a superior</td>
<td>65 71 2 0 1 1.57</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Using physical violence towards an employee or a superior</td>
<td>62 76 0 0 1 1.58</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Making a sexual offer to an employee or a superior</td>
<td>58 78 2 0 1 1.62</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Making sexual gestures towards an employee or a superior</td>
<td>59 77 2 0 1 1.61</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Using threats of firing</td>
<td>55 54 23 5 2 1.88</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suggesting psychical disease</td>
<td>57 69 9 1 1 1.69</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harassing tasks execution through taking work tools away or impeding the access to these tools</td>
<td>60 59 13 3 2 1.74</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encouraging other people to negative behaviours against workers or a superior</td>
<td>61 51 15 6 4 1.84</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suggestions of changing jobs</td>
<td>52 49 29 6 2 1.96</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harassment using phone calls, SMS or e-mails</td>
<td>66 62 8 2 1 1.63</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Frequencies sum is not always equal to 141, because of lack of data (not marking the answers or marking more than one answer).

Source: authors’ own research

The gender structure of workers is important for analysing the research outcomes. The large majority of employees consists of women. Although this does not influence the
representativeness of the sample, it may be that women perceive some elements of interpersonal relationships in a different way. Generally speaking, women may be more sensitive to some behaviours and react in a more emotional way. Unfortunately, on the basis of data received, no reliable comparison can be made between the way in which women and men assess certain phenomena, as the sample of men is too small. However, some general conclusions can be drawn.

Threats of physical violence towards an employee or a superior as well as using physical violence towards an employee or a superior are mobbing behaviours which do not appear in the organisation. Other types of mobbing behaviours occur sporadically, often or even every day. As the most bothersome phenomena behaviours are pointed out: assignment of too many tasks to an employee, criticising work outcomes and assessment of an employee or a superior on the basis of subjective impressions and not work outcomes. According to respondents, there is a group of behaviours which occur every day in the institution, such as: reducing the possibility of expressing one’s own opinion, avoiding contact with an employee or a superior, assessment of an employee or a superior on the basis of the subjective impressions and not work outcomes, assignment of tasks which are below qualifications of an employee, assignment of too many tasks to an employee and encouraging other people to behave in a negative way workers or a superior. This may be a sign of conflicts to arise in these areas. However, it should be taken into consideration that only 4 respondents (about 3% of the sample) mentioned such things to happen every day.

On the basis of data analysis it can be argued that respondents consider working conditions to be rather friendly than unfriendly (mean = 3.58), rather honest than dishonest (mean = 3.56), rather of seriousness than of jeering (mean = 3.38), rather respectful than lack of respect (mean = 3.5) and rather pleasant than unpleasant (mean = 3.60). The possibility of receiving support is on a more neutral level (mean = 3.85), similarly as the level of motivation (mean = 3.87), sincerity (mean = 4.08), fairness (mean = 4.11) and voluntariness (mean = 3.9). The most negative element is the level of stress (mean = 4.93). This effect is also visible when looking at the value of median and mode, which for this dimension clearly deviate from the value for other dimensions.

Some dependencies between the characteristics of respondents and their answers on the occurrence of mobbing behaviour and the assessment of working conditions can be observed.
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The number of previous workplaces positively correlates\(^1\) (\(\tau = 0.198, p<0.05\)) with answers on harassment by phone calls, SMS or e-mails. It may be that together with an increase in the number of previous workplaces the tendency increases to state a situation of harassment occurs more often. There exists also a negative correlation between the number of previous workplaces and the assessment of some working conditions: honesty (\(\tau = -0.164\)), motivation (\(\tau = -0.157\)), fairness (\(\tau = -0.194\)) and seriousness (\(\tau = -0.165\)). Correlation coefficients, though being low, are statistically significant and imply that with an increase in the number of previous workplaces respondents assess above mentioned conditions as more advantageous. This may be a result from various experiences in previous workplaces. A confirmation of this assumption can be found in an opinion included in an open question in one questionnaire, where a worker stated: “I have a comparison of quality and of working conditions (former workplace was a private company, very stressing, exhausting, violation of work safety rules), the present workplace – respect for workers, obeying regulations on work safety, very positive relationships between superiors and subordinates.”\(^2\)

Also dependency between years of working experience in the organisation and the perception of mobbing behaviour as well as assessment of working conditions can be observed. Persons with longer working experience in the organisation tend to report that certain situations occur more often in the present workplace: hampering or forbidding contacts with workers or superiors (\(\tau = 0.168, p<0.05\)), assessment of an employee or a superior on the basis of subjective impressions and not work outcome (\(\tau = 0.191, p<0.05\)), neglecting an employee with task assignment (\(\tau = 0.193, p<0.05\)). They also more often indicated that the following types of behaviour never occurs or occurs sporadically: assignment of tasks to an employee which are beneath one's dignity (\(\tau = -0.198, p<0.05\)), assignment of tasks harmful for health (\(\tau = -0.184, p<0.05\)), using physical violence towards an employee or a superior (\(\tau = -0.171, p<0.05\)) and harassment by phone calls, SMS or e-mails (\(\tau = -0.175, p<0.05\)). These results may imply that people who have been working for a longer time in the analysed workplace see mainly difficulties in relationships between the management and subordinates, as all behaviours which

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1 The Kendall’s tau coefficient was used for calculations, because as a nonparametric method it does not need any assumptions on the distribution of variables in the population. Thus, it can be used for any distributions. Kendall’s measure is aimed at defining the monotone relation. A positive monotone relations occurs, when increase in the value of one variable leads to increase in the expected value of the second variable. A negative relation occurs when increase in the value of one variable leads to decrease in the expected value of the second one (Francuz and Mackiewicz, 2007: 521-523).

2 Quote from one of questionnaires.
are positively correlated with seniority concern this aspect of work. As correlation measures are low in all cases, the relation between described behaviours is very weak but statistically significant. In turn, with reference to the assessment of working conditions, it turns out, that the longer seniority in an institution, the worse the assessment of working conditions by respondents: less friendly (tau = 0.314), less relaxing (tau = 0.193), less supporting (tau = 0.261), less pleasant (tau = 0.268), less sincere (tau = 0.213), less honest (tau = 0.269), less motivating (tau = 0.273), less fair (tau = 0.323), less serious (tau = 0.300) and less respectful (tau = 0.285). Also here, that relations are weak, but statistically significant.

4. Concluding remarks

In general, working conditions existing in the analysed institution are assessed as pretty stressing. At the same time, people with job experience from other workplaces are prone to a more positive assessment of these conditions, especially in terms of such issues as sincerity, motivation, fairness or seriousness. However, respondents working at the analysed place for a longer period assess existing working conditions much worse..

The results may imply that so far new workers perceive existing working conditions as pretty good, exposing them for a longer period to a stress factor and not ensuring neutral working conditions (mobbing behaviours can be considered as such factor) leads to worse assessment of workplace and management. This is expressed by opinions of individual respondents: “(...) it is hard to talk about optimality in a workplace which is more similar to a labour camp, where there is no worker’s right, but only the director’s pressure, crazy visions and private conceptions realised without respect for human beings. Make a survey on the director and managers!” or “unfair assessment, nepotism, inefficient assessment of work, if one likes a person, this person is promoted and others are neglected.”

Summarising the survey results, it seems that a relation between mobbing behaviour and the perception of working conditions exists in the organisation researched. The analysed institution seems to be a typical example of a workplace where working conditions are far from optimal. A high level of structure in and standardisation of ways of working together with an autocratic human resources management style may lead workers to become used to working

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3 Quote from one of questionnaires.
4 Quote from one of questionnaires.
conditions which can cause mobbing behaviours. In turn, mobbing behaviours become a barrier for management of human resources. When certain types of behaviour become accepted when working in an organisation for a longer period of time, mobbing may become permanent. Such a situation may also be explained by a lack of awareness among workers of what is considered as mobbing.

An antidote to the dis-functioning of a traditional bureaucracy may be New Public Management (NPM) can be considered as an antidote to dysfunction of traditional bureaucracy. Main features of NPM are: a wider range of management power related with some elements of restructuring of administration, bigger pressure on marketing and value creation, dependency of the level of salary on labour productivity, rationalisation and use of information and computer technology. NPM underlines the meaning of budget transparency as well as the need of assessment of work outcomes. This philosophy may also be successfully applied to human resources management in the public sector, applying some instruments used in the private sector.

Literature


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5 It seems, that a disadvantage of this NPM aspect would be basing on efficiency without taking the purposefulness into consideration of activities undertaken by workers.

6 A similar argument was given by Dolnicki in a paper devoted to information as a factor reducing the process of increasing bureaucracy in public administration (Dolnicki, 2006: 165-176).
Mobbing w miejscu pracy a percepcja warunków pracy – studium przypadku

Streszczenie
Niniejszy artykuł omawia zagadnienia związane ze zjawiskiem mobbingu w miejscu pracy oraz ze znaczeniem postrzegania warunków pracy na przykładzie studium przypadku przeprowadzonego na Opolszczyźnie w 2010 roku. Studium obejmuje jedną z lokalnych instytucji publicznych. Wyniki badań potwierdzają negatywne oddziaływanie mobbingu na postrzeganie warunków pracy.

Słowa kluczowe: zarządzanie zasobami ludzkimi, mobbing, warunki pracy