# The Relationship Between Mobbing, Public Service Motivation, and Internalization of Mission in Public Sector

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**Abstract**

This study aims to reveal the relationship between public service motivation and mobbing levels of public employees and the level of internalization of the mission. For this purpose, data were collected from 461 academics from different titles working in public universities operating in Türkiye. The obtained data were first subjected to Pearson correlation analysis and then hierarchical regression analysis. According to the correlation analysis findings, there is a statistically significant relationship between public service motivation and the internalization of the mission in the positive direction and between mobbing and the internalization of the mission in the adverse order. In the first model of the hierarchical regression analysis, it was observed that there was a positive significant relationship between the dimensions of public service motivation and the internalization of the mission. In the second model, mobbing dimensions were added to the analysis. According to the analysis results, the dimensions of attacks on self-expression and communication and attacks on professional status negatively predict the internalization of the mission. As a result, there is a statistically significant relationship between public service motivation, mobbing, and internalization of the mission. However, the public service motivations of academics who are mobbed for self-expression and communication, and professional status are negatively affected, and this may cause a decrease in the level of internalization of the mission.

*Keywords: Mobbing, public service motivation, internalization of mission, public sector.*

| Article Type | Application Date | Acceptance Date |
|---|---|---|
| Research Article | January 5, 2024 | February 5, 2024 |

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Mission is a statement adopted by all organizations, regardless of sector, and accepted as an essential part of strategic management today (Carpenter and Gong, 2016). It is stated that the goals and objectives set in the mission are essential motivators for organizational effectiveness and efficiency (Moon, 1999). Mission explicitly defines the values guiding and inspiring the organization's members. Mission is a cultural control and coordination mechanism that focuses employees' efforts on achieving strategic goals. (Desmidt et al., 2011). Studies show that the importance that employees attribute to the mission and the degree to which they identify the values within the mission with their values affect their motivation and, therefore, their performance (Campbell and Yeung, 1991; Rainey and Steinbauer, 1999). Marimon et al. (2016) call this mission effect on employees "internalization of the mission (IM)" and consider it one of the most important tasks an organization must fulfil.

Motivation comes first among the concepts closely related to the mission. Public service motivation (PSM) theory is an approach specific to public administration, created to explain the motivations of those who want to enter public service and those working in public organizations (Perry and Wise, 1990; Bright, 2007; Rainey and Steinbauer, 1999). According to the theory, these individuals, unlike their private sector counterparts, act with internal and spiritual motivators rather than external and material motivators (Houston, 2006; Paarlberg and Lavigna, 2010). In addition, it is assumed that public institutions with employees with high public service motivation are more effective and efficient (Rainey and Steinbauer, 1999).

The individual's work environment and relationships directly affect many factors, such as happiness, health, job satisfaction, motivation, and performance. Especially the problems in the relations between people affect these elements negatively. In this context, mobbing has recently emerged as a problem frequently encountered in many organizations and sectors (Tigrel and Kokalan, 2009). Mobbing is characterized by the repetition of hostile and unethical behavior by an employee against another employee or employees, regardless of title or position (da Silva João and Saldanha Portelada, 2019). Mobbing is accepted as a type of social stress or a traumatic event that can cause serious social, psychological, and psychosomatic problems (Einarsen et al., 2011). Mobbing has devastating effects on individuals and similar results on the organization. (Leymann, 1996; Zapf, 1999).

There are several studies dealing with the relationship between public service motivation and mission (Rainey and Steinbauer, 1999; Word and Park, 2015; Wright et al., 2011), mobbing and motivation (Antep et al., 2012; Pelit and Pelit, 2014; Pranjić et al., 2006). However, in this study, we tried to find answers to these two questions: "Is there a relationship between public service motivation, mobbing, and internalization of the mission? Do public service motivation and mobbing together significantly predict the internalization of the mission?" Our study is one of the first to reveal the relationship between public service motivation, mobbing and mission internalization in public organizations. The difference of our study and its contribution to the literature emerges at this point.

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1. Internalization of Mission

Mission is defined in different ways, such as "a permanent statement of purpose that distinguishes the organization from other organizations of its kind, a statement of an organization's business or reason for existence (Cochran et al., 2008: 27)"; "an official document that helps the organization establish its identity, purpose, and direction (Desmidt et al., 2011: 468)"; "an important tool through which core values are communicated to stakeholders (Leuthesser and Kohli, 1997: 59)"; "an image of the character of the organization and a tone or set of attitudes towards which actions are directed (Ireland and Hitt, 1992: 35)".

Campbell and Yeung (1991) argue that there are two main streams of literature on mission. The first stream considers the mission in the context of a business strategy. In this context, a mission is, above all, a strategic tool. Therefore, it is perceived as the first step of strategic management. According to the second stream, mission is the cultural glue that enables an organization to function as a collective unity. In this context, mission consists of solid norms and values that affect how people behave, work together, and pursue the organization's goals. This form of mission implies a philosophy of work and mission that helps employees perceive and interpret events and speak a common language.

Rey and Bastons (2017) state that a mission has three primary dimensions and therefore functions. First, the mission is a formal statement. As a formal statement, mission is a document that characterizes the organization's identity, in other words, its essence. Secondly, mission is a dynamic exercise. In this dimension, the mission reflects aspects of its implementation as a constitutive part of the organization. Finally, mission functions as a motivator. This is because the mission is considered as an important tool to be used in conveying the feelings, values and principles that will motivate and direct employees to action (Bart et al., 2001; Cochran et al., 2008). Bart and Baetz (1998) state that one of the most prominent benefits of organizations having a mission is behavioral benefit.

Although the mission is accepted as an essential source of motivation and performance for organizations and employees, it has been revealed in many studies in the literature that the activities of organizations and their personnel do not coincide with the mission. In other words, the fact that an organization has a mission statement does not necessarily mean that it is complied with and implemented (Bart and Baetz, 1998; Desmidt et al., 2011; Ireland and Hitt, 1992; Leuthesser and Kohli, 1997). A significant problem arises at this point. It is not enough for an organization for motivation and performance to define a mission and communicate it to its employees. Therefore, the organization must somehow ensure that the employees internalize the mission. Internalization is more than acceptance or identification. Internalization occurs when ideas or practices presented to an individual are satisfactory and compatible with the individual's value system. Considering the mission statement, internalization refers to the situation in which employees undertake the mission as if it belongs to them and make it a part of their personal beliefs and values (Marimon et al., 2016). Studies show that organizations with

mission statements that address the internal values of their employees are more successful than those that do not (Bart and Baetz, 1998; Blair-Loy et al., 2011).

### 2.2. Public Service Motivation

Employment in the public sector is often seen as a duty, not a work (Houston, 2006). It is recognized that public officials act with a "public service ethic". This ethic encourages individuals to enter public service and to work for the public interest (Brewer et al., 2000; Staats, 1988). In this context, PSM has been proposed as a concept used to express motivational differences in public services. PSM represents mechanisms specific to public institutions that activate and guide behavior (Perry and Hondeghem, 2008). PSM is "individuals' orientation toward delivering services to people with a purpose to do good for others and society (Andersen et al., 2020: 2)." According to Perry and Wise (1990: 368) PSM is "an individual's predisposition to respond to motives grounded primarily or uniquely in public institutions and organizations." Rainey and Steinbauer (1999: 23) defined PSM as "general altruistic motivation to serve the interests of a community of people, a state, a nation, or humankind."

PSM emphasizes the importance of elements such as moral obligation, intrinsic motivation, benevolence, loyalty, and compassion in explaining work behavior and work performance in public institutions (Wang et al., 2020). PSM is also closely related to individual motivation and productivity in the public sector, improved management practices, increased political accountability of the bureaucracy, and citizen trust in government (Brewer et al., 2000).

Perry and Wise (1990) suggest that PSM arises from three types of motives: Rational, emotional, and normative. Rational motives are associated with individual utility maximization. Public service is rarely associated with enhancing individual benefit. Norm-based motives are based on the desire to pursue the common good, advance the public interest, devotion to duty, and social equality. On the other hand, emotional motives are related to human feelings such as goodness, love, and compassion. PSM is commonly handled with normative orientations (Kim, 2009; Perry and Wise, 1990).

The effect of motivation on performance and the fact that performance has become one of the determining factors in public administrations has increased the importance of PSM for public institutions (Caillier, 2014; Christensen et al., 2013). In explaining public institutions' work behavior and performance, PSM emphasizes specific motivational elements such as values, moral obligations, intrinsic motivation, and altruism (Stazyk and Davis, 2015; Wang et al., 2020).

### 2.3. Mobbing

Mobbing is seen as one of the most critical problems of contemporary working life in the context of human relations (Hoel et al., 2001; Hogh et al., 2011). Although mobbing is not a new phenomenon in working life, it came to the fore and gained popularity with the studies conducted by Heinz Leymann in the 1980s (da Silva João and Saldanha Portelada, 2019; Groeblinghoff and Becker, 1996). In the

literature, it is also expressed with various concepts such as "unity against someone, bullying, harassment, psychological terror." (Einarsen et al., 2011; Leymann and Gustafsson, 1996; Zapf, 1999).

Leymann (1990; 1996) generally distinguishes mobbing from bullying in his studies and defines mobbing as " hostile and unethical communication which is directed in a systematic way by one or a number of persons mainly toward one individual (Leymann, 1990: 120)." According to Josipović-Jelić, Stoini, and Celić-Bunikić (2005: 347), mobbing or psychological terror in the workplace is "mental cruelty, hostile and unethical communication by which one or more persons terrorize the victim of mobbing with the final aim to destroy and remove the person from her/his work." Mobbing is not an action that starts and ends abruptly; it is the repetitive behavior by individuals or groups intentionally harms others with whom they work (Vandekerckhove and Commers, 2003). Therefore, for such an act to be called mobbing, it is accepted that it must occur at least once a week and for at least six months. (Leymann, 1996; Zapf et al., 1996).

Mobbing or bullying is a form of social stressor. It concerns how employees interact socially within the organization (Einarsen et al., 2011). When it comes to mobbing, power imbalance and loss of control between the parties are the distinguishing factors. Because power imbalance generally reflects the formal power structure of the organizational context in which mobbing develops. Victims have difficulty defending themselves and retaliating due to their current position (Einarsen et al., 2011; Zapf and Einarsen, 2005).

Mobbing in organizations can occur due to a wide variety of factors. Leymann (1996) addresses these under four headings: Deficiencies in job design; deficiencies in leadership behavior; victim's social position, and low moral standards in the department. Zapf (1999), on the other hand, makes a triple distinction in his study as organizational factors, factors related to the social system of the study group, and individual factors. However, the organization, perpetrator, social service group, and victim are generally accepted as potential causes (Zapf and Einarsen, 2005). Mobbing is an escalating process in which the person becomes the target of systematic negative social and psychological actions (Einarsen et al., 2011). This process starts with conflict, aggressive behavior follows it, management participation comes, the victim is stigmatized due to misdiagnosis, pressure is applied, and finally, the person is fired (Davenport et al., 1999; Leymann, 1990). The importance of mobbing in working and organizational life stems from its negative consequences for the victim, the environment, and the organization (Leymann, 1996).

### 3. THEORETICAL RESEARCH MODEL AND HYPOTHESES

Organizations must have a mission to motivate their employees and establish effective leadership. The existence of such a mission statement initiates the process of providing members of the organization with a "meaning for their existence" that transcends the unit or organizational needs in which they work (Bart and Baetz, 1998). Marimon et al. (2016) describe this process as the

internalization of the mission. Internalization is a central concept in sociology, anthropology, and psychology. Internalization was put forward to explain the transformation of values, categories, and beliefs from an external object into an internal driving force of action and even the founder of the personality system (Lizardo, 2021). Internalization occurs when an individual accepts an external influence. The person adopts the stimulated behavior because it is compatible with the value system, and this adopted behavior integrates with the individual's current values (Kelman, 1958). Internalization is choosing a side in one's behavior by accepting positive and negative consequences. As a result, internalization is a form of identification in which a sense of a we, group solidarity, shared values, and a stable role relationship coexist (Campbell, 1964).

In the organizational context, internalization is significant because of its contribution to motivation. The concept of internalization is often associated with pro-social motivation. This type of motivation manifests itself in the values of caring for and helping others. Prosocial motivation is driven by meaning and purpose, in contrast to intrinsic motivation, which is driven by interest and pleasure, and extrinsic motivation, which can be separated from work itself and driven by self-interest (Mas Machuca et al., 2023).

Pro-social motivation is the area where mission internalization and public service motivation theory overlap. Because public service motivation is based on a theory that tends to exhibit altruistic or pro-social behavior. According to the theory, public servants are characterized by a commitment to the public interest and an ethic based on benevolence, life in the service of others, and a desire to influence society. Therefore, they are motivated by spiritual and internal rewards rather than material and external rewards (Houston, 2006; Lee, 2012; Pandey et al., 2008; Shamir, 1991). In this context, public employees with a public service motivation, who emphasize a unique ethical and value system (Andersen et al., 2012), are expected to internalize the corporate missions that are expected to be formed with these ethics and values.

Internalization is a process on which identification, an emotional orientation, is based (Campbell, 1964). Any factor affecting this emotional orientation will affect internalization positively or negatively. Mobbing is also a social stressor frequently encountered in working life and causes psychosomatic and psychological disorders in individuals (Zapf et al., 1996). Many essential and severe health problems include stress, insomnia, anxiety, depression, and musculoskeletal disorders (Hogh et al., 2011; Keim and McDermott, 2010). Studies show that the discomfort experienced by individuals during the mobbing process has consequences such as decreased self-confidence, low self-worth, shyness, increased sense of vulnerability, purposelessness, hopelessness, guilt, and self-contempt. As a result, the individual's organizational commitment, creativity, productivity, job satisfaction, motivation, and performance in the workplace are significantly reduced (Groeblinghoff and Becker, 1996; Hoel et al., 2011; Hogh et al., 2011; Leymann, 1996). The effects of mobbing on the organization are spread over a wide range. These include sickness absence, increased staff turnover and replacement costs,

decreased organizational productivity, performance and service quality, reduced organizational social climate and support, increased complaints, litigation and compensation, and loss of goodwill and reputation in the eyes of the public (Josipović-Jelić et al., 2005; Hoel et al., 2011; Leymann, 1996).

Within the framework of the literature, the hypotheses of the study were formed as follows:

$H_1$: There is a significant relationship between public service motivation dimensions, mobbing dimensions, and internalization of the mission.

$H_2$: Public service motivation dimensions and mobbing dimensions significantly affect the internalization of the mission.

## 4. METHOD

### 4.1. Research Ethic, Study Design and Participants

For the study, ethics committee permission document dated September 15, 2022 and numbered 2022-126 was obtained from the Uşak University Ethics Committee.The study has been crafted in adherence to the principles of research and publication ethics.

The relational survey model, one of the descriptive research methods, was used in the research. The research population consists of academic staff (professor, associate professor, assistant professor, lecturer, and research assistant) working in public universities operating in Türkiye. The convenience sampling method was used in the research. An online questionnaire was applied to the personnel who voluntarily agreed to participate in the study. Data were obtained from a total of 461 (n=461) participants.

### 4.2. Measures

The research used participants' descriptive information form, mission internalization, public service motivation, and mobbing scales. There are 5 questions about the demographic characteristics of the participants: "gender, marital status, age, title, and seniority."

The scale developed by Marimon et al. (2016) and adapted to Turkish culture by Türkmen and Erten (2023) was used to measure the internalization of the mission (IM). The answers given to the scale items are in a five-point Likert type (1= strongly disagree, ...., 5 = strongly agree). The scale has 5 dimensions and 18 items, including leadership, knowledge, participation, inclusion, and importance. In the Turkish version of the scale, it was determined that five factors explained 75,786% of the total variance. In addition, the Cronbach's Alpha (Cronbach α) coefficient of the scale and its dimensions were ≥ 0.90, and the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values ranged from 0.76 to 0.83; Composite Reliability (CR) values were found to be between 0.91 and 0.95 (Türkmen and Erten, 2023).

The scale developed by Kim (2009) and adapted to Turkish culture by Erten and Türkmen (2022) was used to measure public service motivation (PSM). The answers given to the scale items are

in a five-point Likert type (1= strongly disagree, ...., 5 = strongly agree). The scale consists of two dimensions: public interest (PSM1), empathy, and altruism (PSM2), and 12 items. In the Turkish version of the scale, it was determined that two factors explained 66,609% of the total variance. In addition, the Cronbach α coefficient of the scale and its dimensions were ≥ 0.90, and the AVE values were between 0.50 and 0.67; CR values were found to be between 0.85 and 0.92 (Erten and Türkmen, 2022).

The scale developed by Çögenli (2013) was used to measure mobbing (MOBBING). The answers given to the scale items are in a five-point Likert type (1 = Never, ...., 5 = Always). There are five dimensions and 23 items on the scale: attacks on self-expression and communication (MOB1), attacks on social relations (MOB2), attacks on reputation (MOB3), attacks on professional status (MOB4), and attacks on the psychological health of the person (MOB5). It was determined that the 5-factor scale explained 72,553% of the total variance. The Cronbach α coefficient of the entire scale was calculated as 0.970. As a result of the confirmatory factor analysis of the scale, "$\chi^2$ =420.33; df=218; $\chi^2$ / df=1.92; RMSEA=0.077; RMR=0.036; SRMR=0.061; NFI=0.94; NNFI=0.96; CFI=0.97" values were determined (Çögenli and Asunakutlu, 2014: 100).

### 4.3. Statistical Analysis

SPSS 26 program was used to analyze the research data. The demographic characteristics of the participants were examined by frequency analysis. The reliability of the scales used in the study was evaluated with Cronbach α coefficient, and whether they showed a normal distribution was analyzed. Pearson correlation analysis (Pearson r) was used to test $H_1$. Hierarchical regression analysis was performed to test $H_2$. The significance level was accepted as $p<0.05$ in evaluating the findings, and the confidence interval was 95%.

## 5. RESULTS

### 5.1. Sociodemographic Characteristics of the Participants

Statistics regarding the descriptive characteristics of the academicians participating in the research are given in Table 1.

53% of the participants in the research are female, and 70.5% are married. Most participants (42.5%) are between the ages of 31-40. Regarding working time, those with a period of 1-10 years are the majority (47.5%). Regarding academic titles, assistant professor (29.3%) and lecturer (26.6%) lead the way.

**Table 1. Participant profile (N=461; %=100)**

| Variables | N | % | Variables | N | % |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Gender** | | | **Title** | | |
| Female | 247 | 53.6 | Professor | 43 | 9.3 |
| Male | 214 | 46.4 | Assoc.Prof. | 56 | 12.1 |
| **Marital Status** | | | Assist. Prof. | 135 | 29.3 |
| Married | 325 | 70.5 | Lecturer | 123 | 26.6 |
| Single | 136 | 29.5 | Res. Assist. | 104 | 22.6 |
| **Age** | | | **Year of seniority** | | |
| 25 and under | 5 | 1.1 | 1-5 years | 100 | 21.7 |
| 26-30 | 59 | 12.8 | 6-10 years | 119 | 25.8 |
| 31-35 | 93 | 20.2 | 11-15 years | 90 | 19.5 |
| 36-40 | 103 | 22.3 | 16-20 years | 41 | 8.9 |
| 41-45 | 79 | 17.1 | 21-25 years | 56 | 12.1 |
| 46-50 | 60 | 13.0 | 25 years and above | 55 | 11.9 |
| 51 and over | 62 | 13.4 | | | |

**Source:** Prepared by the authors.

### 5.2. Reliability Analysis of Scales

The reliability analysis results of data collection tools are shown in Table 2. According to Table 2, the Cronbach α coefficients of the scales and their dimensions were above the .70 value accepted in the literature (Nunnally and Bernstein, 1994).

**Table 2. Reliability analysis of scales and dimensions**

| Scales and Dimensions | N | Cronbach's Alpha |
|---|---|---|
| IM (Internalization of Mission) | 18 | ,929 |
| PSM (Public Service Motivation) | 12 | ,867 |
| PSM1(Public Interest) | 6 | ,839 |
| PSM2 (Empathy and Sacrifice) | 6 | ,807 |
| MOBBING (Mobbing) | 23 | ,961 |
| MOB1 (Attacks on self-expression and communication) | 6 | ,908 |
| MOB2 (Attacks on social relations) | 4 | ,923 |
| MOB3 (Attacks on reputation) | 3 | ,926 |
| MOB4 (Attacks on professional status) | 7 | ,924 |
| MOB5 (Attacks on the psychological health) | 3 | ,880 |

**Source:** Prepared by the authors.

### 5.3. Normal Distribution Analysis

Before analyzing the data, Skewness and Kurtosis test was applied to find out whether the data were normally distributed. Table 3 shows the results of the skewness and kurtosis test of the data.

**Table 3. Results of the normality test**

| Scales/Dimensions | Skewness | Std. | Kurtosis | Std. |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| IM | -.265 | .114 | .018 | .227 |
| PSM1 | -.863 | | .594 | |
| PSM2 | -.546 | | .231 | |
| PSM | -.460 | | -.329 | |
| MOB1 | .893 | | .049 | |
| MOB2 | 1.654 | | 1.968 | |
| MOB3 | .533 | | -.587 | |
| MOB4 | .821 | | -.330 | |
| MOB5 | 1,649 | | 1.790 | |
| MOBBING | .880 | | -.095 | |

**Source:** Prepared by the authors.

The skewness and kurtosis values of the scales and dimensions used are at ± 2.00. Within the framework of these values, it was accepted that the data were normally distributed (George and Mallery, 2016).

### 5.4. Correlation Analysis

The Pearson r analysis showing the relationship between public service motivation, mobbing, and its dimensions with the internalization of the mission is given in Table 4.

**Table 4. Relationship between scales and dimensions**

| Scales/Dimensions | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1-IM | r | 1 | .208** | .239** | .255** | -.448** | -.286** | -.404** | -.490** | -.323** | -.478** |
| | p | | .000 | .000 | .000 | .000 | .000 | .000 | .000 | .000 | .000 |
| 2-PSM1 | r | | 1 | .553** | .854** | .033 | .096* | .095* | .016 | .056 | .057 |
| | p | | | .000 | .000 | .478 | .040 | .041 | .737 | .232 | .224 |
| 3-PSM2 | r | | | 1 | .906** | -.025 | .084 | .003 | -.045 | -.042 | -.010 |
| | p | | | | .000 | .591 | .071 | .941 | .339 | .364 | .828 |
| 4-PSM | r | | | | 1 | .001 | .101* | .051 | -.020 | .002 | .022 |
| | p | | | | | .980 | .030 | .279 | .669 | .969 | .630 |
| 5-MOB1 | r | | | | | 1 | .695** | .765** | .777** | .607** | .924** |
| | p | | | | | | .000 | .000 | .000 | .000 | .000 |
| 6-MOB2 | r | | | | | | 1 | .634** | .639** | .531** | .812** |
| | p | | | | | | | .000 | .000 | .000 | .000 |
| 7-MOB3 | r | | | | | | | 1 | .688** | .587** | .846** |
| | p | | | | | | | | .000 | .000 | .000 |
| 8-MOB4 | r | | | | | | | | 1 | .605** | .916** |
| | p | | | | | | | | | .000 | .000 |

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 9-MOB5 | r | | | | 1 | ,705** |
| | p | | | | | ,000 |
| 10-MOBBING | r | | | | | 1 |
| | p | | | | | |

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

It is seen that there is a significant positive correlation between mission internalization and PSM1 (r=0.208; p<0.01), PSM2 (r=0.239; p<0.01), and PSM (r=0.255; p<0.01). The variance explained by the variables over each other was 4.32% for PSM1, 5.71% for PSM2, and 6.50% for PSM.

A significant negative relationship is observed between the internalization of the mission and MOB1(r=-0.448; p<0.01), MOB2 (r=-0.286; p<0.01), MOB3 (r=-0.404; p<0.01), MOB4 (r=-0.490; p<0.01), MOB5 (r=-0.323; p<0.01) and Mobbing (r=-0.01), p<0.01; The variance explained by the variables over each other is 20.07% for MOB1, 8.17% for MOB2, 16.32% for MOB3, 24.01% for MOB4, 10.43% for MOB5 and 22.84% for Mobbing.

In addition, while there is a significant positive correlation between PSM1 and MOB2 (r=-0.096; p<0.05) and MOB3 (r=-0.095; p<0.05), It is also seen that there is a significant positive correlation between PSM and MOB2 (r=-0.101; p<0.05). The variance explained by the variables over each other is 0.92% for PSM1 and MOB2, 0.90% for PSM1 and MOB3, and 1.02% for PSM and MOB2.

### 5.5. Hierarchical Regression Analysis

The results of the hierarchical regression analysis regarding whether the public service motivation and mobbing levels of the academicians predict their mission internalization levels are given in Table 5. The dependent variable in the hierarchical regression analysis is the internalization of the mission. In the first model of the analysis, the independent variables are PSM1 and PSM2. In the second model, MOB1, MOB2, MOB3, MOB4, and MOB5 were added to them

**Table 5. Results of hierarchical regression analysis**

| Predictive Variables | Internalization of Mission | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Model 1 | | Model 2 | |
| | β | t | β | t |
| **Model 1** | | | | |
| PSM1 | 0.174 | **2.017*** | **0.239**** | 3.202 |
| PSM2 | 0.231 | **3.289**** | **0.168**** | 2.751 |
| **Model 2** | | | | |
| MOB1 | | | **-.125*** | -2.043 |
| MOB2 | | | .075 | 1.619 |
| MOB3 | | | -.087 | -1.943 |
| MOB4 | | | **-.257**** | -5.158 |
| MOB5 | | | -.006 | -.068 |
| $R^2$ | 0.065 | | 0.322 | |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| $\Delta R^2$ | 0.065 | 0.257 |
| F | 16.011 | 30.717 |

*p<.05; **p<.001

**Source:** Prepared by the authors.

In the first model of hierarchical regression, PSM1, and PSM2, dimensions of PSM, are included as predictive variables. The predictors of PSM1 (β: .174, t: 2.017, p<0.05) and PSM2 (β: .231, t: 3.289, p<0.001) on mission internalization were positive and statistically significant. PSM1 and PSM2 explain 6.5% of the total variance in the dependent variable (F: 16,011 p<.001, R2: .065)

In the second hierarchical regression model, the dimensions of Mobbing, MOB1, MOB2, MOB3, MOB4, and MOB5, were also included in the analysis as a predictor variable. In this model, the predictors of PSM1 (β: .239, t: 3.202, p<0.001) and PSM2 (β: .168, t: 2.751, p<0.001) on mission internalization were positive and statistically significant. However, the predictors of MOB2 (β: .075, t: 1.619, p>0.05), MOB3 (β: -.087, t: -1.943, p>0.05), and MOB5 (β: -.006, t: -.068 p>0.05) on mission internalization were not statistically significant. The predictors of MOB1 (β: -,125, t: -2.043, p<0.05) and MOB4 (β: -,257, t: -5.158, p<0.001) on mission internalization were found to be negative and statistically significant. The total variance explained in the second model was 32.2% (F: 30.717 p<.001, R2: .322). When the possible effects of public interest, empathy, and altruism are controlled, the explained variance is 25.7% (F: 30,717 p<.001, ΔR2: .257).

## 6. DISCUSSION

In this study, the predictive effect of public service motivation and mobbing levels of public employees on their internalization of the mission was examined in the context of Türkiye. The research was carried out on academicians. First, the results reveal a statistically significant relationship between public service motivation and its dimensions, Mobbing, and its dimensions, and internalization of the mission. However, while the level of this relationship was positive and low in public service motivation and its dimensions, mobbing, and its dimensions are negative and moderate (Büyüköztürk, 2011).

In public service motivation theory, it is accepted that mission is an essential motivator in public organizations. In this case, which is conceptualized as mission valence, it is accepted that the more the mission is compatible with the values and principles of the employee, in other words, the more interesting, attractive, and valuable the mission is for the employee, not only the motivation of the individual but also the job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and performance will increase (Rainey and Steinbauer, 1999; Word and Park, 2015; Wright et al., 2011). Studies also support this situation (Caillier, 2016; Carpenter and Gong, 2016; Pandey et al., 2008; Wright, 2007).

In our study, the reason for this low correlation may be long-standing problems in Turkish Higher Education. In the studies conducted, the main problems of academics in Türkiye are listed as a shortage in the number of academics, the focus of research on career and incentives rather than

contribution to science, lack of transparency and merit in promotion in the field, low wages, poor working conditions and loss of prestige of the academic profession. These problems result in job dissatisfaction, burnout, and loss of motivation and performance (Akyol et al., 2018; Arı, 2007; Tuzgöl-Dost and Cenkseven, 2007).

Another result of the analysis and its contribution to the literature is the determination of a negative and statistically significant relationship between mobbing and the internalization of the mission. From this point of view, it is possible to say that the mission's internalization level decreases in the employees exposed to mobbing. Long-term and severe mobbing brings the danger of being excluded from the organization, with consequences such as self-isolation and inability to cooperate and communicate (Hoel et al., 2011; Hogh et al., 2011). According to Davenport et al. (1999), this is one of the primary purposes of mobbing: to remove the person from his/her job and the organization. The meaning of this is also the removal of the employee from all material and moral assets and values of the organization, especially the mission, through mobbing. Therefore, the decrease in the internalization of the organization's mission by the mobbing victim can be seen as one of the usual results.

The final result of the correlation analysis is that there is a very weak but statistically significant positive relationship between public service motivation and attacks on social relations (MOB2) and between public interest (PSM1), attacks on social relations (MOB2) and attacks on reputation (MOB3). This situation can be interpreted as the individual subjected to mobbing, albeit rarely, trying to resist the negative consequences of mobbing by embracing altruistic values more.

In the first model of the hierarchical regression, it was seen that public interest (PSM1) and empathy and altruism (PSM2), which are the dimensions of public service motivation, positively predicted the internalization of the mission. As the employees' public interest and empathy, and self-sacrifice levels increase, the mission's internalization level also increases. However, the variance explained by these two dimensions remained at a low level of 6.50%. It is possible to say that this situation is due to the fundamental problems of the Higher Education system in Türkiye, which we explained above. Regarding Herzberg's dual factor theory, it can be said that the public service motivation of academics in Türkiye is more influenced by hygiene than intrinsic factors (Buchanan and Huczynski, 2017; Chauhan et al., 2018; Lacy and Sheehan, 1997).

In the second model of the hierarchical regression, mobbing dimensions, attacks on self-expression and communication (MOB1), attacks on social relations (MOB2), attacks on reputation (MOB3), attacks on professional status (MOB4) and attacks on psychological health (MOB5) were added to the analysis. In this model, it is seen that attacks on self-expression and communication (MOB1) and attacks on professional status (MOB4) negatively and significantly predict the internalization of the mission but do not have a significant effect on other dimensions.

The academy is generally seen as a space where knowledge is developed, refined, and free and unlimited thought is necessary for a democratic society (Keashly, 2019). In this environment, academics, on the one hand, have to carry out research and teaching activities; on the other hand, they have to deal with administrative affairs and activities for self-development (Chauhan et al., 2018). Studies show that academicians are strongly affected by stress and other negative psycho-emotional factors while performing their duties and activities, and this harms factors such as motivation, performance, and job satisfaction (Chauhan et al., 2018; Keashly, 2019; Lacy and Sheehan, 1997; O'Moore and Crowley, 2011; Qureshi et al., 2015; Tigrel, 2009). The findings we obtained in parallel with the literature show a decrease in the internalization of the corporate mission when the individual is attacked against his "self-expression and communication" and "professional status."

According to Leiding (2010), mobbing is less likely in organizations with clear goals, well-defined job descriptions, and caring and impartial management. In this context, it recommends measures such as developing a clear mission statement that will interest everyone and adjusting the organizational structure according to mission and goals, not personalities, to prevent mobbing. Similarly, Duffy (2009) states that the policies to be formed against mobbing in organizations should reference the organization's fundamental values. In this context, it draws attention to the mission's value creation and inclusion functions. However, he also states that attention should be paid to the difference between the values in organizations and the values adopted.

## 7. LIMITATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE WORK

Our study has some limitations, and the results should be considered within the framework of these limitations. First of all, the research has a cross-sectional design. Data were collected only from higher education institutions within the Turkish public administration structure. The data obtained is limited and reflects the Turkish public administration culture. Therefore, it is impossible to say that the research results are generalizable for the whole field of public administration. Therefore, there is a need for qualitative and quantitative studies in larger sections in future studies.

Although the findings we obtained reveal the relationship between internal motivators and the internalization of the mission in the context of public service motivation, it will contribute to the literature to investigate the place of hygiene factors in public service motivation and internalization of the mission in future studies.

In our study, the adverse effects of mobbing on employees were revealed. However, the relationship with public service motivation was found to be relatively low, and at the level of internalization of the mission, a significant relationship was found only in the context of attacks on self-expression and communication and attacks on professional status. In future studies, conducting qualitative and quantitative research on the causes of these results will be helpful.

## 8. CONCLUSION

Mobbing is recognized as one of the most critical problems of today's working life. Being subjected to mobbing harms the person and the organization they work for. Therefore, it has high direct and indirect costs. Academics are responsible not only for educating individuals but also for producing science. Consequently, they need a democratic and free environment free from mobbing, appropriate working conditions and personal rights to fulfil these duties. This is the case for academics working in Turkey as it is the case worldwide.

In this context, the results of our study within the framework of current limitations are as follows: First of all, there is a statistically significant relationship between public service motivation, mobbing, and internalization of the mission. Secondly, the effect of academicians' public service motivations on their level of internalization of the mission is shallow in Türkiye. The reason for this situation may be hygiene factors that affect motivation. Third, the level of internalization of employees' mission exposed to mobbing decreases. Fourth, in the Turkish context, when academicians are attacked in terms of their "self-expression and communication" and their "professional status" they experience a decline in their level of internalization of the mission, even though they have a particular public service motivation. This is an example of the psychological and social effects of mobbing. Our results will contribute to the relevant literature and guide future studies.

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