MOBBING IN THE HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY EVIDENCE FROM GREECE

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Abstract:

The present work examines and reviews the current knowledge concerning work harassment, mobbing and sexual harassment in the hospitality industry in Greece. Having access to the recent data for the years 2021 and 2022, the authors conduct a qualitative research on how the Hellenic Labour Inspectorate, dealt with the accusations applied by the victims of workplace mobbing. The authors examined victims' and abusers' profiles, aiming to find out the reasons that provoked this criminal attitude as well as the dimensions of mobbing phenomenon. Further studies should be applied concerning employers' attitude towards moral and sexual harassment at workplace.

Keywords: Mobbing, Work Harassment, Hospitality Industry, Hotels

Introduction

Over the last twenty years or so research over mobbing, bullying emotional abuse and harassment at work, as a distinct from harassment based on sex or race and primarily of a non-physical nature, has emerged as a new field of study in Europe, Australia, South Africa and the USA. Heinz Leymann (Leymann, 1986,1990,1992) introduced the word «mobbing» being aspired by the aggressive behavior among school children, aimed at evicting out individual children for negative treatment, to pioneer systematic studies of similar types of behavior in the world of work. Much earlier Konrad Zacharias Lorenz (Lorenz, 1968) an Austrian zoologist, ethologist and novelist observed the attitude of animals in the wild nature, beating and mistreating on daily basis members of their team, aiming to singling out the unwanted animals.

In the 80's these immoral attitudes were examined in the workplace first in Scandinavia by Stale Einarsen and later in the USA by Loraleigh Leashly (Leashly, 1998) and Carroll Brodsky, (Brodsky, 1976) focusing in the hostile behaviors that may be relevant to workplace bullying emotional abuse, mistreatment. By all means a hostile work environment, in which insulting or offensive remarks, persistent criticism, personal abuse, or even physical abuse and threats prevail, is a reality for many employees in both public and private organizations.

Mobbing, or workplace bullying, is unfortunately a common issue in many industries, including the hotel industry. It can take many forms, including verbal abuse, exclusion, intimidation, and even physical violence. In the hotel industry, mobbing can occur between colleagues, between management and employees, or between employees and customers. For example, a manager may consistently belittle and criticize an employee in front of their coworkers, or a group of employees may exclude and isolate a new employee.

Mobbing can have serious consequences for both the individual being targeted and the hotel as a whole. It can lead to decreased job satisfaction, increased turnover, and a negative impact on the hotel's reputation and bottom line. To prevent and address mobbing in the hotel industry, it is important for hotels to have clear policies and procedures in place for reporting and addressing incidents of workplace bullying. Managers and supervisors should also receive

training on how to identify and address mobbing behavior, and employees should be encouraged to speak up if they experience or witness bullying.

These personal negative feelings and attitudes contribute to low business performance indicators, such as high turnover rate and little profitability. Needless to say, that the high prevalence of violence forms a negative image for the tourism and hospitality industry in general. Although, the hospitality industry adds net income to the world economy, creating new jobs each year exponentially (Alola et al. 2019), and has shown tremendous growth, it still faces challenging working conditions. Recent studies (Einarsen et al 2004 ,2009) defined mobbing in the tourism sector as repeated and unwanted actions or practices with the intention to humiliate, punish, evict, and frighten a targeted subject.

The present work examines and reviews the current knowledge and conditions concerning work harassment, mobbing and sexual harassment in the hospitality industry in Greece. Having access to the recent data and reports for the years 2021 and 2022, the authors conduct qualitative research on how the Hellenic Labour Inspectorate, dealt with the accusations applied by the victims of workplace mobbing. The profile of the victims i.e. age, gender, workplace positions, educational levels might be or not relevant with the misbehavior they faced. Moreover, the authors examine the abuser's profile, aiming to find out the reasons that provoked this criminal attitude.

The study is consisted of three main parts. The first part includes the literature review where the terms of violence and harassment at workplace are clarified by the presentation of previous studies. It also includes the definition of anti-bullying policies and the relevant research on this topic along with recent findings with regard to hospitality industry and mobbing. The second part includes the research tool and the general context of the study, that is to say the working environment of hospitality sector in Greece and the official organizations for the implication and supervision of labor laws in the particular country from the second semester of 2021. It also includes the presentation of the elements and findings that derived from the analysis of data and relevant documents. The final section provides a core of actions, policies and agenda rules, along with the recent law applied in Greece in June 2021, that can potential contribute as intervention tools against mobbing.

Literature Review

Defining Bullying, Mobbing and Moral Harassment

Workplace harassment arises when a senior manager or a coworker displays unwanted aggressive behavior against a subordinate, a colleague or rarely to a supervisor (Keashly & Jagatic, 2003). In addition, it relates behavior appearing in the work environment in which superiors abuse their professional authority, including their positions or interpersonal relationships, causing mental or physical pain to their subordinates (Rospenda & Richman, 2004).

Moral and psychological violence is nothing more than psychological violence perpetrated either by one person or by a group of persons, against one person or, similarly, against a group of persons. In essence, it refers to a sequence of offending behavior which, while prima facie not related to each other, is part of an overall picture of humiliation andhumiliation of the victim (Leymann 1996). It is characterized as an extreme form of stress building in the workplace (Zapf, Knorz and Kulla 1996). The particular method aims at a systematic, long-term and insidious tactic with many repetitions, which aims at the psychological and occupational annihilation of theworker (Leymann 1966, Einarsen and Skogstad 1996, Zapf

1999). In many cases, when the violence comes from the administration and there is a lot of tension and pressure on the worker, cases of suicide are found related to the workplace circumstances. (Karakioulafis, 2011).

Various cultures and languages define "Bullying at work" in different ways and shades. The current review adopted the definition provided by Einarsen, Hoel, Zapf, and Cooper (2003, p. 3): "*The systematic mistreatment of a subordinate, a colleague, or a superior, which, if continued, may cause severe social, psychological and psychosomatic problems in the victim*". The bullying reflects a structural imbalance of strength among the victim and the bully(s) (Einarsen et al., 2003).

'Mobbing' is a bullying status when a club of individuals offends one victim (Hoel & Einarsen, 2003). It is more severe than abusive supervision, including repetitive and deliberate acts of offensive nature toward others, creating an oppressive work environment (Rai & Agarwal, 2016). In the long run, the definition 'bullying' was widely used in English-speaking countries, while "mobbing" was preferred in German-speaking countries. In contrast, in France and Belgium, researchers have used the term "moral harassment" (Einarsen et al., 2000). Moreover, other terms such as 'abusive behavior,' 'emotional abuse,' 'workplace harassment,' and 'workplace trauma' have also been used in the USA (Bloisi & Hoel, 2008). However, all these terms tend to refer to the same paradox. The present review follows also Bentley et al.'s (2012) definition, which is "a situation where one or several individuals perceive themselves to be on the receiving end of negative actions from one or more persons persistently over a period of time, in a situation where the targets have difficulty defending themselves against these actions" (op.cit., p. 352). Key features of bullying at work are (1) an imbalance of power between the two parties involved, (2) repeated negative actions or practices over an extended period, (3) directed at one or more people, which are (4) unwanted and (5) cause distress and/or damage (Bloisi & Hoel, 2008).

Anti-Bullying Policy

An anti-bullying policy is the most common organizational intervention to address workplace bullying (Hoel, 2013; Richards and Daley, 2003; Salin, 2003). Anti-bullying policies present important visible standards for interpersonal behaviour, signaling recognition that bullying is unethical and highlighting employees' rights not to be exposed to it. Yet, there are very few attempts to evaluate their effectiveness.

It has been demonstrated that the presence of a policy is a significant predictor of lower rates of workplace bullying (O'Connell et al., 2007), and employers with a robust policy in place are less likely to lose a case against them on Power and inaction 267 ground of bullying or harassment (Rockett et al., 2017); yet, qualitative studies have found negative experiences even in organizations with an anti-bullying policy (Hodgins and Mannix McNamara, 2019; Hodgins et al., 2018; Vickers, 2012), indicating that it is not a straightforward relationship. Policy may be better, broadly speaking, than no policy, but how it is implemented depends on a range of factors. A cynical view is that policy may reduce litigation against the organization, which in fact protects the organization rather than the employee.

However, it may be unfair to impute such negative motivations on all senior managers, and it is fair to say that anti-bullying policies are complex interventions (Cambell et al., 2000) in complex settings, i.e. there are many contextual and implementation factors at play. For example, awareness of policy is a pre-requisite for use, yet organizations do not always inform staff of the availability of a policy. Only 67% of the Finnish municipalities gave information on their policy to staff, and only 27% provided training for managers (Salin, 2003). In a study of

two Irish public sector organizations, one-quarter did not know or had incorrect information about their organization's policy (Hodgins, 2004). More importantly, employers may well be remiss in following their own policies (Ferris, 2004; Hoel, 2013; Namie, 2012; O'Higgins and Kiernan, 2015). While 38% of the targets in a US study reported the presence of an anti-bullying policy, for 35% of these, it was applied unevenly or was considered too weak (Namie, 2012). In a UK study, only 30% of the respondents felt their organizational policies were effective for addressing bullying, while 27% felt procedures were not effective (Evesson and Oxenbridge, 2015). To the extent that formal action can be taken as an indicator of confidence in the organizational system (Shallcross et al., 2013), it is worth noting that very few employees who believe they are bullied take formal action (O'Connell et al., 2007; Task Force on the Prevention of Workplace Bullying, 2001). Low confidence may be well placed; a study of public service personnel in Australia found that of 155 complaints received between 2010 and 2016, 72% were unsubstantiated (Crimp, 2017).

Hospitality Industry and Mobbing

According to Ram 2018, the hospitality industry has the highest ratio of reported incidents of bullying and harassment among all sectors (Ram, 2018). A labour union in Australia, called United Voice, claimed that 86% of the respondents in their survey of employees in the hospitality industry had reported feeling insecure in their workplace (Bowling, 2017). While such negative feedback has been reported about working conditions in the hospitality industry, hospitality scholars and leaders alike emphasize that employee welfare and human development is paramount for the development and promotion of the hospitality industry (Rivera, 2017).

The unfavourable working conditions in the hospitality industry might exacerbate a hostile environment in the workplace that may result in bullying incidents (Anasori et al., 2020). Hershcovis et al. (2015) reported that a stressful working environment is the optimal condition in which mobbing will appear. Higher workload (Baillien et al., 2011) and job stressors (De Cuyper et al., 2009) are also familiar to exercise a critical influence on the occurrence of harassment or offensive behaviors in the workplace. Employees in hotels have exposure to more harmful and stressful situations compared with other services because they work within constrained spaces under the culture of "orders from managers should be obeyed without fail" (Bentley et al., 2012). According to Kitterlin, Tanke, and Stevens (2016), verbal abuse, sexual intimidation, and harassing behaviours are considerably more frequent in the hospitality service industry than in the non-hospitality service industry.

Various studies focus on workplace harassment in the hospitality industry, for example Bloisi and Hoel (2008) recommended that the social interactions/standing of cooks should be improved in hotel kitchens, consistent education and training programs should be conducted at the organizational level, and employers should display interest and support for reducing violence and harassment in kitchens. Moreover Mathisen et al. (2008), claims that workplace harassment in restaurants is a common issue responsible for job dissatisfaction and subsequent reduction in creativity among employees, and it substantially increases negative effects, such as burnout and turnover intent. It is wise to mention that, Mathisen, Einarsen, and Mykletun (2010) supported that managers with severe neurosis harass their subordinates or colleagues more often than those without neurosis, and that superiors' stress represents a significant factor that could increase harassing behaviours. With accordance to Bentley et al. (2012), 10% of all employees in the travel business experience workplace harassment: those who are harassed show lower levels of self-evaluation and thus experience higher stress and increased intent to leave the organization than those who have not been harassed.

Ali et al. (2015) found that employees in the hospitality industry regularly deal with various people in the provision of services and are exposed to several types of harassment in their workplace; further, physical harassment and aggressive behaviours are important reasons why hotel employees leave their jobs. Yap and Ineson (2015) claimed that employees face several types of harassment during internships in the hospitality industry, resulting in negative emotions and deteriorated physical health. Likewise, Holm et al. (2015) observed that harassment by superiors or colleagues as perceived by employees in a hotel or restaurant has a significant consequence on their negative performance, and Cho, Bonn, Han, and Lee (2016) reported that workplace harassment as experienced by restaurant employees reduces their service performance and financial income of the business.

According to Kusluvan (Kusluvan et. al, 2010) in hospitality and tourism businesses the impact on production is greater. The tourism industry, in contrast to purely commercial enterprises, does not simply offer a material good to the customer, but in combination with an intangible service based mainly on the employee's personality (Chen 2013). That is, quite simply, in the case of the hotel product guests do not put a coin in a vending machine to get a soft drink. Here the product is offered and prepared by a worker in a specific environment (Gumbus and Lyons 2011) where not only the satisfaction of the thirst need from the drink is sought, but also the satisfaction of the customer's additional expectations. Thus, the effects on the production of the hotel product, mainly due to its dual nature, is more affected than any other product of the other business branches, since the personality, character, behaviour of the hotel employee are also traits and skills of his professional profile. However, it is not only the quality of the produced product that is damaged by workplace mobbing, as it is the result of a multitude of psychological and physical damages, (Brees et al., 2013) such as anger outbursts, work stress, alopecia, intense sweating, sleep disorders, frequent changes in the working environment and the transfer of these problems to the family environment, resulting in the disruption of domestic peace.

Unquestionably mobbing in the hospitality industry ruins the image of the hospitality tourism image, causes to employees' distress and exhaustion, not to mention the sickness absenteeism phenomenon, where fewer people are left with more work, in a climate of uncertainty (Rivera et al 2016). The existence of mental and moral harassment has contributed decisively to the burden of the quality of working conditions. It is one of the most basic forms of workplace harassment (Zapf 1999) with a highly corrosive and toxic effect on the modern work environment (Sandvik et al. 2008). The effects of this phenomenon are so negative on health, safety, the quality of the work produced as well as on the dynamics of the competitiveness of businesses within the capitalist arena of everyday life (Papalexandri 2011).

Methods, Context and Findings Analysis

Content Analysis

As the particular study is a first attempt for examining the mobbing phenomenon in the hospitality sector in Greece, the content analysis was preferred since it combines qualitative and quantitative research approaches. Since two of the authors work officially in the field of monitoring and prevention of violence and harassment at workplace, the provision of data was immediate and accurate. The authors have also witnessed and, in many occasions, have handled labour disputes so they had the opportunity to study profoundly many reported cases and testimonies of violence and harassment in the work environment. Three types of document sources were used for the content analysis: (a) the annual data of the Independent Department for Monitoring Violence and Harassment at Workplace, (b) reported charges related with the mobbing at workplace, provided by two central Regional Directorates of Labor Relations

Inspection and (c) reported accusations of work harassment in hospitality sector, provided by the Hotel Employees' Union of Heraklion, Crete. Confidentiality was preserved in the process of acquisition and elaboration of accusations and testimonies.

The New Role of The Hellenic Labour Inspectorate (H.L.I.)

Violence and harassment were until recently a taboo subject in the workplace, a fact that was reflected in the design and content of the institutional framework. As society changes and more and more voices are heard demanding a decent job that will fulfil certain qualitative conditions, the issue of violence and harassment now has been in prime concern by official bodies to investigate its dimensions and the forms of its manifestation and then be limited or eliminated through the design and implementation of appropriate strategies and measures. The Labor Inspection Body is called upon to compensate and bridge the subjective interpretations of the manifestations of violence and harassment with the applicable rules required by the legal framework and good morals, through its contribution to the elimination of such phenomena and to motivate victims of such behaviours to proceed to complaint and effective treatment of the damage suffered.

Labor Inspectors are called upon to take action to prevent and manage working conditions that pose psychosocial risks for workers, acting as links between the mandates and dictates of the legislative framework for the implementation of policies aimed at preventing and dealing with psychosocial risks and employers who are obliged to ensure the implementation of these rules. Therefore, the role of the modern Labor Inspector is more expanded as it is not only limited to the detection of violations and the imposition of fines, but is called upon to inform, educate, advise and guide employers and workers in order to create the right environment that will bring profits in the business while at the same time it will contribute to safeguarding and strengthening the mental, spiritual, physical health and well-being of the employee (Weissbrodt, Arial et al., 2018).

At the present time Greek businesses submit their anti-mobbing policy and in the absence of it, a fine is guarantee. The implementation of the Greek labour law 4808/21 imposes the operation of an anti-bullying policy for every business above 70 employees. The anti-bullying policy must be approved by the local Hellenic Labour Inspectorate. In addition, enterprises with more than 20 employees are obliged to apply an internal policy against violence and harassment (Law 4808/21, article 9) so as to show their willingness to combat mobbing at work. The aim of those regulations is to encourage enterprises in Greece to acquire a philosophy and a specific attitude and behaviour where the employee will feel safe and in case he/she has been a victim, will feel comfortable expressing himself/herself and confiding in his/her superiors.

The Mobbing Phenomenon in 2021

According to the annual report for the year 2021 from the Independent Department for Monitoring Violence and Harassment at Work, 37 local Inspection dept.'s around Greece declared complaints about labour disputes regarding violence and harassment at work have been forwarded to the Department since 05/7/2021, when its operation actually began, and until 31/12/2021 (reference year).

Labor Relations Inspection Departments across the territory corresponded to a total of ninety-seven (97) related applications for labour disputes and one hundred and one (101) applicants. Regarding the gender of the complainants, sixty-eight (68) were women and thirty-three (33) were men, and regarding the subject of the complaint, eighty-four (84) were related to

incidents of violence, verbal, physical and psychological and harassment in general, and all thirteen (13) in cases of sexual harassment. Of the ninety-seven (97) labour dispute applications, seventy-seven (77) have been processed and twenty (20) are ongoing, while in sixty-three (63) of them the issue is related to violence and harassment caused by the employer himself and in the other thirty-four (34) the complainant is another employee (supervisor, shift manager) or another person.

The sectors of business activity where most incidents are reported concern catering, trade, hotels, electricity distribution, production, product manufacturing, IT services, entertainment. The vast majority of labour disputes concern incidents of violence, verbal, physical, psychological and in general harassment according to the new concepts and responsibilities introduced by articles 4, 17 and 18 of the recent labour Law 4808/2021 and at a rate of 86.6% against 13, 4 % of the corresponding cases of sexual harassment (Table 1).

Table 1: Forms of Work Harassment in Greece – Annual Report 2021of Hellenic Labour Inspectorate
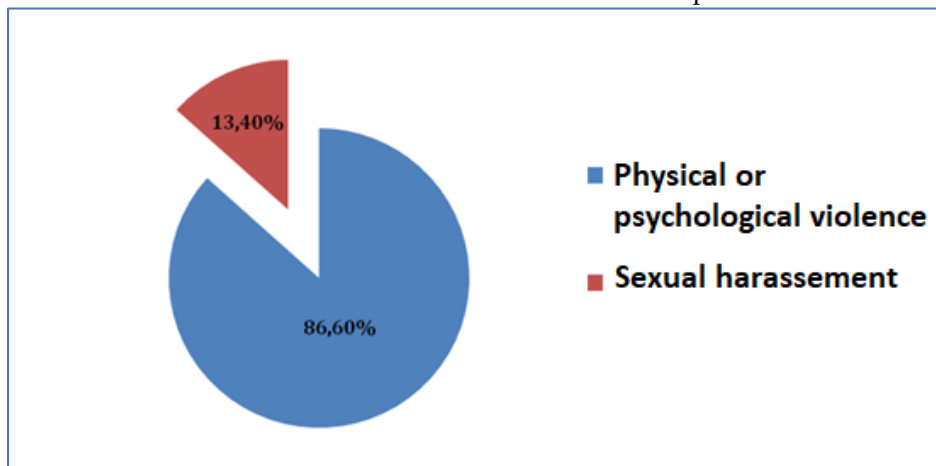
It is noteworthy that 33% of the complainants - "affected" are men, while the female gender occupies the first place with a percentage of 67% (Table 2). It was also noticed that 65% of the alleged persons of harassment are owners, employers or employers' representatives, managers and supervisors whereas 35% of the alleged persons are colleagues or employees (Table 3).

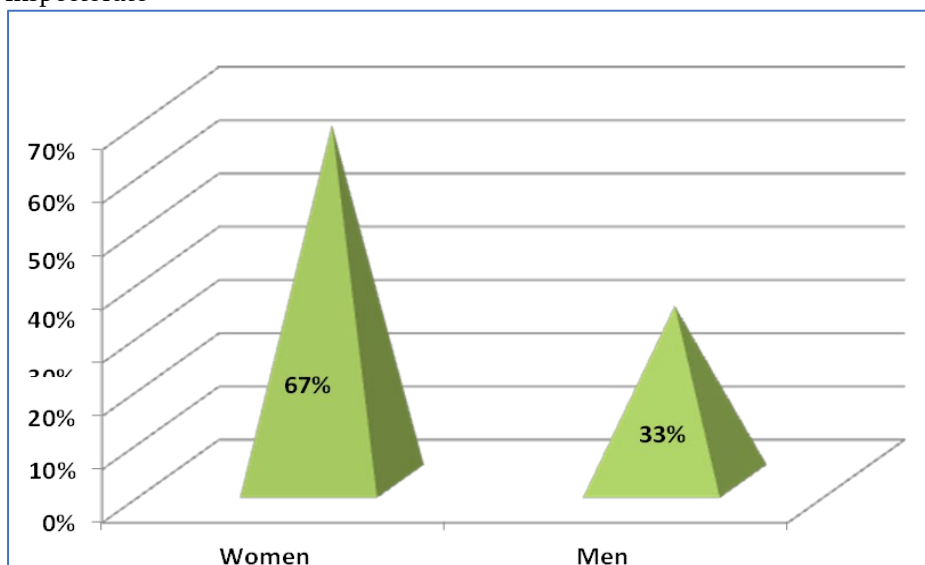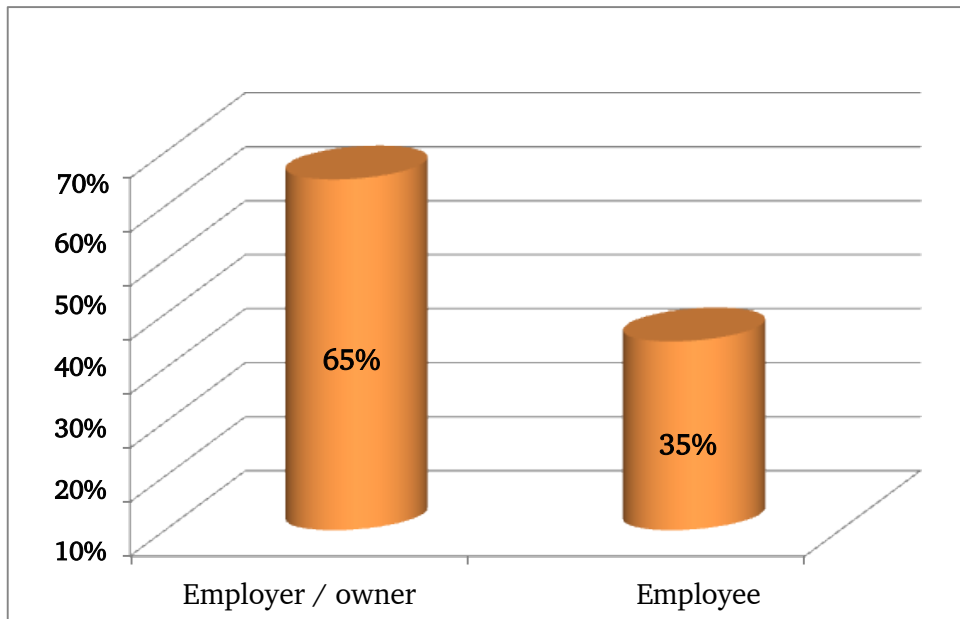**Table 2:** Complainants' Categorization According to Gender- Annual Report 2021of Hellenic Labour Inspectorate

**Table 3**: Rates of Alleged Persons' Work Positions.

Management, Conduct, Outcome of Audits and Labor Disputes During 2021

A special procedure is foreseen by the Labor Inspectorate, which refers to the management of registered complaints submitted to the Inspectorate about the violation of the legal provisions that regulate the prohibition of violence and harassment at work. The affected person has the choice to apply for a labour dispute related to violence and harassment (articles 4,12,13) either to the manager at the Head of the competent Regional Directorate of Labor Relations Inspection, or to manager at the Head of the competent Department, who are responsible to conduct the dispute resolution process.

Twenty-eight (28) cases have been resolved by taking the appropriate and corresponding measures by the police, according to Law 4808/21, relevant recommendations to the police for a work world without violence and harassment and their relative monitoring by the competent inspectorate, i.e. a percentage of 37% of all processed labour disputes with prospects for an increase, as the outcome of the results of other labour disputes is expected at a percentage of 20.6%. Thirteen (13) cases have been aborted - a rate of 17% - either due to non-appearance of the complainant during the scheduled discussion, or due to a written statement of the latter, or because specific incidents of violence and harassment were not further analysed during the discussion, so that to be subject to the special procedure of article 18 of Law 4808/2021. In thirty-six (36) cases - a percentage of 46% - a reasoned recommendation to appeal to the competent courts has been recorded due to conflicting claims on contested factual and legal issues (Table 4).

Table 4: Outcome of the Labour Disputes - Annual Report 2021of Hellenic Labour Inspectorate
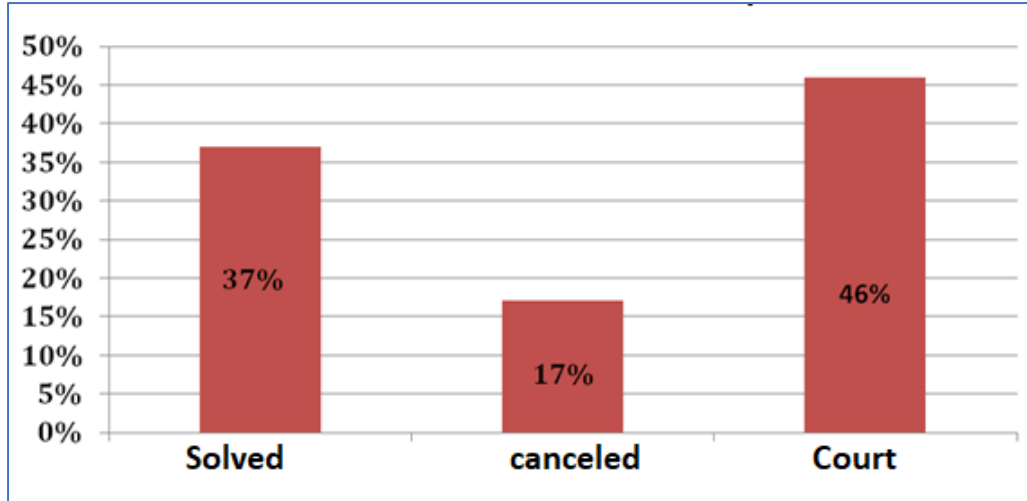
Cases Of Mobbing Issues in The Hospitality Industry In 2021

As stated in the annual report 2021 of the Independent Department for Monitoring Violence and Harassment at Work, 21% of the work harassment cases declared refer to the hospitality and food service industry (Table 5).

Table 5: Work Harassment Cases Reported during the Second Semester of 2021 in Greece.
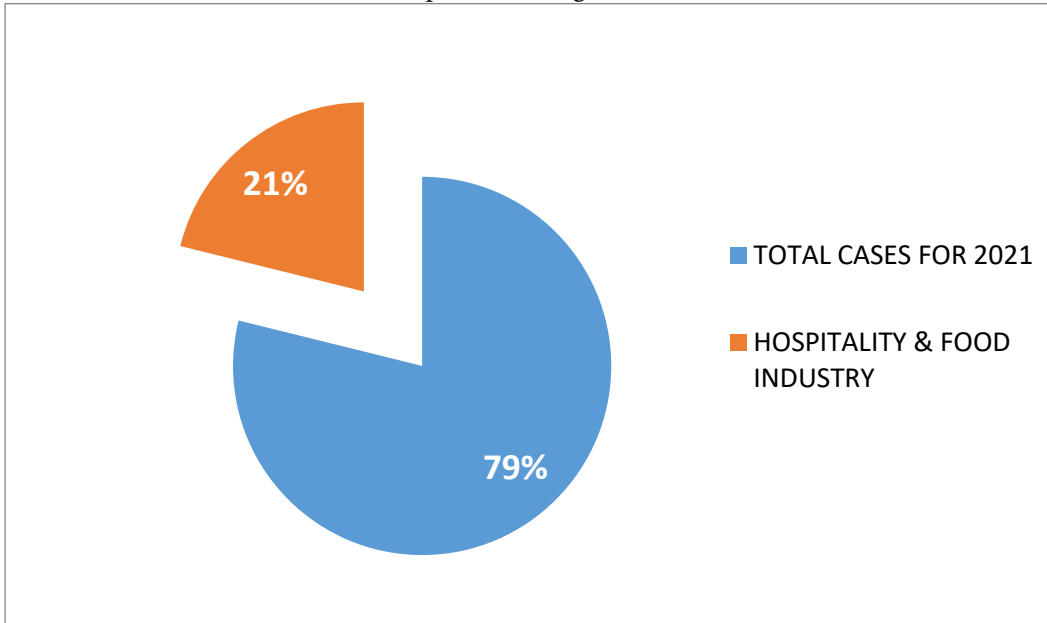

The percentages tend to increase rapidly for the year 2022. The particular department started to accept accusations of work harassment from June 2021 since the new labour law 4808/21 was applied and established the above department. Moreover in 2021 it was not widely spread in the public the operation and the role of the Independent Department for Monitoring Violence and Harassment at Work. The authors considered not to compare years 2021 and 2022 since the year 2021 doesn't represent the actual size of the work harassment epidemic. Therefore, the findings of 2022 will be presented autonomously.

Work Harassment Epidemic In 2022

With accordance to the official records of the Independent Department for Monitoring Violence and Harassment at Work, individuals had submitted 172 accusations of work harassment in Greece in 2022. Among them 31 cases represent mobbing at the hospitality and food service industry. At the Table 6, it is noticed that 15 % of the total work harassment submissions are related to the hospitality industry for the year 2022

Table 6: Mobbing Cases for 2022- Annual Report 2022 of Hellenic Labour Inspectorate
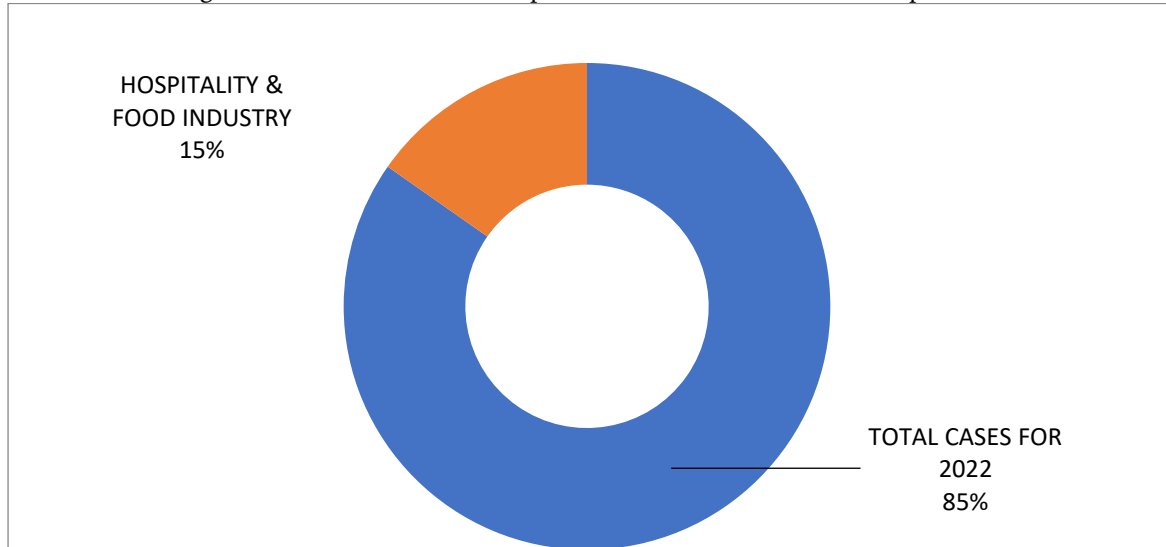
Unformal sources from the Hotel Employees Union in Iraklion Crete, underlines the fact that decades of incidents do not see the light of publicity at the formal government agencies. Small communities discourage employees from expressing official the mobbing they are facing. Seasonal work in the hospitality industry, uncertainty for the future level of reservations lead victims to endure psychological sufferings rather that fighting to extinguish the problem.

Since most of the data for the year 2022 are under process, it's remarkable to notice some vital outcome. Concerning the gender of the victim 61% of the cases represent female victims, whereas men might be a minority with a respectable percentage of almost 40% (Table 7)

Table 7: Rate of Victims' Gender – Annual Report 2022 of Hellenic Labour Inspectorate
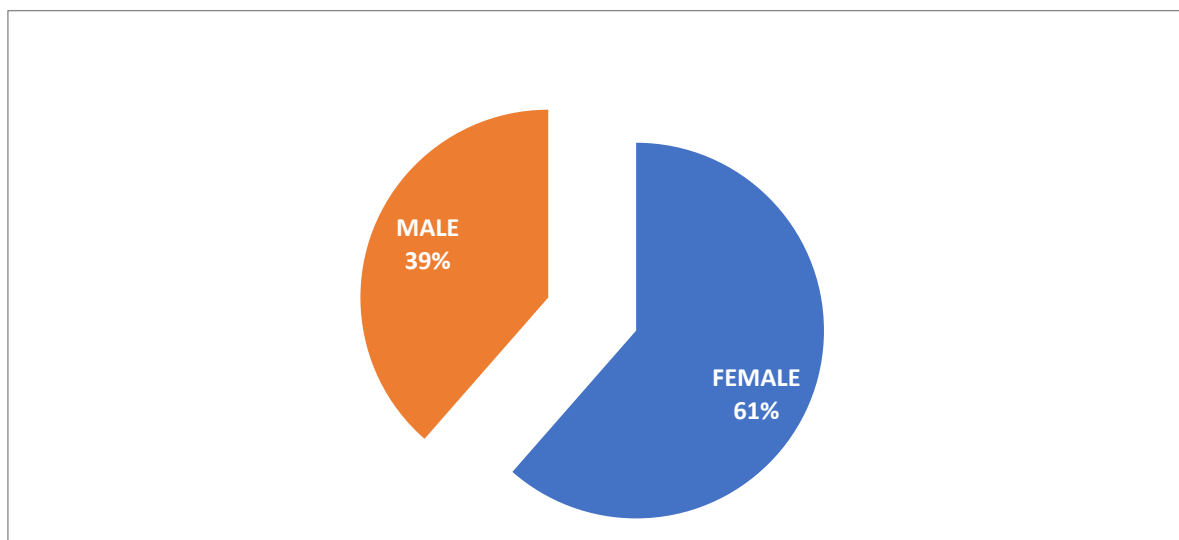
It's remarkable to acknowledge (table 8) that 27% of the cases submitted by civilians were solved effectively in a few weeks, 12% were cancelled, and almost half of them couldn't reach a solution and were driven to court. An amount of 25,150 euros was imposed to business which didn't have developed and anti-bullying policy and some others are still in procedure.

Table 8: Work Harassment Cases- Annual Report 2022- Hellenic Labour Inspectorate
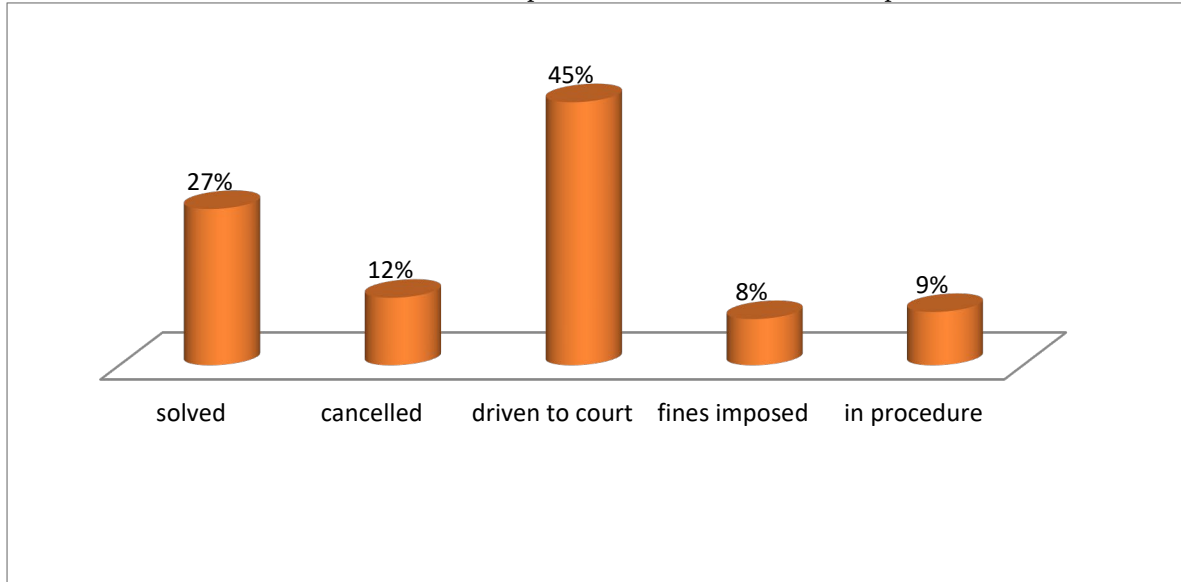
With reference to the types of the harassment (table 9) only 9% of them suffer a sexual violence. Though, authors share the strongest conviction that sexual harassment is not expressed officially, especially among small community groups.

Table 9: Forms of Harassment
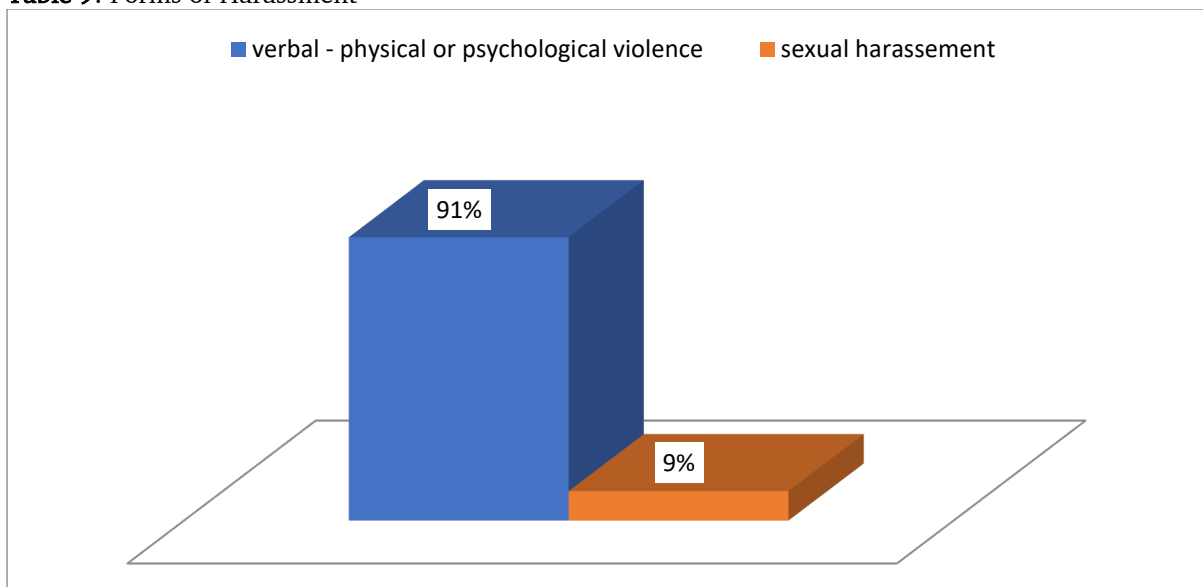
Hotel Employees' Union of Heraklion Prefecture

Apart from the official data, provided by the Hellenic Labour Inspectorate, authors approached the president of the Hotel Employees' union of the Heraklion Prefecture Mr. Nikolaos Kokolakis who willingly assisted and gathered from December 2022 to March 2023 the number of 27 accusations of work harassment in the hospitality industry.

Heraklion is the capital of Crete and one of the Mediterranean region's most fascinating and vibrant cities. Heraklion is the largest region of Crete and a major tourist destination in Greece and Europe. Tourism is one of Crete's primary industries, with 5,287,600 international visitors and 4,573,656 international visitor hotel arrivals in 2019, of which about 44% visited the region of Heraklion. Tourism is a major economic source for the region of Heraklion. The total direct revenue from tourism for 2019 was 3.6 billion euros. Heraklion also has the biggest port on the island regarding cruise passenger numbers, with 307,043 arrivals in 2019. More than 1.7 million passengers arrived by ferry in the same year, either for tourism or other purposes. The port has an annual passenger capacity of up to 0.5 million for cruise tourism, hosting up to 5 cruise ships at once. While boosting Heraklion's economy, this growth is unavoidably linked with operational difficulties and challenges to the city's social, cultural and environmental resources.

All the above inputs led to acknowledge that the evidence from the above union is a significant key to the whole study. The analysis of the data collected will be a trigger for new research of the authors, examining also the reason of the victims' reluctance to declare officially the work harassment they face. Nevertheless, it should be mentioned that 64% of the complaints support the opinion that the hotel managers are aware of the mobbing incidents and do nothing to combat it, underestimating the importance of it. Another astonishing element of the data is that 39% of the mobbing cases were conducted by female supervisors (housekeeping dept.'s) to female employees.

Conclusions – Suggestions

Both, from the complaint's examination and from the international literature, it appears that the abuser, like the victim, does not have a specific gender, since both men and women can perfectly play the role of the abuser even if they were once victims themselves. Also, it derives from the examination of the relevant reported cases and data that victims' reluctance to openly express mobbing incidents is the biggest obstacle for the agencies involved to examine and provide an effective solution to the alleged incident. This reluctance gives ground to the spread of the phenomenon, as the bad example easily finds imitators. It is important then for employees to protest and report when they receive repeated attacks of any kind (physical, verbal, body language, etc.) either to their manager, or to the Labor Inspectorate and the Ombudsman. Workers' hesitations to express the drama they experience, give grounds to every abuser to continue his reprehensible work. So, there is a constant repetition of mobbing behaviours by the perpetrators since impunity not only motivates them to continue, but also to find colleagues who reproduce the same behaviours.

Concerning the sexual harassment in hotels, in some cases it was not easy for the receivers of inappropriate behaviours to express their claims without getting confused, since the alleged persons often claimed that, what was considered as an incident of sexual harassment, it was just a misunderstanding, caused due to the different culture background. Even in occasions with repeated misbehaviour from a harasser against his/her colleagues, the substantiation of his/her guilt was not an easy task as lack of proofs is a common feature in most of these cases.

Another important clue that came to light was the general managers' indifference. The manager of a business has the duty to investigate reported instances of work harassment. However, it was noticed that most of the managers in hospitality sector did not give any or enough attention to employees' complaints about cases of violence or harassment. The usual excuse for their indifference on these matters is that they have to handle a lot of tasks and duties in a confined time. Thus, they underestimate the significance of the problem and prefer to ignore employees' complaints about supervisors' and senior managers' insulting and indecent behaviour.

But it is not only managers' indifference which leads to the escalation of violence and harassment in hotels; it is also the colleagues' apathy. Even when the abuser expressed his/her harassing behaviour against his/her victim in front of colleagues' eyes, they want to have no interference. The phrase: *"They pretend that nothing is happening",* has been referred many times in complaints' reports, when they are asked about colleagues' attitude. The result of reluctance and indifference is the delay in the investigating process of incidents of violence and harassment and, consequently, the loss of proofs and evidence and the weakness of complaints' credibility.

In order to limit and suppress workplace harassment, it is necessary to take action by the victims themselves, but also by their colleagues who must react to the gross injustice and address the appropriate agencies to resolve and - above all - prevent such negative incidents. Employees should feel protected and not ignored by their general manager and feel convenient to submit a possible mobbing action. Mobbing in most cases can be solved and cured at the internal environment of the company and this is the issue that authors want to speak out.

With reference to the New Greek Labour, the employer apart from sharing an anti-bullying policy, should also apply a procedure to investigate and eliminated incidents of work harassment in the business. The authors share strongly the perception that employers should be the defenders of mobbing occasions in their own business by applying effective policies and transparent procedures. Employers should strive to ensure that employees understand its policies and procedures, as well as its commitment to preventing and correcting inappropriate conduct in the workplace (Graves et al., 2021). Special treatment should be taken not to disadvantage the victim of the alleged harassment in order to avoid the perception of retaliation (McTernan et al., 2013).

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