






ORIGINAL

Sociodemographic factors, resilience, and mobbing among teachers in La Paz, Bolivia 2023

Factores sociodemográficos, resiliencia y mobbing en docentes de La Paz, Bolivia 2023

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ABSTRACT

Introduction: mobbing has been studied in Bolivia, but its recognition in the workplace is limited. Resilience is related to social and economic crises.

Objective: to determine the relationship between sociodemographic factors, resilience, and mobbing among teachers in La Paz, Bolivia, in 2023.

Method: quantitative approach, non-experimental and descriptive-correlational scope. A total of 385 primary and secondary education teachers participated. The IVAPT and SV-RES resilience scales were used. Statistical methods such as descriptive analysis, Pearson's χ^2 , and Spearman's correlation were employed for data analysis.

Results: 73,51 % of participants reported a high incidence of psychological violence, while 9,35 % did not experience harassment. 49,35 % are at an average level of resilience, with 26,49 % at a low level and 24,16 % at a high level. Regarding resilient response, 46,23 % are average, 30,39 % are low, and 23,38 % are high. 67,19 % of those experiencing less mobbing have an average resilient response, and 44,96 % with average resilience report high levels of mobbing.

Conclusions: the research emphasizes the importance of addressing mobbing from a multidimensional perspective, considering the individual and contextual characteristics of employees.

Keywords: Psychological Harassment at Work; Primary and Secondary Education; Sociodemographic Factors; Mobbing; Resilience.

RESUMEN

Introducción: el mobbing ha sido estudiado en Bolivia, pero su reconocimiento laboral es limitado. La resiliencia se relaciona con crisis sociales y económicas.

Objetivo: determinar la relación entre factores sociodemográficos, resiliencia y mobbing en docentes de La Paz, Bolivia, en 2023.

Método: enfoque cuantitativo, no experimental y de alcance descriptivo-correlacional. Participaron 385 profesores de educación primaria y secundaria. Se utilizaron las escalas IVAPT y de Resiliencia SV-RES. Para el análisis de los datos, se utilizaron métodos estadísticos como el análisis descriptivo, χ^2 de Pearson y correlación de Spearman.

Resultados: 73,51 % de los participantes reportó alta incidencia de violencia psicológica, el 9,35 % no experimentó acoso. El 49,35 % se sitúa en un nivel promedio de resiliencia, con un 26,49 % en bajo y un 24,16 % en alto. En cuanto a la respuesta resiliente, el 46,23 % está en promedio, el 30,39 % en bajo y el 23,38 % en alto. El 67,19 % de quienes sufren menos mobbing tienen una respuesta resiliente promedio, y el 44,96 % con resiliencia promedio reporta altos niveles de mobbing.

Conclusiones: la investigación subraya la importancia de abordar el mobbing desde una perspectiva multidimensional, considerando las características individuales y contextuales de los empleados.

Palabras clave: Acoso Psicológico en el Trabajo; Educación Primaria y Secundaria; Factores Socio-Demográficos; Mobbing; Resiliencia.

INTRODUCTION

Mobbing, also known as workplace bullying, is defined as a systematic pattern of psychological harassment in which one or more individuals engage in unfavorable behavior towards a victim in the workplace. These actions form a problem of contemporary sociocultural violence⁽¹⁾ and can include insults, humiliation, isolation, and the spreading of rumors to damage the professional reputation and emotional well-being of the person affected. Psychologist Heinz Leymann popularized this term in the 1980s and characterized it as a situation that causes the victim social isolation and considerable psychological distress over a prolonged period, generally at least six months.⁽²⁾

Resilience, on the other hand, is understood as the ability of people to face and overcome difficult situations, adapt to them, and, in some cases, emerge stronger. This concept encompasses coping with adversity and emotional dissonance and the learning and growth that derive from negative experiences.⁽³⁾ Resilience is fundamental for personal development, work motivation, and evaluating effort,⁽⁴⁾ as it allows individuals to manage stress and difficulties effectively, contributing to their emotional and psychological well-being.⁽⁵⁾ In Bolivia, 57 % of teachers have suffered from mobbing, while 74,8 % have experienced psychological violence. This research highlights the need to address this problem to protect teachers' mental and physical health.

In the educational context, mobbing can manifest itself in various ways, including harassment by colleagues, managers, or even students and their families.⁽⁶⁾ Violence is expressed globally in multiple forms, thus revealing an alarming lack of respect, tolerance, and deficiency of social intelligence.⁽⁷⁾ A lack of job autonomy and dissatisfaction in supervisor relationships predict mobbing.⁽⁸⁾ From a psychosocial point of view, there is a lack of well-developed interpersonal relationships and socio-emotional skills that depend on the social formation of the individual.⁽⁹⁾ Furthermore, covert workplace bullying is a silent but significant problem in educational centers, generating a toxic work environment.^(10,11)

In Bolivia, the study by Pando and Beltrán⁽¹²⁾ analyzed the Inventory of Violence and Psychological Harassment at Work "IVAPT-PANDO" in the populations of Bolivia and Ecuador. In terms of the intensity of violence, Bolivia registered 13,2 % and Ecuador 17,9 %, while psychological harassment was 3,5 % in Bolivia and 6,1 % in Ecuador, figures that are lower than those reported in other countries.

In this context, there is currently a need to study and identify sociodemographic factors; resilience and mobbing are important because mobbing (psychological violence at work) hurts the health of the worker,⁽¹³⁾ and resilience could be a protective factor in dealing with this risk factor. Therefore, the objective of this study was to determine the relationship between sociodemographic factors and resilience and mobbing in teachers at educational institutions in the city of La Paz, Bolivia, 2023.

METHOD

The research was developed using a quantitative, non-experimental approach with a descriptive-correlational scope. The sampling method used was convenience sampling, as there is no exact figure for the number of teachers at the level of regular basic education, which was 385 primary and secondary school teachers in the city of La Paz, Bolivia, in 2023.

The following inclusion criteria were used: teachers who voluntarily decide to participate in the study, tenured teachers who have been in their posts for more than a year, teachers who fully complete the surveys applied, primary and secondary school teachers, and as exclusion criteria: teachers who voluntarily decide not to participate in the study, tenured teachers who have been in their posts for less than a year, teachers who do not fully complete the surveys applied, administrative staff of educational units. As an ethical consideration, when the data was collected using scales, they signed a confidentiality form.

The IVAPT Scale was used, and the instrument was adapted to maintain its original structure of twenty-two items with five response options: "Never," "Rarely," "Sometimes," "Frequently," and "Very Frequently,"

classifying it as a multidimensional scale. The second instrument used was the SV-RES Resilience Scale, which is also multidimensional, consisting of sixty items distributed across 12 specific resilience factors.

RESULTS

The results in table 1 reveal gender, age, marital status, academic background, years of work in the educational institution, and work shift. In the category of not being a victim of mobbing, a higher percentage of men (4,4 %) compared to 2,3 % of women. Likewise, the categories were less than to colleagues and the same as to colleagues. The percentage of men was higher, 33,2 % and 19,0 %, respectively. These results suggest that, although mobbing is a problem in both groups, its manifestation may vary according to gender. The absence of cases of severe mobbing in both genders also indicates a considerable group unaffected by these dynamics.

Table 1. Analysis of the Intensity of Mobbing according to Sociodemographic Variables

Sociodemographic variables		Intensity of Mobbing										
		Not a victim of mobbing		Less than to colleagues		The same as for colleagues		More than to my colleagues		Total		
		n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	
Gender	Male	17	4,4 %	128	33,2 %	73	19,0 %	0	0,0 %	218	56,7 %	
	Female	9	2,3 %	91	23,6 %	58	15,1 %	0	0,0 %	158	41,0 %	
	Total	26	6,8 %	219	57,1 %	131	34,1 %	0	0,0 %	385	100,0 %	
Age	61 years and over	9	2,34 %	36	9,36 %	54	14,03 %	0	0,00 %	99	25,71 %	
	51 to 60 years	11	2,86 %	58	15,06 %	24	6,23 %	0	0,00 %	93	24,16 %	
	From 41 to 50 years old	12	3,12 %	62	16,10 %	28	7,27 %	0	0,00 %	102	26,49 %	
	From 31 to 40 years old	12	3,12 %	78	20,26 %	32	8,31 %	0	0,00 %	122	31,64 %	
	From 20 to 30 years old	0	0,00 %	20	5,19 %	19	4,93 %	0	0,00 %	39	10,16 %	
	Total	44	11,43 %	254	66,46 %	157	40,74 %	0	0,00 %	385	100,00 %	
	Marital status	Single	9	2,34 %	22	5,73 %	17	4,42 %	0	0,00 %	48	12,47 %
		Married	30	7,79 %	61	15,84 %	30	7,79 %	0	0,00 %	121	31,39 %
Separated		0	0,00 %	9	2,34 %	1	0,26 %	0	0,00 %	10	2,60 %	
Widowed		0	0,00 %	1	0,26 %	0	0,00 %	0	0,00 %	1	0,26 %	
Total		39	10,16 %	93	24,16 %	48	12,47 %	0	0,00 %	385	100,00 %	
Academic Qualifications	Other	0	0,00 %	26	6,77 %	13	3,38 %	0	0,00 %	39	10,16 %	
	University	4	1,04 %	23	5,97 %	12	3,12 %	0	0,00 %	39	10,16 %	
	Higher technical	4	1,04 %	30	7,79 %	26	6,77 %	0	0,00 %	60	15,58 %	
	Auxiliary	0	0,00 %	1	0,26 %	0	0,00 %	0	0,00 %	1	0,26 %	
	High school	4	1,04 %	23	5,97 %	7	1,82 %	0	0,00 %	34	8,83 %	
	Total	12	3,12 %	103	26,77 %	58	15,06 %	0	0,00 %	385	100,00 %	
Years working at the I.E.	From 21 years and over	1	0,26 %	2	0,52 %	2	0,52 %	0	0,00 %	5	1,30 %	
	From 11 to 20 years	2	0,52 %	16	4,16 %	5	1,30 %	0	0,00 %	23	5,97 %	
	From 6 to 10 years	2	0,52 %	16	4,16 %	16	4,16 %	0	0,00 %	34	8,83 %	
	From 1 to 5 years	3	0,78 %	30	7,79 %	14	3,64 %	0	0,00 %	47	12,21 %	
	Zero years	1	0,26 %	14	3,64 %	11	2,86 %	0	0,00 %	26	6,77 %	
	Total	9	2,34 %	78	20,26 %	48	12,47 %	0	0,00 %	385	100,00 %	
Which shift do you work?	Party (morning-afternoon)	1	0,26 %	10	2,60 %	5	1,30 %	0	0,00 %	16	4,16 %	
	Morning	3	0,78 %	37	9,61 %	32	8,31 %	0	0,00 %	72	18,70 %	
	Afternoon	5	1,30 %	21	5,45 %	9	2,34 %	0	0,00 %	35	9,09 %	
	Evening	0	0,00 %	2	0,52 %	1	0,26 %	0	0,00 %	3	0,78 %	
	Rotating (Morning-afternoon-evening)	0	0,00 %	6	1,56 %	0	0,00 %	0	0,00 %	6	1,56 %	
	Other	0	0,00 %	2	0,52 %	1	0,26 %	0	0,00 %	3	0,78 %	
	Total	9	2,34 %	78	20,26 %	48	12,47 %	0	0,00 %	385	100,00 %	

Table 2 provides an analysis of resilience in terms of several socio-demographic variables, including gender, age, marital status, academic background, years of work in the educational institution and work shift. In terms of gender, both men and women show similar levels of resilience, with 54,81 % of men and 45,19 % of women in total. However, males have a slightly higher percentage in the high resilience categories (40,76 %) compared to females (41,38 %).

Table 2. Resilience in the Educational Environment: Distribution by Gender, Age and Marital Status

Socio-demographic variables		Intensity of Mobbing							
		Low		Medium		Stop		Total	
		n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Gender	Male	40	18,96	85	40,28	86	40,76	211	54,81
	Female	29	16,67	73	41,95	72	41,38	174	45,19
	Total	69	17,92	158	41,04	158	41,04	385	100,00
Age	61 years and over	23	20,00	80	69,57	12	10,43	115	29,87
	51 to 60 years	18	33,33	24	44,44	12	22,22	54	14,03
	41 to 50 years	29	29,90	46	47,42	22	22,68	97	25,19
	31 to 40 years	20	23,26	49	56,98	17	19,77	86	22,34
	20 to 30 years	3	9,09	18	54,55	12	36,36	33	8,57
	Total	93	24,16	217	56,36	75	19,48	385	100,00
Marital Status	Single	9	6,29	100	69,93	34	23,78	143	37,14
	Married	32	17,02	96	51,06	60	31,91	188	48,83
	Separated	8	27,59	18	62,07	3	10,34	29	7,53
	Widowed	6	24,00	12	48,00	7	28,00	25	6,49
	Total	55	14,29	226	58,70	104	27,01	385	100,00
Academic Qualifications	Other	5	8,20	44	72,13	12	19,67	61	15,84
	University	27	25,71	60	57,14	18	17,14	105	27,27
	Advanced technician	27	19,42	70	50,36	42	30,22	139	36,10
	Assistant	6	54,55	3	27,27	2	18,18	11	2,86
	High school graduate	24	34,78	31	44,93	14	20,29	69	17,92
	Total	89	23,12	208	54,03	88	22,86	385	100,00
Years working at the I.E.	From 21 years and over	6	27,27	8	36,36	8	36,36	22	5,71
	From 11 to 20 years	8	9,88	48	59,26	25	30,86	81	21,04
	From 6 to 10 years	8	9,09	48	54,55	32	36,36	88	22,86
	From 1 to 5 years	9	7,03	90	70,31	29	22,66	128	33,25
	Zero years	4	6,06	32	48,48	30	45,45	66	17,14
	Total	35	9,09	226	58,70	124	32,21	385	100,00
What shift are you working?	Party (morning-afternoon)	3	6,25	30	62,50	15	31,25	48	11,9
	Morning	9	4,74	111	58,42	70	36,84	190	53,3
	Afternoon	15	15,15	63	63,64	21	21,21	99	25,9
	Night	2	16,67	6	50,00	4	33,33	12	2,2
	Rotating (morning-afternoon-night)	1	4,76	18	85,71	2	9,52	21	4,4
	Other	4	26,67	6	40,00	5	33,33	15	2,2
	Total	34	8,83	234	60,78	117	30,39	385	1,00

DISCUSSION

Resilience has been recognized as a fundamental element in the experience of mobbing.^(2,5,8) The findings support the idea that resilience is a moderator that helps people face and recover from adverse situations. Resilient people have a greater capacity to manage stress and difficulties, which allows them to maintain their psychological well-being in contexts of harassment. In this sense, the results suggest that promoting resilience in the workplace could be an effective strategy for reducing the perception of harassment. Furthermore, resilience does not only imply the ability to recover but also the ability to adapt and learn from challenging experiences, which can be crucial for the personal and professional development of employees.^(9,10)

The limitation of this study was the lack of diversity in the work contexts analyzed. Organizations must implement programs that strengthen the resilience of their employees. Early identification of abusive behavior and the promotion of a respectful work environment are essential to reduce psychological violence and improve the quality of working life.⁽³⁾ Given the magnitude of the problem in the educational field, it is necessary to include personal development workshops, training in coping skills, and emotional support programs. Promoting a work environment that values mental health and well-being can be critical to mitigating the impact of mobbing.

CONCLUSIONS

This research reveals a complex interaction between demographic factors, resilience, and mobbing in the

educational work environment. Gender, age, and marital status have been observed to be significant variables influencing the mobbing experience. Men tend to report higher levels of victimization, while individuals between the ages of 31 and 40 are the most affected, suggesting that work pressures at this stage of life are particularly intense. In addition, marital status seems to play a crucial role, as married individuals experience higher levels of harassment, highlighting the need to consider the personal context when addressing these dynamics.

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CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest.

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