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The Impact of Goal Orientation and Learning Organization on Mobbing of Academic Advisors in the U.S.

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THE IMPACT OF GOAL ORIENTATION AND LEARNING ORGANIZATION ON
MOBBING OF ACADEMIC ADVISORS IN THE U.S.

by

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MOBBING OF ACADEMIC ADVISORS IN THE U.S.

Bette A. Ludwig, Ph.D.

Western Michigan University, 2019

Mobbing emerged in research decades ago as a way to understand aggressive behavior in the animal kingdom (Lorenz, 1966). This same concept has been adapted for higher education to explain acts of incivility and negative behaviors employees experience within their institutions (Duffy & Sperry, 2007, 2012; Harper, 2016; Yelgecen & Kokalan, 2009). The theory of mobbing encompasses both the organization and the aggressor.

This quantitative study, operationalized using measurable behaviors from the Work Domain Goal Orientation Questionnaire (Vandewalle, 1997), the Dimension of Learning Organization Questionnaire (Watkins and Marsick, 1993), and the Negative Acts Questionnaire (Einarsen, 1997), researches mastery orientation, performance orientation, performance avoidance orientation, communication, collaboration, empowerment, strategic leadership, and the relationship to reported levels of mobbing by academic advisors from across the U.S.

The survey included results of 1,233 professional academic advisors from across the country at both public colleges or universities and community colleges. Negative relationships were found between all constructs of learning organization (communication, collaboration, empowerment, and strategic leadership) and mobbing, while positive relationships were found between mastery and performance orientations with mobbing. The overall prevalence of any mobbing acts reported within the past six months was 87.3%, while 25.2% reported experiencing mobbing acts weekly. The most frequently reported acts included: someone withholding

information affecting performance, having opinions and views ignored, and being ordered to do work below level of competency.

This population was chosen because they are a unique group of staff housed under academic affairs even though increasingly the expectations are to work with students on more personal and social levels, generally considered more in line with student affairs. Some even question whether advising is a profession and if professional staff should be advising students at all (Ginsberg, 2011; Habley, 2009; Kuhn & Padak, 2008; Selingo, 2014; Shaffer, Zalewski, & Leveille, 2010). In order to gain a better understanding of mobbing behavior experienced by professional undergraduate advisors and factors that may contribute to such behaviors, a theoretical framework that encompassed both the individual and the organization was conceptualized.

This study is the first to examine the connection between goal orientation, learning organization, and mobbing of professional academic advisors. The findings show relationships exist between the constructs and reported mobbing behavior. Results further reveal that researchers and administrators may want to focus particular attention on empowerment, strategic leadership, and performance orientation to decrease mobbing acts experienced within this population, and positively support advisors in their role within the institution.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Aggressive and hostile behaviors, often called mobbing, in higher education amongst employees occur at a much a higher rate than non-academic organizations (Hollis, 2012; Hubert & Van Veldhoven, 2001; Keashly & Neuman, 2010). A study by Hollis (2016) suggests as high as 67% of employees working in higher education have experienced or witnessed some type of hostile or aggressive behaviors by colleagues or supervisors. Mobbing is a term initially used by Nobel Prize winner Konrad Lorenz to describe the survival instinct of smaller birds banding together in order to protect themselves from large predators (Lorenz, 1966). The smaller birds would call to other birds and aggressively pursue the threatening bird by flying around the target, divebombing, or even defecating on them in order to scare them off. This concept of mobbing attributed to the survival instincts of birds has also been used to explain types of incivility experienced by individuals working in higher education that include such acts as being ignored, not being invited to meetings, having information withheld that is necessary to perform one's job, or other various behaviors intended to intimidate and exclude the employee (Duffy & Sperry, 2007, 2012; Harper, 2016; Yelgecen & Kokalan, 2009).

Aggressive behavior, bullying, mobbing or any form of incivility should not be tolerated in any organization. However, much of the research in this area has been done outside of higher education or within higher education, but in other countries. The small amount of research that does exist within the United States (U.S.) suggests these types of hostile and negative behaviors are more prevalent in academic settings than other organizations. Twale and DeLuca (2008) suggests the hierarchical structure alone in higher education serves as the major impetus for creating and enabling a hostile working environment. Given the high rate of occurrence and the potential for negative impact on the employee as well as the organization, more needs to be done

to understand the levels of mobbing and what may contribute to those behaviors in institutions of higher learning.

Background

Accountability in higher education has increased over the years due to mounting pressure to retain and graduate students while simultaneously making data driven decisions to effect institutional change. According to the U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Educational Statistics (2017), six-year graduation rates average 59%, but can be as low as 32% at some institutions. State and federal revenue to institutions of higher education has dramatically decreased over the years creating the need for higher tuition to offset the costs. On average colleges and universities now contribute almost 50% of the revenue for operating costs which is nearly double what it was 25 years ago (State Higher Education Executive Officers Association, 2016). With student loan debt increasing 150% over the past decade (Supiano, 2013), some suggest universities and colleges should be held accountable to alleviate this problem (Dickler, 2017; Webber, 2017). Budgets are being tightened while departments are being scrutinized more than ever by upper administration while being asked to justify staffing needs as well as resources with documentation such as assessments and learning outcomes.

The mounting pressure to perform is felt by faculty, staff, and administration across all institutions of higher learning. Employees are continually asked to do more with less and when someone leaves or quits, the work is often absorbed by others within the departments. Institutions desperately create new initiatives in reaction to whatever crisis may be occurring at the time (Strathearn, 2016). The average tenure of chairs and deans is five years, so leadership is continually revolving or in flux (McGrath, 1999; Montez, Wolverton, & Gmelch, 2003; Smith, Rollins, & Smith, 2012). Often times leaders in higher education feel severe pressure to react quickly to problems and do not take the time to gather feedback or input from necessary

constituents to make decisions. Research has shown this type of chaotic leadership and role confusion contributes to aggressive behavior in the workplace (Ilongo, 2016; Quereshi, Iftikhar, Janjua, Zaman, Raja, & Javed, 2015; Yaman, 2010). It is not surprising that aggressive behavior has become so prevalent in institutions of higher learning, but it is an issue that needs attention in order to keep it from escalating even further.

Aggressive or hostile behavior in the workplace is not a new phenomenon but defining the specific behaviors that constitute aggression and using a specific term to denote it has plagued researchers for decades (Chirila & Constantin, 2013; Coyne, Craig, & Chong, 2004; Coyne, Seigne, & Randall, 2000; Crawshaw, 2009; Hollis, 2016; Hutchinson, Vickers, Jackson & Wilkes, 2010; Liefooghe & Olafsson, 1999; Mikkelsen & Einersen, 2001; Rayner & Hoel, 1997: Spratlen, 1995; Tigrel & Kokalan, 2009; Twale & DeLuca, 2008; Zapf, 2001). Various terms including bullying, incivility, workplace aggression or abuse, and mobbing have been used to describe negative acts experienced by employees within organizations, including but not limited to the following behaviors: being ignored, shouted at, demeaned, belittled, personal attacks, given unrealistic workloads or deadlines, purposely not given necessary information needed to perform job duties, and attacks on work performance.

The term mobbing is used in various research studies to describe multiple factors including leadership, administration, colleagues, coworkers and the organization targeting and ganging up on specific employees with the intent to force them into submission or out of the institution (Duffy, 2009; Duffy & Sperry, 2007, 2012, 2014; Harper, 2016; Tigrel & Kokalan, 2009; Twale & DeLuca, 2008). Research has shown aggressive acts toward employees in the workplace can have physical and psychological impact long after the incidents have occurred and some actions create more distress than others (Cooper, Hoel, & Faragher, 2004; Matthiesen & Einarsen, 2004; Vartia, 2001). Some studies even show that merely witnessing acts of

aggression toward fellow colleagues or coworkers can lead to psychological or physical distress (Bjorkqvist, Osterman, & Hjelt-Back, 1994; Mikkelsen & Einersen, 2001; Vartia, 2001).

For the purpose of my proposed research study, *mobbing* will be defined as acts of aggression toward an employee within the past year with the intent of intimidating, silencing or forcing the employee out of the institution. These acts of aggression will consist of any act of intimidation, including, but not limited to the following: being ignored, excluded from meetings, shouted at, demeaned, belittled, personally attacked, given unrealistic workloads or deadlines, purposely not given necessary information needed to perform job duties, and attacks on work performance. Mobbing will be used throughout this study to refer to acts of aggressive behavior previously outlined even when researchers have used the word bullying to describe such behaviors. Bullying is a term generally used to explain acts of aggression between two individuals where there is a power discrepancy (Davenport, Schwartz, & Elliot, 2005; Harper, 2016; Namie & Namie, 2009). Mobbing was chosen as a more accurate definition to explain aggressive behaviors targeted at an employee because it also takes into consideration how the organization contributes to enabling and perpetuating hostile acts rather than only looking at a power differential between two people (Duffy, 2009; Duffy & Sperry, 2007, 2012, 2014; Harper, 2016; Kakumba, Wamala, & Wanyama, 2014; Zapf, 1999).

As a second key concept, understanding the interaction between higher education employees and the organization will be instrumental to understanding the levels of mobbing that may occur. According to Zapf (1999), mobbing occurs due to multiple factors which include the employee and the organization. One of those employee factors that could contribute to mobbing behavior might be goal orientation of the employee which some have described as a stable trait much like personality characteristics (Vandewalle & Cummings, 1997; Potosky, 2010). Some

research suggests that personality may be an indicator of employees who are more likely to be targets of mobbing (Glaso, Nielsen, & Einarsen, 2009; Matthiesen & Einarsen, 2007).

Goal orientation, originally defined by Dweck (1986) in school children and later expanded by Vandewalle (1997) for research in work settings, will be used in my study as a potential variable that explains levels of mobbing within the organization. For example, if an employee takes initiative to perform job duties their supervisor believes is beyond their role and responsibility or if an employee is perceived as not taking enough initiative by their supervisor it could make such an employee more susceptible to being mobbed (Tepper, Moss, & Duffy, 2011; Yaman, 2010). Goal orientation for the purpose of this study will consist of three components: (a) mastery goal orientation, (b) performance goal orientation, and (c) performance avoidance goal orientation.

Mastery orientation will be defined as those employees who seek out challenges, ask for feedback, take initiative, and are not afraid to take risks in their daily job tasks to increase their knowledge. *Performance orientation* will be defined as those employees who learn tasks to gain praise from others and be viewed more favorably than colleagues, although the goal is not to seek out challenging tasks or take initiative for the sake of learning or increasing competency on the job. *Performance avoidance orientation* are those employees who avoid learning tasks, challenges, or taking any initiatives to avoid looking incompetent; they are not concerned with increasing job competency or besting fellow coworkers.

The more Mastery orientated an individual is the more they believe they have the ability to learn new skills and apply them. However, the more performance and performance avoidant an individual, the more they believe ability is fixed, and therefore, not something that can be changed with learning new skills. Given that goal orientation may be seen as a stable personality

trait, it could help explain why some employees or employee groups within an organization may experience mobbing while other employees do not.

As a third component to understanding mobbing in higher education, those identified as professional academic advisors will be the population of my proposed study. *Professional academic advisors* are full time staff whose primary role at a college or university is to advise students on course requirements, majors and minors, graduation, and other polices or procedures, as well as work closely with other departments to refer students when necessary (King, 2008). When advising began with the founding of Harvard in 1636, it was done by the faculty where they acted in loco parentis, which means in place of the parents (White, 2007). Advising not only helped students with choosing the correct courses but was seen as a way to help students develop as good citizens with integrity and values. Faculty continued as the main or only source of student advising until post World War II, after which colleges and universities began hiring permanent staff to advise students due to significant increases in enrollment (Cook, 2009).

The role of professional undergraduate academic advisors has moved from a more prescriptive form of advising where students were given information about what courses to take to a more developmental form where the focus is on helping students develop skills to make decisions about their own academic future (Crookston, 1994). Research has shown that advising plays an important role in student retention and with more focus on increasing graduation rates there is increased pressure placed on advisors (Barbuto, Story, Fritz, & Schinstock, 2011; Bitz, 2010; Ellis, 2014; Kot, 2014; Noel-Levitz, 2017; Swecker, Fifolt, & Searby, 2013; Walker, Zelin, Behrman, & Strnad, 2017).

Professional academic advisors are expected to possess a multitude of skills and be more than just experts on course requirements and pre-requisites (Lee and Metcalfe, 2017). They are expected to be proficient in the unique needs of veterans, first-generation, working-class,

millennials, minority students, and students with disabilities or mental illness (Longwell-Grice, Adsitt, Mullins, & Serrata, 2016; Montag, Campo, Weissman, Walmsley, & Snell, 2012; Museus, & Ravello, 2010; Parks, Walker, & Smith, 2015; Preece et al., 2007; Soria & Bultmann, 2014). In addition to understanding the needs of individual student groups, advisors are also expected to have knowledge with at risk students on probation (Vander Shee, 2007). Student satisfaction is critical to institutions of higher learning especially in advising where there has been more focus on assessment than ever before which creates enormous pressure on advisors to ensure students remain happy (Barbuto et al., 2011; Kot, 2014; Swecker et al., 2013).

Professional academic advisors must balance the needs of their students, administration, faculty and the institution. It is a staff position in higher learning organizations that has no positional power; there have been questions revolving around whether academic advising can actually be considered a profession (Habley, 2009; Kuhn & Padak, 2008; Shaffer, Zalewski, & Leveille, 2010). Even with the rise of professional academic advisors, advising still remains problematic in terms of student satisfaction (Walker et al., 2017). It is a position not always respected by students, administration, or faculty; but one that demands unique skills and comes with enormous responsibility that attracts certain types of individuals.

As a result, professional academic advisors may be a group at risk for mobbing behavior and no current research exists on mobbing specific to this group of staff in higher education. However, certain aspects of the organization may also play a role in mobbing of professional academic advisors, particularly to what degree an organization is a learning organization. According to Zapf (1999), multiple causes may lead to mobbing which include the interaction of both the organization and employee.

As my final concept, understanding and defining the key elements of the organization as a *learning organization* is the last step to further explaining the levels of mobbing in higher

education among professional undergraduate advisors. The concept of learning organizations

has been around for decades, but some argue it is a concept too confusing and ambiguous to ever

achieve (Grieves, 2008; Smith, 2008). White and Weathersby (2005) suggest the structure of

higher education keeps it from evolving into a learning organization given academia is

hierarchical in its power structure and encourages autonomy rather than collaboration. There is a

dearth of research on learning organizations in higher education and those that do exist were

conducted in other countries (Bak, 2012; Rus, Chirica, Ratiu, & Baban, 2014; Kumar & Idris,

2006). The research on learning organizations suggests certain key factors are necessary to

create a positive work environment while simultaneously moving the organization forward

(Dovey & White, 2005; Dymock & McCarthy, 2006; Griego, Geroy, & Wright, 2000; Kim &

Callahan, 2013; Kumar & Idris, 2006; Schyns, & Schilling, 2013). For the purpose of my

proposed study those four key concepts will be defined through the lens of Watkins and Marsick

(1993): (a) communication, (b) empowerment, (c) collaboration, and (d) strategic leadership.

Communication will focus on openness to new ideas and sharing within the organization.

Questioning current practices is encouraged without negative consequences for doing so.

Individual learning is supported and promoted by actively seeking out input and feedback from

employees rather than management dictating specific performance (Watkins & Marsick, 1993).

Strategic leadership will focus on the administration within the organization. The

expectation for continuous learning is the same for leadership within an organization as it is for

the employees (Watkins & Marsick, 1993). Leaders are viewed as coaches or mentors to help

subordinates as well as fellow colleagues. They are encouraged to seek out training and be

knowledgeable about the current trends related to their area of expertise in the leadership

position they are charged with. In addition, leaders are evaluated based on their progress and

innovation which evolves out of their willingness to take risks in order to try out new ideas.

However, once an idea is implemented, it must be reevaluated to ensure effectiveness and changes made if warranted.

Empowerment will look at how leadership creates a shared vision and goals to motivate employees to act toward that shared vision. In order to empower employees, administrators must give up some control and delegate to their employees permitting them to provide feedback and input as well as the encouragement to act (Watkins & Marsick, 1993). This means structures are less rigid within the organization and permission of new behaviors and ideas exist by emboldening employees to act. It is with the understanding new ideas may lead to mistakes along the way, but employees are not penalized for those missteps. Instead, they are viewed as learning opportunities to continue growing and innovating further.

Collaboration will focus on team work and sharing knowledge across the organization at all levels. Continuous learning cannot truly be effective if that knowledge is not shared with colleagues (Watkins & Marsick, 1993). Collaborating allows for increased learning and innovation as teams come up with solutions together to tackle problems to move the organization forward. This type of learning is believed to be effective as a decentralized model where everyone's feedback and input is valued rather than hierarchical or top down. Communicating as a collaborative team only enhances learning and further empowers individuals toward a shared vision (Park, Song, Yoon, & Kim, 2014; Kumar & Idris, 2006; Watkins & Marsick, 1993).

It is my view that understanding how elements of a learning organization interact with the goal orientation of professional undergraduate advisors will help predict levels of mobbing. The prevalence of mobbing in higher education is a problem that needs to be addressed. Not only does it cause psychological and physical distress to those experiencing the abuse but those witnessing it as well. The institution loses in multiple ways by lost hours in work, sick leave, turnover, health insurance costs and negative perceptions of the institution that leak into work

with students, colleagues and the community. Therefore, it is crucial to understand the elements that contribute to mobbing in higher education to keep it from becoming even more pervasive and needlessly hurting institutions and the students they serve.

Problem Statement

Mobbing of employees seems to exist in higher education at a higher rate than at other organizations (Hollis, 2012). A study by Hollis (2016) suggests as high as 67% of employees in higher education have endured some type of mobbing, and this number may be even higher. Some studies have found a discrepancy between what is reported as mobbing by employees and what is witnessed by others within the organization and defined as mobbing behaviors (Hoel, Cooper & Faragher, 2001; Mikkelsen & Einarsen, 2001; Zabrodska & Kveton, 2012). This suggests the prevalence of mobbing may be even higher than what is being reported since there is a higher number of mobbing incidences being witnessed than what is being reported as being experienced by individuals. According to Zapf (1999), both the organization and the individual interact to create environments where mobbing occurs. The role and goal orientation of the employee along with the degree to which an organization is a learning organization may be able to predict levels of mobbing.

The role of professional academic advisors is vital to colleges and universities, but it is still questioned as to whether advising even constitutes a profession (Habley, 2009; Kuhn & Padak, 2008). Some argue staff should not be the ones advising students because it should be left to faculty who are the real experts (Ginsberg, 2011; Selingo, 2014). The type of individual attracted to academic advising as a career and the type of goal orientation they possess may interact with the organization to predict mobbing behaviors of professional academic advisors within institutions of higher learning.

Studies Addressing the Problem

While a significant amount research exists on the topic of mobbing, much less exists in higher education especially in the U.S. (Keashly & Neuman, 2010; Sedivy-Benton, Strohschen, Cavazos, & Boden-McGill, 2014; Spratlen, 1995). Much of the research that has been done in higher education on mobbing was pioneered in other countries (Bjorkqvist et al., 1994; Celep & Konakli, 2013; Giorgi, 2012; Kakumba, et al., 2014; Korkmaz & Cemaloglu, 2010; Qureshi et al., 2015; Rehman, Javed, Khan, Nawaz, & Hyder, 2015; Thomas, 2005; Tigrel & Kokalan, 2009; Yaman, 2010, 2015; Zabrodska & Kveton, 2012).

A significant amount of research also exists showing the physical and psychological impact mobbing has on employees (Bjorkqvist et al., 1994; Celep & Konakli, 2013; Cortina, Magley, Williams, & Langout, 2001; Cooper et al., 2004; Cortina et al., 2001; Coyne et al., 2000; Einarsen & Raknes, 1997; Giorgi, 2012; Hansen, Hogh, Garde, & Persson, 2014; Hansen, Hogh, Person, Karlson, Garde, & Orbaek, 2006; Khubchandani & Price, 2015; Mikkelsen & Einersen, 2001; 2002a, 2002b; O'Moore & Crowley, 2011; Tepper, 2000; Tynes, Johannessen, & Sterud, 2013; Vartia, 2001; Yaman, 2015; Zapf, 1999). Some research shows employees of mobbing exhibiting symptoms as severe as PTSD, paranoia, and suicidal ideation (Bjorkqvist et al., 1994; Leach, Poyser, & Butterworht, 2017; Matthiesen & Einarsen, 2004; Mikkelsen & Einarsen, 2002a; Nielsen, Einarsen, & Notelears, 2016; Nielsen, Notelaers, & Einarsen, 2015; Tigrel & Kokalan, 2009).

While some researchers focused on the more chronic and long-term physical impact mobbing inflicted upon employees (Jacob & Kostev, 2017; Kaarla, Laaksonen, Rahkonen, Lahelma, & Leino-Arjas, 2012; Khubchandani & Price, 2015; Kivima et al., 2004; Xu et al., 2018; Xu et al., 2019); others explored the links between mobbing and long-term sickness absences and disability (Glambek & Skogstad, 2014; Mundbjerg Erikson, Hogh, & Marie, 2016;

Nielsen, Emberland, & Knardahl, 2017; Nielsen, Indregard, & Overland, 2016; Ortega,

Christensen, Hogh, Rugulies, & Borg, 2011).

Plenty of research currently exists showing that mobbing decreases employee

satisfaction, organizational commitment, and leads to increased turnover (Einarsen & Raknes,

1997; Ertureten, Cemalcilar, & Aycan, 2012; Kakumba, et al., 2014; Lutgen-Sandvik, 2008,

2013; McKay, Arnold, Fratzl, & Thomas, 2008, 2008; Qureshi, et al., 2015; Sedivy-benton et al.,

2014; Rehman et al., 2015; Spratlen, 1995; Van Fleet & Van Fleet, 2012; Vartia, 2001; Yaman,

2010; Zapf & Gross, 2001). Some studies further suggest that the personality of the individual

may lead to increased mobbing (Coyne, et al., 2000; Glaso, Matthiesen, Nielsen, & Einarsen,

2007; Glaso et al., 2009; Matthiesen & Einarsen, 2001, 2007; Mikkelsen & Einarsen, 2002b;

Tepper et al., 2011). Other studies indicate the organization is pivotal to enabling and

perpetuating mobbing behavior within the institution (Hauge, Skogstad, & Einarsen, 2009;

Kakumba et al., 2014; Zapf, 1999).

Given that personality and organizations may play a role in mobbing employees, goal

orientation and perceptions regarding levels of learning organizations will also be used as

variables in my proposed study to determine if any predictive ability exists between (a) goal

orientation of employees, (b) degree to which an organization is a learning organization, and (c)

mobbing behavior experienced by professional undergraduate academic advisors.

The first variable in my proposed study, goal orientation, began with research by Dweck

(1986) to understand what characteristics motivated school age children to learn. Research

continued over the years looking at various aspects of goal orientation and learning (Brett &

Vandewalle, 1999; Colquitt & Simmering, 1998; Dweck, 1986; Janssen & Prins, 2007; Johnson,

Shull, & Wallace, 2011; Printrich, 2000; Vandewalle & Cummings, 1997; Yeo & Neal, 2004).

However, the concept later was used to show how goal orientation effects work engagement and

performance on the job (Bell & Kozlowski 2002; Chughtai & Buckley, 2011; Matzler & Mueller, 2011; Porath & Bateman, 2006; Potosky, 2010; Van Yperen & Janssen, 2002). Research by Vandewalle and Cummings (1997) and Potosky (2010) suggests goal orientation is stable like a personality trait. According to Glaso et al., (2009), and Matthiesen and Einarsen (2007), personality may play a role in mobbing, but no research could be found looking at how goal orientation could be used as a predictor of mobbing behaviors.

In addition to looking at characteristics of the employee my proposed study will also look at characteristics of the organization, given how some research suggests both play a role in mobbing behaviors (Kakumba et al., 2014; Zapf, 1999). The second variable in my proposed study, learning organization, is a concept that has been around for decades. However, there is some argument as to the usefulness of the concept in higher education (Grieves, 2008; Smith, 2008; White & Weathersby, 2005). Research outside of academia does suggest institutions that exhibit elements of being a learning organization, which include communication, strategic leadership, empowerment, and collaboration, were found to be higher functioning and to have more engaged employees (Dovey & White, 2005; Dymock & McCarthy, 2006; Griego et al., 2000; Kim & Callahan, 2013; Kim, Watkins, & Zhenqiu, 2017; Park et al., 2014; Schyns, & Schilling, 2013). According to Zapf (1999), employees and organizations do not exist in a vacuum and each impacts the other when it comes to mobbing, which is why it is my view that both the characteristics of the employee and the organization must be examined to understand the levels of mobbing within institutions of higher learning. In addition to looking at specific characteristics of employees, it is also my view that certain populations of staff in higher education may be more susceptible to mobbing than others.

Research shows advising plays a pivotal role in retention efforts and there is increased focus on professional academic advisors (Bitz, 2010; Kot, 2014; 2014; Swecker et al. 2013).

However, some argue academic advising should be done by faculty and question the legitimacy of professional academic advising as a profession (Ginsberg, 2011; Habley, 2009; McGill, 2018; Johnson, Larson, & Barkemeyer, 2015; Kuhn & Padak, 2008; Selingo, 2014). Professional academic advisors are expected to be experts in a multitude of student backgrounds and needs (Longwell-Grice et al., 2016; Montag et al., 2012; Museus & Ravello, 2010; Parks et al., 2015; Preece et al., 2007; Soria & Bultmann, 2014; Vander Shee, 2007). However, professional undergraduate advisors have no positional power and even though they are called professional, higher education does not recognize the field as a profession or discipline (Habley, 2009; Kuhn & Paddak, 2008). Given the lack of positional power and lack of respect as a profession within academia, it is my view that this population of staff within higher institutions of learning may be more susceptible to mobbing than other staff. While plenty of research exists on professional academic advisors, none could be found looking at that population and mobbing or other areas related to mobbing within higher education.

Literature Deficiency and Significance of Study

Plenty of research exists on mobbing, goal orientation, learning organizations and professional academic advisors. However, there is a deficit in the research connecting them all together to determine if goal orientation of professional academic advisors and the degree to which an organization is a learning organization could be used to predict mobbing of professional academic advisors.

There is more accountability in higher education than ever before with outside organizations like the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) to ensure standards are created and followed. Students and parents can easily pay over $100,000 for a bachelor's degree when you factor in housing and food costs. They want to make sure there is a return on their investment and the HLC wants to ensure institutions are held accountable to hold up their end of the deal by

retaining and graduating students. Unfortunately, this type of scrutiny puts a lot of pressure on institutions to perform in a way they are not used to doing. This type of pressure and increased performance with decreased resources creates a climate where mobbing behavior not only thrives but is enabled by the organization in order to get things done.

Staff in higher education, particularly professional undergraduate advisors, walk a fine line where they must advocate for the student while taking great care not to alienate administration or faculty. Unfortunately, there are times when the best interest of the student and how to best handle the situation is at odds with what faculty or administration believe is the "right" course of action. Professional undergraduate advisors are often the first major point of contact for a student academically and it is important they are engaged, committed, and thriving in their positions to provide the best service to students which in turn impacts retention as well as graduation rates.

Purpose Statement and Research Questions

The purpose of my study is to ascertain the levels of mobbing as reported by higher education professional academic advisors across the U.S., and to analyze the connection between the goal orientation (i.e., mastery orientation, performance orientation and performance avoidance orientation) of such academic advisors, the degree to which they report their institution is a learning organization (based on communication, collaboration, strategic leadership, and empowerment), and the levels of reported mobbing. Goal orientation is operationalized by levels of mastery, performance, or performance avoidance to understand employee motivation to perform job tasks. Learning organization is operationalized by levels of communication, strategic leadership, collaboration, and empowerment within the organization. My specific research questions will be the following:

RQ1: From amongst higher education professional academic advisors across the U.S., to what extent do they indicate their institution is a learning organization in relation to reported levels of: (a) communication, (b) strategic leadership, (c) collaboration, and (d) empowerment?

RQ2: To what extent do such professional academic advisors report as their own goal orientation in relation to: (a) mastery orientation, (b) performance orientation, and (c) performance avoidance orientation?

RQ3: To what extent do such professional academic advisors report the degree to which they have personally experienced mobbing and is there a difference in reporting of mobbing based on sex, institutional type, educational attainment, and advising position?

RQ4: To what extent do the levels of organizational learning within institutions and professional academic advisors' goal orientation predict the degree of mobbing experienced, as controlled for by various employee and institutional variables?

In order to gain a better understanding of mobbing behavior experienced by professional undergraduate advisors and factors that may contribute to such behaviors, a theoretical framework that encompasses both the individual and the organization was conceptualized. The first component of the theoretical model includes goal orientation specifically broken down into mastery, performance and performance avoidance orientation. The second component of the model incorporates the concepts of a learning organization specifically related to communication, collaboration, strategic leadership and empowerment. The relationship between these concepts have been illustrated in Figure 1.

Conceptual Framework and Narrative

Levels of Goal Orientation of
Undergraduate Academic Advisor in
Higher Education

- Mastery Orientation
- Performance Orientation
- Performance Avoidance Orientation

Dweck (1986)
Vandewalle (1997)

+

Predicts?

Degree of
Mobbing
Behavior
Experienced

Levels of Organizational Learning

- *Communication*: promoting inquiry and dialogue
- *Strategic leadership*: leader mentoring and continual learning opportunities
- *Empowerment*: collective shared vision with a sense of ownership
- *Collaboration*: team learning and working together

Watkins and Marsick (1993)

Figure 1. Conceptual framework for levels of goal orientation, levels of organizational learning and predicted degree of mobbing behavior experienced (Ludwig, 2019).

The concept of goal orientation will be used to better understand individual behavior and how that interacts with components of a learning organization to predict mobbing. Research has shown that personality may play a role in individuals who experience mobbing (Coyne et al., 2000; Glaso, Matthiesen, Nielsen, & Einarsen, 2007; Glaso et al., 2009; Matthiesen & Einarsen, 2001, 2007; Mikkelsen & Einarsen, 2002b). Goal orientation was chosen because it has been shown to be a characteristic that tends to be stable over time similar to a personality trait (Coyne et al., 2000; Vandewalle & Cummings, 1997; Potosky, 2010;). While situations may influence a person's particular goal orientation, their preference tends to remain consistent like a personality trait would (Vandewalle & Cummings, 1997).

Goal orientation will be used and defined as a trait characteristic consistent over time to gain a better understanding of the motivation driving professional undergraduate advisors to perform their job responsibilities on a daily basis. A trait that is a consistent part of how an employee acts and behaves rather than situational could be helpful in understanding why an individual may be continually targeted for mobbing behavior. The theory suggests individuals are either mastery oriented or performance oriented in terms of their motivation to learn. Mastery oriented individuals seek out challenges, learn for the sake of learning, enjoy new tasks and are not afraid to take risks. Performance oriented individuals learn in order to gain praise from others and outperform colleagues and coworkers. Vandewalle (1997) further separated performance orientation to also encompass performance avoidance where individuals avoid learning to avoid looking incompetent.

While goal orientation theory began with research on school age children to help understand learning behaviors, it has been used in work related research to help understand job performance (Johnson et al., 2011; Matzler & Mueller, 2011; Porath & Bateman, 2006; Vandewalle, 2003). Since goal orientation is seen as a stable trait over time and has been used

in work related research to better understand performance, I believe it will lead to a better understanding of the mobbing behavior experienced by professional undergraduate advisors. I further believe looking at the interaction of goal orientation and the levels an organization is considered a learning organization can further assist in understanding the predictors associated with levels of mobbing.

Employees and organizations do not exist in a vacuum separate from one another (Kakumba et al., 2014; Zapf, 1999). The structure, leadership, policies, procedures and views created by the organization about their employees influence employee behavior. Employee behavior can then in turn influence the various components of the organization. For this reason, it is important not only to look at characteristics of the employee when trying to understand mobbing behaviors, but also the impact the organization plays in the levels of mobbing experienced within an institution. The concept of learning organizations has been in existence for decades, and there are multiple theories on learning organizations (Ghaffari, Jodoon, Fazal, & Shah, 2011). However, the theory on learning organizations by Watkins and Marsick (1993) will be used to further guide this study in understanding the role the organization plays with regard to mobbing behaviors experienced by professional academic advisors.

Learning organizations are those that seek to continuously transform themselves by innovating and growing at the individual, group and organizational levels (Watkins & Marsick, 1993). Communication, strategic leadership, empowerment, and collaboration are the four components of Watkins and Marsick's (1993) theory on learning organizations that will be utilized in this study. All components of a learning organization occur with the direction of strategic leadership to perpetuate the cycle of continuous learning throughout the organization. These concepts were originally proposed and studied in the private sector, but I would argue they are necessary in any sector that wants to be a learning organization.

As previously stated, it is my view that understanding how elements of a learning organization interact with the goal orientation of professional undergraduate advisors will help predict levels of mobbing. Some experts believe the organization plays a vital role in mobbing of employees (Duffy, 2009; Duffy & Sperry, 2007; Hoel et al., 2001; Hollis, 2016; Hutchinson et al., 2010; King & Piotrowski, 2015; Korkmaz & Cemaloglu, 2010). If left unchecked the perpetuation of mobbing in higher education will continue. Not only does bullying cause distress to the victim of mobbing but to others within the organization who witness the abuse as well (Björkqvist et al., 1994; Hansen et al., 2006). The institution loses in multiple ways by lost hours in work, sick leave, turnover, health insurance costs and negative perceptions of the institution that leak into work with students, colleagues and the community. Therefore, it is critical to understand mobbing in higher education to keep it from becoming more problematic to the institution and the students they are there serve.

Methods Overview

A web-based survey was used to collect responses from professional academic advisors within colleges and universities throughout the United States (U.S.). Surveys were sent to professional undergraduate advisors from three institutions with the most enrollment in each state based on U.S. News and World Report (n.d.). The emails for such advisors were retrieved from public sources and included two four-year institutions and one community college from each of the 50 states for a total of 150 institutions. The questionnaire was divided into three categories that included questions pertaining to mobbing, goal orientation, and learning organizations. Each category listed specific questions using a 6-point Likert Scale related to each of the three constructs.

Chapter 1 Summary

There is mounting pressure on institutions to recruit, retain, and ensure students graduate. Colleges and universities are continually expected to do more with fewer resources and decreased staff which creates an environment ripe for mobbing behaviors that are used to justify getting things done in a quick and timely fashion without question or objection from employees. The larger the institutional organization, the more likely it is to be siloed and hierarchical where decisions are made without the input or feedback from those carrying out the work on a daily basis (Ilongo, 2016). Collaboration, communication, empowerment, and strategic leadership hinders quick fix agendas, so it is discouraged at best and punished at most (Thomas, 2005).

This chapter outlined the problem of mobbing in higher education, the negative consequences it causes for the individual and the insufficient research into the prevalence, type of person who experiences mobbing and why an organization might be more susceptible to these behaviors. The following chapter will provide detail about the population of professional academic advisors and a review of the literature in the areas of goal orientation, learning organizations, and mobbing behavior to further understand these constructs and the impact they have on institutions of higher learning.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Chapter 2 provides an extensive review of the key concepts of mobbing, learning

organizations, goal orientation, and professional undergraduate academic advisors. Mobbing is

further defined along with more specific research that addresses the health consequences of

being mobbed and the types of personality traits that may contribute to being a target is also

examined. A learning organization is also explored and defined based on the following key

concepts: (a) communication, (b) empowerment, (c) collaboration, and (d) strategic leadership.

Goal orientation is examined and defined consisting of the following areas: (a) mastery goal

orientation, (b) performance goal orientation, and (c) performance avoidance goal orientation.

The final key concept examined in this chapter is professional undergraduate academic advisors

in higher education.

Mobbing

Mobbing emerged in research decades ago as a way to understand aggressive behavior in

the animal kingdom (Lorenz, 1966). This same concept has been extrapolated to higher

education to explain aggressive behavior employees experience at the hands of their supervisors

and the institutions they serve (Duffy & Sperry, 2012, 2017; Harper, 2016; Yelgecen & Kokalan,

2009). The theory of mobbing encompasses both the perpetrator of aggressive behaviors and the

link between the organization and the aggressor.

Definition

Leymann (1990) was one of the first researchers to use the term mobbing to define

hostility in the workplace. He described mobbing as occurring in four phases: phase one began

with an initial critical incident; phase two stigmatized and isolated the target; phase three

included upper management targeting the victim as the problem; and phase four consisted of

expulsion of the victim by either quitting or being fired. Leyman's definition of mobbing consisted of more than just one individual targeting another individual within the organization. He suggested the organization was part of the mobbing process by supporting the aggressor and then targeting the victim as the problem.

Mobbing was defined by Leyman (1990) in terms of both the organization and the aggressor or aggressors ganging up on the target rather than only looking at the aggressor in the situation. I contend this is the most accurate way to describe the toxic behaviors that occur in higher education and the reason it occurs at a higher rate than other institutions. It is a systemic and organizational issue that is perpetuated and enabled by the institution which allows the aggressor to continue harassing behaviors without consequence. The organization becomes like a mob family and those individual aggressors would be comparable to the lieutenants used to ensure no one steps out of line. Any employee who questions any of the organization or is seen as being different or causing problems becomes a target with the backing of the entire institution. Leymann described the experience of the victim as psychological terror and research he conducted suggested mental and physical health issues so distressing that it led to suicide for some victims of mobbing. Leymann's work was just the beginning to understanding and uncovering the negative impact mobbing had on employees in the workplace.

Health Effects Physiological and Psychological

Full-time employees spend a significant amount of their lives working each week, each year, and throughout their lifetime**.** Outside of sleeping, working is probably the single most time-consuming act of most individual's waking hours. It is, therefore, no great shock that working environments can have a tremendous impact on both mental and physical conditions given how much time is spent in that environment for hours at a time.

Musculoskeletal. The effects of mobbing on employees can have a significant impact on physical symptoms ultimately leading to long-term chronic pain. A longitudinal study by Tynes et al. (2013) of 3,325 Norwegian employees chosen randomly from the general population in 2006 and 2009 looked at various types of headaches and the factors that significantly increased head pain. A psychosocial and organizational questionnaire was used to assess various workplace environments along with a specific question regarding headaches.   Interestingly, they found that excessive workload was not predictive of headaches in this study, but there was a significant correlation between mobbing and increased headaches.

In another study of Norwegian employees from the Helsinki Health Care system consisting of more than 200 job classifications (Kaarla, et al., 2012), mobbing was found to significantly contribute to chronic neck pain. A mail survey was initially conducted with a 67% response rate and follow up was done five to seven years later with an 83% response rate that consisted of individuals who had not experienced any neck pain in the initial survey. While mobbing was not significant for chronic neck pain in men, they found it was a significant predictor in women.

A study by Khubchandani and Price (2015) that analyzed survey data from the National Center for Health Statistics of the U.S. Centers for Disease Control Prevention supports findings from the previous studies. The study included 17,524 adults consisting of 51% female, 75% white, and 46% married with close to 10% indicating they were targets of mobbing within the past year. The researchers found the overall health of both males and females were significantly affected by mobbing but specific symptoms of neck, head, and low back pain were reported in conjunction to mobbing. Consistent with previous studies, women seemed more at risk of experiencing pain disorders.

A cohort study of employees from 12 different hospitals in Finland looked at individuals experiencing overall chronic pain and fatigue (Kivimaki et al., 2004). Participants included in the study reported being medically diagnosed with fibromyalgia in 2000, but not in the initial baseline study conducted in 1998. Fibromyalgia is a medically diagnosed musculoskeletal disease that can create widespread pain, fatigue, and sleep problems that currently does not have a cure. The follow up study consisted of 4,832 women and 601 men comprised of doctors, nurses, professional, and administrative staff. The researchers found individuals who reported mobbing along with excessive workload and low decision-making ability on the job were two to four times more likely to be diagnosed with fibromyalgia. While these studies found that mobbing may be related to chronic pain conditions that are not life threatening, other studies are finding far more serious consequences.

Circulatory and endocrine disease. Recent studies have found that mobbing may have long-term impact on the heart and pancreas. Xu et al. (2018) studied participants from four different cohort studies from Sweden, Denmark, and Finland. Individuals who reported having diabetes or previously used medication related to diabetes were excluded. A total of 19,280 men and 26,625 women were included in the final sample. A nationwide health registry was utilized to find diabetic diagnoses along with health and mobbing questionnaires. Data from the study was individually analyzed and also combined to conduct a meta-analysis. The researchers concluded that mobbing significantly increased the chances of developing type 2 diabetes in both men and women even after controlling for alcohol use and mental illness.

Another study by Xu et al. (2019) focused on cardiovascular disease (CVD) and its relationship to mobbing in the workplace. The sample included 79,201 males and females from 18-65 years old from three cohort studies in Sweden and Denmark. Mobbing and violence questionnaires were used along with national health and death registries to determine

cardiovascular and cerebrovascular disease within the sample. Mobbing was significantly correlated with cardiovascular disease even after controlling for such things as sex, age, marital status and educational attainment. Xu et al. (2019) found individuals who were mobbed had a 59% higher risk of developing CVD. The majority or 90% of participants reported being occasionally mobbed while 10% reported frequently experiencing mobbing. The researchers went on to find those employees who were frequently mobbed were at the highest risk for coronary heart disease and strokes.

A study by Jacob and Kostev (2017) of 699 German workers identified by a doctor's note that indicated workplace mobbing of employees between 2005 and 2014 support the findings of Xu et al. (2019). Jacob and Kostev (2017) found employees who experienced mobbing were more than 1.5 times likely to develop CVD and were also at increased risk for angina pectoris which generally manifests as chest pain or discomfort due to coronary heart disease. Findings from Khubchandani and Price (2015) provides some support to the previous studies regarding cardiovascular disease. The researchers found males who were mobbed were significantly more likely to experience hypertension and angina pectoris, while female targets were only significantly more likely to experience angina pectoris. Current research suggests mobbing poses significant threats to long-term health care on a physiological level that can be life threatening. However, to understand the overall impact mobbing has on employees, it is imperative to take a holistic approach that incorporates both the physical and mental threats mobbing poses to one's well-being.

Physiological and psychological. While the previous studies focused on the physical aspects of mobbing, other researchers sought to understand how mobbing manifested itself both mentally as well as physically in order to gain a greater understanding of the larger impact it has on employees and ultimately the organization. A study by Mikkelsen and Einarsen (2001) from

Denmark that surveyed 224 manufacturing employees, 158 hospital employees from two different hospitals, 215 department store employees, and 90 graduate students at a university in the psychology department using the NAQ and other health related questionnaires found increased symptoms of both psychological and psychosomatic symptoms positively correlated with mobbing.

They further found there was little difference of reported acts of mobbing experienced by individuals across the occupations. Both psychological and psychosomatic symptoms, but especially those of depression, were positively correlated with acts of mobbing. The study also found those witnessing mobbing reported a much higher rate of occurrence than what was actually being reported by those experiencing mobbing. This suggests mobbing may be seriously underreported given that data shows witness accounts of mobbing behavior is much higher than what is being reported by the victims.

A study by Hansen et al. (2006) further supports that individuals who experienced being mobbed reported increased depression, anxiety, and overall negative mood. This study surveyed 437 employees from a high school, a telecommunications company, insurance office, pharmaceutical organization, and wood industry from Sweden using a general health questionnaire, job content questionnaire and an anxiety scale. Saliva samples were also collected within 45 minutes of waking done during a workday. Similar to the previous study, they also found a strong positive correlation between mobbing and depression, anxiety, and somatic symptoms. The study went on to find that cortisol levels were higher in those individuals reporting they experienced mobbing. The authors suggest that this may lead to even more chronic physical problems over time if the mobbing persists.

O'moore and Crowley (2011) support the findings that physical and mental health are impacted by mobbing. They recruited 100 participants in Ireland through solicitations and

psychiatric referrals where mobbing was believed to have led to some type of legal action. The impact event scale, health and anxiety questionnaires, and a personality inventory found correlations between mobbing and anxiety, depression, social problems and other psychosomatic symptoms like fatigue and sleep disturbances. They further found that nearly 60% surveyed reported suicidal ideation. A longitudinal study by Hansen et al. (2014) of 1,171 employees in Denmark also found a significant correlation between mobbing and sleep disturbances. Even occasional mobbing was enough to significantly predict sleep problems in the follow up study. Clearly the impact of mobbing on individuals can have serious consequences to physical as well as mental health that cannot be ignored.

Psychological effects. While some researchers focused on both psychological and physical symptoms of mobbing, others looked more exclusively at the psychological impact employees experienced. A quantitative study by Yaman (2015) examined the link between mobbing by surveying 436 teachers from Turkey using mobbing and depressions scales. The study found levels of mobbing and levels of discrimination, humiliation, and communication were specifically linked to those individuals reporting higher levels of stress. Another study by Einarsen and Rakness (1997), reported similar findings that indicated a positive correlation between mobbing, decreased job satisfaction and increased mental health problems. Survey data was collected from 464 male engineers at all organizational levels from Norway. The top mobbing acts reported that was most correlated with decreased job satisfaction and increased psychological stress consisted of withholding information necessary to perform one's job and ignoring ideas or opinions.

Vartia (2001) further found that ignoring employee's and isolating them had more impact on self-esteem and confidence while gossiping about the individual, not allowing them to express ideas or opinions, judging work unfairly or assigning unnecessary work increased emotional

distress. Survey data from 949 federal municipal employees consisting of 85% women and 15% men found increased use of sedatives and sleep induced drugs as well as increased work absences positively correlated with levels of mobbing reported. While all of these studies found significant positive correlations between mental health and mobbing, other studies looked at varying levels of severity and how that was tied to mobbing.

 Degree of psychological impact. All mobbing is not created equal and the effects experienced by employees ranged in severity as well as the types of symptoms that manifested over time. A cross sectional survey was done in Great Britain by Cooper et al. (2004) with 5,288 employees from 70 different organizations in the private and public sectors using the NAQ-R and health questionnaires. The study found that mental health issues developed sooner than physical symptoms and that individuals experienced negative health consequences from mobbing long after it had occurred. The major mobbing acts reported included being ignored or excluded, allusion to quitting one's job, fault finding with work, being overburdened with work, being discouraged from taking earned time off, and accusations against the employee. The study reported the scores by those being mobbed were so high that they were seriously suffering both mentally and physically from their experiences. A survey done by Cortina et al. (2001) in the U.S. with 1,180 employees from the 8th Circuit Federal Court also found the more mobbing that was experienced by employees, the more it led to increased psychological distress and stronger desires to quit because of it.

 Tepper (2000) reported similar findings in a two-phase study of midwestern city employees surveyed at two different points in time. The first phase collected data from 712 full time employees using the following questionnaires: job satisfaction, life satisfaction, organizational commitment, and psychological distress. The second phase collected further date from 362 of the initial participants six months later. Employees who reported experiences of

mobbing exhibited more overall dissatisfaction with life, family and work as well as increased family and work conflicts. Symptoms of depression and emotional distress were more severe for those individuals who felt stuck in their jobs with no options to leave.

In two additional studies by Mikkelsen and Einarsen (2002a) and Matthiesen and Einarsen (2004), similar findings were reported regarding severity of symptoms experienced by those reporting mobbing. A survey with 102 individuals from Norway who belonged to one of two associations for victims of mobbing found symptoms reported so severe that they were similar to those individuals diagnosed with PTSD (Matthiesen & Einarsen, 2004). The study used the NAQ and PTSD scales and found that certain types of mobbing were reported as more distressing than others. The types of acts leading to more serious distress were similar to those found by Cooper et al. (2004) in the previous study with the addition of age and gender discrimination and penalties for working too much or too little.

Mikkelsen and Einarsen (2002a) also found a significant correlation between symptoms of PTSD and increased reporting of mobbing behaviors in a survey done with 118 self-identified union workers in nursing, trade, and teaching jobs. Even though the symptoms did not fit the DSM criteria for diagnosable PTSD, 80.5% of respondents stated being mobbed impacted them more negatively than events such as serious accidents, divorce, major illness and loss of loved ones. The previous research outlines the severity of symptoms some individuals experience as targets of mobbing, but some employees feel so helpless they may consider taking their own lives to alleviate the work trauma.

Suicidal ideation. For some employees, the pain of dealing with work place mobbing is so extreme, they consider suicide as an alternative to dealing with the physical and mental distress. A longitudinal study by Nielsen et al. (2015) of Norwegian employees that collected data in 2005, 2007, and ended in 2010 with a total of 1,291 employees who participated in all

three surveys analyzed mobbing and suicidal ideation. The Hopkins Symptoms Checklist was used to assess overall health and the self-labeling method was used to address the issue of workplace mobbing. The researchers found that employees who reported being mobbed during the initial survey in 2005 were significantly more likely to report suicidal ideation during both follow-ups in 2007 and 2010. They further found those who reported being mobbed in 2005 were more likely to report mobbing in 2007 and 2010. There was no significant difference between men and women who reported being mobbed and suicidal ideation. However, thoughts of committing suicide were more than two times higher for those mobbed than for those not experiencing workplace mobbing.

Nielsen et al. (2016) built off their previous study using the NAQ-R and found that physically intimating mobbing behavior was positively correlated with suicidal ideation. A meta-analysis of mobbing and suicidal ideation by Leach et al. (2017) found that eight out of 12 studies reported a positive correlation between suicidal ideation and mobbing experienced in the workplace. The other four provided descriptive statistics on the prevalence of suicidal ideation reported by those reporting mobbing behavior but did not provide statistical analysis regarding predictability. The research demonstrates the prevalence and serious impact mobbing has both physically and psychologically, but the symptoms of mobbing can be so severe they lead to long-term health conditions that can physically hinder an employee's ability to work at all.

Long-term leave. Attending work or dealing with the daily grind is challenging when working conditions are acceptable. It becomes much harder, if not impossible, for employees to attend work on a regular basis when the working environment becomes a major factor in their ongoing physical and mental health issues. A meta-analysis of 17 studies from various Nordic countries by Nielsen et al. (2016) used peer reviewed or published articles discovered by various database searches. Only research that used the registry for sickness absences were used in the

meta-analysis. The analysis found that mobbing was significantly related to sickness absences in all but one of the studies analyzed.

A study by Ortega et al. (2011) also used a registry for sickness absences as part of their research design. They surveyed 9,749 Danish employees working in elder care facilities including health care and administrative workers. The questionnaire measured working conditions and self-reported mobbing with females consisting of 96% of respondents from 36 different municipalities. Sickness absences were obtained through a database the following year after respondents completed the surveys. After controlling for variables of age, occupation, BMI, children, and marital status, the researchers found long term sickness absences were significantly higher for those who were occasionally mobbed and 92% higher for those more frequently mobbed.

In a study by Munbjerg Eriksen et al. (2016), the researchers confirmed the previous findings that mobbing led to increased long-term sickness absences in women. Data for the study was collected in 2006 from 60 different companies in Denmark. Questionnaires were sent to 3,358 participants that focused on questions involving working environment, mobbing, and sickness absences. The study found that females reported more long-term sickness absences by approximately two weeks and experienced more long-term health problems based on increased use of anti-depressants than males. Both men and women reported the same degree of immediate health problems related to mobbing, but men did not experience significant long-term health problems. However, men who reported being mobbed also noted higher incidences of presenteeism where they more likely to attend work while ill.

A longitudinal study by Glambek et al. (2015) took a slightly different approach by looking at disability leave as well as unemployment with relation to mobbing. The study used the NAQ-R and self-report questions regarding mobbing and disability, consisting of a baseline

sample of 2,539 employees from Norway with 52% women and 48% men. The first follow up was done two years later for a total of 1,175 participants and the final follow up was done five years after the initial survey and consisted of 1,613 employees who participated in either the first or final follow up. The researchers found self-reported mobbing and exposure to mobbing behaviors were a significant predictor of disability leave after five years. They further found those reporting specific mobbing behaviors were more likely to be unemployed five years upon the initial survey.

A survey study by Nielsen et al. (2017) went even further and found a strong positive correlation between mobbing and disability retirement. The researchers collected data from 2004 to 2014 from various organizations in Norway using questionnaires to assess working environment and a registry to determine disability eligibility for a total of 14,000 employees. They found both males and females who experienced mobbing were at an increased risk of disability retirement. The long term negative health consequences of mobbing eventually render the employee disabled because it ultimately "erodes the work ability of those targeted" (Nielsen, et al., 2017, p. 612). While mobbing was indirectly found to increase the likelihood of disability retirement, the damage was ultimately paid by both the employee and the organization. So far, all the researchers looked at the varying levels mobbing had on the severity of symptoms, whether physiological or psychological; but some researchers believed understanding characteristics of the individual being mobbed may be key to understanding why certain employees become targets.

Personality and psychological impact. Some researchers suggested personality traits may be a predictor of mobbing and looked at how specific characteristics of the employee could play a role in the psychological symptoms experienced and why certain individuals were targeted. A study by Tepper et al. (2011) conducted in the U.S. surveying 183 supervisor and

subordinate dyads across seven different health care organizations found that supervisors who viewed their subordinate as "different" or "dissimilar" from them was significantly correlated with mobbing behaviors.

A mixed methods study by Coyne et al. (2000) from the United Kingdom studied 60 mobbing victims and a control group of 60 non-mobbed colleagues. They found significant differences in the personality characteristics of those mobbed than in those who did not report being mobbed. Victims of mobbing reported characteristics that included being more submissive, conscientious, dependable, reserved, anxious, sensitive, and orderly. The authors concluded from their findings that a type of personality assessment could be used to help predict those employees who may be more at risk of being mobbed. A study by Zapf (1999) of 214 German employees recruited through printed adds reported similar findings. Various scales were used to measure mobbing, conflict, stress, and other psychological functioning. Zapf (1999) found employees exhibiting certain characteristics such as depression, anxiety, avoidance, shyness, inability to recognize conflict, and a lack of interest to be part of the in group were more likely to experience mobbing behaviors. The author suggested high achieving employees were more likely to become targets of mobbing as they were considered part of the out group and different from the rest especially if they were blatant about their achievements.

A study by Mikkelsen and Einarsen (2002b), surveying 234 manufacturing employees comprised of 45% women and 55% male from Denmark further supported the findings that personality may play a role in mobbing. Using the NAQ, health questionnaire, self-efficacy scale, and Hopkins Symptoms Checklist, the researchers set out to determine if any correlations with mobbing existed with state negative affectivity. They further found that state negative affectivity was significant in terms of predicting employees who may be more susceptible to mobbing acts than others. Additionally, they found 88% reported experiencing at least one

mobbing act within the past six months that was significantly correlated with psychological complaints.

Two studies conducted by Matthiesen and Einarsen (2001, 2007) further supported personality as indicators of mobbing behavior. The latest study done in 2007 surveyed 4,742 union members in Norway using the NAQ and personality scales measuring self-esteem, anxiety, and social competency skills. The gender breakdown consisted of 53% male and 47% female with 62% of the sample working in the private sector and the other 38% employed in a public organization. The study found that significantly more mobbing was reported in private industry as well as in organizations with more than 100 employees. They found that 10% or 1 in 10 employees reported being targets of mobbing and that a significant number of those targets reported being victims of aggression in previous jobs or as children in school. They further concluded that targets of mobbing exhibited significantly lower self-esteem and social competency skills. The second study done in 2001 with 85 Norwegian participants recruited from mobbing organizations they belonged to used the MMPI to determine if personality played a role in being mobbing at work. The researchers concluded that targets of mobbing scored significantly higher on certain aspects of the MMPI and those individuals displayed more emotional and psychological issues on a wide range of personality traits suggesting once again personality may play a significant role in mobbing in the workplace.

Another study by Glaso et al. (2009) surveying 2,539 Norwegian employees who were registered through the Central Employee Register during the past six months also found personality was significantly correlated with mobbing behaviors. They reported targets of mobbing exhibited significant differences on the following eight of nine personality traits tested: dominance, vindictiveness, social avoidance, exploitability, distrustfulness, intrusiveness,

nurturing, and being cold. All targets of mobbing reported significantly higher levels of those personality traits in comparison to non-mobbed individuals.

A second study by Glasso et al. (2007) surveying 144 Norwegian employees self-identified as targets of workplace bullying using the NAQ and Big 5 Personality Dimension inventory also found personality linked to mobbing. The study concluded no one predictor in terms of personality emerged as significant. However, they did find some targets tended to be more introverted, less open to experience, less agreeable, less conscientious, and more emotionally unstable than non-targets which suggests that personality should not be ignored with regard to mobbing in the workplace. Extensive research outside of academia demonstrates the negative impact mobbing has on the employee and how characteristics of that individual may play a role in being targeted, but what does research say about mobbing in higher education?

Mobbing and Higher Education

Researchers in other countries pioneered work done as it related to mobbing and the impact it has on employees (Khubehandani & Price, 2015). It is clear from that research that there are psychological and physical symptoms reported by employees who experience mobbing behaviors in the workplace. These symptoms manifest themselves in varying degrees and severity depending on the employee and the mobbing behaviors themselves. Most of the research cited thus far on mobbing has been done in other countries and none in academia. It was only natural to turn that lens to the academy in order to study the impact mobbing had on employees within academia, and until recently, that research was again pioneered outside of the U.S. Furthermore, even though the studies on mobbing in higher education are more limited than those outside of academia, the negative impact on the employee and ultimately the institution are similar to those findings in other organizations.

Faculty. Given the importance faculty plays in the academy, research on mobbing has begun to look more closely at this group in higher education. A study by Tigrel and Kokalan (2009) conducted a mixed methods study of three public and two private universities in Turkey. They surveyed a representative sample of over 34,000 academic personnel from these five different institutions. The first part of the questionnaire was used to ascertain the degrees of mobbing experienced and then in-depth interviews were conducted with six employees to gain a better understanding of positional power within the institutions that may contribute to being mobbed. The findings of the study suggested employees who experienced mobbing reported higher levels of psychological distress including depression and paranoia. Consistent with other studies, the main forms of mobbing included the following: gossiping or spreading rumors, assigning busywork, ignoring, withholding important information, devaluing work done, exclusion from meetings, micromanaging, and verbally harassing behaviors.

Interviews with two professors and four research assistants experiencing mobbing behaviors within this study found they were generally performed in the open and each employee experiencing those behaviors reported a strong desire to quit their job due to the negative impact it had on their daily lives (Tigrel & Kokalan, 2009). The mobbing targets all went on to state they were unsure what was occurring when the mobbing behaviors began and somehow thought it was their fault it was happening. The professors reported being mobbed by students, administrators, research assistants, and other faculty while the research assistants reported mobbing primarily from faculty within the department they were working in. Regardless of the types of mobbing or who it was done by, forcing those employees out of the organization was believed to be the goal.

In another study on mobbing of faculty and faculty administrators by Bjorkqvist et al. (1994), similar results were reported. A mixed methods study was done at Abo Akademi

University in Finland with a sample of 338 faculty and administrators using the Work Harassment Scale along with depression and anxiety scales. The sample consisted of 46% male and 54% female and 19 of those who scored high on the Work Harassment Scale participated in clinical interviews regarding the mobbing behavior they experienced at the institution. The mobbing behaviors reported were consistent with previous studies.

The results of this study showed more women than men reported being mobbed with the majority of those cases being done by a superior (Bjorkqvist et al., 1994). The study further found that administrators reported higher incidences of mobbing than faculty who were teaching or conducting research. Similar to previous studies reported, high levels of depression, anxiety, aggression and in some cases, PTSD were reported. The study also found that 32% of participants reported witnessing at least some form of mobbing, while 17.8% witnessed more than one case.

In another study conducted by Celep and Konakli (2013), the researchers also found a connection between the organization, faculty, and mobbing behaviors. This phenomenological study consisted of eight faculty who were all professors from health and social sciences departments from a university located in Turkey. The researchers found faculty reported mobbing behaviors related to job performance, personality, values, threats, acts of violence, and stifled communication with colleagues. The findings further suggested targets of mobbing believed the perpetrators lacked basic leadership competencies. The targets were identified as standing up for what was right but suffering serious consequences to their mental and physical health for doing so. The researchers additionally found decreased job engagement and increased family problems, economic stress, and even suicidal ideation. On the other hand, some employees reported mobbing behavior increased their drive to perform. This may suggest that

individual personality traits could play a role in how certain employees respond to mobbing and why they may be targeted in the first place.

Another study by Zabrodska and Kveton (2012) surveyed 1,530 faculty, Ph.D. instructors and faculty administrators from Czechoslovakian institutions of higher learning using the NAQ-R. While the researchers only found 8% of those surveyed self-reported as being mobbed, nearly 30% reported witnessing mobbing behavior within their institution. However, 13.6% of respondents were considered mobbing victims based on responses to the NAQ-R of at least one weekly reported mobbing act during the past year. This is consistent with other findings that suggest the rate of mobbing is much higher than what is being reported. The types of mobbing acts were also consistent with research outside of higher education with the most common acts reported as those of being ignored, given too much work, and given work that was beneath job skills.

Another study on faculty and mobbing that was conducted by Kakumba et al. (2014) showed similar findings to the previous research examined. A survey was used with 102 faculty, lecturers, or teaching assistants from Makerere University in Uganda. The mobbing behaviors described in this study were consistent with the previous study and described as covert in nature. They found 53.3% of those surveyed reported being mobbed and those experiencing mobbing also reported being disengaged with colleagues, administration and the overall institution because of that experience. The most frequently reported mobbing behaviors consisted of withholding information, not giving feedback, interrupting, excluding, taking away privileges, and unfair criticism of work. Studies so far have examined mobbing in higher education with a focus on faculty or faculty administrators. However, other studies shifted that lens to also encompass mobbing behaviors in terms of staff experiences at institutions of higher learning.

Staff. The role of staff in higher education can be just as difficult to balance as it is for faculty and faculty administrators. However, as a group they are often overlooked in the research or lumped together even though staff consists of many different types of positions and educational levels within those positions. There were only two articles on staff that I found relevant to my study. The first was a quantitative study conducted by Giorgi (2012) using the NAQ-R, health questionnaires, and organizational questionnaires to survey over 300 employees who were administrators, librarians, technicians, and human resource staff from an Italian university. Professors, researchers, and instructors were purposely excluded from the study at the request of the institution. This study found high levels of mobbing behaviors with 19% of those surveyed stating they experienced mobbing weekly for more than six months. Again, the types of mobbing behaviors were consistent with those from previous studies. They did not, however, find any significant differences between males and females.

The study reported mobbing behaviors negatively impacted the health of employees and also had a negative impact on health due to a negative culture or climate within the organization. The climate dimensions the researchers examined consisted of ability to freely communicate, autonomy to do one's job, clarity of expectations of employee job roles, engagement and loyalty to the organization, and support and encouragement of innovative ideas. The researchers concluded mobbing both directly and indirectly affected employee health. They further suggested there was a direct correlation to organizational culture and mobbing behaviors experienced by employees.

In another study, Thomas (2005) created a mobbing questionnaire that was then used with 42 clerical, secretarial, and support staff who were primarily female from a post-secondary institution in the U.K. She then interviewed 10 of those participants who reported being mobbed in order to understand staff perceptions of mobbing in higher education. The types of mobbing

behavior reported was consisted with previous research but the top four reported as occurring "quite often" or "very often" were the following: withholding information needed to do one's job, devaluing and criticizing work, not recognizing efforts, and ignoring or excluding employees. The results found that nearly 50% reported being mobbed and nearly all identified their direct supervisor as the perpetrator. Physical and psychological symptoms including depression, anxiety, headaches, fatigue, and difficulty sleeping were also consistent with symptoms reported in previous research. Mobbing in the workplace is a complicated issue with serious consequences to the target, but it also negatively impacts the organization.

Organizational Impact

The research clearly demonstrates the negative aftermath mobbing has on employees, but the organization itself suffers severe consequences. A survey study by Qureshi et al. (2015) of 450 Pakistani employees in higher education consisting of both faculty and staff found a positive correlation between mobbing and the negative impact that has on the overall institution. The researchers found mobbing decreased work engagement and morale while increasing the desire to quit and increased missed days at work due to the stress experienced from being mobbed. A study form the U.S. conducted by Spratlen (1995) with 806 faculty and staff from Washington University using a survey on mobbing found similar results. Job satisfaction was the most strongly correlated with mobbing, but commination with superiors as well as productivity was also negatively affected.

Sedivy-Benton et al. (2014) supported the previous study with findings that showed disengagement from the institution posed the most significant negative impact next to quitting in a phenomenological study of three female faculty members from various private institutions in post-secondary education within the U.S. Another study by Rehman et al. (2015) surveying Pakistani employees of various universities also found positive correlations between mobbing

and organizational commitment as well as affective commitment to the institution. A phenomenological study by Yaman (2010) with 12 faculty who experienced mobbing at various Turkish universities further support these findings. The interviews found those faculty who were mobbed did not feel any ties or sense of belonging to the universities in which they were employed. In another phenomenological study by Lutgen-Sandvik (2008) with 20 U.S. workers who experienced mobbing found workers who were once overachievers began doing the bare minimum to stay off the radar so they would be left alone.

Lastly, a study by McKay et al. (2008) conducted in Canada using a self-created mobbing questionnaire with faculty and librarians of various universities also found a significant relationship between mobbing experienced and lowered quality and quantity of work. Consistent with Rehman et al. (2015), they found individuals surveyed had a much more negative view of the institution and over half of employees surveyed reported they had experienced mobbing within the past five years. Mobbing behaviors were perpetrated by administrators, peers, as well as students. They further found that nearly 75% did not report the mobbing behavior because they did not believe administration would effectively work to rectify the situation and feared it would only make their circumstances worse. A study by Zapf and Gross (2001) supports previous findings and found in their mixed methods study of 149 employees from Germany that targets of mobbing reported quitting as the most viable solution to dealing with being mobbed and the one they most recommended. The researchers further stated that reporting mobbing through organizational channels did not improve the problem and in many cases only made it worse. Clearly, the research shows that mobbing negatively impacts the organization as well as the targeted individual of the behaviors.

The research outlined in this section demonstrates the problem mobbing poses for employees and the organization. Studies outside the U.S. and those conducted within were

examined as well as the physiological and psychological impact mobbing has on employees within and outside of higher education. Personality of employees was also found to be an indicator of those more likely to be mobbed. Given the findings regarding personality in mobbing, goal orientation will be analyzed in more detail in the next section of this chapter as an important construct of this research study to help gain a better understanding of personal characteristics and the connection it may have to mobbing of academic advisors in higher education.

Goal Orientation

Goal orientation is the second construct of my study I will examine in more detail in this chapter. Understanding motivation and what pushes individuals to learn or perform can be beneficial to explain what drives employees in the workforce as well as how others interact and react to them. Goal orientation began as a way of viewing student learning, but quickly became a research tool revolving around job performance. However, some research suggests it is similar to personality that remains stable over time.

Goal Orientation as a Personality Trait

Goal orientation can be used as way to understand what drives individual behavior and how that trait might be consistent over time in various situations. Vandewalle and Cummings (1997) conducted longitudinal and field studies of undergraduates at suburban community colleges in the U.S. The first study consisted of 44 students in three sections of accounting courses. They conducted a survey at the beginning and then one again at the end of the semester. The second part of the study surveyed 239 undergraduate students in 12 sections of business administration courses at two suburban community colleges. The researchers focused on goal orientation as a personality trait and found situational influences influenced behavior. However,

if a situation did not dictate a certain response, individuals defaulted to a preferred or natural way of responding or doing things.

A study by Potosky (2010) further supports the findings by Vandewalle and Cummings (1997) that goal orientation may be a stable trait over time. Potosky (2010) surveyed IT professionals from a large U.S. software company that focused on services to the healthcare industries at two different points in time with a span of five years in between. The researcher used multiple goal orientation surveys and included 163 participants in the first phase and 52 of those same participants in the second phase. In agreement with the study by Vandewalle and Cummings (1997), the findings found that goal orientation was a stable trait over time that may change due to situational factors but in general remain consistent. Research suggests that goal orientation can be thought of as a trait that is stable over time with this construct emerging as a way to understand why children learn in educational settings.

Goal Orientation in Education

Goal orientation has it roots in research that focused on school children to examine what motivated them to learn in the classroom and continued to be researched in other levels of education. A study by Printrich (2000) conducted a longitudinal study in three different phases that surveyed 150 eighth and ninth graders in the U.S. who were taking math. The students were surveyed at the beginning of eighth grade, then at the end of eighth grade and again at the end of ninth grade. The questionnaires used consisted of motivation, negative affect, cognitive strategies, and mastery and performance orientation scales. The findings suggested that students who scored highest on mastery orientation demonstrated positive adaptive behaviors and continued excelling in math. Students who scored high on performance orientation, but who were still interested in learning the task exhibited behaviors similar to those of mastery orientation. Students scoring low on both mastery and performance orientation developed the

most maladaptive behaviors and did not excel in the math courses they took. Similar to Vandewalle and Cummings (1997) and Potosky (2010), Printrich (2000), too, found these orientations were consistent across time throughout the longitudinal study.

Bell and Kozlowski (2002) found similar results showing that performance orientation was negatively correlated with performance, suggesting it was maladaptive. They conducted research using computer-based simulators with 125 undergraduate students at a large midwestern university. They were tested on their ability to learn strategic and naval maneuvers and then incorporate that knowledge into correct decision making within a computer program. The students were given questionnaires regarding goal orientation, self-efficacy, knowledge, and cognitive abilities. Those scoring high on mastery orientation were positively correlated with self-efficacy, knowledge, and performance. However, further analysis indicated those scoring high on mastery orientation but low on ability exhibited maladaptive behaviors.

In another simulator study by Johnson et al. (2011), the researchers found performance orientation was positively correlated with performance while performance avoidance was negatively correlated with performance to avoid looking incompetent. This study used goal orientation, focus, and performance scales with 117 undergraduates from a large university in southeastern U.S. The participants were asked to simulate combat maneuvers using a helicopter simulator that included radar, surveillance, and gun fire. Yeo and Neal (2004) also found the higher subjects scored on performance orientation the more likely they were to avoid challenging tasks in order to focus on what they were comfortable with to maintain positive perceptions by others. The study used both conscientious and goal orientation scales in conjunction with a spatial ability test that was done in a computer lab during one of the testing sessions.

Janssen and Prins (2007), like previous research cited, found differences between mastery, performance and performance avoidance orientations. The researchers surveyed 170

medical students at a Dutch University Hospital in the Netherlands regarding goal orientation and feedback seeking behaviors. They found those scoring higher on mastery orientation sought out feedback to improve themselves and it was less about self-validation. In addition, they found a significant positive correlation between performance-avoidance goal orientation and feedback seeking to improve themselves. They further found those scoring high on performance orientation sought feedback to validate themselves rather than to improve upon their skill sets.

A study by Colquitt and Simmering (1998) conducted a similar study using feedback and goal orientation. They surveyed 103 students in a course at a midwestern college and found mastery orientation was positively related to initial learning that continued after feedback. They further found performance orientation was negatively related to initial learning both before and after feedback. Mastery orientated individuals placed a higher value and expectation on learning which was positively correlated to their motivation. Performance orientation was negatively correlated with motivation to learn and the value they placed on their ability to do so.

Brett and Vandewall (1999) also conducted a longitudinal study of MBA students in a course assessing goal orientation, feedback, and goal content setting on presentations during the duration of a semester long course. The study consisted of 262 graduate students who were tested at the beginning of the course. They were then provided training and given feedback on presentations during the course at two different points in time and retested on the scales. They found significant relationships between goal orientation and the types of goal content that was chosen by each participant as a focus to improve presentation skills throughout the semester.

The study by Brett and Vandewalle (1999) further found that mastery-oriented individuals were positively correlated with choosing goals that would increase and develop their presentation skills or enhance those they already possessed. Performance orientation was positively correlated with choosing goals focused around besting their colleagues while

performance avoidance orientation was positively correlated with choosing goals to avoid appearing bad or incompetent during presentations. The researchers found the content goals most significantly related to performance were the desire to improve, develop or refine presentation skills throughout the semester which was positively correlated with mastery goal orientation. Researching goal orientation to understand learning in education proved to be a valuable tool in providing insight into student motivation, so it was natural to turn the attention to understanding motivation in the workplace using that same construct.

Goal Orientation in Employment

Organizations rely on employees to maintain their standing as well as progress in a world where becoming a business casualty can be all too easy. Researchers understood that need and turned to goal orientation to help explain what motivates employee performance on the job. Porath and Bateman (2006) found a connection between goal orientation and job performance in terms of sales in their study of 88 telecommuting employees from a large multinational corporation. They found that mastery and performance orientation was positively correlated with sales performance, while performance avoidance orientation was negatively correlated with sales.

Van Yperen and Janssen (2002) took a slightly different approach by examining goal orientation and its relation to job satisfaction. They surveyed 322 university employees in the Netherlands using goal orientation, job satisfaction, fatigue and job demand questionnaires. They found individuals who scored higher on performance and lower on mastery orientation were significantly more likely to report fatigue and lower job satisfaction. They further found individuals scoring higher on mastery, but lower on performance orientation were significantly more likely to report being satisfied in their jobs regardless of the job demands. The results

suggest that mastery orientation is more adaptable and more likely to be satisfied in jobs that are demanding.

Chughtai and Buckley (2011) also looked at goal orientation and job performance which showed similar results. Their cross-sectional survey of 168 research scientists from six different research institutions in Ireland used trust, job performance, innovative work, and goal orientation scales to determine what connections could be made. They found that mastery orientation mediated job performance and innovative behavior if there was already an atmosphere of trust between employees and their supervisors which was positively correlated with work engagement. The more engaged an employee was, the more likely they would be to participate in mastery-oriented behaviors like innovation, setting goals, and putting forth more effort at work. This supports findings by Potosky (2010) that was mentioned earlier in this chapter of 163 IT professional from a U.S. software company where mastery orientation was related to overall support, self-efficacy, job performance, as well as support for innovation by supervisors.

In a slightly different study, Matzler and Mueller (2011) examined goal orientation and its connection to collaboration and information sharing. They surveyed 124 engineering employees from an internationally operated company headquartered in Germany and Austria using goal orientation questionnaire and a German translation of the Big 5 Personality scale. They found a significant positive relationship between mastery orientation and willingness to share information with colleagues. They further found a significant negative correlation between performance orientation and a willingness to share information with others. Collaboration and information sharing is invaluable when individuals must work together and understanding goal orientation can be a useful tool to facilitate that process.

Whether it is to achieve in the classroom, share information with others, or perform tasks, the key concept in goal orientation throughout all of the studies discussed revolves around

learning. This construct can be useful in understanding individual behaviors and what motivates them which can be especially relevant in work settings. The next key concept I will describe in further detail in the next section is associated with learning, but one that is tied to the organization itself.

<div align="center">**Learning Organization**</div>

In order for organizations to grow and progress, learning must occur. When institutions fail to learn from mistakes or continue down a path of status quo, at best stagnation occurs and at worst, the business ceases to exist. For the purpose of this study, learning organization will be examined through the theoretical framework developed by Watkins and Marsick (1993). Furthermore, communication, strategic leadership, empowerment, and collaboration are the key concepts chosen from the model and outlined in greater detail within this section with regard to their relationships to mobbing behaviors.

The abstract concept of a learning organization was operationalized using measurable behaviors in the Dimension of Learning Organization Questionnaire (DLOQ) created by Watkins and Marsick (1993). The framework categorized learning into seven categories: continuous learning, communication and inquiry, collaboration and team learning, empowerment toward a collective vision, connecting the organization to its environment, establishing systems to capture and share learning, and strategic leadership (Marsick, 2013; Watkins & Marsick, 1993). The categories were further broken down into people and structural levels with the first four categories listed in people and the remaining three falling under structural (Yang, 2003; Yang, Watkins, & Marsick, 2004).

The original DLOQ scale, created by Watkins and Marsick (1993), consisted of 42 questions broken down to measure each of the seven categories. A meta-analysis of the questionnaire using t-tests, descriptive statistics, one-way ANOVAs and factor analysis from 28

companies with nearly 8,000 responses showed a strong positive correlation between the key components of the categories and learning, financial performance, and carrying out the mission of the organization (Watkins & Dirani, 2013). They further found support for validity and reliability of the questionnaire across cultures and languages. Marsick (2013) reported that over 70 studies have been published using the questionnaire. She further noted that over 173 requests to use the instrument from 38 countries have been documented since 2002 with translations of the survey into 14 other languages. The survey has also been adapted for use in business, nonprofit, government agencies, public health, religious organizations, military, and education including K-12 and post-secondary with online versions as well (Marsick, 2013; Watkins & O'Neil, 2013).

Yang (2003), a statistician who worked closely with Marsick and Watkins, created an abbreviated version of the DLOQ. This shortened version contained the same seven dimensions as the original but consisted of 21 questions with three per category rather than 42 and seven respectively. Multivariate analysis showed a strong correlation between the seven dimensions and knowledge and financial performance indicating validity of the instrument. A study by Yang et al. (2004) further supports the validity and reliability of the DLOQ, both the extended and abbreviated versions. This study was conducted in multiple phases and stages with 48 participants in the first stage, 71 in the second stage, and 191 in the last stage.

Item analysis was conducted during each stage of Yang et al.'s (2004) study and Cronbach's alpha was used to measure internal consistency. Another phase of the study added items to the third version of the survey to measure financial performance and knowledge of the organization which ultimately became the finalized questionnaire. Construct validity was measured using 836 participants from multiple types of organizations and different employee roles within those organizations. While the overall data provided strong evidence of content

validity, findings also suggested the shortened version of the survey may be more accurate given that some of the items on the original questionnaire did not seem to be the most accurate measurement of the various dimensions. Strong reliability was found for both the extended and abbreviated versions.

Yang (2003) recommended using the extended version when the end result consisted of a thorough assessment of learning within the organization. The results provide extensive information to make decisions regarding interventions within the organization. However, the shortened version is suggested for individuals conducting research to understand relationships between learning organizations and other variables or constructs. The smaller number of items makes it more ideal to pair with other questionnaires to keep individuals from experiencing survey fatigue (Yang, 2003; Yang et al., 2004). It is also recommended for researchers who are interested in specific sections of the survey rather than in its entirety (Yang 2003). For the purpose of my study, the shortened version was chosen with four dimensions of interest: communication, collaboration, empowerment, and strategic leadership. These specific dimensions were chosen because of the strong role they seemed to play within organizations and the connection to increased mobbing behaviors.

Communication

Communication is an important component of any relationship, but it is essential for healthy work environments as well (Dymock & McCarthy, 2006). A common theme from research previously cited on mobbing suggests communication plays a role when mobbing behaviors exist within organizations. A study by Vartia (2001) with 949 federal municipal employees found that stifling individual expression of ideas and opinions significantly increased emotional stress, while ignoring and isolating employees significantly decreased confidence and self-esteem. Einarsen and Rakness (1997) showed job dissatisfaction and psychological distress

positively correlated with mobbing behaviors that included withholding of information necessary to perform one's job along with ignoring their ideas and opinions.

A study by Zapf and Gross (2001) of 149 German employees reported victims of mobbing who tried to resolve the problems by addressing the issues with their aggressor only made the situation worse. They further found avoidance was the method of choice to deescalate the mobbing behaviors and the victims recommended quitting as the most viable solution. In a study of faculty and staff, Spratlen (1995) found being ignored, belittled, and demeaned were connected to mobbing that in turn severely hindered communication with superiors. These findings were further supported by Bjorkqvist et al. (1994) in a similar study of faculty and administrators in higher education, where employees stated symptoms as severe as PTSD were related to mobbing behaviors that included being ignored, mocked, judgement questioned, and open expressions of concern regarding the mental stability of the targeted employees.

A study by Van Fleet and Van Fleet (2012) of 451 employees surveyed across the U.S. supported both studies with their findings that showed the most common tactic employees used to deal with mobbing behavior was avoidance of the aggressor. Targets were least likely to communicate the issue with the individual perpetrating the behaviors. These studies showed that lack of communication and extremely negative communication correlated significantly with increased mobbing behaviors within organizations. This dysfunctional communication within organizations most likely plays a role in employees being isolated from colleagues which has also been shown to correlate with mobbing behaviors.

Collaboration

Collaboration across units and within organizations is essential to a healthy working environment where employees can work together to challenge the status quo in order to increase innovation and performance (Kumar & Idris, 2006; O'Neil, 2003; Park et al., 2014). Research

previously cited shows a lack of collaboration contributes to mobbing within organizations. Two different types of studies by Hauge et al. (2009) and Yaman (2010) suggest role conflict and ambiguity of job duties contribute to mobbing within institutions. Hauge et al. (2009) surveyed 2,359 Norwegian workers who reported role and interpersonal conflicts to be strong predictors of mobbing. They further found the victims of mobbing were more likely to go on and mob other individuals within the organization.

Yaman (2010) took a phenomenological approach with 12 faculty members of a Turkish university finding that role ambiguity played a major part in being mobbed. Tension was created when individuals took on the same responsibilities as others creating a feeling that boundaries were being overstepped even though none were defined. This not only increased mobbing behaviors toward targeted individuals but ensured the impossibility of collaboration because of it. Ilongo (2016) conducted a similar phenomenological study with 20 faculty from a university in Africa where the main theme reported by participants was not the issue of a political agenda from the administration, but the lack of collaboration with faculty to implement such initiatives. This lack of shared governance and inclusion in decision making created feelings of devaluation among faculty by the administration.

Two other studies, previously cited, found more blatant reports from mobbing victims regarding stifled collaboration (Celep & Konakli, 2013; Tigrel & Kokalan, 2009). Tigrel and Kokalan's (2009) survey of over 34,000 academic personnel from Turkish universities found mobbing victims reported meetings being scheduled without their knowledge and others taking credit for their ideas. Calep and Konakli (2013) conducted a phenomenological study of eight faculty members from a university in Turkey and found mobbing victims experienced overt attacks on their rights to even speak with colleagues by the agressor. Collaboration is an important way of building relationships and communicating ideas. Mobbing research suggests

that type of interaction is not only discouraged, but many times overtly questioned, which is just one more way of disenfranchising victims.

Empowerment

Marginalizing individuals is a way of maintaining power in order to control employee behavior, but in the process, it discourages initiative, innovation, and progress (Kakumba et al., 2014; O'Neil, 2003). A study by McKay et al. (2008) of faculty and librarians from various Canadian universities previously cited found mobbing victims reported decreased quality and quantity of work. Cortina et al. (2001) found overall job satisfaction and engagement significantly suffered for those employees reporting mobbing behaviors, particularly the more those behaviors were experienced in their study of 1,180 federal court employees.

Giorgi (2012) looked at the overall climate within an organization that included transparency of information, autonomy to perform one's job, clearly defined expectations, engagement, and innovation. The survey of staff form an Italian university found the most frequent mobbing behaviors consisted of assigning jobs outside competency area, gossiping and withholding information needed to perform one's job duties. A significant connection between mobbing behaviors, adverse health effects, and the overall climate was reported. Furthermore, the more individuals experienced mobbing behavior, the more negative their view of the organizational climate which created a demoralizing and disengaging effect.

A study by Kakumba et al. (2014) found a similar disengaging effect in a study of 102 faculty, lecturers, or teaching assistants from a university in Uganda where mobbing behaviors were found to be disempowering. Employees reported being unfairly criticized, interrupted during meetings, receiving no feedback, and revoked privileges which led them to withdraw from colleagues, administration, and the overall institution. Mikkelsen and Einarsen (2002b) supported these results in a study of 234 manufacturing employees from Denmark. The

participants reported a high number of items that were personal and denigrating in nature including slander, rumors, ridicule, insults, and other offensive comments personally made about them.

Cooper et al. (2004) found similar marginalizing mobbing behaviors to those of Kakumba et al. (2014) in their study of 5,288 employees from 70 different organizations in Great Britain. They reported mobbing behaviors significantly affected physical and mental health that continued to have an impact long after the mobbing stopped. The common theme in the behaviors associated with these mobbing studies were meant to demean and disempower individuals which led those employees to disengage from their jobs and the organization. However, this does not happen without the consent of leadership whether directly or indirectly.

Strategic Leadership

Abusive leadership can make the life an employee miserable and as previous research in this chapter demonstrated, it can have serious effects on the individual and negative overall organizational impact. Studies by Spratlen (1995), Thomas (2005), and Van Fleet and Van Fleet (2012) found the majority of individuals reported being mobbed by their boss. Thomas (2005) further found the abusive leadership severely impacted the health of the employee as well as their personal life and they were less engaged and unhappy with their jobs. Tepper (2000) demonstrated a strong correlation between abusive supervisors and increased turnover, lowered life and organizational satisfaction, increased psychological distress and depression of the employee targeted. Tepper et al. (2011) also found supervisors justified excluding the targeted employees when they viewed them as dissimilar from themselves and reasoned that giving them lower performance reviews in conjunction with other abusive behaviors toward the target were warranted.

A study by Ertureten et al. (2012) found that certain types of leadership was more strongly correlated with mobbing behaviors within an organization. The study surveyed 251 while collar employees from Turkish organizations who reported working with the same supervisor for at least six months. Authoritarian leadership was most positively correlated with mobbing behaviors while transformational and transactional were negatively correlated. Employees experiencing mobbing behaviors by their supervisors reported lowered job satisfaction and increased emotional disengagement from the organization with increased intentions to quit.

Lastly, a phenomenological study by Sedivy-Benton et al. (2014) of female faculty members in higher education found achieving tenure did not stop the abusive behaviors of mobbing. Like previous findings, detaching from the organization was fundamental to surviving the experience. Individuals reported being excluded from decision making, singled out for being different, targeted for their accomplishments, and denied recognition for their successes. Leadership turning a blind eye which enabled and perpetuated the problem was the core reason participants believed mobbing occurred and continued within their organization. Mobbing does not exist throughout an institution without the participation of its leaders, and certain types or groups of employees may be targeted more than others given their roles within the institution.

Professional Academic Advisors

The final concept in this study addresses professional academic advisors in higher education. This group was chosen because they are a unique group of staff housed under academic affairs even though much of what they are expected to do is work with students on very personal and social levels which is generally considered more in the category of student affairs. This section will examine the history of advising, research on advising, and why it is important to mobbing.

History of Advising

Institutions of higher learning tend to evolve slowly in comparison to the changing world outside the walls of the ivory tower. However, looking back historically with regard to student advising, there have been significant changes from the inception of the academy over 400 years ago. When academia began in 1636 with the founding of Harvard College, the role of guiding students morally, intellectually, and academically belonged to the president and later to that of the faculty (Grites, 1979). The concept of "in loco parentis" which means "instead of parent" is a legal concept providing guardianship of a person to someone other than their legal parent (U.S. Legal, n.d.). When individuals went to college, the faculty and institution were seen as having legal rights comparable to that of a parent in order to take care of those students which encompassed more than academics.

Increased student female populations in the early twentieth century and the hiring of female deans shifted some of the care taking responsibilities that fell on the president and faculty to those of the deanship (Gmelch, Wolverton, Wolverton, & Sarros, 1999). Male deans, in particular, viewed their roles as disciplinarian to ensure students were not cutting classes, cheating, or doing other activities considered morally questionable (Schwartz, 2002). The role of faculty and the university acting "in loci parentis" existed from the inception of the first institution until the 1960s when court cases began recognizing the rights of university and college students which began limiting the authority institutions had over them (Lee, 2011).

The increases in enrollment after World War I, and especially after World War II with the GI Bill, led to many other structural changes within academic institutions (Frost, 2000; Grites, 1979). Grites (1979) went on to report that even though the majority of advising continued to be conducted by faculty, the response to the increasing enrollment over the years created a need for professional staff in order to aid in advising as well as other student service needs. The legal

freedom the courts provided to students in the sixties coincided with the concept that students should be taking part in creating their academic paths with the assistance of advisors and no longer dictated to like a parent-child relationship or in loci parentis.

The formation of the National Academic Advising Association (NACADA) in 1979 was another major step in recognizing the importance of advising and viewing it as a profession housing over 10,000 members throughout the U.S. and internationally as we headed toward the 21st century (Thurmond & Miller, 2006). Advising continued growing as a field into the eighties where a study on advising found students preferred advisors working with them in a holistic capacity that incorporated helping them with academics as well as issues that went on outside the classroom in more of a partnership than a top down or prescriptive approach (Winston & Sandor, 1984). This study surveyed 306 students at ten colleges or universities in 17 different concentrations of study using a prescriptive and developmental questionnaire to determine the type of advising students preferred. Students wanted to have a voice in their education and that need only intensified when millennials went to college where they continued to be heavily influenced by their parents (Montag et al, 2012).

Montag et al. (2012) found similar findings to that of Winston and Sandor (1984) using multiple focus groups consisting of 49 millennial students with senior status from a private Midwestern university. Their findings suggested millennials initially want more prescriptive advising with advisors who are efficient, knowledgeable, and straightforward with advice regarding majors and requirements. They want to know about many different types of majors and career paths and only pick one when they feel connected to it. They further found millennials rely heavily upon their parents and advising sessions need to take that into consideration when meeting with students.

The 21st century brought a different type of student that many times included their parents, tightening budgets, and yet again more changes to the field of academic advising. Increased numbers of staff advisors, research and literature in the field, assessment and accountability, and NACADA continued expanding advising which helped elevate it to a serious profession (Kuhn, 2008). In 2008, NACADA collaborated with Kansas State University (KSU) to offer the first and only master's degree specifically in academic advising (Habley, 2009). Today KSU (n.d.) not only offer a master's degree but a graduate certificate and doctoral option that will begin its first cohort in 2020. With the rise in status of professional academic advisors and increased concerned with retention and graduation rates, it was only a matter of time before more research into advising and accountability would come with the territory.

Advising and Student Satisfaction

As funding for higher education began shifting from state and federal aid to that of the student, the concept of the student as a consumer began emerging (D'Amico, 2018; State Higher Education Executive Officers Association, 2016). Unprecedented student loan debt and the concept of students as consumers of education has been a driving force in the call to hold institutions of higher learning more accountable (Supiano, 2013). Student satisfaction and retention and graduation rates have become daily vocabulary across the academy including in the advising offices. A study by Bitz (2010) surveyed 113 first semester freshmen at a midwestern university in a freshman seminar class that was taught by a full-time advisor who also advised the students. The results showed a strong positive correlation between perceptions of advising and being enrolled in the course with the advisor as the instructor.

A study by Swecker et al. (2013) at a southeast research university of first-generation students further supported the findings of Bitz (2010). Data was collected through university records of 363 first-generation students as well as first time in any college who began fall 2009.

Tracking data from advising offices was also utilized and multiple logistic regression was used to determine any significant relationship between first-generation students, number of meetings with an advisor and retention of students who were in good standing. The findings of the study suggested that retention rates for students in college for the first time and who are first-generation increased 13% for every advising meeting a student had with an advisor.

A similar study by Kot (2014) that used logistical regression found increased retention, GPA and student satisfaction with centralized advising where students were advised by professional advisors. The study consisted of 2,745 first time and full time freshman at a metropolitan public research university who were advised by professional advisors within a centralized advising unit until they accumulated more than 42 credits. Data was compiled from university databases and tracking information from the centralized advising office. The findings showed a positive correlation between the number of advising meetings and first year GPA as well as retention from the first year to the second year. The study further found that centralized advising was the most important predictor of first term GPA after high school GPA. The research clearly demonstrates the importance of student satisfaction in advising and the connection to retention and academic performance, but student expectation also plays a role that cannot be ignored.

Advising and Student Expectations

Students enter college with aspirations to graduate and accomplish great things, and in addition to their future goals, they bring preconceived expectations of the college experience with them. A qualitative study by Walker et al. (2017) at a large Great Lakes state university interviewed 162 first year students and used story circles to gain a better understanding of the transition from high school to college. This study specifically investigated student perceptions of high school guidance counselors and the expectations they held of a college advisor. The

findings suggested that students have difficulty distinguishing the difference between high school guidance counselors and academic advisors. Students expressed frustration when academic advisors were not available to them and they reported wanting a relationship with the same advisor to receive consistent information.

A similar qualitative study by Ellis (2014) interviewed 30 first year undecided students from a large public research university regarding their advising experiences. The findings suggested students had difficulty distinguishing the differing roles between guidance counselor and academic advisors which was consistent with Walker et al. (2017). The study further found contradictory expectations of advising. One student wanted the advisor to do everything for them from picking their classes to registering them while another found that frustrating and wanted to have more input and control. Students reported expecting their advisor to ease their anxiety and care about them as individuals. Ellis (2014) went on to find student expectations of advisors increased after the initial meeting and indicated that advisors needed to assess individual expectations in order to best meet the needs of each student.

A quantitative study by Barbuto et al. (2011) also found students presupposed a high level of expectation with regard to advising. This study surveyed 305 undergraduates using the MLQ in the college of education and arts and sciences at a midwestern university. They further assessed 37 advisors using a survey to assess leadership characteristics. The study found students were most satisfied when advising meetings were more transformational in nature by inspiring, intellectually stimulating, and individually considering each student. Students reported advisors who did not give direction, did not intervene before they made mistakes, and enforced university rules as less effective. In other words, advisors were expected to understand the unique needs of each individual student and transform them through advising sessions without adhering to policies or procedures. In addition to managing student expectations in general,

advisors are also expected to understand and anticipate the needs of students from various backgrounds.

Advising and Specific Student Populations

Increased diversity in higher education has created a need for advisors to understand the unique backgrounds of students in order to best serve them and help them thrive (Soria & Bultmann, 2014). A study by Montag et al. (2012) interviewed 48 Millennials in a series of focus groups who had senior standing and changed their major at least once during their academic career. The sample was chosen from a private midwestern university with centralized advising as incoming freshman, but later handed off to faculty for advising once they declared a major. The findings suggested that these students preferred professional advisors to be more prescriptive with advising and focus on telling students what they needed to do in terms of requirements while simultaneously providing a broad depth of knowledge with regard to various majors. They further found that parents of Millennial students exert a large influence on their decisions and that advising meetings should incorporate parental expectations into the decision-making process with regard to majors and career paths.

A study by Soria and Bultmann (2014) found family background impacted potential student success in college, but in a slightly different way than the study by Montag et al. (2012). They surveyed 10,869 working class students from eight large mid-western public research institutions regarding their experiences in higher education and sense of belonging. They found working class students reported less engagement, lower sense of belonging, and perceived a less welcoming environment. Given their working-class roots, they just did not feel like they fit in and needed help understanding the policies and procedures necessary to successfully navigate college life. The researchers suggested advisors could help these students assimilate by

understanding how their working-class background impacted their education in order to utilize that information in advising meetings to be more impactful.

A mixed methods study by Parks et al. (2015) found understanding the unique needs of veterans by advisors was important to the well-being of those students which was similar to the findings by Soria and Bultmann (2014). The researchers surveyed 50 veterans who had attended various institutions with a survey specifically created to measure veteran experiences with advising. Five veterans who completed the survey agreed to follow up interviews in order to gain a deeper understanding of the unique issues they experience on a college campus. The study found the majority of veterans reported advisors lacked the skills, knowledge, and understanding necessary to advise them. Veterans reported advising as helpful when advisors understood the rules of VA benefits. All of the veterans who participated in the interviews stated that advisors should research military life in general and possess awareness of the specific military background of each veteran they advise. The overall findings from both the quantitative and qualitative methods used suggested that veterans believed they would experience a more positive advising meeting if the advisor was also a fellow veteran.

Longwell-Grice et al. (2016) conducted two qualitative studies with first-generation undergraduate students from very different types of institutions. They found students in the study possessed unique needs specific to their population as previous researchers found. The first study consisted of 14 students with diverse ethnic backgrounds from a private two-year nursing college, two private four-year institutions, and one large residential research university; and the second study recruited 40 all male Latino students from a two-year public college in the southwest. The common theme that emerged from this study for all first-generation students revolved around the struggle to relate to family members. These family members did not

understand the college experience and in many ways were threatened because they believed their son, daughter, brother, sister, or cousin now thought they were better than the rest of the family.

The researchers suggested advisors allow first-generation college students to discuss their college experience and encourage them to make meaning out of those experiences during advising meetings in order to make connections they would no longer be able to make with family members. In addition to connecting with students on an experiential level, the researchers also suggested intrusive advising as the best strategy when working with this population to help keep them engaged. Intrusive advising consists of consistent and intensive follow up to ensure students remain in contact with the advising office. The theory behind intrusive advising is the belief that the more interactions between advisor and advisee where the advisor takes the initiative to make contact, the more connected the student feels toward the institution.

Findings by Museus and Ravello (2010) and Vander Shee (2007) were consisted with Longwell-Grice et al. (2016) that showed intrusive advising techniques were effective with certain populations of students. Museus and Revello (2010) interviewed 31 minority students at a predominantly white large private research institution and a small public state school regarding their perceptions of advising. In addition to a preference for proactive advising, they found the students preferred advisors as friends and mentors who would walk them to referrals when needed and reveal personal information about themselves to students in the advising relationship. Vander Shee (2007) documented the number of advising meetings of 42 students on probation from a private university. He found students who were contacted throughout the semester and who met with an advisor a minimum of three times during the semester had a significant increase in GPA.

Another population of students with unique needs and one that has been increasing on college campuses are students with disabilities or mental illness (National Council on Disability,

2017). A study by Preece et al. (2007) surveyed 1,498 advisors across the U.S. and Canada to gain understanding into the thoughts and feelings of advisors advising students with disabilities and more specifically students with emotional disabilities or mental illness. The study found nearly half of advisors reported receiving no training on the American's with Disability Act and the training they did receive on disabilities were primarily with regard to ADD, ADHD and learning disabilities. Nearly 30% of advisors reported they felt very uncomfortable working with students with emotional disorders. However, nearly half of the respondents reported advising students who had revealed suicidal ideation during an advising session, and 40% of advisors reported working with students who discussed their self-destructive behavior during their meetings. The majority of advisors are not required to be licensed counselors or even possess counseling degrees (Lee & Metcalfe, 2017). However, it is clear from the research the expectations of students and the skills necessary to be an effective advisor are immense even though the general requirements to be hired as an advisor do not reflect that.

Advisors and Importance to Mobbing

The concept of advising students in higher education has changed dramatically from when it first began at Harvard almost 400 years ago. Colleges and universities employ many different models to advise students, but professional academic advisors have consistently grown with increasing responsibilities and expectations as previous research has demonstrated. Unfortunately, the level of pay and job requirements do not seem reflective of the high demands the job entails. A study by Lee and Metcalfe (2017) analyzed 37 job postings for academic advising positions from eight top ten universities in the U.S. collected from HR websites during the month of September 2016.

They found starting salaries ranged from $30,000 to $50,000 and provided the average salary of Librarians in Educational Services of $50,231 from Carnegie classification institutions

as a point of reference. Most positions required a bachelor's degree but preferred a Masters. However, one posting required nothing more than a high school diploma and two others only an associate degree. They found over 60 different categorical variables with regard to skills sought which they collapsed into 10 categories. The top categorical skill set required was communication followed by policy knowledge, advising, ability to work with diverse populations, IT proficiency, decision making, multitasking, service orientation, time management, and diplomacy. The researchers observed the job descriptions demonstrated advisors must possess a multitude of skill sets or required to have skills that are ill defined. The researchers further noted that given the high demands of the job and the emotional needs of the students, more opportunities like "paid study leave" or "mental health breaks" should be built into their schedules (p. 957).

Certain types of individuals may be more drawn to advising given the seemingly low starting salary and educational requirements where an advanced degree is preferred but not required. The skills needed to perform the job are vast and advisors who do their jobs well arguably fall into the high achieving category. Previously examined research has shown that individuals who excel in their jobs could become targets of mobbing (Tepper, et al., 2011; Yaman, 2010; Zapf, 1999).

Tepper et al. (2011) surveyed U.S. healthcare workers in pairs of supervisors and their supervisees. They found that supervisors justified excluding employees and giving them low performance reviews when they were seen as dissimilar from them. This conflict is usually seen by the supervisor as low performance on the part of the employee particularly if the supervisor feels threatened by their work or does not see the employee as loyal to their agenda which then creates a conflict between them. Like Tepper et al. (2011), Zapf (1999) also found conflict and

being part of the out group at the center of mobbing behavior in his study of 214 German employees especially when the targeted individuals were open about their accomplishments.

Findings by Yaman (2010) and Celep and Konakli (2013) of faculty from universities in Turkey were similar to Tepper et al. (2011) and Zapf (1999). Yaman (2010) found that lack of communication and ambiguous roles were linked to mobbing behavior. This qualitative study interviewed 12 faculty from a university in Turkey, with tension and conflict emerging when individuals took on the same tasks as other faculty due to a lack of defined roles within the institution. Celep and Konakli (2013) interviewed 8 faculty members and found mobbing occurred when individuals stood up for what was right only to suffer the consequences of that choice because of incompetent leadership. The common theme from all of these studies include employees being mobbed because they were viewed as different for taking initiative whether it was due to lack of communication, ill-defined roles, or doing what they believed was right. As the research has demonstrated, advising roles are not well defined and advisors must walk a fine line to advocate for students while simultaneously following policies set by faculty and administration.

It is clear the role of an advisor is completely unclear and could create an environment ripe for mobbing behaviors to flourish. A qualitative study by McGill (2018) interviewed 17 leaders, many with doctorates, currently in advising or who previously served in that role. The findings showed that many of the participants could not even agree whether advising was a profession and concluded the most accurate way may be to describe advising as an emerging profession that needed to be more defined.

Ginsberg (2011), a well renowned political science professor and department chair from Johns Hopkins University, released *The Fall of Faculty* in 2013 where he stated that advising should be left to faculty who remain the experts in the field and not conducted by staff advisors.

Selingo (2014), another a leading authority on higher education around the world and roving editor for the Chronicle of Higher Education, echoed similar sentiments when he wrote an article for the New York Times questioning whether staff advisors were better than faculty. When it comes to advising, there seems to be more questions than answers and more ambiguity than clarity.

The high expectations from students coupled with the high demands from faculty and administration, as well as the vast but ambiguous skill set required of advisors, could create environments where mobbing is inevitable. Two studies previously cited that focused exclusively on staff in higher education reported high rates of mobbing: Thomas (2005) found 50% experienced mobbing behaviors and Giorgi (2012) found 19% reported being mobbed weekly for more than six months. The reality of mobbing in higher education seems implausible given how colleges and universities are places students go to expand their minds by learning new ways of thinking. Unfortunately, those same institutions can be threatened by employees like advisors who possess tremendous skills necessary to excel within their job, but as a profession continue to have undefined roles.

Chapter 2 Closure

Mobbing is difficult to define, painful for those who experience it, and detrimental to the organization, yet, the U.S. continues to lag behind other countries with regard to research on mobbing especially in higher education (Bjorkqvist et al., 1994; Celep & Konakli, 2013; Giorgi, 2012; Kakumba, et al., 2014; Korkmaz & Cemaloglu, 2010; Qureshi et al., 2015; Rehman et al., 2015; Thomas, 2005; Tigrel & Kokalan, 2009; Yaman, 2010, 2015; Zabrodska & Kveton, 2012). Institutions that teach critical thinking skills and freedom of thought as the cornerstone to their very existence seem to deny their own employees those same principals in the workplace and create environments where mobbing thrives. The research is clear that everyone loses when

mobbing exists but understanding how certain elements of a learning organization interact with the institution can be key to understanding mobbing in higher education particularly with professional advisors. Now that I have provided an in-depth review of the literature, the next chapter examines the methodology used to analyze the research questions.

CHAPTER 3

METHODS

As extensive research as shown, mobbing behavior decreases engagement and commitment while increasing physical and psychological distress among employees (Björkqvist, Österman, & Hjelt-Bäck, 1994; Celep, & Konakli, 2013; Einarsen & Raknes, 1997; Ertureten et al., 2012; Geirgi, 2012; Hansen et al., 2006; McKay et al., 2008; Mikkelsen & Einarsen, 2001, 2002a, 2002b; O'Moore, & Crowley, 2011; Rehman et al., 2015; Tepper, 2000; Tigrel, & Kokalan, 2009; Thomas, 2005; Vartia, 2001; Yaman, 2015). Therefore, it is important to gain a better understanding of the goal orientation of professional undergraduate advisors to do their jobs and the extent to which communication, strategic leadership, collaboration and empowerment of the organization interact to increase or decrease levels of mobbing behavior. This chapter outlines the methods used to collect data to better understand my research questions. It outlines the research design with the population and sample. Instrumentation, data collection and data analysis of the research collected will also be delineated.

The purpose of this study was to ascertain the levels of mobbing as reported by higher education professional academic advisors across the U.S., and to analyze the connection between the goal orientation (i.e., mastery orientation, performance orientation and performance avoidance orientation) of such academic advisors, the degree to which they report their institution is a learning organization (based on communication, collaboration, strategic leadership, and empowerment), and the levels of reported mobbing. Goal orientation was operationalized by levels of (a) mastery, (b) performance, or (c) performance avoidance to understand employee motivation to perform job tasks. Learning organization was operationalized by levels of communication, strategic leadership, collaboration, and

empowerment within the organization. My specific research questions consisted of the following:

RQ1: From amongst higher education professional academic advisors across the U.S., to what extent do they report the degree to which their institution is a learning organization in relation to perceived levels of: (a) communication, (b) strategic leadership, (c) collaboration, and (d) empowerment?

RQ2: To what extent do such professional academic advisors report as their own goal orientation in relation to: (a) mastery orientation, (b) performance orientation, and (c) performance avoidance orientation?

RQ3: To what extent do such professional academic advisors report the degree to which they have personally experienced mobbing and is there a difference in reporting of mobbing based on sex, institutional type, educational attainment, and advising position?

RQ4: To what extent do the levels of organizational learning within institutions and professional academic advisors' goal orientation predict the degree of mobbing experienced, as controlled for by various employee and institutional variables?

Research Design, Approach, and Rationale

A non-experimental design utilizing a survey was used to collect data from professional undergraduate advisors across the U.S. regarding their goal orientation, levels they believe their organization is a learning organization based on communication, strategic leadership, collaboration and empowerment, and the levels of mobbing behavior they experienced themselves within their organization. Non-experimental designs are used to look at a phenomena or experience that has already occurred and when manipulation of the independent variable is not possible (Christensen, Johnson, & Turner, 2014; Thompson & Panacek, 2007). A survey was the preferred method in order to reach a large sample of a given population in the most efficient

manner (Dillman, Smyth, & Christian, 2014; Thompson & Panacek, 2007). This non-experimental methodology with an added predictive study design was used to analyze the results to determine correlations between the variables in the study that were generalizable to a larger population (Christensen et al., 2014; Morling, 2018). Since a causal effect cannot be known to exist for certain, post-positivism guided my research study where the focus was to obtain research that was as objective as possible, generalizable, and based in theory (Creswell, 2009).

Population and Sample

The sample for this study consisted of professional academic advisors from across the United States. The survey was sent out to advisors from 150 different academic institutions with the highest enrollment in each of the 50 states based on the U.S. News and World Report Rankings (n.d.). Two Colleges or universities with the highest enrollment in each state were identified as well as a community college within each of those states. The emails of the advisors were obtained through a public website of each of the identified institutions where the individuals were employed and advise. A total of 5,286 emails were sent out with 4,293 to four-year colleges or universities and 993 to community colleges. There were 73 emails that bounced back as undeliverable leaving a total 5,221 possible participants from the email list for the sample size. However, advisors were encouraged to forward the email to other advisors they knew which could have increased the possible sample size to more than 5,221.

Titles of academic advisors may vary from one institution to another, so in order to avoid undue burden to any participant, if the participant did not identify as a professional undergraduate advisor in the first question, the survey skipped to the end and thanked them for their time. There were 76 individuals who self-identified as not being full time professional advisors and were then skipped to the end and excluded from the survey. The sample was purposeful in order to have sufficient responses so that findings were generalizability to the

overall population of professional academic advisors in the U.S. (Creswell, 2009). Based on a power analysis conducted using 30 variables and a .15 sensitivity, 184 participants were the minimum number of conceptual surveys needed to make such a claim and 1233 usable surveys were obtained.

Prior to implementation of the study, a proposal was submitted to the Human Subjects Institutional Review Board (HSIRB) at Western Michigan University to ensure data was collected in an ethical manner and to minimize any potential risks to the participants (Christensen et al., 2014; Frankfort-Nachmias, Nachmias, & DeWaard, 2015; Morling, 2018). Participants had the opportunity to review the consent form and contact the researcher with any questions or concerns they had pertaining to the survey. All participation in the study was voluntary and all data collected was kept confidential.

Instrumentation

Data was gathered through a cross sectional questionnaire named "Goal Orientation, Learning Organization, and Working Environment Questionnaire" (see Appendix A), where data was collected at one point in time via an electronic survey (Creswell, 2009). The survey itself was developed with items extracted from three existing instruments, the (a) Dimension of Learning Organization Questionnaire (DLOQ) (Marsick & Watkins, 2003), (b) Work Domain Goal Orientation Questionnaire (WDGOQ) (Vandewalle, 1997), and (c) Negative Acts Questionnaire (NAQ-R) (Einarsen, Hoel, & Notelears, 2009). Permission for usage and adaption was obtained for each instrument (See Appendix B). The main modification was the creation of a 6-point Likert scale as preferred by some researchers (Frankfort-Nachmias et al., 2015). A common 6-point scale helps keep the survey simple to avoid survey fatigue and frustration which could deter participants from completing the survey (Dillman et al., 2014; Thompson & Panacek, 2007).

The DLOQ, WDGOQ, and NAQ-R were chosen for my proposed research study for multiple reasons. The DLOQ has been researched extensively, including in other countries and has been used as a measurement in higher education regarding the elements of a learning organization that focuses on communication, strategic leadership, collaboration, and empowerment which was the focus of my proposed study (Awasthy & Gupta, 2012; Khamis, 2012; Kumar & Idris, 2006; Marsick, 2013; Yang, 2003; Yang et al., 2004). The WDGOQ has been used to study goal orientation in work settings, and while no research could be found in which it was used in higher education to measure goal orientation, the survey has been shown to be a valid and reliable measurement of the trait in the work settings it has been studied in (Johnson et al., 2011; Potosky, 2010; Vandewalle & Cummings, 1997). The NAQ-R was chosen because it has been used in higher education, has had validity and reliability testing in multiple settings, and was found to accurately show mobbing behavior in the workplace (Einarsen et al., 2009; Giorgi, 2012; Zabrodska & Kveton, 2012). Given the extensive research on these instruments, I believed they would produce valid and reliable data in my proposed research study to yield objective and generalizable results based in theory.

The cover page of my survey detailed consent information, followed by various demographic questions. The first demographic question asked if the individual was employed full time as a professional academic advisor. If the participant answered no to that question, they were skipped to the end of the survey and thanked for their participation; this helped ensure that any faculty or other type of advisor was excluded from the survey. The second skip function was coded within the second demographic question to prevent advisors from outside the U.S. to complete the questionnaire. If the participant marked their current institution of employment at a university or college outside the U.S., the next block ended the survey and thanked them for their participation. The third skip function was embedded within demographic question 10 that asked

the type of advising model within the participant's institution. If the participant chose centralized advising, the survey took them to the next block of the survey. However, if the split model was chosen the skip function skipped them to another question to find out if they worked in an office primarily with other staff or in a department primarily with faculty.

The second section of my survey focused on issues related to learning organizations and uses adapted questions from the DLOQ (Marsick & Watkins, 2003), covering communication (questions 1a-c), collaboration (questions 2 a-c), empowerment (questions 3 a-c), and strategic leadership (questions 4 a-c). The DLOQ used a 6-point Likert scale with two extremes labeled "almost never true" and "almost always true" as 1 and 6 respectively. The original scale consisted of 43 items with seven dimensions, but it was scaled down to 21 items with three questions in each dimension. The 21-item questionnaire was suggested as more appropriate when modifying the dimensions, which was reduced from seven to four in my study (Yang 2003).

The original scale with 43 items ranged from .80 to .87 with regard to reliability in each of the seven dimensions using Cronbach's Alpha with an overall reliability of .96 (Yang, 2003). Yang (2003) found the abbreviated version ranged from .68 to .83 using Cronbach's Alpha with an overall reliability of .93. Kim et al. (2017) found Cronbach's Alpha ranging from .84 to .82 supporting Yang's (2003) original data. The Goodness to Fit Index was found to be above .90 indicating a high level of nomological validity (Yang, 2003). Kim et al. (2017) further found standardized validity coefficients above .70 on both item and factor levels indicating significant validity of the survey. The scale consisted of seven dimensions on both the original and abbreviated scales, but for my study only four dimensions were used.

Communication looked at whether the organization was viewed as allowing open dialogue, openness to feedback and ability to question policies or procedures; strategic

leadership explored perceptions of leadership at the organization and whether they supported

continuous learning and they themselves made decisions based on their own learning;

collaboration was measured by whether the organization was perceived as encouraging

individuals to learn from one another and work in teams; and empowerment consisted of

questions related to decision making, accountability and connection to the overall vision

(Marsick, 2013).

The third component of the questionnaire was comprised of questions adapted from the

WDGOQ (Vandewalle, 1997). The WDGOQ used the same extremes as the DLOQ but with

"strongly agree" and "strongly disagree" as 1 and 6 on the scale respectively. The original scale

contained 16 items, and the only modification made to this scale was changing the "strongly

agree" and "strongly disagree" from 1 and 6 to 6 and 1 respectively. The adapted questions from

this questionnaire examined the three different types of goal orientation: Mastery (factor I,

questions 5 a-f), performance (factor II, questions 6 a-e), and performance avoidance (factor III,

questions 7 a-e).

The Cronbach's Alpha found .89 for factor I mastery orientation, .85 for factor II

performance orientation, and .88 for factor III performance avoidance orientation indicating

good internal reliability (Vandewalle, 1997). Vandewalle's (1997) research also showed good

test-retest reliability with coefficients of .66, .60, and .57 for mastery, performance, and

performance avoidance orientations respectively. Factor analysis further showed that a good fit

of the items to the constructs with coefficients of .72 or greater with all three factors.

Mastery goal orientation, originally defined by Dweck (1986), looked at whether

individuals were motivated to perform based on learning for the sake of learning and not being

afraid of tackling a challenging task. Performance goal orientation surveyed whether an

individual was more interested in being seen as outperforming coworkers in order to be viewed

more favorably while performance avoidance orientation analyzed whether an individual was more interested in avoiding new or challenging tasks in order to avoid failure (Vandewalle, 2003).

The fourth component of the questionnaire consisted of questions adapted from the NAQ-R (Einarsen et al., 2009). The NAQ-R also used a 6-point scale that was modified from 5-points to, never (1); occasionally (2); at least once a month (3); more than once a month (4); weekly (5); and daily (6). The addition to the original scale was response (3); more than once a month. A seventh item was added to assess whether any of the behaviors asked within each question was experienced outside of the six-month time frame. This item was not factored in to the average but used to assess mobbing behavior that may have occurred in the past, and all original questions from the 22-item scale was used in my study.

The NAQ-R measures acts of mobbing pertaining to perceptions included but not limited to acts of being excluded, ignored, belittled, overworked, or underworked (questions 8 a-v). The questionnaire measured three dimensions within the scale that included work related physical intimidation, workplace related mobbing, and person related mobbing. Einarsen et al. (2009) found internal consistency or reliability of the scale to be high with a Cronbach's Alpha of .90. Confirmatory factor analysis reported all factors exceeded .70 and further found correlations between the dimensions to be .96 for person related mobbing, .89 for work related mobbing, and .83 for person related and physically intimating mobbing (Einarsen et al., 2009). For the purpose of this research study, the focus of negative behavior in the workplace was more on acts of incivility given that research in higher education indicated acts of mobbing were more covert than overt (Ilongo, 2015; Kakumba et al., 2014; Keashly & Neuman, 2010; Spratlen, 1995; Tigrel & Kokalan, 2009; Twale & DeLuca, 2008).

Amazon gift cards were used as part of a raffle to incentivize participates to complete the survey. Participants had an opportunity to enter a raffle to win one of ten $25 gift cards from amazon.com. At the end of the survey, participants were asked if they would like to enter to win by providing an email address. All emails entered were immediately separated from any responses provided to other survey questions to ensure confidentiality.

The survey was pilot tested by two individuals to review any formatting issues, questions, and to estimate the time needed for participants to complete the survey to avoid survey error (Dillman et al., 2014). While data from the pilot testing was not used for the study, testers were asked to write down their comments on a hard copy of the survey and submit to me for review to make any necessary revisions. They both confirmed the survey took less than 10 minutes to take and all questions were clearly written.

Data Collection Procedures

A tailored design approach was utilized in order to reduce coverage, sampling, nonresponse, and measurement errors (Dillman et al., 2014). This was done by explaining to potential participants how the results would be useful, using monetary incentives through a raffle for gift cards, minimizing the time to complete the survey, minimizing the request for sensitive information, informing participants response time is limited, and assuring confidentiality. The effort needed by the participant was minimized by making responding to the survey convenient, easy to complete, and understandable.

All potential participants were sent an invitation by email from me that invited them to participate in the study. The email included a link for the survey along with an explanation of the purpose of the study (Appendix C). The emails for these individuals were secured from public websites for each institution; and two reminder emails were sent at two-week intervals (Appendix D). The total collection time was approximately six weeks.

Participant emails were associated with their responses and responses were stored on a

password protected server. Upon completion of the survey, participants were given the

opportunity to enter a lottery to win one of ten $25 gift cards from Amazon.com. At the

conclusion of data collection, data was transferred to SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social

Sciences, Version 26). The data was then stored on a password protected computer.

Data Analysis

The data collected for this study was quantitative in nature through electronic surveys.

Data from the responses were entered into SPSS and all data analysis was done using this

software. Table 1 shows the analysis used for each of my research questions, and the

corresponding constructs and survey items.

Table 1

Crosswalk Table

Variable/Construct	Items	Analysis
RQ1 From amongst higher education professional academic advisors across the U.S., to what extent do they indicate their institution is a learning organization in relation to reported levels of:		
Communication	1: a-c	Descriptive statistics:
Collaboration	2: a-c	frequency, relative
Empowerment	3: a-c	frequency, means, and
Strategic Leadership	4: a-c	standard deviations
RQ2 To what extent do such professional academic advisors report as their own goal orientation in relation to:		
Mastery Orientation	5: Factor I a-f	Descriptive statistics:
Performance Orientation	6: Factor II a-e	frequency, relative
Performance Avoidance Orientation	7: Factor III a-e	frequency, means, and standard deviations; One sample t-test; Kendall's W Test, Kendall's Coefficient of Concordance

Table 1-Continued

RQ3 To what extent do such professional academic advisors report the degree to which they have personally experienced mobbing and is there a difference in reporting of mobbing based on sex, institutional type, educational attainment, and advising position?		
Mobbing	8: a-v	Descriptive statistics: frequency, relative frequency, means, and standard deviations; independent samples t-test; one way ANOVA
RQ4 To what extent do the levels of organizational learning within institutions and professional academic advisors' goal orientation predict the degree of mobbing experienced, as controlled for by various employee and institutional variables?		
Mobbing, Goal Orientation, Learning Organization	All items above collapsed to create eight variables (#1-8)	Cronbach's Alpha; multiple linear regression; binary logistic regression; Pearson Correlation; Kendall's tau_b; Spearman Rho

My first research question sought to gain a better understanding of advisor perceptions of their organization as a learning organization by summarizing their responses to the following constructs: communication, collaboration, empowerment, and strategic leadership. The questions for these variables were adapted from an abbreviated version of the DLOQ (Marsick & Watkins, 2003 Yang, 2003; Yang et al., 2004), and consisted of these survey items for each of the four constructs (1 a-c; 2 a-c; 3 a-c; 4 a-c). These variables were analyzed using descriptive statistics that included frequencies, relative frequencies, means, and standard deviations to examine each of the four components.

My second research question sought to understand how advisors described their own goal orientation based on survey questions adapted from the WDGOQ (Vandewalle, 1997). Mastery orientations consisted of six survey items (5 a-f), while performance and performance avoidance consisted of five survey items each (6 a-e; 7 a-e). The variables were summarized using

descriptive statistics that included frequencies, relative frequencies, means, and standard deviations as well as a one sample t-test, Kendall's W Test, and Kendall's Coefficient of Concordance to summarize the levels of goal orientation reported by advisors.

My third research question also used descriptive statistics that included frequencies, relative frequencies, means, and standard deviations in addition to an independent t-test and a one way ANOVA to describe the levels of mobbing advisors reported using survey questions adapted from the NAQ-R (Einarsen et al., 2009). The research questions were analyzed using 22 separate items collapsed under survey question eight to examine the degree advisors reported experiencing mobbing behaviors within their institutions during the past six months. Data was also summarized for advisors reporting mobbing behaviors experienced outside the six-month window but was not factored in to the overall results of the original survey.

Research question four sought to understand how advisor goal orientation (mastery, performance, and performance avoidance) and perceived levels of a learning organization (communication, collaboration, empowerment, and strategic leadership) predicted levels of mobbing within institutions of higher education. Cronbach's' Alpha was used to measure the internal consistency of the questions and determine reliability of the scale using the following formula: $\alpha = \frac{N \cdot \bar{c}}{\bar{v} + (N-1) \cdot \bar{c}}$

Multiple linear regression analysis was used to determine if there was any effect on levels of goal orientation of professional undergraduate advisors, their perception of the institution as a learning organization and levels of mobbing reported. Variables of sex, institutional size, and years of employment were controlled for within the regression analysis to better understand any impact they may have had with regard to levels of mobbing experienced. Composite scores were computed for each construct used in RQ1 for communication, collaboration, empowerment, and

strategic leadership; in RQ2 for mastery orientation, performance orientation, and avoidance performance orientation; and in RQ3 for mobbing behaviors.

The sum of scores for each category were calculated and divided by the highest possible score for that category in order to determine a percentage or composite score. Computing the composite scores avoided multicollinearity, thereby reducing the standard errors of the coefficients and allowing interpretation of regression coefficients and p-values. The composite scores from RQ1, RQ2, and RQ3 were then used as independent variables in a multiple linear regression analysis for RQ4 to determine if any predictive value between the dependent variable of mobbing and the independent variables of learning organization and goal orientation existed: $Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \beta_4 X_4 + \beta_5 X_5 + \beta_6 X_6 + \beta_7 X_7$. Non-parametric statistical analysis including Kendall's tau_b and Spearman Rho were also conducted to support the findings from the multiple linear regression.

A Binary logistic regression was also conducted. Mobbing scores were transformed into a categorical variable coded 0 without mobbing and 1 with mobbing. Any individual who scored 2, 3, 4, 5, or 6 on any item was recoded as 1 with mobbing and any individual who scored 1 or 7 on any item was recoded as 1 without mobbing. Again, the composite scores from RQ1, RQ2, and RQ3 were used as independent variables in a binary logistic regression analysis for RQ4 to determine if any predictive value between the dependent variable of mobbing and the independent variables of learning organization and goal orientation existed: $\log p/1\text{-}p = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \beta_4 X_4 + \beta_5 X_5 + \beta_6 X_6 + \beta_7 X_7 + \beta_m + \beta_m$.

Chapter 3 Closure

Chapter 3 summarizes the methodology that was used in the study and outlined the statistical procedures that were utilized to analyze the data collected. The data analysis was used

to address the proposed research questions outlined in chapter 1. A detailed description of the

sample and population were also described.

CHAPTER 4

DATA ANALYSIS

My research study sought to understand the connection between levels of goal orientation, levels of organizational learning, and the degree mobbing behaviors were experienced by full-time professional academic advisors at educational institutions across the U.S. The research questions posed in the study included the following:

RQ1: From amongst higher education professional academic advisors across the U.S., to what extent do they report the degree to which their institution is a learning organization in relation to perceived levels of: (a) communication, (b) strategic leadership, (c) collaboration, and (d) empowerment?

RQ2: To what extent do such professional academic advisors report as their own goal orientation in relation to: (a) mastery orientation, (b) performance orientation, and (c) performance avoidance orientation?

RQ3: To what extent do such professional academic advisors report the degree to which they have personally experienced mobbing and is there a difference in reporting of mobbing based on sex, institutional type, educational attainment, and advising position?

RQ4: To what extent do the levels of organizational learning within institutions and professional academic advisors' goal orientation predict the degree of mobbing experienced, as controlled for by various employee and institutional variables?

To address these research questions, 5,128 advisors from across the U.S. who worked at four-year post-secondary institutions or community colleges were invited to participate in an online survey during a six-week period beginning May 6, 2019. Each participant received an individual email from my wmich.edu email address with the URL link to the survey. Each participant who received the invitation email was encouraged to forward it to other advisors who

could also choose to participate. The survey asked demographic information consisting of sex, institutional size, years advising, educational attainment, and geographic location; and then three sections using a 6-point Likert scale measuring goal orientation (based on mastery, performance, and performance avoidance), organizational learning (based on communication, collaboration, strategic leadership, and empowerment), and mobbing behaviors.

Of the total emails sent out, 73 were non-deliverable and 71 generated auto responses stating the advisor was either no longer with the institution, retired, on maternity or paternity leave, employed part-time, or out on extended sick leave. This generated a total of 4,984 possible participants from the email list. Of the 4,984 emails sent out to advisors, 76 were immediately excluded because they were either part-time or faculty advisors, leaving a possible sample of 4,908 from the emails sent out. However, participants who received the survey were encouraged to forward it to other advisors which may have increased the possible sample size. An additional 215 began the survey but did not complete a significant portion. Of the eligible participants that responded, 1,233 advisors completed enough of the survey for inclusion in a more detailed analysis in the final sample consisting of a 25% response rate.

Of the 1,233 participants who completed the survey, 1,066 supplied an email address to participate in a random drawing for one of 10 $25 Amazon gift cards used as an incentive for participation in the study. These email addresses were transferred to an excel spreadsheet, and an online random number generator was used to choose the 10 winners from corresponding numbers from the excel document. I ordered 10 gift cards from Amazon after the final email reminder was sent out and proceeded to send emails electronically after the survey closed June 30, 2019 to all the winners. All 10 winners have received and claimed their gift card.

Description of Population

The target population for this study was full-time professional academic advisors from across the United States. The survey was sent out to advisors from a total of 150 different academic institutions. For each of the 50 states, two four-year public institutions and one community college were chosen based on the highest student enrollment in each state. The emails of the advisors were obtained through a public website of each of the identified institutions where the individuals were employed and advise. After accounting for ineligibility, 1,233 (25%) of the potential participants who completed the survey were used for the analysis. In reference to sex, 21.5% selected male, 78.5% selected female, and .2% or 3 participants were non-responders. It was not surprising the majority of respondents were female given that advising seems to be a female dominated profession. In reference to their highest degree earned, the majority or 77.3% of respondents had a master's degree, 15% a bachelor's, 6.4% a doctorate and 1.2% some college. Again, this was not surprising given that many advising positions either require a master's degree or list it as highly desirable. Table 2 depicts demographic data by sex and educational attainment.

Table 2

Respondent Demographics by Sex and Educational Attainment (n=1,233)

Descriptor	Frequency	Percent
Sex		
Male	264	21.5
Female	966	78.5
Missing	3	.2
Educational attainment		
Some college	15	1.2
Bachelor's degree	185	15.0
Master's degree	953	77.3
Doctoral degree	79	6.4
Missing	1	.1

Respondents were also asked demographic questions regarding the institution that consisted of region, number of undergraduates enrolled, and type of institution. Table 3 depicts demographic data by institutional region, enrollment, and type.

Table 3

Respondent Demographics by Region, Type, and Enrollment (n=1,233)

Descriptor	Frequency	Percent
Region		
Northwest	286	23.2
Southwest	128	10.4
Midwest	351	28.5
Southeast	289	23.4
Northeast	176	14.3
Missing	3	.2
Type		
Community college	106	8.6
Public college or university	1122	91.0
Private college or university	3	.2
For profit college or university	2	.2
Undergraduate enrollment		
0<10000	62	5.1
10000<20000	184	14.9
20000<30000	425	34.5
30000<40000	296	24.0
40000<50000	131	10.6
50000<60000	52	4.2
60000<70000	31	2.5
70000<80000	45	3.6
Missing	7	.6

Advisors were represented from across the country based on categories of northwest (23.2%), southwest (10.4%) midwest (28.5%), southeast (23.4%), and northeast (14.3%). Public colleges or universities consisted of 91% of respondents, while community college made up almost 9%. This was expected since there were twice as many public institutions as compared to community colleges chosen and nearly four times the number of advisors sent email invitations to participate based on advisor names gathered from public websites.

Table 4 contains demographic information by job title, advising type, advising model, and years advising. The majority or 67.2%of respondents identified themselves as advisor or equivalent, with the remaining 25.5%as a senior advisor or equivalent, 4.2% as assistant directors and 2.9% as directors.

Table 4

Respondent Demographics by Job Title, Type of Advising, Advising Model, and Years Advising

(n=1,233)

Descriptor	Frequency	Percent
Job title		
Director	36	2.9
Assistant Director	52	4.2
Senior advisor or equivalent	315	25.5
Advisor or equivalent	828	67.2
Missing	2	.2
Type of advising		
College or university course requirements for graduation	1061	86.1
Pre-major(s) requirements	757	61.4
Major(s) requirements	1103	89.5
Minor(s) requirements	812	65.9
Probation advising	884	71.7
Career advising	525	42.6
Advising model		
Centralized	706	57.4
Split	524	42.6
Years advising		
0<4	379	30.9
4<8	384	31.1
8<11	164	13.3
11<16	143	11.6
16<21	94	7.6
21<26	37	3.0
26<31	15	1.2
31<35	5	.4
36<41	4	.3
Missing	8	.6

The most common types of advising reported were major advising (89.5%), college or university requirements (86.1%), and probation advising (71.7%), followed by minor advising (65.9%), pre-major advising (61.4%), and career advising (42.6%). The majority of advisors (57.4%) reported working in a centralized model, while the remaining 42.6% reported working under a split model. All but eight participants reported years of service with nearly 76% working in their advising position less than 11 years, and only 20% reporting years of service between 11 and 21 years leaving 5% reporting more than 21 years.

Research Questions Results

The research questions from my study focused on gaining a deeper understanding of how much an organization was perceived as a learning organization, the degree of goal orientation advisors reported, and how those variables could be used to predict mobbing behaviors. The first question sought to ascertain the levels professional advisors reported communication, collaboration, empowerment, and strategic leadership within their organization to determine how much of a learning organization it was. The second question focused on goal orientation and to what degree professional advisors reported being mastery, performance, or performance avoidant, while the third question sought to understand the amount of mobbing experienced by advisors within their instructions. Finally, the fourth question focused on how those variables interacted to predict mobbing. The overall results from my study indicated some statistical results that may be helpful understanding the type of working conditions professional advisors experience within their institutions.

Research Question 1

In order to address research question one, respondents were asked to identify specific learning organization behaviors within their institution on a Likert scale ranging from (1) almost never true, (2) blank, (3) blank, (4) blank, (5) blank, and (6) almost always true. It was left up to

the participant to determine the meaning of the categories between (2) through (5). Each section

on communication, collaboration, empowerment, and strategic leadership consisted of three

questions, and the reporting of descriptive results is arranged from highest to lowest mean in

each category. Table 5 shows the descriptive statistics that included the means, frequencies, and

standard deviations for advisors reported levels of organizational learning with a full list of

survey statements and responses.

Table 5

Descriptive Statistics for Learning Organization

Likert: almost never true 1; almost always true 6	1	2	3	4	5	6		
	n	n	n	n	n	n	M	N
Survey Items	(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)	SD	
Communication								
- In my organization, people give open and	29	101	211	365	364	163	4.15	1233
honest feedback to each other.	(2.4)	(8.2)	(17.1)	(29.6)	(29.5)	(13.2)	1.23	
- In my organization, whenever people state	26	129	253	367	326	132	4.00	1233
their view, they also ask what others think.	(2.1)	(10.5)	(20.5)	(29.8)	(26.4)	(10.7)	1.23	
- In my organization, people spend time	46	135	263	324	316	149	3.95	1233
building trust with each other.	(3.7)	(10.9)	(21.3)	(26.3)	(25.6)	(12.1)	1.31	
Collaboration								
- In my organization, teams revise thinking	34	87	193	377	398	144	4.18	1233
as result of discussions or info collected.	(2.8)	(7.1)	(15.7)	(30.6)	(32.3)	(11.7)	1.20	
- In my organization, teams have the	36	103	206	344	373	171	4.16	1233
freedom to adapt their goals as needed.	(2.9)	(8.4)	(16.7)	(27.9)	(30.3)	(13.9)	1.26	
- In my organization, teams are confident	122	263	286	332	175	55	3.28	1233
that organization will act on	(9.9)	(21.3)	(23.2)	(26.9)	(14.2)	(4.5)	1.33	
recommendations.								
Empowerment								
- My organization recognizes people for	59	164	200	339	320	151	3.93	1233
taking initiative.	(4.8)	(13.3)	(16.2)	(27.5)	(26.0)	(12.2)	1.37	
- My organization gives people control over	87	161	260	341	272	112	3.72	1233
resources they need to accomplish work.	(7.1)	(13.1)	(21.1)	(27.7)	(22.1)	(9.1)	1.37	
- My organization supports employees who	87	212	349	315	204	61	3.42	1228
take calculated risks.	(7.1)	(17.3)	(28.4)	(25.7)	(16.6)	(5.0)	1.28	
Leadership								
- In my organization, leaders ensure org's	60	142	248	304	323	156	3.94	1233
actions are consistent with values.	(4.9)	(11.5)	(20.1)	(24.7)	(26.2)	(12.7)	1.37	
- In my organization, leaders continually	83	132	268	312	286	149	3.84	1230
look for opportunities to learn.	(6.7)	(10.7)	(21.8)	(25.4)	(23.3)	(12.1)	1.40	
- In my organization, leaders mentor and	119	204	248	309	235	118	3.56	1233
coach those they lead.	(9.7)	(16.5)	(20.1)	(25.1)	(19.1)	(9.6)	1.45	

Note. 1 = almost never true; 2 = blank; 3 = blank; 4 = blank; 5 = blank; 6 = almost always true

The first category on communication showed similar mean scores and standard deviations across all three of the following statements: people give open and honest feedback (M 4.15 and SD 1.23), people ask others what they think (M 4.00 and SD 1.23), and people spend time building trust with one another (M 3.95 and SD 1.31). The category on collaboration showed participants most agreed with the items that teams have the freedom to revise thinking as a result of discussion (M 4.18 and SD 1.2) and adapt goals (M 4.16 and SD 1.26). However, they agreed less with the statement that the organization would act on recommendations with a mean of 3.28 and a standard deviation of 1.33.

The categories on empowerment and strategic leadership consisted of items with overall lower means and higher standard deviations than communication and collaboration. The items measuring empowerment showed participants agreed most with the statement that the institution recognizes people who take initiative (M 3.93 and SD 1.37), but a little less with the statement that people are given control to do their jobs (M 3.72 and SD 1.37) and the least with the organization supporting individuals who take calculated risks (M 3.42 and SD 1.28). The final category on leadership found participants agreed most with the item that leaders ensure organization's actions are consistent with values (M 3.94 and SD 1.37) and that leaders continually look for opportunities to learn (M 3.84 and SD 1.40), but least with the statement that leaders mentor and coach those they lead (M 3.56 and SD 1.45). Table 5 shows detailed descriptive statistics for all item questions on learning organization.

Further statistics were conducted to compare the overall means within each construct. Each of the three questions within the constructs of communication, collaboration, empowerment and strategic leadership were collapsed and transformed into a new variable to compare mean differences between groups. The perceived level of communication was ranked the highest with a mean of 4.04 and a standard deviation of 1.12 followed by collaboration (M 3.87 and SD 1.12),

strategic leadership (M 3.78 and SD 1.28), and empowerment (M 3.69 and SD 1.19). In other words, advisors reported experiencing higher levels of communication within their organization, and lower levels of empowerment, as shown in Table 6 along with overall mean scores and standard deviations for collaboration and strategic leadership.

Table 6

Descriptive Statistics for Collapsed Variables of Perceived Learning Organization (n=1,233)

Collapsed Variable	M	SD
Communication	4.04	1.12
Collaboration	3.87	1.12
Strategic Leadership	3.78	1.28
Empowerment	3.69	1.19

Note. 1= almost never true; 6=almost always true

Research Question 2

In order to address research question two, respondents were asked to identify specific goal orientation behaviors within themselves on a Likert scale ranging from (1) strongly disagree (2) blank, (3) blank, (4) blank, (5) blank, and (6) strongly agree. It was left up to the participant to determine the meaning in categories between (2) through (5). Table 7 shows detailed descriptive statistics for all item questions on goal orientation from highest mean to lowest.

The means and standard deviations were similar for the following mastery items where the advisor agreed most with the following statements: I look for opportunities to develop new skills or knowledge (M 5.03 and SD .95), I prefer work situations where high levels of ability and talent are needed (M 4.89 and SD .94), I enjoy challenging and difficult tasks at work to learn new skills (M 4.88 and SD .98), and I am willing to select challenging work that I can learn from (M 4.87 and SD .98). The two items participants agreed with least were the following: development of work ability is important enough to take risks (M 4.54 and SD 1.08) and I often read material to improve my work abilities (M 4.12 and SD 1.31).

Table 7

Descriptive Statistics for Goal Orientation

Strongly disagree 1 to Strongly agree 6 Goal Orientation Survey Items	1 n (%)	2 n (%)	3 n (%)	4 n (%)	5 n (%)	6 n (%)	M SD	N
Mastery								
-I often look for opportunities to	3	13	64	231	469	450	5.03	1230
develop new skills and knowledge.	(0.2)	(1.1)	(5.2)	(18.8)	(38.1)	(36.6)	.95	
-I prefer to work in situations requiring	3	9	84	287	490	360	4.89	1233
high level of ability and talent.	(0.2)	(0.7)	(6.8)	(23.3)	(39.7)	(29.2)	.94	
-I enjoy challenging and difficult tasks	5	15	89	269	484	370	4.88	1232
at work where I'll learn new skills.	(0.4)	(1.2)	(7.2)	(21.8)	(39.3)	(30.0)	.98	
-I am willing to choose challenging	3	22	78	286	487	356	4.87	1232
work assignments I can learn from.	(0.2)	(1.8)	(6.3)	(23.2)	(39.5)	(28.9)	.98	
-For me, development of work ability	12	41	133	367	437	242	4.54	1232
is important enough to take risks.	(1.0)	(3.3)	(10.8)	(29.8)	(35.5)	(19.6)	1.08	
-I often read materials related to my	25	138	218	338	307	207	4.12	1233
work to improve my ability.	(2.0)	(11.2)	(17.7)	(27.4)	(24.9)	(16.8)	1.31	
Performance								
-I enjoy it when others at work are	63	119	216	314	329	192	4.06	1233
aware of how well I am doing.	(5.1)	(9.7)	(17.5)	(25.5)	(26.7)	(15.6)	1.38	
-I prefer to work on projects where I	116	191	307	292	237	90	3.50	1233
can prove my ability to others.	(9.4)	(15.5)	(24.9)	(23.7)	(19.2)	(7.3)	1.40	
-I would rather prove ability on a task	52	267	395	307	148	63	3.34	1232
I can do well than try a new task.	(4.2)	(21.7)	(32.1)	(24.9)	(12.0)	(5.1)	1.21	
-I try to figure out what it takes to	157	240	290	276	202	66	3.26	1231
prove my ability to others at work.	(12.8)	(19.5)	(23.6)	(22.4)	(16.4)	(5.4)	1.41	
-I'm concerned with showing I can	303	348	230	205	102	45	2.67	1233
perform better than my coworkers.	(24.6)	(28.2)	(18.7)	(16.6)	(8.3)	(3.6)	1.41	
Performance Avoidance								
-I prefer to avoid situations at work	196	357	277	248	118	36	2.87	1232
where I might perform poorly.	(15.9)	(29.0)	(22.5)	(20.1)	(9.6)	(2.9)	1.33	
-I would avoid new task if a chance I	191	391	291	222	101	37	2.81	1233
would appear incompetent to others.	(15.5)	(31.7)	(23.6)	(18.0)	(8.2)	(3.0)	1.30	
-I'm concerned taking on work task if	223	424	271	196	94	22	2.66	1230
performance reveals low ability.	(18.1)	(34.5)	(22.0)	(15.9)	(7.6)	(1.8)	1.26	
-Avoiding show of low ability is more	329	482	251	113	47	10	2.27	1232
important than learning a new skill.	(26.7)	(39.1)	(20.4)	(9.2)	(3.8)	(0.8)	1.11	
- I prefer not asking "dumb questions"	667	349	104	59	36	16	1.78	1231
I think I should know the answer to.	(54.2)	(28.4)	(8.4)	(4.8)	(2.9)	(1.3)	1.11	

Note. 1 = strongly disagree; 2 = blank; 3 = blank; 4 = blank; 5 = blank; 6 = strongly agree

Performance orientation showed more variance between questions than mastery did.

Participants agreed most with the statement where they felt enjoyment when others were aware

of how well they were doing with a mean of 4.06 and a standard deviation of 1.38. There was

less but similar agreement with the following statements: I prefer to work on projects where I can prove my abilities to others (M 3.50 and SD 1.40), I prefer to prove my ability on a task that I can do well rather than trying a new task (M 3.34 and SD 1.21), and I prefer to figure out what it takes to prove my abilities to others at work (M 3.26 and SD 1.41). Advisors agreed least with being concerned with showing they could perform better than coworkers with a mean of 2.67 and a standard deviation of 1.41.

Overall, advisors agreed the least with the questions from performance avoidance than with either mastery or performance orientations. Preferring to avoid situations where they may perform poorly (M 2.87 and SD 1.33), avoiding a new task if there was a chance of appearing incompetent (M 2.81 and SD 1.30), and being concerned with taking on a task that would show low abilities (M 2.66 and SD 1.26) were the questions most agreed with. The two questions agreed with the least were: avoiding a show of low ability as more important than learning a new skill (M 2.27 and SD 1.11) and preferring not to ask "dumb questions" when something was not understood (M 1.78 and SD 1.11).

Further statistics were conducted to compare overall means within each construct to gain a better understanding of perceived levels of goal orientation of advisors. Each of the questions within the categories of mastery, performance, and performance avoidance were collapsed and transformed into a new variable to compare mean differences between groups. The perceived level of mastery orientation was ranked the highest with a mean of 4.72 and a standard deviation of .82 followed by performance orientation (M 3.36 and SD 1.02) and performance avoidance orientation (M 2.78 and SD 1.01). This suggests advisors report viewing themselves as more goal oriented than performance and performance avoidant. Table 8 shows the collapsed means and standard deviations for all goal orientation variables from highest to lowest.

Table 8

Descriptive Statistics for Collapsed Variables of Perceived Goal Orientation (n=1,233)

Collapsed Variable	M	SD
Mastery Orientation	4.72	.82
Performance Orientation	3.36	1.02
Performance Avoidance Orientation	2.78	1.01

A one-sample t-test was conducted to determine whether the differences in reporting of mastery, performance, and performance avoidance was significantly different. The findings showed there was a significant different between each group at the $p<.001$ suggesting that advisors scored statistically higher on mastery orientation than both performance and performance avoidance. It further indicated that advisors also scored significantly higher on performance orientation than they did on performance avoidance shown in detail in Table 9

Table 9

One Sample T-Test of Perceived Levels of Goal Orientation

Collapsed Variable	t	p	M Diff	95% C.I. Lower	Upper
Goal Orientation	202.794	.000*	4.72374	4.6780	4.7694
Performance Orientation	116.161	.000*	3.36456	3.3077	3.4214
Performance avoidance Orientation	86.432	.000*	2.47591	2.4197	2.5321

*Note. *$p<.001$

Kendall's W Test, the non-parametric version of the t-test, was also preformed and confirmed findings from the one sample t-test that significant differences between mean reporting of perceived goal orientation by advisors existed. The mean ranks for goal orientation, performance orientation, and performance avoidance orientation were 2.78, 1.96, and 1.26 respectively. The test showed significant differences between the mean rankings of each group at $p<.001$. Kendall's Coefficient of Concordance of .598 indicated a somewhat similar agreement in terms of how advisors ranked their scores on mastery, performance, and

performance avoidance orientations. The coefficient is ranked from 0 to 1 with 1 being in

perfect agreement. This means that advisors had somewhat similar agreement with how they

answered questions on each section of goal orientation. However, there was still significant

differences between the scores on the questions regarding mastery, performance, and

performance avoidance orientations. Table 10 provides the ranks and test statistics, while Figure

2 shows the frequency and mean rankings of the collapsed variables of goal orientation.

Table 10

Mean Ranks from Kendall's W for Goal Orientation

Collapsed Variable	Mean Rank
Mastery Orientation	2.78
Performance Orientation	1.96
Performance avoidance Orientation	1.26
Test Statistics	
Kendall's W .598; Chi-Square 1475.703, df 2; *p<.001	

The scores shown in Figure 2 are ranked into categories based on the collapsed items

from each section of goal orientation that initially ranged from 1 to 6 on the Likert scale. The

SPSS software automatically groups them, so it is difficult to determine exactly how they were

grouped, but it was between 1 and 3. For example, individuals who had collapsed scores

between 1 and 2 on the Likert scale might be categized as 1, and those between 2 and 3 might be

grouped as 1.5; 3 and 4 might be grouped as 2; 4 and 5 might be grouped as 2.5; and 5 and 6

might be grouped as 3. The figure shows the majority or around 1,000 advisors reported scores

that were grouped into category 3, meaning they scored on the higher end of the Likert scale for

mastery orientation agreeing most with those questions.
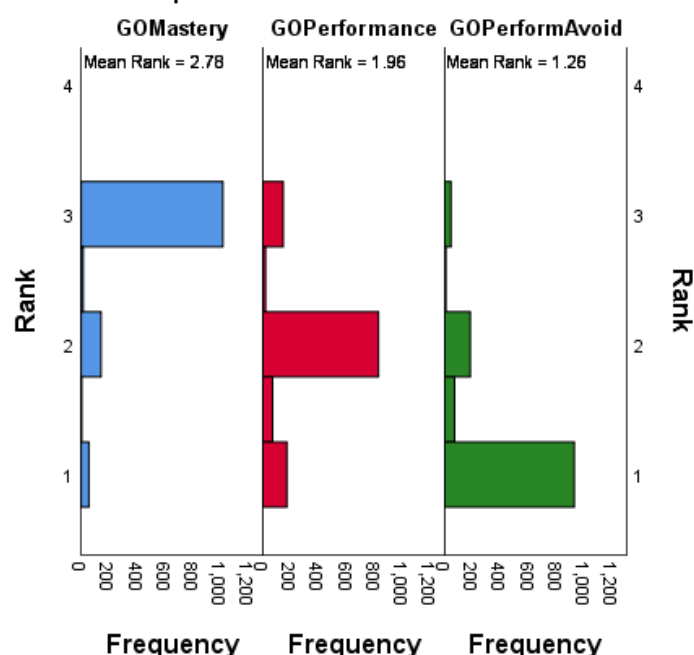
Figure 2. Kendall's Coefficient of Concordance with mean ranking of mastery, performance and performance avoidance orientations.

The opposite was true for performance avoidance where about the same number of advisors were grouped into category 1. This means they scored on the lower end of the Likert scale for performance avoidance orientation disagreeing most with those questions. The scores for performance orientation were grouped most in category 2 with about the same amount of responses falling into the middle and not at the extremes as was the case for mastery and performance avoidance. Once the scores were ranked, they were analyzed and showed statistical differences between the ranked means for mastery, performance, and performance avoidance orientations.

Research Question 3

Table 11 shows the descriptive statistics including means, frequencies, and standard deviations for advisors reported levels of mobbing from highest to lowest mean in each category with a full list of survey statements and responses to each survey item.

Table 11

Descriptive Statistics for Mobbing Behaviors (n = 1,233)

Survey Items	Never n (%)	Occasion-ally n (%)	At least 1X a month n (%)	More than 1X a month n (%)	Weekly n (%)	Daily n (%)	Not experienced past 6 mths; but last 3 yrs n (%)	M SD
Someone withholding information which affects your performance	378 (30.7)	464 (37.7)	134 (10.9)	148 (12.0)	82 (6.7)	24 (2.0)	76 (6.2)	2.32 1.31
Being ordered to do work below your level of competence	564 (45.8)	393 (31.9)	76 (6.2)	71 (5.8)	68 (5.5)	60 (4.9)	56 (4.5)	2.08 1.42
Having your opinions and views ignored	551 (44.7)	471 (38.2)	104 (8.4)	55 (4.5)	34 (2.8)	17 (1.4)	67 (5.4)	1.86 1.08
Being exposed to an unmanageable workload	701 (56.9)	321 (26.1)	60 (4.9)	46 (3.7)	50 (4.1)	53 (4.3)	61 (5.0)	1.85 1.34
Being ignored or excluded from meetings or other areas related to your job	641 (52.0)	379 (30.7)	84 (6.8)	65 (5.3)	39 (3.2)	25 (2.0)	74 (6.0)	1.83 1.17
Removing key areas of responsibility or replaced with trivial/unpleasant tasks	828 (67.3)	255 (20.7)	44 (3.6)	52 (4.2)	29 (2.4)	22 (1.8)	62 (5.0)	1.59 1.10
Spreading of gossip and rumors about you	821 (67.3)	305 (24.8)	32 (2.6)	32 (2.6)	25 (2.0)	15 (1.2)	86 (7.0)	1.52 .97
Given tasks with unreasonable or impossible targets or deadlines	833 (67.6)	307 (24.9)	46 (3.7)	24 (1.9)	15 (1.2)	7 (0.6)	52 (4.2)	1.46 .84
Excessive monitoring of your work	946 (76.8)	172 (14.0)	39 (3.2)	27 (2.2)	21 (1.7)	26 (2.1)	74 (6.0)	1.44 1.03
Being ignored or facing a hostile reaction when you approach	978 (79.4)	158 (12.8)	43 (3.5)	22 (1.8)	22 (1.8)	9 (0.7)	62 (5.0)	1.36 .88
Being humiliated or ridiculed in connection with your work	958 (77.7)	197 (16.0)	30 (2.4)	24 (1.9)	18 (1.5)	6 (0.5)	77 (6.2)	1.35 .82
Pressure not to claim (e.g. sick leave, holiday, travel expenses etc.)	994 (80.7)	176 (14.3)	28 (2.3)	17 (1.4)	8 (0.6)	9 (0.7)	51 (4.1)	1.29 .75
Insulting/offensive remarks made about habits/background, attitudes or private life	1015 (82.4)	166 (13.5)	14 (1.1)	21 (1.7)	12 (1.0)	4 (0.3)	79 (6.4)	1.26 .71
Repeated reminders of your errors or mistakes	1029 (83.6)	143 (11.6)	25 (2.0)	18 (1.5)	11 (0.9)	5 (0.4)	58 (4.7)	1.26 .71
Persistent criticism of your work and effort	1042 (84.6)	138 (11.2)	21 (1.7)	15 (1.2)	12 (1.0)	3 (0.2)	54 (4.4)	1.23 .67
Being shouted at or being the target of spontaneous anger (or rage)	1047 (85.0)	155 (12.6)	15 (1.2)	9 (0.7)	4 (0.3)	2 (0.2)	81 (6.6)	1.19 .54
Hints or signals from others that you should quit your job	1128 (91.5)	71 (5.8)	9 (0.7)	13 (1.1)	7 (0.6)	5 (0.4)	50 (4.1)	1.15 .59
Intimidating behavior: finger-pointing, invasion of space, shoving, blocking exit	1114 (90.4)	94 (7.6)	11 (0.9)	6 (0.5)	5 (0.4)	2 (0.2)	50 (4.1)	1.13 .49
Having allegations made against you	1105 (89.7)	113 (9.2)	6 (0.5)	4 (0.3)	2 (0.2)	2 (0.2)	54 (4.4)	1.13 .44
Being the subject of excessive teasing and sarcasm	1143 (92.8)	71 (5.8)	6 (0.5)	6 (0.5)	4 (0.3)	2 (0.2)	30 (2.4)	1.10 .45
Practical jokes carried out by people you don't get along with	1170 (95.0)	43 (3.5)	5 (0.4)	5 (0.4)	5 (0.4)	4 (0.3)	26 (2.1)	1.09 .48
Threats of violence or physical abuse or actual abuse	1220 (99.1)	6 (0.5)	0 (0.0)	1 (0.1)	2 (0.2)	2 (0.2)	12 (1.0)	1.02 .28

In order to address research question three, respondents were asked to identify specific mobbing behaviors based on the Negative Acts Questionnaire experienced at work within the last six months. Advisors reported experiencing the following acts the most on the mobbing questionnaire: someone withholding information that affects job performance (M 2.32 and SD 1.31), being ordered to do work below level of competency (M 2.08 and SD 1.42), having opinions and views ignored (M 1.86 and SD 1.08), being exposed to an unmanageable workload (M 1.85 and SD 1.34), and being ignored or excluded from meetings or other areas related to one's job (M 1.83 and SD 1.17). Advisors reported experiencing the following mobbing behaviors the least: being the subject of excessive teasing (M 1.10 and SD .45), being the victim of practical jokes carried out by other people (M 1.09 and SD .48), and threats of violence, threats of physical abuse, or actual abuse (M 1.02 and SD .28).

Overall, 87.2% of respondents reported at least one act of mobbing within the past six months, while 11.1% experienced at least one act of mobbing daily. That number increased to over 90% when reported mobbing within the past three years was factored in. Based on the criteria outlined by Einarsen et al. (2009), 25.2% of advisors from my study would be considered victims of targeted mobbing based on the reporting of at least one weekly act from the survey. Table 12 offers a further summary and breakdown of mobbing within the past three years.

Table 12

Descriptive Statistics of Reported Mobbing Within Past 3 Years (n = 1,233)

Mobbing Reported Past 3 Years	Frequency	%
Advisors reporting any mobbing within past 3 years	1114	90.2
Advisors reporting any mobbing within past 6 months	1075	87.2
Advisors reporting mobbing at least once a month or more within past 6 months	656	53.2
Advisors reporting mobbing twice a month or more within past 6 months	489	39.7
Advisors reporting mobbing one to four times a week within past 6 months	311	25.2
Advisors reporting mobbing daily within past 6 months	137	11.1

An independent t-test was conducted to determine if there were any significant differences between males and females reported mobbing scores. The data used in this analysis was the total reported mobbing scores from the collapsed items in Table 11 that had been reported as experienced within the past six months. The mean scores for male and females were determined by adding responses from survey items and then dividing by the total number of items (22) to find the average score for each sex. The means were then used in independent sample t-tests to determine statistical differences between the groups. Levene's Test for Equality of Variance showed equal variances between groups could be assumed. However, the test found no significant difference in means between males and females as shown in Table 13. This suggests that there were no significant differences in the reporting between men and women with regard to their experiences with being mobbed.

Table 13

Independent Samples T-Test of Sex and Mobbing

Factor	N	M	SD	Sig	M Diff
Male	262	31.27	13.74	.777	.82261
Female	944	31.50	11.18		
F .799					
Sig. .371					

Note. *p<.05

One Way ANOVAs were conducted to determine if any significant differences existed between educational level and mobbing, and between advising position and mobbing. Findings from both ANOVAs showed there was no significant differences with either educational level or advising position and reported mobbing, $F(3, 1204)=.125$, $p=.945$ and $F(3, 1203)=1.002$, $p=.391$ respectively, as shown in Table 14. The ANOVA results showed that advisors were equally likely to report mobbing regardless of status and educational attainment within an institution.

Table 14

One Way ANOVA Statistics for Educational Level and Advising Position

Factor	Sum of Squares	DF	Mean Square	F	Sig
Educational Level					
Between Groups	.031	3	.010	.125	.945
Within Groups	99.806	1203	.83		
Total	99.837	1207			
Advising Position					
Between Groups	.245	3	.082	1.002	.391
Within Groups	97.900	1203	.081		
Total	98.145	1206			

Note. *p<.05

The final analysis consisted of another independent samples t-test to determine statistical significance between the total reported mobbing scores from the collapsed items in Table 11 that had been experienced within the past six months and type of institution. Levene's Test for Equality of Variance showed equal variances between groups could be assumed with a significance greater than .05. The results indicated a significant difference between the mean scores of mobbing reported at a community college and those reported at a four-year public college or university, as shown in Table 15. This suggests mobbing was reported significantly more by advisors from a community college than those from a four-year public institution.

Table 15

Independent Samples T-Test of Mobbing and Institutional Type

Factor	N	M	SD	Sig	M Diff
Community College	104	33.82	12.24	.026*	2.64549
4 Year Public	1100	31.17	11.48		
F 3.023					
Sig. .082**					

Note. *p<.05; **p>.05

Research Question 4

In order to address research question four, the scores for learning organization, goal orientation, and mobbing were collapsed down into individual constructs for a total of eight new variables to conduct the multiple linear regression analysis. Questions a-c for "communication" were collapsed down into one score, as well as a-c for "collaboration," a-c for "empowerment," and a-c for "strategic leadership." The same was done for questions a-f for "mastery orientation," a-e for "performance orientation," and a-e for "performance avoidance orientation." The mobbing scale was also collapsed from a-v into one variable, called "mobbing." The reported score not experienced in the past six months (7) was recoded into one on the Likert scale. This was done to accurately reflect they had not experienced the negative act within the past six months. The score of seven on the Likert scale was added for informational purposes for this study and was not intended to be part of the multiple linear regression analysis.

Each category of the grouped independent variables was mean centered and rescaled to an approximate mean of 0 and approximate standard deviation of 1.0. The mean and standard deviation may not be exactly 0 and 1 respectively due to rounding as shown in Table 16. This is done in order to interpret any interactions of X on Y by moving the slope of the Y axis to 0. Mean centering also helps to avoid multicollinearity, but does not affect the standard deviation, skewness or distribution of the data in any way. With a six-point Likert scale, mean centering changes the scale from 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6 to -3, -2, -1, 0, 1, 2, 3 where $\mu=0$ and $\sigma=1$.

Only participants who had completed scores for all questions on the survey were included in the newly centered and scaled predictor variables for an N of 1192. The mean score of each collapsed predictor variable was calculated and then those scores were transformed by subtracting the mean to center the new mean approximating 0 for the newly transformed variable. Scaling of the variable was then done by dividing the mean of each predictor variable

by the standard deviation to approximate 1: $\dfrac{Xi - \bar{X}i}{sd}$. This then allows for an explanation of the

standardized coefficients by interpreting a predicted change in the dependent variable provided a

change of 1.0 standard deviation in the independent variable.   In other words, for each expected

increase or decrease in 1.0 standard deviation scores of the standardized coefficient β for

communication, collaboration, empowerment, strategic leadership, mastery, performance, and

performance avoidance; mobbing scores can be expected to increase by the analysis output in

standard deviations. Since only predictor variables are mean centered and scaled, the mobbing

score was calculated by adding the means for each of the 22 items on the survey and then divided

by the total number of survey items (22) for a mean of 31.5126 as shown in Table 16.

Table 16

Descriptive Statistics for Collapsed Scaled Variables (n=1,192)

Variable	M	SD
Communication	-.0063796	.99799327
Collaboration	-.0052497	1.00364789
Empowerment	.0010744	1.00235759
Strategic Leadership	-.0018261	.99689263
Mastery	-.0007103	.99363014
Performance	.0074401	.99002268
Performance Avoidance	-.0063796	.99799327
Mobbing	31.5126	11.83073

Cronbach's alpha was performed on all eight newly collapsed variables and determined

to have high reliability based on scores of .799 and higher for each construct. This suggests that

each survey subitem within the constructs were related to each other, and therefore, measuring

the same behavior. Further details are provided in Table 17.

Table 17

Cronbach's Alpha of Variables/Constructs

Collapsed Variable	N	A
Communication	1233	.869
Collaboration	1233	.858
Empowerment	1228	.868
Strategic Leadership	1230	.893
Mastery	1227	.871
Performance	1230	.799
Performance Avoidance	1229	.879
Mobbing	1209	.920

Correlation results. Pearson correlations were conducted to determine the strength of the relationship between the independent variables of communication, collaboration, empowerment, strategic leadership, mastery, performance, and performance avoidance with the dependent variable of mobbing. All predictor variables showed significant correlations with mobbing behaviors shown in Table 18. The strength of the relationship is based on the correlation coefficient ranging from -1 to +1 and the closer to positive or negative 1, the stronger the correlation between the variables.

Table 18

Pearson Correlations with Mobbing and Learning Organization and Goal Orientation Variables

Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Mobbing	---							
Communication	-.427**	---						
Collaboration	-.439**	.721	---					
Empowerment	-.443**	.643	.746	---				
Strategic Leadership	-.438**	.711	.696	.733	---			
Mastery	-.076**	.236	.239	.237	.242	---		
Performance	.094**	.020	.040	.057	.037	-.030	---	
Performance Avoidance	.050*	-.037	-.015	-.004	.017	-.276	.459	---

*Note. *p<.05, **p<.01

The correlation found between communication (-.427), collaboration, (-.439) empowerment (-.443), and strategic leadership (-.438) showed a moderate negative linear relationship with mobbing (p<.01). A weak negative linear correlation was found between mastery orientation and mobbing (-.076, p<.01) with weak positive linear correlations between performance (.094, p<.01) and performance avoidance (.05, p<.05). Normality was assumed, but nonparametric measures were used to analyze correlations between the independent and dependent variables. Both Spearman Rho and Kendall's tau_b were performed to determine any significant correlations, and the findings supported the results found in the Pearson correlation as shown in Table 19.

Table 19

Kendall's tau_b and Spearman's Rho for Learning Organization, Goal Orientation and Mobbing

Variable	Com	Collab	Empower	Strategic Leadership	Mastery	Perform	Perform Avoid
Mobbing Kendall's tau_b	-.335**	-.330**	-.331**	-.340**	-.042*	.106**	.042*
Sig. (2 tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.037	.000	.039
Spearman's Rho	-.452**	-.447**	-.446**	-.461**	-.059*	.150**	.059*
Sig. (2 tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.042	.000	.040
N	1207	1209	1204	1207	1203	1206	1206

Note. *p<.05 (2 tailed), ** p<.01 (2 tailed)

Multiple linear regression significance. A multiple linear regression was conducted using SPSS to determine if any of the independent variables of communication, collaboration, empowerment, strategic leadership, mastery, performance, and performance avoidance could be used to predict mobbing behaviors experienced by professional academic advisors. The analysis showed that all predictor variables except performance avoidance were predictive of the dependent variable of mobbing, shown in Table 20.

Table 20

Multiple Linear Regression Analysis for Predictor Variables on Dependent Variable

Variable	B	SE	β	t	p	95% C.I. Lower	Upper
Constant	31.484	295	---	106.654	.001**	30.905	32.063
Communication	-1.632	.473	-.138	-3.454	.001**	-2.560	-.705
Collaboration	-1.544	.507	-.131	-3.043	.002**	-2.539	-.549
Empowerment	-2.099	.496	-.178	-4.231	.000**	-3.073	-1.126
Strategic Leadership	-1.659	.498	-.140	-3.333	.001**	-2.635	-.682
Mastery	.842	.324	.071	2.602	.009**	.207	1.477
Performance	1.365	.338	.114	4.034	.000**	.701	2.029
Performance Avoidance	.140	.350	.012	.398	.690	-.548	.827

R^2 .262
F   60.170**

Note. **p<0.01*

A significant regression equation was found (R^2 = .262, F (7, 1184) = 60.170, p<.001). The combination of communication, collaboration, empowerment, strategic leadership, mastery, and performance orientations as predictor variables explained 26.2% of the variance related to mobbing experienced by academic advisors. The unstandardized coefficient or B was used to interpret the results in terms of raw units or points on the scale. Advisor's predicted mobbing experiences was equal to 31.484 (mobbing) + -1.632 (communication) + -1.544 (collaboration) + -2.099 (empowerment) + -1.659 (strategic leadership) + .842 (mastery) + 1.365 (performance). This means that when all variables were held constant, it was expected that for each increase of 1.0 point on the scale for communication, collaboration, empowerment or strategic leadership, mobbing scores would decrease by 1.632 points, 1.544 points, 2.099 points, and 1.659 points respectively. However, again holding all variables constant, it was found that for each increase of one point in mastery or performance orientation scores, there would be an expected increase in mobbing scores of .842 points and 1.365 points respectively.

The partial regression scatter plot confirmed no linear relationship between performance avoidance orientation and mobbing. Further inspection of the partial regression plots showed very week to no linear relationships between mastery and performance orientations and mobbing as well as with all variables of learning organization (communication, collaboration, empowerment, and strategic leadership) and mobbing. However, given the large sample size, even small differences can be statistically significant, practical, and relevant (Faraway, 2009).

Transformations beyond standardizing and normalizing the variables were not done to the data, and outliers were not removed in order to preserve the integrity of the findings. Given the nature of the study, one can expect extreme cases and removing those cases may change the outcome but may not accurately reflect the research. Faraway (2009) suggests that too much manipulation of the data to fit a particular model can be difficult to accurately interpret and can be made to fit the findings one is seeking even though it is not an accurate portrayal of the dataset. Given the possible issue with linearity in the linear regression model, a binary logistic regression was conducted to determine if any relationships existed between the dependent variable of mobbing with the independent variables of communication, collaboration, empowerment, strategic leadership, mastery orientation, performance orientation, and performance avoidance orientation. When relationships between variables exist in complex datasets, they tend to show relationships in multiple statistical models and this is a way to help confirm the legitimacy of results that may seem questionable (Faraway, 2009).

Binary logistic regression. The dependent variable of mobbing was transformed into a categorical dataset in order to perform a logistic regression. The first category, coded 0, consisted of those experiencing no mobbing within the past six months and answering never (1) or not in last six months (7) on all questions within the mobbing survey. The second category, coded 1, consisted of those who experienced any mobbing within the past six months answering

occasionally (2), at least one time a month (3), more than one time a month (4), weekly (5), and/or daily (6) on any of the question within the mobbing survey.

Mean centered scores for all the independent variables were used to further conduct the analysis. The Omnibus Test of Model Coefficients showed a significant chi square, while the Hosmer and Lemeshow Test showed a chi square with insignificant results shown in Table 21. These findings suggest that the full model including the full set of predictors is a significantly better fit than the null model without any predictors. The Nagelkerke R^2 explains the independent variables in the model together account for 17.1% of reported mobbing, and this would suggest that the model moderately fits the data.

Table 21

Significance of Model Fit

Test	Chi Square	df	p
Omnibus Model Coefficients	115.265	7	.000*
Hosmer/Lemeshow Test	6.060	8	.645
Nagelkerke R^2 .171			

Note. *p<0.001

Table 22 shows the classification table and participants categorized as either being mobbed, coded 0, or not being mobbed, coded 1. Further analysis of the classification table (Table 22) showed that 151 participants in the study were categorized as not being mobbed. Out of the 151, five or 3.3% were accurately predicted to fall within the non-mobbing category (0).

Table 22

Logistic Regression Classification Table

		Predicted With Mobbing		
Observed		0	1	% Correct
Without mobbing	0	5	146	3.3
With mobbing	1	8	1055	99.2
Overall %				87.3

Out of the 1,063 participants reporting mobbing, 1,055 or 99.2% were accurately predicted to fall within the mobbing category (1). Overall, 87.3% of the sample within the model was accurately predicted to fall within their respective groups. This suggests the model does an excellent job predicting those falling into the category of mobbing. However, it further suggests the model does a poor job predicting those falling into the category of not being mobbed, as shown in more detail in Table 22.

The analysis from the binary logistic regression showed significance for three of the independent variables on the dependent variable of mobbing. Significance with p<.01 was found for empowerment (.007), strategic leadership (.008), and performance orientation (.001). In other words, logit(mobbing) = 2.328 + -.435empowerment + -.439strategic leadership + .375performance. The odds ratio for the significant variables were converted to a percentage by using the following formula: (ExpB-1) x 100 as shown in Table 23.

Table 23

Logistic Regression Summary

Variable	B	SE	Wald	ExpB	ExpB (%)	p	95% C.I. Lower	Upper
Communication	-.282	.158	3.183	.755	(24.5)	.074	.554	1.028
Collaboration	-.019	.168	.013	.981	(1.9)	.910	.707	1.362
Empowerment	-.453	.169	7.209	.636	**(36.4)**	**.007***	.457	.885
Strategic Leadership	-.439	.165	7.062	.645	**(35.5)**	**.008***	.467	.891
Mastery	.114	.108	1.121	1.121	(12.1)	.290	.907	1.385
Performance	.375	.106	12.576	1.455	**(45.5)**	**.000***	1.183	1.790
Performance Avoidance	-.137	.108	1.602	.872	(12.8)	.206	.705	1.078
Constant	2.328	.117	399.081	10.256	---	.000*	---	---

Note. *p<0.01

This means that controlling for differences in the independent variables, as the score for empowerment increases by 1.0 point, the likelihood of reporting being mobbed decreases by .636 times or with each increased score on empowerment, the odds of being mobbed decrease by

36.4%. Controlling for all independent variables again, as the score for strategic leadership increases by 1.0 point, the likelihood of reporting being mobbed decreases by .645 times or with each increased score on strategic leadership, the odds of being mobbed decrease by 35.5%. Finally, controlling for all independent variables, as the score for performance orientation increases by 1.0 point, the likelihood of reporting being mobbed would increase by 1.455 times or with each increased score on performance orientation, the odds of being mobbed increase by 45.5%. A full summary of all independent variables is show in Table 23.

Chapter 4 Closure

This chapter summarized the results of the goal orientation, learning organization, and working environment questionnaire. Descriptive statistics were provided for each set of questions along with the results of the multiple linear regression, Kendall's tau_b, Spearman's Rho, t-tests, One Way ANOVAs, and the binary logistic regression. The next chapter will discuss the practical application of the findings within this study and how that connects to the current literature along with recommendations to institutions of higher education.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION

This chapter examines the results of the "Goal Orientation, Learning Organization, and Working Environment Survey" completed by 1,233 professional undergraduate advisors employed at community colleges and public four-year institutions across the United States. The purpose of my study was to understand whether the relationship between professional undergraduate advisor's perceptions of their learning organization and goal orientation could be used to help predict mobbing behaviors experienced by them. Earlier chapters demonstrated the prevalence of mobbing and the serious consequences it wreaks on mental and physical health of employees as well as to the overall company. The dearth of research on mobbing in higher education, particularly with regard to academic advisors, confirmed a need for research within that group of individuals. Given that research suggests that the degree to which an organization is a learning organization and various characteristics of employees may play a role in being mobbed, these constructs were chosen to examine further in my study.

Chapter 2 outlines in detail the concepts used to measure learning organization which include communication, collaboration, empowerment, and strategic leadership; and the concepts of goal orientation which include mastery, performance, and performance avoidance. Chapter 2 further delineates the creation of the online survey for my study using a combination of items from the DLOQ, WDGOQ, and NAQ-R questionnaires. The 6-point Likert scale asked advisors to rate from 1 to 6 how much they agreed something was always true (1) to never true (6) for learning organization constructs, and how much they strongly disagreed (1) to strongly agreed (6) for goal orientation constructs. They were further asked to rate on a 6-point scale how much they experienced mobbing behaviors within the past six months using a scale ranging from (1) never, (2) occasionally, (3) once a month, (4) more than once a month, (5) weekly, and (6) daily.

This chapter presents the major research findings and examines how they address my research questions. This chapter further discusses the importance of the findings and how they relate to current research on mobbing in working environments, particularly in higher education. Limitations of the study and suggestions for future studies are also examined. This chapter seeks to provide a deeper understanding of how the knowledge gained from the data analysis contributes to the overall understanding of mobbing in higher education, particularly with relationship to academic advisors, along with the concepts of learning organization and goal orientation.

Analysis and Discussion of Major Results

My respondents included 1,233 professional undergraduate advisors with various titles within the advising profession from across the United States in both four-year institutions and community colleges.

Demographics

As shown in Table 3 in Chapter 4, each of the five regions across the country were represented: northwest (23.3%), southwest (10.4%), midwest (28.5%), southeast (23.4%), and northeast (14.3%). The majority of respondents were from a public college or university (91%) with 8.6% from a community college. Nearly 70% of respondents worked at an institution with enrollment between 20,000 and 49,999. However, there was nearly 20% of participants from an institution with enrollment under 20,000 and approximately 10% with 50,000 or more students. Overall, a good representation existed from smaller institutions to extremely large ones.

The breakdown of education levels for respondents showed that 77.3% had a master's degree while 6.4% a doctorate, 15% a bachelor's degree, and 1.2% reported only having some college. The categories of job titles showed 2.9% were directors, 4.2% were assistant directors, 25.5% were senior advisors, and 67.2% were advisors, with the overall majority (78.5%) of all

respondents reporting as female. None of this demographic information seems surprising given advising tends to be a female dominated field where master's degrees are either required or highly desired during the job selection process. It was also not surprising there was such a low number of doctoral degrees because director positions do not require that level of formal education, and therefore, no necessity for the degree to advance within the field at this time.

The breakdown in years of service provides a snapshot of the turnover within the field. The majority of advisors (62.2%) were in their positions less than eight years with 31% advising less than four years and another 31% advising between four, but less than eight years. Another 25.1% reported being in their advising role between eight but less than 16 years. This was almost evenly split with 13.3% reporting between eight, but less than 11 years and 11.6% between 11, but less than 16 years of service. Only 5% of advisors reported years of service between 16 and 41 years. This seems to suggest a somewhat high turnover rate for advisors given that nearly a third reported being in their positions less than 4 years.

Both centralized and split models of advising, two of the primary advising models, were represented with 57.4% and 42.6% respectively. Overall, the demographics reported by participants would seem most relevant and usable to leaders of both community colleges and four-year public institutions of moderate size. However, given there was a decent representation of all institutional sizes and a fairly large sample size to help answer my research questions, I would argue that leaders from institutions of all sizes and models of advising could benefit from the results of my study.

Key Findings: Research Question 1

My first research question sought to understand the degree to which professional undergraduate advisors described their institution as a learning organization. The data was gathered using four out of seven sections of the DLOQ developed by Marsick and Watkins

(2003). The constructs chosen for my study from the instrument consisted of communication, collaboration, empowerment, and strategic leadership; and measured how much an individual agrees or disagrees with questions that their learning organization exhibits behaviors focused around each of those variables.

Table 24 shows the comparison of means and standard deviations between the collapsed variables of learning organization from highest to lowest for each survey item, and the average mean for each construct.

Table 24

Descriptive Statistics for Survey Items for Learning Organization Variables (n=1,233)

Learning Organization Variables and Survey Items	M	SD
Communication	4.04	
- In my organization, people give open and honest feedback to each other.	4.15	1.23
- In my organization, whenever people state their view, they ask what others think.	4.00	1.23
- In my organization, people spend time building trust with each other.	3.95	3.95
Collaboration	3.87	
- In my organization, teams revise thinking as result of discussions or info collected.	4.18	1.20
- In my organization, teams have the freedom to adapt their goals as needed.	4.16	1.26
- In my organization, teams are confident organization will act on recommendations.	3.28	1.33
Strategic Leadership	3.78	
- In my organization, leaders ensure org's actions are consistent with values.	3.94	1.37
- In my organization, leaders continually look for opportunities to learn.	3.84	1.40
- In my organization, leaders mentor and coach those they lead.	3.56	1.45
Empowerment	3.69	
- My organization recognizes people for taking initiative.	3.93	1.37
- My organization gives people control over resources needed to accomplish work.	3.72	1.37
- My organization supports employees who take calculated risks.	3.42	1.28

The questions were based on a six-point Likert scale with 1 listed as almost never true and then 6 listed as almost always true. The points in between were not labeled and left up to the participant to determine placement. The closer the score was to 6, the more an individual perceived stronger communication, collaboration, empowerment, and strategic leadership within their institution. The closer the score was to 1, the more an individual perceived weaker communication, collaboration, empowerment, and strategic leadership within their institution.

Figure 3 illustrates the relationship between the highest item means and lowest item mean within each construct. In addition, prescribed categories of scores based on responses from my survey for communication, collaboration, empowerment, and strategic leadership were also created.
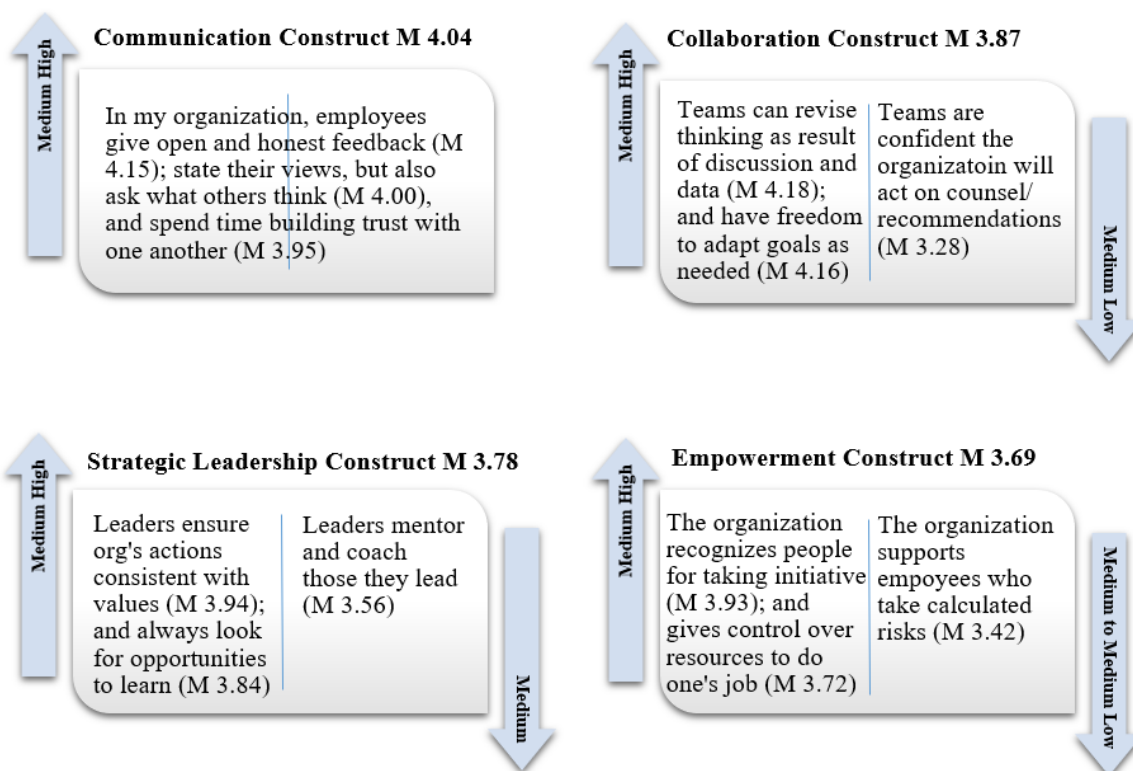
Communication Construct M 4.04

Medium High

In my organization, employees give open and honest feedback (M 4.15); state their views, but also ask what others think (M 4.00), and spend time building trust with one another (M 3.95)

Collaboration Construct M 3.87

Medium High

Teams can revise thinking as result of discussion and data (M 4.18); and have freedom to adapt goals as needed (M 4.16) | Teams are confident the organizatoin will act on counsel/ recommendations (M 3.28)

Medium Low

Strategic Leadership Construct M 3.78

Medium High

Leaders ensure org's actions consistent with values (M 3.94); and always look for opportunities to learn (M 3.84) | Leaders mentor and coach those they lead (M 3.56)

Medium

Empowerment Construct M 3.69

Medium High

The organization recognizes people for taking initiative (M 3.93); and gives control over resources to do one's job (M 3.72) | The organization supports empoyees who take calculated risks (M 3.42)

Medium to Medium Low

Figure 3. Relationship and overall prescribed score categories for learning organization survey item constructs for communication, collaboration, empowerment, and strategic leadership.

The concept of the *communication* construct sought to understand the extent to which advisors believed they were free to provide open and honest feedback (M 4.15), state their views but also ask what other's thought (M 4.00), and build trusting relationships with colleagues (M 3.95). Research consistently showed that communication issues played a major role with individuals who reported experiences of being mobbed (Bjorkqvist et al., 1994; Cooper et al., 2004; Einarsen & Rakness, 1997; Spratlen, 1995; Van Fleet & Van Fleet, 2012; Vartia, 2001; Yaman, 2015; Zapf & Gross, 2001). My study sought to understand the levels of communication and how that may impact mobbing with professional undergraduate advisors by first measuring

how they described communication within their organization. Overall, communication scores were higher than collaboration, empowerment, and strategic leadership. The means of all three questions on the scale for this construct were similar with means of 3.95, 4.00, and 4.15. However, with a combined average of 4.04 on a six-point scale, I would argue that would be considered a medium high score at best.

The items measuring the *collaboration* construct within the survey help provide insight into the way advisors believed they were able to revise thinking as a team based on discussions and data (M 4.18), had the freedom to adapt goals as needed (M 4.16), and felt confident that administrators would act on their recommendations (M 3.28). Studies have shown that collaboration is linked to increased mobbing. A study by Yaman (2010) found that lack of collaboration and role ambiguity lead to increased mobbing. A study by Tigrel and Kokalan (2009) reported mobbing victims were excluded from meetings while others took credit for their ideas. Finally, a study by Calep and Konakli (2013) demonstrated that mobbing victims stated they were forbidden from even speaking with colleagues let alone working with them. Overall, collaboration was the second highest scoring overall construct with a combined mean of 3.87, suggesting a medium high score. However, collaboration had the lowest scoring item within this section with a mean of 3.28. Advisors reporting the least agreement with feeling confident that administration would act on their counsel suggesting a medium low score.

The overall construct of *strategic leadership* was chosen as an important construct to investigate because research linked mobbing to direct supervisors as perpetrators (Spratlen, 1995; Tepper, 2000; Tepper et al., 2011; Thomas, 2005; Van Fleet & Van Fleet, 2012). Strategic leadership was the third highest ranked overall construct in my survey providing a deeper understanding of advisors' perceptions of leadership within their organization which included congruency of values (M 3.94), continuous learning (M 3.84), and mentoring of staff (M 3.56). I

would describe the overall mean of 3.78 as a medium high score. However, advisors reported leaders within their organization as less likely to be viewed as mentoring or coaching their staff with a mean of 3.56 which I would describe as a medium score.

The items that measured the overall *empowerment* construct within the survey provided a better understanding of advisors' reporting of job initiative (M 3.93), having control over resources to perform job duties (M 3.72), and encouragement to take calculated risks (M 3.42). Plenty of studies have shown a connection between mobbing and the negative impact it has on empowerment of employees within organizations which can in turn effect innovation and productivity (Cortina et al., 2001; Giorgi, 2012; Kakumba et al., 2014; Lutgen-Sandvik, 2008; McKay et al., 2008; Mikkelsen & Einarsen, 2002b; O'Neil, 2003; Qureshi et al., 2015; Spratlen, 1995; Yaman, 2010). Empowerment was the lowest overall scoring construct within the learning organization section with individual item means of 3.93, 3.72, and 3.42.

The combined mean of 3.69 suggests a medium to medium high score. However, the question regarding the belief that the organization supports advisors who take calculated risks had a mean of 3.42, creating a medium to medium low score. Advisors rated empowerment as the lowest out of the four learning organization constructs measured indicating that many advisors may likely be disengaged in their jobs. Findings from my study were consistent with research that showed a connection between empowerment and mobbing as well as a link with communication, collaboration, and strategic leadership which I will discuss in more detail under key findings for question four.

Key Findings: Research Question 2

The second question in my study analyzed the degree to which advisors reported their own levels of goal orientation. The data was collected using the WDGOQ which measures mastery, performance, and performance avoidance orientations (Vandewalle, 1997). The scale

was used in its entirety and the questions were based on a six-point Likert scale with 1 listed as strongly disagree and then 6 listed as strongly agree. The closer the scores were to 6, the more advisors identified with the item measuring goal orienation, but the closer the scores to 1 meant they least identified with those items.

Table 25 shows the comparison of means and standard deviations between survey items of goal orientation from highest to lowest within each category. In addition, Table 25 also shows the overall means of the goal orientation constructs that were collapsed from the 16 survey items for each variable of mastery (6 items), performance (5 items), and performance avoidance (5 items) arranged from highest to lowest.

Table 25

Goal Orientation Survey Items and Collapsed Variable Means (n=1,233)

Survey Items and Collapsed Variable Means	M	SD
Mastery	4.72	
- I often look for opportunities to develop new skills and knowledge.	5.03	.95
- I prefer to work in situations that require a high level of ability and talent.	4.89	.94
- I enjoy challenging and difficult tasks at work where I'll learn new skills.	4.88	.98
- I am willing to select a challenging work assignment that I can learn a lot from.	4.87	.98
- For me, development of my work ability is important enough to take risks.	4.54	1.08
- I often read materials related to my work to improve my ability.	4.12	1.31
Performance	3.36	
- I enjoy it when others at work are aware of how well I am doing.	4.06	1.38
- I prefer to work on projects where I can prove my ability to others.	3.50	1.40
- I would rather prove my ability on a task that I can do well at than to try a new task.	3.34	1.21
- I try to figure out what it takes to prove my ability to others at work.	3.26	1.41
- I'm concerned with showing that I can perform better than my coworkers.	2.67	1.41
Performance Avoidance	2.78	
- I prefer to avoid situations at work where I might perform poorly.	2.87	1.33
- I would avoid new task if a chance I would appear incompetent to others.	2.81	1.30
- I'm concerned about taking on work task if performance would reveal low ability.	2.66	1.26
- Avoiding a show of low ability is more important to me than learning a new skill.	2.27	1.11
- When I don't understand something at work, I prefer to avoid asking "dumb questions" I should know the answer to.	1.78	1.11

Goal orientation was chosen for my study because research suggests that it is a stable trait over time and further research suggests there is a connection between mobbing and personality

traits (Coyne et al., 2000; Glaso et al., 2007, 2009; Matthiesen & Einarsen, 2001, 2007; Mikkelsen & Einarsen, 2002b; Potasky, 2010; Vandewalle & Cummings, 1997; Zapf, 1999). *Mastery orientation* had the highest combined mean (4.72) within this section of the survey. This construct measured the degree to which advisors reported seeking opportunities to learn new skills (M 5.03), selecting work situations requiring a high level of ability (M 4.89), selecting challenging work (M 4.88), taking risks to improve work skills (M 4.54), and reading materials to improve abilities at work (M 4.12). The responses to the survey items within this construct went from high (M 5.03) to medium high scores (M 4.12).

 Performance orientation had an overall mean of 3.36. This construct sought to understand the degree advisors enjoy when others are aware of how well they are doing at work (M 4.06), preference to work on projects to prove abilities to others (M 3.50), preference to prove ability on a task they can do well rather than work on a new task (M 3.34), the need to prove ability to others at work (M 3.26), and the need to perform better than colleagues (M 2.67). The responses for the survey items within this construct went from medium high (M 4.06) to medium low (M 2.67).

 Performance avoidance orientation had the lowest overall mean (2.78). This construct looked at advisors reported preference to avoid situations at work and included questions about the following statements: I prefer avoiding situations where I may perform poorly (M 2.87), I avoid tasks if there is a possibility of appearing incompetent (M 2.81), I am concerned about taking on a work task if it would reveal low ability (M 2.66), avoiding a show of low ability is more important than learning a new skill (M 2.27), I prefer avoiding asking "dumb" questions that I believe I should know the answers to (M 1.78). Overall, the responses from this construct went from medium low (M 2.78) to low (M 1.78).

The findings from my study showed advisors reported with fairly high mastery orientation scores that were significantly higher than either of the other two orientations. My study further found that advisors reported the lowest scores on performance avoidance. This suggests advisors take initiative, want to develop new skills, seek out challenging work opportunities and continually seek to improve themselves. They are somewhat concerned about how others view their performance, choose projects they will do well on, and enjoy recognition from colleagues. They are least concerned with asking questions that may seem dumb, being afraid to show low ability in order to learn a new skill, and avoiding work tasks out of fear of appearing incompetent.

Overall, my findings show advisors tend to be high achieving, competent, not afraid to ask questions, and not afraid to learn new skills. Figure 4 illustrates how the scores for mastery, performance, and performance avoidance constructs went from highest to lowest based on the highest mean of each question within each construct to the lowest mean for each question within each construct. The items were further categorized based on means from high to low.
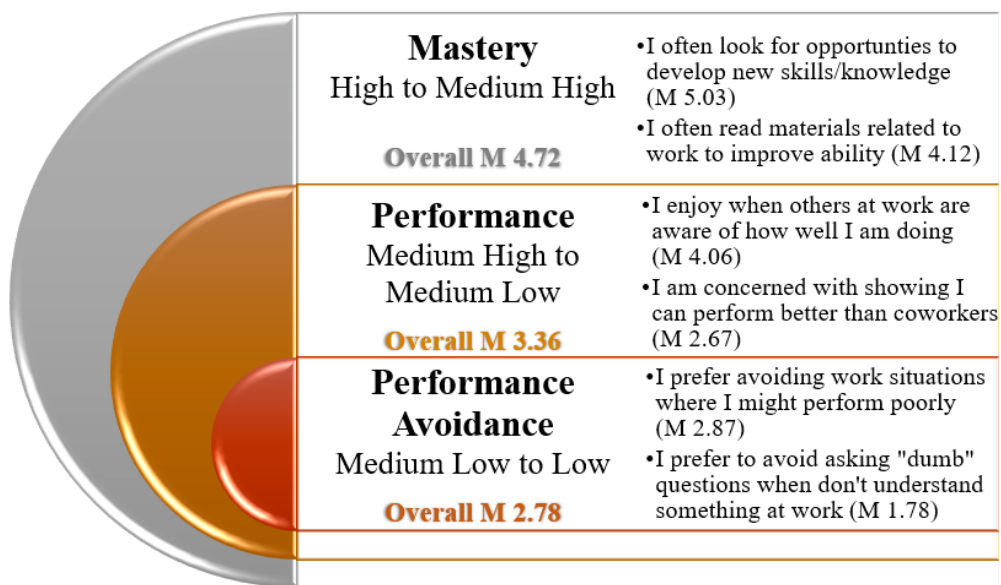

Figure 4. Highest and lowest means for each survey item within each construct of goal orientation and prescribed categories ranging from low to high based on survey item means.

Key Findings: Research Question 3

The third question of this research study sought to understand the degree to which advisors reported personally experiencing mobbing. The data was collected using the NAQ-R which measures mobbing acts (Enarsen et al., 2009). The scale was used in its entirety and the questions were based on a six-point Likert scale from (1) never, (2) occasionally, (3), at least one time a month, (4) more than one time a month, (5) weekly, and (6) daily. The closer the scores were to 6, the more advisors identified with the item measuring mobbing acts and the closer the scores were to 1 meant they least identified with the item measuring mobbing. An additional number (7) was added to the survey for each of the 22 items that asked participants whether they had experienced mobbing within the past three years if it had not been experienced within the past six months. A score of (7) was recoded to (1) for all analyses in research question 3 and was only used for informational purposes as shown in Table 26.

Table 26

Descriptive Statistics of Reported Mobbing Within Past 3 Years (n=1,233)

Mobbing Reported Past 3 Years	Frequency	%
Advisors reporting any mobbing within past *3 years*	1114	90.2
Advisors reporting any mobbing within past *6 months*	1075	87.2
Advisors reporting mobbing *once a month or more* within past 6 months	656	53.2
Advisors reporting mobbing *more than once a month* within past 6 months	489	39.7
Advisors reporting mobbing *weekly* or more within past 6 months	311	25.2
Advisors reporting mobbing *daily* within past 6 months	137	11.1

The overall prevalence of mobbing reported in my study consisting of at least one mobbing act within the past 3 years was 90.2%, or 87.2% within the past 6 months. These findings were consistent with research and literature suggesting that mobbing occurs at a high rate in higher education (Hollis, 2012; Hubrert & Van Veldoven, 2001; Keashly & Neuman, 2010).

The findings from my study were even higher than findings in higher education reported by Hollis (2016) and McKay et al. (2008), who found reported mobbing of 67% and 50% respectively. However, my findings were consistent with two studies outside of higher education by Einarsen and Raknes (1997) and Mikkelsen and Einarsen (2002b) who found 88% of participants reported experiencing at least one mobbing act within the past six months on the NAQ.

The prevalence of mobbing from my study dispute findings from studies outside higher education that less than 20% of individuals experienced mobbing at work (Cooper et al., 2004; Hansen et al., 2006, 2014; Khubchandani & Price, 2015; Ortega et al., 2011; Vartia, 2001). My findings showed 25.2% of advisors reported experiencing mobbing acts weekly which further disputes other studies outside higher education that found between 8% and 13.6% of respondents reported mobbing behaviors of at least one act weekly for six months (Mikkelsen & Einarsen 2002b; Zabrodska & Kveton, 2012. In another study outside of higher education, Giorgi (2012) found 19% reported mobbing weekly, which was considered high, but still lower than the 25.2% reported in my study. Even the study by Kakumba et al. (2014) that found 53.3% of staff in higher education reported experiencing some form of mobbing was much lower than the 87.2% reported in my study. Overall, the findings from my study affirms mobbing in higher education tends to occur at a higher rate than findings in other studies outside of higher education except for those conducted by Einarsen and Raknes (1997) and Mikkelsen and Einarsen (2002b).

Table 27 shows the breakdown of survey items and how many advisors reported experiencing each mobbing act from highest to lowest means. The table is further broken down with 50% or more being reported at least once within the past six months highlighted in orange; 20% to 49% being reported at least once in the past six months highlighted in yellow; 10% to

19% being reported at least once in the past six months highlighted in blue; and less than 10% being reported at least once in the past six months highlighted in purple.

Table 27

Frequency of Mobbing Acts by Survey Item Reported by Advisors Past 6 Months (n = 1233)

Survey Items	Yes	(%)
-Someone withholding information which affects your performance	852	(69.1)
-Having your opinions and views ignored	681	(55.2)
-Being ordered to do work below your level of competence	668	(54.2)
-Being ignored or excluded from meetings or other areas related to your job	592	(48.0)
-Being exposed to an unmanageable workload	530	(43.0)
-Spreading of gossip and rumors about you	409	(33.2)
-Removed key areas of responsibility or replaced with trivial/unpleasant tasks	402	(32.6)
-Given tasks with unreasonable or impossible targets or deadlines	399	(32.4)
-Excessive monitoring of your work	285	(23.1)
-Being humiliated or ridiculed in connection with your work	275	(22.3)
-Being ignored or facing a hostile reaction when you approach	254	(20.6)
-Pressure not to claim (e.g. sick leave, holiday, travel expenses etc.)	238	(19.3)
-Insulting/offensive remarks about habits, background, attitudes or private life	217	(17.6)
-Repeated reminders of your errors or mistakes	202	(16.4)
-Persistent criticism of your work and effort	189	(15.3)
-Being shouted at or being the target of spontaneous anger (or rage)	185	(15.0)
-Having allegations made against you	127	(10.3)
-Intimidating behavior: finger-pointing, invasion space, shoving, blocking exit	118	(9.6)
-Hints or signals from others that you should quit your job	105	(8.5)
-Being the subject of excessive teasing and sarcasm	89	(7.2)
-Practical jokes carried out by people you don't get along with	62	(5.0)
-Threats of violence or physical abuse or actual abuse	11	(0.9)

The breakdown of mobbing acts reported from the NAQ-R in my study showed the top most reported acts, with 50% or more of advisors reporting experiencing the act at least once within the past six months, consisted of the following: someone withholding information that affects job performance (69.1%), having opinions and views ignored (55.2%), and being ordered to do work below competency (54.2%). Advisors reported experiencing the following 20% to 49% of the time in the past six months: being ignored or excluded from meetings related to their job (48.0%), being exposed to an unmanageable workload (43.0%), being a victim of gossip and rumors (33.2%), having key areas of responsibility removed or replaced with more trivial or

unpleasant tasks (32.6%), being given tasks with unreasonable or impossible deadlines, (32.4%), excessive monitoring of work (23.1%), being humiliated or ridiculed in connection with one's work (22.3%), and being ignored or facing a hostile reaction when approaching others (20.6%).

The top reported behaviors found in this study were consistent with other research on mobbing showing similarly reported negative acts (Cooper et al., 2004; Duffy & Sperry, 2007, 2012; Harper, 2016; Einarsen & Rakness, 1997; Thomas, 2005; Tigrel & Kokalan, 2009; Vartia, 2001; Yelgecen & Kokalan, 2009; Zabrodska & Kveton, 2012). This was not surprising given that research in higher education indicated acts of mobbing tended to be more covert than overt (Ilongo, 2015; Kakumba et al., 2014; Keashly & Neuman, 2010; Spratlen, 1995; Tigrel & Kokalan, 2009; Twale & DeLuca, 2008).

More aggressive mobbing acts were also reported in my study, but they were least experienced. The bottom 10% reported mobbing acts in my study consisted of the following: dealing with allegations being made (10.3%), experiencing finger pointing or invasion of space or being barred from exiting (9.6%), receiving hints or signals to quit one's job (8.5%), being the subject of excessive teasing or sarcasm (7.2%), being the target of practical jokes (5.0%), and experiencing threats of violence, threats of physical abuse, or actual abuse (0.9%). Even though these more hostile acts were the lowest scoring, they were still consistent with previous research showing the same types of aggressive behaviors reported by others in the workplace (Celep & Konakli, 2013; Tigrel & Kokolan, 2009).

My study found no significant difference between mobbing reported by males and females. This affirmed research findings from a study in higher education by Giorgi (2012) of various administrators and staff from an Italian University that did not include faculty. My findings disputed those found by Bjorkqvist et al. (1994) that showed significant differences between mobbing of males and females from a university in Finland. However, that study did

not include staff and only looked at administrators and faculty. My findings also disputed

studies outside of higher education where the findings showed more females reported mobbing

than males or had greater odds of being mobbed (Cortina et al., 2001; Khubchandani and Price,

2015).

There were also no significant differences reported in my study of mobbing between

those identifying as advisors, senior advisors, assistant directors, or directors and educational

attainment that consisted of some college, bachelor's, master's, or doctoral degrees. This is

somewhat consistent with research findings by Mikkelsen and Einarsen (2001) that showed little

difference in reported acts of mobbing across occupations. These findings suggest that advisors

are equally likely to experience mobbing regardless of sex, job title, and educational attainment.

The final finding in this section of my study added to the research as a new finding that

showed mobbing reported in community colleges was significantly higher than those reported in

public four-year institutions. Table 28 shows the incidents of mobbing reported in the past six

months by advisors from community colleges from highest reported mean scores to lowest mean

scores. It further compares each survey item score with advisors from public colleges or

universities within my study.

Table 28 is further broken down with 50% or more mobbing acts being reported at least

once within the past six months highlighted in orange; 20% to 49% of mobbing acts being

reported at least once in the past six months highlighted in yellow; 10% to 19% of mobbing acts

being reported at least once in the past six months highlighted in blue; and less than 10% of

mobbing acts being reported at least once in the past six months highlighted in purple. Being

ignored or excluded from meetings or other areas related to one's job and being exposed to an

unmanageable workload both broke into the top 50% with the same reported incidents of 56.6%

in the past six months. An additional three items were reported in the 20% to 49% rate of

incidents that included: pressure not to claim things like sick leave, holiday, travel expenses

(25.7%), being the victim of insulting or offensive remarks about personal habits, attitudes or

private life (22.6%), and experiencing repeated reminders of errors or mistakes (21.7%). The

findings from this section of my study suggest advisors at community colleges are significantly

more likely to report being mobbed; job titles, sex, and educational attainment do not provide

immunity from being targets; and mobbing acts reported tend to be more covert in nature.

Table 28

Percentage of Mobbing Acts for CC (n=109) and 4-Year University (n=1,122) Past 6 Months

Survey Items	CC	4-Yr
-Someone withholding information which effects your performance	(70.8)	(69.0)
-Being ignored or excluded from meetings or other areas related to your job	(56.6)	(47.2)
-Being exposed to an unmanageable workload	(56.6)	(41.8)
-Having your opinions and views ignored	(55.7)	(55.1)
-Being ordered to do work below your level of competence	(52.8)	(54.3)
-Spreading of gossip and rumors about you	(43.4)	(32.3)
-Given tasks with unreasonable or impossible targets or deadlines	(40.6)	(31.5)
-Removed key areas of responsibility or replaced with trivial/unpleasant tasks	(40.0)	(32.0)
-Excessive monitoring of your work	(34.0)	(22.1)
-Being humiliated or ridiculed in connection with your work	(30.2)	(21.5)
-Pressure not to claim (e.g., sick leave, holiday, travel expenses etc.)	(25.7)	(18.7)
-Insulting/offensive remarks about habits, background, attitudes or private life	(22.6)	(17.1)
-Repeated reminders of your errors or mistakes	(21.7)	(15.8)
-Being ignored or facing a hostile reaction when you approach	(20.8)	(20.5)
-Being shouted at or being the target of spontaneous anger (or rage)	(17.9)	(14.7)
-Persistent criticism of your work and effort	(17.0)	(15.1)
-Having allegations made against you	(16.0)	(9.8)
-Practical jokes carried out by people you don't get along with	(14.2)	(4.1)
-Intimidating behavior: finger-pointing, invasion space, shoving, blocking exit	(12.3)	(9.3)
-Hints or signals from others that you should quit your job	(11.3)	(8.2)
-Being the subject of excessive teasing and sarcasm	(6.6)	(7.2)
-Threats of violence or physical abuse or actual abuse	(0.9)	(0.8)

Note. CC = community college; 4 Yr = four-year public college or university
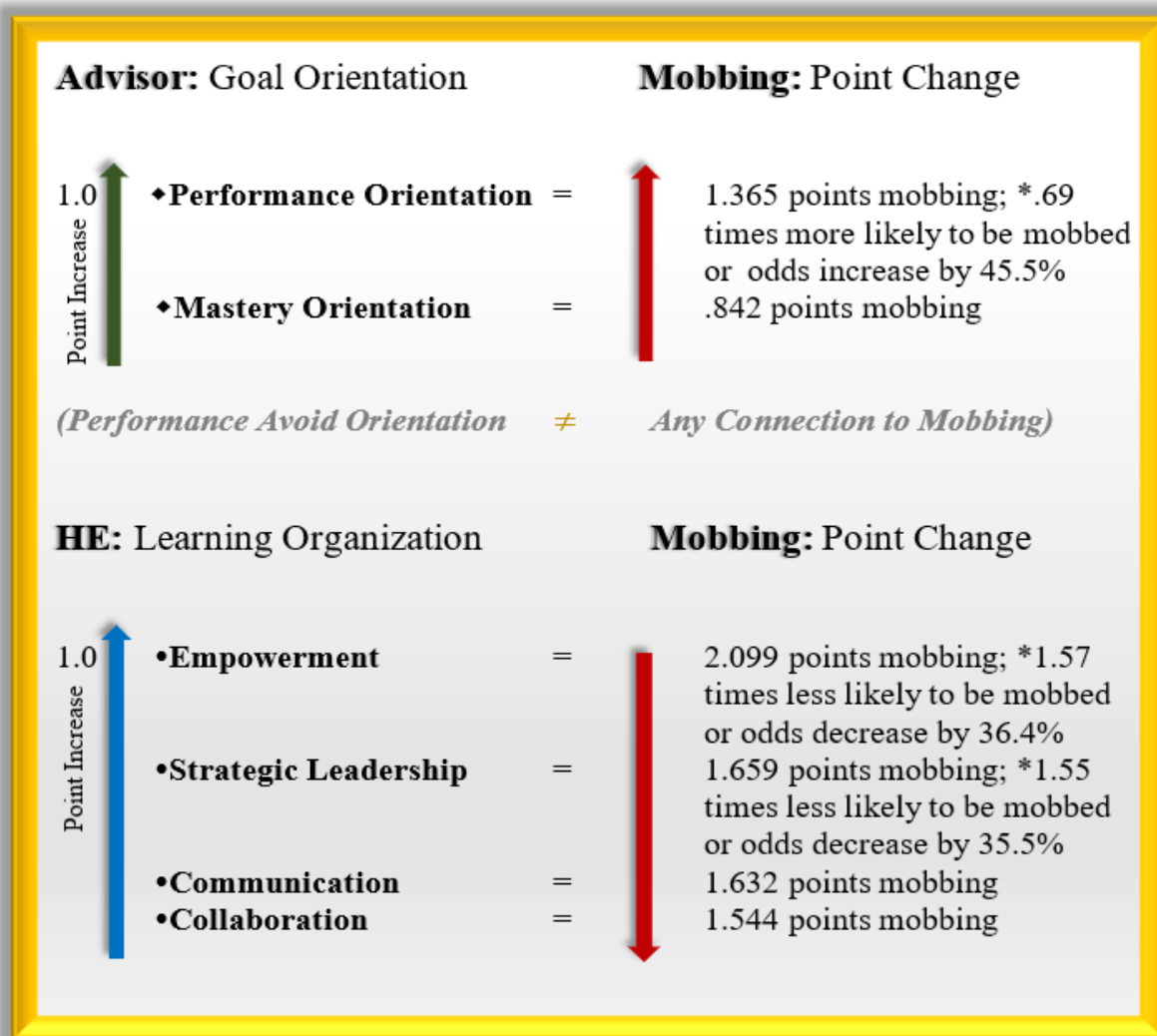
Key Findings: Research Question 4

The final question of this research study sought to understand the degree to which

advisor-reported levels of communication, collaboration, empowerment, and strategic leadership

within their institutions and reported levels of goal orientation based on mastery, performance, and performance avoidance could be used to predict mobbing. The findings in this study showed significant correlations for all the variables (communication, collaboration, empowerment, strategic leadership, mastery, and performance) except for performance avoidance on predicting mobbing experienced by professional academic advisors. Inspection of the scatter plot confirmed that no linearity or predictive value for performance avoidance existed and was therefore excluded from further analysis in the linear regression.

The final analysis of this study, using multiple linear regression, found that as scores for communication, collaboration, empowerment, and strategic leadership increased, the more likely advisors were to report decreased mobbing. The results further indicated that the more an advisor reported mastery and performance orientation, the more likely they were to report increased mobbing. A binary logistic regression was also conducted and found correlations between performance orientation, empowerment, and strategic leadership. These findings showed that the more advisors scores increased on performance orientation, the more likely they were to report increased mobbing. However, the more scores increased on empowered and strategic leadership, the more likely they were to report decreased mobbed. The results from my study along with the connection to previous research will be discussed in detail beginning with the correlation results of the learning organization variables.

Learning organization results. The results from the multiple linear regression found correlations between communication, collaboration, empowerment, and strategic leadership. The findings showed that the more advisors reported increased communication scores the more they reported decreased mobbing scores. These findings were consistent with research that linked increased mobbing with decreased communication (Celep & Konakli, 2013; Einarsen & Rakness, 1997; Giorgi, 2012; Qureshi et al., 2015; Spratlen, 1995; Van Fleet & Van Fleet, 2012;

Zapf & Gross, 2001). Studies by Qureshi et al. (2015) and Spratlen (1995) found more specifically that decreased communication with supervisors was linked to increased mobbing, while Van Fleet and Van Fleet (2012) and Zapf and Gross (2001) found mobbing victims chose avoiding communication with their perpetrators all together as the method of choice to deescalate the situation. Figure 5 illustrates the findings regarding communication and mobbing along with the other significant constructs and their relationship to reported mobbing.

Advisor: Goal Orientation   **Mobbing:** Point Change

1.0   ◆**Performance Orientation** =   1.365 points mobbing; *.69 times more likely to be mobbed or odds increase by 45.5%

          ◆**Mastery Orientation** =   .842 points mobbing

(Performance Avoid Orientation ≠ Any Connection to Mobbing)

HE: Learning Organization   **Mobbing:** Point Change

1.0   •**Empowerment** =   2.099 points mobbing; *1.57 times less likely to be mobbed or odds decrease by 36.4%

          •**Strategic Leadership** =   1.659 points mobbing; *1.55 times less likely to be mobbed or odds decrease by 35.5%

          •**Communication** =   1.632 points mobbing
          •**Collaboration** =   1.544 points mobbing

Note. *Significant findings from binary logistic regression analysis

Figure 5. Significant findings for learning organization, goal orientation, and mobbing.

My study also found a connection between collaboration and mobbing. The findings indicated as advisors reported increased collaboration scores, they reported less incidences of mobbing. These findings affirmed research studies that found collaboration was related to increased mobbing. Yaman (2010) reported that lack of collaboration and role ambiguity lead to increased mobbing, while Tigrel and Kokalan (2009) found mobbing victims reported being excluded from meetings where others took credit for their ideas. Calep and Konakli (2013) reported that mobbing targets reported being forbidden to speak, let alone collaborate, with colleagues.

The findings from my study also showed that the more advisors scored on empowerment, the more likely they were to report decreased mobbing scores. The correlation was the strongest for empowerment out of the four constructs with a decrease of 2.099 points of mobbing scores with every 1.0 point increase in empowerment scores. This suggests the more disempowered an advisor feels, the more likely they are to report being mobbed. This finding was also consistent several studies that found relationships between decreased work engagement, morale, and increased mobbing (Giorgi, 2012; Cooper et al., 2004; Cortina et al., 2001; Kakumba et al., 2014; Qureshi et al., 2015). Lutgen-Sandvik (2008) found mobbing was linked to overachievers feeling so disempowered they began doing the bare minimum to keep from further being targeted. Giorgi (2012) reported that a lack of support and discouragement of innovative ideas, which I would argue is disempowering, was linked to increased mobbing.

The final concept of strategic leadership from my study also found that as scores on this construct increased, mobbing scores decreased. The findings showed this as the second most strongly correlated with mobbing scores with a decrease of 1.659 points of mobbing scores for each increase of 1.0 points on strategic leadership. This suggests that the more advisors view weaker leadership within their institutions, the more likely they are to experiencing being

mobbed. My findings were consistent with studies that reported the majority of mobbing was done by supervisors (Bjorkqvist et al., 1994; Kakumba et al., 2014; Spratlen, 1995; Thomas, 2005). My findings further added to other studies that found abusive leadership was linked to mobbing (Celep & Konakli, 2013; Ertureten et al., 2012; Sedivy-Benton et al., 2014; Tepper, 2000; Tepper et al., 2011). The findings from my study on strategic leadership not only affirmed previous research, but also added to the literature by being the first study in higher education to examine the relationship between mobbing behaviors reported by academic advisors and strategic leadership.

Findings from my study on learning organizations support the research outside of academia that suggests institutions were higher functioning and had more engaged employees the more they exhibited elements of a learning organizing that included: communication, strategic leadership, empowerment, and collaboration, (Dovey & White, 2005; Dymock & McCarthy, 2006; Griego et al., 2000; Kim & Callahan, 2013; Kim et al., 2017; Park et al., 2014; Schyns, & Schilling, 2013). My findings further support researchers and experts who state the organization itself is critical in creating environments that perpetuate mobbing of employees (Dovey & White, 2005; Dymock & McCarthy, 2006; Griego et al., 2000; Kakumba et al., 2014; Kim & Callahan, 2013; Kim et al., 2017; Park et al., 2014; Schyns, & Schilling, 2013; Zapf, 1999). Overall, my findings dispute the argument that learning organizations may not be useful in understanding and explaining behavior in higher education (Grieves, 2008; Smith, 2008; White & Weathersby, 2005). However, additional findings from my study, discussed in the next section, suggests that characteristics of the advisor in higher educational settings may play a role in mobbing behavior.

Goal orientation results. Goal orientation was chosen for this study because some studies suggest that personality may lead to increased mobbing and the results on goal orientation from my study adds to that literature (Coyne et al., 2000; Glaso et al., 2007, 2009;

Matthiesen & Einarsen, 2001, 2007; Mikkelsen & Einarsen, 2002b; Tepper et al., 2011; Zapf,

1999). Findings from my study suggest that advisors who rated themselves as more mastery-

orientated reported increased experiences of mobbing. This means advisors who take initiative,

ask questions, take on challenging tasks, and do not shy away from learning new skills at the risk

of failing tend to report higher levels of being mobbed. This is a new finding, but also adds to a

previous study that suggested high achieving employees may be more likely to become mobbing

targets (Zapf, 1999).

Performance orientation, which measured the degree to which advisors cared about what

their colleagues thought about them, were concerned with job performance, and proving their

abilities to others was also found to be associated with mobbing. The findings in my study

showed that the more advisors reported being performance oriented, the more their experiences

of reported mobbing increased. Performance orientation was more highly correlated with

mobbing than mastery and a 1.0 point increase in performance orientation scores increased

mobbing scores by 1.365 points. These findings add to the literature that found performance

orientation to be more maladaptive (Bell & Kozlowski, 2002; Van Yperen & Janssen, 2002).

Matzler and Mueller (2011) found more performance-oriented employees failed to share

information or collaborate with colleagues. I would argue these maladaptive behaviors could

potentially be related to perpetrators choosing them as mobbing victims.

A binary logistic regression was also conducted to determine any significant

predictability with the independent variables and mobbing. The three variables with statistical

significance found in my study were empowerment, strategic leadership, and performance

orientation. For each point increase in empowerment, an advisor reported they were 1.57 times

less likely to be mobbed or the odds of being mobbed decrease by 36.4%; and for each point

increase in strategic leadership, an advisor reported they were 1.55 times less likely to be

mobbed or the odds of being mobbed decrease by 35.5%. However, for each point increase in performance orientation, advisors reported they were .69 times more likely to be mobbed or the odds of being mobbed increase by 45.5%. These findings were not surprising given all three of these constructs were the most strongly correlated in the multiple linear regression out of all the predictor variables.

Overall connections of findings to previous research. As detailed in previous sections, the findings from my study affirm previous research, add to it, and dispute some of it. Overall, my research adds to the literature on mobbing in the U.S. and particularly in higher education since most of the research done on mobbing and higher education has been done in other countries (Keashly & Neuman, 2010; Sedivy-Benton, et al., 2014; Spratlen, 1995). There was also no research that I could find on mobbing and academic advisors in higher education, so my findings not only add to research on mobbing in higher education in the U.S., but to a specific profession in higher education. The findings in my study suggest a high prevalence of mobbing reported by professional academic advisors and organizational factors that may be contributing to the problem. Given the major challenges facing most institutions in higher education today, there are very practical reasons academic leaders may be interested in the findings from my study. Table 29 summarizes my key findings and how they connect to previous research.

Table 29

Summary of Key Findings and Comparison to Previous Research

Key Findings (Ludwig, 2019)	Previous Research and Literature
Mobbing Reported by Advisors	Affirms:
• Found significant overall prevalence of mobbing with professional undergraduate advisors, with 90.2% experiencing any mobbing	• Literature suggests much higher rate of mobbing in higher education than non-academic institutions (Hollis, 2012; Hubrert & Van Veldoven, 2001; Keashly & Neuman, 2010) • Study suggests as high as 67% of employees experience mobbing in higher education (Hollis, 2016)

Table 29-Continued

within past 3 years and 87.2% within past 6 months; 25.2% experiencing weekly or more mobbing

- Study found high levels of mobbing reported with 19% reporting weekly mobbing experienced for more than 6 months (Giorgi, 2012)
- Study found 88% reported at least one act of mobbing past 6 months on NAQ (Einarsen & Raknes, 1997; Mikkelsen & Einarsen 2002b)

Disputes:
- Studies found between 1.8% and 20% self-reported being mobbed within past 6 months (Cooper et al., 2004; Hansen et al., 2006, 2014; Khubchandani & Price, 2015; Ortega et al., 2011; Vartia, 2001)
- Studies found between 8% and 13.6% of respondents reported mobbing behaviors of at least one act weekly for 6 months (Mikkelsen & Einarsen 2002b; Zabrodska & Kveton, 2012)
- Study found 53.3% staff in higher education reported some form of mobbing (Kakumba et al., 2014)
- Study found over half of respondents self-reported being mobbed and also experiencing mobbing acts on questionnaire within past 5 years (McKay et al., 2008)

Affirms:
- Top three reported mobbing acts with more than 50% incidents reported within past six months consisted of: someone withholding information affecting performance (69.1%), having opinions and views ignored (55.2%), and being ordered to do work below competency (54.2%)
- Most severe acts reported: being shouted at or target of anger (15%), targets of allegations (10.3%), victim of intimidating behavior (9.6%), subject of excessive teasing (8.5%), victim of practical jokes (5%), threats of violence or physical or actual abuse (0.9%)

- Studies and experts indicated mobbing in higher education were more covert than overt (Ilongo, 2015; Kakumba et al., 2014; Keashly & Neuman, 2010; Spratlen, 1995; Tigrel & Kokalan, 2009; Twale & DeLuca, 2008)
- Studies found commonly reported mobbing acts consisted of withholding information needed to do one's job, ignoring ideas or opinions, micromanaging, isolating individuals, judging work unfairly, devaluing work or efforts, allusions to quit, overburdening with work, discouraged earned time off, and accusations against the target (Cooper et al., 2004; Duffy & Sperry, 2007, 2012; Harper, 2016; Einarsen & Rakness, 1997; Thomas, 2005; Tigrel & Kokolan, 2009; Vartia, 2001; Yelgecen & Kokalan, 2009; Zabrodska & Kveton, 2012)
- Studies found more aggressive mobbing acts reported included verbally harassing behaviors, threats, acts of violence, and forbidding communication with colleagues (Celep & Konakli, 2013; Tigrel & Kokalan, 2009)

Affirms:
- No significant difference in reporting of mobbing by male and female professional undergraduate advisors

- Study reported no difference between males and females reporting mobbing behaviors (Giorgi, 2012)

Disputes:
- Studies showed more females than males reported being

Table 29-Continued

| | mobbed (Bjorkqvist et al., 1994; Cortina et al, 2001) |
| | • Study found females had statistically greater odds of being mobbed (Khubchandani & Price, 2015) |

| • No significant difference in reporting of mobbing by title and education levels of professional undergraduate advisors | Affirms: • Study found little difference between reported acts of mobbing across occupations (Mikkelsen & Einarsen, 2001) |
| • Significant difference between reported mobbing of professional undergraduate advisors from community colleges and four-year public institutions | No previous research found, thus a new finding |

MLR and BLR Findings: Learning Organization and Mobbing

| • Increased communication decreased mobbing 1.632 points for each 1.0 point increase in communication scores | Affirms: • Studies found stifled communication linked to increased mobbing (Celep & Konakli, 2013; Einarsen & Rakness, 1997; Giorgi, 2012; Qureshi et al., 2015; Spratlen, 1995; Van Fleet & Van Fleet, 2012; Zapf & Gross, 2001) • Studies found decreased communication with supervisors linked to increased mobbing (Qureshi et al., 2015; Spratlen, 1995) • Avoiding communication with mobbing perpetrators in general found to be most chosen method to deescalate the situation (Van Fleet & Van Fleet, 2012; Zapf & Gross, 2001) |
| • Increased collaboration decreased mobbing 1.544 points for each 1.0 point increase in collaboration scores | Affirms: • Study found lack of collaboration and role ambiguity lead to increased mobbing (Yaman, 2010) • Study found mobbing victims reported meetings being scheduled without their knowledge and others taking credit for their ideas (Tigrel & Kokalan, 2009) • Study found perpetrator forbid mobbing victims to even speak to colleagues (Calep & Konakli, 2013) |

Table 29-Continued

	Affirms:
• Increased empowerment decreased mobbing 2.099 points for each 1.0 point increase in empowerment scores; odds of being mobbed decreased 1.57 times for each increase in empowerment scores	• Studies showed decreased work engagement and morale was linked to increased mobbing (Giorgi, 2012; Cooper et al., 2004; Cortina et al., 2001; Kakumba et al., 2014; Qureshi et al., 2015) • Study reported increased mobbing was linked to overachievers feeling disempowered and doing the bare minimum to keep from further being mobbed (Lutgen-Sandvik, 2008)

	Affirms:
• Increased strategic leadership decreased mobbing scores, 1.659 points for each 1.0 point increase in strategic leadership scores; odds of being mobbed decreased 1.55 times for each increase in strategic leadership scores	• Studies found majority of mobbing done by a supervisor (Bjorkqvist et al., 1994; Kakumba et al., 2014; Spratlen, 1995; Thomas, 2005) Adds: • Study found targets of mobbing stated perpetrators lacked basic leadership competencies (Celep & Konakli, 2013) • Leadership turning a blind eye which enabled and perpetuated the problem was the core reason participants believed mobbing occurred and continued within their organization (Sedivy-Benton et al., 2014) • Study found abusive leadership increased turnover, lowered life and organizational satisfaction, increased psychological distress and depression of the employees targeted (Tepper 2000) • Study showed those mobbed by their supervisors reported lowered job satisfaction and increased emotional disengagement from the organization with increased intentions to quit (Ertureten et al., 2012) • Study found supervisors justified excluding the targeted employees when they viewed them as dissimilar from themselves and reasoned that giving them lower performance reviews in conjunction with other abusive behaviors toward the target were warranted (Tepper et al., 2011)

	Affirms:
• Measures of being a learning organization which include communication, collaboration, empowerment, and strategic leadership can predict mobbing in higher education of professional advisors: *(see specific findings listed above for each variable)*	• Studies indicate the organization enables and perpetuates mobbing behavior within the institution (Kakumba et al., 2014; Zapf, 1999) • Research outside academia suggests institutions that exhibit elements of being a learning organization, which include communication, strategic leadership, empowerment, and collaboration, were found to be higher functioning and to have more engaged employees (Dovey & White, 2005; Dymock & McCarthy, 2006; Griego et al., 2000; Kim & Callahan, 2013; Kim et al., 2017; Park et al., 2014; Schyns, & Schilling, 2013)

Table 29-Continued

- Some experts believe the organization plays a vital role in mobbing of employees (Duffy, 2009; Duffy & Sperry, 2007; Hoel et al., 2001; Hollis, 2016; Hutchinson et al., 2010; King & Piotrowski, 2015; Korkmaz & Cemaloglu, 2010)

Disputes:
- There is some argument as to the usefulness of the concept of learning organization in higher education (Grieves, 2008; Smith, 2008; White & Weathersby, 2005)

MLR and BLR Findings: Goal Orientation and Mobbing

• Increased mastery orientation increased mobbing scores .842 points for each 1.0 point increase in mastery orientation	New Finding; Adds: • Study suggested high achieving employees were more likely to become targets of mobbing as they were considered part of the out group and different from the rest especially if they were blatant about achievements (Zapf, 1999)
• Increased performance orientation increased mobbing 1.365 points or odds of being mobbed increased .69 times for each 1.0 point increase in performance orientation	Adds: • Study found those scoring higher on performance orientation were found to be lower performing and more maladaptive (Bell & Kozlowski, 2002) • Study reported employees scoring higher on performance were more maladaptive with demanding jobs reporting more fatigue and dissatisfaction (Van Yperen & Janssen, 2002) • Study showed the more performance oriented, the more individuals did not like to share information or collaborate, and considered to be more maladaptive work behavior (Matzler & Mueller, 2011)
• Increased mastery orientation increased mobbing .842 points for each 1.0 point increase in mastery orientation and mobbing; Increased performance orientation increased mobbing 1.365 points or odds of being mobbed increased .69 times for each 1.0 point increase in performance orientation	Adds: • Some studies suggest that personality may lead to increased mobbing (Coyne, et al., 2000; Glaso, et al., 2007, 2009; Matthiesen & Einarsen, 2001, 2007; Mikkelsen & Einarsen, 2002b; Tepper et al., 2011; Zapf, 1999)

Table 29-Continued

	Adds:
• First known study of mobbing researching professional advisors across the U.S. recording input from 1,233 respondents	• Much of the research done on mobbing in higher education was done in other countries so this adds to research done in the U.S. in higher ed (Keashly & Neuman, 2010; Sedivy-Benton, et al., 2014; Spratlen, 1995)

Note. MLR = multiple linear regression; BLR = binary linear regression

Implications and Recommendations for Leaders or Researchers in Higher Education

A quick google search of "challenges facing higher education united states" found 134 million results, while a search of "problems with higher education united states" churned out over a billion responses in 0.9 seconds. The issues facing higher education are plenty with enrollment, graduation rates, and retention at the center of many discussions. Research has shown that advisors are an important part of student retention and more expectations are continually being placed on advising offices (Barbuto et al., 2011; Bitz, 2010; Ellis, 2014; Kot, 2014; Noel-Levitz, 2017; Sweckeret al., 2013; Walker et al., 2017).

Professional advisors are expected to be experts in a multitude of student populations and needs, while providing exceptional customer service to ensure student satisfaction (Barbuto et al., 2011; Kot, 2014; Lee & Metcalfe, 2017; Longwell-Grice et al., 2016; Montag et al., 2012; Museus & Ravello, 2010; Parks et al., 2015; Preece et al., 2007; Soria & Bultmann, 2014; Swecker et al., 2013; Vander Shee, 2007). The findings from my study showed that the majority of advisors (77.3%) had attained a master's degree with 6.4% holding a doctorate. However, nearly a third of advisors in my study reported being in their positions 0 to 3 years while nearly another third reported advising for only 4 to 7 years. These findings suggest a high turnover rate in a position that takes several years to attain the extensive knowledge needed to successfully serve the students. Leaders in higher education could benefit from understanding how to retain trained advisors as they are an asset to the institution and not easily replaced. Perhaps findings

from my study provide some possible explanations for the high departures of advisors from their positions.

Mobbing of Advisors: Why Academic Leadership Should Care

Given the pivotal role advisors play with students in a time when graduating, retaining, and serving them are crucial to the financial future of most colleges and universities, academic leaders would be ill served by ignoring the findings from my study. While numerous studies exist on mobbing, and some in higher education, there have been none that could be found on undergraduate professional advisors. The findings from my study provide some insight into the working environment advisors report from various universities and community colleges across the country that academic leaders could use to create better working environments to potentially decrease turnover in a job that requires years of training to reach true proficiency.

The prevalence of mobbing found in my study suggests most advisors experience some form of negative working conditions and for many it is consistent and ongoing. The criteria set by Einarsen et al. (2009) states anyone experiencing at least one negative act weekly for six months constitutes being seriously mobbed at work. Based on the findings from my study that means 25.2%, or 1 in every 4 advisors, would be considered targets of extreme mobbing based on this criterion. The overall percentage of 87.2% of advisors reporting any mobbing acts in the past six months is exactly 87.2% too high. Research shows that even occasional mobbing or merely witnessing others as targets can have negative consequences to the employees and can affect the employee long after the mobbing has stopped (Bjorkqvist et al., 1994; Cooper et al., 2004; Hansen et al., 2006; Mikkelsen & Einersen, 2001; Vartia, 2001).

Mobbing has been linked to physical symptoms including headaches, neck and back pain, chronic pain and fatigue, type 2 diabetes, cardiovascular disease, angina pectoris, coronary heart disease and strokes (Jacob & Kostev, 2017; Kaarla et al., 2012; Khubchandani & Price, 2015;

Kivimaki et al., 2004; Thomas, 2005; Tynes et al., 2013; Xu et al., 2018, 2019). Mobbing has also been linked to depression, anxiety, somatic symptoms, overall mental health, suicidal ideation, PTSD, long-term leave, disability leave, disability retirement, and unemployment (Bjorkqvist et al., 1994; Celep & Konakli, 2013; Glambek et al., 2015; Hansen et al., 2006; Leach et al., 2017; Mikkelsen & Einarsen, 2001; Munbjerg Eriksen et al., 2016; Nielsen et al. 2015, 2016, 2017; O'moore & Crowley, 2011; Ortega et al. 2011; Thomas, 2005). Given the overall frequency of mobbing reported by professional academic advisors in my study, and the occurrence of mobbing that fit the criteria of those being targeted, academic advisors may be at serious risk of experiencing physical and psychological distress. Academic leadership should be concerned not only for the physical and mental health of their employees, but also for the health of their organization.

If academic leaders are not concerned about the individual well-being of their advisors, there are reasons to be troubled by the amount of mobbing reported from my findings and the ramifications it has to the organization. Studies consistently show mobbing is linked to decreased job satisfaction, disengagement, increased absences, stronger desires to quit, a negative view of the organization, and decreased productivity (Celep & Konakli, 2013; Cortina et al., 2001; Einarsen & Rakness, 1997; Qureshi et al., 2015; Rehman et al., 2015; Sedivy-Benton et al., 2014; Spratlen, 1995; Tigrel & Kokalan, 2009; Vartia, 2001; Yaman, 2010). More importantly, a study by Hauge et al. (2009) found victims of mobbing were more likely to mob other individuals within the institution thus creating and perpetuating a more negative culture.

According to Gallup, businesses lose a trillion dollars a year to the cost of turnover which translates to 1.5 to 2 times the salary or more of one employee to replace them, and that does not cover the cost of the knowledge they take when they leave (McFeely & Wigert, 2019). This also does not take into consideration the cost of losing student tuition because advisors who are

constantly dealing with a negative work environment cannot possibly focus all their energies on the students they were hired to serve. In addition to the cost of turn over and the possible loss of tuition dollars, there is also the cost of potential lawsuits for harassment and hostile working environments. For these reasons, mobbing of professional advisors is an issue that leaders in higher education should take seriously, and the findings from my study could offer suggestions on where to start.

Mobbing of Advisors: What Academic Leadership Can Do

Results from my study certainly indicate mobbing is prevalent among professional academic advisors. Since advisors have tremendous amounts of interaction with students and high expectations placed upon them from both the student and the university, academic leaders could benefit from the findings in my study to help create a better work environment. Providing a positive work culture for advisors to thrive in collectively benefits the students, the organization, and the advisor. Given that empowerment, strategic leadership, and performance orientation were found significant as predictors of mobbing in both the multiple linear regression and the binary logistic regression, I will focus on those constructs as possible areas of change for academic leadership.

The concept of empowerment measured how much advisors believed their organization rewarded them for taking initiative, gave advisors control over resources to accomplish work, and supported advisors who took calculated risks. Strategic leadership measured how much advisors reported the leaders within their organization acted consistently with the institutional values, looked for opportunities to learn, and mentored or coached those they lead. The findings from my study showed that the more advisors reported on these variables, the more likely they were to report decreased mobbing experiences.

The construct of performance orientation measured how much advisors preferred working on projects to prove their ability to others, proving their ability on a task rather than learning a new one, liked recognition from others regarding job performance, and outperforming colleagues. The findings from my study showed the higher advisors scored on this construct, the more likely they were to report increased mobbing. Both concepts of performance and strategic leadership tie in to empowerment by advisors wanting to be recognized and seen as competent at their job by colleagues and their leaders. Advisors also want to see leaders empowering those they lead by coaching them and being consistent with institutional goals. The lack of empowerment was reflected in the mobbing acts reported by advisors in my study.

The majority of advisors in my study attained post baccalaureate degrees and in general advisors have a tremendous amount of contact with students outside the classroom, possibly more than instructors or other staff. Research shows advisors impact retention and graduation rates (Barbuto et al., 2011; Bitz, 2010; Ellis, 2014; Kot, 2014; Noel-Levitz, 2017; Swecker et al., 2013; Walker et al., 2017). However, in my study advisors reported being ignored, excluded, given excessive workloads, having information withheld needed to do their jobs, and asked to do things below their competency level.

The top five reported mobbing acts from my study would all be considered more covert in nature and would arguably serve to disempower (Kakumba et al., 2014). Findings from my study further suggest that the more advisors reported needing recognition for their performance and proving their skills to others, the more likely they were to report experiencing mobbing acts. Given the influence and knowledge advisors possess regarding the students they continually serve, leaders could benefit from changing these dynamics by integrating advisors into the decision-making process to help empower them, recognize their contributions, and promote positive leadership to help decrease mobbing acts within their institutions.

Recommendations to Higher Education Leaders

There are steps leaders can take to help empower and mentor advisors while simultaneously decreasing mobbing from occurring. This directly relates to the findings in my study that suggest increased mentoring through more strategic leadership and overall increased empowerment to aid in acknowledging the value and contributions of advisors decrease mobbing incidents. Since performance orientation was linked to reported mobbing in my study, being aware of the need for recognition and showing appreciation of advisors by incorporating them into the decision-making process and elevating them within colleges or universities could aid in decreasing overall mobbing behaviors.

Recommendation 1. The first recommendation centers around defining mobbing behaviors and educating leaders on the specific actions associated with those behaviors. Given the majority of these negative acts are more covert in nature and not what one typically thinks of when an individual is being mistreated, it would be imperative to explain what behaviors constitute mobbing. Some administrators, particularly those who do not understand the role of advisors, may view some of the prevalent mobbing behaviors reported as "normal" to experience for those in a staff position within the institution.

Most reasonable individuals would agree threatening an employee, yelling and physically preventing someone from leaving, or making offensive comments to a person is abusive and inappropriate. However, withholding information that impacts someone's job, ordering them to do work below their level of competency, ignoring their ideas or opinions, saddling them with excessive workloads, excluding them from meetings that directly impact thier work, and giving them lower level work to do while taking away key areas of responsibility seems a lot more benign. It is likely viewed as necessary to get things done, a means to an end perhaps, or merely part of managing employees. Unfortunately, these actions are insidious and culminate in

extremely negative outcomes as previous research demonstrated. Therefore, it is crucial academic leaders are informed of behaviors that seem innocuous but constitute mobbing acts that are detrimental to both the employee and institution.

Recommendation 2. Leaders could consider changing the requirements to be an academic advisor. Even though the findings from my study suggest title and educational attainment does not impact occurrences of mobbing, I would argue elevating the field in such a way promotes advising as more prestigious by making certain it is not viewed as an entry level position. Hiring experienced candidates with more responsibilities into a professional role rather than an entry level one serves to empower the profession which in turn changes how it is perceived by faculty and administration.

In many institutions the educational requirement is a bachelor's degree, one year of relevant experience, and starting salary in the mid-thirties (Payscale, n.d.). Given that advisors advise undergraduates, leaders may want to consider the minimum qualification to be that of a master's degree and doctoral degrees for directors. The title academic advisor does not seem to accurately reflect the job expectations, so consideration could be given to changing the title to something that more precisely defines the role. Since advisors must possess a deep understanding of many different student needs and extensive knowledge of the institution, academic leaders could consider making the requirement for relevant experience a minimum of three to five years.

Leaders could give more consideration to the compensation to reflect the knowledge and experience necessary to effectively be an advisor in higher education, and to ensure highly qualified individuals apply which would further aid in acknowledging the profession to empower advisors. In addition to competitive salaries, creating career paths based on experience and educational attainment to provide advisors with opportunities to progress into leadership

positions within the institution would further elevate the field. Given the importance of assessment in higher education and in advising, more emphasis on research in advising with regard to promotion could be considered. Increasing the educational and experience requirements along with competitive compensation and providing leadership opportunities would be a great first step in advancing the profession. This would serve to mentor, empower and demonstrate the value advisors bring to the institution which were all contributing factors linked to mobbing in my study.

   Recommendation 3. Based on my decade of experience as an advisor, I would argue that advisors probably spend more overall time with the highest number of students than any other staff position on campus. The third recommendation suggests how leaders could benefit from seeking regular feedback from advisors regarding the pulse of the student body, but also with regard to academics which would further empower advisors and advance the field. The issue of curriculum is something advisors become profoundly familiar with within their advising unit in order to effectively advise students. Leaders and faculty could benefit from giving voting rights to advisors regarding curriculum issues and taking their feedback seriously when considering curriculum changes that can have serious consequences to student success.

   Poor curriculum design can drastically increase emails to advisors from confused students or prevent students from registering for courses that can potentially delay graduation and result in Higher Learning Commission violations. My study found 43% of advisors reported experiencing unmanageable workloads within the past six months, while 32.4% reported being given tasks with unreasonable or impossible deadlines. These unnecessary curriculum problems typify the types of issues that increase workload to advisors already overworked schedules that can easily be avoided by providing advisors with the opportunity to give feedback and have input. Being ignored and excluded from meetings directly related to one's job were both within

the top five reported mobbing acts, so inviting advisors to the table would serve to decrease those experiences while simultaneously enhancing the field.

Recommendation 4. Academic leaders could gain from ensuring advisors are not overburdened with excessive caseloads. In a recent article from MLive, some colleges and universities report caseloads of 1,200 students to 1 academic advisor (Patracca, 2019). My own study found that in the past six months, 43% of advisors reported being exposed to an unmanageable workload and 32.4% reported being given tasks with unreasonable or impossible targets or deadlines. According to Carlstrom (2013) the average caseload of students to advisor is approximately 300. However, the ratio of students to advisors vary by institutional size as follows: enrollment of less than 3,000 students have a ratio of 233 students to 1 advisor; enrollment of 6,000 to 23,999 students have a ratio of 333 students to 1 advisor; and enrollment of 24,000 plus students have a ratio of 600 students to 1 advisor. Technology can easily be used to track student and advisor ratios to ensure advisors are assigned appropriate caseloads. This would help guarantee advisors were consistently prepared to provide the best service to the students they were assigned while maintaining their own mental and physical health in the process.

Recommendation 5. Rewarding and recognizing the work of advisors on a consistent and regular basis would also help to further distinguish the profession. This could be done by providing flexible work schedules, building in mental health days, and/or allowing other comp time when advising periods allow. Leadership could also consider automatic raises with attainment of advanced degrees and spotlighting various advisor accomplishments across campus. Providing recognition of advising contributions by the president or provost would further aid in empowerment, appreciation, and modeling of positive leadership especially after excessively busy times like orientation and registration periods. This could be done by providing

a collective breakfast or lunch for all advisors to show the value of their contributions to the institution.

Leaders could provide official recognition for advisors during a ceremony where they received various types of awards for their advising contributions. For example, the awards could consist of categories including, but not limited to, overall advisor of the year, assessment, leadership, working with certain student populations, years of service, and educational attainment. Leadership could also open up the awards to allow self-nominations in order to avoid the program turning into merely a popularity contest. This ceremony could be done in conjunction with other events on campus, perhaps one that includes faculty, or as a stand-alone event. Pairing it with a faculty event would help to exalt the academic component of the role and also highlight the unique staff aspect of the job. This would serve to empower, recognize, and show positive leadership which, again, were all linked to mobbing of advisors in my study.

Final recommendation. The final recommendation consists of implementing an institutional policy. Most institutions have some type of a "no bullying" policy, but leadership would be encouraged to consider enforcing a strict no tolerance policy across campus if one does not currently exist. Given that 25.2% of advisors from my study reported extreme mobbing on a weekly basis, the guidelines should be clear with a reporting structure, consequences, timelines, outcomes, and how concerns related to retaliation for reporting would be handled. Posting this policy on institutional websites to provide easy access and clear guidelines demonstrates transparency along with a commitment to deter this behavior. Understanding mobbing behaviors and the consequences of violating the no tolerance policy could be part of mandatory trainings for supervisors, directors, and administrators across campus. However, I would argue a no tolerance policy without any consideration or implementation of the previous recommendations would likely be ineffective.

Limitations, Delimitations, and Future Research Recommendations

The findings from my study add to the literature, specifically on mobbing in higher education, but also with a particular population of staff. However, because the study was specific to professional undergraduate staff advisors, it cannot be generalized to other staff or faculty who do advising at a university or college. Sometimes institutions have faculty advisors who advise undergraduates as part of their workload, but this study would not be generalizable to those individuals. Institutions may also have other staff who do undergraduate advising as part of their job duties, but it is not their primary job function. For example, an office coordinator whose primary responsibility is running the office, maintaining the budget, and scheduling may advise students as a part of their job particularly if it is a small department. However, the results from this study would not be generalizable to individuals who are not full-time advisors as their primary job duties, and therefore, a delimitation to the overall study.

The findings would also not be generalizable to professional advisors working in private or for profit colleges or universities because only public institutions were surveyed. The overall response rate of the survey was 25%, but the response rate of advisors from community colleges was much lower with a response rate of less than 10%. Therefore, making generalizations about advisors at community colleges must be done with caution. However, this is an area for potential future research given that findings from my study showed significantly more mobbing reported by advisors working in community colleges from those who did participate than those working at public four-year institutions.

While the response rate of 25% for an electronic survey was considered acceptable, there were still 215 individuals who began the survey but did not finish, and nearly 3,500 who never responded at all. It is impossible to know how many individuals never received the emailed survey due to institutional policies regarding spam. Many people may have been reluctant to

click on survey links from unsolicited sources because of excessive email phishing and other scams. Even though great care was taken in titling the survey, individuals may have felt uncomfortable answering questions about the working environment of their institution, particularly if it was not positive which could have been out of fear or personal discomfort reporting such behaviors.

In order to ensure individuals took the survey, demographic questions were kept to a minimum, so participants did not feel they could be identified given the nature of the study. Sex from a binary perspective of male or female was the only personal question asked on the survey. Since ethnicity was not asked and gender with more than two choices were not offered, this limits the generalizability of the results and adds potential for future research.

Another limitation of the study was related to the creation of the survey with instruments that measured perceptions of the participants answering the questions. Based on the questionnaire and title, participants may have been aware the items were measuring mobbing and, therefore, answered in particular ways. Participants may have been fearful to answer at all or opted not to answer honestly. The same effect could have occurred with the sections on goal orientation and learning organization. The questions on goal orientation could have created a biased effect toward answering more positively because they were work questions about the individual. Participants may have been reluctant to answer a question negatively because it would have been perceived as a negative reflection of the themselves.

In addition to future research mentioned above, understanding the high turnover of professional advisors in higher education would be a possible direction for other studies. Given the skills needed for advising, the impact advising has on retention and graduation rates, the cost of turnover to the institution; it would be beneficial for leadership to understand why advisors are not retained in order to change it. The findings from my study provide a possible snapshot of the

types of experiences that may lead advisors to leave positions after such short periods of employment. However, more could be done to gain a deeper understanding of the issue.

It is also unclear why advisors were being mobbed. There is no way to know if the purpose was to force individuals out of the institution or unit, merely an attempt to control behavior and keep individuals in line, or if the hierarchical structure of higher education is such that it tends to create this type of culture. Since the survey did not ask advisors to indicate their beliefs or reasons for the reported behaviors, there is no way to know for sure based on my results. Regardless of the reasons why the acts were reported, the fact remains it is extremely problematic not only to the well-being of the advisor but to the institution as a whole. For those reasons alone, it is an issue that deserves attention and an area for future research.

Concluding Thoughts

I have been an advisor for over a decade, and I have helped students in my office who were crying because they were debilitated by anxiety, devastated by depression, suicidal, dealing with rape or sexual assault, dealing with domestic abuse, going through a divorce, suffering from mental or physical illness, struggling with the death or illness of parents, siblings or other family members, victims of violence, unable to buy food let alone books, lost all their possessions in house fires, struggling to take care of young children, lost their financial aid, and failed out of the university. This of course is in addition to my actual job of advising on academic issues, curriculum, and university requirements in order to graduate.

The findings from my study suggest advisors across the U.S. are experiencing acts of mobbing at an alarming rate in community colleges and public four-year institutions. The findings from my study further suggest that improving communication, collaboration, leadership, and empowering advisors could decrease those experiences. Advising students can be one of the most rewarding jobs when an advisor knows he or she played a part in helping a student

accomplish the ultimate goal of graduation. However, performing that job becomes extremely

difficult when 1 in 4 advisors are victims of intense mobbing on a weekly basis, and when nearly

90% of advisors report experiencing some sort of mobbing act within a six-month period as my

study found.

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Appendix A

Survey Instrument

Goal Orientation, Learning Organization, and Working Environment Questionnaire

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Please read this consent information before you begin the survey.

You are invited to participate in a research project entitled "Goal Orientation, Learning Organization, and Working Environment" designed to better understand the factors that motivate professional undergraduate academic advisors in their jobs, the degree to which they perceive their institution to be a learning institution and the type of work environment they experience.

This study is being conducted by Dr. Sue Poppink and Bette A. Ludwig from Western Michigan University, Department of Educational Leadership, Research, Technology. This research is being conducted as part of the dissertation requirements for Bette A. Ludwig. The questionnaire is comprised of questions asking about goal orientation, perceptions an institution is a learning organization, and working environment experienced.

The online survey will take less than 10 minutes to complete. When you begin this survey, you are consenting to participate in the study and your replies will be completely anonymous. If you do not agree to participate in this research project simply exit now. If after beginning the survey, you decide you do not wish to continue, you may stop at any time. You may choose not to answer any question for any reason. If you have any questions prior to or during the survey, you may contact Dr. Sue Poppink at (269) 387-3569, Ms. Bette A. Ludwig at (269) 387-4475, the Human Studies Institutional Review Board at (269) 387-8293, or the Vice President for Research at Western Michigan University at (269) 387-8298.

This study was approved by the Western Michigan University Human Subjects Institutional Review Board (HSIRB) on March 27, 2019. Please do not participate in this study after **June 15, 2019**. Participating in this survey online indicates your consent for use of the answers you supply.

All surveys must be completed **before June 15, 2019** to be included in this study.

I am employed as a full-time professional undergraduate academic advisor at a college or university

○ Yes (1)

○ No (2)

Current institution of employment

○ Community College (1)

○ Public College or University (2)

○ Private College or University (3)

○ For Profit College or University (4)

○ University or College Outside of the U.S. (5)

Sex

○ Male (1)

○ Female (2)

Highest education level attained

○ Some college (1)

○ Bachelor's degree (2)

○ Master's degree (3)

○ Doctoral degree (4)

Years advising

	0 5 10 15 20 25 30 35 40 45 50
Number of years ()	⬤

Region of institution

○ West (1)

○ Southwest (2)

○ Midwest (3)

○ Southeast (4)

○ Northeast (5)

Number of undergraduate students at your institution

	0 7500 15000 22500 30000 37500 45000 52500 60000 67500 75000
Slide the bar to number of undergraduate students at your institution ()	⬤

Title

○ Director (1)

○ Assistant Director (2)

○ Senior Advisor or Equivalent (3)

○ Advisor or Equivalent (4)

Type of academic advising you primarily do on a regular basis (Check all that apply):

☐ College or university course requirements for graduation (1)

☐ Pre-major(s) requirements (2)

☐ Major(s) requirements (3)

☐ Minor(s) requirements (4)

☐ Probation advising (5)

☐ Career advising (6)

What best describes the undergraduate advising model in your current position

○ Centralized (all academic advising is done by professional advisors) (1)

○ Split Model (advising is done by faculty or an advisor in their departments that is also shared with an advising office staffed by professional advisors) (2)

Skip To: QID31 If What best describes the undergraduate advising model in your current position = Split Model (advising is done by faculty or an advisor in their departments that is also shared with an advising office staffed by professional advisors)

Skip To: End of Block If What best describes the undergraduate advising model in your current position = Centralized (all academic advising is done by professional advisors)

What best describes your work space

◯ I advise for a specific department and work in an office with primarily faculty (1)

◯ I work in an office with primarily other professional advisors or staff (2)

1 Learning Organization: Communication
Please list on the scale from 1 to 6 the degree you believe the statement to be true

	Almost never true 1 (1)	2 (2)	3 (3)	4 (4)	5 (5)	Almost always true 6 (6)
a) In my organization, people give open and honest feedback to each other. (1)	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
b) In my organization, whenever people state their view, they also ask what others think. (2)	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
c) In my organization, people spend time building trust with each other. (3)	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯

2 Learning Organization: Collaboration
Please list on the scale from 1 to 6 the degree you believe the statement to be true

	Almost never true 1 (1)	2 (2)	3 (3)	4 (4)	5 (5)	Almost always true 6 (6)
a) In my organization, teams/groups have the freedom to adapt their goals as needed. (1)	○	○	○	○	○	○
b) In my organization, teams/groups revise their thinking as a result of group discussions or information collected. (2)	○	○	○	○	○	○
c) In my organization, teams/groups are confident that the organization will act on their recommendations. (3)	○	○	○	○	○	○

End of Block: Block 3

Start of Block: Block 4

3 Learning Organization: Empowerment
Please list on the scale from 1 to 6 the degree you believe the statement to be true

	Almost never true 1 (1)	2 (2)	3 (3)	4 (4)	5 (5)	Almost always true 6 (6)
a) My organization recognizes people for taking initiatives. (1)	○	○	○	○	○	○
b) My organization gives people control over the resources they need to accomplish their work. (2)	○	○	○	○	○	○
c) My organization supports employees who take calculated risks. (3)	○	○	○	○	○	○

End of Block: Block 4

Start of Block: Block 5

4 Learning Organization: Strategic Leadership
Please list on the scale from 1 to 6 the degree you believe the statement to be true

	Almost never true 1 (1)	2 (2)	3 (3)	4 (4)	5 (5)	Almost always true 6 (6)
a) In my organization, leaders mentor and coach those they lead. (1)	○	○	○	○	○	○
b) In my organization, leaders continually look for opportunities to learn. (2)	○	○	○	○	○	○
c) In my organization, leaders ensure that the organization's actions are consistent with its values. (3)	○	○	○	○	○	○

End of Block: Block 5

Start of Block: Block 6

5 Goal Orientation Factor I

Please list on the scale from 1 to 6 how much you agree or disagree with each statement

	Strongly disagree 1 (1)	2 (2)	3 (3)	4 (4)	5 (5)	Strongly agree 6 (6)
a) I often read materials related to my work to improve my ability. (1)	○	○	○	○	○	○
b) I am willing to select a challenging work assignment that I can learn a lot from. (2)	○	○	○	○	○	○
c) I often look for opportunities to develop new skills and knowledge. (3)	○	○	○	○	○	○
d) I enjoy challenging and difficult tasks at work where I'll learn new skills. (4)	○	○	○	○	○	○
e) For me, development of my work ability is important enough to take risks. (5)	○	○	○	○	○	○
f) I prefer to work in situations that require a high level of ability and talent. (6)	○	○	○	○	○	○

End of Block: Block 6

6 Goal Orientation Factor II
Please list on the scale from 1 to 6 how much you agree or disagree with each statement

	Strongly disagree 1 (1)	2 (2)	3 (3)	4 (4)	5 (5)	Strongly agree 6 (6)
a) I would rather prove my ability on a task that I can do well at than to try a new task. (1)	○	○	○	○	○	○
b) I'm concerned with showing that I can perform better than my coworkers. (2)	○	○	○	○	○	○
c) I try to figure out what it takes to prove my ability to others at work. (3)	○	○	○	○	○	○
d) I enjoy it when others at work are aware of how well I am doing. (4)	○	○	○	○	○	○
e) I prefer to work on projects where I can prove my ability to others. (5)	○	○	○	○	○	○

7 Goal Orientation Factor III

Please list on the scale from 1 to 6 how much you agree or disagree with each statement

	Strongly disagree 1 (1)	2 (2)	3 (3)	4 (4)	5 (5)	Strongly agree 6 (6)
a) I would avoid taking on a new task if there was a chance that I would appear rather incompetent to others. (1)	○	○	○	○	○	○
b) Avoiding a show of low ability is more important to me than learning a new skill. (2)	○	○	○	○	○	○
c) I'm concerned about taking on a task at work if my performance would reveal that I had low ability. (3)	○	○	○	○	○	○
d) I prefer to avoid situations at work where I might perform poorly. (4)	○	○	○	○	○	○
e) When I don't understand something at work, I prefer to avoid asking what might appear to others to be "dumb questions" that I should know the answer to already. (5)	○	○	○	○	○	○

End of Block: Block 8

Start of Block: Block 9

8 Working Environment
Please indicate how much, if any, you have experienced the following:

	Never (1)	Occasionally (2)	At least once a month (3)	More than once a month (4)	Weekly (5)	Daily (6)	I have not experienced within past 6 months but experienced within last 3 years (7)
a) Someone withholding information which affects your performance (1)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
b) Being humiliated or ridiculed in connection with your work (2)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
c) Being ordered to do work below your level of competence (3)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
d) Having key areas of responsibility removed or replaced with more trivial or unpleasant tasks (4)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
e) Spreading of gossip and rumors about you (5)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
f) Being ignored or excluded from meetings or other areas related to your job (6)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

g) Having insulting or offensive remarks made about your person (i.e. habits and background), your attitudes or your private life (7)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
h) Being shouted at or being the target of spontaneous anger (or rage) (8)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
i) Intimidating behavior such as finger-pointing, invasion of personal space, shoving, blocking/barring the way (9)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
j) Hints or signals from others that you should quit your job (10)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
k) Repeated reminders of your errors or mistakes (11)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
l) Being ignored or facing a hostile reaction when you approach (12)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
m) Persistent criticism of your work and effort (13)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

n) Having your opinions and views ignored (14)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
o) Practical jokes carried out by people you don't get along with (15)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
p) Being given tasks with unreasonable or impossible targets or deadlines (16)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
q) Having allegations made against you (17)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
r) Excessive monitoring of your work (18)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
s) Pressure not to claim something which by right you are entitled to (e.g. sick leave, holiday entitlement, travel expenses) (19)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
t) Being the subject of excessive teasing and sarcasm (20)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
u) Being exposed to an unmanageable workload (21)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

| v) Threats of violence or physical abuse or actual abuse (22) | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |

 If you would like to be entered in a drawing to win one of ten $25 Amazon gift cards, please enter your email address below. This information will only be used for the drawing and stored separately from your responses.

_____

Appendix B

Permission to Use Various Instrument Items

From: Karen Watkins [mailto:kwatkins@uga.edu]
Sent: Sunday, October 14, 2018 2:54 PM
To: Bette A Ludwig <bette.ludwig@wmich.edu>; marsick@tc.columbia.edu
Subject: Re: Writing to Request Permission to use DLOQ in Doctoral Research

It falls under our purview since it is our instrument and we are happy to grant permission to use the 21 item scale. Best wishes on your study!
Best Regards,
Karen

Karen E. Watkins, Ph.D.
Professor, Learning, Leadership & Organization Development
Department of Lifelong Education, Administration & Policy
The University of Georgia
850 College Station Road [Room 406]
Athens, GA 30602 USA
Work (706)542-2214 [to leave a message]
Cell (706) 340-6791

From: Bette A Ludwig <bette.ludwig@wmich.edu>
Date: Sunday, October 14, 2018 at 11:10 AM
To: karen watkins <kwatkins@uga.edu>, Victoria Marsick <marsick@tc.columbia.edu>
Subject: Re: Writing to Request Permission to use DLOQ in Doctoral Research

Hi Dr. Watkins,

Thank you so much for getting back to me as I really do appreciate it, and I am sure you are extremely busy. Using the 6 point Likert scale doesn't look like it will be an issue because authors of the other scales are allowing me to modify if needed. I think the 21 point version scale that you worked on with Dr. Yang would best fit my research needs because I want to remove at least one section and in your article you discouraged doing that with the original scale. Is approval for the 21 item scale something that Dr. Yang exclusively needs to grant permission to use or does that fall under your purview given it's a version of your scale and something you researched together?

Thanks,

Bette

From: Vandewalle, Don [mailto:dvande@mail.cox.smu.edu]
Sent: Wednesday, October 10, 2018 7:15 AM
To: Bette A Ludwig <bette.ludwig@wmich.edu>
Subject: RE: Writing to Request Permission to use Goal Orientation Survey Instrument in Doctoral Research

Dear Bette ----

Per the 1997 goal orientation instrument, you are very welcome to use it as needed for your research ----

For the scoring process, the scale was originally published in the Vandewalle (1997) article, and was subsequently used in the Brett and Vandewalle (1999) article *(copies of both articles are attached)* ----

In the latter article (see Appendix A on page 872), you will find the final 13-item version of the scale. We also switched to using a seven-point response scale (7 being strongly agree), and all items are positive (no reverse coded items). Use the average of the first 5 items for learning, the next 4 for proving, and the next 4 for avoiding.

You may also want to take a close look at the mindset (implicit theories) concept ----

We are finding this concept to be even more powerful than goal orientation to predict outcomes ----

Copies of several of our articles on IPT/mindset are also attached ----

Best wishes with your research ----

Don

Don Vandewalle
Altshuler Distinguished Teaching Professor
Frank and Susan Dunlevy Research Fellow
Management and Organizations Department
Cox School of Business Southern Methodist University 🐎
Dallas, Texas 75275-0333 Tel: 214-768-1239

Cox webpage: www.cox.smu.edu/web/donald-m.-vandewalle
ResearchGate: www.researchgate.net/profile/Don_Vandewalle
LinkedIn: www.linkedin.com/pub/don-vandewalle/3/452/a4
Google Scholar: https://scholar.google.com/citations?user=4IPk2jcAAAAJ&hl=en
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SMU 🏛 COX.

From: Øystein Løvik Hoprekstad <Oystein.Hoprekstad@uib.no>
Sent: Monday, October 15, 2018 3:23 AM
To: Bette A Ludwig
Subject: RE: Writing to Request Permission to use NAQ in Doctoral Research

Dear Bette A. Ludwig,

Thank you for your interest in the Negative Acts Questionnaire!
My name is Oystein Hoprekstad, and I am writing to you now on behalf of Professor Staale Einarsen, as his research assistant.

We will grant you the permission to use the scale on the condition that you accept our terms for users found in the word-file attached in this e-mail. Please fill this in and return.

One of our terms is that you send us your data on the NAQ with some demographical data when the data is collected. These will then be added to our large Global database which now contains some 50.000 respondents from over 40 countries. Please send them as soon as your data is collected. A SPSS database is attached to this mail in the NAQinfo file.

I have attached the English version of the NAQ, a SPSS database, psychometric properties of the questionnaire and the articles suggested on our website. Please use the Einarsen, Hoel and Notelaers article (2009) in Work and Stress as your reference to the scale. I have also attached a book chapter on the measurement of bullying where you also find information on the one item measure.

You are of course welcome to make the proposed changes to the questionnaire. Just keep in mind that you won't be able to compare your results directly to the results obtained in other studies using the NAQ-R, and that we won't know how the scale with the proposed changes works psychometrically.

If you have any questions, we will of course do our best to answer them.

Best regards
Oystein Hoprekstad, Research Assistant
On behalf of
Professor Staale Einarsen
Bergen Bullying Research Group

Fra: Bette A Ludwig <bette.ludwig@wmich.edu>
Sendt: torsdag 11. oktober 2018 04.27
Til: Ståle Einarsen; Guy Notelaers
Emne: Writing to Request Permission to use NAQ in Doctoral Research

Dear Dr. Einarsen and Dr. Notelaers,

I am a doctoral student at Western Michigan University working on my dissertation in the Educational Leadership Department. I have long been fascinated by employee motivation to perform, how the organization they work in influences that behavior, and bullying that may exist within the institution. I have read a lot of articles on the subject, with particular interest in ones that you have authored, and I would like to respectfully request permission to use your survey instrument in my dissertation research.

I am specifically looking at academic advisors in higher education, and I want to see if there is any connection with the degree to which an organization is a learning organization, goal orientation of advisors and levels of incivility or bullying they may experience in their jobs. If you were agreeable to allow me to use your survey, I was also wondering if I could possibly modify the instrument by changing the Likert scale or questions if needed. I will be using two other scales and I would like to keep the Likert scales consistent if possible.

Thanks for your consideration, and I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Bette A. Ludwig, M.S.
Psychology Advisor
Doctoral Candidate

Appendix C

Invitation Email

Subject: Invitation to participate in study on full-time advisors in higher education

Dear [Participant]:

I am a doctoral student in the Educational Leadership program at Western Michigan University and also a full-time academic advisor. I have over a decade of experience in higher education with most of it being an advisor in arts and sciences.

As a fellow advisor, I am inviting you to participate in my research study on full-time advisors in higher education. My goal is to understand what motivates advisors in their jobs, the degree they view their institution as a learning organization, and the type of working environment they experience with coworkers and supervisors.

Please take 10 minutes or less to complete this short survey. At the end, you will have an opportunity to win 1 of 10 $25 gift cards from Amazon. If you have already completed this survey, please do not take it again.

To complete this survey, click on the link: [add web link].

If you are willing to help me further, please feel free to forward the email below to all other full time professional advisors in your office or institution. All information will be kept confidential. I understand how busy advisors are and I appreciate your willingness to take the time to answer these survey questions in order to help us gain insight into the working environment of advisors.

Sincerely,

Bette A. Ludwig, M.S.
Doctoral Candidate

Appendix D

Reminder Email

Subject: Reminder email invitation to participate in study on full-time advisors in higher education

[Date]

Dear [Participant]:

I recently sent you a brief survey to gain an understanding of what motivates advisors in their jobs, the degree they view their institution as a learning organization, and the type of working environment they experience with coworkers and supervisors.

If you have already completed the survey, I am sincerely appreciative. If you have not had the opportunity to respond, please take 10 minutes or less to complete this short survey now.

At the end, you will have an opportunity to win 1 of 10 $25 gift cards from Amazon.

To complete this survey, click on the link: [add web link].

If you are willing to help me further, please feel free to forward the email below to all other full time professional advisors in your office or institution. All information will be kept confidential. I understand how busy advisors are, and I appreciate your willingness to take the time to answer these survey questions in order to help us gain insight into the working environment of advisors.

Sincerely,

Bette A. Ludwig, M.S.
Doctoral Candidate

Appendix E

HSIRB Approval

WESTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY

Date: March 27, 2019

To: Sue Poppink, Principal Investigator
Bette Ludwig, Student Investigator for dissertation

From: Amy Naugle, Ph.D., Chair

Re: IRB Project Number 19-03-09

This letter will serve as confirmation that your research project titled "Mobbing Behaviors Experienced by Academic Advisors in Higher Education and the Connection to Goal Orientation and Organizational Learning" has been **approved** under the **exempt** category of review by the Western Michigan University Institutional Review Board (IRB). The conditions and duration of this approval are specified in the policies of Western Michigan University. You may now begin to implement the research as described in the application.

Please note: This research may **only** be conducted exactly in the form it was approved. You must seek specific board approval for any changes to this project (e.g., *add an investigator, increase number of subjects beyond the number stated in your application, etc.*). Failure to obtain approval for changes will result in a protocol deviation.

In addition, if there are any unanticipated adverse reactions or unanticipated events associated with the conduct of this research, you should immediately suspend the project and contact the Chair of the IRB for consultation.

The Board wishes you success in the pursuit of your research goals.

A status report is required on or prior to (no more than 30 days) March 26, 2020 and each year thereafter until closing of the study. The IRB will send a request.

When this study closes, submit the required Final Report found at https://wmich.edu/research/forms.

Note: All research data must be kept in a secure location on the WMU campus for at least three (3) years after the study closes.