

WORK HARASSMENT IN THE TECHNOLOGICAL ERA: THE PSYCHIC CONSEQUENCES IN THE ABSENCE OF BARRIERS AND THE COURT CHALLENGES

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Currently the organization of work occurs under certain social, economic and cultural conditions influenced by the excess of information and technologies of the digital era. Today its recognized that psychological harassment is a form of workplace harassment.

Simply, it's mobbing in its most basic form and has a negative impact on a person's psychological well-being, which can be extremely damaging. This damage often creates a domino effect, impacting in their physical health, social life and work life. Depression and posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) are the more frequent psychiatric diseases related to harassment at the workplace, mainly when the pathogenic effect of mobbing is highly relevant. The greatest incidence of pathogenic work conflicts is observed in men, and the risk increases with aging, high work, and high education levels. We should be aware of the possible psychopathological changes in this context, in order to better identify the signs and symptoms in the forensic setting.

There is a relationship between the organization of work-contemporaneity and transformations of the work/workers-digital era. Work is problematized by these characteristics of complexity, which simultaneously includes in one hand, conditions of freedom and on the other hand, a setting of subservience in this dynamic. Also, the concept itself of "workplace" is changing. In this new Technological Era the physical spaces of work are vanishing. And the relations between employers and employees are exchanging.

Workplace is not immune to cyber mobbing and in fact, workplace bullies often use cyber spaces to intimidate coworkers and control their environment including offensive emails, email threats; this includes emails that appear to be inoffensive, but the implied meaning behind it constitutes mobbing. As a result, knowing how to respond is essential.

Victims of cyber mobbing experience the same feelings of fear, intimidation, stress and low morale as those bullied face-to-face. However, cyber bullying has been found to result in higher mental strain and lower job satisfaction than 'conventional' bullying. A key difference is that by using information systems to cause harm, the victim has no control over who witnesses the abuse. Also, we should not forget that even remotely, sexual harassment can still occur and probably in a more intense way.

Cyber bullying should be treated as any other form of bullying, requiring a risk assessment and appropriate control measures. It should be included in any prevention of bullying policy and procedures. Employers should keep up to date with advances in technology and update their policies accordingly. In terms of forensic expertise's, victims' evaluation consists in a psychiatric assessment, complemented or not with a psychological analysis, based in the psychic alterations and its causal relationship with work harassment. We assume that these kind of proofs in digital mobbing could be more difficult to prove in court.