

Bullying in Football Experiences of Turkish Professional Footballers

Yrd. Doç. Dr. Cemal İyem

Sakarya Üniversitesi
İşletme Fakültesi, İnsan Kaynakları Yönetimi Bölümü
Email: ciyem@sakarya.edu.tr

Doi:10.5901/mjss.2013.v4n4p479

Abstract

Bullying acts are used in a variety of settings, from school to work life, affecting many professions. But how and where does bullying occur in football? Arguably football is the most globalized industry on the planet, with its huge economy and the massive events produced through it. In Turkey, since the 1980's, football has undergone a rapid commercialization process and become a mass phenomenon as well as being a professional occupation. This article reports on a study dealing with the conjunction of two of the most important social and cultural phenomenon of our times, football and bullying. Four illustrative accounts are presenting which suggest that bullying behaviours and experiences in professional football mirror those of other sectors, albeit that the manifestations in Turkish professional football are influenced by the national and industry context.

Keywords: *Bullying, Work Psychology, Football*

1. Introduction

Opening Account: Bullying in Professional Football – An Early Story

"I am 63 years old. My father died when I was 10, so my mother always had to work for my education and my brother's education. Since, my family's income level was very low. I always had a dream of being a professional footballer, and also worked very hard and thought only football. I became a professional footballer player and I played in many different professional teams and also for my country's national team. I have three bullying stories: Many years ago when I was 22, I transferred to England to continue my professional football career. So, I played in the English Professional Football Second Division League. The team was composed of people of different ages, different nationality, different culture. So our the manager was Scottish and Protestant, I am Irish and Catholic. He never directly said to me anything about this but I felt that he didn't like me. For example, he always played me systematically in the wrong position. I tried to talk him but he wouldn't listen to me and I felt he didn't respect me. It got so I didn't sleep, I had depression I felt a bit guilty, and angry at myself, also anxious about my future. Since I had married, I had a wife and children, so of course, I had to think of my future. In the end, I decided to change my football club, only for this the manager.

I played in the English Second Division League between 1968-1979 for 11 years. I can speak English but my accent is not wonderful. My team friends sometimes called me "Paddy" and laughed for my English accent. On the field I was always respected, but I often experienced this situation in the training. I felt angry and sidelined. I always thought to change my football club.

In the late 1970's, I went from England to South Africa to continue my professional career. I played for 2 years in South Africa. I had a very bad bullying experience in South Africa. I didn't know anything about their traditional culture when I went to South Africa. We played a very important match and we won. About one hour after this game, the captain said to me "we're celebrating this win, so we have to wear our traditional clothes" I said "no". They said to me "if you don't wear them, you have to move" After that, my team colleagues victimised me. They didn't talk to me and also I experienced some physical harrasment. Moreover, I experienced some racist behaviour as well. For example, no one would talk to me, and also they called nasty names about my colour and race. I felt very bad and didn't sleep. Finally, I decided to change my football team."

In many senses this story of bullying in professional football runs contrary to the assumed meaning of 'professional' and contradicts the rhetorical image of professional football as fundamentally based on high performing teams, goal-orientated leadership and performance-maximising management. This account of bullying experiences, from a long-retired footballer, emerged during a study into footballing as leisure work. It provoked a new strand of inquiry focused specifically on the issue of bullying in professional football. It raised questions on footballers experiences of bullying. Was

it common? Who was bullied; who did the bullying? What forms did it take? Where did it happen? What was the context (social, religious, racial and political factors)? How did victims of bullying feel? What did they do? Given the location of Turkey and the exponential growth of the Turkish football industry in the past two decades, a further study exploring these questions with Turkish footballers was carried out. This article presents some initial accounts from a series of in-depth interviews with four Turkish professional footballers who play in different contexts, and explores tentative answers to the questions above. In the section immediately below, we draw from the literature on bullying at work to examine how bullying is understood generally. This is followed by an outline of the context of professional football in Turkey, its scale and scope, before we explain the study methodology and present the four accounts.

2. The Meaning of Bullying

The concept of “bullying” encompasses coercion, psychological violence and harassment and has long been a subject of multidisciplinary interest. Bullying at work is a term used to describe psychologically abusive work behavior not specified under protected groups legislation based on gender, religion, ethnicity, age, or disability (Grunau, 2007). The term bullying was initially used among animals in the 1960s and was later used to describe similar behavior encountered in children. In the 1980s, as Leymann (1996: 165-184) pointed out, bullying was also encountered by adults in the work place. Bullying can be defined in many different ways, meaning many different things to different people. Modern research on bullying at work took off at the end of the 1980s, and the Swedish researcher Leymann (1996:168) preferred to use the term ‘mobbing’ to describe the phenomenon. Leymann (1996:168) defined bullying as

“A social interaction through which one individual . . . is attacked by one or more . . . individuals almost on a daily basis and for periods of many months, bringing the person into an almost helpless position with potentially high risk of expulsion”

Jennifer, Cowie and Ananiadov (2003:492) explained bullying as

“Negative behaviour that occurs repeatedly over time, and causes distress. It includes, threat to professional status, threat to personal status, isolation, unrealistic work load destabilization and unwanted physical contact. To call something bullying the person (or persons) confronted has to experience a feeling of inferiority in defending himself or herself in the situation”

Einarsen (1999:16-27) claimed that it is unlikely that bullying might be explained exclusively in terms of work conditions or that the social work environment is the only cause of bullying (quoted by O’Moore and Lynch; 2007 p. 95-117). He defined bullying as

“All those repeated actions and practices that are directed to one or more workers, which are unwanted by the victim, which maybe done deliberately or unconsciously, but clearly cause humiliation, offence, and distress and that may interfere with job performance and / or cause an unpleasant working environment” (Einarsen; 1999:17).

Thus, we can understand bullying in the following general way “a person is being bullied or victimized when he or she is exposed, repeatedly and over time, to negative actions on the part of one or more other people.” (Olweus,1993:31). Furthermore, bullying behaviours are complicated, commonly having the characteristics of non-physical and verbal insults. The existence of bullying¹ or mobbing has been found to be one of the most notable causes of anxiety among workers. As such, bullying is a source of stress in organizations. Einarsen and Skogstad (1996:185-201) argued that in the context of societal and organisational hierarchical societies bullying can be a particular social source of stress, a keeping down of individuals or groups, the systemic oppression of a worker or group of workers over time.

As we see, bullying can be defined in many different ways. Nevertheless, the USA National Centre for Education Statistics suggests that bullying can be broken into two categories “Direct bullying”, and “Indirect bullying”. Direct bullying involves physical aggression including slapping, kicking, pulling hair, scratching etc. Indirect bullying is described as social aggression and may be characterized by threatening the victim into social isolation (Ross, 1998). Ross (1998) suggests that this isolation is achieved through a wide variety of techniques, including spreading gossip, refusing to

¹ Bullying is more commonly known in continental Europe as ‘mobbing’. In this paper we will use ‘bullying’.

socialize with the victim, bullying other people who wish to socialize with the victim, and criticizing the victim's manner of dress and other socially-significant markers (including the victim's race, religion, disability, for example).

3.How Does Bullying Make People Feel?

People who are bullied often find their work performance and health suffering, experiencing problems with emotional, mental and or physical health, as well as with job satisfaction. Studies of people abused by their peers found they are at risk of mental health problems, such as low self-esteem, stress, depression, or anxiety (New, 2007). Bullying has been found to lead to a wide variety of very different kinds of symptoms of bullying (Randall, 1997), which are summarised in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Five Main Types of Results of Bullying

<p>Main Symptoms <i>Stress, anxiety, sleeplessness, fatigue, trauma</i></p> <p>Physical Symptoms <i>Reduced immunity to infection leading to frequent colds, coughs, flu, glandular fever, back pain, chest pains and angina, high blood pressure, headaches and migraines, sweating, palpitations, trembling, hormonal problems (disturbed menstrual cycle, dysmenorrhoea, loss of libido, impotence), physical numbness (especially in toes, fingers, and lips), emotional numbness (including anhedonia, an inability to feel joy and love), thyroid problems, petit mal seizures, skin irritations and skin disorders (eg athlete's foot, eczema, psoriasis, shingles, internal and external ulcers, urticaria), loss of appetite (although a few people react by overeating), excessive or abnormal thirst, waking up more tired than when you went to bed, etc</i></p> <p>Psychological Symptoms <i>Panic attacks, thoughts of suicide, forgetfulness, impoverished or intermittently functioning memory, poor concentration, flashbacks and replays, excessive guilt, disbelief and confusion and bewilderment, an unusual degree of fear, sense of isolation, insecurity, desperation, etc.</i></p> <p>Behavioural Symptoms <i>Tearfulness, irritability, angry outbursts, obsessiveness (the experience takes over your life), hypervigilance (feels like but is not paranoia), hypersensitivity (almost every remark or action is perceived as critical even when it is not), sullenness (a sign the inner psyche has been damaged), mood swings, withdrawal, indecision, loss of humour, hyperawareness (acute awareness of time, seasons, distance travelled), excessive biting, teeth grinding, picking, scratching or tics, increased reliance on drugs (tannin, caffeine, nicotine, alcohol, sleeping tablets, tranquillisers, antidepressants, other substances), comfort spending (and consequent financial problems), phobias (especially agoraphobia), etc</i></p> <p>Effects on Personality <i>Shattered self-confidence and self-esteem, low self-image, loss of self-worth and self-love. Other symptoms and disorders reported include sleep disorder, bipolar disorder, mood disorder, eating disorder, anxiety disorder, panic disorder, skin disorder.</i></p> <p>Source: Bully Online Resource Centre (2009)</p>
--

4. Bullying in Football

There has been little published to date on bullying in Turkey (Cemaloğlu, 2007:6). Bullying was first translated into Turkish in 2003 by Davenport's (2003) work. Also, there are Yüçetürk's (2003) articles which were published in 2003 entitled "Unstoppable Bullying Applications in Organizations: A dream or Reality?" and "The Dark Side of the Organizations: Bullying". In addition, we can see Pınar Tınaz (2008) "Mobbing" and Şaban Çobanoğlu's (2005) works about "Mobbing". Other than this there is a paucity of research on the area. Bullying acts occur in a range of contexts, including the work environment. Thus, many professions are affected by the acts and studies of workplace bullying have extended our knowledge in recent years. However, a less investigated profession is football and footballers. We claimed that footballers being systematically harassed and attacked by other footballers, managers, coaches, or supporters.

However, internationally, but particularly in Turkey, little is known about bullying within football, despite its meteoric rise as a global industry employing many. In the next section, we will discuss the evolution of football in Turkey and the work of professional footballers.

4.1. Football Business or Sport?

Football in the 21st century is never just football; it is also big business. According to the Federation International de Football Association (FIFA) Big Count Report “ Two hundred and 65 million male and female players in addition to five million referees and officials make a grand total of 270 million people - or four per cent of the world’s population - who are actively involved in the game of football. These are the impressive findings of the 2006 Big Count, a FIFA survey of its 207 member associations, which, after being conducted for the first time in 2000, was repeated last year under the same conditions and offers an interesting insight into the development of football worldwide” (FIFA, 2007). Furthermore, if we look at football organizations around the world, we can see the scale of the football industry. For instance, 8 billion people watched Union of European Football Associations (UEFA) EURO 2004 on television; 1.2 billion people clicked www.euro2008.com, UEFA’s budget was 234 billion Euro for UEFA 2008, 1 billion 50 thousand match tickets sold in EURO 2008.

Table 2: World Cup Global TV Income

Year	MillionEuro
2010	2,500
2006	1,300
2002	808.9
1998	326.8
1994	27.7
1990	8.2

Akşar, T. 2006; “2006 Dünya Kupasının Sosyo-Ekonomik Analizi”; <http://www.verkac.org>. (accessed 10/4/2009).

If we look at Table 2, we can see exponential growth in World Cup TV income from 8.2 million euro in 1990 to a predicted 2,500 million euro in 2010. Football is clearly a major and still growing business sector in the world.

As Yurdesin (2005:107-121) argues, on account of the large economic impact and varying sizes of massive events produced through it, the global effect and social outcome of modern football is reshaped with each new day.

When we talk of the football industry, Roderick (2006) argues we talk about professionalism, national culture / football culture, and the labour process, because without their existence there would be no industry. Since the development of the professional game in the nineteenth century, professional footballers have been heroes for people worldwide. In newspapers and magazines globally there is a vast amount written each week of each football season about professional football and the players, most of which emphasizes the glamour of the game and dramatic and decisive moments on the pitch (Gearing, 1997:63-70). Furthermore, sport belongs to the people. It is part of the culture. Cashmore (2002) argues, whether we like it or not, we live in a culture in which sports play an increasingly important role. Once, the impact of sport was segmental, it was an area distinct from many of the other, more important, domains of our lives (Cashmore; 2002). Nowadays sport is central to our lives; following sports occupies more of our time, through watching, travelling, reading and exercise as well as our money, our energies, even our braincells (Cashmore, 2002).

In Turkey, football is the number one sport, with a huge number of football fans all over the country. In this context, when we look at Turkish national culture and the Turkish football area, it is possible to read it from highly different angles. But taking a social psychological perspective, we can consider how bullying influences football in Turkey.

4.2. Sultans of Football: Professionals, Professionalism and Turkish Football

The idea of footballers being ‘good professionals’ (Giulianotti, 1999) gets centrally to the orientations that players-as-workers conventionally possess about their work. For players as professionals, work, in a Marxian sense, is the central interest of life and they expect to get more from it than most other people, who observe or work in support roles. Much discussion of work attitudes and work motivations has centred upon the question of whether people generally are intrinsically or extrinsically orientated to their work. In these terms professional footballers intrinsically find meaning in their work.


Another feature of football as industry and footballer as profession is the juxtaposition that while one person may delight in watching football or playing football as a leisure pastime, another regards such activity as a must-be-done job. For supporters the activity is leisure; for footballers, their motivations make it work. In summary, we can say football is business, professional football clubs and teams are commercial companies and footballers and another staff are "football industry workers". From the Industrial revolution industrial workers were increasingly likely to have Saturday afternoons off work, and so many turned to the new game of football to watch or to play. Also we can see professional football has started to develop in these years. Moreover, professionalism sparked further modernization of the game through the establishment of the Football League, which enabled the leading dozen teams around the World.

So far in this article we have examined what bullying is, the forms it can take and consequences it can have. We have outlined the rise of professional football in Turkey, and explored the growth of football as an industry and a profession, as well as the meaning of professionalism to footballers in Turkey. We have raised the question that, just as bullying has been established as present within many traditional workplaces, as football has become another business industry, it is relevant to consider how bullying manifests in professional football. As such, we deal with the conjunction of two of the most important social and cultural phenomena of our times, football and bullying. As the opening story illustrated, bullying can take place on the field, in training, in the changing rooms or in social contexts. It can come from team colleagues or the manager. But for Turkish footballers in particular how is bullying experienced? That is the question to which we now turn. The next section explains the study approach, before presenting and discussing four illustrative accounts.

The football business in Turkey has a short history when compared with the expansion of the football industry in Europe. The Turkish Professional Football League started in 1959. Prior to that, the Turkish FA was founded in 1924 and there had been national competitions in the country from then to 1959. Between 1959-1980 there were several Military junta in Turkey (1960, 1961, 1971, 1980) and during this period Turkish football was visibly influenced by the economic and social context. Turkey is a cosmopolitan country with a culture that uniquely blends Eastern and Western tradition. The 1980s brought a wave of cultural change in Muslim communities internationally which touched Turkish communities, affecting Islamic banking, Muslim film directors, film critics, writers, and rock groups, to name just some examples.

This transformation also affected Turkish sport. In this context, 1980 was a very important year for Turkish football. According to Talimciler (2005: 147-163), the 1980s was a period in which the government set football a new role to fill a political vacuum. He suggests that in this period, football was used as an agent to unite the newly introduced neo-liberal politics with the masses of people by creating a fiction of reality. The reasons that gave a new impetus for the role of football industry lay within the new consuming culture and politics introduced to society by the Turgut Özal² government in Turkey (Talimciler, 2005: 147-163). The Turkish Football Federation (TFF) earned autonomy in 1992. The developments and changes in football showed that it was more than a sport. The financial value increasingly created by football and the widening interest in football showed that football had to be governed by an autonomous organization (<http://www.tff.org,15/04/2009>).

Table 3 Turkish Football Industry Statistics:

Football Association	 Turkey / TUR Turkish Football Federation
All Players (professionals + amateurs)	2.748.657
Registered Players (professionals + amateurs)	197.657
Unregistered Players (professionals + amateurs)	2.551.000
Clubs	4.450
Officials	208.027

Source: FIFA, 2007 * data statistically proved by FIFA

We can see from Table 3 the extent to which football has become one of the most important social and cultural phenomena of our times in Turkey.

² Halil Turgut Ozal (1927-1993) was a Turkish liberal politic leader.

5. Study Approach

The study from which these accounts are drawn uses in-depth “qualitative interviewing” (Warren; 2002:83) to capture Turkish footballers’ bullying stories. Qualitative interviewing is based in conversation (Klavye; 1996), with the emphasis on the researcher asking questions and listening and respondents answering (Rubin and Rubin; 1995). Unlike the survey interview, the epistemology of the qualitative interview tends to be more constructionist than positivist (Warren; 2002:83). The primary aim of the interview was to elicit footballers’ experiences of the incidence, nature and effects of workplace bullying in football. Interview transcripts were analysed by thematic coding and categorizing (Gibbs, 2007). The framework of thematic ideas developed came partially from the literature and partly emerged from the data. Thematic Analysis (Miles and Huberman, 1994) was used to systematically apply ‘codes’ to data, in order to help define what the data being analysed was about (Gibbs, 2007). The key themes used were:

- a. Place – where bullying happened
- b. Who – who did the bullying
- c. Behaviour - what was the nature of the bullying behaviour
- d. Symptoms – what were the effects on the bullied
- e. Demographic categorizing – what were the footballers’ life backgrounds

5.1. Bullying Stories from Turkish Football

Here we present four stories purposively selected for their diverse contexts and backgrounds:

- Account 1: A very famous footballer who played in an Istanbul team, now a manager
- Account 2: A very famous footballer who played for a long time for an Anatolia team in central Turkey, now a manager
- Account 3: Currently a professional footballer in the UK Premier League
- Account 4: A professional player who previously played in the Turkish Super League, currently playing in the Turkish Bank Asia League (a secondary league to the Turkish Super League).

These stories illustrate some of the ways professional Turkish footballers talk about their experiences of bullying within their careers. They are presented as illustrative of different sources of bullying: the manager, supporters, the media and team-mates. We had in depth interview with Turkish professional footballers.

ACCOUNT 1 - famous footballer who played in an Istanbul team, now a manager

This illustration provides an example of a professional player being bullied by the manager, in front of his peers, including the colleague who relays the account:

“I was born in 1968 in one of Turkey’s small cities. My father was a factory worker. So my family income was very low. I always worked in my holiday time. My family built up my football career. For example, my father had a limited budget but he always bought football shoes when I needed them. I had 15 years of a professional football career between 1987-2003. I played in the Turkish First Division League (Super Lig) my entire professional football career, also I played for very important teams in Turkey and I got a Turkish Champion Cup with one team.

I never experienced any direct bullying behaviour in my football career. We had very good friendship in my teams when I played for them. Later, I observed many bullying behaviours during my time as a manager (after my professional career, I started to work as a manager). But I remember one story about bullying in my professional football career. We went to Germany for a European League match. In the 2-3 months before, our manager didn’t play one of my friends who was the best forward in Turkey. The reason was because he (the player) had some problems with the team management. He was the best forward. In this context many supporters, football magazines, and the news media criticised the manager and team administration for this. Before the match in Germany, the manager announced the match eleven in the stadium changing room. When he said this player’s name, all the team were shocked, because this match was very important to us and this guy hadn’t played for 2-3 months, so he had no match experience.

In my opinion, the manager wanted to play this guy, because he wanted to give the message to everybody ‘look, I played this guy, and he didn’t play successfully so stop criticising me’. I think, this was bullying behaviour to my friend.

Also my friend said to me that when the manager announced his name, he felt very psychologically pressured by the manager; because he hadn't played for so long and this match was such an important match. The manager knew that he wasn't mentally or physically prepared for this match. It was a very stressful and desperate position."

ACCOUNT 2 - famous footballer who played for a long time for an Anatolia team in central Turkey, now a manager

This illustration provides an example of bullying by supporters:

"I am 41 years old. My father was a labourer; also we are a large family. I have 8 brothers and sisters. My family's average income was very low. I was born in a particular city in Turkey and continued my professional football career in their traditional Turkish professional club. Our city is very small so everybody knows you. I played 17 years professional football in the Turkish First (Super) Division League. My family were always very important to me in preparing mentally. I always worked very hard. I tried to live professionally, which I think means showing respect. I played a forward position when I was a professional footballer. Every year I scored a minimum 15 goals in the Turkish First (Super) League. I think, professional football means respect, but I didn't see any respect from our supporters. I experienced bullying behaviour, very stressful times over the 17 years by this team's supporters. For example, one day during the match, I scored 2 goals. At one point I was in a position where I didn't see my foreign team mate, so I passed to my Turkish team mate. Supporters in the stadium started to use bad words about me. They systematically used the same bad words and nasty names in other matches too. The reason was because foreign footballers are more important than Turkish footballers in my team's city. Football is the only result in Turkey. If you won, supporters loved you, if you lost, supporters called you nasty names, threatened you, no one would talk to you, you couldn't walk on the street. I always used to think when I played for this team "what will happen, if we lose?" When I felt this psychological harassment, I didn't sleep, I cried, I thought about stopping my professional football career. I developed a nervous depression."

ACCOUNT 3 - Currently a professional footballer in the English Premier League

This illustration provides an example of media pressure in Turkey experienced as bullying:

"I was born in 1982 in a small city in Turkey. My family had a very low living standard. So I always thought when I finished my study I would have to work. I just have played football in my free time. My first coach was a very important character for starting my football career. He always came to my home and said to me 'you have to come training. When I was 17 years old, I went professional. I transferred to a very big team when I was 19-20 years old; and played 5 years for this team before I transferred to the English Premier League. Still I am playing in here.

I never experienced any bullying behaviour in UK; because everybody is doing their job. For example, I just come to training at morning time and after training nobody calls out to me, nobody says bad things when we lose a match. Whereas Turkish football is completely different. We are always thinking about the match, and also we're afraid when we lose the match. Before and after a match the media is systematically putting on psychological pressure and harassment. Also we can see the same psychological pressure from supporters, the manager, administrator and team mates in Turkey. Before the match I always felt stressed when I was playing in Turkey. I made mistakes in my job, for example, we often fought in the match. The reason was all footballers are very stressed in Turkey."

ACCOUNT 4 - A professional player who previously played in the Turkish Super League, currently playing in the Turkish Bank Asia League

This illustration provides an example of being socially isolated by team mates:

"I am 24 years old. I finished primary school then I stopped my education and I chose football. I grew up in a big city in Turkey where my family had a low income .

"I played the 2006-2007 season in one Super League team in Turkey. Our team had a very bad position in the Super League, so we had to win all matches to stay in the league. All my team friends and I were very stressed. Also I suffered poor concentration and I made some mistakes in my job. Some team mates looked for victims for the team's bad position. So I experienced systematic psychological harassment from my team mates before, after and inside the match. For example, before and after the match nobody called me to some social team meeting and also during the match some

team mates didn't give me a pass. These team mates once said to me "we are losing because of you, you have to move from this club." I felt very bad; I experienced headaches and migraines, sleeplessness. Finally I changed my club."

6. Discussion and Concluding Thoughts

The study aims to discuss the broad masses affecting the football mobbing practices. Labour mobility in football that football has become the world's most popular and global sports. Nowadays, football has created their own flag, their own language and their own management techniques. Even if soccer player profile has changed. A soccer player profile younger and more easily used increasingly come to the fore consumed.

Table 4: Bullying Stories from Turkish Professional Footballers

ACCOUNT 1	I think, this was bullying behaviour to my friend. Also my friend said to me that when the manager announced his name, he felt very psychologically pressured by the manager; because he hadn't played for so long and this match was such an important match. The manager knew that he wasn't mentally or physically prepared for this match. It was a very stressful and desperate position."
ACCOUNT 2	I always used to think when I played for this team "what will happen, if we lose?" When I felt this psychological harassment, I didn't sleep, I cried, I thought about stopping my professional football career. I developed a nervous depression."
ACCOUNT 3	Before and after a match the media is systematically putting on psychological pressure and harassment. Also we can see the same psychological pressure from supporters, the manager, administrator and team mates in Turkey. Before the match I always felt stressed when I was playing in Turkey. I made mistakes in my job, for example, we often fought in the match. The reason was all footballers are very stressed in Turkey."
ACCOUNT 4	I experienced systematic psychological harassment from my team mates before, after and inside the match. For example, before and after the match nobody called me to some social team meeting and also during the match some team mates didn't give me a pass. These team mates once said to me "we are losing because of you, you have to move from this club." I felt very bad; I experienced headaches and migraines, sleeplessness.

This article set out to explore bullying in Turkish football and to present purposively selected illustrations to raise questions of what experiences have been. Although we obviously cannot draw generalisations about the extent of bullying from these four accounts, or even how typical they are, they illustrate very clearly that the range of bullying behaviours, feelings and symptoms identified from studies in other educational and workplace settings can also be found in the Turkish football industry. Table 4 shows that the accounts provide insight into how bullying can be enacted by people in varying positions: the manager, team-mates, supporters as well as the media. In each case there was repeated negative, non-physical behaviour (Jennifer, Cowie and Ananiadov, 2003:489-496), with the period of time ranging from the 2-3 months exclusion from matches in Account 1, to the 17 years of insults from supporters described in Account 2. The manifestations of bullying in football are displayed in spaces integral to the game. The social isolation described as typical of bullying (Jennifer, Cowie and Ananiadov, 2003) is evident in the examples above of team-mates not passing the ball on the pitch, not being talked to, being excluded from team socialising, or being left out of the team for personalised rather than performance reasons.

All examples are of indirect verbal or non-verbal behaviours, including direct insults or name-calling from supporters, the media or team-mates. More subtly, was evidence of unrealistic work load or pressure. The action of the manager in Account 1 is open to this interpretation as he unexpectedly allocated the player to an important match, when he was not physically or mentally prepared. Likewise the constant demand to win, with a hanging threat of insults following a loss, exerted by supporters in Account 2 and the media in Account 3, were experienced by the players as presenting unrealistic pressures. In addition the way they describe these experiences accords with Jennifer, Cowie and Ananiadov's (2003: 492) definition of bullying as 'a feeling of inferiority in defending himself or herself in the situation'. Feeling inferior may come from actually being socially less powerful than those perpetrating bullying acts, as those with greater power exercise their influence. So the manager in Account 1 was vested with the power to put players in or out of match teams, although this account is interesting because it suggests that although the player himself was relatively

powerless, the media and supporters may have influenced the manager' actions. Clearly in Account 2 supporters are felt to be a strong threat, as was the media in Account 3. One research by Iyem (2009; 2011) shows that team mates have the most effects on footballers and they are most frequently exposed to bullying that arises from their team-mates, as illustrated in Account 4.

Although we must be tentative in drawing conclusions, the demographic data on each of the four footballers above shows all came from a low income background that meant access to earning through professional football was a significant opportunity, but also one that left few alternative choices to walk away to. A tentative conclusion is that characteristics that are seen as structural features of professional football in Turkey such as extreme competition, an extreme discipline approach, intensive results (score)-oriented approach combined with low level education of footballers and unstable management is conducive to bullying.

The impacts of bullying revealed in these accounts mirrors those described in the literature reviewed earlier. Effects on personality described include shattered self-confidence, anxiety and inability to sleep. Physical symptoms of headaches and migraines were mentioned and alongside psychological signs of depression, feeling desperate, making mistakes and behavioural symptoms such as crying and fighting. In two accounts the footballers revealed they considered leaving - either of stopping their professional footballing career altogether (Account 2) or moving teams (Account 4). Here they could be interpreted as displaying what Leymann (1996:168) described as 'an almost helpless position with potentially high risk of expulsion'.

One of the interesting points still tried to be assessed study the relationship of religious commitment and mobbing. Undoubtedly religious affect football. To understand this, just watch the output of any player on the field. In General, footballers pray according to their own beliefs in the field. All footballers are religious-content shows in the field. In this regard, As a result of interviews and observations with a high belief in accepting players mobbing behaviours observed. As a result of from the perspective which evaluates to be invested, football is not just a games and sports. Complex organizational structures, generates fanzine culture, standardization of rules of the game, flexible structure in excess of the geographical and social barriers, football is a matter that can be made on the broad review.

This study deals with the relationship between football and bullying. With the exponential growth in recent decades of the football industry, we can now say football is business, professional football clubs and teams are commercial companies and footballers and other staff are 'football industry workers'. Our questions, provoked by the opening story of bullying experienced by an international player, were concerned to explore whether, as another industry, football is the site of workplace bullying just as the literature suggests so many other workplaces and professions are. And in particular, we were interested in the experiences of Turkish professional footballers. Especially the new conception of football market conditions, footballers forced to think about their individual achievements of the players rather than the team's success.

This study is seen as a only sport and many academic studies have been conducted on the football industry's main professional football players' mobbing practices through interviews with physical and psychological problems caused by these applications is discussed. From the illustrative accounts presented above it is clear that these footballers have encountered many negative behaviours that mirror the indirect, non-verbal bullying behaviours found in other sectors. These came from a variety of sources, acted by team-mates, managers, supporters and the media. The consequences were negative, causing a range of physical, psychological, behavioural and personality symptoms. While some footballers reacted by changing their team, others live with bullying behaviour. However football is their job, they always have to work very hard, have to think of their job, their family as well as their future career. When we talk about of footballers' lives the popular image is often that they are rich, successful and sexy. In fact, most professional footballers do not have a Ferrari, a mansion, a celebrity girl friend or a lucrative book deal (Roderick; 2006). Their careers are short, insecure and as this study suggests, may be fraught with psychological violence and harassment.

Finally, the findings of this study are of course not necessarily representative of all professional footballers' bullying experiences, but they do provide a useful insight into the sorts of negative and stressful issues Turkish professional footballers may be experiencing more widely, which require further investigation. If this paper motivates further research into different dimensions of bullying in football, it will have achieved its aim.

References

- Akşar, T. 2006; "2006 Dünya Kupasının Sosyo-Ekonomik Analizi"; <http://www.verkac.org>. (accessed 10/4/2009).
Bully Online Resource Centre www.bullyonline.org (accessed 14/4/09)
Cashmore, E. 2002; Beckham; Cambridge Polity Pres; UK.

- Cemaloğlu, N. 2007; "The Relationship Between Organizational Health and Bullying That Teachers Experience in Primary School in Turkey"; Educational Research Quarterly; Vol.31.2.
- Çobanoğlu, Ş. 2005; Mobbing/İşyerinde Duygusal Saldırı ve Mücadele Yöntemleri; Timaş Yayınları; Ankara.
- Davenport, N. 2003; Bullying: Emotional Harrasment in the Work Place (Trans. Osman Önerday); Sistem Yayıncılık; İstanbul.
- Einarsen, S., Skogstad, A. 1996, "Bullying at Work Epidemological Findings in Public and Private Organizations"; European Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology; Vol.5, 185-201.
- Einarsen, S 1999; "The Nature and Causes of Bullying at Work"; International Journal of Manpower; Vol. 20 (1/2); 16-27.
- FIFA, 2007, Big Count 2006 Statistical Summary Report by Gender/Category/Region, FIFA Communications Division, Information Services, 31.05.2007 <http://www.fifa.com/worldfootball/bigcount/index.html> (accessed 02/09/09)
- Gearing, B. 1997; "More Than a Game The Experience of Being a Professional Footballer in Britain". Oral History, Vol. 25, 1 63–70.
- Gibbs, G. 2007; Analyzing Qualitative Data (edited by Uwe Flick); Sage, London.
- Gruna, G. 2007; "Mobbing and Burnout, Are They Linked?", PhD thesis, Walden University, School of Psychology.
- Giulianotti, R. 1999; Football: A Sociology of the Global Game; Blackwell Publishers; UK.
- İyem, C. 2009; "Rich, Successful and Sexy The Case of Turkish Professional Footballers"; Critical Management Studies (CMS) 13-15 July 2009; Warwick; UK.
- İyem, Cemal 2011, "New Work Ethic and Leisure Workers: Experiences of Turkish Professional Footballers", PhD Thesis, Sakarya University, Turkey.
- Jennifer, D., Cowie, H and Ananiadou, K. 2003; "Perception and Experience of Workplace Bullying in Five Different Working Populations"; Aggressive Behavior, Vol. 2, 489-496
- Klave, S. 1996; Interviews An Introduction to Qualitative Research Interviewing; Thousand Oaks; CA Sage.
- Leymann, H. 1996; "The Content and Development of Bullying at Work"; European Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology; Vol. 5; 165-184.
- Miles, M. ; Huberman, M. 1994; Qualitative Data Analysis an Expanded Sourcebook; London; Beverley Hills.
- New, M. 2007; Originally Reviewed by D'Arcy Lyness; http://kidshealth.org/teen/your_mind/problems/bullies.html, June 2007 (accessed 07/06/09)
- Olweus, D. 1993; Bullying at School: What We Know and What We Can Do; Oxford; UK Blackwell Publishers.
- O'Moore, M., & Lynch, J. 2007; "Leadership, Working Environment and Workplace Bullying"; International Journal of Organization Theory and Behavior, Vol. 10(1), 95-117.
- Randall, P. 1997; Adult Bullying Perpetrators and Victims; London, Routledge.
- Roderick, M. 2006; The Work of Professional Football A Labour of Love; Routledge; London / New York.
- Ross, P.N. 1998; "Arresting Violence A Resource Guide For Schools and Their Communities"; Toronto Ontario Public School Teachers' Federation.
- Rubbin, H. J., I. S. Rubbin 1995; Qualitative Interviewing The Art of Hearing Data; Thousand Oaks, CA Sage.
- Talimciler, A. 2005; "The Last Twenty-Five Years of Football As a Legitimation Agent in Turkey"; Toplum ve Bilim, Vol. 103, 147-163.
- Tınaz, P. 2008; İşyerinde Psikolojik Taciz (Mobbing); Beta Basım Yayım; İstanbul.
- TFF <http://www.tff.org> (accessed 15/4/2009).
- UEFA <http://www.uefa.com> (accessed 10/4/2009).
- Warren, C. A. B. 2002; "Qualitative Interviewing"; Handbook of Interview Research Context & Method (Editor Jaber F. Gubrium, James A. Holstein); Sage; UK.
- Yurdesin, D. 2005; "Football, Public Sphere and Democracy"; Toplum ve Bilim, Vol. 103, 107-121.