

Abstract

The research on “The Working Life of Medical Personnel : The Case of Sexual Harassment at Work” aims to study the female medical personnel's experiences of sexual harassment at work. The research is designed to study the definitions of sexual harassment at work given by them, the forms of behaviour in sexual harassment at work, their physical and mental impacts on the harassed, factors that facilitate the sexual harassment at work, and the solution process of the harassed and the organization. The case studies in this research are 11 female medical personnel working in a hospital affiliated to the Ministry of Defense. The methodology of this research is qualitative approach with narrative and in-depth interview.

The study of the definition of sexual harassment discovers that most of the female personnel define sexual harassment from their own experiences. They view that sexual harassment is the employ of power by male over female through various expressions i.e. verbal, non-verbal and physical actions. These expressions, many of which are repetitive, are not wanted by them because they caused physical and mental pressure and oppression. They also tarnished their reputation, their dignity and their professional pride. Secondly, two types of sexual harassment at work are found. They are the “quid pro quo” harassment under the context of power demanded by the higher commanders and by the colleagues for sexual favours in exchange for job and position promotion. The second type is the creation of a hostile working environment created by the higher commanders, the colleagues, including the third party, namely the clients (the patients) and strangers. Thirdly, three characteristics of sexual harassment behaviour are found i.e. verbal, non- verbal and physical touches. Fourthly, the findings out of the impacts from sexual harassment at work are the physical and mental effects such as embarrassment, being suspicious, stress and the losing of their dignity. The impacts on their career varied from being bullied, job demotion, job transfer, and higher rate of absenteeism to resignation. If it is calculated in terms of numerical figures and personnel resources, this can cause a detrimental loss of both the budget and qualified

personnel that in turn can affect the organization's confidence and image. Fifthly, factors in this hospital that contribute to sexual harassment at work are capitalism with its employment conditions that forced these female personnel to be under this economic structure, organizational structure and its culture - the multi-complex layers of hierarchical structure and intensive male culture. This affects these female medical personnel's work attitude and their adjustment to the organization as well as the solutions in the executive level. The other factors are the environmental context i.e. time and place, bargaining power and the characteristic of job that the harassed have to perform as well as pornography. Sixthly, another finding out is that the grievance procedures, attitude and beliefs can effect the decision of the harassed whether to complain or not. Seventhly, the study of the solutions of the harassed shows that their reactions are of various kinds depending on their experiences, their personal understanding, and social support. These would enable them to decide whether to complain according to the organizational process or stay silent which depend on the environmental context at that moment. Eighthly, regarding the organization's problem solving procedures the research finds that the hospital uses military disciplinary punishment since the hospital is run by the army. Yet, there is no direct punishment for sexual harassment in the military disciplinary punishment. Therefore, the punishment is made equivalent to the nearest one. However, because the supervisor has the authority to punish, it is still difficult to achieve a practical problem solution in this case. This is due to the fact that most personnel do not aware of the sexual harassment problems.

Thus, the author suggests some solutions as follows:

1. The organization should have specific and clear policy on the prevention and solving procedures of the sexual harassment at work problems. This will help facilitate understanding of the commanders. As they are important mechanism that will materialize the success of the sexual harassment at work solutions. The organization should also provide training and develop grievance procedures that can be effective for everyone in the organization.

2. The State should issue a law on sexual harassment with clear definitions and scope as well as providing protection to both men and women in all career fields and to both state and private organizations including protection from the third party i.e. the clients.
3. Related state and private organizations should emphasize and give a strong attention to alter gender attitude. This will help create better understanding of the problems to the society and help coordinate for prevention and solutions of the sexual harassment at work problems.

