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“OMG! I QUIT THE JOB”: SEXUAL BRIBERY AND ITS IMPACT ON WOMEN’S PRODUCTIVE WORK LIFE

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Abstract

The quality of work life serves as a motivating factor for individuals to fully engage in their professional and personal lives. The Sustainable Development Agenda recognizes the importance of adopting appropriate approaches to promote decent work and work-life balance, ultimately leading to overall well-being. However, gender inequality can hinder women from attaining the happiness they seek in life, as they face barriers to securing productive employment within an unequal environment. Sexual bribery can create an unfavorable environment where women are denied equal access to services and hindered from pursuing productive work lives. This study, therefore, aims to uncover how institutionally ingrained sexual bribery affects women’s ability to achieve a high-quality work life. A case study design was employed, conducting five individual case studies featuring women over 30 years old employed in the public health sector. The study utilizes the Glass Ceiling Effect theory to frame research questions and thematically analyze the collected data. Key findings reveal that the presence of actual or perceived sexual bribery poses a threat to the work environment, jeopardizing feelings of safety and protection from violence. Consequently, women are less likely to seek help or receive support from their peers, leading to a decrease in work productivity. This can also manifest in neglecting certain mandatory tasks in the workplace due to startled behavior. The fear of sexual bribery disrupts the balance between work and family life, resulting in women disconnecting from the workplace and focusing solely on their families. Despite their capabilities and desired professional goals, the fear of actual or perceived sexual bribery prevents women from learning and thriving in their jobs, ultimately diminishing their overall performance within the institution. Gender identity plays a crucial role as an intervening determinant in determining the quality of work life, specifically regarding the subjective evaluation of the value of labor. To ensure fair treatment, women often seek assistance from healthcare and justice systems. However, as highlighted by the findings of this study, the presence of institutionally embedded sexual bribery practices can hinder women from securing a productive work life.

Keywords: Gender Inequality, Glass Ceiling Effect, Labor, Quality of Work Life, Sexual Bribery