

Abstract

- The aim of this literature review is to explore the growing number of sexual harassment and assault cases against women of color across cultures in the work settings.
- The continuous marginalization of women in this group have had an impact on socioeconomic status, relationships, health and their ability to make choices about their body. Sexual harassment or assault can take place through various avenues or diverse public settings such as work, school, stores, park and social media.
- The literature review primarily focused on sexual harassment and assault incidents occurring in the workplace, in order to highlight the effects it has on women of color.
- Another goal of the literature review is to discuss new strategies to prevent or decrease the amount of sexual harassment and assault cases.

Methods

- A literature review was conducted using peer reviewed journals from databases such as Psychology and Behavioral Sciences, PsyArticles, Proquest and Proquest Psychology Journals.
- Our inclusion criteria included keywords such as “sexual harassment,” “sexual assault,” “women of color,” “workplace harassment,” and articles published between 2011-2020.
- Articles were excluded that did not identify sexual harassment or assault against women.

Conclusions & Future Directions

- Sexual harassment can be reduced or prevented in the workplace when the organizations promote a justice climate in the workplace that emphasizes fairness (Rubino et al., 2017)
- Sexual harassment and assault can be prevented in the workplace when more awareness of the victim’s suffering is made known. In addition, the development of advocacy campaigns against sexual harassment can further help victims overcome their fear of speaking out. Women of color are gaining more support in fighting against sexual harassment and sexual assault.
- Future directives call for additional research regarding the effects of sexual harassment and sexual assault on women of color, women who are members of the LGBTQT community, and the prevalence and effects of sexual harassment and assault through social media platforms as it relates to the workplace

Introduction

What is sexual harassment?

- Sexual harassment is considered to be unwelcomed sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, comments or behaviors sexual in nature i.e. touching (US Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, 2020)

What is sexual assault?

- Sexual assault is any type of sexual activity or contact that you do not consent to.

A greater awareness of sexual harassment against women has developed in more recent years which have resulted in advocacy campaigns such as the #ME TOO movement being established. However, despite the many attempts to educate about sexual harassment and publicize sexual assault, more incidents of these inappropriate acts continue to occur. Across cultures, women have been impacted by sexual harassment with many failing to speak up about it or many being criticized for taking action against their offenders. Sexual harassment takes place largely in the workplace and often leaves many of its victims traumatized (Millegan et al., 2015)

Results

- Females, regardless of their race, position, or power they have, are more likely to experience sexual harassment/or sexual assault than males in the workplace
- Sexual harassment and sexual assault are more prevalent when gender equality is understated or trivialized in the workplace
- Research found that 25% to 85% of all women experience some form of sexual harassment while at work.
- According to the literature, 12% of all sexual harassment cases occur daily or weekly
- Findings showed that 60% of women experience some type of abuse or harassment while at work
- European Union surveys found 40-50% of women report some form of sexual harassment or uninvited sexual behavior in the workplace.

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