Workers' perceptions of workplace harassment practices in an industry in the interior of Bahia

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ABSTRACT

Despite advancements in technology and work forms, human labor remains essential, with increasing demands on skills for survival and job maintenance. Workplace harassment is a historical issue affecting workers across genders, races, and ethnicities, and is more likely in environments seeking cost reduction and higher productivity. Harassment involves conduct causing physical or psychological harm, with its roots in Labor Law. Recent efforts focus on problematizing and combating harassment in organizations. The study investigated workers' perceptions of harassment in a Bahian industry, using a questionnaire and scientific studies as data sources.

Keywords: Harassment, Violence, Work.

INTRODUCTION

Even with technological advances, the use of machinery and equipment, and different forms of work, the need for manpower and human integrity continue to be necessary, demanding more and more from workers and leaders the development of skills to maintain their own survival and also the maintenance of jobs. "Harassment in the environment of organizations is not a recent issue, it is a historical phenomenon that has affected human relations since early times. It affects a large part of workers of both sexes, races and ethnicities" (MOURA; CAMFIELD; PIZZOL, 2021, p.231). According to the current situation and considering the precariousness of work, in which organizations seek to reduce expenses and increase productivity more and more, the probability of developing and maintaining practices compatible with harassment in the workplace is externalized. Harassment comprises those types of conduct that cause physical or psychological embarrassment in people's lives; its historical origin involves Labor Law, integrating stories of abuse against workers. It should be noted that the phenomenon of harassment is not something new, but the problematization and denunciation in the organizational environment, with a view to prevention and combat, considering other forms of violence, are new, according to MTP Ordinance No. 4,219, of December 20, 2022. The present study aimed to investigate the perception of workers about harassment practices in the workplace in an industry in the interior of Bahia.

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METHODOLOGY

A total of 29 workers from a chemical company participated in this study, during a collaborative lecture, according to the request of the Occupational Health and Safety sector. Participants with an average age of 20 to 55 years, of both sexes who worked in the day shift in administrative and operational sectors. Regarding the methodology used to carry out this research, a questionnaire was used as the primary source to record the data collected. As a secondary source, we used scientific studies related to the theme, published in journals indexed in the PePSIC, SciELO.br, and Index-psi technical-scientific journals databases, in which the information was organized into two axes related to violence and harassment in the workplace, according to the results described below.

RESULTS

According to the participants, violence in the workplace can be characterized by physical attacks, threatening behaviors, and the use of physical force, in addition, most of them reported that they believe that all types of harassment are violence. Regarding possible causes of harassment in the workplace, participants reported that the causes may be related to low self-esteem, absenteeism, procrastination, depression, which can evolve into suicide attempts. When asked about the definition of moral harassment, the participants reported that it can involve frequent abusive conduct, repeated practices of embarrassment, poor physical working conditions and any situation that causes annoyance. When checking the possible causes of moral harassment, they reported that they may be associated with the immediate boss's unpreparedness to manage people, the presence of an authoritarian culture, rivalry in the workplace, envy and poor working conditions.

CONCLUSION

It is recommended to invest in socio-educational campaigns to guide workers and leaders in the development of new social skills, encouraging non-violent communication, especially in the workplace. In addition, it is necessary to observe the organizational culture, including the current management model, the values, beliefs and taboos that have been encouraged by the leaders themselves, to combat the practices of harassment and violence in the work context.

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