STUDY: Sexual Harassment of women in the Workplace 2022

This project is made possible through the support of the Fiji Women's Rights Movement partnership with the European Development Fund under the project - Safe Workplaces: Translating commitments into meaningful change for Pacific Women.

- The core research objective is to identify Sexual Harassment in the workplace using the following outcomes:
  - the incidence and nature of sexual harassment in the workplace;
  - variation by industry sectors and job requirements;
  - socio-economic and demographic factors related to victim profiles;
  - the nature of sexual harassment experienced, type of harassment, actions taken, and offender profiles; and
  - awareness of a Sexual Harassment Policy in the work place.

The study asks the question, has the prevalence of sexual harassment in the workplace changed with the increasing number of women in the workforce and/or with the increasing number of women in decision-making roles?

- 62 women participated in this survey that was disseminated online and through phone calls and face to face
- The findings of this survey show 66% of women have experienced sexual harassment at their work places whilst 34% have not.
- 54% of girls and women between the ages of 16 – 29 years have experienced a higher rate of sexual harassment at the workplace, with 32% of women aged between 30 – 39 years and 14% aged 40+ years.
- Education and Government Sectors were the most prevalent for experiencing sexual harassment.
- Women and girls in a non-management position (29%), or a junior management position (29%), faced the highest amount of sexual harassment in the workplace. This was followed by senior management level (22%) and middle management (20%).
- 68% of women and girls experienced sexual harassment more than 12 months ago whilst 32% experienced it within the last 12 months.
- Single women and girls experience the most sexual harassment at their work places followed by De facto, Married and Others.
- 48% of women and girls have knowledge of the different types of sexual harassment.
- Verbal harassment, followed by gestural harassment and physical harassment were the most prevalent types of sexual harassment experienced in the workplace.
- 40% of sexual harassment offenders were aged between 30 – 39 years, 33% are 40+ and 27% are between 18 – 29 years.
- 79% of sexual harassment cases at the work place were NOT reported, only 21% of cases were reported.

Reasons as to why victims of sexual harassment at the work place did not report their cases:

- ‘I thought it was normal. That was my first job and he did it to most women and girls at the workplace.’
- ‘I am young and new in this work place and I don’t know how or where to report.’
- ‘The institution I am working for does not have any policy that would protect the right of its employees.’
- ‘His background and reputation surpass mine and I would be called a liar and all sorts of names. He was also a senior officer and I was one of the new ones to be under his management and so I became a victim.’
- ‘He did the same thing to most girls at work and it felt like it was normal.’

Most organisations did have a sexual harassment policy but the results find that just under half, at 48%, did not implement it effectively, with nothing done as a result of sexual harassment being reported.