

Sexual Harassment at Workplace

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A safe and inclusive working environment is important for ensuring employees are able to work as a team. Although most businesses aspire to have a hospitable working environment, cases of bullying, sexual harassment, and job discrimination may frustrate their desire to have an effective team. Sexual harassment is a form of sex discrimination that occurs at work and may adversely affect an employee's personal and professional life. Due to the detrimental effect of sexual harassment on both businesses and their employees, organizations should implement stringent measures to deter its occurrence.

According to the Australian Human Rights Commission (2014), sexual harassment refers to unwelcomed sexual advances or conduct that may occur implicitly or explicitly in a person's employment and that can make the victim to feel offended, humiliated, or intimidated. As a result, sexual harassment can create a hostile work environment that affects the victim's work performance. Although treated as an offense that only affects women, sexual harassment can be perpetrated against men (Australian Human Rights Commission, 2016). Therefore, the elimination of these form of violence improves the welfare of all employees irrespective of their gender.

Sexual harassment can have extremely serious consequences on its victims as well as those working with them. In some cases, harassed individuals may lose their jobs if they fail to give in to the sexual demands of the offender (Salman, Abdullah, & Saleem, 2016). In most cases, the harassed employees are traumatized and suffer emotional breakdowns. The psychological trauma suffered by these victims makes them unable to perform their duties properly (Minnesota Advocates for Human Rights, 2003). According to Minnesota Advocates

for Human Rights (2003), most victims of sexual harassment suffer from anxiety, depression, sleep disorder, lowered self-esteem, and sexual dysfunction.

In September 2016, a jury found Chipotle Mexican Grill liable for sexual harassment offenses that occurred on its premises. In this case, a young woman who previously worked in the hotel narrated a graphic testimony of how one manager in the company tolerated sexual harassment on women working in one of its stores. The young girl was sexually assaulted and harassed by her male colleagues and the store's general manager knew about it. Additionally, the general manager oversaw a team of junior managers who were sexually involved with other female employees (Kragie, 2016). The extensive level of sexual harassment in the store had led to a hostile working environment for the employee and her colleagues.

According to the Australian Human Rights Commission (2014), 45% of workplace sexual harassment stops when a report is made. Therefore, to prevent sexual harassment at work, the management should train its employees on ethical conducts in a work environment. In particular, it should inform employees on actions that qualify as sexual harassment. It should also establish an appropriate channel of communication that aggrieved persons can use to report on cases of sexual harassment.

In summary, the ethical practices of Chipotle Mexican Grill are bad. Although the company apologized for the sexual harassment offenses that occurred to one of its employees, it did not state the specific measures that it would undertake to punish the perpetrators of the crime. In fact, the company has not suspended or fired the general manager of the store where the offense occurred. However, the company recently stated that it had implemented policies that are designed to prevent cases of sexual harassment, which shows it is determined to ensure all its employees have a safe working environment.

## References

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