

Towards More Inclusive and Safer Workplaces: The Delphi Approach in Improving Workplace Discrimination and Harassment Policies and Practices

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Abstract

Workplace misbehaviours and mistreatment (WM) can take many forms and exist in all types of workplaces. For WM victims, such experiences can be a major source of anxiety and depression, and can even result in self-harm. As a form of escapism, some may resort to, or increase in, addictive behaviours such as drinking and smoking. These stressors have a negative impact on work performance, productivity, and commitment. WM victims often choose to leave the organisation than to “fight” the perpetrator. Given the complexity of WM issues, there are often no easy solutions to effectively eradicate dysfunctional behaviours at work. A whole of society approach is needed, involving the participation of all actors in the ecosystem. Including opinions from experts in WM concerns is imperative. Towards this end, the Institute for Adult Learning Singapore conducted a Delphi survey in 2022 to arrive at a set of measures that can help to reduce the occurrence of WM in the country, over and above existing legislation. The Delphi method is a well-developed process that is commonly used to gather data from a panel of experts, to arrive at a consensus on a specific real-world issue (Hsu and Sandford, 2007; Barrios et al., 2021). A set of 14 recommendations from the experts was obtained covering areas such as education and training of individuals regarding WM concerns, providing information on available avenues for recourse, changes in company practices and policies, and a national framework that provides support and guidelines for all actors in the ecosystem.

Keywords: Company Policy, Prejudice, Wellbeing, Workplace Misbehaviour, Workplace Mistreatment