

Undermining from Within? Addressing Queen Bee Syndrome to Advance Gender Equality at Work

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Abstract

Queen Bee Syndrome (QBS) is a critical pattern witnessed in the workplace where dominant female individuals demonstrate behaviours that undermine the professional development of other females, hence, continuing the gender gap and blocking the establishment of favourable work environments. This paper takes us deep into the origins and presentations of QBS and its implications for the career development of women. Combining the results achieved following different theoretical frameworks and literature including the social identity theory, tokenism, and the organizational culture, this research offers a holistic perspective where criticism against other women, preference given to male subordinates, and self-distancing behaviours are discussed. In this research, the negative effects of QBS are pointed out, such as the decreased possibility of mentorship, the creation of tension in the working environment, and the strengthening of the gender inequality. In the concluding part of this paper, we suggest some strategies that could reduce the adverse impact of QBS, including the promotion of inclusive leadership, the healthy support networks, and the organizational culture change. The QBS is a crucial issue to address to contribute to the improvement of women in their careers and gender equality in the workplace.

Keywords: Queen Bee Syndrome, Women Career Advancement, Gender Inequality, and Leadership