

Workforce Diversity: A Case of Discrimination at M Health Organization in Bengkalis, Indonesia

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To Link this Article: <http://dx.doi.org/10.6007/IJARBSS/v14-i9/22786>

DOI:10.6007/IJARBSS/v14-i9/22786

Published Date: 03 September 2024

Abstract

Discrimination is one of the issues that can arise in an organization due to workforce diversity. This study elaborates on the issue of discrimination in terms of its various forms, factors, and possible solutions to minimize the problem. This study collects the data using the qualitative approach and the case study research design. Six informants, including two division leaders and four staff members (two female and four male employees) at the M Health Organization in Bengkalis, Indonesia, were selected for this study. The semi-structured and in-depth interviews were guided by an interview protocol devised by the researchers, which aims to answer all the research objectives related to the issue of discrimination. Thematic analysis using NVivo 12 Plus software was employed to analyze the data. The findings show that the incidence of discrimination exists in the organization in the form of gender discrimination, which is manifested in the cases of different salaries and disparate workloads. Further, the findings also show that the factor of discrimination is patriarchal culture. In terms of possible solutions suggested by the informants, the organization's role, such as the inclusion of the employees in non-job-related activities and programs, discussion with the superiors and involved parties, and issuance of warnings and sanctions, are said to be implemented by the organization. Besides, the role of individual employees is also highlighted in having personal discussions with the parties involved, i.e., the perpetrator and the victim. Searching for organizations or companies genuinely dedicated to solving this issue should be the first step in any future investigation. This indicates that future research related to workforce diversity and discrimination in organizations is relevant for obtaining solutions to the said social phenomenon in the workplace.

Keywords: Workforce Diversity, Form of Discrimination, Gender Discrimination, Factor, Solutions.

Introduction

Any organization's primary goal is to raise productivity. Nevertheless, every employee must efficiently carry out their responsibilities for an organization to achieve its goals. The term "workforce diversity" refers to the diverse characteristics of employees working for an organization (Cho et al., 2017). Diversity is reflected in the employees' diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds, genders, ages, religions, ethnicities, socioeconomic levels, abilities, and skills. It is also seen as a characteristic that can differentiate one person from another (Tuan et al., 2018). Diversity within an organization allows enterprises to collaborate and move forward. According to Khan et al. (2017), it is best to have diverse board members to increase organizational performance. Diverse teams function better as an organization and generate more creative ideas (Chui et al., 2015; Mohammadi et al., 2017).

However, in addition to the benefits of a diverse workforce, some organizations are also experiencing drawbacks, such as discrimination at work. Regarding gender discrimination, research by Saidon et al. (2017) on Malaysian women's political engagement found that women are frequently viewed as mere supporters, not leaders. This is evident from the discrimination experienced, such as in terms of salaries, where women often earn lower salaries and do not get promotion positions in their careers than males who have the same with equivalent credentials and experience (Fibrianto, 2016). According to Yusrini's (2017) perspective, it is the same as in Indonesia, where it has been shown that women have less access to work than men do and that even when they do, their salary is usually lower than men.

Patriarchal culture is one of the reasons for gender discrimination to happen (Saidon et al., 2017). For instance, discrimination continues in Indonesia because of the country's continuing dedication to patriarchal ideology (Nuraeni & Suryono, 2021). According to Ning and Karubi's (2018) research in Malaysia, a patriarchal society believes that men should be at work and women should be at home. Based on popular opinion, gender discrimination prevents women from advancing to positions of authority and decision-making (Dahal, 2013). Society believes men work and women only stay home. Despite that, women's perceived role as caretakers was further propagated wrongly by the government. In 2020, the Malaysian Women and Family Development Ministry created the "*Kebahagiaaan Rumahtangga*" campaign to inform the public about women's and men's roles during the COVID-19 lockdown, which received backlash over the sexist message. The campaign advises women to wear make-up while working at home, speak to their spouses in a Doraemon's voice, and giggle coyly is demeaning (Indramalar, 2020; Palansamy, 2020). In many areas, including the workplace, women are viewed as unimportant, weak, and helpless when working with men (Sriwimon & Zilli, 2017; Suhaimi & Fakhrudin, 2021). According to Shen (2022), women's abilities to work in organizations differ from men's because they are considered physically weak.

Indeed, there are many ways to deal with discrimination when it occurs, and one of them is to change employees' perspectives by educating them to tolerate the weaknesses and situations of others (Lim & Ngo, 2020). With leaders understanding the benefits of diversity and discussing how to reduce the problem, acts of discrimination in the workplace can be reduced or even eliminated (Zhuwao et al., 2019). Increasing understanding of the rights of gender equality can reduce or even end discriminatory actions (Nuraeni & Suryono, 2021).

This study investigates how discrimination manifests itself when workforce diversity is implemented in an organization. The objectives of this study are as follows:

1. To examine the forms of discrimination experienced by employees at M Health Organization in Bengkalis, Indonesia.
2. To analyze responsible factors that cause discrimination among the employees at M Health Organization in Bengkalis, Indonesia.
3. To explore the possible solutions to minimize discrimination at M Health Organization in Bengkalis, Indonesia.

Literature Review

Workforce diversity

Diversity is a difference based on gender, religion, age, or race. As stated by Tuan et al. (2018), diversity is a characteristic that differentiates each individual. Workforce diversity is a variation of characteristics and personalities among employees in an organization that has been widely accepted in almost all organizations (Lee & Kim, 2019). Workforce diversity also refers to the numerous characteristics of employees that contribute to an organization (Cho et al., 2017). It includes a variety of social classes, cultures, and ethnic backgrounds of a group of people in an organization (Kundu & Mor, 2017). It is usually measured in terms of organizational tenure, scope of work, age, gender, ethnicity, and level of education (Mohammadi et al., 2017). Further, diversity can be seen in several types of diversity such as age, disability, gender, nationality, culture, sexual orientation, social class, religion, race, and ethnicity (Chui et al., 2015). Since diversity is associated with people's contributions from various racial, ethnic, religious, social, languages, origins, genders, and sexual orientations, they bring their different knowledge, backgrounds, experiences, and interests to mutual benefit (Williams et al., 2022).

Forms of discrimination

Since gender is considered one of the diversity characteristics in the workplace, it is vulnerable to both positive and negative impacts. Besides its positive impact, such as being productive at the social level (Alazzani et al., 2017), its negative impact is the occurrence of gender discrimination. It is a form of discrimination that occurs when someone is treated unfairly or differently based on their gender or sex. It also occurs when one gender does not receive the same treatment, position, and opportunities as the other gender (Zainol et al., 2019). Gender discrimination means the treatment of men and women differently. It occurs when men and women have different preferences (Lim & Ngo, 2020). In the view of Zainol et al. (2019), gender discrimination has long been accepted in society as the norm for centuries and is one of the reasons why women stop working. According to Yusrini (2017), it is similar to what has been observed in Indonesia, where women have less access to work than men, and when they do, their pay is typically lower. This is further substantiated by Saidon et al.'s (2017) study which found Malaysian women's political engagement is frequently viewed as mere supporters rather than leaders. Women face discrimination because of their ability to work. They are frequently perceived as inferior to men, preventing them from advancing to leadership positions (Fibrianto, 2016). This is evident from the discrimination experienced, such as in terms of salaries, where women frequently earn less and do not advance in their careers than men with equivalent credentials and experience (Fibrianto, 2016).

Apart from the issue of gender, religious and ethnic differences also lead to discrimination. Religious minorities for instance, are more likely to face discriminatory treatment and believe that their colleagues unfairly stereotype them (Schneider et al., 2022). It is especially noticeable when they do not share the same political or religious views as most of their peers or the general public. Some Muslim and Jewish women experience this as well when they wear a headscarf or hijab, which leads to feelings of discrimination at work and even damage relationships with employees (Schneider et al., 2022). Women who work in Malaysia and Indonesia also report this, claiming that they are not permitted to wear the hijab and are given little time for prayer (Choirunisa et al., 2018). On the other hand, discrimination against ethnic minorities can take many different forms, including unfair treatment, unfavorable stereotypes, exclusion, limitations on opportunities and resources, as well as acts of violence and persecution that cause harm to ethnic minorities (Setiawan et al., 2023).

Factors of Discrimination

Patriarchal culture is one of the reasons for gender discrimination to happen (Saidon et al., 2017). For example, discrimination continues in Indonesia because of the country's continuing dedication to patriarchal ideology (Nuraeni & Suryono, 2021). A patriarchal society believes that men should be at work and women should be at home (Kasim, 2022; Ning & Karubi, 2018). Based on popular opinion, gender discrimination prevents women from advancing to positions of authority and decision-making (Dahal, 2013). Additionally, society also views women as inferior to men (Suhaimi & Fakhruddin, 2021). This causes the perception of women as weak and unimportant in many contexts, including the workplace. This culture also makes people believe that men are more competent and substantial than women (Zainol et al., 2019). Lim and Ngo (2020) make their statements from a traditional perspective, believing that men can do better, especially in leadership positions. People still have a closed mindset, particularly in the workplace, due to this nonsensical thought.

Next, religious factors are also seen as factors influencing gender discrimination. For instance, religious academic scientists reported that they experienced workplace discrimination more frequently than their non-religious counterparts (Scheitle & Ecklund, 2018). Women who belong to religious minorities in America frequently experience discrimination in the form of negative perceptions about their aptitudes (Scheitle & Ecklund, 2018). According to studies by Scheitle et al. (2021), women and religious minorities experience stereotypes and social exclusion in distinct ways.

Possible Solutions to Minimize Discrimination

The problem of discrimination has several possible solutions. Lim and Ngo (2020) stated that an organization's job is to support employees in changing their perspectives by tolerating the weaknesses and situations of others. Increasing understanding of the rights of gender equality can reduce or even end discriminatory actions (Nuraeni & Suryono, 2021). To avoid discriminatory problems and prepare strategies for the future, a leader must effectively carry out his responsibilities by understanding the impact of diversity (Zhuwao et al., 2019). Further, Lucifora and Vigani (2016) suggest that having female organizational leaders will help reduce discrimination against women. Women are more likely to establish a work-life balance, support their employees, and not discriminate against men.

According to the study conducted by Baker and Lucas (2017), there are four strategies for solving this problem, i.e., moving outside of danger by finding a safe place, reducing the opportunity for harm, maintaining a safe space for dignity, and standing up for identity devaluation. Everyone deserves to work in an environment where they can feel safe and comfortable. Additionally, developing policies and regulations can decrease discrimination (SteelFisher et al., 2019; Khuzwayo, 2016). People can better comprehend cultural variations, life experiences, and viewpoints by developing a firmer grasp of identity (Setiawan et al., 2023). Activities that foster a sense of community, like social gatherings, cultural events, and community meetings, might reinforce the growth of solidarity. This leads to a more robust bonds and mutual respect that can be developed between individuals and communities with a greater understanding of identity (Setiawan et al., 2023).

Theory of Discrimination

According to Theodorson's (1979) theory of general discrimination, discrimination refers to "unequal treatment of individuals, or groups, based on something, usually categorical, or distinctive attributes, such as based on race, ethnicity, religion, or membership in social classes." Gender, age, health, ethnicity, and religious discrimination are among the prevalent forms of discrimination. Theodorson's (1979) theory provides an impartial and objective lens through which to analyze discrimination; it is appropriate for the present study. Instead of laying blame or emphasizing particular groups, it draws attention to the systemic and frequently inadvertent character of discriminatory practices. The idea also promotes looking at the societal norms and underlying power structures that support discrimination. In order to effectively address discrimination in all forms, solutions must be developed with this greater awareness.

Research Methodology

Research Design

This study uses a qualitative approach, specifically a case study research design, to collect data on the forms and causes of discrimination, and its potential solutions. Because of the flexibility of data collection, the qualitative approach is best suited to be utilized in this study. It enables a deeper understanding and better explanation of the research material, allowing data to be analyzed and conclusions drawn (Creswell, 2013). Meanwhile, a case study investigates a phenomenon in a small area or a small number of topics of interest at the micro level (Yin, 2014). Case study research is an in-depth exploration investigation that can help researchers understand complex issues, and it is becoming increasingly important in social science studies. In addition, a case study explores a phenomenon in a real-world setting. A case study is typically conducted through an in-depth analysis (Yin, 2014). A case study design is appropriate for this study because it aims to investigate and explore different types of discrimination, factors, and solutions to reduce discrimination. Thus, the case study design clearly describes the research subjects' real-world experiences.

Population and sample

The primary focus of the scientific study is the population, an extensive collection of individuals or objects. The population in this study involves employees at M Health Organization in Bengkalis, Indonesia, with a total of 154 employees. Sampling, according to Creswell (2013), is a sampling technique that involves determining specific criteria. It allows researchers to identify and select cases with a wealth of information, increasing the

effectiveness of the limited study resources available (Palinkas et al., 2015). Inaccurate sampling can produce incorrect data; therefore, it must be done correctly (Taherdoost, 2016). Purposeful sampling is employed intentionally to select individuals for inclusion in the study. Purposeful sampling is a commonly employed technique in qualitative research (Palinkas et al., 2015). It allows researchers to identify and select information-rich cases, maximizing the efficient utilization of limited resources available for the study (Palinkas et al., 2015). Hence, the sample for this study was chosen using the snowball sampling technique. The snowball sampling technique was used to select the sample for this study. Snowball sampling is a term that aims to collect samples, which are generally carried out after the research has begun and occur when researchers ask participants to recommend other people to become participants (Creswell, 2013). A total of six informants, consisting of two division leaders and four staff members (two female and four male employees) who have experienced and observed discrimination-related problems at M Health Organization, are selected as the sample. The total number of informants is determined based on data saturation. Saturation refers to the point in data collection when no new issues or insights are discovered, and the data begins to repeat itself, indicating that sufficient samples are reached (Saunders et al., 2018).

Data Collection Procedure

Ensuring proper procedures are followed by accurate investigations and data collection is essential. A semi-structured and in-depth interview is an effective data collection strategy used in this study to collect primary data. It is the most suitable strategy to be used in order to achieve specific research objectives and obtain detailed information regarding the issue of discrimination. The M Health Organization employees in Bengkalis, Indonesia, were selected as informants for this study. Since the researchers need to achieve the study objectives, interviews are done with the informants who offer their opinions, insights, and experiences in connection with the research objectives. The researchers devised the number of questions and divided the interview protocol into four sections. Section A aims to collect the informants' demographic information. Section B focuses on examining the forms of discrimination experienced by employees. Section C aims to analyze the factors responsible for discrimination. Finally, section D explores the possible solution of discrimination suggested by the informants.

The researchers sent an email and came directly to the said organization to meet the employees, describing the objectives of this research and requesting permission to conduct a study at the stated organization. After getting permission, the researchers contacted the informants by phone and email to schedule the interview appointment. All the informants gave their consent before the actual interview sessions were conducted. The researchers informed the informants that the sessions were audio recorded with their permission to ensure that the data could always be referred to and avoid misinterpretation. The informants were assured that their identities and other personal information were kept private. This is done to protect the informants' identities and ensure their confidentiality.

The researchers handed out the Information Sheet and the Interview Protocol before the interview started. This allows the informants to prepare the information they would share in the interview based on the background and objectives highlighted in the Information Sheet and the questions provided in the Interview Protocol. Since the researchers used a semi-structured interview, they had the flexibility to alter the questions depending on the situation of the interview and the informants' responses. The researchers were able to look deeper into the informants' experiences due to the openness of this semi-structured interview. The

average interview session is 43 minutes. Once the data collection was completed, the recorded audio data was transcribed into verbatim written documents for further analysis.

Data Analysis

Data analysis is a systematic process involving searching and organizing interview transcripts, notes, observations, or other written and visual resources the researcher obtains in qualitative research (Graue, 2015). Data analysis aims to ensure the research process is easier to understand and to get meaningful insights from the data. Thematic analysis was used to analyze and evaluate the information from semi-structured, in-depth interview transcripts. This involves carefully examining the data, identifying patterns, themes and relationships, and interpreting the data to better understand the subject under study. Additionally, the analysis was done to see if the data was consistent with the study's objectives. The researchers began sorting the data before continuing to code, categorize, and describe the patterns and themes in the data to simplify it further. To ensure that the study's objectives can be achieved, the qualitative data was coded using the NVivo 12 Plus software, along with methods for evaluating the research questions and generating new understandings from the data to use as a transcript after it has been collected.

Research Findings

The Demographic Information of the Informants

Table 1

Demographic Backgrounds of the Informants

Informant (pseudonym)	Azura	Bilal	Cardy	Daud	Eza	Fahri
Age	24	33	52	54	25	24
Gender	Female	Male	Male	Male	Female	Male
Religion	Islam	Islam	Islam	Islam	Islam	Islam
Ethnic group	Javanese	Malay	Malay	Buginese	Sundanese	Javanese
Academic background	Diploma	Diploma	Masters	Bachelor's degree	Diploma	Diploma
Position	Employee in the planning division	Employee in the planning division	Head of Division	Head of Division	Employee in the planning division	Employee in the planning division
Year of service	3 years	1 year	10 years	6 years	2 years	3 years
Monthly income	Rp. 1.800.000	Rp. 2.900.000	Rp. 5.000.000	Rp. 5.000.000	Rp. 1.800.000	Rp. 1.800.000

Table 1 provides the demographic information about four informants—Azura, Bilal, Cardy, Daud, Eza, and Fahri (pseudonyms)—encompassing key aspects such as their age, gender, religion, ethnic group, academic background, position, year of service in the organization, and monthly income. Azura, a 24-year-old Muslim female of Javanese ethnicity, holds a diploma and serves as an employee in the planning division with three years of experience, earning Rp. 1.800.000 per month. Bilal, a 33-year-old Muslim male of Malay ethnicity with a diploma, works as an employee in the planning division with one year of experience, earning Rp.

2.900.000 monthly. Cardy, a 52-year-old Muslim male of Malay ethnicity, possesses a master's degree and serves as the Head of the Division, contributing ten years of experience and receiving a monthly income of Rp. 5.000.000. Daud, a 54-year-old Muslim male of Buginese ethnicity, holds a bachelor's degree, works as the Head of Division with six years of experience, and earns Rp. 5.000.000 per month. Eza, a 25-year-old Muslim female of Sundanese ethnicity, holds a diploma and serves as an employee in the planning division with two years of experience, earning Rp. 1.800.000 per month. Lastly, Fahri, a 24-year-old Muslim male of Javanese ethnicity, holds a diploma, works as the employee in the planning division with three years of experience, and earns Rp. 1.800.000 per month.

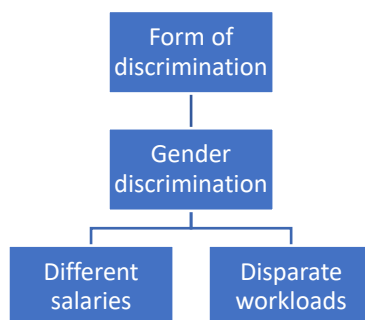


Figure 1. Form of Discrimination Experienced by the Employees of M Health Organization

Figure 1 shows there is only one form of discrimination experienced by employees of M Health Organization, i.e., gender discrimination.

Gender Discrimination

Two sub-themes were categorized under gender discrimination, i.e., different salaries and disparate workloads. As for the matter of different salaries, an informant called Azura shared her experience when she felt a difference in the treatment she received while working in the organization, particularly regarding the salary. She mentions receiving more and heavier tasks compared to male and female employees with the same level and salary. This is reflected in her narratives as follows:

“My work is more extensive and burdensome than other employees, and I receive a different salary. I envy employees with the same level.”

This also aligns with what an informant named Daud mentioned regarding the second sub-theme, i.e., disparate workloads. Daud, being one of the leaders in the organization, often receives reports or complaints from employees, one of which is a female worker who complained to Daud because she had to work more than her colleagues, who often left work earlier than the specified time but still received the same salary. He said:

“Yes, a female worker complained to me about the workload being heavier than her colleagues. She felt that a male colleague in her team did not work as much as she did and often went home earlier than the specified time.”

Daud identified the primary cause of this issue and found that the male worker perceived that women are better suited for indoor work, whereas men are better suited for outdoor work. He said as follows:

“After investigating the issue, it was found that this problem arose because of a perception that women were only skilled in indoor work while men were better suited for outdoor work. However, men and women should perform the same indoor and outdoor tasks.”

Factor of Discrimination

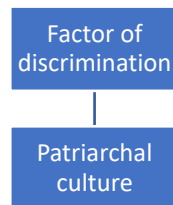


Figure 2. Factor of Discrimination Experienced by the Employees of M Health Organization

Figure 2 shows the factor of discrimination experienced by employees of M Health Organization, i.e., patriarchal culture.

Patriarchal Culture

In terms of the factor of discrimination, Daud believes that patriarchal culture is the cause of gender discrimination. It is manifested by an incident where a male employee thought women were better off working indoors. This is reflected in his narratives as follows:

“The problem we have faced is that male employees often go home before the set working hours and delegate their work to other workers who are women. This happens because male employees think that women are good at managing data and that it is better only to work indoors, whereas work in the field, such as visiting areas, is work that should only be done by men. After all, they have stronger energy than women. Of course, culture is one of the reasons that discrimination exists in organizations and outside, whether we realize it or not.”

Possible Solutions to Minimize Discrimination

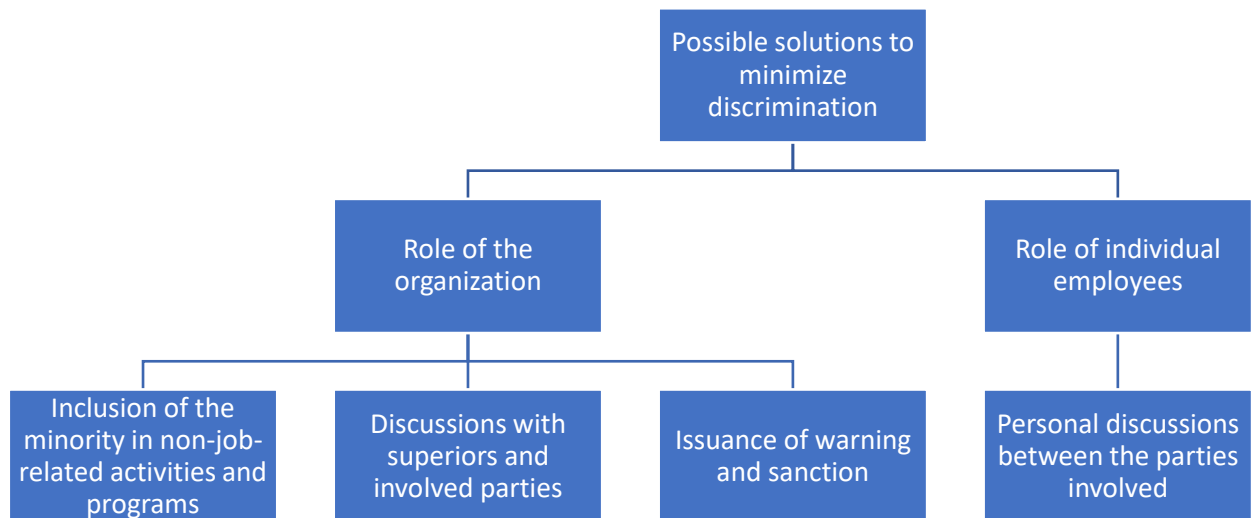


Figure 3. Possible Solutions to Minimize Discrimination Suggested by the Employees of M Health Organization

Figure 3 shows the possible solutions to minimize discrimination. The findings reveal two solutions suggested by the informants, namely, the role that the organization and the individual employees should play.

Role of the organization

Inclusion of the minority in non-job-related activities and programs

An informant named Cardy mentioned several actions taken as a division head to prevent discrimination, i.e., including employees in non-job-related activities and programs organized at the workplace. Due to having employees under his leadership who adhere to diverse faiths and ethnic groups, Cardy ensures that these employees do not feel subjected to differential treatment. Thus, when there are activities or programs beyond job-related tasks, such as religious and cultural programs, employees are not only allowed but are also encouraged to participate. Cardy emphasizes inclusivity by involving Christian employees in such events. This is reflected in his narratives as follows:

“In the workplace, discrimination must be avoided. In my division, where the majority of employees are Muslims, there is one employee who is a Christian. To prevent any feelings of difference based on beliefs, I grant permission for this employee to participate in all activities and programs, whether religious or not. Events like the celebration of Prophet Muhammad’s

birthday, Isra' Miraj, or welcoming the holy month of Ramadan extend invitations to and involve Christian employees. As these religious celebrations are also national holidays in Indonesia, the employee can observe them."

Discussions with superiors and involved parties

On the other hand, Bilal recommends resolving discrimination issues by discussing them with superiors to identify the root causes and find suitable solutions for all parties involved. He said:

"Superiors must take decisive action against discrimination, regardless of the reasons behind it. They should discuss the issue with the involved parties to understand whether it stems from personal problems or a lack of awareness about accepting diversity within the organization. Once the cause is identified, superiors can devise fair and just solutions for all parties."

Issuance of Warnings and Sanctions

In addition, Daud believes in issuing warnings or sanctions as a deterrent against discrimination. He shares an incident where a warning was issued, and a written agreement was made to prevent further occurrences. He shared his experience as follows:

"I brought up a discrimination case faced by a female employee with my supervisors, which resulted in an investigation. After gathering information, superiors addressed the issue with the involved parties, warning the male employee directly. A written warning was also provided, with agreed-upon sanctions for repeat incidents. The most severe sanction would be termination of employment. Taking such actions aims to prevent further negative impacts on organizational performance."

Role of individual employees

Personal discussions between the parties involved

About this issue, Eza and Fahri believe that resolving discrimination relies on the role of individual employees. They say addressing the problem involves a personal discussion between the parties involved, i.e., the perpetrator and the victim, to find a resolution. They said:

"The solution to discrimination problems lies in discussing them with each other, aiming to understand the root causes, and finding appropriate solutions. This process may or may not go smoothly, but individual initiative can resolve issues. Employees' issues should be resolved among colleagues, as involving superiors can complicate matters and create an uncomfortable atmosphere. If the problem reaches higher authorities, investigations will be conducted. While the victim may not face sanctions, the aftermath may still feel awkward and uncomfortable even after the issue is resolved. Therefore, employees should take the initiative to resolve problems among themselves."

Research Discussion

Form of Discrimination

The broad definition of discrimination, as highlighted by Theodorson (1979), which includes a variety of "categorical or distinctive attributes," such as race, ethnicity, religion, or social status, is where this study finds a considerable alignment. This study further supports

Theodorson's (1979) theory regarding how discrimination is addressed, providing a holistic knowledge of the problem. In relation to this, the study has found a form of discrimination experienced by the informants, i.e., gender discrimination. The findings of the study show that the form of gender discrimination that occurs in M Health Organization is males working in the field, and women were required to manage the organization data in the office. However, due to employment demands from superiors, women are still required to work outside, meaning that although they receive the same salary as males, female employees tend to put in more effort in the workplace. These findings are similar to the data gained by Fibrianto (2016) and Yusrini (2017), which align with the discrimination experienced by the informants in this study. Regarding disparate workloads, similar findings with Zainol et al. (2019) and Lim and Ngo (2020) can be observed too, where women stated that they must be as strong or more robust as men to be qualified for positions when they want to overcome challenges.

Factor of Discrimination

Theodorson (1979) promotes looking at the societal norms and underlying power structures that support discrimination. The informants stated that there is a common factor affected discrimination based on the interviews that were conducted. In terms of gender discrimination, the major contributing factor to such occurrence is patriarchal culture (Nuraeni & Suryono, 2021). Women are considered weak and unfit for leadership roles or top positions (Saidon et al., 2017; Fibrianto, 2016). This is parallel to the findings shown by Dahal (2013) and Lim and Ngo's (2020) studies, which stated that from a traditional viewpoint, men may do better, particularly in leadership roles. Zainol et al. (2019) further state that this culture also contributes to the societal perception that men are stronger and more capable than women.

Women experience discrimination at work because they believe they are underqualified for their positions and get unfair treatment. This finding is supported by Kasim (2022) and Ning and Karubi (2018) who found that women should exclusively work in the domestic sphere. Knowing that men are better at jobs requiring physical strength and outside activity, women are typically given different types of work, such as those that require just inside work or data management (Zainol et al., 2019). This is because women are considered to be physically weaker than men. This is consistent with the findings of Shen (2022), Sriwimon and Zilli (2017), and Suhaimi and Fakhruddin (2021), which show that because women are viewed as physically weak, their ability to work in organizations differs from men.

Possible Solutions to Minimize Discrimination

The findings have shown that solutions can be made when the organization and individual employees play their roles in minimizing discrimination at their workplace. For instance, organizations should include all employees in non-job-related activities and programs held at the workplace. All staff members participate equally in indoor and outdoor organizational programs and activities regardless of their religious affiliation and ethnic backgrounds. Programs such as social gatherings and cultural and religious events can all help foster a sense of community and strengthen solidarity (Setiawan et al., 2023).

In addition, the informants also suggested bringing up this discrimination issue with superiors and discussing it with the involved parties. This is parallel with Lim and Ngo (2020), who contend that organizations should help staff members shift their viewpoints by accepting the shortcomings and circumstances of others. All of these can be done through serious

discussion between the superiors and the involved parties on how to solve the problem (Zhuwao et al., 2019). This further may lead to an increasing understanding of the employees' rights regardless of their differences (Nuraeni & Suryono, 2021).

Furthermore, leaders enforcing warnings or penalties to ensure the same incident does not occur again is a relevant mechanism to minimize discrimination. Leaders can issue warnings to perpetrators and enact new laws that outline a more equitable and transparent allocation of labor. This is in line with the issue raised by Khuzwayo (2016) and SteelFisher et al. (2019), which asserts that laws must be made to lessen gender discrimination and a leader must successfully carry out his responsibilities by comprehending the impact of diversity in order to prevent discriminatory issues and plan solutions for the future.

Finally, the informants proposed that the discrimination issue could also be handled independently between the individual employees without involving the superiors. It can be done by having a conversation between the perpetrators and the victims and having them devise a solution together. It aligns with the strategies highlighted by Baker and Lucas (2017), i.e., reducing the opportunity for harm and maintaining a safe space for dignity. Understandably, some employees would feel more secure, and they would be free to discuss it without the presence of their superiors lest their image and reputation be jeopardized or tarnished, which would affect their superiors' perception of them.

Recommendations

Recommendations for Organizations

For any organization that deals with it, discrimination is a significant obstacle. Thus, recognizing and comprehending the issue is the first action that organizations must take. To better understand the cause of the issue, it is critical to identify forms of discrimination in the workplace and the individuals who are accountable for them. It is also essential to comprehend the factors of discrimination and develop solutions. The study's findings indicate that, on the whole, the informants believe that the organization can directly handle this issue by conducting a comprehensive measure. Organizations should create relevant policies to help staff members better comprehend discrimination to address this issue. Organizations should communicate their decisions to ensure that no one feels disadvantaged and everyone can accept them.

Recommendations for Future Research

To gather more affluent and reliable data, future researchers can interview as many informants as possible and fully involve them in future studies. Searching for companies with greater workforce diversity is recommended to enhance the caliber of research findings. Substantial diversity can offer a range of viewpoints, but it is also possible that some connected issues will surface. It is recommended that researchers approach informants directly and perform in-person interviews with them. It is believed that by doing this, informants will be more honest and focused in their responses.

Conclusion

This study indicates that discrimination still exists in the organization under study, particularly gender discrimination. Even the findings of this qualitative study cannot generalize the phenomenon in the organization where the study took place; however, they gave us certain information that this reality is not unfamiliar based on past studies conducted by previous researchers. Such discrimination is perceived to stem from the patriarchal culture that is still

practiced today, at least by the employees in the organization. If individuals, particularly women, were denied rights, this would detrimentally affect an organization with a diverse workforce. They deserve to work similar workloads and earn similar wages, just like their male counterparts. Simultaneously, perpetuating this discrimination would undermine the morale of the individuals involved. This study contributes to a more profound understanding of the mechanisms of discrimination and offers practical insights to organizations looking to develop fully inclusive workplaces. It uses pertinent research to create thorough knowledge and allows further studies in other organizational contexts. Addressing these sensitive issues head-on can create a more equitable and thriving workplace for everyone.

Acknowledgement

We want to extend our gratitude to all informants, i.e., the employees of M Health Organization, Bengkalis, Indonesia and fellow colleagues who supported us technically and intellectually throughout the research. Warmest thanks are also dedicated to our faculty, Faculty of Social Science and Humanities and institution, Universiti Teknologi Malaysia and respected reviewers.

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