

BEYOND BOUNDARIES: REDEFINING GENDER ROLES IN PHILIPPINE WORKSPACES

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Abstract

Background: This case study examines the dynamics of gender roles within Philippine workplaces, focusing on the influence of historical, cultural, and legislative frameworks. It addresses persistent gender stereotypes, the unequal representation and treatment of women in leadership roles, and the pervasive impact of traditional masculine leadership standards.

Methods: The study employs semi-structured interviews and surveys with ten key informants selected to represent a diverse range of industries. This approach aims to capture both the historical impediments to and progressive strides toward gender equality in the workplace.

Findings: Findings indicate a generational shift in the perception of gender roles, with younger workers experiencing less gender bias than older cohorts. The research also highlights significant systemic barriers, such as the gender wage gap and the glass ceiling, which hinder female advancement and impact economic outcomes. These results are contextualized within the broader Filipino socio-cultural landscape and feminist advocacy efforts.

Implications: The study underscores the critical need for ongoing reforms to challenge and change the conventional narratives surrounding gender in professional settings. It advocates for systemic changes that promote gender diversity and inclusivity, aiming to foster a more equitable workplace environment that transcends traditional gender constraints.

Keywords: gender roles; Philippine workspaces; gender inequality

Introduction

Gender stereotypes can create several predicaments for women leaders, who are often evaluated against a "masculine" standard of leadership, leaving them with limited and unfavorable options regardless of their behavior and performance as leaders (Catalyst 2007). The 2030 goal for gender equality, as outlined in the UN Sustainable Development Goals, focuses on women's economic empowerment and participation in the private sector (Makati Business Club, 2019). Global companies have deliberately promoted inclusive growth by enhancing women's participation and representation across various roles and levels in the workforce. In recent years, the international discourse surrounding feminism and gender dynamics in the workplace has gained increasing attention, particularly in countries like the Philippines, where social and cultural norms continuously evolve (Castro & Mamauag, 2016). Despite comprising half of the working-age population, the labor force in the Philippines remains disproportionately skewed towards certain genders, a phenomenon influenced by entrenched social constructs and traditions (Asian Development Bank, 2018). This imbalance persists despite strides made in advocating for gender equality and women's rights, underscoring the need to address obstacles hindering equal opportunities and rights for all individuals (Atienza & Javate-de Dios, n.d.).

Gender in The Philippines: A Brief Historical Review

The examination of gender roles and relationships in the Philippines necessitates a thorough exploration of the nation's historical context. Stanton (2014) delves into the challenges women encounter as they endeavor to assert their voices and positions within predominantly patriarchal societies, offering insights that resonate deeply within the Philippine setting. Notably, the arrival of Spanish colonizers marked a seminal moment in the shaping of gender dynamics. The imposition of Catholicism introduced rigid gender norms, relegating women to subservient roles both within the household and within the church.

Mojares (2006) provides additional insights into this historical continuum, emphasizing the profound impact of the "Marian ideal" – a religious construct centered on the veneration of the Virgin Mary. This construct exerted a constraining

influence on female autonomy, reinforcing patriarchal systems by depicting women as morally virtuous, subservient, and primarily oriented towards maternal roles.

Despite socio-political changes following independence, achieving gender equality remained a formidable challenge. However, the 1970s witnessed the emergence of the feminist movement, led by advocates such as Aguilar (2010), who fervently challenged entrenched patriarchal structures and fervently advocated for women's rights. Legislative initiatives, including the enactment of the Magna Carta of Women, marked significant strides toward addressing gender inequality and fostering women's empowerment across diverse sectors (Kerkvliet, 2002). By situating gender dynamics within the historical narrative of the Philippines, this review offers valuable insights into the multifaceted struggles and advancements in pursuing gender equality and women's empowerment throughout the nation's history.

Gender Wage Gap

Accusations of gender inequality in employment are a global issue, manifesting in various forms, including wage discrepancies based solely on gender. This phenomenon is evidenced by significant wage gaps where men and women receive different salaries for performing identical jobs. This kind of discrimination reflects a deep-seated issue that pervades many societies, affecting economic outcomes for individuals based on their gender.

The issue of gender wage gaps in the Philippines is extensively studied, providing insights into this inequality's historical and systemic nature. Using data from the Philippine Labor Force Survey, Galang (2016) thoroughly analyzes the evolution of gender wage disparities in the country. The study explores how salary differences vary across industries, professions, and job positions, shedding light on the multifaceted dynamics of gender-based pay inequalities. It highlights that these disparities are not merely incidental but are embedded within the structural frameworks of employment sectors.

Furthermore, Dacuycuy (2015) employs a decomposition analysis to delve into the factors contributing to wage disparities between genders in the Philippines. This analysis reveals how different labor market amenities, discriminatory practices, and disparities in human capital endowments play roles in perpetuating wage

inequality. This work is crucial in identifying the root causes of wage disparities, offering a foundation for addressing these inequities effectively.

While focusing on broader issues of gender discrimination, Castro (2016) discusses the challenges Filipino women face in ascending to leadership positions—a realm often associated with higher compensation. This study covers the wage gap and broader discriminatory workplace practices, such as sexism and the glass ceiling effect. Castro's work underscores the necessity for targeted interventions that promote gender diversity and equal opportunities in professional advancement, emphasizing that achieving such equity goes beyond addressing wage disparities to encompassing a more inclusive work culture.

These studies collectively underscore the complex and entrenched nature of gender discrimination in the workplace, highlighting the need for comprehensive strategies to combat these inequities at various levels of employment and policy-making. The intricacies of gender dynamics within the Filipino workforce serve as a microcosm for understanding broader issues related to gender and productivity within organizations. This research paper sheds light on the multifaceted challenges facing feminism and gender relations among Filipino laborers. It is of utmost importance to acknowledge and honor the invaluable contributions of Filipino feminists, activists, and scholars who have long been at the forefront of the struggle for gender equality and women's rights. Their unwavering dedication and tireless efforts have heightened awareness and catalyzed meaningful advancements in addressing gender disparities in the workplace and across broader societal contexts.

Moreover, the title "Beyond Boundaries" resonates with the principles advocated by Filipino feminist scholars such as Mina Roces and Caroline Hau, who advocate for a paradigm shift in understanding and addressing gender dynamics in Philippine society. Roces (2002) emphasizes the need to transcend conventional gender norms, while Hau (2002) underscores the importance of challenging patriarchal structures and promoting gender equality and social justice.

By amplifying the voices of these scholars and engaging in critical discourse, the research aims to contribute to ongoing conversations surrounding feminism and

gender equality in the Philippines, ultimately striving toward a future characterized by justice, equity, and inclusivity for all labor force members.

Literature review and conceptual framework

This review of the literature section synthesizes the interplay between cultural frameworks and gender dynamics within organizations by integrating gender construction theories, the glass ceiling phenomenon, and Hofstede's cultural dimensions. Each perspective offers critical insights into the professional and societal constructs of gender roles.

Gender Construction and Social Theory: Theories by Bell Hooks (1984) and Judith Butler (1990) provide profound insights into how gender roles are socially constructed and performed. Hooks emphasizes the need to challenge traditional gender conceptions to empower feminist discourse and alleviate the suffering of marginalized women. Butler elaborates that gender is a performative construct shaped within a rigid social framework rather than an innate attribute. These perspectives reveal that gender roles are dynamically recreated through societal norms and individual actions, allowing for an examination of how organizational dynamics can perpetuate or challenge traditional gender roles.

The Glass Ceiling: The glass ceiling metaphor illustrates the invisible barriers that prevent women from ascending to top leadership roles, highlighting the real-world challenges despite advancements in education and workforce participation. Research shows that women face systemic obstacles like biased hiring practices and limited networking opportunities, which are exacerbated by enduring stereotypes and intersectional discrimination (Morrison et al., 1987). These barriers reveal women's practical difficulties in achieving leadership roles, especially those from diverse backgrounds.

Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions: Hofstede's theory, particularly the masculinity versus femininity axis, offers a lens through which to view the cultural influences on gender roles. High-masculinity cultures value competitiveness and assertiveness, traits traditionally associated with male dominance. In contrast, high-femininity cultures emphasize nurturing roles, cooperation, and quality of life,

supporting environments that foster gender equality. This framework illustrates how cultural values shape individual behavior and organizational practices, influencing leadership styles and policy formulation.

Integrating these theories makes it evident that a complex array of social theories, cultural norms, and structural barriers influences gender dynamics in the workplace. The performative nature of gender interacts with systemic impediments and cultural predispositions, highlighting the need for organizations to adopt inclusive policies and practices that promote diversity and equality.

In conclusion, understanding gender dynamics within the workplace requires a comprehensive approach that considers theoretical insights into gender construction, recognizes real-world barriers in leadership, and evaluates cultural contexts shaping gender roles. Organizations must address these dimensions to strategize the effective dismantling of gender inequalities and the effective creation of inclusive environments. The study aims to explore strategies for fostering a more equitable and inclusive workplace environment by drawing on empirical data, feminist theory frameworks, and testimonials, mainly focusing on the nuanced dynamics in Filipino workplaces. This holistic approach enables a deeper understanding of the factors that contribute to gender disparities and facilitates the development of effective interventions to promote gender equity in professional settings.

Research Methodology

A. Population and Sampling: The study targets Filipino workers from various industries to examine gender equality issues. A group of ten key informants who met the selection criteria and provided consent were involved in the study. These participants were chosen to represent diverse perspectives across different professional fields.

B. Research Instrument: The methodology includes semi-structured interviews with a subset of the survey respondents. The questions focused on the following factors: Access to Career Opportunities, Workplace Safety and Comfort, Societal Pressures on Gender Roles, Impact of Patriarchal Culture, Imposter

Syndrome, Leadership Roles and Gender Biases, Microaggressions and Subtle Sexism, Networking and Mentorship Opportunities, Role of Media in Promoting Gender Equality, Empowerment to Assert Rights.

C. Data Collection: The data collection process began with the deployment of a survey questionnaire in March 2024. Following the survey, selected key informants participated in semi-structured interviews from March 14 to March 25, 2024, to better understand the evolving concept of gender in the workplace and its broader societal implications. Key informants were encouraged to share personal stories and respond to open-ended questions to provide nuanced insights. Ten statements include the following factors: access to career opportunities,

D. Data Analysis: The frequency distribution and mean were used to analyze the data in the questionnaire. The in-depth interview data was summarized to support the questionnaire result.

Findings

1. Key informants' Profile

The survey includes diverse professionals from academia, freelancing, technology, customer service, and management sectors, each providing unique insights into gender dynamics in their respective fields. Key informants range in age from 22 to 49 years, with an average age of 29.5 years, and are predominantly female (8 females and 2 males), aligning closely with the survey's focus on gender equality in the workplace. The respondents offer a variety of perspectives, from a college instructor discussing educational challenges to a freelancer addressing the nuances of self-employment. The tech sector is strongly represented by roles such as social media analysts and programmers, while customer service positions provide viewpoints on interpersonal dynamics. Moreover, roles in management and administration, like a sales manager and a virtual assistant, add organizational insights. This blend of young and more experienced individuals in entry-level and senior positions enriches the dialogue on workplace experiences and gender equality.

2. Gender Roles in Philippine Workspaces

As discovered through the distribution of questionnaire surveys, there is a semi-definitive consensus that though gender relations have unequivocally improved, there is still a lingering presence of prejudice against female workers, precisely when it comes to positions of power. There is a noticeable division of opinions and responses between the young and newly employed and those who are tenured, with the younger demographic claiming to witness little to no such instances of gender marginalization. The responses from ten diverse respondents reveal consistent perceptions regarding gender issues in the workplace across different demographics and industries in the Philippines. The survey results highlight various issues and perceptions regarding gender equality and workplace challenges for women in the Philippines. The highest mean score (4.4) factors are the Impact of Patriarchal Culture, Leadership Roles and Gender Biases, Microaggressions and Subtle Sexism, and the Role of Media and Empowerment to Assert Rights. It is followed by the factor of mean 4.3, which is Societal Pressures on Gender Roles. The lowest mean score is 3.2 on Workplace Safety and Comfort. These findings illustrate a landscape where progress and ongoing challenges coexist, highlighting areas where focused efforts are needed to achieve true gender equality, especially regarding leadership opportunities, combating subtle sexism, and enhancing the supportive roles of media and empowerment initiatives. Details are in Table 1.

Table 1*Gender Roles in the Philippine Workspaces as Perceived by the Key-informants.*

Statements	Mean	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
		n	n	n	n	n
1. Women in the Philippines face significant challenges in accessing equal opportunities for career advancement compared to men.	3.7	2	3	5	0	0
2. I have felt uncomfortable/unsafe due to gender-oriented harassment/discrimination in my workplace.	3.2	0	5	3	1	1
3. Women in the Philippines often face societal pressure to conform to traditional gender roles, limiting their career choices and aspirations.	4.3	6	3	0	0	1
4. The culture of a traditional patriarchal system in the Philippines negatively impacts women's experiences in the workplace.	4.4	4	6	0	0	0
5. Women in the Philippines are more likely to experience imposter syndrome compared to men in similar positions.	4.1	3	5	2	0	0
6. Women in the Philippines are often overlooked for leadership roles due to traditional gender biases.	4.4	6	2	2	0	0
7. Women in the Philippines are often subjected to microaggressions and subtle forms of sexism in their day-to-day work interactions.	4.4	4	6	0	0	0
8. Women in the Philippines have more access to networking opportunities and mentorship programs aimed at supporting their professional growth than they did a decade ago.	3.6	3	5	1	1	0
9. The media in the Philippines play a significant role in promoting gender equality and challenging stereotypes in the workplace.	4.4	5	4	1	0	0
10. Overall, women in the Philippines feel more empowered to assert their rights and advocate for gender equality in their workplaces compared to previous generations.	4.4	5	4	1	0	0

3. Views from the in-depth interview

As for the semi-structured interviews, the researcher decided to highlight three demographics. Subject (A) is a tenured employee with experience in multiple industries; Subject (B) is a fresh graduate experiencing the early stages of employment; and Subject (C) is a part-time working college student.

Through the interviews, Subject (A) shared their experiences working in industries such as customer service and management, wherein there were alarming instances of inappropriate predatory behavior stemming from people of the opposite gender in positions of power, cases in which they and their peers would stand their ground, they would find themselves in unfavorable situations when it comes to moving up to more prominent employment roles. While under a different company, it was said that male employees were favored when it came to specific roles, which (A) suspected was because of the advantage of the male physical capabilities.

Subject (A) also brought up gender roles in a sense that they are traditionally male-oriented, so much so that for female workers to succeed in their industries, they would have to *"work as if you're a man,"* which makes it *"difficult for women to assert themselves"* despite witnessing successful women leaders and business owners who have reached their peaks *"not without a lot of heartaches"* and marginalization. As they witnessed the rise of these women in high positions and conversed with them, one major social factor that the researcher has learned is the fact that some of these successful women have chosen to refrain from relationships and families in fear of the obligation of being a mother, mothers being traditionally viewed as the caretaker of the family and how that sense of responsibility has a tendency to hinder one's professional growth.

As for Subjects (B) and (C), being much younger and very early in their career, they inevitably carry differing sentiments from Subject (A), though not wholly. They have witnessed and experienced increased employment opportunities for women in a much wider array of industries, mainly administrative positions, indicative of a contemporary shift towards inclusivity and away from gender biases. However, it is not lost on Subject (B) how lingering traces of entrenched gender stereotyping, such as women being primarily viewed as caretakers, impacting the division of labor,

limitation of growth, and performance expectations contribute to the disparities of wages and career advancement across genders. At the same time, Subject (C) elaborated further on the inclusion of not only traditional genders, wherein the LGBTQIA+ community has been seeing better treatment and opportunities, as well as the rise of a feminist movement during the presidential campaign of Leni Robredo in 2022.

According to Subject (B), despite the welcomed and accepted growth of the population of female workers, the ever-looming presence of "the glass ceiling" continues to be a hindrance to the advancement of societal views on gender dynamics in the workplace, while Subject (C), being a part-time worker experiencing employment earlier than most, had already witnessed reforms towards a brighter, more inclusive future for gender equality in the Philippine workplace "but not enough" as they stated.

In sum, the semi-structured interviews revealed the following key points. *Established Employee Challenges:* Subject A experienced gender-based biases, noting a workplace preference for males in physically demanding roles and the necessity for women to emulate male work styles for success. *Career Sacrifices:* Successful women often avoid family life due to traditional caretaking expectations, impacting their career opportunities. *Younger Workers' Observations:* Subjects B and C noted increased workplace inclusivity and opportunities for women, particularly in administrative roles, but highlighted persistent gender stereotypes affecting career advancement and wages. *Persistent Glass Ceiling:* Despite progress, barriers like the "glass ceiling" restrict more profound changes in gender dynamics within the workplace. *Reduction in Harassment:* All subjects reported a decline in overt gender-oriented harassment, indicating gradual improvements in workplace culture.

It should be noted that all subjects had experienced less gender-oriented harassment and biases from their contemporaries, seniors, and administrators in the contemporary professional spaces; though it may still be in practice elsewhere, it is slowly being abolished and exposed as discriminatory and consequential.

Discussion

The responses from the survey highlight a complex web of gender-related challenges and advancements in the workplace in the Philippines, underscoring the interplay of societal norms, workplace culture, and evolving gender perceptions. Each of these factors influences the others, creating a dynamic of cause and effect that shapes the professional landscape for women. Among the factors surveyed, five stood out with remarkably high mean scores, reflecting critical areas of concern and progress in the workplace regarding gender equality in the Philippines. These include:

1. Impact of Patriarchal Culture

The highest mean score of 4.4 indicates a widespread consensus that the patriarchal system significantly hampers women's experiences at work. This system, deeply embedded within the societal framework, often results in unequal treatment and diminished career opportunities for women. The necessity for cultural shifts and gender sensitivity training in organizations is underscored, highlighting the need to dismantle these systemic barriers to foster an inclusive work environment. The finding underscores that patriarchal systems historically ingrained through colonization and religious influences have long dictated gender roles, positioning women in subservient societal and professional roles (Mojares, 2006; Stanton, 2014). This historical context provides a backdrop for understanding the persistent patriarchal attitudes that affect contemporary workplace dynamics and women's career opportunities.

Furthermore, the glass ceiling metaphor describes the invisible barriers that prevent women from rising to top leadership positions despite their qualifications and capabilities. This aligns with the survey findings that highlight how traditional gender biases and patriarchal culture deter women from ascending to leadership roles. The theory suggests that these barriers are systemic, involving biased hiring practices and limited networking opportunities further exacerbated by stereotypes and intersectional discrimination. It illustrates women's real-world challenges, echoed in the survey responses regarding leadership roles and career advancement barriers.

Likewise, Hofstede's dimensions, particularly the masculinity versus femininity axis, offer insights into how cultural values impact gender roles within the workplace. Cultures that score high on masculinity value competitiveness and assertiveness, traits often associated with male dominance in leadership and decision-making roles. This theory correlates with the survey findings on the role of patriarchal systems in the workplace, where such cultural values maintain gender disparities. In contrast, cultures that emphasize femininity support nurturing roles and equality, aligning with the survey's findings on the growing empowerment of women to advocate for gender equality and the supportive role of media in promoting these values. Studies suggest that patriarchal norms pervasively influence workplace behavior, severely impacting women's performance and organizational citizenship behavior. This patriarchal influence manifests as both overt discrimination and subtle biases, which not only undermine women's professional roles but also reinforce gender stereotypes within organizational settings (Adisa, Cooke, & Iwowo, 2020).

2. Leadership Roles and Gender Biases

Scoring a mean of 4.4, the factor highlights the persistent gender biases that hinder women's ascent to leadership positions. These traditional biases restrict women's career paths and contribute to a cultural norm that undervalues their leadership capabilities. Effective measures to counteract these biases include implementing targeted leadership development programs for women and equitable promotion policies to ensure fair leadership opportunities (Catalyst, 2007; Castro, 2016).

The theories of Bell Hooks and Judith Butler on the social construction of gender roles elucidate how societal norms and individual behaviors shape gender dynamics within organizations, influencing career choices and aspirations (Hooks, 1984; Butler, 1990). This understanding supports survey findings about the pervasive impact of societal pressures on gender roles.

Research by Adisa, Cooke, & Iwowo (2020) underscores how patriarchal norms significantly contribute to the underrepresentation of women in leadership. They advocate for active organizational efforts in promoting gender equality.

Additionally, Ryan & Haslam (2005) introduce the "glass cliff" concept, where women in leadership positions are often placed in precarious roles. An archival study of FTSE 100 companies showed that those appointing women during stock-market declines had performed worse in prior months compared to those appointing men, indicating an additional challenge faced by women leaders during unstable times.

3. Microaggressions and Subtle Sexism

The prevalence of microaggressions and subtle forms of sexism in the workplace is a significant concern, as these behaviors contribute to a hostile environment that can hinder women's professional and personal growth. These subtle forms of discrimination, such as microaggressions and implicit biases, are often unnoticed, yet they persistently undermine gender equality. Education and cultural shifts in the workplace are vital to address and eradicate these issues.

Subtle gender biases are indirect forms of discrimination that lead to severe psychological effects, including stereotype threat and social identity threat, particularly prevalent in academic settings (Tran et al. 2019). Women are more likely to perceive and be affected by these biases, impacting their satisfaction and perceptions of discrimination at work.

In the Philippines, subtle gender biases manifest in various nuanced ways, such as tone policing and behavior expectations that label women as "bossy" or "aggressive" for displaying assertiveness—a trait praised by male colleagues. Frequent interruptions during meetings and "mom-shaming" also undermine women's professional contributions and reinforce traditional caretaker roles, contributing to the gender wage gap. Addressing these microaggressions through dedicated training and inclusive policies is crucial for fostering a respectful and equitable workplace environment (RALIANCE, 2020). Recognizing and mitigating these biases is essential to creating a workplace where all employees can thrive without the added challenge of combating gender-based stereotypes and prejudices.

4. Role of Media in Promoting Gender Equality

The media's role in shaping societal views towards gender equality also received a high score, reflecting its potent influence in challenging existing stereotypes and advocating for gender equality. The respondents noted the media's

significant role in promoting gender equality, suggesting its potential to effect change by highlighting successful women and advocating for more equitable treatment across genders. The role of media in shaping and challenging societal norms cannot be overstated. Media portrayals influence public perceptions and can either perpetuate stereotypical images or help break down gender biases by highlighting women's diverse roles and successes, thus supporting a shift toward gender equality (Castro & Mamauag, 2016). The media plays a critical role in either perpetuating or challenging stereotypes. Positive media portrayal of women in diverse roles can challenge stereotypes and influence public perceptions and policies.

5. Empowerment to Assert Rights

This score highlights a positive trend where women feel increasingly empowered to advocate for their rights and pursue equality in the workplace. This empowerment is likely a result of broader societal changes, improved legal frameworks, and enhanced awareness of gender issues, indicating a shift towards greater gender equality. The increased empowerment of women to assert their rights and advocate for gender equality is both a cause and effect of the changing perceptions. As societal views shift and more women occupy leadership roles, there is a corresponding increase in advocacy for rights and equality, creating a virtuous cycle of empowerment and change. The persistent gender wage gap highlights ongoing economic discrimination, reflecting deeper societal and cultural biases that affect women's financial independence and career growth. Studies like those by Galang (2016) and Dacuycuy (2015) delve into the systemic nature of these disparities in the Philippines, offering a foundation for addressing these inequalities effectively. The emergence and impact of feminist movements in the Philippines, which vigorously challenge the patriarchal structures and advocate for women's rights, reflect a significant drive towards empowerment (Aguilar, 2010). Legislative actions, such as the Magna Carta of Women, represent concrete steps toward dismantling barriers and fostering empowerment across diverse sectors (Kerkvliet, 2002).

These high-scoring factors highlight areas where significant issues persist, such as in leadership roles and daily workplace interactions, and areas of positive change, such as empowerment and media influence. Addressing these issues

comprehensively is crucial to advancing gender equality in the workplace. Each of these elements, when analyzed together, paints a comprehensive picture of the multifaceted challenges and the intertwined solutions necessary for advancing gender equality in the workplace. The synthesis of historical insights, current challenges, and progressive movements provides a roadmap for understanding and addressing the structural and societal barriers perpetuating gender disparities.

The title "Beyond Boundaries: Redefining Gender Roles in Philippine Workspaces" illuminates and redefines the meaning of gender in the workplace, especially in the Philippines, advocating not to view gender as a statistic. "Gender roles in the workplace" within itself can be viewed as a reductive statement in most cases, as we should not reduce professional roles and status to stereotypes. Individuals should be viewed for their skills and excellence in the field or industry. "Gender, like race and social class, is a social construction." (Ore, 2018). To withhold traditional standards in today's day and age is a detriment to the potential of the very core of our society.

Society has grown and developed past the need for gender biases. We have already made waves of improvement regarding feminism and activism for equality; social constructs should not dictate any individual's pursuit of professional excellence. The contemporary state of gender in the Philippines has shown great development with the compliance to policies such as the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) (Atienza, n.d.), and this growth is indicative of social reform and steps towards shattering the ever-present glass ceiling.

Conclusion

The survey findings regarding "Redefining Gender Roles in Philippine Workspaces" highlight significant challenges and reveal a complex interplay of developments influenced by societal norms, workplace culture, and evolving gender perceptions. Key insights include:

Patriarchal Culture and Glass Ceiling: The survey shows a clear consensus that patriarchal norms, deeply ingrained in society, limit women's opportunities for

career advancement and leadership roles, evidenced by the highest mean score of 4.4. These traditional structures often lead to unequal treatment and restricted career growth for women, highlighting the persistent influence of historical and cultural constructs on contemporary workplace dynamics.

Leadership and Gender Biases: Alongside patriarchal culture, there are persistent gender biases that hinder women from rising to leadership positions. The data suggest that traditional gender roles continue to undermine women's perceived capabilities in leadership, underscoring the need for targeted interventions such as leadership development programs explicitly aimed at increasing female representation in senior roles.

Microaggressions and Subtle Sexism: Microaggressions and subtle forms of sexism permeate the workplace, contributing to an environment that can be hostile and detrimental to women's professional growth. Addressing these issues requires recognizing and combating such behaviors and fostering a cultural shift towards more inclusive and respectful workplace practices.

Role of Media: The media plays a critical role in shaping societal views and challenging existing gender stereotypes. With a significant score reflecting its influence, the media's portrayal of women in diverse and empowering roles is pivotal in promoting gender equality and empowering women, helping to shift public perceptions and encourage systemic change.

Empowerment and Advocacy: There is a positive trend in women's empowerment, where more women are advocating for their rights and pushing for gender equality, supported by broader societal changes, enhanced legal frameworks, and heightened awareness. This empowerment is crucial for driving further changes and ensuring women can challenge discriminatory practices effectively.

This narrative underscores the need for ongoing efforts to redefine gender roles in the workplace in the Philippines, emphasizing the importance of dismantling entrenched biases, enhancing support systems, and leveraging media influence to create a more equitable professional landscape for all genders.

Suggestions

To address the findings and foster gender equality in the workplace in the Philippines, here are several constructive suggestions:

1. Combatting Patriarchal Culture:

1.1 *Cultural and Organizational Change*: Implement comprehensive diversity and inclusion training across all levels of organizations to challenge patriarchal norms and promote gender sensitivity. Encourage initiatives that break down traditional gender roles and celebrate diverse leadership styles.

1.2 *Policy Advocacy*: Work with policymakers to advocate for and implement laws that ensure equal opportunities and treatment for women in the workplace. Support policies that address and penalize discriminatory practices.

2. Leadership Roles and Gender Biases:

2.1 *Leadership Development Programs*: Create and support programs explicitly aimed at women's leadership development to prepare them for and support them in leadership positions. This could include mentorship programs and leadership training that addresses the unique challenges faced by women.

2.2 *Promotion and Recruitment Policies*: Review and revise recruitment and promotion policies to ensure they are fair and transparent, actively promoting gender equality. This includes establishing clear criteria for promotions that do not discriminate based on gender.

3. Microaggressions and Subtle Sexism:

3.1 *Awareness and Intervention Programs*: Develop workshops and seminars to educate employees about microaggressions and subtle sexism, recognizing them and intervening. Promote an organizational culture that does not tolerate any form of sexism.

3.2 *Reporting Mechanisms*: Strengthen reporting mechanisms to ensure employees can report incidents of microaggressions and sexism safely and without fear of retaliation.

4. Role of Media:

4.1 *Collaboration with Media*: Partner with media outlets to highlight and promote stories of successful women leaders and initiatives that support gender

equality. Encourage media to challenge gender stereotypes and showcase diverse and equitable representations of gender.

4.2 *Media Literacy Campaigns*: Support and promote media literacy programs that educate the public on recognizing and criticizing sexist and stereotypical portrayals in media.

5. Empowerment to Assert Rights:

5.1 *Support Networks*: Establish and support networks for women in the workplace to share experiences, offer support, and mobilize around gender equality issues.

5.2 *Legal and Advocacy Support*: Provide access to legal and advocacy resources for women to navigate and challenge discriminatory practices, enhancing their ability to advocate for their rights effectively.

By implementing these suggestions, organizations can make significant strides in addressing the root causes of gender inequality, thereby creating a more inclusive and equitable working environment. These efforts require sustained commitment and collaboration across various sectors and levels of society to effect change truly.

Limitations of the study

The methodology of this study on gender equality among Filipino workers has several limitations, as follows. The small sample size, with only ten informants, means the findings may not be broadly applicable across various industries. Selection bias: the selection process for participants needs to be clarified, potentially leading to an unrepresentative sample. The interview scope depends on participant articulation during semi-structured interviews, which might affect data consistency and depth. Temporal limitations and the short duration of data collection may not capture enduring trends in gender attitudes. Subjectivity, the qualitative nature of data, and potential researcher biases could influence the results.

These limitations suggest that while the study may provide valuable insights into the state of gender equality in the workplace among a specific group of Filipino workers, caution should be exercised in extrapolating these findings more broadly without consideration of the inherent methodological constraints.

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