



Swedish Agency for Work
Environment Expertise

***How Fraud and Undeclared Work Degrade
Work Environments and Exploit Workers
across Different Industries:
A Literature Review***

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Background and Aim

Background

Fraud and undeclared work in the labor market have become a growing issue worldwide, leading to disadvantages for the state, employers, and employees. For the individual worker, these practices often result in poor work environments and an increased risk of exploitation.

Aim

This literature review aims to identify and analyze existing scientific studies and grey literature concerning how fraud and undeclared work affect the work environment and lead to the exploitation of workers.



Method

The literature review

- Searched in PsycInfo, Scopus, and Sociological Abstracts & Social Service Abstracts
- Scientific studies and grey literature
- Published between 2013 and 2024
- Literature from the EU, Norway, and Canada
- Mainly the employee perspective



Search terms

- **Population:** Employers and employees

- **Exposure:** Workplace crime e.g.

human trafficking, corrupt*, crime*, criminal* exploit*, fraud*, sweatshop*, trafficking, work* violen*
undocumented immigrant*, undeclared work

- **Outcome:** Occupational health e.g.

working conditions”, organizational climate, employ* condition*, job satisfaction*, job stress*, labo*
union*, occupation* health*, precarious employ*, precarious labo*, precarious work*, work*
condition*, work* environment*, work* load*



Scientific studies (n=33) and grey literature (n=6)

Industries represented

Land-based industry, Hotel and restaurant, Health and welfare/domestic work, Construction, Vehicles and transport, Cleaning

Participants

Both men and women

Between 18-68 years

Mostly from Central and Eastern Europe, Asia, Africa, or South America



Results

Overall, the results show that fraud and undeclared work:

- Often negatively impact the work environment.
- Involve the exploitation of employees.
- Affect migrants to a greater extent.
- Lead to increased exposure to risks and safety hazards.



Job demands and challenges

- High demands
- Low control
- Low support

Harassment
Threats

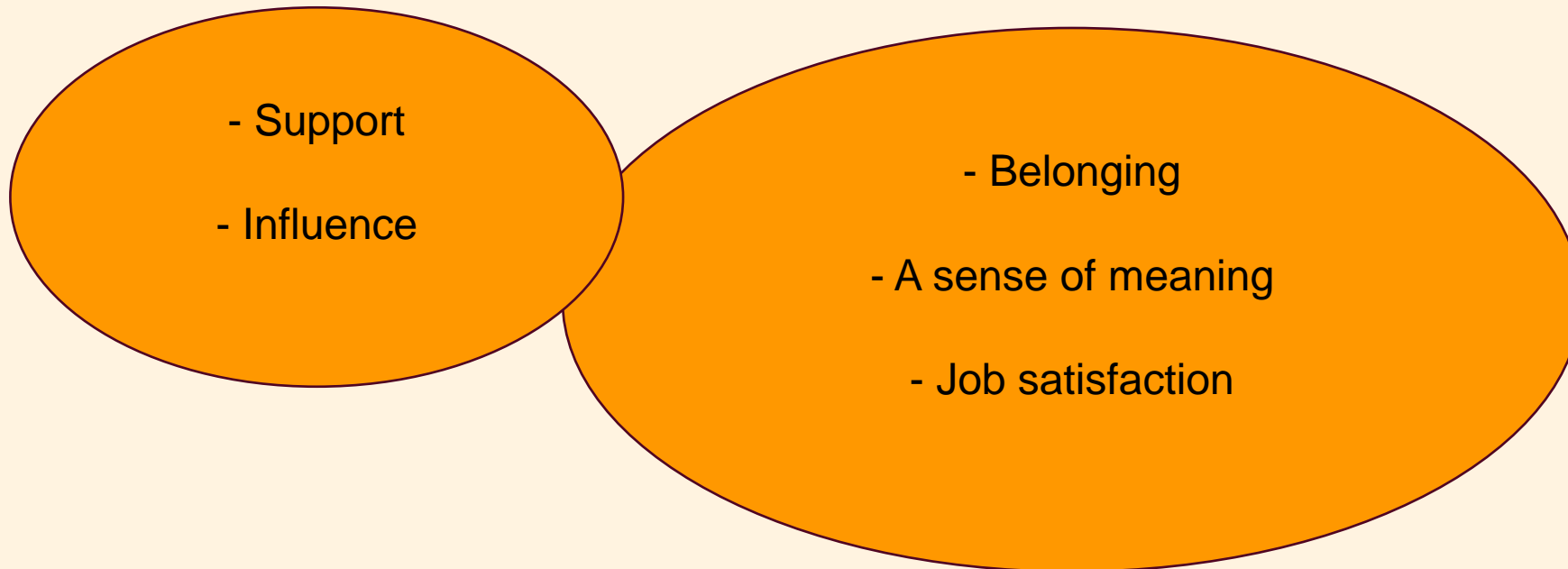
Language barriers

- Limited or no access to personal protective equipment
- Employees had to pay for training and safety equipment
- Employees and employers have negative attitudes towards following safety regulations



Job resources

Despite exploitation, employees, mostly in female-dominated occupations, described..





Contributions and knowledge gaps

Contributions: This literature review is one of the few that focuses on the work environment from an employee perspective.

We need more research involving:

- fraud and undeclared work, and the work environment,
- current challenges,
- describe and compare different groups,
- follow changes over time.

To consider, the results are context-dependent and thus not generalisable.



Our reports at sawee.se

Impact of Work-related Crime on the Work Environment – a literature review

Perceptions of the relationship between work-related crime and the work environment – an interview study regarding the knowledge and experiences of work environment stakeholders





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Thank you for your attention!



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