


# Skating on Thin Ice at Enti: HRM or Employee Bullying?

**Niveen Labib Eid**

 <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-0284-8155>  
*Birzeit University, Palestine*

**Devi Akella**

*Albany State University, USA*

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

*This case study highlights how various human resources management (HRM) policies and practices at ENTI, a Palestinian non-governmental organization (NGO), can be deconstructed as depersonalized forms of ‘workplace bullying’ which exert a totalitarian form of control and domination over employees. It further examines how external sociopolitical forces at the macro level can be held responsible for management’s autocratic regimes, where employees are closely monitored and psychologically controlled. In pursuit of explaining the complex dynamics of employee relations, workplace bullying, and HRM, the case utilizes an interpretative inquiry based on critical theoretical lens of Foucault’s disciplinary power frameworks. HRM in rhetoric is a management responsibility which is primarily concerned with employees, their welfare, growth, and development. However, this case reveals the complete opposite, in the form of startling, critical insights from an under researched sector, that of the (NGOs) which have been historically envisaged as altruistic organizations and ideal workplaces.*

## **ORGANIZATION BACKGROUND**

Women trafficking, incest, gender bias, dehumanization, physical violence, emotional abuse, bullying, and domestic violence are social problems which have been historically practiced against females across the world. The more these practices become publicly visible, the faster they are likely to be tackled and eradicated. However, in some conservative and masculine -oriented societies such as the Palestinian society, such phenomena are usually perceived as taboos and thus suppressed. According to the UN Special Rapporteur's report on violence against women in 2005 and 2011 this can be traced to two main reasons. First, is that Palestine has been under occupation for seventy years, and the Palestinians have been subjected to continuous abuse which has now become part of their mental psyche. Second, gender discrimination is an offshoot of the deeply rooted religious and cultural assumptions of the Palestinian patriarchal society. Therefore, the Palestinian women are forced to endure in silence rather than publicly speak against such cultural taboos.

In the past, people were less knowledgeable, courageous, and open minded to confront these issues to protect and preserve women's dignity and wellbeing. However, over the last few decades, the Palestinian community, along with some NGOs, civil institutions and other influential human rights defenders have been working with the official designated bodies to confront this inhuman phenomenon. The sufferings and trauma suffered by the victimized Palestinian women motivated a young female social entrepreneur called Lima, to establish Enti, an NGO committed to breaking through the community's silence to raise voice against the violence practiced by a few domineering Palestinian males on their women.

### **Establishment of Enti**

The aforementioned social issues were behind the establishment of Enti, which in Arabic language means "*yourself*" and more specifically it is the pronoun used when the subject is a female. Enti's slogan over the last thirty years has not changed: "*Seek protection for yourself and also for other females*". This slogan has encouraged Palestinian women to disclose information about abuse and violence suffered or witnessed by them. Enti was initially established in 1990 as a social initiative, by five female social activists, inspired by Lima's ideology and passion of wanting to create better lives for the vulnerable victims of domestic violence. At that time, such an initiative was seen as a pioneering cornerstone for a continuous wave of community awakening and reform in respect to matters concerning gender equality and justice for the abused. Enti, entered into numerous partnerships with various support groups, and international human rights organizations, thereby gaining access to unlimited networks and resources. These kinds of partnerships opened

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