

# A study on sexual harassment amongst the employees and strategies of its elimination

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## Abstract:

Workplace harassment is outlined by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) as “unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature that expressly or implicitly have an effect on an individual’s employment, unreasonably interferes with an individual’s work performance; or creates a daunting, hostile or offensive work environment.” The objectives of the research is to study and understand regarding harassment amongst the employees and methods to eliminate. The research method followed is descriptive research. The data is collected through a questionnaire and the sample size is 1527. Convenience sampling method is adopted in the study to collect the data. The samples were collected from the general public with special reference to Chennai region. The independent variables are gender, income level and education level of respondents. The dependent variables ill effects and means of reducing sexual harassment. The researcher used graphs to analyze the data collected. From the study it is evident that females are not feeling safe enough to report any incidents of sexual harassment and framing a clear policy alone won't be sufficient to curb sexual harassment practices at workplace.

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## INTRODUCTION

‘A single incident is enough to represent sexual harassment – it doesn’t ought to be repeated’

Sexual harassment is one amongst the main social issues in our society. EEOC classifies harassment under 2 broad classes, namely hostile surroundings, and quid pro quo harassment. the most usually recognized kind, “quid pro quo” comes from a Latin word which accurately means “this for that”.

Sexual harassment is a gender-neutral offense where Men can sexually harass women, and women can sexually harass men. In 2015, 6,822 sexual

harassment claims were filed with the EEOC. 17.1 % of these cases- nearly one in 5 were filed by men. A CNBC Poll in December found that ten % of men reported being victims of harassment or sexual misconduct at work. A recent survey has discovered that nearly 17 % of women employees in India face harassment at their workplace. Further, twenty sixth of women are the sole breadwinners of their families and thus economic vulnerability ends up in 'fear of losing the job'. fresh graduates join different companies as trainees are the most vulnerable

targets at the work as promised a remuneration hike or a permanent job'.

In its entirety, harassment is infringement of guaranteed rights under the Constitution of India viz. right to equality (Article 14), right to profession (Article 19), the right to measure life with dignity (Article 21), welfare state (Article 38), duty to obey and maintain the women respect and dignity (Article 51 A). it's a form of sex discrimination and against the law under the equal opportunity Act 2010. furthermore Section 354-A of the Criminal (Amendment) Act, 2013 (Crml. Act, 13), harassment has been outlined to lead punishment for upto 3 years of imprisonment or fine or both. interestingly, both the SHW Act and Crml. Act, 13 are gender-specific in nature, whereby only men may be blamed for harassment. Moreover, it did not differentiate the terms of 'sexual harassment' and 'gender harassment'.

Beside the massive amounts of financial losses, harassment has an effect on both individuals and organizations like decreases productivity, job satisfaction and will increase team conflict, loss and absence of employees members and experience. The image of the organization can suffer financially, and reputation-wise when complainants take the issue to court. Others like loss of career and income, dropping out of school, personal life exposed to public result in depression, shame, guilt and loss of motivation and trust, discrimination and humiliation by gossips.

For a secure working condition it's necessary to maintain the value and dignity of the employees. The harassment isn't simply physical however psychological also that produces a great deal of stress and frustration. harassment free atmosphere isn't simply the responsibility of the organization or the victim only but it needs support from all the employees whether women or men. you also have a responsibility to keep up a workplace that's free of harassment. If you permit harassment to flourish in your workplace, you'll pay a high value in poor employee morale, low productivity, and lawsuits.

## OBJECTIVES

- To understand about the sexual harassment among the workplace.
- To study the ill effects of sexual harassment at workplace
- To understand various measures to reduce sexual harassment

## LITERATURE REVIEW

**Hejase, Hussin (2015)** Nations or companies are dealing either by reacting or pro-acting to the salient situations. This paper explores sexual harassment within the workplace among chosen Lebanese organizations. A form has been developed and circulated to hotels, many restaurants and nightclubs, and a university. The high response rate (67%) has enabled a comprehensive and reliable data resource and also the expected outcome of this paper is the development of policies and creation of awareness which builds on the findings of this analysis. In the paper by **Paula M. Popovich(1988)** , the main aim is to supply an introduction to the varied aspects of harassment as a problem: its definition (including both the "economic injury" and "hostile environment" type), its characteristics, and a discussion to deal with in the workplace. Organizations are encouraged to act affirmatively by (1) establishing a policy within the organization; (2) creating employees conscious of a grievance procedure for complaints; and (3) educating workers concerning the matter through awareness and coaching techniques. **Asha P (2017)** found in a study the majority of the participants in her study, experienced a minimum of some sort of harassment, they hesitate to objectively indicate the same because of worry of the consequences of losing the job and facing additional ramifications. The problem needs to be addressed with appropriate policies at the workplace. information obtained from 210 workers indicated that majority (20%) were between the age group of 30–35 years. Majority, 63.3% of the workers had occasional harassment, 8.1% had mild harassment, 0.5% had severe harassment, and 28.1% reported no

harassment at the workplace. **Afia Saleem (2016)** This paper tries to research the impact of harassment on employee turnover intention in educational sector of Peshawar, Pakistan. A total of 127 respondents are chosen from three public and three non-public sector business schools of Peshawar. Using simple statistical regression, the results reveal the existence of positive relationship between harassment and employee turnover intentions. The analysis suggests strong interventions to reduce the incidents of harassment so as to retain workers and enable them to work with efficiency. **Arnida Jahya (2014)** Sexual harassment represents one of the most prevalent forms of dysfunctional behavior observed in the workplace today. This study discuss in details the definition, predictors and consequences of sexual harassment in the workplace in order to equip women the knowledge on the nature of sexual harassment. **Patricia K. Kerig (2018)** The studies presented illustrate the often long-lasting mental health consequences of sexual trauma, documenting effects extending as long as a decade and a half after the experience. According to **Abdul (2018)**, sexual harassment in workplace could be a reflection of unequal power relationship among genders and should not be seen as isolated cases emanating from psychological or criminal roots. This study is an endeavor to spot the causes of sexual harassment in the workplace in Pakistan and the underlying factors which lead to under-reporting of the incidences of sexual harassment in the workplace. This study argues that in an atmosphere like Pakistan where rule of law isn't prevailing in entire society so simply having policies and awareness concerning these policies may not be a valid and vital component for lowering the harassment experience within the workplace.

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

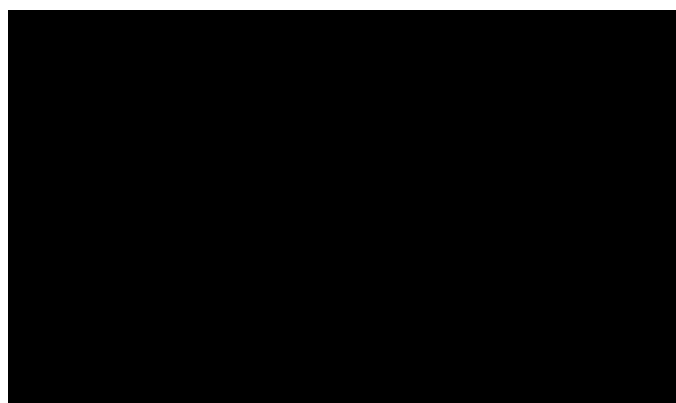
The research method followed is descriptive research. The data is collected through a questionnaire and the sample size is 1527. Convenience sampling method is adopted in the study to collect the data. The samples were

collected from the general public with special reference to Chennai region. The independent variables are gender, income level and education level of respondents. The dependent variables ill effects and means of reducing sexual harassment. The researcher used graphs to analyze the data collected.

## ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

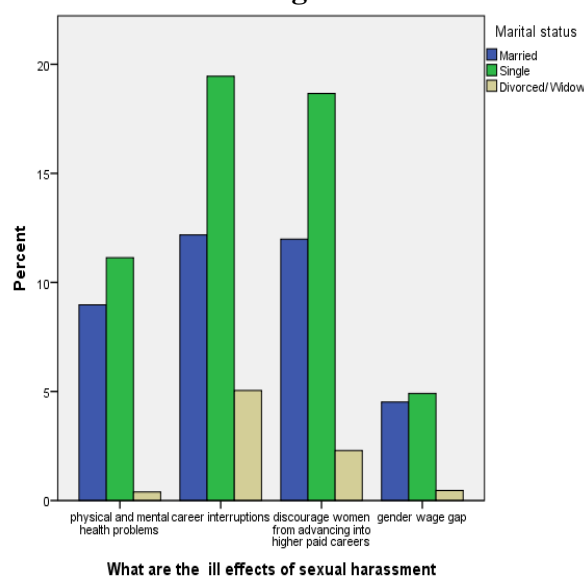
### LEGEND:

**Figure 1**



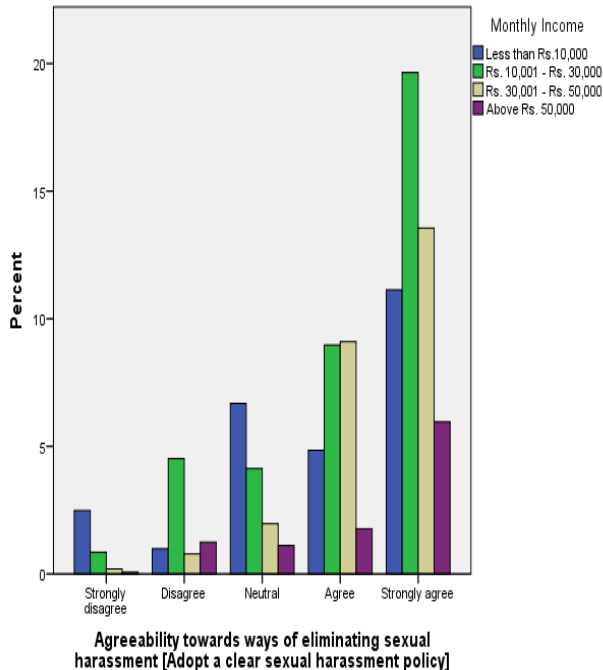
The above figure shows the variability in the opinion on the statement "Do you know anyone is being sexually harassed" between gender of respondents

**Figure 2**



The above figure shows the variability in the opinion on the ill effects sexual harassment between marital status of respondents

**Figure 3**



The above chart illustrates how the monthly income of the respondents influence their Agreeability towards " Adopting a clear sexual harassment policy will help to eliminate sexual harassment at workplace "

## RESULTS:

- From Figure 1, it is seen that 33.27% of male respondents know someone who is sexually harassed at workplace followed by female respondents by 27.31%
- From Figure 2, it seen that career interruptions and problems in advancing in career path as seen as major ill effects by all respondents irrespective of their marital status. Gender wage gap is not seriously considered as consequence of sexual harassment.
- From Figure3, it is clear that all the income groups strongly agree that having a clear sexual harassment policy will help to eliminate sexual harassment at workplace. Followed by, it can be seen that respondents

earning less than Rs.10,0000 are neutral to the statement.

## DISCUSSION:

From the analysis, it is seen that most of respondents have seen sexual harassment at workplace. Male respondents have seen more sexual respondents than female respondents. Female respondents might have some fear of disclosing the same. It can also be seen that career break and advances in career paths as the major ill effects of sexual harassment irrespective of the marital status of respondents, followed by physical and mental problems. It is observed from the analysis that framing a good sexual harassment policy is perceived to be a good solution by respondents of all income groups but some of the lower income groups were neutral to the statement, which shows adopting a good harassment policy might not be the only solutions to the problems faced by them.

## CONCLUSION

Sexual harassment is taken into account one amongst problems that negatively have an effect on organizational surroundings. Therefore, prevention is the simplest tool for the elimination of sexual harassment. This research paper attempted to identify the ill effects and methods of reduction of sexual harassment. From the study it is evident that females are not feeling safe enough to report any incidents of sexual harassment and framing a clear policy alone won't be sufficient to curb sexual harassment practices at workplace A firm can take reasonable steps to prevent harassment from occurring and if happens, it should take appropriate remedial action. Also using a good grievance procedure to analyze charges of sexual harassment will also help to minimize such activities.

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