

# A Study on Sexual Harassment and Its Effects on Workplace Relationships Specifically It Industry Employees

B. Ismail Zabiullah<sup>1</sup>, A. Kavitha<sup>2</sup>, A. Deepthi<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Ass.Prof, Department of Management, Gates Institute of Technology, Gooty-515401, Anantapuramu, Dist, A.P,

<sup>2,3</sup>P.G Student, Department of management studies, Gates Institute of Technology, Gooty-515401, Anantapuramu, Dist, A.P

---

## ABSTRACT

Sexual harassment is defined as the unwanted physical, verbal, or written conduct that is sexual in nature, including inappropriate physical contact, sexual or lewd comments, or inappropriate behavior. While traditionally, sexual harassment has been aimed at women, there have been incidences in which men can also experience sexual harassment. Generally sexual harassment is a sexually oriented conduct that may endanger the victim's job, negatively affect the victim's job performance or undermine the victim's personal dignity. It may manifest itself physically or psychologically. Its milder and subtle forms may imply verbal innuendo, inappropriate affectionate gestures or propositions for dates and sexual favours. However it may also assume blatant and ugly forms like leering, physical grabbing and sexual assault or sexual molestation. By creating high level management support, implementing good policies and giving regular training and information on this for staff and creating positive work place environment we can avoid this situation . In this paper discuss with how the sexual harassment affect the workplace relationship and employee, how it impact organisation, sexual harassment in 2013-17.

**Key Words:** Sexual Harassment, Job Performance, Psychologically, Physical Grabbing Sexual Molestation

---

## I. INTRODUCTION

Sexual harassment is bullying or coercion of a sexual nature, or the unwelcome or inappropriate promise of rewards in exchange for sexual favors.<sup>[1]</sup> In most modern legal contexts, sexual harassment is illegal. As defined by the United States' Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), "It is unlawful to harass a person (an applicant or employee) because of that person's sex." Harassment can include "sexual harassment" or unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical harassment of a sexual nature. The legal definition of sexual harassment varies by jurisdiction. Sexual harassment is subject to a directive in the European Union.<sup>[2]</sup>

Although laws surrounding sexual harassment exist, they generally do not prohibit simple teasing, offhand comments, or minor isolated incidents—that is, they do not impose a "general civility code".<sup>[3]</sup> In the workplace, harassment may be considered illegal when it is so frequent or severe that it creates a hostile or offensive work environment or when it results in an adverse employment decision (such as the victim's demotion, firing or quitting). The legal and social understanding of sexual harassment, however, varies by culture.

It includes a range of actions from mild transgressions to sexual abuse or sexual assault.<sup>[5]</sup> Sexual harassment is a form of illegal employment discrimination in many countries, and is a form of abuse (sexual and psychological abuses) and bullying. For many businesses or organizations, preventing sexual harassment, and defending employees from sexual harassment charges, have become key goals of legal decision-making.

To fit in the concept of sexual harassment the relevant conduct must be unwelcome. That is unwelcome to the recipient of that conduct. Conduct is not sexual harassment if it is welcome. So in order to determine if the conduct was welcome or unwelcome, courts would naturally look to the complainant's reaction at the time of the incident occurred and assess whether the complainant expressly, or by his or her behaviour demonstrated that the conduct was unwelcome. If the evidence shows that the complainant welcomed the conduct the complaint of sexual harassment would fail. For this reason, it is important to communicate (either verbally, in writing, or by your own actions) to the harasser that the conduct makes you uncomfortable and that you want it to stop.

## II. OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

1. To study the Sexual harassment affect workplace relationship
2. To study the Sexual Harassment Affects Employees
3. To study the Sexual Harassment Impacts Organizations
4. To Study the Sexual Harassment in 2013-2017 in IT Industry

### In The Work Place:

The United States' Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) defines workplace sexual harassment as "unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature constitute sexual harassment when this conduct explicitly or implicitly affects an individual's employment, unreasonably interferes with an individual's work performance, or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment" (EEOC).

- 79% of victims are women, 21% are men
- 51% are harassed by a supervisor
- Business, trade, banking, and finance are the biggest industries where sexual harassment occurs
- 12% received threats of termination if they did not comply with their requests
- 26,000 people in the armed forces were assaulted in 2012<sup>[23]</sup>
- 302 of the 2,558 cases pursued by victims were prosecuted
- 38% of the cases were committed by someone of a higher rank
- Sexual harassment is a form of sex discrimination that violates Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964
- Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 is a federal law that prohibits employers from discriminating against employees on the basis of sex, race, color, national origin, and religion. It generally applies to employers with fifteen or more employees, including federal, state, and local governments. Title VII also applies to private and public colleges and universities, employment agencies, and labor organizations.<sup>[24]</sup>
- "It shall be an unlawful employment practice for an employer ... to discriminate against any individual with respect to his compensation, terms, conditions, or privileges of employment, because of such individual's race, color, religion, sex, or national origin."

We looked recently at the importance of sexual harassment policies in the workplace, to help employers and managers create safe, inclusive work spaces for their staff. As we've said before, all employees have the right to work in a positive and non-threatening work environment, free from any form of sexual harassment.

Unfortunately, this isn't always the case, with sexual harassment remaining a serious issue for many American workplaces. Being subjected to unwelcome and inappropriate behavior at work, while trying to carry on and perform well under the usual stresses of a job, can have damaging and long-lasting effects on an individual.

## III. HOW SEXUAL HARASSMENT AFFECTS EMPLOYEES

When an employee is being subjected to sexual harassment, the workplace becomes a hostile environment, with the constant threat of physical and/or emotional harm. This can lead to severe distress for victims, with individuals at risk of developing mental health problems such as depression, anxiety, PTSD or panic attacks, as well as the physical symptoms that accompany these disorders.

Low productivity, motivation and morale levels, or high rates of sick leave or absenteeism, may also be signs that an employee is suffering from some form of harassment. As well as causing direct and immediate suffering for individuals, sexual harassment can interfere with work performance, career progression and even result in people being forced out of their job and income completely.

## IV. HOW SEXUAL HARASSMENT IMPACTS ORGANIZATIONS

A workplace environment that fails to properly address the issue of sexual harassment will be at risk of developing signs of a negative work culture – low morale, discontent employees and high levels of absenteeism will soon be reflected in lower productivity and profits.

Financially, companies can expect to face higher rates of staff turnover, with the added strains of hiring and training new staff, as well as the expense of sexual harassment law suits. A sexual harassment law suit will cost your company significant amounts of money, in addition to damaging your reputation and brand name.

### Sexual Harassment Effects The Workplace Relation Ship

A hostile working environment characterized by pervasive sexual harassment can make employees uncomfortable, to say the least. However, the serious effects of sexual harassment are often understated. These behaviors can cause significant health problems, financial difficulties, and even global repercussions. If you've encountered sexual harassment in the workplace, you have the right to consult a sexual harassment attorney . Your labor law attorney can explain your legal rights to you and discuss your options for obtaining damages.

### Emotional Well-Being

Sexual harassment can jeopardize the victim's emotional and mental health. It can lead to the loss of self-esteem and it may even compromise personal relationships. Sexual harassment in the workplace can cause significant stress and anxiety. An employment harassment lawyer is also likely to work with clients who have suffered from long-term clinical depression as a result of sexual harassment.

### Physical Health

Physical health and emotional health are closely linked. When victims of sexual harassment experience mental and emotional problems, it often leads to physical health issues, such as loss of appetite, headaches, weight fluctuations, and sleep disturbances. Sleep disturbances can in turn lead to other serious health problems, such as hormonal imbalance, an increased risk of high blood pressure, and a weakened immune system.

### Financial Challenges

In addition to causing health problems, sexual harassment frequently leads to financial challenges. It's important to tell your sexual harassment attorney in San Jose about any financial consequences of sexual harassment, such as lost wages and unpaid leave. Some victims of sexual harassment may even face broader career repercussions, such as the loss of job references. They may decide to leave their current position or employer to avoid a hostile work environment.

### Global Consequences

Sexual harassment has a direct effect on employers and the global economy. Each year, millions are lost due to absenteeism, low productivity, employee turnover, low morale, and legal costs stemming from sexual harassment. The economy also suffers due to premature retirement and higher insurance costs.

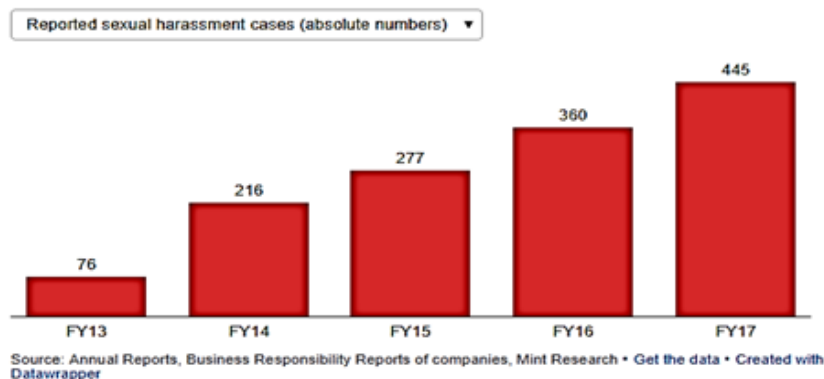
### Sexual Harassment in It Industry 2013-17

Sexual harassment, by definition, is unwanted and not to be tolerated. There are ways, however, for offended and injured people to overcome the resultant psychological effects, remain in or return to society, regain healthy feelings within personal relationships when they were affected by the outside relationship trauma, regain social approval, and recover the ability to concentrate and be productive in educational and work environments. These include [stress management](#) and therapy, [cognitive-behavioral therapy](#), friends and family support, and advocacy. These companies belonging to the BSE 100 universe were mandated to report the number of women employees in their ranks, and the number of sexual harassment charges made by them since 2012-13.

For this analysis, we consider 52 of these firms for which consistent data is available for the past five financial years (from fiscal 2013 to fiscal 2017). Some firms have been excluded because of accounting changes, mergers and so on. Others have been excluded because they have not clearly mentioned either the number of women employees or the number of sexual harassment charges in one or more years in the period under review. The data shows the number of reported instances of harassment has risen over the years. The ratio of the number of harassment cases to the number of women employees on company payrolls has also gone up.

### Rising disclosure of sexual harassment cases

The data below shows the trend in reportage of sexual harassment cases for 52 BSE-100 companies for which consistent data was available since the fiscal year 2013



**Interpretation:** The above chart indicates that see the level of sexual harassment cases increases continuously i.e. 2013-2017(76-445)-82.92%.



## Sectoral share of sexual harassment cases



The figures denote the percentage share of each sector in reported sexual harassment cases

■ IT and other computer services ■ Banks and Finance  
■ Infrastructure (Capital Goods, Construction, Power, Cement) ■ Others ■ Oil, refineries ■ Auto  
■ Metals and mining ■ Pharma



Source: Annual Reports, Business Responsibility Reports of companies, Mint Research • Get the data • Created with Datawrapper

**Interpretation:** The above chart indicates that Sectoral share of Sexual harassment cases in India. In this IT & Other Computer Services –(2013-2017)-20.88% Increased.  
Banks & finance Sector-(2013-2017)-6.51% - Decreased.  
Infrastructure Sector-(2013-2017)-9.85% - Decreased.

### Findings:

1. Sexual harassment can jeopardize the victim's emotional and mental health. It can lead to the loss of self-esteem and it may even compromise personal relationships. Sexual harassment in the workplace can cause significant stress and anxiety.
2. This can lead to severe distress for victims, with individuals at risk of developing mental health problems such as depression, anxiety, PTSD or panic attacks, as well as the physical symptoms that accompany these disorders.
3. Sexual harassment in the workplace may be on the decline, but it is still an ongoing risk to the safety of your employees and your business. A single incident can have a far-reaching impact on your company's bottom line, undermine employee morale, and ruin your organization's reputation among consumers.
4. Especially Sexual harassment in IT industry increases cases- 2013(79)-2017(445).So it is increased almostly 82%- and also most problems increased compare to other sectors

### SUGGESTIONS

1. Internal policies  
Employers, housing providers, educators and other responsible parties have a legal duty to prevent and remedy incidents of sexual and gender-based harassment. Organizations must develop and adopt in-house anti-sexual harassment policies and make sure that responsible parties are properly informed and educated about the nature, effects and cost of this type of behaviour. See the section entitled "Preventing and responding to sexual harassment" for the suggested contents of an Anti-Sexual Harassment Policy.
2. Get high-level management support  
Obtain high level support from the chief executive officer and senior management for implementing a comprehensive strategy to address sexual harassment.
3. Write and implement a sexual harassment policy  
Develop a written policy which prohibits sexual harassment in consultation with staff and relevant unions. Regularly distribute and promote the policy at all levels of the organisation. Ensure the policy is easily accessible on the organisation's intranet. Provide the policy and other relevant information on sexual harassment to new staff as a standard part of induction.
4. Provide regular training and information on sexual harassment to all staff and management  
Conduct regular training sessions for all staff and management on sexual harassment and the organisational policy. This training should be behaviourally based which means it should increase knowledge and understanding of specific behaviours that may amount to sexual harassment under the Sex Discrimination Act.

Regular refresher training is recommended. Train all line managers on their role in ensuring that the workplace is free from sexual harassment.

5. Create a positive workplace environment

Remove offensive, sexually explicit or pornographic calendars, literature, posters and other materials from the workplace. Develop a policy prohibiting inappropriate use of computer technology, such as e-mail, screen savers and the internet. It is recommended that medium and large employers undertake regular audits to monitor the incidence of sexual harassment in their workplaces and the use and effectiveness of their complaints procedures

### **CONCLUSION**

Sexual harassment of women is global and widespread and is tolerated as a social phenomenon, in institutions and customs and to some degree in law. It is not exclusively a new phenomenon because the behaviours it describes are centuries old. Sexual harassment, no doubt is a complex social problem but in the recent decades, it has achieved new dimensions and has brought within its teeth children, youth and women. With the advance of industrialization and urbanization, this evil is gradually rearing its ugly head all over the world. The risks associated with a sexual harassment claim and associated litigation can present a clear, and present danger to your business. By being proactive, instituting sound policy and offering comprehensive training, you can reduce the likelihood of harassment even occurring.

### **REFERENCES**

- [1] Jones, G.R., & George, J.M. (2007). Contemporary Management (fifth ed.), McGraw-Hill Higher Education.
- [2] McGolgan, A. (2004, June). Report on Sexual Harassment in the Workplace in EU Member States, The Irish Presidency of the European Union in association with Farrell Grant Sparks Consulting. Dublin: Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform.
- [3] Sexual Assault Prevention & Awareness Center – SAPAC (n.d.). What is Sexual Harassment? Retrieved October 16, 2014, from
- [4] McLaughlin, H., Uggen, C. & Blackstone, A. (2012). Sexual Harassment, Workplace Authority, and the Paradox of Power. American Sociological Review, XX(X), 1-23.
- [5] <http://www.livemint.com/Companies/wLYIP2JEyNHUPBEGNJenkL/What-does-data-say-about-sexual-harassment-in-Indias-top-co.html>
- [6] <https://www.humanrights.gov.au/publications/chapter-6-preventing-sexual-harassment-all-reasonable-steps-effectively-preventing-and>