



# A STUDY ON EMPLOYEE AWARENESS ON ANTI-SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICY (POSH), IN ONE OF THE LEADING HOSPITALS IN VELLORE

Dr.V.Uma<sup>1</sup>, M. Karthika<sup>2</sup>

*Head of the Department, Department of Hospital Administration, Dr.N.G.P. Arts and Science College*

*<sup>2</sup>Student, Department of Hospital Administration, Dr.N.G.P. Arts and Science College*

**Abstract** - PoSH (Protection of Women from Sexual Harassment) Act, 2013

The PoSH Act has been implemented to prevent and protect women from sexual harassment at the workplace and thereby ensure a safe working environment for women.

Vishaka Judgment is a historical case that deals with the offence of Sexual Harassment of women at her workplace. This supreme court judgment defined the ambit of Sexual Harassment as including an uninvited or unwelcome sexual favour or sexual gestures from one gender towards the other gender. The PoSH Act, as mandatory compliance, requires every company having more than ten employees to constitute an Internal Complaints Committee (ICC) in the prescribed manner to receive and address the complaints of any sort of sexual harassment from women in a time-bound and extremely confidential manner. This paper explores the awareness on anti-sexual harassment policy and the procedures in the workplace within the selected hospital. A questionnaire was framed and circulated to the employees of that hospital in order to study their extent of awareness on the policy. The expected outcome of this paper is the improvement in already existing policy and framing of new policies and increasing the rate of awareness through different modes.

**Key Words:** POSH act ,Vishaka Judgment ,Sexual harassment, Hospital.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

**Definition:** Any form of discrimination that includes unwelcome attention of sexual nature is considered sexual harassment. It involves a range of behaviours from seemingly mild transgressions and annoyances, to actual sexual abuse or sexual assault. Anyone from either gender can be a victim of sexual harassment, and anybody from either gender can be a perpetrator.

Sexual harassment also includes the conduct of co-workers who engage in verbal or physically harassing behaviour which has the potential to humiliate or embarrass an employee or the company.

## CAUSES OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT AT WORKPLACE

### 1. Power Differential

The top cause of sexual harassment complaints stems from the power dynamics at work. Many cases involve senior-level officers abusing their power to sexually harass and intimidate others. Victims are often coerced into sexual acts because they are offered professional favors or fear to lose their job if they refuse their superiors. Creating a culture of equality will help eliminate the fear of retaliation.

## 2. A Culture that Implies Acceptance

In a relaxed work environment, there's often a wink-wink, nod-nod office culture that's accepting of an employee's quirky yet inappropriate behavior. Although some people may be comfortable in that environment, saying things like "Oh that's just how he is," others may be offended and feel uncomfortable which leads to sexual harassment complaints. All employees need to be held accountable for following the established code of conduct.

## 3. Not Understanding Harassment

Some employees don't fully comprehend what counts as sexual harassment at their office. They might not realize that greeting a colleague with a kiss on the cheek or complimenting their appearance is grounds for a sexual harassment complaint. On the other hand, complaints also stem from employees who think they're being harassed but technically are not according to company policies. By clearly defining sexual harassment, organizations can avoid these sticky situations

## 4. Poorly Managed Policies and Procedures

Employee handbooks contain legal jargon in order to remain compliant with the law, which can be hard for employees to fully understand. They also tend to be reviewed only once, during new hire orientation. When policies and procedures aren't expressed clearly and spoken about frequently, the rules are more likely to be broken. Organizations need to have policies in place that explain proper behavior, have zero tolerance for inappropriate behavior, and contain a written code of conduct. Continually reinforcing company policies and educating employees will prevent a hostile work environment.

## 5. Excessive Stress

When under a lot of stress, an employee is likely to express their emotions towards others. Verbal abuse, physical altercations, and other stress-releasing actions create harassment situations in the heat of the moment. By creating a stress-free work environment and teaching employees how to cope with stress, employees will be less likely to act out against their colleagues irrationally.

## Remedies

In order to check sexual harassment, an organization should have clear cut policy to register complaints of such nature and procedure for taking disciplinary action. Such guidelines is already available through Supreme Court judgment, its only its implementation that is required.

Every organization should have an effective employment policy that should ensure well planned career paths based on merit to reduce the vulnerability of individuals and harassment by those who abuse their power and authority.

There should be awareness among the staff members about sexual harassment and the consequences they may face if they indulge in such an act. They should know their social responsibilities to prevent such incident in their organization.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

According to **Andersson, L. M. and Pearson, C. M.<sup>28</sup> (1995)**, he explains the concept of workplace incivility and explain how incivility can potentially spiral into increasingly intense aggressive behaviours. Furthermore, he describe several factors that can facilitate the occurrence and escalation of an incivility spiral and the secondary spirals that can result. He offer research propositions and discuss implications of workplace incivility for researchers and practitioners.

According to **Zapf, D., Einarsen, S., Hoel, H. and Vartia, M.<sup>14</sup> (2009)**, Organizational Climate is a driving force in the organization behavior which provides foundations to many physical and psychological phenomena to the employees. Bullying is one of the major under considered phenomenon, usually caused by the organizational climate. The objective of the study is to examine the relationship between organizational climates, workplace bullying and workers' health in selected higher education institutes of Pakistan.

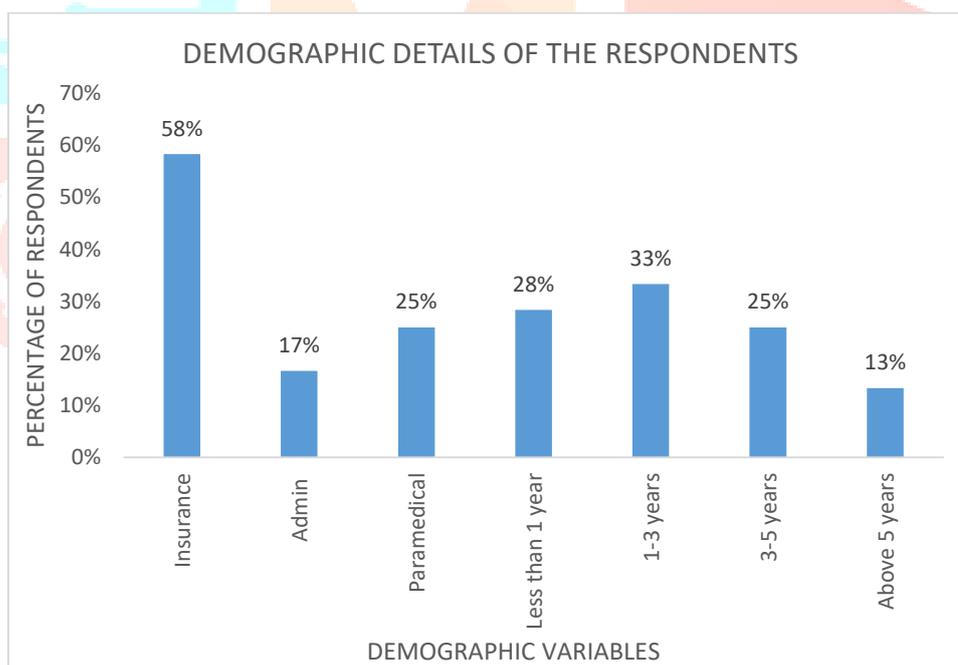
According to **Done, R. S. (2005)**, The study provides information on the prevalence of sexual harassment and common characteristics of how sexual harassment is perpetrated and experienced across lines of industry, occupation, and social class. It concludes with common characteristics of environments where sexual harassment is more likely to occur.

### III. METHODOLOGY

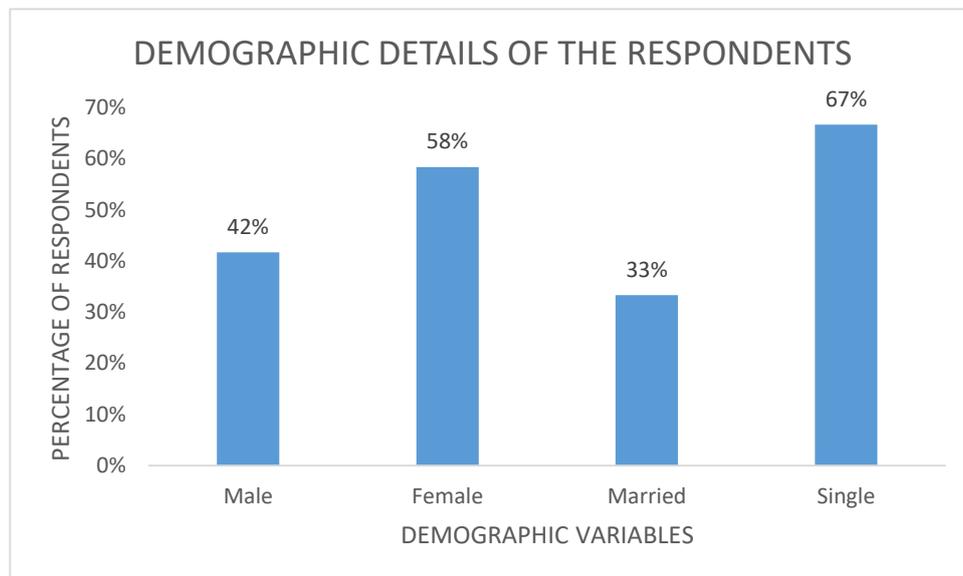
This is an exploratory research that aims on the employees of the selected hospital and their awareness on the existence of the anti-sexual harassment committee in their hospital. The simple random sampling is used in order to collect data. About 350 employee were present in the hospital and by considering the Morgan's data 60 data was collected. For this purpose, a questionnaire has been designed, making sure that the research questions do justice to what the researcher is trying to find and to provide the direction and shape of the research. Accordingly the survey tool is a structured questionnaire divided into two parts. The first part includes the demographic questions such as gender, experience, marital status etc. and the second part is composed of twenty questions that test the employee awareness.

### IV. ANALYSIS

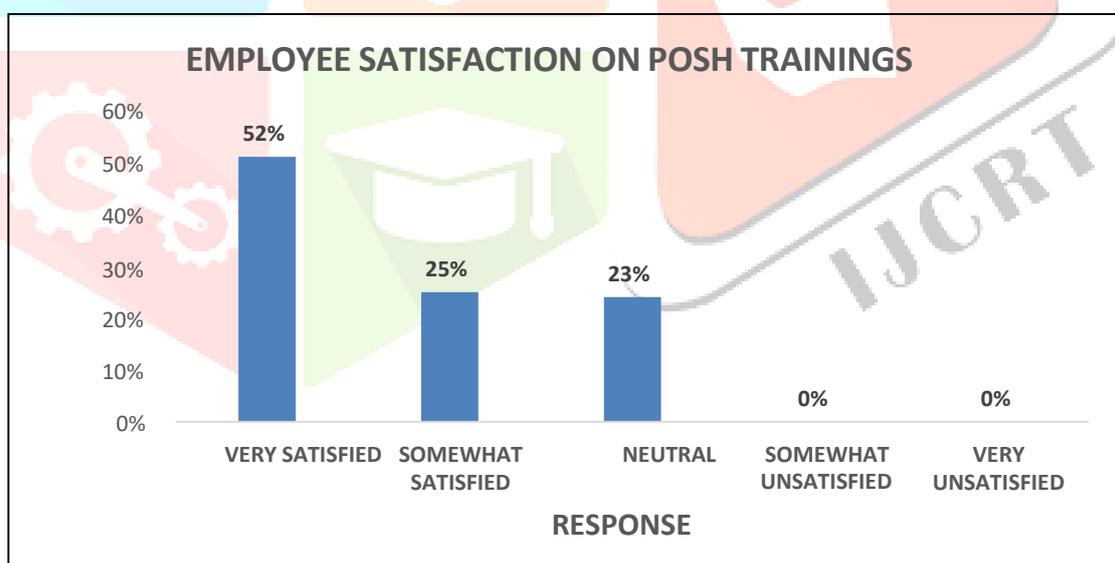
**Chart -I Chart showing the demographic data of the respondents ( Department & Experience )**



The above chart-I shows that three departments that include insurance, admin and paramedical has participated in the study. In this study, the employee who has less than 1 year work experience (28%) has participated more when compared to 1-3 years (33%) and 3-5 years (25%) experienced and above 5 years (13%)

**Chart -II Chart showing the demographic data of the respondents ( Gender and Marital status )**

The above chart-II shows evident that 58% of female employee and 42% of male employee has participated. About 33% of the employee who participated in the study are married and 67% are single.

**Chart -III Chart showing the respondent's opinion on "How far you are satisfied with your organisation's training and awareness program on POSH?"**

From the chart – III, it is interpreted that majority 52% of the employee are satisfied with POSH training, 25% are somewhat satisfied, 23% are neutral and none of them are dissatisfied

**Table-I showing the difference between the marital status and sexual harassment in work place****ANOVA**

Satisfaction	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	1.143	1	1.143	1.052	.309
Within Groups	63.040	58	1.087		
Total	64.183	59			

In the following interpretation, H denotes “HO Hypothesis”

H0: There is no difference between the marital status and sexual harassment in work place

H1: There is difference between the marital status and sexual harassment in work place

From the above table interprets the results of significant difference between marital status and sexual harassment in work place . As the significant value is .309, which is greater than 0.05, we accept HO and it is proved that there is no difference between marital status and sexual harassment in work place.

**V. MAJOR FINDINGS & RECOMMENDATIONS**

❖ Majority, 67% of the respondents are married and only about 33% are single. This shows that married people are more interested to claim their opinion on anti- sexual harassment committee than single .

❖ It is evident from chart-III About 52% of the employee are satisfied with POSH training and the respondents are well know about the sexual harassment

**The recommendations include**

❖ Organisation should take steps to foster greater cooperation, respectful work behavior, and professionalism at the faculty, staff, and student/trainee levels, and should evaluate faculty and staff on these criteria in hiring and promotion.

❖ Institution should support for reporting sexual harassment is an honorable and courageous action . Regardless of a target filling a formal report, institution should provide means of accessing support service

❖ The posters describing the policies of anti-sexual harassment committee can be displayed in the main areas of the hospital in order to create an awareness among the employee

❖ All members of the organisation - Student , trainees , faculty , staff and admin people should assume responsibility for promoting civil and respect full education, training and work safe environment and stepping up and confronting those whose behaviours and actions create sexually harassing environments

❖ Management / organisations Should make all employees comfortable at work place and should assure them safety.

## VI. CONCLUSION

More generally, it is recognised that the incidents of sexual harassment in the work premises of the employers imputes their image amongst the competitors as well as in the society. It is not good a management to a working environment which allows sexual harassment. Good managers know that it is in the long term interest of that enterprise to ensure that their employees may be treated with dignity. For an employer, in addition to sick pay and medical insurance as pointed out earlier, consequences also include reduced efficiency, increased costs, and litigations. Less productivity and low motivation of affected women will result in improper work performance. Costs of recruiting and training new people may also emerge as additional costs, especially where an employer has failed to undertake any effective invention. Hence, a harassment free work environment must be provided for the employee in order to retain them and to get the performance to the fullest. The management can make the employee feel that they are very much important to the organisation and that in turn will help the organisation to come to know about the harassment taking place in the organisation and can be prevented.

## VII. REFERENCE

- 1) Sigal, J., Braden-Maguire, J., Patt, I., Goodrich, C. and Perrino, C. S. (2009) 'Effects of type of coping responses, setting, and social context on reactions to sexual harassment'. *Sex Roles*. February: 157- 167.
- 2) Zapf, D., Einarsen, S., Hoel, H. and Vartia, M. (2009) 'Empirical findings on bullying'. In S. Einarsen, H. Hoel, D. Zapf and C. L. Cooper (eds.) *Bullying and emotional abuse in the workplace. International perspectives in research and practice*. Taylor and Francis: London/New York.
- 3) Sabine Raeder (2019), "The role of human resource management practices in managing organizational change", *Journal of Change Management*.
- 4) Icengole, M. L., Eagle, B. W., Ahmad, S. and Hanks, L. A. (2002) 'Assessing perceptions of sexual harassment behaviours in a manufacturing environment'. *Journal of Business and Psychology*. 16(4): 601-616.
- 5) Gregory, J. (2002) "Picking up the pieces: how organisations manage the aftermath of harassment complaints. Standon Ware: Wainwright Trust."
- 6) Robert.J.Ristino (2001), "Employee perception of Organizational culture's influence on their Attitudes & Behaviour."
- 7) Hubert, A. B. and Van Veldhoven, M. (2001) 'Risk sectors for undesirable behaviour and mobbing'. *European Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology*. 10: 415424.
- 8) Jackson, L. A., Ervin, K. S., Gardner, P. D. and Schmitt, N. (2001) 'Gender and the internet: women communicating and men searching'. *Sex Roles*. 44 (5/6): 363-379.
- 9) Ranitha Weerarathna, Sri Lanka Institute of Information Technology | SLIIT · Department of Business Management, *International Journal of Human Resource Studies* ISSN 2162-3058 2001, Vol. 9, No. 1.
- 10) Howe, K. (2000) "Violence against women with disabilities - an overview of the literature. Women With Disabilities Australia (WWDA). <http://www.wwda.org.au/contents.htm>".