

Analyzing the Multifaceted Impact of Sexual Harassment on Women's Well-Being

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Running Title: *Impact of Sexual Harassment on Women*

Abstract: *Sexual Harassment is unwanted sexual behaviour of one person binding over another. Women worldwide face this issue and fear speaking about it openly due to various reasons, including privacy concerns, societal reactions, fear of job loss, and loss of freedom. Women face emotional breakdown and find it difficult to trust new people like before. It hampers not only their health, personality but also career. The article explores the widespread Issue of sexual harassment and its profound impact on women, encompassing emotional, physical, and career-related consequences. It delves into how this pervasive problem affects not only the victims but also their families, workplaces, and society at large. The discussion extends to the legal frameworks in place and concludes with recommendations for a more supportive societal response.*

Keywords: Sexual Harassment, Women's Rights, Workplace Safety, Emotional Impact, Legal Framework

1. Introduction

Sexual harassment is an increasingly alarming issue, which many women find difficult to discuss. This is a sensitive issue involving severe emotional damage apart from physical torture. Sexual harassment can be understood as desire of one person to have physical intimacy which the other person is not at all ready for it. It is performed in such a way that the other person feels anger, shame, humiliation and mixed emotion at the same time and finds difficult to speak about the issue since there is a fear of negative response of the society. And due to this, women prefer leaving their jobs or escaping that place where such things have happened with her instead of filing a complaint against the culprit.

In this research paper, impacts of sexual harassment on women will be addressed.

Victims of Sexual Harassment

Before we discuss about the impact of sexual harassment on women, let us recognize who are the victims (and the extended sufferers) of such crime.

- 1) The primary victim is the person (women, as per our discussion) who has went through it.
- 2) Secondary victims include the victims close relatives, such as parents, spouses, children, and siblings, who face the dilemma of seeking justice or escaping the situation due to societal, privacy, and safety concerns.
- 3) The other people, who are affected, are the colleagues, specially the women colleagues, who are equally disturbed mentally, but are not able to take any action due to wide reasons.
- 4) Society as a whole is also a hidden victim, due to ongoing crime, corruption and unresolved issues.

Effect of Sexual Harassment on women

Sexual harassment affects women in several ways such as mentally, physically and even socially. Women who have suffered from this perceive the sexual behavior as highly indecent and abnormal. They feel guilty and sometimes blame themselves only for whatever that happened and treats one's self as culprit. They start feeling insecure and lonely. Other ill impact of this is the damage to personality as they start losing self- confidence. Sexual Harassment becomes a cause of depression, sadness and negativity, when life starts seeming unapproachable and interest from living is lost. Women undergone such sexual harassment find it difficult to trust new people or engage in doing friendship as before.

Overall, there is loss of confidence, trust, self-esteem and value. Sometimes, women may quit their jobs to escape such situations, leading to financial difficulties

Impact of Sexual Harassment on Workplace

The impact of sexual harassment is reflected in the workplace too. Institutions often observe an increased frequency of absenteeism or leave requests from the victim. Employee turnover increases, which is bad for a business. The institution also has to face reputational damage and risk in business in the approaching future. The internal environment of the institution becomes unfavourable for other employees too, since decent people will prefer not working in such institutions.

Impact of Sexual Harassment on the Society

Even the society has to pay for the wrongdoings of one or per persons. The sexual harassment has become such a concerning issue that it becomes a barrier for young women to go beyond their limits, discover the world and work professionally parallel to men competitors of their age group. It becomes a matter of fear for other women that how will they be able to manage in case they have to face such situation. And most of the times due to such fear, the best

output is not generated, which pushes back the society as a whole.

Laws Relating to Sexual Harassment

There are several laws that have been brought to safeguard women from sexual harassment. The honourable Supreme Court had also mentioned that sexual harassment is violation of the fundamental rights (articles 14,15,21) in the landmark judgement of Vishakha V. State of Rajasthan &Ors.

There is a specific act Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013 to address the issue of sexual harassment.

2. Conclusion

Until the laws are strictly regulated with the support of governing and regulating authorities, this issue cannot be resolved. The culprit should be so punished that it becomes an alert for others who have the same mindset like that of the culprit. The police should also support and not demoralize the victims, so that they feel safe and find easy to complain and seek justice. Also, the society as a whole should not see the victims as inhuman object or someone who should be isolated. Society should be so transformed that it becomes supportive for women. This problem can be resolved only when the family, society and victim herself is ready to seek justice and speak for it.

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