

RESEARCH STUDY REPORT

**A RESEARCH STUDY ON THE NATURE,
INCIDENCE, EXTENT AND IMPACT OF SEXUAL
HARASSMENT OF WOMEN AT WORK PLACE IN
THE STATE OF MAHARASHTRA**

**SUBMITTED TO
DEPARTMENT OF WOMEN & CHILD DEVELOPMENT,
MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT,
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
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Major Findings, Conclusions And Rcommendations

The present study was undertaken in the organised and unorganised sectors of employment in the State of Maharashtra with the following principal objectives –

1. To study the nature, Incidence and extent of sexual harassment of women at work place.
2. To identify the correlates of sexual harassment used against women.
3. To examine the physical and psychological effects of sexual harassment on the personal and family life of the victims.
4. To study the impact of sexual harassment on the work, productivity and morale of the working women.
5. The examine the impact of sexual harassment of women on the work environment.
6. The examine the sufficiency or otherwise of the existing laws to provide safety and protection to women at work place.
7. To trace the reasons for which the sexually harassed women continue to work in hostile work environment with abusive relationship.
8. To suggest measures to prevent, control and minimize the incidence of sexual harassment of women at work place.

The study was conducted in the State of Maharashtra. A sample of 600 women was drawn from the universe of working women employed in organised and unorganised sectors of employment in four regions of the State i.e. Vidarbha, Marathwada, Konkan and Rest of Maharashtra. Out of 35 districts 10 district were selected at random and from each district a purposive sample of 60 Working Women (30 each from organised and unorganised sectors) was drawn. In addition to this 100 employers (50 each from organised and unorganised sectors) and 100 NGOs and Social Activists from those districts were contacted to collect necessary data for the study.

(1) Out of 600 Working Women covered by the study a large majority of about 77 per cent was found in the age group of 23-43 years. Nearly 39 per cent of them were from organised sector and about 38 per cent from unorganised sector. Similarly, about 39 per cent were from rural areas.

(Table No. 3.1)

(2) About 63 per cent of the working women were married, 20 per cent unmarried, 11 per cent widows, 4 per cent divorced and 3 per cent separated. Married working women were also found in majority in organised and unorganised sectors as well as in urban and rural areas.

(Table No. 3.2)

(3) From the view point of educational status about 20 per cent of the working women were found to be illiterate, about 18 percent had education up to primary level, around 6 per cent could reach the middle school level, nearly 14 per cent were educated up to S.S.C. level and 12 per cent up to H.S.S.C. level. Only about 19 per cent of the working women were graduates and about 9 per cent were having post-graduate qualifications.

The illiterate working women were equally found in urban and rural areas but majority (18%) of them were engaged in unorganised sector and only 2 per cent were found in organised sector

(Table No. 3.3)

(4) Majority (67%) of the working women were Hindus by religion, 17 per cent were Boudha and 10 per cent Muslims, Christian and Jains were 3 per cent each.

(Table No. 3.4)

(5) Exactly 75 per cent of the working women were from depressed and backward communities and only 25 per cent belonged to advanced communities. In the depressed and backward communities the share of S.C.s was 28 per cent S.T.s 13 per cent, VJNTs 6 per cent and O.B.C.s 28 per cent.

(Table No. 3.5)

(6) Out of 600 women workers about 41 per cent were living in villages, 44 per cent in cities and 14 per cent in towns. Thus majority of the working women were living either in cities or in towns.

(Table No. 3.6)

(7) A large majority (about 62 per cent) of the working women were from unclear families as against 34 per cent from joint families. Only 4 per cent of them had single families.

(Table No. 3.7)

(8) About 70 per cent of the working women had 3 to 6 members in their families.

(Table No. 3.8)

(9) Nearly 91 per cent of the working women were living with their families and about 9 per cent were living away from the family due to employment in other cities and towns.

(Table No. 3.9)

(10) Out of 600 working women covered by the study 26 per cent were employed in Government offices, 13 per cent in service establishments, 8 per cent in business establishments, 13 per cent in educational institutes, 6 per cent in private industry, 15 per cent in agriculture and 13 per cent in construction work.

(Table No. 3.10)

(11) Majority (17 per cent) of the working women were employed in clerical cadre, about 11 per cent in teaching jobs, around 20 per cent as casual or contract labour, about 8 per cent in managerial or supervisory cadre and 6 per cent in health services. Nearly 29 per cent of the working women were engaged as farm-workers, factory workers, domestic workers or sales girls.

(Table No. 3.11)

(12) Nearly 54 per cent of the working women had 7 or less than 7 years service to their credit and about 14 per cent of them had more than 10 years service.

(Table No. 3.12)

(13) Majority of 37 per cent of the working women described their work place as joint one, as against 34 per cent of them who described it as separate one. The work place was described as solitary and clustered by about 12 per cent and 15 per cent of the working women respectively.

(Table No. 3.13)

(14) Majority of 68 per cent of the working women stated that their working hours were scheduled during day time between 10.00 a.m. to 6.00 p.m. Only about 6 per cent of them had their working hours during night.

(Table No. 3.14)

(15) Only about 62 per cent of the working women felt safe and secured at work place.

(Table No. 3.15)

(16) Nearly 68 per cent of the working women had cordial and good relations with their male co-workers.

(Table No. 3.16)

(17) Majority of the respondents had limited perception of sexual harassment at work place. About 66 per cent perceived it as physical contact and advances of sexual nature and 58 per cent as request or demand for sexual favours. Sexually coloured remarks was the perception of sexual harassment stated by 44 per cent of the respondents. A large number of respondents were not aware of indirect behaviour of sexual nature i.e. body language.

(Table No. 3.17)

(18) Out of 600 working women covered by the study 224 (about 37 per cent) were the victims of sexual harassment at work place. The incidence of sexual harassment at work place was about 17 per cent in organised sector and 20 per cent in unorganised sector. It was 20 per cent in urban areas and 17 per cent in rural areas.

The detailed analysis of 224 victims of sexual harassment at work-place disclosed that about 94% of them were in the age range of 18 to 38 years as against 67% in the case of those who were above 38 years in age. The general contention that illiterate women and women with lower educational status run a higher risk of sexual harassment at work place as compared with those with higher educational status was negated by the finding of this study. Out of 224 victims about 71% were highly educated and 29% were either illiterate or educated up to primary level only. Similarly, it was also disclosed that the incidence of sexual harassment was comparatively more in married women as compared to unmarried, widows and divorced women, because out of 224 victims about 58% were married, about 17% unmarried and remaining 25% were either widows or divorces or separated.

It is generally presumed that women employed in construction, industry, agricultural farms, Government and corporate offices and domestic workers are exposed more to the risk of sexual harassment. The data analysis of 224 victims disclosed that this contention was partially true because the cases of sexual harassment were reported from all organisations i.e. Government Offices (33%), private offices and business houses (21%), educational institutions (9%), Construction industry (18%) and agricultural farms (14%).

Our analysis of 224 victims also disclosed that incidence of sexual harassment has taken place irrespective of the nature of job or status of job of the employee, though the extent of incidence varied between cadres.

(19) About 17 per cent of the respondents out of 600 reported that co-workers were the perpetrators of sexual harassment in their cases, about 7 per cent named managers or supervisors as perpetrators, whereas, about 7 per cent each reported that they were sexually harassed by clients and frequent visitors respectively. Co-workers were reported in large number of cases as the perpetrators of sexual harassment of women at work-place both in organised and unorganised sectors as well as urban and rural areas. Employers, managers and supervisors were reported as perpetrators of

sexual harassment next to co-workers but they were more in unorganised sector as compared to organised sector.

(20) It was noticed that out of 600 respondents about 12 per cent were being sexually harassed for the last few months, about 7 per cent for the last one year or so and about 6 per cent for the last so many years. Thus about 37 per cent of the respondents out of 600 were the victims of sexual harassment in organised and unorganised sector. The data analysis also revealed that there was no significant variation in extent and incidence of sexual harassment of women at work place in organised and unorganised sectors.

(21) The analysis of data relating to the timings during which women were sexually harassed at work place revealed that in majority of about 22 per cent of the cases the harassment took place during working hours.

(22) Out of 600 respondents near about 22 per cent neglected, 7 per cent each objected and resisted and about 2 per cent tolerated the first unwelcome sexual behaviour of the co-workers, supervisors, managers or employers. It was observed that those who tolerated or neglected the attempt of the perpetrators invited repeated trouble.

(Table No. 4.6)

(23) The initial sexual behaviour of the perpetrators was identified as verbal / non-verbal conduct of sexual nature (about 12%), body language (9%), attempt of physical contact (9%). Sexually coloured remarks (4%), demand or request for sexual favours (2%) and showing pornography (2%).

(24) Out of 600 respondents 186 (31 per cent), who were being sexually harassed at work-place, resisted the offending unwelcome sexual behaviour of their co-workers, supervisors, managers or employers. However, around 6 per cent of the respondents did not show any resistance which resulted in further attempts by perpetrators. Further analysis of data disclosed that those 166 respondents who resisted the offending behaviour of perpetrators had

exhibited their resistance in different ways. A majority of about 41 per cent of them got angry, about 37 per cent gave strong warning and about 20 per cent totally neglected the moves of the perpetrators.

(25) As far as intervention and support of members of the working team was concerned it was revealed that out of 224 cases of sexual harassment at work place, the co-workers intervened and supported the victims only in about 41 per cent of the cases. It is, thus, clear that in majority of the cases (about 59 per cent) there was no support to the victims from other workers in whose presence the incidents of sexual harassment took place. However, even those who intervened did not come forward to give evidence in favour of the victims. Out of 91 respondents, in whose cases the other members of the working team intervened, only 44 (about 48 per cent) reported that those who intervened came forward to give witness against the perpetrators. Thus, majority of the co-workers abstained from giving witness against the perpetrators.

(26) Anger was the first reaction to the attempt of sexual harassment and reported by a majority of about 43 per cent of the respondents out of 224 followed by shock (14%) nervousness (13%), helplessness (13%), and resistance (10%). About 8 per cent of the victims were unable to express in precise terms the first reaction to sexual harassment.

(27) Out of 224 victims a large majority of about 65 per cent spoke about the incidents of sexual harassment to their friend, co-workers or superior authorities.

Out of these 145 victims about 38 per cent were advised to give a strong warning to the perpetrators, 21 per cent each were advised to lodge a complaint and neglect the perpetrators and their behaviour and around 13 per cent were guided to approach the police.

Nearly 41 per cent of the victims (91) reported the incident of sexual harassment to the higher authorities by filing a complaint against the perpetrators. The remaining 133 victims (59%) did not lodge a complaint on various grounds like feeling of humiliation (31%), fear of taunting by co-workers (32%), fear of difficulties in marriage (9%), and fear of stain on character (12%).

(28) The 91 victims who lodged complaint of sexual harassment to the higher authorities informed the research team that the perpetrators were given strong warning by the employers (about 63%), enquiry committees were constituted to screen the complaints (about 8%), and the complaints were forwarded to the police for investigation (about 1%). No action was taken by the employers in 22 per cent of the complaints lodged and the perpetrators of sexual harassment were thus left without any punishment. About 44 per cent of the 91 complainants were greatly dissatisfied with the way in which their complaints were disposed off by the employers.

(29) A very large numbers of respondents (499 out of 600) had no knowledge of the Supreme Court Guidelines for preventing sexual harassment of women at work-places. Only 14 per cent respondents from organised sector and 3 per cent from unorganised sector had some knowledge of these guidelines but they too were ignorant about the details of these guide-lines. Only 44 out of 101 respondents informed that a Complaints Committee as per guidelines of Supreme Court was constituted in their establishment for dealing with the complaints of sexual harassment of women at work places. It is, therefore, very clear that a large number of establishments have not followed the directives of the Supreme Court of India.

(30) No representatives of the women workers were included in Complaints Committees nor were such committees headed by women. This was reported by a very large majority of about 82 per cent of the victims of sexual harassment. Moreover, about 81 per cent of the victims who lodged

complaints were not satisfied with the functioning of the Complaint Committees in their establishments due to a number of reasons.

(31) It was observed that the physical, social and economic consequences of sexual harassment at work place were not of temporary nature, they were long term. Out of 224 victims of sexual harassment about 65 per cent were scared of every male member around them, around 38 per cent developed a feeling that their life was meaningless, nearly 63 per cent wanted to take revenge, about 33 per cent were depressed as their relatives tried to avoid them, the family members look them down and suspected their character in about 29 per cent of the cases and in about 68 per cent of the cases work performance was adversely affected.

(32) More than 50 per cent of the victims of sexual harassment were so much disturbed mentally that they were constantly thinking of resigning the job.

(33) The family life of the victims was also disturbed due to the sexual harassment at work place. In about 29 per cent of the cases the husband suspected the character of the wife and in about 13 per cent of the cases the husband lost the love for wife and in about 13 per cent of the cases the husband lost the love for wife. In another 8 per cent of the cases the husband was keeping distance from the wife and there was irritation even on negligible things in about 7 per cent of the cases.

The study team interviewed 100 employers (50 each from organised and unorganised sector) to collect their views on the issue of sexual harassment of women at work place. Following are the major findings drawn from the responses of the employers –

1. As far as employers were concerned it was observed that about 52 per cent were aware of the ruling of and the guide-lines issued by the Supreme Court of India in respect of sexual harassment of women at work-place.

2. Out of 52 employers who had knowledge of Supreme Court guide-lines only 14 (about 27 per cent) constituted Complaints Committee to deal with the cases of sexual harassment in their establishments.
3. Out of 14 establishments in which Complaint Committee was Constituted only 10 were functioning and 4 were only on paper. The working of these 10 committees was not satisfactory.
4. The employers reported a number of measures adopted by them to prevent and control the sexual harassment of women at work place like (I) constitution of Complaints Committee (27%), exhibition of the notice / warning prohibiting sexual harassment at work place (15 per cent), awareness programmes for employees (4 per cent) and safe seating arrangement for women employees (27 per cent). It was, however, observed that about 61 per cent of the employers did nothing for preventing sexual harassment at work place.
5. Only 29 per cent of 100 employers accepted that the employers should be held responsible for the sexual harassment of women at work place.
6. Out of 100 employers 45 per cent held women responsible for their sexual harassment at work place.
7. About 68 per cent of the employers agreed that the morale, trust and productivity of women were affected due to their sexual harassment at work place.
8. Nearly 59 per cent of the employers were of the opinion that only framing of the policy on prevention of sexual harassment at work place was not sufficient. Effective implementation of the prevention policy was a must for fruitful results.
9. The employers suggested a number of measure to prevent and control sexual harassment of women at work place. Principal measures suggested by a

large majority of employers were (i) women workers should not be given jobs at secluded places (80%), (ii) women should not be given duties after midnight (83%) and (iii) heavy punishment should be given to the perpetrators of sexual harassment even on minor incidents (83%).

The research team also examined the role of NGOs and social activists in providing support services to the victims of sexual harassment at work places. The major findings in this reference are as under –

1. It was observed that out of 100 NGOs and Social Activists interviewed only 34 per cent had taken cognisance of sexual harassment of women at work place since long and 27 per cent very recently. Thus, the NGOs and Social Activists were not very serious about this problem.
2. Only 43 per cent of the NGOs and Social Activists opined that the problem has become serious to a great extent while 14 per cent agreed that it was serious to some extent. Remaining 39 per cent were not worried about the problem.
3. Most of the NGOs and Social Activists, however, agreed that they could play a significant role in preventing sexual harassment at work place by organising awareness programmes (71%), by providing immediate social and psychological support to the victims of sexual harassment (72%), and by providing legal aid to victims (57%).
4. Some of the NGOs and Social Activists provided a number of services to the victims of sexual harassment. Major services provided include (i) social, psychological and moral support (85%). (ii) counselling (75%) and (iii) advise for action against the perpetrators (47%).
5. The NGOs and Social Activists suggested a number of measures for preventing and controlling sexual harassment of women at work place. These included (i) organising regular awareness programmes and training for

employees and employers (69%), providing counselling centers at work places (56%), (iii) Separate law on sexual harassment of women at work place (87%) and (iv) proper security to and safety of women workers at the place of work.

CONCLUSIONS :

Based on the major findings of the study the following conclusions are drawn.

1. Married women are dominating in the field of employment both in organised and unorganised sectors as well as in urban and rural areas.
2. About one-fifth of the working women were illiterate and they were equitably distributed in organised and unorganised sectors of employment.
3. Though more and more women with high educational qualifications are entering in the field of employment they are mostly engaged in lower cadres. Illiterate women and women with moderate education are engaged in lower status jobs as construction labour, farm labour, maid-servants and class IV employees.
4. About one-third of the women are working at places which are not safe and secured and as such are exposed to the risk of sexual abuse.
5. A very large majority of respondents had a very narrow perception of sexual harassment i.e. sexual assault. As a result, when other forms of sexual harassment are used by the perpetrators, these women realise that they were subjected to sexual harassment at a very later stage.
6. The incidence of sexual harassment at work place is 17 per cent in organised sector and 20 per cent in unorganised sector, which seems to be very high.
7. The general contention that illiterate women and women with less education run a higher risk of sexual harassment at work place as compared with women with higher educational achievements is negated by the findings of

this study as even highly educated women were also harassed sexually at work place in sufficiently large numbers.

8. The incidence of sexual harassment at work place is higher in married women as compared to unmarried, divorced and widows.
9. The general presumption that women employed in construction work, factories, agricultural farms and as maid-servants are at higher risk of sexual harassment as compared to those working in offices, industrial houses, schools and colleges is not supported by the results of the present study. The incidence and extent of sexual harassment is equally noticed in all establishments irrespective of their nature.
10. Employers, managers, supervisors and co-workers were all found involved in sexual harassment of women at work place in varying degree but co-workers and supervisors are identified as principal perpetrators of sexual harassment in majority of the incidents.
11. The sexual harassment of women at work place is observed as a slow poisoning process. It starts from simple actions through body language and if not arrested at that point reaches to the stages of sexual advances, physical contacts and demand for sexual favours. Negligence or tolerance of the first attempt of sexual harassment encourages the perpetrators to go ahead till he reaches the target. Objection to and resistance of the first attempt of harassment may demoralise the perpetrators. It is, however, observed that only 14 per cent of the respondents either objected or resisted the first unwelcome sexual behaviour of the perpetrators.
12. It is disclosed from the analysis of data that in majority of the cases the perpetrators used weapons like verbal / non-verbal conduct of sexual nature, body language, sexually coloured remarks, touching objectionable parts of the body through physical contact, showing pornography and demand for sexual favour to attract the women workers and bring them in their fold.

13. About 31 per cent out of 600 women resisted the offending behaviour of the perpetrators but the strategy they adopted for resistance was not effective and tough i.e. getting angry, giving warning and neglecting.
14. The general understanding that when a woman is being harassed those present on the spot intervene and rescue her. However, the finding of this study have negated this understanding partially as in majority of the cases (58%) no one present on the spot ran down to the help of women who were being sexually harassed. Moreover, when it came to giving evidence against the perpetrators, a majority of those who intervened (51%) refused to do so. This trend was observed more in organised sector and urban areas as compared with unorganised sector and rural areas.
15. A large number of cases of sexual harassment of women at work places remain unreported as the victims are afraid of reporting due to possible defamation or threats from the perpetrators. This is evident from the fact that about 35 per cent of the victims covered by the study did not report the incidents to any one, even to their friends, family members or relatives.
16. Normally, if any woman is sexually harassed at work place she would immediately lodge a complaint with higher authorities. The findings of the study, however, revealed that only 41 per cent of the victims complained about the harassment and remaining 59 per cent did not. A number of factors for not lodging a complaint were reported; principal among them were feeling of humiliation, fear of doubting the character and possibilities of difficulties in arranging marriage in cases of unmarried women.
17. In the present study we came across 91 cases of victims who filed complaints of harassment with the employers. However, the employers were not found to be very serious about these complaints. The complaints of 22 per cent of the victims were totally neglected and no action was taken against

the perpetrators. Only one complaint out of 91 was referred to Complaints Committee for investigation. In about 62 per cent of the complaints only strong warning was given to the perpetrators. It is thus very clear that the employers do not appear to be serious on the problem of sexual harassment of women at work place.

18. Only 17 per cent respondents (14 per cent from organised and 3 per cent from unorganised sector) had the knowledge of Supreme Court directives for constitution of a Complaints Committee in every establishment where women are employed. Thus, about 83 per cent of the women workers were totally ignorant of the directives given of the Supreme Court of India.

19. The Complaints Committee constituted in a limited number of establishments under the guidelines of the Supreme Court were not functioning properly as about 83 per cent of the women engaged in those establishments were not satisfied with the working of these committees. There appeared a number of reasons for dissatisfaction of women workers in a number of cases such committees were only on paper. The committees were dominated by males and there was a lot of favoritism. It was also noticed that the complaints were not promptly attended to.

20. The study team, examined the physical, psychological, economic and social impact of sexual harassment of women at work place on personal, family and social life of the respondents. About 64 per cent of the respondents were found to be scares of every male member around them, 68 per cent developed a feeling that their life was meaningless and 31 per cent had a feeling of taking revenge. In about 42 per cent of the cases the social life of the victims was adversely affected as there appeared a change in the behaviour and attitude of their friends and relatives. Within the family, the victims were looked at with suspicion. At the place of work, they could not concentrate on the job and as a result their work efficiency was adversely affected. The total effect of all these factors together was that the victims of sexual harassment continuously thought of resigning the job.

21. The employers are responsible for providing healthy environment at work place and for protecting the rights and interests of women employees, which also includes protection from sexual harassment at work place it is, however, observed that Indian employers have not, as yet, realised their responsibilities in this respect. The study team interviewed 100 employers (50 each from organised and unorganised sector) with a view to know their efforts in preventing sexual harassment of women at work places. It was observed that about 50 per cent of the employers had no knowledge of Supreme Court guide-lines for preventing sexual harassment at work place. It was observed that about 50 per cent of the employers had no knowledge of Supreme Court guide-lines for preventing sexual harassment at work place, only about one-fourth of them constituted Complaint Committees as per directives of the Supreme Court, out of these 14 committees only 10 committees received 65 complaints out of which about 34 per cent were disposed off by giving warning and 40 per cent by giving mild punishments in the perpetrators. Strict action was taken only in 5 per cent of the cases and no action was reported in 23 per cent of the cases. Thus, the functioning of the Complaints Committees wherever they were formed was beyond satisfaction.
22. The employers adopted a number of measures to prevent sexual harassment of women at work place but the same were not so much effective.
23. The role of NGOs and Social activists was also evaluated by the study team by contracting 100 of them. The NGOs are supposed to be on forefront in solving the problems of women in difficult situation. In the area of sexual harassment of women at work place, however, the NGOs and Social activists have shown marginal participation in the State of Maharashtra. Only 34% of the NGOs and Social Activists contacted have taken the cognisance of the problem of sexual harassment of women at work place since long whereas 27 per cent have done so very recently. It clearly shows that most of the

NGOs and Social Activists do not seem to be very serious on this issue, so much so, that about 57 per cent of them treat this as a minor social problem when in reality it is a major one.

24. Those NGOs and Social Activists in Maharashtra who had taken the problem of sexual harassment more seriously organised orientation programmes for creating awareness about sexual harassment at work place and its consequence on the victims, the perpetrators and the work environment for both employers and employees. They also provided immediate social and psychological support to victims. Wherever required legal aid and guidance was also given. However, these efforts of limited number of NGOs and Social Activists are not sufficient and much more is required to be done.
25. Out of 61 NGOs and Social Activists who were active 51 received 198 complaints of sexual harassment at work place out of which only 28 cases were settled in favour of the victims. The remaining cases could not be settled due to non-cooperation of perpetrators and employers.
26. The majority of the NGOs and Social Activists held the employers responsible for sexual harassment of women at work place.
27. The NGOs and Social Activists identified some major factors for sexual harassment of women at work place like (i) attitude of men to treat women as objects of sex (ii) over-smart behaviour of women at work place, (iii) impact of sexy scenes in visual media and (iv) free mixing of men and women at work place.
28. Social boycott and public humiliation, life-long imprisonment and a separate legislation for dealing with the cases of sexual harassment of women were some of the measures suggested by the NGOs and Social Activists for prevention of sexual harassment at work place.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In the backdrop of the objectives of the present study and the findings and conclusions drawn, the study team would like to make the following suggestions cum recommendations.

1. The Guide-lines issued by the Supreme Court of India on August, 1997 prohibiting sexual harassment of women at work place are legally binding on all establishments and institutions. However, though a period of over six years has passed only a few establishments and institutions have implemented these guidelines. It is surprising that the same are also not given effect in many of the Central and State Government organisations. Implementation of these guidelines is the first step towards effective prevention of sexual harassment at work place. The Central and State Governments should, therefore, launch a drive to identify the defaulting establishments, institutions and organisations, punish them suitably and compel them to follow the guidelines honestly.
2. Though the guide-lines issued by the Supreme Court enjoy the status of law till the necessary legislation is passed, these guide-lines are not honestly implemented by the employers. Hence it is the need of the hour to have a separate law exclusively dealing with sexual harassment of women at work place and providing for the punishment to the perpetrators as well as employers who do not take such cases seriously.
3. The employers have a prime responsibility of protecting the rights, interests and dignity of women employed in their establishments. We would like to recommend certain steps to be taken by the employers to ensure that the affected women are given adequate redress. Every employer must design a very clear Sexual Harassment Prohibition and Prevention Policy which must be made known to each employee in the organisation. The policy should clearly provide for actions like –

- (a) Downgrading of job status and responsibilities of those employees who are found guilty of sexual harassment at work place.
- (b) Transfer to another position without job disadvantages.
- (c) A warning and counselling on misconduct.
- (d) Suspension
- (e) Dismissal

4. A large number of reputed NGOs having good reputation and valuable experience to their credit can play a significant role in the area of sexual harassment at work place. The Government and employers should taken their help in organising awareness programmes and training for officers and other employees. They should also be assigned the role of watch dogs for keeping an eye on the likely incidents of sexual harassment and for providing counselling to the possible perpetrators and support services to the victims. These NGOs should be given sufficient financial assistance for their services.
5. Public awareness through, seminars, conferences, T.V. Serials and through the written media should be created on this very important issue of social life of women.
6. Sex Education should form a part of university curriculum so that the youths are acquainted with the possible consequences of sexual harassment of women. This may reduce the present rate of incidence and extent of sexual harassment at work place.
7. The employers should frame very clear rules for promotion transfers, demotion, suspension and dismissal of employees and the same should be made known to all employees at the time of entry in the organisations. This will defeat the tactics of senior officers to sexually harass the women employees by abstracting their promotions, deliberately issuing transfer orders, threats of demotion and so on.

8. The women employees should be social and must maintain good relations with co-workers and superior officials but their behaviour pattern should be such as would not allow anybody to taken disadvantage of their free nature.
9. The women employees should lodge the complaint of harassment when they see the early signs of harassment by the perpetrators. It is always better to take timely precaution than to run for cure after a long time.
10. In a number of cases the perpetrators of sexual harassment of women are disorganised personality and sex perversion. To detect such persons on the staff of the establishment all the employees should be referred to psychiatrics for psychological testing at the cost of the employer. Those found prone to sexual harassment should be sent for counselling and treatment.
11. As at present, the statistical data is available only about the reported crimes against women in police department under a common head 'Crimes Against Women'. Statistics on Sexual Harassment of Women at work place are not separately available. It is, therefore, suggested that the statistics of sexual harassment of women at work place be collected under a separate head and the responsibility of collection, processing and presentation of data be assigned to the National Sample Survey Organizations.
12. The research team suggests that research on psychological aspects of sexual harassment at work place should be undertaken as a continuous process.

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