

## Bystander Effect: Workplace Harassment of Women at Educational Institutes: A Case Study of the University of Okara

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**Abstract:** The statistics of working women being harassed are rising by the day, but reporting these harassment cases remains a societal taboo even in 2024. This study, in particular, seeks to understand why workplace harassment is not reported, as well as the elements that contribute to a victim becoming a bystander. The study investigated the subject at educational institutions. For the purpose of sampling, a public sector university, the University of Okara, was selected. In-depth interviews of the female faculty members at different departments of the university were conducted with their consent and confidentiality as a priority. A comprehensive literature review was conducted prior to the design of this research study to determine the sensitivity of the subject. This paper has explained different forms of harassment one can face, as well as the Protection Against Women at Workplace Act 2010. This paper examined both the legal framework and popular perceptions about it. A well-structured questionnaire was created to conduct the interviews. The data collected was then analyzed using descriptive and inferential research methodologies.

**Keywords:** Harassment, Workplace, Women, Reporting, Bystander Effect

### Introduction

In my previous research, I studied the harassment of women in different workplaces. From that, I concluded that women around us at different workplaces are facing harassment, but they are not reporting it (Fitzgerald, 1993; Sadruddin, 2010). In this study, I tried to explore the fear that working women face at work.

Women share more than half of our country's population (Ahmad, 2023). Their role in the state economy is as important as that of men. Women who go out of their homes to work outside gender-shaped compartments of society suffer many kinds of hurdles on their way to progress. From character assassination to moral indignity, they are given many unwanted charges. To be safe, they are told not to make any unnecessary contact with males in their everyday lives (Goonesekere, 2004). Time has changed

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a lot of things, but still, today, a woman feels unsafe when she leaves her house for work or anything (Ali et al., [2011](#)). A woman leaving her house for work is vulnerable to gaze, comments, and other kinds of harassment from strangers around her. She should be prepared not only to save herself but also to handle these kinds of evils. She should know about her rights to employment and how to protect them. The act of harassment in any form must be unwelcomed and reported by the employee (United Nations, n.d.). Also, the employer must be conscious and responsible enough to provide a secure work environment to employees (Sethna et al., [2019](#)).

In our country, the percentage of women working outside their homes is already very low compared to that of the West. We really need to make sure the working environment is safe for women in every field so that more women feel confident and join hands with men in making our country a developed one (Rafiq et al., [2024](#)). In this study, I am going to examine the reasons behind harassment in the workplace, what women feel about them, and how to cater to these elements in a productive way. First, we need to develop an understanding of harassment for readers so that they can better grasp the crux of this work.

### **Definition of Harassment**

The Home Office and the Department of Health Guidance on Developing and Implementing Multi-agency Policies and Procedures to Protect Vulnerable Adults from Abuse define abuse as a single act or repeated physical, verbal, or psychological acts that violate an individual's human and civil rights. Some cases of abuse constitute criminal offenses. For example, physical, psychological, or sexual assault, theft, fraud, and gender and racial discrimination (Home Office & Department of Health, 2000; Rafiq et al., [2022](#)).

### **Types of Harassment**

There are different types of harassment that need to be addressed here:

**Verbal Harassment:** This refers to acts including hateful comments and abusive behaviour related to sex, race, religion, caste, or creed. Abusive language, humiliation, and hurting others are verbal harassment (Goonsekere, [2004](#)).

**Sexual Harassment:** Sexual assault may be physical, ranging from unwanted touch and rape to any kind of indecent assault. It mostly carries threats of employment termination. Sexual harassment has been defined by the federal government and courts as "illegal employment discrimination" (Barron's Business Dictionary, [2006](#)). Sexual harassment includes unnecessary and unwelcomed touching, requests for sex, sex-related talks and jokes, intimidating behaviors such as demanding sex in return for favors at workplaces, sexually explicit pictures, sexually explicit physical contact, sexually explicit emails, messages, or phone calls, and intrusive questions about a person's body (Sadruddin, [2010](#)).

**Bullying:** It's a phenomenon characterized by undesired, offensive, and malevolent conduct that harms a person's self-esteem. Abuse of position or power usually takes the form of extremely reasonable abuse that can be verbal, nonverbal, or physical (Fitzgerald, [1993](#)).

**Racial Harassment:** Hostility or harm caused to any individual based on their race, nationality, or ethnic background is known as racial harassment (Ahmad, [2023](#)).

### **Reasons for Workplace Harassment of Women**

There can be multiple reasons for harassment in the workplace, from natural to habitual. It can be a biological drive among men or social suppression of women. Among the most prominent reasons that we studied are the following:

- The workplace environment provides a fair opportunity for the power class to oppress others. Most of the cases are seen where male bosses are caught harassing female employees working under them (Ali et al., [2011](#)).
- Unprofessionalism in the workplace is another obvious reason for this issue.
- Absence of policies against harassment at workplaces gives freedom to the offender to get involved in actions leading to harassment at workplaces.
- Organizational problems give space for the attack of harassment among people working in the same organization. It could be for personal profit or organizational well-being in an unfair manner. Inequalities in power and status are the driving force behind this (Fitzgerald, [1993](#)).
- The infrastructure of the offices provides an opportunity for cases of harassment at the workplace. Close cabins are unsafe for such happenings compared to open spaces (Goonesekere, [2004](#)).
- Lower positions of women seem the most obvious reason why they become an easy target for harassment. Women in lower positions in an organization feel vulnerable and powerless to protect themselves from powerful bosses (Ahmad, [2023](#)).
- The social dominance of males makes them psychologically have the upper hand to harass their female colleagues as being more acceptable to the right to work by society (Ali et al., [2011](#)).
- Biologically, men are more sexually driven, which makes them more likely to attempt harassment (Sadrudin, [2010](#)).
- Physical attraction of males towards their female colleagues is a driving force behind incidents of harassment.
- External factors other than internal elements can also be involved in such happenings.

### **Protection against Harassment of Women at Workplace Act 2010**

President Asif Ali Zardari signed the "Protection against Harassment of Women at Workplace Bill 2010" to create a secure workplace for women, helping the country's prosperity outside their homes. It was an effort by President Asif Ali Zardari to uphold the government's commitment to equal rights to work for men and women as given in the constitution of Pakistan. The purpose of the bill was to provide a work environment free from abuse, intimidation, and harassment for women. This initiation was appreciated by the National Assembly on January 21 and by the Senate on February 26. The Prime Minister's social welfare advisor, Shahnaz Wazir Ali, recollected the legislative writing process. The bill's signing has been hailed by the Alliance against Sexual Harassment (Aasha) as a significant victory for women in the country. The punishments against harassment given in the law vary from fines to confinement. Any unwanted sexual proposal, request for sexual favours, verbal or non-verbal communication in a bad context, or sexually unacceptable attitude that can harm a worker's performance at the workplace or leave

an impression of an offensive work environment, as well as any attempt to threaten the complainant, are all considered harassment according to the law (Dawn Newspaper, [2010](#); & Rafiq et al. [2022](#)).

## Literature Review

Sadrudin ([2010](#)) studied the status of women in Pakistani society and violations of their rights. He gave the verdict in his research paper "Sexual Harassment at Workplace in Pakistan- Issues and Remedies about the Global Issue in Managerial Sector." According to him, harassment of women at their workplaces has a negative effect on their productivity in Pakistan. Harassment of women in workplaces is not a regional issue but has been observed worldwide in different faces. Many laws are being created but not put into effect. He found that most working women are aware of their fundamental rights, but they are unaware of the pathways towards the protection of their rights provided by the Protection of Women from Harassment at Workplace Act 2010. Fitzgerald ([1993](#)) says sexual harassment is commonly described as unwanted behavior that has a sexual or sexist component in the workplace. The United Nations defined badgering as behavior that disrupts work or promotes combative work environments. The most known forms of provocation were probably improper behaviour, which was defined as a misleading set of social norms that a woman found unsettling. Goonesekere ([2004](#)). Batool (2018) conducted a poll among women in four big cities of Pakistan: Lahore, Rawalpindi, Gujranwala, and Faisalabad. The purpose behind this was to gauge women's understanding of their legal rights. Rights that were studied in this experiment were women's property rights, divorce rights, legal rights, and measures the government has made to protect their legal rights. The majority of the female participants in this poll were not aware of their legal rights.

The Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan grants equal rights to men and women; however, in reality, there is a disparity in sexual orientation, and men separate women from men. Although women make up nearly half of the country's population, they are also more oppressed and discouraged in society. Pakistan is ranked 126<sup>th</sup> out of 149 countries in the Gender Inequality File (GII), as per the UNDP Human Development Report of 2014. In the Global Sexual Orientation Gap Report of 2014, Pakistan is ranked 141<sup>st</sup> out of 142 countries in the Gender Gap Index (World Economic Forum, 2014). The study noted that compared to women who do not work, working women have a higher level of knowledge regarding their rights. According to different research, education was crucial in raising women's legal understanding. Income, career, and women's legal knowledge were also found to correlate positively. (Ali et al., [2011](#); Rafiq et al. [2024](#)).

It was investigated that the women with higher levels of education, professional achievement, and cultural sophistication had a higher level of legal awareness. The knowledge of several Indian laws, such as those pertaining to dowries, divorces, sexual harassment at work, and the protection of women from violence, was used to gauge the legal awareness of the women in this study. According to a Dawn review of 300 women, lewd behaviour, abuse, and separation at Pakistan's workplaces, including colleges, are unavoidable, typically go unreported, and are ignored by senior directors. When asked if their managers had forced women to keep silent about workplace harassment, 61% of the women said that this was not the case, but 35% of them indicated that their coworkers and supervisors had urged them to keep quiet. Force and authority over women are issues that are raised by inappropriate behaviour. "The Protection

Against Harassment of Women at the Workplace Act primarily focuses on behavior modification; it does not directly involve courts or law enforcement.” Said by Khaliq. The real test is execution, as it was sanctioned and changed to Pakistan Panel Code Section 509 in 2010 (Sethna et al., [2019](#)).

The study found that the media's role has grown increasingly harmful to women's empowerment as a result of the revolution in communication and information technology. Regretfully, though, the media no longer serves as a true resource for the advancement of women in India. It is not providing the public with the necessary knowledge regarding women's issues and the state-guaranteed rights of women. According to a study, the media should take the initiative to educate society and women about women's rights. The media ought to dedicate a significant amount of its programming to promoting and debating the legal and constitutional rights of women. It would support the advancement of women's equality in India. A poll was conducted to show that women are becoming more aware of Pakistani laws that offer them security both at home and at work. Women who are aware of their rights under the nation's protection laws primarily obtain their information from the media. The first significant source of knowledge for women about Pakistan's laws promoting women's rights is electronic media, followed by print media. The study's conclusions demonstrated that Pakistani media was significantly contributing to women's education on the laws protecting their rights. The authors have noted that while social media is a significant worldwide tool for raising public awareness of certain issues, Pakistanis felt that social media was less useful than other means of ensuring that women understand their legal rights, regardless of the literature they read about their own nation or area. There would be no benefit to the community, society, or laws pertaining to women's welfare without their being aware of their rights. They are privileged to enjoy these rights in their homeland. The media may be a crucial instrument for raising awareness in this regard.

## Objectives of Study

The objectives of this study include;

1. To find out if working women at educational institutes are experiencing harassment
2. To find out why working women do not report harassment
3. To find out if educational institutes provide any mechanism to check harassment
4. To find out if working women at educational institutes are aware of the Protection of Women from Harassment at Workplace Act 2010.

## Research Methodology

This research employs a qualitative, analytical, and descriptive approach. For the purpose of this study, interviews were conducted with female faculty from various departments at the University of Okara. The study population includes female teaching staff from different faculties at the University of Okara. This interview-based research allowed us to explore different perspectives, experiences, and opinions, contributing to a comprehensive understanding of the problem (Creswell, [2013](#)). The data collected is primarily based on in-depth interviews and is qualitative in nature. Direct conversations in interviews helped researchers build a closer understanding of interviewees, resulting in rich and contextual insights (Kvale, [2007](#)). The privacy of the participants was ensured to provide comfort and confidence throughout the process (Sieber, [1992](#)).

## Result and Analysis

### Analysis of Data

For the purpose of ease of understanding, we actually divided our study into four major sections, including all sub-areas we covered meanwhile.

- Understanding of working women about harassment
- Role of organization towards the issue
- What are possible hurdles in the way of reporting harassment
- Public perception of PHWWA
- Understanding of working women about harassment

**Participant 1:** In our study, we talked to a number of working women at the University of Okara and tried to get their understanding of harassment as a subject. In the first section of the studies, we interviewed more than 20 women, and statistically, more than half of them were quite aware of harassment. Some of them have faced it at different stages of their career, and others have not. The basic understanding of harassment as an evil was familiar to almost every other woman except one or two who were new to their professional life. When education and awareness become very important in every sphere of life, locally and globally, the boundaries for gender made by older generations out of fear, negligence, or whatever has also been weakening with time. Knowledge has become universal and, more precisely, genderless. In the present world, women are seen sharing equal responsibilities with men. Women are given a fair chance to grow and achieve productive outcomes. They are participating in child raising and economy raising in an equally balanced way. Women are now more confident than they were in past decades and feel much pride in themselves. When we get out of our homes for work, we are mentally prepared for every kind of hardship and situation that could come our way.

**Participant 2:** Harassment may vary from being unconformable in someone's presence to the extreme of physical hurt. There is no settled definition of harassment. This particular act can be different in anyone's experience in a different way. What I have seen harassment as might be different for someone my age. For me, even if a person is staring at me from a distance and I do not feel safe with this stare, I would call it harassment. I will not wait for him or her to proceed further to cause me any harm. Unfortunately, we lack at proving such harassment in front of any third person or party. This is where we, women, feel helpless if we cannot prove our version of discomfort. Meanwhile, a man who is doing wrong knowingly easily proves himself innocent and moves on. Our country needs to give a proper layout for everyone, either men or women, to understand what actual harassment can look like. This is not an issue that should be ignored for a long time, as it can damage the next generations.

**Participant 3:** In recent years, we have heard a lot about the subject, and consciously or unconsciously, we are all aware of harassment in some capacity or another. As a working woman, I feel we are already consciously ready for it. While at the office, in classrooms, in meeting rooms, in the cafeteria, on a bus, or anywhere surrounded by men we trust, we are always in fear of not being safe. It's not this university, but every other institute provides a similar work environment for women.

**Participant 4:** As somewhere coming from Lahore to Okara, I saw a huge work environment difference at university. I believe there is a big ethnic difference that creates a hinge of uncomforted for someone coming from outside. The working environment difference automatically gives a sense of alien in a new place. And fear of being harassed automatically raised in such places, you don't belong to.

The evil of workplace harassment grows in an environment where people do not exactly know what it looks like. To cater to the problem, it is very important to confront its real face. Threatening, bullying, blackmailing, or even a joke including racial or sexual meaning. It can be anywhere in an office pantry or in a meeting room full of coworkers. All that is needed is for someone to stand up and say something, anything against that disrespectful comment or behaviour. This is the first step towards fighting the curse. Unfortunately, most of the females coming from weak backgrounds do not dare to do the minimum against the wrongdoer out of fear or lack of confidence. We name this phenomenon as "bystander effect."

**Participant 5:** Another dilemma we experience today is that we have made harassment normal in our society. This is the reason why when we face it in the workplace, people around us do not bother it much. This behavior gives fire to the phenomenon. Most of my female colleagues have to face harassment from male co-workers and still have to process it normally, as if it is not a big deal to bother about. This ignorant behavior creates an opportunity for evil doers to move ahead in their actions. In my opinion, first of all, we need to change this behavior. No one should wait for the bigger loss. This is the very first change we can bring in ourselves: a change of attitude.

### **Role of Organization towards the Issue**

An anti-harassment policy is designed by the government of Pakistan for all the organizations working within the country in different capacities. An anti-harassment policy seeks to resolve and avoid hostile circumstances that infringe upon workers' dignity. It relates to one-time or recurring instances of bullying, degrading, intimidation, or other unwanted verbal, nonverbal, or physical behavior directed at an individual or group of individuals.

**Participant 6:** Educational institutes as a major play a significant role in curbing the abuse from society. They not only implement a given policy but can play a pivotal part in formulating one. Educational institutes can initiate awareness and educational programs, help in policy development and implementation, conduct research and surveys, bring about cultural and social changes, and ensure a strong reporting and investigative mechanism. In Pakistan, educational institutes are seen encountering workplace harassment in different forms ranging from bullying, verbal abuse, intimidation, unwanted advances, inappropriate conduct, sexual abuse, or in other forms like gender, religion, caste, and disability discrimination. Cyber harassment is another form we have seen recently around us when we hear stories of harassment from colleagues and even students. Educational institutes can play a crucial role in this matter by implementing explicit regulations and training sessions, establishing a helpful reporting system, and promoting an environment that respects and holds both staff and students accountable.

**Participant 7:** While specifically talking about my institute, I noticed that there is a disciplinary committee working at the moment to address this issue. And its efficiency is remarkable in all the ways it works. I have personally heard a number of verdicts by the committee in order to ensure law and order on campus. I have not been introduced to any such system present at the university that is specifically working to deal with harassment cases on campus. However, there is a disciplinary committee that works at a moderate pace. I have not heard anything satisfactory from the committee so far, except from my colleagues

, who somehow approached it for whatever purpose. I believe, working in such a vicinity where there is a huge cultural shock for people who are having a public sector university in their area for the first time, there is much needed strong security and safety mechanisms are required to build credibility among the public at large. It will not only glorify the safer face of the university but will also educate nearby areas as well.

### **What are Possible Hurdles in the way of Reporting Harassment?**

**Participant 8:** We all are components of society. Each of our decisions depends on how society views it. The way society views reporting harassment is crucial, as it wants people to shut their voices for multiple reasons. The stigmas and shame that come along with reports of harassment can make victims feel ashamed or reluctant to talk about their experience, particularly when it comes to women. Another major reason for not reporting harassment is fear of not being heard, reputational damage, or, in the worst case, isolation. Also, I believe we do not reach out to authorities, who are meant to take action, because they are not trustworthy to us. The business of the concerned committee or maybe any precedents stop us from approaching the authority to report the incidents.

**Participant 9:** Of course, societal norms and values are a big hurdle in the way of reporting harassment. While living in a particular society, we have to follow its laws, norms, and traditions, willingly or unwillingly. They are like certificates to live in an honorable way. Ours is a patriarchal society, where any wrongdoing by men is normalized, and even a minor negligence of a woman is questionable. Harassment being normalized in this society is a significant reason for giving rise to the issue.

**Participant 10:** To fight evil, the most important thing is education and awareness. Proactive measures need to be taken on a societal level for the understanding of people. There is still a need to educate people on what exactly harassment can look like. Cultural transformation is directly associated with the outburst of this evil. Normalizing harassment must be replaced with normalizing reporting harassment.

**Participant 11:** There are so many obstacles to reporting harassment. People who came out of their homes to earn for their families cannot risk their jobs by reporting against their bosses. This might be because of a lack of trust among employers and employees. Another reason for not reporting harassment is reputational harm. Nobody wants to live with a questionable reputation at a workplace. It will also definitely affect their productivity at work. Furthermore, the complexities of reporting harassment are itself a big hurdle. There has not been any smooth mechanism introduced in our favor to report harassment. Then, victims are always seen as reluctant to talk about the incident because they feel their



own shame in it. Society somehow sends a message to victims that it must be their mistake first, which leads to some extreme later. People in general, particularly in our society, are not ready to believe the victim first. This makes victims experience feelings of shame, guilt, and self-blame, which makes it even more difficult to come to report.

### **Public Perception of PHWWA**

**Participant 12:** Protection Against Harassment of Women at Workplace Act 2010 was proposed for the protection of women against harassment in the workplace. It was the first law in Pakistan of its kind; there was nothing wrong in calling it a landmark. The best thing about the act is that it defined harassment clearly. The act is applicable to all workplaces, from big industries to small-level workshops, without any discrimination of gender, status, area, or religion. It made it easier and safer for women to participate in the progress and prosperity of the country. The act provides remedies and punishment against harassment. It might include loss of job, imprisonment, or a fine to the abuser. The law clearly prohibits discrimination or victimization of the women who report it.

**Participant 13:** This bill is a failed attempt to provide justice to victims. It is just a glorified act to hide the heinous crime underneath. People are using the act for their personal benefit and blackmailing others. I have seen women misuse the bill and blackmail their colleagues for extra favors. In this scenario, the real victims get backstepped and unheard. There is no check on the proper implementation of the law. Weak administration has failed the utility of the law. Furthermore, the act is not familiar to the common people for whom it was brought. Only a limited, specific section of people know about the bill.

### **Discussion**

The basic purpose of the study was to explore harassment at educational institutes and assess the awareness among working women who are directly affected by it. Another purpose was to investigate the reasons why harassment cases are not reported. In order to achieve these objectives, a qualitative study was conducted involving in-depth interviews with female faculty members at the University of Okara. In-depth interviews provided a comprehensive understanding of the issue (Creswell, [2013](#); Kvale, [2007](#)). The literature review guided the research focus and methodology, providing insights into different types of harassment and their recognition among people.

The University of Okara was chosen as the research site due to ease of access and the ability to obtain honest feedback, as one of the researchers is an active employee of the university. The results revealed that many working women are not well aware of the various forms of harassment they might encounter, possibly due to the lack of a well-constructed definition of harassment in Pakistan (Sadruddin, [2010](#)). Unlike the USA and European countries, which have clear and defined definitions of harassment, Pakistan needs to develop similar standards to protect its women (Ali et al., [2011](#)). The study also found that many working women had faced harassment at different times in their careers, but there were also many who had never experienced it, indicating that not all workplaces are prone to harassment. This highlights the need for creating safe working environments for women. It was also observed that women often did not report harassment incidents at home due to fear of losing their jobs or freedom. Cultural barriers and communication gaps between male and female family members further prevent women from

sharing their experiences. Additionally, many women were unaware of the mechanisms to report harassment or felt that the existing disciplinary committees were ineffective.

Interestingly, some women found the Protection against Harassment of Women at Workplace Act of 2010 to be helpful, while others viewed it as an abuse of power (Sethna et al., [2019](#)). The university has not provided sufficient training or workshops to help women understand harassment and protect themselves, highlighting a significant gap in institutional support. While conducting this research, we encountered many working women who shared their experiences of harassment at different points in their careers. However, it was encouraging to find that some women had never faced any form of harassment, particularly in their current workplaces, suggesting that a safe work environment is possible (Sadruddin, [2010](#)). This diversity in experiences highlights the need for tailored interventions and support systems in different work environments (Ali et al., [2011](#)). Another key finding was that women often did not share their harassment experiences with their families due to fear of repercussions such as losing their jobs or freedom to work. This reflects cultural barriers and communication gaps in Pakistani households, where emotional sharing is not as welcomed as it should be. This lack of open communication within families further prevents women from seeking support and reporting incidents. Many women also reported the absence of clear mechanisms to report harassment at their workplaces. While some expressed satisfaction with the security measures provided by their organizations, others were unaware of how to report harassment to the disciplinary committees or felt that their concerns were not adequately addressed (Sethna et al., [2019](#)). This indicates a need for better communication and education about reporting mechanisms and support systems within institutions (Afzal et al., [2023](#)).

Furthermore, the study revealed that many young women, especially those pursuing M.Phil. and PhD degrees, were unaware of the Protection against Harassment of Women at Workplace Act of 2010. This lack of awareness is concerning, as it highlights the need for more effective dissemination of information about legal protections and rights (Batool, 2018). Some women also perceived the law as being misused by others for personal gain, indicating a need for a balanced and fair implementation of such laws (Sadruddin, [2010](#)). The university itself has not taken adequate steps to educate women about harassment, its various forms, and how to report it. Almost all respondents indicated that they had never attended any workshops or activities that could help them understand and combat harassment (Ali et al., [2011](#)). Despite this, there was a strong sense of solidarity among the women, with many expressing their willingness to support their colleagues in reporting harassment and standing together against it.

## Conclusion

The presented study reveals that age, gender, position at the organization, family bonding, social norms, working environment, and organizational policies are all significantly playing roles in the harassment of women in the workplace. The study investigated the relationship of victims among colleagues as a hurdle as to why they don't report harassment. Although laws and legal protection are provided to every female employee, the lack of a proper mechanism to report such incidents and then take action against them at the second step is a failure of the institute at large. Social norms and fake values associated with working women make them step back from raising their voices against harassment to fear being caught victim shaming in the community.

The lack of privacy rules for the victims makes it harder and unsafe for them to report harassment. Moreover, on a larger scale, it is noted that a majority of women are unaware of their right to report such cases. Even the working class of women are seen unfamiliar with the Protection against Harassment of Women at Workplace Act 2010. Women, in general, are unaware of the types of harassment they can face at different stages of life in their daily lives. It is highly needed to educate women in general and working women in specific about workplace harassment, their rights, and their role in the fight against evil. There must be proper awareness sessions for female employees at education institutes to preach to women about their safety within and outside the organization.

### **Recommendations**

- A proper definition of harassment is necessary in Pakistan, just as they are in the United States and other European Nations.
- A study needs to be done on the male working class as well.
- Government representatives need to take this seriously.
- The laws and acts should be made easy for everyone's understanding, also awareness of the Act must be made among the public.
- All educational institutes must collectively formulate a common policy in this regard.
- The Ministry of Human Rights must have the authority to examine, assess, and modify current legislation to meet fundamental requirements. Taking swift actions in response to sexual harassment may deter future suitors.
- To have a second line of defense against harassment claims, the government should set up an administrative organization.
- Workers should adopt the workplace's sexual harassment policy.

### **Limitations**

- This study is solely based on the opinions of women because of the nature of the problem, i.e., workplace harassment of women.
- As the study focuses on a certain population, the viewpoint of men and the statement of the university is discounted.
- Only faculty members of the university were included in the study; non-teaching staff were excluded from the study.
- The study is conducted only in one university; hence, it cannot be generalized to all.
- Due to social norms and victim-shaming culture, women feel uneasy discussing issues related to harassment.

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