



A Study Evaluating Employee Awareness in Compliance with Posh Act on Industries of Vadodara District

Ms. Khushi Moriswala¹, Asst. Prof. Shruti Bhonsle²

¹Research Scholar, Faculty of Social Work, Parul University, Waghodiya, Vadodara, Gujarat, India

²Research Guide, Faculty of Social Work, Parul University, Waghodiya, Vadodara Gujarat, India

ABSTRACT:

The Prevention of Sexual Harassment (POSH) Act, which was implemented in India in 2013, requires organizations to create a safe and respectful workplace by preventing and responding to sexual harassment in the workplace. This research assesses employee awareness of compliance with the POSH Act in the industries of the Vadodara district. The study seeks to determine the degree of awareness, effectiveness of organizational training initiatives, and functioning of Internal Complaints Committees (ICCs) in enforcing compliance. Surveys and interviews with employees and HR representatives from the mixed-methods research process to provide information on the prevailing knowledge and compliance with the Act. The study will assist in the identification of gaps in awareness and propose action to improve compliance. The research highlights the importance of ongoing training and active enforcement of policies in order to provide a safer workplace.

Keywords: POSH Act, employee awareness, workplace compliance, sexual harassment prevention, Vadodara industries, Internal Complaints Committee (ICC).

INTRODUCTION:

Workplace safety and diversity have become essential issues in contemporary organizational arrangements, especially sexual harassment in the workplace. In response to such issues, the Indian government brought into force the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition, and Redressal) Act, 2013, more popularly referred to as the POSH Act, in order to offer a legal platform to ensure women a safe workplace environment. The act requires all organizations with ten or more employees to form an Internal Complaints Committee (ICC), hold regular awareness programs, and have strict policies in place for preventing and addressing sexual harassment cases. Despite the legal requirement, compliance levels and employee awareness about the POSH Act are mixed across industries and tend to create gaps in enforcement and effectiveness.

The purpose of this research is to assess the level of awareness among different industries in the Vadodara district regarding the POSH Act and its provisions. Through examining employees' knowledge, attitudes, and perceptions about workplace sexual harassment policies, this research aims to determine the efficacy of organizational training programs and compliance policies within the region. In addition, the research will investigate obstacles to industries in maintaining compliance with POSH guidelines and offer an insight into possible strategies to maximize awareness and implementation.

Determining employee awareness is very important in order to develop an organizational culture of respect and safety, minimize incidents of harassment, and maximize an organization's fulfillment of its legal and ethical obligations. The results of this research will be added to the general discussion on workplace safety and can potentially suggest guidelines for policymakers, industry officials, and HR managers to further reinforce POSH compliance in Vadodara's industrial landscape.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY:

This research is particularly important as it assesses staff awareness of abiding by the Prevention of Sexual Harassment (POSH) Act, 2013 in the firms of the Vadodara region. Harassment at workplace is a paramount concern that touches the well-being of employees, organizational culture, and compliance laws. By mapping the awareness quotient of employees, this research identifies knowledge gaps as well as practices of the POSH Act that can be reinforced to make workplaces safer and inclusive.

The research findings will benefit various stakeholders, such as employers, human resource practitioners, policymakers, and employees. For companies, knowledge of employees' awareness levels can inform the creation of effective training programs, with the aim of legal compliance and creating a harassment-free workplace. Furthermore, employees will gain more knowledge and awareness, enabling them to identify and report cases of harassment, hence instilling a culture of accountability and safety.

Industries in Vadodara, which have a diverse set of employees, should make sure that all workers, irrespective of gender, are adequately aware of their rights and duties under the POSH Act. Finally, the study will provide a basis for encouraging legal adherence, ethical business practices, and an industrial sector that is more inclusive in nature in Vadodara.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE:

M. Krishnaveni, S.P Nandhini, (July 2023), The PoSH Act, 2013, seeks to prevent and protect women from sexual harassment at work, providing a safe workplace. Sexual harassment has been defined under the Act as unwelcome sexual advances or conduct of a sexual nature. The Act requires organizations with more than ten employees to set up an Internal Complaints Committee (ICC) for secret and prompt grievance redressal. The paper analyzes salient provisions of the PoSH Act and reviews its implementation and effectiveness in Indian workplaces.

Gayathri Deshani (March 2023), Workplace sexual harassment is a widespread problem that has serious repercussions for victims. Employers must take action, provide training, and have clear procedures in place to prevent and deal with harassment. The 2013 Sexual Harassment Act is one piece of Indian law that attempts to prohibit harassment and defend the rights of women. This study emphasizes the necessity of collaborative efforts to stop sexual harassment and advance women's and oppressed groups' dignity. It highlights how crucial it is to comprehend the extent of the problem and collaborate in order to bring about change.

H L Kumar and Gaurav Kumar (2023), the actual implementation of the law in the workplace. The book is quite helpful and offers assistance to individuals working in this sector because of its approach, method of inquiry, and model forms.

Deepak Walokar (2022), Research was carried out to find out how women employees felt about the Sexual Harassment at Workplace Act (2013). According to the findings, more than 50% of the participants were not aware that sexual harassment regulations were in place or that there was a women's complaint cell. Numerous respondents thought that harassment hampered their ability to advance in their careers and maintain their mental health. In order to reduce sexual harassment, the study emphasizes the necessity of greater knowledge and efficient policy implementation. It highlights how crucial it is to provide a secure and healthful workplace for female employees.

Eern Yie Choo (August 2021), The purpose of this study is to examine, from the viewpoints of both men and women, how sexual harassment at work affects workers' mental health and productivity. It aims to pinpoint the types of harassment, the causes, and ways to stop it. The study will be guided by a review of the literature, which will shed light on the negative impacts of workplace harassment on both mental and physical health. Contributing to program creation and awareness-raising in the fight against sexual harassment in the workplace is the aim.

Sara Qayyum (January 2021), The purpose of this study is to investigate the idea of harassment, including its origins, effects, and possible elimination. The study looks at how often harassment is, how it affects victims' wellbeing, and how difficult it is to deal with. According to the research, a culture of silence and unstable work settings are two important factors that lead to harassment. Intervention tactics, including as education and anti-harassment laws, are also covered in the study. The intention is to raise awareness of the problem and encourage comprehension and action to stop harassment.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:

Research Design:

The research is descriptive in nature

Objectives:

- To assess the level of employee awareness regarding their rights and obligations under the Prevention of Sexual Harassment (POSH) Act within industries located in Vadodara District.
- To determine the factors influencing employee awareness of the POSH Act, including demographic characteristics, educational background, and organizational culture.
- To assess the effectiveness of existing awareness initiatives and training programs implemented by employers in Vadodara District.
- To investigate the barriers and challenges hindering the dissemination of information about the POSH Act and the reporting mechanisms available to employees.

Universe:

All employees in the Vadodara district of Gujarat who work in a range of industries

Sample:

The employees and workers working in Indutch Composites Technology Pvt. Ltd were taken as sample in this study.

Sample Size and Sampling Method:

A representative sample of 80 employees is selected to ensure the findings accurately reflect employee awareness regarding compliance with the Prevention of Sexual Harassment (POSH) Act. The sampling method employed is stratified random sampling, as industries in Vadodara vary in size, sector, and workforce composition.

Tools and methods of Data collection:

The tool for data collection used by the researcher was closed ended questionnaire in this research.

Limitations of the Study:

- May not fully represent all industries or employees, which results in biased findings.
- Self-reported data can be affected by social desirability or fear of retaliation.
- Difficulty in evaluating trends for awareness over time.
- Differences in leadership and culture can influence awareness but are not accounted for

Statistical Tool:

Microsoft Word: Primarily used for creating, editing documents.

Microsoft Excel: Primarily used for organizing and analyzing data using spreadsheets to create charts, graphs and diagram.

Reference Period:

The research data collection and analysis lasted from August 2024 to December 2024.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION:

1.1 Age wise distribution of the respondents:

Table 1: Table showing the division of respondents in terms of Age:

Age	Frequency	Percentage
Below 25	19	23.8%
25-35	51	63.7%
36-45	10	12.5%
46-55	-	
Above 55	-	
Total	80	100%

According to the above table, of the 80 respondents (100%) 51 (63.7%) are between the ages of 25 and 35, 10 (12.5%) are between the ages of 36 and 45, and none of the respondents are older than 46.

1.2 Gender wise distribution of the respondents:

Table 2: Table showing the division of respondents in terms of Gender:

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	14	17.5%
Female	66	82.5%
Others	-	
Total	80	100%

From above table it is interpreted that out of 80(100%), 66(82.5%) respondents are female, 14(17.5%) respondents are male and there is none of the respondent who belong from other sex.

1.3 Distribution according to Years of Experience of respondents in the Current Organization:

Table 3: Table showing the division according to Years of Experience of respondents in the Current Organization:

Years of Experience	Frequency	Percentage
Less than 1 year	29	36.3%
1-3 years	26	32.5%
4-6 years	16	20%
7-10 years	9	11.3%
More than 10 years	-	
Total	80	100%

The distribution of responses by number of years of service with the current company is shown in Table 4. 32.5% of respondents have one to three years of experience, while the majority (36.3%) have less than a year. Twenty percent of employees have four to six years of experience, and 11.3% have seven to ten years. None of the interviewees said they had worked for more than ten years. There are 80 responders in the entire sample.

1.4 Division on the basis of Frequency of Prevention of Sexual Harassment (POSH) Act, 2013 Training Sessions Conducted by the Organization:

Table 4: Table showing Division on the basis of Frequency of Prevention of Sexual Harassment (POSH) Act, 2013 Training Sessions Conducted by the Organization:

	Frequency	Percentage
Never	14	17.5%
Every month	54	67.5%
Twice a year	11	13.8%
Quarterly	01	1.2%
Total	80	100%

The respondents' distribution according to how frequently their organization held training sessions under the Prevention of Sexual Harassment (POSH) Act, 2013 is shown in Table 10. While 13.8% said training sessions take place twice a year, the majority (67.5%) said they happen monthly. Remarkably, just 1.2% reported quarterly sessions, and 17.5% said no training sessions are held. Different organizational commitment levels to consistent POSH Act awareness campaigns are reflected in the statistics.

1.5 Division on the basis of Awareness of Consequences for Non-Compliance with the Prevention of Sexual Harassment (POSH) Act, 2013 Among Respondents:

Table 5: Table showing Division on the basis of Awareness of Consequences for Non-Compliance with the Prevention of Sexual Harassment (POSH) Act, 2013 Among Respondents:

	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	70	87.5%
No	10	12.5%
Total	80	100%

The respondents' distribution according to their knowledge of the penalties for breaking the Prevention of Sexual Harassment (POSH) Act of 2013 is shown in Table 12. According to the research, the majority of respondents (87.5%) are aware of the organizational and legal ramifications, although 12.5% are not. This indicates that staff members have a good awareness of the significance of POSH Act compliance.

1.6 Division on the basis of Clarity of the Procedure for Filing Complaints with the ICC among Respondents:

Table 6: Table showing Division on the basis of Clarity of the Procedure for Filing Complaints with the ICC among Respondents:

	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Agree	27	33.8%
Agree	49	61.3%
Neutral	04	5%
Disagree	-	
Strongly Disagree	-	
Total	80	100%

The distribution of respondents' views on how clear the Internal Complaints Committee (ICC) complaint filing process is shown in this table. Based on survey data from 80 participants, it displays the frequency and proportion of respondents who strongly agree, agree, or are indifferent regarding the procedure's clarity. Just 5% of respondents were neutral, while the majority (61.3%) felt that the process was clear, with 33.8% strongly agreeing. No responders expressed disagreement or significant disagreement with the message.

1.7 Division on the basis of Respondents' Belief on the Organization's Seriousness in Addressing Sexual Harassment Complaints:

Table 7: Table showing Division on the basis of Respondents' Belief on the Organization's Seriousness in Addressing Sexual Harassment Complaints:

	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Agree	37	46.3%
Agree	30	37.5%
Neutral	13	16.2%
Disagree	-	
Strongly Disagree	-	
Total	80	100%

The distribution of respondents' opinions about how seriously the organization takes sexual harassment complaints is shown in this table. According to frequency and percentage, the data displays the percentages of respondents who strongly agree, agree, or are indifferent regarding the organization's dedication to efficiently managing sexual harassment complaints. Out of the 80 respondents who gave their opinions, none of them chose "Disagree" or "Strongly Disagree."

FINDINGS:

- According to the survey, no responders were older than 46, with the majority (63.7%) being between the ages of 25 and 35.
- According to the survey, none of the respondents had more than ten years of work experience, and the majority (36.3%) had less than a year.
- According to the survey, the majority of participants Production has the largest group (41.3%), followed by IT (13.7%).
- The majority of responders are junior employees (35%), or middle management (37.5%).
- According to the study, a significant percentage of participants (92.5%) are aware of the POSH Act of 2013.
- According to the study, 92.5% of respondents primarily obtained their knowledge of the POSH Act from company training.
- According to the survey, 81.3% of participants had participated in POSH training sessions.
- According to the study, the majority of participants (67.5%) report monthly sessions, whereas 17.5% say no training takes place.
- According to the study, the majority of participants (87.5%) are aware of the organizational and legal consequences of non-compliance.
- According to the study, the majority of participants (86.3%) are aware of how to file a complaint with the ICC.
- According to the report, the majority of participants (81.3%) are aware of the complaint procedure.
- According to the study, the majority of participants (95.1%) believe that the complaint filing process is straightforward.
- According to the report, most participants (82.5%) feel at ease talking about issues linked to sexual harassment.
- According to the study, the majority of participants (97.6%) think that safety and respect are encouraged by the company culture.

- Of those surveyed, only 10% reported having seen or experienced harassment.
- Of the respondents, 40% did not report having witnessed harassment, whereas just 28.7% had.
- The support provided by the organization is rated as satisfactory or very satisfactory by the majority of respondents.
- Just 50% of respondents are aware of outside agencies that deal with harassment situations.
- According to the study, the majority of participants (40%) have no opinion regarding the necessity of more POSH awareness initiatives.
- According to the report, 47.5 percent of respondents say that the organization's awareness of the POSH Act is moderate.
- According to the study, the majority of participants (85.1%) concur that maintaining workplace safety requires the POSH Act.

SUGGESTIONS:

- Improve Awareness enhance efforts to train employees on ICC duties and complaint procedure.
- Regular Training Regular, comprehensive sessions to fill knowledge gaps, particularly for the untrained.
- Better Information Make rights, reporting process, and legal sanctions for non-compliance easily accessible.
- Improved Policy Enforcement Review zero-tolerance policies, enhance confidentiality, and incorporate external legal guidance.
- Continuous Evaluation Conduct audits, feedback mechanisms, and longitudinal research to track POSH Act effectiveness over time.

CONCLUSIONS:

A Vadodara district business employees' awareness and compliance study underlines how business firms comprehend and execute the Prevention of Sexual Harassment (POSH) Act, 2013. The results state that 92.5% of the staff are aware of the legislation, 93.8% recognize the Internal Complaints Committee (ICC), and 86.3% identify how to get in touch with it. Besides that, 73.8% of the workers find the POSH Act very effective, and 91.3% assure that their companies have a zero-tolerance policy towards sexual harassment.

Although employees are generally happy with the complaints process, loopholes exist in reporting systems and external legal literacy. More than half of the respondents (52.5%) believe the complaint process should be improved, and almost 50% are unaware of legal organizations outside the ICC. Retaliation fears remain, with 42.5% emphatically agreeing that reprisal is a major concern. Reinforcing POSH compliance via increased legal literacy, open reporting, and stronger protection against retaliation will serve to make the workplace safer and more welcoming.

REFERENCES:

- HANDBOOK - Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs on Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013. <https://mohua.gov.in/upload/uploadfiles/files/Handbook-on-Sexual-Harassment-of-Women-at-Workplace.pdf>
- IOSR Journals. (n.d.). IOSR Journals. Retrieved March 29, 2025, from <https://www.iosrjournals.org/>
- Eern Yie Choo (August 2021), Sexual Harassment in Workplace: A Literature Review. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/354461580_Sexual_Harassment_in_Workplace_A_Literature_Review
- Harassment: Causes, Effects, Solutions – ResearchGate, (Jan 1, 2021) https://www.researchgate.net/publication/348133434_Harassment_Causes_Effects_Solutions
- Feb 20, 2025, POSH Act 2013 – Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace - Vakil Search <https://vakilsearch.com/blog/posh-act-2013-protection-of-women-from-sexual-harassment>
- Feb 4, 2025 · India's Prevention of Sexual Harassment (POSH) Act and corresponding Rules require mandatory reporting compliance from employers. <https://www.india-briefing.com/news/indias-posh-act-compliance-2024-proposed-amendments-29410.html>
- Mishra, R. (2018). Gender justice and workplace safety: An analysis of POSH compliance in Indian companies. *Indian Journal of Labour Economics*, 61(2), 221–238.
- National Commission for Women. (2021). Annual Report on Implementation of the POSH Act. Retrieved from <https://ncw.nic.in>
- Patel, H., & Shah, D. (2022). Awareness and training under the POSH Act in small and medium enterprises. *Journal of Business and Legal Studies*, 12(2), 87–102.
- POSH at Work. (n.d.). POSH law | Sexual harassment of women at workplace act & rule... Retrieved from <https://poshatwork.com/>
- Bhatnagar, J., & Sharma, A. (2020). Awareness of the POSH Act, 2013 among corporate employees: A study of Indian organizations. *Journal of Management Research*, 12(4), 45–58.

-
- Bhattacharya, S., & Ghosh, A. (2021). Employee perceptions of the POSH Act, 2013: An empirical study in Indian industries. *Indian Journal of Industrial Relations*, 56(3), 289–307.
 - Adomi EE (2006). *Job Rotation in Nigerian University Libraries*. Nigeria: Emerald Group Publishing Ltd.
 - Ahmad. N., Iqbal. N., Sohail M., Haider. Z., and Hamad. N. (2014) *Impact of Training and Development on the Employee Performance: “A Case Study from Different Banking Sectors of North Punjab*.