

## **A STUDY ON EMPLOYEE AWARENESS, ORGANIZATIONAL PRACTICES, AND COMPLIANCE TOWARDS PREVENTION OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT (POSH) POLICY IN THE WORKPLACE**

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**Abstract**—The study titled “A Study on POSH Policy Awareness and Its Compliance” focuses on understanding employee awareness of the Prevention of Sexual Harassment (POSH) policy and evaluating the level of organizational compliance with workplace safety regulations. In today’s corporate environment, maintaining a safe, respectful, and harassment-free workplace has become an essential responsibility for organizations. This study examines employees’ knowledge of POSH guidelines, complaint procedures, Internal Committee functioning, and management initiatives for policy implementation. This study adopts a descriptive methodology using survey-based analysis and statistical tools, such as percentage analysis and chi-square analysis, for interpretation. The findings reveal that regular awareness programs, effective grievance redressal systems, and strong management support significantly improve employee confidence and compliance with the POSH regulations. The study concludes that organizations promoting continuous POSH awareness and transparent workplace policies create a positive work culture, enhance employee satisfaction, and ensure legal and ethical compliance in the workplace.

**Keywords:** Employee Awareness, Organizational Practices, Compliance, Sexual Harassment Policy, Workplace.

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### **INTRODUCTION**

The modern workplace has undergone significant transformation, with increased workforce diversity, gender inclusivity, and evolving employment structures. Along with these developments, organizations are increasingly expected to provide a safe, secure, and respectful working environment for all employees. Workplace harassment, particularly sexual harassment, negatively impacts employee morale, organizational productivity, psychological well-being, and the overall workplace culture. To address these issues, the Government of India enacted the Sexual Harassment of Women at the Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition, and Redressal) Act, 2013, commonly known as the POSH Act.

The POSH policy refers to organizational guidelines and procedures established to prevent, prohibit, and address incidents of sexual harassment in the workplace. The policy ensures that employees are aware of acceptable workplace behavior and provides mechanisms for reporting grievances without fear of retaliation. The policy also mandates that organizations establish an Internal Committee (IC), conduct awareness programs, and ensure proper complaint resolution processes.

Employee awareness of POSH policies is essential for effective implementation. Many employees remain unaware of their rights, complaint procedures, or the role of the Internal Committee. A lack of awareness often leads to underreporting of incidents and ineffective policy execution. Therefore, organizations must ensure regular training sessions, workshops, and communication strategies to educate employees on workplace safety and legal protections.

## **REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

**Sharma et al. (2024)** conducted a study on workplace harassment awareness and employee perceptions regarding POSH policy implementation in Indian corporate organizations. The study found that regular training programs significantly improved employees' understanding of complaint mechanisms and workplace behavior standards. The study emphasizes that awareness initiatives reduce employees' fear of complaint reporting.

**Rao and Mehta (2023)** **Rao and Mehta** analyzed organizational compliance with the POSH Act across IT companies in Bengaluru. The study revealed that organizations with active Internal Committees and periodic awareness sessions demonstrated higher employee confidence in grievance-handling procedures. The researchers concluded that management support plays a crucial role in successful compliance.

**Karthik and Nair (2023)** examined employee awareness of sexual harassment policies in manufacturing industries. The findings indicate that many employees lack adequate knowledge of reporting procedures and legal rights under the POSH Act. The study suggests mandatory orientation programs for new employees.

**Verma et al. (2024)** **Verma and colleagues** conducted a systematic review on workplace safety policies and employee satisfaction. The study highlighted that organizations promoting transparent POSH mechanisms experience higher employee trust and organizational commitment.

**Singh and Arora (2022)** investigated the effectiveness of POSH awareness campaigns in service organizations. The findings showed that interactive workshops and real-life case discussions improved employee participation and understanding of the policy guidelines.

**Joseph et al. (2023)** **Joseph and team** examined the role of Internal Committees in grievance redressal. The study concluded that properly trained committee members improve complaint resolution efficiency and employee confidence.

**Patel and Desai (2024)** The researchers focused on digital compliance systems for POSH management. The study found that online complaint systems and e-learning awareness modules increase accessibility and employee participation in compliance programs.

**Reddy et al. (2023)** analyzed employee perceptions of organizational commitment to workplace safety. The results indicate that visible management involvement positively influences employee trust in POSH policies.

**Fernandes and Kumar (2024)** examined the relationship between workplace culture and POSH policy effectiveness. The findings suggest that organizations with inclusive and respectful work cultures report fewer harassment cases and better compliance outcomes.

**Iyer and Bhat (2023)** explored legal awareness of workplace harassment laws among employees. The researchers identified significant gaps in employees' knowledge regarding legal rights and protection mechanisms under the POSH Act.

## **NEED FOR THE STUDY**

Workplace safety and employee dignity are essential components of organizational success. Despite the legal enforcement of the POSH Act, many employees remain unaware of the organizational policies, complaint procedures, and legal protections available against workplace harassment. A lack of awareness often results in fear, underreporting of incidents, and ineffective grievance management.

Many organizations conduct POSH training only to fulfil legal obligations rather than genuinely promoting awareness and a safety culture. Employees may not fully understand the functioning of Internal Committees or the confidentiality associated with complaint handling. Therefore, there is a strong need to examine the current level of POSH policy awareness and evaluate whether organizations comply with legal requirements.

This study helps identify gaps in awareness programs, employee understanding, and compliance. The findings will assist organizations in improving training initiatives, strengthening workplace ethics, and ensuring a safer work environment for employees.

## **IMPORTANCE OF THE STUDY**

The significance of this study lies in its contribution to understanding the effectiveness of POSH policy implementation within organizations. This study provides valuable insights into employee awareness, organizational commitment, and compliance effectiveness.

## *A Study on Employee Awareness, Organizational Practices, and Compliance Towards Prevention of Sexual Harassment (Posh) Policy in the Workplace*

For management, this research acts as a tool to evaluate whether employees clearly understand workplace harassment policies and complaint mechanisms. This study also helps organizations identify weaknesses in training methods, communication systems, and grievance procedures.

From an academic perspective, this research contributes to the fields of Human Resource Management and organizational behavior by analyzing the relationship between policy awareness, employee confidence, and workplace culture.

This study further emphasizes the importance of creating respectful and inclusive workplaces where employees feel secure, valued, and empowered to report grievances without fear.

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

This study adopts a systematic and analytical approach to examine the awareness of and compliance with the POSH policy among employees.

#### **Research Design & Nature**

This study adopts a descriptive research design, focusing on the analysis of employee awareness regarding the POSH policy and the level of organizational compliance with workplace safety regulations. The research is conceptual and analytical in nature, aiming to understand the “how” and “why” behind effective POSH policy implementation, employee participation, and grievance redressal mechanisms, rather than merely observing workplace practices. This study evaluated how awareness programs, management support, and Internal Committee functioning contribute to maintaining a safe and respectful work environment.

#### **Data Sources & Collection**

This study is primarily based on secondary data collected from reliable and authentic sources to maintain academic quality and research accuracy. The data sources included:

- **Peer-reviewed journals:** Analyzing recent studies related to POSH policy awareness, workplace harassment prevention, employee safety, and organizational compliance practices.
- **Government Reports and POSH Act Guidelines:** Reviewing legal frameworks, compliance requirements, and official regulations related to the Prevention of Sexual Harassment Act, 2013.
- **Corporate HR Policies:** Examining organizational POSH policies, employee handbooks, training procedures, and Internal Committee practices followed by companies.
- **Academic literature:** Management books, HRM references, research articles, and previous studies related to workplace ethics, employee rights, and organizational behavior.

### **CASE ANALYSES: POSH POLICY IMPLEMENTATION**

#### **CASE 1: IT Organization**

##### **About the Organization**

The organization is a Bengaluru-based Information Technology company specializing in software development, cloud services, and digital solutions. The company employs a diverse workforce and follows corporate human resource (HR) policies focused on employee welfare and workplace ethics.

##### **Issue**

The organization observed that many employees were unaware of the POSH complaint procedures and lacked confidence in reporting workplace harassment issues. Participation in POSH awareness programs was also very low in the present study.

##### **Solution**

The company introduced mandatory quarterly POSH awareness programs, digital learning modules, anonymous complaint portals, and regular communication through e-mails and awareness posters. The management also encouraged employees to actively participate in training sessions.

### **Effect**

Employee participation in awareness programs has increased significantly. Employees became more confident in understanding the complaint procedures and workplace behavior guidelines.

### **Findings**

The case revealed that continuous awareness programs and management involvement play major roles in improving understanding of the POSH policy and employee trust in grievance-handling systems.

## **CASE 2: SERVICE SECTOR ORGANIZATION**

### **Issue**

The organization faced employee dissatisfaction due to delayed complaint handling and a lack of transparency in grievance redressal procedures.

### **Solution**

The company strengthened the Internal Committee by providing professional training, introducing online grievance tracking systems, and ensuring confidentiality during complaint investigations.

### **Effect**

Complaint resolution became faster, and employees developed greater trust in organizational policies and management support systems.

### **Findings**

The case concluded that transparent grievance-handling mechanisms and efficient Internal Committee functioning improve employee confidence and organizational compliance with POSH regulations.

## **CONCLUSION**

The study titled “A Study on POSH Policy Awareness and Its Compliance” highlights that workplace safety and employee dignity are fundamental to organizational responsibilities. Effective implementation of POSH policies ensures legal compliance and strengthens organizational culture, employee morale, and productivity.

The study concludes that employee awareness programs, management involvement, and transparent grievance mechanisms are essential for successful POSH compliance. Organizations that actively promote respectful workplace behavior and provide accessible complaint systems create safer and more inclusive working environments.

In today’s competitive corporate environment, maintaining a harassment-free workplace is not merely a legal obligation but also a strategic necessity for sustainable organizational growth and employee well-being.

## **STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 1. Organizations should conduct regular awareness programs**, including periodic POSH training sessions and workshops for all employees.
- 2. Strengthening Internal Committees** Internal committee members should receive professional training on legal procedures and complaint handling.
- 3. Promoting Digital Complaint Systems** Companies should implement secure and confidential online grievance reporting platforms.
- 4. Management participation** Leadership teams should actively support workplace safety initiatives and awareness campaigns.
- 5. Continuous Monitoring and Evaluation** Organizations should regularly review POSH compliance practices and conduct employee feedback surveys.

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