

Sexual Harassment Faced by Daily-Wage and Low-Wage Female Workers at the Workplace

NHRC Sponsored Study

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This study focuses on the low-wage female workers, and specifically domestic workers, to understand their views on workplace sexual harassment and myriad ways by which they protect and/or respond to sexual harassment at their workplaces. The problem faced by domestic workers is particularly severe since the harassment can take place within the confines of a household, where the employment contract is informal, with no clear redressal mechanism in place. The primary goals of this research are to understand (a) factors surrounding sexual harassment, (b) the formal and informal redressal mechanisms undertaken by the domestic workers and their employers to address sexual harassment issues, (c) the economic consequences of such harassment on the worker and (d) propose interventions to organizations for addressing the issue at hand.

The study is being conducted in three phases. The first phase of the study was exploratory in nature, wherein we conducted extensive in-depth interviews with experts (researchers and NGO representatives who have worked with women in this regard) and low wage female contract workers to understand their experiences surrounding sexual harassment. In the second phase of the study, we are conducting a survey of domestic workers to understand their perception of sexual harassment, their coping mechanisms when faced with such harassment and their knowledge of redressal mechanisms available to them. The third and final phase will include structured interviews of employers to examine their role in creation of systems and processes in addressing sexual harassment at workplace.