

# Sexual Harassment at Private Hospitals

## A Case Study of Nurses in Jhelum

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### **Abstract:**

Sexual harassment is violation of human Rights and against women & men also favors at any place it could be home, at work, street, market etc. Sexual harassment any unwelcome sexual advance that cause interference with work place and create disturbance during work. Such type of actions can be verbal written and physicals. This act occur at any place it could be their home, street, schools, colleges, universities, hospitals and offices etc. Study focus on sexual harassment at workplace (private hospitals). Present research wants to find out and Probes nurse's experiences and incidents of sexual harassment at work place. Study use convenient sampling is type of non-probability sampling. Researchers have easy access to select a subject or respondent from 70 population of Jhelum private hospitals who sexually harass by boss/coworker and clients at workplace. And from that target population researcher find 59 samples of nurses. That city is on the right bank of the Jhelum River. The study establish that nurses are in a vulnerable position due to the financial issues they are force to bear all kind of harassment not only at workplace as well as on way to home. This study recommends that Government of Pakistan now have a law for "Protection against Harassment of women at workplace Act 2010 & Amendment Act, 2012" therefore should be arranging training session for the capacity building so that they can learn how to report these kind of cases. There should be some prevailing mechanism of accountability for the implementation of laws at workplace.

**Keywords:** Sexual Harassment, Vulnerable, Violence, Nursing

### **Introduction:**

The kind of behavior reflected sexually harassing appear to vary among different cultures, however, the international labor organization (ILO) has outlined a definition and range of example behaviors of what constitutes sexual harassment which has been widely adopted (Pryor et al;1997). Lafontaine and Tredcau (as cited in Fitzgerald, 1990a) defined sexual harassment as:

"Sexual harassment is any action occurring within the workplace whereby women are treated as objects of the male sexual prerogative. Furthermore, given that women are invariably oppressed by these actions, all such treatment is seen to constitute harassment, regardless of whether the victim labels it as problematic or not" (p.23). Sexual harassment explained as conduct of a sexual matter, which is unwelcome to its recipient, which results in feelings of humiliation, embarrassment or intimidated (McCann, 2005).

Sexual harassment any unwelcome sexual advance, request for sexual favors or other verbal or written communication or physical conduct of a sexual nature or sexually demeaning attitudes that create a threatening, aggressive or unpleasant environment, included the definition of harassment. That cause interference with work place and create disturbance during work. We talk about Pakistani society there are many issues about sexual harassment especially at workplace and in Pakistan it is difficult for female as vulnerable group to participate in development of our country because the environment of our country is unsupportive and women face harassment on the streets, at workplace or at public places. Sexual harassment at workplace especially in health sector found that sexual harassment in hospitals of women doctors and nurses seems to have a common. Sexual harassment does not need to be known as face to face but can be involved written or telephone communication or e-mail. Harassment as a social problem in the workplace and research carried out in Europe estimates that up to 50% of female employees in European UNION countries have experienced sexual harassment at workplace.

Workplace harassment can occur in a different ways, some are obvious easy to identify. That person might be a Colleague /supervisor/manager, Client/customer, Patient therefore it is difficult to know

exactly what behavior will be perceived as sexual harassment by an individual. All sexual behavior that an individual finds personally hateful may or may not be considered to be sexual harassment. Such behavior may involve physical, mentally and verbal abuse. Sexual harassment may include the following behaviors: Gender based insults or remarks, Comments about figure, Sexual looks such as leering, unwelcome flirting, Displays of pornographic or other sexually explicit pictures, cartoons, magazine, movies, repeated requests for sexual favors etc. In December 2001, Alliance against Sexual Harassment (AASHA) formed, got the Government to agree to start working on a policy framework which could become an anti-sexual harassment policy for the country. That time only UN had a sexual harassment policy.

### **Purpose of Study:**

The present research explored the factors of sexual harassment of nurses at workplace. Sexual harassment is violation of human rights and against women and men and also favors at any place it could be home, at work, street, market etc.

### **Research Question:**

- What are the factors of sexual harassment on nurses at workplace?
- What are the nurse's experience of sexual harassment and incidents of sexual harassment in hospitals?

### **Literature Review:**

Tangri et al., 1982, Schwartz et al., 1997, Tangri and Hayes, 1997, Tangri et al., 1997 said that sexual harassment is a result of natural sexual characteristics of human being. He said that biologically men has strong physiological urge for sexual activity hence may use coercive powers toward women, the weaker link, in order to satisfy the sex drive and naturally men and women has mutual attraction and likeness hence they both are responsible for sexual acts at workplace. This implies that a person may not have an intention of sexual harassment but still would involve in act due to motivation provided by opposite sex attraction, a natural element. (Tangri et al., 1982).

Grieco's (1987) study was ordered as a result of the (USMSPB, 1982) data and reported a sexual harassment frequency rate is 76% in the nursing profession. Grieco's (1987) research limited work on sexual harassment in nursing has been carried out from available studies, estimates of percentage of nurses who have experienced sexual harassment differ from 30 percent to as high as 97% (Cox, 1987; Cholewinski and Burge, 1990; Donald and Merker, 1993; Kinard et al., 1995; Bronner et al., 2003).

Cox's (1987) study of verbal abuse in nursing which encompassed sexual harassment comments that identify the effect on turnover. In introducing her figures Cox (1987, P.49) stated that, "based on the frequency percentage results, verbal abuse is so prevalent in nursing it is unexpected that any of us stay".

Gutek and Koss (1993) examine that sexual harassment is able to wholly affect career plans with respondents giving up employment or being willing to move to less well paid jobs or ones which offers less opportunity for advancement in order to avoid harassment.

Luegenbiehl (1993) the "Guest" status of physicians in hospitals makes it easier to allow their sexually harassment to continue. Nurses who would not tolerate sexual harassment in other settings may stand for it in hospital settings because they have become desensitized.

Heinrich (1987) find out harassment of nurses by clients is sometimes called "hidden harassment". The line between seductive behavior and harassment is a fine one, clients conditioned by the media which portrays nurses as sex objects, may misinterpret the nurse's friendliness. The nurse, on the other hand may be unsure of client's intent and hesitates to confront them.

### **Methodology:**

Present research wants to find out and probe nurse's experiences and incidents of sexual harassment at workplace. Study use convenient sampling is type of non-probability sampling. The researchers used questionnaire in this research. A survey is a better technique for collecting data from large population in very short time. Researchers used face to face interviewing technique. Through surveys the researchers decided to use questionnaire because the nurses have at least intermediate or graduation degree and they can easily understand the questionnaire.

### **Sample Size:**

Researchers have easy access to select a subject or respondent from 70 populations of Jhelum private hospitals who sexually harass by boss/coworker and clients at workplace. And from that target population researcher find 59 samples of nurses.

### **Findings Discussion:**

The present research focus on sexual harassment of nurses at private hospital of Jhelum city Punjab, Pakistan. During the study researchers find out that when asked question about they are satisfied with atmosphere of hospital or they feel secure at workplace, 62.7% nurses replied they did not feel satisfaction or secure atmosphere around them. But due to financial issue they are bond to working this kind of environment. One survey found nurses most frequent experiences with sexual harassment were threats to have the nurses fired if they refused to respond to a particular demand (Cox, 1987).

If we talk about government hospital than there are beneficial for all the workers of hospital because no one have authority to fired, to worker or staff than may they can complain for sexual harassment to the authorities but at private hospital nurses cannot go for complaint to authority because they afraid to lose the job. Researchers find out that not only hospitals doctors, other staff doing sexually harass at hospital but also clients of the hospital try to flirt with them. According to present survey 61.0% nurses said that they tried to flirt with them at hospital.

Sexual harassment is very sensitive social problem not only Pakistan but all over the world. Dult (1982) study that over 60% of the sample of nurses had experienced sexual harassment in the preceding year. Most recent study (Diaz, 1991) found out that 64% of the nurses said they had verbally insulted 30% of the respondents indicated they had experienced some form of sexual harassment at least once every 2 to 3 months.

On the other hand the study found that 59.3% respondents said if we don't accept the outing demand of our senior than we face the consequences in the shape loss of bonce.

### **Conclusion:**

Present research focus on sexual harassment at workplace or private hospitals of Jhelum city. Sexual harassment mean unwelcome sexual advance activities suffered by nurses at workplace, during study when researcher review the literature and through theoretical framework at national and international level researcher realize that sexual harassment is not prevail at Pakistan or under develop countries but also prevail all the world and mostly nurses sexually harass by colleagues, boss or any male dominant. Many developed countries focus or work on that issue and also make protection bills against sexual harassment at workplace.

Similarly in Pakistan, president of Pakistan Asif Zardari passed the protection bill against sexual harassment in 11 March 2010. In 29th of January, 2010 the Government passed an amendment in the Pakistan penal code section 509 which explain sexual harassment at any place it can be workplace count as crime and can be fine up to five lac or taken into police custody for three years. But still there are no implementation of any rules and law more than 70 percent nurses face sexual harassment at private hospitals of Jhelum and due to no implementation of rules and law and some societal or cultural berries she cannot report at the authority.

### **Recommendation:**

In every society human being have to right secure at any place it can be home ,street ,workplace , hospitals , schools , colleges and universities. There should be arranging training about protect herself/himself by sexual harassment. Through training nurses can learn to avoid behavior that may be viewed as sexual harassment. The government of Pakistan makes some rules and laws about sexual harassment at workplace and there should be a proper monitoring and evolution system introduce for the limitations of laws at workplace.

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