



## INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF HUMAN RIGHTS LAW REVIEW

---

Volume 3 | Issue 2

Art. 4

---

2024

### BUILDING A CULTURE OF EQUALITY: STRATEGIES TO PREVENT SEXUAL HARASSMENT AT WORKPLACE

Anshula Shreshth and Shivam Raj

---

#### **Recommended Citation**

Anshula Shreshth and Shivam Raj, 'Building A Culture Of Equality: Strategies To Prevent Sexual Harassment At Workplace' (2024) 3 IJHRLR 51-69.

Available at [www.humanrightlawreview.in/archives/](http://www.humanrightlawreview.in/archives/).

This Art. is brought to you for free and open access by the International Journal of Human Rights Law Review by an authorized Lex Assisto Media and Publications administrator. For more information, please contact [info@humanrightlawreview.in](mailto:info@humanrightlawreview.in).

---

## **BUILDING A CULTURE OF EQUALITY: STRATEGIES TO PREVENT SEXUAL HARASSMENT AT WORKPLACE**

Anshula Shreshth<sup>1</sup> and Shivam Raj<sup>2</sup>

### **ABSTRACT**

*Sexual harassment is a worrisome and far-reaching problem that impacts employees in different industries and work settings. It inflicts great harm on victims while also exposing organizations to serious consequences such as legal liabilities, damaged reputation, and reduced employee satisfaction. To combat this issue successfully, institutions must employ forward-thinking strategies that cultivate a culture built upon respect and intolerance for harassment. In this paper, we will examine approaches aimed at preventing sexual harassment in the workplace by fostering a respectful work environment. At the core of this effort would be the introduction of robust anti-harassment policies that outline various forms of harassment, establish reporting mechanisms, and lay out punitive measures for violators. A commitment to leadership should be in place, wherein leaders at all levels must demonstrate unwavering dedication to fostering an environment through participation in anti-harassment initiatives. In addition, there is a need for employee training on how to respond to harassment, a mechanism that guarantees the confidentiality of reports, and open communication channels that encourage individuals reporting any incidents without fear of revenge. Making diversity and inclusion core values would help create respect and understanding; also implementing penalties for harassment will show the organization's commitment towards cultivating an environment that values each person as an individual contributing member, not just as part of the process. Imposing penalties for harassment and ensuring accountability reflect the clear message that the organization is not ready to condone harassment. Additionally, encouraging the smooth functioning of programs also supports institutional commitment to a respectful work environment. Instilling a culture of respect is not only an ethical responsibility but also a smart strategy for organizations. Eliminating sexual harassment involves a series of measures, including leadership buy-in, well-defined policies, thorough training, intervention teams, robust reporting mechanisms, diverse engagement forums, and most importantly, creating a feeling of trust. It is important to make the shift from merely*

---

<sup>1</sup> Law Student, ICAI Law School, Hyderabad, Telangana

<sup>2</sup> Law Student, ICAI Law School, Hyderabad, Telangana

*meeting legal requirements to crafting an ecosystem where respect forms the bedrock of organizational culture.*

### **KEYWORDS**

*Sexual Harassment, Workplace, Prevention from harassment, Employee rights, Employer's duties.*

## **I. INTRODUCTION**

In today's world, it is essential to combat sexual harassment and promote a respectful society. Establishing a place where people feel safe, respected, and unaffected by harassment or prejudice is essential. This fosters diversity, productivity, and the general advancement of society in addition to mental and emotional well-being. Prioritizing gender neutrality is essential for addressing sexual harassment in a way that is appropriate. Although women are more likely to become victims of sexual harassment than any other gender, victims of all genders can also be found. By taking a gender-neutral stance, we recognize that sexual harassment is not exclusive to any one gender and that all victims should be given assistance and safety. Additionally, by avoiding the reinforcement of prejudices and preconceptions, a gender-neutral approach can help prevent and effectively manage sexual harassment. It guarantees that laws, policies, and support networks are just, inclusive, and sufficiently take into account the experiences of all parties concerned, irrespective of gender.

Furthermore, we urge a shared responsibility in the fight against sexual harassment by endorsing gender neutrality. Everyone in society benefits from it since it promotes open dialogue, knowledge, and education on consent, boundaries, and polite behavior. Additionally, it creates a space where males and other oppressed genders can seek support and assistance by breaking the shame and silence around sexual harassment.

Crucially, this study seeks to debunk the stereotype that men are the primary targets of sexual harassment while also elevating the perspectives

of women who endure this kind of treatment. Rather, its goal is to highlight how complex the issue of sexual harassment is and how it affects individuals of all genders in different ways. We aim to contribute to the development of a more thorough and inclusive approach to addressing sexual harassment by examining the experiences of men. This research study aims to investigate the impact that sexual harassment has had on people's mental, emotional, and professional well-being, with a particular focus on men.

## II. DEFINITION AND UNDERSTANDING OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Sexual harassment is one kind of gender-based violence and abuse that has major consequences for victims in the workplace. It encompasses any physical, verbal, or nonverbal sexual behavior—including unwelcome sexual advances and requests for sexual favors—that provokes animosity, fear, or offensiveness in the workplace. The idea that only women can become victims of sexual harassment needs to be dispelled because men can also be the targets of this kind of abuse.

The Indian Supreme Court addressed sexual harassment of women at work in the absence of regulations in the case of ***Vishaka and Others v. State of Rajasthan***<sup>3</sup>, setting a precedent for future cases. The court recognized sexual harassment as a violation of fundamental rights in this case, in accordance with Articles 14<sup>4</sup>, 19<sup>5</sup>, and 21<sup>6</sup> of the Indian Constitution. The court held that employers have an obligation to protect their workers from sexual harassment at work and that it is their duty to prevent and handle such behavior.

The Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition, and Redressal) Act, 2013 was enacted as a response to this judgment and

---

<sup>3</sup> *Vishaka & Ors vs State Of Rajasthan & Ors* on 13 August, 1997

<sup>4</sup> Article 14 in The Constitution Of India 1949: Equality before law

<sup>5</sup> Article 19 in The Constitution Of India 1949: Protection of certain rights regarding freedom of speech etc

<sup>6</sup> Article 21 in The Constitution Of India 1949: Protection of life and personal liberty

provides a comprehensive set of legislation to address sexual harassment in the workplace. This Act's goal is to safeguard women's wellness, safety, and dignity at work. It applies to both the public and private sectors. An Internal Allegations Committee (ICC) must be established by any organization in order to receive, review, and address allegations of sexual harassment.

It's crucial to realize that men can experience sexual harassment, even though the Act primarily targets women. The ***State of Punjab v. Major Singh***<sup>7</sup> case is an important decision in this regard. It involved a female supervisor harassing a male police officer in a sexual manner. The court decided that people of the same sex can engage in sexual harassment against each other and that the gender of the harasser or victim is irrelevant. This case made clear how important it is to protect male victims of sexual harassment and how it violates their right to a dignified life. Furthermore, the Indian Penal Code contains laws that address sexual harassment. Under Section 354A<sup>8</sup> of the IPC, anyone who participates in sexual harassment of another person faces consequences, regardless of the person's gender. This clause recognizes the rights of both men and women to be free from unwelcome sexual activity. In summary, sexual harassment at work is a pervasive issue that affects individuals of both genders. Understanding that sexual harassment is an issue that impacts both men and women and should never be downplayed or ignored is crucial. The Vishaka judgment and the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace Act, of 2013 provide the required legal framework to address these kinds of incidents, safeguard the rights of victims, and hold perpetrators accountable. In addition, the ***State of Punjab v. Major Singh***<sup>9</sup> case highlights the fact that sexual harassment can affect both the perpetrator and the victim, irrespective of gender. Raising awareness,

---

<sup>7</sup> State Of Punjab vs Major Singh 1967 AIR 63, 1966 SCR (2) 286

<sup>8</sup> Section 354 in The Indian Penal Code: Assault or criminal force to woman with intent to outrage her modesty

<sup>9</sup> State Of Punjab vs Major Singh 1967 AIR 63, 1966 SCR (2) 286

encouraging reporting, and ensuring the execution of preventive measures and redressal processes are crucial for effectively addressing this issue.

### **III. UNDERSTANDING THE IMPACT OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT ON ALL GENDERS**

All genders are impacted by sexual harassment, which is a pervasive issue. While discussing and highlighting the experiences of harassed women is vital, it's also important to acknowledge that sexual harassment affects people of all genders. In this section, we aim to shed light on the possible emotional, psychological, and professional fallout for males who become victims of sexual harassment.

Sexual harassment victims struggle with feelings of humiliation, guilt, fear, and helplessness, which causes them great psychological suffering. This can impair focus and decision-making by causing worry, sadness, and PTSD. Victims go through emotional upheavals such as despair, rage, and low self-esteem, which strains relationships and leads to social isolation. Harassment at work creates barriers to career progression, which leads to lost opportunities and a hostile workplace that impedes development and happiness. Victims are frequently silenced out of fear of consequences and reputational harm, which exacerbates the negative impacts. It is essential to acknowledge and tackle these complex effects in order to establish environments that foster the well-being of every person.

- ***Gender Stereotypes and Challenges***

Stereotypes and biases are major obstacles that victims of sexual harassment of either gender must overcome. The idea that males cannot be victims and should instead be resilient and unaffected by such events is frequently reinforced by societal conventions. By invalidating their experiences, male victims are deprived of the resources and assistance necessary to deal with the fallout from harassment. Similarly, gender stereotypes might make it harder to hold criminals accountable by casting

doubt on the veracity of reports from victims of both genders. In order to tackle this widespread issue, it is imperative to acknowledge the full impact that sexual harassment has on people's psychological, emotional, and professional well-being. We can promote inclusive support networks, laws, and cultural shifts that cater to the needs of all victims, regardless of gender, by comprehending how these factors interact. It's critical to dispel gender preconceptions, provide secure reporting spaces, and promote an accountable and respectful culture. We can only hope to avoid sexual harassment, support victims, and advance gender equality for all by taking a thorough and compassionate approach.

#### **IV. IMPORTANCE OF GENDER NEUTRALITY IN PREVENTING SEXUAL HARASSMENT**

In order to guarantee that people of all genders receive the same recognition, support, and accountability, it is imperative that gender-neutral approaches be used in the prevention and resolution of sexual harassment. By acknowledging that sexual harassment can affect anybody, regardless of gender, we question social norms and preconceived notions about the problem. Regardless of gender identification, this strategy offers a secure and welcoming atmosphere for all victims to come forward and request assistance. It also dispels the myth that only men are capable of committing acts of sexual harassment by acknowledging that anyone can be the aggressor. We cultivate a culture that promotes candid communication and education around consent, limits, and respect for all parties involved by advocating a gender-neutral approach. Furthermore, by adopting a gender-neutral perspective, institutions and organizations can create all-encompassing preventative plans that tackle the root causes of sexual harassment for people of all genders. All things considered, implementing a gender-neutral strategy is essential to creating a society that protects the rights and welfare of every person and promotes an environment free from discrimination and sexual harassment.

- ***Importance of gender neutrality and men's rights -***

In order to ensure that all victims, regardless of gender, receive equal treatment, respect, and dignity, gender neutrality is important when it comes to combating sexual harassment. By classifying sexual harassment as an offense against any individual, regardless of gender, the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition, and Redressal) Act, 2013 (SHWW Act) in India serves as an example of a legislative framework that supports gender neutrality. Men's rights in sexual harassment prevention are essential to dispelling gender stereotypes and advancing an unbiased viewpoint on the matter. Males may find it difficult to report instances of sexual harassment for a variety of reasons, including cultural norms, embarrassment, and ignorance of their legal rights. Men are more inclined to come forward and seek justice when their rights are acknowledged and upheld.

A person's fundamental right to live in dignity is violated by sexual harassment, according to the Supreme Court of India's 1995 decision in ***Karnel Singh v. State of MP***<sup>10</sup>. The court noted that sexual harassment can affect both men and women and emphasized the need for gender neutrality in responding to such incidents. Everyone should have the right to be shielded from sexual harassment, regardless of gender, according to the judgment. This landmark decision serves as further evidence of the need for gender neutrality in the fight against sexual harassment and in support of men's rights.

- ***Challenges faced by Men:***

Males report sexual harassment situations in different ways than women, which may deter them from pursuing legal action. Among these difficulties include cultural preconceptions that depict men as perpetual offenders rather than victims, as well as the idea that males ought to be able to

---

<sup>10</sup> Karnel Singh vs The State Of M.P 1995 AIR 2472, 1995 SCC (5) 518

"handle" or "enjoy" any form of sexual contact. Men find it harder to report sexual harassment occurrences and acknowledge their victimization as a result of this social and cultural barrier. These difficulties may result in incidents being underreported and male victims not receiving justice.

Several tactics can be used to alleviate the difficulties males encounter while reporting and pursuing justice for occurrences of sexual harassment. It is critical to increase public knowledge of the pervasiveness of sexual harassment against males, the value of gender neutrality, and the rights of male victims. It is crucial to establish safe reporting channels where men can come forward with reports of sexual harassment without worrying about being judged or facing consequences. Male victims of sexual harassment may be better able to handle the trauma and the legal system if they receive support services and therapy. Legal protections for male victims will also be strengthened by examining and changing current legislation to give better definitions of sexual harassment and to ensure that these laws use gender-neutral terminology.

The idea of gender neutrality holds that every person deserves to be treated equally and without prejudice, regardless of their gender. Maintaining gender neutrality in the face of sexual harassment is crucial to providing equal protection and access to justice for men and women. In order to avoid sexual harassment, men's rights must be acknowledged and upheld for male victims of sexual harassment. In this talk, we'll look at the importance of gender neutrality in combating sexual harassment and defending men's rights, assess the obstacles men encounter when reporting instances of sexual harassment, and investigate the societal and cultural elements that support the myth that men cannot experience sexual harassment.

## **V. VIOLATION OF MEN'S RIGHTS: CASE STUDIES AND EXAMPLES**

A widespread problem that impacts people in a variety of contexts, including the workplace, is sexual harassment. It's important to remember that males can also become victims of sexual harassment and have their rights violated, even though talks about the issue frequently center on women as the victims. To address sexual harassment and protect men's rights, gender neutrality is crucial in making sure that all victims receive equitable and respectful treatment, regardless of their gender. We can highlight the difficulties men encounter in reporting instances of sexual harassment and advance tactics to successfully address these problems by looking at actual examples and comprehending the particular rights infringed.

The case ***Mahesh Murthy v. State of Maharashtra***<sup>11</sup> involved a complaint filed by well-known venture capitalist Mahesh Murthy against a woman entrepreneur for persistently bothering him sexually. During commercial encounters, Murthy claimed the entrepreneur made unwanted approaches, sent explicit messages, and made unwanted physical contact. Murthy's right to a respectful and safe workplace was violated, and this litigation exposed it. The case demonstrated how important it is to acknowledge that men can experience sexual harassment in the workplace on the same level as women. It reaffirmed that men's rights to prevent sexual harassment must be respected and protected, underscoring the necessity of gender neutrality in handling such situations. The case highlighted how crucial it is to have a secure workplace for everyone, regardless of gender, and to make sure that allegations of sexual harassment are taken seriously and dealt with appropriately.

Tarun Tejpal, the former editor-in-chief of Tehelka magazine, was accused of sexually abusing a female employee during an event the publication hosted. This case was ***Tarun Tejpal v. State of Goa***.<sup>12</sup> This lawsuit

---

<sup>11</sup> Mahesh Murthy vs The State Of Maharashtra And Anr on 9 September, 2019, W.P. NO. 1854 OF 2018

<sup>12</sup> Tarun Jit Tejpal vs The State Of Goa on 19 August, 2019 C.A. NO. 1246 of 2019

clarified the infringement on Tarun Tejpal's rights in addition to those of the victim. Although the victim's rights to a private and respected workplace, confidentiality, and legal remedies were the main concerns in this case, Tarun Tejpal's rights also had to be taken into consideration. This particular instance brought to light the need to guarantee an impartial inquiry and treatment of all parties participating in the legal process<sup>13</sup>.

The examples cited above highlight how important it is to handle sexual harassment charges in an unbiased, gender-neutral way. They stress how crucial it is to acknowledge men's rights in order to put an end to sexual harassment and other forms of violations of human rights. It is imperative to promote and safeguard these rights in order to create a more equitable and welcoming work environment for all. These stories demonstrate how important it is to establish an all-encompassing framework that takes into account the viewpoints of both men and women in order to successfully prevent and address instances of sexual harassment.<sup>14</sup>

A number of laws and regulations, including the Indian Penal Code, the Code of Criminal Procedure, and the Indian Constitution, safeguard men's rights in India. Instances in which men's rights are violated include intimate partnerships, the workplace, and society at general. The workplace is one setting in which men's rights may be infringed. Gender-based discrimination and sexual harassment against males are commonplace, despite the fact that men have a right to a safe and respectful work environment. Regarding sexual harassment and insulting someone's modesty, the Indian Penal Code has sections 354A<sup>15</sup> and 509<sup>16</sup>, respectively. Males who experience sexual harassment at work are likewise

---

<sup>13</sup> <https://www.icsi.edu/>

<sup>14</sup> <https://papers.ssrn.com/>

<sup>15</sup> Section 354 in The Indian Penal Code: Assault or criminal force to woman with intent to outrage her modesty.

<sup>16</sup> Section 509 in The Indian Penal Code: gesture or act intended to insult the modesty of a woman.

covered by the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition, and Redressal) Act, 2013.

The way men's rights are violated can have a big effect on their career trajectory, professional growth, and emotional health. Men who encounter discrimination or harassment may become depressed, anxious, or have low self-esteem. Moreover, these infractions may impede their career advancement and prospects. Discrimination or false accusations might obstruct opportunities for advancement or employment, there are a number of circumstances in which men's rights—such as access to support and a safe workplace—may be infringed. Men's career success, emotional health, and general trajectory are all adversely affected by these infractions. To achieve gender equality and defend the rights of all people, regardless of gender, society and the legal system must confront and acknowledge these violations.

## **VI. STRATEGIES FOR PREVENTING SEXUAL HARASSMENT WITH GENDER NEUTRALITY**

In order to avoid sexual harassment in a gender-neutral manner in a variety of contexts, including public areas, educational institutions, and workplaces, it's critical to put in place a number of intervention techniques. First and foremost, institutions and organizations need to put strong anti-harassment rules in place that define sexual harassment precisely, offer a way for occurrences to be reported, and specify the penalties for offenders. To safeguard people of all genders, these regulations ought to be inclusive and gender-neutral.

In the said case ***Aureliano Fernandes v. State of Goa, 2023***<sup>17</sup>, The Supreme Court of India issued directives to address implementation issues of the Prevention of Sexual Harassment (PoSH) Act. These directives

---

<sup>17</sup> Aureliano Fernandes v. State of Goa and others, dated May 12, 2023 C.A. NO. 2482 OF 2014

include conducting a review of implementation by the Union of India, State Governments, and Union Territories to ensure the establishment of Internal Complaints Committees (ICs) or Local Complaints Committees (LCs) in compliance with the Act. The Court also emphasized the need for online transparency, requiring relevant authorities and organizations to provide detailed information on ICs/LCs, contact details, complaint procedures, and relevant rules and policies on their websites. Additionally, the directives extended the obligations under the Act to include statutory bodies, universities, colleges, educational institutions, and healthcare facilities. The Supreme Court also stressed the importance of education and training programs for ICs/LCs members and awareness sessions for women employees and groups to enhance their knowledge and understanding of the PoSH Act and its provisions. These directives aim to improve the implementation and effectiveness of the PoSH Act in creating safer environments and preventing sexual harassment.<sup>18</sup>

Key tactics for eliminating sexual harassment with gender neutrality include robust anti-harassment policies, extensive awareness campaigns, and training programs that consider the perspectives of both men and women as offenders and victims. These steps guarantee definite policies, raise consciousness, and improve comprehension of sexual harassment for people of all genders. These tactics may not be specifically addressed by case legislation, but they are consistent with the guidelines established in the Vishaka case, which highlights the value of preventative actions, information sharing, and training in the fight against sexual harassment. Organizations and institutions may foster safer workplaces that stress equality and respect for every person, regardless of gender identity, by putting these measures into practice.

## **VII. CHALLENGES AND BARRIERS TO ACHIEVING GENDER**

---

<sup>18</sup> Livelaw.com

## **NEUTRALITY IN THE PREVENTION OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT**

In today's environment, gender neutrality is crucial when it comes to stopping sexual harassment. Ensuring equal care and protection for all victims is crucial when addressing sexual harassment, as it is a serious problem that affects people of all genders<sup>19</sup>. The absence of gender neutrality in the response to sexual harassment, however, is a result of a number of societal obstacles and constraints.

Deeply embedded societal presumptions regarding gender roles represent one of the major obstacles. Men are portrayed in traditional gender roles as powerful, domineering, and incapable of being victims. These presumptions make it more difficult to identify and acknowledge sexual harassment of men<sup>20</sup>. Male victims are discouraged from coming forward and demanding justice because of the widespread perception that males should be able to defend themselves and that they like being approached inappropriately. Beyond societal perceptions of male victims, another obstacle to attaining gender parity in sexual harassment responses is societal views. When male victims confess their experiences, they may encounter stigmatization, mockery, and skepticism. Men are deterred by this bias from reporting similar occurrences because they worry about being laughed off or written off. Moreover, men find it especially harder to own and express their vulnerabilities because of cultural expectations of masculinity.<sup>21</sup>

The persistent misconception that men cannot experience sexual harassment is a serious obstacle. Men are typically represented as being unaffected by coercion or being pushed into undesirable situations, and as always being ready for sexual activity. In addition to erasing the experiences of male victims, these stereotypes foster a society that

---

<sup>19</sup> JLS journals

<sup>20</sup> [ijcrt.org](http://ijcrt.org)

<sup>21</sup> [www.researchgate.com](http://www.researchgate.com)

supports the notion that males should welcome whatever sexual attention they get. This reinforces the perception that male victims are less deserving of protection and downplays how serious the problem is. It is essential to confront and get over these social hurdles in order to attain gender neutrality in the prevention of sexual harassment. Campaigns for awareness and education are required to dispel the myths that support the notion that males are incapable of being victims<sup>22</sup>. The experiences of male victims should be highlighted in public debate and media representation in order to normalize their disclosure. Gender-neutral workplace rules and legal frameworks addressing sexual harassment are also necessary to ensure that all victims, regardless of gender, receive equal protection and support.

The POSH statute defines sexual harassment and offers procedures for handling complaints and preventing it. The statute primarily targets women, but it's vital to remember that men who are sexually harassed may also be covered by its provisions.

### **VIII. OVERCOMING CHALLENGES AND PROMOTING GENDER NEUTRALITY**

To attain gender parity in the avoidance of sexual harassment, it is imperative to tackle the obstacles impeding advancement and execute efficacious tactics. Promoting inclusivity necessitates taking into account the experiences of all genders because sexual harassment is not exclusive to any one gender. This response focuses on suggestions and tactics for resolving these issues and promoting gender neutrality in the fight against sexual harassment.

### **IX. RECOMMENDATIONS**

---

<sup>22</sup> [www.researchgate.com](http://www.researchgate.com)

- **Education and Awareness:** Putting in place thorough educational programs on sexual harassment is one of the most important stages towards attaining gender neutrality. These initiatives ought to start early in colleges and schools and continue in the workplace. Education ought to have a strong emphasis on consent, gender equality, dispelling stereotypes, and power dynamics. We may question societal norms and foster respect in people by educating people and increasing awareness.
- **Strengthen Laws:** It is imperative to advocate for laws and policies that are more inclusive of all genders. The Indian Penal Code (IPC) has specific sections that handle sexual harassment charges and offer judicial recourse: 354A<sup>23</sup>, 354B<sup>24</sup>, 354C<sup>25</sup>, and 354D<sup>26</sup>. Ensuring appropriate implementation and enforcement of these laws is crucial, and this can be accomplished by working in tandem with the judiciary and law enforcement organizations.
- **Workplace rules:** Gender-neutral workplace rules and practices ought to be adopted by organizations and put into effect. Zero tolerance for any kind of sexual harassment should be emphasized in these policies, and safe reporting channels should be established. In addition to helping witnesses, inclusive policies can provide victims the confidence to come forward and report incidents without fear of reprisal. Employee sensitization and training initiatives can contribute to the creation of a courteous and welcoming workplace.

---

<sup>23</sup> Section 354 in The Indian Penal Code: Assault or criminal force to woman with intent to outrage her modesty, amended as section 69 of THE BHARATIYA NYAYA SANHITA, 2023.

<sup>24</sup> Section 354 in The Indian Penal Code: Assault or criminal force to woman with intent to outrage her modesty, amended as section 69 of THE BHARATIYA NYAYA SANHITA, 2023.

<sup>25</sup> Section 354 in The Indian Penal Code: Assault or criminal force to woman with intent to outrage her modesty, amended as section 69 of THE BHARATIYA NYAYA SANHITA, 2023.

<sup>26</sup> Section 354 in The Indian Penal Code: Assault or criminal force to woman with intent to outrage her modesty, amended as section 69 of THE BHARATIYA NYAYA SANHITA, 2023..

- **Awareness Campaigns:** It is necessary to start awareness campaigns in order to question societal conventions and advance gender neutrality. These campaigns can change attitudes and behaviors regarding sexual harassment by reaching a large audience and making use of social media, public areas, and a variety of media platforms. Campaigns of this kind ought to address both genders and aim to dispel prejudice and preconceptions.
- **Support for Male Victims:** To encourage male victims to come forward and report sexual harassment instances, inclusive policies, and support networks should be established. It is imperative that society acknowledges the fact that sexual harassment can affect people of any gender and establishes sufficient support networks to cater to the particular difficulties encountered by male victims. All victims can get the help they require if we provide safe spaces, offer therapy, and offer legal support<sup>27</sup>.
- **Boost Reporting Mechanisms:** Boosting reporting mechanisms is crucial to overcoming the problems caused by underreporting. Enhancing the process's impartiality, punctuality, and secrecy are all part of this. Helping victims seek effective redress can be achieved through creating hotline numbers and encouraging public and private businesses to establish Internal Complaints Committees (ICCs) in accordance with the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013.

It takes teamwork and the application of practical tactics to advance gender neutrality in the prevention of sexual harassment. We can overcome obstacles and build a society that is safe and just for people of all genders by supporting inclusive policies, enforcing stricter laws, encouraging awareness and education, providing support to male victims, enhancing reporting procedures, and enlisting men as allies. In order to

---

<sup>27</sup> [www.livwlaw.com](http://www.livwlaw.com)

achieve gender neutrality in the prevention of sexual harassment, adherence to current regulations and the promotion of an inclusive and respectful culture are essential.

## **X. CONCLUSION**

As the conclusion makes apparent, gender neutrality is crucial for both preventing and responding to sexual harassment. This can be accomplished by encouraging a courteous culture that acknowledges and addresses the problems and experiences of people of all genders. It is imperative to ensure the safety of individuals of all genders, especially in India where there exist laws specifically designed to combat sexual harassment against women, such as the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013.

In order to establish a secure and welcoming atmosphere for everyone, it is imperative that sexual harassment be acknowledged and addressed beyond the binary conception of gender. This necessitates acknowledging the variety of gender identities and expressions present in our culture as well as the fact that anyone, regardless of gender, has the potential to engage in or be the victim of sexual harassment<sup>28</sup>. Recognizing and addressing the hierarchical structures and power dynamics that support sexual harassment is also essential. Our goal is to undermine the gender prejudices and patriarchal norms that support this kind of behavior by advocating for gender neutrality. This entails developing procedures and guidelines that safeguard and assist every person, irrespective of their gender identity or mode of expression.<sup>29</sup>

It's also critical to keep pushing for diversity and gender neutrality. Education initiatives, training courses, and awareness efforts that prioritize understanding, respect, and consent can help accomplish this.

---

<sup>28</sup> [www.researchgate.com](http://www.researchgate.com)

<sup>29</sup> JLS Journals

Establishing procedures and guidelines that guarantee a secure and nurturing atmosphere for every person is a critical priority for institutions of higher learning, organizations, and society at large.

Fostering a culture of respect and combating sexual harassment depends heavily on gender neutrality. For venues to be inclusive and safe, it is essential to acknowledge and respond to the experiences and worries of people of all genders. To establish a society devoid of sexual harassment and discrimination, we must pool our resources and demonstrate our dedication to gender equality.