

PERCEPTION ON AWARENESS OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT AMONG UNDERGRADUATE WOMEN STUDENTS

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Introduction

In today's world women students are facing lot of difficulties not in studies where there is so much of competitions but peer pressure, family pressure and most important the social pressure. Needless to say, women continue to suffer more than men from slavery, colonialism, patriarchal oppression, domestic and psychological violence along with economic exploitation, which are perennial predicaments that have traversed for centuries. So, the women issues are central to any discussion of literary professionalism in the present time. Women constitute almost half of the population in the world. Despite of enforced laws, female foeticide and child marriages are still prevalent in many parts of the country. Incidence of sexual harassment, eve teasing, sexual abuse of female children and rape are on the rise.

Discrimination against women is found in every culture and society in varying degrees. It is manifested in various domains of life and activity, economic, social, political and religious. As a result of gender discrimination, the status of women is subordinate to men and they have little access to education, food, nutrition, health care, employment and wages. Women in our country are unaware of the basic human rights, thus the exploitation continues. This survey consisted the items assessing the incidence of sexual harassment, when, where it occurred and how the victims were affected by sexual harassment.

Significance of the Study

Throughout history, irrespective of any culture or civilization or race or religion, women have been denied even their genuine due social, political, economic and cultural. However, in India immediately after our independence our founding fathers realized the importance of gender equality and legalized universal adult franchise and took a lot of initiatives for women empowerment. Sexual Harassment is an obstacle to women's empowerment as it undermines their sense of personhood and safety, in turn preventing them from living full personal and professional lives. 'Eve Teasing' is a form of sexual harassment that Indian women face on a daily basis. Women's education is extremely important intrinsically as it is their human right and required for the flourishing of many of their capacities. The effect of Education, in general, is greatly influenced by the social context in which women live. This research highlights the adolescent's understanding level of gender sensitive issue and women empowerment.

Operational definitions of the key terms

Awareness

By the term awareness, the investigator means that the state of being conscious of something.

Sexual Harassment

By the term sexual harassment, the investigator defines that any unwanted sexual behaviour that makes someone feel upset, scared, offended or humiliated.

Objectives

1. To find out the level of awareness of sexual harassment among undergraduate women students
2. To find out whether there is no significant difference between rural and urban undergraduate women students on their awareness of sexual harassment.
3. To find out whether there is no significant difference between day scholar and hosteller undergraduate women students on their awareness of sexual harassment.

Hypothesis

1. There is no significant difference between rural and urban undergraduate women students on their awareness of sexual harassment.
2. There is no significant difference between day scholar and hosteller undergraduate women students on their awareness of sexual harassment.

Methodology

The investigator adopted survey research method.

Population

All the undergraduate women students were selected as population of the study.

Sample

Eight hundred and forty one undergraduate arts and science college women students were selected from Arts and Science colleges in Tirunelveli district as sample by using simple random sampling technique.

Tool used for the study

Awareness on Sexual Harassment Scale standardised by investigator and the guide. (2021)

Statistical Techniques used

Percentage Analysis and 't' test.

Table 1

Level of awareness of sexual harassment among undergraduate women students

Variable	Low		Moderate		High	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Awareness of sexual harassment students	130	15.5	580	69	131	15.6

It is inferred from the table that 15.5% of undergraduate women students have low, 69% of undergraduate women students have moderate, and 15.6% of undergraduate women students have high level of awareness of sexual harassment.

NULL HYPOTHESIS 1

There is no significant difference between rural and urban undergraduate women students on awareness of sexual harassment.

Table 2

Difference between undergraduate women students on awareness of sexual harassment

Variable	Rural (N=343)		Urban (N=498)		Calculated 't' value	Remarks
	Mean	S.D	Mean	S.D		
Awareness of sexual harassment	36.04	7.69	39.27	9.45	5.452	S

(At 5% level of significance, the table value of 't' is 1.96)

It is inferred from the table that there is significant difference between rural and urban undergraduate women students on awareness of sexual harassment. Urban students have high level of awareness on sexual harassment than rural students.

NULL HYPOTHESIS 2

There is no significant difference between day scholar and hosteller undergraduate women students on awareness of sexual harassment.

Table 3

Difference between day scholar and hosteller undergraduate women students on awareness of sexual harassment

Variable	Day scholar (N=663)		Hosteller (N=178)		Calculated 't' value	Remarks
	Mean	S.D	Mean	S.D		
Awareness of sexual harassment	37.56	9.09	39.43	7.913	2.715	S

(At 5% level of significance, the table value of 't' is 1.96)

It is inferred from the table that there is significant difference between day scholar and hosteller undergraduate women students on awareness of sexual harassment. Day's scholar students have high level of awareness on sexual harassment than hostellers.

Findings of the study

1. 15.5% of undergraduate women students have low, 69% of undergraduate women students have moderate, and 15.6% of undergraduate women students have high level of awareness of sexual harassment.
2. There is significant difference between rural and urban undergraduate women students on awareness of sexual harassment. Urban students have high level of awareness on sexual harassment than rural students.
3. There is significant difference between day scholar and hosteller undergraduate women students on awareness of sexual harassment. Day's scholar students have high level of awareness on sexual harassment than hostellers.

Recommendations

1. Create system to report sexual harassment issue courageously.
2. Provide proper guidance regarding sexual harassment among college students.
3. Ensuring a discrimination free environment.
4. Promote and practice healthy relationships, behaviours and attitudes.
5. Organise a support campaign to promote awareness regarding sexual harassment act and prevention activities for all youngsters.

Conclusion

There are many policies and projects at work in India for prevention sexual harassment, still women empowerment and awareness are not up to the mark. The government policies should help lower class women also. The study concludes as “A nation or a society without the participation of women cannot achieve development.