CASE STUDIES AND ANALYSIS

The significance of case study method is to get in depth knowledge about the problem of sexual harassment, which we cannot get in quantitative data. The concept of case study is frequently associated with qualitative research. Social Scientists, in particular, have made use of this qualitative research method to examine contemporary real-life situations and provide the basis for application of ideas and extension of methods. Robert K. Yin defines, 'the case study research method as an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context; when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident; and in which multiple sources of evidence are used.' The present study attempts to focus on the following objectives in order to obtain the information on the problem of sexual harassment of women at workplace.

- To highlight the problem of sexual harassment of women at workplace.
- To find out how women cope up with this problem i.e., the coping mechanisms used by women to deal with sexual harassment at workplace.
- To understand the types of action taken by the respondents to end their harassment.

To obtain information on the above said objectives, case study method has been used. Case studies are one of the most popular methods of conducting social science research. Despite the widespread use of case
studies there is little consensus about what the term actually means. What is clear is that the definition of what constitutes a case study has changed over time and varies between social science disciplines and individual researchers. For some researchers case study research includes a single case, otherwise the research is regarded as comparative and not case study research. Other researchers consider that the number of cases is not an important issue. A central concept used in social science research is the idea of having cases as the building blocks for data collection and analysis. The main advantage of case study method is that it involves an in-depth study of each case. The most theoretical advantage of the case study is that it attempts to organize data around the unit of growth or group structure or individual life pattern. Another advantage of this method is that repeated visits to the case provide detailed information. It leads to a new insight and thus highlights the hidden aspect of one's life. Other advantage of the case study method includes its applicability to real life contemporary human situations and its public acceptability through written reports. In general, case studies make no claims to be representative. A major drawback of case study method is that it is not possible to generalize statistically from one or small number of cases. It is impossible to determine how far the findings of a study into one example of a social phenomenon can be applied to other examples. One way to overcome this problem is to choose a case or cases which are typical and contain certain cluster characteristics that are representative of other cases.

Case study research excels in bringing to us an understanding of a complex issue or object and can extend experience or add strength to what is already known through previous research. Case studies emphasize detailed contextual analysis of a limited number of events or conditions and their relationships. Case study method is an ideal methodology when a holistic, in-depth investigation is needed.

In the present study, 10 case studies have been included. The cases selected were interviewed on several occasions so that detailed information
could be procured. Keeping in view, the objectives of the study in depth interviews and probing were relied upon to bring out their subterranean life circumstances. The cases have been presented in this chapter in a systematic manner i.e. their background, causes of harassment, traits of the perpetrator, consequences of harassment on the victim at workplace, action taken by the victims etc. To maintain secrecy, the first letter of their first names has been used. The cases that have lodged a formal complaint against the perpetrator have been included; further snowball technique has been used to collect the cases.
CASE – B

Ms. B. is a 44 years old Hindu widow. She belongs to a Brahmin family. She is working as a peon in a Government office at Chandigarh.

Born in Amritsar, she has been brought up in a nuclear family. Her father is a small businessman. Her mother was illiterate housewife. Ms. B. belongs to a lower middle class family. They are four sisters and two brothers and she is the youngest of all. Her all siblings are married and well settled.

Ms. B. is a Matriculate from a Government school at Amritsar. She was an average student. However, she regularly took part in extra curricular activities and was good in sports. She was very extrovert and made friends easily. After completing her studies at the age of 18 years she took a temporary job in a Government office. She got this job on someone’s recommendation.

When she was 20 years old, she got married in her own caste. Her husband was four years elder to her. It was an arranged marriage. Her husband was a Graduate and was in Government job with handsome salary. He belonged to joint family which was economically well off. After marriage, she left her job. Unfortunately within two years of marriage, her husband expired due to heart attack. She did not have any issue from this marriage. After her husband’s death, she was forced to go to her parents. She again started working because of the economic needs. She joined a private office on daily wages.

She remarried to a boy who was two years elder to her after a gap of two years. She met the boy while travelling in a bus and got involved with him. He belonged to an economically well off Khatri family. Ms. B’s parents openly accepted their marital alliance however, boy’s family did not agree to this marriage, as she was a widow. Inspite of resistance of boy’s parents they got married. Boy’s parents did not accept them even after marriage. After that her husband’s parents detached him from the family business, he started
working in a shop. After one year of marriage, she was blessed with a
daughter.

Her husband who was earlier a social drinker became an alcoholic due
to economic difficulties and rejection by the family. His alcoholic behaviour
became cause of marital conflict. On and off they had fights that often resulted
in physical violence against her. During this period she gave birth to a son.
They had very difficult time financially as her husband started spending the
entire income on alcohol and they had no support from the kinsmen.

She developed animosity against her in-laws and decided to shift from
Ludhiana to Chandigarh, as she wanted to wean away her husband from his
parents. They started living in a rented house. In Chandigarh, her husband
took a job in a shop. His salary was insufficient to meet their daily needs. To
fulfill their requirements she started working as a sales-woman in a shop.

It was at her working place where she met a man. She developed
friendship with him and found him very understanding and helpful. He was
unmarried and younger to her. She started meeting him daily. He was in a
government job. She started sharing all her family problems with him. He
helped her in getting a permanent job of a peon in his own office. Her
husband somehow got an inkling that she was going around with someone
that increased the events of quarrels between them. Her husband asked her
to terminate her relations with that man, to which she did not agree. There
was lot of conflict and tension between them. After two years, her second
husband also died due to alcoholism. After her husband’s death, her
boyfriend started visiting her. Both of them decided not to get married and
continued their relationship. There was lot of pressure on the boy to get
married by his parents. After taking her consent he got married to a girl of his
parent’s choice. However, they continued to work and meet at work place after
his marriage.

At her workplace, the number of male employees was more than the
female employees. There was no discrimination between male and female
employees regarding the work. She always had good relations with male as well as female employees in her work place. There were no complaints against her regarding her work and conduct. She was satisfied with her job as it was secured. The working hours were relaxed with lots of benefits. During her work she faced sexual harassment by one of her bosses, who was 64 years old. He was a widower with two sons who were married but living separately. Right from the beginning the behaviour of the Manager was not good with any of the female employees. He always misbehaved with them. He always used double meaning words like open the flap of file, giving an indirect reference of the under garments. Whenever he was standing in front of a female employee, he used to roll his tongue on his lips. Ms. B faced the same problem. She was 40 years old at that time. The boss’s conduct was not acceptable to any of the female employees. But none could dare to speak against him.

Ms. B shared this problem with her male friend. He suggested her to give a written complaint against the Manager. But she did not agree to it. The Manager kept on misbehaving with her by using verbal obscene innuendoes. Ms. B started avoiding him, but did not take any action.

Ms. B continued to face harassment from her boss for one year. This one-year was not really comfortable for her. She had to face many psychological as well as physical problems. Due to tension, she could not sleep at night. She continued to ignore his waywardness till her son got injured in an accident and called her in the office. The boss received the call but misinformed her son that she was not present in the office. She came to know about her son’s accident on reaching home in the evening. It really made her angry. Next day, in the office when she inquired from the Manager reasons for not conveying the correct message, he misbehaved with her. At this stage she decided to lodge a written complaint to higher authorities. Thereafter, the Manager was immediately transferred out of Chandigarh. Every one at the workplace appreciated her for her courage. She felt that her
action played a very positive role in changing the working atmosphere of the office. She personally felt that any women facing such problems at work place should fight against the harasser.
CASE – K

Ms. K. is a 49 years old married Hindu Khatri lady. She is working on an administrative post in University with handsome salary.

Born in a town named Khanna in Punjab, Ms. K. comes from a well to do urban, educated, nuclear family. Her father retired as Superintendent of Police. Her mother is a housewife. She has one younger brother and sister. Her brother is also an Inspector in police and her sister is a Lecturer. She has cordial relations with her parents and siblings. She is very close to her mother. She shares each and everything with her mother.

The family shifted to Chandigarh on her father’s transfer. She completed her schooling in a co-educational school and post graduation in all girls’ college from Chandigarh. She is also a diploma holder in Library Science and Office Management. Academically, she was a mediocre student. She used to participate actively in the co-curricular activities. She was very extrovert and made friends easily. Wherever she went, she used to fill the atmosphere with mirth and joy.

When Ms. K. was doing her diploma in Library Science she developed a close proximity with the librarian who was 10 years elder to her. He did not belong to her caste. She disclosed her feelings for this man to her mother. However, her mother did not agree to this relationship as there was age gap and the man belonged to different caste. Ms. K. accepted her parent’s decision and married to a man of her parent’s choice. The boy was law graduate and working in a government office with handsome salary. He belonged to her caste and was only three years elder to her. After marriage, she shared her past with her husband who appreciated her honesty. They developed close and intimate relationship. Her husband has three brothers and all the brothers are landlords. She has very good and friendly relation with her in-laws.
After completing her studies, she got a job in the University through her father’s recommendation and till date she is continuing with the job and has risen to higher ranks. Ms. K always wanted to be independent. She worked for two years before marriage. After marriage also, she continued to work and her husband and in-laws did not object to her working. She has grown up children. Her daughter is doing Ph.D. in the U.S. and is going to get married in near future. Her son is doing Engineering at Chandigarh. She has very friendly relations with her daughter and son. Both of them share each and everything with her.

She always liked her work and did it with full enjoyment. She is fond of her job and finds it quite comfortable. Her work timings are from 9.00 a.m. to 5.00 p.m. At her work place the female–male ratio is almost equal. She has friendly and cordial relations with all colleagues. There is no discrimination between male and female employees regarding the work. She is very much devoted to her work. There have never been any complaints against her. Ms. K. had healthy relations with her subordinates and superordinates at work place.

However, she did experience sexual harassment at her work place. Her immediate senior, who was 50 years old married man with grown up children tried to harass her. He always used to flirt with the female employees. He was very abusive and would start his sentence by calling names and Ms. K. was a kind of person who would not tolerate such behaviour. She always resented his behaviour. He would come and sit where female employees were sitting and would pass some obnoxious remarks. His remarks had all the undertones of sexual misdemeanor. He always indulged in frivolous talks and called ladies `sexy, gorgeous, stunning, Cleopatra, lightening’ etc. He habitually passed such base remarks in front of other male employees also and his attitude always made female employees feel embarrassed. No one however, took any action against him and treated him as mentally sick. Most of them ignored his comments.
Ms. K. was also facing the same problem. But as a self-respecting lady, she always warned him not to misbehave with her. Her senior could not digest her resentment and felt that she was humiliating him. No one had dared to raise any objection about his misbehaviour. He thought that he was all in all and his subordinates must dance to his tunes without saying a word. He had a notion that it was his right to take liberties with the ladies. Ms. K. did not respond to his whims and warned him of the dire consequences in case he continued with the misbehaviour. In spite of warnings by Ms. K., her boss continued with his abusive and sexually offensive behaviour. Ms. K. did not take any action against him because she was not coming to office on time. She knew that he would disciplinary action against her. Therefore she would just warn him not to take liberties with her but never informed the higher authorities.

One day, Ms. K. reached her office half an hour late and she was asked to submit half-day leave. At this, Ms. K. protested and there was an exchange of hot words between them. Matter was settled with her colleagues asking her to submit an application. After this episode, her harassment increased manifold and he started passing obscene remarks with sexual connotations directly towards her. She got very much frustrated with her boss’s behaviour. But she kept on ignoring his behaviour. Right from the beginning, Ms. K. was sharing her problem with her husband. He suggested her to lodge a complaint against the boss to higher authorities. But Ms. K. did not do so. She thought things will settle down with time. But it did not happen.

Ms. K. was not allowing her boss to take liberties with her. He started harassing her all the more. He even spoiled her annual career report. He wrote hasty remarks about her. That made her furious. She decided to settle the scores with him. Other female colleagues decided to join her in filing the complaint but at the last moment they backed out. But Ms. K. did not lose heart. Her husband gave her support at this crucial time and she gave written complaint against the boss to higher authorities. When her boss came to
know about the complaint, he started threatening her. He warned her of dire consequences. But Ms. K. did not succumb to his pressures as she had full support of her family.

After filing the complaint authorities held an enquiry. Ms. K. fought for 3 months to get justice and this period was really full of tension for her. She faced embarrassment, anxiety, lowered self-esteem as well as psychological disorders. At the time when enquiry was going on her boss was not placed under suspension. They continued to work in the same workplace. He continued to stare at her at work place. He made things miserable for her. It was a very traumatic period of her life. To pressurize her, boss started roaming around her home with his young son and would stare at her. Things became from bad to worse.

She approached the office union and asked for favours. Consequently her boss was transferred to a different branch. It lessened her trauma to some extent. He continued to threaten her by sending messages through common sources that he would commit suicide and blame her.

After enquiry, the higher authorities found the boss guilty and recommended termination of his service. She requested the authorities for her own transfer. She did not want his services to be terminated. Her only purpose was to highlight the existence of sexual harassment at work place and set an example for victims. He was demoted and continued to work in the same place.

Ms. K. feels that her complaint had a positive effect on other female employees at the work place. Even the other male colleagues started behaving respectfully with female employees. Her female colleagues expressed their gratitude towards her. She felt very honoured. She feels that she has done a good job for women’s welfare. She was transferred to some other department where she enjoys respect of all her colleagues.
CASE – J

Ms. J is a 25 years old Graduate. She belongs to a Sikh nuclear family. She is a freelancer who writes for a Human Rights Magazine. She highlights the social issues existing in the society. Ms. J. belongs to Chandigarh. Her parents are well educated. Her father is a Postgraduate and mother is a Graduate. Her father used to work in a private company. Now, he has retired from the service. Her mother is a housewife. She belongs to an upper middle class family with a sound financial background. Ms. J. has one brother who after completing his M.B.A. has gone to Australia and is now well settled there.

Ms. J. completed her entire education at Chandigarh. She is a Graduate and has also done Diploma in French and a course from Airhostess academy. She did her schooling from a co-educational school. She was an extrovert and was very friendly with her male class fellows. She was mediocre at studies. She always participated actively in cultural activities. After graduating at the age of 20 years, she got trained as an Airhostess and started working for an Airline company. It was when her friend was called for an interview at Bangalore for job of an Airhostess in Jet Airways, she accompanied her and appeared for the interview. She got selected.

Her parents were very open-minded. They provided her all the opportunities in her life and always respected her decision. They allowed her to join the Airlines. She knew that it was a difficult job but she accepted this challenge confidently and moved on. She stayed in Bangalore for six months and worked with Jet Airways. Having gained experience she made quick change over. She got selected for a more prestigious British Airways in London at a handsome salary and worked there for 8 months. Then, she opted to work in Emirates Airways in Dubai for a year. Ms. J. holds that in these two years and two months, she learnt a lot. When Ms. J. was working in Emirates Airways her physical health started deteriorating. Her doctor suggested that she was facing health problems because of her profession.
She started remaining ill most of the time. Her parents asked her to leave the job. Thus due to ill health she left the job of airhostess during the span of two years. She did not face any kind of sexual harassment from her male superordinates, colleagues, subordinates and customers during this period.

Ms. J. came back to Chandigarh and joined her parents for the sake of her health. She decided to work in Chandigarh. She gave an Interview in Airhostess Academy and got selected as an instructor. She started working as a Front Office Executive and a trainer too. Her income was Rs.15000/- per month, which was quite meager, as she has been earning in lakhs earlier. At her work place, there were two males and six females. One male was senior officer and one was subordinate to her. Her work timings were from 10.00 a.m. to 5.00 p.m. There were no shift duties and travelling. Ms. J. found this job very interesting, as she has to interact with new people everyday.

Ms. J. worked in the Airhostess Academy for a period of ten months and due to her hard work and dedication she was confirmed after a period of six months with an enhanced salary. Her senior officer who was 50 years old joined the academy after seven months of her joining. He was not a man of good character. Soon, he started making advances towards her. He started making passes at her, showering compliments and praises on her to win over her, like “you are very beautiful’ and “God has made you in free time.” Initially Ms. J ignored his behaviour and later snubbed him that they were not there to exchange compliments. To do work with dedication was her sole motive. He further tried to allure her by telling her repeatedly that he was going through a bitter matrimonial experience with his wife and he needed somebody to share his feelings. When Ms. J. did not respond to his advances, his misbehaviour continued for two to three months. He used every tactic to impress her but she did not fall into his trap. He resorted to pressure tactics by sending complaints against her to the Head Office regarding her work and conduct viz. she was a habitual late comer and an inefficient executive. One day, he crossed all the
limits by alleging that she had taken the money collected from students as fine for violation of various rules.

The senior officer started insulting her on pity matters and did not lose any opportunity to demean her. He looked for the occasion to mentally harass her. Ms. J faced the problem of sexual harassment for 3 months and during this period due to tension, her physical health started deteriorating. In the beginning, she did not share her problems with her parents because she was of the view that she could handle her official problems on her own. However, when things became difficult for her and she was not able to cope with the stress in the job, she disclosed the problem to her parents. Soon after knowing the problem her parents compelled her to leave the job. Further, for her job was not a necessity. Her parents did not allow her to inform the higher authorities as they were of the opinion that the superordinate would manipulate the matter according to his convenience. Ms. J wanted to fight for justice. After convincing her parents, she lodged a formal complaint in the labour court as her superordinate withheld her salary of two months. At the time of recording of this case study, she was fighting for justice. She had not received any relief.

Ms. J is of the view that only males are responsible for the existence of the problem of sexual harassment in the society. When she worked in odd hours (as an airhostess), she did not face any sexual harassment from any of her colleagues, superordinates or subordinates. But when she was working in normal hours, she had to face sexual harassment on the hands of her superordinate. She thinks, it depends only on the socialization of men that how they perceive women as sex objects. Ms. J holds that a woman must fight against the problem of sexual harassment. Culprit should be brought to books. Otherwise such men would continue to harass women.
CASE – E

Ms. E is 28 years old Sikh married woman. At present she is working as Deputy Director in a Government Office on contractual basis. Born in Chandigarh, Ms. E was brought up in a nuclear family. Her father was in a Government job but could not complete his services and left his job on the health grounds. Her mother is a housewife. She had to face economic hardships in the childhood. Ms. E has two sisters and one brother and she is the youngest of them all. Her brother is working in a private company and her sister-in-law is a housewife. Both her sisters are happily married and are well settled. She has very friendly relations with her sisters. Hers is a close-knit family.

Ms. E completed her schooling from a Government school at Chandigarh. She studied in a co-educational school. She was a friendly child. In studies, she was a mediocre and shy student, as a result not very participative in extra-curricular activities. After her schooling, she completed a course in the Nursing and started working because of the economic need of the family. She worked as Nurse in a private organization on meager salary. However, she continued with her education. She appeared as a private candidate for Graduation and Post Graduation. After improving her qualification, she changed her job. In spite of different difficulties, she worked hard to improve her qualification. She completed her Ph.D. after marriage to get better job opportunities. Before taking up the present job she worked for eleven years in three different non-government organizations, mostly in research projects.

She got married at the age of 24 years with a Hindu Jat boy of her choice with the consent of her parents. Her husband is a MBA and 5 years elder to her. He was working with her in an organization and there they developed intimacy with each other. After working together for one and a half year, they got married. It was an inter-caste marriage. She was married in a joint family. Her father-in-law was in the Army and is since retired. Her
mother-in-law is a housewife. Ms. E’s husband is the only son of his parents. Her two sister-in-laws are married and are well settled. After one year of marriage, she gave birth to twin daughters. She is in a very good terms with her in-laws. She continued to work even after marriage.

Ms. E, started working at an early age. She worked in different private organizations. She worked at odd hours, travelled with male colleagues but developed cordial relations with them. It was in one of the organizations, where she worked as a Social Scientist. She faced the problem of sexual harassment. She had very good relations with her male as well as female colleagues at the workplace. Male and female employees were treated equally at her workplace. She always liked her work and did it with full sincerity. Her superordinates were happy with her performance. There had never been any complaints against Ms. E, as she was very efficient in her work.

She had been working in this private organization for the last three years, when a new male colleague who was about 30 years old joined as a Computer Typist in the office. He always used to come drunk to the office. In spite of his addiction, he was quite efficient. The superordinates ignored his drinking habit.

Due to requirement of the job, Ms. E had to interact with this computer typist on regular basis. Initially, she did not face any problem. But gradually she noticed that he started passing vulgar remarks in front of her. She ignored his behaviour. He started passing unwelcome personal remarks having sexual connotations about her looks, dress and body contours etc. He realized that she did not react. She continued to ignore his remarks till she felt that they were not personalized. It became a routine affair, she would meet him for job purposes and he would comment on her looks. This disturbed her peace of mind. She could not concentrate on her work. She started avoiding him. She stopped going to him. Her work started suffering. She felt miserable. She did not think of talking to her superiors. She did not even share the matter with
her fiancée, because she thought that her fiancé’s ill temper would make the matter worse. Ms. E faced harassment for a month and this period was really traumatic for her. She noticed that computer typist did not misbehave with other female employees. He used to target her at every available opportunity. As time passed by, things became quite apparent to everyone at workplace. Other colleagues in the Office started talking about the matter. Ms. E’s situation became awkward. She felt very embarrassed, helpless and vulnerable. She even could not sleep at nights. All the employees were aware of the fact that this computer typist was targeting Ms. E. But they did not share anything with Ms. E.

When things became unbearable, Ms. E decided to talk to one of her female colleagues. Her colleague suggested her to complain against him to the higher authority. Ms. E was not sure how her superordinates would react. Further, she never wanted to be in limelight for wrong reasons as such she did complain immediately. She started thinking about making a formal complaint as her perpetrator continue with his waywardness. In the meantime, her female colleague complained to her immediate boss who was a lady officer. The lady officer was highly disturbed about the whole episode and decided to take immediate action. The Computer typist was sacked on the allegations of inefficient work, coming to office in the drunken state and misbehaving with a female colleague. When Ms. E came to know about his dismissal, it was a big relief for her. Her name did not figure directly in the whole episode.

Ms. E who has worked with male coworkers mentioned that staring and passing comments about female colleagues is a major past time among males in most of the work organizations. She reported that large number of women ignore it; as a result problem of sexual harassment goes unnoticed in the workplace. It is brought to notice only when it takes ugly turn or results in physical assault. She argued that women keep silent to avoid being stigmatized because women who make complaints face insecurity with regard
to job, she considered herself lucky as she got justice by not making tireless efforts.
CASE – T

Ms. T is a 49 years old married Sikh lady. At present she is working as Assistant Sub Inspector in Chandigarh Police and started her career as a Constable in Police. She is serving the Chandigarh Police with high dedication and honesty for the last 28 years. Her monthly income is approximately Rs.20,000/-. 

She was born in Chandigarh. She is from an economically well off nuclear family. Both her parents are well educated. Her father served in the Army. Her mother is a housewife. She has a younger sister as the only sibling, who is married and is a Lecturer. Her parents being educated themselves were in favour of providing good education to their daughters. Both the sisters, got education according to their own interests. Her father believed in freedom of thought. He was rather idealistic, believer in the good and right things, so none of the daughters were ever forced to choose a particular stream of education. They got complete freedom to select their career.

Ms. T was an average all round student. She did her schooling from Chandigarh. Her father was in Army and kept on getting postings at different places. Her mother stayed with them at Chandigarh. She studied in a co-educational school. She was very extrovert. She had very open relations with her parents and sister. She shared all her problems with her family members. After completing graduation, she joined police force; which is considered to be a male dominated occupation.

At the age of 25 years, she married the boy of her own choice. Her parents, without any objection, gave their consent. She met her husband through a common friend and developed intimacy with him. Her husband is a Graduate in Arts and a Businessman. He earns approximately Rs.40,000/- per month. She has only one daughter, who is doing M.B.B.S.
Ms. T, inspired by her father, always wanted to serve her country. So, she adopted police force. She had to work in shift duties. Travelling was very rare in her work. She always had very good and cordial relations with the males at her workplace. She was very happy with her profession. Being in a male dominated occupation, the number of male superordinates, colleagues and subordinates was high at her workplace. During her Police life, she did face many odd situations at times. Many a times, criminals threatened her whom she caught on different cases. It was a tough job but she continued to work with great zeal and spirit.

She faced sexual harassment at the hands of male superordinate when she faced an official enquiry. The enquiry was instituted on a complaint made by a criminal against her. The complainant had been charged with eve teasing by Ms. T. He lodged complaint against Ms T to malaise his image in the Human Rights Commission. The Police Department appointed a senior 52 year old, Police Inspector as an enquiring officer. The Inspector would call her late in the evening to join the enquiry. She showed her inability to join the enquiry in the late hours. When she repeatedly refused to abide by his orders, he called her at 5:00 p.m. at Police Headquarters. She reached at Police Head quarter at 4.55 p.m. but the Inspector was not there. After waiting for about one and half hours, she returned home. Same day at about 8.00 p.m. she received a call from the Inspector again to report at his house for the enquiry. She again showed her inability to join enquiry at odd hours.

Next day, when she was performing her duties in a Hotel, the Inspector came to her, started showering of abuses upon her. He used abusive, derogatory language against her with an intention to insult her in presence of a number of persons. To quote his words: “TU MAINU FUDU BANA RAHI HAIN, HUN MAIN TAINU FUDU BANA KE DASANGA. TO DO KAURI DI AURAT APNE AAP NU KI SAMAJH DI HAIN, MAIN TAINU DASANGA KE MARD KI HUNDA HAI.” It was very embarrassing moment for Ms. T. Her other colleagues who were witness to whole episode mentioned the bad reputation
of Police Inspector. She came to know that he was a corrupt police official and had faced CBI enquiry in that regard. Her colleagues warned her of dire consequences. They mentioned that she had not done right to get into conflicting situation with him. He was known as quite an arrogant and high-headed official.

She reported the incident to her husband and both of them decided to take some action against the erring Inspector. She complained to the higher official but no action was taken against the Inspector. As, she was working in male dominated occupation, no male colleague supported her for her action. Rather, she herself was blamed. When no action was taken by the higher officials, she brought the issue to public consciousness through media. It was then; the matter was taken up by various Human Rights Organizations and the social workers. The media also played a vital role in exposing the exclusive case of sexual harassment and insult of a woman, particularly, who herself was the lady A.S.I. In spite of the fact that Police Department runs Crime against Women Cell, women in their own department are harassed a lot.

Sexual harassment made Ms. T felt very irritable; her emotional reactions included anger, fear, depression, anxiety, lowered self esteem, feelings of humiliations, vulnerability etc. In spite of all this, she continued to enjoy the support of her husband. He showed complete confidence and faith in her. At the time of recording of this case history Ms. T did not receive any justice. She is still suffering from mental torture, agony and embarrassment. Her superordinates are upset with her for bringing bad name to Police Force. Her female colleagues avoid her company. Her subordinates make fun of her. She has become a topic of discussion at her Workplace. This episode has jeopardized her career. She has dared to challenge the male ego in male dominating occupation. The retaliation against her action has been so severe that hardly any women in the Police force would think of bringing the culprit to books. She prays that the accused be punished in the interest of justice. She
is of the opinion that her fight against sexual harassment will definitely prove beneficial to other working females and it will teach men to respect women.
Ms. S is a 40 years old married Hindu lady. She is Aggarwal by caste. She is working as a Teacher in a Private School in Chandigarh. Her monthly salary is approximately Rs.15,000/-. Born in Patiala, she was brought up in an economically well off nuclear family. Her father is a Doctor and her mother is a housewife. Her mother is educated upto Senior Secondary. She has one brother and one sister, both are elder to her. Her brother is a Doctor. Her sister-in-law is a Post Graduate and is a housewife. Her sister is a Lecturer. She has been brought up in a very open atmosphere by her parents.

Her parents never imposed any restrictions on her. She describes her parents as very gentle and kind hearted. She completed her schooling and Post-Graduation from Patiala. She has also done M.Ed. She studied in a co-educational college. She was a brilliant student. She used to actively participate in co-curricular activities. She is a very extrovert and make friend easily.

After completing studies, she became teacher as she was very fond of children. She always wanted to be independent. She taught in a private school at Patiala for 2 years. She was married off at the age of 25 by her parents. Her husband is 5 years elder to her and belonged to same caste. He was a Law Graduate and was working as a Lawyer in Chandigarh. After marriage, she settled in Chandigarh.

She got married in a highly educated family. Her father-in-law is a retired senior judge. Her mother-in-law is a Graduate and she is a housewife. Ms. S’s husband has two brothers. One brother is settled in the U.S. and one brother is a Class-I official. Her sister-in-law is a Law Graduate and is a housewife.

After one year of her marriage, she was blessed with a son. She got busy in the up bringing of her son. She gave birth to her second son after the
gap of one year. She could not think of joining any job. She became busy with her family and children. When both of her sons started going to school, she was left alone at home and she used to feel very lonely. She planned to work again at the age of 31 years. She got an English teacher’s job in a private school at Chandigarh through her husband’s recommendations.

She found her job very interesting and enjoyable. She had relaxed working hours i.e. 8.00 a.m. to 2.00 p.m. She would take care of her children and job in a best possible manner. In her workplace, she had very cordial and friendly relations with her male as well as female colleagues. She did not face any discrimination at her work place. The school atmosphere was very good. She never faced any problem in the school. After 5 years, the Principal got transferred and the new male Principal joined who was 55 years old married man with two children.

The new Principal did not show any respect to female teachers. He used to misbehave with all the female teachers in the school. He had the habit of winking at the female teachers. He used to feign blinking or roll his tongue on his lips in front of female employees. He used to call up female teachers to his office on one excuse or other. Almost all female teachers were upset with his behaviour but no one could dare to protest. She felt harassed for the first time when the Principal looked at her with lewd and exploring way in front of other staff members. It really made her embarrassed. And day-by-day, the harassment of the Principal increased. Ms. S. discussed this problem with her husband. Her husband suggested her to lodge a complaint against the Principal with higher authorities. But she did not gather courage to complain against him. She thought, things would get settled with time. She continued to go through trauma of harassment.

The Principal continued with his waywardness. He used to call her to his office on and off and always used to talk irrelevant things. She was getting mentally disturbed. She tried to warn him but he persisted with his behaviour. One day, the Principal caught hold of her hand. She felt highly disturbed and
discussed the matter with a senior male staff member who tried to intervene in the matter. But the Principal made excuses and continued with his behaviour. He again misbehaved with her. She again made an oral complaint to the senior staff member, who warned the principal again but in vain. After these complaints, the Principal's behaviour became all the more annoying and harassing. He started torturing her mentally. He used to insult her in the assembly, in the staff room, in front of the other teachers for no reason. Ms. S felt miserable and stressed. She discussed the matter again with her husband. After lot of persuasion she decided to give a written complaint to the Managing Committee of the school.

The Principal using his power reconstituted the Managing Committee of the school and included his favourite in it as members; she was forced by the Chairperson of the Managing Committee to take her complaint back failing which she was threatened by him of dire consequences. She did not take the complaint back. As a result, she was suspended from her service on the basis of false allegations like negligence of duties and creating false propaganda against authorities. She stayed at home for two months. This was a period of great distress and agony for her. She continued to fight her battle against injustice because all the time she had support of her husband. In the mean time, her husband being lawyer asked her to take legal action. She filed a case in the Court against her dismissal. Three of her female colleagues who were also being harassed by the Principal joined her and gave their statements against him in the High Court. It was out of vengeance that Principal has suspended her. The Court ordered the management for her reinstatement. She was reinstated but was not given any work. She was not given teaching work because management wanted to teach her a lesson. For the last two years, she has been going to school but does not teach. The Principal does not cross his limits with her. The Principal however, still misbehaves with other female employees of the school. She has filed another case against the authorities. At the time of recording of this case study, she
did not receive any justice. Ms. S feels, her battle for justice may go in vain; because by the time she will get justice the Principal might get retired.

There was no Sexual Harassment Cell in the school. She faced physical as well as emotional harassment. Her physical ailments included nausea, headache, loss of appetite, inability to sleep and emotional trauma included anger, depression, anxiety and a feeling of helplessness. But her husband and family gave her full support and encouraged her to fight against the Principal.

When Ms. S made a formal complaint, other female employees also felt happy. They thought that after the complaint, the Principal would not misbehave with other female employees. But it did not happen. The Principal kept on misbehaving with other female employees except Ms. S.

Ms. S feels, “the women who are being sexually harassed at workplace, should collectively come forward to eradicate this problem from the society.”
CASE – M

Ms. M is a 21 years old married Hindu lady. She has done Bachelors in Computer Application. At present, she is working as a Call Support Associate in a Call Center and is earning approximately Rs.12000/- per month. Her husband is M.B.A and works in the same Call Center. Born in Chandigarh, Ms. M was brought up in a Rajput joint family. Her father is a Bank Manager and her mother looks after the household activities. Her father is a Post Graduate in Arts and her mother is a Matriculate. She has one elder brother, who is an Engineer. She has very friendly relations with her parents and other family members. She is from an economically well off family.

She completed her schooling from Chandigarh. She studied in a co-educational school. Academically, she was a brilliant student. She also actively participated in Sports, Quiz and Cultural activities. She was very extrovert and made friends easily. When Ms. M was 18 years old, she developed intimate relations with a boy who was 6 years elder to her and belonged to Jat family. He was their family friend’s son. After 2 years of courtship, Ms. M, informed her parents about her affair. In spite of the fact the families were known to each other, they refused to accept the relationship, as her husband was not economically independent. He was without any job. After lot of persuasion her parents accepted their relationship. However, her husband’s parents did not accept their relationship because of the caste factor. Despite their opposition Ms. M decided to get married. Her father-in-law is in Government Service. Her mother-in-law is a housewife. Her husband is the only son of his parents. Her in-laws did not accept her even after marriage. So, the newly married couple set up their own home. Just after marriage, she and her husband started looking for a job.

They got job in a call center at fixed salary of Rs.12,000/- per month through an advertisement. Her husband also joined the job in the same Call Center on an identical salary. She found the job attractive because she was getting good salary and moreover, there were only young people at her
workplace. She had to work at night also. Her working hours were from 9.00 p.m. to 4.00 a.m. and from 4.00 a.m. to 10.00 a.m. In the Call Center, there were five females and twenty males. She had cordial relations with colleagues and subordinates at the Call Center. However, the boss at the Call Center behaved differently towards female staff. He would always come drunk to the office. She realized that her boss was not a person of good character. The employees did not like her boss because; he always misbehaved with the females at the workplace.

Her boss was 45 years old, married man and had two children, a daughter and a son. After two days of joining the job, the boss also started misbehaving with her on the occasions by touching and caucusing exposed parts. Female employee resisted but did not say anything as most of them were in dire need of money. He held Ms. M's hands while talking, which made her very uncomfortable. She did not know how to react to her boss's advances. He misbehaved with all the female employees. He started doing the same to Ms. M. She started avoiding her boss but could not take any strong step against him, because she was also under financial constrain. She informed her husband, who told her to maintain distance from him or avoid him as much as possible. He assured her that they would leave the job as soon as they get a new opportunity.

Within a month's time, Ms. M got new job in another Call Center. They informed the boss and asked to clear their dues. The boss refused to give their salaries. On their repeated requests, the boss did not release their wages. Ms. M and her husband decided to lodge a formal complaint against the boss. The other employees declined to support them. On the other hand, they informed the boss. When the boss came to know that Ms. M was going to lodge a complaint against him, he called her up. He requested her to settle the matter, as he did not want bad name for his center. He asked her to take her salary and not to complain to Police. She accepted his proposal and went to his office along with her husband. On reaching Office, he told her to come
to his cabin alone. When she went inside his cabin, he offered half the salary. Ms. M refused to take the half salary. He started laughing at her. He agreed to give her full salary provided she spent night with him. She refused to his proposal. He got annoyed and called her woman of loose morale. He tried to molest her. Ms. M raised an alarm. Her husband immediately entered the cabin and thrashed the boss. He succeeded in saving her wife and they both went straight to the police station and wanted to lodge a formal complaint of sexual harassment against her boss. But in the police station, they were again harassed. The police did not lodge their complaint. Ms. M took the help of media and brought the issue in the knowledge of everyone. She lodged a formal complaint in the Labour Court for the release of her salary.

Ms. M had to go through many problems in her job. She was working under a fear and threat of sexual harassment every day. At every point of time, she felt insecure. Even after lodging complaint, she had to face social disgrace. Every third person started discussing about her problem which used to upset her. It was only because of the support of her husband, that she could lodge a complaint against the boss. Her husband encouraged her on every moment. Without her husband’s support, it was not possible for her to take such an action.

She feels that every woman who is being harassed at workplace should come forward and teach the culprit a lesson. In the long run, it will help other females at workplace. She feels, this problem exists in the society because of the under reporting of the problem. At the time of recording of this case study, she was fighting a legal battle against the culprit. She is working in another Call Center along with her husband. She feels that all men are not bad. There are some bad elements in the private organizations that can go to any extent to serve their purpose. She argues that women do not complain because of lack of support system, further many women work on lower wages. This weakness is known to their perpetrators and they exploit these women economically and sexually.
CASE – C

Ms. C is a 33 years old widow Hindu lady. She belongs to Scheduled caste. She is working for an NGO as peer educator. Her job is to create awareness about HIV/AIDS in the slums at Chandigarh. Her monthly income is Rs.1500/-. Different projects are being run by the Government of India in city and adjoining areas with regard to AIDS awareness. Sex workers, intravenous drug users, migrant workers live in slum areas. In order to create awareness among them, different organizations assign job to people living in that area only to create awareness.

Ms. C was born in a village near Chandigarh. She was brought up in a nuclear family. She belongs to an illiterate family. Her father is working as a Peon in a private office. Her mother was a housewife and died 6 years ago due to Cancer. Ms. C has eight brothers and sisters. Her all siblings are illiterate. Ms. C spent her whole childhood in poverty and misery. They had hand to mouth existence.

Ms. C got married when she was 13 years old. The boy was also of the same caste. Her husband was a Matriculate and was working as a Mechanic. He was the only child of his parents. His parents are staying in village. Ms. C and her husband got settled in slum Chandigarh.

After three years of her marriage, she gave birth to a son and after 3 years to a daughter. At present, her son is 17 years old and is studying in 7th standard in the night school. Besides this, he works as a painter and is earning Rs.1600/- per month. Her daughter is 13 years old and is studying in 4th standard in the Government school in the slum, where she is staying. She was in good terms with her husband. Unfortunately, her husband died in an accident after 14 years of marriage. It was only after her husband's death that she started working as a maid outside home. There was no support from her family of orientation, who themselves were living in poverty.
She started working as a maid servant in different houses. She worked very hard as she had to feed her children. She did this job for two years. In the first year of her job, she was happy with her work. She was not facing any kind of problem at her workplace. But after one year, she faced sexual harassment. In one of the houses where she was working, male head of the family tried to sexually molest her. His wife was working and he sat idle at the home for the whole day. He used to pass sexually explicit remarks at her, like, she was sexy, young, she could get many men etc. Initially, Ms. C ignored it. But he kept on harassing her by passing sexual remarks. She could not share her problem with anybody and also did not complain to his wife because of her economic compulsions, as she did not want to leave the job.

One day, she was asked to come in the afternoon for her chores, as they were expecting guests in the evening. When she reached, there was no work for her to do. The perpetrator caught hold of her and tried to rape her. She shouted for help. She could manage to run. However, he threatened her not to tell anybody; otherwise it would not be good for her and her family. He threatened her that he knew many Police Officials and he would blame her of theft. He gave her money and told her not to come to his house again. She got scared and left the house and did not talk about it to anyone. For few days she did not go to work. In the meantime she talked to her neighbour who was working as a sweeper in a private hospital. He helped her in getting job of a sweeper on daily wages.

She started working as a sweeper in a hospital. While working in the hospital, she realized that her male coworkers used to pass lewd remarks at her. She continued to ignore them as she was in dire need of work. She became friendly with one of the female sweeper. She talked to her about the annoying behaviour of the male sweepers. This lady asked Ms. C not to annoy them rather pleases them. She told Ms. C that in order to survive in the man’s world, she has to obey men. She asked Ms. C to provide sexual favours to those men otherwise they would not allow her to work in the
hospital. Left with no alternative, Ms. C joined her friend. She developed physical intimacy with those men. These men provided her with gifts and money. Life became very easy for Ms. C. She started providing sexual favours to other men in exchange of money.

To the outside world, she was working as a sweeper in the private hospital, but actually she became full-fledged sex worker. She was able to provide all the facilities to her children. Her physical status also improved. She developed contacts with many affluent people. It was in this context she was able to get job as peer group educator with one of the NGO. She creates awareness about AIDS among sex workers and the precautions to be taken for protection.

She holds that she had faced a very miserable life and blames the society and her circumstances responsible for her present condition. Ms. C is of the opinion that it is very difficult for single woman to survive in this male dominating society. When she resisted other men's sexual advances, she was harassed and humiliated. The moment she agreed to their ways, she had a comfortable living. She feels that she became sex worker because women in society are viewed only as sex objects. They do not have any identity of their own. She, however, does not want her children to fall astray. For her, sexual harassment exists because of Gender Inequality. Unless and until women are given respect and equality, this problem cannot be checked.
CASE – P

Ms. P is 45 years old Hindu Schedule Caste widow, who works as maid servant in different homes. Her monthly income is Rs.2000/- and lives in a slum at Chandigarh. Born in a Village near Sirsa, she comes from a joint family. Her father was a daily wager and mother was a maid servant. They are six brothers and sisters. One of her brothers and a sister are elder to her and one brother and two sisters are younger to her. She belongs to poor illiterate family. She never went to school. She started helping her mother in her work since childhood.

Ms. P was 14 years old, when she was married to an illiterate boy of 18 years who was working on daily wages. He was living in a slum at Chandigarh. Her husband’s parents were not living with them. They were three brothers. His parents and his brothers were living in a village in U.P. Her husband was earning Rs.1500/- per month. Ms. P has three children, two sons and a daughter after marriage. She continued to work as a maid servant. She was earning Rs.1000/- per month.

After six years of her marriage, her husband died due to alcoholism. There was no support from the family. After death of her husband, she continued her job. She started sending her children in a Government school in the slum. She started working hard. She did not find her work comfortable, because after her husband’s death, male members of the families were harassing her, where she worked. In one incident, she was sexually harassed by a male member of the household, who was 35 years old. He used to pass sexually explicit remarks at her like, “you are very sexy, you are young, you don’t earn much in this job; why don’t you try some other profession.” But Ms. P did not respond and did not even complain to his wife. She continued in her job due to economic compulsion. This male member tried to molest her physically but she succeeded in escaping herself. She felt very miserable, stressed, helpless, vulnerable, depressed as well as humiliated. So, she decided to take some legal action against the perpetrator. She approached a
women’s organization but in vain. She used to visit women’s organization in routine for the enquiry but the perpetrator never gave his attendance. She could not get justice. The perpetrator got the case dismissed by using his power. She left that job and started working somewhere else.

Even the growing adolescent children started harassing her. Once, she was washing utensils in a house and a male adolescent of the family was alone at home. He showed Ms. P a porn magazine. On this, she slapped the boy and complained to his parents. The boy’s parents did not accept her side of the story and forced her to quit the job. She is working as a maid servant for last 31 years. She had faced sexual harassment from very young and middle aged men at her workplace. She feels that rich men do not respect poor working women. They feel that women who come to work outside their homes do not have any dignity. Further, poor illiterate women do not know where to complain? Further, if she complains, there is no one to provide justice. “It is a rich man world.” In order to safeguard her interest, she prefers to work in those households where women are not working. She avoids taking her daughter to her workplace. She mentions that most of the poor women are not as lucky as her and they are exploited by their paymasters. Government can check exploitation of women in formal setting but it is very difficult to arrest men who exploit poor women at their own houses. They try to exploit them as they have no fear and have full protection.
CASE – V

Ms. V is 44 years old married woman. She belongs to a Hindu middle class family. She is a Khatri by caste. At present, she is working as a Deputy Manager in a Public Sector Bank. Born in a small town, Hamirpur, Ms. V. was brought up in a nuclear family. Her father is a Graduate and has since retired from a Government service. Her mother is a housewife. Ms. V has only one brother, who is elder to her. Her brother and sister-in-law are well educated and are working in Government offices. She has friendly relations with her family members. She always used to share her problem with her parents.

Ms. V. completed her schooling and college in Government institutes at Hamirpur. She studied in all girls’ school. She has always been a topper and was also very participative in extra curricular activities. She was very popular with her teachers. After her Graduation, she started preparing the entrance test for the job in Banks. At the age of 24 years, she got through the exam and started working as a clerk in a Public Sector Bank. She got married at the age of 30 years.

Her husband is one year younger to her and belonged to her caste. He is a Graduate and works in a Government office in Chandigarh. On special requests to the authorities she got herself transferred to Chandigarh. Her husband is the only son of his parents. His parents are staying in the Village. After marriage Ms. V got settled in Chandigarh. Within a year of her marriage, she had a daughter and after 2 years she was blessed with a son. At present, her daughter is studying in 8th standard and her son is in 6th standard.

After marriage, Ms. V joined her bank in Chandigarh, where her immediate boss who was married man with children, tried to pass sexual remarks at her. She never faced such a problem in her previous workplace. Passing sexual remarks became daily affair for her boss. He was 50 years old. He also demanded sexual favours from her side. But Ms. V refused his proposal bluntly. Her refusal made boss furious and he made up his mind to teach her a lesson. She did not talk to anyone at her workplace about her
harassment. However, her boss made false allegations against her character. He portrayed her as a woman of loose character who can go any extent to serve her interests. There was lot of false propaganda against her at her workplace and all the male colleagues and subordinates supported the boss. No body in her workplace supported her. She felt miserable and could not concentrate on her work. She decided to report the matter to the higher authorities. The superordinate, however, manipulated the matter. He did not allow her to lodge the complaint. He misplaced her complaint and filed a complained against her. She was blamed as sex starved female who blackmailed superordinates in order to get favours. She realized, she could never get justice, as her boss is very powerful. In order, to get rid of this problem, she requested the higher authorities for her transfer.

After working for two years in Chandigarh, she was transferred to Shimla. She shifted there along with her children, but her husband continued to stay at Chandigarh as his job was not transferable. After one month of her joining, she came to know that her previous boss had spread rumours of her past at the new branch, which led to nuisance and disrespect for her. She was not given respect by the male supervisors, colleagues as well as subordinates in the bank at Shimla. She felt very upset. Her physical as well as mental health started deteriorating. She continued to tolerate disrespectful behaviour and later after one year, got herself transferred to Rajpura in Punjab.

Being Rajpura, near to Chandigarh, she got settled with her husband in Chandigarh. Her children had also started going to school at Chandigarh. In Rajpura, she worked for two years. These two years were also very miserable for her. Male colleagues did not show any respect to her and all sorts of rumours about her character and unsuccessful marriage was spread. She felt miserable with the behaviour of male staff members. They were torturing her mentally. She could not cope up with the stress in the job. She got so much disturbed that she had to consult a Psychiatrist. She continued to work with depressed state of mind, later got transferred to Chandigarh. She remained
with one branch at Chandigarh for two years. She got transferred to another branch. She got promoted after six years. Her subordinates were promoted earlier than her.

Ms. V shared all the problems with her husband. She continued to get his support all the time. According to her, it was one single episode of sexual harassment, which made her suffer through out her working career. She realizes that she did not succumb to the pressures of the male officer and it was all retaliation against her. He succeeded in spreading all sort of rumours about her and disturbed her mentally. She feels that she is a weak person and did not take any action against her perpetrator. It is for this reason she had to suffer so long.
ANALYSIS OF THE CASE STUDIES

For the purpose of having an in-depth understanding of the problem, it was decided to take up case analysis. These case histories may not be representative of the cases discussed in earlier chapters. On the other hand, they may be unique or even unusual in a number of ways. Each woman may perceive her situation as unique because women, who make formal complaints, face different circumstances as compared to women who don't complain. However, these cases share certain common experiences like fear of stigma, fear of retaliation, fear of loss of job, psychological as well as health related problems. The subsequent analysis highlights their background, workplace environment, their relations with male colleagues, superordinates and subordinates, causes of harassment, steps taken to end harassment, psychological trauma faced by the victims and coping mechanisms adopted by the victims to face the harassment.

BACKGROUND OF THE CASES

In order to know the background of the cases, different variables like age, marital status, caste, religion, education, occupation, income etc. have been discussed.

Age:

In the present study, there were six cases (Case B, K, T, S, P, V), who were above the age of 40 years and four cases i.e. case J, E, M and C were in the age group of 20-35 years. Out of these cases, there were five cases (J, E, M, C, P) who faced sexual harassment at an early age at their workplace. Five cases (Case B, K, T, S, V) faced sexual harassment at later age i.e. after the age of 30 years. Such findings indicated that sexual harassment could occur at any age. The age of women respondent varied from 21 to 49 years.
As reported in majority of studies most of the victims of sexual harassment were young, in the case analysis majority of victims were middle aged women.

**Marital Status:**

The analysis of case studies revealed that out of ten cases, only one case i.e. Case J was unmarried. There were three cases i.e. Case B, C and P who were widows. Remaining six cases (Case K, E, T, S, M, V) were married. All the married cases started working before marriage except one case i.e. Case M. Out of three widows, two cases started working before marriage i.e. Case B and P while Case C started working after the death of her husband.

All the married women had the support of their spouses. Case J who was unmarried got the support of her parents. Case C and P were widows belonged to poor segment of the society. Hence the question of social support from Kinsmen did not arise in their cases. These females were socially isolated as they did not have consistent contact with members of their family of orientation. Lack of support made them vulnerable to harassment.

Out of six married cases, one case i.e. Case E faced sexual harassment before marriage and all the widow cases faced sexual harassment after the death of their husbands. Irrespective of marital status, women were sexually harassed at workplace. The quantitative data of the study presented that married women faced more sexual harassment at workplace. However, majority of the researches, Chappell and Maritino, (2000); Fuentes et al., (1988); Merit Systems Study, (1981); U. S. Merit Systems Protection Board (1988) reported that single women are more prone to sexual harassment at workplace.
Caste:

Out of ten cases, two cases i.e. case C and P belonged to lower caste background. Seven cases (Case J, E, T, K, V, M and B) belonged to intermediate caste. Case B belonged to Upper caste. Such a distribution indicates that the problem of sexual harassment at workplace was prevalent in all the caste groups.

Religion:

Religion is that force which influences our ideology, value system and behaviour pattern. Qualitative data indicates that there were seven cases (Case B, K, S, M, C, P and V) who were Hindus and three cases i.e. Case J, E and T belonged to Sikh religion. Thus, it can be stated that qualitative as well as quantitative data of the study presented that Hindu women were more prone to the problem of sexual harassment at workplace in the present study since there was over representation of Hindu religion. It can be stated that there was no segregation among inmates on the basis of religion.

Education:

Analysis of case studies showed that majority of cases were educated. Case B was Matriculate. Case K was a Post-Graduate and a diploma holder in Library Science and Office Management. Case J was a Graduate and diploma holder from Airhostess Academy. Case E did Professional course in Nursing and Ph.D. Case T and Case V were Graduates. Case S was M.Ed. Case M was BCA. There were only two cases i.e. Case C and P, who were illiterate. Both educated as well as illiterate women were sexually harassed. Majority of women were highly educated. Women who possess more work experience and higher education qualification are at the greater risk of sexual harassment and victimization (Decoster et al, 1999). Findings of Fain and
Anderton, (1987); Merit Systems Study, (1981) have shown that educated women are more prone to harassment. The quantitative data of the study also came out with the same findings.

**Occupation:**

The qualitative data shows that there were five cases (Case E, B, K, T and V) that were working in the Government sector. On the other hand, there were five cases (Case J, S, M, C and P) that were working in private sector. There were two cases i.e. (Case T and V) who were engaged in occupations of higher prestige. Case T was working in Police force and Case V was working in a public sector Bank. There were six cases i.e. (Case E, B, K, J, S, M) who were engaged in occupations of medium prestige. Case E was working as a Deputy Director in a Government Office on contract basis. Case B was working as a Peon in a Government Office. Case K was working on Administrative post in University. Case J was a freelancer and was writing for Human Rights Magazine. Case S was a Teacher and Case M was working as a Call Support Associate in a Call Center. Two Cases i.e. (Case C and P) were involved in menial and occupations of low prestige. Case C was working in an NGO as a peer educator and also as a sex worker and Case P was working as a maid servant. Such analysis indicated that, sexual harassment exists in all occupational groups in the society. However, it is more among the medium occupational groups.

The case analysis also depicted that there was only one case i.e. Case S who was working in a workplace where number of females was more than males. Remaining nine cases i.e. (Case B, K, E, T, J, M, V, C and P) were working where male-female ratio was equal or where male ratio was more. Majority of researchers i.e. Gruber, (1998); Gutek et al., (1990); Loe, (1996); Moss, (1997) also assumed that women who work in highly sexualized environments are likely to experience more harassment.
Income:

Income determines the social status of individuals. The results of qualitative data depicted that there were three cases i.e. Case B, C and P, who were earning less than Rs. 5,000/- per month. These women were widows. Case C and P were illiterate. Case C was earning Rs 1500/- per month as peer educator and earning remaining amount as sex worker. There were five cases who were earning between Rs.10,000/- to Rs.15,000/- per month i.e. Case K, J, E, S and M. There were only two cases i.e. Case T and V who were earning above Rs.15,000/- per month. Economic necessity emerged as one of the main reason for working by women in the lower social class. Women who depend solely on their wages to support themselves and their families are unlikely to take risk at work. Their reluctance to either confront or complain makes them easy prey for sexual harassment (Stambaugh, 1997). These findings are applicable to two cases i.e. (Case C and P).

Family Composition:

Out of 10 cases, eight cases (Case B, K, J, E, T, S, C and V) were brought up in nuclear families and it was only after marriage that Case E and S joined the joint families. Case E and P were brought up in joint families and they set up nuclear families after marriage. Women of both nuclear and joint families fought against the problem of sexual harassment at workplace.

Education of Family Members:

Education in its wider sense includes everything that exerts a formative influence upon an individual. In the present analysis, it is expected that education of family members can provide women with better suggestions and solutions regarding their problems. Out of six married cases (K, E, T, S, M
and V), spouses of all cases were educated. One unmarried case i.e. Case J also belonged to well educated family. All the widow cases (Case B, C and P) were living alone with their small children. They were not treated well by their kinsmen after the death of their husbands. Two widow cases i.e. Case C and P could not take any action against the harasser. They were illiterate and were in lowly paid occupations. Even when they tried to fight against sexual harassment, they did not get justice. Further, absence of educated family members was a disadvantage in their case.

**WORKING ENVIRONMENT**

In the present study, an attempt has been made to know the work place environment.

**Age at the time of starting work:**

The qualitative data shows that there were two cases i.e. Case B and E who started working at the age of 18 years, Case B and E started working due to economic necessity. There were six cases who started working between the age of 20-25 years i.e. Case K, J, T, S, M and V. Out of these, there was only one case i.e. Case M who started working at the age of 21 years because of economic necessity. There were two cases i.e. Case P and C who started working at the age of 14 years because of economic need and there was one case i.e. Case C who started working at the age of 14 years because of economic need. They started working at tender age and continue to work after the death of her husband due to economic compulsions. So, it can be said that out of ten cases, five cases i.e. (Case B, E, M, C and P) started working due to sheer survival.
Work Hours:

In Government sector, women work for 8 hours, whereas in private sector, sometimes they have to work more than 8 hours, they have to work late as well as in shift duties. There were five cases i.e. (Case J, S, M, C, P) who were working in private sector. Out of five cases, three cases i.e. Case M, C and P were working at odd hours. Case C and P were uneducated and engaged in lowly paid occupations. In Government sector, there was only one case i.e. Case T who was working in the Police had to perform duties at odd hours. Such findings negate the results of those research studies that state women who work late or in shift duties are harassed more as compared to those who work at normal working hours (Hemlatha and Suryanarayana, 1983). Qualitative analysis indicates that sexual harassment was prevalent even in those occupational groups where women were not staying late or working at odd hours.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT

In the present study, an attempt was made to know the age of the cases at which they faced sexual harassment, characteristics of the perpetrator, type of sexual harassment, period of sexual harassment, action taken by the victims, support at workplace, consequences and physical and psychological effects.

Age at which faced sexual harassment:

For the present study, it is very important to know the age at which these cases faced sexual harassment at workplace. The qualitative data shows that there were four cases (Case J, E, M and P) that faced sexual harassment between the ages of 20-25 years. There were three cases i.e. Case B, K and T who faced sexual harassment at the age of 40 and above.
There was one case i.e. Case C who faced sexual harassment at the age of 28 years, one case i.e. Case V faced sexual harassment at the age of 31 years, one case i.e. Case S faced sexual harassment at the age of 37 years. Results indicate that women of all age groups faced sexual harassment at workplace. But majority of victims were middle aged women. However the quantitative data of the study indicated that young women i.e. between the ages of 25-35 years faced sexual harassment at workplace. Other researches i.e. Fuentes et al., (1988); Merit Systems Study, (1981); U. S. Merit Systems Protection Board, (1988) also mentioned that young women are more prone to sexual harassment.

**By whom cases faced sexual harassment:**

The qualitative data of the present study presented that maximum cases faced sexual harassment at the hands of their Superiors. There was only one case i.e. Case E who faced sexual harassment from her colleague. Remaining nine cases i.e. (Case B, K, J, T, S, M, C, P and V) faced sexual harassment from their superordinates. Findings of the qualitative data, indicate that maximum harassment of women at work place was done by superordinates which coincides with the findings of Brackenridge and Fasting, (2005); Coleus, (1986); Fitzerald et. al, (1988); Lindsey, (1977); Varro, (1980); Worsfold and McCann, (2000); Zaitun, (2001). Results of Qualitative analysis coincides with the findings of quantitative data in the present study.

Most of the harassment was done by the superordinates thus, making more difficult for the victims to take action against their superiors because of fear of retaliation.
The Harasser / Perpetrator:

An attempt was made to find out about the harasser. There were three cases i.e. (Case E, C and P) where the harassers were between the ages of 30-40 years. There was one case i.e. Case M, whose harasser was 45 years old. There were three cases i.e. Case K, J and V whose harassers were of 50 years. There was one case i.e. Case T, whose harasser was 52 years old and one case i.e. Case S, whose harasser was 55 years old. There was one case i.e. Case B, whose harasser was 64 years old. Results indicated that harassers of the victims ranged from 30 to 64 years age group. All of them were married and had children. Such findings indicated more elderly men were engaged in sexual harassment. The findings of qualitative analysis coincide with the findings of Merit Systems Study, (1981); Pryor et al., (1995).

The harassers of Case E, J and V did not misbehave with other female workers whereas, harassers of Case B, K, T, M, S, C and P were misbehaving with other female workers also. However, other females did not react to their waywardness and continued to face harassment at hands of their perpetrators.

Type of Sexual Harassment:

The qualitative data shows that there were four cases i.e. Case (K, J, E and T) who faced sexual explicit remarks from the harassers. There was one case i.e. Case B who faced non-verbal conduct of sexual nature. There were two cases i.e. Case M and V who were asked for sexual favours, Case M was asked for sexual favours in return of wages. There were two cases i.e. Case C and P who were physically molested. These cases were illiterate and were engaged in lowly paid occupations. The results indicated that harassers started with the mild form of harassment i.e. staring, winking or making lewd gestures. When the victim did not take any action, she was asked for physical favour and in the extreme cases the harassers even tried to molest the victim.
Perpetrator of the harassment tried to judge the victim whether she resisted sexual advances and accordingly continued with their behaviour.

**Period of sexual harassment:**

In the present study, there were three cases i.e. Case B, K and S who faced sexual harassment for approximately 1 year and Case K and S were sharing their problem with their husbands’ right from the beginning and Case B was sharing with her friend from the first day. There were four cases i.e. Case J, E, T and M who faced sexual harassment approximately upto six months. Case J, being unmarried, shared her problem with her parents and Case E shared her problem with her colleagues. Remaining two cases i.e. Case T and M shared with their husbands. There were three cases i.e. Case C, P and V who faced sexual harassment for many years. Cases C and P did not share their problem with anybody and Case V shared her problem with her husband. In total, three cases i.e. Case J, T, M were fighting their battle to get justice at the time of recording of these case histories. In the beginning, cases tried to solve the problem on their own because they were afraid of stigma and reprisals. Victims were ashamed or embarrassed about what happened to them and preferred to keep quite about it, often also because they were afraid of being labeled as either “Loose” women or “Frigid” women who could not take a joke .Results thus coincides with findings of Wijayatilake & Zackariya,( 2000).

The victims who complained against the perpetrators tried to solve the matter of their own. They either tried to avoid the situation like demanded for her own transfer or ignored the offensive behaviours. Victims complained against the perpetrators only when the situation was not in their hands. The findings coincide with the results of Grubber & Smith, (1995); Keashly et al., (1994) who report that victims most often manage their experiences by trying to avoid and ignore the offensive behaviours.
Action:

Out of ten cases, there were two cases i.e. Case B and K who complained to higher authorities at the workplace and got the justice. There were two cases i.e. Case T and M who lodged a formal complaint against the perpetrator were fighting case at the time of recording of case histories. There was only one case i.e. Case S who first complained to higher authorities, when did not get justice, went to legal way and won the case. One of the colleagues of Case E complained to higher authorities and Case E got justice. There were three cases i.e. case C, P and V who could not take any action against the perpetrator. Cases C and P were illiterate and were not aware of their rights. Case P approached a women’s organization but without any results. Case V first complained to higher authorities but the matter was manipulated by the superordinates. After this she did not try to fight, as she was sure, she would not get justice because of her superordinate’s manipulations.

Results indicated that women who had support of their family members and were aware of their rights were able to seek justice for them in spite of initial hesitation. It was also found that authorities in the Government organization were serious with regard to providing justice to the victims. As soon as the victims lodged formal complaint enquiry was held. Whereas, in the Private sector, authorities lacked political will to check the problem of sexual harassment. Victims also rely on different forms of social support from friends, family and co-workers (Richman, et. al. 2001), including support from more formal associations (e.g. community or religious organizations). There were three cases i.e. (Case B, K and V) in the Government sector who had sexual harassment cell at their workplace. In spite of the sexual harassment cell in the workplace Case V did not get justice. Women engaged in private sector reported that there was no sexual harassment cell present at their workplace. Case C and P worked in unorganized informal sector and these women had no redress to their grievances.
Support at Workplace:

The case analysis showed that there were only two cases i.e. Case B and E who got help from their colleagues and subordinates. Remaining eight cases (T, S, V, J, M, K, C, P) did not get help from other colleagues and subordinates to handle the situation. On the other hand perpetrators could gather lot of support for themselves. Women workers were too scared to support the victims openly. They feared negative repercussions had they sided with the victim. Men sided with male perpetrator as they were under the impression that if they supported the female victim, it would encourage other females to raise their voice, which they would not want. Most of the cases, it was the victim who was blamed for the whole situation. Results coincides with the findings of Wijaytilake and Zackariya, (2000); Zaituns, (2001). Such findings clearly highlighted the prevalence of patriarchal ideology in the society where women are not treated at par with men. At workplace, they are treated as women first, then as a worker.

Consequences:

All the cases admitted that they were afraid of stigma and retaliation. The period of trauma was very painful for all the victims. Facing the same person daily at workplace added to more disturbances for the victims. They could not concentrate on their work. Further, none of the culprit felt even sorry or guilty about his behaviour. They rather left an impression of vindictiveness. A large number of studies have found that women who report sexual harassment are doubly victimized: first when they are harassed and subsequently through the protracted and traumatic process of redress, the victim is blamed and stigmatized and her prospects of continuing work is affected (Devika & Kodoth, 2001). Women remain silent from fear of having the event trivialized (Srivastava, 1999, Tejani, 2004) or loosing employment (Srivastava, 2004, Chaudhury, 2007). Cases B, K, J, E, T, S, M, V fall in this category.
Many do not report sexual harassment simply because they do not know how to and whom to seek assistance from. Illiteracy and lack of understanding of information pose difficulties for women working in unorganized sector (ILO, 1997). Qualitative analysis indicates that Case C and P fall in this category.

Physical and Psychological Effects:

In the present study, all the ten cases faced both physical and psychological effects due to sexual harassment at work place. Their physical symptoms included headaches, inability to sleep, tiredness etc. and psychological symptoms included anger, fear, depression, anxiety, helplessness etc. There was one case i.e. Case V who had to consult a psychiatrist to live upto the working environment. Dansky and Kilpatrick (1997), argued that women who have experienced unwanted sexual attention or sexual coercion at some point during their careers are likely to experience depression and symptoms of post traumatic stress disorder. Findings endorse the results of other studies that reported various physical and psychological problems faced by the victims of sexual harassment, Crull, (1982); United States Merit Systems Protection Board, (1981), (1987).

CONCLUSION

Sexual harassment is all about expression of male power over women that sustain patriarchal relations. It is used to remind women of their vulnerability and subjugated status. In a society where violence against women, both subtle and direct, is borne out of the patriarchal values operating in society, force women's conformity to gendered roles. These patriarchal values and attitudes of both men and women pose the greatest challenge in resolution and prevention of sexual harassment. Results indicated that sexual harassment is still endemic, often hidden, and present in all kinds of
Sexual harassment is an expression of male power over women. Although number of women have started working outside their homes, but they are not given respect by male superordinates, colleagues as well as subordinates at workplace. Women have been socially conditioned from an early age to be passive, meek and tolerant whereas men are socialized to be authoritative and aggressive towards women. These social / cultural constraints do not allow men to be subordinate to women and follow the orders of a female superordinate. There are men who still consider women’s place is to be at home. Society and personal influences what we are taught as children in regards to roles of females and males overflow into the workplace. The managers of today grow up in families where their mother’s stayed at home and took care of the children. They are also taught that men are stronger and should be the leaders. These behaviour flows into the work setting. Men have traditionally held organizational power and supervisory positions whereas women are not allowed to rise in their professional life. They are likely to be employed in subordinate positions. Women feel they are invisible, isolated and irrelevant within an organization while men see them as sex objects. Thus men with power positions at workplace feel that they have the authority to harass women. Women feel excluded from power and socially isolated at workplace. This imbalance of power leads to sexual harassment of women at workplace. Further, Patriarchy also plays an important role in the Indian society. Women are to obey the orders of men. They are perceived as an object of enjoyment by men. They are first treated as women at workplace then treated as a worker. Women working in highly sexualized fields face more problems at their workplace. In the male dominated workplace, a woman’s gender is a salient feature because of her singularity and distinctiveness. The perpetrators with power positions are not at all guilty of their behaviour. Rather, they have an attitude of vindictiveness. Further sexual
harassed women hesitate to complain against the perpetrators because of the fear of stigma to be attached to them and fear of retaliation. Only educated women are aware of their rights and are able to fight against the perpetrators. Whereas, illiterate women are unaware of their rights and also do not know where to lodge a complaint against the perpetrator. Women with economic compulsions do not complain against the perpetrators as they do not want to loose their job. In spite of the fact that Government has made the law to have sexual harassment cell in every organization where women work, in most of the private organizations, sexual harassment cell is not present. So, there is no redressal for their grievances which further leads to the perpetuation of the problem of sexual harassment. Men who are affluent and have power, authority and prestigious job are not afraid of law even. By using their power, they get the case dismissed. Rather it is the victim who is blamed.

Sexual harassment has been recognized as most intimidating, most violating form of violence since long in countries like UK, USA and many countries have not only taken note of how degrading experiences of sexual harassment can be for women as well as employers but have adapted legislative measures to combat sexual harassment.

In India, it has been eleven years since sexual harassment was for the first time recognized by the Supreme Court as human rights violation and gender based systemic discrimination that affects women’s Right to Life and Livelihood. The Court defined sexual harassment very clearly as well as provided guidelines for employers to redress and prevent sexual harassment at workplace. While the Supreme Court has given mandatory guidelines, known as Vishaka Guidelines, for resolution and prevention of sexual harassment enjoining employers by holding them responsible for providing safe work environment for women, the issue still remains under carpets for most women and employers. Vishaka guidelines apply to both organized and unorganized work sectors and to all women whether working part time, on contract or in voluntary/honorary capacity. The guidelines are a broad
framework which put a lot of emphasis on prevention and within which all appropriate preventive measures can be adapted. One very important preventive measure is to adopt a sexual harassment policy, which expressly prohibits sexual harassment at work place and provides effective grievance procedure, which has provisions clearly laid down for prevention and for training the personnel at all levels of employment.

The Patriarchal attitudes and values are the biggest challenge in implementation of any law concerning women in our society. Combating these attitudes of men and women and the personnel involved / responsible for implementation of laws and systems is most crucial in prevention of unwanted sexual behaviour. Preventing and avoiding sexual harassment involves all levels of employees / persons in any organization - employees and colleagues, management and bodies like trade unions. Most importantly it requires for the employer to act before a problem occurs. Along with legislative measure, support of family members, education, job status, determination of women etc. can help the women to cope up with the problem of sexual harassment. Being a male dominated society, presence of a male in a women’s life can also make the other male feel afraid. Power theory, Social / Cultural theory and Sex-Role theory work in combination in the present study to explain the existence and perpetuation of sexual harassment at workplace.