

HARASSMENT AWARENESS VOLUNTEER PROGRAM HAVP

Seminar on “Protection Against Harassment of Women At Workplace Act, 2010”

November 26, 2014

District Muzaffargarh



TITLE OF THE SEMINAR

Protection Against Harassment of Women at Workplace Act, 2010

ACTIVITY DATE

November 26, 2014

VENUE

Govt. Boys Comprehensive High School, Muzafargarh

METHODOLOGIES

Following methodologies were used during the seminar:

- Interactive speeches & Discussion
- Question & Answers

NAME OF SPEAKERS

1. **Mr. Hafiz Shaukat Ali:** Chief Guest (District Coordination Officer, , Muzafargarh)
2. **Mr. Kareem Baksh:** (District Officer, Coordination, Muzafargarh)
3. **Mr. Athar Iqbal:** (EDO Health, Muzafargarh)
4. **Mr. Mukhtar Hussain:** (DO Elementary , Muzafargarh)
5. **Mr. Khalid Bashir:** (DO Social Welfare, Muzafargarh)
6. **Ms. Zohra Sajjad Zaidi:** (Women Rights Activist, Multan)
7. **Mr. Yasir Fareed** (Admin Officer, Office of the Woman Ombudsperson, Lahore)
8. **Ms. Bushra Khaliq:** (Executive Director, WISE, Lahore)
9. **Ms. Javeria Niaz:** (program Officer, WISE, Lahore)

PROCEEDINGS

Public Seminar was held on November 26, 2014 at Govt. Boys Comprehensive High School, Muzafargarh. There were 222 (male & female) participants from public/ private sector including Education, Health, Social Welfare and Labor Department. The members from civil society, electronic and press media also attended the event. A large number of working women from different walks of life participated in the seminar.

Ms. Bushra Khaliq, welcomed the chief guest, guest of honors, guest speakers and all the participants on behalf of Women Ombudsperson, District Government Muzaffargarh and WISE.

Ms. Bushra Khaliq: (Executive Director, WISE, Lahore)

She started with the introduction of Harassment Awareness Volunteers Program (HAVP); she said that although the law against sexual harassment at workplace “The Protection Against Harassment of Women at the Workplace Act 2010” has been passed in 2010 and according to this law all the organization are bound to adopt the code of conduct against sexual harassment within the 6 months after enactment of

this law. The Management of organization doesn't know how to adopt code of conduct and employees are unaware about remedies under this law. The ratio of reported cases of sexual harassment is quite low as compared to actual number of incidents. So keeping all in view The Office of the Women Ombudsperson has launched "Harassment Awareness Volunteer Program" for the orientation of "The Protection Against Harassment of Women at the Workplace Act 2010". And today's seminar is the continuity of this program.



During her speech for the better understanding of participants she discussed main features of "The Protection Against Harassment of Women at the Workplace Act 2010"

She comprehensively told the participants about the role and powers of Women Ombudsperson

Role of Ombudsperson:

- To receive direct complaints from employees of all organizations
- To hear appeals where the accused or complainant are not satisfied with decision of Inquiry Committee of an organization
- Any employee shall have the option to file a complaint either to the inquiry committee or the Ombudsperson



Powers of Ombudsperson:

- Summoning and enforcing the attendance of any person and examining him on oath;
- Compelling the production of evidence; Receiving evidence on affidavits;
- Issuing commission for the examination of witnesses

- entering any premises for the purpose of making any inspection or investigation, enter any premises where the Ombudsperson has a reason to believe that any information relevant to the case may be found; and
- The Ombudsperson shall have the same powers as the High Court has to punish any person for its contempt.
- Ombudsperson shall while making the decision on the complaint may impose any of the minor or major penalties

Compliance of Code of Conduct:

She also highlighted the steps for the code of conduct compliance

- Incorporate of Code of Conduct for "Protection Against Harassment of Women at Workplace Act, 2010" as a part of Management, HR and Gender Policies
- Constitution of 3 Member Standing Inquiry Committee
- Designation of a competent Authority
- Display the code of conduct
- Orientation to all the staff members including support staff

Ms. Javeria Niaz: (program Officer, WISE, Lahore)



While giving presentation on the campaign activities in Muzaffargarh, she explained that the Volunteer's training on "The Protection Against Harassment of Women at Workplace Act 2010" was organized on 24th of November. Twenty (20) volunteers (10 male & 10 female) from different parts of district Muzaffargarh attended the capacity building training workshop. The orientation on the issue of Harassment, Protection Against Harassment of Women at Workplace, Act 2010 were the main topics of the training.

After that training, 20 volunteers along with the WISE team members visited 30 workplaces including 09 banks, 05 Hospitals, 05 Colleges, 11 factories/ industries, where the volunteers conducted brief sessions on the topic of the compliance of anti-harassment laws.

Mr. Yasir Fareed: (Admin Officer, Office of the Woman Ombudsperson, Lahore)

On behalf of Woman Ombudsperson Mr. Yasir Fareed thanked to the chief guest, guest speakers, participants, WISE and District Government Muzaffargarh for the organizing of this successful event. He also expressed his views that there is no chance for the welfare of the nation unless the condition of women is improved and the condition of women can be improved only through their economic empowerment and that why the office of the Woman Ombudsperson is working for sexual harassment free environment at workplace.



Mr. Mukhtar Hussain: (DO Elementary, Muzafargarh)



While addressing the seminar he said that women constitute approximately 50% population of our nation. If the women are given the task for the development of the country, can make a holistic progress. Women, being more dedicated, hard working, creative and devoted to the cause, they really need a fundamental change in our social attitudes toward women, particularly in our rural areas. A massive effort is required to make both men and women aware of the need and the benefits of women's economic empowerment for a better future of Pakistan. He said that 3 member inquiry committees have been formed in education department and we are actively implementing all the features of "Protection Against Harassment of Women at Workplace Act, 2010".

Mr. Khalid Bashir: (DO Social Welfare, Muzafargarh)

He expressed his views that efforts to promote gender equality and economic empowerment of women will lead to social justice and human development which will be further sustained through participation and partnership between both women and the men in all spheres of life. The Protection Against Harassment of Women at Workplace Act, 2010 will contribute a lot towards women economic and social empowerment, he added.



Ms. Zohra Sajjad Zaidi: (Women Rights Activist)

While addressing the seminar, she said that women in Pakistan are not encouraged to play their full and active role in country's development. While further sharing her life experiences she told that there are many social barriers and taboos in the way of women development and empowerment. She gave examples of those who are potential and can become successful entrepreneurs, managers and much more; but due to the stereotype role and responsibilities women are only defined as the home keepers and in fact are not encouraged to get themselves mainstreamed.



She highlighted the impact of the laws on the lives and productivity of the working women after enactment of anti harassment law, the social perception regarding women mobility and mainstreaming would be changed and has become better. The women are now able to contribute and play their due role for the economic empowerment as well as country's economic uplift.

She also appraises the Role of Punjab Government and Prof. Dr. Mira Phailbus, Woman Ombudsperson, Punjab for launching Harassment Awareness Volunteers Program throughout the province. She said the

civil society organizations would be in solidarity to this very important campaign. She appreciated the Provincial Government, District Government and Civil Society joint efforts and initiatives for the promotion and implementation of sexual harassment laws at workplace.

Mr. Athar Iqbal: (EDO Health, Muzafargarh)

He appreciated the efforts of Women Ombudsperson for the promotion of the laws. He also highlighted the importance of “Protection Against Harassment of Women at Workplace Act, 2010. He said that in the Health Department women employees are in large numbers and now after the enactment of the said law all the women employees of health department will feel protected as the 3 Member Inquiry Committee has been formed in the department. He further said that the inquiries committees will also be constituted in each hospitals and offices of health department to provide harassment free environment for women.



Mr. Hafiz Shaukat Ali: Chief Guest (District Coordination Officer, Muzafargarh)

The Chief Guest of the seminar, Mr. Hafiz Shaukat Ali, District Coordination Officer, Muzafargarh, during his speech appreciated the efforts of Punjab Government, Office of the Woman Ombudsperson and WISE for organizing the comprehensive campaign against sexual harassment at workplace in district Muzafargarh. He said that District Government Muzafargarh is very proactive towards women empowerment and inquiry committees have been formed in each department. The District Government Muzaffargarh believes on women empowerment and will ensure the implementation of “Protection Against Harassment of Women at Workplace Act, 2010” in its true spirit.



Media Coverage:

The local media was engaged throughout the campaign through issuance of press statements, article and message of the Ombudsperson, which was largely covered.