GENDER INEQUALITY AND HABITUS AT THE INDIAN WORKPLACE

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ABSTRACT

This thesis highlights the important components of the habitus of Indian workplaces of private and public sector organisations in Delhi and establishes how gender inequalities prevalent in both work sectors are deeply embedded in their habitus. The connection between habitus and gender inequalities is demonstrated by research and field studies conducted within this project that exhibit how the scale, perception, reaction and overall approach to sexual harassment at the workplace differs extensively between fields of public and private sector. Sexual harassment and inappropriate behaviour at the workplace are used as signifiers for the exposition of gender inequality in public and private sectors. Therefore, this thesis constitutes the exploration of two central concepts i.e. habitus and gender inequalities by studying the understanding of and approach towards sexual harassment in the two sectors and thus, substantiate the linkage betwixt habitus and gender inequality at the Indian workplace.

ABSTRAKT

Diese Arbeit beleuchtet die wichtigen Komponenten des Habitus indischer Arbeitsplätze von Organisationen des privaten und öffentlichen Sektors in Delhi und zeigt auf, wie tief die in beiden Arbeitssektoren vorherrschenden geschlechtsspezifischen Ungleichheiten in ihren Habitus eingebettet sind. Der Zusammenhang zwischen Habitus und geschlechtsspezifischen Ungleichheiten wird durch im Rahmen dieses Projekts durchgeführte Forschungen und Feldstudien aufgezeigt, die zeigen, wie sich das Ausmaß, die Wahrnehmung, die Reaktion und der allgemeine Ansatz zur sexuellen Belästigung am Arbeitsplatz zwischen den Bereichen des öffentlichen und des privaten Sektors stark unterscheiden. Sexuelle Belästigung und unangemessenes Verhalten am Arbeitsplatz werden als Indikatoren für die Aufdeckung von Ungleichheiten zwischen den Geschlechtern im öffentlichen und privaten Sektor verwendet. Daher stellt diese These die Erforschung zweier zentraler Konzepte dar, d. H. Habitus- und Geschlechterungleichheiten, indem das Verständnis und die Herangehensweise an sexuelle Belästigung in beiden Sektoren untersucht werden und somit die Verbindung zwischen Habitus und Geschlechterungleichheit am indischen Arbeitsplatz begründet wird.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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CHAPTER 1 - INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this research work is to explore the relationship between gender inequalities and habitus within the workplaces of Delhi, India. This work delves into the subject areas of gender, inequality, organisation culture and sexual harassment by using Pierre Bourdieu's concepts of habitus and fields. The premise of this thesis is the correlation between gender inequality at the workplace and habitus and how these elements interweave to reproduce gender inequalities over time in public and private sector. Public and private sector are reviewed as two individual systems within Indian workplaces with differing habitus that cultivate practices and behaviour unique to these sectors. The link between habitus and gender inequality is validated by interviewing participants in the two sectors around the notion of sexual harassment. The subsequent section explains the design and structure of this thesis before elucidating this study.

1.1 STRUCTURE OF THE THESIS

This thesis is divided into six chapters. The first chapter 'Introduction' discusses the basics with aims and focus, hypothesis, objective and research questions of this project. It locates the work within a broader framework and establishes its foundation. The second chapter 'Literature Review' provides conceptual clarity by detailing and analysing literature on relevant subjects such as gender equality, sexism, Indian public and private sectors, organisation culture, habitus and fields. This chapter also assesses how this thesis is situated within existing research and what it adds to the domain.

The third chapter is 'Research Methodology' which explains the research strategy and methodology adopted to carry out this research along with details of field work. The rationale behind methodological choices, development of an appropriate strategy over time and logistics of data collection are aspects that are also addressed in this chapter. The next chapter 'Data Discussion' discusses the particulars of the data collected during the entirety of the field works of this research and the findings that have been excavated. Following this is the 'Implications' chapter that reflects upon the findings discussed in the 'Data Discussion' chapter, what they mean and their evidentiary value in the context of the hypothesis and objective of this thesis. Lastly the sixth and final 'Conclusion' chapter presents and sums up the final comments on the points made through this research, its essence and ideas to be considered moving forward.

1.2 AIMS AND FOCUS

In this thesis, I explore the habitus of workplaces in Delhi and the connection of their habitus to gender based inequalities that persist in these workplaces. Bourdieu's concepts of habitus and fields serve as the guiding philosophy for this thesis. The workplaces that I study in this thesis are formal/organised public and private sector organisations in urban Delhi. To examine the scale of gender based inequalities, I focus on sexual harassment and its understanding and awareness among employees. This is done by collecting data on how employees perceive and fathom inappropriate behaviour and sexual harassment at the workplace, the extent to which said behaviour and practices persist and how these issues are handled by organisations in the two sectors. Data on knowledge and perception of sexual harassment and inappropriate

behaviour and their existing levels in public and private sector serves as the apparatus to discern scales of gender inequality in both sectors. How employees perceive and react to inappropriate behaviour and sexual harassment against and around them is indicative of the kind of work culture that prevails in a workplace and this understanding of the work culture by an employee supports creation of habitus of an organisation. The habitus is what helps an employee understand and navigate their way around a place of work. The idea behind this research is to breakdown the habitus of public and private sectors by exploring how employees view and comprehend inappropriate behaviour and sexual harassment; highlight the differences between public and private sector in terms of their habitus and then connect their differing habitus to prevalence of gender inequalities in workplaces.

My case study is the urban area of Delhi. I chose Delhi as it has a diverse population. As the capital of India, it attracts people from different corners of the country. These people belong to different regions, religions and communities and thus, make for a heterogeneous sample for research purposes. Keeping in mind restraints of time, resources, commutation and the challenges associated with the geography of the country and the profoundly diverse nature of its population, it was important to settle on a place that attempts at covering sections of its heterogeneous amplitude. Therefore, I chose Delhi. With regards to the workplace, I focus on the formal or organised sector of work which entails private as well as public sector, the details of which are explained in the subsequent section.

1.2 a) Defining Public and Private Sector of Work

Public sector refers to government and state owned organisations, and private sector refers to privately owned companies and organisations (BBC, n.d.). I have excluded informal or unorganised work sector in my thesis. The National Commission for Enterprises in the Unorganised Sector (NCEUS) defines unorganised sector as, "unincorporated private enterprises owned by individuals or households engaged in the sale and production of goods and services operated on a proprietary or partnership basis and with less than 10 total workers" (Roy, 2015). This sector has issues affiliated to labour laws, absence of regulations and insufficient legislation (Gaur & Singh, 2002). Since there is lack of legislation, accountability and regulation, and a range of foundational issues, it is excluded to maintain clarity and focus in my research. The formal sector mainly comprises of government and privately owned enterprises that are licenced and pay taxes (BBC, n.d.). Since the advent of globalisation in the country, India has witnessed a surge in multinational organisations (Khan, 2015). More and more privately owned organisations have developed an international and constantly evolving work culture. India's foray into the international economic stage after the era of economic liberalisation of the 90s has introduced new variables in the equation (Khan, 2015). There are differences in the structure and goals of public and private sector organisations and therefore, it is natural to presume that there would be differences in the work environments of both sectors. Thus, I distinguish between public and private sectors while looking into 'workplaces' and exploring their work environments.

1.2 b) Defining gender inequality and sexual harassment

As defined by the Merriam-Webster dictionary (n.d.), inequality in its most basic sense refers to the quality of being uneven or unequal. This can be highlighted in instances of social disparity, disparity in distribution or opportunities. Inequality occurs in various arenas of life pertaining to economy, society, race, gender, etc. In this thesis, I focus on gender inequality. According to the European Institute of Gender Inequality (2004), gender inequality refers to "legal, social and cultural situation in which sex and/or gender determine different rights and dignity for women and men, which are reflected in their unequal access to or enjoyment of rights, as well as the assumption of stereotyped social and cultural roles." In this thesis, I explore gender inequalities that are reproduced in the private and public sector of work in Delhi and the factors that support this reproduction. Within the purview of gender based inequality, I examine the employees' awareness on sexual harassment and inappropriate behaviour at the workplace and how organisations of public and private sector deal with these occurrences. As per the definition by the United Nations Population Fund (2018), "sexual harassment refers to prohibited conduct in the work context and is defined as any unwelcome sexual advance, request for sexual favour, verbal or physical conduct or gesture of a sexual nature, or any other behaviour of a sexual nature that might reasonably be expected or be perceived to cause offence or humiliation to another person". Sexual harassment oftentimes begins with inappropriate behaviour and then escalates and is a manifestation of gender inequality at an extreme level and therefore, I centralize prevalence of sexual harassment and its scale in both sectors as the means to illustrate gender inequality in public and private

sector. I also highlight how dispositions of sexism and stereotypes are expressed differently in both sectors, and how this along with pre–existing structural differences in the sectors lead to differences in the kind of gender inequalities produced and reproduced in these sectors.

In the next sections, I explain the hypothesis, objectives and research questions of this PhD project.

1.3 HYPOTHESIS

For this thesis, the concepts of 'fields' and 'habitus' situated within the works of Pierre Bourdieu serve as my guiding philosophy. Fields is a structured system of social positions with its own internal logic and structure. This structure produces as well as is a product of a specific habitus appropriate to it (Williams, 1995). I regard private and public sectors as 'fields' in this research. In the 21st century, a socialised set of individuals, in a country that has a history of inequalities against women, belonging from various communities, regions and religions with their own set of practices and traditions, all come together to work in the private and public sector, respectively. The 'fields' of public and the private sector are where the interplay between the socialised individual and the structured workplace unfolds. It is this interaction between the socialised individual and the organisation that results in reproduction of inequalities at the workplace. My hypothesis is that gender inequalities are deeply embodied in the habitus of the organisations of the public and the private sector and that the scale of

these inequalities differs in both of these sectorial fields. So, the scale of these inequalities persisting in the public and private fields is different from one other and the root cause of this is the habitus of these fields.

1.4 OBJECTIVE

By definition, habitus is "a system of durable, transposable dispositions, structured structures predisposed to function as structuring structures, that is, as principles which generate and organize practices and representations" (Bourdieu, 1990). It can be described as a sense of one's and others' place and role in the world (a person's lived environment). Based on the hypothesis, the objective of this thesis is to delve into the creation of 'habitus' in the public and private sector, analysing what its important components are and how they play a part in reproduction of gender inequalities at the workplace. A follow up of this objective is to highlight the differences between public and private sector in the context of habitus and gender inequalities and based on these differences what the way forward is to order to create a more balanced and healthy workspace for both men and women.

1.5 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The main question and aspect that this thesis explores are the differences that exist between public and private fields of work in Delhi in terms of the scale of gender inequality, structure and work environment and how these differences factor into creation of the habitus of these fields. The next chapter details all relevant literature on key concepts within this thesis.

CHAPTER 2- LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 STRUCTURE OF THE LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter contains existing research and literature on different concepts and postulates that are pertinent to this thesis. In this thesis, I explore gender inequalities that are produced and reproduced in the public and private workplaces in Delhi by arguing that public and private workplaces are two separate fields that entail the construction of different gendered habitus. As a result of the different gendered habitus in both fields (sectors) the scale of sexual harassment that persists in these fields is different and so is the approach towards it. In order to assess this argument within this thesis, I explain the various concepts used for this argument via the literature review chapter. To begin with, the first section talks about gender equality in India and how that is reflected in the workplace. This is followed by the scale of sexism by Benokratis and Feagin (1986) as it is an important tool to judge the scale of sexual harassment in the public and private sector and thus, the argument for a different gendered habitus in both fields. I also give an overview about the origin and composition public-private sector in India along with public-private partnerships to better define the structural differences in these sectors. These structural differences are accompanied by 'cultural' differences that are discussed in the next two sections. Furthermore, these sections include an analysis about the significance of the differences present between sectors and the shortcomings of existing research and what my research adds to the domain. It is to be noted that studying the work culture of organisations is essential when making an argument for the differing gendered

habitus of these organisations and the ramifications of the same. Lastly, towards the end of this chapter I expound Bourdieu's concepts of 'habitus' and 'fields' which are the very backbone and guiding philosophy of the thesis. Therefore, to be succinct, I am expanding upon gender equality in workplaces in Delhi, India, and to do that I have studied the habitus of public and private places of work as they embody separate gender habitus which leads to difference in levels and handling of sexual harassment in these workplaces. As work culture is a vital part of the habitus of an organisation, it has been included in this chapter in the form of existing research and analysed via my fieldwork in this PhD project by looking into the knowledge, understanding and handling of inappropriate behaviour at workplaces. I draw upon Bourdieu's inclusive and flexible concepts of 'habitus' and 'fields' as they are appropriate to interpret the complex nature of both sectors. It is only using Bourdieu's concepts that the habitus of these sectors can be studied best as the required attention is paid to all significant elements such as time, history, the inside as well as the outside of the individual, the structure of the fields etc. The flexibility and all- encompassing quality of Bourdieu's concepts make it ideal for a case study such as India. Bourdieu's concepts also allow us to acknowledge the distinctions between public and private sectors by treating them as 'fields' which is crucial to this thesis. All of the above mentioned elements that are the make-up of this thesis are conceptually and theoretically expanded in this chapter.

2.2 GENDER EQUALITY

The subject of gender equality has been gaining momentum in the international arena over time. The principle of gender equality has been highlighted by the United Nations Charter (1945) as well as the United Nations Declaration of Human rights (1948) though at the time, a detailed description of women's role in the development process had been lacking. It was in 1975 when the first UN Conference of Women and Development took place in Mexico with the motto of 'Equality, Development, and Peace'. Further, in the 1995 Beijing Conference, the demand to assimilate women in the development process was professed internationally. In India, it is since the 1990s that women's development and gender equality have been accredited as key agents central to a more holistic model of sustainable development (Sangwan & Thakre, 2018). In the Indian Economic Survey of 1999-2000, there was an entire section on gender equality. It reiterated the undertaking made during the ninth development plan of allocating 30 % resources towards women's development schemes under various Women's Component Plans (Sangwan & Thakre, 2018). Citing economic gain, there was an appeal to further invest in women's equality (Menon-Sen & Prabhu, 2001). Since the 1980s, there have been an increasing number of legislations to promote women's education and political participation by the government of India. The role played by non-governmental organizations (NGOs) has also heightened in the area of women's empowerment since then. These NGOs traditionally focussed on subjects like women's health and education, but have now expanded their focus to analyse and explore the underlying causes of inequality and are doing so, by further promoting social and economic empowerment of women especially in rural areas

(McNamara, 2003). While strides have been made, women still suffer more than their male counterparts by being the first ones to lose out on essential services and opportunities whenever there are socio-economic changes for the worse. As per Oxfam (n.d.), when government expenditure is cut down on public services such as healthcare and education, girls and women are the first in line to get affected as an outcome. Majority of girls from the lower strata of Indian society do not get the opportunity to enrol in a school throughout their lives or are the first ones to be pulled out of school when money becomes an issue (Oxfam, n.d.). Additionally, every year 23 million girls drop out of schools in India due to lack of availability of sanitation and menstrual care facilities (Dutta, 2018). Due to social norms, on an average, women also spend about 4.5 hours a day on unpaid care work in the household engaging in domestic work and looking after young and the elderly (Oxfam, 2019). As a consequence they end up losing out on opportunities where they could be engaged in paid labour work instead, while creating financial independence for themselves as well as stimulating the economy. As per the census survey conducted by the government of India (2014), 160 million women in India are not integrated into the workforce. Out of these women, 88% are of working age (15-59 years). According to an Oxfam report (2019), in the workforce, on average women make 34 % less wages for the same work and position as men. The 'Worldwide Index of Women as Public Sector Leaders' by Ernst & Young (2013) reveals India only has 7.7 % women as leaders in the public sector. Therefore, inequality continues to persist hindering women's participation in the workforce with the economy bearing the brunt of it.

India currently ranks at 95 out of 160 countries in the current Gender Inequality Index (GII) by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). As explained on the UNDP webpage, " *the GII measures gender inequalities in three important aspects of human development—reproductive health, measured by maternal mortality ratio and adolescent birth rates; empowerment, measured by proportion of parliamentary seats occupied by females and proportion of adult females and males aged 25 years and older with at least some secondary education; and economic status, expressed as labour market participation and measured by labour force participation rate of female and male populations aged 15 years and older. The GII is built to expose differences in the distribution of achievements between women and men. It measures the human development costs of gender inequality. Thus the higher the GII value the more disparities between females and males and the more loss to human development.*" The key word for a solution has been 'empowerment' for arguments by scholars such as Nussbaum (1995) and Robeyns (2003) who have postulated that to curb inequality and achieve women's development, their status in society and bargaining power in the economy needs to be improved and this can be done by working upon strategies and tools that influence their empowerment.

Gender equality is a much debated subject in the 21st century. We are living in the time of the #MeToo movement, a movement that has become a global phenomenon and taken the world of internet by storm[1]. Women across geographical lines are sharing their stories of sexual assault and harassment, more often than not, at the

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[1] Starting October 2017, the #MeToo Movement has been called a watershed moment in the advancement of gender equality, giving a platform to women and demonstrating the extent of sexual assault and harassment across society. The movement spread across globe with the help of social media, where women shared their experiences of gender inequality and harassment using the hash tag #MeToo. The use of this particular hash tag intends to highlight the pervasive nature of sexual harassment in women's lives

hands of men in the workplace and outside of it. The movement has brought to limelight how widespread the ingrained notions of chauvinism, misogyny, sexism and gender prejudice are. There are rising cases of misbehaviour and harassment at professional organisations, places where the notion of propriety and one's mode of conduct is crucial to the extent that a person's livelihood depends on it. One would infer, in view of the collective formal design of a workplace, and expectations of professionalism placed on employees that there would be fewer instances of misbehaviour at workplaces, but going by statistics that would not be the case.

Sexual harassment and violence are at the extreme end of the spectrum of gender inequality. As per a survey conducted in 2016 by the Indian National Bar Association involving 6,047 participants, 38% said that they had faced sexual harassment at the workplace and 69% of the victims said they did not go forward with filing a complaint.

Within this thesis, in order to delve into why certain patterns of behaviour and practices associated with gender based inequalities are established in an organisation, I would first like to elaborate on the scales of sexism by Nijole V. Benokraitis and Joe R. Feagin (1986). I use this scale later in the thesis to distinguish between the differing scales and extent of harassment in the public and private sector in India.

2.3 SCALES OF SEXISM

The scale of sexism by Benokratis and Feagin (1986) is an effective tool to measure prevalent levels of gender discrimination and inequality at the workplace. The distinctions provided by this scale have proved particularly useful as a reference point in distinguishing the levels of gender inequality persistent in the private and public sector in this thesis, as is demonstrated in the later chapters.

By definition sexism and sexist behaviour refers to discriminatory and prejudiced behaviour on the basis of one's gender especially against women and girls. The roots of sexism lie in stereotypes of gender roles (UNICEF, 2014). As per Benokraitis and Feagin (1986), sexism manifests itself in blatant, covert and subtle ways. Blatant sexism is very obvious and visible in its unfair and unequal treatment of women whereas covert is more hidden even though there is recognition that there is sexism. The most interesting out of these is subtle sexism. It doesn't get recognition as it is perceived to be normal and not unusual (Benokraitis & Feagin, 1986). Examples of blatant sexism include sexual harassment and violence towards women. Covert sexism is quite difficult to document as it is implemented in hidden and skilful ways to ensure that women fail. It is mostly practiced in professional environments in the form of lack of promotion, unequal salaries, gossip and ridicule etc. Such practices discourage women to do better and are aimed to keep them in their "Place". Subtle sexism is most unnoticeable as it normalises sexist behaviour and sees it as natural or customary. This form of sexism can be unintentional, intentional, manipulative or even well intentioned. For example, if a man is appointed as the head of a department he is

congratulated. When a woman is appointed as the head and she faces innocently worded questions inquiring how she plans to manage her family as well as a managerial position. The change in expectation here is sexist. Sexist behaviours can be displayed by both men and women. The three forms of sexism are distinguished by their varying degrees of visibility, intention, harm and their ability to be remedied through legislation and bureaucratic rules. Blatant sexism can definitely be remedied through policy intervention whereas covert may not be able to get corrected in all instances through the same. Policy change very rarely works as an apt solution for subtle sexism which is deeply ingrained knowingly and unknowingly in people's behaviour and perception (Benokraitis & Feagin, 1986).

In this thesis, I have used the concepts of subtle, blatant and covert sexism as explained by Benokratis and Feagin (1986) to distinguish the kind of practices of sexism prevalent in the public and private sector in India. In the next section I elaborate what constitutes and the background on public and private sectors in India.

2.4 PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SECTOR IN INDIA

2.4 a) Public Sector

India became independent in 1947 after almost 200 years of British colonial rule. The newfound independence was accompanied by a general realisation about the futility of political independence without economic independence and stability. Through public enterprises, government of India proceeded with its developmental objectives of employment growth, reduction of income disparities among masses, overall rapid economic growth with the values of a free and equal society (Minhas, 1974). The government had control over the public sector as a regulatory body with strict rules about foreign participation and private investments. The economy at the time was focused inward with the public sector playing a dominant role in all important industries (Azeem, Ghouse & Prasad, 2013). Prior to independence, the Indian public sector consisted of the All India Radio, the Railways, the Government salt factories, the Port Trusts etc. (Narain, 1980). Being an agriculture economy with a weak industrial base, the idea was to become an economy that was self-reliant and could tackle issues of vast unemployment, technological backwardness and disparities of class, income and rural and urban regions (Azeem, Ghouse & Prasad, 2013). Therefore, the Industrial Policy Resolution was passed in 1948. As per the Industrial Resolution Policy of 1948, the railways, the production and control of atomic energy and production of arms and ammunition were to be exclusively under the domain of the Central government. There have been revisions to the policy in 1956, 1973, 1977, and

1980 and so on. The amendments in 1956 gave more responsibility to States and a greater role in industrial development (Verma, 2017). The State Level Public Sector Enterprises (SLPEs) under the State governments have been given the responsibility of many sectors including power, energy, roads, agriculture, irrigation, tourism, forest and fisheries development, mining, housing, handloom development and financial services etc. There are a total of 849 operational State Level Public Sector Enterprises in India that employ over 18 lakh people (Government of India, 2012). The majority of the investments in these projects can be categorised as public utilities that were infrastructure based projects, the highest share of which was 67% taken by the power and energy sector. As of 2017-2018, there are 257 operational Central Public Sector Enterprises (CPSE) in India and 82 that are under construction (Government of India, 2018). With the Central government holding a share of 51% or more, all CPSE'S are under the purview of the Central government.

2.4 b) Private Sector

The first five year plans were first introduced in India in 1951 by then Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru. These plans laid out strategies and objectives for both the public and private sector within the Indian policy framework to boost industrial and economic growth (Rajakumar, 2011). Though at the time of the First Five Year Plan, the vast majority of productive industrial assets (96%) were under the control of private enterprises which also accounted for 43% of the total productive assets, the State had been given a crucial role within the Plan in regards to overall industrial development and clear areas were defined where the public and private sector were expected to

cooperate and areas that were left exclusively to both sectors (Rajakumar, 2011). The Second Plan in 1956 aimed at a more balanced development between the public and private sector and by the Third Plan in 1961, the industrial outlay for the public sector was increased. The motivation behind defining the role of public sector in industries was to ensure that concentrated wealth and economic power into the hands of a few individuals and businesses could be avoided. It is to be noted that the emphasis was in the first three plans was still agriculture. In the plans that followed, the role of market forces and their flow was becoming more apparent with insistence on factors such as efficiency in production through competition (Rajakumar, 2011).

It was during the Eighth plan in 1992 that a number of reforms were introduced. The plan argued for and initiated more foreign investment and also to restructure areas of public sector to allow for more private investment (Planning Commission, Government of India, 2013). The Ninth and Tenth Plans in 1997 and 2002 respectively, encouraged the creation of a climate of a "vibrant private sector" by eradicating policy based hindrances to Foreign Direct Investment to increase domestic production. There was a shift in terms of the private sector being controlled to a gradual relaxation of rules to a greater allocation of freedom and movement within the private sector to let it thrive and grow. The initial public sector dominated set-up has evolved from a thriving private sector one with ambitions in the global arena (Planning Commission, Government of India, 2013).

Since the 90s, the Indian private sector has witnessed tremendous growth. As per the National Manufacturing Competitive Council (NMCC), it currently contributes nearly 16 per cent to the current GDP and is targeting to increase that by 25 per cent in 2025.

As per the Global Manufacturing Competitive Index (GMCI) published by Deloitte (2010), India ranks at number 2 in the world in the global manufacturing sector and is likely to retain that rank. Key international companies such as Nokia and Samsung are setting up manufacturing facilities in the country due to its vast domestic market. A report published by the Mckinsey Global Institute (2007), has also projected that between 2005-2025, there is set to be a 10 % increase from 29% to 38 % in urbanisation in India with an expansion of 12 times in its middle class. As a result of this, India is set to become the fifth largest consumer market in the world by the year 2025. With an increase in export demands and colossal growth in domestic market, India has risen as a global manufacturing hub.

2.4 c) Public Private Partnerships

Public Private Partnership (PPP) was set up to boost infrastructure via encouragement of private investments. PPP is an arrangement between a government and a private entity where in the private entity usually provides investment or undertakes a management related role for the provision of public services or assets (National Public Private Partnership Policy, 2011). The arrangement includes compliance of pre-determined performance standards as well as defined allocation of risk between both sectors. The PPP Cell was established by the Department of Economic Affairs (DEA), India in 2006 for management of all policy, implementation, and supervision related matters of PPP (National Public Private Partnership Policy, 2011).

Although there are some stray examples of private sector participation in public sector enterprises, their more significant partnerships can be traced back to the 1990s with

private sector's involvement in electricity generation and granting of licenses to eight mobile circular telephone service operators (Kutumbale & Telang, 2014). Since then there have been various amendments to Acts such as the National Highways Authority of India Act (1995), Electricity Act (2003), the Special Economic Zone Act (2005) etc. that have allowed for more private sector participation. Presently, more than 90% of mobile users are serviced by private sector companies. The road construction sector accounts for the maximum number of PPP projects. This is followed by urban development, ports and energy (Kutumbale & Telang, 2014). Other sectorial PPP projects include airports, education, healthcare, railways, tourism etc. PPP is a fairly new sector in India and while some of the partnerships have been positive, there have been issues as well owing to the fact that each PPP contract is unique and thus, the format of PPPs cannot be standardised. There are also concerns regarding lack of regulations and transparency (Kutumbale & Telang, 2014). Regardless, the PPP model is a new and evolving one and thus, its long-term impact on the economy remains to be seen.

2.5 WORK CULTURE IN PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SECTOR

The culture of any organisation is made up of the values of the individuals that work in that organisation. Each individual has personal beliefs and values, which are expressed collectively in an organisation and shape its culture (Haines, 2000). Culture also defines the "unwritten rules of the game" and how things ought to be (Scott-Morgan, 1994). The presence of culture can be felt even in the absence of written rules and in the expectation of behaviour placed upon employees (Saxena & Shah, 2008). The past of an organisation plays an important role in determining its culture. The culture of a workplace is very important to their respective leaders so they can anticipate any required changes needed to adapt for smooth functioning of the organisation (Agarwal & Tyagi, 2010). There have been various studies on how organisation culture is directly related to the commitment of workers in a workplace and how they perceive, feel and act in the place of work (Hansen & Wernerfelt, 1989; Schein, 1990). As per Koh and Boo (2001), the measures of organisational culture namely, career success, ethical behaviour and top management support have a direct link to employee's commitment to the organisation. The effect of organisational culture can also be seen on the performance of the employees (Deal & Kennedy, 1982). A study on Indian R&D professionals by Saxena and Shah (2008) found that organisational culture played a profound part in creation and removal of learned helplessness[2].

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[2] Learned helplessness refers to a mental state in which an organism that is forced to tolerate unpleasant or painful stimuli does not try or wills to avoid brushes with that stimulus even though it can because it has learned that the situation cannot be control. This behavioural theory explains why individuals remain passive in the face of negative or challenging situations even though it may be possible to change them.

According to Meek (1988), culture is not something that is universal and has to be studied keeping the context in mind. Taking this context into consideration, Pearson and Chatterjee (1999) have said that "Within the context of organizations, Indian employees can embrace global work values while retaining deep connection to their societal culture". In order to present effect results in the face of global competition Indian managers assimilate western management practices with their traditional values in their organisation cultures (Sinha & Kanungo, 1997).

Studies conducted by Mathur et al. (1996) and Agarwal and Tyagi (2010) show findings about the differences in work culture of private and public sector. These findings denote that the culture in private sector organisations is an open one that encourages quick individual decisions and experimentation. The culture in public sector organisations differs in that regard as it follows formal structured hierarchies and the decision making process is also a formal one based on administrative expertise and experience. Even though there have been many reforms since the 1990s in the way that public and private sector operate, stability and predictability continue to be defining characteristics of public sector as it follows a more traditional model of management (Perry & Rainey, 1988). The persistence of factors such as openness, experimentation and autonomy in work culture has been reported to be higher in private sector compared to the public sector in a study conducted by Agarwal and Tyagi (2010).

As mentioned in the beginning of this section, culture can be described as "unwritten rules of the game" (Scott-Morgan, 1994) and in an organisational context, even in the absence of written rules, culture prevails in the form of expectation of behaviour placed upon employees (Saxena & Shah, 2008). In this thesis, using Bourdieu's concept

of fields I study the culture of the public and private sectors. Both sectors are two different fields. Bourdieu's field where the interplay between an individual and the organisation takes place and where capital both material and cultural is also acquired by the agents/individuals is a game. This game has rules that are both implicit and explicit i.e. written on the part of the institution or organisation involved as well as unwritten going by the "feel of things". They're rules of common sense in the context of the institution. All participants play this game with the belief that this game is worth playing. This belief that goes with their participation is called the illusio. It is Illusio that keeps this game going and inadvertently participants end up reproducing the existing order (Boon, n.d.). This is the concept I have used to interpret culture of the public and private sectors in my research as both sectors have their own unwritten rules of the game (culture) in the field that they're a part of. And it is these rules that support creation of separate gendered habitus and dispositions in both sectors leading to reproduction of inequalities at varying scales.

In the next section, I summarise the main differences between public and private sector and how these differences are important in the context of this research.

2.6 KEY DIFFERENCES BETWEEN PUBLIC-PRIVATE SECTOR AND THEIR SIGNIFICANCE

To outline, there are two crucial differences between the public and private sectors and these pertain to their structure and ownership; and work culture respectively. Private sector organisations are owned by an individual or a group of individuals that work for profit, while public sector organisations are owned by the Central or State government and work towards providing services and welfare to the public. Concerning their work culture, public sector organisations also follow a bureaucratic approach in the way they operate while private sector organisations have a mode of operation that can be characterised by terms such as openness, experimentation and individual autonomy. During the majority of my interviews in my first field work while asking participants, all of whom were female, about their experiences in their respective workplaces, the work culture of their organisations was mentioned frequently as either an encouraging or discouraging factor in the perusal of their career goals affecting their overall impression of the organisation and in some cases, the sector itself. In that regard, gender becomes an important component within the context of public and private sector especially considering that gender inequality at the workplace is a pressing issue. As per a paper by the Institute of Social Studies Trust (2015), gender inequality at the workplace in India manifests itself in various forms such as gender gap persisting in employment, management and leadership, unequal pay, uneven power relations, sexual harassment, etc. A study by Sarim and Zehra (2017), wherein they looked into the board composition of a number of private and public sector companies showed that female representation in boards of private sector companies is at 13 % compared to 87% of male board of directors. The number for

female board of directors is 8% for women and 92% for men in public sector companies within their sample. The primary reason for the large male-female gap in India which includes only 25% females in the workforce is gender inequality in society and at work (McKinsey, 2018).

Sexual harassment at the workplace is one of the major deterrents in women's perusal of their career goals and creates and unsafe and discouraging work environment for all employees. A study conducted by Sangwan and Thakre (2018) titled 'Sexual Harassment at the Workplace in Public and Private Sectors in India: A Study at National Capital Region of Delhi', found that the majority of the participants (70.8%) were unaware of Supreme Court's Vishaka guidelines to combat sexual harassment at the workplace. Organisations have been lax in adhering to the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013, according to 65% of the respondents. Also, 1 % of respondents stated that they would go to the police if they were to be a victim of sexual harassment, while 29.47% were against it and said that this would be too damaging for their reputation. 27.1 % felt that in case of an incident of harassment, the complainant should first discuss the matter with the colleagues and then decide about going to the appropriate committee. It was also stated that 6.3% would encourage the victim to change their team or department within the organisation (Sangwan & Thakre, 2018).

The above mentioned studies highlight the failure of organisations to tackle sexual harassment at the workplace effectively. Since organisations belonging to different sectors have their own set of rules by the way of structure, conduct, management and motives i.e. profit making (private) and public service (public), it can be surmised that

these differences are relevant in determining and understanding the sectorial approach towards gender inequalities present at the workplace. Gender equality at the work needs to be understood keeping in mind the sector and the differences that these sectors present. Both sectors have differing habitus which is why their cultural differences need to be understood along with structural ones. My approach in this thesis takes into consideration these differences.

Delving further into my approach, the next section details limitations presented by existing research and literature on the subject area and how my research adds to the gap present in present research.

2.7 LIMITATIONS OF EXISTING RESEARCH

While exploring literature for this thesis, the research that was available can be clearly categorised and placed in terms of relevance and significance within the subject areas of gender equality and workplace studies. On the subject of gender equality at the workplace there are various studies that are by individuals such as Sarim and Zehra (2017), Sangwan and Thakre (2018) etc. and international organisations like the United Nations (UN) etc. that explore the persistence of gender inequality at work while detailing a range of causes that are societal and, also pertain to sexist and biased practices at workplaces that result in unequal pay, sexual harassment at work, biased managerial practices, loss of opportunity etc. There are also studies by authors such as Saxena and Shah (2008), Agarwal and Tyagi (2010), Sinha and Kanungo (1997), Mathur et al. (1996), that explore differences between work cultures of public and private sector. The rationale in these studies behind examining the work or organisation culture of the two sectors is to assess how the culture of a workplace is linked to productivity and efficiency of that organisation and how changes or modifications to culture can be utilised to increase outputs of workplaces. The differences between sectors concerning their cultures in present research can be analysed to scrutinize the elements that work positively and negatively for the respective places to increase productivity, efficiency and profit. Organisational/workplace culture has been studied in a way that only looks at it from a productivity and efficiency point of view without perusing the possibility if it is supporting gender inequalities at the workplace in any way whatsoever.

The gap that is present in existing research is the failure to utilize the literature on differences that exist between the organisation cultures of public and private sector and exploring their relationship with workplace practices that are sexist, unfair and promote gender inequality. The possible linkages between the contribution of organisation culture/ work culture to gender inequality: its scale and production in public and private sectors has not been sufficiently researched either in a workplace environment as a whole or separately in public and private sectors. While there are existing works that explain the more traditional bureaucratic mode of management in the public sector and a more open and evolving atmosphere in the private sector, those distinctions have not been delved into further to examine their contribution to reproduction of gender inequalities at the respective workplaces and the kind of gender inequalities they produce in the first place, if they differ at all. It is recognised that basic structural differences and management styles exist but the possibility that different approaches may be required in lieu of these differences to understand gender inequality in sectors is left unexplored. In that sense, present research has gaps and the research can be perceived as isolated. While studying gender inequality, both sectors have been fused together as one instead of being grasped as two separate entities. Existing literature presents gender inequality in public and private sector as an 'overview' and in a consolidated manner instead of treating it as an intricate issue with separate variables in both sectors complicating it further.

Additionally, there is insufficient research into the concept of habitus within the context of workplaces in India. Bourdieu's concepts of habitus and fields have not been used especially in relation to gender inequality at the workplace. Therefore,

exploration of a connection between elements of habitus, fields, structure and work culture and scale and persistence of gender inequalities along with, separate approaches to understanding gender inequality at the public and private sector are absent.

I have rectified this in my thesis by treating public and private sector as separate fields by using Bourdieu's ideas. I explain how elements of organisational structure, culture devise components of habitus in the fields of public and private sector and act as the guiding tool for employers and employees to navigate around sexual harassment at the workplace and conclusively produce and reproduce gender inequalities at a differing scale in the two fields/sectors. Therefore, I use Bourdieu's concept of 'habitus' and 'fields' to bridge this gap in existing research and connect the differing gendered habitus of public and private sector organisations to gender inequalities that are present in these sectors.

In the next section, I explain Bourdieu's concepts of habitus and fields and why these concepts are appropriate to bridge the gap in current research on the subject.

2.8 READING PIERRE BOURDIEU

Born on August 1, 1930 in France, Pierre Bourdieu was an intellectual and Sociologist and is one of the most influential social philosophers in the world. Some of his famous works include Distinction (1979), The Logic of Practice (1980), Outline of a Theory of Practice (1972), Language and Symbolic Power (1982), The Field of Cultural Production (1993) etc. Bourdieu in his various studies has examined social systems of individuals from diverse backgrounds and settings. He analysed the social environment of Algerian peasants, the church, students, professors, writers and artists, and throughout his research, the common question that emerged is, how is it that systems of hierarchy and domination manage to reproduce themselves across generations without conscious awareness and substantial resistance from its members (Swartz, 1997)? He encourages sociologists and researchers to explore how individuals and groups work together to constantly reproduce the conditions of their collective existence (Swartz, 1997). This is what I aim to examine too with regards to gender inequalities that have managed to get reproduced in different forms in workplaces in India over the years and continue to do so. Taking the works of Pierre Bourdieu as inspiration, I have adopted an approach where I am considering the collective interaction between organisational structures, culture, and the individual to understand how gender inequalities have persisted in workplaces. A fundamental feature of Bourdieu's concepts of fields and habitus is that they give unmitigated signification to the element of time and due consideration to the dual nature of social reality which exists on the inside and outside of individual. The flexibility of these concepts recognises the impact of culture on the individual and how the individual

adopts these changes into his behaviour while moving forward. It is this malleability that is the foundation of these concepts that becomes critical in studying Indian public and private sectors. The process of habitus creation gives due consideration to the different layers that form certain dispositions and then how these dispositions reproduce certain realities. This process of habitus applies well to studying gender inequality in Indian workplaces because the idea is to explore how the different dispositions within sectors that are unique to these fields support the reproduction of gender inequality and what supports the creation of these dispositions in the first place. Habitus acknowledges the importance of time and history and how it shapes an individual and moves forward with this understanding which is important to do in the case of India with its history of gender inequality and violence. With the existing predispositions, the individual moves forward and joins a new field which in the case of this research are public and private sectors and the existing elements of the fields such as structure and culture mingle with the predispositions and create unique patterns of behaviour that are exclusive to each field and support reproduction of gender inequality. Here all elements past, present, inside and outside are given consideration. So, taking into account all these factors, the flexible and inclusive approach of Bourdieu's concepts of fields and habitus is an appropriate and prudent one for this study.

Bourdieu tried to understand the relationship between people's practices and the context where these practices take place. This context where these practices occur that embodies rules, regulations, discourses, institutions etc. are known as 'fields' (Danaher, Schirato & Webb, 2002). Fields constitute an objective hierarchy which

authorise certain activities and discourses. There is interaction between rules, practices and institutions, and therefore, fields are not static or rigid in nature, but quite fluid and dynamic (Swartz, 1997). It is the field in the social setting where habitus operates. Competitive positions are held by actors in fields to accumulate different forms of capital (Swartz, 1997). The definition of capital here is wide and encompasses material things along with attributes that are culturally significant like status and prestige. This capital is symbolic in nature, known as cultural capital. In the field, conflicts arise as individuals work towards determining exactly what comprises of capital within the particular field and how the distribution of the said capital is to take place (Danaher, Schirato & Webb, 2002). Capital determines the position that people hold in the social order. For Bourdieu, capital extends beyond the economic realm and delves into the cultural form as well. As a person becomes a part of a particular social class, they acquire certain skills, mannerisms, and tastes in the form of language, intellectual interests, clothing, and artistic inclinations etc. that distinguishes them from people of other social classes. Some acquired distinctions are more favoured in society in general and ends up hindering social mobility for individuals and thus, becomes a cause for social inequality. For example, academic degrees from certain universities are favoured over others in the job market. According to Bourdieu, this struggle for social distinction is a fundamental aspect of social life (Swartz, 1997). Another significant aspect here is power which is also central to all social life. One can successfully exercise power in social life through legitimisation. A major focus of Bourdieu's work is correlation of these concepts of cultural capital and power through which he explains how individuals due to cultural socialisation have become a part of a competitive social hierarchy where they are vying

for power and capital. It is in this process that social inequalities are unwittingly reproduced (Swartz, 1997). The individuals end up participating in this competitive game for power and capital because they hold the belief that this is the right thing for them to do. This belief is known as illusio and it guides them to follow both the written and unwritten rules of the game (Boon, n.d.). This is how social order is maintained. The illusio not only supports reproduction of existing system but keeps participants under a cover of deception by preventing them from realising the intricacies of the actual power structure. For example, when profit making in an organisation takes precedence over an employee's rights and to creation of a healthy work environment, the employee becomes a part of a powerful game without realising its complexities but keeps going because of the illusio.

In the struggle for power, social distinction, production and reproduction of hierarchies, actors fail to realise that they have become trapped in a cycle. So, as per Bourdieu, human action in this cycle is quite complex and not a simple reaction to micro/macro or internal/external processes. This reaction is neither singularly objective nor subjective in nature. So, one should not try to isolate these variants or make them mutually exclusive. These varied dimensions are micro, macro, determinist, voluntary, internal and external. Bourdieu called for the integration of all these dimensions into a single conceptual movement, and thus, proposed a structural theory of practice connecting action to structure, power and culture (Swartz, 1997). This theory came to be known as habitus. Two elements to be regarded here are the presence of observed structural regularities and the experiential reality of a supposed free thinking individual. Everyday this individual carries out actions without being

fully aware of them and also, while lacking a conscious reflection of structures around him. The question is how a social scientist is supposed to accurately measure these supposed free thinking practices without letting the formal characteristics of modelling interfere with informal dynamics and practices that are a part of the everyday life of an individual. The two key concepts of habitus and fields allowed Bourdieu to do precisely that. As per DiMaggio (1979), habitus is a theory through which Bourdieu related the two elements of individual activity and objective structure. To put it simply, it is prudent for a researcher to preserve the dual nature social reality which exists both on the inside and outside of an individual. The individual and society are not two separate entities but exist in relation to each other, like two sides of the same coin (DiMaggio, 1979). A suitable example of this can be taken from Bourdieu's study of Algerian peasants. He noted that in their culture, the presence of social solidarity was not due to any Stated codified rules and regulations but due to honour and sentiment. Another example of this is the honour based justice system of 'khap' panchayats in some villages in India. Khaps are not democratically elected bodies but an unofficial gathering of village elders that exerts significant social sway in village communities in India. In 2015, there was global outrage after a khap panchyat passed a 'rape diktat' in the Baghpat village of Uttar Pradesh, where a man's two sisters were ordered to be raped after the man had eloped with a married woman (Basu, 2015). Since the man had damaged the perceived honour of the woman's family by eloping with her, the idea behind this sentencing was to mar the honour of the man's family by ordering his sisters to be raped. Even though the legal system of the country does not allow panchayats to pass such sentences, panchayats all over India continue to do so, based on their own informal justice system guided by honour and morals.

Time is a critical component in the creation and shaping of habitus as dispositions and values are gained through cultural histories that stay with the individual across different contexts. These dispositions allow for improvisation but the action is largely determined by the position that the individual has had in a culture (Danaher, Schirato & Webb, 2002). As agents or individuals move from one field to another, they assimilate the values of those fields into their habitus.

There are a number of other elements to be kept in mind while discussing habitus namely knowledge, our disposition towards certain attitudes and practice/execution. Firstly, the way we perceive and make sense of the world around us, our beliefs and values, all are constructed through the process of habitus and not passively documented. Secondly, our cultural trajectories influence and make us disposed towards certain values and behaviours which transfer across fields. Lastly, habitus is always reflected in moments of practice. It is seen when our dispositions come into contact with a problem or a situation within a particular context. The most straightforward way to understand it is that it is action by the 'feel of things' (Danaher, Schirato & Webb, 2002). It is the notions of power, culture and self-interest that guide our actions but in the mind of individuals, these actions are deemed or reasoned as necessary, inevitable, natural or just common sense. A naturalisation of cultural rules, agendas and dispositions takes place.

In this thesis, both public and private sectors are fields where the production and reproduction of inequalities occur and these inequalities are related to the work culture. I am treating the two sectors as fields. I am doing so as both public and private sector contain sufficient elements to treat them as such. Fields epitomize rules,

regulations, discourses; institutions etc. where people's practices collide with this context and evolve. There is also an objective hierarchy that legitimises certain activities and discourses. Public and Private sector contain organisations with structures and hierarchies where an employee brings their own set of behavioural characteristics and those merge and evolve with the pre-existing set of rules. This fluid and dynamic exchange is what sets the tone of the work culture of that organisation and creates the habitus that is unique to that place. Therefore, public and private sectors become the fields where this entire interaction takes place. I explore how in these fields, the habitus of the individual/agent is created or evolves and how the structure and culture of the fields has an impact on the process of habitus; which becomes very gender centric and thereupon different kinds of gender inequalities unique to the private and public sector get produced and reproduced over time. Levels of sexual harassment, knowledge around it, and approaches towards it are used to measure gender inequality in this thesis. The methodology and research strategies adopted for execution of the above mentioned are elaborated in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 3 - RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This thesis is a case study of gender inequality in the public and private sector workplaces in Delhi, India. The constitution of Indian population is profusely diverse with reference to region, religion, caste, community, language and ethnicity. To make this study an inclusive one in this respect, it was pertinent to focus on an area as a centre of this research that comes close to being a container of this heterogeneousness. Therefore, I chose Delhi as my case study. Keeping in mind logistical constraints such as time, resources, commutation and most importantly the unfeasibility of there being one geographical centre that incorporates the aforementioned diverse dimensions of a whole nation in its population, the logical step is to focus on an area which encompasses if not all, then many of these diverse elements. In the case of this research study, this area is Delhi. According to the 2011 census, Delhi has the highest share of Interstate migrants in India in its total population who move there for reasons relating to work, education, marriage etc. Delhi is a diverse state with a regional, religious and communally diverse population through birth and migration. So, it makes for a suitable case study for this thesis. This thesis is placed under the broader domain of gender sociology. This thesis takes forward existing work that delves into gender inequality at the work place as well as research on work cultures of public and private sector in India and utilises constituents of both categories in order to produce a cultivated case study that aims to

highlight the complex nature of the two work sectors and creation of their gendered habitus that leads to prevalence of different levels of sexual harassment at these workplaces. In this context, this thesis fills the gap in existing research that is segregated and has a condensed view of gender inequalities in the public and private sector without taking an in-depth look at the complexities of both sectors separately. The cycle of reproduction of gender inequalities at the public and private workplace continues as these inequalities are deeply embedded in the habitus of these organisations. Both sectors contain habitus that differ from each other and thus produce different kinds of gender inequalities in these organisations. I have highlighted that by demonstrating the different scales of sexual harassment present in these sectors later in the thesis. The way that these cases of sexual harassment are handled also differ sector wise and this is also due to their differing habitus. Work culture and the structure of the organisation form important components of habitus. I explored the habitus of the public and private sector by delving into the work culture of the organisations. To understand their work cultures and to showcase the different levels of sexual harassment present in both sectors, I perused the knowledge and perception about the subject of inappropriate behaviour and sexual harassment at the workplace of employees of these sectors through my final field work in this thesis.

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┌─────────────────────────┐                    ┌─────────────────────────┐
│   PUBLIC SECTOR (FIELD)  │                    │  PRIVATE SECTOR (FIELD) │
└─────────────────────────┘                    └─────────────────────────┘
             │                ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE         │
             ▼                                                 ▼
      ┌─────────────┐                                   ┌─────────────┐
      │   HABITUS   │ ──────────►   ✚   ◄────────────── │   HABITUS   │
      └─────────────┘                                   └─────────────┘
             │                   WORK CULTURE                  │
             ▼                        │                        ▼
  ┌────────────────────┐              │            ┌────────────────────┐
  │  GENDER INEQUALITY │              │            │  GENDER INEQUALITY │
  └────────────────────┘              │            └────────────────────┘
             │                        │                        │
             ▼                        │                        ▼
  ┌────────────────────┐              │            ┌────────────────────┐
  │ SCALE OF HARRASMENT│              │            │ SCALE OF HARRASMENT│
  └────────────────────┘              │            └────────────────────┘
              \                       │                      /
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        ┌──────────────────────────────────────────────────────┐
        │   INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIOUR AT THE WORKPLACE            │
        └──────────────────────────────────────────────────────┘
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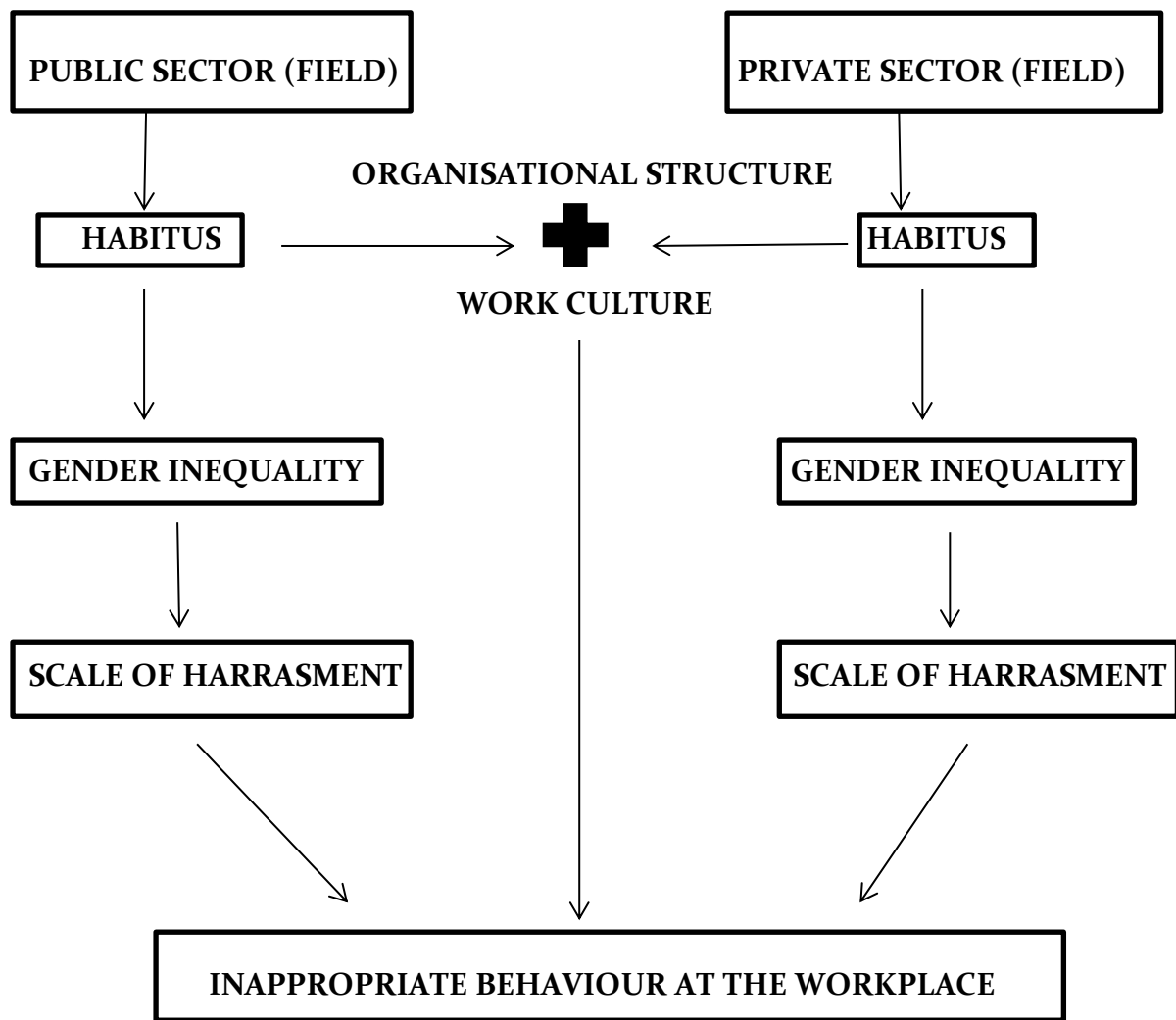
The diagram above highlights the central components of the cycle of inequality as argued in this thesis. Public and private sector are two separate fields that have their own set of habitus with the structure of the organisation and work culture as main constituents. The habitus leads to different scales of sexual harassment in both sectors and thus, persistence of different kinds of inequalities. In order to explore the scales of inequalities in the fields in this thesis by judging the levels of sexual harassment present in both sectors, participants are interviewed around the subject of inappropriate workplace behaviour. How they understand inappropriate behaviour,

sexual harassment, their knowledge of the concept and mechanisms in place is indicative of their work culture and how they navigate around it. It also illustrates if and how their navigation of it contributes to reproduction of gender inequalities at the workplace.

This section has summarised the critical elements of this thesis. In the next sections, I detail the logistics of the methodology and the field work of my thesis.

3.2 METHODOLOGY

This is a qualitative research study conducted using the interpretive approach. Instead of numerical data, qualitative research data analysis is meaning based and not dependent on core statistics (Polkinghorne, 1983). The research data in this study is linguistic data collected through the interview technique. It focuses on the descriptive, meaning and characteristic side of things and the idea is to analyse why a certain phenomenon occurs as opposed to how often (Elliot & Timulak, 2005). Within qualitative analysis, the interpretive approach has been used during my field works. The interpretive approach looks at the motive and meanings behind the behaviour of people and their social interactions in a culture (Whitley, 1984). In the same way, one can understand a culture by trying to comprehend the ideas, thinking and the meanings that are important to its people (Boas, 1995). Within this approach, the causal relationship i.e. its absence or presence is significant along with how it manifests and the context in which it transpires (Lin, 1998). Therefore, using this approach I interpret the culture of organisations in the public and private sector to fathom the characteristics of their particular culture that contribute to creation of their habitus. To gather data I used the interview technique where I had one on one interaction with people working in public and private sector organisations. While I had a set of pre-determined questions for the participants before the interview, the interview itself was largely unstructured that allowed for more flexibility and room for rapport building during the interaction. The list of pre-determined questions served merely as a checklist to cover all relevant areas related to the interview subject. For interview analysis, the documentary method is used as a crucial tool for the analysis

mechanism in this thesis. Developed by Ralf Bohnsack, the documentary method assesses human action by analysing the participant's explicit and implicit interpretation of their world (Trautrims, Grant, Cunliffe & Wong, 2012). As per Bohnsack (2010), the individual has two levels of knowledge which is reflexive or theoretical knowledge, and practical or incorporated knowledge (also known as 'atheoretical knowledge' and 'tacit knowledge'). The latter kind of knowledge believes that behind actions there is an underlying mental structure. The tacit knowledge of the participant may even exist without the participant's awareness and it is the documentary method that allows the researcher to tap into that knowledge (Bohnsack, 2010). This method documents the message present in the participant's structure of practices, orientations, modus operandi or habitus which indicates their implicit preferences and value system (Bohnsack, 2010). This data allows the researcher to interpret, reconstruct and elucidate the participant's tacit meanings. This hidden knowledge is extracted by the researcher by the way of the participant's language, story and narrative choices even when the participant does not explicitly define something. This tacit or incorporated knowledge is very significant in a person's life as it is a part of their everyday life and is comprehensible intuitively (Richter, 2016). In this method, Arndt-Michael Nohl (2010) talks about generation of data from narrative interviews where participants describe their everyday activities, interactions, perceptions and practices, and in which the participant answers narrative generating questions asked by the researcher followed by the researcher probing certain parts of the answers. From the perspective of a social constructionist, the knowledge of the participant is present in the discourse and this discourse is extracted from interview transcripts, particularly parts of transcripts that are narratively rich (Nohl, 2010). Two

important facets within this process are what is said i.e. the story and how it is said i.e. the discourse (Fontana & Frey, 2003). Taking the story and the discourse into account helps the researcher to understand how a participant is shaping their reality (Trautrims, Grant, Cunliffe & Wong, 2012). From a logistic standpoint, this method not only helps record the elements of a system but how those elements are enacted in a system by noting the changes that have taken place in the system through the changes in tacit meanings of participants (Trautrims, Grant, Cunliffe & Wong, 2012). The process of interview analysis in the documentary method is divided into three parts. It begins with formulating or rephrasing interpretation which is done by transcribing parts of interviews and when the interview is rephrased generalisations and thematic constants are revealed (Berger & Luckmann, 1966). This is followed by reflective interpretation which includes interpreting distinction of text types and overall textual interpretation that tells how this reality is created (Nohl, 2010). The results in the second step are then used in the last step for a comparative analysis of different respondents to see how interviewees responded to various questions and using this, a typology based on similarities or differences is created (Nohl, 2010). To ensure accuracy and 'conceptual representativity' (Przyborski & Wohlrab-Sahr, 2008), sufficient interviews are conducted that entail a range of views, perspectives, profiles and backgrounds of participants.

I have used this method for my research for a number of reasons. The qualitative, interpretive approach is meaning based and is used to understand how the culture of an organisation is created in the public and private sector by focusing upon the experience and perception of the people working in those organisations. In this thesis,

this is done by interviewing people working in public and private sector organisations and interpreting their responses using the documentary approach which is suitable to this kind of research. As mentioned above, the documentary method is cognizant of an individual's theoretical as well practical/incorporated/tacit knowledge. This tacit knowledge is very important in the context of the thesis as it allows the individual to navigate and work his/her way around the work culture of an organisation. In view of Bourdieu's concepts of fields and habitus used in the thesis, the organisation has rules that people/agents navigate and these rules are explicit i.e. written by the organisation and implicit i.e. unwritten rules that guide an individual. The implicit rules are an integral part of the culture and habitus that is created in the organisations of public and private sector which I explore in my fieldwork. The documentary method's recognition of a person's theoretical and practical knowledge and especially its further breakdown of understanding the meaning behind a person's tacit knowledge are essential in the thesis to discern the participant's reality i.e. the habitus in the public and private sector. As described by Arndt- Michael Nohl (2010) participants are asked narrative generating questions followed by further probing during certain parts and in the case of this thesis those questions centre around inappropriate workplace behaviour and sexual harassment, and with participants who indicated (through their discourse, body language etc.) that there was more to the story, further probing around their answers was carried out. The discourse of the story narrated by the participant in the case of this thesis is imperative and indicative as the topic of inappropriate behaviour at workplace and sexual harassment is a sensitive one and thus, it becomes paramount that the participant's tacit and implied meanings be made sense of using the documentary method. As is in the documentary method, the

interview data in this research is present in the form of audio recordings and transcripts to better interpret the story and discourse of the participants. It is then restructured after encountering thematic constants across interviews during a comparative analysis and a typology of respondents is created based on their views, and responses on the subject of inappropriate work place behaviour and sexual harassment. In this thesis, to ensure accuracy and conceptual 'representativity', the sample of participants is diverse with relation to their background, age, gender, religion, place of origin, field of job and job positions with the unifying factor being Delhi as their location of work.

In the next section I detail my fieldwork and research activities.

3.3 RESEARCH STRATEGY AND FIELD WORK

In this section of the chapter, I explain my whole research strategy and summaries of field works which include both the conceptual part of the research plan i.e. the process by which I narrowed down the themes and direction of this thesis in conjunction with my field study during the fieldwork, as well as the actual field work including planning, methodological choices, logistics and all the whys and how's related to carrying out the field research. I also discuss the limitations or problems faced during the course of my field research in this chapter. While I discuss my strategy in this chapter and how I got there accompanied by compact summaries of both field works, an in-depth description of the field activities inclusive of data, participants, responses etc. is provided in the next chapter titled 'Data Discussion'. The data discussion chapter serves as a catalogue of the field work activities.

3.3 a) The Setting

I began this research project in October 2016, and the basic idea at the time was to explore the reasons behind women's low participation in the workforce along with the serious lack of females in leadership positions. For the case study I chose the capital of India, Delhi and by doing so I focus on urban India as opposed to rural. This is the logical choice as I examine the formal or organised sector of work which entails private and public sector. I have excluded informal or unorganised work sector in my thesis. The National Commission for Enterprises in the Unorganised Sector defines unorganised sector as, "unincorporated private enterprises owned by individuals or households engaged in the sale and production of goods and services operated on a

proprietary or partnership basis and with less than 10 total workers" (Roy, 2015). There are a range of issues associated with this sector such as lack of labour laws, insufficient legislation and regulations and therefore, I excluded it. Delhi is a suitable choice to assess the formal sector of work due to its cultural diversity that makes for a rich sample.

3.3 b)First Field Work (December 2017-February 2018)

To achieve the aim of exploring the reasons behind women's low workforce and leadership participation I decided to delve into both the domestic and professional arena of a woman's life in urban India. It is to be noted that my first field included only female participants. The notion behind examining both the domestic and professional life was to see the impact of the home and professional environment on the professional will, choices, goals and career trajectory of the urban Indian woman. This is the central theme of my first field work and it helped me traverse just how much both the domestic front .i.e. the family and the professional front i.e. the work environment are detrimental to a woman perusing her career goals. Therefore, with this aim in mind I conducted my first field work from December 2017 to the first week of February 2018. This field work lasted a little over two months. I conducted in depth interviews of total 10 women between the ages of 26-58 years. These women belonged to different religions, regions and communities, all residing and working in Delhi at the time of the interviews. 8 of the women had extensive work experience in the private sector and 4 in public sector and 2 women had significant work experience in both sectors. All these women had at least 4- 5 years of work experience which

enabled me to question them about their career trajectory and track changes in their work experience over time. The identity of the participants is anonymous and their interviews were recorded and later transcribed. I made contact with the women primarily via word of mouth. I contacted former colleagues, friends, family and people in my network in Delhi and through them made contact with willing participants that were suitable for this sample. The pre-requisite for choosing participants for this field work are minimum 4 years of work experience, gender- female, divergent work profiles within the public or private sector and diverse backgrounds in terms of religion, community etc. I also included a practising lawyer and 2 Human Resource (HR) managers in my participants to get a different perspective on issues. All the participants in this field work were unknown to me as before I interviewed them. Before the interviews they were not given details of what my research was about and were only told that I wanted to talk to them about their work experiences. This was done to get spontaneous and honest responses from the participants and not carefully crafted or processed responses.

My questionnaire during this field work was unstructured in the sense that it touched upon themes with regards to their life experiences and not structured in a way that there were any 'yes' or 'no' answers. The questions were aimed at generating a narration of their life experiences in their homes as well as workplaces. They were open ended and left room for descriptions and discussions. This technique is affiliated with the documentary method. The questions focused around their professional roles, educational backgrounds and why they made the choices that they did with regards to both. I asked them about their family's opinions and involvement in their educational

and professional lives to gauge their influence in the participant's career related decisions. The rest of my questions pertained to their work experiences, obstacles in their path of perusal of career goals, work satisfaction, and hopes and expectations for themselves personally and professionally. To assess the data collected, I made transcripts of the audio recordings of the interviews and later reconstructed or paraphrased their responses. I noted the common themes and highlights present throughout interviews and thus, generated a typology based on the similarities. I discuss the questions and the responses in detail in the next chapter.

To summarise the results of my first field work, the biggest takeaway has been the pattern wherein the environment of workplaces i.e. the work culture has been deemed responsible as an encouraging or discouraging factor towards women continuing in a work place and going after their career goals. Though family involvement was still obvious and in some cases implied in association with women choosing a particular educational or work field. 8 out of 10 respondents demonstrated their families' involvement by stating how their families wished they had picked or were happy that they had picked academic fields or government jobs (public sector) as they were perceived as reputable in society and deemed as safer fields for women. Although the respondents especially the married ones did refer to the psychological pressure of maintaining a work-life balance and managing family responsibilities along with professional obligations, they did not point to it as the decisive factor either explicitly or implicitly when choosing to continue their career and professional aspirations. What they did talk about at length was how their work culture affects their day to day experience and their will to continue in a particular field. When I was perusing their

interviews during data assessment it became clear that women face a range of problems at their workplaces and the common themes that emerged out of this assessment indicated that women who had jobs in the public sector cited the rigidity and monotony of their sector especially when it comes to promotions and work assessment as the major obstacle. They found their workplaces to be unevolved with rigid structures in place since decades but exhibited overall job security. Their description of the workplaces align with studies conducted on work cultures that say stability and predictability continue to be defining characteristics of public sector due to its traditional model of management (Perry & Rainey, 1988). While there were mentions of casual sexist attitudes in place, they are suggested as irritants that they had learnt to navigate around without it affecting the majority of their work experience. The mentions of sexist attitudes included attempts by colleagues to deprive them of opportunities that entailed work travel and late stays in the office with the assumption it would be physically strenuous for them and out of a misplaced consideration towards their presumed familial responsibilities, but the participants said they eventually got past these by taking it as a challenge and proving themselves as capable at work. None of the participants working in the public sector during the first field work reported any extreme cases of gender discrimination or sexual harassment. Bearing in mind the scale of sexism by Benokratis and Feagin (1986), the cases of sexism expressed by women of public sector in this particular field work can be categorised as subtle sexism which is mostly hidden as it normalises sexist behaviour and can be unintentional, intentional, manipulative or even well intentioned. On the other hand, participants with work experience in private sector insinuated to their work culture as the major obstacle in their career growth. The

incidents of sexism as described by them range from subtle to covert and blatant on the Benokratis and Feagin (1986) scale. These women referred to incidents that had either happened to them or someone else in their workplaces that included lack of promotion, ridicule, gossip, unequal pay and extreme cases of sexual harassment that led to one of the participants quitting her job. 2 out of the 10 women in this sample had changed their sector from private to public as they found public sector jobs to be more secure and their environments easier to handle. More cases with similar descriptions that occurred in private sector organisations were corroborated by the participants with experience in HR and handling legal cases. The work environment as characterised by participants associated with private sector contained terms like "stressful", "time consuming", "strenuous", "political", "insecure" and "competitive" across interviews.

The findings of this fieldwork presented me with an absolute contrast between the structure and culture of both the public and private sector and participants' experience of it. This paved the way for me to narrow down my hypothesis and research objectives by further exploring the work life of a woman as opposed to the family life. This consists of studying the work culture of public and private sector of work. I carry out that task by applying Bourdieu's concepts of fields and habitus to these sectors. Therefore, I hypothesise that gender inequalities are deeply embedded in the differing habitus of the public and private sector fields and these habitus produce different kind of gender inequalities in both sectors including varying levels of sexual harassment.

3.3 c)Final Field Work (December 2018- February 2019)

After arriving at my hypothesis I pored over the required research and literature on subjects of gender equality, work culture, Indian public and private sector and Bourdieu's habitus and fields as detailed in the literature review chapter of this thesis. I conducted my second and final field work from December 2018 to February 2019. This field work took around 3 months. I conducted in-depth interviews of 25 people during this field work. This makes the total number of people interviewed during this field study to be 35. I included both men and women aged 23-59 years in my sample. During this fieldwork I included males as well because it would not be prudent to breakdown the culture of an organisation by excluding the majority of its workforce. They not only formulate an imperative part of the employee base but presence of gender inequality and a certain kind of culture in a workplace affects and has consequences for them too. They formulate the work culture and bear its consequences just as much as their female colleagues even if they may manifest in different ways. The sample choice for this field work shared the same pre-requisites as my first field work in terms of ensuring the religious, communal and regional diversity of participants. Although there were no pre-conditions this time around regarding the work experience of participants. I interviewed participants who had a little less than 6 months of experience to others who had decades of experience in order to get varying perceptions on how people understand and navigate their work culture. I also interviewed 3 lawyers to get their perspective on significance of a work culture and their experience and views on sexual harassment in the workplace. Out of the 25 participants, 20 had work experience in private sector, 15 in public and this includes 10

who overlap with experience in both sectors. This allowed me to attain a comprehensive comparative analysis of employees' experience in both sectors. Similar to the first field work, I contacted participants through my network of known people in Delhi, and all the participants were unknown to me when I met them other than 1 lawyer from my first field work whom I interviewed again. Prior to the meeting, they were given the necessary minimal information about the interview to ensure candour.

The questionnaire for this fieldwork was unstructured. The questions touched upon certain subject areas and during the interviews more questions were asked on the spot to gain deeper knowledge about their experiences on some matters akin to the documentary method. The idea behind this fieldwork was to understand the organisations' work culture and I did so by exploring the participants' knowledge and perception around subject areas of inappropriate behaviour and sexual harassment. Both aspects form an important part of the work culture and are on the spectrum of gender inequality. It is to be noted that at first while terms like inappropriate behaviour and harassment in work places was used during questions, it was the participants' who interpreted and understood the questions to mean sexually inappropriate behaviour and harassment which indicates a very high level of awareness about one's gender among participants in this sample. Most in this sample interpreted inappropriate behaviour and harassment as the sexual kind without it being explicitly or implicitly stated in the first couple of questions. The questions for this fieldwork centred on gathering basic information about their work experience and jobs at first, followed by grievances they faced at the workplaces, encountering inappropriate behaviour and defining the same, perceptions about their work

environments, awareness about sexual harassment and measures in place to deal with said sexual harassment, their career growth and the changes or developments they'd like to see in their organisations. I interviewed 3 lawyers towards the end of this fieldwork and the set of questions for them were different with additions about sexual harassment laws and handling of such cases in public and private sector. All lawyers interviewed had vast experience handling cases of sexual harassment and misconduct and added a very exclusive perspective on this subject area to this thesis. While I had questions associated with the relevant subject areas for reference, the interviews itself were very in depth not adhering to any particular structure.

In this section of the chapter, I have explained how I arrived at my final hypothesis and objectives for my thesis after the findings of my first field work. I discuss my detailed findings for the final fieldwork in the next chapter of data discussion and implications of those findings in the chapter following that. To summarise the findings of my final field work, I would like to say that the findings paint a clear picture about how employees perceive and manoeuvre the environment in their respective fields and also highlight the important factors that play a part in the creation of their 'personal' habitus when they join an organisation and later learn their way around it. While there is existing research on the structural domain of both the public and private sector which I also analyse for my sample using the data collected during fieldwork, the data in the final field work adds to the ignored relevancy of the cultural dimension of both fields/sectors in the form of cultural characteristics of both sectors and their potency in creation of gendered habitus of the sectors. The findings also provide an insight into the trends of sexual harassment at public and private sector and their

administrative treatment. These findings highlight the connection between habitus and sexual harassment at the workplace, its differing presence in public and private sectors and how it supports the cycle of gender inequality.

Before I move on to the data discussion chapter to present my findings in detail, I would like to discuss the potential limitations of this field research in the last sub-section of this chapter.

3.4 LIMITATIONS

The following are the possible methodological limitations associated with this field research:

3.4 a) Sample Size

The sample size of this study is 35 participants. Due to the qualitative and exploratory nature of this type of study it can be difficult for the researcher to determine exactly what the right number of people is for a sample. However, choosing the sample size for a study is very subjective and depends on the topic of the research. In the case of this study, I curtailed my sample size at 35 participants (first field work at 10 and final at 25) because I was able to gather enough data to establish meaningful relationships and connections between my particular data set. This affirms that the research stays on course and remains true to its aims and objectives. I was also able to ensure the sample is a divergent one, with the participants varying where their ages, gender, personal and professional backgrounds are concerned.

3.4 b) Research Design Limitations

Within my research design, I arrived at the specific demographic for this research study by a process of elimination. This process of elimination included setting aside rural India and informal/ unorganised sector of work and choosing the urban area of Delhi as the base for the fieldwork. This was done mainly due to logistical reasons such as cost efficiency, time, accessibility, convenience, commutation and for creating

a homogenous sample. The homogenous nature of a sample does make it a very categorical study and this can affect the insertion of underrepresented socio-demographic groups within the sample.

3.4 c) Impact Limitations

Due to the study being population and region specific, the impact and scope of the study, limitations are added to the study that makes it relevant to a certain demographic.

3.4 d) Lack of Prior Research on the Topic

There was little to no research available to me that connected the work culture, structure or habitus of a sector to gender inequalities persistent in the field. The existing literature is very segregating in its focus and while this did help towards identifying gaps present in the literature, the lack of sufficient literature can be limiting for a researcher without extensive research experience on a particular subject.

3.4 e) Possible Inaccuracies in Self-Reported Data

The interview technique used in this methodology can have various limitations. This technique relies on the interviewee to a great degree and that can pose a number of problems in the form of selective memory, exaggeration, potential biases on the part of the respondent. The interviewer has to rely on and take at face value what the

interviewee says. The data provided by the respondent cannot be independently verified and that is a potential limitation when one uses this technique.

3.4 f) Access

To conduct interviews I needed access to people working in public sector and private sector in Delhi. There are fewer public sector organisations as compared to private. It was difficult to get the people from government agencies (public sector) to agree to any kind of interview. Their association with the government however large or small makes them more cautious. While I was able to get many to participate in the study, in both fieldworks I still had more private sector participants as opposed to public. I would have ideally liked to have equal number of participants from both public and private sector but it was not possible due to smaller number of public sector workers and accessibility issues.

3.4 g) Time Constraints

There are two kinds of time constraints associated with this study. First is setting a time for research and field work during this study and arriving at a decision about how long the field work can go on for. This is a PhD study and so deadlines and timelines present a constraint in thoroughly investigating a research problem. Add to this the fact that the duration of study happens to be very active time for the subject of inappropriate behaviour at the workplace and sexual harassment. There is constant coverage on news and social media on Indian as well as global cases on the subject. This makes the research study a very relevant one but also adds changing context that

can be difficult to keep track of due to its evolving nature with added restrictions by the timeline of the study itself. Another time constraint during this field study was the interview timing. Timing is a major restraint when trying to get a participant to open up about a subject that they may not be comfortable talking about. There is need for rapport building and time to create a relaxed atmosphere so that the participant is amenable to sharing sensitive experiences and achieving all this within a limited timeframe can be a challenging task.

3.4 h) Linguistic Restrictions

I am fluent in English and Hindi languages. India is a multilingual country and interviewing participants who do not have either Hindi or English as their first or second language is a potential problem. There is always a possibility that during the interactions something was lost in translation. However audio recordings of the interviews that were also used to collect data in this research can prove useful while trying to tackle this issue as they can be analysed later and reduce any possible semantics related problems.

3.4 i) Positionality of the researcher

One's point of view and opinions are formed and affected by their own lived experiences. The same goes for researchers conducting a study on any particular topic. The experiences, opinions, beliefs, values and moral stances of a researcher have the possibility of influencing aspects of their research such as research inquiries, findings, and data collection especially when the method of collecting the data is interactive in

nature. This presents a possible limitation as the biases and inclinations of a researcher can have an effect on the validity and credibility of their research. Throughout this research project, I have been fully aware of my position as a former female employee of both private and public sector organisations in Delhi. I dealt with my positionality within this research area with self-reflexivity and with an understanding that positionality itself is an evolving concept. One's position on things evolves with time whether it's through interaction with others or by acquiring knowledge and new experiences. My positionality is reflected in parts this research without compromising the validity of the results of this thesis. To begin with, my interest in this research subject cultivated due to my own experience of observing low overall participation and leadership positions held by female employees compared to their male counterparts. It was also due to my own unique experiences as an employee in the public and private sectors in Delhi that I was quick to recognise the pattern of differing work environments of the two sectors as experienced by participants during my first field work while doing the data analysis. This helped me to further narrow down the hypothesis of my thesis. Additionally and not by design, simply the fact that I am female made the majority of my female participants more comfortable and amenable to discussing sensitive experiences. My familiarity with the structure and mechanisms of public and private sector organisations proved useful while extracting data on the knowledge of participants on subjects such as sexual harassment committees at the workplace. As stated, consistent self-reflexivity is crucial to this process as well as lack of rigidity of the mind during the interview process. It is important to not lose sight of the fact that opinions evolve and that the interviewer-interviewee relationship is a fluid one. Each of the 35 interviews was unique in their

own way and each participant a subject with their own particular personality and lived experience and both the participants and data collected from them were treated as such. Therefore, while my own positionality within the subject area had an effect in the initial process of guiding my research, it did not prove to be a deterrent during the research process but rather an asset, notably during data collection.

3.4 j) Unconscious Bias

There is possibility to be considered that one's response may be affected by certain cultural, gender or any other kind of biases and pre conceived notions on the subject. The respondent may or may not be aware of their biases. One of the ways that I tried to avoid this in this study was by giving participants no information about the interview subjects prior to the interaction. This prevented them from forming opinions before the interaction and made the interviews more candid and spontaneous. I also initiated further probing and in-depth discussions around relevant subjects to get as clear a picture as possible about why the respondents felt the way they did.

3.4 k) Sensitive Nature of Research Topic

A very significant challenge around interviewing people about the subject of inappropriate behaviour and sexual harassment is the very sensitive and almost taboo nature of the subject. India is largely a conservative nation where the subject of sex is not openly talked about in majority of the places. Most participants become very guarded and cagey when the topic of sexual harassment is initiated in the

conversation. It was especially difficult to talk about this subject with male participants as they became very defensive and uncomfortable and indicated to vilification of their gender in media and society as the main reason. The female participants' demeanour ranged from eager to hesitant and dismissive. Every response and thus every interview are unique in that regard. It becomes pertinent to create a relaxed and welcoming atmosphere on the part of the interviewer and build a good rapport with the interviewee. There is great potential for the participant to become distant and evasive. Thus factors such as intuition and observational skills become very important for the interviewer during this process. It is also critical to break down the interviews properly during data assessment as to not miss any implicit clues. This is one of the reasons that documentary method is apt for this study and has been used a methodological device in this thesis.

In the next chapter I break down the data collected in the entirety of the field study.

CHAPTER 4- DATA DISCUSSION

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter discusses the data and findings collected in the duration of the field study of this thesis. In this chapter I present findings from the interviews of public and private sector participants. These findings are on the subjects of inappropriate behaviour and sexual harassment in the workplace. Sexual harassment at the workplace is used in this research to connote gender inequality and therefore, the scales of gender inequalities are measured in this thesis by measuring the scales and prevalence of sexual harassment at workplaces in public and private sector organisations. Findings presented in this chapter include how employees from the two sectors describe their respective work environments. Based on the characteristics described by participants, work cultures and mode of managements are classified into different types. Other findings include what participants think about inappropriate behaviour, awareness about sexual harassment, sexism and discriminatory practices taking place at their workplaces, familiarity about mechanisms in place to tackle workplace sexual harassment and their opinion on its effectiveness, and general experience of participants who worked both in the public and private sector. I also interviewed legal experts with experience overseeing cases of sexual harassment in both sectors. While gathering data via in depth interactions on participants' experiences, opinions and knowledge around sexual harassment at the workplace in

both sectors, I was able to systematically classify the scales of sexism and sexual harassment present in both sectors by noting the similarities and pattern development within sectors. This way the practices unique to each sector emerged and indicated the scale and level of gender inequality prevalent in both fields. These practices, behaviours and approaches enable gender inequality to prevail and rehash the cycle of gender inequality. The factors equated with habitus that play an important role in the form of organisational structure and culture are also discussed among findings. Therefore, findings in this chapter relate to typologies of sexual harassment: its scale, awareness and mechanisms, along with classifications based on work cultures and organisational structures of respective sectors. While findings that appertain these elements are detailed in this chapter, how these categories related to sexual harassment and structure and culture intertwine to reproduce gender inequalities (sexual harassment) is analysed in the 'Implications' chapter.

This field study took place in Delhi, India and a total 35 public and private sector employees, both men and women took in it. Given below is the list of all the participants in the entirety of this field study:

PARTICIPANT	SEX	AGE	SECTOR	AREA	EXPERIENCE
1	Female	30	Private	Banking/Accounts	5 + years
2	Female	26	Private	Human Resource	4 + years
3	Female	52	Private	Import/Export	15+years
4	Female	58	Private	Teaching	25+ years
5	Female	28	Private	Graphic Design	6+years
6	Female	28	Private	Law	5+ years

7	Female	53	Public	Human Resource/Finance	20+ years
8	Female	31	Public	Stock Exchange	6 years
9	Female	35	Public/Private	Legal Research	10+ years
10	Female	30	Public/Private	Finance and Teaching	8+years
11	Female	31	Public/Private	Research	6+years
12	Female	33	Public/Private	Research, Administration	7+years
13	Female	24	Public/Private	Writing, Marketing	3 years
14	Female	27	Public/Private	NGO, Administration	5+years
15	Female	24	Public/Private	Art, Public Relations (PR)	6 months
16	Female	28	Public/Private	NGO, Think Tank	4+ years
17	Female	29	Public	Law	6 years
18	Female	30	Public	University/Administration	6+ years
19	Female	28	Public	Assistant	5 years
20	Female	23	Public	Media and HR	1 year
21	Female	28	Public	Corporate Law	6+ years
22	Female	31	Private	Editor, Copywriter	7+ years
23	Female	25	Private	Science, Sales	3 years
24	Female	23	Private	Media	2 years
25	Female	25	Private	Multinational Company	1 year 6 months
26	Female	27	Private	Publishing	6+years
27	Female	26	Private	Media	4 years
28	Female	35	Private	Corporate	10+ years
29	Male	36	Public/Private	Financial management	14 years
30	Male	26	Public/Private	Finance and Accounts	5+ years

31	Male	36	Public/Private	Multinational Company, Research	10+
32	Male	59	Public/Private	Law	25+ years
33	Male	39	Private	Banking, Trading, E-Commerce	11+years
34	Male	25	Private	Fashion, Sports	5 years
35	Male	27	Private	Publishing/ Writing/Administration	6 years

This study has a total of 35 participants. 7 of those participants are male and 28 female. 16 participants had work experience exclusively in the private sector and 7 only in the public sector with 12 participants with experience in both sectors. Overall, this makes the total number of people associated with private sector to be 28 and 19 for public sector with 12 participants within this number that encompass both sectors. All participants are aged between 23-59 years. They belong to a variety of professions across both sectors and have been engaged professionally from 6 months to 25+ years. Their backgrounds also vary in terms of religion, place of birth, community etc. with Delhi being the place of residence as well as work location at the time of the interviews. Additionally, for majority of the participants, their work experience across various work positions and organisations has largely taken place in Delhi despite their place of birth, education etc. As stated earlier in the thesis, all organisations covered are formal/organised sector of work and the employees interviewed have been or are

currently part of an office environment sharing space with co-workers with a formal or informal hierarchy in the workplace.

The findings described in the next section are pertinent to the concepts of habitus, fields, and gender equality in this thesis and were collected through two fieldworks.

4.2 FINDINGS

The relevant findings discussed in this section are typologies based on the thematic constants and generalisations extracted from the responses of the 35 participants within this field study. As stated above, the majority of the respondents are female (80%) and 20% are male. 45.71% are engaged with the private sector exclusively and 20% with public sector. 34.29 % have experience in both sectors.

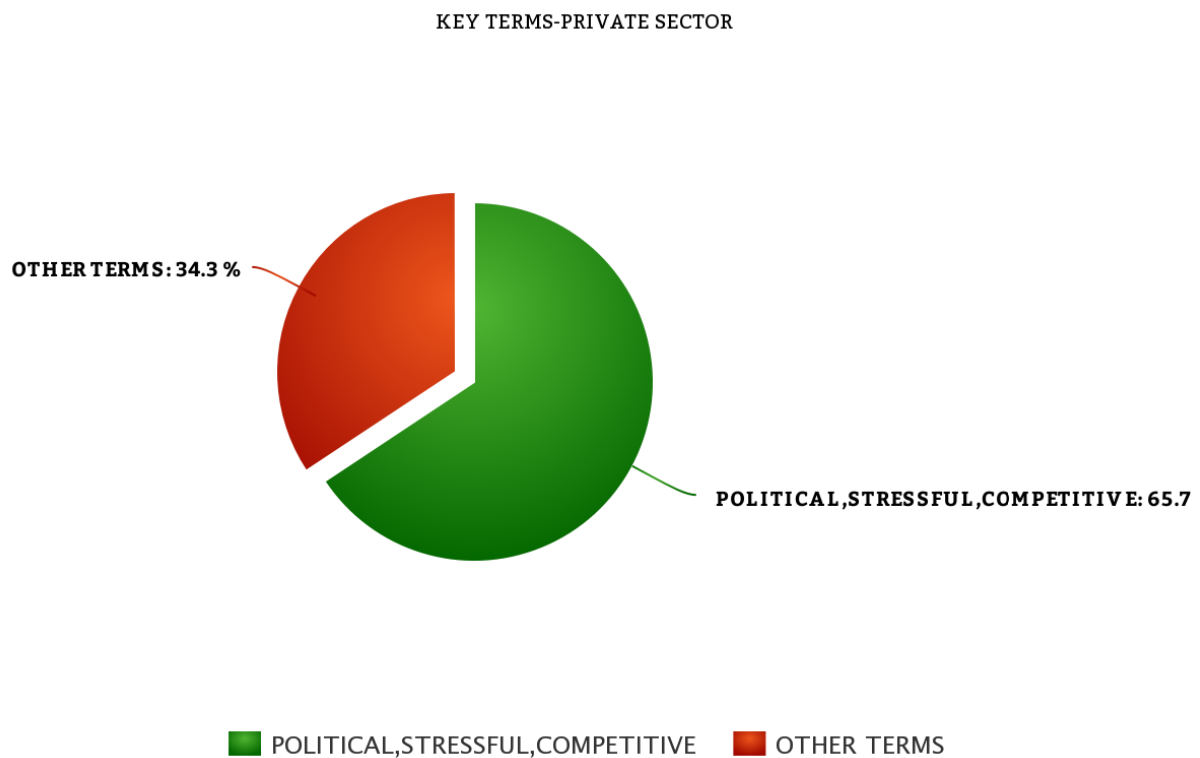## *4.2 a) - Finding 1: Describing private and public sector work environment*

KEY TERMS-PRIVATE SECTOR

FIGURE 1: KEY TERMS- PRIVATE SECTOR

RIGID, BUREAUCRATIC, MONOTONOUS: 45.1
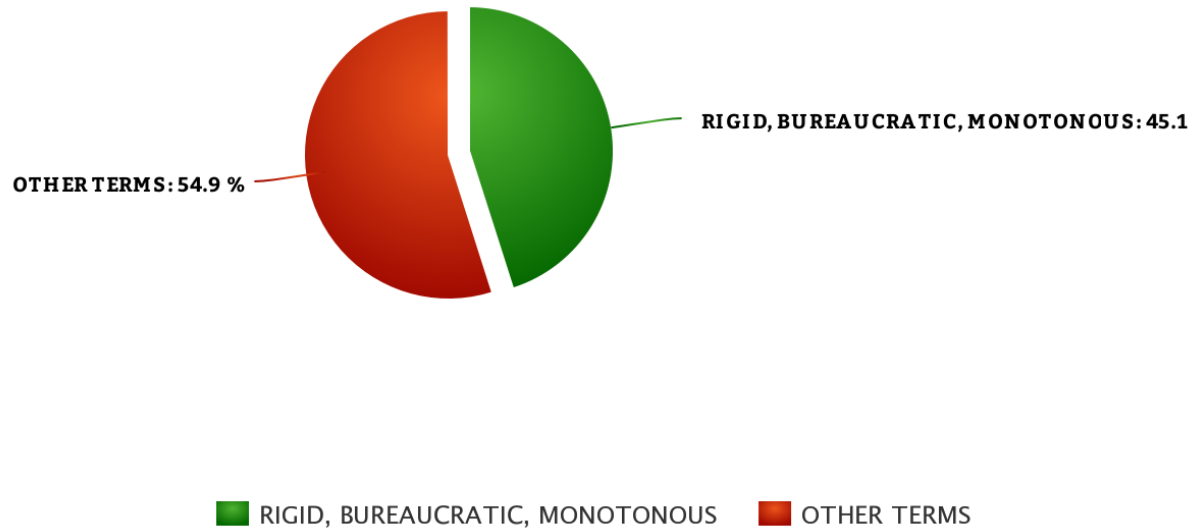
OTHER TERMS: 54.9 %

■ RIGID, BUREAUCRATIC, MONOTONOUS   ■ OTHER TERMS

FIGURE 2: KEY TERMS- PUBLIC SECTOR

JOB TRANSITION DUE TO UNSATISFACTORY WORK ENVIRONMENT

UNSATISFACTORY ENVIRONMENT: 34

OTHER REASONS: 66 %

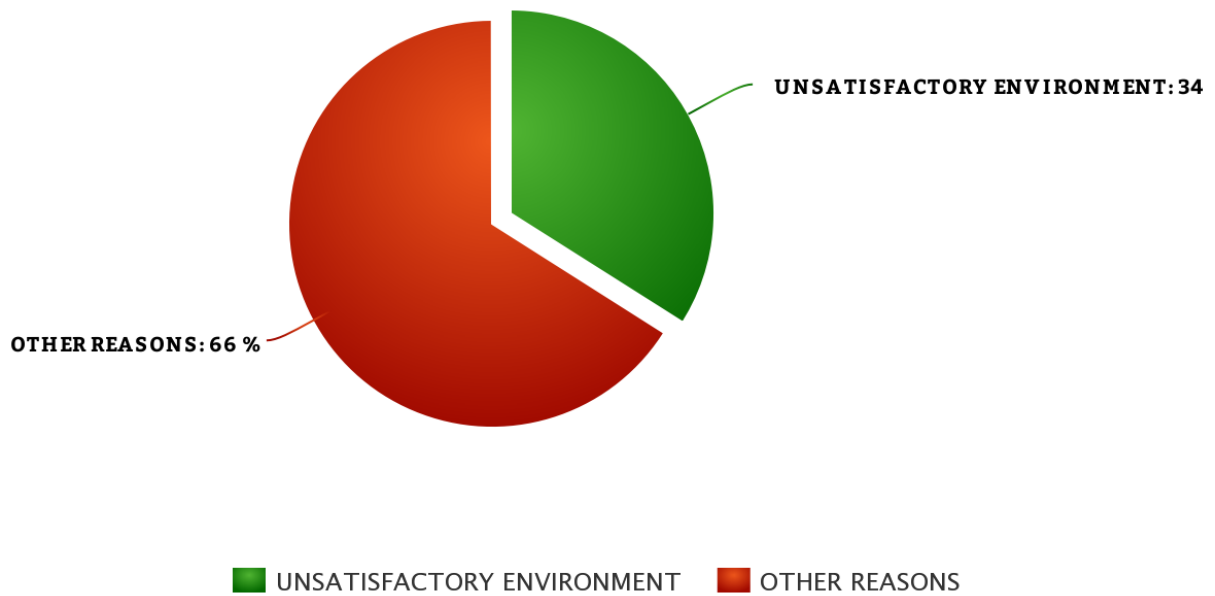■ UNSATISFACTORY ENVIRONMENT   ■ OTHER REASONS

FIGURE 3: JOB TRANSITION DUE TO UNSATISFACTORY WORK ENVIRONMENT

For private sector, 65.7% respondents used key words such as work pressure, deadlines, late stays, office politics, stressful, open, change, salary related issues, competitive, profits, appraisal, etc. while describing their work environments and office lives. Discussing the competitive, stressful and political nature of the sector, a participant said, *"Have you heard of the thing, 'Bigger the fish, bigger the fight'? So...of course it was one of the most competitive environments I had seen. My team was made up of four females. One being my senior most manager and two other being my colleagues. Same level probably...it was a very tough fight. Because of office politics I could not envision myself staying there for much longer"*. Another participant from a leading media house said, *"I wouldn't really go on to call it negative but it was very... kind of clustered .It's like you know the moment you enter office you're like 'Ok I am jailed for the next few hours'. And people there, I wouldn't really blame them because everyone would be so much under pressure that there would be no time for interaction, we wouldn't make friends, we were colleagues. As compared to that, here[3] I have friends. In that way it's much more pleasant. It is pretty challenging though, everyone is really really competitive. There's always a time crunch, you know you have to perform in a certain period of time and that's where your performance assessment comes from, how well you're delivering and how quickly you're delivering it. Harassment is there in the form of mental harassment, like the person probably wouldn't be realising that he is mentally harassing you because it is so hectic. Probably there was no malice in anybody's mind but the way, the behaviour itself would be so convoluted...finding people shouting at each other used to be a very common sight. Like you know, people are shouting at each other, people are abusing each other"*. One participant said,

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[3] Another media house, different job. Both jobs in private sector.

"Something or the other is always happening... you can call it back bitching; it keeps happening...one has to then recover from these things. I am the one doing the work and they are the ones taking credit... they do not let us come ahead. If I were to ever make even the smallest of mistakes, it would be highlighted in the whole office (Translated from Hindi)". The contexts of terms such as stress and pressure are not limited solely to work. Elaborating on the same one of the private sector participants said *"So corporate outings you know, we often used to have these breakouts or events, outings. And women, who did not prefer staying back or drinking, were labelled as boring or not a part of the team. They were labelled as people who do not want to be a part of your organisation, or your team just because they did not like to drink. That's another concern. A lot of people I know started drinking under peer pressure that 'oh at corporate outings I will have to drink up'."* The recapitulation of these terms across interviews of respondents associated with private sector highlights the tumultuous and strenuous nature of private sector organisations.

Alternatively, for public sector, terms such as monotonous, rigid, policy, procedure, bureaucratic made repeat appearances in interviews of 45.1% respondents. Summarising her experience in a public sector organisation, one of the participants said, *"Given that it's a government organisation, promotions and all are time bound. And there are certain policies and procedures that are rigid. So I believe to that effect private sector would have offered more flexibility."* Another public sector participant said of the work culture, *"My organisation, like any typical government organisation was very bureaucratic primarily because it is an extension of the ministry. There's the idea of hierarchy and it has more to do with the culture than actual roles, functions or*

actual division of labour. You cannot look at it strictly in an organisational structure way. And there are certain ways in which work is done. There are certain ways in which you dress. There are certain ways in which you conduct yourself so those are the main things." Another participant described their work, "*In my current job, it's mostly older people in the office...it's very basic, you come in the morning, do your work and leave and go home in the evening. It can be a bit lethargic compared to my older job in an MNC[4] but there is more security overall (Translated from Hindi).*"

This denotes the traditional, organised and unbending nature of public sector organisations. Additionally, 34% participants in the sample changed jobs citing the unhealthy and thus, unsatisfactory work environments of their respective organisations, signifying the profoundness of a healthy work culture in the continuity an individual's career growth.

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[4] Multinational Corporation

4.2 b)- Finding 2: Understanding inappropriate behaviour

OTHER EXPLANATION: 28.8 %

DEPENDS ON PERSON AND SITUATION: 71.2

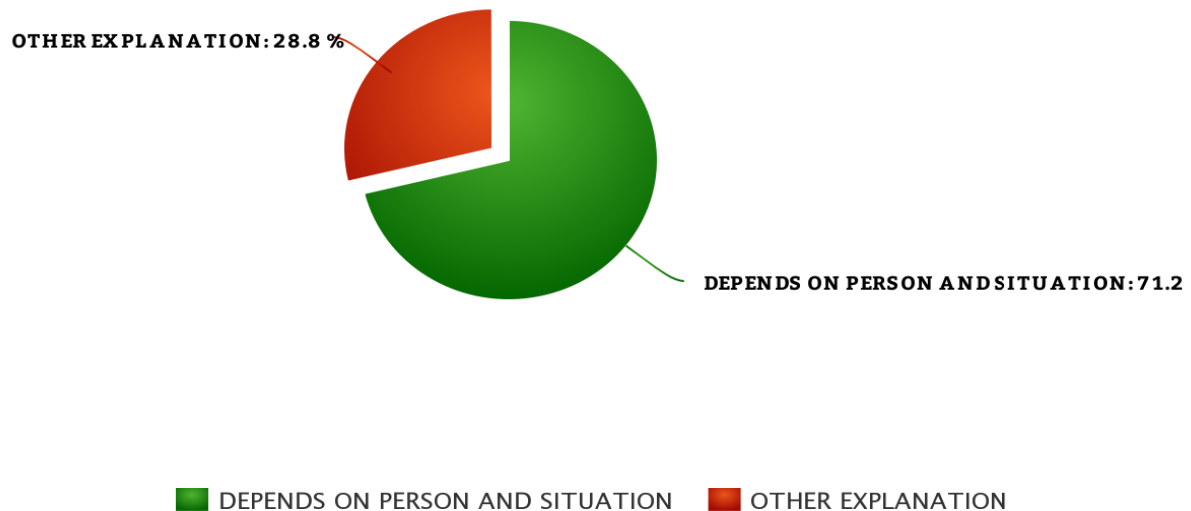■ DEPENDS ON PERSON AND SITUATION   ■ OTHER EXPLANATION

FIGURE 4: WHAT IS INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIOUR AT THE WORKPLACE?

When asked about their understanding of what is inappropriate behaviour at the workplace, 71.2 % respondents emphasised on the subjective and personal nature of the concept and how it depends on the perception of the affected individual what it could mean in a given situation given their relationship with the person involved. As described by one of the participants, *"For me it would be very basic, inappropriate would be anything that makes me uncomfortable. It could be a remark, it could be something physical, it could be an insinuation, anything…anything that makes me uncomfortable would be inappropriate. It is subjective of course, if I am sitting and having coffee with a colleague who I am friendly with and we are cracking a joke or we are commenting on each other's clothing it won't be inappropriate. But if it's someone I am not familiar with and if he or she says something then that would be inappropriate."*

Another participant said, *"See it really depends on your equation with the individual. If you're friendly with a person then it's alright like something can be passed on as a joke, you don't really mind it."*

When the subject of harassment at the workplace was introduced in the discussion, 82% respondents interpreted that to mean sexual harassment with clarifications such as *"sexual harassment, right?"* While this thesis does centralize around the subject of sexual harassment under the scope of harassment in general, the figure of 82% is conducive in understanding gender awareness among employees in an Indian workplace and also that even though no official gender segregation or gender based roles are officiated in the work environment, the habitus is gendered within the work climate. 97% participants out of this understood this to mean sexual harassment effectuated by men against women. As put across by one male participant, *"Inappropriate is anything that makes a woman physically or mentally uncomfortable, related to I think... you know anything related to her sexuality, any kind of an obscenity or vulgarity... this would constitute harassment. This can be very subtle and indirect also. Such overtures are also harassment. It doesn't have to be in your face all the time. I would exclude men here because it is largely women who are subjected to such overtures."*

It is to be noted that 100% of the persons and organisations covered in this sample had no common prescribed definition for inappropriate behaviour in the context of a workplace and this subject had not been touched upon during their orientation in the organisations formally or informally. 27% respondents stated the lack of a discussion on a code of conduct whether formally during orientation in an organisation or an

informal mention on the part of employer is a possible issue. One of the participants commented on its need, *"Myself and a few other colleagues had worked on sort of a confidential report saying that these are instances that a sexual harassment policy should address and there we brought in something very similar to a code of conduct saying that when a person joins a) it should be a part of their orientation b) that there are certain guidelines we expect in the workplace like cracking jokes on a community is not acceptable or I mean... I understand there can be informal relationships between colleagues that are outside the ambit of control but still within the workplace, there aren't basic guidelines and then people feel its ok to behave a certain way which is problematic."*

To put it simply, the absence of regulations or guidance on the kind of behaviour and conduct that is expected out of employees leaves the employees to figure out on their own what the work boundaries are and what the limits should be of their interactions with their colleagues.

4.2 c) - Finding 3: Awareness about harassment and discriminatory practices

PRIVATE SECTOR- AWARENESS ABOUT HARASSMENT AT THE WORKPLACE

FIGURE 5: PRIVATE SECTOR- AWARENESS ABOUT HARRASMENT AT THE WORKPLACE

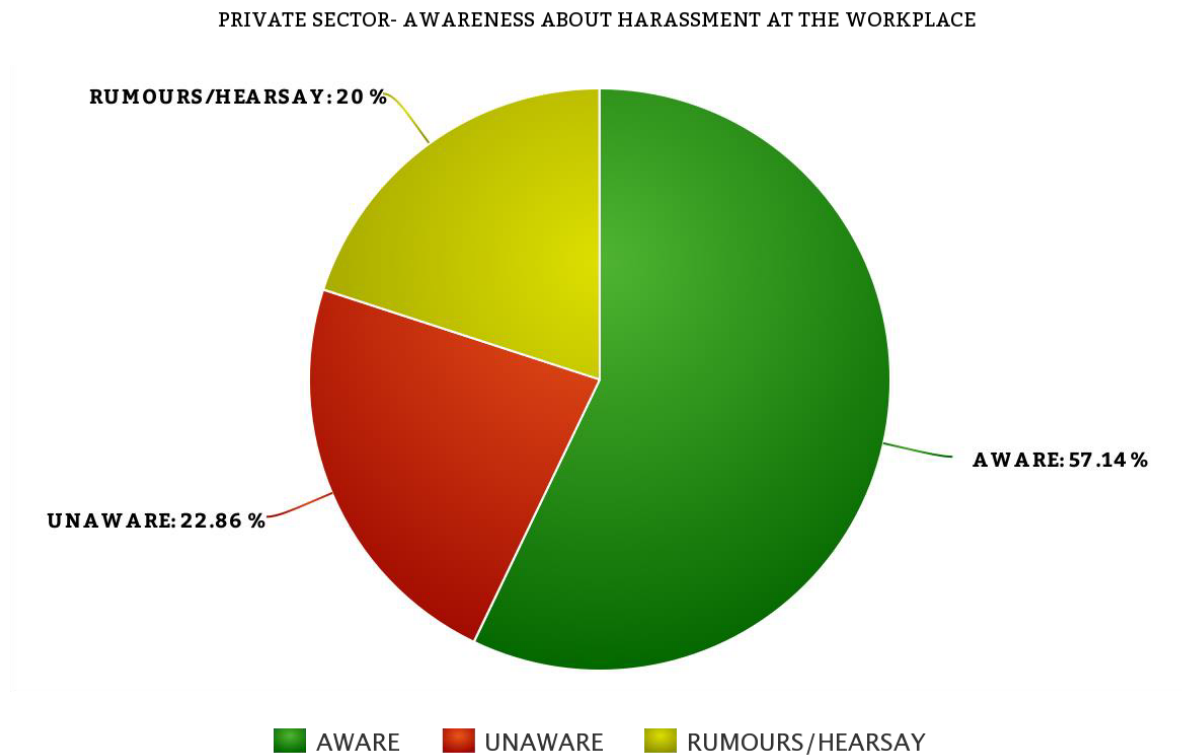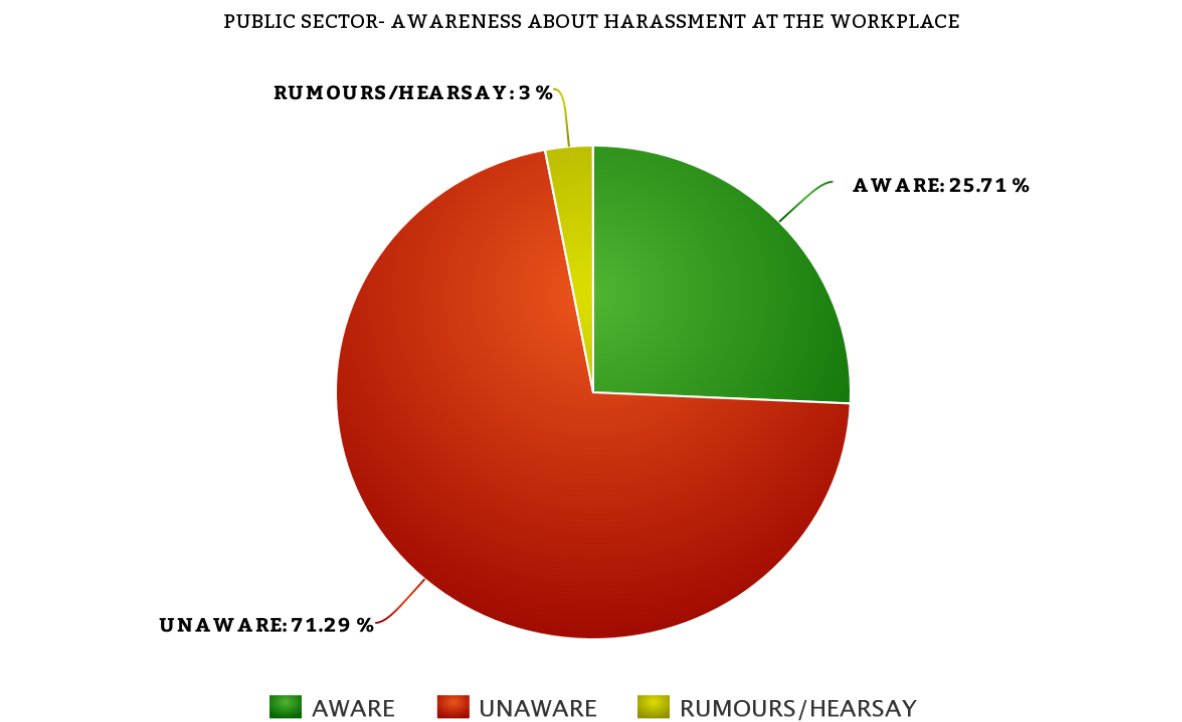PUBLIC SECTOR- AWARENESS ABOUT HARASSMENT AT THE WORKPLACE

FIGURE 6: PUBLIC SECTOR- AWARENESS ABOUT HARRASMENT AT THE WORKPLACE

83

57.14 % of private sector employees said that they were aware of cases of sexual harassment in their past or current private sector organisations. 22.86% were unaware of presence of sexual harassment at their workplaces. Additionally, 20% participants of private sector organisations said that they had heard rumours through workplace gossip about cases of harassment under investigation or otherwise but this was hearsay and could not be confirmed by them. 25.71 % public sector employees in this sample confirmed their awareness of sexist practices at their workplaces. 71.29% of these employees said they were unaware of any kind of cases of harassment or discriminatory practices at their workplaces. 3% of public sector employees confirmed that they had heard of cases of sexual harassment in their respective organisations that took place before they joined their workplaces as employees and that these cases had been resolved swiftly. This second-hand information was passed to them via their colleagues and could not be confirmed by them.

4.2 d) Finding 4: Scale of harassment in the private and public sector

As stated above, 57.14 of private sector participants and 25.71% of public sector participants admitted to awareness about harassment and sexist practices in their organisations respectively. What was striking in the process of perusing the transcripts and notes on these interviews was just how noticeably different the nature and scale of the practices of discrimination, harassment, and thus, gender inequality came to be in both sectors as per the findings of this field study. While discussing harassment in private sector across participants, the instances of inappropriate behaviour described aligned more with the extreme end of the spectrum of gender inequality. Instances as described by private sector participants included cases ranging from sexually charged comments in the workplace, ridicule, gossip and attacks on the reputation of female colleagues especially the ones holding higher work positions. One of the participants detailed such an attitude held at her workplace, *"If we are simply sitting and talking to our boss or a colleague, and there is nothing going on between us, the environment is such that they think that these people are talking so there is definitely something fishy going on here...this has happened and they do not gossip this way about men... they say things like 'That girl, she is very fast'. The people use such cheap language I cannot tell you... So... they would use bad language and say things like 'how has she reached that position? (Translated from Hindi)".* Another participant added a similar point of view, *"This mental block is there. And it's not only with men; it's also with some of the women who do not want to see their peers rising. They always have a comment on some female that how did she get up there? What is she doing right that we are not doing right?"*

The Human Resource (HR) managers I spoke with confirmed presence of discrimination against female employees in the pay bracket wherein their male counterparts were getting paid substantially more for the same job. One private sector HR manager said, *"So usually the HR tries to squeeze the maximum out of you as far as pay is concerned. But I have seen the budget and the pay bracket for men which are much more than that for women. I mean two of my peers working at the same position had a salary difference of around 80k, 80,000 Rupees. And I being an insider knew about it. I don't know how that girl agreed for it. I did approach my senior recruiter about it that 'why do you have to keep such a huge difference between the salaries?' so he said 'oh she agreed' so yes, it happens."* The motivation behind gender pay gaps for the same job position as explained by one HR manager was *"The boy will eventually have a family so he needs more money, the other one is a girl, and her husband will take care of her".* This reaffirms the stereotypical role of the breadwinner for men and homemaker for women. Talking about gender based discrimination one participant with extensive experience in private sector said, *"Somewhere it's a very partial favouritism in terms of gender. I would not say it's completely biased its partial biased. Maybe in terms of physical need they will be like 'no she cannot do it or she can't travel too much'. Apart from that pay is one factor which I have felt in terms of bonuses. I have seen it. Bonuses are not very openly offered to female workers. There is always a lingering factor that 'if we give her this bonus that she might leave that she might not stick along. If we give her less she may stay in her place'. These are the three things. Fourth thing is that I have personally experienced is that once you are married...the hit to them is that we might have to give her a leave which includes maternal leave. So that is in terms of cost something which they value very strongly. So my performance appraisal let's say one*

year after my marriage might be much less because they might be expecting me to have a baby in the next year. So they will automatically withdraw."

During these private sector interviews, I also came across cases of blatant sexual harassment that the interviewee or their colleagues were involved in. 4% of private sector female participants in this sample changed their jobs due to sexual harassment at their former place of work which included instances where inappropriate comments with sexual undertones were directed at them from colleagues as well as cases where other participants were subjected to sexual propositions and harassment by senior colleagues. One of those participants described her situation, *"At XYZ, to be honest my HOD[5] umm... was... you can simply call it harassment. He wanted much more than work out of me knowing that I am committed, knowing that I was going to be married soon, he tried his chances. And I don't know why it was because I was young or new to the office or whatever. I initially took his compliments as just you know compliments but later on when he started getting personal I said 'oh, it's much more'. And I also realised that he favoured women who used to take his compliments nicely. And the ones who used to you know be all cheerful with him. One of my presidents, she was a female president, senior-vice president, this lady, I won't name her... she was very strict, she was all clear that I am going to give you work, no bullshit. And I have seen that this did not go down with him very well. I was sick of his behaviour so I quit. He got fired later, I think somebody complained."* Another participant said, *"My friend in the different division faced harassment from her senior. When she flagged it off with her managers, they refused to take action, she went up to the HR she complained about this particular man they refused to take action which is why she was forced to leave from that job. Like*

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[5] Head of Department

she was forced to put down the papers because nobody decided to do anything about her complaint."

The instances of sexism and discrimination as described by public sector employees in this sample are milder compared to private sector with emphasis on stereotypes. These instances include attempts at deprivation of opportunities for responsibilities that are considered too difficult for female employees such as travelling and earmarking jobs within fields like finance for male candidates. One participant added, *"So most of the times I'm not picked for a job, to go for a job that is very challenging. In terms of physical work, not in terms of intellect but in terms of physical work where I have to say travel to a place called Malda which is somewhere in Calcutta. I am not the first priority because they would be concerned with my safety and they would be concerned about my travel, 'how is she travelling, where is she staying?' That stress is something because of which I will not be the first preference."* Another participant commented, *"When I was in HR, we used to outsource some work. When that used to happen, people would say, 'don't hire women, they can't work on accounts. She won't stay late if needed; she will not come to office on a holiday if required'. I would insist on hiring women. (Translated from Hindi)"*

Detailing deprivation of responsibility, one participant said, *"When I was interning I always felt that always there was a very different treatment that was given to the men. I mean all the boys, we all came with the same qualifications. So obviously, yeah I felt that the boys were treated very differently. And to get into the nitty gritties of it, they were always given much meatier work. They were given actual work. I remember one time I was told to...there was one of my colleagues, he was told to research an actual project.*

He was told to stay late while I actually wanted work. I went to my boss and she said 'oh why don't you plan tomorrow's presentation lunch'. And my job was to organise sandwiches."

Several participants reported facing derisive and contemptuous comments and glances from older male colleagues that were reserved exclusively for younger female employees and their male counterparts were not subjected to the same behaviour. Many female participants described being subjected an additional level of scrutiny and higher standards of decorum. This was done in the form reiterating the formal dress code of the organisation to them by senior colleagues and suggestions about proper physical conduct such as comments on posture, tone of voice, attitude and demeanour. One participant described her experience, *"I remember I wore a long formal skirt to XYZ one day and believe me, it was the most uncomfortable experience of my life. And, I am not saying that, you know, for me wearing a certain kind of clothing is important, but I just feel that it was a very uncomfortable and a very very...I felt very small. I felt uncomfortable being a woman."* Referring to behaviour specifically directed at the female workforce, one respondent said, *"This senior administrative person ABC, every time I would pass him somewhere in the office or the staircase or somewhere you know, he would have something to say...and this is not just me he always has things to point out about the females in the office... him and his people in the department. They are all the same... 'correct your posture, correct the way you're standing, correct the way you know you're leaning , you should sit properly in office'. That only was directed towards a female employee. And his behaviour towards me was because I am a woman and he was passive aggressive towards me. I was forced to ignore*

him for a year and then I confronted him and he just denied this so I don't know if I consider this resolved." Another employee with several years of experience in a government organisation said, *"There have been multiple incidences, for instance one time I was standing with a couple of colleagues and one girl was sitting a certain way like she was relaxed and waiting for her turn to get coffee in the canteen and she was asked to get up and told by a senior person not to sit, and he was trying to give her a lecture on how to sit…I think that's inappropriate. His tone was not nice I mean canteen is an informal space. This has happened a couple of times and every time it's been a girl… there is a gendered dynamic."*

These suggestions again, were reserved for and were restated to the female employees of the organisations at different points during their job tenure. The employees alluded to the traditional and conservative climate of public sector as the reason for these sexist practices.

4.2 e) Finding 5: Awareness about workplace sexual harassment committees

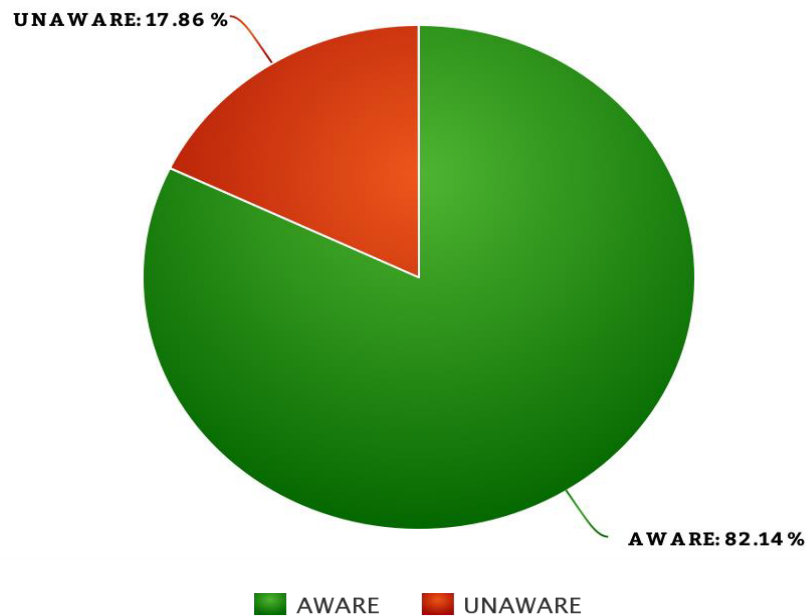PRIVATE SECTOR- AWARENESS ABOUT SEXUAL HARASSMENT COMMITTEE AT THE WORKPLACE

FIGURE 7: PRIVATE SECTOR- AWARENESS ABOUT SEXUAL HARRASSMENT COMMITTEE AT THE WORKPLACE

PUBLIC SECTOR- AWARENESS ABOUT SEXUAL HARASSMENT COMMITTEE AT THE WORKPLACE
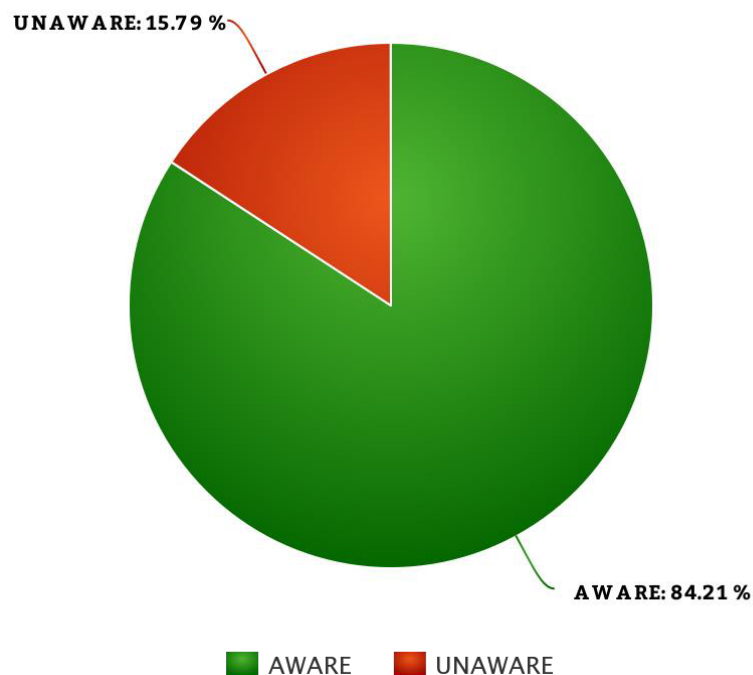

FIGURE 8: PUBLIC SECTOR- AWARENESS ABOUT SEXUAL HARRASSMENT COMMITTEE AT THE

WORKPLACE

82.14% of private sector employees were aware of the presence of sexual harassment committee at the workplace while 17.86% showed unawareness regarding the existence or logistics around the workplace sexual harassment committee. Keeping in mind the focus on sexual harassment in this thesis, the discussion centred on awareness about the official mechanism in place for dealing with cases of sexual harassment in their respective organisations. Although, it was mentioned by several participants that for other kind of workplace tiffs or grievances with colleagues and sometimes in cases of inappropriate behaviour, different approaches such as mutually dissolving an issue after informal interaction between the affected parties, involving the department head or HR to solve dispute were also commonly adopted methods. 84.21%of public sector employees showed awareness about sexual harassment committees in their workplaces while 15.79 % were not aware. Organisations both in public and private sector where the number of employees is no more than 30-40 have issues relating to how sexual harassment is handled. A participant with experience within both sectors commented, *"With small scale companies, it's not very official... the structure... for grievances they were addressed mostly informally for whatever reasons. There was no official protocol, it was largely discussed informally and for that matter there was no formal or informal action taken. To be honest I don't think in my previous company especially which was a private limited people even knew the meaning of harassment... a committee comes at a later stage, first you should understand what harassment means. Nobody understands that neither men neither the female employees. All this healthy work environment, harassment and all are fancy terms for them."*

4.2 f) Finding 6: Efforts by public and private sector on sexual harassment awareness

PRIVATE SECTOR- EFFORTS ON SEXUAL HARASSMENT AWARENESS
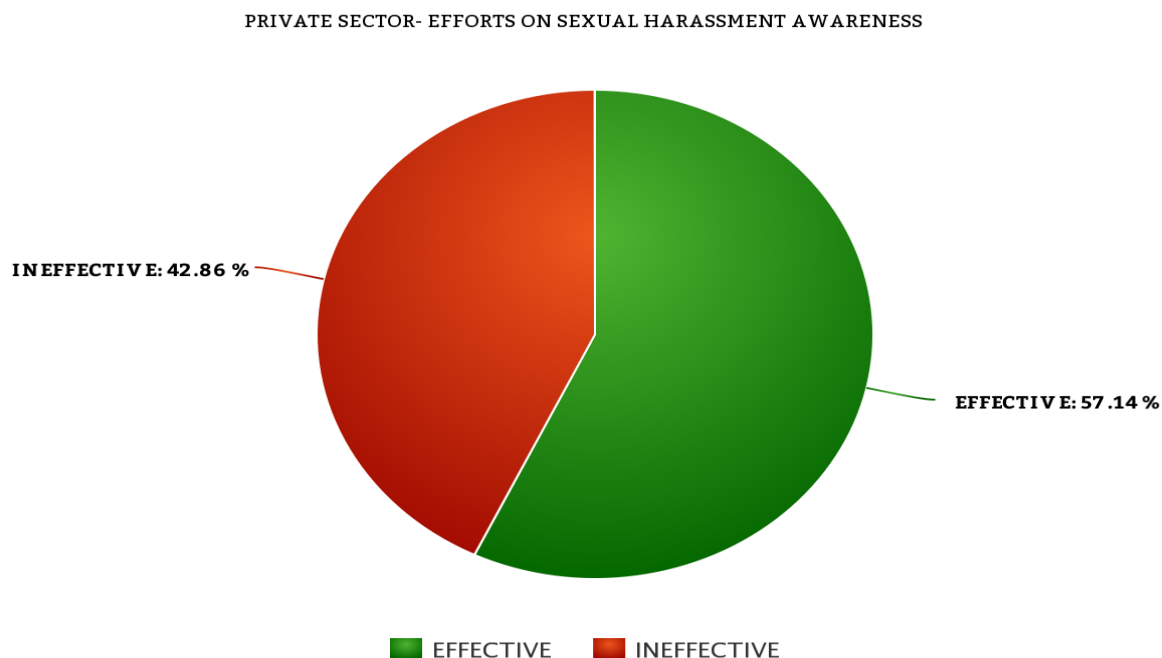

INEFFECTIVE: 42.86 %

EFFECTIVE: 57.14 %

■ EFFECTIVE   ■ INEFFECTIVE

FIGURE 9: PRIVATE SECTOR- EFFORTS ON SEXUAL HARRASSMENT AWARENESS

PUBLIC SECTOR- EFFORTS ON SEXUAL HARASSMENT AWARENESS

EFFORTS UNNECESSARY: 10.53 %

EFFECTIVE: 52.63 %

INEFFECTIVE: 36.84 %

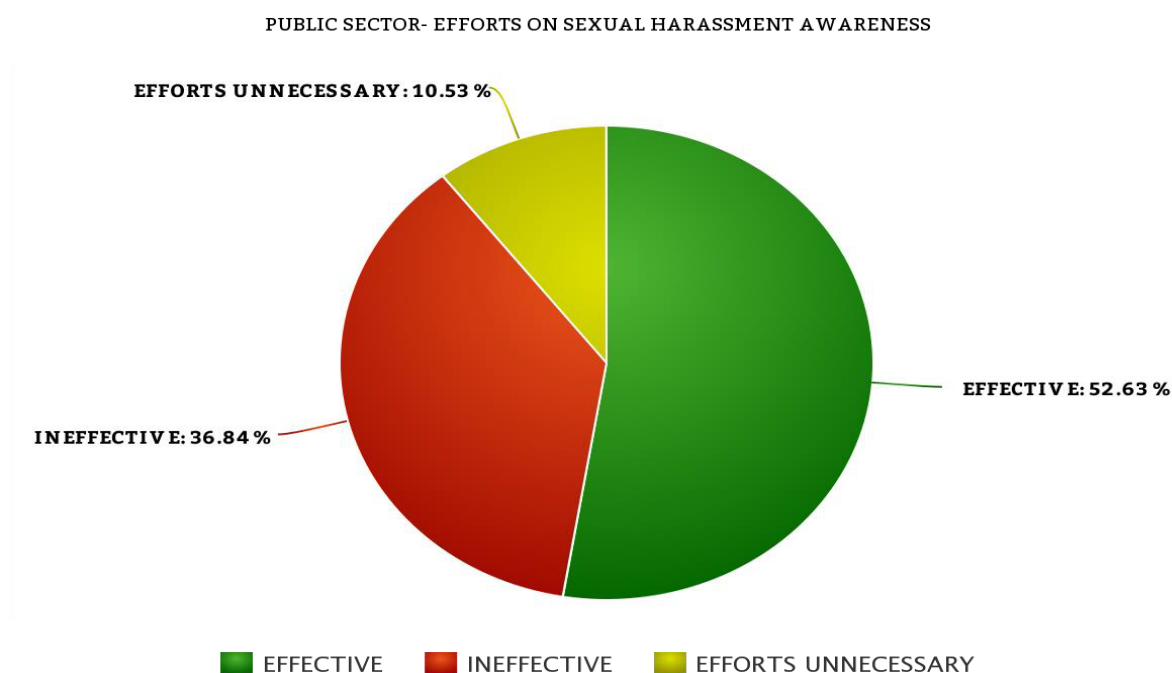■ EFFECTIVE   ■ INEFFECTIVE   ■ EFFORTS UNNECESSARY

FIGURE 10: PUBLIC SECTOR- EFFORTS ON SEXUAL HARRASSMENT AWARENESS

57.14 % private sector participants believed that their organisation had been effectively and continuously addressing the issue of inappropriate behaviour at the workplace and had been keeping the discussion on the subject active among their staff. The process in place for increasing awareness and for the education of the employees includes periodic emails on the issue and organisation of workshops. 42.86% believed that these efforts by their organisations had been largely ineffective and had not accomplished anything noteworthy. 52.63% of public sector participants believed that their organisations had made substantial efforts to initiate discussions and awareness in the workplace in the form of regular workshops by experts on the subject while 10.53 % believed that any attempts to spread awareness on this subject were unnecessary in the first place. One public sector employee said, *"I have not observed any distinctive difference or any kind of big change here after the committee was established... I mean what we have here this is a positive space... we can handle issues here individually and tell the person that 'listen I don't like this'"* 36.84% believed that these efforts by their organisations were unsuccessful as participation in workshops etc. was treated as a chore and not taken seriously by most.

Out of the sample, 54% respondents agreed that efforts to spread awareness and prevent sexual harassment at the workplaces had only come into force at their organisations since 2013 after amendments were made through the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013 under the Vishaka guidelines and that prior to this the attitude of their organisations had been lacklustre towards this issue. As stated by one of the participants, *"It was 2013 right when this act was introduced...I am surprised to even learn and shocked that the law*

took so many years and that an act has only been passed in 2013. That also with the understanding that women should not be made to feel uncomfortable at work. I mean this understanding came so late. The issue I was telling you about... that incident happened before this law thing and had a committee been in place at that time then I would have complained".

4.2 g) Finding 7: Observations of participants with work experience in public and private sectors

50% participants in this sample with experience in both sectors changed their jobs from private to public sector companies citing long work hours, hectic and stressful schedule, unsatisfactory/unhealthy work environment and low job security as the reasons. 33.33% of participants said that after gaining work experience in both sectors they preferred working for the public sector as they found the working conditions to be more conducive towards them maintaining a healthy work-life balance. One participant who had changed jobs said of their private sector job, *"It was not what I thought it would be…HR made it seem more bearable that it is."* Another participant who changed from private sector to freelancing said, *"I think it has been the work culture. It has been the work culture challenges. It is also the profession which is very demanding because you might be sitting at one place…you do not have your day planned. That's the problem. It is very uncertain. It's very…how do I express it…its very ambiguous. I might be thinking that today I should be done by 8 but when I am sitting at my desk at 6'O clock, I might be having something coming in from the client which has to be closed tonight. So then I have to make it to COB which is closure of business which is may be 1 or 2. So that's why people especially women do not feel the stability which is the missing factor with the profession."* Another who made the change from private to public sector said, *"Earlier when I was in non-banking financial sector, it was because I was doing my English honours. I had a Commerce background but not a very major one. So there I learnt from scratch, everything. I joined as a, basically as an executive and throughout, after 1-1 and a half year I got promoted and when I quit that job I was at*

Assistant Manager level. So it was a challenging job, at corporate level any job is competitive and very time consuming and it was challenging. At each and every point."

Comparing their experience in both sectors, one participant said, *"I feel that you know compared to the public sector there is much more pressure, kind of an extended work routine in the private sector because I feel that public sector has certain rules and regulations in terms of initially how do work timings go like there's a particular time like a 9 to 5 job. In private sector more pressure is there because most of the population is driven towards the private sector because of you could say better benefits or better salary. There's a chance of earning growth as compared to the public sector. So people are more interested because at the end of the day you when you work you work for your own growth for career and salary. That is one of the most attractive reasons why people go for private sector. I think public sector is organised in a more orderly manner, you know how things work when you enter a public sector organisation. Private sector at the end of the day it's too much of rush and too much of workload. It's very fast paced. You need to be fast if you want to adjust. My current job in this organisation[6] it's more relaxing and I know it'll be till a certain point of time. I know when I will be going home. After my day is over I can go home and relax. There are issues in this sector too related to my growth and I sometimes feel too comfortable... you need daily goals to grow but I prefer this over private sector."*

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[6] Public Sector

4.2 h) Finding 8: from a legal standpoint

During this field study, I interviewed 3 legal experts to gain insights on sexual harassment in the workplace and its treatment by both sectors. Although all 3 added unique insights on this matter, one of the lawyers that I interviewed had extensive experience with cases of sexual harassment at the workplace as she served as an external panel member in sexual harassment committees at various organisations dealing with cases from both public and private sector. In this capacity, the legal expert on the subject has presided over 284 cases of sexual harassment in the workplace. In this section, I explicate her discernment of sexual harassment in the public and private sector. Explaining some of the steps involved when a sexual harassment case is being investigated by a committee, she said, *"I am not doing these investigations alone, we are also taking help from investigators of which they submit a proper report. You are going through the phone records, you are going through the emails, you are going through the pictures. There is a proper investigation. There is a detective which is hired."* In her experience, out of the 284 cases, 90% of cases handled had been from private sector organisations, which also includes cases that could not be substantiated in the end. A considerable number of the cases could not be called "genuine cases of sexual harassment" due to a lack of understanding on the complainer's part on what sexual harassment constitutes or what the committee stands for. Most of these cases included dubious complaints, one such example is a complaint where a comment was made on the bright colour of the outfit of one colleague by a fellow colleague or other disagreements between co-workers that were not under the purview of sexual harassment. Noting lack of clarity as the main cause

of disputable complaints that could not be treated as sexual harassment by the appropriate committees, other unsubstantiated cases mentioned had been false complaints of harassment aimed as a spear campaign against a person or other such motivations. Discussing the distinctively high number of official registered cases of sexual harassment in the private sector, one of the main causes as already mentioned is the lack of a uniform definition or understanding of sexual harassment at the workplace not only across private sector as a whole but within companies too. This deficit in understanding adds to the confusion between sexual harassment and other forms of work harassment. The *"Private sector has teething problems in terms of implementation but the major concern is that they're not able to identify that this is harassment and this is not harassment"* said the expert. Further reasons for high number of cases in private sector are easy access and lack of accountability. In the experience of the legal expert, private sector employees display the same take charge, expeditious attitude while dealing with perceived transgressions; sexual harassment or otherwise, that emboldens them during management of work deadlines. She said, *"I think it has more to do with the accessibility of the program. If there is a POSH[7] committee, the accessibility and frequency is more in the private sector, reason being that in public sector if you and I are X and Y and we are having a conversation and I do not like any part of your conversation , I would not immediately go up and start fighting about it. In the private sector the accessibility to suddenly go to a committee or write an email is more. The public servant or the public sector people are more, are a little laid back in terms of the repercussions that it's going to have. The private sector is more in terms that there is something which has happened with me and I need to vent it, I need*

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[7] The Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013 ("POSH Act")

*to complain so it's the accessibility of the str*ucture or the program which is existing."
This approach is encouraged by their employers. This was reflected in one of the cases handled by the legal expert where the company involved encouraged the committee to close a case of sexual harassment at the earliest and administered a month long leave to the complainant even before the investigation was finished. The departmental mangers or immediate supervisors of the accused and the complainant bear responsibility in cases of sexual harassment and are tasked with coordinating with their respective sexual harassment committees. They are under considerable pressure from their organisations to resolve these cases in a speedy manner. This pressure can act as an impediment in the way of a thorough investigation and attainment of justice. As put across by the legal professional, *"It's a gun on the head of the person who is running the workplace so if there is a complaint you have to action it even if you close it you need to take an action."* The idea on the part of the organisation is to tick boxes on their checklist. They have committees and it should be exhibited that the committee is doing their job and closing cases, and so the chances of the investigative process becoming compromised are increased. One major factor contributing further to the hastiness of this process is lack of accountability. After a sexual harassment complaint is dealt with and a case is investigated and closed in a private sector organisation regardless of its conclusion, the record of it becomes irrelevant. Most of these case files are either lost or expunged after closure and so if a person makes a false complaint, they can just change their jobs and start afresh in a new organisation. As said by the expert, *"The best way to get rid of accountability is change your organisation."* Their record does not follow them. In the aftermath of a case, the accountability is little to none for an accuser and the career prospects are unaffected

to a large extent. Since there are generally no repercussions one doesn't have to give serious thought to the fallout.

Whilst discussing cases where sexual harassment had taken place in private sector, the legal expert noted a change in approach on the part of the organisations where the accused had been a senior official in the company. She said, *"If there is one organisation that is working for profit vs. an organisation for policy making, so once you're in a profit making company in terms of job satisfaction, in terms of working lifestyle, in terms of work-life balance, all that takes a backseat."* In the aforesaid cases their approach had been one of procrastination. With few exceptions, private sector mainly consists of either goal oriented revenue making companies or revenue generating profit making companies. Cases where the accused had significant contribution in the commercial interests of the organisation, the swift approach of resolving and shutting cases had not been apparent by the companies involved. Referring to one such case, the legal expert mentioned a legal matter of sexual harassment where the accused is a very senior official in a multinational company and despite evidence of said harassment; the case has been continuing for years with the accused still employed and the matter has now moved to court remaining unsolved. Detailing the approach taken, she said *"I had the luck of reading her file because it came to us, so I have been doing that matter though it is highly confidential but in terms of procedure and in terms of the response that she got at the stature where she was only one level down from the person who harassed her, I was very surprised by the procedure adopted. It was absolutely biased; it was mostly in terms of the commercial interests of the company..."*

The approach of public sector employees and their organisations while dealing with sexual harassment at the workplace is different from private sector. Filing a complaint to the sexual harassment committee in a public sector organisation is an arduous process especially where accountability is concerned. Once a case is dealt with, the records do not disappear, they stay in a person's file even if they transfer jobs within the sector. There is a paper trail. There is a sense of gravity and seriousness associated with this process that carries ramifications for the careers of those involved. About this procedure, the legal expert said, *"In public sector people understand there is a proper written process which is being kept somewhere in your file. That's the seriousness of the procedure. The seriousness of the procedure in terms of the private sector is nothing. It's just a file. I have been carrying out investigations. I for a fact know that if this person leaves the organisation, this file is going to get shut and destroyed after few years so there's no accountability. But someone who takes over your work in public sector would be able to see your file and see there was something like this. You are held accountable for the complaint you are making."* There's long term accountability if one makes a complaint, and therefore, if two people have an unpleasant encounter in a public sector organisation, harassment or otherwise, their first instinct is not to approach the concerned committee or a higher authority. As per the legal expert, *"In private sector it is a peer compulsion pressure now that if something like this is going on you should go and report it. You would not apply your brain but for a public sector person that would mean an uphill charge."* Public sector employees are more likely to opt for informal means conflict resolution in case of a dispute. This approach is emulated in cases of sexual harassment as well. The career progression chart of a public sector employee is a slow one shaped by unaltered rigid rules and structure in place since long and so a

public sector employee is less inclined to hinder the already sluggish advancement of their career path in an organisation. Image and the reputation associated with working for a government sector organisation also bears weight on the decision of going through official channels in case of disputes, especially in matters involving sexual harassment. As per the legal expert, *"As far as public servants were concerned, they were aware but there was some denial in per se the acceptance that this act applies to them. The reason for that is that they feel as a government official there is some kind of a shelter for them. The feeling is that the same rules don't apply to them that is how it comes across.*

Deliberating upon problems associated with public sector while presiding over cases of sexual harassment, the legal professional points out issues of lack of transparency and administrative hurdles. In many instances where the legal expert was investigating a case of sexual harassment, there was no cross examination of the complainant. Questionnaires were provided to those who made a complaint and they provided written testimonies to the committee. This inhibited the inquiries and left room for errors related to misinterpretation of testimonies and inadequate narration.

Conferring the current situation of public and private sector, the legal expert points out that while knowledge and exposure to what is sexual harassment and the mechanisms in place to handle it is almost on the same level in both sectors, but their reaction to it, take on it and treatment of it differs. The approach to sexual harassment varies across sectors and organisations in both fields remain affected from problems that are procedural, issues of transparency, accountability etc. Another matter of contention especially in private sector is growing cases of misuse of the existing sexual

harassment in the workplace law and using it make threats as well as false cases primarily towards men by women for a range of personal and professional reasons. The other two legal experts that I spoke with corroborated this phenomenon of rise in threats and false complaints and pointed out to the lack of system in place to prevent this from happening. False complaints even after proven so can have chronic consequences for the reputation, social standing and mental health of the accused, an aspect that remains largely ignored according to all legal professionals interviewed during this field study.

In the next chapter titled 'Implications', I explain what the findings in this chapter mean in the context of this thesis. This encompasses findings after interviewing public and private sector employees in addition to the findings uncovered while speaking with legal experts.

CHAPTER 5 – IMPLICATIONS

This chapter discusses findings detailed in the previous chapter, what it all means and how it provides evidence for the hypothesis of this thesis in addition to fulfilling its objectives.

In the 'Data Discussion' chapter, public sector as described by the majority of employees of public sector organisations that took part in this study is traditional and conservative in the way that it operates. Its structure is rigid and rules, formalities and procedures that have been in place since long take precedence. These characteristics dominate the work experience of public sector employees. This is in conjunction with studies on the work culture of public sector. Studies by Mathur et al. (1996), Agarwal and Tyagi (2010) and Perry & Rainey (1988) associate stability and predictability with public sector and emphasise on the presence of formal hierarchies and a traditional mode of management in this sector. The same studies also assign openness, experimentation, individuality and autonomy as characteristics of private sector. Private sector organisations participants in this study have described their sector with similar terms highlighting the tumultuous nature of work culture by stating the stressful, open, competitive, profit-driven and political nature of their work environments. Therefore, a clear distinction can be made between the two sectors based on their work cultures and their objectives i.e. public sector is State or Central government owned with the aim of providing services and welfare to the public and private sector is privately owned and profit driven.

The distinction between public and private sector has been made clear with respect to their structure, goals and work environments, other findings focus on exploring aspects related to gender inequality. Some of these findings are:

Findings	Public Sector	Private Sector
Awareness about incidences of sexual harassment and discriminatory practices at the workplace	Aware –25.71 % Unaware- 72.29% Hearsay- 3%	Aware –57.14 % Unaware-22.86% Hearsay- 20%
Awareness about workplace sexual harassment committees	Aware- 84.21% Unaware- 15.79%	Aware- 82.14% Unaware- 17.86%
Efforts by sector on sexual harassment awareness	Effective- 52.63% Ineffective- 36.84% Efforts unnecessary- 10.53%	Effective- 57.14% Ineffective- 42.86%
In the experience of legal experts, cases of sexual harassment	Cases – 10%	Cases- 90%

The table above shows that as per this study and in the experience of the legal expert interviewed, statistically, more cases of sexual harassment occur in private sector compared to public sector. Additionally awareness regarding mechanisms in place and the perception of employees about effectiveness of mechanisms to tackle sexual harassment is on the same wavelength across sectors. It is the manifestation of sexual harassment itself that differs significantly. Based on the findings of this study, we can now add to the existing distinctions between both sectors with reference to presence of sexual harassment.

The structural and cultural differences that exist between public and private sectors are linked to the gender inequality that is produced and reproduced in these fields. The characteristics associated with both sectors are reflected in the way that gender inequalities persist in these sectors along with, how the employees and employers handle and react to them. The habitus of both sectors is absorbed by the employees and employers and has a direct impact on how gender inequalities, especially incidents of sexual harassment and inappropriate behaviour unfold from the time they take place to how they are perceived by people, their reactions and the organisations' handling of it. To begin with, the scale of harassment that exists between the two sectors differs vastly. Majority of public sector participants in this study experienced gender inequalities at their workplaces that can be categorised as subtle and covert sexism in the Benokratis and Feagin (1986) scale of sexism, where the sexism is normalised as natural or customary behaviour or it is implemented in hidden and skilful ways to obstruct the professional progress of a woman. On the other hand, the harassment experienced by private sector participants in this sample falls under covert to blatant sexism within the Benokratis and Feagin (1986) sexism scale, with incidents of sexual harassment being of a more extreme nature. 4% of private sector participants changed jobs due to sexual harassment at their workplaces. Alluding to the stressful and intense climate of private sector organisations, 50% participants with experience in both sectors made the transition from private to public sector. Among these 33.33 % said that they preferred working for public sector.

The connection between the habitus of public and private sector and how gender inequalities manifest can be made clear by how the employees and heads of

organisations react to gender inequalities in their organisations. In this thesis, sexual harassment and inappropriate behaviour are used to connote gender inequality. Based on the findings of this thesis, not only more cases of sexual harassment exist in private sector but more extreme cases of harassment, inappropriate behaviour and sexism occur in private sector compared to public sector. The approaches of operation adopted by both sectors namely, a conservative and traditional one for public sector and a fast paced, experimental and open one for private is reflected not just in their work culture and atmosphere but also in the way that they deal with the overall issue of sexual harassment. The legal expert interviewed for this research commented on the rushed, almost chaotic approach of private sector towards shutting cases of sexual harassment compromising the thoroughness of the investigation. As a result, majority of the cases remain unsubstantiated in the end. The idea here is to handle a case as fast as one would handle a deadline. This was corroborated by a number of private sector participants that I interviewed who had their complaints handled in an expedited manner with retribution doled out to the persons involved within days without exhaustive investigation into the matters. One participant described an incident with a new male intern who offered her a lift in his car as it was getting late while she was waiting for a cab outside and she politely declined and then he left. About the person involved, the participant said that *"he was pretty much harmless but not completely harmless because I did feel uncomfortable"*. The participant then went to the HR and the accused was terminated immediately and asked not to come to work from the next day. *"I didn't even think my organisation would do something, I honestly wanted a third opinion if I am thinking too much about it."* This is one such example of the private sectors' "shoot first and ask questions later" approach especially

where non- senior staff is concerned. The participant was confused about whether this was inappropriate and if yes then exactly to what degree/scale of inappropriate and wanted to initiate a discussion about it but the response of the management here is questionable and hasty at the very least. This matter was concluded within two days without conducting any investigation. The management isn't the only variable in the private sector with an impulsive attitude towards such instances. Many employees also position the quality of the investigation conducted once a complaint is made low on the priority list. Discussing a case that was brought to the sexual harassment committee, one employee said that *"the HR obviously fired him after the allegations were made"* indicating a lack of concern about whether the accused is actually guilty before completion of the investigation and termination of employment as the only solution. It is a very straightforward process and nuances relating to possible misunderstandings arising due to cultural or other differences are not something that are commonly addressed by the management or the employees.

The same approach though was not displayed in cases where senior officials pertinent to company's financial gains were involved, both in the experience of the legal expert and some people I interviewed. The commonality of this approach when the accused is a senior was confirmed by a HR manager that I interviewed who said, *"I'll tell you, you won't believe the level of …what do I call it…dirty games that go down in HR, right from recruitment to your grievance handling and everything. So, I was also part of grievance handling and there were a couple of cases of women being consultants being harassed offsite, I mean not at our location, at other locations as well. And the kind of discussions that they would have, like 'No we cannot afford to lose this guy, he brings us business, so*

let's just put it on this woman, and let's make her apologise.' I have actually seen cases where women were made to apologise because they were threatened and of course women being afraid for their image, they used to go ahead and apologise. And then soon after quit. I have seen a lot of cases where women had to give up their career just because nobody supported them." Here, profit making which is an essential component of the structure and goal of a private sector company and thus the habitus took precedence over completing an investigation in a just and fair manner. In this regard, we see the dominance of habitus that relates to structure and work culture of an organisation emulated within the handling of the issue of sexual harassment both by the employee and employer. Work culture of an organisation and the structure and rules of an organisation are significant elements that form the habitus of a workplace. This habitus forms an employee's understanding of what their place is in that organisation, how to act and behave and most importantly how they manoeuvre their way around at their workplace. Elements of private sector work culture i.e. the chaotic, rushed, fast paced approach and an important aspect of their structural constitution i.e. profit making are reflected back in how sexual harassment unfolds in private sector through the expeditious approach of the organisation and attitude of the employees along with prioritisation of profit driven agenda in many cases. This consequently affects the investigative process and demonstrates the commanding role of habitus as the driving force behind decisions. Habitus influences the cognition, perception, and reaction of the private sector to sexual harassment which is under the purview of gender inequality and thus, fortifies the production and reproduction of gender inequality at in private sector workplaces in Delhi.

The connection between habitus and gender inequality in public sector is also apparent through the findings in this thesis. The scale of sexual harassment ranges from incidences of oftentimes subtle to covert sexism in the Benokratis and Feagin (1986) sexism scale. These incidents were intimated to the conservative and traditional atmosphere by the public sector participants of this study, and these characteristics are also present in the structure and the way of operation of public sector itself. Image and reputation are important considerations for a public sector employee which is evidenced by the 10.53% of public sector participants in this study questioning the necessity for need of efforts towards sexual harassment awareness at the workplace. The emphasis on procedure, presence of bureaucratic hurdles, and adherence to traditions are commonplace attributes of public sector that are found also in the way that sexual harassment is dealt with both on the part of the employee and employer. To begin with, the very reason for pervasiveness of subtle sexism in the public sector can be alluded to its conservative and traditional atmosphere. Subtle sexism can often go undetected as it is usually well- intentioned, manipulative or even unintentional. Insistence or paying special attention towards norms for propriety, decorum targeted specifically at female employees in an organisation as suggested by public sector participants is a reproduction of the traditional, unchanging, formal and antiquated structure and mode of operation undertaken by public sector enterprises. Attaching stereotypes to jobs and categorising positions in certain fields as more suited to the male workforce was also reported by participants and this comes under the practice of covert sexism. The traditionalist values of public sector are mirrored in the way that their female workforce is perceived and not only restricted to their mode of management that follows long-established rules and procedures. The cohesive attitude

is outmoded and conservative structurally and with regard to work culture. One of the main reasons for there being fewer cases of sexual harassment in the public sector are the long term ramifications attached to filing a sexual harassment complaint. The whole process is very cautious and bureaucratic and the consequences of it add a gravity and seriousness to the procedure that makes the whole mechanism the opposite of chaotic or rushed. There is incentive for employees to reflect, contemplate and analyse the whole situation in case of an incident of inappropriate behaviour before they proceed with a complaint and go through official channels. This is another facet of the bureaucratic structure of public sector that affects the way sexual harassment unfolds in this sector. Problems faced by the legal expert while supervising sexual harassment complaints in public sector were procedural in nature citing lack of cross examination of complainant and provision of written testimonies instead and administrative delays. Again, the mode of management with emphasis on the process and inflexible mechanisms is also visible in public sector's approach towards sexual harassment. Therefore, the traditional and conservative structure as well as work culture of public sector materialises in the practices of subtle and covert sexism, and the cognition, perception and administration of sexual harassment at the workplace.

When looking at the perception, reaction to and handling of sexual harassment in public and private sector, we see time and again that there are certain elements that make repeat appearances. These elements emerge out of the organisational structures and work cultures of the two sectors. These elements in public sector are their traditional and conservative nature that emerges out of the organisational structure of this sector. Rigidity, bureaucracy, administrative and procedural considerations are

elements that emerge out of the work culture of this sector. These elements relating to the organisational structure and work culture are the ones that are reflected in the way that sexual harassment i.e. gender inequality prevails in this sector. It creates dispositions of predominately subtle to covert sexism in the general behaviour of the people driven by traditional gender roles and stereotypes, and an approach towards sexual harassment that is very cautious, ruminative and influenced by procedural concerns. All of this emanates from its traditional structure and work culture. Similarly, in private sector the elements that emerge out of its structure and work culture are its profit driven approach during handling of some cases of sexual harassment, profit making is the major goal of a private sector organisation and a foundation of its structure. This profit making structure of the sector creates a work culture that is chaotic, rushed, competitive, stressful and politically charged. These structural and cultural elements create dispositions which are predominantly covert to blatant sexism in the behaviour of the people in this sector. The attitude towards and handling of sexual harassment emanates out of its fast-paced work culture and is reflected in the expeditious approach of this sector or a commercially motivated agenda in many sexual harassment cases emanating from its profit driven structure. While the culture, ethnicity, history, background, etc. of an individual are all important factors within the habitus we see that in the case of public and private sector it is the elements from the structural and cultural makeup of both sectors that dictate action of the employees and management and create dispositions unique to each sector that create differing scales of sexual harassment and thus gender inequalities in the two sectors. It is the work culture and structure of the organisations that employees take a cue from when it comes to how a case of gender inequality

(sexual harassment) unfolds in an organisation from beginning to the end. The gender inequalities being produced are different in both sectors and so are the approaches adopted to tackle it but the common denominator is the structure and culture across sectors and it is the driving force. Therefore, I surmise that within habitus of the public and private sectors, organisational structure and work culture are the central components.

The habitus within an organisation that guides an employee about how to behave and navigate their way around a place of work is strengthened by the illusio. The illusio is their visceral belief that they must participate in the game that is taking place in their field (Lupu & Empson, 2015). Here the fields are public and private sectors of work in Delhi. One example where we see the illusio at work and its potency to the extent that employees do not even realise that they follow certain dispositions without question is in the private sector. It becomes second nature to accept things the way they are and to not question them. Commercial gain is a priority in private sector and this is evidenced during handling of cases of sexual harassment against people in senior management. While referring to one of those cases and the general profit driven disposition of the private sector, one of the legal the experts said, *"People don't understand that they are being a victim of the profit making process and they are just a part of the rung."* It is important to understand that when a person joins an organisation and starts to adapt, with the unflinching belief that as part and a member of a field one must follow the process of how things are done, how they've always been done, this symbiotic relationship between habitus and illusio becomes crucial. The strong belief and urge to follow as a member of the field is already there, and this urge

combined with the habitus of the organisation i.e. the prevalent dispositions support, produce and reproduce the cycle of gender inequalities at public and private sector of workplaces in Delhi.

To conclude, I would like to highlight that within the creation of habitus two elements namely: organisational structure and work culture play the preeminent role in shaping the habitus of workplaces of both public and private sector. This is indicated by all the ways that the structural and cultural properties of both sectors are embodied in the collective modus operandi of each field towards sexual harassment at the workplace. The dissimilar scales of sexual harassment in public and private sector are also indicative of this. Thus, habitus is central to the production and reproduction of gender inequalities in the public and private sector of work in Delhi.

In the last chapter of this thesis titled 'Conclusion' I reflect upon the takeaways from this research project and discuss suggestions in light of the findings of this thesis.

CHAPTER 6 – CONCLUSION

Gender equality is a subject that has been on the forefront especially since Indian independence in 1947 with the idea of it being vital to a comprehensive model of sustainable development (Sangwan & Thakre, 2018). The roots of gender inequality lie in the differential treatment of men and women where discriminatory and prejudiced behaviour is meted out on the basis of a person's gender especially against women and girls (UNICEF, 2014). Attaching stereotypes to gender roles capacitates sexist behaviour. The understanding of what sexism is and stereotyping gender roles is not an Indian one but a global decipherment. The women's movement in India against gender inequality was experienced by women across communities, states, religions and ethnicities and legislative measure to address this problem affect all.

Gender inequality as a concept or notion is understood on the same wavelength across countries and has unfolds in certain ways regionally depending upon geographical, cultural and political considerations of the particular polity. Why is it that in India with its shared history of gender related struggles and movements and considering the basic understanding of it amongst populace relating to stereotypical and prejudiced perception of the sexes, that sexual harassment at the workplace unfurls so differently between sectors? Based on the findings of this research, the answer is habitus. Habitus is central to which gender inequality is able to sustain itself within the field. Habitus is comprised of a person's dispositions that guide them make their way around a field. Here, there are two fields, the public and private sector. Now, while there are many factors both internal and external including a person's past, history, culture,

community etc., that shape their dispositions, I argue that in the public and private workplaces in India it is two elements within the habitus which are work culture/organisational culture and organisational structure that are the assertive components. The work culture of an organisation includes the ideologies, principles, values, beliefs and attitudes of employees that create its culture (Haines, 2000). Culture is something that can also be felt through expectation of behaviour placed upon employees (Saxena & Shah, 2008). When I refer to the structure of an organisation, its ownership and goal, i.e. government or state owned with provision of services and welfare for public sector and, private ownership by an individual or group of individuals with profit making for private sector are cogent. According to the findings of this study, the scale of sexual harassment is more extreme in private sector with more complaints of blatant sexual harassment with an attitude and approach towards sexual harassment that lacks reflection and accountability and is rushed, chaotic, and profit-oriented. All these are attributes also displayed in its for-profit structure and high pressure, fast-paced, competitive and political work culture/environment. Employees take their cue from these characteristics and these factors become the driving force of the habitus of their workplaces. The features associated with work culture, structure and the general mode of management of private sector have been confirmed by the participants of this study but also in other studies that look independently into the dominant characteristics of work culture in private sector. This study connects these features with attitudes towards sexual harassment in the private sector. Similarly, in public sector, its traditional and conservative structure and mode of management dominated by rigidity, formality and bureaucracy is evident in its approach towards sexual harassment. The whole process

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from the time that an incident takes place is forethoughtful, cautious, prolonged and laced with administrative and procedural concerns especially when a complaint is under review of the sexual harassment committee.

The habitus of public and private sectors also affects the scale of sexual harassment in both sectors. In public sector, with an emphasis on formality and tradition, the perception of its female workforce is altered. This is evident in instances within this study where almost old fashioned views and standards relating to conduct, propriety and reputability are imposed specifically on female employees. This mirrors their unchanging, rigid and long established structure of rules and regulations. In private sector, the culture is one of openness and experimentation and a work environment that takes a lot out if its employees due to its pressure-driven, demanding and stressful nature. An overwhelming majority in the sample of this study mentioned requirement of late stays at the workplace due to the sheer workload. It can be inferred from the nature of the work environment of private sector and its profit based orientation that is given priority, that there is more of an opportunity for inappropriate behaviour to take place due to the general turbulent substratum that its culture and structure relies on. A high stress, unregulated tumultuous workplace with severe profit based goals that can possibly compromise an individual's mental faculties is bound to incite negative and irrational impulses in those involved. Although there are individual psychological, cultural and other variants that can make one person more susceptible towards acting on negative impulses, the role of the facilitator played by structural and cultural elements within an organisation and thus, the habitus cannot be overlooked.

Based on the results of this study, dominant components with the habitus i.e. work culture and organisational structure converge to create a habitus that institutes behavioural dispositions within employees that are unique to public and private sectors. The habitus/dispositions created are how people navigate their way around their workplaces and in the case of the two sectors; gender inequalities are produced that differ sector-wise with regard to their scale. Sexual harassment is used to denote gender inequality in this research and along with the scale of sexual harassment, the approach and reaction to sexual harassment also differs in both fields. What is absent within this interplay between structures and cultures within the fields of public and private sectors a code of conduct. A code of conduct may exist within the formal structure of an organisation in the form of a document but it is commonly not known and discussed among employees. A common theme across my interactions with participants was the dearth of information exchange initiated by organisations detailing what is expected behaviour wise from employees especially when they first join a workplace. While many organisations private or public conduct orientations, these pertain to familiarising the new worker with the structure i.e. the departments and addressing logistical concerns of employees. A new member learns the work culture and habitus of an organisation by observation and becoming a part of it over time. Induction of a code of conduct into the general awareness of workers in an organisation is a start and could have positive long term results. Presently, a code of conduct, behaviour, social codes and protocol are rarely discussed subjects in the everyday life of an average public/private sector employee. The fact that it is ignored by managers and other supervisors in organisations is indicative of its lack of importance and low priority in their purview and thus exhibits to the workforce that

behaviour regulation is negligible. The need for a uniform understanding of sexual harassment and appropriate behaviour within an organisation if not across sector has been stressed by the legal expert interviewed as well and this is very relevant to code of conduct. Sexual harassment at the workplace has become a subject of discussion in India and globally at the moment but introduction of guidelines regarding conduct as a preventive measure is not a common practice within organisations of this study. With the passage of time, employees of an organisation are more inclined to follow its habitus without resistance and with a strong commitment. They do this because of the illusio which is their visceral belief that they must participate in the game that is taking place in their field (Lupu & Empson, 2015). This guides them to support this cycle of reproduction of gender inequality even when the reasons of why they support this cycle are not clear to them. As the illusio and the habitus work together to continue this course, it becomes pertinent to instil components in this apparatus that could potentially modify the direction of this course. A uniform code of conduct that is an important part of a person's career in the introductory phase and during their tenure in an organisation detailing the behavioural expectations, social conduct and all things concerning inappropriate behaviour and sexual harassment shows promise as a deterrent and can affect the relationship between illusio and habitus. In fact, the illusio itself could be adjusted to include the idea of appropriate conduct at the workplace as something that is also a crucial part of the game they participate in so unquestionably. This can only be made possible if the organisations take strong initiative in melding behaviour codes within their systems. As stated by one of the participants who has made recommendations to the sexual harassment committee at the workplace, *"One of the things we had also pointed out is that we need something like*

a document, we do have a sexual harassment policy on the website which was put up after our report and I don't know if this has happened yet, but when new people join, along with other documents they sign they should sign like you sign an anti-ragging affidavit[8] when you join college, you sign a zero tolerance policy against harassment." Here it is pertinent that the organisation take the initiative to enforce behavioural codes. Therefore, given time and the right treatment, emphasis on a code of conduct and its inclusion as a commonplace, customary practice in the system of organisations across sectors has the potential of it inculcating itself within the habitus of these fields and amending the dispositions within.

Another concern referred to by legal experts interviewed during this study is the misuse of the sexual harassment act as a way to settle scores at the workplace and unintentional misuses arising from lack of clarity regarding what constitutes sexual harassment. This was found to be more common in the private sector. More efforts are required of organisations to counter and discourage this and again, preventive measures in the form of discussions about code of conduct, increased workshops with the aim of clarification about unacceptable behaviour etc. is a good start towards addressing these concerns.

The Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013 under the Vishaka guidelines is a new initiative. In this sample 54% participants agreed that until 2013 sexual harassment at the workplace has been a neglected issue. It is only in the last 5-6 years that organisations across sectors have

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[8] Ragging is defined as a form of damaging interaction between individuals, especially students, with the intent to insult/intimidate. It comes very close to bullying or hazing and often involves humiliation and abuse. This is where the anti-ragging affidavit comes into place. Many educational institutions in India enforce rules which mandate that every person studying/ working with them to sign an affidavit stating that they will not carry out the act of ragging within the premises of the institution.

really begun and accelerated their attempts to get ahead of this. With the implementation of this relatively new law, organisations are still finding their footing around this issue. A one dimensional approach to tackle a complicated problem is implausible. One law cannot be implemented the same way with the aim of achieving the same results between two sectors that have a different make up. It is imperative that organisations in public and private sector make modifications and acclimate to the law in such a way that the issue is tackled without encountering the problems it does at present. The problems demonstrated by both sectors are different to one another emerging out of their habitus. Public sector's excess rigidity and private sector's extraneous malleability interfere with the perception, understanding, reaction to and handling of sexual harassment. A healthy balance with the appropriate amount of flexibility and regulations when needed so that investigations of sexual harassment are not compromised is required. Balance between flexibility and strict regulations works also as a preventive measure to improve work cultures of companies within sectors. During the interviews, participants who are currently working in mixed organisations that share features of both public and private sector discussed merits of the work culture of their workplaces. Participants with experience in Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) and academic think tanks that have private ownerships but work towards welfare, policy making, research etc. conferred how they enjoy a healthy and balanced work environment that has positive elements from both sectors. They appreciate the appropriately expeditious nature of their day to day tasks without having to overwork and exhaust themselves while avoiding tediousness and monotony. The work culture is regulated with insistence on formalities and hierarchy without the interference of said formalities and bureaucratic and administrative

hurdles in their overall career progression. It is swift as well as cautious in circumstances and mechanisms where those qualities are most required. In NGOs and academic think tanks despite private ownerships, a lot of work with government agencies is involved and many retired government officials end up joining these organisations, as a result of which these organisations embody many characteristics from both public and private sector and thus, display a higher level of work satisfaction among employees.

The cycle of gender inequality i.e. sexual harassment is supplemented within fields of public and private sector due to their habitus that has variants unique to each sector stimulating this reproduction. At present, public and private sectors find themselves on shaky grounds with a new law of sexual harassment at the workplace and an approach to control sexual harassment that is lacking. It does not take into account the diacritic constructions of each sector and thus ignores the special needs of each field. Going forward, the research on this subject needs to be multidimensional. A view that acknowledges the unique structural and cultural differences, thus the habitus and their distinctive impacts on public and private sector while looking into gender inequality is needed.

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