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English Essay Test 2

1. Workplace Harassment: Causes and Way Forward.

Outline

i) Introduction

1) The provision of dignity to both men and women in Islam

2) Defining Gender-Based Violence and its types

3) Thesis Statement: There are various causes of workplace harassment that include social and economic factors; hence, certain measures such as establishment of legal mechanisms and awareness programs are crucial for redressal of this issue.

ii) Causes of Workplace harassment

1) The ingrained patriarchal system in the social fabric

- the cultural concept of women as subordinate class

- Lack of accountability of the perpetrators

2) Economic vulnerability of women

- prevailing poverty and unemployment
- threat to promotional opportunities

iii) Way forward in the address of Workplace harassment

1) Legal Mechanism and social education

- establishment and implication of legal and policy framework
- social awareness and harassment-prevention mechanism. drives for both men and women

Essay

During the Last Sermon of Prophet (SAW), the element of dignity for mankind was strongly emphasized. Unfortunately, in Pakistan, this lesson failed to properly become a part of the social structure. One prominent reason is the prevalent Gender-Based Violence in the

country. The Global Gender Gap has ^{ranked} Pakistan at the very bottom. Reports of acid attack, honour killing, economic violence and sexual harassment are widespread. Among these issues, workplace harassment have become gravely concerning amidst rising labour force participation of women. Many factors are contributing to the rising workplace harassment such as ^{the} deeply embedded patriarchal values and the economic vulnerability of women. Hence, the problem must be promptly controlled through establishment of robust legal and regulatory mechanism and initiation of social awareness programs on workplace harassment, targetting both men and women. This will ensure that women feel safe while observing their professional duties.

To begin with, the entrenched patriarchal values in the society of Pakistan are one of the major reasons for workplace harassment.

Women are perceived as second class citizens whose main purpose is to serve men. The society view them as emotionally weak and vulnerable, exposing them to sheer exploitation. According to ~~psychoanal~~ psychoanalytical feminist Chodrow, these values are transmitted by mother to their children during ^{their} growing stages. Hence, it creates an environment where a woman eventually faces some form of sexual, physical or psychological assault from their male colleagues. Moreover, there is an absence in accountability of the criminal. This is due to society pressure, resulting in under reporting of the crime and low conviction. According to classical sociologist Cesare Lombroso, presence of punishment deters a criminal from committing crime. However, lack of justice further emboldens a person to engage in harassment. Therefore, the social structure of Pakistan and lack of accountability creates optimal grounds for workplace harassment.

Economic vulnerability of women is another major component for persisting harassment in working environments. Pakistan faces serious economic instability. The proportion of people below poverty rate has risen to 45% with majority of women. Inflation has averaged 24% for the last five years. Unemployment prevails and wage gap is prevalent among female labour force. Most of this has created over-dependence of women on the organisations they work in. Moreover, women have fewer opportunities of promotion. Most of the upper management is composed of men. These factors deeply expose the position of women in work, resulting in harassment. They fear losing their jobs or any chances of promotions. Betty Friedan, organizer of Second Wave of Feminism, termed the dominance of male in top management positions as an 'invisible glass ceiling' for women. They are discouraged or prevented from securing top influential professional

position. Hence, they lack any real representation to voice their concerns of harassment, exacerbated by prevailing poverty in the country.

The issue of workplace harassment could be effectively addressed by forming a legal and regulatory mechanism and through social awareness campaigns. Although Pakistan has established Protection Against Harassment of Women at the Workplace Act, 2010, gaps persist in implementation. First, Criminal Justice System in harassment cases should be improved. Gender sensitive training, separate courts for Gender-Based Violence cases, witness protection and due diligence in investigation must be ensured. Second, the state should establish a standardized anti-harassment policy framework for all the public and private organizations that should be mandated, and monitored. This will ensure deterrence and for the perpetrators and swift justice for the victims. Moreover, social awareness drives should

be initiated. Men should be educated regarding the sensitivity of this problem. ~~Women~~ Proper guidance on prevention and report of harassment will result in the creation of a safe and secure workplace for women. Also, people can be encouraged to voice their concerns of harassment without fear of retribution. A safe and sound working environment will encourage ~~or~~ more women to participate in labour force, increasing the GDP of the country.