

# SHe-BOX' (Sexual Harassment Electronic Box): Social and technological innovation with reference to safe workplace.

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## **Abstract**

*Sexual Harassment electronic Box is a portal of online complaint Management System for women who are working in the public and private organizations to register complaints of sexual harassment at working place. In July 2017, the minister for women and child development, Smt. Maneka Sanjay Gandhi launched this online portal. As per enactment of the Protection of Women from Sexual Harassment at Workplace Prevention Prohibition and Redressal Act (The SH Act), 2013 workplace should be safe and secure and it should be free from sexual harassment. Women in India are vulnerable to the fear of being avoided socially when they complain against sexual harassment. SHe-Box is a step in the right direction to challenge this situation and to finally give the Indian working women the fair status and support they deserve.*

**Keywords:** *Sexual Harassment Electronic Box (SHe-BOX), Ministry of Women and Child Development (MWCD), Sexual Harassment Act, 2013, workplace*

## **INTRODUCTION**

In Last year, the #MeToo campaign (#MeToo trends on social media as women speak up about sexual abuse.) was really eye opener of the world on how deep-rooted and rampant sexual harassment is, and how important it is to report and talk about it [1]. When there is a matter of reporting, Indian woman – typically who is earning barely enough money to make ends meet – may be not even aware that she can complain against of someone regarding sexual harassment. In July 2017 The Minister for Women and Child Development, Smt. Maneka Sanjay Gandhi launched a comprehensive portal of SHe-Box online complaint Management System for women who are working in the public and private organizations [2]. This social and technological innovation is the beginning of a new and progressive era for women in the India. This portal and system could become the crunch point for women encountering sexual harassment at the workplace in India.

## **OBJECTIVES, METHODS AND MATERIALS**

- To find out the society's perception regarding sexual harassment.
- To understand the enactment of Sexual Harassment Act2013.
- To analyze the technical innovation and mechanism of SHe-BOX portal.
- To understand outcomes of SHe-BOX.

Secondary data collected from Government documents, newspaper, published papers, books and internet sources.

## SEXUAL HARASSMENT ACT, 2013

As per enactment of the Protection of Women from Sexual Harassment at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act (the SH Act), 2013 workplace should be safe and secure and it should be free from sexual harassment. This Act covers women who are working both in organized and unorganized sector and establishes a redressal mechanism for registering of their complaints[3]. This Act also denotes “sexual harassment at the workplace” in a complete manner, to cover circumstances of implied or explicit promise or threat to a woman’s employment likelihood or creation of offensive work environment or humiliating treatment, which can affect her health or safety. As per the sexual harassment act any workplaces with more than 10 employees should make an internal complaints committee for receiving complaints of sexual harassment [5]. These Committees will be continuously under pressure to ensure that they execute their responsibility adequately, as they could be monitored.

## NEED OF ‘SHE-BOX’

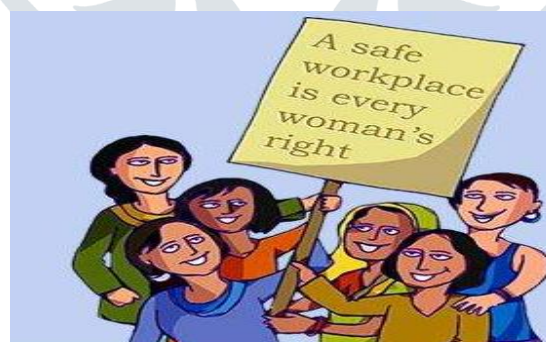
Women in India are vulnerable to the fear of being avoided socially when they complain against sexual harassment. They fear to lose their essential financial income, the adverse reaction at the workplace, and a lot more. As per society’s perception normal Indian woman has long been conditioned to leave the workplace rather than lift a complaint. SHe-Box is a step in the right direction to challenge this status quo and to finally give the Indian working women the fair status and support they deserve.

Data shows that last year only 500 complaints of sexual harassment at the workplace are reported in India, which is extreme lower when it compared to the 27,000 complaints reported in the US[1]. It may be possible that SHe-Box will encourage more women to come forward to name perpetrators and seek justice.

SHe-BOX is a proactive step taken by Ministry of Women and Child Development in the wake of the worldwide social media #MeToo campaign (#MeToo trends on social media as women speak up about sexual abuse) ,where women have related their experience of facing sexual harassment and abuse.

## DETAILS OF SHE-BOX

SHe-Box is an online portal of complaint management system which is launched in July 2017, focusing on filing complaint and inquiring on sexual harassment for female in government sector



<sup>1</sup>Fig. 1: Women’s right

## MECHANISM OF REGISTERING COMPLAINT

SHe-BOX portal provide speedier remedy to women who are facing sexual harassment at workplace. Once a complaint is submitted to the portal, it will directly send to the ICC/LCC of the concern

<sup>1</sup> Ministry of Women and Child Development, Govt of India. (n.d.). Retrieved February 20, 2018, from <http://www.shebox.nic.in>

employer. Through this portal, WCD as well as complainant can monitor the progress of inquiry conducted by the ICC/LCC[4].



<sup>2</sup>Fig.2: Portal of SHe-BOX

Users of SHe-BOX can also interact with Ministry of WCD through this portal. Aadhaar and valid email ID is necessary for registering of complaint [6].

### OUTCOME OF SHE-BOX

- Women employees working in government as well as private departments can now lodge complaints of sexual harassment at work place online and can monitor action being taken on them too.
- Data of SHe-Box will also help the Indian government track the number of incidents and understand the magnitude of the problem.
- Previously a victim could always report to other authorities through a physical document or an email. A portal provides convenience. In addition, the SHe-Box portal is fairly user-friendly.
- Sometimes, offender can harass a lot of victims before they are eventually revealed to the world. In such a condition, SHe-Box should have a facility where a group of victims of the same offender can sue them together as a group, or 'class action'.
- This portal provides placebo effect to society that women have a powerful support and without any hesitation she can complaint any time.

### CONCLUSION

As per society's perception the normal Indian woman has long been forced to be quit at workplace rather than raise a complaint. Enactment of any law or act is a primary step but enforcement of that is a necessary step. Thus SHe-box will become helpful in "effective enforcement" of the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013. SHe-BOX will help to make social and technological innovation in the beginning of a new and progressive era for women in the Indian workforce.

<sup>2</sup> Ministry of Women and Child Development, Govt of India. (n.d.). Retrieved February 22, 2018, from <http://www.shebox.nic.in>

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