



# Unraveling Legal Paradigms for Addressing Sexual Offenses in the Unorganized Sector

Sub theme : Gender Justice, Law and Society

**Name of the Author** : Ms. Sonia Balkrishna Shirodkar, Assistant Professor,  
**Name of the College /University** : VVMs Govind Ramanth Kare College of Law, Margao  
**Email Id** : soniabshirodkar@gmail.com

**Name of the Co-Author** : Mr. Harshad Gurudas Bandodkar, Assistant Professor,  
**Name of the College /University** : VVMs Govind Ramanth Kare College of Law, Margao  
**Email Id** : [harsh1234.hb@gmail.com](mailto:harsh1234.hb@gmail.com)

## Abstract:

The unorganized sectors, a considerable and indispensable part of the global economy, persist to be a place where workforce, particularly women, experience total gender abuse, including sexual persecution. This segment, which includes workers from different areas like domestic, construction, street selling, agriculture, and other informal occupation, affects women excessively by the acts of sexual exploitations in workplaces that are every so often unnoticed and unregulated. These factors, together with the insecure nature of employment in this field, leave workers particularly prone to exploitation and abuse. Gender-based violence and harassment are normalized by societal formation and intensely embedded patriarchal stance, mainly affects the marginalized and rural sector. The application of set of laws is weak in this area due to the impermanent, casual, and fragmented nature of the work culture as well as the nonexistence of formal employer-employee relations. Workers' socioeconomic susceptibility is aggravated further by inefficacy of the legal safeguards reaching the marginalized sector, thus broadening the gap between legislative protections and their execution. In the recent years the gig economy has also seen steep growth, due to flexible work schedule; but numerous gig workers also find themselves in similarly unsafe work setting of the unorganized sector. A specialized approach is desirable to tackle the problems of gender disparity and sexual aggravation in the unorganised economy. While giving casual workers legal privileges is essential, addressing the universal problems to reach out its ground level execution is just as crucial. Decisive components of this consist of legal acquaintance, assistance for better admittance to grievance measures, and persuading a movement in culture towards accountability. Further, all-encompassing advances are necessary, one that integrates community-based development, awareness drives, and locally relevant solutions that permit workers to emphasize their rights and take up step against harassment, in addition to stricter implementation of laws.

**Keywords: Unorganized sector, sexual harassment, sexual offences, marginalized community, Informal employment**

## 1. Introduction :

The unorganized sector is a backbone of the society and important part of the global economic system, as it provides employment to a considerable population of the workforce. The sector has played very important role in strengthening the employment structure. Over the years this sector is part of the main stream economy yet unrecognized, unacknowledged and unaccredited. Their contribution is always neglected, and this sector has been troubled by issues of insecurity, and exploitation. Gender-based violence and harassment are deeply rooted in this sector due to its informality based form of employment, deeply ingrained in societal customary practices, patriarchal outlook, and extensively affected women in marginalized and rural sector. There is absence of formal employer-employee relationships and employment contract, thus resulting in vulnerability of workers affecting their social, economic, financial status. A sexual offense is a serious problem affecting every women in direct or indirect way and unorganized sector is also is not escaping from that. It is a pervasive issue nationally and internationally. It has serious implications for the social and economic well-being of women. The unorganized sector comprises of various different forms of employment ranging from agriculture, domestic labor, street vending, construction, and small-scale manufacturing. women working in the unorganized sector face various forms of exploitation, with sexual offenses being one of the emerging challenges they stumble upon. The unorganized sector being informal in nature has been lacking legal protections, and as they belong to non developed strata of society there is persistent social stigmas which often leave these women vulnerable to sexual harassment and abuse, with almost no resort to justice. The aim of this research is to understand the legal frameworks, explore the challenges, and recommend potential solutions to address the issues of sexual offenses against women in the unorganized sector. This research specifically focuses on the effectiveness of existing laws, their applicability in the unorganized sector, and the obstacles these women face in recourse of justice. It emphasizes the significance of legal reforms, and community-based initiatives to create a safer and more unbiased work environment for women. The research has opted for the combination of doctrinal and empirical study to examine the structural and systemic challenges faced by women in the

unorganized sector. The research through this study aims to propose comprehensive policy to address gender abuse and sexual harassment in unorganized sector

## **2. Background and Significance of the Topic :**

The issue of sexual offenses against women is not new in India, but the unorganized sector has remained an area of concern largely neglected by both policymakers and legal authorities. Approximately 90% of the workforce in India comprises of the unorganized sector including women, many of whom are domestic workers, agricultural laborers, construction workers and migrant workers, who are often subject to exploitation at workplace, low wages, and inadequate legal protections from sexual offenses, including harassment, assault, and exploitation. The significance of the present topic is that in spite of law in place; the sexual offenses against women in the unorganized sector go largely unreported, undetected, or unpunished. Women in this sector are frequently unaware of their rights and lack the resources to seek justice. Since they belong to the economically and financially deprived section of society, they are trapped in condition of economic vulnerability, and dependency, which prevent them from taking help of the legal options. As a result, this research is significant in examining the gaps in the legal framework and the enforcement of laws, with a particular focus on the overlooked unorganized sector. The laws such as the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition, and Redressal) Act, 2013 (POSH Act) and the Indian Penal Code (IPC) [now known as The Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS)] provide a structure to address, prevent and curb sexual offenses. However, these laws in the unorganised sector have not given full justice, due to the lack of formal engagement and the informal structure of the work culture. Considering the vulnerability of women in the unorganized sector and the gap of legal and policy measures to provide remedy, the efficacy of the legal reform is questionable. This research provides a much needed investigation into this pressing issue.

## **3. Objectives of the Research:**

The rationale behind this research is to examine the legal frameworks and challenges surrounding sexual offenses against women in the unorganized sector. The main objectives include:

1. To study the existing legal provisions for addressing sexual offenses against women in the unorganized sector,
2. To assess the effectiveness of these legal provisions in addressing sexual harassment and other sexual offences in the unorganised sector
3. To analyze the key gaps in enforcement and compliance of the legal provisions
4. To understand the grievances of women of the unorganised working sector in seeking justice for sexual offenses.
5. To identify reliable outcomes for uplifting the condition of these women and their reach for legal protections and justice
6. To suggest recommendations for legal reforms, and enhanced law enforcement measures.

#### **4. Scope and Limitations :**

##### **4.1. Scope of the Research:**

This research will focus on sexual offenses against women in the unorganised sector in Goa, with a specific emphasis on the legal frameworks that are intended to address such offenses. The scope will include an analysis of: □ The applicability and limitations of the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition, and Redressal) Act, 2013 (POSH Act), in informal employment. □ The problems faced by women workers in obtaining justice, including ignorance, fear of reprisal, and social shame; □ The role of law enforcement and the legal system in handling sexual offences within the unorganised sector. The research relies primarily on secondary data sources, including legal texts, government reports, and academic literature. Interviews with legal experts, workers, and organizations working with women in the unorganized sector are conducted to gain further insights.

##### **4.2 Limitations of the Research:**

1. The research focus on the unorganised sector in Goa, and the researchers has collected the data from two districts namely, North Goa and South Goa.
2. Additionally, it concentrates more on certain industries (such as domestic work, agriculture, or construction) due to the availability of data.

3. While the research will involve interviews with legal experts and workers, it may be difficult to reach a large sample of unorganized sector workers due to factors such as, the informal nature of their employment.
4. The sensitive cases related to sexual offenses, is restricted, potentially limiting the depth of analysis in certain areas.

By acknowledging these limitations, the research aims to provide a comprehensive overview of the key issues, challenges, and potential solutions for addressing sexual offenses against women in the unorganised sector in Goa. The findings will contribute to the broader effort to improve gender justice and the protection of women in this overlooked sector.

## 5. The Unorganised Sector: An Overview

The unorganised sector, often referred to as the informal sector, plays a critical role in the economy, particularly in developing countries like India. Despite of its contribution to economy, workforce in this sector face unsafe working environment, lack of legal protections, and limited access to social security benefits. This section aims to explore the definition, scope, characteristics, and the economic and social significance of the unorganised sector.

### 5.1. Definition and Scope

The unorganised sector refers to the section of the workforce that works beyond the formal structures of employment. They are not covered under the traditional meaning of workers due to lack of formal work arrangement. Workers in this sector are typically engaged in jobs that do not provide legal safeguards such as wages, employment contracts, benefits, or social security coverage. According to the International Labour Organization (ILO), "*the unorganised sector encompasses self-employed workers, casual laborers, and employees in small enterprises that are not registered with government authorities and do not comply with formal labor regulations*".<sup>1</sup>

The National Commission for Enterprises in the Unorganised Sector (NCEUS) defines the unorganised sector as comprising "*those enterprises or establishments which are not covered under the provisions of*

<sup>1</sup> International Labour Organization, Decent Work and the Informal Economy 4 (Geneva: ILO, 2002).



*the Factories Act, Shops and Establishment Act, or the Industrial Disputes Act.*" These workers typically face inadequate wages, poor working conditions, and a lack of social and economic security. For India, where approximately 90% of the workforce is employed in the unorganized sector, this sector plays an essential role in both economic productivity and job creation, despite being under-regulated and marginalized.<sup>2</sup>

## 5. 2. Characteristics of the Unorganized form of employment

The workforce in the unorganised sector consists of individuals from various demographic backgrounds, including gender, age, caste, and geographic location. The unorganized sector is encompassed with varied characteristics which makes it totally different from the usual structure of employment. The unique characteristics of these are as follows:

### 5.2.1. Insecure Employment Practices

The employment in any sector is based on the usual practice of employment contract and a formal relationship of employer and employee. But the workers in the unorganised sector often work without formal contract. This leads to a very insecure, unstable, and precarious employment conditions. The wages in this sector are typically lower compared to the formal sector, and workers often lack job security. A report by the NCEUS highlights that a large number of workers in this sector do not have access to paid sick leave, health insurance, or other social benefits, making them highly vulnerable to economic shocks.<sup>3</sup> In the context of India, workers in sectors such as domestic work, construction, and agriculture are often paid on a piece-rate or daily wage basis. This agreement not only offers little job security but also limits their access to legal safeguards available to formal sector workers.

### 5.2.2. No employer- employee Relationships

A typical trait of the unorganised sector is the lack of formal employer-employee relationships. Many workers are not covered by labor laws or formal employment contracts. The International Labour

<sup>2</sup> National Commission for Enterprises in the Unorganised Sector, Report on Conditions of Work and Promotion of Livelihoods in the Unorganised Sector 5 (2007).

<sup>3</sup> NCEUS, Report on Conditions of Work and Promotion of Livelihoods in the Unorganised Sector 12-15 (2007).

Organization (ILO) points out that the absence of formal contractual arrangements often leads to exploitation and discrimination.<sup>4</sup>

### 5.2.3. Gender disparity

Women workers in the unorganised sector face additional vulnerabilities due to gender-based bias and violence. This sector being the principal source of livelihood for women, especially in rural and informal occupations such as domestic work, agriculture, and textile production, make them more dependent on the system further making them susceptible to the atrocities. A report by the International Labour Organization (ILO) finds that women in the unorganised sector receive lower wages than men and are more likely to experience exploitation, harassment, and unsafe working conditions.<sup>5</sup> Women workers are considerably in the lowest-paying sectors of the economy, where they often face sexual harassment and abuse. A study by the National Domestic Workers Movement (NDWM) revealed that domestic workers, the majority of whom are women, are often subjected to physical and sexual abuse without any recourse to legal protection.<sup>6</sup>

### 5.2.4. Lack of Skills and Education

The workforce in the unorganised sector often lacks formal education and professional training. As a result, they are typically employed in low-skill jobs, getting less opportunities for improvement and advancement. According to the NCEUS, the majority of workers in the unorganised sector are involved in agricultural labor, casual manual labor, and street vending, all of which require minimal formal education or skills.<sup>7</sup> In India, many unorganised sector workers, particularly those in rural areas, are unable to access formal education and vocational training programs, which further perpetuates the cycle of poverty and exclusion.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>4</sup> International Labour Organization, *Informality and Employment in Developing Economies: A Global View 9* (Geneva: ILO, 2017).

<sup>5</sup> International Labour Organization, *Women and Men in the Informal Economy: A Statistical Picture 21* (Geneva: ILO, 2018).

<sup>6</sup> National Domestic Workers Movement, *Report on Domestic Workers in India: Issues of Rights and Exploitation 6* (2015).

<sup>7</sup> NCEUS, *Report on Conditions of Work and Promotion of Livelihoods in the Unorganised Sector 22* (2007).

<sup>8</sup> A. Das, *Educational Gaps in the Informal Sector Workforce in India 12-14* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2015).

## **6. Sexual Offenses in the Unorganised Sector :**

The unorganised sector, is a sector that employs number of workforce, particularly in developing countries like India, and it is also marked by vulnerabilities, especially concerning sex related offenses. Women in these sector are often subjected to inimitable forms of gender-based violence and sexual harassment. This section in this research paper examines the types of sexual offenses prevalent in the unorganised sector, and explores the factors and reasons that contribute to the occurrence of these particular offenses.

### **6.1. Types of Sexual Offenses Prevalent in the Unorganised Sector**

In this particular sector, sex related offenses can exist in different forms, ranging from more serious crimes like rape to sexual harassment and violence. It becomes challenging to identify, stop, or punish these offences because of the non formal nature of the employment, the absence of legal protection to reach grassroot level, and the isolation of the employees.

#### **6.1.1. Sexual Harassment at the Workplace**

One of the most common types of sexual offence in this sector is sexual harassment. The women from construction, agriculture, and domestic service are suffering sexual atrocities and harassment. As there are no formal workplaces or place to complaint or proper complaint mechanism, employees are frequently violated by their bosses or coworkers, who tend to misuse their position or authority to act inappropriately. Domestic workers are also vulnerable to violence because they work in private houses with little opportunity for social interaction, which makes it simpler for perpetrator to take advantage of their position of authority.

A study conducted by the National Domestic Workers Movement (NDWM) in 2017 found that sexual harassment was a common complaint among unorganized sector workers in India, with many incidents of groping, verbal harassment, and unwanted sexual advances by employers or male family members of employers.

#### **6.1.2. Rape and Attempted Rape**

Rape and attempted rape are serious offenses that occur in the unorganised sector, particularly in industries where workers are isolated or work in unsafe environments. In these environments, women are



often vulnerable to physical violence, including rape, by supervisors, co-workers, or strangers. The unorganised sector's informal nature often means that there are no effective reporting mechanisms or support structures for victims. Fear of retaliation, job loss, or social stigma prevents many women from reporting such incidents. Additionally, the lack of awareness of legal rights and available remedies exacerbates the problem. Migrant women working in urban areas are also, at risk of sexual violence and exploitation in these sectors.

### **6.1.3. Trafficking for Sexual Exploitation**

Trafficking of women for purpose of sexual exploitation which includes prostitution is another serious problem in the unorganised sector. Migrant workers, who may enter in urban areas looking for employment, are mainly susceptible to being trafficked into abusive circumstances.

### **6.1.4. Sexual Violence in Domestic Work**

One of the most informal and gender based industries where women are over-represented is domestic employment. Sexual violence in domestic employment can include rape, sexual assault, and verbal abuse. Because they are frequently alone in private homes, domestic workers are readily abused employers and their relatives. Because they fear losing their jobs or being ashamed by the society, many domestic workers don't report to report such abuse and sometimes are unaware of their rights.

### **6.1.5. Sexual Exploitation in Agriculture and Construction**

Women who work in construction and agriculture are particularly vulnerable to sexual exploitation. These industries, which are mostly unorganised, frequently lack defined procedures for dealing with sexual abuse as well as uniform working conditions. Male coworkers or superiors may sexually harass or abuse agricultural workers, particularly those employed on big farms or in rural locations. Similarly, women who work in construction are susceptible to exploitation, including rape and sexual harassment, because they frequently operate in hazardous environments without the necessary safety gear. These industries are especially characterised by power disparities, where male employees have more authority and women are frequently unwilling to disclose such instances for fear of reprisals.

## 7. Legal Framework and Its Applicability in Addressing Sexual Offenses Against Women in the

### Unorganised Sector

The goal of India's legal system for sexual offences against women is to give victims justice and safety. However, the unorganised sector—which include informal work settings including domestic work, agricultural labour, and casual labor—remains mainly unregulated, leaving women workers vulnerable to exploitation and other types of sexual abuse. The Indian Penal Code (IPC), the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition, and Redressal) Act (POSH Act), and the Bhartiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), which aims to update the country's criminal justice system, are the main laws designed to address these offences. India has ratified a number of international declarations and conventions that protect women from sexual harassment and assault. National laws and policies are greatly influenced by these norms, especially when it comes to matters pertaining to the unorganised sector. Furthermore, these agreements like the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination and the International Labour Organization's (ILO) conventions has helped to combat sexual offences.

#### 7.1. The Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition, and Redressal) Act, 2013 (POSH Act)

In order to combat sexual harassment of women in the workplace, the POSH Act was passed in 2013. It offers a thorough framework for stopping and dealing with harassment in the workplace. It compels businesses to take precautions to guarantee a safe workplace and necessitates the creation of Internal Complaints Committees (ICC) in companies with more than ten workers.

##### 7.1.1. Applicability to the Unorganised Sector

The POSH Act provides protection against sexual harassment and is intended for use in the organised sector. It has little relevance to the unorganised sector, though. Domestic workers, agricultural labourers, and other women employed in unregistered or informal jobs are exempt from the Act. Formal workplaces with internal grievance redressal procedures or complaint channels are frequently inaccessible to women working in the unorganised sector. Because of this, they are extremely susceptible to sexual harassment and lack legal protection. The POSH Act's requirements are still only partially implemented nationally, despite some attempts to apply them to informal employment, such as by include domestic workers in

certain state legislation. The Act's application in the unorganised sector is further complicated by low knowledge, a lack of enforcement, and employer opposition.

## **8. Analytical Overview**

### **8.1.1. Research Methods**

This research article provides readers with information gathered from government sources, Questionnaire and interview methods. Among other objectives, the research aims to inform readers of the current status of sexual violence in unorganized sector in Goa, identify ways to close gaps in existing policies and suggest future policies to strengthen the quality of life for women. According to the research topic under investigation, the research will examine legal protections for women and their effectiveness in the state of Goa. Even as a tiny tourist destination, Goa has regularly been the scene of sexual offenses against women.

### **8.1.2. Results and Discussions**

The Result part of the research consists of tabulated data obtained through questionnaires and interviews. The discussion of various sexual crimes against women is explained through the tabulated data.

### **8.1.3. Prevalence of Sexual Harassment and Violence**

Reports of sexual offences, including as rape, harassment, and assault, have significantly increased in recent years, according to statistics from the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB). However, the majority of these instances come from the official sector, and because of underreporting, there is little data from the unorganised sector. According to a research by the International Labour Organisation (ILO), sexual harassment is common in the unorganised sector, especially in domestic work and farming. Women who work in these fields frequently encounter major obstacles to obtaining justice, such as ignorance of their rights, a lack of support networks, and fear of losing their jobs.

#### 8.1.4. Data Analysis

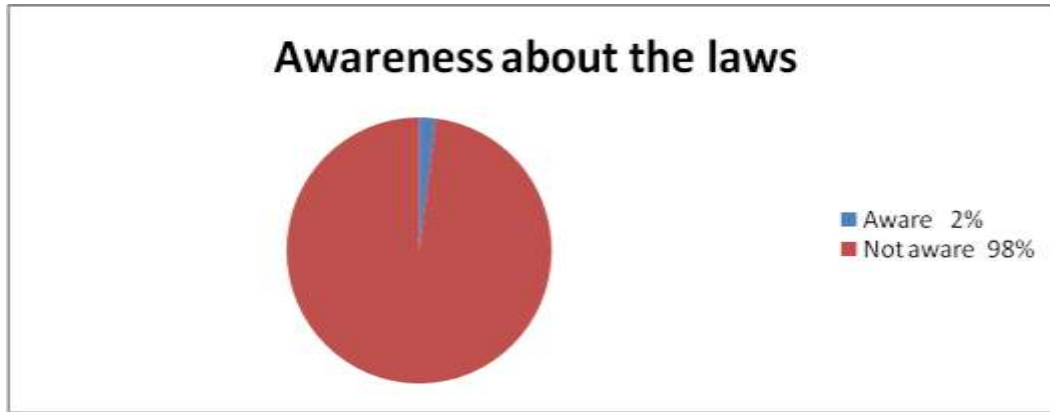
The researcher collected empirical and statistical data from the various stakeholders using a questionnaire and interview method. The researcher has divided the current study into the several state talukas, from both district of Goa in order to gather statistical data. These talukas were chosen based on their accessibility, location, size, and population.

List of Respondents		
Sr. No	Nature of Respondents	Total number
01.	Legal Counsels	20
02.	Police Personnel	20
03.	Members of NGO's	15
04.	Judiciary	10
05.	Victims of sexual abuse	15
06.	Women workers from unorganized sector	75
	Construction	20
	Agriculture	30
	Domestic	25
	Total	158

The data was gathered by questionnaires and interview methods. A distinct structured and unstructured questionnaire has also been produced by the researcher to the respondent. Additionally, the researcher used the methods of in-person interviews to gather empirical data. The following representation is through the data collected from the above methods.

##### 8.1.4.1. Awareness about the laws protecting from sexual harassment:

This data is collected from the women of unorganized sector whether they are awareness about the legal protection available to them. The following is the data representation.



The above diagram clearly shows that 98% of the women from unorganized sector are not aware about the existing laws and the protection available to them

#### 8.1.4.2. Encountered any form of sexual abuse

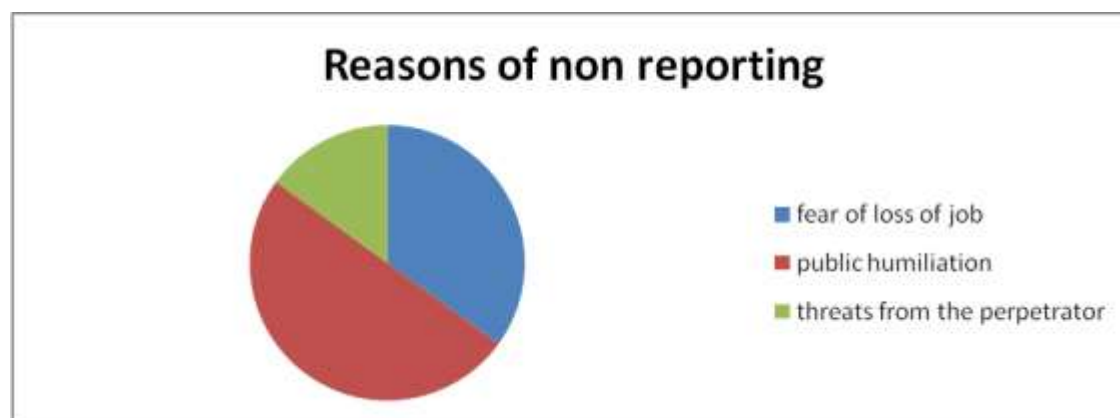
The question was positively answered by all the females working in the unorganized sector. They have mentioned in the interview that most of the time they face sexual abuse at the work place either from the employer or from the fellow workers.

#### 8.1.4.4. Reporting of the act of sexual abuse

The research has questioned the female workers whether they have reported any kind act of sexual abuse which they faced. They all answered negatively. That they have not reported to anybody the act of sexual abuse.

#### 8.1.4.5. Reasons for non-reporting

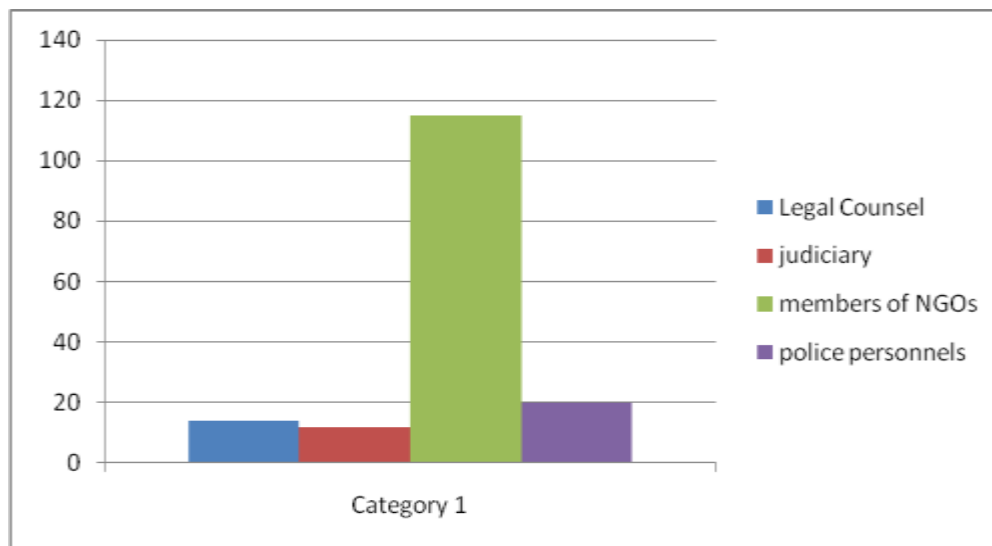
The following data representation gives a clear idea of reasons of non-reporting





The above data depicts that 50 % of the women did not report because of public humiliation, 35% did not report due to the fear of loss of job and 15 % were under threat given by the perpetrator.

#### 8.1.4.6. Difficulty to reach the unorganized sector for protection.



This data is collected from the Legal Counsels Police Personnel, Members of NGO's and Judiciary. Its very evident from the above data that the authorities; even though seek to provide the help to the members of unorganized sector. They fail to reach to them owing to their informal and scattered form of work culture.

## 9. Challenges in Addressing Sexual Offenses in the Unorganised Sector

Sexual offences against women in the unorganised sector still occur, but because of a number of obstacles, they are frequently not reported or are not appropriately addressed. The efficiency of legislative frameworks meant to safeguard women workers is hampered by these obstacles, which also have an immediate negative influence on their safety and well-being. The main obstacles to handling sexual offences in the unorganised sector include cultural and social stigma, lack of knowledge among employees, enforcement and compliance difficulties, and the inaccessibility of legal remedies.

### 9. 1. Lack of Awareness Among Workers

Women workers' ignorance of their legal rights is one of the largest obstacles to resolving sexual offences in the unorganised sector. Many women who work in unorganised industries including domestic work,

farming, and casual labour are not aware of their legal rights. Many women are unaware of the important protections offered by the Indian Penal Code (IPC) and the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition, and Redressal) Act (POSH Act) in their workplaces. A number of variables, such as a lack of formal employer-employee connections, isolation in informal workplaces, and inadequate education, contribute to this lack of understanding.

Victims of sexual offences frequently do not know where to turn for assistance in the unorganised sector, where many women work alone. These women continue to be susceptible to exploitation in the absence of adequate legal protections or awareness of their rights. This knowledge gap is further exacerbated by the fact that informal workplaces lack the grievance redressal mechanisms seen in formal industries.

## **9. 2. Barriers to Enforcement and Compliance**

It can be difficult to enforce legal rights for women in the unorganised economy. In contrast to formal workplaces, which usually have internal complaint procedures and established standards, informal sectors lack the infrastructure required to guarantee adherence to labour rules, including those pertaining to sexual harassment. In order to keep control over their employees, employers in the unorganised sector—such as those in domestic work or agriculture—frequently either choose to disregard their legal responsibilities or are ignorant of them.

Law enforcement officials may take no action even when sexual offences are recorded in these areas, occasionally brushing the cases aside as "personal issues" or "family matters," particularly when domestic employment is involved. It is challenging to hold employers responsible for legal infractions in the unorganised sector due to the absence of a defined employment structure. Furthermore, law enforcement frequently lacks the resources or training needed to efficiently handle such problems in rural or less urbanised regions. The enforcement issue is made worse by these shortcomings.

## **9. 3. Social Stigma and Cultural Factors**

Sexual offences in the unorganised sector are frequently perpetuated by social stigma and deeply ingrained cultural factors. Perpetrators are frequently shielded by dominant societal norms that support male power, whereas women who report sexual harassment or assault frequently experience social

exclusion. Women in fields like domestic work, which employs a high number of women from under-represented groups, frequently have the added weight of being viewed as "lower class" or "inferior," which leaves them more open to abuse and exploitation.

Another widespread cultural element that deters women from reporting sexual offences is victim-blaming. Women are frequently urged to put up with harassment in order to maintain their livelihood, or they are made to feel accountable for the mistreatment they endure. The cycle of violence is normalised and sustained by such cultural views. Because they fear being blamed or not believed, victims are prevented from pursuing justice by these deeply ingrained cultural ideas. Because of this, a large number of women decide to keep quiet, which permits abusers to carry on guilt-free.

#### **9. 4. Inaccessibility of Legal Remedies**

Another major issue for women in the unorganised sector is the inaccessibility of legal remedies. In India, the judicial system is sometimes convoluted, costly, and time-consuming, which makes it challenging for informal workers—many of whom are impoverished—to obtain justice. Women in these fields frequently lack the financial resources and legal knowledge necessary to successfully traverse the judicial system. In India, workers frequently have to rely on a slow-moving, overcrowded legal system that is not built to handle the particular difficulties of informal employment since legal procedures can be burdensome. Furthermore, access to legal services is geographically restricted for many women who labour in rural or isolated places. Their capacity to seek justice is further hampered by the fact that police stations and courts are sometimes distant from their homes or places of employment. Furthermore, there is sometimes no official employer-employee connection in informal workplaces, which makes it more difficult for workers to file complaints. Many women are stuck in violent work situations because they lack the legal assistance they need to take action against their abusers.

#### **10. Conclusion**

In the unorganised sector, sexual offences are a serious and widespread problem that disproportionately impacts women, especially in unorganised sectors including construction, domestic labour, and agriculture. These industries' informality and the absence of legal protections make them ideal environments for assault, harassment, and exploitation. Although statistics show that sexual offences in

these sectors are still underreported, reports and data that are now accessible point to concerning trends, with a sizable proportion of women experiencing sexual assault, harassment, and human trafficking.

India's legal systems, offer major safeguards against sexual offences through POSH Act, the BNS, and the IPC,. However, because of the informal nature of labour and employees' ignorance of the law, its relevance to the unorganised sector is still restricted. Although there is a basis for better legal safeguards provided by international treaties such as CEDAW, the ICESCR, and ILO Convention No. 189, implementation issues still exist. Enforcing international norms more successfully and implementing national changes are both necessary to strengthen legal rights for women working in the unorganised sector.

