

Chapter 15

Women Safety at Workplace: Challenges and Support System in Healthcare

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ABSTRACT

This study explores the safety challenges women face in healthcare workplaces and evaluates the effectiveness of existing support systems. Despite strides in gender equality, women continue to experience harassment, discrimination, and unsafe conditions that harm their well-being and hinder career growth. Through a review of literature and case studies, the research identifies key issues such as inadequate reporting mechanisms, insufficient harassment prevention training, weak policies, and the high-stress healthcare environment that heightens risks. It also highlights solutions like mentorship programs, strong anti-harassment policies, and training initiatives that promote respect and accountability. By showcasing best practices,

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the study advocates for comprehensive strategies that healthcare organizations can adopt to enhance women's safety. The findings stress the need for collective efforts to create an inclusive, secure workplace and offer actionable recommendations for fostering a fear-free environment where all employees can thrive.

INTRODUCTION

Gender equality in the workplace is achieved when both men and women are treated fairly, without any discrimination. This includes providing equal pay for the same roles, addressing the unique needs of both genders, and offering equal opportunities for career advancement (Grzelec, 2024). However, it is unfortunate that many women still face issues such as sexist comments, racism, and sexual harassment, which negatively impact their mental and physical well-being, hindering their professional growth (Basharat et al., 2024). To combat these issues, the Indian Penal Code has introduced several laws, including the Equal Remuneration Act of 1976, which ensures equal pay, the Maternity Benefit Act of 1961, which provides protections and benefits for mothers, and Article 15 of the Indian Constitution, which prohibits discrimination based on religion, race, caste, sex, or place of birth. These laws aim to create a safer and more equitable workplace for everyone. In 2024, men's participation in the workforce is expected to be 64 percent, while women's participation in the organized sector is expected to be 36 percent (Wheebox, 2024).

Table 1. Share of participation at work across India from 2014 to 2024, by gender

Year	Male (in percentage)	Female (in percentage)
2014	71	29
2015	70	30
2016	68	32
2017	71	29
2018	77	23
2019	75	25
2020	77	23
2021	64	36
2022	67	33
2023	67	33
2024	64	36

Source: Confederation of Indian Industry; Wheebox; PeopleStrong; AICTE (India); AIU; UNDP

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