**Chapter Ten**

**Sexual Harassment in Work Place, E- Human Resource Management & Empowerment**

**10.1. Equal Employment Opportunity**

protects applicants and employees from discrimination in hiring, promotion, discharge, pay, fringe benefits, job training, classification, referral, and other aspects of employment, on the basis of race, color, religion, sex (including pregnancy), or national origin. Religious discrimination includes failing to reasonably accommodate an employee’s religious practices where the accommodation does not impose undue hardship.

**Age**- protects applicants and employees 40 years of age or older from discrimination based on age in hiring, promotion, discharge, pay, fringe benefits, job training, classification, referral, and other aspects of employment.

**Sex-** prohibits sex discrimination in the payment of wages to women and men performing substantially equal work, in jobs that require equal skill, effort, and responsibility, under similar working conditions, in the same establishment.

**Genetics**- protects applicants and employees from discrimination based on genetic information in hiring, promotion, discharge, pay, fringe benefits, job training, classification, referral, and other aspects of employment. Also restricts employers’ acquisition of genetic information and strictly limits disclosure of genetic information. Genetic information includes information about genetic tests of applicants, employees, or their family members; the manifestation of diseases or disorders in family members (family medical history); and requests for or receipt of genetic services by applicants, employees, or their family members.

**Relations**- prohibit covered entities from retaliating against a person who files a charge of discrimination, participates in a discrimination proceeding, or otherwise opposes an unlawful employment practice.

**10.2. Types of Sexual Harassment in Work Place**

Sexual harassment is unwelcome sexual behavior, which could be expected to make a person feel offended, humiliated or intimidated. Sexual harassment is against the law. Some types of sexual harassment may also be offences under criminal law and should be reported to the police, including indecent exposure, stalking, sexual assault and obscene or threatening communications, such as phone calls, letters, emails, text messages and postings on social networking sites.

Sadly, sexual harassment has always been a feature of life at work. Perhaps it is not always quite as blatant today as it has been in the past, but it is still there, in more or less subtle forms, and it is just as unpleasant. People subject to sexual harassment can take legal action but it must be the policy of the organization to make it clear that it will not be tolerated, and this policy should be backed up by procedures and practices for dealing with harassment. It can be physical, verbal or written.

* **Physical-** Physical violence, touching, unnecessary close proximity
* **Verbal-** Comments and questions about appearance, life-style, sexual orientation, offensive phone calls
* **Non-Verbal-** Whistling, sexually-suggestive gestures, display of sexual materials

Sexual harassment is covered in the workplace when it happens:

* At work
* At work-related events
* Between people sharing the same workplace
* Between colleagues outside of work.

**10.3. Effects of Sexual Harassment**

Sexual harassment at work can have very serious consequences both for the harassed individual as well as for other working women who experience it secondhand. The consequences to the individual employee can be many and serious.  In some situations, a harassed woman risks losing her job or the chance for a promotion if she refuses to give in to the sexual demands of someone in authority.  In other situations, the unwelcome sexual conduct of co-workers makes the working conditions hostile and unpleasant- putting indirect pressure on her to leave the job.  Sometimes, the employee is so traumatized by the harassment that she suffers serious emotional and physical consequences—and very often, becomes unable to perform her job properly.

The consequences to working women as a group are no less serious.  Sexual harassment has a cumulative, demoralizing effect that discourages women from asserting themselves within the workplace, while among men it reinforces stereotypes of women employees as sex objects.  Severe or pervasive sexual harassment in certain types of businesses creates a hostile or intimidating environment that causes women to leave their jobs and look elsewhere for work or discourages them from seeking those jobs in the first place.

The effect on the morale of all employees can also be serious.  Both men and women in a workplace can find their work disrupted by sexual harassment even if they are not directly involved.  Sexual harassment can have a demoralizing effect on everyone within range of it, and it often negatively impacts company productivity on the whole.

**10.4. Remedies**

There are no easy solutions to these problems. It may be very hard to eradicate sexual harassment completely, but the effort must be made along the following lines.

1. Issue a clear statement by the chief executive that sexual harassment will not be tolerated.
2. Back up the statement with a policy directive that spells out in more detail that the organization deplore it, why it is not acceptable and what people who believe they are being subjected to harassment can do about it.
3. Reinforce the policy statement by behavior at senior level that demonstrates that it is not merely words but that these exhortations have meaning.
4. Ensure that the sexual harassment policy is stated clearly in induction courses and is conveyed to everyone on promotion. Reinforce this message by regular reminders.
5. Make arrangements for employees subjected to sexual harassment to seek advice, support and counseling without any obligation to take a complaint forward. They could talk informally with someone in HR. Alternatively, a counselor (possibly engaged as part of an employee assistance programme) can usefully offer guidance on harassment problems, assist in resolving them informally by seeking, with the agreement of the complainant, a confidential and voluntary interview with the person complained against to achieve a solution without resource to a formal disciplinary procedure, assist in submitting a complaint if the employee wishes to raise it formally, and counseling the parties on their future conduct.
6. Create a special procedure for hearing complaints about sexual harassment. The normal procedure may not be suitable because the harasser could be the employee’s line manager. The procedure should provide for employees to bring their complaint to someone of their own sex, should they so choose.

**10.5. Tips on E- Human Resource Management**

HRM services are being offered through an intranet for use by employees. The e-HRM business solution is designed for human resources professionals and executive managers who need support to manage the work force, monitor changes and gather the information needed in decision-making. At the same time it enables all employees to participate in the process and keep track of relevant information.

E-HRM is the relatively new term for this IT supported HRM, especially through the use of web technology. The major goals of e-HRM are mainly to improve HR’s administrative efficiency/to achieve cost reduction.

Next to these goals, international companies seem to use the introduction of e-HRM to Standardize/ harmonize HR policies and processes.

Though e- HRM hardly helped to improve employee competences, but resulted in cost reduction and a reduction of the administrative burden.

**Advantages** of the e-HRM business solution:

* Gradual implementation
* Adaptability to any client
* Collection of information as the basis for strategic decision-making
* Integral support for the management of human resources and all other basic and support processes within the company
* Prompt insight into reporting and analysis
* A more dynamic workflow in the business process, productivity and employee satisfaction
* A decisive step towards a paperless office
* Lower business costs

**E-HR Activities**

We talk about using technology in HR functions. Here we focus on recruitment, selection, training, performance management and compensation.

**1. E- Recruitment:** e- recruitment strategy is the integration and utilization of internet technology to improve efficiency and effectiveness of the recruitment process. Most companies understand this and have begun the evolution by integrating e-recruitment strategy into their hiring process.

**Drawbacks of E-Recruitment**

1. **Require being Computer Savvy:** The process is restricted within computer savvy candidates.
2. **Legal Consequences:** Alike other recruitment sources this source also should be aware of the words used in the advertisements otherwise it may lead to the charge of discrimination.
3. **Vast Pool of Applicants:** This benefits the Organizations as well as it is disadvantage to them also. Because the huge database cannot be scanned in depth. Either first few candidates are called for interview or the resumes are screened based on some key words.
4. **Non-serious Applicants:** Lot of applicants forward their resumes just to know their market value.
5. **Disclosure of Information:** Candidates profile and company details are available to public. The applicants do not want their employer to know that they are looking for a change. Phone number, address information has lead to many security problems. Again the companies do not want their competitors always to know the current scenario.

**2. E- Selection:** Usually it is difficult to decide where recruiting ends and selection begins. The main purpose of selection process is to distinguish individuals on the basis of important characteristics. In a changing environment, the speed of selection process becomes very important. There are many formal selection tools available to measure applicants on the characteristics:

* Work Samples
* Structured Interviews
* Personality inventories
* Situational Judgment Tests
* Cognitive Ability Tests

E-selection process is a paperless process where electronic documents and information can be quickly disseminated nationwide or worldwide.

**3. E- Performance Management:** e-performance management also known as Business Intelligence (BI). Business Performance Management is a growing field. Use of technology in performance management leads to increment in productivity, enhances competitiveness, and motivates employees. This is possible through two ways:

1. Technology becomes a tool to facilitate the process of writing reviews or generating performance feedback.
2. Technology may facilitate measuring individual’s performance via computer monitoring activities.

**4. E-Learning:** e-Learning is the use of technology to enable people to learn anytime and anywhere. e- Learning can include training, the delivery of just-in-time information and guidance from experts.

E-Learning is learning that takes place in an electronically simulated environment. E Learning, web-based training, internet-based training and computer-based training are the next-generation instruction methods being developed today. With e-Learning, users can immerse themselves in a three-dimensional environment to further enhance their learning experience. Moreover, e-Learning can be done anywhere and anytime as long as the user has the proper hardware. Today, E-Learning is fast becoming a reality through companies like Trainer soft and others.

**10.6. Workforce Diversity Management**

Diversity is generally defined as acknowledging, understanding, accepting, valuing, and celebrating differences among people with respect to age, class, ethnicity, gender, physical and mental ability, race, sexual orientation, spiritual practice, and public assistance status.

**Benefits of Diversity in the Workplace**

Diversity is beneficial to both associates and employers. Although associates are interdependent in the workplace, respecting individual differences can increase productivity. Diversity in the workplace can reduce lawsuits and increase marketing opportunities, recruitment, creativity, and business image.

**Challenges of Diversity in the Workplace**

There are challenges to managing a diverse work population. Managing diversity is more than simply acknowledging differences in people. It involves recognizing the value of differences, combating discrimination, and promoting inclusiveness. Managers may also be challenged with losses in personnel and work productivity due to prejudice and discrimination and complaints and legal actions against the organization

**10.7. HIV and Workplace**

People living with HIV/AIDS have the right to remain active in the workplace. However, they often face discrimination in the workplace when others are aware of their condition

HIV is not transmitted through casual contact, such as sharing seats, utensils or even hugs. As such, no special precautions need to be taken to prevent HIV infection in normal workplace contacts, other than providing a safe and healthy work environment.

An employer should not terminate the services of an employee living with HIV/AIDS simply because he/she is living with the disease. Highly Active Antiretroviral Therapy (HAART) allows people living with HIV to lead normal, healthy and productive lives for many years. By maintaining employment, employers are helping their employee living with HIV/AIDS to afford treatment and thus remain healthy and economically active.

**Helping Those with HIV Maintain Anti-Retroviral Therapy**  
The report makes several specific recommendations to help improve ART adherence, including:

* Prioritizing actions that promote the economic independence of people living with HIV.
* Improving national efforts to develop new anti-discrimination policies and enforcing existing anti-discrimination laws in the workplace.
* Offering direct incentives to keep up ART, including food distribution and economic incentives.
* Expanding opening hours of health facilities offering ART to ensure wider access.
* The adoption of measures by employers to provide flexibility for people living with HIV who may need to change their work arrangements. This includes time off to visit health facilities to receive medication and support to help adhere to treatment.
* Strengthening of health systems by Governments, including the provision of training and retention measures to benefit health workers and ensure sustainability of treatment delivery.
* Ensuring that social protection schemes are sensitive to the needs of people living with HIV and provide them with the necessary support to remain on treatment.

**10.8. Workforce Empowerment**

Employee empowerment has been defined in many ways but generally means the process of allowing employees to have input and control over their work, and the ability to openly share suggestions and ideas about their work and the organization as a whole. Empowered employees are committed, loyal and conscientious. They are eager to share ideas and can serve as strong ambassadors for their organizations.

Empowerment is based on the idea that giving employees [skills](http://www.businessdictionary.com/definition/skill.html), [resources](http://www.businessdictionary.com/definition/resource.html), [authority](http://www.businessdictionary.com/definition/authority.html), [opportunity](http://www.businessdictionary.com/definition/opportunity.html), [motivation](http://www.businessdictionary.com/definition/motivation.html), as well [holding](http://www.businessdictionary.com/definition/holder.html) them responsible and [accountable](http://www.businessdictionary.com/definition/accountable.html) for outcomes of their [actions](http://www.businessdictionary.com/definition/action.html), will [contribute](http://www.businessdictionary.com/definition/contribute.html) to their [competence](http://www.businessdictionary.com/definition/competence.html) and [satisfaction](http://www.businessdictionary.com/definition/satisfaction.html).