



RAJSHAHI UNIVERSITY LAW JOURNAL

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Articles

Examine the Gap within Legal Protection of Animals Welfare in Bangladesh through the Lens of International Law

Reforming the Prosecution Service in the Subordinate Courts of Bangladesh

Shaping the Modern Police in Indian Sub-Continent with Special Reference to Police Commission 1902-1903

Dispensing Justice through Court Annexed ADR in Bangladesh : Family Court Experience

Daughter's Preferential Right of Inheritance: *Kalala* Revisited

Sexual Harassment Prevention Policy of Islamic University with Special Reference to Awareness Programs

The Responsibility to Protect in Westphalian Sovereignty: A Post Colonial Approach

Maintenance of Wife under Islamic *Shariah* and Statutory Laws of Bangladesh: An Analytical Overview

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Cyber Violence Against Women in Bangladesh: Laws and Realities

ইসলামী আইনে রোমান আইনের প্রভাব : একটি তুলনামূলক পর্যালোচনা



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Contents

Author's Name	Article	Page
Dr. Md. Abdul Alim	Examine the Gap within Legal Protection of Animals Welfare in Bangladesh through the Lens of International Law	1-16
Dr. Md. Abdur Rahim Mia	Reforming the Prosecution Service in the Subordinate Courts of Bangladesh	17-39
Md. Abul Kalam Azad	Shaping the Modern Police in Indian Sub-Continent with Special Reference to Police Commission 1902-1903	40-55
Dr. Armin Khatun Khaledur Rahman	Dispensing Justice through Court Annexed ADR in Bangladesh : Family Court Experience	56-74
Dr. Begum Asma Siddiqua Dr. Sayeeda Anju	Daughter's Preferential Right of Inheritance: <i>Kalala</i> Revisited	75-88
Dr. Halima Khatun	Sexual Harassment Prevention Policy of Islamic University with Special Reference to Awareness Programs	89-106
Humayun Kabir	The Responsibility to Protect in Westphalian Sovereignty: A Post Colonial Approach	107-120
Dr. Maksuda Akter Dr. Md. Golam Rosul	Maintenance of Wife under Islamic <i>Shariah</i> and Statutory Laws of Bangladesh: An Analytical Overview	121-141
Mobarak Hossain	The Definition of Investment under Article 25 of the ICSID Convention: A Critical Legal Study on the Post Salini Development	142-161
Md. Mosharaf Hossain	Admissibility of Electronic Evidence in India, Pakistan and Bangladesh: A Comparative Study	162-183
Dr. Shahin Zohora	Cyber Violence Against Women in Bangladesh: Laws and Realities	184-205
ড. মোহাম্মদ নাছির উদ্দীন	ইসলামী আইনে রোমান আইনের প্রভাব : একটি তুলনামূলক পর্যালোচনা	206-219

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Manuscripts submitted for publication must be in three copies, in neat and clear double-spaced typescript or electronic print-out on A4 size (8.5"×11") white sheets with margins of 1" on all sides and pages consecutively numbered. The manuscript should have a title-page with the title of the article and the author's name, designation and contact address. The title should also be placed on the first page of the text of the article. The author's name or anything that may identify the author should not appear anywhere in the text paper. Submissions should be addressed to the Editor, Rajshahi University Law Journal, Faculty of Law, University of Rajshahi, Rajshahi 6205.

An abstract in English must be provided within 200-300 words at the beginning of the article. Notes and references in the text should be placed at the end of the article under the caption 'Notes and References'. Notes should be numbered consecutively in the text in superscript (i.e., one half line above the text). The note index number should be placed after all punctuation in a sentence, i.e., it should be placed after a comma or semicolon or the concluding full stop of the sentence. For articles in the Humanities the following is the prescribed form of documentation notes on their first occurrence:

Books: Published Books Should be cited by the author's name in normal order (first name first), title and subtitle (if any) of the book underlined or in italics, place of publication, publisher's name, year of publication within brackets, page number(s) preceded by the abbreviation 'p' or 'pp'.

Sexual Harassment Prevention Policy of Islamic University with Special Reference to Awareness Programs

Halima Khatun*

Abstract: *The Constitution of the People's Republic of Bangladesh enshrines 'education' is one of the basic needs food, clothing, shelter, education and medicine for citizens of Bangladesh. However, Article 26 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights describes education as a right. At present right to education has been recognized as a fundamental right across the globe. Deterioration of sexual harassment makes harder to enforce this right and acquire higher education for women. Like other higher educational institutions, Islamic University, Bangladesh is not free from this heinous phenomenon. Islamic University, Bangladesh has taken zero tolerance policy against sexual harassment. There is well organized and active sexual harassment prevention committee named as Complaint Committee in this university and this committee takes different kinds of necessary steps to reduce and prevent sexual harassment from this institution. This study aims to disclose the sexual harassment prevention policy of Islamic University, discover the effectiveness of the Complaint Committee and the level of awareness of students in this regard.*

Keywords: Complaint Committee, Education, Female student, Sexual harassment, victim.

1. Introduction

Honour and dignity is an inalienable right of human being. Sexual harassment is worthy harmful to an individual's standing. Violence against women is increasing day by day in our society. Sexual harassment is one of the forms of violence against girl and young women in Bangladesh. Most of the girls cannot walk freely on streets and their educational institution campus without being teased by an opposite sex. In this situation, the honorable High Court Division in *BNWLA vs Bangladesh*¹ issued 11 points directives to prevent sexual harassments in the educational institutions and workplaces of women. Sexual harassment becomes a worldwide phenomenon and makes complex social problem for women. It may occur in a variety of circumstances. But sexual harassments educational institutions more serious and common issues

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¹ Bangladesh National Women Lawyers Association (BNWLA) Vs. Government of Bangladesh and others (14 BLC, 2009) 694

globally. It is often deemed to a form of illegal discrimination against an individual on the basis of sex. Sexual harassment may occur in a variety of ways. Such as harassment of students by students, harassment of students by faculty members, harassment of students by other non faculty staffs, harassment of students by strangers or harassment of faculty members by faculty members/boss/head, harassment of faculty or non-faculty staffs by students etc. It may occur anywhere in campus including staffs offices, classrooms, corridors, cafeteria even library. However, this study aims to look into the sexual harassment prevention policy of the university, perceive the level of awareness of female students regarding the issue, identify challenges and make suggestions to come forward.

2. Objectives of the study

The main objective of this article is to demonstrate the sexual harassment prevention policy of Islamic University, Bangladesh. The other objectives as follows:

- a) To examine different types of activities of the Complaint Committee following the guidelines of the High Court Division regarding sexual harassment;
- b) To understand the level of awareness of the female student regarding the guidelines and the Complaint Committee;
- c) To investigate the challenges in the way of Complaint Committee to prevent or reduce sexual harassment from the university; and
- d) To set forth recommendations to meet the challenges.

3. Methodology

The study is based on primary sources as well as secondary sources data. An expressive research design questionnaire was made and used for this survey. The respondents were 55 female students who participated by filling questionnaire distributed to them through simple random sampling. The questionnaires included factual information, both open-ended and closed questions. The open-ended questions allow the stakeholders to answer in a way as they like and close question confine them to choose among alternatives like yes or no, no comment etc. The data were coded and analyzed by simple frequency distribution tables.

4. Definition of Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment in education is an unwelcome behaviour of a sexual nature that interferes with a student's ability to study, work or participate in school activities. Sexual harassment encompasses a range of behavior from mild annoyances to sexual assault and rape.²

Sexual Harassment is essentially uninvited or unwelcome conduct with sexual undertones. It encompasses physical, verbal or non-verbal acts of a sexual nature which are offensive to the victim.³

According to United Nations Secretary-General's bulletin, "Sexual harassment is –

- a) any unwelcome sexual advance;
- b) request for sexual favor;
- c) verbal or physical conduct or gesture of a sexual nature; or
- d) any other behaviour of a sexual nature that might reasonably be expected; or
- e) be perceived to cause offence; or
- f) humiliation to another, when such conduct interferes with work, is made a condition of employment or creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment. While typically involving a pattern of behaviour, it can take the form of a single incident. Sexual harassment may occur between persons of the opposite or same sex. Both males and females can be either the victims or the offenders.”⁴

According to the High Court Division of the Supreme Court of Bangladesh, sexual harassment includes unwelcome sexual determined behaviour; attempts or effort to establish physical relation having sexual implication by abuse of administrative, authoritative or professional powers; sexually coloured verbal representation; demand or request for sexual favours; showing pornography;

² *Wikipedia*, the free encyclopedia. Accessed on 02.06.2022.

³ Towards Gender Equality in the World of Work in Asia and the Pacific: Technical Report for Discussion at the Asia Regional Consultation on Follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women, Manila, 6-8 October, 1999, available at https://www.ilo.org/public/libdoc/ilo/1999/99B09424_engl.pdf, Accessed on 27.02.2023.

⁴ Secretary-General's Bulletin (ST/5GB/2008/5), Prohibition of Discrimination, Harassment, including Sexual Harassment and Abuse of Authority, https://resourcecentre.savethechildren.net/pdf/COC%20layout_2nd20lay.pdf, Accessed on 27.02.2023.

sexually coloured remark or gesture; indecent gesture, teasing through abusive language, stalking, joking, having sexual implication; insult through letters, telephone calls, SMS, pottering, notice, cartoon, writing on bench, chair, table, notice boards, walls, of office, factory, classroom, washroom having sexual implication; taking still or video photographs for the purpose of blackmailing and character assassination; preventing participation in sports, cultural, organizational and academic activities on the ground of sex and/or for the purpose of sexual harassment; making love proposal and exerting pressure or posing threats in case of refusal to love proposal; attempt to establish sexual relation by intimidation, deception or false assurance”.⁵ In *Vichada and others vs the State of Rajasthan* case the Supreme Court of India stipulates that “Sexual harassment includes such unwelcome sexually determined behaviour (whether directly or by implication) as: a) physical contact and advances; b) a demand or request for sexual favours; c) sexually coloured remarks; d) showing pornography.”⁶ So, sexual harassment is a group of activities or actions which may be verbal, non-verbal or physical and by which one wants to take sexual advantages from opposite sex or same sex and which is prejudicial to dignity, modesty, personal life even social life of victim.

5. Sexual Harassment Prevention Policy of Islamic University

Islamic University, Bangladesh is one of the largest public universities of Bangladesh. It has taken zero tolerance policy against sexual harassment. Though, the university authority has not made written or formal policy yet against sexual harassment. But, following the guidelines of the High Court Division of the Supreme Court of Bangladesh, the University is complying with the following policies:

5.1 Formulation of a Complaint Committee

Clause 9 of the directives of the High Court Division stipulates the procedure of the constitution of a Complaint Committee in all work places and educational institutions in both public and private sectors. The formulation of the Complaint Committee is as follows:

The Complaint Committee –

⁵ Bangladesh National Women Lawyers Association (BNWLA) Vs. Government of Bangladesh and Others, (14 BLC, 2009), 694 (Writ Petition No. 5916 of 2008)

⁶ *Vishaka & Others vs. State of Rajasthan & Others* [1997 (6 SCC 241)]

- a) will have minimum 5 members of them majority will be women as well as Head of the Committee should be woman (if available);
- b) at least two members should be from outside the concern organization, preferably working on gender issues and sexual abuse.⁷

Following the directives of the High Court Division, on 02.04.2011, Islamic University, Bangladesh has constituted a Complaint Committee consisting with 9 members. Of them, 5 are women including Head and 4 are male. 7 of the members (including Head) are from inside the university and two from outside the university and working in on gender issues and sexual abuse in different organizations.

5.2 Creating Awareness

Clause 5 of the Guidelines of the *BNWLA vs Bangladesh* (2009) mentions different types of programs to create awareness and public opinion. In order to deter and eliminate sexual harassment and torture and to create a safe environment for work and education, the management of workplace and the authorities of all educational institutions will append prime importance to publicity and publication against sexual harassment and gender discrimination. To fulfill this purpose, all educational institutions must be arranged sufficient orientation programs before starting formal classes of a new session. Moreover, the Guidelines make directives to all educational institutions to arrange proper counseling for the concern person and to create awareness of rights and fundamental of female students and employees which are guaranteed by the Constitution and the statutes. In addition, the High Court Division also suggests all educational institutions to prepare and publish booklets containing the Guidelines and provisions of the Constitution and statutes regarding gender equality and sexual offences. The educational institutions and the employers will maintain regular communication and effective consultation with the administrative authorities to awareness among the personnel in law enforcing agencies.⁸

⁷ Clause 9 of the Guidelines of *BNWLA vs Bangladesh*, (14 BLC, 2009) 694 (Writ Petition No. 5916 of 2008)

⁸ Clause 5 of the guidelines of *BNWLA vs. Bangladesh* of *BNWLA vs. Bangladesh*, (14 BLC, 2009) 694 (Writ Petition No. 5916 of 2008)

Islamic University, Bangladesh follows those Guidelines as its internal policy. In order to eliminate sexual harassment and torture from university and to maintain students' friendly teaching-learning environment, Complaint Committee arranges different types of awareness programs inside the university. Such as:

- a) Provide conception about sexual harassment in the first orientation program which is arranged by the university authority;
- b) Arranges formal seminars in female students' halls with assistance of university authority and hall authorities. Through these seminars, initiatives to be taken to create awareness regarding fundamental rights, human rights, equality before law, sex and gender issues etc.;
- c) Sets up complaint boxes in conspicuous places of all halls, faculty buildings and administrative buildings;
- d) Prepares and publishes booklets, handbills containing the guidelines and rights fundamental rights which are guaranteed by the Constitution and circulates those among the students;
- e) Arranges periodic rally with female students for making awareness.

5.3 Preventive Steps and Disciplinary Actions

Clause 6 of the Guidelines mentions some effective steps to prevent sexual harassment from the workplaces and educational institutions. The preventives steps are as follows:

- a) Prohibition of sexual harassment and sexual torture should be notified, published and circulated widely in an effective manner;
- b) Constitutional and statutory provisions against gender discriminations and offences of sexual harassment and torture with punishment should be widely circulated;
- c) To ensure friendly environment for women at workplaces and educational institutions;
- d) To engender confidence and trust in women workers and students that they are not placed in a disadvantaged position in comparison to their male colleagues and fellow students.

Following the Guidelines, Islamic University is conforming to the following strategies:

- a) Prohibits sexual harassment inside the campus;

- b) Makes booklets and handbills containing the offences regarding sexual harassment and torture with their punishments;
- c) Circulates those booklets and handbills among the female students and employees;
- d) Takes initiatives to make friendly environment between teaching staffs, non-teaching staffs and students;
- e) Takes initiatives to eliminate gender discriminations and builds up trust and confidence among the women and students that they are in equal position.

However, following clause 7 of the Guidelines, another policy of Islamic University is to take appropriate disciplinary action against the issue of sexual harassment and torture.

5.4 Complaints Mechanism

According to clause 8 of the Guidelines all workplaces and educational institutions must include the following measures in the complaint mechanism:

- a) The identity of the complainant as well as the accused must not disclose until the allegation is proved;
- b) The concern authority will ensure the security of the complainant;
- c) The victim or her relatives or friends or lawyers can lodge complaint and it can send by mail;
- d) A complainant can file the complaint with a female member of the Complaint Committee separately;

Islamic University follows the above mentioned rules as its internal policy.

5.5. Procedural Activities of the Complaint Committee

Clause 10 of the guidelines stipulates that, normally a complaint has to be lodged with the Complaint Committee within 30 working days of the occurrence. After receiving a complaint, the Complaint Committee will follow the following procedures:

a) In Case of Minor Harassment

In minor harassment, (if possible) the Complaint Committee shall dispose the complaint with the consent of the involving parties and shall report to the concern authority of the educational institution;

b) In all other cases the Complaint Committee shall –

- i) investigate the matter;
- ii) send registered notice to the parties and witnesses by mail;
- iii) conduct hearing;
- iv) gather evidence; and
- v) examines all relevant papers;
- vi) keep the identities of the complainant confidential.
- vii) avoid such questions which are insulting or harassing for the complainant while recording testimony'

c) Submission of Investigation Report

The Complaint Committee shall submit the investigation report with recommendations within 30 working days to the concern authority.

The Complaint Committee should give emphasis on oral evidence as well as on circumstantial evidence. If the complainant wants to withdraw the complainant or stop the investigation that the reason behind this has to be investigated and has to mentioned in the report.⁹

Since formation of the Complaint Committee¹⁰ of Islamic University, it follows the following procedures:

- a) Receives and investigates the complaint and takes necessary action following the guidelines and existing service rules applicable in the university.
- b) Submits investigation report with recommendation to the university authority as per the guidelines.

Besides these, the Complaint Committee sits for regular meetings to follow up its activities and to set up its next plans and sends report to the authority.

Since formulation of the Complaint Committee, there were three formal and three informal complaints were made before it. The Complaint Committee disposed of those complaints following the procedures provided by the guidelines and reported to the university authority with necessary recommendations.

⁹ Clause 10 of the Guidelines.

¹⁰ The Complaint Committee of Islamic University has been formulated on 02.04.2011.

5.6. Punishment

After receiving the recommendation of the Complaint Committee, the concern authority may suspend temporarily the accused person (other than students) and in case of students, may prevent them from attending their classes. If the accused is found guilty of sexual harassment, the concern authority shall treat it as misconduct and take proper action according to the disciplinary rules of the work places or the educational institutions within 30 days shall refer the matter to the appropriate court or tribunal if the act complained of constitutes an offence under any penal.¹¹

Lack of written internal sexual prevention policy and enacted law applicable for educational institutions, Islamic University follows the Guidelines and the Government Servants (Discipline and Appeal) Rules of 1985.

6. Results of the Empirical Study

The completed questionnaires were arranged; data were coded, analyzed and interpreted with simple frequency distribution tables. The respondents were 55 in number and the students of under graduate, graduate and post graduate levels of Islamic University. About 96% of the respondents were at the age of 17-26 and rests of 4% were above 26. About 65.5% respondents were under graduate, 27% graduate and 7.5% were post graduate level.

6.1. Level of awareness regarding sexual harassment

Response	Number of respondents	Percentage
Yes	36	65
No	19	35
Total	55	100

The above table shows that majority (65%) of the respondents have knowledge about sexual harassment. While, 35% of the respondents reported that they have no knowledge about the phenomenon.

6. 2. Responses about victimization of sexual harassment

Response	Number of respondents	Percentage
Yes	22	40
No	29	52.73
No Comment	4	7.27
Total	55	100

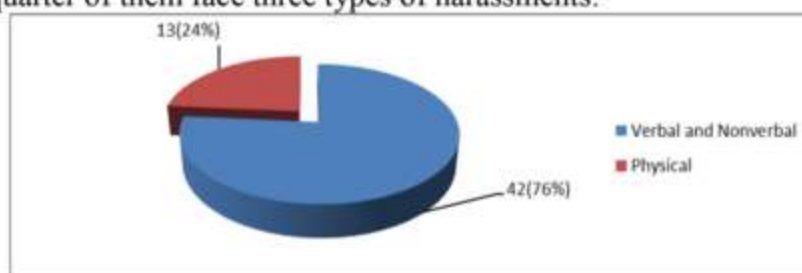
¹¹ Clause 10 of the Guidelines.

40% of the respondents reported that they have experienced sexual harassment and 52.73% answered that they were not victimized and rests of 7.27% did not answer this question.

6.3. Responses about the type of sexual harassment that the respondents have usually faced

Types of sexual harassment	Number of respondents	Percentage
Verbal	21	38
Non-verbal	21	38
Physical	13	24

The study depicts that 38% respondents reported that they have experience verbal sexual harassment since their enrolment in the university. Verbal sexual harassment includes whistling, unpleasant word or comment, sexually explicit jokes, demand for sexual favor, undesired/unwanted invitation for snacks or lunch, sexual explicit song etc. Same sizes of respondents (38%) are the victims of non-verbal sexual harassment which includes staring, black/bad/unpleasant massage, irrelevant/offensive phone calls, immoral letter, tasteless/offensive literature, winking etc. Moreover, 24% of the respondents are victimized physical forms of sexual harassment that includes touching, pinching, obstructing passageway etc. More than one third of the respondents are victims both verbal and non-verbal sexual harassment and about quarter of them face three types of harassments.



The study reveals that about 76% respondents are victims both verbal and non-verbal sexual harassment and 24% respondents experience verbal, non-verbal and physical forms of sexual harassment.

6. 4 Opinion about the status of perpetrators

The respondents were asked about the status of the perpetrators. The total respondents were 55. Of them 33 respondents were answered to this question. The responses are as follows:

Status of perpetrators	Respondents	Percentage
Teaching staffs	2	6
Non teaching staffs	3	9
Students	20	61
Strangers	8	24
Total	33	100

The above table discloses that 61% of the responding female students are harassed by the students of opposite sex of the university, 24% responding respondents claimed that they are sexually harassed by stranger persons, 9% are harassed by non teaching staffs and 6% victims reported that they are sexually harassed by teaching staffs.

6.5 Responses regarding existing Complaint Committee of the university

The respondents were asked whether they are aware about the Complaint Committee of their university. The responses are as follows:

Response	Number of respondents	Percentage
Yes	34	62
No	21	38
Total	55	100

Majority 62% of the respondents are aware that a Complaint Committee exists in the university to deal the issues of sexual harassment. While 38% are unaware of the existence of such Committee.

6.6 Responses as to make complaint to Complaint Committee

The responding victims were asked whether they made complaint to Complaint Committee or to university authority. The responses are as follows:

Response	Number of respondents	Percentage
Yes	9	41
No	13	59
Total	22	100

This table depicts that among the responding female students 41% victims of sexual harassment claimed that they filed complaint to the committee or to legal authority. Whereas, majority (59%) of them opined that they did not file any complaint.

6.7 Grounds for not filing complaint to Complaint Committee or legal authority

The victim female students were asked about the grounds for which they did not make complaint to Complaint Committee or to legal authority. Their responses are given below:

Causes	Responses	Percentage
I did not know where to complain	8	13.56
I thought that no one believe me	2	3.39
It was embarrassing and shameful	10	16.95
It would be harmful to my academic life	6	10.17
Fear to negative social consequences	16	27.12
Fear to take revenge by perpetrators	2	3.39
Due to Political pressure	7	11.86
Fear to disseminate among public	2	3.39
I thought that I could handle it myself	5	8.48
I thought it was not serious enough	1	1.70
Total	59 ¹²	100

The investigation finds that among responding female students 59% female students did not file complaint to legal authority or to the Complaint Committee existing in the university. Of them, 13.56% victims of sexual harassment answered that they did not know where to file complaint. 3.39% victims did not file complaint because they thought that no one believe them. 16.95% respondents felt ashamed and embarrassed to report to the Committee or legal authority. 10.17% respondent considered it would be harmful to their academic and future life. Similarly, 27.12% respondents are silent because they are in fear of negative social consequences. 3.39% female students remained silent because they are in fear to take avenge by perpetrators.

¹² It is to be noted that the total respondents were 55 and their responses counted as 59. Because, four of the total respondents pointed out multiple causes that are playing vital role in committing sexual harassment at university campuses.

11.86% female students remained silent due to political pressure. 3.39% responding female students did not report because they did not want to circulate the incident among the public. 8.48% victims believed that they could handle the situation themselves. Moreover, 1.7% respondents perceived that the incident was not serious enough to file complaint to the authority.

6.8 Responses regarding regular arrangement of awareness program by university authority

The participating respondents in survey were asked whether the university authority arranges awareness programs regularly regarding sexual harassment. The answers of the stakeholders are as follows:

Response	Number of respondents	Percentage
Yes	15	28.30
No	27	50.94
No comment	11	20.76
Total	53 ¹³	100

28.30% responding students answered that university authority arranges awareness programs regularly. On the other hand, 50.94% respondents replied that university authority does not arrange awareness programs regularly and rest of 20.76% did not make any comment.

6.9 Responses about taking part in the awareness programs

Respondents were asked about their taking part of the awareness programs that their University arranges. Out of total respondents 52 were answered to this question. The responses are as follows:

Response	Number of respondents	Percentage
Yes	18	34.62
No	23	44.23
No comment	11	21.15
Total	52	100

The table shows that 34.62% respondents reported that they took part in the awareness programs that authority of university arranged. While 44.23%

¹³ Out of 55 respondents, 53 were responded to this question.

respondent did not take part in the awareness programs and rest of 21.15% were not make any comment.

6.10 Causes for not to participate in the awareness programs

28% respondents agreed that university authority arranges awareness programs regularly. But, 44% of them answered that they did not participate that programs. Therefore, they were asked about the causes for which they did not participate in the awareness programs. The responses are as follows:

Causes	Respondents	%
I thought it was not important	8	14.50
I thought it was not needed to participate	5	9
I was in trouble that time	10	18
I was not injured or physically assaulted	7	13
I was too busy	6	11
Other	19	34.50
		100

14.50% responding female students answered that they did not participate in awareness programs because they thought that it was not so important. 9% perceived that participation of such programs was not necessary. 18% responding female students stated that they were in trouble that times when the awareness programs were going on. 13% female students viewed that they were not injured personally, so they did not go the programs. 11% answered that they were busy when the awareness programs were arranged. 34.5% replied that there were other causes for not to participate in such programs.

7. Discussion

The study revealed that like other universities of Bangladesh, Islamic University is not free from the heinous phenomenon of sexual harassment. From this study, it is evident that 38% of the surveyed female students had experienced sexual harassment. Of them equal 38% were the victims of verbal and non-verbal types of sexual harassment and 24% reported that they were victimized of physical form of harassment. Most of the victims (77%) reported that they had experienced both verbal and non-verbal forms of sexual harassment.

A study has been done in Dhaka University which found that 51.4% surveyed female students had experienced non-verbal sexual harassment i.e., pinching and touching by force since enrolling in the university and 60% of the surveyed female students were victims of verbal sexual harassment such as whistling, blinking and ogling. They also received jokes, pictures and videos through emails, text, phone calls and instant messages containing offensive sexual remarks.¹⁴ Accordingly in a study of Khulna University, verbal, visual and physical forms of sexual harassment were identified, where 52.75% female students were harassed verbally and 20.3 were physically harassed.¹⁵ Likewise Rospenda et al. (2000) found that 59.1% responding students experienced sexual harassment at an urban university of the United States.¹⁶ Like this present study, Cantor et al. (2016) found that 47.7% of students experienced sexual harassment since matriculation in American University schools.¹⁷ Shah Khalid Baloch and Abdul Wahid Khetran (2014) in their study found that 73% female students were sexual harassed at the University of Balochistan in Pakistan.¹⁸

The present study revealed that majority 61% of surveyed female students claimed they were harassed by the students of the university. Of them, only 41% reported that they made complaint to authority. 38% were unaware about existence of Complaint Committee. 27% did not file complaint due to fear of negative social consequences, 17% felt shame and embarrassed, 10% feared to harm of their academic life and 13.55 did not know where to complaint.

¹⁴ Minhazur Rahman Rezvi, Purbasha Prithvi & Md. Mohsin Hossain, *Sexual Harassment of University Students in Bangladesh: A Case Dhaka University* (April 2021), available at <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/3823232>. Accessed on 03.06.2022.

¹⁵ Rina Akter and Nusrat Jahan, *Perception about Sexual Harassment among Undergraduate Students: The Case of Khulna University in Bangladesh*, BAUET JOURNAL, Volume 03, Issue 02, 2022, available at <http://journal.bauet.ac.bd/>, Accessed on 04.03.2023.

¹⁶ Rospenda, K.M. Richman, J. A. Wislar, & Flaherty, J. A (2000) Chronicity of sexual harassment and generalized workplace abuse: effect on drinking outcomes. available at <http://doi.org/10.1046/j.1360-0443.2000.9512180510.x>, Accessed on 03.06.2022

¹⁷ Cantor, D., Townsend, R., & Sun, H. (2016). Methodology Report for the AAU Campus Climate Survey on Sexual Assault and Sexual Misconduct. <http://www.aau.edu/sites/default/files/> Accessed on 03.06.2022.

¹⁸ Shah Khalid Baloch and Abdul Wahid Khetran, University female students personal experiences, perspective of sexual harassment (A case study of University of Balochistan), BI-ANNUAL RESEARCH JOURNAL, "BALOCHISTAN REVIEW", Vol. XXXI No. 2, 2014, PP. 133-143.

Apaak and Sarpong's (2015) study found that the level of knowledge of female university athletes in Ghana on sexual harassment proved to be significantly high. Majority of the respondents seemed to be aw about the Internal Complaint Committee. In contrary to expectations, a majority of them do not know about the body or the committee provided to address the issue of sexual harassment in their respective.¹⁹ Aditi et al. (2016a) found that in spite of the good knowledge that a majority of their survey sample had about sexual harassment, 61.3% of them were not aware of the provision of grievance committee pertaining to sexual harassment in their college.²⁰ The survey has been done among the undergraduate students in Udupi district in Karnataka of India. Thomas (2015) in his study revealed that above 80% of research participants opined that the key reason for not reporting sexual harassment incidents at educational institutions was lack of courage, fear of disgrace and social isolation, which was experienced by the victimized person on filling a complaint against the abuser. This study significantly showed that, one of the main reasons for sexual harassment in educational institutions is lack of proper awareness, which significantly contributes to people engaging in such manners and aid failure to speak-up.²¹ This study also found that less than half (35%) of the respondents participated in the awareness programs which the university authority arranged for building awareness.²²

8. Challenges before the Complaint Committee to Reduce Sexual Harassment from the University

The results of the study illustrates that sexual harassment is a serious problem at the university campus and female students more likely to be affected. Though, the Complaint Committee of Islamic University arranges different types of awareness programs, there is a challenge that a large number (38%) of the students do not know about the existence of the committee. Moreover,

¹⁹ Apaak, D., & Sarpong, E. O. (2015). Knowledge Level and Incidence of Sexual Harassment in Sports: of Ghanaian female University Athletes, *Journal of Education and Social Research*, 5(3), 121-130.

²⁰ Aditi, G., Sangeetha, P., & Binu, E. M. (2016a), Knowledge of Sexual Harassment among the Undergraduate Students in Udupi District, *Nitte University Journal of Health Science*, 6(2), PP. 4-9.

²¹ Thomas A. (2015). Incidents of Sexual Harassment at Educational Institutions in India: Preventive Measures and Grievance handling. *International Journal of Recent Advances in Multidisciplinary Research*, 02(03), PP. 0317-0322.

²² Ibid.

there is no specific office with sufficient logistic support for the Complaint committee. Another challenge that the Committee usually faces that there is no fixed budget to arrange awareness programs like seminar, symposium, publish and circulate booklets etc. Victims keep silent due to fear of academic loss or fear to disseminate the incidents among the public. University authority has liability to take necessary initiative so that the victim can speak out her problem and make complaint to the committee. The university does not have psychologists and specialists to support and provide legal counsel to victims.

9. Conclusion and Suggestions

The results of the study indicate that sexual harassment occurs in the higher educational institutions and it can be reduced to raise the knowledge and to build up awareness of students and staffs about the subject matter. Sexual harassment is phenomenon and to be treated with more seriousness in educational institutions as because of today's students the future of the country. However, to reduce and prevent sexual harassment from the educational institutions the following measures should be taken:

- a) Sexual abuse in educational institution may destroy academic life and future career of victims. Sometimes they suffer from depression and other types of mental problems. So, it is necessary to appoint psychologist and specialist in the university to support and provide legal counsel to victims;
- b) A confidential web-based method should be created for submitting complaint to the Complaint Committee;
- c) University should set up an office for the Head of the Committee with sufficient logistic support;
- d) A designated person should appoint to contact with victims and witnesses;
- e) Provide sufficient budget to meet different types of cost (office management, arrangement awareness programs, publishing booklet, making complaint boxes, banners, festoons etc.);
- f) Provide information about sexual harassment prevention policy on the website of the university;
- g) More interactive seminars, workshop and training programs should be arranged;

- h) Self defence training should be provided to female students regularly; and
- i) Make significant efforts to publicize its sexual harassment prevention policies so that the employees and the students handed a copy of the policy on their first day at the university;
- j) Following the Guidelines, University should make written internal policy to eradicate and prevent sexual harassment from campus until an appropriate and adequate enactment is made by the parliament.