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Violence, Bullying, and Sexual Harassment in Tourism and Hospitality Industry: A Global Perspective

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Violence, Bullying, and Sexual Harassment in Tourism and Hospitality Industry: A Global Perspective

Melisha Chatterjee

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I. Introduction

The tourism and hospitality industry is one of the world's largest and fastest-growing economic sectors, employing hundreds of millions of people across hotels, resorts, restaurants, cruise lines, airlines, travel agencies, and entertainment venues (Baum, 2015; WTTC, 2023). Characterized by high levels of interpersonal interaction, long and irregular working hours, and pressure to deliver consistent customer satisfaction, this industry depends heavily on the labor and emotional commitment of its workforce (Lugosi et al., 2016). Yet, behind its polished exterior lies a troubling and persistent undercurrent of workplace issues—most notably, violence, bullying, and sexual harassment. These forms of mistreatment are alarmingly widespread and often go unreported, unnoticed, or unpunished (Ram, 2015; Pizam et al., 2016; UNWTO, 2021).

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Workplace violence can include physical assaults, threats, intimidation, and verbal abuse, often exacerbated by factors such as alcohol consumption, stressful situations, and limited security (Pizam & Shani, 2016). Bullying typically manifests in the form of psychological aggression, humiliation, exclusion, or persistent criticism from supervisors, peers, or customers (Yagil, 2008). Sexual harassment, a particularly pervasive issue in the industry, includes unwelcome sexual advances, inappropriate comments, coercion, or physical harassment (Gettman & Gelfand, 2007; Ram, 2015). The cumulative effect of these behaviors can be devastating—not only to the victims but to organizations themselves, which suffer from increased staff turnover, decreased productivity, and reputational damage (Hoel & Einarsen, 2003).

What makes these challenges more difficult to combat is the normalization of abusive behavior in many workplace cultures. Employees are often socialized to tolerate mistreatment as part of their job (Guerrier & Adib, 2000). Frontline service workers, in particular, are trained to prioritize the comfort and satisfaction of guests, often at the expense of their own dignity and safety (Korczynski, 2002). Management may be complicit—whether by minimizing complaints, failing to act decisively, or engaging in the misconduct themselves (Poulston, 2008). In some cases, business interests and profits are prioritized over employee well-being, leading to a workplace environment where inappropriate behavior is excused or overlooked to retain valuable clients or avoid negative publicity (Baum, 2015).

The lack of effective legislation and enforcement mechanisms further compounds the issue. In many countries, labor laws do not adequately address harassment and violence in the service industry, or they are poorly enforced (ILO, 2022). Moreover, workers on temporary contracts, working informally, or employed through third-party agencies often fall outside the scope of legal protections (UNWTO, 2021). The result is a climate of impunity, where victims fear retaliation, loss of employment, or reputational harm if they speak out (Ram, 2015).

Despite the severity and scope of the problem, there is growing recognition—among scholars, activists, policymakers, and industry leaders—of the need to

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tackle workplace violence, bullying, and sexual harassment in tourism and hospitality. Efforts to bring about change are evident in initiatives to develop comprehensive anti-harassment policies, provide employee training, strengthen legal frameworks, and shift cultural norms (ILO, 2022; UNWTO, 2021). Yet, these efforts are often fragmented, underfunded, or implemented unevenly across regions and organizations (Poulston, 2008).

II. Methodology

This study adopts a *qualitative, secondary data-based research methodology* to examine the nature, causes, and impacts of violence, bullying, and sexual harassment in the tourism and hospitality industry from a global perspective. The methodology is designed to synthesize existing knowledge from academic literature, industry reports, and institutional data to identify patterns, challenges, and best practices internationally. Secondary data was selected due to its ability to provide a wide-ranging, cross-cultural view of industry practices, allowing for comparative analysis across regions and organizational contexts.

a) Data Sources

The data for this research was gathered from a variety of reputable and relevant sources, including:

Academic Journals: Peer-reviewed literature from databases such as Scopus, JSTOR, Science Direct, and Google Scholar was reviewed to assess empirical studies, theoretical frameworks, and case studies.

Industry Reports: Publications from organizations such as the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), International Labour Organization (ILO), World Travel & Tourism Council (WTTC), and Hospitality industry associations provided sector-specific insights and statistics.

News Articles and Case Reports: Global news platforms and documented legal cases provided context-specific examples and recent developments.

Company Policies and HR Guidelines: Publicly available documents from major hospitality brands (e.g., Marriott, Hilton) were analyzed to evaluate corporate strategies addressing misconduct.

III. Defining Key Terms and Concepts

A foundational step in addressing violence, bullying, and sexual harassment in the tourism and hospitality industry is to define and understand these terms in the context of workplace dynamics. Each of these issues involves distinct behaviors and consequences, but they are also interrelated and often occur concurrently. Clear definitions help distinguish between unacceptable conduct and misunderstandings, guide policy development, and provide a framework for legal and ethical accountability (International Labour Organization [ILO], 2022; Ram, 2015).

a) Violence in the Workplace

Workplace violence is typically defined by the World Health Organization (WHO) and the International Labour Organization (ILO) as any incident in which a person is abused, threatened, or assaulted in circumstances related to their work (WHO & ILO, 2002). In the tourism and hospitality sector, such violence can be physical, verbal, or psychological. It may come from customers, coworkers, supervisors, or even strangers (Pizam & Shani, 2016).

Violence in this industry is often fueled by long working hours, high emotional demands, and the service-based nature of interactions with customers, which can become confrontational (Yagil, 2008). Examples include physical assaults (pushing, hitting, grabbing), verbal threats or yelling, and aggressive customer behavior—often under the influence of alcohol or drugs—as well as hostile confrontations between colleagues or between staff and supervisors (Guerrier & Adib, 2000; Poulston, 2008).

Due to the public-facing nature of many roles, especially in hotels, restaurants, and nightclubs, workers are particularly vulnerable to client-perpetrated violence. The risk is heightened in jobs that involve money handling, working alone, or late-night shifts (ILO, 2022).

b) Bullying

Bullying, also referred to as psychological or emotional harassment, involves repeated, deliberate actions intended to intimidate, degrade, isolate, or undermine another individual (Hoel & Einarsen, 2003). Unlike isolated conflicts or disagreements, bullying is systematic and persistent.

In the hospitality workplace, bullying might include constant criticism or belittling of an employee's work, social exclusion or silent treatment, spreading rumors or gossip, assigning impossible deadlines or unrealistic expectations, or threatening job security to control or coerce (Poulston, 2008; Ram, 2015).

Bullying can be vertical (between different levels of hierarchy) or horizontal (among peers). For instance, a manager may belittle a staff member in front of colleagues, or a group of employees might ostracize a new team member. In many instances, bullying is disguised as "tough management" or "joking around," making it difficult to identify and address (Guerrier & Adib, 2000; Yagil, 2008).

A unique challenge in the tourism and hospitality industry is the normalization of toxic behavior under the banner of maintaining standards or performance pressure, especially in high-end establishments (Baum, 2015; Poulston, 2008).

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c) Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment refers to any unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature that creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment (United Nations, 2020). According to the UN, sexual harassment includes both quid pro quo harassment (where job benefits are conditional on sexual favors) and hostile work environment harassment (where behavior creates an offensive atmosphere).

In the tourism and hospitality industry, this may involve inappropriate touching or groping, sexually suggestive jokes or comments, unwanted flirting or advances from customers or coworkers, sharing explicit content at work, and coercive behavior from supervisors implying professional rewards or threats based on compliance (Gettman & Gelfand, 2007; Ram, 2015).

Hospitality workers—particularly women, LGBTQ+ individuals, and migrants—are especially vulnerable. Many work in precarious roles and fear retaliation or job loss if they report misconduct (UNWTO, 2021; Pizam & Shani, 2016). Since the industry promotes "service with a smile," professional boundaries are often blurred, and inappropriate behavior may be tolerated or dismissed (Guerrier & Adib, 2000).

d) Discrimination and Intersectionality

While violence, bullying, and harassment can affect any worker, discrimination based on gender, race, ethnicity, age, sexual orientation, or disability can exacerbate these experiences. Intersectionality—a term coined by legal scholar Kimberlé Crenshaw (1989)—explains how overlapping identities (e.g., being both female and a migrant worker) intensify vulnerability.

In hospitality, where the workforce is often diverse, systemic bias is common. Racialized workers may be assigned less desirable shifts, overlooked for promotions, or treated differently by management and guests (Baum, 2015; UNWTO, 2021). When discrimination intersects with harassment or bullying, the resulting harm is magnified, and reporting mechanisms become even less accessible.

e) Customer-Perpetrated Misconduct

Customer-perpetrated harassment is a major but under-addressed issue in the hospitality industry. Employees are often expected to tolerate inappropriate behavior to avoid guest complaints, negative reviews, or loss of business (Yagil, 2008; Ram, 2015). This includes enduring sexual comments, threats, or abuse without intervention from management, who may prioritize guest satisfaction over staff safety (Guerrier & Adib, 2000).

The "customer is always right" mentality creates a power imbalance that strips workers of agency and reinforces a culture where abuse is excused if it protects profits (Poulston, 2008).

f) Cultural and Organizational Silence

Organizational silence—when institutions fail to acknowledge or address internal issues—is widespread in hospitality. It is driven by concerns over brand reputation, unclear reporting structures, lack of faith in HR, and fear of retaliation or job insecurity (Morrison & Milliken, 2000; ILO, 2022). High turnover and informal work arrangements further discourage whistle-blowing.

This silence enables harmful behavior to persist and signals institutional complicity. When employers ignore complaints or downplay misconduct, it reinforces the idea that harassment and violence are normal parts of the job (Poulston, 2008).

g) Emotional Labor

Sociologist Arlie Hochschild (1983) introduced the concept of emotional labor, which refers to the management of emotions to fulfill job requirements. In hospitality, this often means remaining calm, cheerful, and polite—even in the face of mistreatment.

While emotional labor is central to hospitality service, it becomes exploitative when workers are expected to absorb abuse without support or redress. Over time, this leads to emotional exhaustion, stress, and burnout (Grandey et al., 2005; Zapf & Holz, 2006).

Understanding these concepts—violence, bullying, sexual harassment, discrimination, customer misconduct, organizational silence, and emotional labor—is essential for addressing the systemic roots of mistreatment in hospitality. These issues are not isolated incidents; they are shaped by workplace culture, economic structures, and entrenched power imbalances.

IV. Prevalence and Nature of the Problem

a) Global Overview

Workplace violence, bullying, and harassment in the tourism and hospitality industry are alarmingly widespread. According to a 2022 ILO report, workers in accommodation and food services experience significantly higher rates of violence and harassment than most other sectors. The study found that 1 in 3 hospitality workers had experienced verbal abuse, and over 20% reported sexual harassment—mainly from customers (ILO, 2022).

In the United States, a 2021 survey by UNITE HERE found that 58% of hotel workers had experienced sexual harassment (UNITE HERE, 2021). In the UK, the Trades Union Congress (TUC) reported in 2017 that 68% of hospitality workers under 25 had experienced workplace harassment, including sexual and verbal abuse (TUC, 2017).

In Asia and the Middle East, limited legal protections and cultural stigma contribute to under-reporting, but media and NGO reports suggest high

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levels of abuse—especially among women and migrant workers (UNWTO, 2021).

b) Industry-Specific Characteristics

Several structural features of hospitality heighten the risk of misconduct:

Customer-Facing Roles: Constant guest interaction increases the likelihood of verbal or sexual abuse, especially when employees are discouraged from confronting misconduct (Yagil, 2008).

Alcohol and Nighttime Economy: Many jobs involve serving intoxicated patrons in late-night settings without adequate security, increasing risk (Pizam & Shani, 2016).

Gendered Labor: Women dominate in housekeeping, reception, and food service roles, where physical proximity to guests and isolation (e.g., in hotel rooms) make them particularly vulnerable (Baum, 2015).

Precarious Employment: High reliance on temporary, seasonal, and outsourced labor creates fear around reporting, especially among migrant workers whose visa status may depend on employment (ILO, 2022; UNWTO, 2021).

c) Common Forms of Violence and Harassment

Verbal Abuse: The most common form, often minimized as part of the service role, includes yelling, swearing, or threats from guests (Poulston, 2008).

Sexual Comments & Touching: Workers, especially women, frequently report unwanted touching or suggestive remarks—often from intoxicated guests (Ram, 2015).

Bullying by Managers: A top-down culture often enables abusive supervision, justified as enforcing standards, especially in kitchens and high-pressure venues (Hoel & Einarsen, 2003).

Online Harassment: As hospitality operations move online, workers now face cyberbullying through messaging platforms, review sites, and social media—an area with limited regulation (Yagil, 2008).

d) Underreporting and Silence

Despite the frequency of abuse and harassment in the hospitality industry, incidents are vastly underreported. Multiple intersecting barriers discourage victims from speaking out (ILO, 2022; Ram, 2015):

Fear of Retaliation: Workers fear being demoted, denied shifts, or blacklisted—especially in small or tightly networked labor markets (Poulston, 2008).

Lack of Trust in HR: Many employees view human resource departments as tools of management, not as support systems (Morrison & Milliken, 2000).

Normalization: Young or new workers may assume harassment is part of the job, particularly when such behavior is minimized or laughed off by more senior staff (Guerrier & Adib, 2000).

Power Imbalance: Migrant workers may lack knowledge of their rights or face linguistic and cultural barriers that prevent them from reporting abuse (Baum, 2015).

Reputational Concerns: Organizations may discourage complaints or settle them quietly to protect their brand, often failing to discipline perpetrators (Yagil, 2008).

These conditions foster a *culture of silence,* where abuse is tolerated and victims remain unsupported.

e) Impact of COVID-19

The COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated existing workplace vulnerabilities. As lockdowns, layoffs, and rehiring disrupted the hospitality workforce, employees were rehired under even more precarious conditions (UNWTO, 2021; ILO, 2022). New forms of abuse and stress emerged:

Enforcement backlash: Staff enforcing public health measures (e.g., masks, distancing) became targets of aggression from resistant customers (UNITE HERE, 2021).

Job Insecurity: Increased unemployment risk made workers more hesitant to report mistreatment or harassment (ILO, 2022).

Reduced Oversight: Skeleton staffing left fewer witnesses or support personnel during incidents, further increasing vulnerability (TUC, 2021).

However, the pandemic also spotlighted the essential nature of service work, prompting *greater labor activism* and advocacy for safe and fair working conditions in hospitality (UNWTO, 2021).

f) The Role of Intersectionality

Intersectionality—the concept that social identities (such as race, gender, class, and migration status) intersect to shape individuals' experiences—plays a key role in workplace harassment (Crenshaw, 1989). Not all employees face the same risks:

Racialized women often experience *dual discrimination* and higher rates of harassment and stereotyping (Baum, 2015; Ram, 2015).

LGBTQ+ workers are disproportionately subject to exclusion, slurs, or forced concealment of identity (Pizam & Shani, 2016).

Migrant laborers may not have adequate legal protections or language skills to report misconduct (ILO, 2022).

Young workers and interns are often seen as easier targets due to their lack of experience and social power (TUC, 2017).

Understanding how these overlapping identities impact risk is essential for creating *equitable and*

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inclusive policies that address the full spectrum of worker vulnerability.

V. Root Causes and Contributing Factors

The tourism and hospitality industry, while often perceived as glamorous, unfortunately faces significant challenges related to violence, bullying, and sexual harassment. These issues are deeply rooted in a combination of industry-specific characteristics, power dynamics, organizational culture, and broader societal factors.

a) Industry-Specific Characteristics

High Stress and Demanding Work Environment: The industry is characterized by long, irregular, and unsocial work hours, intense service situations, high emotional labor, and often demanding physical work. This can lead to increased stress, burnout, and a heightened likelihood of conflict and aggression among staff and from customers. The intricate work environment in the hospitality industry, which includes volatile employment, uncomfortable working environments, stressful service situations, poor wages, long and unsocial work hours, emotional labor, the failure to adopt formal HRM mechanisms, and power imbalance, makes it a fertile environment for workplace bullying (Ram, 2018; Nimri et al., 2025).

Customer-Centric Culture ("Customer is King"): The strong emphasis on customer satisfaction can pressure employees to tolerate inappropriate behavior from guests, fearing negative consequences like reduced tips, poor reviews, or job loss. This creates an environment where customer misconduct can be overlooked or even implicitly encouraged by management. These service cultures imply that customers, as paying clients, may abuse and even make unwanted advancements towards workers without evident penalties, while workers are expected to tolerate it and remain silent (Kim et al., 2014), or even accept it 'as part of the job' (Poulston, 2008) (Ram, 2018). Because customer experience is often prioritised, customers are placed in a position of power where their behaviour can often be overlooked, creating a culture of tolerance where employees feel more pressure to put up with harassment from customers (Culture Shift, 2024).

Close Contact between Staff and Customers: The nature of hospitality involves frequent and often close interactions between employees and guests. This can blur boundaries, making employees, particularly front-of-house staff, vulnerable to unwanted attention and inappropriate behavior. Factors that contribute to the prevalence of sexual harassment in the hospitality sector include the nature of customer interactions–characterized by proximity and personalized service–which might create an environment where inappropriate behavior may be ignored (Gilbert, Guerrier, & Guy, 1998; Ram, 2018) (EHL Insights, 2024).

Alcohol Consumption: In settings like bars and restaurants, alcohol consumption by guests is a significant aggravating factor, impairing judgment and increasing the risk of aggressive and inappropriate behavior. Along with high levels of young workers and female employees, the late-night nature of the industry which often involves alcohol... creates a breeding ground for sexual harassment and an industry wide culture that normalises this behaviour (Culture Shift, 2024).

Precarious Employment and Low Wages: A significant portion of the hospitality workforce consists of low-wage, "atypical" workers (e.g., part-time, fixed-term, or zero-hours contracts). This leads to job insecurity, making employees less likely to report incidents due to fear of retaliation or losing their income. Power imbalances associated with low-skilled, low-status work and insecure jobs may increase workers' vulnerability to sexual harassment because they fear that resisting or reporting it will negatively affect their income and employment (Ram, 2018) (ResearchGate, 2015). The hospitality industry workforce consists of large levels of low wage workers and is often the youngest workers in our society. They are also more likely to be 'a-typical' workers on a fixed term or zero hours contract, and therefore don't have the same rights as permanent employees (Culture Shift, 2024).

b) Power Imbalances and Hierarchical Structures

Employee-Customer Power Imbalance: As noted above, customers often hold a position of power. This leads to a power imbalance between service providers and customers, which is fundamental to the occurrence of workplace violence, such as abuse and harassment (Korczynski & Evans, 2013; Ram, 2018) (ResearchGate, 2015).

Hierarchical Workplace Structures and Abusive Supervision: Power disparities within organizations (management vs. frontline, experienced vs. junior) can foster bullying and harassment. Managers or supervisors who abuse their power or ignore misconduct contribute to a toxic environment. The hotel business is characterized by its labor-intensive nature, job-demanding, and hierarchical structure. As a result, WB targeting vulnerable employees, including trainees, frontline staff, and entry-level workers, is often considered commonplace or even an accepted aspect of the job (MDPI, 2025). Managers control the schedules of workers, making it difficult for vulnerable workers to avoid the perpetrators or to report wrongdoing (Culture Shift, 2024).

c) Organizational Culture and Lack of Safeguards

Tolerant or Permissive Culture: A culture where inappropriate behavior is normalized, trivialized, or even

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implicitly accepted as "part of the job" is a major root cause. The hospitality industry is particularly susceptible to SH due to its entrenched acceptance of such behaviors, insufficient institutional sanctions, persistence of traditional gender norms, and notions of male sexual entitlement (PMC, 2025). The true scope of SH in the workplace is concealed by a conspiracy of silence between supervisors and establishment owners (Zhou et al., 2021) (Tandfonline.com, 2024).

Insufficient Institutional Sanctions and Inadequate Complaint Mechanisms: When organizations lack robust policies, clear reporting procedures, and effective enforcement, perpetrators face few consequences, and victims feel unsupported. Despite legislative efforts, only 10–20% of workers report instances of violence and SH (Eurofound, 2015) (Tandfonline.com, 2024). Evidence shows that sexual harassment goes unreported, incidents are not handled properly, or workers who report an incident experience retaliation (Eaton, 2004; Morganson & Major, 2014; Ram, 2018) (EHL Insights, 2024). Only small proportions who complained formally reported the perpetrator facing formal disciplinary actions – 10% informal warnings, 5% formal warnings, 6% fired or asked to leave. When there are negative consequences or poor outcomes when speaking up, it makes it more difficult to make a report in the future (Culture Shift, 2024).

Lack of Training and Awareness: Insufficient training on what constitutes violence, bullying, and sexual harassment, as well as on de-escalation techniques and bystander intervention, leaves both employees and management ill-equipped. Research highlights the importance of campaigns to raise awareness, pre-service education, and training (Geojournal of Tourism and Geosites, 2024).

Prioritizing Customer Satisfaction Over Employee Safety: When management focuses exclusively on customer satisfaction, employee well-being can be overlooked. As mentioned above, Because customer experience is often prioritised, customers are placed in a position of power where their behaviour can often be overlooked, creating a culture of tolerance where employees feel more pressure to put up with harassment from customers (Culture Shift, 2024).

Isolated Work Environments and Weak Social Ties: Certain roles or settings can increase vulnerability. Employees with weak managerial relationships and limited social ties among coworkers are also at greater risk of experiencing WSH (PMC, 2025).

d) Societal and Individual Factors

Traditional Gender Norms and Male Sexual Entitlement: Societal norms that perpetuate traditional gender roles and notions of male sexual entitlement significantly contribute to sexual harassment, with women disproportionately affected. The hospitality industry is particularly susceptible to SH due to its entrenched acceptance of such behaviors, insufficient institutional sanctions, persistence of traditional gender norms, and notions of male sexual entitlement (PMC, 2025). Socialization processes that encourage male dominance, as well as the societal and cultural acceptability of violence against women, are the root causes of sexual harassment (Geojournal of Tourism and Geosites, 2024).

Individual Characteristics: While not root causes themselves, certain individual traits can influence vulnerability or propensity. Factors such as perception and neuroticism were the individual-level characteristics positively associated with the sexual harassment experience" (PMC, 2025).Younger people are perceived as more sexually attractive. This is particularly true for the hospitality and tourism industry, which hires young employees for frontline junior service-related positions... Young employees are defenseless and susceptible to being sexually harassed by coworkers, supervisors and customers (Emerald Insight, 2025).

VI. Case Studies and Real-World Examples

Understanding the complex issues of violence, bullying, and sexual harassment in tourism and hospitality requires more than theoretical knowledge. Real-world case studies provide valuable insight into how these problems manifest across different contexts, exposing both the lived experiences of workers and the responses—or lack thereof—by institutions. This section presents several illustrative examples from around the world, highlighting various types of misconduct and showcasing the systemic failures that allow such behaviors to persist.

a) The "Hands Off, Pants On" Campaign – United States

One of the most well-known cases of organized resistance against workplace harassment in the hospitality sector took place in Chicago. In 2016, hotel workers—particularly female housekeepers—launched the *"Hands Off, Pants On"* campaign, demanding greater protection from guests who exposed themselves or sexually harassed staff while they were cleaning rooms.

The Campaign was Sparked by Disturbing Stories: Women reporting guests masturbating openly, attempting to grope them, or cornering them in rooms. Despite these incidents, many said that hotel management either ignored their complaints or discouraged them from filing reports to avoid upsetting high-paying guests.

As a result of worker organizing and union support from UNITE HERE Local 1, Chicago passed a city ordinance requiring hotels to provide *panic buttons*

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for housekeepers and to adopt anti-harassment policies. This case demonstrates how collective action and media visibility can push local governments and employers to take concrete safety measures.

b) Gordon Ramsay's Kitchen Nightmares – United Kingdom & USA

While not a legal case, the reality television series Kitchen Nightmares, hosted by celebrity chef Gordon Ramsay, offers insight into the normalization of verbal abuse and bullying in hospitality settings. Ramsay's confrontational style—characterized by shouting, public humiliation, and insults—mirrors what many hospitality workers experience in high-pressure kitchens.

Although often justified as part of maintaining high culinary standards, such behavior can contribute to a toxic culture where bullying is accepted and even glamorized. Many young chefs have reported enduring similar treatment in real life, believing it is the norm or a necessary step toward success. This cultural trope—rooted in patriarchal notions of leadership—reinforces abusive dynamics within the industry.

c) Racial Harassment at a Luxury Hotel – South Africa

In 2019, several employees at a luxury hotel in Cape Town filed complaints of *racial bullying and harassment.* Black staff reported being referred to by derogatory terms, denied promotions in favor of less qualified white colleagues, and segregated into back-of-house roles to avoid being seen by international guests.

One case involved a guest complaining about the "appearance" of a Black front-desk worker, after which the employee was transferred without explanation. The incident triggered a wider investigation by labor rights activists, revealing systematic discrimination across the hotel group.

This case illustrates how racism intersects with harassment in hospitality, particularly in regions with a legacy of colonialism and apartheid. It also shows how employer practices can perpetuate structural inequality, even under the guise of meeting customer preferences.

d) The Cruise Ship Industry – International Waters

Cruise ships are often described as *lawless environments* when it comes to labor protections, especially for sexual harassment and assault cases. A 2018 investigation by The Guardian and NBC News revealed that dozens of cruise employees—mostly women from Southeast Asia and Eastern Europe—had reported harassment, assault, or rape by supervisors or passengers, only to be ignored or threatened into silence.

Because many cruise lines are registered in countries with lax labor laws (so-called *flags of convenience*), legal recourse for victims is extremely limited. Investigations are often internal, opaque, and biased in favor of the company. Victims may be deported at the next port, dismissed from their roles, or even held responsible for "disrupting service."

The cruise ship case underscores how *jurisdictional loopholes* and the isolation of workers can be exploited to avoid accountability. It also highlights the extreme vulnerability of migrant workers in highly mobile and unregulated environments.

e) Airbnb and Host Misconduct – Global

While often positioned as part of the "sharing economy," platforms like *Airbnb* have faced growing criticism for failing to protect guests and hosts from harassment and violence. One major concern is the *lack of oversight or employer responsibilities*—unlike traditional hospitality businesses, Airbnb does not directly employ workers, which complicates the issue of duty of care.

Numerous cases have emerged involving: Hosts making sexual advances on guests, guests harassing or threatening hosts, particularly women and no formal mechanism to report or investigate claims beyond customer service reviews

For instance, a 2019 vice report exposed a case in which a female guest in Europe was harassed by a host who refused to leave the apartment and later attempted to enter her room at night. Despite complaints, Airbnb offered only generic responses and refused to intervene further.

This case illustrates how *platform-based hospitality* models can obscure employer accountability, placing workers and users at risk without meaningful protections.

f) Bullying in Culinary Schools – France and Japan

Culinary education is another area where bullying and harassment often go unchecked. In both France and Japan—countries known for their strict, hierarchical kitchen traditions—reports have emerged of culinary students being subjected to verbal abuse, physical punishment, and even sexual misconduct by instructors.

In 2021, former students of a prestigious French culinary institute filed complaints about an instructor who screamed insults daily, grabbed female students' bodies without consent and threatened to fail students who complained.

In Japan, similarly, a major cooking school faced scrutiny when students described being hit with utensils, locked in refrigerators as punishment, or forced to clean for hours without food.

These examples show that the *roots of abuse can begin during training,* setting the tone for future workplace acceptance of mistreatment. If hospitality education programs tolerate or encourage abuse, it becomes embedded in professional norms.

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g) *Sexual Harassment in Resort Settings – Caribbean and Southeast Asia*

Resorts in popular tourist destinations are often hotspots for sexual harassment, particularly where foreign tourists interact with local staff. Workers report harassment from both customers and managers, including demands for sexual favors in exchange for promotions or better shifts, physical assault in back-of-house areas and inappropriate touching or requests for photos.

In one 2020 case in the Dominican Republic, several female entertainers at a resort sued their employer after being forced to "entertain" VIP clients at private parties. The employer argued the job required "flexibility," and resort management turned a blind eye.

Tourism-driven economies, where jobs are scarce and the industry dominates GDP, can foster exploitative dynamics. Employees may feel unable to reject advances or report incidents for fear of being labeled uncooperative or losing their only income source.

h) *Positive Case: Marriott International's Global Safety Initiative*

In contrast to many of these negative cases, *Marriott International* has been recognized for implementing one of the most comprehensive safety and anti-harassment policies in the global hospitality sector. In 2018, the company launched a *Global Human Trafficking Awareness Training Program* and committed to providing *panic buttons* for all U.S.-based housekeepers.

In addition, Marriott has created anonymous reporting tools, offered multilingual anti-harassment training and introduced diversity and inclusion initiatives.

While not without its critics, Marriott's proactive stance shows that multinational corporations can lead by example when they prioritize employee safety and enforce accountability from the top down.

The real-world cases highlighted in this section offer a sobering yet essential look at the ways violence, bullying, and sexual harassment manifest across the hospitality industry. From luxury hotels in South Africa to cruise ships on international waters, these examples reveal patterns of abuse, corporate silence, and systemic failures. At the same time, they demonstrate the potential for change when workers organize, unions intervene, or companies embrace meaningful reform. In the next section, we will analyze the broader impacts of these behaviors—not just on individuals, but on organizational health and industry sustainability.

VII. Impact on Individuals and Organizations

The presence of violence, bullying, and sexual harassment in the tourism and hospitality industry has far-reaching consequences, affecting not only individual employees but also the broader organizational health and the industry's sustainability. These issues undermine workplace morale, productivity, reputation, and profitability, while simultaneously causing deep psychological, emotional, and financial harm to victims. This section explores the multi-dimensional impacts, emphasizing why these behaviors cannot be ignored or treated as isolated incidents (Baum, 2015).

a) *Psychological and Emotional Impact on Individuals*

For individuals, the most immediate and profound effects of violence, bullying, and harassment are psychological and emotional. Victims often experience chronic stress and anxiety, depression and suicidal thoughts, loss of self-esteem and confidence, sleep disturbances and fatigue, emotional exhaustion and burnout. These effects are not limited to the time and place of the incident. Victims often carry the trauma into their personal lives, affecting relationships, academic or career aspirations, and long-term mental health. Repeated exposure to harassment or bullying can lead to complex PTSD (Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder), especially in cases involving sexual abuse or power-based coercion. In some instances, victims become socially withdrawn, distrustful of others, or unable to maintain steady employment due to psychological instability caused by their workplace experience. Migrant workers and young staff, in particular, may be more vulnerable due to limited social support, language barriers, and financial dependency on the job (Hoel, Einarsen, & Cooper, 2003; Yagil, 2008).

b) *Physical Health Consequences*

The emotional strain caused by sustained workplace abuse often translates into physical health issues. Studies have linked exposure to toxic work environments to a variety of conditions, including headaches and migraines, cardiovascular problems, gastrointestinal disorders, weakened immune response, and musculoskeletal pain (especially when combined with physically demanding roles). Victims of physical or sexual violence may also suffer direct bodily harm, including bruises, sprains, or more severe injuries that can require medical attention. Moreover, the financial burden of healthcare, particularly in countries without universal coverage, further deepens the impact on affected workers (Kivimäki et al., 2003; Hogh, Conway, & Grynderup, 2016).

c) *Economic Impact on Individuals*

On a practical level, many victims of harassment or bullying are forced to leave their jobs or accept fewer hours to avoid their abuser. This can result in loss of income and job instability, difficulty finding new employment—especially in tight-knit local hospitality markets—and career stagnation or forced departure from the industry altogether. For women and

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marginalized workers, this economic fallout can contribute to a cycle of poverty and vulnerability, especially if they are single parents, migrants, or heads of households. The fear of financial insecurity often keeps victims silent or compliant, allowing abuse to continue unchecked (McLaughlin, Uggen, & Blackstone, 2012; Guerrier & Adib, 2004).

d) Organizational Impact: Staff Turnover and Talent Drain

One of the most visible consequences of a toxic workplace is high employee turnover. Hospitality businesses already face challenges with retention due to seasonal work, long hours, and physically demanding conditions. When combined with workplace abuse, the turnover rate accelerates significantly. The cost of turnover includes recruitment and onboarding expenses, training new staff, loss of institutional knowledge and experience, and decline in service quality during transition periods. When talented workers—especially experienced women or multilingual staff—leave due to harassment, organizations suffer a loss of valuable human capital. Over time, this can damage a company's reputation as an employer, making it harder to attract top talent (Baum, 2015; Einarsen, Hoel, Zapf, & Cooper, 2011).

e) Impact on Team Dynamics and Morale

Bullying, harassment, and violence do not only affect the direct victims; they have a toxic ripple effect on entire teams. Colleagues who witness or hear about misconduct may feel unsafe or anxious at work, disillusioned with management, distrustful of reporting mechanisms, and powerless to intervene.

This leads to deteriorating workplace relationships, fragmentation of team cohesion, and a decline in overall morale. In many cases, bystanders develop a form of "moral injury," a psychological distress caused by observing injustice without being able to act against it. This erodes collective trust and can result in widespread disengagement (Lutgen-Sandvik, 2006; Rayner, 2002).

f) Productivity and Service Quality

A hostile work environment inevitably reduces productivity. Employees preoccupied with fear, stress, or trauma cannot perform at their best. Common outcomes include increased absenteeism and sick leave, lower engagement and motivation, mistakes or lapses in judgment, and poor customer service delivery.

In hospitality, where customer satisfaction directly affects revenue, even minor declines in service quality can result in bad reviews, fewer repeat customers, and a drop in reputation. Thus, failing to address internal abuse indirectly affects external business performance (Baum, 2015; Gilboa et al., 2008).

g) Legal and Financial Consequences

Organizations that tolerate or ignore workplace abuse face significant legal and financial risks, including: lawsuits and compensation claims, fines and sanctions from regulatory bodies, legal costs from settlements and court proceedings, and increased insurance premiums.

In some cases, companies may be held liable for third-party harassment (such as by customers) if they fail to implement preventive policies or take corrective action. Negative publicity associated with lawsuits can also deter investors, damage partnerships, and impact stock value (in the case of publicly traded companies).

A notable example is the 2020 case of a global hotel chain sued by multiple employees who alleged long-standing sexual harassment. The company ultimately paid millions in damages and was forced to undergo external audits of its HR practices, affecting its brand image and market share (Equal Employment Opportunity Commission [EEOC], 2021; Ryu & Johari, 2021).

h) Brand Reputation and Consumer Trust

In today's digital and socially conscious marketplace, reputation matters more than ever. Consumers increasingly choose to support businesses that demonstrate ethical behavior and respect for human rights. High-profile allegations of misconduct, especially if poorly handled, can lead to viral backlash on social media, negative press coverage, boycotts, and loss of customer loyalty.

Even if the initial story involves only a few employees or locations, reputational damage can affect the entire brand globally. Conversely, companies that actively protect workers and take a stand against abuse can build customer trust and loyalty, which contributes to long-term profitability (Tepper et al., 2008; Kandampully et al., 2011).

i) Industry-Wide Implications

At a macro level, systemic mistreatment of workers contributes to a negative public perception of the tourism and hospitality sector as exploitative or unsafe. This has several implications: Young professionals may avoid entering the industry, Training programs may struggle to attract students, Governments may impose stricter regulations, increasing operational costs and Unions and advocacy groups may call for boycotts or public scrutiny.

In the long run, if the industry fails to address these issues, it risks eroding its own labor pool and undermining its future sustainability. In an industry so reliant on human interaction, the human cost of abuse is also an economic one (UNWTO, 2019; International Labour Organization [ILO], 2022).

The impacts of violence, bullying, and sexual harassment in the tourism and hospitality industry

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extend far beyond the immediate moment of abuse. They cause deep harm to individuals, fracture teams, reduce organizational performance, and damage brand reputation. More broadly, they threaten the industry's integrity and viability by perpetuating labor instability and deterring new talent. These behaviors are not merely ethical failures—they are strategic liabilities.

VIII. Legal and Ethical Frameworks

Addressing violence, bullying, and sexual harassment in the tourism and hospitality industry requires not only organizational reform but also a robust understanding of the legal and ethical frameworks that define employer responsibilities and employee rights. Laws vary widely by country and region, but there are common international standards and principles that can guide policy-making and enforcement. Ethical responsibilities, while not always enforceable by law, are equally vital in shaping just and sustainable workplace cultures.

This section outlines the global and national legal instruments relevant to workplace conduct in hospitality, explores corporate ethical obligations, and assesses the limitations of existing frameworks (ILO, 2019; OHCHR, 2011).

a) International Legal Instruments and Guidelines

i. *International Labour Organization (ILO)*

The ILO plays a central role in setting global labor standards. Its Violence and Harassment Convention, 2019 (No. 190) is the first international treaty to specifically address workplace violence and harassment, including sexual harassment. Key features include: A broad definition of violence and harassment, including psychological and gender-based abuse, protection for all workers, regardless of contractual status (including interns, trainees, and informal workers) and obligations for member states to adopt policies, legislation, and education programs.

Although ratification is voluntary, Convention 190 provides a powerful tool for advocacy and can pressure governments and employers to act (International Labour Organization [ILO], 2019).

ii. *United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights*

These principles outline the corporate responsibility to respect human rights, including freedom from harassment and violence. They stress the need for due diligence, grievance mechanisms, and reparative action when violations occur.

For multinational hospitality brands operating across borders, these principles encourage consistent global policies and accountability, regardless of local legal discrepancies (Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights [OHCHR], 2011).

b) National Legal Frameworks

While international guidelines provide a foundation, most protections are enforced at the national level. Here's a comparison of some key jurisdictions:

i. *United States*

Title VII of the Civil Rights Act (1964) prohibits workplace discrimination based on sex, race, color, religion, or national origin. Sexual harassment is considered a form of sex discrimination. Victims can file complaints through the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC). However, the burden of proof often lies heavily on the victim, and gig workers or independent contractors may fall outside the law's scope (EEOC, 2021; U.S. Department of Labor, 2022).

ii. *United Kingdom*

The Equality Act 2010 consolidates anti-discrimination laws and explicitly prohibits sexual harassment, victimization, and bullying. Employers are liable for acts of harassment by employees unless they can demonstrate they took "reasonable steps" to prevent it. New 2024 legislation also makes employers liable for third-party harassment (e.g., from customers), a critical development for hospitality (UK Government, 2024; Acas, 2024).

iii. *Australia*

Laws are governed by the *Fair Work Act* and *Sex Discrimination Act* 1984. The *Respect@Work* report in 2020 prompted legal reforms, increasing employer duties to prevent sexual harassment proactively. The *Australian Human Rights Commission* can investigate systemic workplace issues. The Respect@Work report (2020), led by the Australian Human Rights Commission, prompted significant legal reforms, increasing employer obligations to *proactively prevent* sexual harassment rather than just respond to complaints. As a result, new amendments in 2022 empowered the *Australian Human Rights Commission* to investigate *systemic workplace issues* and provided greater legal protection for workers across sectors, including hospitality (Australian Human Rights Commission, 2020; Australian Government, 2022).

iv. *Other Regions*

Scandinavian countries (e.g., Sweden, Norway, Denmark) have comprehensive labor protections, including mandatory anti-harassment training, strong whistleblower legislation, and significant employer liability for failing to protect workers (Eurofound, 2021).

In *parts of Asia, Africa, and Latin America,* laws may exist on paper but are often poorly enforced. Informal employment is widespread in hospitality, and migrant or low-wage workers frequently face abuse without recourse (ILO, 2021).

In *Gulf countries* such as the UAE, Qatar, and Saudi Arabia—where hospitality depends heavily on migrant labor—legal protections are limited by the

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Kafala (sponsorship) system, which ties workers' legal status to their employer. This severely restricts freedom of movement, unionization, and access to justice (Human Rights Watch, 2020; ITUC, 2021).

c) Limitations of Legal Approaches

Despite the presence of these frameworks, legal mechanisms alone are *insufficient* to eliminate harassment and violence in hospitality workplaces. Several systemic challenges persist:

i. *Underreporting*

Victims often avoid legal processes due to *fear of retaliation,* cultural stigma, lack of language proficiency, or skepticism about the fairness of investigations. This is especially true in hierarchical workplaces or among migrant and younger workers (Fitzgerald et al., 1997; McDonald, 2012).

ii. *Burden of Proof*

In many jurisdictions, legal cases require the victim to present *extensive documentation or witnesses,* which is often unrealistic—particularly in cases involving *psychological harassment,* gaslighting, or coercive behavior that leaves no physical evidence (Hersch, 2011; McLaughlin et al., 2012).

iii. *Limited Protections for Vulnerable Workers*

Many hospitality workers fall outside the protection of traditional labor laws because of *informal employment* or seasonal status, classification as "independent contractors" and *visa dependencies* or lack of union representation

These categories leave workers especially exposed to abuse with little legal fallback (ILO, 2022; Standing, 2011).

iv. *Company Complicity*

Organizations sometimes avoid public accountability by *settling claims privately* using non-disclosure agreements (NDAs), which *silence victims,* allow perpetrators to continue working, and shield companies from reputational damage. This practice has come under global scrutiny in recent years (Baker & McKenzie, 2020; BBC News, 2019).

d) Ethical Responsibilities of Employers

While legal frameworks set the minimum standard, ethical obligations go beyond compliance. Ethical leadership in hospitality means creating workplaces rooted in *dignity, equity, and transparency* (Brown et al., 2005; Sims, 1992).

i. *Duty of Care*

Employers have a moral responsibility to ensure the *physical and psychological well-being* of their employees. This includes: Providing security measures (e.g., panic buttons, surveillance, trained security), fostering a psychologically safe environment with open communication, employee assistance programs, and confidential reporting systems, ensuring respectful treatment by *colleagues, managers, and customers alike* and failing to meet these ethical duties can have long-term consequences for employee health and organizational morale (ILO, 2022; Clark et al., 2020).

ii. *Transparency and Accountability*

Ethical Organizations Implement: Clear, multilingual anti-harassment policies, anonymous or third-party reporting channels, regular audits, feedback mechanisms, and climate surveys and l ack of transparency can damage organizational trust and lead to *employee disengagement and reputational harm* (Kaptein, 2008; Ethics Resource Center, 2021).

iii. *Cultural Sensitivity and Inclusion*

Hospitality is a global, multicultural industry, and ethical leadership includes respecting *diversity* without tolerating discriminatory or harmful cultural norms. Best practices include: Policies that are *inclusive of LGBTQ+ identities,* gender equity in leadership and promotions, training to reduce unconscious bias and cultural insensitivity and inclusive workplaces correlate with *higher retention, stronger performance,* and improved customer satisfaction (Mor Barak, 2015; WTTC, 2023).

e) Codes of Conduct and Industry Guidelines

i. *World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC)*

The WTTC has published guidelines on *responsible tourism* and *employee safety,* calling on members to enforce *zero-tolerance* harassment policies, provide regular training and partner with local NGOs and advocacy groups.

Though voluntary, these guidelines offer *best-practice standards* that many multinationals refer in policy development (WTTC, 2023).

ii. *International Hotel and Restaurant Association (IHRA)*

IHRA promotes *ethical business practices* in hospitality. However, critics note that in the absence of enforcement mechanisms, these codes risk becoming "*performative*"—public statements with little operational follow-through (Bakan, 2004; IHRA, 2022).

Accountability remains a central challenge in translating industry codes into *tangible workplace protections.*

f) Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and ESG

Modern investors and consumers increasingly assess companies based on *Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG)* metrics. Social indicators include worker health and safety, diversity and inclusion performance and protection of labor and human rights.

Failing to address harassment can *lower ESG ratings,* reduce shareholder confidence, and affect capital access. Ethical labor practices are becoming a *competitive and financial imperative,* not just a moral one (Harvard Law School Forum on Corporate Governance, 2021; Eccles & Klimenko, 2019).

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g) *The Role of Unions and NGOs*

Unions and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) help close the *enforcement gap* in hospitality by *Unions* offering collective bargaining on safety, wages and grievance procedures, providing legal aid and advocacy and educating members on rights and reporting and *NGOs* running public awareness campaigns, conducting independent investigations and pressuring governments and corporations to implement reforms.

Examples:

UNITE HERE (North America) and *GMB* and *Unite the Union* (UK)

Notable contributions have come from *ILO-affiliated organizations* in Asia, Africa, and Latin America, where *migrant and informal workers are most vulnerable* (ILO, 2022; UN Women, 2020). Their work has contributed to legal changes, union formation, and international monitoring mechanisms.

IX. Prevention and Intervention Strategies

a) *Prevention Strategies*

i. *Clear Policies and Code of Conduct:* Establishing comprehensive, clearly communicated policies on violence, bullying, and sexual harassment helps set behavioral expectations and consequences. These policies must be accessible to all staff and guests (Kowalski & Limber, 2013).

ii. *Regular Training and Awareness Programs:* Mandatory training sessions for employees and managers on identifying and preventing harassment, bullying, and violence promote awareness and empower bystander intervention (Einarsen, Hoel, Zapf, & Cooper, 2011).

iii. *Confidential Reporting Mechanisms:* Providing multiple, confidential avenues for reporting incidents encourages timely disclosure and helps prevent escalation (Hogh, Hoel, & Carneiro, 2011).

iv. *Leadership Commitment:* Strong, visible leadership commitment to zero tolerance policies is essential for creating a respectful workplace culture and ensuring enforcement (Nishii & Mayer, 2009).

v. *Workplace Environmental Controls:* Designing safe work environments with adequate lighting, surveillance, and minimized isolated areas reduces opportunities for harassment or violence, especially for staff working alone or at night (World Health Organization, 2002).

b) *Intervention Strategies*

i. *Immediate and Safe Response Protocols:* Employees should be trained to intervene safely and support victims promptly while ensuring their own safety (Griffin & Clark, 2014).

ii. *Prompt and Impartial Investigations:* All reported incidents must be investigated confidentially and fairly to ensure accountability and prevent further harm (Einarsen, Hoel, & Notelaers, 2009).

iii. *Victim Support Services:* Providing counseling, medical, and legal support helps victims recover and feel safe returning to work (Barling & Frone, 2017).

iv. *Consistent Disciplinary Actions:* Applying disciplinary measures proportional to the offense reinforces the organization's stance against harassment and violence (Rayner & Lewis, 2011).

v. *Mediation and Conflict Resolution:* When appropriate, neutral mediators can help resolve conflicts without victim blaming (Bush & Folger, 2005).

vi. *Follow-Up and Monitoring:* Regular follow-up with affected employees and ongoing monitoring of the workplace environment help prevent recurrence and improve policies (Nielsen & Einarsen, 2018).

X. Conclusion

Violence, bullying, and sexual harassment are pervasive and deeply rooted problems in the tourism and hospitality industry. Addressing them requires more than legal reforms—it demands a values-driven transformation of workplace culture. Employers must move beyond performative compliance toward genuine ethical engagement. Industry associations must enforce their codes, and governments must close the legal gaps that leave workers vulnerable. Most importantly, workers must be empowered to speak out without fear. The industry's future depends not only on customer satisfaction, but on ensuring the safety, dignity, and well-being of the people who make hospitality possible.

The future of the tourism and hospitality industry hinges on its ability to create workplaces free from violence, bullying, and sexual harassment. Achieving this requires strengthened legal protections, cultural shifts, technological innovation, and inclusive policies that empower workers and involve all stakeholders. Transparent accountability, mental health integration, and proactive adaptation to changing workforces will sustain progress. Ultimately, a safe and respectful environment benefits employees, customers, businesses, and society at large, ensuring the long-term vitality and ethical integrity of the industry.

The tourism and hospitality industry, celebrated for its warmth, cultural exchange, and service excellence, paradoxically grapples with pervasive issues of violence, bullying, and sexual harassment. These challenges not only jeopardize the safety and well-being of millions of workers globally but also undermine organizational reputation, customer experience, and industry sustainability.

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This study has explored the multifaceted nature of these workplace abuses, highlighting their root causes—ranging from the sector's labor dynamics and hierarchical power imbalances to customer interactions and cultural stigmas. Through a detailed examination of the consequences, we see how such misconduct damages individuals' mental and physical health, reduces productivity, increases turnover, and perpetuates systemic inequalities.

Legal frameworks, while foundational, often fall short due to gaps in enforcement, underreporting, and the vulnerable status of many hospitality workers, especially migrants and contract staff. Ethical responsibilities, corporate social responsibility, and labor union involvement emerge as essential pillars in bridging these gaps.

Best practices demonstrate that sustainable change comes from comprehensive anti-harassment policies, robust training, safe reporting systems, leadership commitment, and technological innovation. Additionally, fostering diversity, equity, inclusion, and mental health support creates resilient and respectful workplaces. Collaborative efforts involving governments, NGOs, industry associations, and consumers further amplify impact.

Looking forward, the industry must strengthen laws, embed anti-harassment culture, leverage technology, empower workers, and remain adaptable to future workforce transformations. Transparent accountability and consumer engagement will be key drivers in ensuring a harassment-free hospitality environment.

In conclusion, eradicating violence, bullying, and sexual harassment in tourism and hospitality is not just a moral imperative but a strategic necessity for a thriving, ethical, and sustainable industry. Collective action, grounded in empathy, equity, and respect, can transform workplaces into safe havens where all employees can flourish and deliver the exceptional experiences that define hospitality's true spirit.

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