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Compliance or Compromise: Exploring Organizational Gaps in POSH Act Implementation through Media and Legal Narratives in India

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Abstract

The Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013 (POSH Act) obliges every employer to constitute an Internal Committee (IC), sensitise employees, display prescribed information, and report annually. More than a decade after its enactment, public reports, court judgments, and regulatory notices continue to document organisations that miss these mandates. The present study examines the reasons given for such gaps, the consequences recorded, and the way non-compliance is framed in media and legal narratives in India.

A qualitative content analysis was carried out using secondary sources only. A purposive corpus of 200 publicly available articles was assembled in batches covering media reports, legal commentary, court judgments, reports of regulatory and government notices, organisational disclosures, surveys, and expert opinion blogs and articles, published between 2014 and 2026. Each article was recorded with its date, sector, organisation type, source type, epistemic status, and voice, and was then coded under four families: the mandate missed, the reason cited in the source, the consequence cited in the source, and the framing used in the source. Because the corpus is built from reported cases and a single event, the Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) Nashik matter, produces a large cluster of articles, the analysis is interpretive and does not treat article counts as a measure of how often non-compliance occurs.

Four patterns stand out. First, the mandate most often reported as missed is the constitution of a legally valid IC, followed by defects in inquiry procedure, board-level disclosure, IC composition, and failure to act on complaints. Second, nearly half of the articles state no reason for non-compliance; where reasons are given, they point to structural and legal-applicability gaps, procedural errors, institutional neglect, and paper-only compliance more often than to awareness or resource constraints. Third, recorded consequences are mostly directives, inspections, court orders, and reputational reaction rather than fines, and the evidence for deterrence is thin. Fourth, the framing in media narratives (like negligence, ignorance, deliberate evasion) is present but is outweighed by systemic, procedural-fairness, and reform-oriented framings, with a visible shift after April 2026 (after the TCS incident's reporting) towards governance and enforcement language.

The report concludes that POSH compliance in India is better understood as a gap between legal form and organisational practice, shaped by legal design and enforcement as much as by employer attitudes. Findings are limited to reported cases and should not be generalised to all organisations.

Keywords: POSH Act, non-compliance, workplace sexual harassment, organisational compliance, India.

1. Introduction

1.1 Background of the Study

Workplace sexual harassment is a matter of safety, dignity, and equal access to work. In India, the legal response moved from the Supreme Court's guidelines in Vishaka v. State of Rajasthan (1997) to a statute, the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013. The Act places duties on employers to constitute an Internal Committee at each office or branch with ten or more employees, organise awareness programmes for employees and orientation for committee members, display the penal consequences and committee details, and report case data each year. Districts are required to have Local Committees for establishments without an IC and for complaints against the employer.

Having a law does not ensure that it is implemented. Court judgments, news reports, and regulatory notices continue to describe workplaces without committees, committees that are improperly constituted, inquiries set aside for procedural defects, and employers that do not report. These reports raise a practical question: why do mandates that are clearly written and legally binding remain inconsistently implemented?

The present study approaches this question through documents rather than through employers. It examines how non-compliance is described, explained, and judged in publicly available media reports, legal commentary, expert opinions, reports of court judgments, government and regulatory notices, etc.

1.2 Context of the Study

Compliance with workplace legislation is both a legal requirement and a signal of organisational culture and accountability. The POSH Act has been in force for over a decade, yet documented lapses recur. Public attention to these lapses has not been constant. In April 2026, allegations of harassment at a Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) unit in Nashik led to a National Commission for Women (NCW) inquiry, police action, and state-level inspection drives, and to wider discussion of whether paper compliance is enough. Earlier, the Supreme Court's directions of December 2024 on District Officers and Local Committees, and the 2025 amendment requiring detailed board-report disclosures, had already moved the issue from HR policy towards governance and enforcement.

The study is situated in this period. It treats the TCS Nashik matter as an important cluster in the corpus, not as the whole of it, and it looks at earlier articles from 2014 onward so that the post-2026 attention can be read against what was said before.

1.3 Statement of the Research Problem

Compliance gaps under the POSH Act are widely reported, but the reasons given for them are scattered across news items, judgments, advisories, surveys, and opinion pieces. It is not clear which reasons are most commonly cited, whether the consequences recorded appear to change organisational behaviour, or how different kinds of sources frame the same failure, for example as negligence, ignorance, deliberate evasion, or a structural problem.

The present study therefore investigates the reasons for organisational non-compliance with the POSH Act in India, the consequences cited, and the framing of non-compliance, using a corpus of publicly available secondary sources.

1.4 Research Gap

The synopsis identifies two gaps in existing work. First, there is limited synthesis of the organisational reasons for non-compliance. Existing studies examine enforcement deficits, training, and sector-specific barriers, but they do not bring together the reasons offered across different kinds of sources. Second, little is known about how media and legal narratives frame non-compliance, and whether those frames differ between news reporting, judgments, regulators, and commentators.

The present project addresses both gaps through a structured reading of a larger and more varied corpus than earlier studies. It is exploratory and descriptive. Because it relies on reported cases, it cannot estimate how widespread non-compliance is, and its contribution is a taxonomy of reasons, a map of missed mandates, and a description of discourse.

1.5 Research Questions

1. What are the most commonly cited reasons for POSH non-compliance?
2. Do consequences influence compliance?
3. How is non-compliance framed in public discourse?

1.6 Objectives of the Study

a. To identify the factors contributing to organisational non-compliance with the POSH Act in India.
b. To examine the role of legal and reputational consequences in influencing organisational compliance.
c. To determine how instances of POSH non-compliance are framed and represented in public discourse.

1.7 Hypothesis

Despite the existence of legal and reputational consequences, many Indian organisations continue to miss POSH mandates due to lack of awareness, insufficient resources, and resistance to cultural change. For analysis, the hypothesis is read as four linked propositions: H1a, lack of awareness is cited as a reason for missed mandates; H1b, insufficient resources are cited; H1c, resistance to cultural change is cited; and H1d, mandates continue to be missed in spite of recorded legal and reputational consequences. The study is qualitative, so these are examined against the corpus and not tested statistically.

1.8 Variables of the Study

Independent variables: reasons for non-compliance, namely awareness, resources, cultural attitudes, and perceived consequences.

Dependent variables: compliance outcomes (IC constitution, training, reporting, disclosure), quality of compliance, and framing in discourse.

In content analysis these variables are operationalised as codes assigned to each article, described in Chapter 3. Additional descriptors (year, sector, organisation type, source type, epistemic status, and voice) are recorded so that the reasons and frames can be read in context.

1.9 Scope and Importance of the Study

The study covers non-compliance with POSH mandates listed as employer responsibilities in Indian organisations since 2013, including IC constitution, training, annual reporting, and relevant disclosures. It draws only on secondary sources, which are public, verifiable, and ethically sound. It excludes primary data collection, because responses from POSH consultants or HR and IC members are often guarded by confidentiality and reputational concerns. The unorganised sector is outside the intended scope because its enforcement problems differ in kind and would need a separate study.

The study is relevant to organisational behaviour, workplace psychology, and compliance practice. It links compliance behaviour to organisational culture and accountability and highlights barriers that sit in the structure of implementation.

1.10 Limitations of the Study

- The corpus consists of publicly available media reported cases and cannot capture unreported or internal organisational practices.
- Article counts depend on what was published and retrievable online, and a single event (TCS Nashik) generates many articles; counts therefore do not measure how often non-compliance occurs.
- Many sources report allegations or one party's account; epistemic status is coded so that allegations are not treated as findings.
- Roughly half of the articles state no reason for non-compliance, so reasons are known only for the articles that state them.

2. Review of Literature

2.1 Introduction

The present review is organised around the legal framework of the POSH Act, studies of corporate disclosure, work on implementation and enforcement gaps, awareness and training, structural and sectoral barriers, theories of symbolic compliance, and the framing of non-compliance in public discourse. It separates established concepts from the preliminary findings of the present corpus.

2.2 The POSH Act and Employer Mandates

The Act requires an employer to constitute an Internal Committee at each administrative unit or office with ten or more employees. The committee's presiding officer is a senior woman employee and includes at least two members committed to the cause of women or with social work or legal knowledge, and one external member who serves as a neutral party from a non-governmental organisation or association. At least half of the members must be women. The Act lists employer duties, including displaying the penal consequences of harassment and the committee's composition, organising awareness programmes for employees and orientation for committee members, and assisting the inquiry. The committee prepares an annual report for the employer and the District Officer, and the employer includes case data in its own annual report or intimates it to the District Officer. For establishments with fewer than ten employees and for complaints against the employer, a district-level Local Committee is the forum. The Act provides a fine of up to Rs 50,000 for non-compliance, doubled on repetition, with possible cancellation of licence or registration.

These provisions define the "mandates" examined in this study.

2.3 Corporate Disclosure of POSH Compliance

Jumde and Kumar (2023) examined annual reports of listed companies to evaluate the nature of company disclosures related to statutory requirements under the POSH law. They found that while most companies had a corporate policy and had constituted an Internal Committee, they often did not disclose how reported cases of sexual harassment were prevented and resolved. Singh (2023) identifies significant vagueness and insufficient information in company reporting on preventive policies and practices for workplace sexual harassment.

Together, these studies suggest that disclosure often confirms the presence of a policy and a committee but says little about their working. This is relevant to the present study because disclosure is itself a mandate, and because reported "zero complaints" may be read either as success or as under-reporting.

2.4 Implementation and Enforcement Gaps

Rathore (2026) critically examines how employer non-compliance and structural enforcement deficits dilute the real-world impact of the legal framework on sexual harassment, assessing structural features of the Act and identifying implementation and enforcement gaps. YK (2026) investigates enduring issues with the POSH Act in practice and evaluates opportunities for better execution, including implementation gaps that undermine the Act's objectives. Sareen and Dhingra (2024) note that organisations with superficial compliance show an absence of complaints or handle them ineffectively, as compared with organisations that have functional committees.

These studies place the source of the problem in both employer behaviour and the enforcement environment. They motivate the study's attention to consequences: if penalties are rarely applied, employers may not treat them as credible.

2.5 Awareness, Training, and Penal Consequences

Dixit (2024) discusses how, despite sanctions for non-compliance with the POSH Act, a significant percentage of companies do not implement it, many are unaware of the penal consequences, and some fail to train IC members adequately. Awareness and training are thus treated in the literature both as mandates and as explanations for other failures. The hypothesis of the present study includes lack of awareness for this reason.

2.6 Structural and Sectoral Barriers

Anand and Anand (2025) examine legal and structural barriers to implementing the POSH Act in the construction industry in India. They note that enforcement is weak at sites without formal employment structures and describe systemic failures such as non-functional redressal mechanisms, unclear employer responsibilities, infrastructural neglect, and socio-cultural silencing. Their work shows that non-compliance can arise from the way work is organised and not only from employer attitude. It also explains why the present study, which concentrates on organised employers, treats informal-sector problems as a separate subject.

2.7 Symbolic Compliance and the Legal Environment

Organisational sociology offers a vocabulary for what the Indian literature calls tokenistic compliance. Meyer and Rowan (1977) argued that organisations adopt formal structures that signal legitimacy, and that these structures may be loosely connected to daily practice. Edelman (1992) and Edelman, Uggen, and Erlanger (1999) showed that, where legal requirements are ambiguous, organisations create visible structures such as grievance procedures, and that the meaning of compliance is then shaped by the organisations themselves. Dobbin and Kelly (2007) examined how professionals construct what counts as compliance in harassment policy.

Applied to the POSH Act, this literature suggests that having a committee, a policy, and a training record can satisfy the appearance of compliance without ensuring that complaints are handled fairly. These theoretical sources come from the United States and are used here only as sensitising concepts. The coding frame draws its categories from the Indian sources themselves.

2.8 Framing of Non-Compliance in Public Discourse

Entman (1993) described framing as selecting some aspects of a perceived reality and making them more salient so as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, or remedy. For this study, framing is the way a source characterises a compliance failure, for instance as negligence, ignorance, deliberate evasion, a systemic gap, a procedural-fairness problem, or a

governance risk. Different voices (a court, a regulator, a journalist, a law firm, a company) can frame the same failure differently, which is why the corpus records voice and epistemic status along with frames.

2.9 Methodological Literature

Qualitative content analysis is a systematic, rule-guided method for describing the meaning of textual material. Mayring (2014) describes procedures for developing categories from the material and applying them consistently. Hsieh and Shannon (2005) distinguish conventional, directed, and summative approaches, and Elo and Kyngäs (2008) describe the preparation, organising, and reporting phases of the process. Krippendorff (2018) emphasises that content analysis should be replicable and valid, which supports the documentation of coding rules and an audit trail. The present study uses "thematic coding" in the content-analysis sense of assigning defined codes to units of text and interpreting patterns across them.

2.10 Conceptual Framework

The framework places reasons cited for non-compliance as the explanatory domain, missed mandates as the compliance outcome, and framing in public discourse as the representational domain. Consequences cited in the sources link the outcome to later organisational or regulatory response. Epistemic status and voice sit across all domains as qualifiers that indicate who is speaking and with what authority.

2.11 Summary and Research Gap

The literature shows persistent gaps between the intent of the Act and organisational practice. Disclosure is often perfunctory, enforcement is uneven, awareness and training are patchy, and compliance is often tokenistic. Structural features, including who counts as an employer and where the complaint should go, further limit effectiveness.

What remains unclear, and what the present study addresses, is which reasons for non-compliance are actually stated across public sources, what consequences are recorded, and how these failures are framed by different voices. Given that the corpus comprises reported cases and is shaped by media attention, the study offers an exploratory taxonomy, not a prevalence estimate.

3. Research Methodology

3.1 Research Design

The study uses a qualitative content analysis design based entirely on secondary sources. The descriptive component profiles the corpus by year, sector, organisation type, source type, epistemic status, and voice. The interpretive component codes each article for the mandate missed, the reason cited, the consequence cited, and the framing, and reads patterns across them. The corpus was assembled in October 2026 and is a snapshot of what was publicly retrievable at that time.

Secondary sources were chosen deliberately as interviews or questionnaires with POSH consultants, HR professionals, or IC members would likely produce guarded responses owing to confidentiality and reputational concerns, and surveys risk self-censorship and social-desirability bias.

3.2 Population

The population is the body of publicly available documents that report, explain, or adjudicate organisational non-compliance with the POSH Act in India since 2013.

3.3 Corpus Construction and Sampling Technique

A purposive corpus of 200 articles was assembled. Inclusion criteria were: the item is publicly accessible; it concerns POSH mandates or their enforcement in the Indian organised sector; and it either reports a compliance failure or gap, records a consequence or enforcement measure, or discusses reasons

for non-compliance. Items were excluded if they could not be retrieved, if they concerned a different statute, or if they were repeats of an article already in the corpus. Where several articles report the same event, each is kept because outlets and voices differ, and the clusters are linked in the corpus.

3.4 Data Sources

The corpus draws on news and business press, HR and trade press, legal-news portals, law-firm and consultancy articles, court judgments, government documents, research reports, and opinion pieces. Sources vary in rigour, so source type, epistemic status, and voice are recorded for every article.

3.5 Variables and Operationalisation

Domain	Operational indicators in the coding frame	Interpretive note
Context	Year, sector, organisation type, source type	Describe the corpus; not prevalence measures.
Source qualifiers	Epistemic status; voice	Separate findings from allegations, statements, and commentary.
Mandate missed	IC constitution; composition; functioning; display; training; annual report; board disclosure; grievance handling; retaliation; applicability; SHe-Box; policy adaptation	Multi-valued; "Not applicable" where no mandate is in play.
Reason cited	Awareness; resources; cultural resistance; perceived weak consequences; tick-box; reactive mindset; leadership neglect; structural gap; procedural error; alleged bias	Only reasons stated in the source; otherwise "Not stated in source".
Consequence cited	Fine; costs or compensation; quashing; directive or inspection; criminal proceedings; licence threat; reputational reaction; reinstatement; policy change; advisory; court direction; none	What the source records, not what followed later.
Framing	Negligence; ignorance; evasion; systemic failure; tokenism; contested allegation; procedural fairness; reform push; governance risk; guidance; neutral; applicability gap	The source's own characterisation.

b

3.6 Data Collection Procedure

Articles were identified through searches of public sources and were recorded with their title, URL, organisations named, reason for non-compliance as cited, consequence as cited, related articles, and date. The search and first-pass summarising were carried out with the help of an AI research assistant (Claude, Anthropic). Each entry was then read and reviewed by the researcher for verification, including reconstructed titles, undated items, mirror domains, low-reliability sources, and entries marked as allegations. Where limitations remained, such as paywalled pages, partial excerpts, or undated pages, the researcher decided to retain the item as it is publicly accessed, since this is how the general public encounters these sources.

Figure 2 summarises the process.

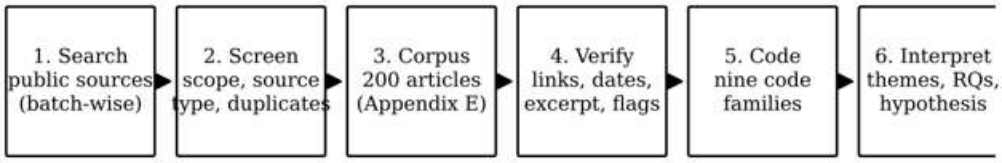


Figure 2: Research process

3.7 Data Preparation

The corpus was held in a spreadsheet with 200 rows and a unique identifier (ID 1 to 200) for each article. Duplicate URLs were checked and none remain. Years were taken from the stated publication date and left blank where no date could be read. Titles that could not be read from the page were reconstructed from the URL slug and marked in Appendix E.

3.8 Analytical Technique

The analysis follows a hybrid of directed and conventional content analysis. Deductive codes came from the variables in the synopsis (missed mandates such as IC constitution, training, annual report, and disclosure; reasons such as awareness, resources, and culture; and frames such as negligence, ignorance, and evasion). Inductive codes were added where the material required them, for example procedural error, alleged bias, structural or applicability gap, retaliation, and paper compliance.

- Read each article and its recorded excerpt, noting the unit of meaning.
- Assign codes within each of the four families; more than one code may apply to an article.
- Assign "Not stated in source" where no reason is given, rather than inferring one.
- Record source type, epistemic status, and voice, to qualify each code.
- Compare codes across sources and over time; group them into themes; and read the themes against the research questions and the hypothesis.

Codes are working codes with written definitions (Appendix B). Coded values were assigned by a single coder. Findings are presented as thematic categories with illustrative articles, and they are interpreted qualitatively. Because the TCS Nashik event accounts for a large cluster, the analysis reads event clusters as single narratives and avoids treating the number of articles as a measure of how often a failure occurs.

3.9 Trustworthiness of the Analysis

Credibility rests on public sources traceable through ID and URL (Appendix E). Dependability rests on documented code definitions. Confirmability depends on recording reasons and consequences only as the source states them. Transferability is limited as findings describe reported cases in the Indian organised sector and are not general estimates.

3.10 Ethical Considerations

All material is publicly available and no personal data were collected from participants. The report names organisations only as they are named in the sources and does not name complainants or accused individuals. Where a source reports an allegation that the organisation disputes, the report attributes the claim to the source and does not treat it as established. The report does not reproduce passages from the articles.

3.11 Methodological Limitations

The corpus is purposive, shaped by what is published and retrievable online, and over-represents recent years and well-known organisations. Roughly half of the articles state no reason for non-compliance.

Coding was done by one coder, and reliability statistics were not computed.

4. Data Analysis and Interpretation

4.1 Overview of the Corpus

The corpus contains 200 articles. The first part of this chapter profiles the corpus by year, sector, organisation type, source type, epistemic status, and voice. The second part presents the thematic analysis of missed mandates, reasons, consequences, and framing, and answers the research questions. Percentages in the profile tables are shares of all 200 articles and describe the corpus only. They are not estimates of how common non-compliance is, because the corpus is built from published reports and one event, the TCS Nashik matter, accounts for a cluster of 33 articles that name TCS.

4.2 Year of Publication

Year	Articles	Percentage
2014	1	0.5%
2015	6	3.0%
2018	4	2.0%
2019	4	2.0%
2020	11	5.5%
2021	2	1.0%
2022	2	1.0%
2023	12	6.0%
2024	27	13.5%
2025	29	14.5%
2026	73	36.5%
Not determined	29	14.5%

Table 2: Distribution of articles by year of publication

Interpretation: The corpus is weighted towards 2024 to 2026, reflecting heavy reporting after the Supreme Court's directions of December 2024, the 2025 disclosure rules, and the TCS Nashik case of April 2026, and easier retrieval of recent pages. It does not show that non-compliance increased. Some undated explainer pages could not be placed in a year.

4.3 Sector

Sector	Articles	Percentage
Cross-sector / general	84	42.0%
IT / ITeS / BPO	39	19.5%
Media & film	14	7.0%
Legal / judiciary	12	6.0%
Healthcare	9	4.5%
Education	8	4.0%
Gig / platform aggregator	8	4.0%
Government / public sector	6	3.0%
Politics	5	2.5%
Real estate & construction	4	2.0%
Cultural / arts institution	4	2.0%
Hospitality	3	1.5%
Aviation	2	1.0%
Banking & finance	1	0.5%
Professional services	1	0.5%

Table 3: Distribution of articles by sector

Interpretation: The largest group is cross-sector material (advisories, surveys, court directions, explainers), followed by information technology, which includes the TCS cluster. Sector counts should not be read as the share of non-compliance in each sector.

4.4 Organisation Type

Organisation type	Articles	Percentage
Listed company	51	25.5%
Government / public body	33	16.5%
Private / unlisted company	33	16.5%
Multiple / mixed	21	10.5%
Court / judicial body	14	7.0%
Not applicable (general)	13	6.5%
Media organisation	8	4.0%
Educational institution	6	3.0%
Industry / trade body	6	3.0%
Political party	5	2.5%
Multinational / foreign company	4	2.0%
NGO / civil society / union	3	1.5%
Professional / statutory body	2	1.0%
Regulator / commission	1	0.5%

Table 4: Distribution of articles by organisation type

Interpretation: Listed companies, government and public bodies, and private companies are the main organisation types. Courts, political parties, educational institutions, and media organisations appear as subjects of specific articles, and articles with no single subject are coded as not applicable or mixed.

4.5 Source Type

Source type	Articles	Percentage
News report	52	26%
Law-firm article / blog	43	21.5%
Legal news portal	18	9.0%
HR / trade press	16	8.0%
Business press	11	5.5%
Consultancy / vendor blog	11	5.5%
Explainer	11	5.5%
News-wire report	10	5.0%
Opinion / commentary	9	4.5%
Research / survey report	6	3.0%
Court judgment / order / notification	6	3.0%
Investigative / digital media	3	1.5%
Academic journal / paper	2	1.0%
Parliament record	1	0.5%
Government document	1	0.5%

Table 5: Distribution of articles by source type

Interpretation: News reports and law-firm articles are the two largest source types. Court judgments, government documents, academic papers, and research reports form a smaller but important group, because they carry findings and data in place of reporting or advice.

4.6 Epistemic Status

Epistemic status	Articles	% of articles
Judicial finding / order	53	26.5%
Expert opinion / commentary	48	24.0%
Survey / empirical data	25	12.5%
Allegation (unproven)	23	11.5%
Advisory / explainer	19	9.5%
Reported fact (news)	17	8.5%
Regulator / commission finding	16	8.0%
Government directive / notice	15	7.5%
Company statement / denial	14	7.0%
Stakeholder demand	3	1.5%
Low reliability / uncorroborated	2	1.0%

Table 6: Epistemic status of the sources

Interpretation: An article may carry more than one status, so rows do not sum to the number of articles. Judicial findings and orders are the most frequent status, followed by expert opinion, survey data, and unproven allegations. Many reasons recorded for the TCS cluster and for media organisations are allegations or contested statements, while those in judgments are findings, they are not weighted equally.

4.7 Voice

Voice	Articles	% of articles
Journalist / media	51	25.5%
Law firm / legal practitioner	42	21.0%
Consultant / vendor	22	11.0%
Judiciary	22	11.0%
Regulator / government	20	10.0%
HR / domain expert	12	6.0%
Company / employer	9	4.5%
Academic / researcher	8	4.0%
Complainant / employee	8	4.0%
Union / civil society	7	3.5%
Industry / trade body	4	2.0%

Table 7: Voice in the sources

Interpretation: Journalists and legal practitioners dominate, followed by consultants, the judiciary, and regulators. Organisations and complainants speak directly in few articles, so accounts of non-compliance are mostly given by others about organisations.

4.8 Coding Approach

Each article was coded under four families. Codes within a family are not mutually exclusive, and the definitions are in Appendix B. The sections below present each family as themes, with illustrative articles identified by ID (Appendix E). In line with the design, the discussion is interpretive; it describes which themes recur, which are rare, and which are tied to one type of source, and avoids using the number of articles as a measure of how often a failure occurs, as explained previously.

4.9 Missed Mandates

Category	Working definition	Illustrative articles (ID)
IC not constituted / not at each office (s.4)	No IC constituted, or one IC covering several offices where separate ones are required.	2, 18, 30, 31, 51, 56, 62, 65
IC composition / independence / external member	IC lacks a valid external member, proper presiding officer, women majority, or independence.	46, 77, 115, 152, 157
IC functioning / inquiry procedure	IC exists but inquiry is procedurally defective or the IC fails to function properly.	32, 49, 113, 121, 180
Display / awareness (s.19)	No display of IC details, penal consequences or awareness material.	5, 6, 17
Training / sensitisation (s.19)	No or inadequate employee sensitisation or IC-member training.	22, 70, 126, 155
Annual report (s.21)	Annual report to the District Officer not filed.	28, 33, 86
Board / annual-report disclosure	Board-report or annual-report disclosure missing or inadequate.	24, 91, 92, 192
Grievance handling / failure to act on complaint	Complaints ignored or not escalated.	9, 10, 21, 108
Retaliation against complainant	Adverse action against a complainant or witness.	169, 170, 173, 177
Applicability / jurisdiction gap	Dispute about whether the Act or the IC applies (employer status, jurisdiction, political parties).	40, 45, 105, 107, 171
SHe-Box / registration	SHe-Box registration or portal compliance.	15, 86, 189, 190
Enforcement measure (not an employer lapse)	The article is about an enforcement or oversight measure, not an employer lapse.	16, 84, 87, 188
Policy adaptation (e.g., WFH)	Policy adaptation (for example work-from-home coverage).	134, 136, 141
Not applicable	No mandate in play (criminal track, market reaction, rebuttal).	20, 104, 196

Table 8: Missed mandates: coding categories and illustrative articles

Absent, shared, or unregistered committees

The most frequently reported failure is that a legally valid IC does not exist where one is required, from no committee at all (IDs 30, 31, 51, 56, 62, 65) to one committee serving more than one office. In the TCS Nashik matter, the NCW report as reported found that one IC was shared between Pune and Nashik and that no member had inspected the Nashik unit (IDs 1, 2, 7), and later directions as reported required separate ICs in all 127 units with ten or more employees within four weeks (IDs 18, 83). A parallel concern is registration: a ministry listing showed that of more than 1,61,000 registered workplaces, IC details had been updated for only 68,460 as of March 2026 (IDs 15, 189, 190).

Committees that exist but are invalid or ineffective

A second group concerns committees that exist but do not meet the standard in the Act. Composition defects are the best documented. The Supreme Court is reported to have described the absence of an independent external member as a fundamental defect (ID 77), and commentators note that the external member is often chosen by the employer whose conduct the committee examines (IDs 152, 157). Defective inquiry procedure appears chiefly in judgments, where inquiries were set aside for violating natural justice, for example by not giving the accused the complaint, by allowing anonymous witnesses over the complainant's objection, or by compressing hearings (IDs 32, 49, 113, 121, 122, 180). These are failures in the quality of compliance and not merely its absence.

Training, display, and reporting

Training and display lapses appear mostly in survey and opinion sources. Surveys from 2015, 2018 and 2019 report that sizeable shares of companies had not trained IC members or displayed penal consequences (IDs 124 to 129), and later commentary describes training as form-filling (ID 22). Disclosure is discussed mainly in 2024 to 2026 sources, where a large majority of top listed companies reported zero complaints, which commentators treat as questionable reassurance (IDs 24, 91, 99), and a Registrar of Companies order penalised a company for omitting the board-report statement (ID 192).

Complaint handling and retaliation

Failure to act on a complaint is reported in the TCS cluster (IDs 9, 10, 21) and in the Ola matter (IDs 108, 109). Retaliation is the subject of a separate set of articles, including a court's finding that a termination was retaliatory (IDs 169, 170, 172) and commentary that the Act has no express anti-retaliation provision (IDs 174 to 176).

Applicability and policy adaptation

A final theme concerns who owes the mandate in the first place. Articles on political parties report that the Kerala High Court held the Act inapplicable and that the Supreme Court declined to entertain a petition for lack of an employer-employee relationship (IDs 40 to 43). Gig-platform articles report that aggregators argue that workers are independent contractors, and a single-judge order treating an Ola driver as an employee was stayed on appeal (IDs 105 to 112).

Mandates missed differ by type of source: judgments concern the quality of committees, regulators concern constitution and registration, news concerns complaint handling, and law-firm commentary concerns disclosure and guidance. The corpus shows what each kind of voice notices, not a single ranking of failures.

4.10 Reasons Cited in the Sources

Category	Working definition	Illustrative articles (ID)
Awareness gap	Source attributes the failure to lack of awareness or training.	59, 72, 125, 145
Resource / capacity constraint	Source cites resource, capacity or infrastructure limits.	38, 148, 153
Cultural resistance / hierarchy	Source cites culture, hierarchy or resistance to change.	95, 144, 150, 156
Perceived weak consequences	Source cites weak or unenforced penalties as a reason.	193
Tick-box / paper compliance	Source describes box-ticking or paper-only compliance.	22, 85, 147, 151
Reactive / no-complaint-no-compliance mindset	Source describes a reactive or no-complaint-no-compliance mindset.	144, 149
Leadership indifference / institutional neglect	Source cites leadership inaction or institutional neglect.	1, 21, 154, 185
Structural / legal-applicability gap	Source cites a legal or structural gap (applicability, missing bodies).	34, 40, 105, 159
Procedural error	Source cites a procedural or technical error.	2, 32, 121, 180
Alleged bias / cover-up	Source alleges bias, conflict of interest or cover-up.	10, 52, 74, 172
Not stated in source	The source gives no reason.	12, 17, 187

Table 9: Reasons cited in the sources: categories and illustrative articles

Nearly half of the articles state no reason. Sources that report an event, announce an inspection drive, or explain a rule commonly describe what was missed without saying why. This is itself a finding, that public narratives are more informative about what organisations failed to do than about why. It may be reasonably interpreted that any account of reasons rests on a subset of sources.

Structural and procedural reasons

Where reasons are given, structural and legal-applicability gaps are prominent. These are not organisational attitudes. They include District Officers not being uniformly notified and Local Committees missing in many districts (ID 34), the absence of an employer-employee relationship in political parties and bar associations (IDs 40, 43, 45), platform workers falling outside the statutory definition of employee (IDs 105, 106), and the fact that an IC cannot take a complaint against the employer (ID 76). Procedural errors are the second major cluster and come mostly from judgments, such as a university referring a matter to a retired judge instead of the statutory committee (ID 48), or a committee that failed to follow natural justice (IDs 113, 121).

Institutional neglect and alleged bias

Leadership indifference or institutional neglect is the most common attitudinal reason, and it is concentrated in the TCS cluster: a governance deficit, a shared committee, complaints that were allegedly ignored, and an NCW finding of a toxic workplace environment (IDs 1, 7, 21, 198). Because these items report one event, and many report allegations that TCS disputes (IDs 6, 14, 102), the theme should be read as a single contested narrative and not as a pattern across employers. Allegations of bias or cover-up also occur in other settings: a committee head said to have called the accused harmless (ID 74), an IC said to operate under management control (ID 52), and a termination that a court held reeked of mala fides (ID 170).

Awareness, culture, resources, and mindset

Awareness gaps are cited mostly in survey reports and expert commentary: companies unaware of penal consequences (IDs 125, 129), IC members without legal training (ID 124), and health workers or journalists unaware that a committee exists (IDs 59, 72). Cultural resistance and hierarchy appear in opinion and analytical pieces, such as committees dominated by hierarchy and compliance treated as a formality (IDs 95, 150, 156). Resource and capacity constraints are cited least often and mainly for Local Committees and for employers that under-resource the mechanism (IDs 38, 148, 153). The reactive mindset, that no complaint means no need to comply, is described in commentary on family-owned and mid-size firms and on ICs constituted only after a complaint (IDs 144, 149). One source states that employers may see the cost of compliance as greater than the fine, which is the clearest statement of perceived weak consequences (ID 193).

The type of source matters. Reasons that fit the hypothesis (awareness, culture, mindset) come mostly from surveys and commentators describing employers in general. Reasons attached to named organisations are mostly allegations of neglect, and organisations' own statements deny the allegation or say that no formal complaint was received (IDs 14, 101, 102). Few organisations explain their own gaps.

4.11 Consequences Cited in the Sources

Category	Working definition	Illustrative articles (ID)
Statutory fine / penalty	A statutory fine or penalty is imposed or specified.	30, 31, 192
Court costs / compensation	Court costs or compensation ordered.	32, 35, 107, 195
Order / report quashed or set aside	An order, report or inquiry set aside.	113, 114, 117, 121
Regulatory directive / audit / inspection	Regulatory directive, audit, inspection or investigation.	15, 18, 86, 87
Criminal proceedings	Criminal proceedings or arrests.	9, 10, 19
Licence threat	Licence cancellation or non-renewal threatened.	15, 37, 194
Reputational / market reaction	Reputational or market consequence.	101, 196, 197, 198
Reinstatement / remedial order	Reinstatement or remedial order.	170, 172
None documented	No consequence documented in the source.	25, 52, 74
Policy / institutional change	Policy or institutional change by the organisation or court.	47, 84, 162
Advisory only	Advisory or recommendation only.	58, 130, 131
Court clarification / direction	Court clarification, direction or ruling that is not itself a penalty.	34, 36, 167
Outcome not visible in excerpt	Outcome not visible in the retrieved excerpt.	49, 116

Table 10: Consequences cited in the sources: categories and illustrative articles

Fines and costs are rare and often modest

Statutory fines are documented in few articles. They include a conviction under Section 26 in an airline matter and a Rs 50,000 penalty upheld against a hospital company (IDs 30, 31), a Registrar of Companies penalty of Rs 3,00,000 on a company and Rs 50,000 on its officers for the board-report omission (ID 192), costs of Rs 50,000 imposed in a case about IC procedure (ID 32), and costs of Rs 5,000 on States that did not report compliance with Supreme Court directions (ID 35). A Rs 5 lakh compensation order against Ola was stayed on appeal (IDs 107, 109). Commentary notes that penalties exist but are weakly applied or unenforced (IDs 27, 124), and one source argues that an employer may find compliance costlier than the Rs 50,000 fine (ID 193).

Directives, inspections, and orders dominate

The commonest recorded consequence is a regulatory or governmental step: an NCW investigation, a state inspection drive, an audit direction, a registration deadline, or an advisory (IDs 1, 15, 16, 84, 86 to 90). Courts mostly respond by setting aside inquiries or reports or by issuing directions (IDs 34, 113, 121, 167). In these cases, the cost of a defective committee falls first on the inquiry, which must be redone, and not on the employer. (This is an interpretation of the pattern and not a statement made by the sources.)

Criminal proceedings and reputational reaction

Criminal proceedings concern individuals accused of harassment and, in one report, an officer alleged to have ignored complaints (IDs 9, 10, 19, 21); the corpus records no criminal sanction on an employer for failing to constitute a committee. Reputational consequences are mixed. Shareholders questioned the incident at TCS's annual general meeting, the company announced an internal review, and commentators describe a governance crisis (IDs 101, 102, 185, 198). But the stock was reported to have risen about 3 per cent on 15 April 2026 and to have fallen 1.93 per cent later, with analysts still mostly positive (IDs 196, 197).

Change in enforcement posture since 2024

Several articles record a change of posture. The Supreme Court's directions on District Officers and Local Committees (ID 34), a six-week survey deadline (ID 89), a proposal for mandatory annual POSH audits (ID 84), a possible refusal of licence renewals until compliance is shown (ID 37), the 2025 board-report amendment with penal consequences under the Companies Act (IDs 92 to 94), and state inspection drives after the TCS case (IDs 16, 87, 88). These are recorded as measures, not as outcomes, and the corpus cannot show whether they have changed employer behaviour.

4.12 Framing of Non-Compliance

Category	Working definition	Illustrative articles (ID)
Negligence	Failure framed as negligence.	8, 30, 31, 128
Ignorance / awareness gap	Failure framed as ignorance of the law.	59, 72, 125, 126
Deliberate evasion / cover-up	Failure framed as deliberate evasion or cover-up.	10, 170, 172, 177
Systemic / structural failure	Failure framed as systemic or structural.	7, 34, 65, 137
Paper compliance / tokenism	Failure framed as paper compliance or tokenism.	22, 85, 147, 150
Contested allegation	Allegation presented as contested between parties.	3, 52, 181, 184
Procedural fairness	Framed as an issue of procedural fairness or natural justice.	32, 77, 121, 173
Policy reform / enforcement push	Framed as an enforcement or reform opportunity.	15, 84, 152, 158
Governance / reputational risk	Framed as a governance, investor or reputational risk.	99, 101, 185, 192
Compliance guidance	Framed as compliance guidance for employers.	17, 92, 134, 187
Neutral reporting	Neutral reporting with no clear frame.	20, 104, 162
Applicability / legal gap	Framed as a gap or dispute about the law's reach.	40, 105, 111, 112

Table 11: Framing of non-compliance: categories and illustrative articles

The three frames anticipated in the synopsis, negligence, ignorance, and deliberate evasion, are present but are not the dominant frames. Negligence is used for lapses such as a missing committee (IDs 8, 30, 31), ignorance is used mostly for survey findings and the health and media workforces (IDs 59, 72, 125), and deliberate evasion appears mostly in retaliation cases and in allegations of cover-up (IDs 10, 170, 172, 177). The frames that occur most often are systemic or structural failure, policy reform or enforcement push, procedural fairness, paper compliance, and governance risk.

Frames differ by voice

- Courts frame failures as questions of procedural fairness and legal reach: natural justice, valid composition, who is an employer (IDs 77, 121, 40).
- Regulators and governments frame them as systemic gaps requiring enforcement: audits, registration, inspections, directions (IDs 15, 84, 86, 191).
- Law firms and consultants frame them as governance and compliance risk, with guidance for employers (IDs 17, 92, 187).
- Journalists frame them as systemic failure or as contested allegation, with neutral reporting when events are in dispute (IDs 7, 181, 184).
- Commentators and HR experts frame them as paper compliance and mindset (IDs 22, 147, 149, 150).
- Organisations appear mostly as denying the allegation, saying no formal complaint was received, or saying that processes were followed (IDs 14, 68, 102, 182).

A contested frame: isolated incident or systemic failure

The TCS cluster shows how the same facts can be framed differently. An industry body described the case as isolated, an employee union sought audits of IC constitution and independence across the company, and the NCW report was reported to describe zero compliance and a toxic workplace environment (IDs 3, 12, 184, 198). Later articles describe a shift from a complaint to a governance crisis (ID 185) and discuss allegations at other IT firms, to which the companies have responded (IDs 181, 183, 200). The shift in frame is itself a finding, because it moves the question from a single unit to the adequacy of compliance across the organisation.

4.13 Reading Across Time and Source Type

Read in time order, the corpus suggests three phases. Articles from 2015 to 2021 are mostly survey reports, MeToo-era reporting, and advisory commentary, with awareness, training, and penalties as explanations (IDs 124 to 131, 73, 74), and 2020 commentary on work from home (IDs 134 to 142). Articles from 2022 to 2025 are mostly judgments on committee composition and procedure, disclosure analysis, and Supreme Court directions, with procedural and structural explanations (IDs 77, 78, 121, 34 to 36, 91 to 100). Articles from 2026 are dominated by the TCS Nashik case and its aftermath, with enforcement measures, board-level scrutiny, and attention to courts' own committees (IDs 1 to 24, 83 to 90, 159 to 161).

The corpus also includes articles on the judiciary's own compliance. A petitioner told the Supreme Court that several High Courts had no guidelines and that only three High Courts were fully compliant, and the Court ordered status reports (IDs 159 to 161). Individual courts are reported to have notified or reconstituted their committees (IDs 162 to 164). This theme shows that the mandate gap extends to institutions that adjudicate it.

4.14 Answers to the Research Questions

RQ1: What are the most commonly cited reasons for POSH non-compliance?

Nearly half of the articles give no reason. Among those that do, the most common are structural or legal-applicability gaps and procedural errors, followed by institutional neglect (concentrated in one contested event), alleged bias, awareness gaps, and paper-only compliance. Cultural resistance, resource constraints, reactive mindset, and perceived weak consequences are cited less often.

RQ2: Do consequences influence compliance?

The corpus does not show that consequences cause compliance. Fines are rare and modest, and sources describe penalties as weakly applied. Reputational reaction is real in shareholder questions and press commentary, but market reaction was muted. A shift towards inspections, registration, disclosure, and audit proposals began in 2024 and strengthened after April 2026; its effect cannot be read from the corpus, which records measures and not later compliance.

RQ3: How is non-compliance framed in public discourse?

Systemic or structural failure, procedural fairness, paper compliance, reform, and governance risk are the main frames. Negligence, ignorance, and evasion are present but less common. Frames differ by voice, and the same event can be framed as isolated or systemic.

4.15 Assessment of the Hypothesis

Proposition	What the corpus shows	Assessment
H1a: Lack of awareness	Cited in surveys and expert commentary (IDs 59, 72, 124 to 129, 145); rarely attached to a named organisation.	Partly supported
H1b: Insufficient resources	Cited in few articles, mainly for Local Committees and under-resourced mechanisms (IDs 38, 148, 153).	Weakly supported
H1c: Resistance to cultural change	Cited in commentary on hierarchy, reactive mindset, and family-owned firms (IDs 95, 144, 149, 150, 156).	Partly supported
H1d: Mandates missed despite consequences	Consequences recorded are mostly directives and few fines; penalties described as weakly applied (IDs 27, 124, 193); effect of post-2024 measures unknown.	Consistent, but not testable with this corpus
Reasons not in the hypothesis	Structural and legal-applicability gaps, procedural errors, institutional neglect, alleged bias.	Prominent and not anticipated in the hypothesis

Table 12: Assessment of the hypothesis against the corpus

Interpretation: The hypothesis is partly supported. Awareness and cultural resistance are cited, but mostly by surveys and commentators, and the most prominent stated reasons are structural and procedural and fall outside the hypothesis. Resource constraints receive little support. The corpus is consistent with weak deterrence, but it cannot test whether consequences change behaviour.

4.16 Summary of Main Patterns

- Nearly half of the articles state no reason for non-compliance.
- The most commonly reported failure is the absence or invalidity of a legally required IC, but judgments show many committees that exist and still fail on composition or procedure.
- Structural and legal-applicability gaps are cited as often as, or more often than, awareness or resources.
- Attitudinal reasons come mainly from surveys and commentators; named organisations seldom explain their own gaps.
- Recorded consequences are mostly regulatory directives, inspections, and court orders; fines are few and modest.
- Frames differ by voice; the three frames anticipated in the synopsis are present but are not the dominant ones.
- After April 2026 the discourse moves towards governance, inspection, and audit, but the effect of these measures is not yet documented.

5. Findings, Discussion, Recommendations and Conclusion

5.1 Major Findings

- The corpus comprises 200 publicly available articles, mostly from 2024 to 2026, drawn from news, law-firm and legal-portal commentary, court judgments, government and regulatory notices, surveys, and opinion.
- The most commonly reported missed mandate is the absence or invalidity of a legally required Internal Committee. Judgments, however, document many committees that exist but fail on composition, independence, or inquiry procedure.

- Disclosure, complaint handling, retaliation, and applicability emerge as further areas of failure, each tied to particular kinds of sources.
- Nearly half of the articles give no reason for non-compliance. Where reasons are given, structural and legal-applicability gaps and procedural errors are prominent, ahead of awareness, resources, and cultural resistance.
- Attitudinal reasons (awareness, culture, reactive mindset, paper compliance) come mostly from surveys and commentators, while organisations seldom explain their own gaps.
- Recorded consequences are mostly directives, inspections, and court orders. Fines are few and modest, and market reaction to the TCS Nashik case was muted even as shareholder questions and press commentary treated it as a governance issue.
- Negligence, ignorance, and evasion appear as frames, but systemic failure, procedural fairness, paper compliance, reform, and governance risk are more common. Frames differ by voice.
- After April 2026 the discourse shifts towards governance, inspection, registration, and audit.

5.2 Discussion in Relation to the Objectives

Objective 1: To identify the factors contributing to organisational non-compliance.

The corpus identifies two kinds of factors. Attitudinal factors (awareness, culture, mindset, paper compliance, neglect) are cited by surveys, commentators, and allegations. Structural factors (who counts as an employer, missing district bodies, procedural rules for committees) are cited by courts and in government directions. A taxonomy limited to attitudes would miss the second group, which is prominent in the sources. The study also finds that reasons are often unstated, so the taxonomy describes what the public record says and not everything that may lie behind non-compliance.

Objective 2: To examine the role of legal and reputational consequences.

The recorded consequences are more often directives and court orders than penalties. Fines are described as modest and weakly applied, and one source states that an employer may find compliance costlier than the fine. Reputational reaction is visible in press and shareholder questioning but not in market movements. The corpus therefore offers no evidence that consequences have deterred non-compliance, but it also cannot show that they have not, since it records events and not compliance outcomes. The enforcement changes since 2024 are recent, and their effect cannot yet be assessed.

Objective 3: To determine how non-compliance is framed.

Framing is plural. Courts speak in terms of fairness and legal reach, regulators in terms of enforcement, law firms in terms of risk and guidance, journalists in terms of systemic failure or dispute, and commentators in terms of tokenism. Organisations mostly deny or rebut. In the TCS cluster, the frame moves from an isolated incident to a governance crisis, which illustrates that framing is part of how accountability is contested.

5.3 Discussion of the Hypothesis

The hypothesis that organisations miss POSH mandates despite consequences, owing to lack of awareness, insufficient resources, and cultural resistance, is partly supported. Awareness and cultural resistance are cited, but mostly in general descriptions of employers, while resources are cited rarely. More prominent are explanations the hypothesis did not anticipate: legal-applicability gaps, procedural error, and institutional neglect. A refined statement, consistent with the corpus, would be that mandates are missed where the law's reach is unclear, where committees are formed to satisfy form and not function, where leadership does not oversee the mechanism, and where consequences are not applied with enough consistency to alter incentives.

This reading is consistent with the literature on symbolic compliance, in which visible structures (a policy, a committee, a training record) are adopted to signal legitimacy, while their working is left to the organisation. It remains an interpretation of reported cases and not a test of a causal model.

5.4 Implications for Employers and HR

- Treat the IC as a functioning body and not as a document: check composition, an independent external member, a presiding officer of the required rank, and records of training and meetings.
- Constitute a separate IC for each office or unit where the Act requires it, and register the committee on the SHe-Box portal where applicable.
- Treat the absence of complaints as a prompt for review, not as proof of compliance; boards and investors increasingly read zero-complaint disclosures with scepticism.
- Review the policy for work from home, platform or contract workers, and complaints against senior leaders, so that the route to the correct forum is clear.
- Protect complainants and witnesses from adverse action during and after an inquiry, including in appraisals and transfers.
- Document each inquiry to the standard of natural justice, since courts have set aside inquiries for procedural defects.

5.5 Recommendations for Regulators, Courts, and Policy-Makers

- Publish consolidated, regularly updated data on committee constitution and registration, as the gap between registered workplaces and updated IC details shows.
- Clarify, by rule or amendment, how the Act applies where the employer-employee relationship is disputed, including platform workers, political parties, and associations.
- Consider an express anti-retaliation provision, since commentators note that the Act has none.
- Provide for the appointment and training of external members in a way that does not leave the choice solely with the employer.
- Apply penalties consistently and publish outcomes, so that enforcement can be seen.
- Complete the compliance of courts' own committees and consider a supervisory mechanism for them.

5.6 Recommendations for IC Members, Practitioners, and Commentators

IC members and consultants should treat training in procedure and natural justice as seriously as awareness training, because many of the judgments in the corpus turn on procedure. Law firms and advisers can help by publishing practical checklists on composition and inquiry steps. Journalists and commentators can help by separating allegations from findings, naming the mandate at issue, and reporting what the organisation says, so that readers can tell whether a failure is alleged, found, or disputed.

5.7 Recommendations for Future Research

- Combine the document analysis with interviews of IC members, HR heads, and consultants where confidentiality can be managed, to learn the reasons that are unstated in the public record.
- Use a second coder and report inter-coder agreement.
- Analyse court judgments as a separate corpus, since they carry findings and not allegations.
- Study disclosures in annual reports before and after the 2025 amendment, to see whether detailed disclosure changes practice.
- Extend the design to the unorganised sector and to Local Committees in a separate study.

- Follow the post-2026 enforcement measures over time to examine whether inspection and audit change compliance.

5.8 Limitations Revisited

The findings are limited by the reliance on reported cases, the influence of a large single event on the corpus, the share of articles that state no reason, the mix of allegations and findings among the sources, and coding by a single coder. The study describes themes in the public record; it does not estimate how often non-compliance occurs, nor does it establish why individual organisations failed.

5.9 Conclusion

This study analysed 200 publicly available articles to understand the reasons given for organisational non-compliance with the POSH Act, the consequences recorded, and the framing of non-compliance in media and legal narratives. The record shows that the most visible failure is the absence or invalidity of the Internal Committee, but that committees which exist can also fail on composition and procedure. Reasons are often unstated, and where they are stated, structural and procedural explanations are as prominent as awareness, resources, and culture. Recorded consequences are mostly regulatory and judicial directions, and there is little documented evidence of deterrence. Frames differ by voice, and since April 2026 the discussion has moved towards governance, inspection, and audit.

The overall picture is of a legal framework whose mandates are clear in wording but uneven in application. Closing the gap will need clearer rules on who owes the mandate, committees that work in practice, and consistent enforcement, along with the leadership attention that the more recent cases suggest has been missing.

5.10 Final Statement

Compliance with the POSH Act is measured not by the existence of a committee but by whether an employee can bring a complaint and expect a fair, timely, and protected process. The public record suggests that this standard is still not consistently met.

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