

# RESEARCH REPORT

## VIOLENCE AND SEXUAL HARASSMENT AT THE WORKPLACE IN GARMENT INDUSTRY IN SUKABUMI AND PURWAKARTA, INDONESIA

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for  
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## Abstract

This study on Violence and Sexual Harassment in the workplace was conducted by interviewing female garment factory workers, in addition to several other resource persons, in Purwakarta and Sukabumi throughout March 2021. The main objective of this study was to inquire whether Violence and Sexual Harassment occurred during the COVID-19 pandemic.

This study found that 63% of all workers that the researchers have interviewed had experienced sexual violence and/or harassment before. Violence against female workers is a daily occurrence, that were often done by supervisors with the aim to maintain work productivity. Sexual harassment, on the other hand, were carried out the most by supervisors and co-workers, especially the mechanics who were stationed at the factory. This study shows that in the long term, the use of violence reduces individual worker's productivity; and both violence and sexual harassment have detrimental impacts on the general well being of the workers; which include their psychological and emotional well being, as well as their cognitive capacity.

Several things were identified as sources of violence and sexual harassment, including: demands to meet the production targets, power imbalances between superiors and subordinates; unequal gender relations, discrimination, gender biased views against female workers; and the powerlessness of female workers, including a lack of understanding of various aspects of violence and harassment. Therefore, the research mainly recommends empowering female workers to collectively fight against violence and harassment in the workplace.

**keywords:**

*violence, sexual harassment, labor, female workers, garment industry, workplace, gender, empowerment.*

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# Chapter I:

## Introduction

### 1.1 Female Workers in the Garment Sector during the Pandemic

**Female workers in the garment industry.** There are numerous research reports and media coverages highlighting the poor working condition in Indonesia's garment industry. Two things that were mentioned the most are the low wages and the lack of job security in that said industry. Most of the workers in the garment industry are temporarily employed for a short duration; and it's such a rare sight to find those who are hired permanently.

These problems - the low wages and lack of job security - happened due to the relatively weak position of Indonesia's garment industry (and other garment-producing countries in South and Southeast Asia) in the global garment supply chain. Garment factories in Indonesia, both PMA (*Penanaman Modal Asing* or foreign investment) and PMDN (*Penanaman Modal dalam Negeri* or domestic investment), are export-oriented factories that are supplying for global brands, and they rely heavily on the demands from the global garment market.

The other thing that has also been widely discussed is that the garment industry (alongside textile and footwear industries) prominently employs a large number of female workers. Around 85% of garment workers in Indonesia are female (ILO, 2017). Usually they are employed in the lowest position as machine operators - a position with the smallest wages, devoid of career path, and with almost no chance to reach managerial position in the future.

In Indonesia, garment factories were established mainly in areas that are largely populated; such as West Java and Central Java, with a large number of job seekers as well. Intense competition for jobs, the lack of job security, and high production targets are some of the factors that make (female) workers vulnerable to the risk of exploitation and violence.

Female workers are constantly facing the risks of sexual exploitation, violence, and abuse; starting from the recruitment process, during the employment, when they are thrown out of the labor market, and when they are trying to find work again. All of these risks could happen inside or outside of the workplace. From field observations conducted by Perempuan Mahardhika in Jakarta and Purwakarta (2019), female workers seeking new employment are prone to be exploited by labor brokers; which might include village officials, local community organizations, and officers from the companies. Inside of the workplace, they are at risk of sexual harassment from fellow workers (mechanics, security officers) and their superiors. While outside of the workplace, Violence and Sexual Harassment could always happen in areas with a strong culture of violence.



For the past 20 years, several measures have been taken to improve the working condition in the garment industry, including measures to prevent Violence and Sexual Harassment from happening. One of the most recent effort was to adopt the ILO Convention (No. 190, 2019) on Violence and Sexual Harassment. In order to achieve the desired impacts, the principles, frameworks, and guidelines contained within the convention must be operationalized to the workplace-level regulations.

**The Impact of COVID-19 on the Garment Industry.** Throughout 2020, the world faced a major crisis triggered by the outbreak of Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19). First detected in China in November 2019, this virus is known to have spread in Indonesia since February 2020. The COVID-19 pandemic, which was declared a global health crisis, continues to become an economic crisis. Efforts to limit the movement of people, to prevent the transmission of the virus, have impacted various sectors of the economy. The global trade volume has declined due to supply chain disruptions and the stagnation in the flow of goods (both raw materials and manufactured goods).

Since April 2020, three provinces with large populations (Greater Jakarta, West Java, and Banten) have implemented Large-Scale Social Restrictions (*Pembatasan Sosial Berskala Besar* or PSBB), at least in several cities with increased numbers of COVID-19 cases. The economic impact was seen soon after. According to the Ministry of Manpower, at the end of May 2020, in both the formal and informal sectors, at least 1.7 million people lost their jobs or were furloughed<sup>1</sup>. Meanwhile, according to the Indonesian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (*Kamar Dagang dan Industri Indonesia* or KADIN), the number has reached 6-7 million workers.

As an industry that is highly connected to the global industrial supply chain, the garment industry has been severely impacted by COVID-19. News on the termination and production halt, as well as their impact towards workers (layoffs, termination of employment contracts) in garment-manufacturing cities are continuously being reported throughout the year. These reports clearly show that existing protection mechanisms are not sufficient to protect workers from the crisis.

This research was conducted to study the impact of COVID-19 on garment workers in two garment-manufacturing cities; namely Purwakarta and Sukabumi. In the context of COVID-19, the research focus on the prevalence of Violence and Sexual Harassment cases in garment industries before and during the pandemic. From this research, it is hoped that various insights could be obtained to build better resilience capacities in the face of similar crises in the future.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://kemnaker.go.id/news/detail/memasuki-new-normal-ibu-ida-minta-perusahaan-rekrut-lagi-pekerja-yang-ter-phk>

## 2.2 Research Objectives

This research was conducted to obtain data and analysis on violence and sexual harassment against female workers in Purwakarta and Sukabumi, before and during COVID-19 pandemic. This research is primarily aimed at:

1. Studying cases of Violence and Sexual Harassment against female workers,
2. Studying the negative impact of Violence and Sexual Harassment,
3. Analyzing the losses caused by cases of Violence and Sexual Harassment, in terms of loss of work time due to absenteeism,
4. Identifying regulations at the company level regarding complaint mechanisms and the management of Violence and Sexual Harassment cases,
5. Producing legal and policy solutions to prevent Violence and Sexual Harassment from happening against female workers.

## Chapter II:

### Methodology

This study was conducted to examine the scope, forms, and nature of Violence and Sexual Harassment cases occurring before and during the COVID-19 pandemic among female garment workers in Purwakarta and Sukabumi. Rapid assessment was chosen as the research method, considering that this method - in a fairly short time - could reveal important information needed to develop preventive actions and interventions related to Violence and Sexual Harassment in the workplace during crisis situation.

Often classified as an approach that is purely qualitative, the rapid assessment conducted in this study, however, combines both qualitative and quantitative approach through convergent design/one-phase design. In this case, the researcher collected or combined quantitative and qualitative data to provide a comprehensive analysis of the problem.

Based on this design, the researcher collected both types of data at the same time, analyzed them separately, and compared the results to see if the findings confirm or contradict each other, or if there are inconsistent findings that can be explained or investigated further (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). This method was utilized to examine and analyze five problem areas, namely the prevalence of Violence and Sexual Harassment, the negative effects of Violence and Sexual Harassment including on women's work productivity, existing regulatory gaps, and also to identify solutions when addressing Violence and Sexual Harassment cases happening in the workplace.

#### 2.1 Population, Sampling Technique, and Sample for Quantitative Data

In this study, the population for data collection is female workers who took part in one of the the Worker Dignity Health and Leadership (WDHL) program and belong to a village level organization called EKATA (Empowerment, Knowledge, and Transformative Action), that was initiated by Yayasan CARE Peduli (YCP) in 2019.

The quantitative data was collected through systematic random sampling on the clusters of garment companies assisted by Yayasan CARE Peduli in Purwakarta and Sukabumi areas. The names of those companies are PT Eins Trend, PT HS Apparel and PT Seyang, which are located in Purwakarta and PT Gunung Salak, PT Dassan, and PT CDB which are located in Sukabumi. The sampling proportion is as shown in table 1.

**Table 1:**  
Number of samples by regions and companies

Regions & Companies	Active EKATA Members	Sample Plan	Actual Sample
<b>Purwakarta</b>	426	107	79
PT Eins Trend	265	66	47
PT HS Apparel	116	29	25
PT Seyang Activewear	45	12	7
<b>Sukabumi</b>	387	98	82
PT Gunung Salak	166	42	36
PT Dassan	114	29	20
PT Cipta Dwi Busana	107	27	26

*\* confidence level 90%, margin of error 5% and population proportion 50%*

Several constraints, notably the accuracy of the employee database, changing telephone numbers and employment status of female workers, as well as resistance from prospective respondents resulted in the differences between the number of samples that researchers had planned to collect and the actual data collected.

## 2.2 Sample Criteria, Sampling Technique, and Sample for Qualitative Data

The study utilized a non-probability, purposive sampling method in selecting informants for the qualitative data collection. Using a set of indicators that the researchers had developed, informants were chosen based on their knowledge and experience related to Violence and Sexual Harassment that occurred before (limited to one year before the pandemic) and during the COVID-19 pandemic. The selected informants were people who have experienced Violence and Sexual Harassment, or understood the issue and were often involved in managing cases of Violence and Sexual Harassment occurring in garment and footwear factories in Sukabumi and Purwakarta.

This sampling technique is commonly used in qualitative research to identify and select key informants with the most knowledge that are relevant for the research. In addition to knowledge and experience, another thing to consider was the willingness of an individual or group of individuals to participate, as well as the ability to communicate their experiences and opinions in an articulate, expressive, and reflective way. In essence, the sampling process focuses on finding people with certain characteristics that can help researchers better obtain relevant data and information.

Thus, several steps that were taken to select the proper informants for this research are as follows: **First**, researchers identified individuals or group of individuals who have experienced, understand, or adept in managing Violence and Sexual Harassment cases in the garment and footwear industry in Sukabumi and Purwakarta. **Second**, researchers approached individuals or groups of individuals with adequate communication skills who are willing to participate in the

research. These individuals were not selected randomly, as researchers tried to purposely find informants from specific groups, that could help shed a light on the prevalence and the management of Violence and Sexual Harassment cases in intervention areas, namely: survivors, trade unionist, representatives from the companies, and members of a working group or people in charge with implementing programs related to the management of gender-based violence or other programs with the aim to improve female workers' welfare.

Based on the purposive sampling technique, the following are the criteria for informants who were selected as informants for this study:

1. Currently employed, or was employed in one of the factories located in Sukabumi or Purwakarta
2. Have experienced Violence and Sexual Harassment in the workplace before and/or during the COVID-19 pandemic
3. Have had experience in managing Violence and Sexual Harassment cases in the workplace before and/or during the COVID-19 pandemic
4. Have knowledge and experience in formulating, implementing, and enforcing regulations and other forms of intervention in response to cases of Violence and Sexual Harassment in the workplace before and/or during the COVID-19 pandemic

Based on these criteria, researchers mapped out several prospective groups for the rapid assessment as follows:

1. Survivors, female workers who are still working or was employed within the last year, who have experienced sexual violence or harassment while working in garment and footwear factories during the period of 2019 - 2020 in Sukabumi or Purwakarta
2. Female workers who are members of the Worker Dignity Health and Leadership (WDHL) program initiated by the Yayasan CARE Peduli (YCP) in 2019-2020
3. Representatives from six companies assisted by Yayasan CARE Peduli (YCP) located in Purwakarta and Sukabumi, mainly those who occupy positions, or stationed in departments that deal with issues related to Violence and Sexual Harassment in the workplace, or those who are in charge of managing cases of Violence and Sexual Harassment, during the period of 2019 - 2020
4. Trade union members who understand the details of Violence and Sexual Harassment cases happening in the workplace and have prior experience in managing those cases
5. Other parties who might not be working directly at the factories but were involved in the management of Violence and Sexual Harassment cases and the development of regulations as well as interventions related to Violence and Sexual Harassment occurring in the workplace in Sukabumi or Purwakarta.

Furthermore, the number of informants was determined based on the identification of potential resource persons, their willingness to become participants, as well as their ability to convey information in an articulate, expressive and reflective manner. Based on the above criteria, 7 participants, consisting of 5 female workers who have experienced Violence and Sexual Harassment and 2 compliance officers from two companies, namely PT Eins Trend and PT Seyang Activewear, were successfully interviewed.

## **2.3 Data Collection Technique**

Quantitative data for this study was collected through telephone survey, in which enumerators contacted respondents with matching characteristics and went through the survey questions by phone. These respondents were called for the telephone survey at least once (some were twice, due to technical constraints or requirements to collect additional data) with an average duration of 50 minutes/call. Based on the data provided by the respondents, the enumerator then filled in the answers on the questionnaire which was then copied into the word database to be combined with data from other respondents.

Qualitative data for this study was collected through individual phone interviews. We interviewed seven informants, and each interview session took around 30 minutes to a maximum of one hour. These individual interviews were conducted once for each informant, however there were some individuals who were further contacted by the enumerators via written messages to request data and examples needed to clarify the results of the interviews.

## **2.4 Training for Enumerators**

The quantitative and qualitative data collection was assisted by 7 trained enumerators who have prior experience in conducting interviews; have adequate knowledge as well as experience related to the issue of gender-based violence; and are skilled in applying interview techniques to collect data according to the research needs. Training for enumerators was carried out for one day on March 3 2021 to highlight several things:

1. How to build a good rapport with respondents; including how to start and end the relationship in a good term; this includes knowledge on how to conduct the interview safely, to prevent the enumerators from accidentally causing psychological harm to the survivors of Violence and Sexual Harassment.
2. The introduction of research indicators used in the measuring tools, which includes the introduction of the survey framework, as well as the interview and group discussion guidelines that will be used to gather information and data.
3. Brief introduction on relevant phone interview techniques, the research protocols, and the schedule for the data collection process

The collection and entry process for quantitative data were conducted from 9 to 30 March 2021, while the collection and transcribing process for qualitative data were conducted from 1 to 8 April 2021. A meeting was held after the enumerators finished collecting and processing the data, to combine and compare the quantitative and qualitative data that were collected during the process. This meeting was held on 8 April 2021.

## 2.5 Research Instrument

The measuring tools in the form of a survey and interview guideline were developed. These measuring tools were formulated based on the five problem areas that were examined and analyzed; which were then operationalized by the researchers to create specific indicators that will cover the context prior to, and during COVID-19 pandemic. The use of the same indicator framework in both the quantitative and qualitative instruments was carried out in line with the mixed research methods principles that recommend the use of similar variables and indicators in both qualitative and quantitative data formats. The following are indicators of the five problem areas that become the focus of this study, namely:

**Table 2:**  
Problem Areas and Indicators

No	Problem Areas	Indicators
1.	The prevalence of Violence and Sexual Harassment cases experienced and reported by female workers.	<b>Number of cases</b> of Violence and Sexual Harassment in the workplace during 2019 and 2020 (before and after COVID-19).
		<b>Forms of Violence and Sexual Harassment in the workplace</b> such as physical, psychological (verbal, harassment, humiliation), sexual, economic, and others in online and offline situations
		<b>Degree of severity of the forms of Violence and Sexual Harassment</b> that have occurred (based on the perception, understanding and categories of each party)
		<b>Profile or general description of survivors:</b> age, education, position and department of work, length of work in the factory and also description of perpetrators: age, education, position and department of work
		<b>Protective factors and risk factors</b> affecting the resilience of survivors related to Violence and Sexual Harassment (for example, social relationships and situations including place/area/work location before and during the COVID-19 pandemic which is allegedly providing opportunities for acts of Violence and Sexual Harassment in the workplace or placing women in vulnerable positions).
2.	Examine the harmful negative effects of Violence and Sexual Harassment experienced by female workers.	<b>The types of negative impacts or effects</b> of Violence and Sexual Harassment experienced by survivors in terms of physical, psychological, social, economic, and others.
		<b>The intensity and duration of the various negative effects</b> felt especially by the survivors and other parties who are directly or indirectly related to the survivors as a result of the experience of Violence and Sexual Harassment.
		<b>Personal coping, especially the maladaptive one(s)</b> carried out

		<p>by survivors and other parties involved in the management of Violence and Sexual Harassment cases, or personal coping as a result of survivors' Violence and Sexual Harassment experiences.</p> <p><b>Social responses and attitudes</b> that are able to amplify the negative effects from survivors' Violence and Sexual Harassment experiences, such as social stigma etc.</p>
3.	Analyzing the loss of productivity due to Violence and Sexual Harassment cases happening to female workers with indirect estimates of turnover, absenteeism and present costs (direct and indirect)	<p><b>Forms of work disruptions</b> as the results from on-the-job Violence and Sexual Harassment by the perpetrators that interrupts or stops survivors' work activities.</p> <p><b>Job performance problems</b> that could affect female workers' work statuses in the short term, such as increased absenteeism, reduced concentration and motivation, thus affecting the ability of survivors to meet their work targets.</p> <p><b>Long-term productivity problems</b> related to behaviors that affect their work, such as inconsistent work history, job loss, part time work or reduced actual and potential income</p> <p><b>General well-being</b>, that is related to these two aspects: feeling well and functioning well, which is characterized by job satisfaction and success.</p>
4.	Analyzing existing regulatory gaps in factories to establish reporting and case-management mechanisms in dealing with Violence and Sexual Harassment that guarantee the safety and security of the female workers	<p><b>Prevention</b>, related to the urgency of implementing preventive actions at the factory, forms of prevention that have been carried out by the factory, implementation of these forms of prevention, and parties that are involved in prevention activities.</p> <p><b>Management</b>, namely the availability of protocols and referral pathways for cases of Violence and Sexual Harassment, the parties involved in case management, accessibility, funding, and confidentiality.</p> <p><b>Recovery</b> which includes the availability of recovery services, types of intervention for recovery process, accessibility to recovery services (Health etc.), financing, and parties involved in recovery efforts.</p>
5.	Identify proposed solutions and recommendations for laws and policies or regulations that need to be adopted in dealing with Violence and Sexual Harassment at the workplace	<p><b>The need and urgency</b> to adopt the necessary regulations to prevent, address, and resolve various gender-based violence occurring in the workplace.</p> <p><b>Types of legal rules, sanctions and discipline needed</b> to respond to Violence and Sexual Harassment in the workplace during normal and pandemic times.</p> <p><b>The level of women's involvement and participation</b> in setting policies to prevent and adequately respond to cases of Violence and Sexual Harassment in the workplace</p> <p><b>Strategic recommendations</b> to strengthen gender-based</p>



		programs (including the elimination of gender-based violence) in workplaces affected by the COVID-19 pandemic
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Based on the framework above, measuring tools for online surveys and interview guidelines for semi-structured individual interviews were developed.

Furthermore, the process of telephone survey was designed to be as short and as efficient as possible which served as a tool to map the general conditions of gender-based violence in the workplace. Meanwhile, qualitative interview guidelines were used to explore the dynamics in case management and interventions, so that researchers will be able to gain a deeper understanding of the obstacles that may arise when implementing regulations or forms of prevention, treatment, and recovery for survivors of Violence and Sexual Harassment.

## 2.6 Data Processing and Analysis

Data analysis in this convergent research consists of three stages. First, qualitative data in the form of conversations with informants were transcribed into written (word by word) text, to be further codified, and developed into themes. Second, quantitative data analysis was conducted to obtain relevant statistical data. Third, is the mixed data analysis, integrating qualitative and quantitative data according to research needs. Data processing and integration, as well as preliminary report writing were carried out through one online and one offline presentation and discussion on 22-23 April 2021. The final revision and writing of the report took place on 31 May – 2 June 2021.

## 2.7 Risk Management

To obtain accurate research data in sufficient quantities, this research requires physical encounters with respondents/interviewees, namely female workers in the garment sector in Sukabumi and Purwakarta. Some of the risks that were faced are:

1. **The rainy season and COVID-19.** The rainy season started when the research was still in the planning stage; and continued when the research entered the implementation stage. This caused several technical obstacles. At the same time, increased numbers of COVID-19 cases were observed in the city of Bandung and its surrounding areas - and the same condition might happen in the research sites, Sukabumi and Purwakarta. Following the direction from the Governor of West Java, since May 2020 several cities/districts have implemented Large-Scale Social Restrictions (PSBB), especially in areas with large populations or with high population mobility. The increasing number of COVID-19 cases poses a risk, when it comes to organizing large gatherings that create large crowds for enumerator training, for example. Moreover, we have received feedback that such meetings, even if they are brief and apply strict health procedures, are unlikely to be authorized by local officials (village heads).

2. **The condition of factories and workers during the pandemic.** We were faced with uncertainties related to the situation of factories and their workers, due to at least two waves of layoffs happening throughout 2020. It was a challenge to find female workers who have lost their jobs because they might have moved to other cities to find new job opportunities. Meanwhile, female workers who are still working can generally only be interviewed on weekends. To address this risk, researchers recruited as many potential interviewees as possible.
3. **Data collection.** In order to obtain research data swiftly and in sufficient quantities in the midst of COVID-19 pandemic, the study considered several options for data collection. Initially, it was planned to collect data through online surveys. This choice is expected to meet several obstacles such as the ownership of cellphones, and the ability of respondents to fill out question sheets on the cellphone screen. The possibility of assisting respondents in filling out online forms was also considered, under the guidance of a data collection officer. However, this method was dismissed because it was feared that it would create a crowd and increase the risk of COVID-19 transmission. Data collection was finally carried out through individual interviews via telephone lines. Telephone interviews, of course, cannot replace face-to-face interviews, and this method was chosen mainly because of the pandemic situation. Interview techniques aimed to obtain rich information through telephone interviews were discussed during the briefing for enumerators.

## Chapter III

### Findings and Discussions

As explained in the methodology chapter, we interviewed factory workers who are members of local, village-level, organizations who are part of the WDHL-YCP program. Thus, the first step that we took in order to conduct the research was to obtain a workers database from the manager of the WDHL program; this was done to collect at least the names and phone numbers of our prospective informants. Researchers then utilized a random sampling method in order to formulate the list of interviewees.

Several challenges surfaced during this preliminary step since the database we obtained was not sufficiently updated. There were a lot of prospective interviewees that we could not contact. The ones that we've managed to contact were not necessarily willing to be interviewed. Some of the factory workers from PT Seyang Activewear refused to be interviewed, indicating their fears of the problem that would arise when their employer finds out their participation in the research.

Considering the ongoing pandemic, it was decided that all interviews would be conducted by phone. Although easier, this option has some limitations. It was recognized from the start of this process that, compared to face-to-face interviews, telephone interviews made it difficult for the interviewer for rapport-building, to capture informants' facial expressions and other gestures; while in this kind of research it's always important to capture these aspects.

Compared to face-to-face interviews with specific appointments, it was more difficult for the interviewer to ascertain the appropriateness of the time, place and the settings of the interview. In at least one interview, we suspected that the interviewee, before providing us with her answers, consulted with someone 'behind' her. It might be her husband, relative, or trade union officials.

With some of the limitations mentioned above, we were able to interview 79 workers who live and work in Purwakarta, and 82 workers from Sukabumi. Thus, the total number of respondents is 161 people – not as many as we desired.

The following section contains the research findings including brief comments on those findings, respectively discussing respondents' demographic features, the prevalence of Violence and Sexual Harassment and their impacts, and case handling mechanisms, followed by a discussion on Violence and Sexual Harassment in the garment industry.

### 3.1 Demographic Overview

All of the 161 respondents in this study are women, and most of them worked in garment factories as operators, especially in the sewing section. Their age range is 18-50 years. The average age for Purwakarta and Sukabumi is 31.9 and 29.2 years, respectively. In addition to their date of birth, we asked the respondent's place of birth as well. From our inquiries, we found that the characteristics of 'migrant workers' are more visible in female workers from Purwakarta. Only 58% of them were born in Purwakarta and the surrounding areas. Meanwhile, of all respondents who worked in Sukabumi, 86% were born in Sukabumi.

The majority of respondents received 9 years of education (42%) and 12 years of education (36%). Workers from Sukabumi get slightly better schooling opportunities, seeing that around 40% of them received 12 years of education. About 73% percent of our respondents admitted to having children with a range from one to four children.

In terms of workplaces, workers from Purwakarta were concentrated in two companies, namely PT. Einstrend (58%) and PT. HS Apparel (32%). Meanwhile, workers from Sukabumi were spread across PT Gunung Salak (44%), PT Cipta Dwi Busana (32%), and PT Dasan Pan Pacific Indonesia (24%). Most of them are temporary workers (65%). Workers whose contracts have expired will look for work in other factories/companies, both in the garment industry and other sectors. Quite commonly, workers who lose their jobs in one factory will then apply for another factory that belongs to the same company. Workers who originally worked at PT Gunung Salak for a few months, later after their contract has expired, will obtain a new job at PT Dasan San Pacific, and vice versa.

**Graph 1:**  
Number of respondents by company/factory.



Regarding workers' wages, as shown in the table below, sewing operators in Purwakarta received wages that are lower than the district minimum wage. It also appears that operators with permanent employment status received wages that are only slightly better than those with non-permanent employment.

**Table 3:**  
Sewing machine operators' wages in Purwakarta and Sukabumi.

	Work Status	Wages (Rp.)	Wages (USD)*
<b>Purwakarta</b>	Non-permanent	3.089.655	216.28
	Permanen	3.174.603	222.22
<b>Sukabumi</b>	Non-permanen	3.064.468	214.51
	Permanent	3.137.571	219.63

Note:

The minimum wages for Purwakarta District, Sukabumi City, dan Sukabumi district for 2021 respectively are: Rp. 4.173.568; Rp. 2.530.183; and Rp. 3.125.444 ; based on the Decree of the Governor of West Java No 561/Kep 774-Yanbansos/2020.

Exchange rate as June 2021, USD 1 = Rp. 14228.00

We also discovered an unusually high union density, almost 40% of workers joining a union. This number is higher than any other sources that we found. As expected, membership in trade unions is more common among permanent workers than in non-permanent workers.

**Tabel 4:**  
Membership in the Trade Union

	Union members	Percentage (%)
<b>Purwakarta</b>	34	43%
<b>Sukabumi</b>	30	37%
	64	40%

### 3.2 Changes Happened during COVID-19 Pandemic

The COVID-19 virus was first identified in Wuhan, China, December 2019. While the virus was spreading all across the globe, Indonesia was occupied with public debates between two camps. The former, which was supported by a number of public officers, insisted that 'it's impossible for the virus to enter Indonesia, and that COVID-19 was a hoax. While the later voiced the urgency to start preparing for a pandemic situation. This prolonged debate ended with a government statement on March 2, 2020, announcing the findings of the first COVID-19 case in Indonesia.

Moving on, after a prolonged public debate, the Indonesian government finally implemented Large-Scale Social Restrictions (PSBB) to control the spread of the virus. This decision was then followed up by local officials.

On April 12, 2020, the Governor of West Java, Ridwan Kamil, issued a decision to enforce the PSBB in a number of areas in West Java, namely in Bogor, Depok and Bekasi. The PSBB in West Java was valid for two weeks from April 15, 2020, and could be extended or re-enacted at any time. Over the course of the pandemic, the PSBB in West Java was extended several times, and new terminologies appeared to refer to social distancing (PSBB) that was imposed on a local scale, or that was less-strict than the actual PSBB.

PSBB is basically a method to control the outbreak by limiting people's mobility, including activities in workplaces. The PSBB certainly has a significant impact on West Java province, which is a large and populated area with a large amount of capitals circulating in labour-intensive industries. However, eight industrial sectors were excluded from the PSBB, including public services and sectors that produce essential goods and services. In addition, exceptions were also given to companies producing export goods for the global market which were allowed to continue operating. In March 2020, after a meeting with representatives from the business sector, the West Java government added several new provisions. Companies that produce Personal Protective Equipment (such as cloth masks) were excluded from the PSBB. In addition, companies that are considered capable of preventing virus transmission and are able to obtain a COVID-19 Free Certificate were also allowed to operate.

Findings from this study indicate that during the pandemic, garment companies in Purwakarta and Sukabumi apparently continued to operate and retained their workers. Therefore, most of the respondents were still able to keep their jobs. Job loss was reported by only nine respondents. Others, indeed, did not lose their jobs, but they got demoted from contract workers to casual workers who receive daily-wage.

Instead of job loss, the more visible impact of the pandemic is the pay cut; reported by 17 people in Purwakarta and 22 people in Sukabumi. Pay cut occurred due to reduced working days and overtime work. One informant in Purwakarta said that because there were fewer jobs, there were rarely orders to work overtime, workers were able to leave the factory at 15.00; earlier than usual.

Meanwhile, due to the pandemic, PT Gunung Salak was reported to have laid off its workers for two days on April 13-14 2020. The company's decision sparked protests from workers, who demanded that their wages be paid in full. During the pandemic (and PSBB in some areas), workers demanded companies to pay the Celebration Day Allowance (THR) approaching Eid al-Fitr celebration on May 24, 2020. Meanwhile, in early May 2020 the Minister of Manpower issued a circular letter that allowed companies to postpone and pay the THR allowance in installments. However, only 26 people (16%) of all respondents said they did not receive THR. Most of the respondents claimed to have received THR, although it was not paid all at once but

in installments. Regarding THR payments, more workers in Sukabumi have their THR paid in full at once. It seems that this is related to the big labor protests in Sukabumi during April-May 2020 that demanded THR payments.

**Table 5:**  
Eid al-Fitr 2020 Holiday Allowance Payment.

	THR Payment	No. of Workers
<b>Purwakarta</b>	Not paid	16
	Paid in installments	43
	Paid full at once	16
	-not answering-	4
<b>Sukabumi</b>	Not paid	10
	Paid in installments	11
	Paid full at once	55
	-not answering-	6

### 3.3 Prevalence of Violence and Sexual Harassment in the Workplace

Overall, the results of this study indicate that Violence and Sexual Harassment did occurs in the workplace. In terms of its types of action, acts of violence such as yelling, throwing things, etc., ranks first, with as many as 102 people mentioned that they have experienced that; followed by unwanted comments on physical conditions, which was experienced by as many as 70 people. Unwanted treatment comes next, with as many as 41 people reported that they have experienced that; followed by unwanted physical contact, experienced by 26 people; and posting of indecent images, experienced by as many as 16 people.

**Violence in the workplace.** At least 102 respondents (63%) reported that they have experienced violence in the workplace. Furthermore, respondents were asked to recall their latest experience. From the survivors' memory, they mentioned that violence in the workplace has been happening long before the COVID-19 pandemic started. There were 27 people who stated that the last time they experienced violence, wherever they worked at that time, was between 2006-2019. Violence during the pandemic (2020-2021) was experienced by 74 people (46% of respondents). Assuming that the latest case of violence happened in their current workplace; The following table shows that violence was especially prominent at PT Eins Trend, PT CDB (Purwakarta) and PT Seyang Activewear (Sukabumi).

**Table 6:**  
Last time experiencing violence at work

Year	Purwakarta	Sukabumi	Total
2006	1		1
2007			
2008		1	1
2009		1	1
2010	1	1	2
2011			
2012			
2013			
2014		1	1
2015	1	1	2
2016			
2017	1	2	3
2018	2	2	4
2019	5	7	12
2020	18	17	35
2021	22	17	39
N/A	1		
Total	52	50	102

**Table 7:**  
Distributed by factories  
The last violence occurred in the period of 2020-2021

	Total	Total Respondents	%
<b>Purwakarta</b>			
Eins Trend	29	46	63%
CDB	11	26	42%
Dasan Pan Pacific	10	20	50%
<b>Sukabumi</b>			
Seyang Activewear	4	7	57%
Gunung Salak	13	36	36%
HS Apparel	7	25	28%
	74	161	46%

If we narrow down the observations to the last two years, (2020-2021), since the pandemic broke out until the field research was carried out, 40 respondents from Purwakarta (51%) and 34 from Sukabumi (41%) mentioned that they have experienced violence during that time frame. Most said the violence occurred "several times" or "often". There is no specific pattern, because



violence was experienced by workers from all age groups, in all factories, both permanent and non-permanent workers, and union members as well as non-union members.

The percentage of workers experiencing violence in Purwakarta during the 2020-2021 period is higher, while the union density in Purwakarta is also significantly higher than in Sukabumi. This indicates that the presence of and membership in trade unions does not necessarily reduce the prevalence of violence in the workplace. Looking at the differences in the demographic characteristics of workers in the two cities, the status of migrants (not “originally” from Purwakarta) possibly creates vulnerability as they become targets of violence.

This study found that violence in the workplace has been occurring since 2020, and it is not particularly surprising. Violence is experienced on a daily basis, perpetrated by superordinates (supervisors/bosses) against operators (sewing, finishing). The forms of violence include: yelling, using curse words and degrading remarks, banging the table, throwing things. Violence, which generally occurs when workers are considered to be working slowly, is apparently used as a tool to encourage workers to work until they reach the target, and as a punishment when they do not perform as expected. Several other forms of punishment were also revealed when workers were working slowly, namely being publicly shamed and prohibited to leave the factory until they met the production target.

**Sexual violence.** In addition to the day-to-day violence described above, female workers are also facing various forms of sexual harassment in factories. We'll start with the most common form of harassment, the unwanted comments on physical appearance, that were experienced by a total of 70 respondents (43%). The percentage differs when the data is segregated by region, with 38 (48%) in Purwakarta and 32 (39%) respondents in Sukabumi mentioned that they have experienced unwanted comments on physical appearance. Once again, female workers from Purwakarta experienced more sexual harassment. The perpetrators, most of the time, are their own co-workers.

Unwanted comments on physical appearance include: comments on physical aspects (“fat”, “black skin”), appearances (“you look like a male/tomboyish”), changes in appearance (not wearing a headscarf anymore), and the style of their dresses (too tight, too flashy, or considered to be too attractive/distracting). Several aspects regarding physical appearance are indeed regulated by the company. The company requires workers to dress modestly and not be fat (weight under 55-60 kg, may vary in different companies). In this case, when ridiculing the appearance of female workers, who are their own co-workers, the company regulations were often used as reference by the perpetrators. In addition, comments on the physical appearances also seem to be related to the hetero-normative norms on how a woman should present herself. That is why, women who like or dress like men, will get comments or be ridiculed by those around them. If comments on physical appearance are used as a form of punishment, aside from other forms of violence discussed in the previous section (yelling, throwing), this punishment has nothing to do with work performance.

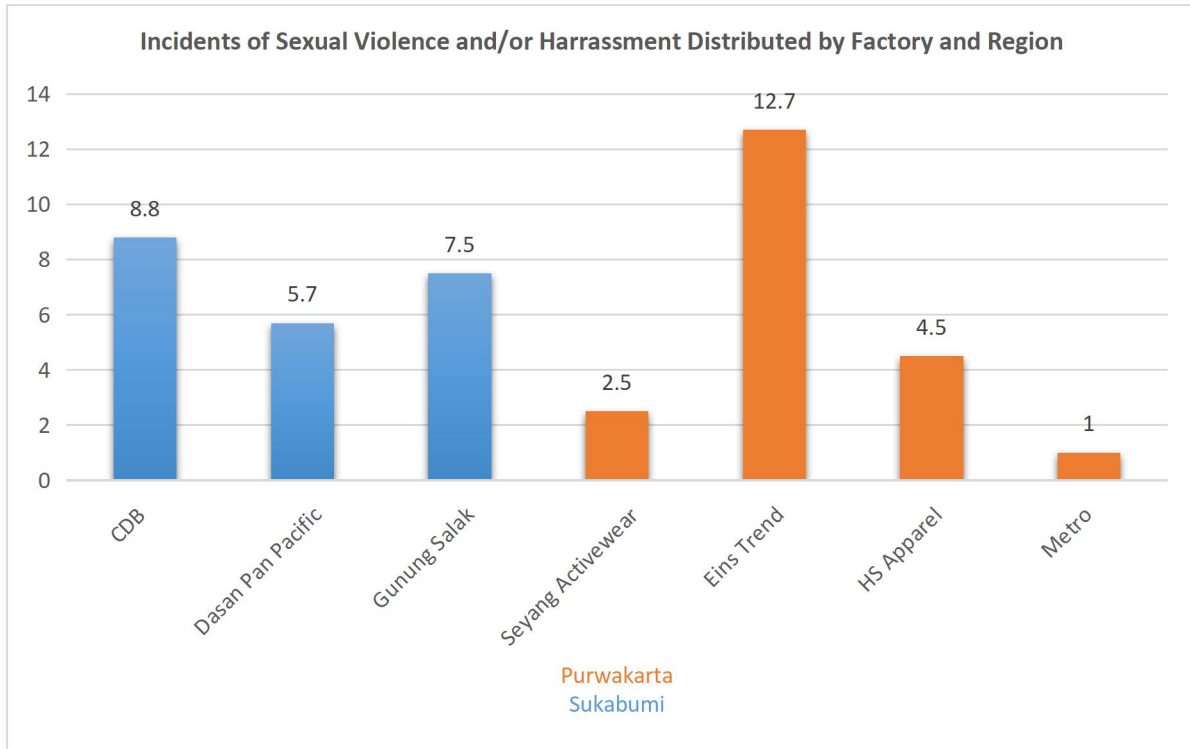
The other form of sexual harassment is unwanted treatments, such as: sexual advances, verbal sexual remarks or sexual gestures, and “passionate” gazes. Overall, 1 in 4 people (25%) stated that they have experienced unwanted treatment. Only four people mentioned that the perpetrators were supervisors and/or security guards; while most of the perpetrators were described as co-workers and mechanics. It seems that this form of harassment is much more common in Sukabumi. About 75% of respondents who experienced that were female workers from Sukabumi.

The next one is unwanted physical contact; such as touching body parts. A total of 26 respondents said they have experienced it. In most cases, the perpetrators are mechanics and co-workers. Some respondents (16) admitted that they have received indecent messages/photos/pictures via mobile phones; and – in most cases – from female co-workers. Then, out of all 161 respondents, three people have accepted a date invitation (one person is not willing to answer this question).

Regarding comments on physical appearance and sending indecent pictures, these two forms of harassment are usually considered as humor or jokes between coworkers. However, the survivors do not necessarily think so. Which means that this form of harassment still affects the person who becomes the target.

Some respondents added that degrading and humiliating remarks were also part of violence. The same applies to the discriminatory treatment they experienced at the factory. Based on all the descriptions above, it is sufficient to say that Violence and Sexual Harassment still occurs in the factory working environment. In fact, most acts of violence and sexual harassment occurred in the 2020-2021 period, during the COVID-19 pandemic. Although workers are aware that violence and sexual harassment occur in factories, some consider it as a risk of working in factories.

**Graph 2:**  
Incidents of Sexual Violence and/or Harassment Distributed by Factory and Region



### 3.4 Survivors and Perpetrators of Violence and Sexual Harassment

The data obtained from this study provides an opportunity to examine some of the common beliefs about survivors of sexual violence and abuse. As mentioned above, various forms of violence (yelling, swearing) which are intended to increase the speed and quality of work actually affect female workers of all ages.

Meanwhile, regarding sexual harassment, there is a widely believed opinion among workers that the victims of sexual harassment are mainly beautiful, young, and unmarried female workers. Ignoring the beauty factor (which is difficult to prove), apparently it is true that single women are more likely to receive unwanted treatment (sexual seduction, lustful gazes); compared to women who are widowed and married.

Next is the general perception of widows, who are considered to be vulnerable to Violence and Sexual Harassments. Available data also indicates that widowed female workers are more vulnerable to being subjected to several forms of harassment, namely: unwanted comments on physical appearance, unwanted physical contact, and the sending of indecent messages/images. In terms of sexual harassment, widows are a vulnerable group. Besides being more likely to be the object of sexual harassment, it is also more difficult for them to get help, support, and sympathy from their environment for the abuse that they have experienced. In addition to

widow status, certain characteristics of a woman's behavior could also make her lose support from her environment. For some people, it's natural for "flirty" women to get sexually harassed by men.

**Table 8:**  
Forms of sexual harassment and marital status.

Comments on physical appearance			
Marital Status	Have Experienced	Total	%
Widowed	No	5	38%
Widowed	Yes	8	62%
Married	No	73	60%
Married	Yes	48	40%
Single	No	13	48%
Single	Yes	14	52%

Unwanted treatments			
Marital Status	Have Experienced	Total	%
Widowed	No	9	69%
Widowed	Yes	4	31%
Married	No	95	79%
Married	Yes	26	21%
Single	No	16	59%
Single	Yes	11	41%

Unwanted physical contacts			
Marital Status	Have Experienced	Total	%
Widowed	No	10	77%
Widowed	Yes	3	23%
Married	No	103	85%
Married	Yes	18	15%
Single	No	21	81%
Single	Yes	5	19%

Received indecent pictures/messages			
Marital Status	Have Experienced	Total	%
Widowed	No	11	85%
Widowed	Yes	2	15%
Married	No	106	88%
Married	Yes	14	12%
Single	No	25	93%
Single	Yes	2	7%

Perpetrators of violence against female workers are generally the foremen, supervisors, and people with other titles whose job is to ensure that female workers' work meets certain quality and quantity requirements. In some factories, the position of supervisors at various levels (production lines, work teams, factory buildings) might be held by women. Various types of violence directed to these female workers (yelling, degrading verbal remarks, physical attacks) are considered as triggers for workers to work faster and better, to ensure the achievement of production targets; or as punishments if the worker does not perform as desired.

Several factors that can trigger the emergence of these violent acts are, in addition to high production targets, the necessity to manufacture products with certain specifications. In this scenario, violence and repression from superiors are used to ensure that the final product is of good quality and on target. It is also known that because the garment industry in Indonesia is generally export-oriented, the ups and downs of violence are determined by demand fluctuations from buyers/brands. Therefore, the intensity of overtime, and the length of working hours are determined by the export schedule (day, week, month). Thus, the increased workload contributes to the increase in the prevalence of violence; and as explained before, perpetrators of violence are usually people who occupy a higher position.

But when it comes to sexual harassment, the situation is a bit different. Most of the time, the perpetrators of sexual harassment are co-workers, mechanics, security guards, and men in higher position. Mechanics, which are generally men, benefit from their position; although their positions are labeled as 'workers' which is equal to the position of female workers. This is due to mechanics being needed from time to time to repair the machines. Meanwhile, operators are unlikely to let machine breakdowns last too long because they will lose the time to pursue production targets.

In this situation, the mechanics take financial (money, cigarette money, or irrelevant services such as asking female workers to buy them coffee) and non-financial benefits, i.e. committing various forms of harassment. In Sukabumi, the perpetrators of harassment are mostly co-workers, namely fellow (male) operators. This seems to be related to the common norms believed in Sukabumi, that some forms of action (unwanted physical contact, sending indecent messages/images) are not considered harassment. Since those are not considered harassment, the perpetrator does not need to be someone who has a higher position in the workplace. Violence in the form of commenting on physical appearances are generally carried out by fellow coworkers (most of whom are women). Meanwhile, for sexual touch, sexual solicitation and dating requests, the perpetrators were all men; both superiors and fellow workers (operators, security guards, mechanics).

Several forms of Violence and Sexual Harassment occurred on a daily basis. They are considered to be normal, and even interpreted as part of the 'factory life' and as occupational risk. It's natural to be yelled at (to work quickly) and it's natural for people to comment on physical appearance (because company regulations prevent fat people from applying for jobs). Some forms of sexual harassment are allowed to occur because people do not recognize it as sexual

harassment. A female worker in Sukabumi said that if the mechanic jokingly touched her body, it was a normal thing that should not be considered as sexual harassment. Some forms of harassment are interpreted as jokes without any real intent.

Because various forms of violence and harassment are considered normal; the survivors, even though they objected, chose to do nothing; let alone tried to defend themselves. A common tendency of the survivor is to belittle and ignore the perpetrator, or blame herself for working slowly, being overweight, or behaving in a way that invites people to tease her.

This study also found several women who claimed that they no longer felt comfortable working - because of high production targets, daily violence, and the mechanics' that teased and touched them. These women then chose to stop working in that factory and changed their workplace. It should be pointed out that not everyone is able to make the choice to stop working. One of the workers chose to continue working, and "swallowed" all of the violence she experienced, because she did not want to sacrifice the permanent work status that provided her with income security. Not everyone has the financial preparedness to stop working or take other options. They are forced to accept below the minimum wage jobs because they have to support themselves and their families.

### 3.5 Impact of Violence and Sexual Harassment towards Female Workers

*I can't stay any longer, it's uncomfortable,  
it's like working in a cage full of Tarzans, it hurts me (emotionally).*  
(Permanent worker in the Sewing Department, PT Eins Trend, Purwakarta)

Interviews with informants captured the various impacts felt by female workers, who were victims of Violence and Sexual Harassment. These various impacts are: physical, cognitive, emotional, and affective disorders, as well as social and work disruptions. Overall, these perceived impacts reflect a decline in female workers' well-being. Physical and cognitive disorders can manifest in the form of losing appetite, difficulty getting rid of violent events from the mind, unable to concentrate, and inability to focus on work. While the socio-emotional disorders that were revealed by informants consist of feelings of sadness, shame, insecurity and discomfort, and even fear. While the form of disruptions on work performances are related to motivational disorders, for example the laziness to go to work, or inability to achieve production targets.

Based on the impacts of Violence and Sexual Harassment explained above, the next question is, how intense is the impact of such violence and harassment on work productivity. To answer that question, in this study 102 respondents who have experienced Violence and Sexual Harassment

were asked to assess the intensity of the impact of these actions on their work productivity; on a scale of 1 (lowest, low intensity) to 10 (highest, strong intensity). The results are as follows:

- Violence in the workplace, unwanted physical contact and unwanted sexual treatment, have a fairly significant on work productivity; and
- Unwanted comments on physical appearance or the act of sending indecent images/messages are considered not to significantly affect their work productivity.

The following is the detailed description about the intensity of impact of Violence and Sexual Harassment on work productivity, segregated by types of Violence and Sexual Harassment.

**Violence at the workplace.** As shown in the table below, 66 respondents stated that workplace violence has a strong impact (on a scale of 6-10) on their work productivity. In fact, 26% of female workers who experienced violence stated that violence severely disrupted their work productivity.

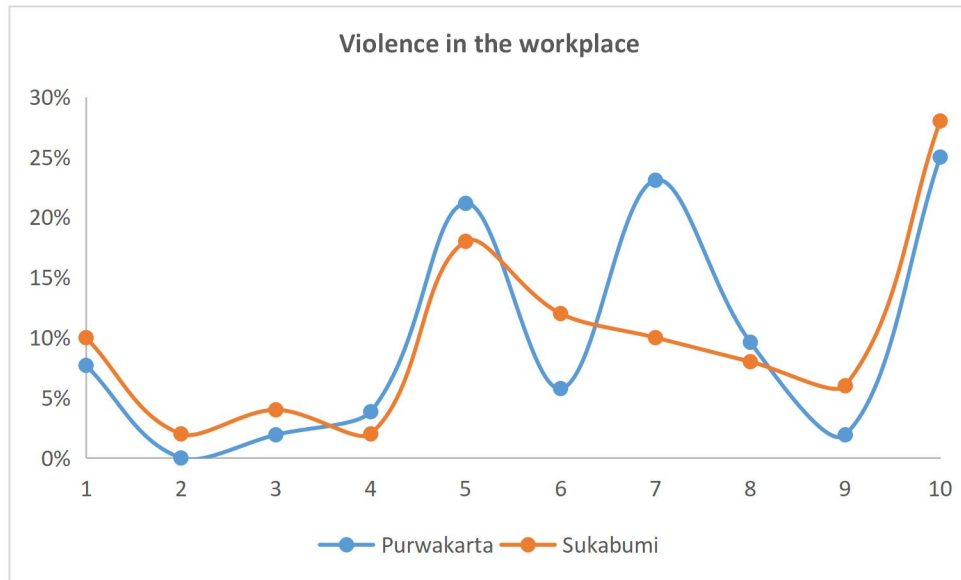
**Table 9:**

The intensity of the impact of violence in the workplace on the productivity of women workers

Intensity	Total	%
1	9	9%
2	1	1%
3	3	3%
4	3	3%
5	20	20%
6	9	9%
7	17	17%
8	9	9%
9	4	4%
10	27	26%
	<b>102</b>	100%

Furthermore, the following graph compares the ratings given by 52 female workers in Purwakarta and 50 female workers in Sukabumi. The pattern in these two cities looks almost the same, indicating a similar experience in both cities regarding the strong intensity of the effect of violence on work productivity.

**Graph 3:**  
Comparison of the intensity of the influence of violence in the workplace on the productivity of female workers



**Unwanted physical contact.** Of the 26 respondents who experienced unwanted physical contact, most (58%) said that the treatment greatly interfered with their work productivity. Both graphs tend to rise sharply to the right; and again the pattern is similar in both cities.

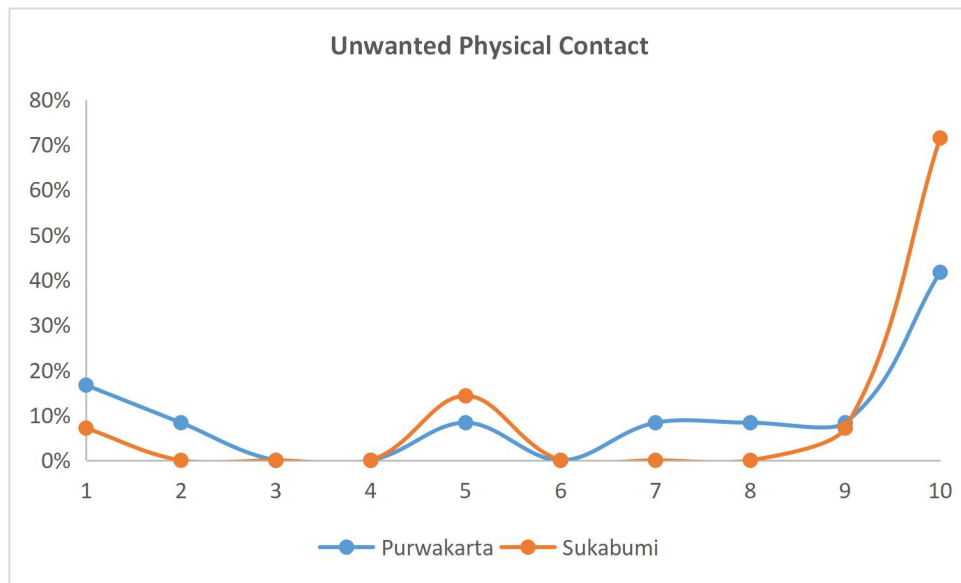
**Table 10:**  
The intensity of the effect of unwanted physical contact on work productivity.

Intensity	Total	%
1	3	12%
2	1	4%
3		0%
4		0%
5	3	12%
6		0%
7	1	4%
8	1	4%
9	2	8%
10	15	58%
	<b>26</b>	<b>100%</b>



**Graph 4:**

Comparison of the intensity of the effect of unwanted physical contact on work productivity.



**Unwanted treatment.** Next is the impact of unwanted treatments, such as sexual advances, verbal sexual remarks or sexual gestures, being peeked in the bathroom, etc. to the work productivity of female workers. Of the 41 respondents who experienced these treatments, some of the female workers, as many as 20 people, felt that the influence (on a 6-10 scale) on their work productivity is fairly large

**Table 11:**

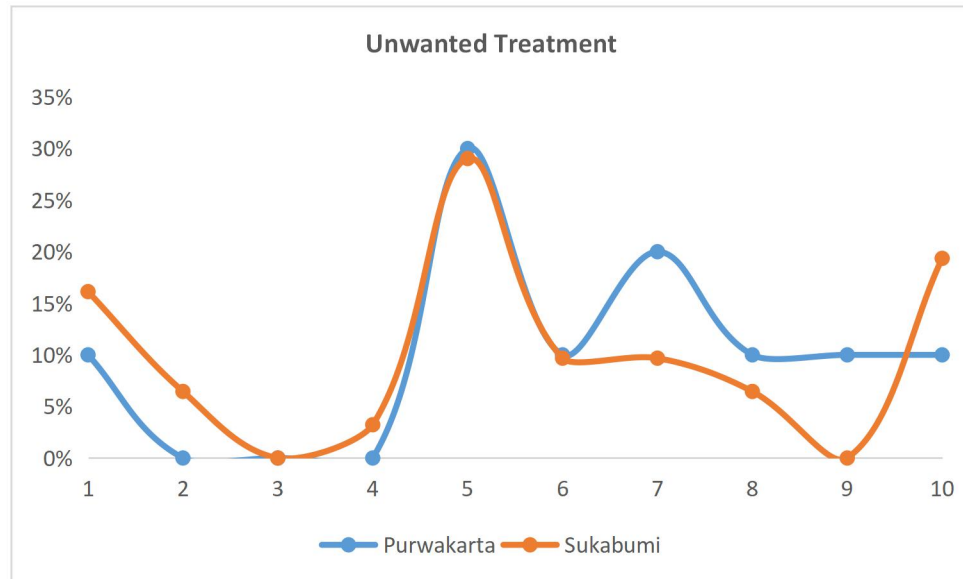
Effect of unwanted treatment on productivity

Intensity	Total	%
1	6	15%
2	2	5%
3		0%
4	1	2%
5	12	29%
6	4	10%
7	5	12%
8	3	7%
9	1	2%
10	7	17%
	41	100%

If the previous two graphs show a significant raise on the right side of the graphs, this time the graph is skewed to the middle and to the right. This means that unwanted treatment interferes with productivity in a moderate to strong intensity. Again, this pattern looks similar in Purwakarta and Sukabumi.

**Graph 5:**

Comparison of the intensity of the effect of unwanted treatment on work productivity.



**Comments on Physical Appearance.** Regarding this form of violence, as many as 70 female workers mentioned that they have experienced it; yet the effect of such violence on their work productivity seems to be less significant. In this case, as many as 40 respondents stated that the intensity of the impact was low (<5); while 16 people stated that the impact was medium (5), and only 14 female workers felt that comments on physical appearance affected their work productivity on a scale of 6 and above.

**Tabel 12:**

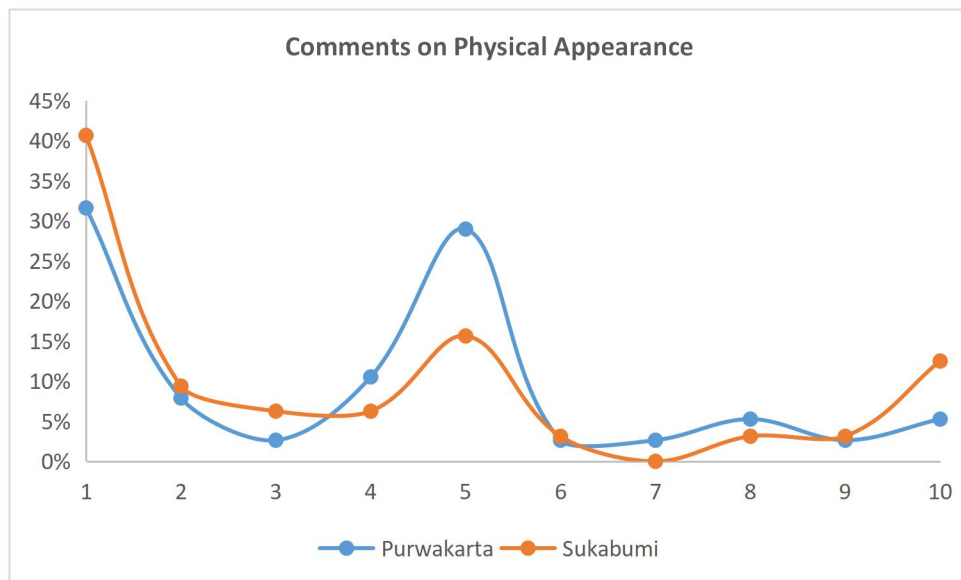
The effect of comments on physical appearance on work productivity.

Intensity	Total	%
1	25	36%
2	6	9%
3	3	4%
4	6	9%
5	16	23%
6	2	3%
7	1	1%
8	3	4%
9	2	3%
10	6	9%
	70	100%

Comparison of the results from Purwakarta and Sukabumi shows a similar pattern in terms of assessing the level of influence of comments on physical appearance on the productivity of female workers.

**Graph 6:**

Comparison of the intensity of comments on physical appearance on work productivity.



**Receiving indecent messages, photos, pictures.** Apparently, receiving indecent messages, photos and/or images have a little impact (1-5) on work productivity. This is especially evident in the

female workers from Purwakarta. Perhaps because the messages, photos, and pictures they received were sent by their fellow female colleagues; and was not considered as a serious disruption.

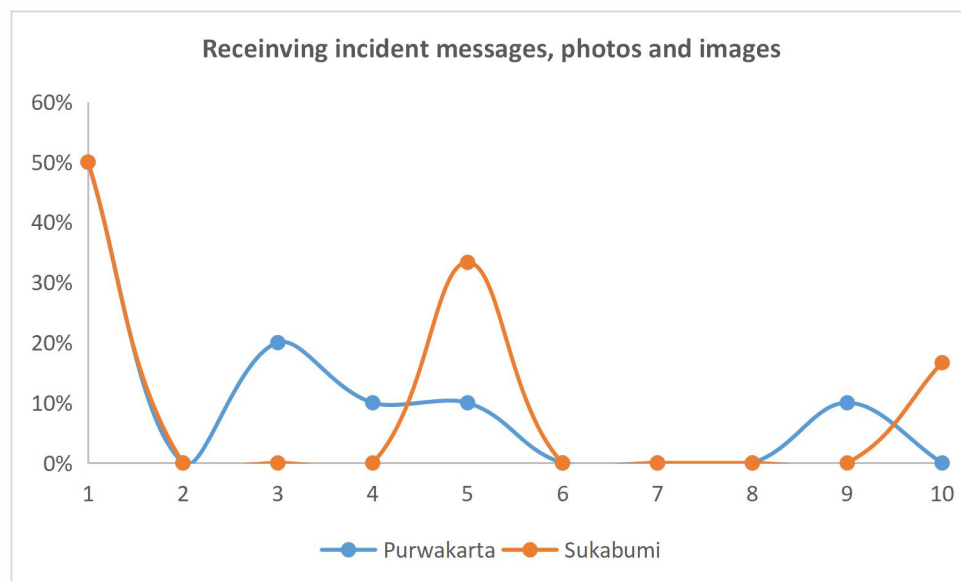
**Table 13:**

The intensity of the influence of receiving indecent messages, photos and or images on work productivity.

Intensity	Total	%
1	8	50%
2		0%
3	2	13%
4	1	6%
5	3	19%
6		0%
7		0%
8		0%
9	1	6%
10	1	6%
	<b>16</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Graph 7:**

Comparison of the intensity of the influence of receiving indecent messages, photos, and images on work productivity.



To further observe the dynamics and obtain a concrete example regarding the intensity of the influence of Violence and Sexual Harassment on work productivity, the following are excerpts taken from three interviews. The first story, told by Dina who works in Purwakarta, relates to the experience of violence and the connection between unwanted physical contact and her work performance:

In 2019, Dina decided to resign from her work in a clothing factory. There are several reasons behind her decision. One day, her repair work (*vermak*) was deemed not up to standard, and the chief lashed out by throwing the cloth that Dina was working on, and hit the table angrily. Once Dina was put in trouble because her machine broke and she could not work. Her boss was angry and again, hit the table. That day Dina was forced to work overtime until 18.00. She came home crying. At the exit she was stopped by a personnel officer, who advised her to rest, and asked her to return to work tomorrow. But, Dina did not want to be persuaded. She stopped working. Not only was she tired of working with three different machines, she was irritated by the nature of the mechanic, whose job was to repair the machines. There are mechanics who always ask for cigarette money for every repair. Another mechanic was willing to fix the machine for free, but his hands were groping the female operator's body parts while doing so.

These are the reasons why Dina decided to resign from her work; the inhumane workload, violence from supervisors, as well as sexual harassment from the mechanics. But these things were often considered normal in her work environment at that time. Dina's decision to resign indicates extreme disruption on her work productivity; compared to other decisions that indicates lower level of disruption such as absencing from work and the decrease in work performance.

The next story was told by Tina who experienced Violence and Sexual Harassment in the form of unwanted physical contact and unwanted sexual treatment that affected her productivity.

Tina worked with the QA staff to help buyers. During that time, the head of the QA department often harassed her. One day, when Tina was in the pantry - when she was washing her hands or eating, she couldn't remember - the QA staff suddenly pressed his penis to Tina's buttocks. Tina was pregnant back then, and of course she was surprised. On another occasion, this QA staff member suddenly took a pen from Tina's chest pocket, while deliberately touching her breast. After continuously receiving such unpleasant treatments, Tina felt uncomfortable and had difficulty concentrating. She often dozed off, as her mind was filled with fear. Her difficulty to concentrate affected Tina's work; she made a lot of mistakes when inventorizing goods, and such mistakes would be discovered by the company since they have the record of who was responsible for checking the goods when the mistake happened.

The last story was told by Ririn, who was raped by one of her colleagues in her boarding house.

One day, Ririn's friends came to visit her in her boarding house. After spending some time, her friends said goodbye and went back to their places - except this man. He forced Ririn to have sex in her room. No one saw what happened. Shaken by the incident, Ririn locked herself in the

bathroom and stood still under the shower. The next day, she felt that it's too much for her to come to work. She was absent for 3-7 days, and lied by saying that she was sick.

From the above findings, it can be seen that the results from quantitative and qualitative data are consistent; which shows that Violence and Sexual Harassment are part of the working culture that occurs in most factories; with a relatively similar disruption pattern in both Purwakarta and Sukabumi. The three excerpts from the three informants' stories above describe how violence was used to 'punish' female workers who were deemed to be working slowly or not up to standard. In Dina's case, the demand to work quickly appears in the word "*keteteran*" or "in trouble" (because she was not working fast enough), in addition to the label "your work is not up to standard" which describes the demand to maintain work quality. The impacts of these forms of violence are also visible, in addition to physical and emotional impacts such as fatigue, crying, and irritation.

At one point Dina decided to stop working. Thus, when the management utilized violent punishment with the aim of boosting labor productivity, it causes a paradox since the method actually interferes with workers' performance and productivity.

Experiences shared by our informants show several forms of violence that happened to them. These forms of violence are, but not limited to: groping body parts, attaching their (perpetrators) genitals to the female worker's body - as experienced by Tina , and forcing sexual intercourse, just like what happened in Ririn's case. In Dina's case, sexual violence was treated as a reward for the mechanics, after carrying out their job in repairing female worker's machines.

The impacts of Violence and Sexual Harassment can be observed in the form of disturbances or disruptions on female workers' productivity. In Dina's experience, she can only continue her work when the machine is repaired. However, she must be willing to "pay more" for her machine to be repaired immediately, so that she can continue her work and maintain her productivity, perhaps even maintaining her work status.

By examining Tina 's story, we found that the immediate impact of unwanted physical contact is the disruption of a comfortable working environment, due to the victims being afflicted with a gripping fear. This psychological condition affects female workers' cognitive abilities, and might cause difficulty concentrating, which could lead to the decline in her work productivity. It was also observed that unwanted physical contacts were carried out gradually, and they were indeed, impacting the work productivity of female workers. In Ririn's case, disruption of work productivity occurred in the form of absence from work which lasted for up to one week. In this case it can be said that female workers might be experiencing more than one form of violence, that ended up disturbing and reducing their work productivity.

Facing Violence and Sexual Harassment in factories, most of the female workers decided to tell their stories, to share their feelings with someone whom they can trust. Even though some female workers perceive the violence they experienced as an incentive to do better, it does not mean that violence and harassment have no impact on them. Because Violence and Sexual Harassment are happening daily in the production room, they are normalized, and treated as part of the everyday life in the factory.

It is also interesting to note that only a small proportion of female workers reported the incidents they experienced, especially incidents related to unwanted physical contact and sexual solicitation, to their superiors and HRD at the company. Even if the company provides a complaint mechanism, female workers are not necessarily willing to go through this mechanism.

### 3.6 Company-Level Regulations, Reporting Mechanism, Case Management for Violence and Sexual Harassment, and Security Insurance

**Company-level Regulations.** The next question is how far workplace regulations protect workers from Violence and Sexual Harassment. When this question is asked to the respondents, although some of them are union members, about 46% mentioned that they do not know whether or not the clause on the “prohibition of Violence and Sexual Harassment” is present in company regulations or collective bargaining agreement..

From approximately 25% of respondents who answered “Yes” (there are regulations that prohibit Violence and Sexual Harassment), in general they were unable to remember the contents of the regulations. This answer is actually quite expected. It is quite difficult to find workers in the garment sector who are willing to read carefully the company regulations and collective bargaining agreement. In the midst of a flexible labor market, workers do not really care about regulations in the workplace as long as they are still employed, even if it is not as permanent workers.

**Tabel 14:**

Is there any workplace regulation that prohibit Violence and Sexual Harassment?

	Total	%
No	40	25%
Have no idea	75	47%
Yes	45	28%
(blank)	1	1%
	161	100%

**Programs/Activities at the company level.** Several companies have programs/activities aimed at ensuring the safety of female workers from Violence and Sexual Harassment. The content and the title of such programs might vary from factory to factory; but usually it took the form of awareness-building classes on Violence and Sexual Harassment. The management of PT Eins Trend, Purwakarta, calls it a training; which is held every six months, in the form of lectures on Violence and Sexual Harassment in factories. This training is provided for supervisors from each department. This activity is carried out in the first hour before the start of routine activities at

the factory. Awareness-raising materials, prepared by HR and compliance officers, are distributed to supervisors to be delivered to all workers in the factory. In addition there are also posters placed on notice boards and factory entrances.

Similar practices are also carried out in PT HS. Awareness-building classes are given to the supervisors for one hour at the end of the working hours. Supervisors are expected to convey the knowledge they have obtained to those who are working under their care. In addition, they also posted an announcement on the notice board near the factory entrance and opened a complaint hotline via the telephone number of the compliance department. At PT Cipta Dwi Busana (CDB), an awareness-building program was carried out by playing (educational) videos during lunch break; while at the PT Dasan factory, the information (on Violence and Sexual Harassment) was disseminated through banners.

Efforts made by the company, on one hand, can be viewed as attempts to fulfill their obligation to the brands<sup>2</sup>. From here, several things can be discussed. First, since the programs were designed to fulfill their obligation only, the approach behind the program/activity was very top-down. One of our informants, a representative from the company, revealed the drawbacks of this approach. There is a question whether this program could really improve the knowledge of supervisors about Violence and Sexual Harassment. Furthermore, it is difficult to monitor whether the supervisors, after getting the educational materials, passed it to those who are working under their care. Another issue is how the training is delivered.

In addition, this study provides clues that most of the workers are not aware about the existence of mechanisms that could help manage Violence and Sexual Harassment cases. Another issue is about trustworthiness and confidentiality, whether the existing mechanism provides a sense of security for the complainant. Even if workers understand the complaint mechanism, they are not necessarily willing to report the case due to their fears. Furthermore, the implementation of programs/activities is clearly top-down and was not based on the urgency to protect and fulfill the needs of female workers

**Complaint mechanism and the management of Violence and Sexual Harassment.** There are several findings related to the perceptions, responses, and management of Violence and Sexual Harassment cases in factories. There is a big difference between the number of Violence and Sexual Harassment cases revealed by research participants and statements from the company. Companies generally said that cases of Violence and Sexual Harassment are very rare or non-existent.

Where did this difference come from? Researchers suspected several things. First, it might be related to the understanding of factory workers from all level, regarding what Violence and

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<sup>2</sup> All companies where our respondents work are companies that supply major brands. Some of the big brands that are most often mentioned include: Target, Old Navy, GAP, H&M, JC Penney, Uniqlo, and Banana Republic. One company may supply products for several brands.



Sexual Harassment are, and what are their forms. Second; it might be related to the effectiveness of awareness-building programs/activities; and lastly, it might be related to the effectiveness of the complaint and case management mechanisms.

As mentioned previously, definitions on what Violence and Sexual Harassment are might differ from one party to the other. For some people, yelling and cursing might not be categorized as violence. They consider it a normal thing, part of the risks of working in a factory; something that has been going on for a long time which became part of the factory culture. This resulted in multiple interpretations of Violence and Sexual Harassment.

These multiple interpretations are reflected into the awareness-building activities carried out by companies. Although there have been innovations in terms of the delivery media (posters, videos), in fact this method has not been effective enough to provide adequate understanding and knowledge, especially about what Violence and Sexual Harassment are; and what action should be taken if such incident happens to a female worker. In addition to the possibility of having a weak awareness-building material, other things that might cause the awareness-building activities to be less effective are their method of delivery and the absence of a monitoring mechanism.

Moving on, on the issue regarding the complaint mechanism provided by the company, this study found that there were only 12 respondents who mentioned that they have used the complaint mechanism provided to report cases of Violence and Sexual Harassment in their workplace; be it cases that they experienced themselves or cases experienced by their colleagues. From here, we can see that the company does not have the full record on the actual number of cases. Most of the female workers did not know where to complain, or stated that there was no means to complain. Most respondents did not know anything about the complaints facilities provided by the company.

### **3.7 Discussion: The State of Violence and Sexual Harassment in the Workplace**

**On work productivity.** The question that is often asked regarding Violence and Sexual Harassment in the workplace is 'how these two things relate to work productivity,' or more specifically, 'do Violence and Sexual Harassment reduce workers' productivity or not'. The simplest way to answer this question is to calculate a person's 'loss of productivity'. Usually this concept is associated with a person's ability to be able to produce something (goods, services), compared to the inputs or resources used. Based on this calculation, being productive means using a minimum amount of resources while achieving maximum production results. In the management approach, this is usually referred to as effective and efficient work.

Based on the stories told by our informants, violence committed by superiors is usually "used" as a strategy to increase productivity. This was done so that workers could work faster to achieve their production targets and produce quality goods without errors. Violence (such as yelling, banging on tables, or throwing things) are commonly used as ways to control female workers,

and as a strategy used by superiors to increase productivity. What is revealed from this study is not entirely new, and has been shown by previous studies, including the study of managers in Bangladesh (Siddiqi, 2003). Allegedly the application of the "Just-In-Time" work system in the garment industry, - goods with certain specifications (type, model, color, size) are available in a quantity as requested, at the specified time - especially to catch up with the demand for seasonal clothing in a short time, pressures the female workers to be always productive (Gibbs et al, 2019). Furthermore, female workers who cannot display adequate productivity will be vulnerable to violent treatment in the workplace.

Previous studies have linked female workers' experiences of violence in the workplace to depression; domestic violence; functional impairments such as hearing, vision, and concentration loss; company culture that is limiting women from accessing their rights, for example, by making it difficult for women to be granted a leave; and the perception of more coercive management practices (Gibbs et al, 2019). When compared with the findings of this study, several requirements for applying for work (not being pregnant, or having a certain weight or not being "fat") are efforts made by the company to overcome limitations that might affect work productivity, in addition to other reasons. Furthermore, after being accepted to work, female workers are faced with violence acts that are seen as something essential to maintain productivity.

The use of violence to maintain productivity is related to several factors. First, as a supplier of goods for international brands, export-oriented garment factories are always under pressure to display high productivity. Then, the way the production works are organized in the factory, which generally places the majority of female workers in the sewing department (the lowest-level department) is putting these female workers in the most vulnerable position. Simply put, they are the most vulnerable to be the target of violence. In addition, female workers are considered socially inferior to mechanics (who are almost entirely male); even though mechanics are 'workers' too. In addition to violence committed in the name of maintaining productivity, there are also cases of gender-based violence (which will be discussed in more detail in the next section). The large number of female workers who are working in the sewing department, with most of their bosses being male, makes this hierarchical work structure strengthen gender power relations, where men are in control. This includes allowing men to use violence to subdue their female workers (Naved et al. 2018 ). All the layers of factors above form a culture of violence in the workplace, which through the habituation process is then accepted as day-to-day practices that are considered normal. During our interview sessions, our informants often joked that "(violence) is normal."

Furthermore, is it true that Violence and Sexual Harassment are able to increase work productivity? Is it true that after receiving violent treatment, workers will continue working? Moreover, female workers (especially those with non-permanent employment status) will surrender to the harsh treatment, mainly because they are afraid of losing their jobs. They even accept the punishment given as a 'motivation' to do better. At first glance, violence seems to be effective in maintaining productivity.

However, looking back at the research findings, the use of violence 'seems' to be effective in pushing female workers to increase their productivity. But at some point, it will become

counterproductive. This happens when the impacts of violence begin to interfere with a person's psychological functions: their feelings, emotions and even the ability to think; and finally affects their foresight, perseverance, accuracy and enthusiasm for work. In time, workers who fell victim to violence will experience burn-out, physical and emotional exhaustion due to repression, pressure and impaired concentration. Just like the impact of violence; anxiety and fear due to sexual harassment will in time interfere with performance. Female workers who are concerned will start making a lot of work mistakes and/or will become unable to meet the quality standards set. Violence, which was originally intended to boost productivity, will in fact disrupt performance and productivity.

When workers who fell victim to Violence and Sexual Harassment reach mental exhaustion, the decline in productivity would have already occurred. Workers will strike in the form of taking unplanned absences or resigning from their jobs. Various literatures associate mental fatigue with absenteeism and resignation. However, especially in a pandemic situation followed by an economic slowdown, the decision to be absent and to resign is not an easy decision to make. In the current economic slowdown, it is not easy to get a new job right away. For companies, loss of productivity due to violence and sexual harassment in the workplace may show up in their turnover rates, but not in their production records. Production records will appear to remain high, as the flexible labor market allows companies to let go of workers whose productivity is declining, to be replaced by new ones. It is not too difficult for companies to let go of non-permanent workers. This study also found the vulnerability of non-permanent workers, who in the midst of the pandemic were 'demoted' into casual workers who were paid daily. Even without the pandemic, many companies continue to reduce the number of permanent workers.

In short, when a female worker decides to be absent or resign from her job, either because of exhaustion or fear, she will be immediately replaced by another worker. With the decline in the proportion of permanent workers, companies also do not need to pay severance pay when terminating their workers. With the easy and low cost of recruitment mechanism, the company actually does not suffer losses from the 'temporary' decline of labor productivity.

Furthermore, Violence and Sexual Harassment are not only associated with decreased work productivity. They are also associated with the mental health and welfare of female workers. These female workers who have experienced sexual violence and abuse will need help and support to recover. This service is not provided and is not covered by the company. The female workers in this study sought support and assistance from the people around them, namely friends, coworkers, and family. In other words, it is the female workers and their social environment that bear the impact of violence and sexual harassment. They are the ones who bear the social costs of the violent culture in the factory. There is nothing wrong with working, nor do women have to stop being workers. But more precisely, it's important to ensure how this wage work can be carried out without having to endanger and allow oneself to be the target of Violence and Sexual Harassment, including having to bear the social costs of such violence.

The description only offers a micro-analysis at the factory level, regarding Violence and Sexual Harassment, and its relation to a decrease in productivity; and the relationship between the decrease in productivity and social costs, which are not paid by the company but by female workers and their environment. In recent years, both Purwakarta and Sukabumi have developed

into industrial areas for the garment industry. Many garment companies set up factories in these two cities, and a single large-scale factory may employ thousands of female workers. The bigger challenge, then, is to quantify the impact of Violence and Sexual Harassment on a broader scale.

**Gender Analysis of Violence and Sexual Harassment.** The simplest reason why we should use gender analysis when discussing the issues surrounding the garment industry is that the industry prominently employs more female workers. There are two reasons that are most used to justify this decision; namely equal distribution of job opportunities and because sewing is considered to be more suitable for women.

The large number of female workers working in the garment industry is no coincidence. Since the recruitment stage, the garment industry has deliberately targeted women. In gender construction, women are imagined as creatures with certain characteristics such as: not independent, obedient, and more careful. In labor selection, the industry takes advantage of the stereotype that, in the gender-based division of labor; sewing, ironing, and folding clothes are women's jobs. At the same time, these types of work are considered lower jobs, easy, do not require skills, and do not require a high level of education; and thus the wages are set to be low.

The sexism that runs within the family and in society at large is clearly reflected in the factory. In the garment industry, the gender-based division of labor is clearly visible. Sewing, ironing, folding, labeling jobs are for women, while the mechanics, supervisors, HRD, and bosses are men. If women then become objects of violence and sexual harassment in the workplace, they have been experiencing such violence even before entering the labor force. Women have been subjugated by various discriminatory norms and gender biases, even long before they enter the factory. Thus, women are losing power over their body.

The findings of this study highlight various aspects of gender-biased stereotypes and discrimination against women:

First, the objectification of women's bodies. About 63% of the 161 respondents experienced some form of violence and harassment. Some of the forms of violence highlight how the perpetrators viewed women as sexual objects: unwanted touching, groping certain body parts, sexual advances, lustful gazes and comments on body shape. Incidents of violence and sexual harassment occur continuously. Some respondents even experienced more than one form of violence and harassment. The high rate of violence and harassment also indicates that there is no protection system provided by the company in the workplace. If this is the case, conditions in the workplace will be difficult to change, and will continue as they are today, if no efforts are made to change the stereotyped views described above.

Second, some company regulations, more specifically the rules regarding maximum weight, reflect the will to exercise control over women's bodies. To be underlined, the regulation only applies to women. PT Doosan requires a maximum weight of 60 kg and a minimum height of 150 cm, while PT CDB imposes a maximum weight of 50 kg. The existence of these regulations and their correlation to employability and productivity have never been debated, they are taken for granted as a condition of employment.

Because these rules regarding weight and height requirements reflect and reinforce the stereotype of the ideal woman; it is not surprising that later on female workers often become targets of sexist comments. The work environment becomes uncomfortable for female workers who are outside of the “ideal weight” category. They will receive comments about weight, body shape (such as too fat, or too thin), dressing style, and looks (tomboy-masculine) in conversations between coworkers. Through these “ordinary” conversations that occur every day, normalization occurs, and the company regulations about ‘the female body’ are slowly being accepted as the truth. After that, no one cares about the impact of such rules and continue to make comments on female workers’ body weight and general appearance. This study notes that these comments are impacting female workers, making them lose their confidence. In addition, the rules regarding minimum and maximum weight cause people to lose jobs or lose opportunities to apply for jobs.

Third, by looking at the characteristics of perpetrators and survivors, Violence and Sexual Harassment have a gender dimension and are gender-based. In incidents of violence and harassment, supervisors and mechanics are the most frequently mentioned perpetrators. There are two kinds of power relations at work in it; namely the superior-subordinate relationship in the workplace where the perpetrators can be male or female; and the gender-power relations between male and female. Although there is no superior-subordinate relationship between operators and mechanics, the power relations between the two are not equal. Sewing machine operators rely heavily on mechanics, and in that situation sexual harassment can occur at any time. Meanwhile, supervisors clearly have the power to assess the performance of operators, and determine whether or not to extend their employment contracts. Permission to take menstrual leave and maternity leave are also obtained through the supervisor. All of these aspects maintain unequal power relations and increasing the possibility of sexual harassment and violence.

Fourth, what is more specific is the general perception and stigma against widows, beautiful women, and young women. While violence in the name of boosting productivity can happen to any female workers indiscriminately; some forms of sexual harassment are more likely to occur in the three female group with the above characteristics.

In the midst of the lack of protection of labor rights, the COVID19 pandemic has placed workers under various pressures. The reduced working time during COVID-19 is used as an excuse for laying off workers, terminating contracts and not paying full wages, as well as making the holiday allowance (THR) not paid or not being paid all at once. Even without a pandemic, Violence and Sexual Harassment can happen any time in factories. In the current situation, to stay employed, female workers are forced to neglect their health and safety, in order to have money to take home.

**From powerless to empowered.** From the discussion of the research findings so far, it seems that the keywords of this study is the situation of powerlessness. Even since the start of this study, some workers have refused to be interviewed, fearing that their participation in the research will put them in trouble. The study also found several vulnerability factors that weakened the position of most garment workers: from their status as women, who are mostly working as

sewing machine operators, the lowest position in the factory's working structure; their non-local status, their non-permanent status, wages that do not even meet the minimum wage, and – lastly discussed – Violence and Sexual Harassment that accompany the 'regimes of productivity'. A concrete and often encountered expression of helplessness is that, when workers were about to reveal harmful practices in the workplace during our interview, they start with sentences such as "I don't mean to disrespect the company, but...".

The existence of violence and sexual harassment is actually a determining factor if we want to discuss women's empowerment. Several studies have shown that the presence or absence of violence is the main determinant that brings women to be empowered (Hancock, 2017; Sinha, Gupta, Singh & Srivastava, 2017).

However, (women) empowerment is usually, or too often, associated solely with socio-economic empowerment, for example for women who are victims of domestic violence. Such empowerment programs usually assume that economically empowered women will be less likely to become victims of violence or are able to escape from the perpetrators. For factory workers, socio-economic empowerment is assumed to allow female workers who were laid off to find new livelihoods. However, this socio-economic empowerment is not sufficient. Other interventions are still needed, namely gender empowerment in the context of factory working conditions; so that women are able to be freed from violence committed by their partners and superiors in the workplace (Parvin, 2018; Naved, 2018).

Some of the causes of powerlessness (flexible labor market, production target regime that characterizes the export-oriented garment industry) are indeed difficult to change in a short time. However, there is still room for empowerment in legal and cultural aspects (behavior, culture of violence in factories, gender bias).

The key to essential empowerment lies in the aspect of education, including education regarding various types of rights; women's rights, labor rights, even civil rights, and human rights in general. Education on rights is usually followed by education on the various types of rights protected by law and various regulations (including company regulations and collective bargaining agreements). Workers who fell victim to rape and humiliating and inhumane punishments need to understand that they can actually take legal actions. Furthermore, it is also important for women workers to have knowledge about various options that can be taken to defend their legally protected rights.

Many garment companies that are supplying for big brands consider themselves to have fulfilled their obligations, protecting workers from acts of violence and sexual harassment, solely by relying on various provisions contained in the Code of Conduct (COC). In fact, the Code of Conduct for the most part is only an agreement from the company to fulfill a series of obligations, and the agreement is not legally binding in Indonesian law.

Another type of reinforcement that is also important is understanding the various aspects of Violence and Sexual Harassment. As described above, so far knowledge about Violence and

Sexual Harassment is solely obtained on a top-down basis, produced and disseminated by the company through various educational programs/activities, training, and other similar initiatives. After that, the company opened a complaint mechanism, which proved to only be able to collect very few complaints about acts of violence and harassment that are occurring every day in factories. It is necessary to find other ways to produce knowledge - about various aspects of Violence and Sexual Harassment (eg forms of action, perpetrators, victims, causes, violence as a way to obtain compliance, as well as the impact to the social costs) - from the 'bottom' side. It should not be a top-down initiative, but drawn from the daily life of workers. It seems that the parties that are most obligated to do this are the labor organizations, both the trade union and community-based labor organizations.

In the end, after empowerment in the sense of shaping the understanding around Violence and Sexual Harassment, the more practical thing that needs to be done is to find various possible ways to fight the daily practice of Violence and Sexual Harassment in the workplace. Something like this proved possible to do. In a factory in Semarang, an interesting practice once took place, when female workers working in a line booed the abusers altogether. A similar story happened in Sukabumi, when a community organization was able to pressure the company to punish the factory manager who sexually harassed female workers. Trade unions and even an association of workers' families can also protest if the company imposes long overtime work too often. Trade unions, if desired, can also insist that factories provide counselors and an independent complaint mechanism (that is not part of HRD/personnel department); to ensure confidentiality and ensure that there is no retaliation against workers who report/complain incidents of Violence and Sexual Harassment. All of these examples can be expanded further, as long as empowering the oppressed group also means disempowering the (false) power of the oppressor.

## Chapter 4

### Conclusion and Recommendation

#### 4.1 Conclusion

This study was conducted to study the prevalence of Violence and Sexual Harassment against female workers in two garment-producing areas, namely: Purwakarta and Sukabumi, before and during COVID-19 pandemic. To answer this question, apart from collecting secondary data; through telephone interviews this study managed to connect with no less than 161 female workers, and several other sources from both cities. All of the female workers interviewed are members of the EKATA organization, and are connected to the WDHL/Yayasan Care Peduli (YCP) program.

Some conclusions that can be drawn from this study are as follows:

- First, the research confirms that in the observed period, namely during the Covid-19 pandemic (February 2020-March 2021), Violence and Sexual Harassment occurred among the female workers interviewed. At least 102 of the 161 informants that we (63%) interviewed stated that they have experienced sexual violence and/or harassment in the workplace. There are strong indications that, sexual harassment and violence has been around for a long time (the longest recorded year is 2006) and is a daily occurrence in the garment industry. In short, Violence and Sexual Harassment occurred both before and during the pandemic.
- Second, this study lacks methodological adequacy to conclude whether cases of Violence and Sexual Harassment are increasing or decreasing during the pandemic. However, the pandemic, which was followed by economic downfall, created its own pressure for workers. The reduced working time during COVID-19 is used as an excuse to lay off workers, change the status of contract workers to casual daily workers, terminate the working contracts, not paying workers' full wages, and to erase holiday allowance (THR) or to make the payment of holiday allowance in installments. All of these situations weaken the bargaining position of female workers, increase their vulnerability, and do not reduce the possibility of preventing Violence and Sexual Harassment in the workplace.
- Third; This study confirms several factors related to Violence and Sexual Harassment. Some of the factors are structural, and difficult to change in a short time, namely: strong pressure to maintain and push productivity in the export-oriented garment industry; and the flexibility of the labor market which places workers in a vulnerable position to lose their jobs. The next factors are discrimination, stereotypes and gender-biased division of labor, which then place female workers, especially sewing operators, on the lowest position in the factory work structure, and in the weakest position. This study has also found that violence generally affects all workers; and because of certain gender biases,



various forms of sexual harassment are more likely to afflict female workers with certain characteristics (widowed, young, unmarried). There are also indications that status as migrant is a factor that adds to the vulnerability, and union membership does not protect workers from becoming victims of Violence and Sexual Harassment.

- Fourth; Violence and Sexual Harassment cause physical, cognitive, emotional or affective disorders, as well as social and work disorders. Overall, these perceived impacts reflect a decline in workers' well-being, which in turn reduces one's work productivity. However, the losses incurred are not borne by the company, but by the workers, workers' families, and their social environment.
- Fifth; Even if company regulations and the collective bargaining agreements include protection and complaint mechanism in the event of Violence and Sexual Harassment, very few workers know and understand them. This study has also found that although violence and harassment are common, very few victims take advantage of such reporting mechanisms.

## 4.2 Recommendation

Various factors associated with Violence and Sexual Harassment (gender bias, discrimination, stereotypes) are rooted deeply in our society. They existed before the factory was built and started to operate; however, the incidents of violence and harassment observed in this study all occurred in the workplace. To be precise, inside of the factory. Perpetrators (supervisors, foremen, co-workers) and survivors, namely female workers, were present at the locus of the events in the context of factory work. Perpetrators and victims are in the same locus and are bound in a work relationship in the same factory/company.

So, to create a safe and friendly work environment for female workers, the thing that needs to be done is to change the perspective of every worker to uphold the values of gender equality. From here, the following recommendations are derived:

### Empowerment Program.

- EKATA should play a more active role, by positioning itself at the frontline, to advocate the cases of violence and harassment in the workplace. Every EKATA member needs to be prepared to become a vocal point for issues of violence and harassment in the workplace.
- This role requires each EKATA member to have adequate knowledge on various aspects of Violence and Sexual Harassment in the workplace; as well as advocacy skills. Yayasan Care Peduli can take on the role of providing capacity building; from providing education

on gender equality to the training of relevant skills such as case documentation, case handling, assisting the victims, and negotiation skills.

- Along with the above programs/activities, changes in workplace culture can also be pursued through providing education/training for supervisors, mechanics, and production operators; aimed at increasing gender sensitivity and opening up perspectives on gender justice.

### **Advocacy Program.**

Some things that can be suggested in terms of advocacy for survivors of Violence and Sexual Harassment are:

- Yayasan Care Peduli can start the initiative to conduct an open dialogue with companies, to start discussing the ILO Convention on the Eradication of Violence and Sexual Harassment in the workplace.
- From here, Yayasan Care Peduli could then push the companies to provide mechanism for the management of Violence and Sexual Harassment in the workplace (grievance mechanism); or to review and strengthen the existing mechanisms in their respective factories.

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## Appendix: Five Tales from the Factories

### If Only I Was More Careful in Choosing Friends

It was 2015, and Ririn had been working for two years in the factory. She befriended a lot of people, and among them was a guy who was working at the sewing section alongside her. Over time, this man often harassed Ririn by grabbing her buttocks and breasts - and he kept doing that despite his wife working at the same factory, in the QC department. Even though she felt uncomfortable by that treatment, Ririn decided to remain silent, because they both worked at the same line, only two machines apart. Ririn was not the only victim, other female workers were also "preyed upon" by this man.

One day in 2015, Ririn's friends came to visit her in her boarding house. After spending some time, her friends said goodbye and went back to their places - except this man. He forced Ririn to have sex in her room. No one saw what happened.

Shaken by the incident, Ririn locked herself in the bathroom and stood still under the shower. The next day, she felt that it's too much for her to come to work. She was absent for 3-7 days, and lied by saying that she was sick.

When Ririn returned to work, the man said that the reason he did that was because Ririn *"is a widow"*. That man's reasoning hit her hard. What's wrong with being a widow? Is it really necessary to put that label on me? She thought.

After that, Ririn decided to change. She became more abrasive, and she did not hesitate to say rude things to others. What's the use of being kind if at the end of the day, I'm going to be treated badly, she thought. She stopped caring about what other people think of her. She became fierce and rude, so that she would not be picked on again. Back then, Ririn understood that the man still had 4 - 5 months left in his working contract.

To protect herself, she became evasive. She asked her supervisor to keep the man away from her. Her supervisor was confused and asked *"why?"* and Ririn gave a short answer saying that the man's wife was jealous. Her supervisor believed and granted Ririn's request.

The man stopped working at the factory briefly, but returned to work at the factory where Ririn was working in 2018. He tried to approach one of the female workers. Ririn was alerted and decided to tell the incident that happened in her boarding house to warn the woman. In fact, she had never told that story to anyone. She didn't want the same thing to happen to another woman. Because the woman that he was approaching kept her distance, the man was annoyed and resigned from the company.

Ririn kept this story to herself. The company doesn't know anything. Ririn does not blame anyone for what happened to her. She only blamed herself. She always thought, *"if only I was more careful in choosing friends"*.

At the company where Ririn is working, each applicant will undergo a medical check-up at the company's clinic. Those who are pregnant will not be accepted. Meanwhile, female workers who are pregnant are allowed to take three months of maternity leave. They are also allowed to leave work at 5:30 p.m. while others continue to work overtime until 8 p.m. Female workers in their period are expected to continue working, as they will receive compensation money which will be included in the monthly payslip.

### Thus, Iis Started to Wear a Veil

During her 14 years of working at PT Eins Trend, Iis continued to receive unpleasant treatments. There was a mechanic who, everytime he did a repair, groped Iis's body. The mechanic is indeed no longer working at the factory. But Iis witnessed similar incidents happening to young female and widowed workers. Aside from during repair, the time when women are at risk to sexual harassment is when they take goods from the warehouse.

When she was first harassed, Iis thought *"how could a mechanic do that?"* and the responses from her friends shocked her. They always said that *"it's normal"* or *"just be patient, okay"* and *"don't report that or else it'll become complicated"*.

Facing this situation, Iis became more diligent in praying (*shalat*), as she poured her heart and surrendered herself to God. In order not to be disturbed, she became harsher towards the opposite sex and began to wear a veil and non-revealing clothes.

So far cases of sexual harassment have never been reported and dealt with. There are also no specific rules in the factory to prevent sexual harassment. Iis believes, as a supervisor at the factory, the chief should act to prevent such harassment from happening.

Iis heard that until now, sexual harassment in the sewing department is still happening. She didn't know about it firsthand since she moved to the administration department, then quit her job due to giving birth.

Iis mentioned that PT Eins Trend has a clinic and a lactation room. However, these facilities are rarely used. Instead of checking in at the clinic, sick workers prefer to hydrate and rest in the canteen. The lactation room is rarely used because the workers are busy chasing their production targets.

When she resigned to give birth, Iis received severance pay. But the amount is not large. According to Iis, because it was a resignation of her own volition. Not because the company laid off.

## **The Mechanic's Harassment**

Working as a sewing machine operator at PT CBD Section 1, Sometimes Ira is faced with unpleasant scenarios. Mechanics often target and harass widowed female workers while repairing machines or when they are just passing through. These treatments made her uncomfortable and unmotivated to go to work. She was forced to become more alert and fierce, so that she would not be constantly harassed.

Ira expects the company to implement regulations that help prevent sexual harassment from happening; and so far, there are no such regulations. The company never reprimands the perpetrators as well. No one has ever reported incidents of sexual harassment to the HR department; and when the survivor tried to tell her friends about what happened, they would simply reply by saying, "that's normal."

Company regulations do exist, but those regulations only talk about workers' appearance and body weight. For example, workers must dress modestly, wear uniforms and must not wear ripped jeans. The company does not accept applicants who are pregnant, over 30 years old, and weigh more than 50 kg. However, the regulation on body weight does not apply to men.

As long as they have the status of 'permanent workers,' female workers are allowed to get pregnant. The company will not abruptly fire their pregnant workers. The company provides a health clinic with doctors and nurses, complete with a special room for pregnant workers and a lactation room. Pregnant workers also receive additional resting time, and are allowed to finish their work sooner. Meanwhile, male workers get an additional 15 minutes of rest to perform Friday prayers.

## Everyday, I am Surrounded by Three Machines

Dina had been working in Factory No.1, PT Dosan, Purwakarta, for approximately four years before she decided to resign from that clothing factory in 2019. She resigned because she was too tired working with three types of machines every single day: the overlock machine, needle machine, and funnel machine; while other workers were assigned to one machine only. To make matters worse, her chief often ordered her to transport goods as well. In addition, if the work is deemed unsatisfactory, the chief will vent their anger at her.

One day, because her repair work was deemed not up to standard, the chief became angry. The chief threw the cloth Dina had worked on and kicked the table. Seeing the incident, other workers could not do anything except to remain silent. After receiving such treatment, Dina reported the incident to the personnel department in Dosan 1. At that time he was defended by a representative from the personnel department, who then reprimanded the chief, and ordered Dina to only work with one machine.

But the chief ended up ignoring the warning from the personnel department. Dina was still ordered to work with three machines. The reason was because *“she was able to do that before”* while the truth is, in order to operate all these machines, Dina had to move her chair back and forth from one machine to the other. When she had to perform overlocking stitches, she had to move the chair near the overlock machine. When she needed to use another machine, she had to move her chair again.

One day Dina was put into trouble because the machine broke and she could not finish her work. The chief was so angry and he kicked the table. That day Dina was supposed to work overtime until 18.00. She came home crying. At the exit she was stopped by the representative from the personnel department, who advised her to rest, and asked her to return to work tomorrow.

But Dina decided that she could not be persuaded anymore. She resigned. The fatigue from working with three machines was not the only reason. She was irritated by the behavior of the mechanic, whose job it was to repair the machines. There are mechanics who always ask for “cigarette money” for every repair. Another mechanic was willing to fix the machine for free, but ended up groping the female operators’ body parts while carrying the task. They did that even though their wives might be working at the same factory. Dina prefers to ask help from the pervert mechanic, because then she doesn't have to spend any money. Because of that, Dina was usually picky about which mechanics that she would turn to for help.

Dina resigned from the Factory No.1 in November 2019, and then applied to the Factory No.2. The working conditions in the new place were much better. No mechanic asked for cigarette money or groped her body.

However at PT Dosan there are rules, which according to Dina, were designed to hinder women. To apply for work, applicants must be under 35 years old and the minimum height is 150 cm. Female workers whose weight is over 60 kg are told to lose weight. According to Dina, these are written, formal rules. Pregnant women are prohibited from applying; they can only apply after giving birth. The company provides compensation money for menstrual leave, which amounts to Rp. 20,000, that will be paid alongside their monthly wages. To claim the compensation money,



workers must first undergo a menstrual inspection. But rules that are in favor of women do exist. Pregnant women will be given priority to get a break; and women who are breastfeeding are given time to pump their breast milk at the clinic.

In April 2021, workers' wages were heavily cut and Dina didn't know why. Dina's basic wage is Rp.2.800.000/month, but that is not the amount she receives every month. Rp.200.000 is taken from her basic salary for *BPJS Ketenagakerjaan* (state-pension fund) and *BPJS Kesehatan* (national health insurance). Now, every Saturday workers are given a day off, and for each day off, Rp.100.000 will be cut from the basic salary. Thus, if there are four Saturdays in one month, Dina will lose Rp.400.000 from her salary. Dina could only complain to her husband and her fellow friends regarding this matter.

There are also workers who are in a worse condition. Those whose work contracts had expired were forced to take a job as day laborers. They are paid Rp.13.000 - Rp.17.000/day, and the payment will be made every two weeks. With overtime pay added to the calculation, workers might be able to collect a little more than Rp.1.000.000 every two weeks. Currently, it's rare for workers to take overtime. Most of them went home at 15.00, earlier than usual.

## **This Permanent Employee Status Helps Me Survive**

It is not easy to obtain permanent employment at PT Eins Trend. It has been a long time since the last 'wave of promotion,' in which contract employees were promoted as permanent employees. Therefore, Tina feels lucky to have obtained the status of permanent employee. So, even though the working conditions are not ideal, she chooses to stay with the company.

Tina once worked in the frontman division. Two years later she moved to assist the Quality Assurance (QA) department in the finishing section. Her duties include helping buyers if they need goods, measuring and inspecting goods, and so on.

In 2016, Tina worked with the QA staff to help buyers. During that time, the head of the QA department often harassed her. One day, when Tina was in the pantry - when she was washing her hands or eating, she couldn't remember - the QA staff suddenly pressed his penis to Tina's buttocks. Tina was pregnant back then, and of course she was surprised. On another occasion, this QA staff suddenly took a pen from Tina's chest pocket, while deliberately touching her breast.

After continuously receiving such unpleasant treatments, Tina felt uncomfortable and had difficulty concentrating. She often dozed off, as her mind was filled with fear. Her difficulty to concentrate affected Tina's work; she made a lot of mistakes when inventorizing goods, and such mistakes would be discovered by the company since they have the record of who was responsible for checking the goods when the mistake happened.

In addition to the harassment described above, Tina repeatedly received indecent messages and images, which were shared via WhatsApp and other social media platforms such as Facebook. Tina thought that this was just a joke, because the sender was also a woman.

Tina also noticed other forms of abuse that often happened to her and her friends: the 'male gaze'. This happened especially when women wore tight clothes and pants. There were those who would look at women in a 'different' way from top to bottom and smirk, then look at the women's stomach and genitals and then smirk again; sometimes while whispering inappropriate words. If she received such treatment, Tina usually ignored the perpetrator.

In addition to the harassment, Tina has another bitter experience. She was once scolded by her superior in the Quality Control (QC) department, when inspecting goods with buyers. Tina's job was to choose products with good quality and present them to the buyers in the correct quantity and colors as requested. This work requires precision because the same item can have up to 12 color types. Items that have been counted can also be taken by other officers, thus keeping a good record of the inventory is crucial for this type of work. One day Tina asked the QC whether the quantity of the goods presented was correct, because she felt that the quantity of the goods were different from the amount requested by the buyers. The QC replied, yes. Then the boss got angry, insulted Tina by saying that she could count and she was incompetent, then slammed the door and ignored Tina for some time. Then, he started gossiping about Tina in front of other people. After receiving such treatment, Tina cried and complained to her friends.

For Tina , there are good practices that have been implemented in the factory. Pregnant women have their ID card marked, so that they can get more attention and are given special work chairs. Lactation room is available at the factory, but the location is very far from the working station. Pregnant workers are reluctant to use it, because it wastes their time and it could hinder their work. Instead of pumping in the lactation room, pregnant workers prefer to throw out their breast milk in the nearest toilet. Tina is also like that, often dumping her own breast milk. She is no longer breastfeeding her baby.