

To everyone around the Globe,

Many people in today's society may say they were subjected to unwanted sexual advances or coercion from others. These situations can arise anywhere, from the workplace to the classroom to the military and church. However, what, exactly, is sexual exploitation or sexually inappropriate conduct? After researching various definitions, I settled on the one below, which I think adequately captures the essence of sexual misconduct. The term "sexual harassment" refers to any unwanted verbal, nonverbal, or physical behavior of a sexual nature that has the intent or effect of producing an intimidating, hostile, demeaning, humiliating, or offensive atmosphere. Sexual harassment is a form of discrimination against women that has been recognized by society for a long time. Since its inception, it has evolved into an everyday societal norm. Around 41% indicated they had experienced sexual harassment online, and 27% said they had endured sexual assault. The report also explored potential hotspots for harassment. Almost two-thirds of women (66%) reported experiencing sexual harassment while out in public (Chatterjee, 2021). As a result, I feel compelled to speak out against the pervasiveness of sexual harassment, which is not limited to any area or setting. However, it has persisted in our culture ever since, so understanding its pervasiveness is crucial before we can do anything about it.

It has been observed that sexually harassed women more often report severe detrimental outcomes from harassing situations than sexually harassed men, making sexual harassment a critical issue of gender discrimination. Harassment can have powerful and enduring effects on victims. Sexual harassment in the workplace can cause long-term health issues, PTSD, depression, substance misuse, trouble keeping a job, and strain on personal relationships (Houle et al., 2011). Contrarily, the vast majority of research shows that male SH sufferers do not regard their experiences as anxiety-inducing or to be bothered by, unpleasant to, or distressed in the same way

that female SH sufferers do (Quick & McFadyen, 2016). To that end, remember that a harasser can be either man or a woman. The harasser would not even realize their behavior was inappropriate, but if the target has expressed discomfort, the harasser should stop immediately to avoid legal repercussions. Furthermore, sexual harassment can occur in various social settings, including educational institutions, workplaces, and the Internet.

**Educational Institutions.** The most common times for sexual harassment at school are in the hallways, at lunch, and during recess. The expression of sexual harassment might be as subtle as a sideways glance or as blatant as a hoot or whistle. 78% of students, including 92% girls and 57% males, reported experiencing at least one incidence of sexual harassment since entering high school (Stein, 2000). It is not uncommon for people to be harassed or harass others without realizing it. Heterosexual males are typically the instigators of harassment, whether attempting to pick up a female victim or making fun of a homosexual person. According to the Association of American Universities (2020), 13% of all students are raped or sexually assaulted by employing physical force, violence, or immobilization. 9.7% of female and 2.5% of male graduate and professional students encounter rape or sexual assault using physical force, violence, or incapacitating means. To harass someone sexually is to engage in the form of discrimination based on their gender. When someone is subjected to sexual harassment at school, it can have far-reaching effects on their sense of self-worth and safety, academic progress, and ability to fulfill their full potential. There is a risk that sexual harassment at school could lead to sexual assault if it is not addressed.

**Workplaces.** *Sexual harassment* is a pervasive issue that has long had far-reaching consequences for all genders in the workplace. Because of its versatility, sexual harassment has become endemic in today's workplaces. Harassment can manifest itself in various ways, from

demeaning comments to overt sexual approaches or even violence. The adverse effects and repercussions of sexual harassment on employers in low-wage jobs make it a serious issue. 43.8 percent of workers in all industries and sizes say they have been harassed. Over half, or 56.2%, claim they have not. Upper management employees who had been with their company for five years or more were more likely to have been harassed (Team, 2020). Moreover, One-third of the working population has been victimized by harassment, verbal abuse, or physical assault. Almost a quarter (24%) of people who identify as disabled in the workforce report experiencing discrimination on the job. Two times as many black workers as white workers reported experiencing prejudice on the job (Cadieux,2022). Sexual harassment is strongly associated with job discontent and disengagement, according to research. Additional workplace effects of sexual harassment include tardiness, absenteeism, project neglect, and employee distraction.

Internet. With the proliferation of social media platforms came an increase in online environments where both men and women are vulnerable to sexual assault. Online sexual harassment is a growing problem as more and more people use the Internet. Online sexual harassment occurs when a person repeatedly sends another person sexually explicit images, messages, or emails. It is the feeling of unease or fear that someone may be in danger due to what they have received. More than six-and-a-half percent (68%) of Filipino teenage girls and young women have been the target of online harassment, most often on social media platforms, according to a recent survey. Additionally, half or more of these girls reported that harassment occurs regularly (33 percent). A majority of respondents (8/10) reported that they or other girls they know had received online sexual violence threats (Narvaez, 2020). Online spaces can facilitate a wide variety of harassing behaviors. Some examples include sexually explicit communications directed

at the victim, comments that degrade a person's identity based on their gender, other sexual comments, and crude humor.

Preventative measures are the most helpful tool in the fight against sexual harassment since this problem seldom goes away on its own. Moreover, if the situation isn't addressed, the harassment will only get worse and harder to fix over time. The choice is ours, as it is for the millions of people subjected to sexual harassment in their daily lives and at work: we can educate ourselves and others, retaliate, or do nothing. Lessening or eliminating sexual harassment is not just an issue affecting women, men, and the LGBTQ+ population. To avoid and halt it, however, we need other people who are willing to contribute and engage in changing legal frameworks, cultural norms, and workplace rules, practices, and expectations. To effectively minimize sexual harassment in the workplace, it is essential to alter the enabling cultures and conditions that now exist.

The most effective sexual harassment prevention techniques and plans require the participation of all parties involved and a statement of intent. The statement of purpose should demonstrate that all parties appreciate the significance of the battle against sexual harassment in the workplace. To begin, one way to combat the pervasiveness of sexual harassment is to implement strict regulations and processes to prevent it. Having a clear policy and practice in place, as well as providing anti-harassment training to all employees, can go a long way toward eliminating harassment in the workplace and encouraging those who are experiencing harassment to seek help. Secondly, ensure that both employees and management comprehend sexual harassment. Anti-harassment rules should define harassment, inform all employees that it will not be condoned, and outline how employers and employees should respond to harassment instances. Third, we must study and comprehend human behavior and altering mentalities. Understanding

how the brain works could improve the efficacy of sexual harassment training and equip individuals with the tools to prevent or respond to sexual harassment. Moreover, when responding to victims, remember that utilizing supportive language while communicating with a victim helps reduce additional trauma. Finally, if you know someone who is being harassed, show your support for them. Encourage the recipient to discuss it and take quick measures to stop it. If possible, provide specific comments to the perpetrator or their supervisor.

According to experts, there are no scripts to follow or phrases to utter if you are a victim of sexual harassment. The fight, flight or freeze reaction can occur in the face of sexual harassment or assault. The appropriateness of any action will depend on several factors, such as the nature of the harassing behavior and the power dynamic between the harasser and the harassed. It is normal to feel nervous or worried about taking action to stop sexual harassment. Nevertheless, you should stay on course and assess the situation. Many women either do not believe they can or do not want to report harassment for fear of backlash or punishment. Keep track of what happened, even if you decide not to bring it up later. Be explicit and honest about the behavior that makes you uncomfortable. According to research, contacting the harasser can sometimes halt the harassment. Legally, it is advantageous to demonstrate that you made it plain to the harasser that you want the behavior to stop. Do what you think is best for you and avoid things that could harm you.

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