

The sexual harassment against the working woman

(Field study at the hospitals of Laghouat)

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Abstract:

This study aims at knowing the main types of sexual harassment against the working woman at the hospitals of Laghouat. In so doing, we used the descriptive method and the sexual harassment scale, made by the author, with a sample of 40 female workers. Besides, we used the arithmetic mean and the standard deviation. Findings show that the main types of the sexual harassment faced by these women are the verbal, the symbolic, and the physical.

Keywords: sexual harassment; working woman.

1- Introduction

The issue of sexual harassment has lately got social and political interest because the woman is the weaker side. The logic imposes the respect of the others' rights regardless of their gender, race, color, religion, or outfit. In this regard, each human has his freedom, including the woman who has the full freedom to study, work, and go out without being disturbed or harassed. However, our society disrespects these rights and shows harassment against women, mainly in workplaces. The woman fears being a victim of harassment due to the negative attitude of society. Nevertheless, the increase of the issues that penetrated workplaces, universities, markets, transportation means, streets, etc obliges us to face and limit them with suitable solutions. Thus, the women started calling for their rights to a safe life and for laws that criminalize the commissioner of the harassment.

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2. The Problem of the study:

Lately, the Algerian women got her rights thanks to the change in the intellectual trends. In his context, its entrance to the labor market and integration with males make it necessary to know the relationship between them. However, obstacles arose and brought about many pressures such as harassment, which increased in the workplaces, administrations, schools, and hospitals. Thus, it is necessary to face it. Based on what was said, this study aims to know the main types of harassment against working women. In so doing, we raise the following question, “What are the main types of sexual harassment against the female workers in the hospitals of Laghouat?”.

3. The Hypothesis of the study:

- Verbal harassment is the most widespread against the female workers in the hospitals of Laghouat.

4. Aim of the study:

- Knowing the most common types of sexual harassment against female workers in the hospitals of Laghouat.

5. Importance of the study:

5.1 The theoretical importance:

- The study discusses the issue of harassment against working women because it is very important to shed light on this issue in the workplace. Thus, our study responds to the need to study the issue.

- The importance of the study lies within the importance of the topic, mainly that it aims at knowing the most widespread types of harassment against female workers in the hospitals of Laghouat.

5.2 The practical importance:

- The findings of the study help the psychological and pedagogical experts set counselling programs to limit sexual harassment in the workplace.

6. The procedural definitions:

6.1 The sexual harassment: It is the recurrent harassment against a woman working in a hospital by her colleague or president through clues, approach, touching, or verbal.

In this study, it is measured by the degree obtained by the informants on the scale made by the author.

6.2 The female workers in the hospital: They are the female nurses, doctors, or administrative employees in the hospitals of Laghouat.

Theoretical frame and literate review:

* Literature review:

- The study of Youssef Ben Ali al Zakouani (2021) “**The harassment in the workplace against the Omani female employees of the governmental sector**”.It aimed at knowing the existence of harassment in the workplace. It used a questionnaire with a sample of 432 female employees. Findings showed a very low level of sexual harassment and that the main type is the seducing speech (Al Zakouani, 2021, p. 225).
- The study of Haddouche Aissa & Bouhala Selma (2021) “**The sexual harassment in the sport school milieu**”.It aimed at knowing the sexual harassment in the sport school milieu and used the descriptive method and the sexual harassment scale with a sample of 27 female students from the University of Batna and 02 from the University of Mila who had been harassed at the secondary school. Findings show the physical harassment at the top (Haddouche, 2021, p. 602).
- The study by Baamouche Naim & Hanane Bechta (2021) “**The sexual harassment against the female university students**”.It aimed at knowing the types of sexual harassment against female students. It used the descriptive method and a scale with a sample of 64 female students. Findings showed that verbal harassment is the most used (Baamouche&Bechta, 2011, p. 110).
- The study by Hakima Hadj Ali & El Hocine Hemmache (2021) “**The effect of the sexual harassment on the professional stability of the working woman**”. It

aimed to examine the differences in the sexual harassment and professional stability according to the age and social status of the female workers at the hospital of TiziOuzou. It used the sexual harassment scale with a sample of 100 female workers. Findings show differences according to age and social status (Hadj Ali, 2021, p. 395).

*** Comment on the literature:**

The previous studies have different aims and approaches. Some tackled the levels of sexual harassment, others tackled the types, while others tackled the causes.

Procedures of the study:

1- Method of the study: We used the analytical descriptive method.

2- The study imitations:

2.1- The spatial limitations: The study took place in the hospitals of Laghouat.

2.2 The temporal limitations: The study took place in October 2022.

3- The study sample:

3.1- The pilot sample: We used the questionnaire with a pilot sample of 20 female workers in the hospitals (nurses, doctors, and administrative employees) to check the psychometric properties).

3.2- The real sample: The study sample included 40 female workers who had been chosen at random.

4- The study tool:

After reviewing the literature and the scales of sexual harassment, such as those of Ben Ali al Zakouani (2021), Mahmoud Fetei (2010), and Sihem Abu Bakr Othman (2015), we designed our scale that covers 03 dimensions:

- **verbal sexual harassment:** It includes the sexual terms by the harasser against the woman (05 items).
- **symbolicsexual harassment:** It includes looks, smiles, cues, and gestures (05 items).
- **p hysicalsexual harassment:** It includes touching and attachment, etc (05 items).

Thus, the scale covers 15 items answered with “always, sometimes, and never” that are graded with 3, 2, and 1, respectively.

Table 01: The scale grading

Frequency	Grade
Always	3
Sometimes	2
Never	1

4.1- The psychometric properties of the scale:

4.1.1-The validity:

- **The interrater validity:** It was examined by integrators to know the belonging of each item to the suitable dimension. Then, we adopted the items that got 80% of consensus. In this regard, all the items got a consensus of the 80% and more. Therefore, we used them all with slight changes.
- **The internal consistency validity:** It refers to a strong correlation between the degrees of each dimension and the total degree of the scale. In this context, we calculate the correlation coefficients between the total degree of the dimension and the degree of the scale.

Table 02: The results of the internal consistency validity of the degrees of each dimension

Dimensions	Correlation coefficient
Verbal harassment dimension	0.88**
symbolic harassment dimension	0.80**
Physical harassment dimension	0.78**

**** Significant at significance level 0.01**

The table shows that the correlation coefficients of each dimension with the total degree of the scale are positive and statistically significant at a significance level 0.01. Thus, the dimensions have a high level of validity and the internal correlation is strong. Therefore, the scale is highly valid.

4.1.2- Consistency:

- Cronbach's Alpha:

We processed the data with Cronbach's Alpha, as shown in Table 03:

Table 03: Cronbach's Alpha results

Variable	Items	N	Cronbach's Alpha
Sexual harassment	15	20	0.723

The table shows that Cronbach's Alpha is 0.723, which is high and confirms the high consistency of the scale.

5-The statistical methods:

We used the arithmetic means and standard deviations. Besides, we relied on SPSS 17, as it is the most practical for analyzing and processing the data in various fields.

- Findings of the study:

Hypothesis:

- verbal harassment is the most widespread against the female workers in the hospitals of Laghouat.

To test it, we calculated the arithmetic means and standard deviations of each dimension. Findings are shown in table 04:

Table 04: The arithmetic means and standard deviations of the scale

Dimensions	Arithmetic mean	Standard deviation	Sample	Order
Verbal harassment dimension	66.50	10.43	40	1
Symbolic harassment dimension	20.46	8.32	40	2
Physical harassment dimension	12.04	4.60	40	3

The table shows that the verbal harassment is the most used, as its arithmetic mean is 66.50 and The standard deviation is 10.43. The symbolic is the 2nd with an arithmetic mean of 20.46 and a standard deviation of 8.32. The physical ranks last with an arithmetic mean of 12.04 and a standard deviation of 4.60. Thus, our hypothesis is confirmed. In this regard, the harasser speaks to the woman and shows a desire to get toknow her, as they are colleagues. Besides, he asks her just to open up a discussion and narrates his marital life details and issues as a pretext for discussion. In addition, he tries toknow more about her person and the other female colleagues. Furthermore, he shows admiration for her body, beauty, and clothes that show her femininity. He praises her in front of the collages and cracks sexual jokes. Moreover, he intervenes in her life by asking private questions and declares falling in love with her. He even asks her out.

In the second position, we find the symbolic harassment that manifests in inappropriate gazes, signs, smiles, and gestures. Finally, the physical harassment is low. It includes the physical approach and asking the worker to come to the desk with no reason. Besides, the male wants to stay alone with her and tries to spend much time taking the opportunity. In addition, he even stalks her in the street to know her address. Our findings agree with those of **Baamouche Naim & Hanane Bechta 2021** and **Youssef Ben Ali al Zakouani 2021** that showed that verbal harassment is the most used. On the other hand, our study disagrees with that of **Heddouche Aissa 2021** which showed that physical harassment ranks first.

Conclusion:

sexual harassment against a gainst working women is one of the violence forms. Therefore, the preventive measures must be taken to limit it. In so doing, we must raise the women's awareness about reporting harassment and the familial and social awareness about the need to face this issue that takes a risky path.

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Appendix:

The sexual harassment scale

No	Item	Always	Sometimes	Never
1	I always face verbal harassment by my colleague or president			
2	He always tries to speak to me without limits			
3	He shows appreciation of me and my body			
4	He tells me about his marital life			
5	He cracks sexual jokes			
6	He smiles whenever he sees me			
7	He whistles when I pass by him			
8	He gazes at me often			
9	He makes unethical gestures			
10	He sighs a lot			
11	He stalks me in the street			
12	He approaches me a lot			
13	He tries to touch me			
14	He tries to stay alone with me			

	in the office			
15	He tries to get attached to me			

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