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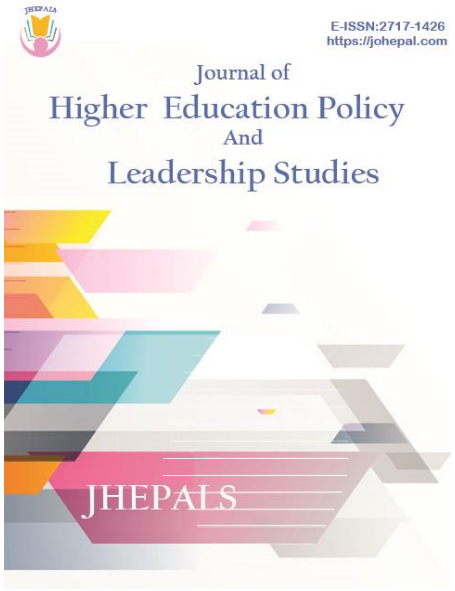
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Name It to Tame It: A Thematic Synthesis of Sexual Academic Transgressions Among Faculty Members



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Abstract

Sexual transgression—any attitude, behavior, or condition that violates social norms and expectations—particularly in the form of sexual harassment in higher education, is a topic of ongoing public debate. When committed by a faculty member, a trusted figure with significant authority and autonomy over students, sexual harassment can have serious societal consequences. However, defining and addressing sexual harassment remains challenging due to the lack of uniformity in its definition, which hinders the formulation of strict policies and laws. Having the proper language to name an incident as sexual harassment enables and empowers individuals to take action. Through a thematic synthesis, we aimed to bring attention to various types of sexual academic transgressions committed by faculty members to enable policymakers, legislators, and victims to properly address these transgressions and implement social control measures. This research contributes to the literature by presenting a thematic model and tables that delineate legally actionable sexual harassment, the means through which such behaviors occur, and the muddled professional boundaries that create conditions for these misconducts. Policymakers and legislators can use these themes and sub-themes to gain a broader and deeper understanding of faculty-perpetrated sexual harassment and identify areas requiring immediate action or reconsideration.

Keywords: Sexual Academic Transgressions; Faculty Members; Legally Actionable Sexual Harassment; Means of Sexual Harassment; Muddled Professional Boundaries

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Introduction

Sexual transgression or deviance (i.e., any attitude, behavior, or condition that violates social norms and expectations) (Herington & van de Fliert, 2018), particularly in the form of sexual harassment in universities or scientific disciplines, is currently a subject of significant public debate (Cantalupo & Kidder, 2018). It is a pervasive but underreported issue, and higher education is not immune to the ignored epidemic of faculty sexual harassment, which persists due to power differentials (Young & Wiley, 2021; O'Callaghan et al., 2022).

Sexual harassment in the workplace is a visible form of sexism (Kirkner et al., 2022). Sexism, gender discrimination, and inequity in the workplace are intertwined with harassment, especially sexual harassment by colleagues or superiors. Harassment is fostered in environments that perpetuate gender disparities, such as male-dominated organizations and professions or industries in which women make up the majority of the workforce but hold a minority position in terms of power (Taylor et al., 2018a; Lu et al., 2020).

Sexual harassment primarily involves disrespect, with gender harassment as its most prevalent form (Clancy et al., 2020). The longer organizational cultures permit sexual harassment and sexism, the more organizations and professions become accepting of these behaviors as a "part of the job" (Taylor et al., 2018a).

Faculty members are entrusted with considerable authority and autonomy in their work with students and are afforded high levels of due process protections. As a result, concerns arise regarding sexual harassment, particularly the potential for repeat faculty harassers and the "pass-the-harasser" phenomenon (Cantalupo & Kidder, 2018)—higher education's worst-kept secret (Fortney & Morris, 2021).

Policymakers and legal scholars seek answers to these issues, but student surveys often fail to provide satisfactory insights. Additionally, strict confidentiality restrictions on campus sexual harassment cases impede the washing of institutional "dirty laundry" (Cantalupo & Kidder, 2017; Cantalupo & Kidder, 2018).

Moreover, defining and addressing sexual harassment is challenging due to the lack of uniformity in its definition, which hinders the formulation of strict guidelines on (im)permissible conduct. Faculty and students differ structurally in their opinions and interpretations of the severity of unprofessional behaviors, and their thresholds for perceiving a behavior as sexual harassment are highly personal and influenced by gender (Dekker et al., 2013). Given the difficulty and complexity of defining sexual transgression, we have borrowed the phrase "name it to tame it" for this paper's title from Dan Siegel (MD), who argues that naming emotions, especially challenging ones, raises self-awareness and aids self-management (Fessell & Cherniss, 2020). Prior research has also shown that having the proper language to name an incident as sexual harassment enables and empowers individuals to confront and take action more immediately (Hurren, 2018).

Thus, in this research, through a thematic synthesis, we aimed to identify different types of sexual transgressions committed by faculty members to enable policymakers, legislators, and victims to properly address and socially control them. This paper follows the IMRAD (Introduction, Methods, Results, And Discussion) format, a common but not universal structure in contemporary scientific writing (Moskovitz & Harmon, 2023).

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Research Methodology

The current research employed a thematic synthesis, which consists of three parts, each exploring a main research question—one of which is explored here. Research synthesis refers to a family of methods that organize, summarize, integrate, combine, and compare findings from primary studies (i.e., created knowledge) on a specific topic or research question, making them more applicable (Cruzes & Dyba, 2011; dos Santos & Travassos, 2020). Hence, it plays a significant role in the knowledge accumulation process, which includes both knowledge creation (associated with primary studies) and knowledge application, with secondary studies considered a necessary step (dos Santos & Travassos, 2020). Indeed, systematic review is a crucial method for the evidence-informed policy and practice movement, aiming to bring research closer to decision-making (Thomas & Harden, 2008).

Thematic synthesis—based on the principles of thematic analysis—identifies, analyzes, interprets, explains, and reports recurrent themes and patterns within data in primary qualitative research and technical literature. It summarizes results from different studies related to each theme and draws conclusions in systematic reviews. It employs the following five steps: data extraction, data coding, translation of codes into themes, creation of a higher-order model, and trustworthiness assessment. The final product can be a description of higher-order themes, a taxonomy, a theory, or a model with graphical representations and cognitive maps (Cruzes & Dyba, 2011; dos Santos & Travassos, 2020).

In the current research, according to Viksveen et al. (2022), APA (2020), Levitt (2018), Cruzes and Dyba (2011), Timulak (2009), and Thomas and Harden (2008), we conducted sampling, coding, and reporting processes. To enhance transparency in reporting the synthesis of qualitative research, we employed ENTREQ Statement, which includes 21 items grouped into the following five main domains: introduction, methods and methodology, literature search and selection, appraisal, and synthesis of findings (Tong et al., 2012).

Sampling Technique and Sample Size

To explore the types of sexual transgressions committed by faculty members, we selected and searched relevant keywords in Google Scholar. As the purpose of synthesis is interpretive explanation rather than prediction, the sample is purposive, not exhaustive (Thomas & Harden, 2008). Moreover, adopting a total population sampling technique for Google Scholar-indexed articles is not feasible due to the large number of resultant articles. Hence, according to APA (2020), Levitt (2018), and Thomas and Harden (2008), we aimed to reach conceptual saturation.

Search Strategy and Selection Criteria

The search strategies, keywords, and initial selection process are presented in Table 1.

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Table 1.
Search Strategies

Search Criteria			
Database: Google Scholar (**Settings**: Any time; Sort by relevance; Any type); **Search Date**: Sep. 22 - Sep. 23, 2021); **Language**: English **Number of Reviewed Documents for Each Keyword Set**: 100 first resultant documents **Document Types (full-texts available to the researchers)**: Article (Research/Review); Thesis/Dissertation; and Book/Book Chapter			
Keyword Sets			
Area	**Keywords**	**Total Number of Search Results**	**Number of Reviewed Articles**
Sexual Transgression	"Sexual Harassment" University Faculty	approx. 75500	100
	"Sexual Assault" University Faculty	approx. 64500	100
	"Sexual Misconduct" University Faculty	approx. 18700	100
	"Sexual Misbehavior" University Faculty	approx. 3400	100
	"Rape" University Faculty	approx. 234000	100
Eliminated	Prevention; Policy; Reporting and Complaint processes	–	–
Initial Selection Process			
The initial selection process (based on the research questions) was as follows: 1. Reviewing the title 2. Ambiguous title → Reviewing the abstract 3. Reviewing the abstract for all articles with related titles 4. Ambiguous abstract → Counting the number of occurrences of "Faculty" vs. "Student" 5. Ambiguous abstract → Reviewing the methodology section 6. Lack of methodology section → Reviewing the whole article			

The final selection process and elimination criteria are presented in Figure 1.

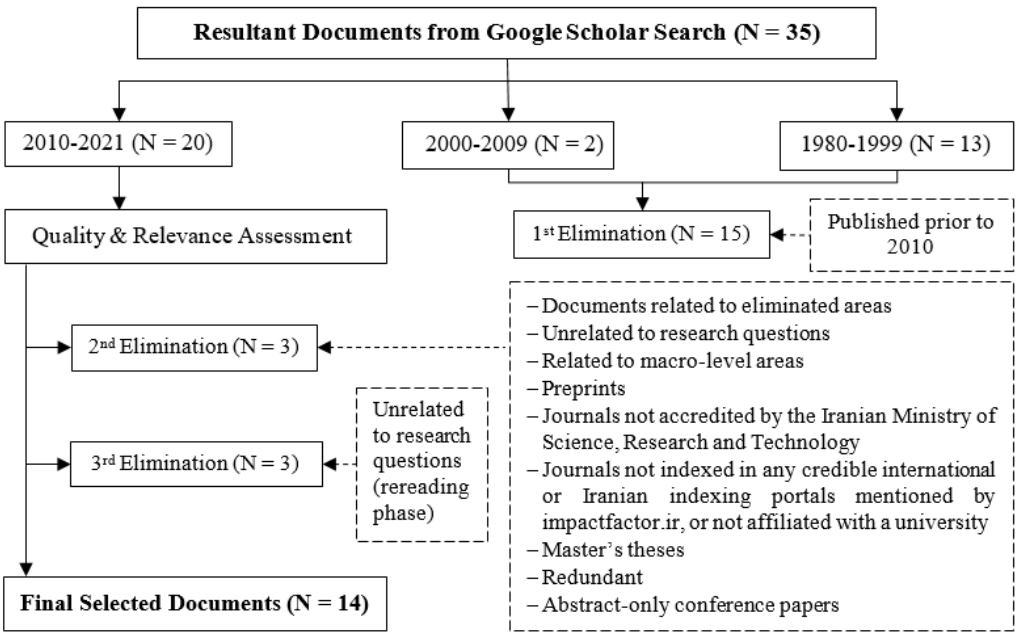


Figure 1. Final Selection Process and Elimination Criteria

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To ensure the quality of the selected articles, and following Levitt (2018), we eliminated unpublished research and retained the studies that had undergone peer review. The final selected documents (mostly articles) were as follows: Crittenden et al. (2021); Young and Wiley (2021); Espinoza and Hsiehchen (2020); Karami et al. (2020); Lu et al. (2020); Carrillo et al. (2019); Evans et al. (2019); Cantalupo and Kidder (2018) (a 116-page article); Hurren (2018); National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, & Medicine (2018) (Book); Taylor et al. (2018a); Cantalupo and Kidder (2017); St. John et al. (2016); and Dekker et al. (2013).

Coding Procedures

According to Cruzes and Dyba (2011), the unit of analysis in our study was the sampled primary studies. We employed a line-by-line coding technique and an integrated approach to coding by combining a deductive (a priori) approach with an inductive (grounded theory) approach. As Levitt (2018) advised, we labeled primary units with "the primary researchers' category or thematic titles directly or with small clarifying amendments," when possible. First, we manually extracted initial in-vivo codes and parts of the primary documents into a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet, then imported this file into NVivo 10 software. The following sections of the selected documents were coded: 1) findings in the abstract section; 2) operational definitions in the methodology section; 3) results section; 4) tables and figures in the results section; 5) discussion and conclusion sections; 6) entire review articles.

Primary Studies Characteristics

According to APA (2020), we extracted the following information (Table 2.). According to our data, the 14 selected primary studies included 2,107 participants, of which 60.51% were faculty members. Three studies solely focused on female participants. Additionally, the selected studies examined 2,808 cases of formal court accusations and informally narrated sexual harassment experiences. Although interviewing individuals involved in transgressive behaviors is crucial for recognizing and understanding these transgressions, there is a lack of knowledge in the literature regarding the situational characteristics of sexual transgressions and the explanations provided by the transgressors (Schierff & Heinskou, 2020). The sampled primary studies reflected this gap, with only a few focusing on reports and narrations about the transgressors.

Trustworthiness

Credibility, transferability, dependability, confirmability, and reflexivity are the best-known criteria for trustworthiness, ensuring transparency and quality in qualitative research. Since all strategies for ensuring trustworthiness are not suitable for every study (Korstjens & Moser, 2018), we employed the following strategies, according to Korstjens and Moser (2018), Hadi and Closs (2016), Tong et al. (2012), Shenton (2004), and Morse et al. (2002): persistent observation, thick description, verification strategies, ENTREQ statement criteria, audit trail, peer debriefing, and diagrams.

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Table2.
Primary Studies Characteristics *

Type	Research Article = 10 (71.43%); Book = 1 (7.14%); Review Article = 2 (14.28%); Editorial = 1 (7.14%)
Publication Date	2021 = 2 (14.28%); 2020 = 3 (21.43%); 2019 = 2 (14.28%); 2018 = 4 (28.57%); 2017 = 1 (7.14%); 2016 = 1 (7.14%); 2013 = 1 (7.14%)
Country	USA = 12 (85.71%); Canada = 1 (7.14%); the Netherlands = 1 (7.14%)
Area	Faculty-to-Faculty = 4 (28.57%); Faculty-to-Student = 4 (28.57%); Faculty-Student Consensual Sexual Relationships = 2 (14.28%); Sexual Harassment = 3 (21.43%); Gender Discrimination = 1 (7.14%)
Sample Size (Participants & Documents)	–**Total Participants = 2107** (Total N-Female = 1159; Total N-Male = 658; Total N-Other = 2; Total N-Undefined = 288) Of which Total N-Students = 832→ Female = 495; Male = 148; Undefined= 189 –**Total Cases = 429** (Accused Faculty Member Cases = 125; Court Cases, News Report, and Office for Civil Rights or U.S. Department of Justice letters of finding = 304) –**Total Experiences = 2379** sexual harassment experiences from the sexual harassment crowdsource survey
Research Approach	Quan = 3 (21.43%); Qual = 3 (21.43%); Mixed = 2 (14.28%); Systematic Review = 3 (21.43%); Review = 3 (21.43%)
Unit of Analysis**	Victim = 4 (28.57%); Transgressor = 1 (7.14%); Transgressive Behaviors = 1 (7.14%); Faculty Members perceptions = 2 (14.28%); Documents = 2 (14.28%); Faculty Members & Students perceptions = 2 (14.28%); Other = 3 (21.43%)
Sampling Technique**	Convenience Sampling = 4; Purposive Sampling = 4; Systematic Review = 3; Total Population Sampling = 1

* The total percentages are not exactly 100% due to rounding.
** The total percentage is more than 100% due to an article being categorized in two categories.

Results and Discussion

Core Concepts of Sexual Academic Transgression

At the core of faculty members' sexual academic transgressions, and indeed, any sexual harassment, are the concepts of "unwantedness," "unwelcomeness," "non-consensuality," "one-sidedness," "human rights violations," "victimization," and "physical/psychological harm." These transgressions are "sexualized unprofessional behaviors" that can be either "violent" or "subtle" and may be exerted "repetitively" on one victim or "serially" to include multiple victims simultaneously or over a long period of time (i.e., serial/repeat sexual harassment) (Cantalupo & Kidder, 2017; Cantalupo & Kidder, 2018; Cantalupo & Kidder, 2019).

Power Dynamics in Sexual Academic Transgressions

Two forms of power dynamics are also at play in shaping sexual academic transgressions. First, socio-organizational power dynamics, which include: 1) the abuse of power in the form of "top-down or vertical downward harassment," where a hierarchical superior abuses his/her position of trust, power of direction, or authority over another person. This is the most common type of harassment (Rissi et al., 2016; Hurren, 2018; York, 2022); 2) "horizontal sexual harassment" (Rissi et al., 2016; York, 2022), which refers to sexual harassment between individuals in the workplace with no hierarchical difference (Maito et al., 2021) who operate at the same hierarchical level (Rissi et al., 2016)—also known as peer

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harassment; and 3) a less common type of abuse (Rissi et al., 2016), "contrapower harassment" ([vertical] upward harassment; Rissi et al., 2016; York, 2022), in which a superior with greater authority is harassed by a subordinate with less authority (Taylor et al., 2018). Despite some forms of faculty-to-faculty harassment, student-to-faculty harassment is also a type of contrapower harassment, which is outside the scope of the current study. Research on contrapower harassment indicates that factors such as gender, race, and class can grant harassers informal power, even when their targets hold higher organizational authority (McLaughlin et al., 2012).

Second, gender power dynamics, which comprise both other-sex and same-sex harassment (Berdahl, 2007). The latter includes "female-on-female" and "male-on-male" harassment, which we conceptualized as a form of horizontal harassment (York, 2022). In Figure 2, we also illustrate other-sex harassment with both vertical downward and upward dynamics, due to persistent and highly resilient structural hierarchies and inequalities, gender power dynamics, discriminatory norms, and exclusionary practices embedded in the DNA of organizations that keep women subordinate (Rao, 2016). Indeed, despite some progress, sociological research has shown that women continue to hold less social power than men (Miner-Rubino & Cortina, 2004; Morris, 2011). The theory of "hegemonic masculinity" asserts that this ideal pattern of manhood—the most powerful and revered form of masculine practice—represents men's superiority over women, perceived "feminine" qualities, and other, less revered forms of masculinity (Morris, 2011).

The aforementioned power dynamics define faculty members' sexual academic transgressions in two general forms: faculty-to-student and faculty-to-faculty harassment. While same-sex harassment—a form of horizontal harassment—may be perpetrated by a faculty member against students, it is inherently a form of vertical downward harassment and an abuse of power over students. The power dynamics in faculty-to-faculty harassment are more complex and can involve various forms of vertical and horizontal harassment—i.e., mixed harassment (Rissi et al., 2016; York, 2022). The overlapping sections in Figure 2 indicate that some perpetrators may engage in mixed harassment, simultaneously employing multiple types of socio-organizational and gender power dynamics against different types of victims.

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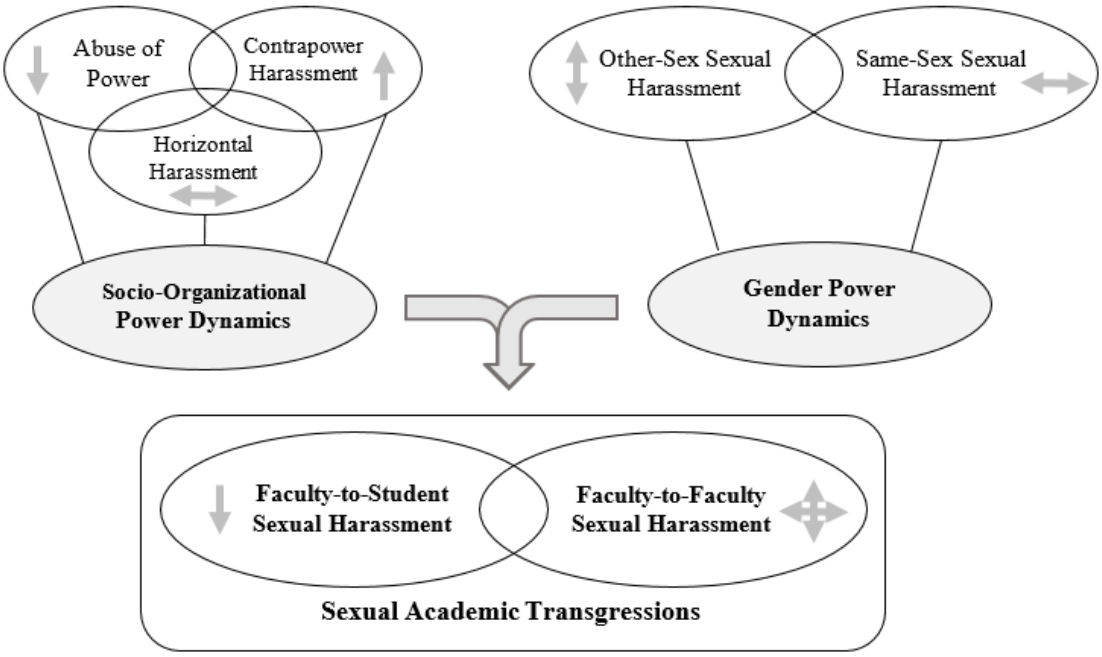


Figure 2. Power Dynamics in Faculty Members' Sexual Academic Transgressions

Faculty Members' Sexual Transgressions

The emerged themes fell into three distinct categories: 1) "Legally Actionable Sexual Harassment" (i.e., the transgressive behaviors themselves); 2) "The Means of Sexual Harassment" that enable these behaviors; and 3) "Muddled Professional Boundaries" that create a fertile ground for them.

Legally Actionable Sexual Harassment

Physical Sexual Harassment

We categorized this theme into the following sub-themes (Table 3.):

Table 3.
Physical Sexual Harrassment Sub-Themes

Physical Sexual Harassment	
Criminal rape	Completed
	Attempted
Unwelcome Sexual Physical Contact/Assault	–
Physical Assault	–

a) "Criminal Rape" (whether completed or attempted), in the forms of coercive and forcible sexual intercourse, nonconsensual digital penetration, and drug-assisted rape (Cantalupo & Kidder, 2017; Cantalupo & Kidder, 2018; National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, & Medicine, 2018; Karami et al., 2020), falls under this sub-theme.

Rape laws in the United States, Australia, India, and South Africa legally define rape as the nonconsensual engagement in oral, anal, or vaginal sexual intercourse and penetration by any body part (i.e., digital penetration) or by a foreign object (Easteal, 2011; Gangoli,

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2011; Schafran & Weinberger, 2011; Vetten, 2011), or by an animal's genital organs (Vetten, 2011). These laws also recognize rape as occurring through forcible compulsion or involving a person incapable of consent due to physical helplessness, mental disability, mental incapacitation (including drug-facilitation), or being under a certain age (Schafran & Weinberger, 2011).

The Iranian Penal Code does not explicitly define sexual rape as a separate crime. Instead, it includes laws on adultery with force and duress (Zena-e ba onf va ekrah), categorized under the Islamic jurisprudential definitions of "sex outside marriage" (Zena) and "male-to-male sodomy" (Lavat). While these laws can be considered Iran's equivalent to rape laws, their definitions are far more limited than those outlined in international criminal law (Aghtaie, 2011; Paknezhad et al., 2022).

India's rape law amendments expanded the definition of rape to include the uttering of any word, making any sound or gesture, or exhibiting any object or part of the body for sexual purposes (Gangoli, 2011). However, we categorized exhibitionism (Kipāne, 2018) under a separate theme.

There is an urgent need for Iranian policymakers and legislators to broaden the legal definition of sexual rape and other forms of sexual assault and harassment to precisely encompass any harmful, nonconsensual sexual behavior by any means, committed against both females and males.

b) "Unwelcome Sexual Physical Contact/Assault" includes unwelcome sexual touching and physical advances that make the victim feel uncomfortable, ranging from hugs and kisses, stroking, caressing, and repeatedly touching the victim during conversation, to massaging the victim's body and face, sexual overture, sexual groping, grabbing, sexual coercion and assault, criminal sexualized violence, overt harassment, and making the victim touch the harasser's genitals (Dekker et al., 2013; St. John et al., 2016; Cantalupo & Kidder, 2017; Cantalupo & Kidder, 2018; Hurren, 2018; National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, & Medicine, 2018; Taylor et al., 2018a; Karami et al., 2020), and any sexual contact in which the victim could not or did not give consent, or felt it would be unsafe to resist or refuse (St. John et al., 2016). These behaviors can be legally categorized under rape law, but the degrees of harassment and the harm caused can be placed on a continuum from less to most severe.

c) "Physical Assault" includes potentially criminal non-sexual physical violence and assaults, such as punching (Cantalupo & Kidder, 2017; Cantalupo & Kidder, 2018; Young & Wiley, 2021). It refers to physical contact of an unwanted nature, such as being punched, kicked, bitten, pushed, or grabbed, that results in harm or is perceived as threatening (Sachdeva et al., 2019), and is a prevalent type of crime in societies. In Australia, for example, during the last two decades, physical assault has had the highest rate of victimization among the four major types of violent crime, including homicide, physical assault, sexual assault, and robbery (Fuller, 2015). Physical assault is often a part of rape, sexual assault, and domestic violence.

Domestic Abuse(-Like) Behaviors

We categorized this theme separately from physical sexual harassment due to the fact that these behaviors are both physical and psychological in nature. Domestic abuse or domestic abuse-like behaviors are misbehaviors such as controlling and abusive actions accomplished

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through a combination of physical, sexual, verbal, psychological, and emotional abuse, or intimate partner abuse, and any kinds of physical assaults and/or psychologically abusive and controlling behaviors often associated with domestic violence (Cantalupo & Kidder, 2017; Cantalupo & Kidder, 2018). Domestic abuse can comprise the following behaviors perpetrated or experienced by both males and females: non-physical abuse (emotional, financial), physical abuse such as force, threats, or unwanted sexual touching, sexual assault by (attempted) rape or penetration, and indecent exposure, and stalking (Elkin, 2018).

Unfortunately, the essence of domestic violence (i.e., non-physical methods of power and control) remains uncriminalized. It seems that the offense of torture better captures the ongoing nature of domestic abuse and its emotional impact on the victim. Hence, policymakers and legislators could benefit society by introducing this offense into criminal statutes. To provide an example, in Queensland jurisdiction, the crime of torture is defined as the intentional infliction of permanent/temporary, and physical/mental/psychological and/or emotional severe pain or suffering on a person by an act or series of acts done on one or more occasions (Douglas, 2015).

Communicative Sexual Harassment

This type of sexual harassment is of a communicative nature, and we categorized it into the following sub-themes (Table 4.):

Table 4.
Communicative Sexual Harassment Sub-Themes

Communicative Sexual Harassment	
Unwanted Sexual Verbal Comments	Sexual Comments About the Victim
	Sexual Comments About Other People
	Sexual Comments About the Harassers Themselves
	Sexual Remarks
	Sexual Humor
	Sexual Requests
Unwanted Sexual Attention	Suggestive Sexual Gestures/Behaviors
	Voyeurism
	Excessive/Sexually-Themed Gifts
Unwelcome Sexual Messages	–

a) "Unwanted Sexual Verbal Comments" includes: a1) Sexual Comments About the Victim", a2) About Other People (mostly other women), and a3) About the Harassers Themselves, which encompass making comments about the body, appearance (dress, make-up, and hair), physical beauty, appeal and attractiveness, sex life, and sexual activities of the victim, other people, or oneself (St. John et al., 2016; Cantalupo & Kidder, 2017; Hurren, 2018; National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, & Medicine, 2018; Taylor et al., 2018a; Evans et al., 2019; Karami et al., 2020); a4) Sexual Remarks, which include using lewd remarks and innuendos, singing sexually suggestive songs, calling women "Hon," "Babe," and "Sweetie" (Cantalupo & Kidder, 2018; National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, & Medicine, 2018), commenting on cognitive sex differences (St. John et al., 2016), hitting on students and (junior) faculty (Karami et al., 2020), and such; a5) Sexual Humor, which

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includes vulgar, disgusting, and lewd (explicit) sexual jokes or stories, and comments or jokes about women that cause embarrassment, discomfort, and offense (Dekker et al., 2013; Cantalupo & Kidder, 2017; Cantalupo & Kidder, 2018; National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, & Medicine, 2018); and a6) Sexual Requests (Cantalupo & Kidder, 2017).

Verbal sexual harassment should be taken seriously by statutory bodies. For example, the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) and courts require employers to take these behaviors seriously, and immediately and adequately address employee complaints of purely verbal offensive conduct (Jones & Patel, 2019).

b) "Unwanted Sexual Attention" includes: b1) Suggestive Sexual Gestures/Behaviors, which comprise unwanted and unwelcome symbols, gestures, and body language that are based on sex or gender, as well as eye contact, invitations, and wearing provocative clothes, all of which cause embarrassment, offense, or discomfort (Dekker et al., 2013; National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, & Medicine, 2018); b2) "Voyeurism" and ogling (Cantalupo & Kidder, 2018; Hurren, 2018; Espinoza & Hsiehchen, 2020); and b3) "Excessive/Sexually-Themed Gifts", such as sending flowers to the victim (Cantalupo & Kidder, 2018).

Although these behaviors can be defined under sexual harassment due to being perceived as unwanted, offensive, or intimidating by the victim (for example, according to Article 2 of the European Union's Equal Treatment Directive 2006/54/EC) (Latcheva, 2017), most of them are not criminalized. However, due to their communicative nature and the fact that they are often accompanied by other types of legally actionable behaviors, we have kept them in this sub-theme. Indeed, there are individual, socio-cultural, and country differences in perceiving what sexual harassment is or is not, and hence, there is no agreed-upon definition of it. Additionally, varying definitions and measurement instruments significantly influence reported prevalence rates and the comparability of different research results in official or survey data, which can affect policy development (Latcheva, 2017).

c) "Unwelcome Sexual Messages" are any unwelcome, sexual, sexist, or sexually offensive, or suggestive content and materials displayed, used, or sent through any form or means of communication (e.g., online, social media, email, phone, text, answering machine, through a third party, or verbal, written, visual, etc.), shared in person or electronically (Cantalupo & Kidder, 2017; Hurren, 2018; National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, & Medicine, 2018; Karami et al., 2020). Sending sexually explicit materials to another person's cell phone is called "sexting" (Korenis & Billick, 2014).

This sub-theme may involve the use of information and communication technology to socially exclude, threaten, insult, or shame another person (Korenis & Billick, 2014), which is referred to as direct (obvious/overt) workplace "cyberbullying." Due to the variety of these behaviors and their unique characteristics, such as the anonymity of offenders, the online disinhibition effect, and the permanence of hurtful materials, organizations have been struggling to enact effective decision-making processes to reduce the negative outcomes (Oguz et al., 2023). Workplace cyberbullying requires further study and action from human resource professionals, business ethicists, and legal scholars (Bendeliani et al., 2014) (see "Bullying" subsection).

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Sexual Academic Transgressions & Faculty Members

Discrimination

Discrimination is "the behavioral manifestation of biased cognitions (stereotypes) and attitudes (prejudice) toward individuals as a function of their social group membership." Employment discrimination is defined by the United Nations' International Labor Organization as any distinction, exclusion, or preference made on the basis of sex, race, color, religion, political opinion, national extraction, or social origin, (we can also add disability or sexual orientation (Nelson et al., 2019)) "which has the effect of nullifying or impairing equality of opportunity or treatment in employment or occupation" (Cheung et al., 2016). Despite the prohibition of employment discrimination by law in countries like the United States, people from disadvantaged social groups (Cheung et al., 2016), including women, persons of color, and LGBTQ persons, continue to face discrimination in organizations (Nelson et al., 2019). We categorized "Discrimination" into the following themes (Table 5.):

Table 5.
Discrimination Themes

Discrimination	
Gender/Sex/Sexuality-Based Discrimination	Sexism
	Family Responsibilities Discrimination
	Misogyny
Racial Harassment/Microaggression	–
Favoritism	–

a) "Gender/Sex/Sexuality-Based Discrimination" (Cantalupo & Kidder, 2018; Hurren, 2018; National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, & Medicine, 2018; Taylor et al., 2018a; Espinoza & Hsiehchen, 2020; Karami et al., 2020; Lu et al., 2020). Gender discrimination is considered a type of sexual harassment (Schlick et al., 2021). Gender harassment is any verbal and nonverbal behavior that conveys hostility, objectification, exclusion, or second-class status about members of one gender, particularly women or transgender individuals, and communicates that they do not belong or do not merit respect. It is by far the most common type of sexual harassment, but many people do not realize that gender harassment is a form of sexual harassment (National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, & Medicine, 2018). Sexual harassment is part of a continuum of different forms of actual and potential gender-based violence within higher education systems, ranging from bullying, sexist jargon, and gender harassment to sexual assault, abuse, and rape (Bondestam & Lundqvist, 2020; Bosco Damous & Guillopé, 2021). Some European countries, such as France, Italy, and Ireland, have solid legal systems to address sexual harassment in academia. However, not all European countries have legislation in this area, or if they do, it is often ineffective (Bosco Damous & Guillopé, 2021).

Power-threat theories suggest that women in supervisory authority, exhibiting gender nonconformity (i.e., performing gender in stereotypically masculine ways, such as being assertive, dominant, and independent), or working in male-dominated work settings are most likely to face sexual harassment. Sex-based and sexual harassment here can serve as

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an equalizer against women in power, motivated more by control and domination to protect sex-based social standing than by sexual desire (McLaughlin et al., 2012).

We categorized "Gender/Sex/Sexuality-Based Discrimination" into the following sub-themes: a1) "Sexism," which includes (subtle) sexism, gender-based or sexist remarks, jokes, and behaviors, or sexually offensive language; sexist hostility and sexist practices on academic campuses, in the field, lab, and workplace; systemic sexism; gender bias; implicit bias in hiring, tenure, and promotion decisions, and in judgments of performance; significant differences in recommendation letters, such as letter length and tone; negative gendered experiences; poor treatment and degrading, demeaning behaviors toward women and transgenders; different treatment because of the victim's sex; sexual hostility; and referring to women by degrading names of female body parts, or using sexist remarks such as "Barbie doll," or making stereotypical comments about, for example, menstruation (Dekker et al., 2013; St. John et al., 2016; Cantalupo & Kidder, 2017; Cantalupo & Kidder, 2018; Hurren, 2018; National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, & Medicine, 2018; Taylor et al., 2018a; Karami et al., 2020; Lu et al., 2020; Young & Wiley, 2021). Also, due to "bro culture," women in some fields like the sciences are perceived as being held to higher standards: "You have to be twice as good and work twice as hard" (Evans et al., 2019). Bro culture manhood and internalized misogyny are social constructs and part of the collective unconscious, where men justify for one another acts of sexual violence to the point that such acts become normalized and the damage is diminished—at least in their minds (Briones, 2022). Hence, they follow a pattern of harassment and denial (Cantalupo & Kidder, 2018).

a2) "Family Responsibilities Discrimination" includes work/family policing; discrimination based on family obligations; sexism and questioning of competency, intelligence, or commitment to academia based on pregnancy and motherhood, which may limit a woman's ability to advance her career if she chooses to have a family (Taylor et al., 2018a; Karami et al., 2020); refusing promotions or raises due to maternal status; commenting on breastfeeding in public, or questioning the morality of single mothers (Cantalupo & Kidder, 2018); a lack of onsite child care; and cultural practices such as holding faculty or scholarly meetings during evening hours or other times when women/primary caregivers are typically unavailable (Evans et al., 2019). Family responsibilities discrimination, or "caregiver discrimination," refers to bias in the workplace against mothers and others with caregiving responsibilities and is legislated against in some countries, such as the United States (Bornstein et al., 2012).

a3) "Misogyny" refers to any misogynistic behavior toward women (Cantalupo & Kidder, 2018; National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, & Medicine, 2018), such as being confrontational and antagonistic toward women who complain about sexual harassment, including accusations that they are physically unattractive or make such claims for attention or financial gain (Cantalupo & Kidder, 2018). Misogyny (hatred toward women), which can be traced back to ancient Greek mythology, has taken shape in multiple forms, such as male privilege, patriarchy, gender discrimination, sexual harassment, violence against women, belittling of women, and sexual objectification (Srivastava et al., 2017).

b) "Racial Harassment/Microaggression" may include any verbal or nonverbal racial or ethnic harassment of students or staff, as well as racialized sexual harassment (Cantalupo & Kidder, 2018; National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, & Medicine, 2018; Young & Wiley, 2021), or microaggressions (St. John et al., 2016; National Academies of Sciences,

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Engineering, & Medicine, 2018). Racial harassment is defined as an incident or a series of incidents that intend or are likely to intimidate, offend, or harm an individual or group because of their ethnic origin, race, color, or nationality. It may encompass derogatory name-calling, insults and racist jokes, verbal threats, displays of racially offensive material, exclusion from normal workplace conversation or activities, physical attacks, and encouraging others to commit such acts (La Torre et al., 2022). Microaggression is a covert form of racism (Williams, 2020) and entails brief, low-intensity everyday events, as well as (un)intentional daily verbal, behavioral, or environmental indignities that convey hostile, derogatory, or negative racial slights, insults, and messages toward marginalized groups (Yearwood, 2013; Ogunyemi et al., 2020).

c) "Favoritism" was mentioned in the following incident: A faculty member recruits advisees whom he perceives as attractive and treats them more favorably than other students (Cantalupo & Kidder, 2018). Favoritism is a form of bias and the use of non-merit criteria, including in-group favoritism, political favoritism, friendship (or the buddy system) favoritism, homophily or similarity-attraction bias, and status threats imposed by workplace policies or decision-makers in favoring, rewarding, promoting, assigning tasks, and hiring certain individuals over others (Pearce & Wang, 2024). Erotic capital—the combination of aesthetic, visual, physical, social, and sexual attractiveness to other members of society, particularly to the opposite sex—influences managers' favoritism toward their employees (Abubakar et al., 2019). Sexual favoritism occurs when a hierarchical (coerced or consensual) romantic relationship leads to decisions, actions, preferential treatment, or benefits for the sexual partner that negatively affect the opportunities of other employees, creating a hostile work environment. Sexual favoritism is recognized "as a form of unlawful and unethical discrimination based on gender, which can be illegal in the United States based on federal and/or state laws" (Mujtaba & Cavico, 2020).

Quid Pro Quos

We classified "Quid Pro Quos" into two sub-themes (Table 6.): a) "Sexual Quid Pro Quos" (Cantalupo & Kidder, 2018; National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, & Medicine, 2018; Lu et al., 2020) involve the abuse of power, authority, or position to gain something sexually, where victims feel they have something to lose if they do not submit to sexual conduct (Mahlangu, 2017). These occur when favorable professional or educational treatment is conditioned on sexual activity, or when better treatment is implied in exchange for sexual cooperation (National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, & Medicine, 2018). Indeed, perpetrators with power over grades, job recommendations, inclusion in important scholarly activities, or the completion of major program milestones—such as a thesis or dissertation—use their influence to coerce students into sexual activity. Alternatively, a victim may exchange sexual favors for benefits (or promised benefits), such as higher grades, or experience negative consequences for refusing such exchanges (Cantalupo & Kidder, 2018; Karami et al., 2020).

b) Subtle or explicit "Bribery" to engage in sexual behavior (Cantalupo & Kidder, 2017; Lu et al., 2020) occurs when a benefit is offered in exchange for sexual favors (Karami et al., 2020). This makes the victim feel as if they are being bribed with a reward to engage in sexual activity (National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, & Medicine, 2018).

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Table 6.
Quid Pro Quos Sub-Themes

Quid Pro Quos
Sexual Quid Pro Quos
Bribery

Hostile Environment Sexual Harassment

Sexually harassing behavior can be direct (targeted at an individual) or ambient (a general atmosphere of sexual harassment within an environment) (National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, & Medicine, 2018). "Hostile environment sexual harassment" (Cantalupo & Kidder, 2017; Cantalupo & Kidder, 2018) occurs when a social, academic, educational, or work environment becomes intimidating, humiliating, hostile, or offensive (Cantalupo & Kidder, 2017; Hurren, 2018). This includes a climate of harassment (Evans et al., 2019), gender bias, hostile climates, and sexist behaviors and practices across campuses, research labs, workplaces, and fieldwork settings (St. John et al., 2016). These hostile environments may also be characterized by bystander complacency toward harassment, the use of harassment as a tool for power assertion, and the normalization of grooming students into "consensual" affairs that later turn abusive (Karami et al., 2020), as well as severe or pervasive sexual harassment (Cantalupo & Kidder, 2017). In the United States, such environments are considered illegal when hostility, gender-based discomfort, or sexist hostility is severe or pervasive enough to create abusive, grueling conditions in training settings, alter the conditions of employment, influence work performance, or impede one's ability to obtain an education (National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, & Medicine, 2018).

We categorized the "Hostile environment sexual harassment" theme into the following sub-themes (Table 7.): a) "Hostile environment," in which harassment occurs at all levels (i.e., undergraduate and graduate levels, as well as within departments among faculty, graduate, and undergraduate students). In some departments, such as music and art, harassment is normalized, with professors modeling sexually harassing behavior and setting the tone for what is considered normative. This creates an environment in which individuals with more power feel they are free to harass those with less power (Karami et al., 2020).

Table 7.
Hostile Environment Sexual Harassment Sub-Themes

Hostile Environment Sexual Harassment
Hostile Environment
Open Secret Environments
Silence Culture

The widespread perception of women as "sexual playthings," an atmosphere that demeans and humiliates individuals based on their gender or sexual orientation, favoritism, overtly sexist humor and non-sexist sexual humor, quid pro quo sexual harassment, and similar behaviors in the workplace can significantly harm professional functioning and the enjoyment of professional endeavors. These factors contribute to a hostile work

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environment, which is a form of sexual harassment (Mujtaba & Cavico, 2020; Otsri, 2020). In some countries, such an environment is legally objectionable, allowing both female and male employees to take legal action, regardless of whether the sexual misconduct was directed at them (Mujtaba & Cavico, 2020).

Additionally, "uncivil environments" can create opportunities for bullying by normalizing aggression and hostility (Keashly, 2021). Indeed, what all higher education sexual harassment incidents have in common is institutional betrayal, wherein trusted and powerful institutions act in ways that cause harm to those who depend on them for safety and well-being (Smith & Freyd, 2014).

b) "Open Secret Environments" (Cantalupo & Kidder, 2017) refer to situations in which people within a university are aware that sexual harassment occurs on campus (Taylor et al., 2018a), and professors who harass students are often known to their departments, yet no action is taken (Karami et al., 2020).

c) "Silence Culture": A culture of silence is a key factor that enables sexual harassment (Bondestam & Lundqvist, 2020). A "secrets code" operates to keep actions, situations, and arrangements hidden, maintain the status quo, isolate individuals (which strengthens the power of the secrets code), and silence those who experience sexual harassment. Secrecy serves as a powerful enabler, allowing harassers to continue their misconduct (Hurren, 2018).

Imposed Exposure

We categorized this theme into two sub-themes (Table 8.): a) "Exhibitionism," which includes: a1) "Indecent Exposure of Nude Body Parts", and a2) "Indecent Exposure of Sexual Activity"; and b) "Imposed Pornography Exposure," which includes: b1) "Making the Victim Watch Porn", and b2) "Using Porn Before Others' Eyes".

Table 8.
Imposed Exposure Sub-Themes

Imposed Exposure	
Exhibitionism	Indecent Exposure of Nude Body Parts
	Indecent Exposure of Sexual Activity
Imposed Pornography Exposure	Making the Victim Watch Porn
	Using Porn Before Others' Eyes

Exhibitionism is defined as the denuding of the genitals, often with simultaneous masturbation, within the view of a person of the opposite sex or exposing one's naked body to others without consent (Kipāne, 2018). It can fall under rape laws (such as the Indian rape law amendment) (see Gangoli, 2011) or be categorized more broadly as sexual harassment or violence. "[F]orcing someone to look at pornographic magazines, movies or to engage in pornographic activities" is also considered a form of sexual violence (Kipāne, 2018).

Examples of indecent exposure (Cantalupo & Kidder, 2018; Hurren, 2018) and imposed pornography exposure cited in the selected articles include acts such as disrobing or masturbating in front of the victim (Cantalupo & Kidder, 2018) and inappropriate workplace behavior, such as using pornography in front of others (Karami et al., 2020). In another documented incident, a faculty member allowed male students to bring in a

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pornographic film and made the only female student watch it (Cantalupo & Kidder, 2018). This case exemplifies both "Making the Victim Watch Porn" and "Enabling Third-Party Harassment."

Enabling Third-Party Harassment

This theme encompasses any conduct that enables harassment by peer students or third parties, such as suggesting that the victim engage in sexual activity with a third party known to the faculty member or participating in off-hours drinking with students while a relative or acquaintance of the faculty member is present (Cantalupo & Kidder, 2018).

In such cases, the source of sexual harassment is third parties who are not directly controlled by the employer (e.g., customers and clients) (Vaughn, 2002). National and international laws, along with organizational regulations, should address this form of harassment. For example, the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) holds employers responsible for preventing sexual harassment not only by coworkers but also by third parties. Employers are also required to take appropriate measures to end reported sexual harassment, regardless of the perpetrator (Jones & Patel, 2019).

Stalking

Stalking (Cantalupo & Kidder, 2017; Cantalupo & Kidder, 2018; Hurren, 2018; National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, & Medicine, 2018; Karami et al., 2020) includes behaviors such as photographing or filming the victim (Cantalupo & Kidder, 2018), following or spying on them, leaving threatening notes or messages, destroying their property, making unwanted phone calls, or engaging in technology-based abuse. Cyberstalking involves using technology to stalk, surveil, monitor, harass, impersonate, watch over, or threaten the victim (Messing et al., 2020).

In U.S. law, stalking is considered a serious crime. Most U.S. anti-stalking laws include the following elements: 1) a pattern of repeated, intentional harassment in person or electronically, 2) engagement in threatening behaviors toward the victim, and 3) actions that create a reasonable state of fear or emotional distress in the victim (Bouffard et al., 2021). Anti-stalking legislation should be a priority in policymaking agendas for all countries worldwide.

The Means of Sexual Harassment

The following means of harassment were identified in the primary studies:

Objectification/Sexualization

"Objectification/Sexualization" includes various forms of sexualization of women (Crittenden et al., 2021); the use of inappropriate sexualized remarks (Cantalupo & Kidder, 2018); the sexualization of the classroom environment; and the combination of inappropriate office behavior with a sexualized environment, characterized by sexist statements expressing contempt for women (Karami et al., 2020).

Men may commodify women or treat them as property by engaging in acts of sexual harassment and sexism to establish dominance over them. Hence, male faculty may employ sexual harassment or sexism not out of sexual desire but as a means to maintain power over female faculty members (Taylor et al., 2018a).

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Objectification (National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, & Medicine, 2018; Taylor et al., 2018a) occurs when people (most often women) are treated as objects rather than individuals, or when their body parts or functions are isolated from their personhood and reduced to instruments for another's use or as representations of their entire being (Gervais et al., 2013). Sexual objectification happens when a person (usually a woman) is reduced to her appearance, body, or sexual body parts/functions. This is associated with viewing women as less than human and primarily manifests in media and interpersonal interactions. It is marked by observable behaviors such as objectifying gazes, comments about appearance, unreciprocated sexual advances, and unwanted touching (Gervais et al., 2016), as well as more violent acts such as assault, exploitation, and trafficking (Gervais et al., 2013). The essence of sexual assault lies in wrongful objectification that warrants criminal culpability. It is characterized by the perpetrator's "sheer use" of another person—treating them solely as a means to an end, entirely disregarding their plans and purposes. However, criminal sanctions cannot and should not be applied to all instances of sexual objectification (Mathen, 2014).

Compulsion

When coercion, force, threats, or intimidation are involved, consent cannot exist, ultimately creating an intimidating, humiliating, or hostile environment (Hurren, 2018). "Compulsion" is categorized into the following sub-themes (Table 9.):

Table 9.
Compulsion Sub-Themes

Compulsion	
Coercion	–
Threat	Threatening/Intimidating the victim
	Claims of Impunity
	Malicious Accusation/Prosecution Against the Victim
Imposition	Beyond Collegial Obligations
	Beyond Program Obligations

a) "Coercion" includes abusing positions of power (Young & Wiley, 2021), using force, threat, or authority (National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, & Medicine, 2018), or applying verbal pressure to obtain sexual contact with an unwilling person (Cantalupo & Kidder, 2017). It also encompasses committing coercive advances (Lu et al., 2020) and sexual coercion (Hurren, 2018; National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, & Medicine, 2018; Taylor et al., 2018a); coercing students into engaging in sexual relationships or performing sexual acts (Cantalupo & Kidder, 2018); pressuring the victim to consent to sex or a romantic relationship; or attempting to initiate an unwanted romantic sexual relationship (National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, & Medicine, 2018). Additionally, sexual coercion may take the form of offering benefits in exchange for sexual favors or influencing the victim's success (Karami et al., 2020).

b) "Threat" includes: b1) "Threatening/Intimidating the Victim" to engage in sexual behavior (Lu et al., 2020); utilizing intimidation (Cantalupo & Kidder, 2017; Cantalupo & Kidder, 2018; Hurren, 2018; Taylor et al., 2018a; Crittenden et al., 2021); making threatening comments (Taylor et al., 2018a); using subtle or explicit threats, interpersonal threats, and

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threatening the victim with being fired, deported, injured, receiving low grades, not getting recommendation letters, or making the victim's life difficult, or with some sort of retaliation for not being sexually cooperative, or for speaking up (St. John et al., 2016; Cantalupo & Kidder, 2017; Cantalupo & Kidder, 2018; National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, & Medicine, 2018; Karami et al., 2020).

b2) "Claims of Impunity" occur when those with more power feel they have a free pass to harass those with less power, and thus make public statements that they would face no discipline for their harassment (Cantalupo & Kidder, 2018; Karami et al., 2020). The concept of the line of impunity "refers to the idea that certain ranks or positions in the social hierarchy entitle prerogatives or advantages, and that the power granted at those levels transcends the limits of control and law enforcement" (Medina et al., 2020).

b3) "Malicious Accusation/Prosecution against the Victim" occurs when the harasser claims malicious prosecution against the victim/complainant and her family to intentionally inflict emotional distress; or claims that the victim is a liar, mentally troubled and unstable, trying to get attention and money, is a stripper, or that the accusations were part of a conspiracy (Cantalupo & Kidder, 2018).

c) "Imposition" is categorized into: c1) "Beyond Collegial Obligations," which encompasses any unwanted behavior or request that makes collegial relationships include a level of intimacy unrelated to work and moves interactions from professional to personal (Hurren, 2018), as well as any attempt to turn professional interactions into romantic or sexual ones (Karami et al., 2020); and c2) "Beyond Program Obligations," which includes insisting and pressuring the victim to enroll in the harasser's courses; insisting on the victim's daily presence in the harasser's office or demanding sex in the office (Cantalupo & Kidder, 2018); getting students alone and sexually advancing toward them; using meetings to turn a mentoring relationship into a sexual one (Karami et al., 2020); and so on.

Exploitation

"Exploitation" involves any behavior that exploits the victim for the harasser's personal advantage (Cantalupo & Kidder, 2017; Cantalupo & Kidder, 2018). Sexual exploitation (Hurren, 2018) refers to taking nonconsensual or abusive sexual advantage of others, including voyeurism or distributing sexual information (Espinoza & Hsiehchen, 2020).

Manipulation

We categorized the "Manipulation" theme into the following sub-themes (Table 10.):

Table 10.
Manipulation Sub-Themes

	Manipulation
Alcohol/Drug-Facilitated Harassment	Alcohol/Drug-Assisted Sexual Contact
	Supplying Students with Alcohol
	Excessive Drinking
Deception	Luring
	Seduction
	Environmental/Victim Grooming
	Apparently Innocent/Accidental Behaviors
	Fraud

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a) "Alcohol/Drug-Facilitated Harassment" includes: a1) "Alcohol/Drug-Assisted Sexual Contact" (Cantalupo & Kidder, 2017), which involves encouraging drinking and using settings with alcohol to make advances, or drugging the victim and raping her (Karami et al., 2020); a2) "Supplying Students with Alcohol" and off-hours drinking with students (Cantalupo & Kidder, 2018); and a3) "Excessive Drinking" during after-hours socialization between graduate students and faculty, leading to becoming drunk (Cantalupo & Kidder, 2018).

b) "Deception" includes the following categories: b1) "Luring," which occurs when harassers mislead victims with illusory promises, such as promising a postgraduate job (Cantalupo & Kidder, 2018), or lure students into a relationship by suggesting that they would leave their spouse (Karami et al., 2020), and similar behaviors; b2) Seduction of young and admiring students (even those not enrolled in the harasser's classes) (Cantalupo & Kidder, 2018); b3) Environmental/Victim Grooming (Young & Wiley, 2021) which occurs when the harasser grooms students into consensual affairs and then abuses them (Karami et al., 2020). Grooming has long been identified with language in child sexual abuse and refers to methods sex offenders use to (nonviolently) gain access to and prepare future victims to be compliant with abuse. It is a complex, incremental, three-stage process, including gaining access to the victim, initiating and maintaining the abuse, and concealing it (Burgess & Hartman, 2018). It occurs in both forms of "victim grooming" (behaviors directed toward the victim) and "environmental grooming" (manipulating the perceptions of individuals in the victim's life to ensure continued access to the victim and minimize discovery or disclosure of the assault) (Tanner & Brake, 2013);

b4) Apparently Innocent/Accidental Behaviors, which are low-risk behaviors that can easily be explained as a misunderstanding (Dekker et al., 2013), such as any form of unwelcome physical conduct that could be characterized as nonsexual or accidental, or calling women "Hon," "Babe," and "Sweetie" (Cantalupo & Kidder, 2018), or any other comments or compliments about the victim's body or appearance that cause uncomfortable feelings (Hurren, 2018); and b5) "Fraud" and withholding critical information that could affect a person's decision to consent (Hurren, 2018).

Aggression

"Aggression" or aggressive harassment (Taylor et al., 2018a) includes aggressive behaviors; violence and overt harassment (St. John et al., 2016; Crittenden et al., 2021); aggressive and sexual violence; offensive comments and aggressive sexist bullying; verbal disrespect; yelling, cursing, or verbal abuse; demeaning methods of speaking; hostile encounters; crude and intimidating language and behavior; and unwelcome verbalized disrespect, conduct, and harassment (Cantalupo & Kidder, 2017; Cantalupo & Kidder, 2018; National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, & Medicine, 2018; Taylor et al., 2018a; Karami et al., 2020).

Psychological Abuse

"Psychological Abuse" includes abusive behaviors (Crittenden et al., 2021), such as the assertion of dominance (Taylor et al., 2018a) and using harassment to assert power (Karami et al., 2020); psychologically and emotionally abusive and controlling behaviors often associated with domestic violence (Cantalupo & Kidder, 2017/ 2018); the intentional infliction of emotional distress on the victim and her family members (Cantalupo & Kidder, 2018); mentally playing mind games at the intellectual level to hinder the victim's physical

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performance (National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, & Medicine, 2018); and psychological forms of gender-based violence (Evans et al., 2019).

Bullying

This theme includes workplace bullying behaviors directed at both victims and bystanders to coerce them into complying with the harasser's demands (St. John et al., 2016; Cantalupo & Kidder, 2017; Cantalupo & Kidder, 2018; Hurren, 2018; Crittenden et al., 2021); sexual bullying, aggressive sexist bullying, and offensive comments from individuals in positions of power directed at colleagues and students (Karami et al., 2020); embarrassing, ridiculing, or demeaning victims in front of students and colleagues (Cantalupo & Kidder, 2017; Cantalupo & Kidder, 2018; National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, & Medicine, 2018; Taylor et al., 2018a); faculty-to-faculty/staff non-sexual harassment (Cantalupo & Kidder, 2018); and the use of derogatory comments (Cantalupo & Kidder, 2018), among other behaviors.

There is no legal definition of bullying in some countries—for example, in the UK—and it is a subjective concept. However, it can be defined as unwanted behavior from a person or group that is offensive, malicious, intimidating or insulting and is an abuse or misuse of power that undermines, humiliates or causes physical or emotional harm to others (Munro & Phillips, 2023). Bullying is related to mobbing, (personal) harassment, emotional abuse, workplace mistreatment, psychological aggression, and incivility (Keashly, 2021). Positionality—the social factors of gender, class, ability, race, and sexual orientation—influences experiences of bullying (Misawa et al., 2019).

There is a pervasive belief that academe, especially universities, are hotbeds of conflict and bullying, often characterized as hostile and fostering a "culture of cruelty," with academics labeled as "mean and nasty" (Keashly, 2021). Power structures in academia play a significant role in academic bullying, where authorities, perceiving their power base to be under threat, strive to eliminate the perceived threat (Mhaka-Mutepfa & Rampa, 2021). The faculty's unique organizational citizenship status and positioning as evaluators in subjective processes provide opportunities for exclusionary and derogatory activities to occur outside of others' view—a manifestation of the "power of the peer" that resembles bullying through the misuse or abuse of power (Keashly, 2021).

The heavy dependence of firms on a variety of information and communication technologies has contributed to the expansion of traditional face-to-face workplace bullying into cyberspace, which includes indirect (subtle/covert) workplace cyberbullying (such as spreading rumors about a co-worker, ignoring/not responding to a coworker's messages, and excluding them from work e-mail lists) (Oguz et al., 2023). Cyberbullying refers to all types of electronic, targeted interactions that subject people to humiliation, ridicule, ostracism, or exclusion. It can include the distribution of intimate images, which is criminalized by law, but generally, cyberbullying relates to a much broader range of behaviors that are not criminalized in some countries, such as Canada (Mathen, 2014). Both university email accounts and social media platforms can be routes for staff to groom or harass students. Hence, clear policy frameworks for appropriate behaviors, interactions, and ethical principles on both online teaching platforms and social media are needed (Bull et al., 2023).

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Organizational Abuse

This theme is categorized into the following sub-themes (Table 11.):

Table 11.
Organizational Abuse Sub-Themes

	Organizational Abuse
Intrigue	False Complaints/Reports
	Discouraging Students about Their Professor
	Manipulation of Teaching Evaluation Process
Competence-Questioning	–
Unfair Treatment	Exclusion
	Pressure to Quit
	Taking away Opportunities
	Unfair Punishments
Faculty Allies	–

a) "Intrigue" is classified into: a1) "False Complaints/Reports," which include false reporting to superiors or filing false complaints; accusing the faculty member of unprofessional conduct, such as improper teaching (Taylor et al., 2018a); or making sexist, false accusations toward a faculty member for damaging an instrument because she was the only woman there (Karami et al., 2020; Taylor et al., 2018a); a2) "Discouraging Students about Their Professor's" abilities to help them find a job or secure internships, or secretly emailing the students and threatening to take away their graduate assistant positions if they didn't come to talk about her (Taylor et al., 2018a); and a3) "Manipulation of Teaching Evaluation Process" to further the harasser's goals in disputes with colleagues (Cantalupo & Kidder, 2018).

b) "Competence-Questioning" includes behaviors such as using lewd jokes or comments, disparaging or critical remarks related to competency; questioning women's intelligence or commitment to academia due to motherhood (Karami et al., 2020); telling the victim that she is not as capable or sincere as others (National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, & Medicine, 2018); degrading the victim and her work as an educator and scholar; telling the victim she is unable to manage extra duties due to her pregnancy; treating women as if they should discontinue their work as soon as they become pregnant; complying with traditional societal norms that suggest women should not be knowledgeable about or good at traditionally masculine jobs, such as sports (Taylor et al., 2018a).

Competence-questioning communication at work, downgrading, ignoring, and questioning the importance of a person's contributions, is described as gender-linked and informed by sexist stereotypes of women as less competent. These behaviors may include condescending explanations or "mansplaining" (when a man explains to a woman something she knows more about than he does, conveying a feeling of patronizing superiority); voice non-recognition (a workplace incivility where supervisors ignore or downplay the discretionary inputs they have received from their employees, which includes rude and discourteous behavior, abusive supervision, and repeated hostile verbal and nonverbal behaviors); and interruption or "manterrupting" (when a man deliberately interrupts or hinders a woman while she is speaking) (Briggs et al., 2023).

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c) "Unfair Treatment" of (women) faculty and graduate students (Cantalupo & Kidder, 2018) is classified into: c1) "Exclusion" and marginalizing the victim (National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, & Medicine, 2018); c2) "Pressure to Quit" (Taylor et al., 2018a); c3) "Taking away Opportunities" (Taylor et al., 2018a), such as hindering tenure (National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, & Medicine, 2018); and c4) "Unfair Punishments" for (informal) reporting of sexual harassment (National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, & Medicine, 2018), or punishment for false accusations without any evidence (Taylor et al., 2018a).

d) "Faculty Allies" are those who act as surrogates for the harasser, circulating rumors and derogatory views about the victim while claiming that the accusations are part of a conspiracy (Cantalupo & Kidder, 2018). They convey a sense of an "us versus them" mentality (Taylor et al., 2018a).

Retaliation

Retaliation can take different forms (Table 12.): a) "Retaliatory Acts" occur when the perpetrator retaliates against the victim for reporting the harassment, or for not complying or sexually cooperating with the harasser (National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, & Medicine, 2018; Karami et al., 2020). This may include retaliating through unauthorized investigations about the victim (Cantalupo & Kidder, 2018), among other actions.

b) "Whisper Campaign," aimed at retaliation or retribution, is most often initiated by a perpetrator in a position of power, who shares information or makes disparaging comments about the person who has refused the coercive or harassing sexual situation or has confronted the perpetrator (Hurren, 2018). It can take various forms, including: b1) "Rumors," which involve circulating rumors about the sexual harassment plaintiff by the harasser or faculty allies (Cantalupo & Kidder, 2018; Karami et al., 2020); b2) "Revenge Porn," which refers to the distribution of sexually explicit photographs, videos, or sexual information of a person without their consent (Hurren, 2018; Espinoza & Hsiehchen, 2020); and b3) "Slut-Shaming," a sexist form of victimization, defined as the stigmatization of victims in both physical and virtual spaces, based on their appearance, sexual availability, and actual or perceived sexual behavior (Goblet & Glowacz, 2021). For example, this might involve calling the victim a stripper (Cantalupo & Kidder, 2018).

c) "Academic Retaliation" may include: c1) "Assigning Unfair Low Grades" (Cantalupo & Kidder, 2017; Cantalupo & Kidder, 2018; Karami et al., 2020); and c2) "Withholding Academic Support" for the victim's academic work (Cantalupo & Kidder, 2017; Cantalupo & Kidder, 2018).

Table 12.
Retaliation Sub-Themes

Retaliation	
Retaliatory Acts	–
Whisper Campaign	Rumors
	Revenge Porn
	Slut-Shaming
Academic Retaliation	Assigning Unfair Low Grades
	Withholding Academic Support

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Sexual Academic Transgressions & Faculty Members

Muddled Professional Boundaries

We identified three themes that highlight areas which create a fertile ground for sexual transgressions by faculty members, and therefore, require policymaking actions, regulatory decisions, and professional boundary-setting initiatives. Despite recent international developments regarding policy concerns within higher education institutions over the regulation of sexual and romantic relationships between faculty/staff and students, the concept of "professional boundaries," commonly used in sectors with regulations on professional relationships between adults, has not been widely applied in higher education (Bull et al., 2023).

Bull et al. (2023) discussed sexualized faculty-student interactions (e.g., asking students out on a date; telling students that the faculty member is attracted to them; commenting on students' bodies; having sexual or romantic relationships with them) and personal faculty-student interactions (e.g., getting drunk with students; adding students on social media; communicating with them via private messages on social media; arranging meetings outside the academic timetable). Bull et al. (2023) found that students were much less comfortable with items on the sexualized interactions scale than with those on the personal interactions scale, with significant differences in comfort levels based on gender, race, sexuality, and whether students were domestic or international. However, there was no difference based on the respondent's level of study. Based on our primary research sample, policymakers need to develop regulations for the following three areas:

Off-Campus/After-Hours Interactions

Faculty-student and faculty-faculty "Off-Campus/After-Hours Interactions" are important areas of higher education policymaking, and the following should be carefully considered (Table 13.):

Table 13.
Off-Campus/After-Hours Interactions

Off-Campus/After-Hours Interactions
After-Hours Socialization
International/Remote Sites
Conferences
Off-Campus Trips

a) "After-Hours Socialization" encompasses expectations for students to socialize and engage in sexual relationships (Karami et al., 2020), or to participate in off-hours drinking, which typically involves excessive drinking and reports of sexual harassment and assault (Cantalupo & Kidder, 2018). It also includes sexual advances in cars, homes, parties, dining, dating, off-campus social events, etc. (Karami et al., 2020). Female faculty members, in particular, may be harassed in social situations (e.g., candidate dinners), especially those that involve alcohol (National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, & Medicine, 2018); b) "International/Remote Sites," (e.g., fields, camps) may be used by professors to harass students; c) "Conferences" and social events at professional conferences, where many faculty members have experienced sexual harassment (National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, & Medicine, 2018), are seen by some professors as a free pass to behave in

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ways typically deemed inappropriate for the office (Cantalupo & Kidder, 2018; Hurren, 2018; Karami et al., 2020); and d) "Off-Campus Trips" can also be used by some professors to harass students (Cantalupo & Kidder, 2017; Cantalupo & Kidder, 2018; Karami et al., 2020).

Welcome/Consensual Sexual Relationships

Welcome or consensual sexual relationships (Cantalupo & Kidder, 2018; Espinoza & Hsiehchen, 2020), or professor-student affairs (Karami et al., 2020), are a complicated area that requires a full exploration of the attitudes of faculty and students in order to develop well-rounded and comprehensive policies that allow "life to happen" while protecting both students and faculty members (Crittenden et al., 2021). There is a fine line between consensual faculty-student sexual relationships and sexual harassment, and these relationships are complex due to power differentials and disparities between faculty and students. They can be considered potential sexual harassment (Carrillo et al., 2019; Crittenden et al., 2021), and may evolve into controlling, abusive (Cantalupo & Kidder, 2018), and exploitative relationships (Cantalupo & Kidder, 2017). Professors may also groom or coerce students into such consensual sexual relationships (Karami et al., 2020).

Consensual sexual harassment on Iranian campuses is becoming more prevalent, but this phenomenon has been understudied (Rostami, 2021). Research (Nystrom & Richards, 2023) showed that the majority of a nationally representative sample of higher education institutions in the United States do not have a consensual sexual relationship (CSR) policy. Less than half of them have such policies, with the most common type being limited bans that prohibit faculty-student CSRs only when the faculty has direct responsibility over the student, followed by "advisory" policies that simply discourage such relationships. Richards and Nystrom (2022) also showed that, in recent years, with the increase in societal awareness regarding sexual harassment, higher education institutions are becoming more restrictive in their CSR policies, moving toward limited bans and prohibitions due to power differentials. These policies tend to include reporting requirements, sanctions for policy violations, nuanced discussions of consent (placing the burden of proof on faculty to prove consent in allegations of sexual harassment), and considerations for graduate students. UK higher education institutions, though having few or weak policies, are also moving toward stricter policies (Bull et al., 2023).

Transgressive Approaches in Practice

Two transgressive approaches were introduced in the selected sample: a) "University as Sexual Supermarket," where professors see and treat their work environment and academy as a sexual supermarket, and their students as commodities they have the right to pick and choose. This attitude leads to behaviors that can include sexual comments, unwanted touching, or attempts to date or have sex with students (Karami et al., 2020); and b) "Promoting Faculty-Student Dating," when professors promote faculty-student dating and spread rumors that such relationships are actually occurring (Cantalupo & Kidder, 2018).

Thematic Model

The above-mentioned themes are illustrated in the following thematic model (Figure 3.):

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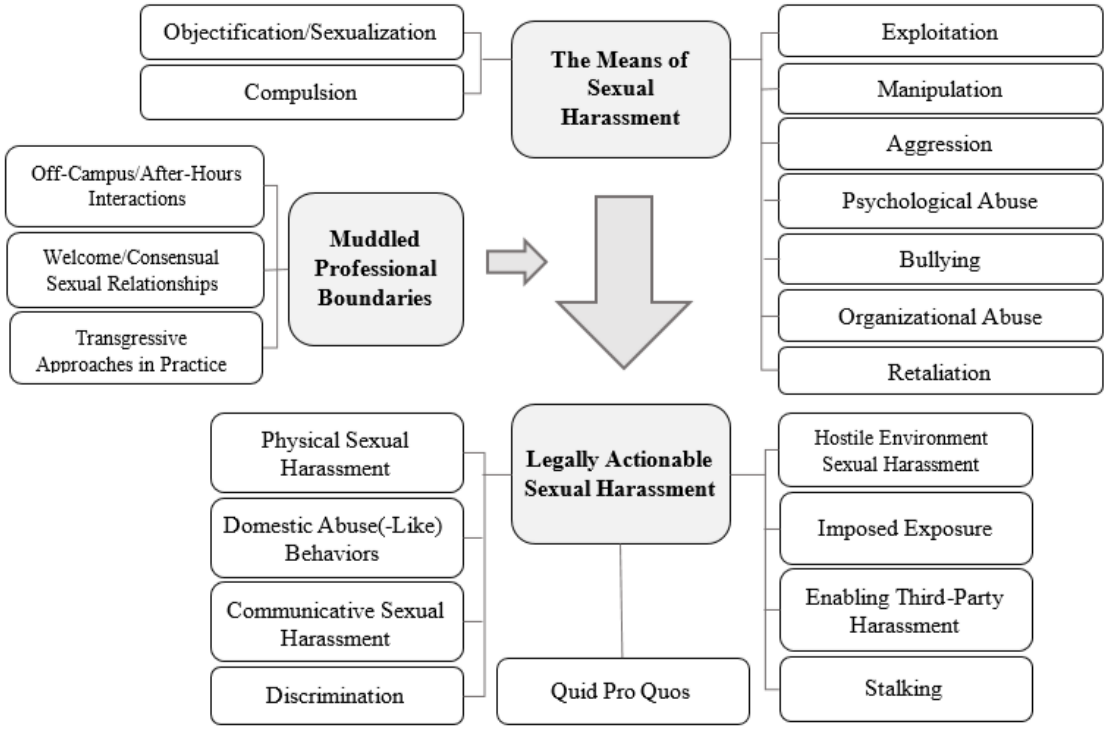


Figure 3. Academic Sexual Transgressions of Faculty Members

Conclusion

The current research aimed to highlight the importance of carefully defining sexual academic transgressions of faculty members to effectively enact policies and laws for their social control. Definitions of sexual harassment may vary across agencies, places, and cultures (Bosco Damous & Guillopé, 2021). Although preventing or combating sexual harassment in universities is challenging, it is the social responsibility of universities to fight against it (Bosco Damous & Guillopé, 2021). Therefore, colleges and universities should take reports of faculty harassment seriously and identify and sanction sexual harassers (Cantalupo & Kidder, 2017).

Wulfekühler and Andrason (2023) argue that the focus and burden of whistleblowing should be shifted from individuals to higher education institutions as collective agents with ethical responsibilities and a purpose of conscientization. Whistleblowing should be integrated into an institution's ethical infrastructure by incorporating four fundamental elements: "whistleblowing's enablement, whistleblowers' protection, the correction of problematic practices, and the recognition of the whistleblower's action." Additionally, Bull et al. (2023) recommend incorporating professional boundary training into higher education teaching qualifications and fostering shared norms around professional boundaries within academic departments and professional societies.

The current research contributes to the literature through its thematic model and tables, which demonstrate legally actionable sexual harassment, the means by which such behaviors occur, and the muddled professional boundaries that prepare the ground for

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these misconducts. Policymakers and legislators can use these themes and sub-themes to gain a better and broader understanding of sexual harassment by faculty members and identify areas that require immediate action or reconsideration. This research is limited to sampled research documents published in English between 2010 and 2021 and may reflect certain cultural characteristics of the societies in which the primary studies were conducted. Bearing these cultural nuances in mind, we suggest further research on existing laws and policies against sexual harassment in higher education to identify areas requiring redefinition and revision. Additionally, we recommend that future research explore the three sub-themes introduced under the muddled professional boundaries to better understand the perceptions of students and faculty members, with the aim of devising new policies and laws.

Declaration of Conflicting Interests

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Human Participants

This study did not involve human participants.

Originality Note

This study presents a thematic model that categorizes faculty-perpetrated sexual harassment, highlighting legally actionable sexual harassment, the means through which such behaviors occur, and the muddled professional boundaries that create conditions for these misconducts. By addressing definitional inconsistencies, it provides a foundation for policy development and institutional action.

Use of Generative AI/ AI-assisted Technologies Statement

The author(s) claimed that ChatGPT is used in this research just for the purpose of improving the language of the manuscript. No further use of this technology is also confirmed by the author(s) to write different parts of the research. The authors proof-read the text prior to its online publication.

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As this manuscript is co-authored by the one of the editors-in-chief, the following issues are considered:

- Two members of the editorial team were working on the manuscript (on behalf of editors-in-chief) in its initial editorial screening.
- Two other members of the editorial team (while the authors' identifying information was kept as anonymous) joined the team to pursue further review of the research.
- Potential reviewers were identified and they received the revised version based on the comments.
- Another round of review was administered to maximize the scientific merits of the research and avoid biased editorial decision-making.

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