**Introduction**

Sexual harassment is a form of discrimination leveled against an individual based on his/her sexual orientation. This type of discrimination is a crime for which often its undertones are directly linked to the need for control over a certain person or group of people. Men are responsible for sexual harassment against women, a common crime that has devastating effects on its victims. By acquiring powerful positions, men often prey on vulnerable individuals or groups who have no alternative to the despicable crime[[1]](#footnote-2). Sexual harassment at the workplace and the authority involvement coupled with power has been said to be the underlying factor of many feminists’ claims of sexual harassment (McLaughlin et al., 2012). With this, questions have been raised regarding the issue thereby heightening the need for additional studies and development of policies as legal measures through which the problem can be addressed. Therefore, the act has been criminalized with sensitization campaigns used as efforts towards educating women on their rights and advocating for standing up against this heinous crime.

**History**

Donald Trump has been accused by 19 women of several sexual misconduct claims[[2]](#footnote-3). He is allegedly responsible for harassing the women by going backstage when they were naked and the use of sexual innuendo when talking to them. According to the testimony of the victims, this made them feel guilty as they were not attracted to his unwarranted behavior. Similar assertions have been echoed by the different women who filed the sexual misconduct claims. As such, Trump used the authoritative position that he held over these women who were vulnerable[[3]](#footnote-4). Inappropriate dominant behaviors by men is a form of assault against women that should be prohibited. In most cases, sexual harassment is about power, a person in an authoritative position controlling the other individual.

Additionally, Trump’s accusation is an example of how men in authoritative position abuse their power by discriminating against women. As such, women are more vulnerable to sexual harassment compared to men who occupy powerful positions in the working environment. With this, it can be acknowledged that sexual discrimination is being practiced in elevated levels. However, underreporting of this issue has impacted the efficacy of the legislation and policies enacted to curb its escalation[[4]](#footnote-5). Therefore, sexual harassment is a practice that necessitates additional research.

Women are vulnerable to sexual harassment but fail to report this in the work settings for fear of repercussions that might emanate from it. Therefore, this calls for additional policies that protect sexual harassment victims from intimidation by the predators who held authoritative positions. For example, the sexual misconduct claims against President Donald Trump were underreported during their occurrence as the vulnerable women feared of the impending repercussions.

**Women victimization**

Before the 1970s, sexual harassment was considered an acceptable behavior in the society. However, this was bound to change after a woman filed a lawsuit in 1974 indicating that she was inappropriately dismissed from her job by refusing to have sexual relation with her manager[[5]](#footnote-6). Subsequently, this was followed suit by additional lawsuits by women activists who stated that sexual harassment is a form of discrimination under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. By 1980, the US Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) provided guidelines that defined sexual harassment within the workplace[[6]](#footnote-7). Currently, sexual harassment in the working environment is recognized as sexual discrimination which is punishable by law. Besides, sexual discrimination is recognized as the violation of fundamental human rights[[7]](#footnote-8). Despite this, this type of discrimination is still pervasive as organizational policies are yet to curb its escalation.

The power that they get in holding a higher position at work paradoxically is the underlying root of their problem. The higher position threatens the males who then feel the need to ‘equalize’ and therefore retaliate by either physically or verbally harassing the women as a means to even the odds in their favor. These dynamics pose a threat and thus environmental unfriendliness at the workplace[[8]](#footnote-9). The vulnerability created by this opportunity creates an avenue for which women are forced to seem emotionally detached from their peers and to appear tougher and thus unapproachable. This perception makes them create a security wall that is often mistaken for being cold and unfeeling; a term often referred to as ‘bitchiness’ or ‘ice queen’. This in itself becomes another form of discrimination for the women in this position, resulting in a categorization of a certain “type” of woman that is sexually harassed. The case is not reflected on the men since if they appear cold, they are often regarded as being serious and business minded. The fact that more supervisory women have reported this issue shows the frequency of them being sexually harassed thereby creating an isolation that is uncomfortable. This might be one of the reasons why women choose to not report sexual harassment issues while still in their higher positions and only do so after they have left their occupations.

In other instances, the vulnerability of women to sexual harassment is stemmed from an economic factor. In this aspect, income comes into play. Mature women are considered to be most of the victims in this category. The position these women find themselves are one in which management has more power than them. More often than not, these women feel the need to let it happen to them in order to not jeopardize their income. In this aspect, the male in power’s behavior pattern demonstrates a growth in egoism until they no longer recognize what others feel. In this way, men holding the power believe that they are more in control of their surroundings and therefore mistakenly assume that women are more attracted to them. In making these assumptions, the men in power often end up sexually harassing women and regrettably pass it off as normal social behaviors.

1. McDonald, Paula, and Sara Charlesworth. "Workplace sexual harassment at the margins." Work, employment and society 30, no. 1 (2016): 118-134. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. Cooney, Samantha. These Are the Women Who Have Accused President Trump of Sexual Misconduct. (2017) [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
3. Cooney, Samantha. These Are the Women Who Have Accused President Trump of Sexual Misconduct. (2017) [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
4. Keltner, Dacher. What the Science of Power Can Tell Us about Sexual Harassment. (2017) [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
5. HerscH, Joni. "Sexual harassment in the workplace." IZA World of Labor (2015). [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
6. Hejase, Hussin Jose. "Sexual harassment in the workplace: An exploratory study from Lebanon." Journal of Management Research 7, no. 1 (2015): 107-121. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
7. HerscH, Joni. "Sexual harassment in the workplace." IZA World of Labor (2015). [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
8. McLaughlin, Heather, Christopher Uggen, and Amy Blackstone. "Sexual harassment, workplace authority, and the paradox of power." American sociological review 77, no. 4 (2012): 625-647. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)