The #MeToo Era in Academic Publishing

Tackling Harassment and the Roots of Gender Bias

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“I honestly do not know one single woman who has not encountered harassment at work...I mean being repeatedly asked on “dates” after turning the person down multiple times. I mean being grabbed by the breasts in a public space. I mean being told you’d look better on your knees. I mean being stalked and followed home from work. I mean being forcibly kissed by a colleague. I mean being asked if you performed specific sexual acts...I have to wonder if this will ever end.”

“Sadly, early in my own career I heard powerful women, sharing war stories, imply that their ability to navigate working with a lech and eventually get him on-side was a sign of their mettle... a woman with career ambition had to somehow be strong enough to silently navigate the situation and remain professional no matter what.”
What do we mean by “sexual harassment”?
By the Numbers
The Culture of Science and Academia

• 20-50% percent of female students in science, engineering and medicine, and 50%+ of faculty, said they had experienced harassment.  
  (NASEM Report, June 2018)

• Most faculty harassers are accused of physical, not verbal, harassment, and more than half of cases – 53% -- involve alleged serial harassers.  
  (A Systematic Look at a Serial Problem: Sexual Harassment of Students by University Faculty, May 2017)

• 41% of UK students report experiencing sexual misconduct by university staff; 12% specified inappropriate touching  
  (National Union of Students Survey, November 2017)
Most Training is Ineffective

• At best, teaches basic definitions and reporting mechanisms
• But reinforces gender stereotypes, potentially making things worse
• Ineffective at preventing sexual harassment in the first place

The solution? “A culture in which women are treated as equals and employees treat one another with respect”
"You cannot easily fit women into a structure that is already coded as male; you have to change the structure…. We have to be more reflective about what power is, what it is for, and how it is measured. To put it another way, if women are not perceived to be fully within the structures of power, surely it is power that we need to redefine rather than women?"
Our Panel

**Femi Otitoju**
*Training Director, Challenge Consultancy Ltd*

**Karen Phillips**
*SVP, Global Learning Resources & UK Editorial, SAGE Publishing*

**Afroditi Pina**
*Senior Lecturer in Forensic Psychology, University of Kent*

**Eric Merkel-Sobotta**
*Vice President, Communications & External Affairs, De Gruyter*
What is sexual harassment?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Inventory of sexual harassment:</th>
<th>Types of sexual harassment:</th>
<th>Status of perpetrator:</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Verbal comments (on clothing, looks, etc.)</td>
<td>• Quid pro quo harassment</td>
<td>• Superiors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Verbal requests (e.g. for dates)</td>
<td>• Hostile environment harassment</td>
<td>• Co-workers</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Non-verbal displays (e.g. staring, whistling)</td>
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<td>• Subordinates</td>
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What underlies sexual harassment?

• Organisational climate:
  • Risk perceived in complaining
  • Availability of sanctions for harassers

• Job-gender context:
  • In traditionally masculine occupations:
    • Women seen as deviating from traditional gender norms
  • In female-dominated occupations:
    • Usually comes from supervisors and of the quid-pro-quo nature

• Power:
  • Those with high organisational power make demands of those with less
  • Most frequent type is peer-to-peer where power differences are not easily visible
What impact does it have?

• **Work-related:**
  • Turnover, job dissatisfaction and absenteeism

• **Health related:**
  • Stress-related psychosomatic symptoms that persevere over time
  • Headaches, migraines, muscle pains
  • Nausea and gastrointestinal disorders
  • Heart palpitations
  • Sleep disruptions/disorders

• **Psychological (acute and chronic):**
  • Depression, negative affect
  • Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)
  • Co-victimisation has profound impact on both psychological well-being as well as job satisfaction
What are victims’ responses?

- Varied, personal and complex
- Official reporting and taking legal action remains very low
- Four types:
  - Formal reports
  - Informal complaints
  - Social support strategies
  - Attempts to communicate with the harasser

Figure 6.21: To whom women talked or reported the most serious incident of sexual harassment since the age of 15 (%)

Notes: a Out of all women who have indicated at least one serious incident (n = 17,335).
  b Respondents were able to give more than one answer, so categories may total to more than 100%.
  Source: FRA gender-based violence against women survey dataset, 2012
How do victims cope?

Core coping strategies:
- Advocacy seeking (formal complaint, grievances)
- Social support
- Avoidance
- Denial
- Confrontation/negotiation

Three main profile clusters:
- Avoidant negotiators
- Support Seekers
- Detached Women
How do victims cope?

Links with perceptions and emotions:

- Confrontation/negotiation linked with anger
- Avoidance linked with experiencing fear
- More likely to seek confrontation when harassed by peers than supervisors
- More likely to seek social support and avoidance when harassed by supervisors
The #metoo era in academic publishing: Tackling harassment and the roots of gender bias

- Prevention, tackling and healing
- With Femi Otitoju of Challenge Consultancy
No organisation is immune
Creating the right working culture

Language
  • Dignity at work rather than bullying and harassment

The right messages from the right people
  • Policies and other initiatives introduced by leadership

Structure
  • Clear, accessible processes for reporting, investigation and resolution

Communication Channels
  • Advisors and supporters trained across all levels and departments

Frequency
  • Annual update and reissue of policy
Positive interventions

Early intervention
Affirmative responses
Support and empowerment
Nominated investigator/owner of the complaint
Clear behavioural guidance
Timely process

Aim to preserve dignity, trust, morale and fairness
Closure and learning

Recipient
- Recognition
- Blame free
- Space to talk and support
- Choice and control
- Practical changes

Respondent
- Recognition
- Responsibility
- Space to talk and support
- Respectful treatment
- Practical changes
Ten take aways

1. Clear statement position
2. Supporting policy and procedure
3. Inclusion in handbook and induction
4. Training for all existing staff
5. Specific briefings for leaders
6. Clarify individuals understanding
7. Evidence communication of policy - get staff to sign it
8. Set up support and reporting mechanisms
9. Monitoring of reporting and outcomes
10. Regular review of policy