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## Perceptions of Teachers about Effects of Sexual Harassment on Academic Performance of Students with Hearing Impairment

Muhammad Javed Aftab	Lecturer/ Coordinator, Department of Special Education (DOE), University of Education, Faisalabad Campus, Punjab, Pakistan. Email: <a href="mailto:drmjavedaftab@gmail.com">drmjavedaftab@gmail.com</a>
Sayyeda Rabia Basri	Lecturer, Department of Special Education, University of Education, Lahore, Lower Mall Campus, Punjab, Pakistan.
Muhammad Qasim	M.Phil. Education Scholar, Department of Education, Institute of Southern Punjab, Multan, Punjab, Pakistan.

**Abstract:** *When it comes to sexual harassment, it is defined as any sort of sexual harassment or manipulation and the unwelcome or improper offering of monetary remuneration in return for sexual favors. The impacts of sexual harassment on the students' academic performance with hearing impairment were explored in this study, which looked at teachers' impressions of the consequences. Specifically, the purpose of this study is to investigate special education teachers' impressions of the incidence of sexual harassment and the consequences of such harassment on the performance of students with hearing impairment. The data for this study was gathered through the use of a questionnaire. Several types of statistics were employed to address the study questions, including descriptive and inferential statistics. According to the findings of the data analysis, sexual harassment is a frequent practice in special academic institutions for children with hearing impairments, and sexual harassment has a negative impact on the academic performance of students with hearing impairments.*

**Key Words:** Sexual Harassment, Academic Performance, Hearing Impairment

### Introduction

Sexting is a form of sexual harassment, which includes unwanted or improper sexual favors in exchange for monetary payment. Discrimination on the basis of gender is unethical and unjustifiable. Harassment of women is more common than it is of men. In recent years, sexual assault has taken on a different level. It is a pity to read and hear about their parents, siblings, and extended relatives sexually assault children. What used to be taboo culturally is what is now in vogue. Although sexual harassment is not only male to female, a male may sexually harass another male, and a female harassing a male or another female, that of the male harassing a female is very common and affects the education of the girls. This barbaric attitude affects the girls psychologically, physically, and socially ([Pasamonik, 2019](#)).

There is a widespread problem of sexual harassment in educational institutions. A survey involving 16,754 students from all eight colleges asked about their experiences as victims of sexual harassment by professors or fellow students while in college. One in every five university students and one in every five students in other settings have reported sexual harassment by academics or employers. The number of persons subjected to harassment by the organisation has progressively increased over the years. Women, people of color, people of any sexual orientation, and people of any gender or sexual orientation were more likely to be targeted than some other university students. Female instructors and employees are 86 percent more likely than teachers and employees to be sexually harassed, respectively, according to two studies. Latinx

students and others have reported fewer victims, while those who have reported sexual harassment have been subjected to a greater amount of abuse (Wood et al., 2021).

In Pakistan, there is a significant gap, and publications are not available since no significant study is done on this issue due to its sensitivity. So, there is a need to conduct the study and seek views of teachers about the harassment of children with disabilities and the impact of harassment on their studies. Since Punjab has 70 percent of HI students in special education, the target study population is these children to evaluate the true image of this scenario.

### Statement of the Problem

Hearing-impaired students are the largest part of the enrolled student population in special education schools in Pakistan. Incidents of sexual victimization against the students are being reported frequently in general education schools and special education schools. Studies noted that any form of sexual victimization or harassment affects the victim in different areas of life including academic performance. Teachers are among the first individuals to see whether or not their kids are performing well academically. The influence of sexual harassment on student' academic achievement was investigated in this study, which looked at instructors' perspectives on the subject.

### Research Objectives

The purpose of this study was to accomplish the following objectives:

To study the special education teacher's perceptions about the occurrence of sexual harassment in institutes of Special educations

To explore the impact of sexual harassment on children with hearing impairments in their classroom achievements.

### Questions of the Study

The present study was aimed to answer the following questions.

How do teachers of hearing-impaired students think about the occurrence of sexual harassment in the school?

What effects does sexual harassment have on students with hearing impairment academic performance?

### Literature Review

Sexual harassment continues to impair the academic experiences of millions of children in middle and secondary schools. Sexually assaulted students who participated in the AAUW survey said they had problems learning and didn't want to go to school, and had a sick body. Any schoolchildren remained at home. Sexual violence caused some to miss classes, drop out, or even switch campuses. Girls were particularly adverse since the sexual assault was higher than that of boys, including most physical aspects of sexual harassment ([Lonsway, Paynich & Hall, 2013](#)).

[McMaster, Connolly, Pepler, & Craig \(2021\)](#) explained that sexual abuse cases involving students at universities, colleges, and schools are widely published in publications, social media websites, television, and the internet. Sexual abuse of students in educational institutions is seen as a serious human rights problem that deprives students of their basic right to an education. When sexual harassment is not treated in classrooms, the victim is stigmatized. Criminals that walk free establish a system of crime, aggression, and intimidation in society. The following is how the Office for Civil Rights of the U.S. Department of Education defines sexual harassment: (OCR, 2001).

Sexual harassment is unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature, which can include unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or other verbal, nonverbal, or physical conduct of a sexual nature. Thus, sexual harassment prohibited by Title IX can include conduct such as touching of a sexual nature; making sexual comments, jokes, or gestures; writing graffiti or displaying or distributing sexually explicit drawings, pictures, or written materials; calling students sexually charged names; spreading sexual rumors; rating students on sexual activity or performance; or circulating, showing, or creating e-mails or Web sites of a sexual nature."

Specifically, sexual harassment is defined in Section 2(h) of the Pakistani Harassment Act as "an improper sexual approach, a request for a sexual

favor, and any other written and verbal contact or physical activity that is derogatory to a sexual nature." The phrase "sexual harassment," which was first used in the workplace, may now be used to characterize unwanted sexual behavior on campuses ([MacKinnon, 1979](#)). According to [Hill and Kearl \(2011\)](#), "sexual abuse" in the perspective of the school environment refers to any inappropriate sexual activity that disrupts a student's academic achievement. At school, sexual harassment might take the form of verbal or verbal comments, gestures, images or films, or physical intimidation. Text messaging or social media can help with this form of communication both in-person and electronically. While school employees might bully kids, friend harassment is perhaps the most prevalent kind of sexual harassment in high schools. As a result, students engage in sexual misbehavior with their classmates are more likely to be subjected to the same behavior in response ([Fineran & Bolen, 2006](#)).

Sexual harassment has a variety of impacts on students' academic performance, including difficulty sleeping, lack of appetite, reduced class attendance, skipping a group study, considering changing classes, changing institutions, avoid libraries, changing majors, not attend teachers or office teacher's hours. Students could be exposed to several outcomes or merely one. Given the variety of student perspectives, the number of students who have only one conclusion is lowered. According to a 2006 study conducted by the American Association of University Women, 16% of women who had been sexually assaulted reported difficulties concentrating or paying attention in class. Because of harassment, 9% of kids have left out or skipped school. 27 % of female college students avoid certain buildings or districts on campus due to the high incidence of sexual harassment on their university ([Omotoshio, 2015](#)).

[Kearney & Gilbert \(2012\)](#) explained that harassment escalates, causing students to lose focus in class. Because of safety concerns, financial restrictions, social and cultural challenges, demand for early marriage, sexual abuse, and violence in and out of educational settings, many girls are now unable to attend school and complete their education due to sexual harassment. There is often a lot of confusion

when it comes to racial groups and sexual harassment evidence. Non-Latinx white women are more likely to be harassed than other groups, according to one study but statistics show that harassment is on the rise among women of color, particularly in Black and mixed-race communities ([Yoon et al., 2010](#)).

Compared to other social work students, [Moylan and Wood \(2016\)](#) found that they experienced higher levels of harassment. Students of color are not permitted to deal with harassment in a variety of ways. Racism and post-traumatic stress disorder are likely factors in cases of sexual harassment of Black students ([Woods, Buchanan, & Settles, 2009](#)). Students of color have access to a variety of programs, including assistance with challenges such as prejudice and language difficulties ([Angelone, Mitchell, & Hirschman, 2006](#)). The intersectional theory, developed by [Crenshaw \(1991\)](#), [Lockhart and Mitchell \(1992\)](#), and others, are used to understand how individuals (including those subjected to violence and oppression) interact and have identities at the same time, such as cultural, sexual orientation race, gender, sex, age, and culture, as well as environmental factors (2010). According to [Else-Ouest and Hyde \(1998\)](#), intersectional science is concerned with how people are influenced by and respond to their social environment, particularly problems of power and inequality (2016).

Among female high school students, these findings were compared to the impact of harassment and discrimination on six different health outcomes. More female high school students than male high school students have been sexually harassed, but the health consequences have been less severe for female high school students. Improved support networks and coping strategies for females in high schools might be the result of differences in results or hard shifts in development throughout middle school. There were significant links to sexual orientation, race, and disability, as well as health consequences in connection to bullies and sexual harassment ([Gruber & Fineran, 2007](#)).

According to the AAUW Study (2001), 83 percent of women and 79 percent of men were abused at the school by a current or past student. According to the findings of a recent study, gender inequalities are more substantial than previously

imagined. Women, particularly young women, are frequently abused, and this is especially true in today's society ([Hill & Kearn, 2011](#); [McMaster, Connolly, Pepler, & Craig, 2002](#); [Trigg & Wittenstrom, 1996](#)). Only homosexual males were shown to be more likely than heterosexual men to engage in sexually harassing conduct toward other guys (AAUW, 2001 & Wittenstrom, 1996).

Bullying is a sexual act: when adolescent females bully, their actions are mostly targeted at other youngsters ([Espelage & Holt, 2001](#)). In a similar vein, girls mistreat other girls while ignoring the needs of children ([Basile, Espelage, Rivers, McMahan, & Simon, 2009](#)). Bullying is one of the variables of socialisation and development that must be considered. Such tendencies may be seen in the cases of international students ([Peskin, Tortolero, & Markham, 2006](#)). When high school kids arrive, the incidence of sexual harassment increases because gender norms and sexuality are more frequently considered when judging conduct ([Pelligrini, 2001](#)). Espelage and Basile and Hamburger were provided with documentary evidence of what they referred to as abusive sexual assault (2011). In particular, sexual harassment was predicted three years later early in high school, like bullying. A survey of females also revealed an increase in sexual harassment between secondary and intermediate schools. Sexual harassment entails more sexual conduct in contrast to bullying, with females as their major goals ([Gruber & Fineran, 2007](#)).

Sexual harassment is linked to numerous bad results, including depression, PTSD, decreased mental health, insulatedness and powerlessness, internalized guilt, troubled eating, troubled alcohol use, nausea, and insomnia ([Street et al., 2007](#)). Students who are subjected to bullying or other forms of harassment often suffer academically, with lower levels of satisfaction, a negative impression of the teacher, less effort, and lower grades as a result ([Rosenthal et al., 2016](#)). The post-harassment tactics also affect the cultural, sexual, racial, and ethnic milieu ([Hill & Silva, 2005](#)). When asked whether they avoided harassment, 48 percent of women responded "no," but 27 percent said they avoided particular buildings, and 9 percent claimed they floated or dropped out of sight, while 26 percent of males, 11 percent of men, and 4% of women stated the same thing ([Hill & Silva, 2005](#)). Students may

choose to further disrupt the educational experience by taking measures to safeguard themselves, such as dropping out, changing advisors, changing majors, skipping classes, and dropping out altogether ([Huerta et al., 2006](#)).

Keeping in view the situation of educational institutions across the country and the increasing number of sexual victimization reports, the same phenomena cannot be overlooked in special education institutions. Living with a disability makes a student more vulnerable to assault and different forms of harassment. Hearing impairment limits the communication abilities of a student, which also adds to the natural threat. The above-stated facts and findings provide enough basis for the issue to be explored for the hearing-impaired students.

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## Research Methodology

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### Research Design

This study was quantitative. The type of study was descriptive. The data were obtained using a survey questionnaire that was created using a survey technique.

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### Population & Sample

The population of the study was the special education teachers from Punjab who teach children with hearing impairment. The study's sample was chosen using a simple random sampling procedure. The sample of the present study was comprised of 100 special education school teachers who have experience teaching children with hearing impairment in special education schools of Punjab.

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### Instrumentation

For the purpose of learning more about how instructors think sexual abuse of children with deaf and hard of hearing impacts their students' grades, we created a survey questionnaire. There were two components to the survey questionnaire. The first half was about demographic questions, whereas the second section dealt with the effects of sexual harassment on students with hearing impairment's academic performance. Experts have evaluated the proposed survey questionnaire.

### Data Collection and Analysis

Given the pandemic COVID-19, data have been collected online using Google forms. A Google form was developed for the survey questionnaire and a link was sent to instructors of hearing-impaired children. Through the SPSS program, data obtained are tabulated and evaluated. The results were obtained

via descriptive and inferential statistics. Data on analyze the characteristics and questions is presented using frequencies and percentages; the differences in teacher opinions on the basis of various demographic variables are shown using independent sample t-tests and one-way ANOVA. Based on the findings, judgments and suggestions were drawn.

### Sample Description based on Demographics

Table 1

S. No	Respondents	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Gender			
1	Male	25	25%
2	Female	75	75%
	Total	100	100%
Designation			
1	SET	35	35%
2	JSET	58	58%
3	Psychologist	3	3%
4	Other	4	4%
	Total	100	100%
Area			
1	Rural	30	30%
2	Urban	70	70%
	Total	100	100%
School / Centre			
1	School	47	47%
2	Centre	53	53%
	Total	100	100%
Experience			
1	1-5 Years	70	70%
2	6-10 Years	12	12%
3	11-15 Years	15	15%
4	Greater	3	3%

Table 2.

S. No	Statements of Questions	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	M	SD
Impacts of Sexual Harassment at Student with Hearing Impairment						
1	Sexual harassment is common practice in special education institutions	85(85%)	7(7%)	8(8%)	4.15	0.94
2	Sexual harassment is Often perceived in children with hearing impairment	89(89%)	4(4%)	7(7%)	4.23	0.86
3	Sexual harassment has a great psychological impact on children with hearing impairment	97(97%)	3(3%)	0(0%)	4.46	0.56
4	Sexual harassment cause trouble in sleeping the children with hearing impairment	89(89%)	9(9%)	2(2%)	4.34	0.77

S. No	Statements of Questions	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	M	SD
5	Sexual harassment causes the loss of appetite to students with hearing impairment	87(87%)	11(11%)	2(2%)	4.24	0.73
6	Sexual harassment decreases the Hearing-impaired students are allowed to participate	87(87%)	10(10%)	3(3%)	4.24	0.75
7	Children with hearing impairment avoid group participation in the class due to sexual harassment	88(88%)	9(9%)	3(3%)	4.23	0.74
8	Due to sexual harassment, the student with hearing impairment thinks about changing the school	85(85%)	13(13%)	2(2%)	4.24	0.75
9	Students avoid the teacher's assistance regarding any difficulty in the studies	84(84%)	8(8%)	8(8%)	4.04	0.93
10	Sexual harassment causes social loneliness to the students with hearing impairments	92(92%)	7(7%)	1(1%)	4.34	0.65
11	Sexual harassment could cause aggression in the children with hearing impairment	93(93%)	6(6%)	1(1%)	4.35	0.64
12	Sexual harassment could create insecurity in students with Hearing Impairment	89(89%)	10(10%)	1(1%)	4.24	0.67
13	Sexual Harassment could cause anxiety in children with Hearing Impairment	92(92%)	8(8%)	0(0%)	4.21	0.57
14	Sexual Harassment could develop fear in children with Hearing Impairment	96(96%)	4(4%)	0(0%)	4.29	0.54
15	Sexual Harassment could cause depression in children with Hearing Impairment	93(93%)	6(6%)	1(1%)	4.33	0.64
16	Sexual Harassment could confuse the personality of children with Hearing Impairment	89(89%)	11(11%)	0(0%)	4.19	0.61
17	Factors which affect Student's academic performance caused by Sexual Harassment Sexual harassment affects students' performance	97(97%)	1(1%)	2(2%)	4.49	0.63
18	The trouble in sleeping affects the academic performance of the children with hearing impairment	92(92%)	7(7%)	1(1%)	4.35	0.66
19	The loss of appetite affects the academic performance of children with hearing impairment	91(91%)	6(6%)	3(3%)	4.25	0.7
20	Decreases the participation in class effects badly the academic performance of the children with hearing impairment	93(93%)	5(5%)	2(2%)	4.29	0.66
21	Less participation in the class groups affects gravely the academic performance of the children with hearing impairment	91(91%)	7(7%)	2(2%)	4.31	0.69
22	Change of school could reduce the academic performance of the children with hearing impairment	87(87%)	4(4%)	9(9%)	4.11	0.85

S. No	Statements of Questions	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	M	SD
23	Lack of teacher's assistance affects the academic performance of the children with hearing impairment	94(94%)	5(5%)	1(1%)	4.45	0.64
24	Social loneliness affects the academic performance of children with hearing impairment	91(91%)	8(8%)	1(1%)	4.25	0.64
25	Aggressive behavior affects the academic performance of children with hearing impairment	94(94%)	2(2%)	4(4%)	4.27	0.69
26	Insecurity could reduce the academic performance of students with hearing impairment	89(89%)	7(7%)	4(4%)	4.17	0.73
27	Anxiety might influence children with hearing impairment's academic performance	95(95%)	4(4%)	1(1%)	4.34	0.61
28	Fear might influence children with hearing impairment's academic performance	95(95%)	3(3%)	2(2%)	4.3	0.63
29	Depression can influence children with hearing impairment's academic performance	92(92%)	7(7%)	1(1%)	4.29	0.64
30	A confused personality could affect the academic performance of children with Hearing Impairment	93(93%)	6(6%)	1(1%)	4.28	0.67

According to the findings, the majority of respondents agreed with all of the questions' rights. According to the majority of respondents, sexual harassment is a regular occurrence in special

education settings, and it has a negative impact on the academic progress of children with hearing impairment.

### Table Description on the base of gender

**Table 3.** Comparison of Means of Responses at the Basis of Gender (Independent Sample t-test)

Gender	N	M	SD	df	t	Sig.
Male	25	127.64	10.88	98	-.359	.769
Female	75	128.48	9.88			

\* $P > .05$  Level of Significance

The table indicates that the mean score of the male participants was 127.64 (std dev= 10.88), whereas the mean score of female participants was 128.48 (std dev = 9.88). independent sample t-test proved that this

0.84 difference is significant difference ( $t(100) = -.359, P > .05 = .854$ ), that there is no substantial difference of opinion between male and female respondents.

**Table 4.** Comparison of Means of Responses at the Basis of Place of Posting (Independent Sample t-test)

School or Centre	M	SD	df	t	Sig.	N
School	47	129.40	10.01	98	1.059	.896
Centre	53	127.26	10.15			

\* $P > .05$  Level of Significance

The table indicates that the mean score of the teachers belonging to the school institutes was

129.40 (std dev= 10.01), whereas the mean score of the teachers belonging to the center institutes was

127.23 (std dev = 10.15). This 2.14 difference is substantial ( $t(100) = 1.059, P > .05 = .896$ ), corroborated by an independent t-test sample, which

revealed that the statistically evident discrepancy between the school participants and the school instructors' participants contradicts this assertion.

**Table 5.** Comparison of Means of Responses at the Basis of Area (Independent Sample t-test)

Area	N	M	SD	df	T	Sig
Rural	30	128.93	10.25	98	.429	.854
Urban	70	127.98	10.08			

*\*P > .05 Level of Significance*

The table indicates that the mean score of the teachers belonging to the rural areas was 128.93 (std dev= 10.25), whereas the mean score of the teachers belonging to the urban living areas was 127.98 (std

dev = 10.08). According to the presumptions, the independent T-test indicated a significant difference between rural and urban people ( $t(100) = 0.429, P > 0.05 = .0854$ ).

**Table 6.** Comparison of Means of Responses at the Basis of Designation (One-way ANOVA)

Designation	Sum of squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	29.764	37	.804	.991	.503
Within Groups	50.346	62	.812		
Total	80.110	99			

*\*P > .05 Level of Significance*

Based on their designations, the one direction ANOVA test indicates that there is no significant gap ( $0.503 > 0.05$ ) in teachers' opinions regarding the

effects of Sexual Harassment on the Academic Performance of Students with Hearing Impaired.

**Table 7.** Comparison of Means of Responses at the Basis of Experience (One-way ANOVA)

Experience	Sum of squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	21.553	37	.583	.702	.875
Within Groups	51.437	62	.830		
Total	72.990	99			

*\*P > .05 Level of Significance*

A one-way ANOVA test demonstrates that instructors' perspectives on the impact of sexual harassment on academic performance among students with hearing impaired are not significantly different ( $0.875 > 0.05$ ).

### **Finding and Conclusions**

Researchers found that the majority of participants were women who worked in metropolitan locations and had 1–5 years of professional experience. Respondents' attitudes did not differ based on gender, title or experience. In conclusion, Sexual harassment of children with hearing impairment is a prevalent occurrence in special education systems,

and it has significant social consequences that negatively affect the student's academic performance. Sexual abuse of students with hearing impairment can result in psychological effects such as insomnia, lack of appetite, decreased interest in class, avoidance of group participation, avoidance of instructor assistance, social isolation, insecurity, anger, anxiety, paranoia, depression, and uncertainty, all of which can have a negative influence on their studies.

### **Discussion**

In the debate of the study, it was found that sexual harassment is a prevalent practice that students in special education institutions confront, either from



instructors or their classmates, or from other members of the school staff, which detracts them from their studies and creates stress. Sexual harassment has a great psychological impact on children with hearing impairment and as a result, with studies loss, there is also a bad impact on their health psychologically. Government should take strict measures so that this kind of activity should be avoided and children feel easy to come to school for the purpose to get an education. Female students are more likely to be harassed by both their peers and teachers. [Hill and Silva \(2005\)](#) and [Silverschanz et al. \(2005\)](#) are examples of this (2007). Individuals who are harassed by heterosexuals are much more likely to be suffering from despair, anxiety, alcoholism, and poor physical health than the general population, according to research ([Woodford, Kulick, & Atteberry, 2015](#)). Clearly, more research on sexual harassment is required, and this work adds to filling the vacuum in the literature by demonstrating that further research is required. Longitude and qualitative approaches must be incorporated in research to improve our understanding of the impact of sexual harassment on students and the possible protective characteristics they may possess.

## **Recommendations**

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Government should take strict measures so that this kind of activity should be avoided and children feel easy to come to school for the purpose to get an education. Responsible persons have to perform their duty honestly and supportive legislation is much needed. School buildings should arrange some preventive measures to avoid sexual Harassment. The head of the institute should keep an active eye on the activities of staff and children. For this purpose, the cameras should be installed at different places in the school building. Teachers' training and student awareness are some of the best options to keep things on the right track. If complaints of this sort are received there should be stern and swift action to avoid these types of occurrences and to never try to mask these problems. Recommendation for future research is to increase the size of the sample for better and more authentic results and as for a collection of data is concerned, the researcher should arrange interviews (qualitative research) to gather correct and accurate data.

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