Sexual Harassment Experiences of Female Prisoners in Jail

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The present study was carried out to investigate the experiences of sexual harassment among female prisoners in jail. 100 female prisoners from central jails of Gujrat and Gujranwala district (Gujrat = 35, Gujranwala = 65) participated in the study. The data were collected by using purposive sampling. Sexual Harassment Experiences Questionnaire (Kamal & Tariq, 1997) was used to measure study variable. Data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. Mean, standard deviation (M = 151.2, SD = 12.28) and graphical representation of data were made in descriptive statistics. In inferential statistics, Shapiro-Wilk's test was used which indicated normal distribution of data (p = .76). Further, two-step cluster analysis was applied to identify level of sexual harassment among female prisoners. Results of cluster analysis categorized data into three levels high, medium and low. The study established that 80% of respondents scored on medium level of Unwanted Sexual Attention and 9% of respondents scored on high level of Gender Harassment, whereas, 11% of respondents scored on low level of Sexual Coercion. Overall, results of study depicted that there was medium level of sexual harassment among female prisoners. Results of this study would be useful for policy makers and higher administration of the Jail department in order to improve jail environment by preventing sexual harassment.

Keywords: sexual harassment, gender harassment, unwanted sexual attention, sexual coercion

Sexual harassment in the workplaces, newsroom, and movie houses, has blasted in the media awareness in 2017, though it is not

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uncommon. Scholars have long studied harassment experiences, their frequency and related coping strategies in varied samples, however, only few investigations exist on how sexual harassment experiences occur within the Jails affecting the inmates (Coaston, 2017). Physical, social, and emotional security is a strong requirement of prisoners, but is frequently compromised in such environments. Hence, it is very crucial to study different problems faced by people inside the prison (Bennett, Butler, Donovan, Levy, & Kaldor, as cited in Kreamer, Gately, & Kessell, 2009). The alteration in the rules and services of prison group has pointed out the inadequacies in approximately all prison setup in meeting the gender-specific requirements of female prisoners. Due to the increasing rate of the women prisoner population worldwide, it is very important to identify inadequacies related to jail management faced by women prisoners and ways to tackle these complications (Müller et al., 2006).

International Labor Organization (McCann, 2005a) defined sexual harassment as unwanted and unlawful sexual and erotic conducts and vocal or bodily deportment of sexual nature that unjustly impacts and interrupts work performance of an employee or generating an overwhelming, aggressive, offensive or invasive working atmosphere (Chung et al., 2008). Sexual harassment of female prisoners and girls is a severe destruction of human rights, values, and norms. Sexual misconduct is more commonly experienced by women than men. Administration of different countries has taken several steps in order to solve issue of viciousness against females. A crucial component of such initiative is a comprehensive investigation and identification of females 'experience of harassment and its effect on their psychological well-being (Müller et al., 2006). This study is considered very important as it has addressed and pointed out a big problem of sexual harassment of female prisoners in Pakistani culture that is often denied and repressed. Besdies, only few studies are conducted in jail setting that represent a serious research gap. It is worthwhile to determine the extent of sexual harassment and its relationship with various demographic variables among female prisoners, in order to convey new knowledge and statistical data on the degree of problem, which is helpful for policy makers.

Researchers have identified various types of harassment behaviors mostly faced by females during prison. Some of them are the most blatant conducts strictly forbidden by the law including rape and sexual beating. Sexual harassment can be classified into physical, verbal, and non-verbal behavior (Coaston, 2017). *Physical* form of sexual harassment includes diverse type of sexual advances as physical violence, bodily contact (touching, pinching, stroking,

squeezing, etc.) and the use of job-related threats or rewards to ask for sexual favor (Awan & Sitwat, 2014). *Verbal* sexual harassment involves comments on an employee's appearance, age, sex life, etc. Sexual remarks, stories and jokes, sexual progresses, frequent social invitations, insults based on the sex of the employee and authoritarian remarks (Awan & Sitwat, 2014). Whereas, the *non-verbal* form of sexual harassment comprises written expression and body language involving sexual interpretation. For example, display of sexually overt or expressive material, sexually-expressive movements, hooting, visual conducts (McCann, 2005b).

Sexual harassment among female prisoners were studies in different researches within the Pakistani culture as well as in different other communities. In 2016, a study was conducted on sexual harassment of female in the United States, which established that everywhere from 25% to 85% of females faced severe form of sexual harassment. Statistics of sexual harassment showed that every fourth women has been badly affected by sexual harassment (Golshan, 2017). A US government organization (Golshan, 2017) accountable for the sexual harassment complaints stated that approximately one-third of the 90,000 protests against sexual harassment were received in 2015. It was evaluated that 75% of all sexual harassment happenings go unreported. According to Coaston (2017), sexual harassment is mostly underreported. Study showed that up to 75% of females experienced sexual harassment, only 29% reported. Leah (2017) 86% of females in jail expressed that they had been sexually harassed by administrations of Jails.

Ali and Shah (2011) reported that in Pakistan, laws which are primarily established for the protection of prisoners were not being implemented properly. Most of female prisoners are uneducated and unaware about their official and human rights. Result of their study has shown that most of the females in Jails are facing dreadful and shocking condition. Their findings showed that 95% female prisoners reported of being sexually harassed and were facing mental health issues. Zandonda (2010) worked on effects and prevalence of sexual harassment on working females. A sample of 160 female employees was taken from Nodla and Zambia's private and public workplaces. Data were collected by using a semi-structured questionnaire. Their findings revealed that 69% females were claiming sexual harassment related serious issue and 75% employees were reported of having no organizational policy to stop sexual harassment behaviors. Results indicated a clinically significant level of stress and depression among victims of sexual harassment. They have low level of motivation and poor psychological wellbeing.

Keeping the previous findings in mind, the present research aimed to investigate experiences of sexual harassment in female prisoners.

Method

Sample

There were total 100 female prisoners in Gujrat and Gujranwala Central Jails of Pakistan (35 = Gujrat, 65 = Gujranwala). By using purposive sampling all the female prisoners from both jails were included in the study.

Instrument

Sexual Harassment Experience Questionnaire.   Sexual harassment was measured by using Sexual Harassment Experiences Questionnaire (Kamal & Tariq, 1997). This is Urdu version questionnaire consists of 35 items that measures three different dimensions of sexual harassment experienced by women at workplaces in Pakistan. The scale has three subscales: Gender Harassment (item 1, 3, 5, 7, 10, 23, & 25), Unwanted Sexual Attention (item 2, 4, 6, 8, 9, 11, 13, 14, 15, 16, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 24, 29, 31, 33, 34, & 35) and Sexual Coercion (item 12, 17, 26, 27, 28, 30, & 32). It was a four-point Likert scale (*not at all* = 1, *one time* = 2*, sometime* = 3, & *often* = 4). Minimum scores were 35 that showed low level of sexual harassment and highest scores were 140 depicted high level of sexual harassment. Reliability of the scale as reported by authors was .94 (Kamal & Tariq, 1997).

Procedure

Considering the sensitivity of the research topic, formal permission was taken from concerned authorities and informed consent was taken from respondents. Confidentiality and privacy of data were assured to the respondents. Researcher briefed the participants about the purpose of research and each item was verbally explained to the prisoner respondents because it seemed difficult to them. Every individual was given the basic information of research and how to fill the questionnaire. All the respondents were free to express their opinion. After the data collection, data were analyzed using Statistical Packages for Social Sciences (SPSS-22).

Ethical Consideration

The participants were asked to sign consent form. It was informed to the participants that their participation is voluntary, and

they have the right to discontinue if they want. It was also assured that there were no harmful consequences to participate in this study and all the information would be used only for research purpose. Participants were thanked for their cooperation.

Results

Statistical Package for Social Sciences-Version 22 was used to analyze data. Normality of data was identified using Shapiro and Wilk's test. Values of Skewness and Kurtosis were in range and the results revealed that data was normally distributed.

Table 1
Psychometric Properties of Sexual Harassment Experienced Questionnaire (N = 100)

	α	*M*	*SD*
Sexual Harassment Experiences	.80	138.2	12.28
Gender Harassment	.63	16.7	3.9
Unwanted Sexual Attention	.77	33.1	7.5
Sexual Coercion	.75	23.2	8.06

Table 1 shows acceptable to satisfactory alpha coefficients for overall scale and its subscales.

Furthermore, two steps cluster analysis were applied to classify data into high, medium and low levels of sexual harassment.

Table 2 shows how many classification groups are suitable in data by calculating clustering standard for every possible digit of clusters. Lesser values of the Bayesian Information Criterion (BIC) demonstrate better models and in this way, the 'best' cluster solution has the least BIC. The smallest value of BIC is 233.62 on Cluster 3 and value of BIC alteration is -42.89. This value is from cluster 3, which displays that three clusters represent best classification of data. So, the deviations in BIC and variations in the distance measure has assessed to identify the best cluster solution. A best explanation will have a realistically big Ratio of BIC variations 1.000 and a high Ratio of Distance Measures 2.81. Here, the value of great Ratio of BIC Variations lies in the cluster 2 and the large Ratio of Distance Measures lies in the cluster 3, hence, it is clear that we choose three clusters for this data.

Table 2

Auto Clustering Table Showing Possible Number of Best Clusters (N = 100)

Number of Clusters	Schwarz's Bayesian Criterion (BIC)	BIC Change	Ratio of BIC Changes	Ratio of Distance Measures
1	370.88			
2	276.51	-94.37	1.00	1.64
3	233.62	-42.89	.45	2.81
4	242.14	8.52	-.09	1.27
5	256.71	14.56	-.15	1.75
6	280.85	24.14	-.25	2.06
7	311.53	30.68	-.32	1.00
8	342.26	30.73	-.32	1.10
9	373.57	31.31	-.33	1.60
10	406.96	33.39	-.35	1.16
11	440.86	33.89	-.35	1.26
12	475.368	34.50	-.36	1.15
13	510.194	34.82	-.36	1.07
14	545.154	34.95	-.37	1.01
15	580.136	34.982	-.37	1.14

Table 3

Results of Cases Distribution in Each Cluster (N = 100)

Cluster	N	% of Combined	% of Total
1	9	9.0	9.0
2	80	80.0	80.0
3	11	11.0	11.0
Combined	100	100.0	100.0
Total	100		100.0

Table 3 displays the total number of cases in every cluster. There are total 100 cases that are allocated into three clusters. There is a big difference among frequency of cases in each cluster. Nine cases are allocated to the first cluster, 80 cases to the second, and 11 cases assigned to the third cluster. Findings show that most of cases fall in cluster two.

Table 4

Showing Results of Centroids of Variables (N = 100)

| Variables | | Clusters | | | |
		1	2	3	Combined
Gender Harassment	M	2.92	2.59	1.59	2.51
	SD	0.34	0.43	0.27	0.53
Unwanted Sexual Attention	M	3.03	2.38	1.45	2.33
	SD	0.16	0.29	0.20	0.45
Sexual Coercion	M	3.63	2.80	1.76	2.76
	SD	0.36	0.53	0.63	0.67

Table 4 shows mean and standard deviation of each cluster's continuous variables. Findings show highest mean values of all variables in cluster one as compared to other clusters. This shows high level of sexual harassment in cluster one. Second highest mean values of all variables lie in cluster two which shows that there is moderate level of sexual harassment in second cluster. Whereas, low mean values of each variables in cluster three depicts low level of sexual harassment.

Table 5

Results of Cluster Frequency and Percentages (N = 100)

| | | Levels of Sexual Harassment | | | | | |
| | | Low | | Medium | | High | |
		f	%	F	%	f	%
Cluster	1	0	0	0	0	9	100
	2	0	0	80	100	0	0
	3	11	100	0	0	0	0
Combined		11	100	80	100	9	100

Table 5 shows the frequency and level of sexual harassment in each cluster classification of female prisoners. Frequency of cluster 1 express that 9 participants scored on high level of sexual harassment and frequency of cluster 2 displays that 80 participants scored on moderate level of sexual harassment. Whereas cluster 3 shows low level of sexual harassment where 9 scored on low level of sexual harassment.

So, on the basis of above results it is concluded that overall there were moderate level of sexual harassment among female prisoners in

jail as 80 participants counted for moderate level of sexual harassment on cluster 2. Figures of all respective clusters were automatically generated by two step cluster analysis are given below.
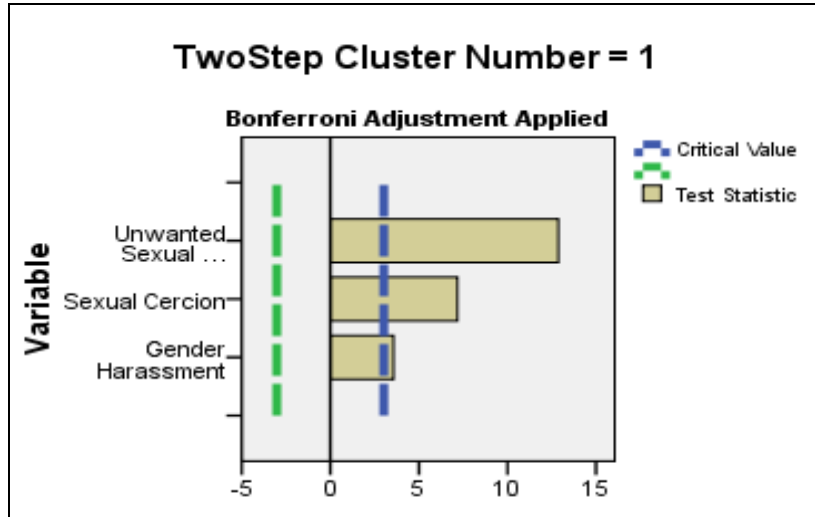

Figure 1. Graphical representation of Cluster-I.

Figure 1 for Cluster 1 displays that all subscales including Unwanted Sexual Attention, Sexual Coercion, and Gender Harassment take greater than average values. The maximum bar in cluster 1 is for Unwanted Sexual Attention that reinforce the creation of cluster 1 showing it the most significant factor of sexual harassment.
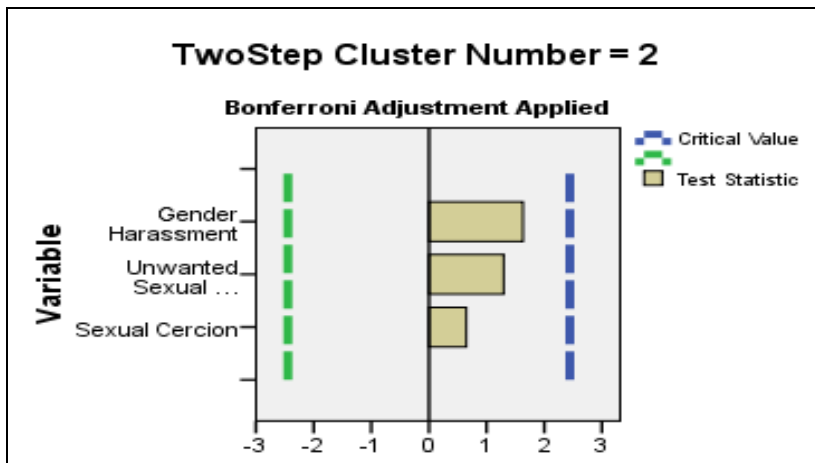

Figure 2. Graphical representation of Cluster-II.

Figure 2 for Cluster 2 shows that all factors including Gender Harassment, Unwanted Sexual Harassment, and Sexual Coercion take larger than average values.
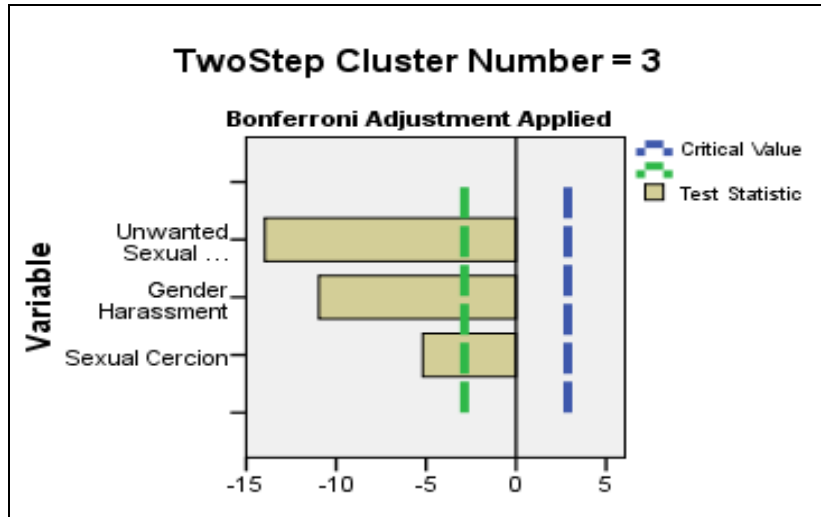

Figure 3. Graphical representation of Cluster-III.

In Figure 3, the chart for Cluster 3 indicates that the factor of Unwanted Sexual Attention is more substantial to the establishment of this cluster, and all of the other variables take lower than average values.
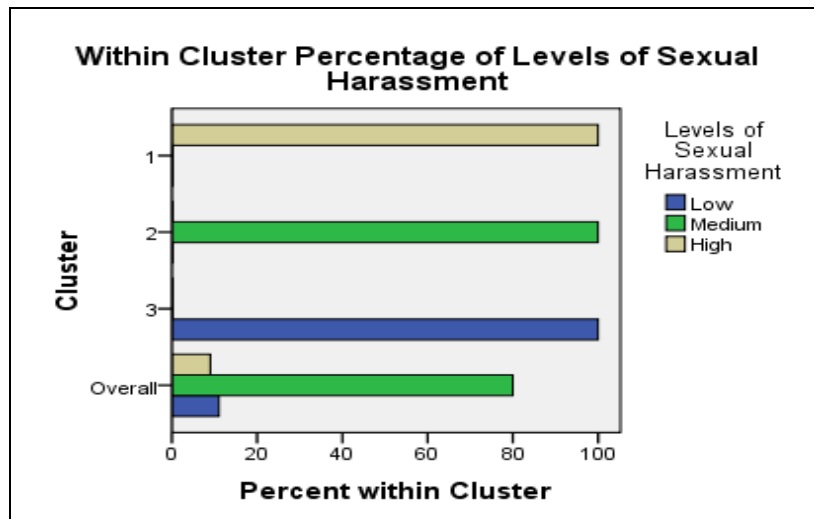

Figure 4. Graphical representation of overall levels of sexual harassment.

Figure 4 indicates graphical representation of sexual harassment among female prisoners in jail. Results described that 80 respondents scored on medium level of sexual harassment which represent an overall medium level of sexual harassment among female prisoners in jail.

Discussion

Main objective of the study was to find out the level of sexual harassment experienced by female prisoners in Jail. According to the suitability of data, cluster analysis was used to identify high, moderate, and low levels of sexual harassment among female prisoners. Results showed an overall moderate level of sexual harassment among female prisoners. These findings are consistent with previous findings. For example, Houle (2001) studied sexual harassment and its impact on female prisoners. It was identified that sexual harassment is an ill-informed problem at workplace that create worse environment. High level of sexual harassment negatively impacts mental health and overall wellbeing of female prisoners. It was also concluded that 75% females in jail reported sexual harassment related issues.

Johnson (1994) conducted a research on sexual harassment and its impact on female victims. Sexual harassment is repeatedly ignorant problem at workplace that create verse environment at workplaces. women are large in number than men who experience sexual harassment. Higher level of sexual harassment impacts badly on mental health and overall wellbeing of female victims. In this study it was concluded that all the 75% women who reported sexual harassment related sever issues.

Another study was conducted by Flagg (2017), identified sexual harassment is a horrible situation seriously effecting environment of jail and females tend to experience higher level of sexual harassment than male. Sexual harassment was studies among American inmates. Where it was identified that every year almost 200,000 imprisoned females are sexually mistreated. Current data also demonstrate similar findings and reveal that majority of female prisoners are sexually harassed by male staff members.

Limitations

The results of present study may be valid for the participants of district Gujrat and Gujranwala central jails. However, the present results cannot be generalized on the jails of other districts situated at

various geographical locations as situation may be quite different at other places. Also, due to the sensitivity of topic it was difficult to collect data on sexual harassment questionnaire. It was also difficult to approach female pensioners in jail to collect data on sexual harassment. Because management of jails does not allow to meet prisoners. It was hard to take permission from the administration of jails in order to conduct any type of research on female prisoners. This might have affected the reporting of the participants.

Suggestions and Implications

Based on above mentioned limitations, few suggestions and recommendations for future research are made. First, study on sexual harassment may be conducted on large and diverse type of sample to explore this phenomenon with more authenticity. Second, as police department is a male dominant workplace where sexual harassment related issues are not openly discussed. So, result of this study may be helpful for policy makers and administration of police department to stop this problem. Third, the finding of this study may be helpful for the higher authorities to design some prevention programs to create awareness among people. These programs would facilitate the peoples to tackles sexual harassment related insecurities. Forth, present study does provide an important step toward the prevention of sexual harassment related issues and to promote correctional services and overall wellbeing of female prisoners in jail.

Conclusion

In Pakistan, there is little knowledge about the females in Jail. Even it's very difficult to meet the female prisoners and to know the problems faced by them. This study is very crucial as it explore the experience of sexual harassment of female prisoners in jail where the existence of sexual harassment related issues are creating undesirable atmosphere and different type of problems, such as aggressive attitude, stress, anxiety, and other emotional problems due to pressure, threats and insecurity. Overall, the present study identified a medium level of sexual harassment on unwanted sexual attention in jail. This research stresses the need to develop policies for providing a secure and protective environment to female prisoners.

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