

# Case Study: Sexual Harassment and Management Behaviour at Work

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### Abstract

This case study looks at Nisha's experience as a qualified female professor in Malaysia who is subjected to improper conduct by her male supervisor. Nisha's excellent performance leads to focused harassment that makes her workplace uncomfortable and disparaging of her coworkers. The example emphasizes the interaction of power dynamics, gender prejudice, and the absence of institutional assistance. Nisha's final firing emphasizes the pressing necessity of strong regulations and preventative actions against workplace sexual harassment, hence guaranteeing a safe and fair environment for every worker. This scenario highlights more general problems of gender inequality and job harassment common in patriarchal countries such as Malaysia.

**Keywords:** Human Resource Management, Case Study, Employee Behaviour, Training, Morales

## 1. INTRODUCTION: SYNOPSIS OF CASE STUDY

In the case study, a competent female lecturer named Nisha experiences inappropriate behaviour from her male supervisor in an educational institution in Malaysia. Even though Nisha does a great job at her job, she feels uncomfortable because her boss is picking on her, which makes the workplace uncomfortable. By criticising Nisha's performance, co-workers make matters worse and create a negative impression of her inside the company. The story emphasises disparities in power, issues pertaining to gender, and a dearth of institutional support. Regrettably, the victim's termination because of the management's inability to adequately handle the harassment underscores the critical need for strong policies and preventative measures to stop workplace sexual harassment and guarantee a just and secure working environment. (Becton et al., 2016; Grossman, 2003; Ineson et al., 2013; Mueller et al., 2001; Pfeifer, 2012; Salters, 1999). Increased Representative Complaints almost work Environment: Workers, especially female staff, have been progressively communicating inconvenience and disappointment with the work environment, as shown by a rise in complaints and dialogs around the by and large environment. (Ineson et al., 2013). Deteriorating Group Flow and Collaboration: Group flow has seen a decrease, with colleagues getting to be isolated due to gender-related pressures. Collaborative endeavours have debilitated, affecting efficiency, and preventing the accomplishment of common objectives. (Sekine et al., 2014) It is highly likely that well-developed policy, regulations, explicit

directives across Human Resources and existing risk management systems contribute to this common understanding (Pavithra et al., 2022). Unequal Workload Distribution and Disparities in Execution Assessment: Female representatives, particularly the casualty, report incongruities in workload dissemination and execution assessments. This recommends potential predispositions in how duties are doled out and execution is assessed, affecting career development openings. (Lyness & Thompson, 1997). Unwarranted Investigation and Negative Communication Designs: Female representatives, particularly the casualty, encounter outlandish examination and negative communication from a male predominant. This incorporates unjustified fault-finding, pointless communications, and a common distress in proficient intuitive. (Paul et al., 2018)

Elevated Turnover Among Female Workers: There's a noticeable increment within the turnover rate among female representatives, especially those who have been exceptional entertainers. This may well be characteristic of a basic issue related to work environment culture or gender-based challenges. (Weisberg & Kirschenbaum, 1993)

## 2. PROBLEMS STATEMENTS

Inadequate Handling of Sexual Harassment Complaints

- Problem: The company's HR administration faces the challenge of insufficiently tending to and settling sexual harassment complaints, driving to a harmful work environment.
- Actionable: Set up a strong and private reporting component for sexual

harassment complaints, conduct regular preparing for HR faculty on proper investigation methods, and execute clear and reasonable results for culprits, guaranteeing a zero-tolerance approach to such behaviour.

#### Gender Bias and Unequal Treatment

- Problem: HR administration is managing with gender-related working environment flow coming about in unequal treatment, influencing the well-being and execution of female workers.
- Actionable: Execute gender affectability training for all employees, counting directors and HR staff, to cultivate a comprehensive and aware working environment. Conduct customary differences reviews to recognize and address any occurrences of bias in hiring, advancements, or day-to-day intuitive, and create mentorship programs to back the professional growth of female workers.(Haine et al., 2020)

#### Insufficient Diversity and Inclusion Initiatives

- Problem: HR administration is challenged by a need of differences and incorporation, especially in administration roles, which may contribute to a less comprehensive and innovative work environment.
- Actionable: Develop and execute comprehensive differences and consideration activities, counting focused on recruitment methodologies to pull in a different ability pool. Actualize mentorship programs, administration improvement openings, and differing qualities preparing to guarantee impartial representation at all organizational levels. Regularly survey and report on differing qualities measurements to

track advance and alter methodologies in like manner.

### 3. PROBLEM ANALYSIS

#### Inadequate Handling of Sexual Harassment Complaints

- The problem of inadequately handling sexual harassment complaints uncovers potential lawful and reputational risks. From a human assets' viewpoint, this may lead to expanded turnover, diminished assurance, and trouble pulling in beat ability due to a seen need of a secure and strong work environment. (Ineson et al., 2013)

#### Gender Bias and Unequal Treatment

- Gender-related working environment flow and unequal treatment demonstrate a disappointment in advancing differing qualities and incorporation. This may negatively affect worker engagement and collaboration, leading to ability whittling down and potential legal issues related to biased homes in human assets administration.

#### Insufficient Diversity and Inclusion Initiatives

- The lack of diversity and inclusion initiatives focuses to a human resources methodology lack. A diverse workforce has been demonstrated to upgrade inventiveness and problem-solving, and without it, the company may battle to adjust to showcase changes, improve, and support a competitive edge in ability securing.(Sakitri, 2015)

## 4. IDENTIFICATION OF ALTERNATIVES

### Inadequate Handling of Sexual Harassment Complaints

- **Cultural assessment:** Cultural assessment plays a crucial role in preventing sexual harassment in the workplace. An inadequate handling of sexual harassment complaints can be linked to cultural factors within an organisation by cultural stigma which means cultural stigmatise those who come forward with complaints, making victims reluctant to speak up. Assessing and addressing these cultural stigmas is crucial in creating an environment where victims feel supported rather than ignored. A comprehensive cultural assessment is essential to uncover and address the underlying factors that contribute to the inadequate handling of sexual harassment complaints. By understanding and transforming the organizational culture, companies can foster a safe and inclusive workplace for all employees.
- **Anonymous hotline or reporting platform:** Implement an anonymous hotline or reporting platform, allowing employees to share their experiences without fear of retaliation, thereby encouraging more individuals to come forward. In some cases, there may be a lack of follow-up mechanisms, make it difficult to ensure that reported incidents are properly investigated. Moreover, anonymity can lead to challenges in verifying the credibility of complaints, potentially hindering the resolution process.
- **Gender Bias and Unequal Treatment:** Ensure that recruitment and promotion processes are gender-neutral, focusing on skills, qualifications, and

achievements rather than gender-specific attributes. Their aim is to create a fair and exclusive work environment by minimizing gender bias and unequal treatment by using anonymous screening, which is implementing blind recruitment practices, where initial screening is done without revealing candidate's gender. Additionally, by clear evaluation criteria which is establish transparent and unbiased criteria for evaluating employees. This can help eliminate subjective judgements that may be influenced by gender-related stereotypes.

- **Flexible work arrangements:** Implement flexible work arrangements to accommodate diverse needs, supporting work-life balance for all employees, and minimizing gender-based disparities. Flexible work arrangements, coupled with supportive policies and a commitment to diversity and inclusion, can play a crucial role in mitigating gender bias, promoting equality and preventing sexual harassment in the workplace.

### 2. Insufficient Diversity and Inclusion Initiatives

- **Diversity training programs**  
Develop and implement training sessions that focus on diversity, inclusion, and respectful workplace behaviour. Diversity training programs can address insufficient diversity and inclusion initiatives by focusing on education, awareness, and fostering a culture of respect. Emphasizing the importance of diversity in the workplace can help prevent sexual harassment and improve management behaviour. Training should cover topics such as unconscious bias, cultural competence, and communication skills to promote understanding among employees. Additionally, creating

a safe environment for open dialogue can encourage employees to share their experiences and perspectives, fostering a more inclusive workplace. Regular assessments and adjustments to these programs are crucial to ensure ongoing effectiveness.

- Regular climate surveys

Regular climate surveys play a crucial role in addressing insufficient diversity and inclusion initiatives to prevent sexual harassment and improve management behaviour in the workplace. These surveys provide a structured mechanism to gather feedback from employees about their

experiences and perceptions by identifying Gaps. Climate surveys help identify gaps in diversity and inclusion efforts by collecting data on employees' experiences. This includes understanding whether employees feel valued, included, and respected, or if there are disparities in treatment based on gender, race, or other factors. It also serves as a diagnostic tool to gauge the effectiveness of diversity and inclusion initiatives, identify areas for improvement, and create a workplace environment that is free from harassment and promotes positive management behaviour.

## 5. EVALUATION OF ALTERNATIVES

### 1. Inadequate Handling of Sexual Harassment Complaints

Anonymous  
Hotline or  
Reporting  
Platform

Confidentiality

An anonymous hotline promotes a safe space for individuals to report incidents without fear of retaliation.

Increased Reporting

Employees may feel more comfortable reporting harassment, leading to a higher likelihood of identifying and addressing issues.

Data Collection

Provides a systematic way to collect data on harassment incidents, aiding in analysis and policy improvement.

False Reports

Anonymity may lead to false or malicious reports, requiring careful investigation to discern genuine cases.

Lack of Context

Anonymous reports might lack necessary details, making it challenging to fully understand and address the situation.

Limited Accountability

The accused may argue that the lack of transparency compromises their ability to defend against allegations.

B. Gender Bias and Unequal Treatment

ALTERNATIVES	PROS	CONS
Gender-Neutral Recruitment and Promotion Processes	<p><b>Equality</b> Ensures equal opportunities for all genders, reducing gender-based discrimination.</p>	<p><b>Unintended Consequences</b> Blindly applying gender-neutral processes might overlook specific challenges faced by underrepresented groups, unintentionally perpetuating inequalities.</p>
	<p><b>Diverse Perspectives</b> Promotes diversity, bringing in a variety of perspectives, which can enhance creativity and problem-solving.</p>	<p><b>Implementation Challenges</b> Adapting existing processes or creating new ones can be logistically challenging and may require significant time and resources.</p>
	<p><b>Talent Pool Expansion</b> Widens the talent pool by attracting individuals based on merit rather than gender, potentially leading to a more skilled workforce.</p>	<p><b>Perception Issues</b> There might be concerns about the perceived fairness of gender-neutral processes, leading to scepticism and resistance from certain quarters.</p>
Flexible Work Arrangements	<p><b>Equal Opportunities</b> Flexibility can create a level playing field, as it allows employees to showcase their skills and contributions without being constrained by rigid schedules that may favour one gender over another.</p>	<p>1. <b>Communication Challenges</b> Remote or flexible work might lead to communication gaps, making it challenging for employees to stay informed and connected, which can contribute to misunderstandings.</p>
	<p><b>Diversity and Inclusion</b> Flexible arrangements support a diverse and inclusive workplace by accommodating different needs and lifestyles, fostering a sense of belonging for employees of all genders.</p>	<p>2. <b>Risk of Isolation</b> Flexible work arrangements may result in isolation, especially if certain employees are consistently working remotely, potentially leading to feelings of exclusion and unequal treatment.</p>
	<p><b>Increased Job Satisfaction</b> Employees with flexible schedules may experience higher job satisfaction, reducing frustration and potential conflicts related to gender bias or unequal treatment.</p>	<p>3. <b>Management Oversight Challenges</b> Supervising employees with diverse schedules may pose challenges for management in terms of monitoring performance and ensuring fair treatment, which can inadvertently lead to biases</p>

## 1. Insufficient Diversity and Inclusion Initiatives

ALTERNATIVES	PROS	CONS
Diversity Training Programs	<p>1. Increased Awareness Diversity training can raise awareness about various forms of discrimination, including sexual harassment, fostering a more inclusive workplace.</p> <p>2. Cultural Competence Employees may develop cultural competence, understanding and appreciating diverse perspectives, which can enhance teamwork and communication.</p> <p>3. Improved Recruitment and Retention A diverse and inclusive workplace is attractive to a broader talent pool, and it can improve employee satisfaction and retention.</p>	<p>1. Resistance and Backlash Some employees may resist diversity training, feeling it is forced upon them, leading to potential lack of genuine engagement.</p> <p>2. Lack of Long-Term Impact Short-term training sessions may not lead to sustained behaviour change. Real change requires ongoing efforts beyond occasional workshops.</p> <p>3. Focus on Compliance Over Inclusion Some programs may prioritize meeting legal requirements rather than fostering a genuinely inclusive culture, leading to a checkbox mentality.</p>

Regular Climate Surveys	1. Identification of Issues Surveys can uncover areas of concern and identify instances of sexual harassment or problematic management behaviour that might otherwise go unnoticed.	1. Limited Scope Surveys may not capture the full complexity of workplace dynamics and may oversimplify nuanced issues related to diversity, inclusion, sexual harassment, and management behaviour.
	2. Employee Feedback Regular surveys provide a platform for employees to express their experiences and concerns, giving them a voice in shaping the workplace culture.	2. Overreliance on Quantitative Data Surveys often focus on quantitative data, potentially missing qualitative insights that could provide a deeper understanding of the issues at hand.
	3. Benchmarking Progress Surveys enable organizations to track changes over time, allowing them to measure the effectiveness of diversity and inclusion initiatives and identify areas for improvement.	3. Survey Fatigue Conducting frequent surveys may lead to survey fatigue among employees, reducing the quality of responses and diminishing the overall effectiveness of the survey process.

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## 6. Recommended course of action in sexual harassment and management behaviour at work.

There are several recommended actions in sexual harassment and management behaviour in the workplace that can be used in this case. This issue is not a new issue, it has happened many times and caused many unwanted incidents due to this matter. Therefore, this issue needs to be taken seriously by all parties involved.

First, we have created a thorough sexual harassment policy with the goal of outlining exactly what sexual harassment is and establishing a simple reporting procedure to promote a respectful and safe work environment. All staff have easy access to this policy, and we make sure it is distributed often. Furthermore, we furnish details on accessible support resources, such as counselling and employee assistance initiatives, for those who might have experienced harassment. We have clear policies in place for reporting, and they include a variety of methods, including online reporting, a hotline for private information, and assigned

HR contacts. As part of our dedication to awareness-raising and prevention, we hold frequent training sessions for all staff members, emphasising the significance of the policy and strategies for preventing sexual harassment. Our managers also get specific training on how to deal with and avoid improper management behaviour. When taken as a whole, these initiatives foster an environment at work where inclusion, respect, and team wellness are valued highly.

Besides that, regular training seminars for all workers are an essential component in our commitment to creating a work environment that values inclusion and respect. These seminars aim to increase knowledge of sexual harassment, its effects, and practical prevention behaviours. In addition, our managerial team receives specialised training to identify and deal with improper behaviour, helping to foster a culture that ensures everyone works in a safe and respected environment. Understanding how crucial it is to pay attention to the law, we offer a thorough summary of the laws pertaining to sexual harassment, including those from municipal, state, and federal levels. This includes a concise declaration highlighting our company's commitment to abiding by these regulations. We perform a full evaluation, considering the industry, organisational culture, and any recent occurrences, to properly meet unique training needs. We also guarantee that the training materials we provide for our clients are interesting, educational, and pertinent to company policies, principles, and regional laws. We hope to create an atmosphere where each team member feels appreciated, valued, and safe by implementing these initiatives.

Next, we strongly encourage honest communication between staff members

and management to develop a work environment that values mutual respect and honesty. To promote the reporting of harassment, many avenues are set up, such as an online reporting system and a discreet hotline. Securing the senior leadership's visible commitment to upholding this culture is a crucial part of our plan. Leaders are expected to quickly solve any problems that may occur in addition to modelling good behaviour. In addition, we have an anonymous reporting system in place since we understand that some workers may find it difficult to report harassment in person. This system includes many reporting channels, including a hotline, an online portal, or a designated individual within the company, while also guaranteeing anonymity. As part of our commitment to responsibility, we place a strong emphasis on the timely and comprehensive investigation of all reported incidents. Trained investigators handle cases delicately to guarantee that an impartial and fair procedure is always adhered to. We hope to establish a work environment where accountability, respect, and open communication are essential elements through these actions.

Finally, addressing complex issues like sexual harassment and management behaviour at work requires a multidisciplinary approach. There's a hypothetical example demonstrating how we can integrate concepts and functional tools from business disciplines to tackle this issue. The business disciplines that we use are Human Resources (HR) and Organizational Behaviour, Legal and Compliance, Communication and Public Relations and Ethics and Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR). Besides that, the problem statement based on this issue are the company is experiencing a rise in reported cases of sexual harassment, affecting the workplace environment, employee

morale, and potentially exposing the organization to legal risks. So, as the consultant we need to provide the integrated solution. First, Human Resources and Organizational Behaviour. The concepts are foster a culture of respect, diversity, and inclusion through employee training and development. For example, the manager conducts workshops on diversity and inclusion, implement mentorship programs, and establish a confidential counselling system. Secondly, Legal and Compliance. This legal and compliance concept very important for all employees to understand the role which is ensure compliance with relevant employment laws and regulations to mitigate legal risks. For instance, regular legal audits, updated policies, and legal consultations for employees affected by harassment. Thirdly, Communication and Public Relations. The concept of this business discipline is communicated transparently about the organization's commitment to addressing and preventing harassment. This concept can be applied by Internal communication campaigns, newsletters, and a dedicated hotline for reporting incidents. Lastly, Ethics and Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR). This concept might be different from the other concepts, this concept will embed ethical behaviour and social responsibility into the company's values and practices. Hence, develop a code of conduct and establish CSR initiatives promoting workplace equality.

To effectively implement the plan, start by forming a Cross-functional Team, for example representatives from HR, legal, communications and CSR to ensure diverse perspectives are implemented. In addition, under Employee Training and Development, it is necessary to conduct workshops on diversity, inclusion and workplace behaviours that respect and

foster a culture of mutual understanding. Next, implement a continuous training program to empower both employees and management in accepting these principles. Legal Compliance Review is important because it constantly updates HR policies to align with the law and conducts legal audits to proactively address risks. In addition, the Transparent Communication Campaign emphasizes the organization's commitment to addressing harassment as well as encouraging open dialogue and providing relevant, accessible resources for reporting incidents. Developing an Ethical Framework is also very important to emphasize a zero-tolerance policy and integrate CSR Initiatives that support diversity and inclusion. However, the establishment of Counselling and Support Services is mandatory to ensure awareness and comfort in using these services for affected employees. Next, implement a robust Monitoring and Reporting System to track incidents and resolve to maintain transparency. Finally, include a Feedback Mechanism for continuous improvement to allow employees to contribute to the effectiveness of the measures implemented and foster a culture of continuous improvement.

## 7. Implementation Plan

An implementation plan is a comprehensive road map that describes how a certain collection of tasks, projects, or initiatives will be carried out to accomplish a defined aim. Starting with Months 1-2, the focus is on Policy Development and Leadership Commitment. In Weeks 1-2, the HR Department and Legal Team are tasked with developing a draft of the sexual harassment policy, considering legal requirements and best practices.

Weeks 3-4 involve Top Leadership and HR Department reviewing and finalizing the policy to ensure alignment with organizational values. Moving on to week 3-4, attention shifts to Training Programs and an Anonymous Reporting System. Weeks 5-8 see the Training Department developing and scheduling mandatory training programs for all employees, while Weeks 9-10 involve the HR Department and IT Department implementing an anonymous reporting system to ensure confidentiality and accessibility. In Months 5-6, the focus turns to Leadership Communication and Employee Resource Groups. Weeks 11-12 require Top Leadership and the Communication Team to communicate the sexual harassment policy and commitment through internal channels, followed by Weeks 13-16 where the HR Department and Diversity and Inclusion Committee establish employee resource groups focused on diversity, equity, and inclusion. Months 7-8 center on Thorough Investigations and Regular Communication Channels, with Weeks 17-20 involving the HR Department and Legal Team training investigators and ensuring their preparedness, while Weeks 21-24 task, the Communication Team with implementing regular communication channels to update employees on organizational efforts. In Months 9-10, the focus is on Counseling Services and Policy Review. Weeks 25-28 involve the HR Department and Employee Assistance Program Providers implementing counseling and support services for employees affected by harassment, while Weeks 29-32 require the HR Department and Legal Team to conduct a comprehensive review of policies, ensuring alignment with evolving best practices. Months 11-12 concentrate on Performance Metrics and Celebrating Successes, with Weeks 33-36 seeing the HR Department

and Leadership developing and implementing performance metrics to measure the effectiveness of anti-harassment measures, and Weeks 37-40 involving the Communication Team and Leadership in communicating successes and recognizing employees who contribute positively to the organizational culture. Ongoing responsibilities include Legal Compliance and Continuous Improvement, with the Legal Team and HR Department staying updated on legal requirements and making necessary adjustments to policies and practices, and the Leadership and HR Department continuously assessing the workplace climate through surveys and feedback mechanisms, making improvements as needed.

## 8. Conclusion:

The issue of sexual harassment in the workplace is a complex and multifaceted problem that requires careful attention and proactive measures from both employees and management. In conclusion, dealing with sexual harassment requires a multifaceted approach that involves individual and collective responsibility. Management must play an important role in fostering a culture of respect, implementing preventive measures, and addressing any incidents of harassment to create a safe and inclusive work environment. Ongoing education, clear policies, and a commitment to upholding the values of equality and respect are essential to creating lasting change.

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