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Role of Sexual Harassment in Female Mental Distress, Burnout, and Job Satisfaction: Moderating role of perceived peer support

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ABSTRACT

Businesses face cut-throat competition to survive in the highly dynamic industrial environment. Managers are making all efforts to maximize the capitalization of available resources and achieve operational efficiency. However, firms cannot survive without developing their human resources and ensuring their mental and physical health. Considering the significant increase in women's participation in industrial operations, this study examines impact of on the sexual harassment on their mental health, job burnout, and satisfaction. In this regard, perceived peer support is taken as a moderating variable. The authors took data from female staff associated with the hospitality and tourism industry. This study finds that sexual harassment leads to mental distress, increased job burnout, and decreased job satisfaction. However, perceived peer support significantly moderates these findings and diminishes the strength of these relations. The finding suggests that management must take care of their female workers and promote a safe and healthy working environment that discourages sexual harassment and respect all workers.

Keywords: Sexual harassment; Perceived peer support; Job satisfaction, Job burnout, Mental distress

1. INTRODUCTION

Industry and business play a critical role in nation's economic growth Nurshuhada & Hafez (2021), and human resource serves as the driving force of organizational performance (Habib et al., 2019). For effective performance, firms must provide the well-being of their employees. In recent decades, business leaders have recognized the impact of sexual harassment on the organizational environment. Ali & Rukhsana (2019) indicated that sexual harassment in the workplace is more likely to develop mental and physical health issues such as depression and anxiety, which in turn lowers organizational performance and productivity. As a result of their potential, they play a significant role in progress (Abbas et al., 2018). The likes of sexual

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assault and harassment are only two examples of the many forms of oppression women face that keep them from reaching their potential (Ali & Rukhsana, 2019).

Organizational costs rise because of the human and professional impacts of sexual assault. They are terminating employees, recruiting replacements, dealing with other human resources (HR) concerns, and taking disciplinary action against offenders, all to add to the direct costs of sexual harassment in the workplace (Phillips, 2020). More and more women are entering the workforce and holding positions traditionally held by men (Abbas et al., 2018). One of the many challenges women face when they first enter the workforce is sexual harassment. Harassment of women is an issue that nearly every culture around the globe is still trying to solve. The #MeToo movement has encouraged more and more people to speak out about their experiences with sexual harassment and abuse, leading to a recent spate of shocking revelations around the world (Jung & Yoon, 2020).

Women in Pakistan are sexually abused and oppressed for various reasons, including socioeconomic class, race, culture, language, and career. Victimization of women in Pakistan is an understatement, and the prevalence of sexual harassment in Pakistani women's workplace and social environments is likely far higher than is commonly assumed (Jamil, 2020). Another issue is the prevalence of sexism due to conservative social norms and religious fundamentalism. Women in any field in Pakistan suffer substantial dangers, barriers, and prejudice due to the country's conventional social norms and religious fundamentalism (Jamil, 2020). Pakistan's women are devalued due to the country's patriarchal culture (Ali & Rukhsana, 2019).

Sexual harassment is a growing focus in the academic community because of its widespread impact on individuals and businesses and its wide range of social, organizational, and legal consequences. Although most people would agree that sexual harassment occurs in some form in most settings, the tourist and hospitality industries have a significantly higher rate of sexual harassment (Morgan & Pritchard, 2019). Several characteristics of tourist and hospitality jobs can create an environment conducive to sexual harassment. Long hours, varying shifts, sexist culture, and a noticeable power differential are all characteristics of the modern workplace (Alrawadieh et al., 2022). Many studies have looked at sexual harassment in various hospitality-related contexts, such as hotels (Jung & Yoon, 2020; Nimri et al., 2021), restaurants (Szymanski & Mikorski, 2016), airlines (Gunnarsdottir et al., 2006), casinos, and private clubs (Stedham & Mitchell, 1998). Young individuals are particularly vulnerable to sexual harassment (Eom et al., 2015).

This research aims to understand better the experience of sexual harassment by females in Pakistan and examine the relationship between sexual harassment, mental distress, burnout, and job satisfaction. In this regard, perceived peer support is a moderating variable to determine whether it moderates the relationship between the main hypotheses. The present study adds new and helpful information to the body of knowledge in several ways. This research begins by examining how female employee exposure to sexual harassment affects their mental health and contentment

on the job. This study is a direct response to the calls for additional research on sexual harassment by Morgan & Pritchard (2019)and the need for studies that specifically address the health and happiness of workers by Sirgy (2019). Second, the study connects the experience of sexual harassment to perceived peer support theories which highlights another uniqueness and firm foundation of the study. To the author's knowledge, no prior research has investigated whether or if social and organizational support plays a role in reducing instances of sexual harassment. Consequently, the present study contributes to a growing body of literature examining the implications of including gender in the research and implementing a sustainable environment for female workers.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Sexual Harassment

When a woman defies social standards by entering the job force and taking on financial responsibility for her family, she becomes the victim of sexual harassment. Despite the social norms and expectations placed on women, more and more Pakistani women are leaving their homes to enter the workforce (Abbas et al., 2018). However, progress in this area is being hampered by several factors, including cultural misconceptions, gender standards created by society, and social conventions. However, women's participation in labor has increased faster annually since 1990. The pace was 13.2 percent in 1990 but jumped to 22.4 percent in 2017. The percentage of working-age women is higher than in many other South Asian countries; nonetheless, it remains low overall (Hadi, 2017).

Women constitute nearly half of Pakistan's population but only around a quarter of the country's workforce. This means many females who could help the economy or their standing in society aren't doing anything useful now (Ali & Rukhsana, 2019). There is a 93% higher rate of sexual harassment in the official sector than in the informal sector (Staff Report, 2021). Despite the vast majority of instances of sexual harassment not being recorded. Therefore, the prevalence of sexual harassment in the workplace is likely to be underestimated based on the number of cases that have been recorded (Alrawadieh et al., 2022).

2.2. Sexual Harassment and Mental Distress

Employees who have experienced sexual assault are more likely to invest less in their organization's commitments. They also tend to be less productive and less healthy overall (Mooney, 2020). Businesses are missing out on women's skills and potential for advancement, while women are missing out on the financial security, social standing, and political influence of holding executive-level jobs (Je et al., 2022). The social repercussions of sexual assault that go undetected in the workplace might include bullying, social exclusion, guilt, threats, passive treatment, and more (Folke et al., 2020). According to Bucchianeri et al. (2014), sexual harassment harms

the psychological health of its victims. However, the question of whether or not its effects on the physical health of men and women are the same or different is still up for debate. While some research on teenagers and young adults has revealed that male respondents are more adversely affected than females, other research has suggested the opposite (Mitchell et al., 2014; Kaltiala-Heino et al., 2016). Many writers have noted that whereas males find sexual harassment more upsetting and shocking, women have learned to accept it as part of daily life. They may find it more challenging than men to deal with their feelings and find help after being subjected to sexual harassment. However, sexual harassment can impact women's personal and professional lives despite all these. The current study claims that sexual harassment causes psychological stress among female workers, ultimately disturbing their daily lives (see Figure 1). Thus, it is hypothesized;

***H1**: Sexual harassment creates mental distress among female workers in the tourism industry*

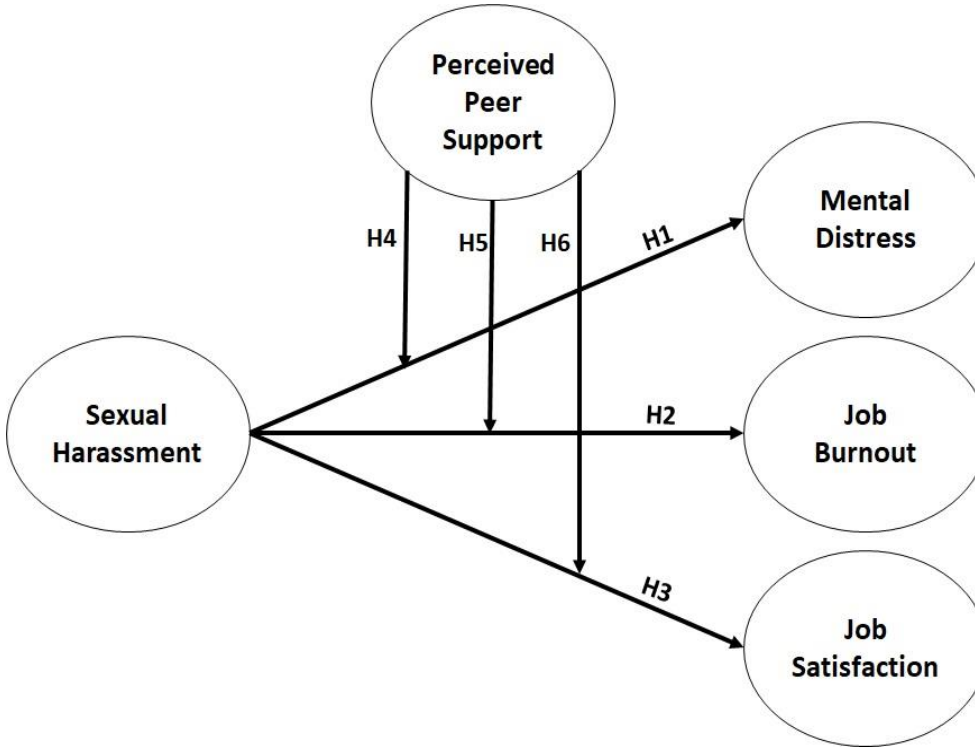

Figure 1: Research Framework

2.3. Sexual Harassment and Job Burnout

A large body of research shows that sexual harassment negatively affects individuals and businesses. These effects are significantly interconnected, as sexual

harassment can negatively affect an employee's mental health, affecting their work performance and advancement opportunities (Buchanan & Fitzgerald, 2008). Burnout, defined as "a sustained response to chronic emotional and interpersonal pressures on the job" (Maslach et al., 2001), is widely acknowledged as a severe issue in the workplace, resulting in undesirable outcomes like employee discontentment, lack of dedication, and high rates of employee turnover (Cheng &Yang, 2018; Lu & Gursoy, 2016). Hu et al. (2019) observed that sexual harassment leads to stress in the tourism and hotel industry. Some researchers, including Szymanski and Sikorski (2016), mentioned that sexually objectifying restaurants could lead to burnout if employees are subjected to unwelcome sexual advances. Similar results were reported by Jung and Yoon (2020), who discovered that female hotel workers' perceptions of sexual harassment contributed to higher rates of stress and depression.

Kara et al. (2013); Koc & Bozkurt (2017) stated that burnout has adverse effects on the psychological well-being of female employees, in addition to the negative impact it has on the organizational behavior of employees (Lu & Gursoy, 2016). Burnout is a significant contributor to stress in the workplace, and it has adverse consequences on workers in the here and now and their future expectations (Koc & Bozkurt, 2017). This study hypothesizes that sexual harassment in the organization is the driving force for job burnout among female workers. Thus, the following hypothesis is formulated:

H2: Sexual harassment causes job burnout among female workers

2.4. Sexual Harassment and Job Dissatisfaction

Multiple researchers (Ineson et al., 2013; Ram, 2018)mentioned that employees in the business are more likely to experience hostility on the job due to the nature of their position. Along these lines, it's generally agreed that sexual harassment significantly contributes to employees' behavior in the work environments(Willness et al., 2007; Yagil, 2008). Kong et al. (2018) stated that "job satisfaction" refers to workers' positive or negative feelings about their jobs. Several studies have supported the negative correlation between burnout and job satisfaction in organizational behavior (Kara et al., 2013; Koc & Bozkurt, 2017; Jung & Yoon, 2020).

Sexual harassment is a problem, although there hasn't been much research done on it in underdeveloped nations. Nevertheless, according to one study conducted in Turkey, sexual harassment of female nurses continues to be an alarming problem in the region. Mangi (2011) mentioned that sexual harassment is still prevalent in Pakistan and causes job stress. Sexually harassed female workers in Pakistan are less likely to be productive in the workplace (Merkin & Shah, 2014). Antecol et al. (2009) conducted a similar study in the United States and found identical results. Considering the nature of the issue in the organizational setting, the current research

argues that sexual harassment causes dissatisfaction among female workers, ultimately damaging organizational performance. Thus, it is proposed that;

H3: Sexual harassment creates job dissatisfaction among female workers in the tourism industry

2.5. Moderating Role of Perceived Peer Support

In a peer support system, people who share everyday experiences or difficulties band as peers to help one another out. Relationship counseling can help the victim of peer violence (Sagrestano et al., 2019). Peer support is an efficient method of giving and receiving help because it taps into our innate desire to address the problems of those with whom we identify most closely (Alrawadieh et al., 2022). Individuals experiencing a wide range of social, emotional, and physical difficulties have benefited from its use (Penney & Spector, 2008). Personal growth and development, satisfying connections with others, a strong sense of identity, and a strong sense of purpose in life all contribute to a person's psychological well-being (Alrawadıeh & Alrawadıeh, 2020). Female victims of sexual assault experience more severe psychological effects than male victims. Both sexual harassment and sexual assault are associated with increased emotional issues and decreased subjective well-being (Espelage et al., 2019).

Perceived organizational support (POS) is defined by Eisenberger et al. (1986) as "a general sense that the organization values and cares about its personnel." Job and incentive structures within an organization significantly impact how supportive employees feel of the company. A dissatisfied worker can be transformed into a hard worker through the power of extrinsic incentives in the form of perceived recognition (Walt, 2018). Employees who feel their bosses care about them and value their contributions are more willing to go above and beyond to meet corporate duties (Imran et al., 2020). Companies that invest in their employees' sense of agency tend to see a return in the form of increased worker satisfaction, psychological conformity to the firm's aims, and emotional investment in the company as a whole (Gupta et al., 2016).

According to Lee et al. (2016), employees in the tourism and hospitality industries are recognized for engaging in emotionally demanding and rewarding work. They frequently turn to their social or peer support networks to minimize and recover from this stress (McGinley & Wei, 2018). Equally, those subjected to sexual harassment at work may find comfort in talking to friends and relatives about it (Cortina, 2004). To put it simply, social support is "any interaction between at least two people in which either party believes that the other's welfare will improve as a result of the exchange of resources" (Shumaker & Brownell, 1984). An individual's cognitive resources are depleted as they deal with a stressor (such as sexual harassment) and adopt coping mechanisms, as proposed by Hobfoll (1989). In this sense, peer support may be seen as a resource gain, whereas sexual harassment may be seen as a resource

loss. Therefore, we hypothesize that female employee who feels more peer support from their networks are likely to moderate the relationship between SH and MDS, BO and JDS. Hence, the following hypotheses are suggested:

H4: Perceived peer support moderates the relationship between sexual harassment and mental distress

H5: Perceived peer support moderates the relationship between sexual harassment and job burnout

H6: Perceived peer support moderates the relationship between sexual harassment and job satisfaction

3. METHODOLOGY

For the current study, each firm was considered a sector, and respondents were approached using questionnaires through a non-probability sampling technique. Data were collected from 318 female staff members working in hotels in Islamabad, Karachi, and Lahore. The study's variables were measured using scales used in previous investigations. The Sexual Harassment Scale created by Fitzgerald et al. (1988)was utilized for this study's data collection. Eisenberger et al. (1986) designed items that were used to gauge POS. The Sirgy et al. (2001) created scale was used to assess participants' levels of PPS. Although people of different ages were included in the sample, most responses were between 25 and 35. Most of those who took part held at least a Bachelor's degree. All experience levels have been represented among the responders. However, those with 2–8 years of experience are the most numerous.

3.1. Data Analysis and Results

By identifying and testing models with both observable and unobservable or latent variables as well as the inter-linear interaction of variables, Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) is used to analyze the proposed model (Sarstedt & Ringle, 2020). PLS was initially developed by

Wold (1966). However, it has been expanded upon and modified to evaluate high-dimensional data in a less structured setting in various ways. Path models of PLS consist of two linear equations, the inner model indicating the relationship between the latent (unobserved) variables and the outer model indicating the link between the latent (unobserved) variable and its manifest (observed) indicators (Henseler & Sarstedt, 2013). The Smart-PLS software is employed for conducting data analysis and producing SEM results.

Cronbach's Alpha, Composite Reliability, Average Variance Extracted, and Discriminant Validity are used to evaluate the internal, external, construct, and discriminant validity of the reflective outer model. Most of the indicators are reflective ones involved in the relevant studies that consider perception-based studies

(Hair Jr. et al., 2017). When compared, the introduction of formative indicators causes conventional measurements of appropriate individual item reliability and convergent validity to become irrelevant while also bringing difficulties (Hulland, 1999). The formative markers may not be a good fit for the various discriminant validity approaches (Henseler et al., 2015).

Observed items are accounted for by questions on the chosen scale, which are, in turn, derived from the study's underlying variables (constructs). As a result, we incorporated reflective indicators into this analysis. Since there are epistemological, statistical, and logical flaws in relying on formative constructions, reflecting indicators help check the validity of a theory (Urbach & Ahlemann, 2010). The research also intends to evaluate conceptual frameworks (in the form of relevant hypotheses) grounded in theory and actual research. It is important to use reflective indicators as they are the most pertinent appropriate metrics.

4. RESULTS

4.1. Reliability and Validity

The reliability of data is often analyzed using Cronbach's alpha. In general, the higher the Cronbach's alpha of a construct, the more certain one can be that its parts all have roughly the same meaning and validity (Cronbach, 1951). This method of dependability estimation relies on the correlation between observable variables. Values > 0.60 are considered acceptable for exploratory investigations when using composite reliability. In contrast, values in the range of 0.70 to 0.90 are considered highly satisfactory, and values beyond 0.90 are assumed as significantly acceptable (Ramayah et al., 2018). The purpose of measuring reliability is to establish how well one or more indicators correspond to the characteristics they are designed to track (Urbach & Ahlemann, 2010). For the current study, the reliability value is 0.901, which matches the 0.708 criteria suggested by (Hair et al., 2010).

Table 1: *Outer Loadings (Amended Measurement Model)*

Constructs	Items	Loadings
Perceived Peer Support	PPS1	0.672
	PPS10	0.716
	PPS2	0.683
	PPS5	0.725
	PPS6	0.759
	PPS8	0.706
	PPS9	0.759
Mental Distress	MD1	0.714
	MD2	0.780
	MD3	0.757
	MD4	0.710

	MD7	0.611
Burnout	BO	0.000
Job Dissatisfaction	JDS	0.000
Sexual Harassment	SH10	0.680
	SH2	0.661
	SH4	0.707
	SH5	0.778
	SH6	0.786
	SH7	0.733
	SH8	0.647
	SH9	0.676

Table 2: *Construct Reliability and Validity (Amended Measurement Model)*

	Cranach's Alpha	**rho_A**	**Composite Reliability**	**Average Variance Extracted (AVE)**
Perceived Peer Support	0.846	0.858	0.881	0.515
Mental Distress	0.763	0.773	0.840	0.514
Burnout	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
Job Dissatisfaction	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
Sexual Harassment	0.862	0.881	0.890	0.50

Once this is complete, we will evaluate the validity of the discriminator. According to Fornell & Larcker (1981), discriminant validity requires indicators to place a heavier weight on their respective constructs than on other constructs and for the average variance or variation shared between each construct and its relevant measures to be larger than the variance shared between the build and other constructs.

Table 3: *Fornell-Larcker Criterion (Amended Measurement Model)*

Variable	**PPS**	**MDS**	**BO**	**JS**	**SH**
Perceived Peer Support	**0.833***				
Mental Distress	0.606	**0.807***			
Burnout	0.50	0.493	**0.809***		
Job Satisfaction	0.777	0.705	0.563	**0.773***	
Sexual Harassment	0.65	0.502	0.429	0.472	**0.806***

PPS: Perceived Peer Support; MDS: Mental Distress; B.O.: Burnout; J.S: Job Satisfaction; S.H.: Sexual Harassment

Table 4: *Fornell-Larcker Criterion (Amended Measurement Model)*

Variable	PPS	MDS	BO	JDS	SH
Perceived Peer Support	0.718				
Mental Distress	0.253				
Burnout					
Job Dissatisfaction		0.717			
Sexual Harassment	0.088	0.615			0.710

PPS: Perceived Peer Support; MDS: Mental Distress; B.O.: Burnout; J.S: Job Satisfaction; S.H.: Sexual Harassment

Table: 5 displays the inter-construct correlations. Metrics can only be used if they load at a 0.5 or greater on their principal construct and a 0.1 or lower. This table demonstrates that all indicators have high loadings on their primary and modest loadings on secondary constructs. Having acquired discriminant validity shows that the constructs can be distinguished.

Table 5: *Cross Loadings (Amended Measurement Model)*

	PPS	MDS	BO	JDS	SH
PPS1	**0.672**	0.154			-0.079
PPS10	**0.716**	0.235			-0.081
PPS2	**0.683**	0.136			-0.089
PPS5	**0.725**	0.156			-0.034
PPS6	**0.759**	0.191			-0.172
PPS8	**0.706**	0.133			-0.018
PPS9	**0.759**	0.216			0.031
MD1	0.109	**0.714**			-0.120
MD2	0.222	**0.780**			-0.125
MD3	0.197	**0.757**			-0.132
MD4	0.189	**0.710**			-0.135
MD7	0.178	**0.611**			-0.069
BO					
JDS					
SH10	-0.019	-0.152			**0.680**
SH12	-0.073	-0.101			**0.661**
SH4	-0.124	-0.164			**0.707**
SH5	-0.019	-0.081			**0.778**
SH6	-0.087	-0.123			**0.786**
SH7	-0.012	-0.085			**0.733**
SH8	-0.111	-0.076			**0.647**
SH9	-0.012	-0.068			**0.676**

Henseler et al. (2015), that criterion is then used to evaluate the test's ability to discriminate between groups. To prove discriminant validity, Table 6 demonstrates

that factors fall below the HTMT threshold values of 0.85 and 0.90 (Roemer et al., 2021). Measurement model with minimal loadings for objects that were eliminated.

Table 6: *Heterrotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT) (Amended Measurement Model)*

Variable	PPS	MDS	BO	JS	SH
Perceived Peer Support	0.091				
Mental Distress	0.298				
Burnout					
Job Satisfaction					
Sexual Harassment	0.141	0.181			

PPS: Perceived Peer Support; MDS: Mental Distress; B.O.: Burnout; J.S: Job Satisfaction; S.H.: Sexual Harassment

As a significant issue influencing the estimations of the regression model, multicollinearity is characterized by the presence of correlations between variables that should be considered independent. Collinearity amongst the predictors might skew the results and distort how we understand the influence of one variable on another (Kock & Lynn, 2012). Multicollinearity is shown when the VIF is either less than 3.3 or greater than 5 (Hair et al., 2017). Given that sexual harassment is the sole independent variable in our analysis, multicollinearity was not an issue. In addition, as shown in Table 7, the VIF values for the individual items are all under the threshold mentioned above values, indicating that there is no multicollinearity between the items. Again, the lack of multicollinearity is reflected in inner VIF values below the threshold levels. The revised measurement model with the removed components is depicted.

Table 7: *Outer VIF Values (Amended Measurement Model)*

	VIF
PPS1	1.870
PPS10	1.543
PPS2	1.883
PPS5	1.933
PPS6	1.827
PPS8	1.720
PPS9	1.704
MD1	1.473
MD2	1.619
MD3	1.613
MD4	1.300
MD7	1.260
BO	
JDS	
SH10	1.663
SH12	1.532

SH4	1.580
SH5	2.348
SH6	2.402
SH7	2.586
SH8	1.740
SH9	1.942

Inner VIF Values (Amended Measurement Model)

		Mental Distress
Perceived Support	Peer	1.033
Sexual Harassment		1.016

4.2 Assessment of Goodness-of-Fit (GOF)

The mode fit must be estimated before we can conclude the structural model. According to Tenenhaus et al. (2004), an effective way to evaluate a PLS-SEM is by looking at its goodness of fit. Nonetheless, this statistic is not a useful fit measure. Hence researchers using PLS-SEM typically rely on measurements reflecting the model's prediction ability to gauge its quality instead of fit measures (Henseler & Sarstedt, 2013). The SmartPLS incorporates assessment model fit criteria such as (NFI) and RMS Theta to expand the capabilities of PLS-SEM for theory testing (Ramayah et al., 2018). This provides an average assessment of the disparities between the observed and predicted correlations (Ramayah et al., 2018). An SRMR value determines the appropriateness of fit between 0.10 and 0.80 (L. Hu & Bentler, 1999). Table 8 demonstrates that the model is potentially an excellent fit, with SRMR values of 0.066. NFI was created by (Bentler & Bonett, 1980). Since the Chi2 value of the proposed model does not provide enough information to judge model fit, the Chi2 value of the null model is used as a yardstick in the computation of NFI, with NFI defined as the difference between the two values. This yields a value for NFI between 0 and 1, with a higher value indicating a better match between the two models (Ramayah et al., 2018). Table 8 demonstrates that the saturated and estimated NFI values are 0.703, closer to 1 and indicating a satisfactory model fit. The residual covariance around the outer model is denoted by the root-mean-squared (RMS) value of Theta (Lohmöller, 1989). The correlation between residuals from the model's outer layers is measured (Ramayah et al., 2018). From 0.12 to 0.14 is fine (Lohmöller, 1989; Henseler & Sarstedt, 2013). The root-mean-square value of Theta, as shown in Table 4.8, is 0.143, which is very close to the range (0.12-0.14). With this additional information, the model may once again be accepted as appropriate.

Table 8: *Model Fit Summary (Amended Measurement Model)*

	Saturated Model	Estimated Model
SRMR	0.066	0.066
NFI	0.753	0.753
RMS Theta		0.143

4.3. Assessment of Structural Model:

The first hypothesis is inter-conceptual and was developed directly. To determine statistical significance, the Smart-PLS includes a bootstrapping function that computes t-statistics for each path. The findings in Table 9 indicate that the first hypothesis is valid with a t-value greater than 0.05, with a t-value greater than 0.05. The coefficient of determination for the percentage of variance in subjective well-being attributed to sexual harassment is 0.154 (Table 11). Employees' reports of organizational support significantly moderate the association between sexual harassment and psychological well-being.

Table 9: *Path Coefficients (Amended Measurement Model)*

	Original Sample	Sample Mean	Std.Dev	t-value	p-value
Perceived Peer Support→Mental Distress	0.232	0.241	0.072	0.989	0.000
SH→MDS	-0.130	-0.146	**0.042**	3.059	0.002
SH*PPS→MDS (moderating effect)	0.182	0.076	0.224	0.813	0.417

The following hypotheses are based on the information presented above:

Table 10: *Hypotheses*

Hypothesis	Relationship	Std. Beta	t-value	p-value	Decision
H1	SH→MDS	-0.130	3.059	0.002	Supported
H2	SH →BO				Supported
H3	SH →JDS				Supported
H4	SH*PPS→MDS (moderating 1)				Supported
H5	SH*PPS→BO				Supported

	(moderation 2)	
H6	SH*PPS→JDS	Supported
	(moderation 3)	

The coefficient of determination (R2) measures how much of the observed variation in the dependent variable can be attributed to the model's independent variables. It is therefore used to assess the model's predictive power (i.e., the amount of variance in the endogenous construct that can be attributed to all exogenous constructs). R2 between 0.26 and 0.13 is commonly accepted to represent good predictive accuracy, while values between 0.02 and 0.05 generally indicate low predictive ability (Cohen, 1988). There is a moderate relationship between sexual harassment and psychological health, as shown by the R2 value in Table 11. The f 2 demonstrates the R2 contribution of an exogenous construct to an endogenous one. When estimating R2, a predecessor construct is used; excluding this construct leads to a lower estimate of R2. As a result, the effect size is defined as the difference between the model estimation R2 values for the having and without the preceding construct. Effect sizes of 0.35, 0.15, and 0.02, as defined by Cohen 1988 are significant, medium, and small, respectively.

The Q2 usage was developed to evaluate the predictive value of the path model. (Stone, 1974; Geisser, 1975). The blindfold method is used to determine Q2. This resampling method is used to eliminate all of the indicators of the endogenous construct in the reflective measurement model. This method uses single-item endogenous constructs and those with a specified measurement methodology. Both the external and endogenous components are highly predictive in this scenario. The strong correlation between sexual harassment and mental distress is reflected in Table 11 with a Q2 value of 0.55, which is greater than zero and thus indicative of the model's predictive usefulness based on an endogenous construct.

Table 11: *R^2, f^2, and Q^2 (Structural Model)*

Hypothesis	Relationship	R^2	f^2	Q^2	Decision
H1	SH→MDS	0.154	0.020	0.55	Supported

Likewise, the magnitudes of the moderators' effects are calculated and analyzed. A big, medium and minor effect size is represented by the values 0.025, 0.01, and 0.005. (Kenney & Milling, 2016). According to Table 12, the f2 value of 0.018 indicates a medium impact between sexual harassment and psychological well-being when the perceived organizational influence acts as a moderator.

Table 12: *Hypotheses Testing*

Hypotheses	Relationship	f^2	Decision
H2	SH →BO	0.018	Supported
H3	SH →JDS		Supported

H4	SH*PPS→MDS (moderating1)	Supported
H5	SH*PPS→BO(moderation 2)	Supported
H6	SH*PPS→JDS (moderation3)	Supported

5. CONCLUSION

The study's findings suggest the following hypotheses. This study looked at how sexual harassment affects victims' mental health. Studies confirm sexual harassment harms victims' mental health. Researchers also examined how perceived support from superiors and peers mediated the association between sexual harassment and mental health. The results show that PPS significantly and positively moderates the connection between MDS and SH. The positive relationship between SH and MDS is weakened when PPS is high but strengthened when PPS is low. When PPS is high, the positive connection is cut. Even though it may appear like a less severe type of victimization compared to domestic violence and sexual harassment nonetheless has a significant detrimental effect on the mental health of the men and women subjected to it. For a long time, women were thought to be the only ones who experienced sexual harassment and the resulting mental suffering. The findings demonstrate that victims of sexual abuse can recover with the aid of perceived organizational support, which also contributes to improved mental health. The administration should undertake measures to improve the emotional health of its female staff. The organizations should also set aside funds for training programs designed to improve the emotional health of female staff. Following are the study recommendations.

- Legal requirements obligate firms to provide a safe work environment for their staff. Positive work environments result from concerted efforts between H.R., managers, and supervisors. Organizations can reduce the adverse effects of sexual harassment in the workplace by better using the perception of receiving support from higher-ups.
- Provide all-female nursing personnel the same opportunities. Incorporate a place of employment that is free of harassment while providing a secure, healthy, and educational environment for its employees.
- Leaders should demonstrate respect for the women in their charge by treating them without bias, fairly, and with good manners.
- The organizational administration needs to take charge and act swiftly to stop bullying and harassment.
- Employees should feel comfortable approaching upper management with concerns.

There is a need for more studies in some other regions that were brought to light by the study's limitations. It is suggested that future researchers gather and analyze data over a more extended period to capture the inter-variable interaction more accurately. Second, future research should investigate and analyze sexual harassment in various contexts, such as diverse industries, organizations, and cultures.

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