



School of
Pacific Arts,
Communication,
and Education

PREVALENCE AND IMPACT OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT ON FEMALE JOURNALISTS: A Fiji Case Study

The University of the South Pacific Journalism Programme

Fiji Women's Rights Movement

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and
Fiji Women's Rights Movement**

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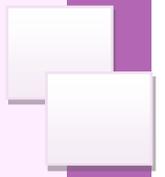
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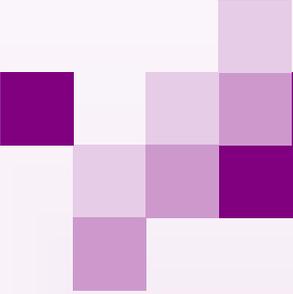
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The Fiji Women's Rights Movement is a multiethnic and multicultural non-governmental organisation committed to removing discrimination against women through institutional reforms and attitudinal changes, by means of core programmes as well as innovative approaches. The Movement's vision is for the women of Fiji to be free from all forms of discrimination, have equal access to opportunities and to live in a healthy environment where the principles of feminism, democracy, good governance, multiculturalism and human rights prevail.

The University of the South Pacific Journalism Programme started in Suva in 1988 with the mandate to train future journalists in the Pacific region and conduct research in news media-related issues. The programme is located within the School of Pacific Arts, Communication and Education and is the leader in research in Pacific media.





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FOREWORD

From disparities in wages to physical and online bullying from the public, women journalists across the world continue to experience inequalities and harassment in the workplace, oftentimes with little to no action taken against the perpetrators.

According to the International Labour Organisation (ILO), violence and harassment against women in the world of work impede women's empowerment, and their active engagement and participation in the labour force. One of the major problems is sexual harassment against females in nearly all fields and areas of employment.

This study is focused on the prevalence and impact of sexual harassment in the Fiji news media sector, where up to half the journalist corps are women, many of whom are leading reporters and editors in the national scene.

The University of the South Pacific Journalism (USP) Programme collaborated with the Fiji Women's Rights Movement (FWRM) through the *We Rise Coalition Phase 3* project to conduct this research.

The project, funded by the Australian Government, investigated the prevalence and impact of sexual harassment in the Fiji news media sector, with the aim of identifying the problem and recommending possible solutions for the safety and wellbeing of female journalists.

This research falls within the ambit of the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation's (UNESCO) mandate to create a safe work environment for journalists and the ILO Convention No. 190 (C190) on *Eliminating Violence and Harass-*

ment in the World of Work. Fiji ratified this ILO convention in 2021.

The research is based on a survey consisting of 50 questions, administered to 42 respondents and in-depth interviews with 23 respondents.

The questions cover the different types of sexual harassment and intimidation, including digital media platforms, to unpack the multifaceted impact of sexual harassment experienced by female journalists. At the commencement of this project, it was paramount for the research team to ensure that there was no stigma or shame in female journalists talking about their experiences, as this is often the main reason why so many women choose to remain silent, so confidentiality was respected and safeguarded.

Overall, the research findings indicate fairly high prevalence of sexual harassment in the workplace and on news reporting rounds, with major repercussions on the victims' morale and productivity. Part of the reason for the problem is the lack of awareness in the Fiji news media fraternity about sexual harassment and its impact on victims and media organisations as a whole.

The lack of clarity about reporting mechanisms and redress is not helping either. This is despite the fact that under Fiji's Employment Relations Promulgation (2007) section 76(2) '*an employer must develop and maintain a policy to prevent sexual harassment in his or her workplace*'. As this report argues, taking proactive steps by creating awareness is an important first step towards reducing the risks.

This research is a follow-up on two groundbreaking FWRM studies in 2002 and 2016 into the incidence and nature of sexual harassment of women in the workplace in Fiji's four major economic hubs in the country — Suva, Nadi, Lautoka and Labasa.

The first study found that around 33 percent of the respondents had experienced sexual harassment at the workplace, whereas the second study found that the rate of incidences had dropped to 20 percent.

The FWRM utilised the 2002 and 2016 studies to lobby and advocate against sexual harassment in the workplace. This included providing inputs into a decision to adopt a broader definition of sexual harassment for legislation being developed at that time.

Currently, the FWRM conducts *Sexual Harassment Awareness and Prevention Training* with different organisations in order to increase awareness and prevent incidences at the workplace.

The FWRM's internationally-designed toolkit through local evidence generation will help organisations increase their awareness and develop their own sexual harassment policies. The target audience for this training is

employees, managers, supervisors, contract workers and volunteers.

The 2002 and 2016 reports inspired this third study for a more focussed look at into a particular profession or industry.

Journalism was chosen because of its public interest role and because up to half the workers are women. Existing researches indicate that female journalists are a potentially high-risk group with regards to exposure to sexual harassment.

It is envisaged that this study will achieve similar results as the 2002 and 2016 FWRM studies in educating the media sector about sexual harassment and adopting further safety measures.

A key achievements for FWRM as part of the women's movement in the National Action Plan to Prevent Violence Against Women and Girls (NAP) is the successful inclusion on the issue of sexual harassment in the workplace as a key priority area of concern.

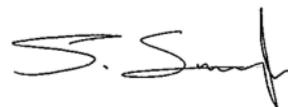
We are hopeful that the findings of this research as well as existing work done will inform key action and approaches to prevent sexual harassment in the workplace for women in the world of work.



Nalini Singh

Executive Director

Fiji Women's Rights Movement



Shailendra Bahadur Singh

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USP Journalism Programme

KEY FINDINGS AT A GLANCE

1. Of the 42 respondents in the survey, the youngest was 22, the oldest 51, with the average age of 33.2 years. The average work experience was 8.3 years.
2. Most respondents (80.5%) worked in print, with the others choosing online and/or broadcasting.
3. Most respondents professed to be quite knowledgeable about sexual harassment.
4. The level of harassment at both the workplace and in the reporting field is high, with up to two-thirds reporting incidents occurring at least sometimes.
5. The harassment is predominantly verbal, but also very often gestural. Physical harassment is fairly common as well.
6. Respondents predominantly experienced comments about their dress and appearance, besides crude, sexual jokes.
7. Only 40% lodged complaints about sexual harassment that occurred in the workplace, in part due to feelings of embarrassment.
8. Of the cases that were reported, just over 50% resulted in a warning for the offenders, 17% in termination, and 12% in suspensions.
9. On news reporting assignments, the most common sources of harassment included businessmen, followed by politicians and community leaders.
10. While Fiji media organisations appear to have sexual harassment policies in place, over two thirds of the respondents said their media organisation never held workplace training on the topic.
11. More than half the respondents said their experience of sexual harassment impacted on them professionally and mentally.
12. Online harassment is an emerging threat in Fiji, with up to 83% of respondents having experienced it one time or another.
13. Online harassment takes place predominantly on Facebook, as identified by nearly half of the respondents.
14. While most offenders of online harassment are largely anonymous, others included news sources or contacts, government officials and political party affiliates.
15. Political and government stories lead to the highest levels of online abuse, followed by stories about race and ethnicity, as well as religion.
16. Most of the respondents chose to ignore online harassment while others reported it or deactivated their account temporarily.
17. Most respondents tended to self-censor on social media as a result of online harassment while others refrained from pursuing certain stories.
18. Most respondents said that their employers were not fully equipped to deal with online harassment.

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

The primary purpose of this study is to assess the prevalence of sexual harassment against Fiji female journalists — at the workplace and in the news reporting field — and the impact on their professional and personal lives.

It covers both current and former female journalists across print, broadcast and electronic media. The report is based on a questionnaire survey of 42 respondents and in-depth interviews of 23 respondents.

The survey also covers online sexual harassment against female journalists, which is a growing concern internationally, as reported in a UNESCO-commissioned study in 2020.

The survey results indicate that online sexual harassment and threats are also developing into a serious problem, with media organisations not entirely equipped to deal with this emerging issue.

Given the public interest role of journalism in any country, the health and welfare of journalists is a national concern, especially vulnerable female journalists.

Yet, sexual harassment against female journalist and its impact have never been researched in Fiji.

This is even though as much as half out of a total population of about 120 active journalists in the country are females, with trends in Fiji and abroad indicating that sexual harassment could be a major problem in journalism.

Some conclusions could be drawn from a 2016 FWRM study showing a high incidence

of sexual harassment in various work sectors, with one in five respondents having experienced it, especially the younger ones (25% under 30 years old).

Specific to women in the news media, the first global survey by the International News Safety Institute and the International Women's Media Foundation in 2014 found that half the 683 respondents had experienced sexual harassment at their jobs, with the most common forms being unwanted comments on dress and appearance, suggestive remarks or sounds, jokes of a sexual nature and invasion of personal space.

A 2018 Australian Broadcasting Corporation International Development study on 'women in the media' in Papua New Guinea showed that sexual harassment was a major concern. The respondents stated that management did not deal effectively with the cases and that such behaviour was inherent in the sector.

Even in a more developed country like Australia, the largest survey of female journalists published in 2012 found increased levels of sexual harassment, with a follow-up study in 2016 noting that sexual harassment flourishes in cultures that privilege hegemonic masculinity.

This Fiji study is inspired by the International Labour Organisation Violence and Harassment Convention (No.190), which recognises that every person has the right to a world of work free from any form of violence and harassment.

INTRODUCTION

The convention acknowledges that “violence and harassment in the world of work affects a person’s psychological, physical and sexual health, dignity, and family and social environment.

It also affects the quality of public and private services, and may prevent persons, particularly women, from accessing, and remaining and advancing in the labour market”.

In Fiji’s case, this study, besides getting an in-

dication of the prevalence of sexual harassment and its impact, addresses some other key questions:

- How do Fiji media organisations handle cases of sexual harassment?
- What are the reporting mechanisms, if any?
- What measures can be taken to address any problems identified in the survey?

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PROJECT OUTCOMES

The intended outcomes of the research project are:

- To get a measure of the prevalence of sexual harassment against female journalists.
- To assess the impact of sexual harassment on the professional and personal lives of the victims.
- Based on the data/feedback from the respondents, recommend possible solutions.

METHODOLOGY

This study adopted a mixed methods approach based on questionnaire survey and in-depth interviews since cross-fertilizing these complimentary methods would provide greater insights into the problem and add depth to the findings, analysis and conclusions.

We included both current and former journalists to cover a longer timeframe and to get a better measure of the problem.

The research used non-probability purposive sampling method, whereby the researchers use professional expertise, institutional knowledge and industry contacts to select samples and information-rich case studies related to the problem under investigation.

Due to the risks of Covid-19 and in compliance with Fiji's physical distancing laws, most of the research was conducted virtually. The Google online survey received a total of 42 responses between 3 August and 11 December 2021.

This included 20 current and 22 former journalists. Previous studies indicate that the fe-

male journalists make up around 50% of Fiji's total male-female journalist population of about 120. This was confirmed by a head count of current Fiji journalists conducted by this project's researchers. Subsequently, the survey response rate from active female journalists is 33%.

The in-depth interviews took place between 7 October and 11 November 2021. Of the 23 participants, there were 13 current and 10 former journalists.

In all, the sample included senior, mid-career, and junior-level journalists to provide a good cross-section of work experiences and viewpoints. The youngest respondent was 22 and the oldest 51.

They had worked in Fiji's major news media houses and were able to speak authoritatively about the subject matter, based on personal experiences.

Between them, the respondents cover a span of 30 years of journalism practice in Fiji.

METHODOLOGY

The questions for both the survey and the in-depth interviews were developed from a literature review of studies into sexual harassment against female journalists in Australia, Papua New Guinea and Nepal.

The questions were also derived from the 2002 and 2016 FWRM report on sexual harassment of women in the workplace in Fiji and the International News Safety Institute and International Women's Media Foundation global study on violence and harassment against women in the news media.

All the participants took part in the survey on a voluntary basis. They were provided an information sheet with details about the nature and the purpose of the survey.

The participants were guaranteed complete confidentiality, with the option of withdrawing from the survey at any time of their choosing.

The questionnaire survey included definitions of sexual harassment in different forms, based on the 2019 ILO guidelines.

According to the guidelines, sexual harassment is any unwanted conduct of a sexual nature, including:

- **Physical:** unwelcome touching in a sexual manner — kissing, patting, pinching, glancing or lustful staring.
- **Verbal:** unwelcome comments about private life or body part or person's appearance, sexually suggestive jokes and comments.
- **Gestural:** sexually suggestive body language and or gestures, repeated winks, gestures with fingers, and licking lips.
- **Written/graphic:** display of pornographic materials, sexually explicit pictures, screen savers or posters, harassment via emails and other modes of electronic communication.
- **Psychological/emotional:** persistent proposals and unwelcome requests, unwanted invitations to go out on dates, insults, taunts or innuendo of a sexual nature.

- ABC International Development. (2018). *Papua New Guinea women in the media: Research report*. (2018). Australian Aid. <https://www.abc.net.au/cm/lb/10469098/data/png-women-in-media-report-data.pdf>
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- Ibid.

RESULTS—QUESTIONNAIRE SURVEY

SURVEY OVERVIEW

The Google online survey was open between 3 August and 11 December 2021.

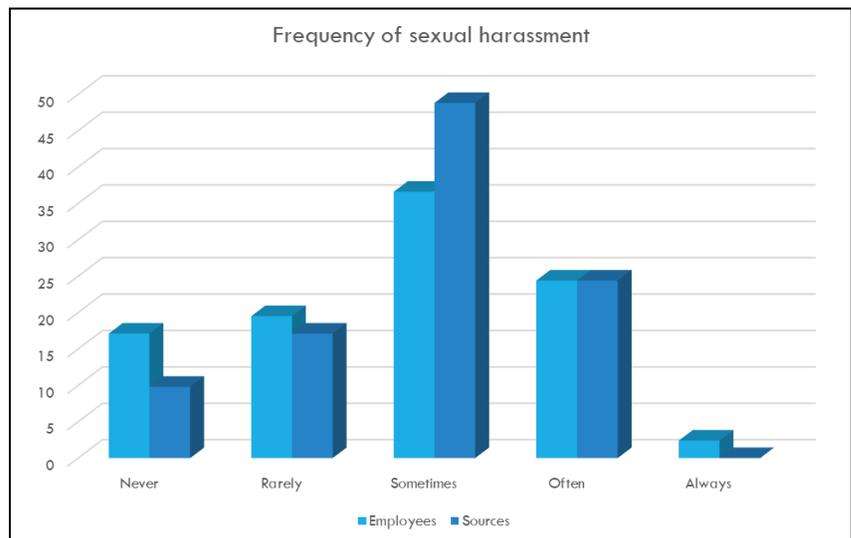
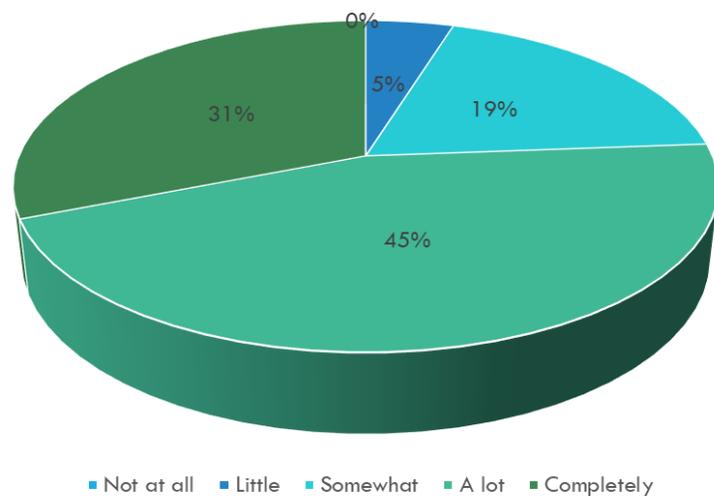
A total of 42 responses were received, all female, since this research only covers female journalists.

The average age of the respondents was 33.2 years (median 32). The youngest was 22, the oldest 51. The respondents had an average of 8.3 years work experience, ranging from 1 to 30 years.

The vast majority (80.5%) worked in print, 39% worked in online and 34.1% in broadcasting (multiple mentions were possible).

Overall, respondents professed to be quite knowledgeable about sexual harassment.

How knowledgeable are you about how sexual harassment?



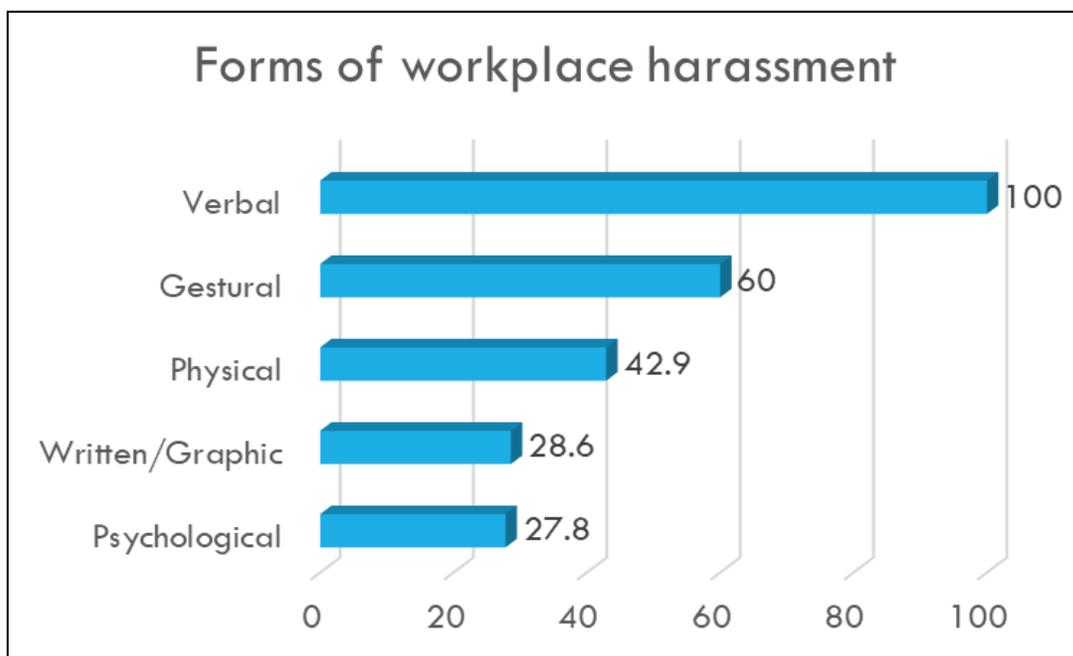
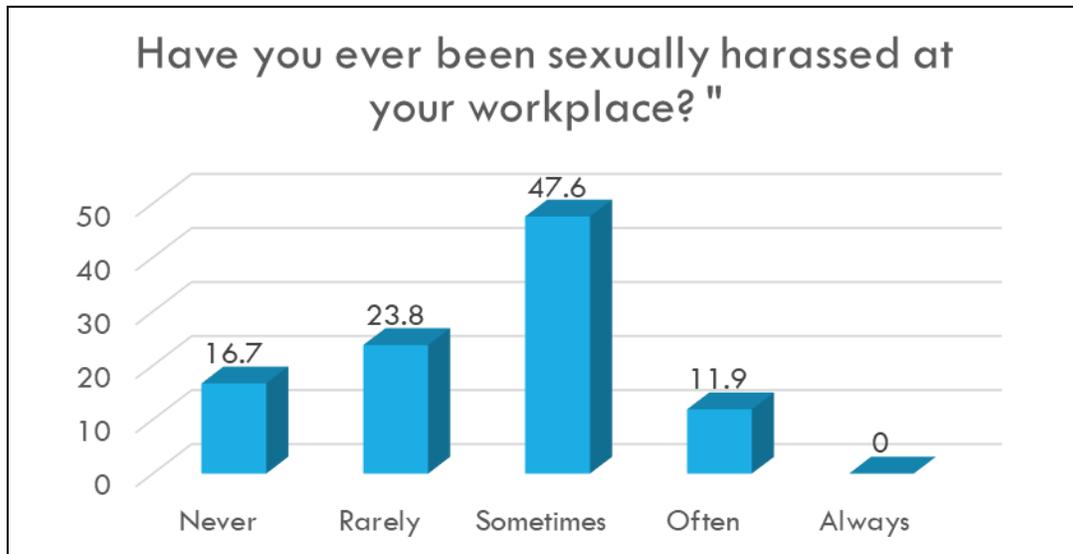
SOURCES OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT

When it comes to the frequency of sexual harassment, respondents appear to experience it from sources when covering news events or conducting interviews slightly more often than from employees in the workplace.

Overall, the level of harassment from both sources is worryingly high, with around two-thirds reporting incidents occurring at least sometimes, and one-quarter as occurring often.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT IN THE WORKPLACE

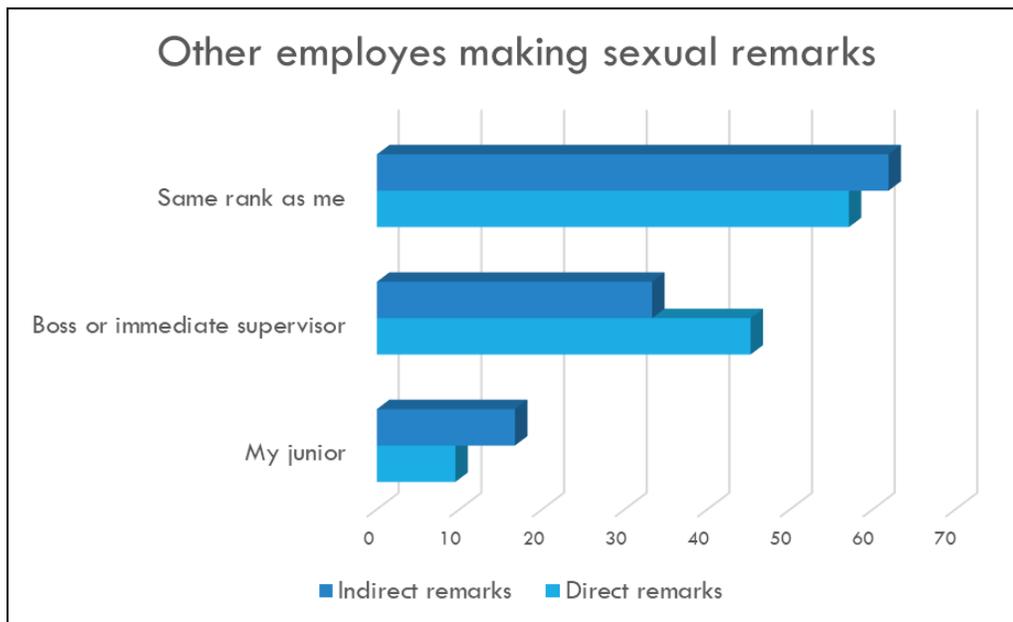
Harassment at the workplace appears to be common: Only 7 of 42 respondents said they had never experienced sexual harassment in the workplace. When it occurs, the harassment is predominantly verbal, but also very often gestural. Overall, 4 in 10 also report physical harassment. Just under one-third have experienced psychological or written or graphic harassment.



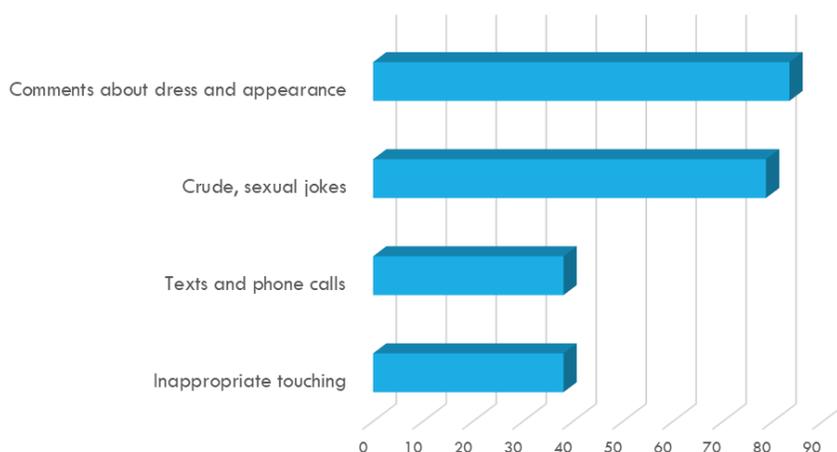
SEXUAL HARASSMENT IN THE WORKPLACE

Offensive sexual remarks appear to be the norm. Eight out of 10 respondents (81%) say that a fellow employee has made direct sexual remarks or jokes, or told stories that they found offensive. Only slightly less (73.8%) report another employee having made indirect sexual remarks or jokes, or told sexual stories within earshot of them.

Comments are made most frequently by journalists of the same rank, but also frequently by a boss or immediate supervisor.



Manifestations of sexual harassment



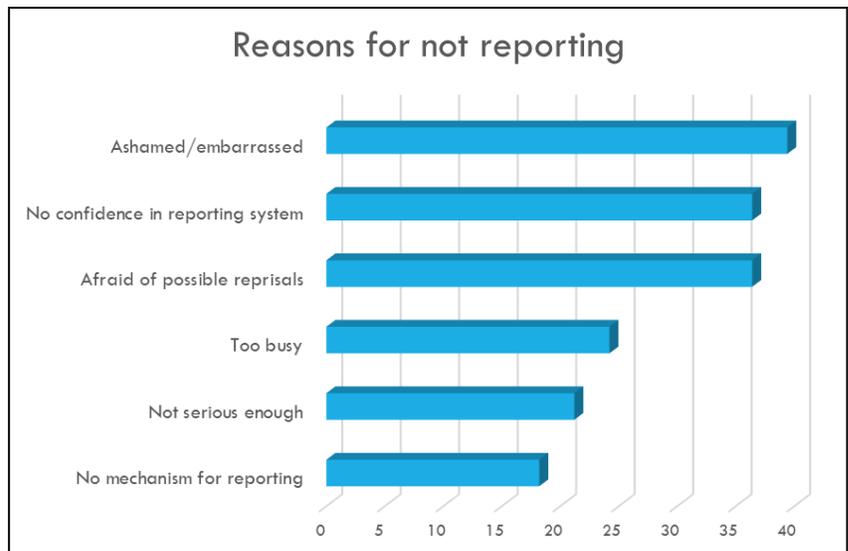
KINDS OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT

When asked about certain specific kinds of sexual harassment that they experienced, respondents predominantly referred to comments about their dress and appearance, as well as crude, sexual jokes. But even texts and phone calls, as well as inappropriate touching were reported by nearly 40%.

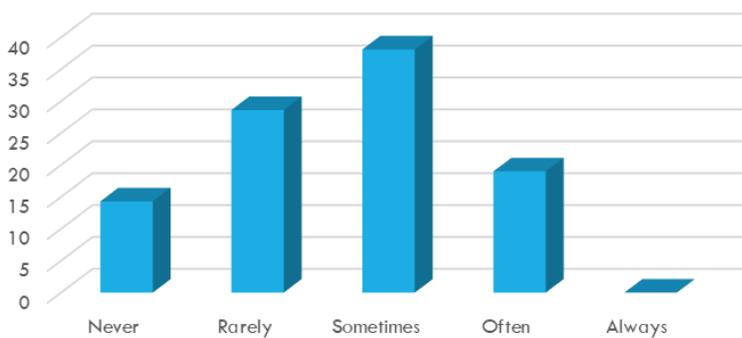
REPORTING WORKPLACE SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Respondents were less likely to report sexual harassment that occurred in the workplace – only 40% said they reported any such incidents. The dominant reason for not reporting was a feeling of shame or embarrassment, but also quite often a lack of confidence in the reporting system, as well as fear of possible reprisals.

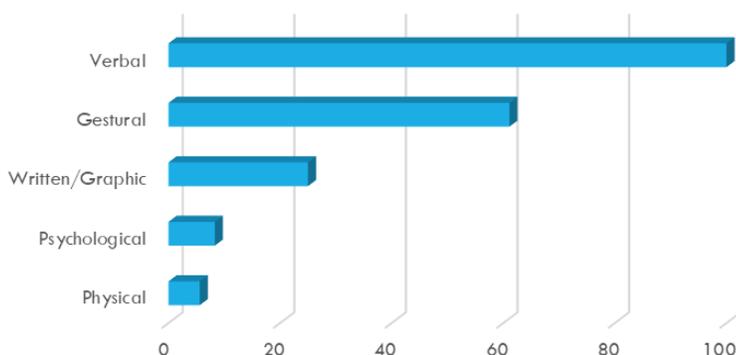
When cases were reported, just over half the cases ended with a warning for the fellow employee. Only 17% ended in termination, and 12% in suspension.



Have you faced sexual harassment on news reporting assignments?



Forms of harassment on assignment

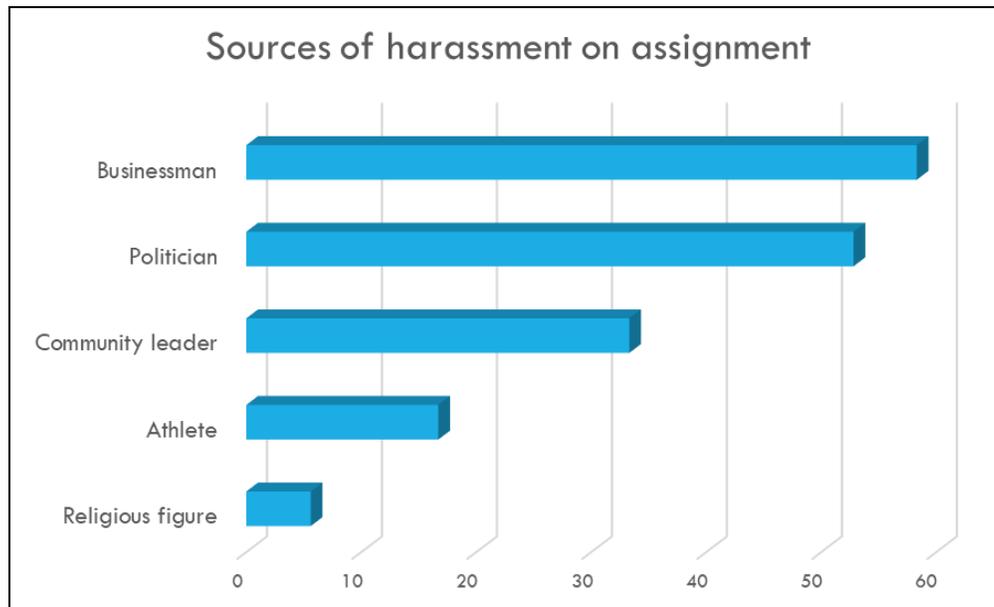


SEXUAL HARASSMENT ON ASSIGNMENT

Sexual harassment when out on news reporting assignments is also quite common. Nearly 6 in 10 respondents say they have faced such harassment. The most common form is verbal, as well as gestural. Written/graphic, psychological or physical are less common.

SOURCES OF HARASSMENT ON ASSIGNMENT

The most common sources of harassment when out reporting news include people in power. Nearly 6 in 10 cited businessmen as the offenders, followed by just over half who experienced sexual harassment from politicians. Community leaders were named by one-third, with athletes (17%) and religious figures (6%) less rare offenders.

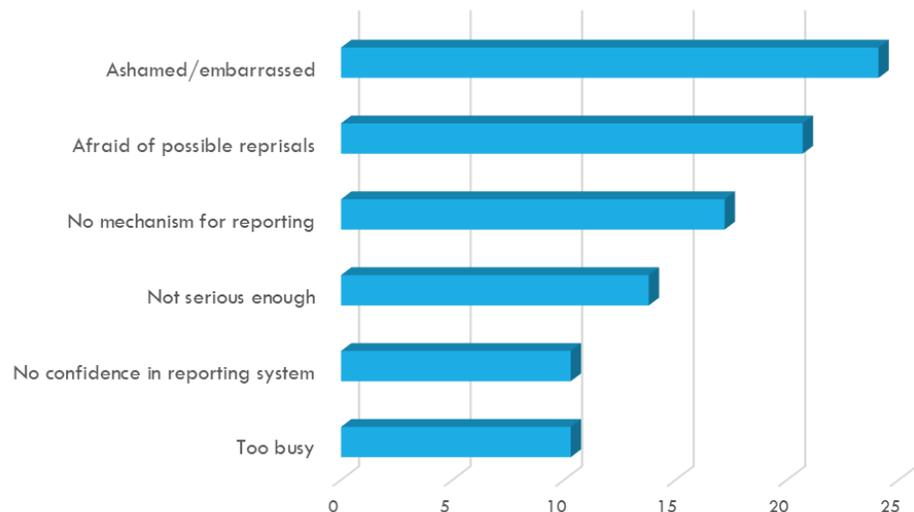


REPORTING HARASSMENT ON ASSIGNMENT

Reluctance to report sexual harassment when on assignment was even higher compared to harassment in the workplace. Only 1 in 5 (18.9%) reported such incidents, with the overwhelming majority (81.1%) choosing not to.

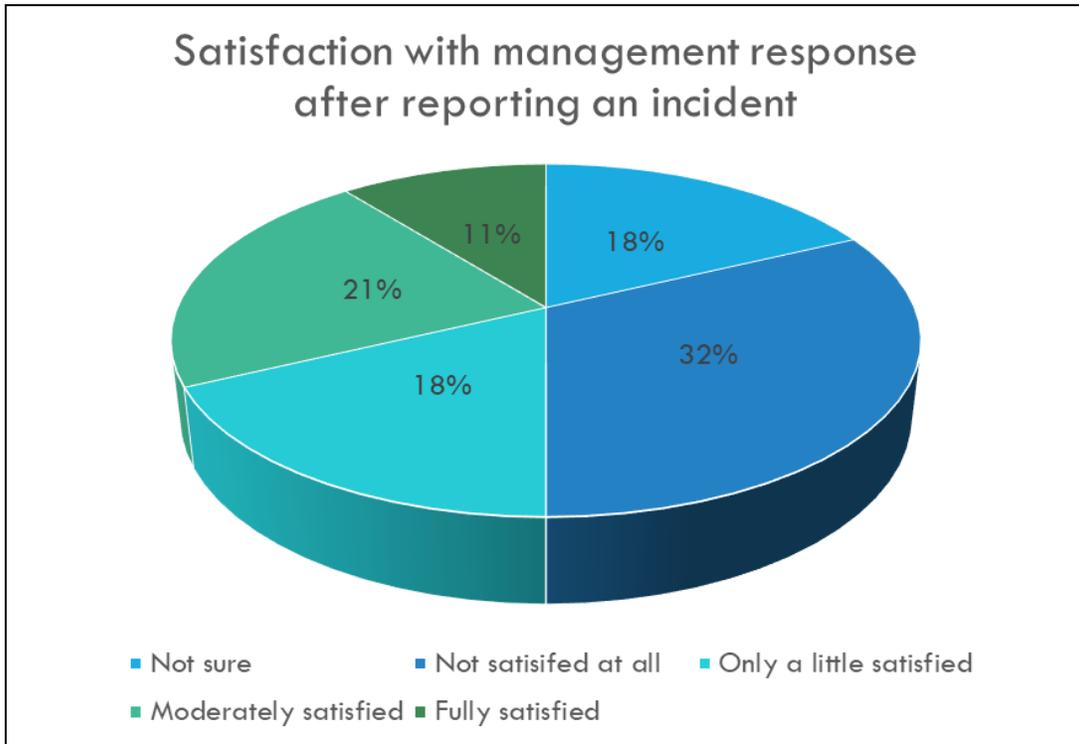
The main reasons for not reporting were a sense of shame or embarrassment, as well as fear of possible reprisals.

Reasons for not reporting sexual harassment on assignment



REPORTING HARASSMENT ON ASSIGNMENT

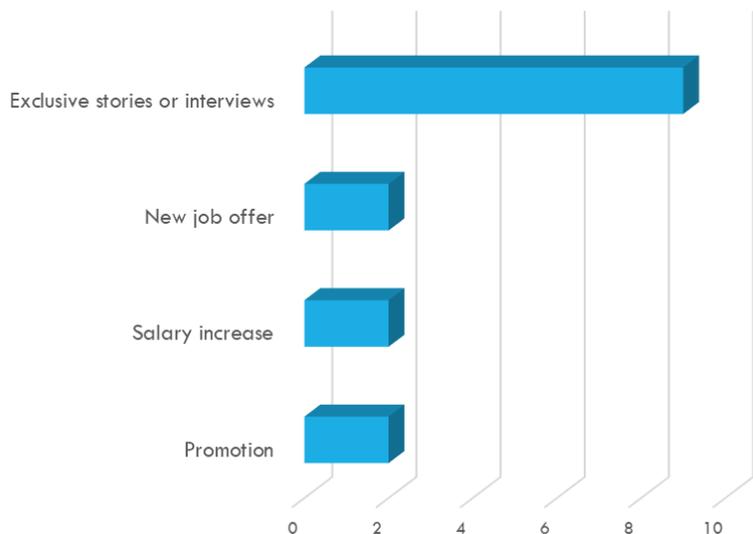
Five of the 7 cases where harassment was reported resulted in no action. Only in one case was the offender reported to police. More broadly, journalists tended to be little satisfied (18%) with management response when they had reported an incident. One-third were not satisfied at all.



OFFERS IN EXCHANGE FOR SEXUAL FAVOURS

One in 5 respondents (22% and 9 journalists in total) report that they had been offered something in exchange for sexual favors. The most common offer experienced by each of the 9 journalists related to exclusive stories or interviews. A promotion was also offered to 2 journalists, a salary increase to another 2, while 2 also received new job offers.

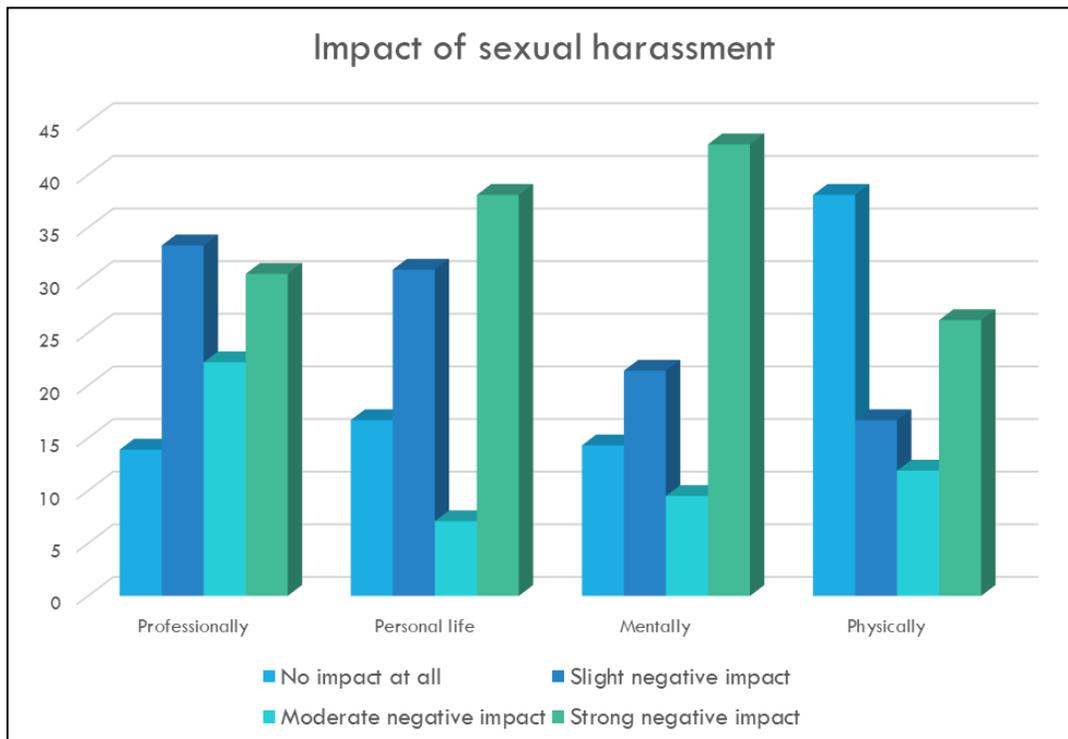
Offers in exchange for sexual favours



SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICIES

Media organizations in Fiji appear to overwhelmingly have sexual harassment policies. Nearly all respondents (86%) said their organization had such a policy, while a further 12% were unsure. Three-quarters of respondents also knew how and where to make sexual assault or misconduct complaints at work. Just over half (52.8%) also thought their fellow employees had at least adequate awareness of the policy, though one-third (33.3%) felt they had little or zero awareness.

However, two thirds (66.7%) said their media organisation never held workplace training on sexual assault and misconduct, and only 16.7% said their organisation provided stress counselling in such cases. Overall, 36.6% of respondents felt their workplace’s safeguards against sexual harassment were not at all, or only a little sufficient. Yet, 29.2% also thought safeguards were very, or completely sufficient.



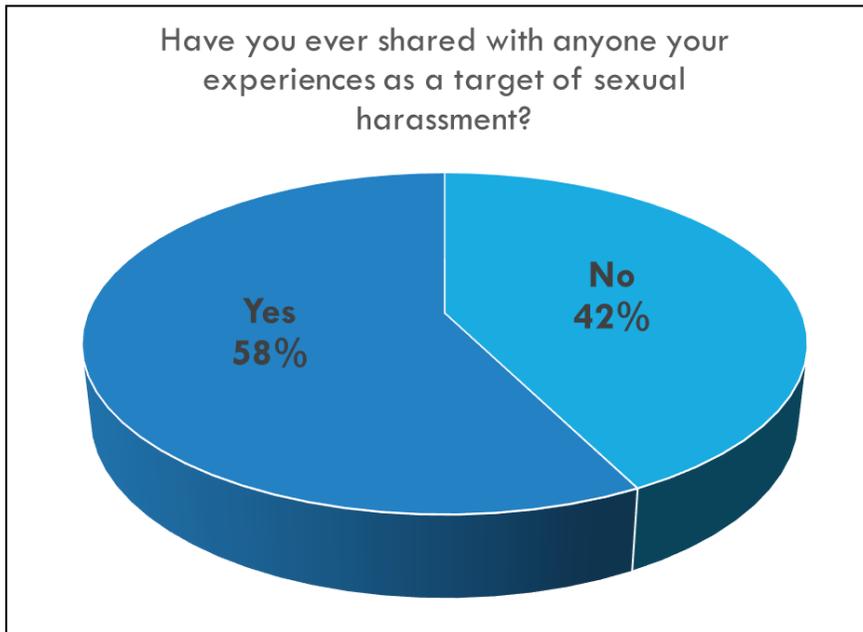
IMPACT OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Sexual harassment has a range of impacts on respondents’ lives. More than half said their experience of such harassment had had moderate or strong negative impacts, both professionally and mentally. Only slightly fewer (45%) said the impact on their personal lives was moderately or strongly negative. Physical impact was somewhat less, but still mentioned as moderately or strongly negative by 38% of respondents.

OPENING UP

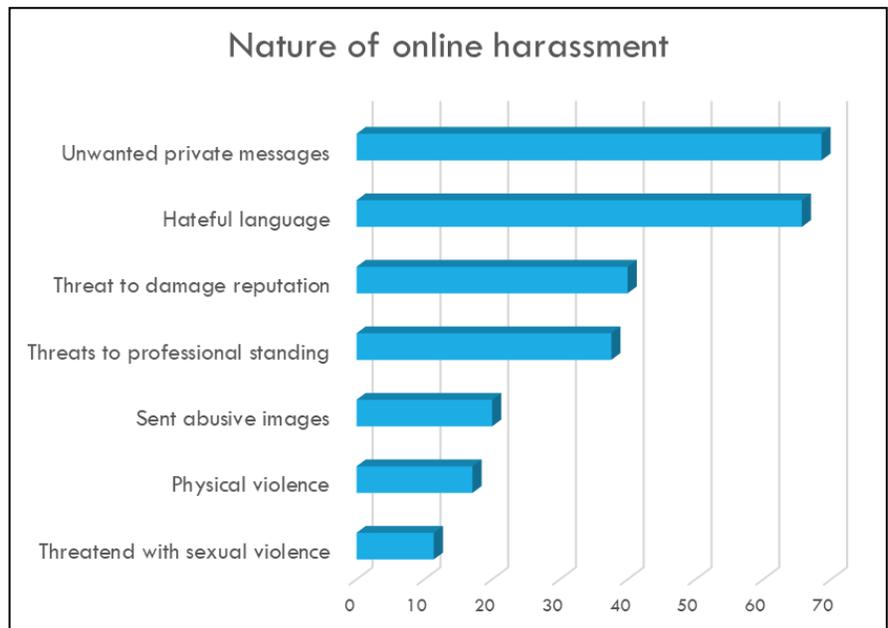
Responding to the survey appears to be the first time many of the respondents discussed their experiences with sexual harassment. A staggering 43% said that prior to the survey, they had never shared with anyone their experiences as a target of sexual harassment.

Further, only 29% had received any form of counselling, with 62% reporting they had not any such assistance.



FACING ONLINE THREATS AND HARASSMENT

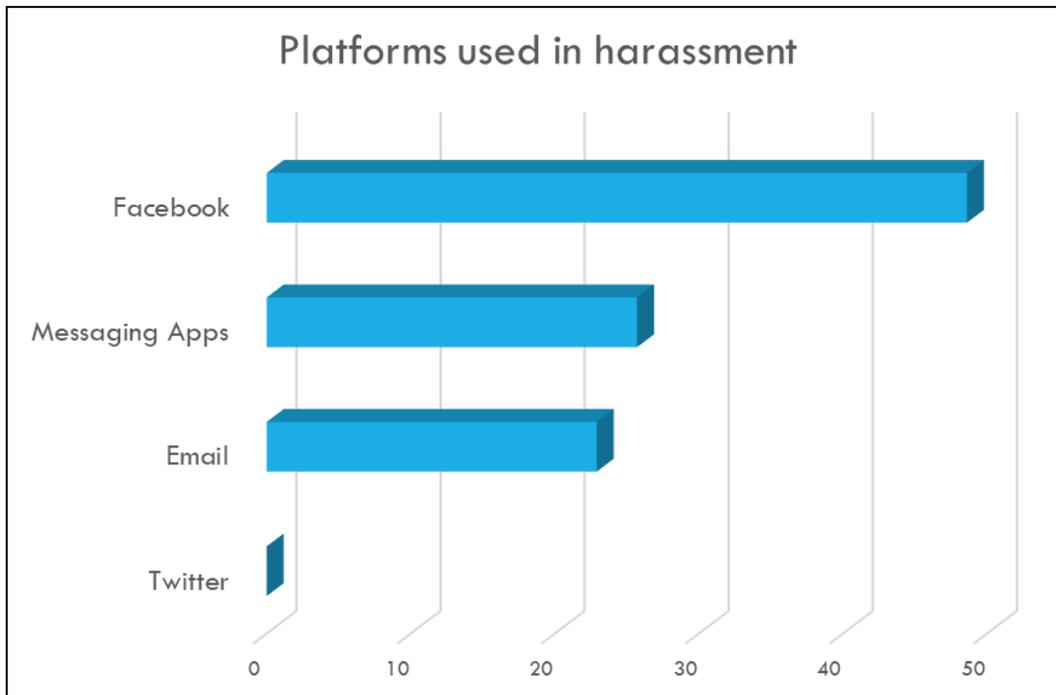
Online harassment of journalists has become a massive concern around the globe. In Fiji, it is also becoming an issue, with only 16.7% of respondents saying they had never experienced online threats or harassment as a journalist. Just over half (54.8%) said they had faced it sometimes, 19% often and 7.1% all the time. Most common are unwanted private messages and hateful language, with two-thirds of respondents who had



experienced online harassment reporting these forms. Threats to damage journalists' reputation was the third highest form of online harassment.

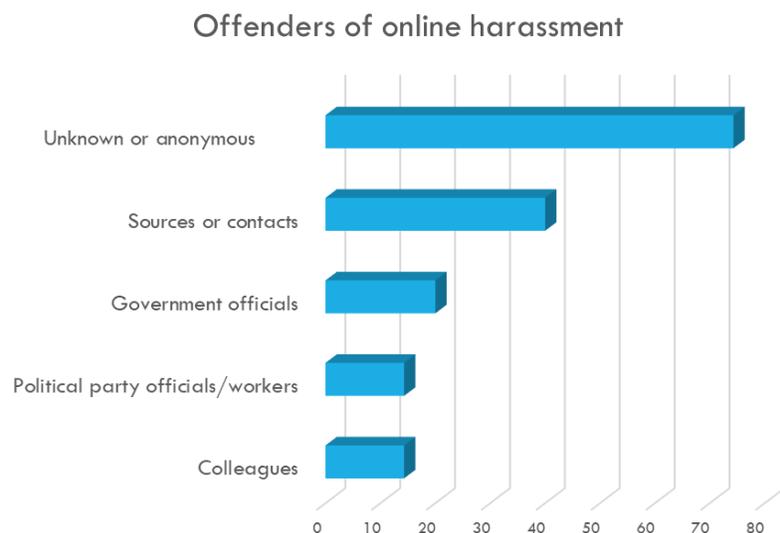
PLATFORMS USED FOR ONLINE HARASSMENT

Harassment takes place predominantly on Facebook, with nearly half of the respondents identifying the social network as the platform used against them. Messaging apps and emails are used to a lesser extent. *Twitter* was not reported as a platform by any of the respondents, perhaps a sign that the site, while popular particularly in the Global North, is not so popular in Fiji. *Twitter* is regarded more of a professional than social platform.



SOURCES OF ONLINE THREATS AND HARASSMENT

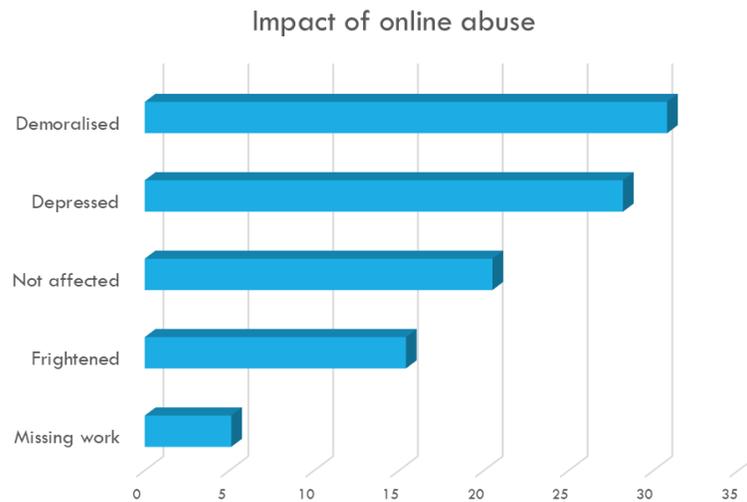
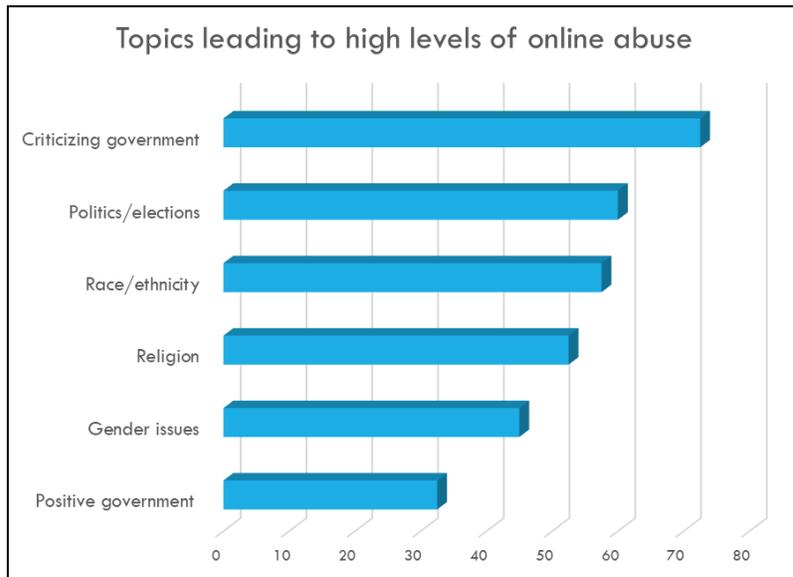
The offenders of online threats and harassment are largely anonymous. But journalists also reported offences from sources or contacts, as well as government officials and political party officials. Even colleagues engaged in online harassment, but to a smaller extent.



TOPICS LEADING TO ONLINE ABUSE

It appears that political and government stories lead to the highest levels of abuse. Stories criticising the government were cited by 72.5% as triggering high or extremely high levels of online abuse. Positive government stories triggered considerably less abuse.

Stories about race and ethnicity, as well as religion also led to high levels of abuse.



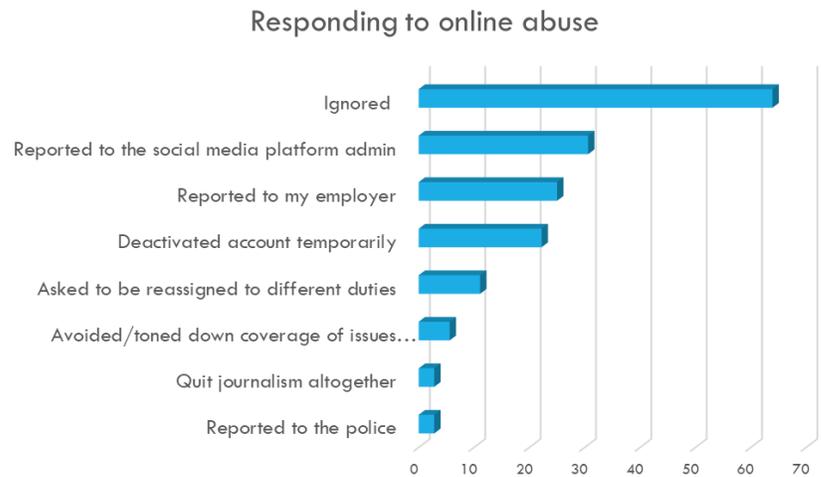
IMPACT OF ONLINE ABUSE

While one-fifth of respondents said they were not affected by online abuse, nearly one-third said that it demoralised them, and 28% said it made them depressed. Five per cent even said it made them miss work, while 15% were frightened by it.

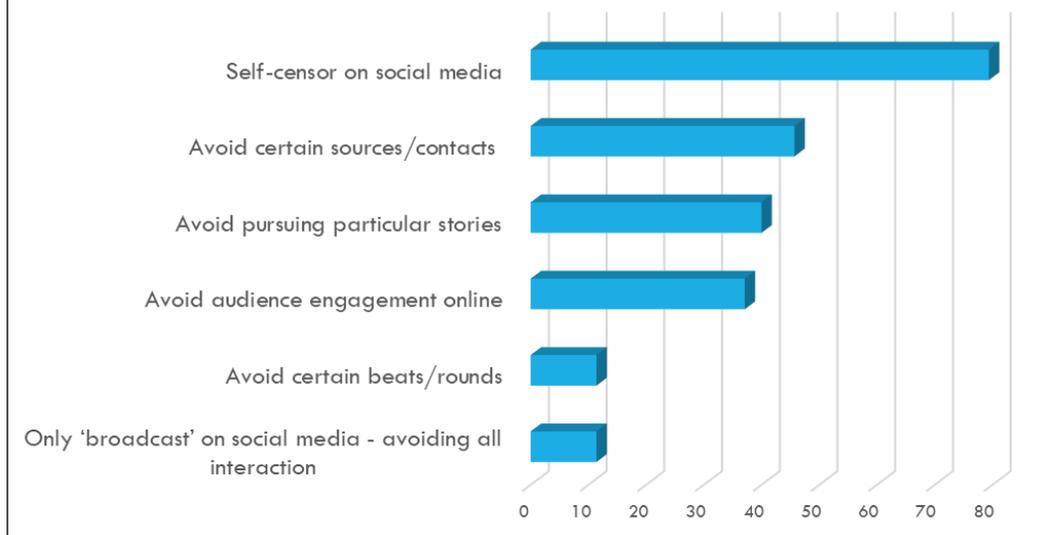
RESPONDING TO ONLINE HARASSMENT

The dominant approach to dealing with online harassment appears to be to ignore it, with 64% choosing this strategy. However, 31% also said they reported the abuse to social media administrators, while 25% reported it to their employer.

One in five (22%) even deactivated their account temporarily.



How does online violence affect your journalism practice and audience engagement?



IMPACT OF ONLINE ABUSE ON PRACTICES

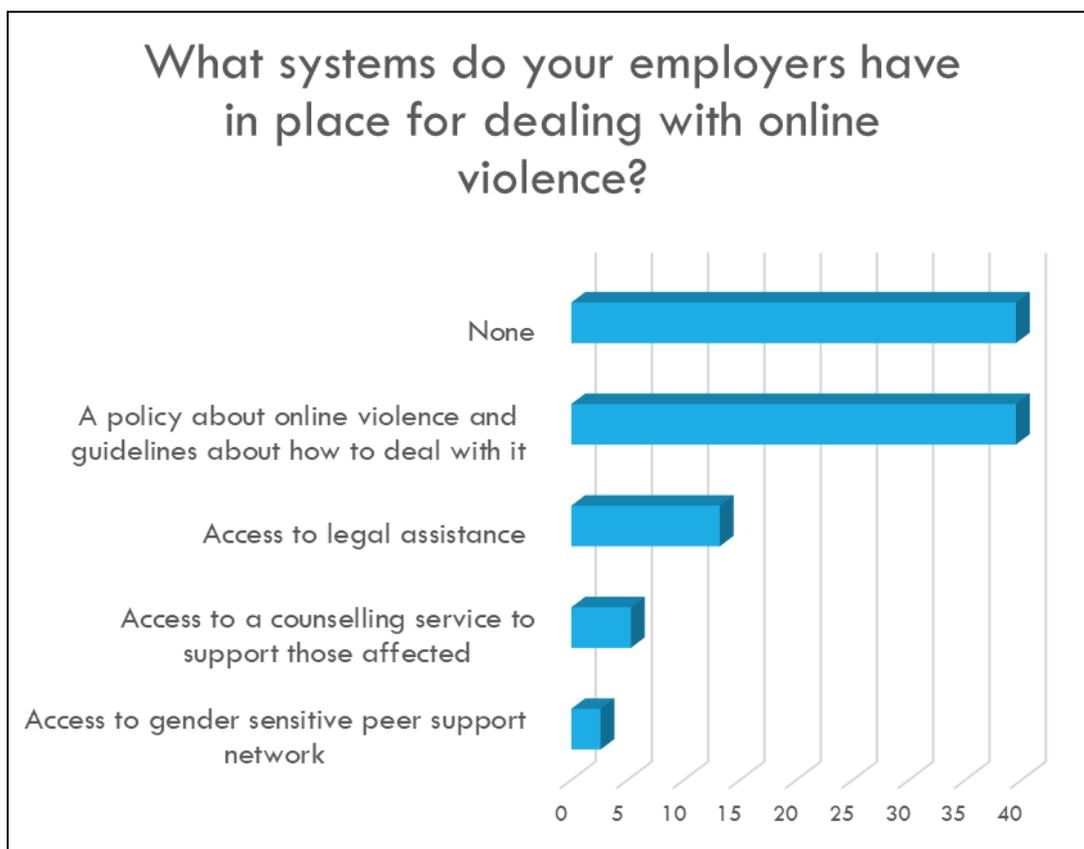
The largest impact of online violence seems to be that journalists tend to self-censor on social media.

This is followed by avoidance: either of certain sources or contacts, not pursuing certain stories, or unwillingness to engage with audiences.

EMPLOYER RESPONSE TO ONLINE ABUSE

Most respondents said employers are still ill-equipped to deal with online harassment. One-quarter said employers were not at all equipped, and a further 36% said they were barely equipped. Only 11% felt employers were sufficiently well-equipped.

Indeed, 40% said their employers had no systems in place for dealing with online violence, while another 40% said their employer had a policy and guidelines about how to deal with it. Thirteen per cent even reported having access to legal assistance.



RESULTS—INDEPTH INTERVIEWS

The in-depth interviews indicate that between them, the 23 respondents experienced all five types of sexual harassment in the ILO list — physical, verbal, gestural, written/graphic and psychological/emotional— comprising touching, insults, and/or innuendo and propositions of a sexual nature.

The respondents experienced sexual harassment both at the workplace and on their reporting rounds. Besides fellow journalists, the perpetrators ranged from politicians, businesses executives, athletes and ordinary members of the public encountered while reporting news.

Many victims reported feeling scared, scarred, and traumatised, with prolonged impacts on both their personal and professional lives.

Verbal and gestural sexual harassment were the most common, with the respondents having sexual remarks directed at them, or within earshot of them; offers to go on dates and drinking parties; and requests for sexual favors. Some respondents were also subjected to belittling remarks, as well as touching, groping and staring, both at the office and in the news reporting field.

Sexual harassment at the workplace

In terms of workplace harassment, *Respondent Two* recalled that her and her female colleagues were frequently subjected to jokes of

a sexual nature and told to “chill” when they expressed disapproval. *Respondent Two* felt that this behavior had been normalised. She became disillusioned because she took up journalism to help society:

“I didn’t know that this type of thing existed.”

Respondent Two also recalled criticism from her cameraman for wearing a skirt, instead of traditional attire to a media conference, with the comment that the way women dressed, often led to rape.

Respondent Five recalled a male colleague who commented on her personal life and made her feel inferior.

Young females starting a career in journalism felt especially vulnerable as they did not know about sexual harassment, were new to the workplace, desperate to fit in, and under pressure to produce news stories on a daily basis.

Respondent Six, who was in her first job, stated that because she wanted to maintain good working relationships, she tolerated the jokes, which over time became more sexual in nature.

In her opinion, putting up with the verbal harassment gave the wrong impression, and in some cases, escalated into physical harassment.

- Singh, S. B., & Hanusch, F. (2021). SPECIAL REPORT: Watchdogs under pressure: Pacific Islands journalists’ demographic profiles and professional views. *Pacific Journalism Review: Te Koako*, 27(1 & 2), 132-149. <https://doi.org/10.24135/pjr.v27i1and2.1164>

Respondent 10, a journalist with 10 years' background in both print and broadcast media, had a similar experience. When she started her career as a 21-year-old, she tried to adapt to the "coarse and vulgar jokes" but things gradually turned physical:

"I had accepted it as the norm...lighthearted moments to share laughter given the Fijian style of joking and spoiling each other. At times it does get physical. They would do it jokingly. I would get hugs from the back and when I resisted, he told me to just relax; it's just a hug."

Respondent Seven, in what was her first job, experienced frequent groping from a male colleague. She described herself as a "jovial person", which she feels could have sent the wrong signal. *Respondent 19* started in journalism as an 18-year-old, "fresh out of high school" after "a sheltered, privileged life". She feels taken advantage of by a colleague 15 years her senior.

"I was, in retrospect, very unaware of the power dynamics."

The interviews indicate that at least some of the in-house sexual harassment cases that

were reported were dealt with. *Respondent 19* states that after her complaint, a manager was demoted and transferred to another department, while *Respondent Five* stated that the last media company that she worked for was strict on sexual harassment.

However, the responses indicate that uncertainty about what constitutes sexual harassment, and the lack of reporting mechanisms often meant that a majority of the cases went unreported.

Much of the confusion concerns verbal sexual harassment, both on the part of the victim and the perpetrator.

This is reflected in *Respondent Six's* comment — that women need to understand that they do not have to entertain sexual jokes, and the men need to understand that there's a limit to 'jokes'. Besides the desire to fit in at work, the victims did not lodge complaints due to fears of retribution and being shunned by colleagues, fear of losing their jobs, and concerns about the perpetrator losing his job over their complaints.

Respondent 22 stated that she didn't know the definition of 'sexual harassment', but if it included inappropriate actions, insinuations and making her feel uncomfortable, then she definitely experienced it at the hands of her male colleagues.

After weighing her options, *Respondent Two* decided not to lodge a complaint because of work commitments.

- International Labour Organisation. (2019). C190 — Violence and Harassment Convention, 2019 (No. 190). https://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=NORMLEXPUB:12100:0::NO::P12100_ILO_CODE:C190
- Ibid.

Respondent 11 stated that she chose not to report verbal sexual harassment thinking that the perpetrator would lose his job “just because of a few remarks”.

“At the end of the day, we have to work together. He is the cameraman and I am the reporter.”

Sexual harassment while on news reporting assignments

The interviews indicate that not only are female reporters at risk at the workplace/office, but also on their news reporting rounds, where they experienced a similar trend of verbal, gestural and physical sexual harassment at the hands of male interviewees, or males encountered while on assignment. The perpetrators included government ministers and senior government officials, members of parliament, business executives, athletes, and at least in one case, a religious leader.

In one incident, a journalist sent to an isolated spot to cover an event was molested by a security guard under the pretext of helping her. The female journalists were also targeted by male spectators at sports venues and other random males at events and functions. They were subjected to sexually suggestive remarks, invited to drinking parties and received unwanted phone calls at their office, and even at home.

Respondent One stated that some people in high positions would only grant “exclusive interviews” to female reporters. In 2015, she interviewed a permanent secretary whose eyes “locked on my cleavage”, and a government minister who “sat so close to me, putting his hand around me”. She stated that she felt angry at the lack of respect for her as a journalist, and as a woman.

Respondent Five encountered a man who took her to his place on the pretext of interviewing him. Instead, she found a drinking party in full progress, where she was forced to stay against her wish.

Respondent Seven encountered a senior government ministry official who insisted on being interviewed outside his office and proceeded to grope her during the interview. Following that incident, she felt too traumatised to write the story.

Only four months into the job, *Respondent 11* was assigned to interview a manager at a major multinational corporation in Fiji, who asked that they go somewhere else to talk privately, then proceeded to ask her about her private life, while inviting her for drinks. When she declined, he stopped responding to her questions, and broke off all contact.

Respondent 19 recalled that six months into her cadetship, she was assigned to a senior member of the government after he insisted that he would only grant her an interview. Upon arrival, she was taken into his office where she had to sit through remarks about

her looks and questions about her personal relationships. *Respondent 19* also recalled covering formal events and functions, where she experienced men rubbing against her, handshakes that took longer than necessary and invitations to after-event rendezvous. *Respondent Six* remembered a business executive who insisted on meeting at his office, where he did not answer any of her questions, instead telling her that she was being ‘too professional’ and that she needed to ‘relax and not stress over it’.

“I remember my hands shaking and my palms sweating. I told him, ‘no, sir, I can’t’. I found it awkward, but I desperately needed this story.”

Respondent 13 recalled feeling ‘very uncomfortable’, when a ‘respected’ religious leader started calling her ‘darling’:

“I ignored it at first, because some old people call young girls dear and darling, but he said he really feels good talking to me, and I don’t think he meant it in a polite way.”

Respondent 20 stated that she would be invited on dates, and also sent inappropriate messages. One person she interviewed in Lautoka stalked her for months on Facebook.

“This type of thing would happen perhaps once a month...and I was a journalist for years. There were other young female journalists looking up to these men and they treated them in the same way.”

Respondents recalled frequent offers of gifts and propositions. *Interviewee 13* was offered expensive gifts by a ‘very well-known personality’.

“He asked me what kind of outfits I liked. He invited me for Diwali and offered to buy me a dress for the occasion.”

Female sports journalists, both photographers and reporters, were the prime targets of certain male athletes, male sports officials, and male sports fans.

Respondent Eight recalled facing comments of a sexual nature on almost every sports assignment, from both players and spectators. Likewise, *Respondent 12* stated that she would get Viber messages from players, and even management, including ‘sexting’. Some athletes would ask to be interviewed at their homes, where she would be offered drinks.

Respondent 17 stated that taking photos at rugby matches meant enduring name-calling and wolf whistling from spectators at every match:

“I learnt to block it out a lot of the time.”

Respondent 18 recalled being groped at a volleyball match by some men who made lewd comments.

“I cried in the van as I was shocked. The guys said to suck it up as it was part of the job.”

Weak reporting mechanisms

In a number of cases, the lack of reporting mechanisms, or the lack of knowledge about the reporting mechanisms that may have been in place, discouraged the victims from lodging complaints. Concerns that their complaints would not be treated seriously or would not be acted upon because some of the perpetrators were prominent figures, also discouraged the victims from complaining. *Respondent Five* stated:

“If I had a chance to report the incidences, I would have done it. I would report it if I was provided the right support to do it.”

According to *Respondent Two*, she had to seek outside counselling since none was available at her workplace. The victims who did choose to complain felt that their complaints were not always treated seriously, especially non-physical sexual harassment,

which was often passed off as joking or bantering.

Respondent 10 stated that sexual jokes and innuendos were ‘just normal and part of the work life’. The male supervisors treated verbal harassment as ‘lighthearted moments’ and would join in.

Respondent 13 stated that her editor made light of the religious leader calling her ‘darling’, while *Respondent 10* stated that she was told that she needed to develop a ‘thick skin’ as she was in the media industry.

Respondent 19 felt this this was a dangerous trend that only encouraged the perpetrators:

“What starts as harassment quickly escalates to assault when the perpetrators feel protected by a newsroom that puts skill above values.”

In some cases, even the more serious incidents involving physical sexual harassment were dismissed when reported. *Respondent Six*, who was attacked by the security guard, stated that she was actually blamed when she reported the incident:

“They blamed me for wearing a skirt. They blamed me because I didn’t ask the driver to wait for me even though I did. They blamed me for accepting the assignment.”

Respondent Six added:

“The higher ups should take serious action...they should follow through with the police if the matter is reported.”

The apparent dismissive attitude could partly be put down to a lack of understanding about sexual harassment and the severity of the impact on the victims. This underscores the need for an awareness campaign among all editorial staff.

Impact on personal and professional lives

All the respondents said that they were personally and professionally affected by the sexual harassment. The respondents felt afraid, demeaned, depressed and demoralised. They did not feel like coming to work, and those that did turn up, found it hard to concentrate. The victims dreaded having to face the perpetrators again, whether a workmate, or someone they had to interact with in the course of their reporting. Respondent One felt “uncomfortable” and “angry” because of the lack of respect for women.

“You feel like you don’t have the freedom to do your work and execute it to the best of your ability because at the back of your mind, you know that someone’s eyes are going to be on you in the most disgusting way.”

Respondent Four was among those who started to avoid certain assignments because she felt “scared most of the time”. She felt that she was not progressing at work and took to drinking as a coping mechanism. For Respondent Five, the stress took a mental toll, and caused her to leave the industry:

Your mind and body just shut down and you don’t want to get out of bed.

Respondent Six, the victim of the security guard, stated:

“Words can’t describe the emotions I felt. Only a person who has gone through a similar situation would understand.”

She added that she no longer wanted to interview males, unless it was in a public setting. She eventually quit her job.

Respondent Seven stated that she lost trust in men, whereas Respondent Eight blamed herself, and took to dressing “properly” in baggy clothes.

According to Respondent 9, the sexual harassment that she experienced “affected her whole being” — her work, her personal life and her relationships with others. At one point she refused to talk to most men because she felt unsafe around them. She resorted exclusively to phone interviews because she was frightened to meet strangers in person.

Respondent 10 said that being objectified as a woman affected her self-esteem, and she became resigned that it was a “man’s world”. *Respondent 12* said she became too shy and scared to even enter a sports venue.

Her performance at work suffered as a result:

“I recall on Sunday I was covering a football match at the National Stadium...the sexual comments from the crowd and the reserve players shook me up. My hands were shaking so much that I couldn’t control the camera, and my footage was not the quality to be shown on national television.”

Some respondents pointed out that the problem goes beyond the newsroom and is rooted in a patriarchal society.

According to *Respondent 11*, it starts from how we have been brought up, and the mindset that women are inferior to men, and

that the woman’s role is that of the homemaker:

“When they see us out there on the field, reporting on issues, I guess it’s something that bruises their egos. They objectify us for pleasure.”

These views were echoed by *Respondent 20*, who also believes that it ‘starts from the home’:

“Young boys must be taught about the right and wrong.”

These responses suggest that sexual harassment could, in part, stem from deeply-rooted attitudes in society and while efforts by individual sectors and organisations to counter the problem is required, the situation also calls for a broader, national campaign.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This research reveals that Fijian female journalists, as a group, are vulnerable to sexual harassment, which is fairly prevalent, both at the workplace, and on the news beat.

The lack of awareness about the issue on the part of both the victims and perpetrators, and the apparent absence in some cases of clearly articulated sexual harassment policies, including reporting mechanisms, could be exacerbating and perpetuating the problem.

In cases where there are reporting mechanisms, policies and procedures in place, they are not fully utilised, due to a lack of awareness about them and/or inconsistency in their application.

And when sexual harassment is reported, it is not always taken seriously. These lapses could mean that not only is sexual harassment fairly commonplace, often the perpetrators get away with it, which only encourages such behaviour and prolongs the problem.

Because of the lack of education about sexual harassment, coupled with the fact that the victims rarely get a chance to share their experiences, even privately, it is conceivable that the perpetrators do not fully understand sexual harassment or the extent of the suffering that is inflicted on the victims.

It is plausible that the perpetrators will think twice about their actions if they are fully cognisant of sexual harassment and its effects, including verbal sexual harassment, which the research indicates isn't taken seriously enough.

For example, *Respondent 15* stated that when she shared with male colleagues what she

faced when covering sports events, they were sympathetic, and would accompany her on assignments.

This indicates the positive outcome of sharing problems and creating awareness, including awareness about the victims' suffering (without identifying the victims).

The research indicates that damage from sexual harassment is widespread. It not only affects the victim in multiple ways, but also has an adverse impact on the organisation's productivity as whole, given that up to 50% of Fiji journalists are females.

A good proportion of the victims feel incapacitated by sexual harassment and have to force themselves to attend work, where they are unable to function at optimal levels.

The female journalists' inability to carry out their work proficiently would have a knock-on effect on the quality of news.

Given the public interest role of the media, this indicates that stamping out sexual harassment in the Fiji news media sector is a national issue. However, the research indicates that victims mostly choose to suffer in silence, or they leave the profession altogether, which means that it is unclear whether the heads of media organisations are fully cognisant of the scale of the problem.

This is not a healthy trend for a sector that is already facing a shortage of skills and qualifications.

Towards this end, this study makes nine recommendations to protect female journalists from sexual harassment at the workplace and on the news reporting beat.

Recommendation 1:

The first step in breaking the sexual harassment cycle is adopting adequate safety measures. It is recommended that all media organisations not only adopt a sexual harassment policy but implement it to the full. The policy should include well-defined reporting mechanisms, including criminal proceedings if warranted.

Recommendation 2:

The research indicates that one of the root causes of the problem is the victims' and perpetrators' lack of awareness about what constitutes sexual harassment and its impact. In order to break the culture of silence in which sexual harassment thrives, it is recommended that all media organisations create awareness about their sexual harassment policies among staff to better understand the problem, its manifestations, its impact on the victims, and the protective measures that are in place. If necessary, this can be achieved through workshops and seminars, which should become part of the organisational calendar of activities.

Recommendation 3:

Further to creating awareness and demonstrating commitment to the sexual harassment policy, it is recommended that media organisations require that all staff read the sexual harassment policy, and sign a declaration confirming that they have read the document, understand it, and agree to comply with its requirements. This should be included in the contracts of all new staff to put their signature. These measures will instill employee awareness and confidence in the sexual harassment policy. It will demonstrate the organisation's commitment to addressing the problem.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation 4:

Based on the feedback that cases of sexual harassment, when reported, were not always taken seriously, or that offenders tended to get off lightly, if not scot-free, it is recommended that news media organisations adopt a 'zero-tolerance' sexual harassment policy and implement measures to ensure that any offences that are reported are recorded and taken through the entire process. The criteria for lodging a complaint should be clearly articulated and the complainants should be able to track the progress of their complaints. There should be a deadline within which cases must be heard and dealt with.

Recommendation 5:

Besides the newsroom and the office, female journalists are also victimised while out reporting the news. The research indicates that both media organisations and female journalists are not fully aware of the risks in the field of news reporting until they are confronted with a situation, when it is too late. It is recommended that media organisations take a proactive approach and appraise themselves of the risks that female journalists face while reporting news, and compile/adopt the appropriate guidelines and safety precautions. These could include identifying any potentially risky assignments in advance and preparing accordingly. For instance, for certain assignments female reporters should be accompanied by a fellow male employee. Female journalists should not be alone when working late hours, or in remote or isolated areas. Great care should be taken to ensure that proper transportation arrangements are in place, and female journalists are not stranded, especially in isolated spots and in late hours. If need be, media organisations should consider not allocating certain risky assignments to female journalists unless appropriate security can be arranged.

Recommendation 6:

Because of the sensitive nature of sexual harassment and the stigma/shame associated with it, the victims are often reluctant to speak out or lodge complaints. Towards this end, it is recommended that media organisations create female-only workplace spaces for employees for '*talanoa sessions*', to share information about sexual harassment and how to support each other. Female journalists may find it easier to share with members of the same sex within the support group. They may feel emboldened to speak out among their peers, before taking any complaints forward. This addresses *Respondent One's* recommendation to provide women the opportunity and the courage to speak out.

Recommendation 7:

Another anti-sexual harassment measure for media organisations is to take specific actions to boost female leadership in the newsroom. Having gender balanced newsrooms with more females in top management and decision-making positions could lead to a more sympathetic response towards sexual harassment victims and a greater inclination to take such incidents seriously.

Recommendation 8:

Besides strengthening internal mechanisms, media organisation should consider some form of recognition/acknowledgement of external reporting/monitoring mechanisms for sexual harassment cases through organisations such as the Fiji Media Association, which represents the country's journalists, and could advocate on the victims' behalf. Among other things, this will allow an independent organisation to keep watch on the progress, or lack thereof, of any complaints that are lodged. External oversight will compel media organisations to act on complaints and take them to conclusion.

Recommendation 9:

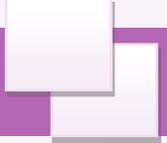
As some respondents pointed out, sexual harassment is an issue that transcends the media sector, with roots in a patriarchal society. Female journalists encounter sexual harassment not just in the newsroom but while out reporting the news, from males from all strata of society. This indicates a much bigger problem in other employment sectors as well, with some evidence of this in the FWRM research on sexual harassment published in 2002 and 2016.

This situation calls for a national effort covering the country as a whole. It is recommended that as part efforts to empower women, the Fiji government recognises sexual harassment as a national priority and embarks on a national campaign to create widespread awareness about it, starting with training and education in schools. It is recommended that the media sector, because of its reach and influence, support any such government effort.

RECOMMENDATIONS IN SUMMARY

- That all media organisations adopt a sexual harassment policy with well-defined reporting mechanisms and implement it to the full.
- Media organisations create awareness about their sexual harassment policy through workshops and seminars, in conjunction with women's rights groups and other relevant bodies such as the ILO Pacific.
- Media organisations require all staff to sign a declaration that they will abide by the organisational sexual harassment policy. This declaration should be part of staff contract.
- News media organisations adopt a 'zero-tolerance' policy against sexual harassment and ensure that any offences that are reported are registered and taken through the complaints process within a stipulated time-frame.
- Media organisations adopt appropriate guidelines and safety precautions for female journalists on news assignment, especially risky assignments like sports.
- Media organisations facilitate the creation of female-only safe spaces and support groups to discuss issues and incidences of sexual harassment.
- Media organisations take specific measures to boost female leadership in newsrooms, with more opportunities for females in top management and decision-making positions.
- Media organisations allow victims to lodge cases with an independent organisation like the Fijian Media Association to monitor how the cases are being handled.
- Government to launch a national education and awareness sexual harassment campaign starting at the school level and the media sector to support any such effort.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT



This project is a tribute to the courageous female journalists who shared their stories. Their invaluable contributions could be a catalyst for change for a safer workplace for future female journalists.

We acknowledge your strength, courage and resilience to speak up and speak out against sexual harassment in the workplace, breaking the bias and walls of gender inequality.

We thank the research and technical support team at The University of the South Pacific Journalism (USP) Programme — Associate Professor Shailendra Bahadur Singh and journalism teaching assistants, Geraldine Panapasa and Eliko Drugunalevu.

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**Prevalence of sexual harassment and impact on female journalists in the
workplace and on assignment:
A Fiji case study**

Survey: 2021

**This is a strictly confidential questionnaire.
No names of any respondents or organisations will be used.**

Notes on Sexual harassment and its manifestations

Before filling the questionnaire, please consider the definition of sexual harassment and its different forms.

A. Sexual harassment

1. Sexual harassment is any unwanted conduct of a sexual nature, including:
2. Request for sexual favours
3. Verbal/physical gesture of sexual nature that makes recipient feel humiliated, offended and/or intimidated by it being made into working requirement, or;
4. Create an intimidating, hostile or inappropriate working environment¹.

B. Forms of Sexual harassment

- I. **Physical:** includes unwelcome touching in a sexual manner - kissing, patting, pinching, glancing or lustful staring.
- II. **Verbal:** unwelcome comments about private life or body part or person's appearance, sexually suggestive jokes and comments.
- III. **Gestural:** sexually suggestive body language and or gestures, repeated winks, gestures with fingers, and licking lips.
- IV. **Written or graphic** display of pornographic materials, sexually explicit pictures, screen savers or posters, harassment via emails and other modes of electronic communication.
- V. **Psychological/emotional:** persistent proposals and unwelcome requests, unwanted invitations to go out on dates, insults, taunts or innuendo of a sexual nature.

¹ International Labour Organisation. (April, 2011). Guidelines on sexual harassment at the workplace. Available at: https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---asia/---ro-bangkok/---ilo-jakarta/documents/publication/wcms_171329.pdf available at:

Tick which media you work in

Print
Online
Broadcast
Other

QUESTIONS

1. How knowledgeable are you about how sexual harassment?
 - A. Not at all
 - B. Little
 - C. Somewhat
 - D. A lot
 - E. Completely

2. Have you ever been sexually harassed at your workplace?
 - A. Never
 - B. Rarely
 - C. Sometimes
 - D. Often
 - E. Always

3. If yes, what form did the sexual harassment take? You can circle more than answer if relevant.
 - A. Physical
 - B. Verbal
 - C. Gestural
 - D. Written/Graphic
 - E. psychological

4. How frequently does sexual harassment occur at your workplace by fellow employees?
 - A. Never
 - B. Rarely
 - C. Sometimes
 - D. Often
 - E. Always

5. How frequent is sexual harassment from your sources when covering news events and conducting interviews?
 - A. Never
 - B. Rarely
 - C. Sometimes
 - D. Often
 - E. Always

6. Has a fellow employee(s) made direct sexual remarks/jokes or told stories to you that you found offensive?
- A. Yes
 - B. No
 - C. Not sure
7. If yes, what was your working relationship with the offender(s)? Indicate more than one answer if relevant.
- A. Boss/immediate supervisor
 - B. My junior
 - C. Same rank as me
 - D. Others: _____
8. Has a fellow employee made indirect offensive sexual remarks/jokes or told sexual stories within earshot of you?
- A. Yes
 - B. No
 - C. Not sure
9. If yes, what was your working relationship with the offender(s)? Indicate more than one answer if relevant.
- A. Boss/immediate supervisor
 - B. My junior
 - C. Same rank as me
 - D. Others: _____
10. Which of the following manifestations of sexual harassment have you experienced? Indicate more than one answer if relevant.
- A. Inappropriate touching
 - B. Crude, sexual jokes
 - C. Comments about dress and appearance
 - D. Texts and phone calls
 - D. Others: _____
11. Did you report any of the incidents to anyone?
- A. Yes
 - B. No
12. What was the main reason for not reporting incidents?
- A. It wasn't serious enough
 - B. Too busy

- C. Afraid to report due to possible reprisals/victimization
- D. No mechanism for reporting
- E. No confidence in reporting system
- F. Ashamed/embarrassed to report
- G. Not sure

13. If the case(s) was reported, what action was taken against the offender(s)?

- A. No action
- B. Warning
- C. Suspension
- D. Termination
- E. Not sure

14. Have you faced sexual harassment on news reporting assignments?

- A. Never
- B. Rarely
- C. Sometimes
- D. Often
- E. Always

15. If yes, what form did the sexual harassment take? See forms of harassment on P1.

Indicate more than one answer if relevant.

- A. Physical
- B. Verbal
- C. Gestural
- D. Written/Graphic
- E. Psychological

16. If yes, who was the offender? You can circle more than one answer if relevant.

- A. Politician
- B. Businessman
- C. Athlete
- D. Religious figure
- E. Community Leader
- F. Others (specify) _____

17. Did you report any of the incidents to anyone?

- A. Yes
- B. No

18. What was the main reason for not reporting incidents?

- A. It wasn't serious enough

- B. Too busy
 - C. Afraid to report due to reprisal/victimization
 - D. No mechanism for reporting
 - E. No confidence in reporting system
 - F. Ashamed/embarrassed to report
 - G. Not sure
19. If the case(s) was reported, what action was taken against the offender(s)?
- A. No action
 - B. Offender was reprimanded/disciplined by my employer
 - C. Offender was reported to police
 - D. Offender was convicted in court
 - E. Not sure
20. If the case(s) was reported, did any of your workmates treat you differently for reporting sexual harassment?
- A. Mostly treated me favourably
 - B. Mostly treated me unfavourably
 - C. Mostly treated me neutrally
 - D. Not sure
 - E. Others _____
21. If you reported an incident, how satisfied were you with the management response?
- A. Fully satisfied
 - B. Moderately satisfied
 - C. Only a little satisfied
 - D. Not satisfied at all
 - E. Not sure
22. Have you ever been offered any of the following in exchange of sexual favours? Indicate more than one answer if relevant.
- A. Promotion
 - B. Salary increase
 - C. Exclusive stories/interviews
 - D. New job offer
 - E. Others _____
23. Does your media organization have a sexual harassment policy?
- A. Yes
 - B. No
 - C. Not sure
24. If your organisation has a sexual harassment policy, how aware are your fellow employees about the policy?

- A. Zero awareness
- B. Little awareness
- C. Somewhat aware
- D. Adequate awareness
- E. Complete awareness

25. Does your organization have sufficient workplace safeguards against sexual harassment?

- A. None at all
- B. Little
- C. Somewhat
- D. A lot
- E. Complete safeguards

26. Do you know how and where to make sexual assault/misconduct complaints at work?

- A. Yes
- B. No
- C. Not sure

27. Does your media organisation provide stress counseling in cases of sexual harassment?

- A. Yes
- B. No
- C. Not sure

28. Has your media organization ever held workplace training on sexual assault/misconduct?

- A. Yes
- B. No
- C. Not sure

29. If you experienced sexual harassment, what was the impact on you professionally (work performance)?

- A. Strong negative impact
- B. Moderate negative impact
- C. Slight negative impact
- D. No impact at all
- E. Others _____

30. What was the impact on your personal life?

- A. Strong negative impact
- B. Moderate negative impact
- C. Slight negative impact
- D. No impact at all
- E. Others _____

31. What was the impact mentally/psychologically?
- A. Strong negative impact
 - B. Moderate negative impact
 - C. Slight negative impact
 - D. No impact at all
 - E. Others _____
32. What was the impact physically?
- A. Strong negative impact
 - B. Moderate negative impact
 - C. Slight negative impact
 - D. No impact
 - E. Others _____
33. Prior to this survey, have you ever shared with anyone your experiences as a target of sexual harassment?
- A. Yes
 - B. No
34. As a sexual harassment victim, have you ever received any form of counseling?
- A. Yes
 - B. No

SECTION TWO

Online threats

1. Have you ever faced any form of online threats/harassment as a journalist?
- A. Never
 - B. Sometimes
 - C. Often
 - D. Very often
 - E. Not sure
2. If you have faced online harassment, what is the nature of the harassment?
Indicate more than one answer if relevant.
- A. Hateful language
 - B. Unwanted private messages
 - C. Threat to damage your reputation
 - D. Physical violence
 - E. Threats to professional standing
 - F. Threatened with sexual violence
 - G. Sent abusive images

3. **What is the e-platform used in the harassment?**
Indicate more than one answer if relevant.
 - A. Email
 - B. Messaging Apps
 - C. Facebook
 - D. Twitter
 - E. Others (Please specify)

4. **Who were the offenders of the online harassment?**
Indicate more than one answer if relevant.
 - A. Unknown or anonymous
 - B. Sources or contacts
 - C. Colleagues
 - D. Government officials
 - E. Opposition politicians
 - F. Political party officials/workers
 - G. Rival media organization staff

5. **In your experience, what is the level of online abuse triggered by stories on gender issues?**
 - A. None
 - B. Low
 - C. Medium
 - D. High
 - E. Extremely high

6. **In your experience, what is the level of abuse triggered by stories on politics/elections?**
 - A. None
 - B. Low
 - C. Medium
 - D. High
 - E. Extremely high

7. **In your experience, what is the level of abuse triggered by stories on race/ethnicity?**
 - A. None
 - B. Low
 - C. Medium
 - D. High
 - E. Extremely high

8. In your experience, what is the level of abuse triggered by stories on religion?
- A. None
 - B. Low
 - C. Medium
 - D. High
 - E. Extremely high
9. In your experience, what is the level of abuse triggered by stories on politics/elections?
- A. None
 - B. Low
 - C. Medium
 - D. High
 - E. Extremely high
10. In your experience, what is the level of abuse triggered by stories criticizing government?
- A. None
 - B. Low
 - C. Medium
 - D. High
 - E. Extremely high
11. In your experience, what is the level of abuse triggered by positive government stories?
- A. None
 - B. Low
 - C. Medium
 - D. High
 - E. Extremely high
12. In general, which of the following best describes how were you affected by one, or more of the forms of online abuse?
- A. Not affected
 - B. Demoralised
 - C. Depressed
 - D. Frightened
 - E. Missing work

13. In general, how did you respond to any forms of online harassment or deal with them?

Indicate more than one answer if relevant.

- A. Ignored
- B. Reported to my employer
- C. Reported to the police
- D. Reported to the social media platform admin
- E. Avoided/toned down coverage of issues likely to attract harassment
- F. Deactivated account temporarily
- G. Asked to be reassigned to different duties
- H. Quit journalism altogether

14. How does online violence affect your journalism practice and audience engagement?

Indicate more than on answer if relevant.

- A. Self-censor on social media
- B. Only 'broadcast' on social media - avoiding all interaction
- C. Avoid certain beats/rounds
- D. Avoid audience engagement online
- E. Avoid certain sources/contacts
- F. Avoid pursuing particular stories

15. What systems do your employers have in place for dealing with online violence?

- A. Access to gender sensitive peer support network
- B. Access to legal assistance
- C. A policy about online violence and guidelines about how to deal with it
- D. Access to a counselling service to support those affected
- E. None

16. Which of the following best describes how well your media organization is equipped to deal with online harassment?

- A. Sufficiently well-equipped
- B. Insufficiently equipped
- C. Barely equipped
- D. Not at all equipped.
- E. Not sure

PLEASE BE SURE TO FILL IN THE BACKGROUND INFORMATION PLEASE

Background Information

Date: _____ Age: _____ Location: _____

Job title: _____

Journalist work experience (which years): _____

Circle which media you work in: Print Online Broadcast Others



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