# Optimizing Extension Communication in The Prevention of Sexual Harrasment in Higher Education Institutions (Systematic Literature Review)

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## ARTICLE INFO

**How to cite:**
Ritonga, AR, Et all. (2024) Optimizing Extension Communication on The Prevention of Sexual Harrasment in Higher Education Institutions (Systematic Literature Review). Komunika, 20(02) 09-25

## ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengoptimalkan strategi komunikasi dalam mencegah pelecehan seksual di institusi pendidikan tinggi. Di tengah meningkatnya insiden pelecehan seksual yang mengancam keamanan dan kesejahteraan mahasiswa, khususnya perempuan berusia 18-24 tahun, kebutuhan akan intervensi yang lebih efektif menjadi semakin mendesak. Menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif deskriptif, penelitian ini menganalisis data dari berbagai publikasi ilmiah, dokumen resmi, dan jurnal melalui teknik analisis konten untuk mengidentifikasi tema utama dan mengkategorisasi informasi relevan. Hasil dari penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa strategi komunikasi konseling yang efektif sangat penting dalam mencegah pelecehan seksual di institusi pendidikan tinggi. Penelitian ini menggarisbawahi pentingnya pendidikan dan kesadaran, pengembangan keterampilan komunikasi interpersonal, penyediaan sumber daya pendukung, pelatihan khusus untuk fasilitator, integrasi kurikulum pendidikan seksual yang komprehensif, dan penggunaan media serta teknologi dalam konseling. Kombinasi dari pendekatan-pendekatan ini bertujuan untuk membangun pemahaman yang lebih dalam, meningkatkan dukungan bagi korban, dan mengembangkan strategi pencegahan yang inklusif dan efektif. Pembahasan menekankan perlunya adaptasi strategi komunikasi yang sesuai dengan konteks kultural dan kebijakan setiap institusi untuk meningkatkan efektivitasnya. Rekomendasi penelitian ini meliputi integrasi holistik pendekatan yang berfokus pada pelatihan, advokasi, dan kebijakan yang jelas, serta evaluasi berkelanjutan untuk menilai dan memperbaiki strategi yang ada, guna memastikan efektivitasnya dalam mencegah pelecehan seksual di lingkungan universitas.
**Kata Kunci:** Optimasi; Komunikasi Konseling, Pelecehan Seksual, Perguruan Tinggi

## ABSTRACT

This study aims to optimize communication strategies for preventing sexual harassment in higher education institutions. Amid rising incidents of sexual harassment that threaten the safety and well-being of students, especially women aged 18-24, there is an urgent need for more effective interventions. Employing a descriptive qualitative approach, this research analyzes data from various scientific publications, official documents, and journals using content analysis techniques to identify main themes and categorize relevant information. The findings suggest that effective counseling communication strategies are crucial in preventing sexual harassment within higher education institutions. The study highlights the importance of education and awareness, development of interpersonal communication skills, provision of support resources, specialized training for facilitators, integration of a comprehensive sexual education curriculum, and the use of media and technology in counseling. These approaches aim to deepen understanding, enhance support for victims, and develop inclusive and effective prevention strategies. The discussion emphasizes the need for

adapting communication strategies to match the cultural context and policies of each institution to enhance their effectiveness. Recommendations from this research include a holistic integration of approaches focusing on training, advocacy, and clear policies, as well as ongoing evaluation to assess and improve existing strategies, ensuring their effectiveness in preventing sexual harassment in university environments.

**Keyword:** *Optimization; Counseling Communication, Sexual Harassment, Higher Education Institutions*

## 1. Introduction

A deeper understanding of sexual violence within higher education environments is increasingly vital as the incidence among students rises (Loperena et al., 2023). Statistics reveal that non-student women aged 18-24 face the highest risk of sexual assault compared to other groups, with a lower risk noted among those enrolled in colleges. Moreover, approximately 26.4% of undergraduate women and 9.7% of postgraduate women report unpleasant experiences involving physical violence or incapacitation. This study underscores the crucial roles of campus law enforcement and victim service agencies in addressing and responding to sexual violence cases, highlighting that only about 20% of female student victims report incidents to law enforcement (Rainn, 2024). This fact demands effective communication strategies and systematic interventions to prevent sexual violence, integrating various sources and research methodologies to gain a broader and more accurate understanding of its prevalence and dynamics on campuses.

The increasing incidence of sexual violence in higher education settings has sparked significant concern over student safety and welfare (Burke et al., 2023). Reports indicate that students, especially women aged 18-24 who are not enrolled in college, are at a high risk of sexual assault, underscoring the urgent need for more effective prevention strategies. The fact that only a small fraction of victims report incidents to authorities points to significant barriers within the existing reporting and support systems. This condition clearly necessitates an optimized approach to counseling communication, which not only enhances awareness and understanding of sexual violence prevention but also supports victims in overcoming trauma and reducing the stigma associated with reporting incidents. Gaps in communication and the effectiveness of interventions call for a thorough analysis of existing strategies to develop more integrated and responsive prevention measures tailored to the specific needs of the academic community (Cîrtiță-Buzoianu et al., 2023; Suroya & Dewi, 2022).

Sexual violence in higher education institutions has become a pressing global issue. Universities and higher education institutions should be safe places for learning and development. Yet, sexual violence frequently occurs within these academic settings, harming victims' well-being and creating a non-conducive learning atmosphere. Therefore, optimizing counseling communication is critical as a preventive measure against this problem. This study aims to conduct a systematic review of existing literature to evaluate the most effective counseling communication strategies for preventing sexual violence in higher education settings (Bovill & Podpadec, 2023; Gretgrix & Farmer, 2023).

Counseling communication is a pivotal element in preventing sexual violence, its effectiveness largely depends on various factors, including the methods used, the target audience, and the cultural context of the educational institution. Studies have demonstrated that a holistic and integrated approach, involving training, seminars, and digital media, significantly enhances awareness and understanding of sexual violence prevention (Ilyas & Chalidaziah, 2022). However, variations in the effectiveness of these methods highlight the need for a comprehensive review to identify the most efficient and effective strategies.

This literature review critically evaluates various approaches employed in counseling communication within higher education institutions. For instance, studies have shown that in-person training and face-to-face outreach sessions significantly affect students' understanding and behavioral changes. Conversely, digital-based approaches such as social media campaigns have also proven effective in reaching a broader audience. Analyzing the strengths and weaknesses of these different approaches provides valuable insights into optimizing outreach strategies in higher education

institutions. One of the key challenges in optimizing outreach communications is ensuring that prevention messages are accessible and understood by all individuals within higher education institutions, including those facing language or accessibility barriers (Lee & Rudolf, 2022). This study also assesses the effectiveness of communication methods in reaching different demographic groups and discusses strategies for increasing inclusivity in outreach. This includes evaluating how outreach materials can be tailored to meet the specific needs of different groups within the campus community.

The results of this systematic review are expected to provide clearer, data-driven guidance on best practices in outreach communications for sexual violence prevention. By identifying strategies that have proven effective and avoiding less successful approaches, higher education institutions can develop and implement more effective programs. Not only will this enhance awareness and understanding of sexual violence prevention, but it will also create a safer and more supportive campus environment for all members of the academic community.

Overall, this systematic review of the literature aims to synthesize findings from a range of studies on outreach communications in the context of sexual violence prevention in higher education institutions. This research will significantly contribute to the development of policies and best practices in outreach, as well as support more effective sexual violence prevention efforts at the university level. In doing so, it is hoped that this research will foster continued improvement in outreach strategies and enhance safety and well-being in higher education settings.

## 2. Method

The research methodology employed in this study is qualitative with a descriptive approach, aiming to deepen the understanding of effective counseling communication strategies for preventing sexual violence in higher education institutions (Creswell, 2020). This approach was selected due to its ability to explore diverse perceptions, experiences, and contexts through narrative data analysis. The study focuses extensively on data extraction through literature review, analyzing academic articles, research reports, and published materials related to sexual violence prevention communication in academic settings.

Data sources in this research are categorized into primary and secondary data (Weyant, 2022). Primary data are obtained from official documents from educational institutions, including policies, sexual violence prevention programs, and related reports. Secondary data consist of scientific journals, books, articles, and relevant online sources. These sources are selected based on relevance, recency, and credibility to ensure the validity and reliability of the data collected for further analysis.

Data collection is conducted through literature review, where researchers search and gather data from various scholarly publications and related documents. This process involves searching for specific keywords in online databases, digital libraries, and educational institution repositories. The accumulated data are then organized and synthesized to draw conclusions. Additionally, researchers pay attention to methodological differences and outcomes from various studies as part of a critical literature analysis.

Data analysis is conducted using content analysis techniques, where data obtained from the literature are analyzed to identify, code, and categorize emerging themes (Krippendorff, 2022). This technique allows researchers to systematically understand and interpret the broader context of counseling communication in preventing sexual violence on campuses. Data validity testing is conducted through source triangulation, where information obtained from various sources is confirmed and compared to strengthen the validity of findings. This approach reduces bias and enhances the trustworthiness of the analysis and conclusions drawn from this research (Flick, 2020).

## 3. Results and Discussion
### Systematic Literature Review: Sexual Harassment in Higher Education Institutions

In the effort to understand and address the issue of sexual harassment in higher education settings, a systematic literature review is vital. This review aims to explore how this issue has been handled in prior scholarly work, identify gaps in knowledge, and assess the effectiveness of implemented strategies. The research focuses on analyzing various studies related to sexual

harassment on campus, examining factors such as institutional policies, student awareness, and the role of educational institutions in preventing and responding to incidents.

For this analysis, the author used the Publish or Perish application to retrieve 1,000 previous studies. After collecting these studies, the author employed network analysis, overlay analysis, and density analysis using the VosViewer application. The results outlined the interconnectedness of key concepts within the academic literature on sexual harassment in higher education, highlighting dominant themes and gaps that could guide future research and intervention strategies. This approach not only maps out the landscape of existing research but also emphasizes the complexity of addressing sexual harassment in educational settings, suggesting a need for multifaceted and contextually adapted strategies.
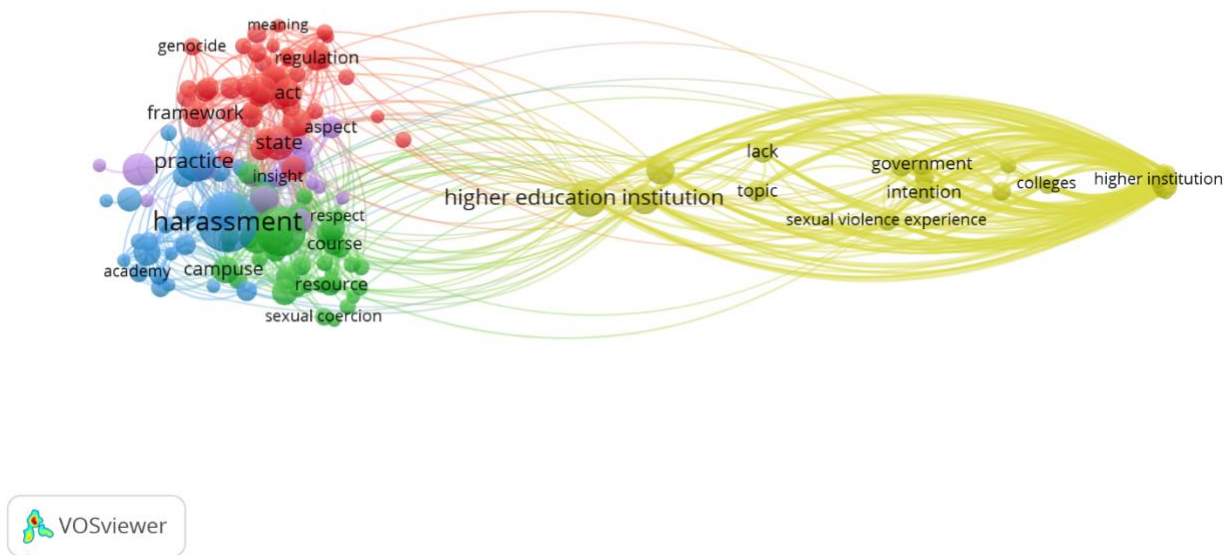


**Figure 1. Network Analysis**

The conceptual network depicted in the VOSviewer image illustrates the interconnected concepts related to sexual violence in higher education within academic literature. Central nodes such as "harassment," "higher education institution," and "government" highlight a strong focus on the interaction between harassment practices, the structure of higher education, and government regulation. At the core of this network, the interconnections between "campus," "regulation," and "sexual coercion" emphasize intense research on policies implemented within campus environments and their impact on preventing or addressing sexual violence. These diverse connections help identify how various aspects of sexual violence are interrelated and how a multidisciplinary approach is necessary to address them.

In comparison with the research on "Optimizing Extension Communication in The Prevention of Sexual Harassment in Higher Education Institutions," this conceptual network provides a valuable foundation. The reviewed research focuses on communication strategies to prevent sexual harassment in higher education, particularly through a holistic and integrated approach that includes training, seminars, and digital media. Meanwhile, the conceptual network analysis highlights various factors and relationships that can influence the effectiveness of such communication, including institutional policies and the role of government. Through network analysis, we can identify potential policy factors as crucial intervention points and delve deeper into how these practices are integrated into a broader educational context, which in turn can inform and refine the strategies discussed in the ongoing research.
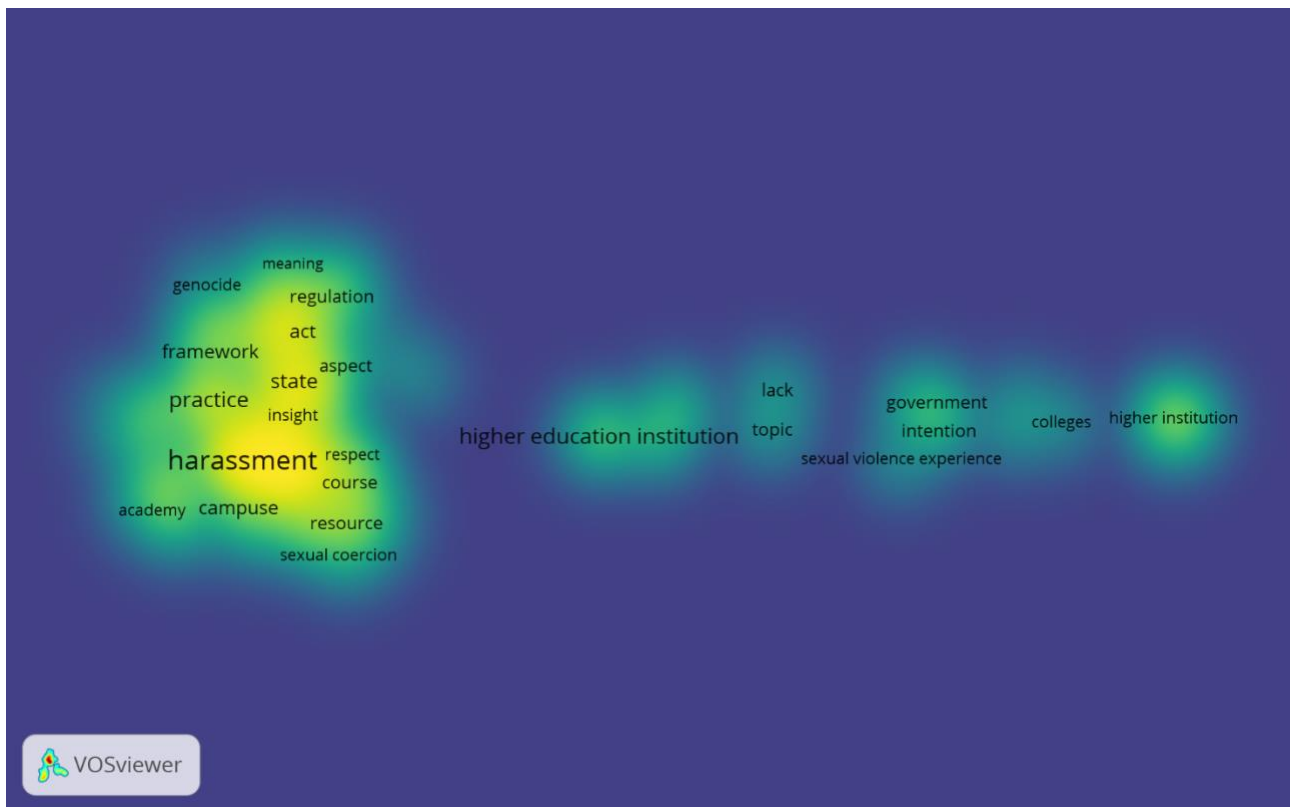
**Figure 2. Density Analysis**

The density analysis from the VOSviewer visualization highlights the core consequences and focal areas in the literature related to sexual harassment in higher education institutions. Areas with high density such as "harassment," "higher education institution," and "government" indicate a significant amount of literature focused on the role of government regulations and policies as well as campus practices concerning this issue. The concentration around "harassment" and "campus" reflects the intensive research conducted on practices and policies in campus environments, underscoring the urgency and complexity of sexual harassment as both a social and educational issue requiring serious attention.

Conversely, areas with lower density like "genocide" and "sexual coercion" might suggest that certain aspects of sexual violence are underexplored or indirectly linked. The scarcity of literature focusing on the relationship between sexual violence and broader or more extreme aspects such as "genocide" may indicate gaps in existing research, where more specific or extreme issues have not been thoroughly addressed. In an academic context, this suggests opportunities for further research that could integrate these issues into a broader framework concerning violence and discrimination in higher education settings.

Linking this to the review in the research on communication strategies for preventing sexual harassment, this study's focus on effective communication strategies in preventing sexual harassment at universities aligns with the high-density areas identified in the VOSviewer visualization. In both cases, the importance of regulation, policy, and institutional interventions is central, highlighting the need to develop and implement holistic and inclusive strategies that are not only reactive to incidents but also proactive in preventing harassment. The comparison between these sources reaffirms the importance of an evidence-based, multifaceted approach in addressing sexual harassment in academic environments.
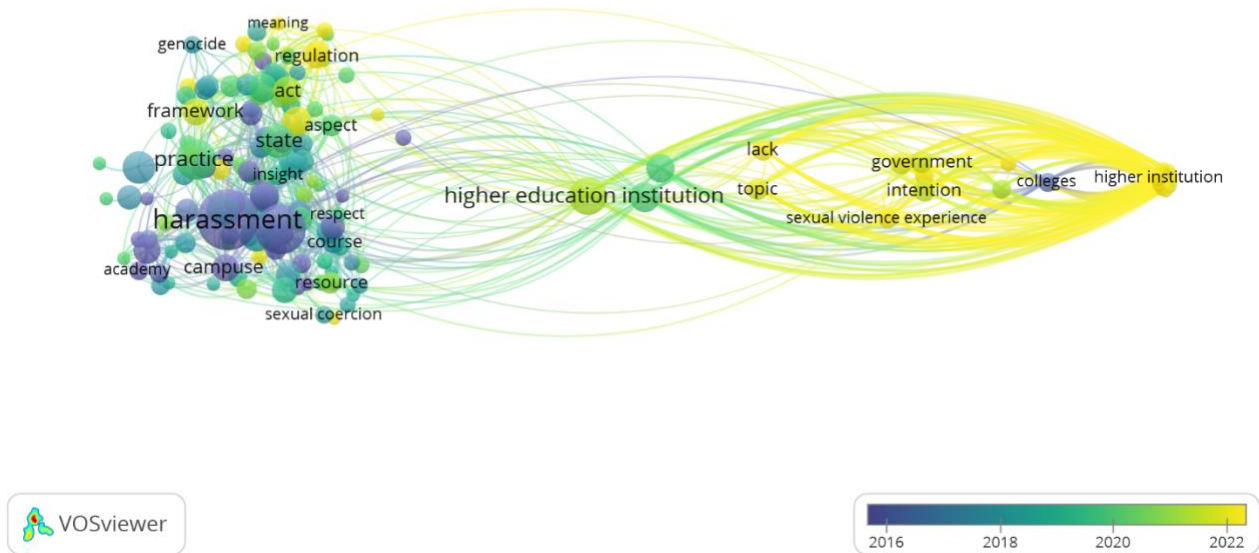
**Figure 3. Overlay Analysis**

The overlay analysis on the VOSviewer visualization displays the evolution of research topics related to sexual harassment in higher education from 2016 to 2022, highlighting the temporal dynamics within the relevant literature. The early years of the visualization show a concentrated focus on "harassment" and "campus," reflecting the initial response to sexual harassment as an urgent research topic within academic environments. Over time, research focus has shifted towards "government" and "higher institution," indicating increased discussion about the role of government regulation and high-level institutional policies in addressing sexual harassment. The most recent years emphasize the topics of "sexual violence experience" and "colleges," signaling a trend towards more in-depth research on the experiences of victims and the role of universities in protecting students and staff.

In the context of research on optimizing communication for the prevention of sexual harassment in higher education, this analysis reveals that while the initial topics concentrated on identification and response to harassment, there has been an evolution towards more systematic and sustained strategies for prevention. The annual trends indicate a growing need for more coordinated interventions involving government participation and better institutional management. This parallels findings that emphasize the importance of holistic communication strategies involving training, advocacy, and clear policies as part of prevention efforts. Emerging issues in the literature year by year also underscore the importance of complementing these approaches with strong support for victims, highlighting the need for more inclusive and empathetic services in addressing sexual harassment within higher education environments.

**Sexual Harassment in Higher Education: Challenges in the Educational Context**

Sexual harassment in higher education is a serious issue that affects not only individual well-being but also the integrity of educational institutions. Within the educational context, this challenge not only damages the environment that should be safe and conducive for learning but also raises serious questions about equality and justice on campus. Students, staff, and faculty often face dilemmas in reporting incidents of harassment due to fears of stigma, retaliation, and potential career damage. This phenomenon underscores the urgent need for the development of more effective

policies and strong support systems to ensure all members of the academic community can learn and work in an environment free from intimidation and discrimination (Ilyas & Chalidaziah, 2022).

Moreover, sexual harassment in higher education also raises issues regarding the implementation of existing laws and policies. Many institutions still struggle to implement policies that not only prevent incidents but also handle cases of harassment fairly and appropriately. Major barriers include a lack of resources, inadequate training for policy enforcers, and a lack of awareness about the rights and protections that should be afforded to victims. This necessitates a holistic approach involving awareness training, policy improvement, and cross-sector collaboration to support the creation of a safer, more inclusive academic environment for all (Chukhray et al., 2022; Tsagkarliotis & Rachaniotis, 2023). The recurring challenges of sexual harassment in educational environments are summarized as follows:

**Table 1. Challenges of Sexual Harassment in Educational Environments**

| No. | Issue of Sexual Harassment in Higher Education | Challenges Faced |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | Substantial deficit in awareness and understanding of harassment dynamics | Development of comprehensive educational programs involving the entire academic community. |
| 2 | Inconsistency and ineffectiveness of anti-harassment policies | Formulation and implementation of clear, transparent, and consistent policies that support the prevention and handling of harassment. |
| 3 | Threat of social stigma and retaliation against reporters | Creation of robust protection mechanisms for reporters and promotion of a culture of safe and open reporting. |
| 4 | Complexity and inaccessibility of reporting systems | Simplification and standardization of more victim-friendly and transparent reporting procedures. |
| 5 | Insufficiency of resources and support for harassment victims | Allocation of adequate resources and establishment of accessible psychological support services for victims. |
| 6 | Privacy issues in handling cases | Maintaining a balance between privacy protection and procedural transparency and fairness. |
| 7 | Gender bias in responses and case handling | Ensuring gender equality in all case handling procedures to ensure fairness and objectivity. |
| 8 | Lack of institutional engagement in prevention and response | Enhancing active and proactive institutional participation in developing effective prevention and response strategies against sexual harassment. |

**Source: Literature Observation (2024)**

In academic settings, sexual harassment remains a complex and damaging issue not only to the victims but also to the integrity and security of higher education institutions. A major challenge is the substantial deficit in awareness and understanding of sexual harassment dynamics, highlighting the urgent need to develop comprehensive educational programs that engage the entire academic community (Bondestam & Lundqvist, 2020; Fenwick et al., 2021). These programs should include information on what constitutes sexual harassment, how to recognize it, and the steps to take when one becomes a victim or a witness.

Moreover, inconsistencies and ineffectiveness of existing anti-harassment policies pose barriers to preventing and addressing sexual harassment cases in colleges. It is crucial for institutions to formulate and implement clear, transparent, and consistent policies across all faculties and departments that support harassment prevention and provide clear guidelines on actions to be taken when reports are made (Blumell & Mulupi, 2023).

The threat of social stigma and retaliation often deters individuals from reporting sexual harassment incidents. Establishing robust protective mechanisms for reporters and cultivating a safe and open reporting culture are essential. Institutions must ensure that reporters and victims can continue their studies or work without fear of discrimination or retaliation (Goulah-Pabst, 2023; Pathania et al., 2023).

The complexity and inaccessibility of reporting systems are also significant challenges. Many victims are intimidated by complex and opaque reporting procedures. Simplifying and standardizing

more victim-friendly and transparent reporting procedures will ensure that more cases are reported and handled fairly and effectively (Cosola et al., 2020).

Additionally, the lack of resources and support for victims of sexual harassment often leaves them feeling isolated and unsupported. Adequate resource allocation and the establishment of accessible psychological support services are crucial. These services should provide counseling, legal assistance, and academic support to help victims recover and continue their lives (Jenner et al., 2022; Simorangkir & Schumacher, 2022).

The issue of privacy in the handling of sexual harassment cases is highly sensitive. Institutions must balance privacy protection with transparency and procedural fairness. Privacy protections should not hinder the justice process but must ensure fair and respectful treatment for all parties involved (Neroni Rezende, 2024; Rahimi Khalifeh Kandi et al., 2023).

Gender bias in the response to and handling of cases also presents challenges in achieving justice. Institutions must strive to ensure gender equality in all case-handling procedures to ensure that decisions are free from gender bias and objective.

Lastly, the lack of institutional engagement in preventing and responding to sexual harassment often results in ineffective policies and interventions. It is vital for institutions to enhance active and proactive participation in developing effective prevention and response strategies against sexual harassment. This includes engaging all stakeholders in open dialogue, creating partnerships with external organizations, and continually assessing and updating their strategies to address the issue (Alemu et al., 2023).

Addressing sexual harassment in colleges requires a coordinated and multifaceted approach. By systematically and proactively addressing these challenges, colleges can create a safer and more supportive environment for all their members. This involves not only complying with the law but also building a healthy and inclusive academic community.

**Counseling Communication in Preventing Sexual Harassment at Universities**

Counseling communication is an essential tool in the prevention of sexual harassment at universities. This approach involves the use of dialog-based interactions that are informative and supportive, not only aiming to provide information and education about sexual harassment but also to facilitate the development of interpersonal skills and decision-making abilities among students and staff. Effective counseling communication can help dismantle cultural norms that may support harassing behaviors and enhance awareness of individual rights and reporting mechanisms. Through counseling, individuals are taught to proactively identify and respond to early signs of harassment, significantly reducing the incidence in the university environment (Coleman et al., 2023; Faridi et al., 2022).

Moreover, counseling communication in universities should be structured and continuous, involving all stakeholders within the institution, including students, faculty, and administrative staff. Counseling programs must be tailored to meet the specific needs of the campus community, considering factors such as gender diversity, sexual orientation, and ethnic backgrounds. The effectiveness of counseling communication also depends on adequate training for counselors and facilitators, who must be equipped with the skills, knowledge, and sensitivity to comprehensively address sexual harassment issues (Mangolian Shahrbabaki et al., 2021; Tuncer & Yeşiltepe Oskay, 2023). In this way, counseling communication acts not only as a preventative tool but also as a support mechanism that provides psychological security and restoration for the academic community. The author outlines several formulations of counseling communication strategies as follows in the provided table.

**Table 2. Counseling Communication Strategies for Mitigating Sexual Harassment in Higher Education**

| No. | Counseling Communication Strategy | Description |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | Education and Awareness Training | Implement comprehensive educational programs to enhance understanding of sexual harassment, including the identification of inappropriate behavior and correct reporting procedures. |
| 2 | Development of Interpersonal Communication Skills | Provide sessions designed to strengthen verbal and non-verbal communication skills, which are essential in preventing misunderstandings and enhancing respectful interactions among individuals. |
| 3 | Provision of Support Resources | Provide access to resources such as personal counseling, peer support, and legal assistance for victims of sexual harassment, and for the community to learn how to support victims. |
| 4 | Specialized Training for Facilitators and Counselors | Conduct specialized training for counselors and facilitators on handling sexual harassment issues, including training in identifying early signs of harassment and effective response strategies. |
| 5 | Integration of Comprehensive Sexual Education Curriculum | Integrate comprehensive sexual education into the curriculum that addresses issues such as consent, personal boundaries, and gender equality. |
| 6 | Use of Media and Technology in Counseling | Utilize digital platforms and social media to disseminate educational information, interactive workshops, and Q&A sessions that facilitate open dialogue and broader reach. |
| 7 | Continuous Counseling and Program Evaluation | Conduct ongoing counseling to assess the effectiveness of interventions implemented and identify areas for improvement in sexual harassment prevention strategies. |

**Source: Literature Observation (2024)**

Education and awareness training form the foundation of counseling communication strategies to prevent sexual harassment in academic environments (Ahma et al., 2021). Comprehensive educational programs should be implemented to enhance understanding of sexual harassment, including identifying inappropriate behavior and correct reporting procedures. The goal is to equip individuals with the knowledge and tools necessary to recognize and effectively respond to potential incidents of harassment.

Developing interpersonal communication skills through specialized training sessions is also crucial, as these skills are essential in preventing misunderstandings and enhancing respectful interactions among individuals. These training sessions should cover both verbal and non-verbal aspects, which support the development of more effective communication and empathy within the educational community. Providing support resources for victims of sexual harassment is another proactive step. Institutions should offer access to personal counseling, peer support, and legal assistance. This not only aids victims in their recovery process but also strengthens community awareness about how to support affected individuals (Steele et al., 2022).

Specialized training for facilitators and counselors dealing with sexual harassment issues is critical. Such training should include techniques for identifying early signs of harassment and effective response strategies. The focus is on providing skills and knowledge to handle harassment cases with sensitivity and expertise. Integrating a comprehensive sexual education curriculum into the educational system also supports the prevention of sexual harassment. The curriculum should cover concepts such as consent, personal boundaries, and gender equality. The aim is to build a deeper understanding and respect for the rights and responsibilities of each individual in social and professional interactions.

Finally, the use of media and technology in counseling should be expanded to enhance the reach and effectiveness of educational programs (Emezue et al., 2021; Fernet et al., 2023; Karomah, 2023). Digital platforms and social media are efficient tools for disseminating information, conducting interactive workshops, and facilitating open and inclusive dialogues. Utilizing these modern tools ensures that key messages about preventing sexual harassment can reach a broader audience in a relatively straightforward and efficient manner.

**Strategies for Expanding Communication in Mitigating Sexual Harassment in Higher Education Institutions**

Addressing sexual harassment in academic settings necessitates innovative and comprehensive approaches to information dissemination and communication. In this context, the success of interventions heavily relies on how effectively information is conveyed to students, faculty, and staff. Thus, expanding communication methods is a key aspect that can strengthen prevention efforts. This involves integrating diverse communication methods—from seminars and workshops to digital campaigns and social media—to reach a broader audience and ensure widespread understanding of the dangers and prevention of sexual harassment (Acosta et al., 2022).

Furthermore, it is crucial to assess and tailor the approaches used in training and educational programs. This evaluation not only considers the extent to which these programs are effective in reducing incidents of harassment but also how messages are delivered and received within the campus community. Recent research and data should be utilized to continually update and refine training materials to remain relevant with the social and cultural changes occurring in higher education settings (Axinn et al., 2023). Consequently, adaptive and responsive communication strategies that meet current needs and challenges are vital steps in ensuring a safe and inclusive academic environment. The author outlines several formulations of extension communication strategies as follows in the provided table.

**Table 3. Extension Communication Strategies in Mitigating Sexual Harassment at Universities**

| No. | Communication Strategy | Description |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | Implementation of Educational Seminars and Workshops | Conduct regular seminars and workshops designed to educate students and staff on the dynamics of sexual harassment, prevention methods, and protocols to follow when incidents occur. |
| 2 | Digital Awareness Campaigns | Utilize digital tools, including social media, to disseminate key information and enhance awareness about sexual harassment, as well as inform about the university's related policies. |
| 3 | Anonymous Reporting Initiative | Provide an online reporting system that allows students and staff to report incidents of sexual harassment anonymously, supporting an environment free from fear of retaliation. |
| 4 | Mandatory Training Programs for Faculty and Staff | Organize mandatory training sessions for faculty and staff, discussing techniques to identify and respond to sexual harassment and ways to effectively support victims. |
| 5 | Integration of Prevention Material into Curriculum | Integrate information about sexual harassment, prevention, and intervention into the curriculum for all students, ensuring thorough and consistent understanding among the student body. |

**Source: Literature Observation (2024)**

Sexual harassment in higher education is a severe issue requiring a comprehensive approach to mitigation. Regular educational seminars and workshops are vital strategies in prevention efforts. Through these seminars, students and staff are educated about the dynamics of sexual harassment, prevention methods, and protocols to follow when incidents occur. This education aims to enhance awareness and provide deep understanding and necessary tools to address such situations (Paudel & Khanal, 2023).

Digital awareness campaigns are an effective way to reach a broader audience within the university environment. By utilizing digital tools and social media, universities can spread crucial information about sexual harassment prevention. These campaigns not only raise awareness but also facilitate easy access to information and support for those in need. The use of digital platforms ensures that messages about sexual harassment and university policies are widely and efficiently received (Powell et al., 2020).

Addressing sexual harassment also requires a system that supports reporting without fear of retaliation. The anonymous reporting initiative is a crucial solution in this regard. This online reporting system allows students and staff to report incidents of sexual harassment anonymously

(Ståhl & Dennhag, 2021). With this system, individuals can feel safer and protected, reducing concerns about stigma or negative repercussions from reporting.

Mandatory training programs for faculty and staff are also a crucial step in sexual harassment prevention strategies. These programs provide the knowledge and techniques needed to identify and effectively respond to sexual harassment. Through this training, faculty and staff are equipped with ways to support victims of sexual harassment, ensuring they can act as strong and informed supporters in such situations.

Integrating prevention materials into the higher education curriculum is another critical step. This strategy ensures that every student receives education about sexual harassment, including prevention methods and actions to take if an incident occurs (Schoenefeld et al., 2021). This material is taught as part of the general curriculum, guaranteeing that all students have a consistent and comprehensive understanding of the issue.

Comprehensive and ongoing education is required to change norms and behaviors in the academic environment. Seminars and workshops not only provide information but also open dialogue between students and staff, helping to create a supportive and respectful environment (Blahopoulou & Ortiz-Bonnin, 2022). Through open and interactive discussions, participants are taught to critique and question cultural norms that may contribute to sexual harassment.

Digital campaigns and the use of social media allow universities to adapt to evolving technology and the digital habits of students. This strategy ensures that messages about preventing sexual harassment reach students wherever they are, whether on or off campus, providing consistent and reliable information access (Rovira-Sancho, 2023).

Creating an effective and anonymous reporting system also reflects the university's commitment to fairness and safety on campus. This system must maintain integrity, with assurances that every report is taken seriously and handled sensitively, regardless of who the reporter or reported party is.

Training for faculty and staff often involves scenarios and simulations, allowing participants to practice responding to various harassment situations they might encounter. This training not only boosts their confidence in facing incidents but also strengthens their role as victim supporters in real situations (Santre & Pumpaibool, 2022).

Integrating prevention material into the curriculum builds a strong knowledge base for students, preparing them to recognize and confront sexual harassment both within the university environment and beyond (Msimanga et al., 2023). It also ensures that sexual harassment is taken seriously by educational institutions, with real efforts made to reduce incidents through education and advocacy.

**Discussion**

In addressing sexual harassment challenges within higher education, the importance of optimizing counseling communication cannot be understated. In this context, counseling communication serves as a vital tool for promoting anti-harassment policies, enhancing awareness, and strengthening supportive interventions. The application of two relevant counseling communication theories, Crisis Response Theory and Social Exchange Theory, provides profound insights into the effective implementation of communication strategies (Saftner et al., 2021; Starks et al., 2021).

Crisis Response Theory emphasizes the importance of accurate and swift communication when confronting harassment incidents (Zhang et al., 2024). Within the university context, this means that institutions must promptly respond to sexual harassment reports in an open and supportive manner, ensuring that victims feel heard and treated with respect. Effective communication under this theory also aims to minimize damage and restore the institution's image by conveying the actions taken to address the issue and preventive measures for the future.

Meanwhile, Social Exchange Theory explores the dynamics of interpersonal relationships and the benefits derived through social interactions. In the prevention of sexual harassment, applying this theory can aid in designing communication programs that offer incentives—emotional, social, or even

professional—to encourage active participation from all university community members (Ahmad et al., 2023; Kilroy et al., 2023). These programs could include training, workshops, and informational sessions that not only provide information but also build a strong support network among participants.

Effective counseling communication in this context also necessitates the integration of technology. The use of digital platforms and social media can enhance the reach and effectiveness of the messages delivered. Well-designed interactive sessions, webinars, and online campaigns can facilitate broader and deeper dialogues, allowing for faster and more efficient dissemination of information about policies and procedures related to harassment (Bhattacharyya, 2023; Oliver et al., 2023).

The quality and clarity of communication materials are crucial. Information should be conveyed clearly and understandably, avoiding jargon that could confuse. This ensures that all community members, regardless of their academic or socioeconomic background, can comprehend and internalize the information provided.

Furthermore, the involvement of stakeholders at all levels—from students and teaching staff to university management—is key to the success of these programs. Two-way communication between management and the campus community is essential for building trust and ensuring that the policies and initiatives undertaken truly reflect the needs and expectations of the community (Acosta et al., 2022).

By leveraging Crisis Response Theory and Social Exchange Theory within the framework of counseling communication strategies, universities can optimize their interventions in handling sexual harassment. This not only protects students and staff from harmful behaviors but also supports the creation of a safer, more inclusive, and supportive learning environment.

This study introduces an innovative approach in counseling communication strategies for preventing sexual harassment at universities by integrating Crisis Response Theory and Social Exchange Theory into a comprehensive framework. This approach specifically recognizes the importance of rapid response and effective communication in addressing harassment incidents while also encouraging active involvement from all university community members through incentives developed based on social exchange. The novelty of this research lies in the utilization of both theories combined to optimize communication in crisis contexts, focusing not only on short-term impact reduction but also on sustainable building of a safe and inclusive academic environment.

Moreover, this research expands understanding on the implementation of digital technology in counseling communication strategies, highlighting the importance of digital platforms and social media in the dissemination of information and training. This innovation reflects the need for adapting harassment prevention strategies to suit evolving technologies and modern communication methods. By aligning the approaches presented with existing digital tools, this study offers a framework that can be applied more broadly and effectively to strengthen existing policies and practices, providing relevant and accessible solutions for a diverse campus population.

## 4. Conclussion

The conclusion of this study emphasizes the importance of optimizing communication expansion as a core strategy in preventing sexual harassment in higher education institutions. It reveals that integrating Crisis Response Theory and Social Exchange Theory, coupled with the use of technology and digital media, can significantly enhance communication effectiveness in crisis situations. Developing and implementing appropriate communication strategies not only supports victims in a more empathetic and effective manner but also helps to strengthen prevention policies on campus, creating a safer and more conducive environment for all members of the academic community.

Recommendations for further research and practice include the need for higher education institutions to proactively involve all stakeholders in the design and implementation of effective communication strategies. This includes ongoing training for counselors and facilitators, the development of comprehensive sexual education curricula, and the utilization of digital media in

prevention efforts. It is also recommended that colleges conduct regular assessments and evaluations of implemented prevention strategies, aiming to identify and rectify weaknesses in their approaches, and to ensure that the strategies remain relevant to ongoing social dynamics and needs. Through these initiatives, colleges not only enhance the security and well-being of their students but also demonstrate a real commitment to preventing and managing sexual harassment in the academic environment.

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