



Sexual Deviations from Islamic Perspective: Sexual Harassment as An Example

Nasih Kareem Abdulla

University of Halabja, Halabja, Iraq

nasih.abdulla@uoh.edu.iq

Shabaz Abdalla

University of Halabja, Halabja, Iraq

shabaz.aaen61@uoh.edu.iq

Tariq Jabar Mohammed

University of Halabja, Halabja, Iraq

tariq.muhammad@uoh.edu.iq

Abstract: *This research addresses the pressing global issue of sexual harassment by examining its prevalence and underlying factors. Drawing on international data, our study reveals alarming rates of sexual harassment in various contexts, emphasizing its urgency. Employing a descriptive analysis method, the research investigates the motives and consequences of this behavioral deviation. Findings underscore the roles of education, economics, and the absence of a proper Islamic perspective on sexuality in perpetuating harassment. Educational institutions emerge as pivotal in both occurrence and prevention, while media portrayal of women and insufficient sexual education contribute to societal deviations. The study highlights the multifaceted impact of harassment on mental well-being and advocates for effective punitive measures to curb sexual deviancy and restore social harmony.*

Keywords: *Sexual Deviations, Sexuality, Sexual Harassment, Islamic Ethics, Gender Dynamics.*

A. Introduction

The Islamic perspective on matters of sexual motivation is deeply rooted in a profound understanding of human nature, as elucidated by the Holy Qur'an, the teachings of the Prophet of Islam (peace be upon him), and insights from classical and contemporary Islamic scholars. Devoid of superficiality and negligence, Islam approaches sexual matters with originality, pragmatism, and moderation.

At the core of human motivations lies the powerful desire for sexual gratification. Al-Ghazali astutely remarked, "The strongest and most persistent urge within a person is the desire for the opposite sex, and it is the most challenging desire one must confront".¹ Remarkably, it has taken medical and psychiatric experts nearly a millennium to validate the accuracy of Ghazali's observations.

Nobel laureate psychiatrist Alexis Carrel once noted, "When the sexual instinct is aroused, it releases a substance that travels through the bloodstream to the brain, injecting it and causing a suspension of rational thinking".² Ghazali's insights, rooted in Islamic wisdom, continue to resonate, transcending centuries.

Discussions on sexuality become the main focus when understanding the essence of human personality. When discussing aspects of personality, we realize that humans are essentially biological entities. The body operates through bodily instincts, such as the drive to achieve pleasure and avoid discomfort.³ This fundamental identity tends to be carnal, where the enjoyment of food and pleasure gain priority over the concept of modesty. The desire to achieve perfection in opposite-sex relationships is often more dominant than imperfection. This corresponds to Freud's view that psychic life is driven by biological instincts or sexual instincts.⁴

¹ Abu Hamid al-Ghazali, *Ihya' Ulumuddin*, Jilid III (Beirut: Dar al-Fikr, 1989), 219.

² Alexis Carrel, *Man the Unknown* (India: Wilco Publishing House, 2016), 67.

³ Rudi Ahmad Suryadi, *Dimensi-Dimensi Manusia: : Perspektif Pendidikan Islam* (Sleman, Yogyakarta: Deepublish, 2015), 2–3.

⁴ Abdul Mujib, *Fitrah dan Kepribadian Islam: Sebuah Pendekatan Psikologis* (Jakarta: Darul Falah, 1999), 101; Idi Warsah, "Interkoneksi Pemikiran Al-Ghazālī Dan Sigmund Freud Tentang Potensi Manusia," *Kontekstualita* 32, no. 01 (January 26, 2018): 55.

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The term "sexuality" first appeared in the 19th century, used in the technical context of biological and animal sciences in the early 1800s.⁵ However, it wasn't until the late 19th century that the word began to be applied generally with an open-ended meaning, and has been recorded in the Oxford English Dictionary. According to Weeks, sexuality is largely concerned with words, images, rituals and fantasies involving the body: the way humans view models or styles of sex, as well as how humans live sexual lives.⁶ Giddens, citing Foucault, defines sexuality as a social construction that operates within the realm of power. It is not just a set of biological urges that seek or find no release.⁷

The discussion of sexuality in the Muslim world is often a topic that is delivered in an uncertain manner. The discussion can be respectful, but at the same time, it can also be very closed and conservative. This situation arises as a result of two patterns of religiosity in Islam, the ideal-Islamic and the historical-Islamic. The ideal Islamic pattern values sexuality as a natural part of humanity, considered a gift from God. Sexual desires are considered to be fulfilled as long as they are necessary, but only in the context of marriage.⁸ Ideal Islam promotes equal, just and beneficial relationships. On the other hand, historical Islam is often influenced by gender-biased ideologies, which make sex negative, even considered as the opposite of spirituality.

In our contemporary era marked by globalization, technological advancement, and a diminishing emphasis on Islamic education and core values, the escalation of sexual deviations, including instances of sexual harassment, poses a significant global threat. The subsequent sections of this research will present compelling statistics and data

⁵ Ratna Batara Munti, *Demokrasi Keintiman; Seksualitas di Era Global* (Yogyakarta: Lkis Pelangi Aksara, 2005), 26.

⁶ Jeffrey Weeks, *Sexuality and Its Discontents: Meanings, Myths, and Modern Sexualities* (London and New York: Routledge, 2002), 3.

⁷ Anthony Giddens, *The Transformation of Intimacy: Sexuality, Love and Eroticism in Modern Societies* (Cambridge, United Kingdom (UK): John Wiley & Sons, 2013), 30.

⁸ Liky Faizal *et.al.*, "Age Limit for Marriage in Indonesia from The Perspective of Maqashid Sharia," *Analisis: Jurnal Studi Keislaman* 22, no. 2 (December 30, 2022): 297–318, <https://doi.org/10.24042/ajsk.v22i2.14068>.

demonstrating the global impact of this phenomenon on both non-Muslim and Muslim societies.

This research contributes significantly to the field of Islamic studies, delving into the understudied realm of sex and sexual violence. Its distinctive feature lies in providing an academic interpretation of sexual harassment within a comprehensive theoretical framework integrating religious, sociological, psychological, and legal perspectives. Utilizing local and international fieldwork, data, and statistics, the study establishes its global relevance, adopting a systematic approach to investigate the nature, motives, consequences, and coping strategies associated with sexual violence through direct interviews with experts.

The urgency of this research is underscored by the escalating prevalence of sexual aberrations, particularly sexual harassment, as revealed through compelling international and local data. The study emphasizes the historical responsibility of divine religions in combating such deviations, supported by statistics from the U.S Merit System Protection Board, a Canadian study, and European Union-level research.⁹ Alarming high prevalence rates in Muslim-majority countries, such as Egypt and Yemen, and a concerning 73% incidence of sexual harassment among girls in various settings in Kurdistan, as identified by the Norwegian Public Aid Organization, further emphasize the gravity of the issue.¹⁰

Adopting a descriptive method of analysis, this research strategically explores the intricate subject of sexual violence, offering in-depth insights into the multifaceted nature of sexual harassment and the diverse factors contributing to its prevalence. This chosen

⁹ Aysan Sev'er, "Mainstream Neglect of Sexual Harassment," *Canadian Journal of Sociology* 22, no. 2 (1996): 210–22, <https://hdl.handle.net/1807/17567>; See also V.N. Parrillo, *Contemporary Social Problems*, 5th ed. (London: Allyn and Bacon, 2002); See also National Branch of Transparency International, *Al-Taharush al-Jinsiu Fi Makan al-'Amal Kashakl Min 'Aashkal al-Fasad (Sexual Harassment in the Workplace as a Form of Corruption)* (Palestine: Legal Advocacy and Guidance Center, 2010).

¹⁰ Karwan Massoud, "Out of 300 People, 221 Have Been Sexually Harassed," December 25, 2017, Retrieved from <https://www.xendan.org>, accessed October 21, 2023; Engy Abdelkader, "99.3% of Egyptian Women, Girls Have Been Sexually Harassed," Institute for Social Policy and Understanding, June 4, 2013, Retrieved from <https://www.ispu.org>, accessed October 21, 2023.

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methodology aligns seamlessly with the research's objective of providing a thorough understanding of sexual violence, ensuring a meaningful contribution to the existing body of knowledge on this critical issue.

B. Sexual Deviations and Sexual Harassment

1. Definition of Sexual Deviance

Sexual deviations, also known in the fields of health and science as Psychopathia Sexualis, are considered highly dangerous. According to some researchers and psychologists, it is believed that all types of behavioral deviations can be traced back to sexual deviations as their root cause.¹¹ In the realm of psychology and health, various definitions of "sexual deviation" exist. Arifaj defines it as follows: "Sexual deviation encompasses any sexual activity that does not seek procreation or the fulfillment of normal sexual desire".¹² Azouz, on the other hand, contends that "sexual deviations encompass all sexual behaviors aimed at satisfying sexual desires, regardless of societal, religious, or legal norms".¹³ Al-Issawi further elucidates that "sexual deviation entails deriving pleasure in ways that run counter to moral and religious values, reject societal customs, and contravene social laws".¹⁴

From a religious perspective, sexual deviation encompasses all forms of illicit sexual conduct undertaken outside the bounds of legitimate marital processes for the purpose of gratifying sexual desires.¹⁵ Sexual deviance refers to a range of behaviors or actions that are considered to violate moral and legal norms in the context of sexuality. For example, in many religions, sexual relationships are

¹¹ A. A. Al-Qusi, *As Al-Sihhah al-Nafsiyah (Foundations of Mental Health)*, 4th ed. (Egypt: Egyptian Nahda Library, 1952), 463.

¹² S. S. Arifaj, *Ilm Al-Nafs al-Tatwuri (Evolutionary Psychology)* (Jordan: Dār al-Majdalawi, 1999), 44.

¹³ H. Azouz, "Āfāq Al-Anhrāfāt al-Jinsīyah Lada Ash-Shabāb (Prospects of Sexual Deviations Among Youth)" (Master's Thesis, Khemis Miliana, Aljazair, Universitas Djilali Bounaama di Khemis Miliana, Ain Defla, 2018), 23.

¹⁴ A. M. Al-Issawi, *Alujiz Fi 'Ilm An-Nafs al-'Am (Al-Wajeez in General Psychology)* (Alexandria: Dār al-Ma'arif al-Jami'iyah, 2002), 73.

¹⁵ H. Al-Shazly, *Al-Intirnit Wa al-Jins (The Internet and Sex)* (Libya: Maktabat ar-Rifā'i, 2008), 33.

governed by moral norms and values that are considered part of the religious teachings. Sexual deviance may involve behaviors or practices that are considered to violate these religious moral or ethical norms.¹⁶

These definitions make it evident that a sexual deviant is an individual who habitually engages in sexual behaviors that deviate from the established norms of society and cultural sexual customs. Such actions, according to religious precepts or legal statutes, are deemed prohibited and subject to punishment. Examples of sexual deviations encompass various behaviors such as homosexuality, sodomy, and lesbianism, as well as prostitution, rape, domestic violence, masturbation, and sexual harassment – the primary focus of our research.

Each of these behaviors is considered forbidden according to divine laws and common sense, and they are regarded as morally reprehensible and perilous actions. For instance, homosexuality, which was practiced by the people of Prophet Lot (peace be upon him), was punishable by death in the Holy Scriptures. In Leviticus 20:13, it is explicitly stated: “If a man has sexual relations with a man as one does with a woman, both of them have done what is detestable. They are to be put to death; their blood will be on their own heads”.¹⁷ Furthermore, Leviticus 22:18 warns against engaging in sexual relations with a man as one does with a woman, deeming it a grave transgression.¹⁸

Sexual deviation and sexual violence are forms of violence perpetrated against women, encompassing various aspects, including sexual rape, the focus of our research. This multifaceted phenomenon, which victimizes not only women but also, on occasion, men,

¹⁶ Daniel Tri Juniardo Tambunan, “Mendobrak Diskriminasi Lesbian Gay, Bisexual, Transgender (LGBT) dalam Bingkai Agama dan Kesetaraan Gender,” *Jurnal Teologi Cultivation* 5, no. 2 (December 30, 2021): 159–177, <https://doi.org/10.46965/jtc.v5i2.1043>; See also Neri Widya Ramailis, “Homo Seksual Potret Perilaku Seksual Menyimpang dalam Perspektif Kriminologi, Islam dan Budaya Melayu,” *Sisi Lain Realita* 2, no. 2 (December 22, 2017): 1–12, [https://doi.org/10.25299/sisilainrealita.2017.vol2\(2\).2455](https://doi.org/10.25299/sisilainrealita.2017.vol2(2).2455).

¹⁷ New International Version, “Holy Bible” (n.d.).

¹⁸ New International Version.

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particularly children, has been scrutinized and defined by scholars, legal experts, as well as professionals in the realms of psychology and sociology. These efforts aim to safeguard individuals and communities from its consequences and impacts.

In this article, we will provide several definitions of this compound concept, 'sexual harassment,' breaking down its constituent elements, 'harassment' and 'sex', for a comprehensive understanding, which is as follows: Harassment: The term "harassment" encompasses various meanings, including to move, excite, shake, itch, deceive, prevent, choke, and trap. In this context, the perpetrator seeks to deceive the other person through a series of sexual behaviors, making them the target of their desires.¹⁹ Sex: Sex is the culmination of physiological and psychological processes associated with reproduction and the pleasure experienced during arousal and desire between individuals of both sexes.²⁰ Sex: refers to the state of being male or female, while the term 'sex' encompasses the innate attraction that draws individuals of opposite sexes toward one another. It also pertains to sexual intercourse and sexual practices. 'Sexual description' denotes the stimulus of sexual desire.²¹

Sexual harassment is not a familiar term in Eastern literature in general, and Islamic literature in particular. This concept originates from the Western world; in English, it is referred to as "sexual harassment", and in French, it is known as "harcèlement sexuel". This term is employed to describe the essence of sexual harassment, which involves the oppression of one party by another, the adoption of certain behaviors marked by imbalance and inequality between both

¹⁹ M. A. Al-Harawi, *Tadhib Al-Lughah (Refinement of the Language)*, ed. M. Marib (Beirut: Dār Ihya' al-Turath al-'Arabi, 2001), 108; See also A. Ibn Al-Athir, *Al-Kamil Fi at-Tarikh (The Complete History)*, ed. O.A.S. Tadmurri (Beirut: Dar al-Kitab al-Arabi, 1997), 367; See also F. Nizam Al-Din, *Farhang-e Shirin (Shirin Dictionary)*, 3rd ed. (Sulaymaniyah: Sardam Printing and Publishing House, 2003), 133; See also Mustafa et al., *Al-Mu'jam al-Wasit (The Intermediate Dictionary)* (Istanbul: Dār ad-Da'wah, 1989), 166.

²⁰ J. Hamid and A. Kafafi, *Mu'jam 'Ilm an-Nafs Wa at-Tibb an-Nafsi (Dictionary of Psychology and Psychiatry)*, 1st ed. (Kairo: Dār an-Nahḍah al-'Arabīyah, 1992), 350.

²¹ L. Al-Sherbini, *Mu'jam Mustalahat at-Tibb an-Nafsi (Dictionary of Psychiatric Terms)* (Kuwait: Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Sciences, n.d), 169.

parties, mutual dissatisfaction, and persistent and unwanted advances. It is considered a criminal act and reprehensible for pursuing a sexually motivated gain.²²

Niboye's study of violence against women in public transport spaces in Dar es Salaam (2023) reveals the multifaceted nature of gender-based violence, influenced by cultural, legal, geographical and economic factors.²³ The findings are consistent with a broader understanding of sexual harassment as a complex, universal phenomenon. Emphasizing the need for comprehensive initiatives, including legal frameworks, behavioral changes, and infrastructure improvements, the research reinforces the broader theme of sexual harassment as a multifaceted concept shaped by sociocultural, economic, and geographic contexts.²⁴

Sexual harassment, which originates from the Western world, is unknown in Eastern and Islamic literature. Its complex nature, marked by imbalance and inequality, is highlighted. Niboye's study of violence in Dar es Salaam echoes a broader understanding of sexual harassment as a universal issue.²⁵ The call for comprehensive initiatives resonates with the multifaceted nature shaped by sociocultural, economic and geographic contexts.

2. Psychological, Sociological, and Legal Perspectives on Sexual Harassment

To examine sexual harassment from a psychological standpoint, researchers in this field have endeavored to explore the psychological repercussions of sexual harassment and subsequently categorize it as

²² L. Mustafā, “*Jrīm At-Tawthīr Ash-Sha’bī Fī al-Qānūn al-Jazā’irī Wa al-Qānūn al-Muqāran*” (Master’s Thesis, Aljazair, University of Algiers, Algiers, 2013), 12; Some other cases can be seen in Hudzaifah Achmad Qotadah, *et.al.*, “Problems With the Implementation of Qanun Aceh Number 6 of 2014 Concerning Jinayat Law,” *Analisis: Jurnal Studi Keislaman* 22, no. 1 (June 30, 2022): 111–132, <https://doi.org/10.24042/ajsk.v22i1.6556>.

²³ Elliott P. Niboye, “Universal or Specific? - Violence Against Women in Public Spaces in Tanzania: Experiences from Public Bus Stations in Dar Es Salaam City,” *Social Sciences & Humanities Open* 7, no. 1 (January 1, 2023): 100430, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ssaho.2023.100430>.

²⁴ Niboye, 100430.

²⁵ Niboye, 100430.

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a facet of sexual deviance. They often introduce it in the context of the psychological effects of sexual harassment.

Among these studies, Van Wijek (2009) and Asis (2011) conducted fieldwork involving victims of sexual harassment and delved into the aftermath of rape, particularly its impact on mental health and well-being. Asis contends that there exists a strong correlation between sexual harassment and adverse psychological changes, including anxiety, depression, disillusionment, excessive fear, and self-blame. Accordingly, Asis defines sexual harassment from a psychological perspective as follows: “Sexual harassment is a reprehensible behavior that bears semblance to spiritual rape. It encompasses a range of words and actions, which may involve sexual intercourse, sometimes achieved through deception or threats, all with the aim of establishing a sexual relationship with another person”.²⁶

Researcher and psychologist Mariselela Huerta has also sought to define sexual harassment by associating it with the concept of psychological trauma. Huerta posits that sexual harassment constitutes a sexual act that induces anxiety, depression, diminished self-esteem, memory loss, and even miscarriage.²⁷ Researcher and psychologist Professor Karim Sharif Karchetani views sexual harassment as a violation of both physical and mental boundaries, primarily targeting girls and women through comments, verbal communication, physical contact, and even physical harassment.²⁸ As evident, the psychological perspective on sexual harassment underscores the psychological, physical, and intellectual consequences that result from such acts.

Experts in the field of sociology have conducted numerous field studies on sexual harassment and its underlying motives. They have endeavored to establish a sociological framework for understanding sexual harassment from this standpoint. Noteworthy among these

²⁶ F. H. Abdel Hamid, *At-Taharush al-Jinsi Wa Jara'Im al-'Ird (Sexual Harassment and Honorable Mentions)* (Kairo: Maṭba' Dār al-Ūthā'iq, 2011), 29.

²⁷ Marisela Huerta *et.al.*, “Sex and Power in the Academy: Modeling Sexual Harassment in the Lives of College Women,” *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin* 32, no. 5 (May 1, 2006): 32, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0146167205284281>.

²⁸ K. S. Qarachatani, Professor: Karim Sharif Karachetani - University Professor and Psychologist, *Interview*, March 18, 2019.

efforts is the work of Leora Reese and Karen Landenberg, who sought to uncover the connection between gender-related concepts and sexual harassment. In their study, these two researchers define sexual harassment as follows: “Obscene activities and behaviors, encompassing physical advances, demands, and intimidating sexual misconduct”.²⁹

Fitzgerald, Gelfand, and Drasgow (1995) aimed to create a robust workplace sexual harassment measurement tool.³⁰ Grounded in a theoretical framework aligning with legal and psychological considerations, they developed a three-dimensional model. The revised Sexual Experiences Questionnaire (SEQ) underwent extensive testing, demonstrating reliability in 448 employed women. Confirmatory factor analysis affirmed the model's stability and generalizability, contributing to psychometric progress. This study underscores the significance of theoretical grounding and empirical validation in crafting a comprehensive assessment tool for understanding workplace harassment dynamics.³¹

Combining sociological insights such as the work of Reese and Landenberg with psychometric advances by Fitzgerald, Gelfand, and Drasgow (1995) provides a comprehensive understanding of sexual harassment.³² Their efforts offer a nuanced approach to addressing the dynamics of workplace harassment, emphasizing the importance of theoretical foundation and empirical validation in addressing sexual deviance in society.

Given that sexual harassment is considered a form of social deviation, with potential harm to both individuals and society comparable to that of corruption, theft, and dishonesty, many countries have established legal frameworks to address sexual

²⁹ Laura A. Reese and Karen E. Lindenberg, “Gender, Age, and Sexual Harassment,” *Review of Public Personnel Administration* 25, no. 4 (December 1, 2005): 336–337, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0734371X04272349>.

³⁰ Louise F. Fitzgerald, Michele J. Gelfand, and Fritz Drasgow, “Measuring Sexual Harassment: Theoretical and Psychometric Advances,” *Basic and Applied Social Psychology* 17, no. 4 (December 1, 1995): 425–445, https://doi.org/10.1207/s15324834basp1704_2.

³¹ Fitzgerald, Gelfand, and Drasgow, 425–445.

³² Fitzgerald, Gelfand, and Drasgow, 425–445.

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harassment and defined corresponding punishments. These countries include Egypt, Lebanon, Algeria, and the United States. The Algerian Penal Code, for instance, defines sexual harassment as follows: “A deliberate act committed by a sexually driven individual, abusing their power, position, or profession, by issuing commands to another person, inducing fear, coercion, threats, or pressure to engage in disgraceful sexual acts”.³³

However, within the Kurdistan Regional Government and the Iraqi Penal Code, which largely inherit provisions from the former Ba'ath regime's Penal Code, the concept of sexual harassment is not explicitly defined. Instead, Articles 393-404 describe various forms of sexual misconduct, including acts such as homosexuality, rape, adultery, honor attacks, deflowering of virgins, and the use of sexually explicit and deceptive language. Many of these actions can be categorized as forms of sexual harassment. These articles also outline penalties for the perpetrators of such sexual crimes, which can range from imprisonment to the death penalty, especially if the offender is a government employee who has misused their authority for these sexually deviant purposes.³⁴

A legal expert asserts that sexual harassment encompasses any indecent words, actions, gestures, or expressions through images, movies, and songs.³⁵ Interestingly, legal definitions categorize sexual harassment as a violation of the law, subjecting the perpetrator to legal consequences.

Sexual harassment in Indonesia includes various forms of behavior that are considered inappropriate and violate ethical and legal norms related to intimacy and personal boundaries. Some forms of sexual harassment that can occur involve actions or behaviors such as verbal harassment (using words that are demeaning or sexually degrading), physical harassment (unwanted physical contact or non-

³³ Bin Arab Muhammad, “Sexual Harassment in Algeria from Silent Taboos to Legal Criminalization,” *Journal of Arts and Social Sciences* 6, no. 1 (June 1, 2009): 445–90, <https://www.asjp.cerist.dz/en/article/39732>.

³⁴ Compilation Team, *Qanun Al-Iqubat (Penal Code)* (Baghdad: Legal Library, 2008), 22.

³⁵ B. M. Ali, Lawyer: Bakhtiar Mohammed Ali, Head of Halabja Prosecutor General's Office, *Interview*, February 25, 2019.

consensual sexual acts), hacking (dissemination of sexual material or messages through media such as text messages, emails, or social media), sexual harassment of women (sexually degrading behavior towards women, including street harassment, harassment in public places, or non-consensual sexual acts), and others.

3. Sexual Harassment from an Islamic Perspective

First, let's explore sexual harassment from an Islamic standpoint. Although the concept of sexual harassment is relatively new and foreign to Muslim culture and Islamic literature, it is not explicitly mentioned in linguistic dictionaries as it is today. However, Islamic scholars and thinkers have made efforts to define it on multiple occasions, with definitions such as:

Ibn Sa'dun's definition: Sexual harassment encompasses all behaviors, both actions and speech, initiated by one person and directed towards another with the intent of arousing sexual desire. The ultimate goal of such behaviors is to engage in forbidden sexual acts. It's important to note that these actions and speech, regardless of their nature, are considered unauthorized and are seen as transgressions against religious principles and breaches of public morality.³⁶

Nasreen Abdul Hamid's Definition: Sexual harassment is a moral offense that involves touching a woman's body in a manner contrary to the established lawful rules and procedures meant to protect her from inappropriate exposure, sexual harassment, and indecent relationships.³⁷

Analyzing these two definitions of sexual harassment reveals the following key points: *First*, Encompasses inappropriate and unauthorized sexual behavior: This includes a wide range of actions, gestures, speech, and writings. For instance, it covers actions like handshakes, kisses, and hugs, as well as gestures such as eye

³⁶ A. S. Abdel Moneim, "*Ahkam Al-Taharush al-Jinsi (Provisions on Sexual Harassment)*" (Master's Thesis, Riyadh, Imam Muhammad Ibn Saud Islamic University, 2010), 30.

³⁷ N. A. Nassieh, *Al-I'tidā' al-Jinsī (Sexual Crime)* (Alexandria: Dar al-Jami'ah al-Jadidah, 2007), 158.

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movements, laughter, and smiling. Additionally, it includes speech such as sexual jokes, words of affection, and any form of communication with sexual undertones. *Second*, Pertains to person-to-person offenses: Sexual harassment can involve both males and females, and it does not exclusively involve males harassing females. Field research has shown that females can also engage in sexually harassing behavior towards males.

Third, Motivated by sexual desire: The underlying motivation behind these actions is to engage in forbidden sexual acts such as adultery, rape, and homosexuality. Whether it's a simple hand gesture, a smile, a glance, a suggestive word, or explicit writing, the intention is to arouse sexual desire, and these actions are considered transgressions against religious principles. *Fourth*, Violation of religious standards: Unauthorized sexual activity represents a clear violation of the societal moral standards that serve as a safeguard for social stability and harmony. Some of these sexual behaviors are strictly forbidden in Muslim societies, with penalties that may even include death, such as homosexuality. In contrast, Western and non-Muslim countries may have legal frameworks regulating such behaviors, including homosexuality, and in some extreme cases, even unconventional practices like bestiality.

As previously mentioned, although sexual harassment is a concept foreign to Muslim culture, there are several similar concepts found in Islamic sources, including the Holy Qur'an, Hadiths, jurisprudence books, and educational texts. These include:

- a. Scheduling and greed: This refers to attempts to seduce someone, as mentioned in the Holy Qur'an: "And the lady, in whose house he lived, tried to seduce him. She locked the doors firmly and said, "Come to me!" He replied, "Allah is my refuge! It is not right to betray my master, who has taken good care of me. Indeed, the wrongdoers never succeed".
- b. Passion: This denotes intense love or infatuation, as described in the Qur'an: "Some women of the city gossiped, "The Chief Minister's wife is trying to seduce

her slave-boy. Love for him has plagued her heart. Indeed, we see that she is clearly mistaken”.

- c. Harassment: This includes defamation, slander, or false accusations against a chaste woman, resulting in the defamation of her honor. This is prohibited and punishable, as stated in the Qur'an: “As for those who abuse believing men and 1women unjustifiably, they will definitely bear the guilt of slander and blatant sin”.
- d. Spanking: This refers to a sexual deviation aimed at harassing and coercing a woman (of any age) into committing adultery or shameful acts.³⁸
- e. Adultery: Adultery is condemned in Islam and is a grave sin, as stated in the Qur'an: “Do not go near adultery. It is truly a shameful deed and an evil way”.
- f. Friendship and marital infidelity: This concept pertains to illicit relationships outside of a lawful marriage, which is also prohibited in Islam, as indicated in the Qur'an: “... if they are chaste, neither promiscuous nor having secret affairs”.

C. Interpretive Approaches and Motives of Sexual Harassment

1. Definitions of Sexual Harassment

Sociologists and psychologists employ various analytical and interpretive theories to elucidate sexual harassment. Notably, Assistant Professor Alia Faraj, a sociologist and lecturer at Sulaimani University, expounds upon interpretive and analytical theories pertinent to the sociological analysis of sexual violence. These theories encompass:

Regulatory Perspective: This perspective centers on the manifestations of sexual harassment and relies upon factors such as the coexistence of both sexes in institutions (e.g., universities), cultural disparities, and the socio-cultural backgrounds of individuals.

³⁸ A. Al-Hafni, *Al-Mustalah an-Nafsi al-Jinsi* (Kairo: Maktabah Madbouli, 2002), 770.

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It also takes into account the absence or inadequacy of institutional legal measures to combat sexual harassment.

Socio-cultural Orientation: This perspective emphasizes the prevalence of masculinity in most societies and the presence of hierarchical structures, roles, power dynamics, and authority among men, largely shaped by familial socialization. In such societies, sexual harassment is often regarded as a societal issue, and females may be conditioned to tolerate it in the interest of safeguarding their own reputation and social life.

Gender Role Direction: This perspective interlinks the previous orientations while considering the divergent positions of men and women within institutions and society, with a focus on the evolving role of men.³⁹

An alternative group of sociological researchers posits that sexual violence arises from the conflict between individual desires and instincts and societal norms (such as restrictions) that constrain these desires. In such cases, sexual harassment may be viewed as a consequence of societal coercion, as if it were an escape from these constraints.⁴⁰

Yet another group of sociologists provides a gender-social interpretation of sexual harassment, incorporating women's perspectives. They regard sexual harassment as an expression of masculine dominance—a hegemony that enables men to exert sexual power through acts of sexual violence, thereby reinforcing and perpetuating male dominance. Advocates of this approach link sexual harassment to gender-based social conditioning.⁴¹

Psychologists proffer a psychological interpretation of sexual harassment, positing that this form of social deviance originates from a sense of social alienation. When an individual despairs of fitting

³⁹ A. Faraj, Assistant Professor: Alia Faraj-University Professor and Sociologist, *Interview*, March 1, 2019.

⁴⁰ A. A. Jumaa and A. A. Areef, *Dirāsāt Fī 'ilm Al-Ijtimā' al-Islāmī (Studies in Islamic Sociology)*, 1st ed. (Damaskus: Dār al-'Ulamā', 2011), 24.

⁴¹ M. Obada and K. Abu Doh, *The Social Dimensions of Sexual Harassment in Daily Life, a Field Study in Sohag Governorate* (Riyadh Arab Saudi: King Saud University, n.d.), 27.

into society or perceives an inability to attain their desires and objectives while adhering to societal norms and regulations, feelings of aggression may predominate. Consequently, individuals may resort to committing such transgressions, which, in turn, incur societal sanctions and contravene established social values.

2. Motives Behind Sexual Harassment

According to the researcher, the primary motivations for sexual harassment include:

- a. Weak Religious Deterrence: The absence or weakness of effective moral barriers facilitates the commission of various crimes, including sexual harassment. Therefore, in our view, the primary gateway to all other motives for sexual violence is the lack of self-restraint and a weakened belief system.
- b. Media Influence: Media plays a significant role in motivating sexual harassment through the dissemination of pornographic and provocative content, objectifying women, portraying them in a sexualized manner, advertising that exploits sexuality, and more. Social networks, television channels, mobile phones, and other forms of media become sources of sexual violence when ethical media standards are disregarded. Instead of fostering awareness, certain media outlets and social platforms can contribute to the degradation of societal values.⁴²
- c. Domestic Abuse and Unhealthy Upbringing: Research suggests that one of the primary causes of sexual harassment arises from domestic violence and an unhealthy upbringing.⁴³

⁴² M. S. Al-Shanqiti, *Lil-I'lām al-Islāmī - al-Manhaj (Islamic Media - Methodology)* (Riyadh: Dār 'Ilm al-Kutub, 1998), 159–160.

⁴³ K. S. Qarachatani, Professor: Karim Sharif Karachetani - University Professor and Psychologist, *Interview*, March 18, 2019.

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- d. Gender Mixing: Increased interaction between both sexes, especially in workplaces, universities, colleges, tourist destinations, and private cafes, raises the likelihood of sexual harassment. A study conducted in the United States found that 92% of government office workers have experienced sexual harassment, including incidents involving close relatives (such as fathers, brothers, uncles). Such interactions with non-mahram individuals outside the family circle can lead to inappropriate behavior.⁴⁴
- e. Economic Factors: Economic conditions such as unemployment, the high cost of marriage, poverty, and exorbitant dowries can also contribute to sexual harassment.
- f. Other Motivations: Additional motives include the lack of satisfaction of basic needs, especially sexual needs, a weak state punishment system, the absence of effective monitoring systems like “Hisbah”, which is an Islamic monitoring organization, and the disregard of Islamic moral values. Women being out late at night, socializing in groups, and gathering in crowded places can also be factors.⁴⁵

According to psychologists, sociologists, and legal experts, the key motivations for sexual harassment include: Psychological Emptiness of the Perpetrator: Even minor feelings of emptiness and confusion due to improper upbringing can lead to such behavior; External Influences Leading to Imitation: Perpetrators may imitate the actions of others due to external influences; Excessive Objectification of Women: Deviating from societal norms and religious guidelines,

⁴⁴ R. Musa, Z. Al-Ayish, and M. S. Al-Dasuqi, *Sikūlūjīa Al-Atfāl (The Psychology of Violence against Children)*, 1st ed. (Giza: 'Ilm al-Kitāb, 2008), 2014.

⁴⁵ A. Ashour, S. Najm, and L. Al-Alim, *Sexual Harassment, Its Causes, Repercussions, And Coping Mechanisms. A Case Study of Egyptian Society* (Cairo: Cairo University, 2009), 39–40; M. Abd Al-Samad, “Phenomena of Social Deviation in Islamic Society and Their Treatment,” *International Islamic University Chittagong* 4, no. 9 (December 2007): 150–151, <http://dspace.iuic.ac.bd:8080/xmlui/handle/88203/473>.

as well as excessive mixing of the sexes, can contribute to harassment; Weak Social Resistance to Immoral Acts (Society's Defense): The lack of strong societal condemnation for such acts can embolden perpetrators; Inadequate Enforcement and Penalties at the State Level: While the law may impose severe penalties for such behavior, the enforcement and implementation of these penalties may not be stringent enough.

D. Conclusion

The analysis of sexual deviations from an Islamic perspective reveals multifaceted origins, spanning educational, economic, and cultural factors. Sexual harassment emerges as a behavioral deviation influenced by the absence of a comprehensive Islamic viewpoint on sexuality. Educational institutions, pivotal in both perpetuating and preventing sexual violence, require targeted interventions. The failure to respect boundaries and media's objectification of women exacerbate societal deviations. Inadequate sexual awareness among adolescents contributes to deviations, while women's roles in harassment vary across categories. The repercussions of sexual harassment impact both perpetrators and victims mentally. Ineffective punishment for perpetrators perpetuates sexual deviancy, disrupting social harmony.

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