

WORKPLACE SEXUAL HARASSMENT AND WITHDRAWAL BEHAVIORS AMONG FEMALE WORKERS IN JORDANIAN HOTELS, THE MEDIATING ROLE OF EMOTIONAL EXHAUSTION

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Abstract: This study explores the connection between workplace sexual harassment and the tendency of female hotel workers in Jordan to withdraw from their jobs, with a specific focus on the role of emotional exhaustion. The study involved female employees from five-star hotels in Amman, Jordan, using a convenience sampling approach, and collected 203 valid responses, achieving an 87% response rate. Using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM), the research found that sexual harassment and emotional exhaustion directly and positively affected withdrawal behaviors. Notably, sexual harassment had a substantial positive impact on emotional exhaustion. However, the study found that emotional exhaustion did not mediate the relationship between sexual harassment and withdrawal behaviors. The coefficients of determination (R²) for emotional exhaustion and withdrawal behaviors were 0.780 and 0.841, respectively. This study underscores the prevalence of sexual harassment in Jordanian hotel workplaces, especially among female employees. It highlights that sexual harassment significantly contributes to emotional exhaustion among female workers, which, in turn, affects their inclination to leave their jobs. This emphasizes the importance of maintaining motivated and engaged female employees within the hospitality industry.

Key words: Sexual Harassment, Withdrawal Behaviors, Emotional Exhaustion, Hotel, Jordan

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INTRODUCTION

Sexual harassment is unwanted sexual behavior (Ram et al., 2016). Sexual harassment is a pervasive issue that affects workplaces worldwide (Cho, 2002). Following the #MeToo movement, the issue of sexual harassment in the workplace has received increased attention (Martinmaki et al., 2023), and the International Labor Organization has recognized it as a global phenomenon (Beghini, 2021). Notably, the Middle East and North Africa region has been identified as the least advanced in terms of legislation addressing sexual harassment in the workplace (Alquisi and Sryreh, 2015). In Jordan, the legal framework does not provide a clear definition of sexual harassment. However, acts and behaviors falling within the scope of sexual harassment are criminalized under laws related to immoral acts (Al-Nabils et al., 2017). Certain workplace environments, such as hotels, can make female employees more vulnerable to sexual harassment (Cho, 2002), where the hotel sector places a high value on customer satisfaction, which can put employees under pressure to tolerate unethical behavior (Gilbert et al., 1998). Furthermore, variables such as late-night shifts, uniform requirements, and the expectation of an attractive appearance within the hotel lead to an environment in which sexual harassment is more visible (Ali et al., 2015).

Jordan is a stable country and a preferred destination (Shatnawi et al., 2019). Human resources play an important role in the success of the hospitality sector (Al-Makhadmeh et al., 2022); however, the hospitality industry in Jordan continues to have a quite low female presence in various tourism activities; the percentage of female workers in the sector is still around 12%, despite efforts by state institutions and NGOs aiming to increase women's involvement in the labor market. Where 1,252 women work in travel and tourism offices, 2,364 women work in hotels, and 2,425 women work in tourist restaurants (Jordanian Ministry of Tourism & Antiquities, 2022). The low rate of female involvement in Jordan's hospitality industry may be attributed to a number of factors, some of which are cultural or societal in origin, while others are related to the

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work environment peculiar to this sector. Despite evidence showing a connection between sexual harassment and female employees leaving their jobs, Jordan hasn't conducted its own study on the subject. Addressing the issue of sexual harassment in the workplace is crucial for ensuring the well-being of employees and fostering a safe and inclusive work environment. Efforts to raise awareness, strengthen legislation, and implement preventive measures are essential to combating this pervasive problem and protecting the rights and dignity of all workers, regardless of gender.

The purpose of this study is to examine the prevalence of sexual harassment among female employees in the Jordanian hospitality industry as well as how it affects women's risk of experiencing considerable Job Withdrawal and job exhaustion.

By recognizing the reality of sexual harassment in this context, actionable steps can be taken to address the problem and make the workplace a safer and more welcoming place for female employees. This, in turn, can then help increase the engagement and retention of women in Jordan's hospitality industry. Understanding the link between sexual harassment, emotional exhaustion, and Job Withdrawal is crucial for addressing the underlying issues and putting effective interventions in place. The study's findings will assist policymakers, organizations, and stakeholders develop strategies and policies that mitigate sexual harassment and foster a supportive and friendly work environment for female employees. Therefore, by reducing the incidence of sexual harassment and alleviating emotional exhaustion, it is possible to take action in order to improve employment environments and increase the retention of women in the hospitality sector.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Workplace Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment in the hospitality sector is considered an ongoing problem and a legal issue because it violates the Labor and Anti-Discrimination Law and the Occupational Safety Law (Nimri et al., 2021) and is one of the documented phenomena in many countries around the world (Brown and Osman, 2017), and sexual harassment is also considered an explicit threat that affects competitive advantage (Alrawadieh et al., 2019). Sexual harassment is a form of violence since it violates a woman's right to maintain her bodily integrity as well as her psychological and social safety (Fitzgerald et al., 1995; Ram et al., 2016). Therefore, managing sexual harassment in the workplace is extremely important (Pearlman and Bordelon, 2022).

Gilbert et al. (1998) defined sexual harassment as any infringement of a woman's privacy, whether by sight, hearing, or bodily touch. Zhu et al. (2019), however, have stressed that sexual harassment is an unwanted sexual action directed against another person, and hence it may occur in both men and women. According to Cho (2002) and Martinmaki et al. (2023), sexual harassment is any unwelcome sexual activity, whether physical, verbal, or with particular signals, that has a detrimental influence on workers' performance at work. Welsh (1999), he indicated that sexual harassment falls into two categories: hostile environment harassment and quid pro quo. While Fitzgerald et al. (1995), placed harassing behavior in a model of three categories, namely: sexual coercion, unwanted sexual attention, and gender harassment (Cortina and Areguin, 2021).

Tony's (2021) study, which aimed to uncover issues related to harassment in Egyptian Hotels The study showed that more than half of the study sample were exposed to harassment, and the effects of harassment were a decrease in self-confidence, a loss of desire to work, and a decrease in job performance. According to a study by Wziak-Biaowolska (2020), conducted in developing countries, sexual harassment has a negative impact on both the quantity and quality of employment. The study made an interesting observation about how sexual harassment influenced employees' intentions to quit the workplace but did not affect decisions to quit. Harassment can occur anywhere, including the workplace, and can take the form of gender discrimination and the exploitation of power imbalances between men and women in order to achieve sexual benefits and goals, or the exploitation of a position within a workplace by a man in order to receive sexual pleasure in exchange for intimidation or enticement (Clarke, 2021).

The researchers from the preceding study found that sexual harassment in the workplace is sexually provocative activity directed from one person to another. It can take many forms, including verbal and physical. This harassment may be apparent, direct, or implicit, and it may be an abuse of the harasser's power and authority over the victim.

Sexual harassment issues started to emerge and worsen with the increase of women working in combination with men in all fields, especially with the overall decline in morality in Arab societies, along with a decline in religious and moral principles brought on by changes in lifestyle (Al-Matalkah and Alkhatibiyeh, 2017). Lee's 2023 study focused on the idea that the large ratio of males in the workplace with extended working hours resulted in an increased chance of sexual harassment instances. According to Burn's (2019) study, socialization processes that encourage male dominance, as well as the societal and cultural acceptability of violence against women, are the root causes of sexual harassment. The Marn (2021) research found that the level of sexual harassment among low-paid female workers had reached the point of explicit sexual offers, and it showed the need for a real shift in how this vulnerable population is supported and dealt with. In view of the prevalence of sexual harassment, Worke's 2021 study on perceptions and experiences of sexual harassment among female hotel workers in Ethiopia, a low-income nation, emphasized the importance of undertaking campaigns to raise awareness, pre-service education, and training. The same applies to the Al-Bahri study, 2023, which confirmed that studying the phenomenon of sexual harassment contributes to providing a warm environment in which order and stability prevail and indicated the lack of mechanisms to control harassment with the aim of reducing its practice. Shahinaz (2015) emphasized that by understanding the socio-cultural context, we can work towards addressing and preventing sexual harassment, promoting gender equality, and creating safer and more inclusive environments for all individuals.

Based on the "vulnerable victim" theory, McLaughlin et al. (2012) and Aksonnit (2014) reported that those with less social and cultural authority, as well as less organizational power, are more prone to sexual harassment. Not to mention that the girls preferred to remain silent out of fear and shame for what the harassed victim might experience from members of her society in what society refers to as a scandal due to the prevalent custom in some societies regarding sexual harassment

cases, which condemned the girl even if she was a victim (Cho, 2002). Arab societies, in particular, have a propensity to stigmatize conversations regarding sexual harassment since they perceive it as an insult to working women's reputations and a dishonor (Alquisi and Sryreh, 2015). The prevalence of sexual harassment in the dark is further exacerbated by this attitude in society, leaving victims without proper support (Wasti et al., 2000). Additionally, some researchers pointed out the shortcomings in the laws governing the issue of sexual harassment as well as the difficulties in establishing facts supporting the crime of sexual harassment (Liao et al., 2016). The work environment in the hotel industry is distinct from that of other businesses due to the high amount of social contact (Gilbert et al., 1998). The harasser's audacity was fueled by the relationship between hotel service production and customer contentment, as well as the commonly held assumption that the customer is always right (Poulston, 2008). This also helped with the unusual working hours, which required female employees to be present at night and at nightclubs, as well as dealing with some alcoholics, tempting fashion, and a beautiful look (Browne, 2008; Eller, 1990; and Cho, 2002). She was also involved in this because of the informal working conditions and the presence of individuals with low incomes and no education (Jung and Yoon, 2019).

Emotional Exhaustion

There are three sub-components of job burnout; the only one of the three elements that has been researched as a separate construct is "emotional exhaustion" (Bui et al., 2019). Emotional exhaustion is the primary cause of job burnout, the initial stage of the process, and the most blatant sign of burnout, according to Lammers et al. (2013). According to Maslach et al. (2001) and Bilal et al. (2022), emotional exhaustion is a quick and immediate psychological response to stress and shocks. Maslach et al. (2001), Maslach and Jackson (1981), and Chen et al. (2023a), among others, claim that emotional exhaustion is a psychological syndrome that results from significant physical, affective, and behavioral stress.

Emotional exhaustion is frequently associated with jobs that require a high level of interpersonal connection. This includes industries such as hotels, where staff frequently interact with a diverse spectrum of people on a daily basis (Chen et al., 2023a). Employees in the hotel sector constantly interact with guests, coworkers, and superiors, and they may encounter a variety of demands and obstacles as a result of these interactions (Wittmer and Martin, 2010). The quality of the services that employees deliver to their clients determines how well the hospitality business will do, and it is also one of the most stressful workplaces. As a result, the hospitality sector faces numerous difficulties today, the most significant of which is a labour shortage and the inability to keep talented employees (Grobelna, 2021).

Withdrawal Behavior

Withdrawal behavior in the workplace refers to actions taken by employees that create a psychological or physical distance between themselves and their work environment (Khawaja et al., 2022). Functional withdrawal specifically relates to the existence of a gap between the employee and the organization due to negative attitudes held by the worker towards their work (Mursi, 2014). The employee's withdrawal behavior is a reaction to his dissatisfaction with his job (Erdemli, 2015). Withdrawal behavior is several behaviors (Liu et al., 2019), and many experts (Abuzied and Al-Romeedy, 2022; Erdemli, 2015) agree that withdrawal behavior can be classified into types, namely psychological withdrawal and physical withdrawal. It is worth noting here that the first stage of functional withdrawal is psychological withdrawal.

According to Cropanzano et al. (1997), psychological withdrawal is the presence of an employee's body in the workplace but his thoughts elsewhere. It is also characterized by a reduction in effort, wasting work time, and indifference. Physical withdrawal reflects the employee's entire separation from the organization and manifests itself as tardiness, absenteeism, and leaving work (León and Morales, 2018). According to Lehman and Simpson (1992), it starts with psychological withdrawal behavior and then progresses to behavioral withdrawal and escalates, respectively, until the conclusion. According to Koslowsky (2009) the most typical type of job withdrawal is the gradual one, which begins with psychological withdrawal, progresses to being late for work, and eventually culminates with abandoning the actual job. The theory of reasoned action holds that intention precedes a behavioral act, and those who think about quitting their jobs are frequently the best and most qualified ones with the ability to obtain new employment (Shapira-Lishchinsky and Even-Zohar, 2011).

Employee retention is crucial (Xuecheng and Iqbal, 2022), and opt-out behaviors are a significant expense for many firms (Lobene and Meade, 2013). Employee withdrawal from work, whether physical or psychological, is one of the severe difficulties with high expenses for institutions, with the financial impact of withdrawal behavior estimated to be around \$200 billion a year in the United States (Pokharel and Sharma, 2020). Withdrawal has an impact on organizational performance since it causes a lack of attention to work and a decline in quality. It also affects organizational efficiency and makes it more difficult for the organization to achieve its objectives (Ababneh et al., 2023). And the study of Abuzied and Al-Romeedy (2022) indicated that there is an effect of job burnout on job withdrawal, and the motives of workers towards withdrawal from work may arise as a result of work conflicts and sexual harassment (Mursi, 2014). The Chen (2023b) study, which investigated the topic through a survey of six Chinese hotels, also found that sexual harassment undermined organizational identification, leading to an increase in workers' behaviors to quit their employment.

FRAMEWORK AND RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

Research Framework

Drawing upon the insights gleaned from the preceding literature review, a research model was constructed, and its schematic structure is portrayed in Figure 1. This framework elucidates the causal association between sexual harassment, which serves as the independent variable, and withdrawal behaviors, which function as the dependent variable. Additionally, the framework delineates the mediating influence of emotional exhaustion in the relationship between the independent and dependent variables.

Sexual Harassment and Emotional Exhaustion

People can experience sexual harassment in a variety of contexts, including the workplace, educational institutions, public venues, and social settings (Benya et al., 2018). Sexual harassment refers to any unwanted or inappropriate sexual approaches, requests for sexual favours, or other verbal or physical sexual activity that makes the situation for the person experiencing it unpleasant or intimidating (Jung and Yoon, 2020a; Gilbert et al., 1998). Hutagalung and Ishak (2012) Noted

that prolonged stress, especially stress brought on by sexual harassment, frequently results in emotional weariness. like that Bui et al. (2019) observed that sexual harassment can have a very negative effect on a person's emotional stability and mental health. Mathews et al. (2019) also noted that Increased anxiety and sadness can result from ongoing sexual harassment. The person could feel helpless, guilty, ashamed, and self-conscious, all of which over time can lead to emotional exhaustion. Timmerman and Bajema (1999) argued that Sexual harassment victims may feel self-blame and remorse, wondering if they somehow initiated the harassment or if they ought to have acted otherwise. These emotions may increase their emotional load and make them feel worn out. Reguera et al. (2021) observed that workplace sexual harassment can have a detrimental effect on productivity, career advancement, and job happiness. A person's emotional and mental resources may be depleted as a result of dealing with the persistent impacts of harassment, such as fear, worry, and low self-esteem, making it harder for them to perform at their best (Houle et al., 2011). Establishing safe and respectful work environments that address and prevent sexual harassment is the duty of both employers and institutions (Laband and Lentz, 1998). Lessening the incidence of harassment and its psychological effects on people can be achieved by putting policies into place, offering training, and building a supportive culture (Hsu et al., 2019).

In light of the aforementioned information, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H1: Sexual Harassment significantly and positively influences Emotional Exhaustion.

Sexual Harassment and Withdrawal Behavior

According to Sliter et al. (2012), withdrawal behaviors include excused or unexplained physical absence from the workplace, such as absence, tardiness, leaving early, and the goal to avoid or leave that organization. In the hospitality industry according to study findings by Khawaja et al. (2022), workplace stresses and withdrawal behavior have a favorable and substantial link. Ram (2018) stated that the negative impacts of sexual harassment on employees include withdrawal behavior and psychological upset. According to Jung and Yoon (2020b), respondents who experienced sexual harassment had a greater turnover intention and rate of absenteeism than those who did not. Withdrawal behavior refers to actions or attitudes that reflect an employee's disengagement or detachment from their job (Abuzied and Al-Romeedy, 2022). These behaviors often stem from various underlying factors such as job dissatisfaction, burnout, and sexual harassment can contribute to these behaviors (Nicole Salvaggio et al., 2011). When employees experience sexual harassment, they may demonstrate and engage in withdrawal behaviors as a coping mechanism or as a way to distance themselves from the uncomfortable situation (Glomb et al., 1999). These behaviors can be indicative of withdrawal behavior in the workplace (Abuzied and Al-Romeedy, 2022). For example, employees who experience sexual harassment may want to avoid the harasser or the workplace altogether, which leads to thoughts of absence (Erdemli, 2015). also, leaving the work station frequently may be a way to avoid the harasser or find temporary relief from the distressing situation (Berdahl, 2007). In addition, it can be employees experiencing sexual harassment may find it difficult to concentrate on their work, leading them to spend more time on personal matters as a form of escapism. also, persistent thoughts of leaving the job may arise due to the desire to escape the harassment and find a safer and more supportive work environment (Baker, 2016; Berdahl and Aquino, 2009). In light of the aforementioned information, the following hypothesis is proposed: Therefore, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H2: Sexual Harassment Significantly and Positively Influences Withdrawal Behavior.

Emotional Exhaustion and Withdrawal Behavior

Burnout has been found by Scanlan and Still (2013) to be a direct predictor of turnover intention. According to a study conducted by (Kyei-Poku, 2019), stress or weariness were linked to stronger intent to leave an organization. Withdrawal Behaviors are often more strongly related to emotional exhaustion (Maslach et al., 2001). Maslach and Jackson (1981) reported that burnout inventory was also related to Withdrawal Behavior.

Deery et al. (2002); Malakh-Pines et al. (1981) found their burnout or tedium measure to be associated with a form of withdrawal behavior. In other words, when individuals experience high levels of emotional exhaustion, they are more likely to engage in withdrawal behaviors such as absenteeism, lateness, or avoiding social interactions at work.

As reported by (Lazaro et al., 1984) the links between burnout and job withdrawal behaviors are sufficiently apparent that items evaluating the behaviors are sometimes incorporated into burnout measures.

Based on the nature of these two variables, we can formulate the following hypothesis:

H3: Emotional exhaustion has a positive impact on withdrawal behavior.

Emotional Exhaustion as a mediator between sexual harassment and withdrawal behaviors

Job burnout has been dubbed the greatest occupational risk of the twenty-first century (Maslach and Leiter, 2016).

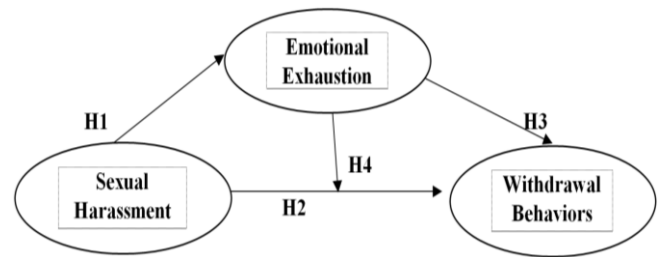


Figure 1. Research model

Previous study has revealed that hotel employees suffer from higher levels of emotional exhaustion (Baquero, 2023). Ali et al. (2020), discovered that emotional exhaustion fully mediated the relationship between workload and job performance. Furthermore, it has been demonstrated that both physical and emotional exhaustion have a detrimental influence on work. According to Huang et al. (2011); Leiter and Maslach (2005) occupational stress causes burnout, which consequently has detrimental physical and psychological effects on the individual. Employees who suffer from bullying or other abusive behavior initially feel emotionally exhausted, which leads to a desire to leave (Schaufeli et al., 2009; Tang and Schmitz, 2001). Sexual harassment causes lasting tension and worry (Jung et al., 2016). In other words, sexual harassment causes unpleasant feelings in workers, which causes emotional tiredness. Workers who experience emotional exhaustion exhibit more withdrawal symptoms (Srivastava and Agarwal, 2020). The most serious impact of such negative feelings resulting from emotional exhaustion is the withdrawal behaviors (Wu et al., 2017). In addition, Van Jaarsveld et al. (2010); Koon and Pun, (2018) studies shown emotional exhaustion to be a powerful mediator in the link between consumer and employee incivility.

Given the link between emotional exhaustion and increased withdrawal behaviors, it can be assumed that it plays a role in the interaction between sexual harassment and withdrawal behaviors. If sexual harassment leads to increased emotional exhaustion, withdrawal behaviors will also be affected (Linos et al., 2022). Emotional exhaustion might be a moderating factor in the relationship between sexual harassment and withdrawal behaviors. As a result, the researchers hypothesize that emotional exhaustion mediates the link between sexual harassment and withdrawal behaviors.

H4. Emotional Exhaustion mediates the relationship between sexual harassment and withdrawal behaviors.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Figure 2 is a flowchart that summarizes the workflow of the methodologies adopted in these investigations.

Participants and Procedure

The researchers utilized a technique known as convenience sampling. Participants were chosen based on their availability and willingness to participate. The study focused on female staff working in Amman's five-star hotels. A pilot study was carried out, with 35 randomly selected female hotel staff participating. The pilot study results demonstrated that the survey questions had strong internal consistency reliability, which implies that they consistently measured the same underlying construct. The main study employed a self-administered survey approach. This study took place across several months, from January 2023 to June 2023, with a two-week break between each interval. The survey asked about demographics, independent variables (factors being examined), moderating variables (factors that may influence the connection between other variables), and dependent variables.

203 valid responses were received from the contacted respondents. This resulted in an 87% response rate, showing that a sizable proportion of those contacted took part in the study.

Study Measure

Data acquisition was carried out through a questionnaire that was crafted in both Arabic and English languages. Consequently, the survey items employed in this study were drawn and adapted from prior literature. These items were assessed using a five-point Likert scale, spanning from 1 (never) to 5 (always), encompassing the domains of sexual harassment, emotional exhaustion, and withdrawal behavior. Sexual harassment was measured using a measure based on the Sexual Experiences Questionnaire for the Department of Defense (SEQ-DoD), which Stark et al. (2022) shortened to a 16-item scale. Then the questionnaire was modified by the researchers in this study to be valid for measuring workplace sexual harassment. To examine withdrawal behavior, Khawaja et al. (2022) developed a 12-item scale. Al-Badarneh et al. (2019) created a seven-item scale to assess emotional exhaustion. Then the items were modified by the researchers in this study to be valid for measuring withdrawal behavior and emotional exhaustion for Female Workers in hotels.

Data Analysis and Results

Descriptive analysis was employed to describe the sample's characteristics, the responses to the questionnaires, and the independent and dependent variables. Furthermore, reliability and validity analyses were conducted, and SEM analysis was used to test the research hypotheses. Table (1) displays the measured constructs as well as the items used to measure each construct.

Respondents' Profile

Figure 3 shows the response to the question, "How long have you been working in the hospitality industry?" The answers show that (38.4) percent have work experience ranging from (1 - 3) years, while (16.3) percent have work experience spanning more than 6 years. Regarding the participants' department questions "What department do you work in at the hotel?". The statistics show that (39.9) percent work in the housekeeping department, while 15.8 percent work in the

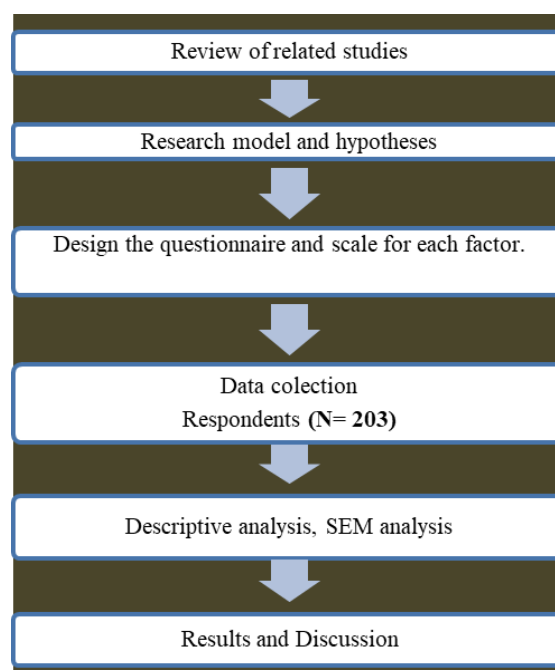


Figure 2. Research process (Source: suggested by the author)

front office department. Concerning the response to the question "Are you exposed to sexual harassment at work?" the answers show that (44.3) percent have often experienced sexual harassment, while (13.8) percent have rarely experienced it.

Table 1. Constructs and Measurement Items

Constructs	Measurement items
Sexual Harassment (SH)	SH1 Have you been treated differently because you are female?
	SH2 Have you ever been offered sexually suggestive material?
	SH3 Have sexually offensive comments ever been made in your presence?
	SH4 Criticized you or treated you with disdain because you are a female?
	SH5 Have you been repeatedly exposed to sexual stories or jokes that were offensive to you?
	SH6 Have you received unwanted efforts to engage you in a sexual conversation?
	SH7 Have you heard insulting comments about your looks, body, or sexual activities?
	SH8 Have you ever been humiliated or offended by sexual gestures or body language?
	SH9 Have you ever faced unwanted requests for love or sexual connection despite your best efforts to fend them off?
	SH10 Have you been asked for a meeting, drinks, dinner, etc. despite the fact that you replied "No"?
	SH11 Have you been touched in a way that has made you feel uneasy?
	SH12 Have you ever been subjected to unwelcome efforts to kiss, fondle, or stroke you?
	SH13 Have you ever felt like you were being bribed into engaging in sexual activity?
	SH14 Have you ever felt threatened with some sort of retaliation for not being sexually cooperative?
	SH15 Have you ever been harassed because you rejected an offer of sex?
	SH16 Have you ever been promised better treatment or quicker promotions in exchange for sexual cooperation?
Emotional Exhaustion (EE)	EE1 I believe I have lost interest in my profession.
	EE2 I feel spiritually exhausted by the end of the working day.
	EE3 I can't do this job for even another day.
	EE4 My shifts at work drained my energy.
	EE5 I'm worn out from my current job.
	EE6 My profession has restrictions on me.
	EE7 I feel mentally and emotionally worn out at work.
Withdrawal Behaviors (WB)	WB1 Are you being absentminded at work?
	WB2 Do you often talk about issues unrelated to work with colleagues at work?
	WB3 Do you leave your place of employment for trivial reasons?
	WB4 Do you often find yourself daydreaming at work?
	WB5 Do you spend work time on personal matters?
	WB6 Do you put less effort into your job than you should?
	WB7 Do you have thoughts of leaving your current job?
	WB8 Do you pass on your responsibilities to others?
	WB9 Do you leave work early without permission?
	WB10 Do you lunch or rest for longer than is permitted?
	WB11 Do you take equipment without permission?
	WB12 Do you snooze through timework?

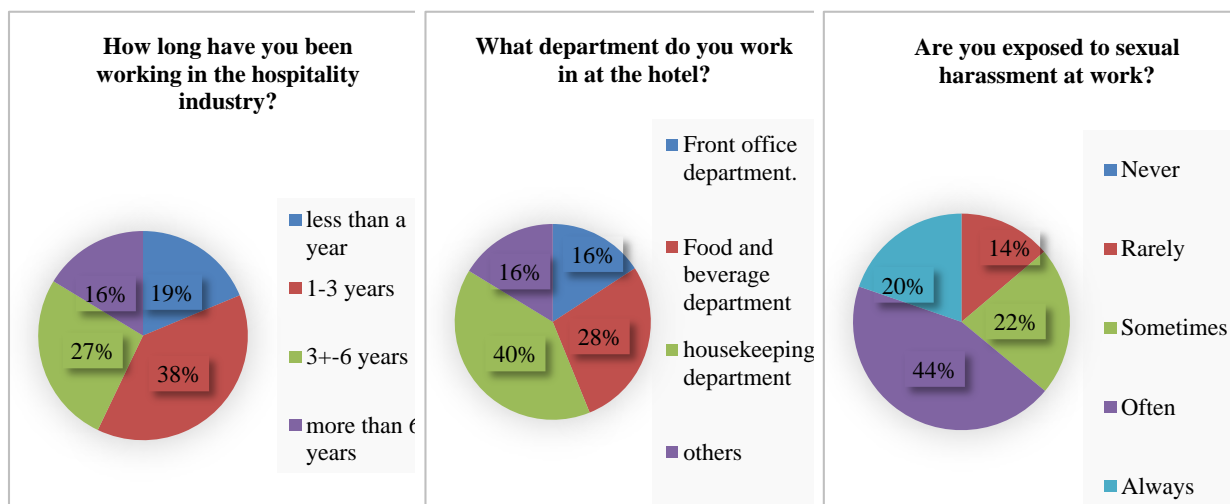


Figure 3. Description of the Respondents' Profiles

Descriptive Analysis

Researchers can learn about the broad trends and variations in participant responses and attitudes by measuring the mean and standard deviation for each survey question. Understanding the data's central tendency and the degree to which individual responses depart from the mean is aided by this information (Pallant, 2005; Sekaran and Bougie, 2013). In other words, a small standard deviation indicates that a group of numbers is closely clustered around or close to the mean, whereas a large standard deviation suggests the opposite. The level of each item was established using the formula below: (highest point on the Likert scale to lowest point on the Likert scale)/number of levels used = (5-1)/5=0.80, where (1-1.80)

denotes "very low," (1.81-2.60) "low," (2.61-3.40) "moderate," and (3.41-4.20) "high," and (4.21-5) represents "very high." The items were being ordered based on their means. Tables 2 and 3 show the results.

Table 2. Mean and Standard Deviation of the study's variables

Sexual Harassment	Mean	SD	Level	Order
SH1	4.2660	.91639	Very high	2
SH2	3.0099	.86167	Moderate	11
SH3	3.7685	1.15209	high	4
SH4	2.9261	.76395	Moderate	12
SH5	3.0985	1.01481	Moderate	10
SH6	4.0690	.79924	high	3
SH7	3.3941	.95044	Moderate	8
SH8	4.4581	.91304	Very high	1
SH9	3.5961	.71365	high	6
SH10	2.7094	1.12543	Moderate	15
SH11	2.8867	.96573	Moderate	13
SH12	2.5567	.97518	low	16
SH13	3.7438	.79191	high	5
SH14	2.7685	1.16915	Moderate	14
SH15	3.1527	.95510	Moderate	9
SH16	3.4828	.91384	high	7
Emotional Exhaustion	Mean	SD	Level	Order
EE1	3.8867	1.04454	high	3
EE2	3.4926	1.37650	high	5
EE3	2.7931	1.25333	Moderate	6
EE4	2.5813	1.28858	low	7
EE5	3.5123	.92469	high	4
EE6	3.8916	.84904	high	2
EE7	3.9754	1.19586	high	1
Withdrawal Behaviors	Mean	SD	Level	Order
WB1	4.0443	1.01132	high	1
WB2	3.8818	.94702	high	4
WB3	3.8177	1.02507	high	5
WB4	3.6355	1.28013	high	6
WB5	3.5074	1.39081	high	7
WB6	3.9261	1.41402	high	3
WB7	3.9606	1.08474	high	2
WB8	2.8424	1.01219	Moderate	11
WB9	2.9458	1.11338	Moderate	9
WB10	3.0640	1.00041	Moderate	8
WB11	2.4384	1.16462	low	12
WB12	2.8621	1.17763	Moderate	10

Table 3. Overall mean and standard deviation of the study's variables

Type of Variable	Variables	Mean	Standard Deviation (SD)	Level
Independent Variables	Sexual Harassment	3.3679	.56699	Moderate
Mediating Variable	Emotional Exhaustion	3.4476	.79370	high
Dependent Variable	Withdrawal Behaviors	3.4105	.76074	high

Measurement Model

The results of a Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) that was conducted to assess the properties of a measurement instrument used in the study indicate most of the items have factor loadings exceeding 0.50, which is generally considered an acceptable threshold. where the factor loadings and the strength of the relationship between each observed item (question) and its underlying latent construct (factor) are explained. Nine items with low factor loadings were eliminated from the analysis (SH4 = 0.344, SH8 = 0.093, SH10 = 0.153, SH11 = 0.478, SH12 = 0.218, EE3 = 0.494, EE6 = 0.285, WB2 = 0.178, and WB9 = 0.289), and that's to improve the model fit and enhance convergent validity. Items with low factor loadings (below 0.50) can indicate that they are not strongly associated with the intended construct and might not be providing accurate measurements (Bagozzi and Yi, 1988; Creswell, 2009). As it appears from the results of the analysis shown in Table (4), the composite reliability values (which are closely related to Cronbach's alpha) exceed 0.60, indicating a high level of consistency within the latent variables. where Cronbach's Alpha assesses how well the items within a scale (factor) correlate with each other. In this study's analysis, since each AVE value exceeded 0.50, this indicates strong convergent validity, where an Average Variance Extracted (AVE) value exceeding 0.50 suggests that more variance is due to the construct itself than measurement error (Bagozzi and Yi, 1988; Hair et al., 2010). Based on the analysis shown in the table (4), the measurement model demonstrates good properties in terms of factor loadings, internal consistency (Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability), and convergent validity (AVE), and these findings suggest that the measurement instrument is reliable and valid for assessing the constructs of interest.

Table 4. Properties of the final measurement model

CI	FL	(SE)	(SMC)	(EV)	(CA)	(CR)*	(AVE)**
Sexual Harassment					0.905	0.92	0.54
SH 1	0.797	***	0.635	0.305			
SH 2	0.626	0.077	0.392	0.449			
SH 3	0.924	0.090	0.853	0.194			
SH 5	0.766	0.086	0.587	0.423			
SH 6	0.672	0.070	0.452	0.348			
SH 7	0.543	0.087	0.295	0.633			
SH 9	0.642	0.063	0.413	0.298			
SH 13	0.559	0.072	0.313	0.429			
SH 14	0.840	0.096	0.706	0.400			
SH 15	0.659	0.084	0.434	0.514			
SH 16	0.505	0.084	0.255	0.619			
Emotional Exhaustion					0.909	0.89	0.61
EE 1	0.862	***	0.743	0.279			
EE 2	0.861	0.079	0.741	0.489			
EE 4	0.755	0.082	0.569	0.711			
EE 5	0.868	0.053	0.753	0.210			
EE 7	0.791	0.074	0.626	0.533			
Withdrawal Behaviors					0.898	0.91	0.50
WB 1	0.691	***	0.477	0.532			
WB 3	0.529	0.107	0.280	0.357			
WB 4	0.591	0.134	0.349	0.620			
WB 5	0.820	0.148	0.672	0.432			
WB 6	0.822	0.150	0.676	0.445			
WB 7	0.852	0.116	0.725	0.321			
WB 8	0.585	0.106	0.342	0.671			
WB 10	0.697	0.105	0.486	0.512			
WB 11	0.713	0.123	0.508	0.664			
WB 12	0.573	0.123	0.328	0.289			
* Composite Reliability = $(\sum Li)^2 / ((\sum Li)^2 + \sum Var (Ei))$; ** Average Variance Extracted = $\sum Li^2 / (\sum Li^2 + \sum Var (Ei))$ Caption: Cronbach Alpha(CA), Composite Reliability(CR), Average Variance Extracted (AVE), Error Variance: EV Square Multiple Correlation: SMC, Constructs and Indicators: CI, Factor Loadings: FL and Std. Error: SE							

Structural Model

The SEM analysis revealed that Sexual Harassment directly, positively, and significantly affected Emotional Exhaustion ($\beta = 0.883, t = 26.738, p = 0.000$); thus, H1 was supported. Also, H2, and H3 were supported. Results found that Sexual Harassment directly, positively, and significantly affected Withdrawal Behaviors ($\beta = 0.727, t = 12.172, p = 0.000$), besides Emotional Exhaustion on Withdrawal Behaviors ($\beta = 0.210, t = 3.510, p = 0.000$). Furthermore, the coefficient of determination (R^2) for the research endogenous variables for Emotional Exhaustion, and Withdrawal Behaviors were 0.780, and 0.841 respectively, which indicates that the model does account for the variation of the proposed model. To test the mediating effects of Emotional Exhaustion, the study looked at both the direct effect of Sexual Harassment on Withdrawal Behaviors; and its indirect effect through the mediatory path of Emotional Exhaustion. It was found that Emotional Exhaustion did not mediate the relationship between Sexual Harassment and Withdrawal Behaviors. Thus, H4 was not supported.

Table 5. Summary of proposed results for the theoretical model

Research Proposed Paths	Coefficient Value	t-value	p-value	Empirical Evidence
H1: SH → EE	0.883	26.738	0.000	Supported
H2: SH → WB	0.727	12.172	0.000	Supported
H3: EE → WB	0.210	3.510	0.000	Supported
SH: Sexual Harassment; EE: Emotional Exhaustion; WB: Withdrawal Behaviors.				

Table 6. Mediating effect of perceived benefits

Hypothesis	From	Mediation	To	Direct Effect	Indirect Effect	Total Effect	Empirical Evidence
H4: SH → EE → WB	SH	EE	WB	0.727	0.185	0.912	Not Supported

DISCUSSION

The objective of this research was to shed light on the prevalence of sexual harassment experienced by female hotel workers, a subject often concealed and rarely explored, especially within traditional Arab communities. Additionally, the study sought to delve into how this issue impacts the incidence of job exhaustion among female employees, ultimately leading to withdrawal behaviors from the hospitality industry. Upon analyzing the results obtained by asking the research participants, "Have you encountered instances of sexual harassment at your workplace?". It became evident that a significant 64% of the sample confirmed the presence of harassment within hotel settings, this result is consistent with earlier research on issues of harassment in Jordan conducted by the Jordanian National Commission for Women (JNCW) in 2017, in which 75.9% of study participants reported experiencing sexual harassment in various forms. This is also evident from the paragraph included in the questionnaire within the sexual harassment assessment axis, which states: "Have you

ever been humiliated or offended by sexual gestures or body language?", this paragraph received the highest approval rate. Most of the respondents expressed that they have experienced offense due to sexual gestures at some point in their career life. Such experiences led to feelings of discomfort, embarrassment, or even fear. Turning back to the discussion of these findings and the analysis that followed within the framework of the proposed theoretical model, it was evident that the first hypothesis, which postulated that sexual harassment has a considerable and positive influence on emotional exhaustion, was validated. This validation coincides with the conclusions drawn from (Jung and Yoon, 2020a; Bilal et al., 2022; Bui et al., 2019; Figueira and Alves, 2023) studies, which confirm that sexual harassment has a significant impact on emotional exhaustion. Indeed, there is a body of research that approves the influence of sexual harassment on emotional exhaustion.

Most of these studies have explored the relationship and found that experiencing sexual harassment may lead to emotional exhaustion and other negative psychological consequences. This relationship highlights the significance of addressing and avoiding sexual harassment in various environments, including workplaces and social sites. Furthermore, the results of the analysis lend support to the second hypothesis, suggesting that sexual harassment of female employees significantly influences their inclination to withdraw from their job, a correlation consistent with the following studies (Cortina and Areguin, 2021; Merkin, 2008; Touni and Mohamed Hussien, 2021; Salman et al., 2016).

The study findings also support the third hypothesis, which is consistent with the findings of previous studies (Srivastava and Agarwal, 2020; Khan et al., 2022; Mishra and Kumar, 2016; Jolly et al., 2022), which show that emotional exhaustion plays an important role in shaping withdrawal behaviors among female employees. Concerning the fourth hypothesis, which is concerned with the potential mediating role of emotional exhaustion in the relationship between sexual harassment and withdrawal behaviors, the study found no such mediation in the context of the relationship between sexual harassment and work withdrawal in hotels. This suggests that emotional exhaustion, while a significant factor, does not serve as a mediator in this particular context, which contradicts the studies of (Kyei-Poku, 2019; Srivastava and Agarwal, 2020; Alrawadieh et al., 2022) which show that emotional exhaustion plays a mediating role.

CONCLUSIONS

This study revealed a widespread problem in the hospitality industry, especially in Jordanian hotels, as it seems that sexual harassment is a common concern among female workers. Since the study found that sexual harassment has a major and positive impact on the emotional exhaustion of workers, it revealed the extent of the spread of sexual harassment in this sector, and the study shed light on its deep effects on the intention to leave their jobs in the hospitality sector. The study also highlighted the decisive effect of emotional exhaustion on identifying withdrawal behavior among hotel female workers. These outputs emphasize the importance of institutions in the hospitality industry retaining committed and interactive working forces. However, despite emotional exhaustion being recognized as a mediator in the association between sexual harassment and withdrawal behaviors in previous studies, this research did not provide supporting evidence for such mediation within the specific context of the hospitality business; suggesting that further investigation is needed to better understand the dynamics of sexual harassment and its consequences in the workplace.

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