Educating Co-op Students about Workplace Harassment in the Public Sector:
An Evaluation of the University of Victoria’s Current Practices in the Master of Public Administration and Master of Business Administration Co-op Programs

by

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Educating Co-op Students about Workplace Harassment in the Public Sector:
An Evaluation of the University of Victoria’s Current Practices in the Master of Public Administration and Master of Business Administration Co-op Programs

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I want to acknowledge and commend any student who faced harassment in the workplace and felt safe enough to report it. Not all circumstances allow a person to come forward because their livelihood is dependent on their job, they fear reprisal will be severe, or they do not have support. It is incredibly difficult and uncomfortable to report and handle harassment. I hope my paper leads to students being given the tools, information, and guidance they need to deal with any situation.
Executive Summary

Introduction
This report examines how the University of Victoria (UVic) currently educates its Master of Public Administration (MPA) and Master of Business Administration (MBA) students on workplace harassment before, during, and after their first co-operative education (co-op) placements. While the focus of the report tends to be co-op placements in the federal public service, the analysis and recommendations are also pertinent to other co-op placements. In particular, the report examines how well equipped UVic students can navigate the intersecting harassment policies of the Canadian federal government, the Government of British Columbia (B.C.), and UVic.

Co-op placements are intended to be an opportunity for students to gain meaningful work experience in the subject matter they are studying before graduating from university and fully entering the workforce (UVic, 2018-a). It can be difficult for new professionals to enter any field and co-op programs enable students to make connections and gain work experience before they finish their degree. University programs that encourage or require co-op experiences also provide students with access to a job board of positions they may not otherwise have been able to find or access.

The MPA program at UVic requires completion of two co-ops, while the MBA program bases the co-op requirement on the student's past work experience in the specific field (UVic, 2018-a). Before the start of any co-op, students must complete a course that teaches a range of subjects, including how to write a cover letter and how to succeed in interviews (UVic, 2018-a). The topic of harassment does not appear to be a subject matter that is always discussed in the pre-co-op course. On the UVic co-op website, there is information about harassment, but the word harassment is not in a heading; instead, there are titles about diversity, inclusivity, human rights, and prevention of sexualized violence (UVic-2018). The UVic Equity and Human Rights office also provides information online about different forms of harassment and discrimination, along with information on workplace bullying and harassment prevention.

The primary research question of this report was:

- How do UVic MBA and MPA graduate programs educate their students on workplace harassment before, during, and after their first co-op placement?

Secondary questions were:

- What information, tools, and resources are students provided with before they go to their first co-op placement in each of the programs?
- How is harassment defined by the university and by each of the programs?
- What is the current UVic framework and policy for addressing harassment?
● How does UVic compare to other schools that require co-ops for their programs in regard to harassment policies and services for students?
● Does UVic track the number and type of harassment cases that involve students on co-op?
● What are the barriers preventing students from reporting harassment?
● What improvements can be made to UVic’s policy on harassment for students on co-op?
● What improvements can be made to education, resources, and support services related to workplace harassment in the MBA and MPA programs?

Methodology and Methods

This project used a qualitative research approach, and the initial research design framework that was used is a gap analysis. A smart practices approach was also used to support finding what worked and did not work concerning harassment issues and co-op placements in other universities. The gap analysis evaluated the difference between the current state of the situation and the desired future state.

The methods used to collect data were a document review and interviews. Through comparing how UVic currently prepares students to confront the issue of harassment during co-op to how other universities approach the topic; recommendations were made on how UVic can employ smart practices when educating students about harassment before their co-op.

Key Findings

The document review for UVic illustrated that their definition of harassment is taken straight from the B.C. Human Rights Code. The key elements that make up this definition are:

● Harassing behavior is meant to intimidate, humiliate and/or create a hostile environment
● It is conduct based on any human rights prohibited ground
● The harasser should reasonably know the action or comment is unwanted by the recipient
● Behavior towards someone specific
● It prevents the recipient of the harassment participation in university.

The co-op office uses this definition for harassment and provides information and links to further resources on its website.

Each university analyzed has slightly different policies and procedures regarding harassment and procedures in place, but several common themes emerged in this review. All universities studied have clear policies and procedures against harassment, and the co-op programs use the same system and procedural framework in their practices.
Based on the interviews, resources, and information are available, but it is not verbally discussed at length. It was evident that all co-op coordinators who participated in this study viewed harassment as a serious issue and were dedicated to supporting students who encounter any problem during their co-op term. Two participants acknowledged that more information could be provided to educate students on workplace harassment.

Recommendations

These recommendations are developed from information obtained through the literature review, smart practices review, and the interviews conducted with co-op programs across Canada.

The following criteria factored into the development of these recommendations: importance, cost, time, efficiency, effectiveness, and ease of implementation. The recommendations are divided into three sections: before co-op, during co-op, and after co-op.

Before Co-op Recommendations

- **Recommendation 1** - The Introductory to Professional Practice (IPP) should include an in-person class or a proportion of a course on information about harassment. The class should include case studies that are explored in small and large groups.
- **Recommendation 2** - The UVic co-op website should have a page about what harassment is, signs and examples of harassment, and what to do if it occurs. This is an important addition to in-person training because students who experience harassment may not immediately recall details of training that they received before the co-op, especially during a personal crisis. Online content promotes timely access to information that students may otherwise struggle to find; however, one challenge with this approach is likely to be generating awareness of the website and ensuring that it is sufficiently prominent and user-friendly on the website.
- **Recommendation 3** - UVic should only collaborate with employers after vetting their code of conduct and procedures to ensure that zero-tolerance harassment policy is in place. This practice is essential to ensure that employers acknowledge the seriousness of harassment and understand the importance of a healthy work environment. An established anti-harassment policy cannot guarantee harassment will not occur, but it does provide a framework for students and co-op coordinators to reference if an incident occurs.
- **Recommendation 4** - Many students will pursue co-op placements that are outside Victoria; when a problem such as harassment occurs, they may feel physically and emotionally too far from the school to reach out for help. UVic could reach out to co-op coordinators at other universities who agree to provide support and advice from students who are working in the respective cities each university is located. The co-op coordinator network would allow students to have a proxy advocate who could attend formal meetings at their placement to discuss how to address the harassment the student faced.
During Co-op Recommendations

- **Recommendation 5** - Require MBA and MPA co-op coordinators to send out an email soon after a co-op placement has begun, reiterating what harassment is and reminding students that they are encouraged to come forward if it occurs.
- **Recommendation 6** - Create a platform on which students can anonymously submit questions. Some students may feel intimidated coming forward, but if there is a way to do so anonymously, they may feel more comfortable to ask questions or ultimately ask for help.

After Co-op Recommendations

- **Recommendation 7** - The co-op office should consider sending out a survey that can be completed anonymously asking students to evaluate their co-op experience, including questions about harassment. Encouraging students to be vocal about their experience, whether good or bad, can identify issues being faced, but not discussed. In the survey, harassment should be defined, and nuanced examples provided of what forms it can take in the workplace.
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1.0 Introduction

1.1 Defining the Problem

This report examines how the University of Victoria (UVic) currently educates its Master of Business Administration (MBA) and Master of Public Administration (MPA) students to address and deal with harassment while on co-operative education (co-op) placements in the federal public sector. Further, the report also examines how well equipped UVic students are to navigate the intersecting harassment policies of the Canadian federal government, the Government of British Columbia (B.C.), and UVic.

In general, a co-op placement is intended to be an opportunity for students to gain meaningful work experience in the subject matter they are studying before graduating university and fully entering the workforce (UVic, 2018-a). It can be difficult for new professionals to enter any field, but successful co-op programs enable students to make connections and gain work experience before they finish their degree. University programs that encourage or require co-op experiences also provide students with access to a job board of positions they may not otherwise have been able to find or access.

The MPA program at UVic requires completion of two co-op terms while the MBA program bases the co-op requirement on a student’s past work experience in the field (UVic, 2018-a). Before the start of any co-op, students must complete a preparation course that provides information on how to conduct a professional job search and on career management, including how to write a cover letter and how to succeed in interviews (UVic, 2018-a). Issues involving paycheques, supervisors, and workplace success are also discussed during the preparatory co-op course (UVic, 2018-b). Anecdotal evidence suggests that problems such as experiencing harassment or discrimination are not consistently addressed in the preparation courses, which may leave students in the potentially challenging position of navigating the process themselves after a complication has arisen. Although harassment is not always discussed consistently, many resources are available online or from the co-op office.

One of the issues that are central to this study is the existence of co-op harassment and education and training about what to do should it occur. In 2017, it was revealed in the annual Public Service Survey conducted by the federal government that 8% of students working in the federal government report experiencing harassment at work (Government of Canada, 2017-a). Students on co-op are uniquely vulnerable due to the short-term length and precariousness of their work, coupled with their lack of institutional support and knowledge (Dednya, 2005, p.1). Students may also be eager to turn their co-op into a permanent position and do not want to hinder their chances by making a complaint (Dedyna, 2005, p.1).

Another issue is ensuring the student has an understanding of what their job classification is within the federal public service and what their rights are if harassment occurs. The above Survey also examined how a student working for the federal government differs from a permanent
employee. The Survey found that students are seen as employees while working for the federal government, under the Financial Administration Act and the Government Employees Compensation Act but are excluded from the Public Service Labour Relations Act (Government of Canada, 2017-b). As a result, the full-time job classification most similar to the student’s position is the collective agreement under which the student falls (Government of Canada, 2017-b). The organization employing the student during co-op has a legal responsibility to create a safe work environment for all employees (Government of Canada, 2017-b). If harassment occurs, an employee has twelve months to report a complaint and depending on how the harassment claim is handled; it could be resolved quickly or subject to a lengthier process due to an investigation (Government of Canada, 2017-a).

While on a co-op placement in the federal government, students also have access to the emergency assistance program (EAP) (Treasury Board of Canada, 2015) should they experience any issues that they wish they could receive support and advice. The EAP is a free and 24/7 hotline, where employees can call to get information about short-term counselling, learn about internally reporting workplace harassment and how to get help for other personal issues (Treasury Board of Canada, 2015). It is uncertain whether either the federal department employing the student or UVic explains the general legal logistics of the co-op placement or how it pertains to harassment before a student begins a program.

Dedyna (2005) argues that students may not know their rights or what a collective agreement is, leading them to think they do not have options. At UVic, there are various resources a student on a co-op placement can access to learn more about their position in terms of workplace rules and procedures and to work within a collective agreement environment. The resources include federal and provincial workplace standards, the Canadian Human Rights Act, the BC Employment Standards Act, WorkSafeBC bullying and harassment information, and resource groups in Victoria (UVic, 2018-a). For students completing a co-op outside the province or country, a crisis line link and a link to the BC Human Rights Tribunal is listed (UVic, 2018-a). Students working in Victoria can go to the co-op office on campus, the equity office, or a trusted professor. Students working in another location can communicate with these offices and persons via Skype, email, or phone.

On that note, in the 2016-2017 term, 8.9% of students took co-op internationally, and 14.7% of students were in positions within Canada outside B.C.. Should any issues arise while students are on a co-op placement outside of the Victoria area, UVic offers personal counselling, which is available on campus, on the phone, or via Skype to fit the student’s need (UVic-e, 2018-c). Self-help information, including mental health, taking care of yourself, and other information is also online under UVic’s counselling service information (UVic-e, 2018-c). The co-op coordinator visits students once during their co-op term, and this allows the student to discuss a problem or concern in person. Online and Skype services are provided but depending on access to reliable internet in a private space and time zone; it could be difficult in some circumstances to communicate.
One of the goals of this report was to identify what services and information are provided to students in the MBA and MPA co-op programs regarding workplace harassment. At the outset of this project, there was interest to determine if there was a knowledge gap, if additional resources are needed, or if existing resources need to be improved to improve harassment resources and support systems to a student in co-op placements.

1.2 Project Objectives, Scope, and Research Questions

The primary objective of this research project is to assess how UVic prepares students in the MPA and MBA programs to deal with harassment should it arise while on co-op terms in the public service focusing mostly on the federal public service. These two academic programs were chosen because they are comparable, as they are professional graduate programs that are usually completed by students wanting to prepare for the traditional workforce and not pursue an academic career (UVic, 2018-b).

In the Co-op and Career Services Annual Report for 2016-2017, it was reported that 63.4% of co-op placements were in the private sector, and 30.8% were in the public sector (UVic, 2017). A significant number of students in both programs will likely complete co-ops in the federal government. Unlike in private sector jobs, employers, employees, and co-op students in the federal public sector must comply with specific rules around harassment that are consistent nationwide.

The co-op preparation of law students will not be assessed, as law students and legal employers are also governed by rules of professional conduct, regulated by the law society of their province, and thus are quite distinct from MPA and MBA co-ops. MPA and MBA students are more likely to be prepared in the same way for their co-op placements and face similar institutional structures. While there are other professional graduate programs, given the resources for this project, it was decided to focus on MPA and MBA programs although the findings and recommendations may be useful to other professional graduate co-op programs.

The primary research question of this report was:

- How do UVic MBA and MPA graduate programs educate their students on workplace harassment before their first, during, and after their co-op placement?

To support answering the first research question, the following secondary questions were also explored:

- What information, tools, and resources are students provided with before they go to their first co-op placement in each of the programs?
- How is harassment defined by the University and by each of the programs?
- What is the current UVic framework and policy for addressing harassment?
- How does UVic compare to other schools that require co-ops for their programs in regard to harassment policies and services for students?
- Does UVic track the number and type of harassment cases that involve students on co-op?
• What are the barriers preventing students from reporting harassment?
• What improvements can be made to UVic's policy on harassment for students on co-op?
• What improvements can be made to education, resources, and support services related to workplace harassment in the MBA and MPA programs?

The term co-op that will be used in this report is defined by the information presented on the UVic website: "Co-op enables students to try a range of jobs, meet employers, and gain new experiences and skills. Co-op lets students find a position in their field of study and gain a better sense of their passions. Co-op positions are paid and occur between academic terms" (UVic, 2018-a). The website further notes that a co-op program helps a student become job ready to build competencies and gain insight into what employers' value most in employees, before students graduate (UVic, 2018-a).

1.3 Background

The University of Victoria and Co-op Education
The University of Victoria is a medium-sized, major research university, with a student population of 21,700 undergraduate and graduate students (UVic, 2018-a). UVic is known for offering research-enriched education that is complemented by hands-on learning and co-op placements (UVic, 2018-a). UVic defines co-op as a program that formally integrates a student's academic studies with work experience, with participating employers (UVic, 2018-b). Unlike many internship programs, co-ops are full-time, paid positions that are administered by the University and aim to integrate the student's field of study into the work experience. Co-op opportunities for UVic students are located across Canada and internationally.

In terms of how the program is managed, co-op is administered by the Co-operative Education Program and Career Services (UVic, 2018-b). The Co-operative Education Program and Career Services office serves under the guidance of the Associate Vice President, Academic Planning. The vision of the Co-op and Career Centre is to empower students to excel in their field of study and contribute back to their community and society (UVic, 2018-b).

Each year, 42% of UVic students participate in the co-op program, and 3,800 placements are made (UVic, 2018-a). Both the MPA and MBA program charges $703.00 for domestic students and $867.26 for international students UVic, 2018-a). The fee differs by program, student status, and level of study (UVic, 2018-a). Students must remain in above-average academic standing to stay in the co-op program.

Co-operative Education and Work-Integrated Learning (CEWIL) Canada accredit the co-op degree programs at UVic. CEWIL's mission is to foster and advance post-secondary co-operative education and work-integrated learning in Canada (UVic, 2018-b). The Co-op and Career office also works with many other professional associations to help post-secondary students enter the workforce. Many UVic Master's programs encourage or require co-op completion (UVic, 2018-b) such as business, engineering, and computer science, health information science, public administration, recreation, and health education, and coaching studies. Before starting any co-op
position, students must complete a course called Introduction to Professional Practice (IPP), administered by the co-op coordinator for their faculty or School/Department. The criteria for a co-op term to count towards one's degree are as follows:

- it must be relevant to one's program of study
- last at least 12 weeks at 35 hours per week
- receive at least minimum wage
- last for four months (UVic, 2018-b).

Before the start of a co-op placement, students are required to read, sign, and agree to abide by the co-op terms and conditions of participation. The terms and conditions contract sets out professional responsibilities and principles of conduct expected of all students participating in a co-op term (UVic, 2018-a). The section "Legal and Safety Issues" focuses on the legal requirements for employment and provides information for students on immigration issues, international student status, and information for students under the age of 19 (UVic, 2018-b).

Employers can find information on the process and requirements of hiring students on UVic's Co-operative Education and Career Services website. There is a link entitled "Ensuring equity, diversity and personal safety in the workplace." The page states that employers are responsible for ensuring the workplace is equitable and safe for all employees (UVic, 2018-a). Specific to harassment, there is information on how to prevent sexualized violence in the workplace under details on the legal responsibilities of employers. Harassment is not explicitly mentioned, but sexual violence is defined on the website as "any non-consensual, unwanted actual, attempted or threatened act or behavior, that is carried out through sexual means or by targeting a person's sex, sexual or gender identity, or gender expression. The act or behaviour may or may not involve physical contact." Sexualized violence can include intimidation, verbal pressure, sexual jokes, threats, and street harassment, among other acts.

Students are particularly vulnerable to sexualized violence because of their age, inexperience, and financial and social security (UVic, 2018-b). The power imbalance between students and employees with permanent positions make students susceptible to being taken advantage of. Their UVic's policy notes that consent cannot occur if one person is in a position of power, trust, or authority over another person (UVic, 2018-b).

**History of Harassment Law and Legislation**

In 1977, the Canadian Human Rights Act (CHRA) was passed by the Parliament of Canada, which entrenched the right for all individuals to have equal opportunity regardless of their age, race, gender (Standing Committee on the Status of Women, 2014, p.1). This Act only applied to those working in federally regulated workplaces across the country, as provinces had their anti-discrimination laws. Section 91 of the constitution dictates that Parliament has jurisdiction over employment conditions and labor relations concerning federal employees (LeBlanc, p. 9, 2014).
The Canadian Human Rights Commission (CHRC) was created to administer the CHRA. The CHRC asserts that harassment is a form of discrimination (CHRC, n.d-b). Discrimination is "an action or a decision that treats a person or a group badly for reasons such as their race, age or disability" (CHRC, n.d-b). Reasons are also referred to as grounds, and they are protected under the CHRA (CHRC, n.d-b). Other grounds include national or ethnic origin, religion, sex, gender expression or identity, sexual orientation, marital status, family status, genetic characteristic, or a conviction that was pardoned or a record suspended (CHRC, n.d-b). CHRC defines harassment as "any unwanted physical or verbal behaviour that offends or humiliates you." Harassment can be one severe incident or several incidences that persist over time (CHRC, n.d-a). CHRC provides examples of harassment such as a coworker making unwelcome physical contact with you by rubbing your shoulders despite your objection or a manager making inappropriate comments about your body (CHRC, n.d-a).

In 1987, in Robichaud v. Canada, the Supreme Court of Canada (SCC) defined workplace sexual harassment as the "unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature that detrimentally affects the work environment or leads to adverse, job-related consequences for the victim of harassment" (Hart, 2012, P.268). The SCC declared workplaces could be held liable for the actions of employees who have committed sexual harassment (Standing Committee on the Status of Women, 2014, p.1). In 1989, the SCC found that sexual harassment counts as a form of discrimination under the Charter and in 1998, Parliament amended the CHRA to specify that victims and complainants could not face sanction for coming forward (Standing Committee on the Status of Women, 2014, p.1).

Notably, in the U.S and Canada, sexual discrimination in employment is a civil rights issue and not a criminal offence according to the Canadian Human Rights Commission and the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunities Commission (Standing Committee on the Status of Women, 2014, p.1).

Under Canadian provincial and federal human rights legislation, all employees have the right to work in a harassment-free workplace (Hart, 2012, p.268) and employers have a statutory duty to provide a safe workplace and let employees exercise their rights (Hart, 2012, p.268). The Treasury Board creates harassment policies for those who work in the federal government and created the "Policy on the Prevention and Resolution of Harassment in the Workplace" in 2001, and later updated and renamed the document in 2012 to "Policy on Harassment Prevention and Resolution (Standing Committee on the Status of Women, 2014, p.2). The federal public service uses the Treasury Board Secretariat (TBS) of Canada's definition, which defines harassment as:

improper conduct by an individual, that is directed at and offensive to another individual in the workplace, including at any event or any location related to work, and that the individual knew or ought reasonably to have known would cause offence or harm. It comprises objectionable act(s), comment(s) or display(s) that demean, belittle, or cause personal humiliation or embarrassment, and any act of intimidation or threat. It also includes harassment within the meaning of the Canadian Human Rights Act (i.e. based on race, national or ethnic origin).
origin, colour, religion, age, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, family status, disability and pardoned conviction) (2015).

The Canadian justice system has communicated that they are increasingly intolerant of workplace factors that threaten psychological safety, they are asking management to change practices that negatively impact employees, and they are imposing financial penalties for transgressions (Nesrallah, 2013, p.5). An Alberta judge asserted that the conditions in which a person works affects and shapes a person's self-worth, identity, and mental wellbeing (Nesrallah, 2013, p.5). Harassment can be detrimental to not only an employee but to the entire organization.
2.0 Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

This literature review explores scholarly research on general themes related to harassment in the workplace and specifically, the issue of students experiencing harassment during co-op terms. The literature review builds off the project objectives and research questions. The main themes discussed in the following chapter are:

- Definitions of harassment
- Causes of harassment
- Prevalence of harassment in the workplace
- Environmental factors that affect harassment rates
- Impact of harassment on individuals
- Impact of harassment on organization
- Reporting and grievance mechanisms
- Prevention methods

The researcher accessed literature through the University of Victoria search engine Summon 2.0, the ProQuest database, and Google Scholar. The search terms used in this study were "harassment," "workplace harassment," "sexual harassment workplace," "co-op placements," "federal government workplace policies regarding co-op students," "B.C. Provincial workplace policies," "Ontario workplace policies," and "student safety on jobs."

2.2 Definitions of Workplace Harassment

Harassment does not have a standard definition. It differs based on the institution or organization defining it. Workplace harassment is also referred to as bullying, mobbing, or psychological abuse (Einarsen, 2000, p.379). Regardless of the word used, similar elements are used to define this behavior such as actions or language that is unwanted and is intended to offend, humiliate, or make the recipient feel uncomfortable (McDonald, 2012). Harassment can be challenging to identify because it is based on how the recipient interprets the action. Similar behaviors could be harassment to some and not to others. The lack of consistency in name and meaning makes it challenging to understand further what type of behavior or actions is not allowed.

Hart cites the CHRC definition of harassment, which is "any behaviour that demeans, humiliates or embarrasses a person, [. . .which] a reasonable person should have known would be unwelcome" (2012, p. 268), and expands upon it. Hart states that feminist theorists primarily analyze workplace sexual harassment where women are the recipient of the action (2012, p.269). Therefore, the definition of sexual harassment is influenced by women's position more broadly in society.

The subscales of sexual harassment are sexual coercion, unwanted sexual attention, and gender harassment (Willness, Steel, & Lee, 2007, p.131). Sexual coercion refers to a harasser implying if an employee does not engage in a sexual relationship; they will be fired (Holland, Rabelo,
Gustafson, Seabrook & Cortina, 2016, p.17). Sexual coercion typically occurs in traditionally female occupations; women are seen as a sex object because they are in a traditional subservient gender role (Hart, 2012, 271). It can be an act of asserting power and dominance by trying to put women "back in their place" or treating women poorly because they are in a traditional role (Hart, 2012, 272). Unwanted sexual attention involves a harasser making unwanted advances to another employee that is romantic or sexual, or actions or words that can be seen as offensive (Holland et al., 2016, p.18). Gender harassment is when one uses degrading language or negative behavior towards someone because of their gender (Holland et al., 2016, p.18). Hodge contends that men display harassing behavior because they are exercising power over women (2006, p188).

Fitzgerald, Swan, & Magley's definition of sexual harassment comes from a psychological lens and is widely cited by many others who write about sexual harassment. Fitzgerald et al. 's definition focus on the target's personal view; sexual harassment is when the recipient of the sex-related behavior at work that is being appraised as offensive, unwanted, and a threat to their safety (p.269) (Fitzgerald et al. 1997b, p. 15). Behavior is offensive or threatening based on how the victim of the treatment receives the action (Hart, 2012, p.270). Willness, Steel, & Lee, Fitzgerald, Swan, & Magley, McDonald, and Hart use this definition where sexual harassment is unwanted sex-related behavior in the workplace that leads the recipient to fear or well-being or is offended. Madera writes that workplace sexual harassment is defined using the legal definition or from a psychological perspective. Madera uses the American legal description, which is quid pro quo and a hostile work environment and attributes Fitzgerald et al. for the psychological definition.

Organizational psychologists such as Bowling & Beehr define workplace harassment as an interpersonal action aimed at purposely, causing harm to another (2006, p.998). Norwegian psychologist Stale Einarsen says harassment in any form is aimed at persistently and continuously working to torment, humiliate, provoke, frighten, intimidate, frustrate, or create discomfort in an individual (Einarsen, 2000, p.379). Workplace harassment is often synonymously referred to as bullying, social undermining, abuse, among other terms. In Scandinavia, the term "mobbing" is commonly used instead of harassment. Mobbing is described as repeated aggressive or potentially violent behavior against an individual over some time (2000, p.379). It can be a fellow worker, superior, or subordinate displaying mobbing behavior (Einarsen, 2000, p.379).

Gender and sex are not the primary focus in this perspective; instead, it is more the ill intent behind an action. Early theorist Brodsky (1976) explains there are five types of workplace harassment; sexual, name-calling, scapegoating, physical abuse, and work pressure (Einarsen, 2000, p.379). Aquino and Thau use the term workplace victimization, which they define as acts of aggression that intentionally aim to cause emotional, physical or psychological harm to one or more members of their work (2009, p.717).

2.3 Causes of Workplace Harassment

For some authors, the causes of workplace harassment are rooted in the definition being used to define it. Hart argues that workplace harassment occurs because males feel threatened by female coworkers and want to protect their dominance, masculinity, and power in the office (Hart 2012,
Hart further posits that our society is a sex-based hierarchy, and men have authority over women regardless of their organizational or social status (Hart, 2012, p.269). Therefore, irrespective of a woman's high-ranking position in a company, a man in a lower paying job still has more power than her because of his gender. Harassment occurs because men want women to know they have more power and control in the office. Hart explains that women report workplace harassment in all types of jobs, but statistically, women are more often the target, and it occurs in traditionally male-dominated environments (2012, P.269).

Willness, Steel, & Lee purport that the one situational characteristic that can explain workplace harassment is job-gender context (2007, p.143). Job gender context comes from theorists Fitzgerald, Swan, & Fischer and refers to the gendered aspects of a job (1995, p. 62). This notion analyzes the gender of those in management if the position has traditionally male or female roles, and the staff sex ratio (Willness, Steel, & Lee, 2007, p.134). For example, if a woman is in a management position that was traditionally held by a man, sexual harassment may occur as a form of punishment for deviating from a "female" job such as a secretary (Willness, Steel, & Lee, 2007, p.143).

Jackson & Newman assert that that likelihood and determinants of harassment differ by gender (2004, p. 705). They explain that workplace harassment is rooted in the idea of what traditional roles are best suited for men and women. The sex-role spillover theory means that men carry over their expectations of women outside the workplace into the workplace, sexual expectations included (Jackson & Newman, 2004, p. 707). They have learned specific roles are for women and not for men and have those expectations in the workplace (Jackson & Newman, 2004, p. 708). The likelihood of workplace harassment increases for women in high-dominated, non-traditional roles, higher levels of educations, and top paying positions (Jackson & Newman, 2004, p. 707). These factors do not seem to affect the likelihood of workplace harassment for men. Increased age lowers the possibility of sexual harassment (Jackson & Newman, 2004, p. 709). Female workers are more likely than men to receive harassment based on sex in the workplace. Conversely, Holland et al. found that men who engaged in feminist activism were more likely to be harassed as a form of punishment for deviating from traditional masculine role (2016, p.18).

Gruber found that workplace harassment could be explained by the socio-contact theory, meaning the more contact women have with men, the more likely sexual harassment is to occur (Jackson & Newman, 2004, p. 708). Gruber tested the contact hypothesis in his study, and found, regardless of the type of work a woman is employed to do, extensive routine contact with men predicts inappropriate socio-sexual behavior (p.302, 2018). They found women are more likely to report unwanted sexual attention as their number of male coworkers increase, and men are more likely to report harassment when they have more female colleagues (Jackson & Newman, 2004, p. 705). Men are more likely to report harassment when they have a female supervisor.

In addition to the socio-contact theory, Gruber also contended the three factors that determine if harassment will occur are the tolerance level of harassment, believed the level of commitment of management to effectively address harassment and the implementation of the policies and
procedures that aim to stop harassment (1998, p.304). Gruber argues harassment is more likely to occur in an organization if those in management are perceived to be tolerant of harassment, if it is believed they will not adequately handle a harassment complaint, and if policies and procedures about harassment are poorly implemented (Gruber, 1998, p.304). This perspective from Gruber eliminates the role of gender and looks at how an organization itself can cause harassment.

Nesrallah discusses that large organizations often have sub-cultures that are not representative of the whole workplace, but improper behavior continues if management implicitly condones or rewards those actions (Nesrallah, 2013, p.26). Harassment is then able to occur because it is seen as acceptable behavior by management (Nesrallah, 2013, p.26). The happiness and health of an organization can lead to harassment. If a work environment stressful or negative, that may cause a reaction from some employees, whereby they take their frustrations out on other colleagues (Bowling & Beehr, 2006, p.998). A 2017 study by Minister Hajdu found that the top five risk factors for harassment are low employee morale, unrealistic workloads, problematic supervisors, domineering management, and lack of communication between coworkers and supervisors (ESDC, p.11). Therefore, an unhealthy work environment can lead to employees releasing their frustration on other employees.

2.4 Prevalence of Workplace Harassment Towards Students in the Workplace

Many universities require or encourage students to participate in field placements, co-ops, or internships. Dednya discusses how students are very vulnerable to harassment because they are eager to fit in and are inexperienced (2005, p.1). According to Dednya, many do not know their rights and fear that if they report their experience, they may lose their job. Heather MacNaughton, chair of the B.C. Human Rights Tribunal describes how harassment occurs most frequently in situations where there are power imbalances. Students lack seniority in their job status and are usually younger than most of their colleagues. Many will keep quiet because they cannot risk losing their job or jeopardizing their chance of achieving full-time employment (Dedyna, 2005, p.1). The 2017 Public Service Employee Annual Survey Results (PSEAS) showed 7% of students, which roughly 106 students, reported experiencing harassment (Government of Canada, 2017). Students want to be seen as independent people who can take care of themselves, and thus stay silent not to be labeled a whiner (Dedyna, 2005, p.1).

In one study, social work students were surveyed, and over 55% had experienced at least one incidence of sexual harassment; the perpetrators were mostly coworkers and then clients (Moylan & Wood, 2016, p.413). It is challenging to know the exact number of students experiencing harassment because they need to report it to the school or workplace. Underreporting can also be due to isolation due to lack of evidence or support (Hutcheson & Lewington, 2017, p.96).

Hutcheson & Lewington note students studying or working abroad are especially vulnerable to harassment because they will most likely be unaware of the country's laws about harassment in addition to the immigration regulations and visa restrictions (p.81, 2017). Canadian students may travel to other countries for co-op, and students with the co-op program might be international and working within Canada. Legal processes and laws of different countries (Hutcheson & Lewington,
Administrators often favour reactive rather than proactive measures and policies because they lack the knowledge and legal rights of students who come forward from an incident (Hutcheson & Lewington, p.90, 2017)

2.5 Impact of Harassment on Victims

The experience of harassment can have several negative impacts on a victim. Bowling & Beehr assert workplace harassment is positively associated with anxiety, depression, burnout, frustration, negative emotions at work, and physical symptoms (2006, p.1006). Nesrallah details the immediate effects individuals can experience are a loss of self-confidence, sleep problems, panic attacks, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), and more severely suicide (Nesrallah, 2013, p.39). When the person harassed internalizes the situation and does not address it, this can prolong the situation and effects (Nesrallah, 2013, p.39). Harassment has been found to be negatively associated with positive work feelings such as self-satisfaction and organizational commitment (Bowling & Beehr, 2006, p.1008). It was also positively related to unproductive behavior and staff turnover but negatively associated with absenteeism, organizational citizenship behavior, and job performance (Bowling & Beehr, 2006, p.1007).

Even when harassment has stopped and been addressed, studies have shown that the subject of harassment will continue to experience stress and anxiety because of the trauma they experienced (Nesrallah, 2013, p.67). The effects of harassment will continue because the victim may continue to feel it was their fault and feel uncomfortable at work due to other people knowing the situation. If an employee files a harassment claim, and it is unfounded, or the resolution was perceived to be unsatisfactory, the person can continue feeling distressed. The result can be a state of disillusionment, where they feel unsupported, mistreated, and unacknowledged (Nesrallah, 2013, p.67).

There are conventional external and internal methods that victims will use to handle the situation. The 2004 report by Centre for Research & Education on Violence Against Women and Children, found external measures include seeking help or support from family, while internal ones may involve blaming themselves or pretending it did not happen (Standing Committee on the Status of Women, 2014, p. 4). The overall impact of the experience will differ based on the victim, meaning many or few emotions will occur (Bowling & Beehr, 2006, p.998). How a victim will feel can be found on pre-existing categories of organizational climate for sexual harassment, such as the perceived risk of complaining, lack of sanctions for offenders, and belief about if claims will be taken seriously (Willness, Steel, & Lee, 2007, p.147).

Physical consequences include fatigue, headaches, eating disorders, and on a psychological level feeling of low self-esteem, embarrassment, and fear (Standing Committee on the Status of Women, 2014, p. 5). Victims will often have to take stress or sick leave during the occurrences and process (Standing Committee on the Status of Women, 2014, p. 6). It can damage a person's outside life and lead to substantial legal costs that many cannot afford. In some cases, a victim cannot leave the situation because they cannot financially afford to, and therefore have to stay in
the job despite how it is impacting their life (Standing Committee on the Status of Women, 2014, p. 4).

Researcher Madera studied the appraisal process used by victims of harassment when placing a level of blame on the organization in which it occurred for the result (2018, p.49). A target's subjective emotional appraisals of the incident (stressful, offensive, threatening, etc.) lead to the assessment of how they will respond (blaming, coping, or reporting) (Madera, 2018, p.51). The results found that the intensity of the sexual harassment does lead to organizational blame, but it is also affected by the person's fear of retaliation for reporting and perceived level of distress they experienced. The employee will place a different degree of blame on the organization based on each incidence. Their response will not be the same for two separate incidences of harassment (Madera, 2018, p.57).

It is likely that those who experience harassment will leave the organization, especially if the harasser was in a supervisory position to them (Nesrallah, 2013, p.18). An Australian study found that only 1 in 6 employees would stay in the organization after experiencing harassment (Standing Committee on the Status of Women, 2014, p.7.) Even when the person has left the organization, that does not mean the harassment will stop. If the workplace is not restored or the case is mishandled, harassment might continue with another person or resentment will build with the staff who observed the situation.

2.6 Impact of Harassment on Organizations

Workplace harassment can lead to the organization paying high legal costs, retention and recruitment of employees, and a negative environment. High legal fees are a result of needing to hire outside groups to investigate along with therapy fees or disability claims for affected employees (Standing Committee on the Status of Women, 2014, p. 7). Harassment can lead to increased staff turnover, negative publicity, and trouble hiring capable professionals (Nesrallah, 2013, p.43). During or after the incidence of harassment, the workplace may experience low morale, increased absences, reduced productivity, decrease in commitment to the organization, tensions and unhappiness in the workplace (Willness, Steel, & Lee, 2007, p.127).

Harassment has a radiating effect on the organization in the long and short term, which shows how important it is for harassment to be efficiently and effectively addressed (Standing Committee on the Status of Women, 2014, p.7). It has been reported that only 63% of employees were satisfied with how their work responds to harassment and discrimination (Nesrallah, 2013, p.7). The vice president of Public Service Alliance of Canada (PSAC) stated that the poor handling of harassment could spiral to other issues such as employees being depressed, stressed and taking more time off (Nesrallah, 2013, p.38). Therefore, it is beneficial for both the organization and the victim, for harassment complaints to be handled appropriately internally with the resources and procedures in place.
2.7 Reporting and Grievance Processes

Workplace harassment is an underreported occurrence (ESDC, 2017, p.29). The common reasons for employees not reporting harassment are not knowing the reporting process, complaint-driven approach, feeling reporting is not worth it, workplace culture, fear of retaliation, lack of support for complaints, leadership, and job insecurity (Standing Committee on the Status of Women, 2014, p.49).

One study showed the response of women who have experienced harassment is influenced by the likelihood their complaint will be taken seriously, their perceived level of involvement if they report, and the possibility the alleged harasser will be disciplined (Gruber, 1998, p.316). Tseng found that the likelihood of reporting was impacted by factors such as the rank or reputation of the harasser; if it was an external person to the organization employees were more likely to report the incidence (Tseng, 2014, p.510).

Women often do not report because they are fearful of losing their jobs and their privacy (Barak, 1994, p.595). It is onerous on complaints to provide supporting evidence and even understand the laws and regulations of harassment. There is a need for education and training, so employees are aware of policies and rules, how to report, and organizational costs (Barak, 1994, p.596).

Gruber notes organizations that speak openly against harassment experience lower rates of harassment, especially compared to organizations where executives seem indifferent (1998, p.304). Gruber found that employees are more likely to file a complaint or report the incident to someone if the workplace advertised several methods of dealing with sexual harassment, such as pamphlets, posters, training (1998, p.305). Employees were hesitant to "whistle blow" because they feared it would cause a negative outcome, could result, such as backlash from the harasser or no support from the organization (Tseng, 2014, p.510). Employees are more likely to report misconduct to the organization if the organization has established policies about reporting and consequences for wrongdoing (Tseng, 2014, p.520).

Hart concluded that arbitration often leads to women not filing formal complaints (2012, p.268). Her findings revealed that female complaints often faced aggressive gendered cross-examination, and the impact of gendered power relations was ignored when applying the rules (Hart, 2012, p.272). Hart found in her study that victim-blaming was commonly experienced by those who came forward to report the harassment (2012, p.273). For example, management making an effort to prove the perpetrator could not have reasonably known their actions were unwelcome. In one case, a woman was accused of being flirtatious, and male coworkers were brought in to corroborate her behavior (Hart, 2012, p.276).

Another tactic to discredit the complainant is stating they did not ask the perpetrator to stop, therefore, how would they have known; this is why the definition of harassment says a reasonable person would see the behavior was unwelcome (Hart, 2012, p.274). Non-communication is a tough defense because one of the arbitral principles is progressive discipline; dismissals could be reversed if the perpetrator was not given warning. (Hart, 2012, p.276).
2.8 Prevention Methods

Due to harassment being underreported and people generally being uncomfortable speaking about the issue, measures often are not taken until it becomes a severe issue. Alternatively, harassment policies exist, but no preventative measures are in place, only reactionary procedures. Nesrallah asserted that harassment policies are not enough; more preventative measures are needed, such as passive types of prevention and rhetoric (2013, p.73). The harassment policy is the foundation and needs to be strong and able to be followed through by the organization (Nesrallah, 2013, p.77). Administrators often favour reactive rather than proactive measures and policies because they lack the knowledge and legal rights of students who come forward from an incident (Hutcheson & Lewington, p.90, 2017). Nesrallah acknowledges that literature on how to handle harassment incidents and how to develop preventative measures are still limited (2013, p.7).

The critical factors in reducing sexual harassment are leadership, training, and workplace culture (Standing Committee on the Status of Women, 2014, p. 87). It is essential for those who exert the most power in an organization to be seen and heard as ethical and effective leaders (Nesrallah, 2013, p.8). Reducing harassment is needed from a management and performance perspective if organizations want employees to be healthy and productive (Willness, Steel, & Lee, 2007, p.151). Organizations that are seen to have integrity quickly deal with misconduct, mitigate future misconduct, and work to reduce future offenders.

Ongoing training programs need to be offered (Jackson & Newman, 2004, p.707). For example, Barak designed a training workshop to prevent sexual harassment, using psycho-educational methods to help give participants a better understanding of what sexual harassment is, and what are alternative responses (1994, p.595). Barak states a workshop needs to be brief and intense, based on recent information, focus on the development of coping skills, not past experiences, small group, flexible content to meet the needs of participants, use cognitive behavioral techniques and establish measures to understand the impact of the workshop on participants. Her workshop was divided into two phases, with three learning exercises. Phase one was entitled "Development of Awareness and Understanding of Sexual Harassment in the Workplace" and phase two "Development of Coping Skills with Sexual Harassment in the Workplace" (Barak, 1994, p.597).

Organizations can offer sensitivity programs to give a better understanding of harassment (Gruber, 1998, p.314). Training programs about harassment often have low attendance and engagement (Gruber, 1998, p.314). This means programs need to be redesigned to improve how employees view harassment. Workplace culture requires making it clear to employees that making discriminatory jokes, using derogatory language, and showing explicit images will not be tolerated and allowed in the workplace. ESDC's report recommends that more education and awareness campaigns need to be done to prevent harassment (2017, P.17).

2.9 Literature Review Summary and Conceptual Framework

The literature review analyzed current research on harassment in the workplace, student harassment in the workplace, and government research on the issue of harassment. The analysis
also revealed various theories used to define harassment and explain why it occurs. Many feminist theorists study harassment from the perspective of men asserting power over women because of the entrenched gendered roles in our society whereas some organizational psychologists argue harassment is a byproduct of the attitude, actions, and environment of a workplace. The critical elements of harassment discovered in the literature review were the different definitions of harassment, the numerous variations of harassment that occur, the prevalence of workplace harassment in general and towards students, the impact on the victim and organization, the reporting and grievance process, and some of the prevention methods.

The literature review, problem definition influenced the following conceptual framework (See Figure 1), and research questions, which led to the development of the interview questions and the framework for the smart practices scan. The conceptual framework demonstrates the critical facets of harassment that students should understand before they begin their first co-op placement.

Figure 1: Key Elements of Harassment Education
3.0 Methodology and Methods

This section of the report details the methodology used and the methods selected to answer the main research question of the report. To best understand how UVic's MBA and MPA co-op programs educate students on workplace harassment before students complete their first placement, a qualitative methodology was applied. A gap analysis was employed to understand better the current education provided to students, and the desired future state of informing students on workplace harassment. To support the gap analysis, smart practices were developed based on a document review and interviews. Before this process began, a literature review was performed to understand how academics, government institutions, and professional organizations have studied workplace harassment.

UVic was chosen as the subject of the study because the researcher was attending their MPA program and participating in the co-op program and was curious about how it compared to other co-op systems. MPA and MBAs are professional programs that are generally chosen by students who want to go straight into the workforce and not further pursue academia immediately or at all. The study decided to look at university masters programs in Ontario and B.C. because they are large provinces in different parts of the country. Ontario has 24 public universities, and B.C. has 11 public universities (Universities Canada, n.d). The federal service is the largest employer in Canada and offers co-op placements. The federal service has the most public information and policies available, and the same standards are set across the country.

The project received ethics clearance from the British Columbia Ethics Harmonized Initiative (BC18-243), as well as from the ethics boards at Queen's University (TRAQ # 6024566), Ottawa University (S-10-18-1199), and Carleton University (Project # 109272).

3.1 Methodology

This project used a qualitative research design. Qualitative research is quality based, therefore focusing on concepts, meanings, and symbols (Berg & Lune, 2012, p.3). Qualitative research was useful for this study because the focus of the study was on processes. Namely, understanding how schools currently inform and prepare students about workplace harassment before they complete their first co-op placement (Berg & Lune, 2012, p.3). This project gathered and analyzed qualitative information from primary research and conducted a literature review to make evidence-based recommendations on how to improve the UVic policies on harassment education for co-op students.

**Gap Analysis**

The primary research design framework implemented was a gap analysis. A gap analysis evaluates the difference between the current state of a situation and the desired future state (University of Cambridge, 2016). Through comparing how UVic currently educates students on the issue of harassment before co-op to the approach used by other universities, recommendations were made on how UVic can employ better practices when teaching students about harassment before their co-op terms (University of Cambridge, 2016).
Smart Practices

To support the gap analysis, a smart (alternately referred to as best) practice review was used to compare and contrast how five other universities prepare their Master of MBA and MPA students to address and prevent harassment in the workplace. Bendixsen & Guchteniere state that smart practices are developed when information is gathered regarding what was successful and unsuccessful about a situation and applying this knowledge to other applicable contexts to help other projects succeed (2003, p.678).

The smart practices were developed by using the information gathered from the UVic document review, jurisdictional scan, and interviews. The smart practices review analyzed the following five universities that have comparable MPA and MBA co-op programs:

- University of British Columbia
- Simon Fraser University
- University of Ottawa
- Carleton University
- Queen’s University

These universities were chosen because they each have an MPA and MBA program with a large co-op program with students often working for the federal government. For each university, the definition of a co-op, the definition of harassment, the information provided to students, and the information provided to employers will be compared. It is crucial to research whether workplace harassment is mentioned in both the student and employer sections, how easily each of the respective parties can find information on harassment, and what resources and steps are recommended in the event of an incident of harassment.

University policies and procedures are based on provincial legislation, but students doing co-op in the federal government are subject to harassment policies that may reflect significant differences from any given provincial context, given the federal jurisdiction. By comparing three schools in British Columbia to three schools in Ontario, the report was able to assess whether different provincial laws in two significant jurisdictions influence the available information on harassment at major Canadian universities.

3.2 Methods

A current state analysis was performed through a document review, jurisdictional scan and interviews. This data impacted the creation of smart practices.

Document Review

The first phase of the research involved conducting a current state analysis where all existing relevant documents published by the UVic co-op office and UVic administration were reviewed. Significant differences between the MBA and MPA co-op program were addressed. UVic's
policies and definition of harassment were analyzed as they influence the policies of the co-op office. The co-op requirements of the program, such as length, time, assignments, payment, resources, and workshops were reviewed.

**Interviews**

The final phase of research methods consisted of interviewing co-op advisors from UVic, as well as co-op advisors from the other five universities. The consent form given to interviewees, interview questions and a summary of each interview can be found in Appendix A, Appendix B, and Appendix C. In combination with the interviews, the information, and resources from the respective universities' websites were evaluated. This helped establish how the practices of UVic fare compared to other MBA and MPA co-op programs and influenced the recommendations made.

The early stages of research revealed that the universities under analysis did not have public information about the rates of students who have experienced workplace harassment during a co-op placement. Therefore, interviews, a form of qualitative research, were utilized to gather information from co-op coordinators on their experience with educating students about workplace harassment and incidences of harassment that have been reported to them. The combination of the literature review and interviews identified the current information provided to students on harassment and how prepared co-op coordinators feel they are to deal with cases of harassment.

An in-depth interview was conducted with two co-op coordinators from the UVic MBA program. Due to turnover and an administrative leave in the MPA co-op office, no coordinator was interviewed, and only information from their website was used. In-depth interviews consist of a researcher conducting intensive discussions with a small number of participants (Boyce & Neale, 2006). As opposed to surveys, interviews allow the participant to expand on why their current practices exist and how they have evolved (Boyce & Neale, 2006). Workplace harassment is an issue that can happen at any point in someone's career, but young people are often formally educated on the subject. Co-op is sometimes the first form of professional employment a student has, and if they are not informed about what a healthy, safe environment looks like, they can fall victim to putting up with harassment and not speaking out against issues that arise. The smart practices recommended were developed by exploring the differences between how UVic and other universities present information on harassment and prepare students to deal with problems during co-op.

Interviews allowed for co-op coordinators to expand on the information that may not be publicly available online and discuss how the strategy to address harassment of students has evolved over the years. These interviews were completed in a semi-structured manner. Semi-structured interviews allow the interviewer to ask predetermined questions but also ask for clarification or expansion from the interviewee on the answers (Doody & Noonan, 2013, p.30). An interview protocol was developed to guide each interview. Interview protocols help ensure the consistency and reliability of answers when analyzing the content (Boyce & Neale, p.5, 2006).
3.3 Data Analysis

The literature review and document review were analyzed by looking for common themes and categories. An inductive approach produced themes that evolved from the data rather than being predetermined by the researcher (Anderson, 2007, p.1). The themes were then identified and coded.

Next, the data from the interviews were interpreted through inductive thematic content analysis. This form of analysis used is "a descriptive presentation of qualitative data," meaning it identifies patterns and themes from the data (Anderson, 2007, p. 1). Anderson's 15-step process was used to analyze the data. The researcher analyzed each interview by looking for a unit of meaning that was associated with the research topic (Anderson, 2007, p. 3). Units of meaning occur when there is a break or change in meaning. Themes were produced based on the frequency of units of meaning from the interviews. This involved reviewing the document twice and assessing if proper themes were identified and provided reliable data. The themes from the literature review, document review, and interviews were then compared and combined into common themes. These themes are presented in the Findings and Discussion portion of the report.

3.4 Project Limitations and Delimitations

The first limitation of the project was the reluctance of some of the co-op coordinators to participate in the study and openly discuss the topic of students potentially experiencing harassment during a co-op. The study hypothesized that co-op coordinators might be hesitant to participate because of the seriousness and confidential nature of harassment disclosures. Furthermore, they could feel defensive and interpret the report as an agenda-driven investigation into how schools are failing to protect students from harassment during work terms, as opposed to research and analysis of smart practices for educating students about harassment.

The study mitigated the problem by clearly articulating to co-op coordinators the purpose of the report and the helpfulness of their insights. The researcher approached twelve co-op coordinators, or those in a similar position, to be interviewed, four of whom agreed to participate in the process. The low participation rate of interviewees hindered receiving greater insight into the co-op coordinator's opinion on harassment education before co-op and their experience addressing harassment. It was apparent that co-op coordinators take harassment seriously, but they noted that few students had reported the issue, and in some cases, none have done so. Therefore, there is little evidence or research to develop a fuller understanding of the problem. While there is a significant amount of information and resources that exist online and in co-op offices, smart practices have not been developed on the information needed for a student who has experienced harassment because of the scarcity of reported cases.

Each university had a significant amount of information regarding the co-op experience and harassment policies and procedures publicly available on their respective websites. Therefore, the study was able to gather and analyze this information to understand each university's process without having to conduct an interview.
Little research regarding harassment education for students on work placement has explicitly been performed. This limitation was alleviated by gathering research on general workplace harassment, student harassment, harassment prevention, workplace education on harassment, and government studies.
4.0 Findings: Current State Analysis and Smart Practices

The following two chapters focuses on the findings regarding how the UVic MPA and MBA programs are educating students about harassment before a co-op placement. This chapter develops a current state analysis and then presents a smart practices scan. The following chapter then presents the results from the interviews.

4.1 Current State - University of Victoria

UVic Harassment Definition and Policies

UVic addresses the definition of harassment under section 3.0 of UVic’s Discrimination and Harassment Policy (UVic, 2018-d). Harassment is divided into the following categories: (3.01) harassment based on prohibited ground of discrimination, (3.02) sexual harassment; and, (3.03) personal harassment (UVic, 2018-d).

Under 3.01 “Harassment based on a prohibited ground of discrimination”, harassment is defined as any behaviour directed towards another person that is abusive or demeaning, includes a direct or indirect reference to a Prohibited Ground of Discrimination; and would be viewed by a reasonable person experiencing the behaviour as an interference with that person’s participation in a University-Related Activity or creating an intimidating, humiliating or hostile environment (UVic, sec. 3.01, 2018).”

Under section 3.02, sexual harassment is defined as “behaviour of a sexual nature by a person: who knows or ought reasonably to know that the behaviour is unwanted or unwelcome and leads to or implies job or academically related consequences for the person harassed; or would be viewed by a reasonable person experiencing the behaviour as an interference with that person’s participation in a University-Related Activity or creating an intimidating, humiliating or hostile environment (UVic, sec. 3.02, 2018).”

Subsection 3.03 entitled Personal Harassment, is described as “behaviour directed towards members of the University Community that would be characterized by a reasonable person as: abusive and demeaning, threatening or intimidating; and either interfering with the targeted person’s participation in a University Related Activity or creating an intimidating, humiliating or hostile environment. In addition, Personal Harassment must either abuse the power one person holds over another or misuse authority or constitute a pattern of mistreatment. Personal Harassment is not: a. interpersonal conflict or disagreement; b. the use of appropriate evaluation or discipline; or c. action where the harm by any objective standard is fleeting (UVic, sec.3.03, 2018).”
Based on these definitions, the key elements of harassment are as follows. Actions or comments that are:

1. Reasonably known to be unwanted
2. Directed towards a person
3. Interfere with participation in university
4. Create an intimidating, humiliating and/or hostile environment

Co-op Procedures that Apply to the UVic MBA and MPA Programs

Before starting any co-op position, both MPA and MBA students must complete a course called Introduction to Professional Practice (IPP), administered by the co-op coordinator for their faculty. The criteria for a co-op placement to count towards one’s degree is that it must be relevant to one’s program of study, last at least twelve weeks at thirty-five hours per a week, and receive at least minimum wage (UVic, 2018-b). Students are also required to read, sign, and abide by the co-op terms and conditions of participation (UVic, 2018-a). The terms and conditions contract sets out professional responsibilities and principles of conduct expected of all students participating in a co-op term (UVic, 2018-a). During the co-op term, students must complete competency assessments, have a work site visit with their co-op coordinator, and submit a co-op work term report about their experience.

In addition to the IPP course, information about co-op can on the co-operative education program and career services website. The tab “co-op program” on their website leads to a page with general information regarding learning about co-op, finding a co-op, explore funding and more. Employers can find information on the process and requirements of hiring students on UVic’s co-operative education and career services website under the heading “hire a student.” Below the subtab “support students in the workplace” there are subheadings called “ensuring equity, diversity and personal safety in the workplace” and “employer code of ethics.” The word harassment is not in any of the headings, but harassment information can be found under those two links (UVic-2018-a).

On the “Ensuring equity, diversity and personal safety in the workplace” page it asserts the responsibility of the employer to provide a safe and equitable workplace. It then asks if you are a student and if so to click on the link to the equity, diversity, mental health and personal safety information for students.” It will take the user to the “career services” page for this information, not the “co-op program” where employer information about this is provided. It contains information such as how to create a diverse team, accommodating disabilities, and what are the legal responsibilities for creating a safe and inclusive workplace. On this page, links to BC Human Rights Code, WorkSafe BC bullying and harassment information, CHRA, CHRC, and more.

Harassment is not explicitly mentioned, but there is information on “how to prevent sexualized violence in the workplace” and what do if your student experiences or witnesses sexualized
violence. Sexualized violence is defined as “any non-consensual, unwanted actual, attempted or threatened act or behaviour, that is carried out through sexual means or by targeting a person’s sex, sexual or gender identity, or gender expression. The act or behaviour may or may not involve physical contact.” Sexualized violence can include intimidation, verbal pressure, sexual jokes, threats, and street harassment, among other acts.

It illustrates that students are particularly vulnerable to sexualized violence because of the central power imbalance in the workplace. Their age, inexperience, and relative financial and social insecurity make students susceptible to being harassed. UVic’s policy notes that consent cannot occur if one person is in a position of power, trust, or authority over the other person (UVic, 2018-b). Due to information about harassment being under the ‘Hire a student’ tab, students may not click on this tab because they may presume the information only applies to employers, and therefore may not know that this resource exists. The “employer code of ethics” page outlines the ethical guidelines created by the Canadian Association for Co-operative Education that employers must follow (UVic-2018-a). The first guideline states that employers need to abide by both federal and provincial legislation on freedom of information, human rights and employment (UVic-2018-a). The page states that employers are responsible for ensuring the workplace is equitable and safe for all employees (UVic, 2018-a).

Information about forms of harassment can be found on the website, but it is not on the first page or on a visible tab. The question “what should I do if I feel like I’m experiencing harassment or discrimination at work?” can be found on the career services page. The answer explains that under the CHRA no one has the right to discriminate on the basis of prohibited grounds. In the event of harassment, it advises you to speak to someone you trust who is not involved in the situation. An employee can report harassment to their work’ responsible for human resources, an employment standards office of, and the provincial or federal tribunal. It does not reference UVic or a co-op coordinator, indicating that this is referring to jobs in general, and not specifically jobs obtained through the co-op.

**UVic MPA Co-op Policies and Procedures**

The UVic MPA program claims to help students build knowledge in problem solving, leadership and professionalism in regard to government, non-profit organizations, and policy challenges. It consists of two academic terms that alternate with two required co-op work terms and then a final thesis or capstone project (UVic, 2018-a). After the first co-op, the MPA students will take a course in professional integrity. Students who opt to complete the capstone project evaluate the work of an organization, governmental department or agency and make policy recommendations. The capstone previously involved getting a client that would often be the organization at which the student did their co-op.
UVic MBA Co-op Policies and Procedures

The UVic MBA program focuses on a sustainable approach to business where the triple bottom line is people, profits, and the planet. They teach the importance of taking into consideration societal outcomes and impact on the environment. This project assessed the daytime MBA, as the corporate MBA and Weekend MBA are differently designed programs for current professionals in the workforce. The daytime MBA is currently being redesigned over the next year and is no longer accepting 2019 intake. Co-op is mandatory for undergraduate business students and is mandatory for their MBA who have less than three years of full-time professional work experience. One term is required and a second is optional.

4.2 Smart Practices Review

This section of the report explores and evaluates five different universities’ harassment policies, MBA co-op program or equivalent, and MPA co-op program or equivalent. Firstly, it focuses on universities in B.C., which are UBC and SFU, then moving to Ontario, looking at CU, QU, and OU.

University of British Columbia

UBC Harassment Definition and Policies

The policies and procedures regarding harassment can be found under UBC’s Board of Governors’ policy 3 entitled “Harassment and Discrimination” (UBC, 2016). The policy was first enacted in January 1995 and last revised in December 2016. The purpose of this policy is to “prevent discrimination and harassment on grounds protected by the B.C. Human Rights Code” and establish the procedures for addressing complaints, stopping harassment, and disciplinary measures (UBC, 2016). The B.C. Human Rights Code grounds are “(actual or perceived) age, ancestry, colour, family status, marital status, physical or mental disability, place of origin, political belief, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, and criminal conviction unrelated to employment” (UBC, 2016). The policy is interpreted in the same manner of the B.C. Human Rights Tribunal (UBC, 2016). Harassment is defined as a “comment or conduct that one knows or ought reasonably to know is unwelcome, that creates a negative impact for the recipient, and that is related to one or more of the prohibited grounds of discrimination as set out in the B.C. Human Rights Code” (UBC, 2016).

UBC also has a web page “Bullying and Harassment Prevention at UBC”. Harassment is divided into two forms; discriminatory harassment, and workplace bullying and harassment (UBC-a, n.d.). Discriminatory harassment is defined using the definition from Policy 3. Workplace bullying and harassment is defined by the WorkSafeBC definition. WorkSafeBC is an agency established by provincial legislation to help British Columbian workers going through issues related to workplace injury, illness, and death (WorkSafeBC, 2019). Bullying and harassment is defined as “any inappropriate conduct or comment by a person towards a worker that the person knew or reasonably ought to have known would cause the worker to be humiliated or intimidated but,
excludes any reasonable action taken by an employer or supervisor relating to the management and direction of workers or the place of employment” (UBC-a, n.d.). A major component of defining harassment is the standard that a reasonable person should know their actions or comments would not be wanted by someone. The next component looks at the impact on the receiver of the harassment and whether the action or comment seeks to humiliate, demean, embarrass, or intimidate.

UBC Master of Public Policy and Global Affairs (MPPGA) Co-op Program and Policies

UBC’s MPPGA program is a professional degree in public policy with a global focus (UBC-b, n.d.). UBC Arts Co-op Program administers the co-op process (UBC-c, n.d.). Co-op is described as being a paid work experience that helps students acquire practical skills specific to their degree and adds to what they have learned in the classroom. It is optional, and those who participate must complete one co-op term that is at least 13 weeks (UBC-c, n.d.). It occurs between the summer of first and second year. Examples of past co-op placements range from working at Global Affairs Canada to CanCham Hong Kong. Students must sign a terms and conditions document about expectations before co-op (UBC-c, n.d.). The terms and conditions sheet explains that while on co-op they are an employee of the employer and not an employee or agent of the university.

Students in the program get access to numerous workshops that build professional skills. The topics include “intercultural fluency, finance and budgets, technical media skills, public speaking C.V. writing and conflict resolution” (UBC-c, n.d.). Students must complete a mandatory co-op conference for pre-employment training, a 30-minute work term planning session in the fall, and a 30-minute mock interview in the winter term (UBC Arts Co-op Program, 2018). Throughout the year, they can receive one-on-one training and coaching for job applications and interviews (UBC-c, n.d.). Under the heading “FAQs” there is a subheading called “access co-op resources”, it lists the Arts Co-op Hub’s resources such as “Online Student Guide – writing effective applications, interviewing for success, portfolios, relocation resources, tips written by co-op students on the job, and more” (UBC-d, n.d.). A heading entitled “work environment to expect,” outlines that while on co-op, students will be considered regular employees. Students must complete career-building assignments, mid-point evaluations and an end of term evaluation. The heading “co-op ongoing support and resources” advises students that they have ongoing support before co-op and after they have graduated.

On the Arts co-op’s main website, under the section of the website for employers is information on why to hire co-op students, steps to hiring, funding and resources, available disciplines, and supervisor reference guide (UBC-e, n.d.). The supervisor reference guide describes the typical duties and responsibilities for the employer, student, and arts co-op office (UBC-e, n.d.). The employer’s role includes setting up students with a supervisor, assigning work duties, participating in a site visit, and performing evaluations (UBC-e, n.d.). Students are to respect the policies and procedures of the organization, accept feedback, conform to work norms, and complete an evaluation (UBC-e, n.d.). The first duty listed for the co-op office is dealing with any problem the
student or employer has, conducting site visits, providing resources to employers and students, and making changes to the program based on feedback and review (UBC-e, n.d.)

**UBC Undergraduate Business Co-op Program and Policies**

The UBC MBA program does not offer a co-op program, but a co-op is an option for undergraduate students in the Bachelor of Commerce program (UBC-f, n.d.). The Bachelor of Commerce is a competitive program with ten available divisions in which to specialize, such as accounting and business technology management (UBC-g, n.d.). The business school's career center administers the co-op program. They define co-op as an opportunity to combine academic study with real business experience (UBC-f, n.d.). Their co-op program allows students to integrate three work terms of four to eight months into their academic terms, resulting in a full year of work experience (UBC-f, n.d.). The program recruits second and third-year students who are succeeding in their studies (UBC-f, n.d.). Once co-op terms begin, the co-op office works with the student and employee throughout the duration to insure both are getting the most out of the experience (UBC-f, n.d.). Students must complete two mandatory workshops, one held in term one and one held in term two. The workshops cover how to find and transition into a job (UBC-f, n.d.).

The co-op offices are independent and distribute their own information and materials. In the UBC Engineering Co-op Student Handbook, there is a specific section entitled “Harassment in the Workplace,” and a highlighted book stating, “contact a coordinator immediately for advice and assistance if you feel you are being harassed” (UBC, 2018). It explains harassment, and that most co-op employers will have policies and standards on harassment, and they may help students interpret the policy (UBC, 2018). It also says that harassment often consists of overt or covert actions of someone in an authority position abusing their power (UBC, 2018). Some examples are unnecessary touching, sexually explicit images, suggestive remarks, and hate speech (UBC, 2018).

**Simon Fraser University**

**SFU Harassment Definition and Policies**

SFU’s definition of harassment is in their official policies, under GP-18 Human Rights Policy. The policy was created in 1988 and last revised in 2014 (SFU, 2014). It explains that harassment is a form of discrimination and that this behavior is prohibited under this policy (SFU, 2014). Breaking this policy can result in disciplinary actions such as dismissal or permanent suspension (SFU, 2014). Under the Human Rights Code of British Columbia, the university is responsible for preventing, resolving, and remediing incidences of harassment (SFU, 2014). Harassment is defined as behaviors and actions that meet the definition below:

(a) Harassment based on a prohibited ground of discrimination. Behaviour directed towards another person or persons that:
1. is abusive or demeaning; and

2. includes a direct or indirect reference to a prohibited ground of discrimination under British Columbia’s Human Rights Code; and

3. would be viewed by a reasonable person experiencing the behaviour as an interference with her/his participation in a University-related activity.

(b) Sexual harassment. Behaviour of a sexual nature by a person:

1. who knows or ought reasonably to know that the behaviour is unwanted or unwelcome; and

2. which interferes with another person's participation in a University-related activity; or

3. leads to or implies job- or academically-related consequences for the person harassed.

(c) Personal harassment. Behaviour directed towards a specific person or persons that:

1. serves no legitimate purpose; and

2. would be considered by a reasonable person to create an intimidating, humiliating, or hostile work or learning environment (SFU, 2014).”

SFU employees use the WorkSafeBC definition for workplace bullying and harassment. WorkSafeBC defines workplace bullying and harassment as “any inappropriate conduct or comment by a person towards a worker that the person knew or reasonably ought to have known would cause that worker to be humiliated or intimidated, but excludes any reasonable action taken by an employer or supervisor relating to the management and direction of workers (SFU-a, n.d.).

Information regarding harassment can be found under the “Environmental health and safety” tab on SFU’s website (SFU-a, n.d.). The subtabs are bullying & harassment, workplace bullying and harassment program, workplace bullying and harassment training, resources for bullying & harassment, information for employees, information for supervisors, and then FAQ (SFU-a, n.d.). It asserts that the three forms of bullying and harassment are “discriminatory, personal, and workplace” (SFU-a, n.d.). The resources available to deal with these issues are “the Student Code of Conduct, Collective Agreements, and the Human Rights Policy” (SFU-a, n.d.) SFU’s policy around harassment and bullying was developed using the WorkSafeBC legislation, with the
primary goal of preventing and minimizing incidents from occurring (SFU-a, n.d.). Under BC Legislation, the *Workers Compensation Act*, supervisors and employees are not to engage in bullying, must comply with SFU’s policies and procedures, and must report observed or experienced harassment or bullying. Employers are required to train workers about these issues, review policies and procedures, prevent and minimize this behavior, and have a related policy statement (SFU-a, n.d.).

Workplace bullying and harassment are an occupational health and safety issue that pose significant risks to employee mental health and well-being (SFU-a, n.d.). Bullying can lead to an unhealthy work environment resulting in high turnover, increases in absent days taken, increased stress, and poor motivation. Examples of this include verbal aggression or insults, damaging another’s work, using gestures that are aggressive or threatening, and posting embarrassing information about co-workers on the Internet. Workplace harassment and bullying are defined to exclude reasonable actions taken by management related to job duties, workloads, deadlines, or layoffs (SFU-a, n.d.).

The effects of workplace bullying range from shock, anger, feelings of frustration and/or helplessness, increased feelings of vulnerability, loss of confidence, inability to concentrate and many other symptoms (SFU-a, n.d.). It is essential for all employers to reduce and ultimately stop harassment and bullying, have firm policies about workplace bullying, have a reporting process, properly train managers, staff and supervisors, and annually review statement (SFU-a, n.d.).

**SFU Master of Public Policy (MPP) Program Co-op Program and Policies**

SFU’s MPP program is a two-year program and focuses on public policy analysis and planning for public, private, and non-governmental organizations (SFU-b, n.d.). The MPP program offers a co-op term between May to August between the first and second year of the program. Unless given permission, students must complete this 12-16-week co-op term (SFU-c, n.d.). They define co-op as an educational model that integrates academic study with paid work experience in the student’s field. Before the work term, the co-op coordinators help students with resume, cover letter, and interview skills (SFU-c, n.d.). Students set learning objectives before the beginning of the work term, have a site visit with their co-op coordinator, and then submit end of term documents (supervisor evaluation, student evaluation, updated resume, and work report (SFU-c, n.d.).

On the “work integrated learning (WIL) co-operative education” page, there is “the co-op student guide” (SFU-d, n.d.). It has information about admissions, job search, workplace culture, expectations during the work term, and other information (SFU-d, n.d.). Under the tab “co-op students as employees of the workplace,” it explains the student is an employee of the organization and not SFU and is encouraged to contact a co-op coordinator with concerns during their placement (SFU-d, n.d.). Students are also told to review labour standards and policies that apply to their position (SFU-d, n.d.). There is a specific tab entitled “discrimination and harassment;” it details that students need to conduct themselves in a manner that is free from discrimination and harassment and have the right to work in a place free from discrimination and
harassment (SFU-d, n.d.). Students are to contact the co-op coordinator immediately if they have concerns and should also consult the Human Rights Code (SFU-d, n.d.).

**SFU MBA Program Internship and Policies**

The full-time, 12-month MBA program only accepts 55 students and focuses on giving students the knowledge and skills to be successful in different areas of business (SFU-e, n.d.). On average, students are expected to have five years of work experience before applying (SFU-f, n.d.). The MBA program offers the option of an internship program that must be for a minimum of 4 months and at least 35 hours per week (SFU-f, n.d.). The internship is organized through the Beedie School of Business’ career management centre (SFU-f, n.d.). The supervisor assigned to the student must complete an evaluation form at the end of the position (SFU-f, n.d.). The internship is described as a “risk-free way” to try out different industries and roles you are interested in pursuing (SFU-f, n.d.).

**Carleton University**

**Carleton’s Harassment Definition and Policies**

The Carleton University human rights policies and procedures were approved in 2001 and updated in 2010. They define harassment in general and then further explain the following forms of harassment: gender harassment, sexual harassment, racial harassment and harassment based on sexual orientation (CarletonU, 2010). Harassment is understood as engagement in conduct (including innuendos), based on any prohibited grounds (noted below), that is abusive, demeaning, threatening, vexatious or intimidating and/or involves the misuse of authority or power that exceeds the bounds of freedom of expression or academic freedom (CarletonU, 2010).

Discrimination and harassment can involve one or more human rights grounds, persons of the same or different status, individuals or groups, one incident or several, and on and off campus (CarletonU, 2010).

**Gender Harassment** is meant to permit redress where a person is harassed on the basis of his or her gender but the conduct is not sexual or does not take place in a sexual context. Gender harassment would include physical assault or interference; inappropriate display or transmission of gender-degrading material or graffiti; as well as sexist jokes, anecdotes, slurs (including gender-derogatory nicknames) or comments—insulting, demeaning or derogatory toward a person because of gender—that are obviously offensive or continue after the speaker is informed that the comments are unwelcome and/or have caused offense.
Sexual harassment occurs when an individual engages in sexually harassing behaviour or inappropriate conduct of a sexual nature that is known, or ought to reasonably be known, to be unwelcome, and that:

6.1 Interferes with the academic or employment performance or participation in a University-related activity for the person harassed; and/or

6.2 Is associated with an expressed or implied promise of employment-related or academic-related consequences for the person harassed (including reward, reprisal or conditions of study or employment); and/or

6.3 Provides a basis for academic or employment decisions affecting the person harassed; and/or

6.4 Creates an abusive, demeaning, or threatening study, work or living environment for the person harassed; and/or

6.5 Excludes the person harassed from rights and/or privileges to which they are entitled.

Racial harassment is harassment directed at a person or group on the basis of race. It includes physical assault or interference; inappropriate display or transmission of material or graffiti that is racist, ethnic or religious in a demeaning manner; as well as racist jokes, anecdotes, slurs (including racially derogatory nicknames) or comments—insulting, demeaning or derogatory toward a person because of race—that are obviously offensive or continue after the speaker is informed that the comments are unwelcome and/or have caused offense.

Harassment on the basis of sexual orientation would include physical assault or interference; inappropriate display or transmission of degrading material or graffiti directed against gays, lesbians or bisexuals; as well as antigay jokes, anecdotes, slurs (including derogatory nicknames) or comments—insulting, demeaning or derogatory toward a person because of sexual orientation—that are obviously offensive or continue after the speaker is informed that the comments are unwelcome and/or have caused offense. The concept of “gender harassment” is meant to permit redress where a person is harassed on the basis of his or her sexual orientation but the conduct is not sexual or does not take place in a sexual context (CarletonU, 2010).
Carleton University’s Human Rights Policy and Procedures illustrate under part 1 general section #20, that students are protected from harassment while on co-op placements and internships (CarletonU, 2010). The University is available to help students with respect to how they wish to go forward, such as making a complaint with the Ontario Human Rights Commission (CarletonU, 2010). The role of equity services at Carleton is to prevent harassment from happening on campus and build knowledge around how to act formally or informally if it does (CarletonU, 2010).

Carleton’s Master of Public Policy and Public Administration (MPPA) Co-op Program Policies and Procedures

The MPPA program aims to give students a comprehensive understanding of the actions or inactions of government and essential policy tools (CarletonU-a, 2019). Co-operative Education combines traditional, in-class education with hands-on experience (CarletonU-a, 2019). Co-op students alternate study terms at Carleton with four, eight, twelve or sixteen-month work terms (CarletonU-a, 2019) The MPPA encourages students to complete co-op to gain a co-op designation, but it is not required (CarletonU-a, 2019) Co-op and Career Services Office administers the MPPA co-op process. The co-op office provides sessions to help them find a job and assist them while they work (CarletonU-a, 2019). There are online modules and in-person career counsellors available to discuss cover letters and resumes. The co-op supervisor will visit students at their placement to discuss it with both the student and the employer. After six to seven academic courses, students can apply to complete two co-ops; this gives them a designation when they graduate (CarletonU-a, 2019). At the end of the co-op placement, they must submit a report to the faculty advisor who is the program’s co-op liaison. The employer will fill out an evaluation form for students (CarletonU-a, 2019).

The Carleton University cooperative education office web page provides information about “workplace harassment and discrimination” under the “How Does Co-op Work” and “At Work” tab (CarletonU-b, 2019). It explains that they are dedicated to ensuring their students have placements in a healthy work environment that treats all employees with respect and dignity (CarletonU-b, 2019). Students need to know it is their legal right not to be harassed in the workplace. Harassment is defined on the website as abuse of actual or perceived power (CarletonU-b, 2019). Harassment is assessed based on how the behavior impacted others, independent of the intent of the harasser (CarletonU-b, 2019). If a student experiences harassment in the workplace they have access to free and confidential services on campus to support them (CarletonU-b, 2019). They can contact their student adviser or any representative at the co-op office (CarletonU-b, 2019). The webpage explains that every person in the workplace has the responsibility to create an environment that is free from harassment (CarletonU-b, 2019). A healthy work environment is achieved by refraining from harassing behaviors, bringing complaints forward, and helping with the investigation of the incident (CarletonU-b, 2019). Harassing behaviour must fall within the 17 enumerated grounds of prohibited discrimination recognized by the university (CarletonU-b, 2019).
Carleton MBA Co-op Policies and Procedures

The MBA is a 16-month program that covers multiple business disciplines such as corporate finance, ethics, and marketing strategy strategies (CarletonU-c, 2019). Students can specialize in a concentration such as international business and business analytics or do an MBA with no concentration (CarletonU-c, 2019). Their MBA program offers an internship program where students can apply the knowledge they have learned as a student to the real world (CarletonU-d, 2019). The internship occurs during the summer term and is a mandatory requirement for full-time students who have less two years of professional job experience (CarletonU-d, 2019). Students meet with an MBA Internship Coordinator who helps them with resumes, job searching, advice, and develop skills (CarletonU-d, 2019). Mandatory career workshops occur throughout the fall and winter term for all internship students (CarletonU-d, 2019). Typical internships are 16 weeks, can be paid or unpaid, and require a course report about the internship once it is finished (CarletonU-d, 2019). Co-op is available to undergraduate business students but not required; they can apply from high school or during their first year. They use the same platform for information as MPPA students (CarletonU-d, 2019).

Queen’s University

Queen’s Harassment Definition and Policies

Queen’s Harassment and Discrimination Complaint Policy and Procedure was approved in March 2000 and replaced the 1995 version (Queen’s, 2000). Queen’s is currently using an Interim Workplace Harassment and Discrimination Policy. It was developed due to changes in the Occupational Health and Safety Act that was the result of Bill 132 that took place in 2016 (Queen’s). This interim document is being used until all documents are updated to reflect the changes required by Bill 132 (Queen’s, 2016). The new policy also has amendments to include smart practices for allegations under the Human Rights Code (Queen’s, 2016). The old policy did not include complaints involving an alleged violation of the Human Rights Code (Queen’s, 2016).

New amendments stipulate that it is not the sole responsibility of the complainant to address workplace harassment (Queen’s, 2016). Workplace sexual harassment is a workplace safety issue and not a general human rights issue (Queen’s, 2016). During an investigation, employers need to maintain the privacy of the students, provide written results of the investigation and any corrective measures used, and use an investigation process that is appropriate to the circumstance. Employers need to identify how to submit a report of harassment to someone that is not the manager or supervisor and must have a process and procedure to deal with harassment (Queen’s, 2016).

Workplace harassment is defined as:

“when someone engages in a course of vexatious (distressing) comment or conduct against an employee in a workplace that is known or ought reasonably
to be known to be unwelcome and includes Workplace Sexual Harassment. Examples are:

- Serious or repeated rude, degrading, or offensive remarks, such as teasing related to a person's physical characteristics or appearance, put-downs, or insults.
- Repeatedly singling out an employee by assigning them with demeaning and belittling jobs that are not part of their regular duties.
- Comments destroying a person's reputation, repeated insinuations, or unfounded accusations.
- Bullying (Queen’s, 2016)

Workplace sexual harassment is:

someone engages in a course of vexatious (distressing) comment or conduct against an employee in a workplace, because of sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression that is known or ought to reasonably be known to be unwelcome. It also includes making a sexual solicitation or advance where the person making the solicitation or advance is in a position to confer, grant or deny a benefit or advancement to the worker in circumstances where the person knows or ought reasonably to know that the solicitation or advance is unwelcome. Some examples of Workplace Sexual Harassment include, but are not limited to:

- Unwelcome social invitations, with sexual overtones or flirting, with a subordinate.
- Unwelcome sexual advances which may or may not be accompanied by promises or threats, explicit or implicit.
- Persistently asking someone out, despite being turned down (Queen’s, 2016)

**MPA Co-op Program Policies and Procedures**

Queen’s offers a one-year, full-time, multidisciplinary program for students interested in leadership roles in the public service, public policy, management, analysis and policy-making (Queen’s-a, n.d.). They are typically people at entry or mid-level points in their career (Queen’s-a, n.d.). There is an optional internship or co-op where students can apply their skills towards a policy problem and offer solutions (Queen’s-a, n.d.). Placements are normally with the federal, provincial, or municipal government after the completion of the MPA studies (Queen’s-a, n.d.). Students can participate in a four-month cooperative education placement in their field through the MPA Internship. Some funding is available for relocation and tuition. Co-op enables students to have on the job training and a bridge to employment possibly (Queen’s-a, n.d.)
A program called “Professional Foundations” offers interactive workshops, panel discussions, and one-on-one coaching to students to help with career development and professional skills (Queen’s-b, n.d.). During the 2017-18 year, the fall term looked at issues relating to getting a job, while the winter term was about career planning (Queen’s-b, n.d.). In 2017-18, the focus in the fall term were: on “Getting a Job”; the focus in the winter term was on career planning (Queen’s-b, n.d.). The fall sessions were; Know Who You Are: Essential for Success, Your Resume and Cover Letter, and Interviews and Other Career Conversations (Queen’s-b, n.d.). The winter term had sessions called, Options Outside “Big” Government, Professional Ethics and Values, and Getting It Right on the Job (Queen’s-b, n.d.). There are also many networking opportunities to meet alumni in formal and informal circumstances. Undergraduate International students can participate but they need to obtain a Co-op/Intern Work Permit from Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) to participate in QUIP (Queen’s-b, n.d.).

Queen’s Undergraduate Engineering and Applied Science Co-op Program Policies and Procedures

Queen’s MBA program requires all students to do an individual course project where students either work with a company and analyze a real-life problem or design a business case to launch a new company (Queen’s-c, n.d.). Neither applies to co-op, and therefore Queen’s undergraduate internship program was analyzed instead. QUIP is optional and allows second and third-year students to do a 12-16 month paid jobs working in their fields (Queen’s, 2018). The QUIP for the Faculty of Engineering and Applied Science was used in this study (Queen’s, 2018). Analyzing the internship program for engineering offers a different perspective.

It explains how an internship is a contract between a student and employer and is to be considered binding upon both. Students are to inform a QUIP coordinator during their internship as soon as possible with any questions or concerns (Queen’s, 2018). Those participating in the internship program must complete the Off-Campus Activity Safety Policy (OCASP) forms. All student outside of Canada or in a remote or industrial setting fills out high-risk forms and those in an office or urban setting complete low-risk forms (Queen’s, 2018).

The OCASP came into effect in September 2004; all students and faculty complete it, and any staff who carry out studies, research or other work off-campus and are in the purview of the university. The university wants to ensure any off-campus activity is in a safe space as possible where all persons are aware of their roles and responsibilities (Queen’s, 2018). Harassment is not mentioned in this document. The form says if a critical incident occurs in a low or high-risk activity the person in authority assesses if work should continue or stop due to unmanageable risk. For students on placement, the person in authority is the relevant administrator of the faculty (Queen’s, 2018). A critical incident can include assaults (including sexual assault) or other violent occurrences. Students who are in international placements have access to the Emergency Support Program for Study/Work/Travel Abroad. A program that Queen’s has partnered with to assist with problems and connecting them with administrators and staff at Queen’s (Queen’s, 2018).
A performance evaluation is completed during the internship (Queen’s, 2018). The Queen’s Career Services office created a document entitled “2018-19: QUIP Frequently Asked Questions”. All students need to complete two mandatory workshops “Resume and Cover Letter Workshop” and the “Interview Workshop.” Excluding computing studies, all other students must attend the “Find Your Own Internship Workshop.” Students can schedule meeting with a QUIP coordinator to discuss job choices, resumes, and other issues (Queen’s, 2018). Students can find a job outside positions posted by the QUIP office, but the QUIP office needs to give approval for the position to qualify as a co-op. Nothing in this document discusses what to do if a problem arises (Queen’s, 2018).

**University of Ottawa**

*University of Ottawa’s Harassment Definition and Policies*

The school’s official policy on harassment can be found in the Administration and Governance webpage. The Board approved Policy 67 “Prevention of Harassment and Discrimination” in 2012. UOttawa explains that understand their obligation to prevent harassment and discrimination, as set out in the Ontario Human Rights Code, Occupational Health and Safety Act, and Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities Act (UOttawa, 2012). Some incidences of harassment or sexual harassment could be deemed to be criminal harassment under the Criminal Code (UOttawa, 2012). They handle reporting, investigating, and complaints of harassment (UOttawa, 2012).

Harassment is defined as:

“engaging in a course of vexatious comment or conduct that is known or ought reasonably to be known to be unwelcome. A single unwelcome incident, if serious enough, can be sufficient to support an instance of harassment. Harassment includes comments or conduct that intimidates, humiliates, undermines or dominates the other person by belittling, embarrassing or demeaning them or involves the use of abusive or threatening language” (UOttawa, 2012).

A form of harassment is sexual harassment, it is defined as:

“a) sexual solicitation or unwanted sexual attention from a person who knows or ought reasonably to know that such attention is unwanted;

b) implied or expressed promise of reward for complying with a sexually oriented request;

c) implied or expressed threat of reprisal or actual reprisal for refusing to comply with a sexually oriented request;

d) a sexual relationship that constitutes an abuse of power in a relationship of authority;

or
e) a sexually oriented comment or behaviour that may reasonably be perceived to create a negative psychological and emotional environment for work or study (“poisoned environment”)” (UOttawa, 2012).

The policy explains that a “poisoned environment” is when harassing comments or conduct creates a negative psychological and emotional workplace or study (UOttawa, 2012).

Workplace harassment is defined as:

“engaging in a course of vexatious comment or conduct against a worker in a workplace, conduct that is known or ought reasonably to be known to be unwelcome. Workplace harassment does not include legitimate performance management of an employee (UOttawa, 2012).”

The Human Rights Office houses the office for the prevention of discrimination and harassment. Their job is to receive formal or informal complaints, work to resolve issues, provide guidance, and develop and implement the education and awareness programs regarding these issues on campus. UOttawa asserts its commitment to providing an environment free from harassment. The webpage entitled “Harassment” which is found under the heading harassment and discrimination by the Human Rights Offices. After stating the definition of harassment, they expand on the different types of harassment which are sexual harassment, workplace harassment, workplace sexual harassment, poisoned environment, criminal harassment, and the use of technology to criminally harass. The page asks if help is needed and provides the number for protection services, emergency protective services, and the police.

The webpage then has information on what to do if you are being harassed and what to do if you are accused of harassment. For those experiencing harassment, they can contact the HRO with any questions or get advice. It is recommended to acknowledge that there is an issue and to know it would not stop by itself and may get worse (UOttawa-a, n.d.). Advice such as talk to a trusted source, do not isolate yourself and assert in a frank manner to the harasser that their behaviour is not acceptable (UOttawa-a, n.d.).

For those accused of harassment, the advice is to acknowledge that this is a serious matter and work to understand your rights. For example, a person accused of harassment has the right to know the nature of the allegation, know who made it, get legal representation or professional assistance and tell their side of the story. If possible, it is recommended to avoid contact with the accuser and keep the situation confidential.

UOttawa Master of Arts Public Administration (MPA) Co-op Program Policies and Procedures

UOttawa’s MPA program is intended to equip students with the theoretical and conceptual tools needed to understand and analyze public administration (UOttawa-b, n.d.). They offer an optional co-op placement to a small number of students in the program who are also completing the research paper and not writing a thesis (UOttawa-b, n.d.). The student can do two separate terms that are each four months long, or one eight-month long co-op (UOttawa-b, n.d.). The UOttawa
co-op office administers co-op for the MPA program, which gives students practical work experience, generally in the public service (UOttawa-b, n.d.).

Students can take co-op workshops that are online, in-person, or a combination of the two (UOttawa-c, n.d.). The workshops “Co-op Welcome,” “The Realities of the Job Market,” “Applying to Jobs Online,” “Work Term Excellence,” and “Work Term in Review” are mandatory (UOttawa-c, n.d.). ‘Co-op Resumes’, ‘Co-op Interviews’, ‘Co-op Continuous Placement’, ‘Goal: To Succeed!’ , ‘Finding Your Own Job 101’, and ‘Job Search for Graduating Students’ are optional. Individual appointments can be booked to meet one on one with an advisor regarding cover letters, interview skills, and more (UOttawa-c, n.d.).

Students who are participating in an optional co-op must sign an admissions agreement (UOttawa-c, n.d.). It discusses how students are representing the school when they are away, and outlines requirements to complete all academic requirements, perform well during the co-op, pay the co-op fee and follow regulations and procedures governing co-operative education programs (UOttawa-c, n.d.). One section of the report states, “I will notify the co-op office before dealing with any problem issues that may arise” (UOttawa-c, n.d.). In a section for employers, it explains that co-op is a three-way partnership between the employer, the student, and the school (UOttawa-c, n.d.).

The role of the employer is to train students, set clear work term objectives, conduct evaluations and answer any questions (UOttawa-c, n.d.). Co-op office trains students to be prepared for placement, answers questions, and conducts follow-up meetings after midterm evaluations (UOttawa-c, n.d.). Students must complete workshops, set objectives, book meetings with supervisors to articulate goals, reflect on their work and complete a final work term report (UOttawa-c, n.d.). If the term is not going well for whatever reason, the employer is encouraged to articulate this to the student and develop an action plan to improve. If the situation does not improve, the co-op office can act as a mediator (UOttawa-c, n.d.).

**UOttawa MBA Co-op Policies and Procedures**

UOttawa’s MBA program is offered in two streams, professional which is a twenty-four-month program with classes during nights and weekends, and an intensive twelve-month program (UOttawa, 2018). The twelve-month program was observed because it is more likely that students in this version of the program will complete an internship than someone in the professional program that is intended for those with a full-time job (UOttawa, 2018). This program offers an internship, rather than a co-op (UOttawa, 2018). It is optional and not required. Students can have a general MBA or specialize in “finance, consulting, analytics, entrepreneurship, or public management” (UOttawa, 2018). Students will spend at least 288 or more hours on their internship project (UOttawa, 2018).

The internship is designed for students to complete a project such as a business plan or marketing strategy. Internships can be paid through a stipend, governmental funding, paid directly by the company or unpaid. It can be part-time or full-time (UOttawa, 2018). The company is giving a
project of importance that requires research, analysis, and recommendations. In terms of reference
document, students must sign for the internship project; it outlines the information and rough
structure needed for the project (UOttawa, 2018). Students then sign the form outlining the salary,
hours per week, and time frame logistics. Students must keep what they learned private and
confidential (UOttawa, 2018).
5.0 Findings - Interviews

The study sought to interview twelve co-op coordinators; six who work with students completing an MPA or a comparable program and six co-op coordinators that worked with MBA students. Universities are regulated by the province and have a provincial human right council. Students working for the federal government follow federal legislation on harassment and human rights issues. Three schools from B.C. and three schools with Ontario were chosen to see how provincial legislation influences the school’s harassment policy and if it differs from federal legislation.

Four in-depth interviews were conducted. Eight semi-structured questions were asked, and participants were asked to elaborate if they had further thoughts. For confidentiality reasons respondents and their corresponding university will be referred to as follows; University A and Participant A, University B and Participant B, University C and Participant C, and University D and Participant D.

5.1 Question 1 - Information

Question - Before students begin their first co-op term, what type of information is given to student about harassment in the workplace?

The first question co-op coordinators were asked was regarding the types of information about harassment students are given before the term begins. This first question was used as a mechanism to understand the current state of harassment education in the universities explored.

All four participants articulated that before co-op, students need to complete a form of preparatory course. University A and University B utilize both online contact and in-person workshops to prepare students, while University C only has an in-person seminar, and University D has an online prep class.

Participant A stated that students are told about harassment legislation that is in place and if it is breached to contact the co-op office (Participant A, personal communication, November 9, 2018). Students have access to a “co-op hub” on the university’s website, which includes many modules with information and quizzes. Participant A noted that within the last twenty years, they could only recall one case of sexual harassment (Participant A, personal communication, November 9, 2018). This case influenced a change in pre-employment curriculum to discuss harassment. Participant A explained previously, there was a module entitled “Legislation Facts in the Workplace”; this provided the Employment Standard Act and B.C. Human Rights Council. Federal human rights and work policies were not included. The information exists and can be found on the website, such as the University’s Equity and Inclusion office (Participant A, personal communication, November 9, 2018)

Graduate students will also complete a one-day workshop which mainly discusses interviews, cover letters, and job searching (Participant A, personal communication, November 9, 2018). Undergraduate students have to complete two workshops. In one of their sessions, case studies based on real experiences of students and learn about what to do if they encounter that problem.
(Participant A, personal communication, November 9, 2018). There is no case study on sexual harassment, but there has been one on discrimination in general. In the past, the equity office has done a presentation for students on protective grounds. Participant A explains that co-op coordinators have more time with undergraduate students and therefore, can provide more information. Participant A admits that case studies have prompted students to come forward, but there will always be those who are too apprehensive about coming forward (Participant A, personal communication, November 9, 2018). Participant A shares that maybe they could add in more information for students. They explain that a good co-op pre curriculum should always be evolving to meet the needs of students. For example, last year, gender identity was discussed (Participant A, personal communication, November 9, 2018). Regardless of whether an issue is discussed before co-op, Participant A says that they encourage all students to contact them if they feel safe to do so (Participant A, personal communication, November 9, 2018).

At University B, all students must complete a preparatory course before their first term. The online portion of the course includes a unit about equity, diversity, and other workplace safety issues. This unit provides links to online resources about harassment and discrimination in the workplace (Participant B, personal communication, September 27, 2018). Participant B explains that the in-person portion of the curriculum includes lectures, case studies, and guest speakers. The content varies from year to year, but it typically provides workplace success and what to do if you have a problem (Participant B, personal communication, September 27, 2018). Some faculties, such as engineering or business, will have standards of professional practice to which students and staff adhere to. Not all forms of misconduct are explicitly listed, but it stresses the principles of respect, confidentiality, and privacy (Participant B, personal communication, September 27, 2018). If the co-op is required, students are expected to follow both the school’s rules and professional standards. This also means these students will have processes and resources from the profession’s regulatory body (Participant B, personal communication, September 27, 2018).

Participant C said that before co-op begins, there is always a workshop that aims to explain everything you need to know about co-op and this profession. The workshop discusses a variety of issues, harassment is not delved into, but there is a portion on how to work with different types of people (Participant C, personal communication, October 1, 2018).

Participant C notes that 80% or higher of incidences are not reported until co-op is over unless it is an extreme situation (Participant C, personal communication, October 1, 2018). They believe that students don’t come forward because of embarrassment or lack of confidence, but the co-op office tries to convey that no question is too small, and they are available to provide help (Participant C, personal communication, October 1, 2018). Participant C says a benefit of co-op is that there is a resource outside the job to seek help. Participant C says that they want students to know that if anything makes them uncomfortable, they can reach out to the co-op office right away (Participant C, personal communication, October 1, 2018).
Participant D explains that the preparatory curriculum is only online, and all information that students should know is there (Participant D, personal communication, September 28, 2018). Further, they state that during the term the resources are still available (Participant D, personal communication, September 28, 2018).

At University A and C, a case study about harassment was added partly due to the experience of a student. Case studies with undergraduate students are done in groups and discussed with the 250 people there.

Three of the coordinators stressed how they encourage students to come speak with them about any issue (Participant D, personal communication, September 28, 2018). For every school, the participant explained that information is available during all co-ops online.

5.2 Question 2 - Definition
Question - How is harassment defined by the university and by each of the programs?

Each coordinator affirmed their co-op office uses the definition established by their respective university. Participant B elaborated that in addition to the school’s definition, they send students links to online resources; such as WorkSafeBC or the Canadian Human Rights Act, if they would like further information (Participant B, personal communication, September 27, 2018).

Participant C explained they use the definition of the school and any legal definition of B.C. labor (Participant C, personal communication, October 1, 2018). Participant D states they use the university’s definition on harassment and human rights policy (Participant D, personal communication, September 28, 2018).

5.3 Question 3 – Current Framework
Question - What is your school’s current framework and policy for addressing harassment?

Participant A explained their response to a student reporting harassment would be dependent on what resources or help the student requested (Participant A, personal communication, November 9, 2018). They have the option to go to the Equity office. If they came to the co-op coordinator, they would listen and determine what resources the student needs (medical, counselling, etc.) (Participant A, personal communication, November 9, 2018). The co-op office would ask the equity office for referrals. Students who are experiencing harassment at work have the option to leave or get a different supervisor. It is the student’s choice regarding whether to report or disclose, as the office cannot report on their behalf. They make a note of the employer if the student has a bad experience (Participant A, personal communication, November 9, 2018)

Participant B follows the school’s framework and policy on harassment. They encourage students to contact their co-op coordinator and get assistance while navigating the process (Participant B, personal communication, September 27, 2018).
Participant C explains they often do not find out until after it happens. Their first step is to listen and hear the student’s story (Participant C, personal communication, October 1, 2018). Since they do not employee the student they are restricted in their actions, therefore they support the student in whatever way they need and give resources. In past experiences, they have made a note regarding an employer if a negative situation occurs. The co-op office cannot make claims directly because they are hearing the information secondhand.

Participant D stated that they follow the harassment policy of University D (Participant D, personal communication, September 28, 2018).

5.4 Question 4 – Reporting Process

Question - If a student experiences harassment on a co-op placement, what is the reporting process within the university?

Participant A explains there is no formal requirement to report statistics of student harassment on co-op to the university (Participant A, personal communication, November 9, 2018). The student has a choice and the co-op coordinator helps in any way they can in the event that a disclosure occurs (Participant A, personal communication, November 9, 2018).

Participant B explains that students are told to first speak with their co-op coordinator in the event of harassment (Participant B, personal communication, September 27, 2018). Many organizations have their own harassment policies so it may be helpful to find them as well. The reporting process will depend on the situations but may include reporting to the following stakeholders:

- The Coordinator’s Program Manager and senior Co-op & Career management
- The employing organization (via the direct supervisor, human resources, senior management or an ombudsperson)
- Relevant authorities (e.g. Police, WorkSafeBC) (Participant B, personal communication, September 27, 2018)

Participant C says that the process starts with listening and talking to the student. The student may be worried about how this will affect their own reputation (Participant C, personal communication, October 1, 2018). If the student gives permission, they will have a conversation with the organization, but it is the student's choice. As a result, despite the best intentions, there are inherent constraints on how much a coordinator can help, given that situations will not necessarily come to their attention (Participant C, personal communication, October 1, 2018).

5.5 Question 5 – Resources and Protocol

Question - If a student experiences harassment while on a co-op placement, what are the resources or protocol in place for dealing with such harassment?
Participant A reiterated that the resources available would be the Equity and inclusion Office, seeking medical attention if needed, connecting students to counselling, and speaking with the Student Ombudsman office (Participant A, personal communication, November 9, 2018). They said the Student Ombudsman office probably would not be the most effective because they deal with on-campus student issues with faculty (Participant A, personal communication, November 9, 2018).

Participant B said the protocol would involve reporting to appropriate stakeholders, as well as working with the student and potentially the employer directly to deal with the situation. This may include coaching on having difficult conversations and navigating power structures. The student may also be referred to Counselling Services. For students in danger, either physically or emotionally, they are able to leave the co-op even if they did not do the required number of hours. The co-op requirements would be adapted or waived to help them. Students are referred to any relevant resource such as a counsellor and the priority is ensuring students are not unsafe in the situation.

Participant C stated that when the students come forward, they will be given all the support they need (Participant C, personal communication, October 1, 2018). Co-op coordinators build great relationships with the students they work with one-on-one. The hope is that trust is built. If the student gives permission the co-op coordinator will speak with the employer about the accused. It is a delicate situation to handle. If the student wanted to go to the human rights commission then they would need corroboration, as both sides of the story would need to be heard (Participant C, personal communication, October 1, 2018). The co-op coordinators will walk students over to counselling services if they wish, to help provide all the support they need. Counselling is provided 24/7 by phone or email. Participant C’s university has an early alert system, where if someone has a concern, they can use a secure online form to alert that a student is having difficulty (Participant C, personal communication, October 1, 2018). The early alert advisors review the form and then provide what resources may help the student, so then the staff can approach the student with suggestions (Participant C, personal communication, October 1, 2018).

Participant D’s co-op coordinator provided a curriculum outline. They provide students with a handbook on co-op. Section 4.1 ‘Rights and Responsibilities’ details the rights and responsibilities of the employee and employer. In addition, the student support program is a free, confidential 24/7 mental and well-being service for all graduate and undergraduate students. Students can book appointments for online, video or in-person counselling sessions and find articles and videos about related subjects such as study skills and conflict management (Participant D, personal communication, September 28, 2018). It is available for students living or studying abroad and is in multiple languages. There is also an app to download. Many co-op students are covered under the Employee Standards Act of BC. WorkSafeBC also has valuable resources for young and new workers, including information on workplace harassment reporting processes (Participant D, personal communication, September 28, 2018).
It states that under the “your rights as an employee under the act” that students have the right to work in an environment free of discrimination and harassment (Participant D, personal communication, September 28, 2018). It lists that there are resources on WorkSafeBC relating to how to submit a complaint, contact information for a victim service hotline for support, and a link to their school’s Human Rights Policy. Example of sexual harassment include when classmates repeatedly invite you on dates and say how attractive you are even after you say you are not interested. Examples of personal harassment are directing commentary that is intended to shame or humiliate. A link to information on Participant D’s sexual violence support and prevention office “stresses in bold font to not hesitate to contact your co-op coordinator at any time and the co-op program is always there for any question, challenge, and to support you” (Participant D, personal communication, September 28, 2018).

5.6 Question 6 – Tracking Cases

Question - Does your school track the number and type of harassment cases involving students on co-op?

University A and C have a decentralized co-op system where each faculty has its own director or leader of the co-op program. The co-op coordinator explained that they have been fortunate that harassment is rare, and they have not had to keep track (Participant C, personal communication, October 1, 2018). The office monitors the situation by debriefing on what they could have done differently, how they can learn, and what they can change in terms of sources and training for students (Participant C, personal communication, October 1, 2018).

Participant B said that they take notes, but the number of cases is not tracked (Participant B, personal communication, September 27, 2018). Participant C said that their program takes notes for all situations. Harassment cases being reported have been rare (Participant C, personal communication, October 1, 2018). They have only heard of 1-2 situations over the past year, but before that they had received none. That does not mean that harassment did not happen; it just might mean that they were not told. Over the last year and a half, they have been hearing more about mental issues or symptoms, but it is unknown whether harassment may have been a contributing factor.

Participant D stated that an annual report about harassment rights is done by the human rights office, and a link was provided (Participant D, personal communication, September 28, 2018).

5.7 Question 7 – Improvements to Policy

Question - What improvements do you think could be made to your school’s policy on harassment for students on co-op?

Participant A said that they have no formal policy; co-op students are governed the same way with respect to harassment whether it occurs on or off campus (Participant A, personal communication, November 9, 2018). The university has done a lot of work on harassment and discrimination due
to tough cases (Participant A, personal communication, November 9, 2018). There is a new office called the Sexual Violence Prevention and Support Centre, and there are a lot of new resources being offered. The co-op office has not worked with this office yet. One of their students worked there last year on a co-op to help develop a consultation process with students (Participant A, personal communication, November 9, 2018).

Participant B said that they are constantly looking for ways to improve based on experiences of students and feedback from stakeholders such as students, co-op coordinators, and others (Participant B, personal communication, September 27, 2018). The federal and provincial governments have resources, laws, and processes to address these issues (Participant B, personal communication, September 27, 2018). They say they can empathize with the links between various policies as important for students to know and acknowledge that they could be improved. The IPP course may benefit from a review and adding more education on employee rights and expanding other concerns such as gender identity as they gain greater expansion in society and the workplace (Participant B, personal communication, September 27, 2018).

Each faculty sets their own standards for professional behavior, but discussions could be held to review existing content to ensure clarity of application within the context of co-op work terms. Discussion with different faculties could be held to improve the co-op participation process.

Participant C says that they need to continually enforce and work with legal and other groups on how to manage these issues (Participant B, personal communication, September 27, 2018). They acknowledge that they can always do and learn more with respect to handling these situations.

5.8 Question 8 – Improvements to Resources

Question - What improvements can be made to education, resources, and support services related to workplace harassment in your program?

Participant A says that they think the resources need to be continually updated and changed, for example navigating gender identity in the workplace (Participant A, personal communication, November 9, 2018). They suggest they could do more for graduate students, a short-term component of which is to develop case studies. Half of students are international and are likely to be less aware of the applicable policies and rules (Participant A, personal communication, November 9, 2018).

Participant B states that the preparatory course curriculum has been adapted in recent years to ensure students can learn about harassment and have tools to deal with what they observe and experience (Participant B, personal communication, September 27, 2018). Sexualized violence is an important issue that University B has stressed and the pre-course includes relevant information and resources (Participant B, personal communication, September 27, 2018). These have been positive advancements and they believe the issue is being addressed for their students. The co-op office works closely with counselling services and these services continue to be available when students are on co-op terms (Participant B, personal communication, September 27, 2018).
Participant C explains that they could do better and help reinforce these things with students (Participant B, personal communication, September 27, 2018). A few forms of evaluation are done regarding supervision, but it is not anonymous, and they also ask about feedback on the program in a format that is not anonymous. The program is sizable but not large, about 256, so it would not be easy to pinpoint if it were done anonymously. Participant D says that additional information that is timely to students going on their first work term would be beneficial (Participant D, personal communication, September 28, 2018).

5.9 Summary of Findings

Each university analyzed has slightly different policies and procedures regarding harassment in place, but several common themes emerged in this review. All universities studied have strong policies and procedures against harassment and the co-op program uses the same framework in their practices.

Each university’s definition includes words such as demeaning, humiliating, intimidating, vexatious, and abusive. Based on the interviews, resources and information is available. However, nowhere does such information appear to be discussed at length with students prior to co-op placements. This could be a significant gap because if someone knows it is safe to report they are more likely to come forward.

Harassment is a behaviour or conduct that directly or indirectly violates a prohibited ground of discrimination. The standard of what a reasonable person ought to know is used when assessing the alleged harassment. Therefore, whether or not the person had bad intentions is irrelevant to the question of whether harassment occurred.

Participant B and Participant D use the same definition of harassment in their formal policy, where harassment is broken down by prohibited grounds of discrimination, personal, and sexual. Participant C’s formal policy is under discrimination and harassment, and simply defines harassment generally. Each mentioned the applicable provincial human rights legislation and the fact that harassment is seen as an interference to one’s participation in university activity.

It was evident that all co-op coordinators who participated viewed harassment as a serious issue and were dedicated to supporting students who encounter any problem during their co-op term.
6.0 Discussion and Analysis

The research illustrated that workplace harassment can be defined in various ways, and many factors can cause it to occur. The interviews showed that co-op coordinators have not experienced many students reporting workplace harassment and therefore do not have a standard procedure for addressing it. Participant A stated that harassment is likely occurring, but students have not come forward. Lack of reporting reflects findings in the literature review that students are often scared or embarrassed to report harassment (Dednya, 2005, p.1). Alternatively, students may not know what constitutes workplace harassment; they are then not reporting because they don’t realize it has occurred (Einarsen, 2000, p.380). Providing education on harassment can help bring awareness, understanding, and resources to students. A student’s educational development, income, and health can be negatively impacted in the short and long term if they experience harassment during their co-ops and they do not know how to handle it (Standing Committee on the Status of Women, 2014, p. 4).

6.1 Answering the Research Questions

This study sought to answer the following primary research question:

- How do UVic MBA and MPA graduate programs educate their students on harassment issues before students begin their first co-op placement?

The secondary questions were developed to aid in providing a better understanding of the current operating systems of UVic. They were as follows:

- What information, tools, and resources are students provided with before they go to their first co-op placement in each of the programs?
- How is harassment defined by the university and by each of the programs?
- What is the current UVic framework and policy for addressing harassment?
- How does UVic compare to other schools that require co-ops for their programs in regard to harassment policies and services for students?
- Does UVic track the number and type of harassment cases that happen to students on co-op?
- What are the barriers preventing students from reporting harassment?
- What improvements can be made to UVic’s policy on harassment for students on co-op?

The research questions were situated within a conceptual framework that developed through the core findings of the literature review. The conceptual framework identified seven aspect of harassment education that is essential for students to know before they start in the workplace. For many students this is their first job in their field or in an office, therefore the rules of acceptable conduct will not be known to them unless they are taught. The conceptual framework demonstrates that students need to know more than just the definition of harassment, they need to
know their rights, what it looks like, its prevalence, effects, reporting options, and prevention methods.

The document reviews and interviews gave further insight on harassment education and how it is currently presented. Three themes emerged from the research that was conducted that helped give insight into the research question:

1. Importance of relationship building between students and the co-op coordinators
2. Underreporting and Lack of Data
3. Evolving Policy

Table 2 displays the themes that emerged from both the literature review and findings. The literature review was conducted before independent research was performed. These elements will be combined to develop recommendations.

Table 2: Themes of the literature review and findings from research.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Literature Review Themes</th>
<th>Findings Themes</th>
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<td>Importance of relationship between students and the co-op coordinators</td>
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<tr>
<td>Prevalence of harassment in the workplace</td>
<td>Underreporting and Lack of Data</td>
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<td>Prevalence of harassment towards students in the workplace</td>
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<td>Environmental factors that affect harassment rates</td>
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<td>Impact of harassment on individuals</td>
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6.2 Overall Themes in the Research

Importance of relationship between students and the co-op coordinators

Each co-op website advises students to contact their co-op supervisor if any problem emerges during their placement. Every coordinator interviewed reiterated that they hope students contact them with issues and their dedication to being available to students. The co-op coordinators interviewed had very few examples of students reporting harassment. At the universities examined, none had conducted statistics on the prevalence or forms of harassment that students had experience. Co-op coordinators expressed they hoped they had built a relationship with students where they felt comfortable coming forward.

Foster & Fullagar’s studied why students do not report sexual harassment. Two factors that influence the decision to report was their self-esteem and their friend’s opinion on reporting (Foster & Fullagar, 2018, p.156). Many students feared how a person in authority would respond to their experience and worried about embarrassment (Foster & Fullagar, 2018, p.156). Co-op coordinators could stress more to students they will be compassionate and impartial regarding any problem brought to them (Foster & Fullagar, 2018, p.156). The opinions given by a student’s friend can lead a student to reporting. Students are likely to go to their classmates before a co-op advisor, and the preparatory class is an opportunity to show all students that co-op advisors are a helpful resource (Foster & Fullagar, 2018, p.156). It can be argued students who trust and have a positive relationship with their co-op advisor would be more likely to report because they would feel they would be taken seriously and be offered real solutions. Students reach out to friends because of the foundation of their relationship, through building trust and understanding with students it could lead to more open conversations about harassment. The requirement of many mandatory in-person information sessions with students and an individual meeting with the co-op coordinator could help build confidence.

Underreporting and lack of data

To build upon the theme, students may not be reaching out to co-op coordinators because they don’t know what they are experiencing is harassment. Foster & Fullagar illuminate that to report harassment you need to be able to identify what harassment is and understand what actions and behaviors constitute harassment (2018, p.150). The federal government and every examined university offered many resources and information about harassment online. Resources seem to exist but not be well known and utilized.

It does not appear that the preparatory course or work term report discusses or asks about harassment. Coming forward and reporting harassment is an extremely difficult task that puts into question not only the character of the alleged harasser, but the complainant. If students are specifically asked about harassment after their co-op after understanding what it could encourage students to speak up. It could be in the form of an anonymous survey or questionnaire. The data from this could be used to gather information on the prevalence of harassment year to year. It is
difficult to develop sound policies that meet the needs of students who experience harassment when the matter is often not reported, or the information is not sought after.

Evolving policy

The literature review demonstrates that harassment is prevalent but underreported. The interviews showed that coordinators have rarely encountered students reporting harassment and therefore official statistics are not tracked. They also do not doubt it is happening but assume that it is simply not being communicated to them. The document review and jurisdictional scan showed that each university studied has harassment policies and procedures enacted and advertised on their website. There appears to be a gap between students and the university when it comes to reporting. Students may be reporting internally in an organization and not telling the co-op office.

6.3 Future Research

Future research could explore the main reasons students do not report harassment that occurs when students are on co-op placements and related, what changes could be made that would make them feel comfortable to report incidents.

It would also be useful to do a study with two co-op programs, the first under an existing regime where little to no information regarding harassment is directly explained to students, and the second in a program that provides a detailed in-person presentation about harassment before the first co-op term. The study could subsequently ask students from both groups whether they experienced harassment during their co-op term, if so, how they handled it, and if not, what they would have done if they had experienced it. Such a study could clarify whether providing explicit information about harassment prior to co-op increases the rate of reporting and comfort level with reporting through the university. In the absence of such a study, it can be plausibly assumed that more information would increase such outcomes.
7.0 Recommendations

7.1 Introduction
The primary purpose of this project was to identify how the UVic co-op office can improve how they educate students about workplace harassment before they begin their first co-op. In this section, six key recommendations are presented for the UVic co-op office to implement.

These recommendations have been developed from the information obtained through the literature review, smart practices review, and the primary research conducted with co-op programs across Canada. The following criteria factored into the development of these recommendations: importance, cost, time, efficiency, effectiveness, and ease of implementation.

7.2 Recommendations
The recommendations are divided into three sections: before co-op, during co-op, and after co-op. The recommendations are organized this way to show when information should be given to students and what is needed at each stage.

**Before Co-op Recommendations**

**Recommendation 1** - The Introductory to Professional Practice (IPP) should include an in-person class or a proportion of a course on information about harassment. The class should include case studies that are explored in small and large groups.

The case studies should provide current and varying severities of kinds of harassment. Examples of relevant case studies are in appendix C. This would help to ensure that co-op students can identify multiple forms of harassment, including more subtle ways that they may otherwise struggle to understand and address. An example of a possible case study can be found in Appendix C. Additional case studies would be developed based on reported student experiences in consultation with affected students. This would further ensure the relevance of examples to real-world challenges.

**Recommendation 2** - The UVic co-op website should have a page about what harassment is, signs and examples of harassment, and what to do if it occurs.

This is an important addition to in-person training because students who experience harassment may not immediately recall details of training that they received before the co-op, especially during a personal crisis. Online content promotes timely access to information that students may otherwise struggle to find; however, one challenge with this approach is likely to be generating awareness of the website and ensuring that it is sufficiently prominent and user-friendly on the website.

**Recommendation 3** - UVic should only collaborate with employers after vetting their code of conduct and procedures to ensure that zero-tolerance harassment policy is in place. This practice is
essential to ensure that employers acknowledge the seriousness of harassment and understand the importance of a healthy work environment. An established anti-harassment policy cannot guarantee harassment will not occur, but it does provide a framework for students and co-op coordinators to reference if an incident occurs. Moreover, this would allow identifying any gaps or contradictions between UVic policies and those of the employers. Implementing this practice would potentially require some relatively significant resources from the university, particularly in terms of time from personnel with human resources or legal training.

**Recommendation 4** - Many students will pursue co-op placements that are outside Victoria; when a problem such as harassment occurs, they may feel physically and emotionally too far from the school to reach out for help. UVic could reach out to co-op coordinators at other universities who agree to provide support and advice from students who are working in the respective cities each university is located. For example, a UVic student placed in Ottawa could obtain the contact information of a co-op coordinator at UOttawa or Carleton if they want to have an in-person discussion about harassment. Students will often not know about employment law or an organization’s policy while a co-op coordinator at a university will be more knowledgeable about reporting processes and resources available to the student. The co-op coordinator network would allow students to have a proxy advocate who could attend formal meetings at their placement to discuss how to address the harassment the student faced. Some students will work in smaller cities that do not have a university, but creating the network is a significant first step to addressing how to provide in-person support for co-op placements outside Victoria.

**During Co-op Recommendations**

**Recommendation 5** - Require MBA and MPA co-op coordinators to send out an email soon after a co-op placement has begun, reiterating what harassment is and reminding students that they are encouraged to come forward if it occurs.

This step can likely promote engagement and trust on issues relating to harassment between co-op students and coordinators. As discussed, one barrier to disclosing harassment can be that one does not know whom to contact. Establishing communication early on in the co-op placement can likely help to reduce this barrier.

**Recommendation 6** - Create a platform on which students can anonymously submit questions. Some students may feel intimidated coming forward, but if there is a way to do so anonymously, they may feel more comfortable to ask questions or ultimately ask for help.

This would require some additional resources to develop the platform, as well as some additional training for students on how to use it; however, the benefits could extend beyond the issue of harassment since candid feedback on a range of subjects could be beneficial to the further development of the co-op program.
Recommendation 7 - The co-op office should consider sending out a survey that can be completed anonymously asking students to evaluate their co-op experience, including questions about harassment. Encouraging students to be vocal about their experience, whether good or bad, can identify issues being faced, but not discussed. In the survey, harassment should be defined, and nuanced examples provided of what forms it can take in the workplace.

As discussed previously, a trend across universities is the lack of data on incidents of harassment during co-op. Among other reasons, some students may value their job to the point that they feel compelled to ignore specific incidents. They may nevertheless be willing to share information after the completion of the co-op to help ensure better experiences for future students. This data can be valuable in terms of better preparing prospective students and potentially discontinuing partnerships with specific problematic organizations.
8.0 Conclusion

Workplace harassment can occur at any time in any person’s career. Factors such as age, sex, gender, sexual orientation, height, body type, demeanor, and workplace experience and job security can influence the likelihood of a person being harassed. For many of these reasons, students tend to be at relatively high risk of facing workplace harassment during co-op placements.

Given the significant impacts that workplace harassment can have on students, including in terms of mental health and productivity, it is crucially important for students to be educated on harassment so that they are well-placed to effectively make use of the sometimes complex, overlapping policy and legislation that may apply in any given workplace. UVic students working in the federal public service would likely be better prepared to address incidents of harassment if certain practices were adopted, such as the Introductory to Professional Practice (IPP) including an in-person class or a proportion of a class on information about harassment, and the co-op office sending out a survey that can be completed anonymously asking students to evaluate their co-op experience, including questions about harassment.

Although harassment during a co-op term is a significant risk in itself, education about policies, laws and strategies for responding to an incident are also lifelong skills that unfortunately may be relevant throughout one’s career. Harassment can happen at any stage in a person’s career and its negative impact can be prevented or mitigated through understanding what harassment is, what to do if it happens to you, and perhaps most importantly, that you are not alone. Being educated on whom to turn to in a crisis has the potential to make a significant difference for co-op students and should be a key focus of co-op preparation by universities alongside other important skills like writing a resume or preparing for an interview.
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Appendix A - Interview Questions

1. Before students begin their first co-op term, what type of information is given to students about harassment in the workplace?
2. How is harassment defined by the university and by each of the programs?
3. What is your school’s current framework and policy for addressing harassment?
4. If a student experiences harassment on a co-op placement, what is the reporting process within the university?
5. If a student experiences harassment while on a co-op placement, what are the resources or protocol in place for dealing with such harassment?
6. Does your school track the number and type of harassment cases involving students on co-op?
7. What improvements do you think could be made to your school’s policy on harassment for students on co-op?
8. What improvements can be made to education, resources, and support services related to workplace harassment in your program?
Appendix B - Participant Consent Form

PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM

Project Title: Addressing Co-op Students and Harassment in the Public Sector Workplace: Lessons Learned in MPA and MBA Programs

Researcher: Laura Lynch, Graduate Student, School of Public Administration, University of Victoria, 416-873-5830, lynchla@uvic.ca

Supervisor: Dr. Kimberly Speers, School of Public Administration, University of Victoria, 250-721-8057, kspeers@uvic.ca

Purpose(s) and Objective(s) of the Research:
● The primary objective of this research project is to identify how the University of Victoria’s School of Public Administration can improve its services to students related to workplace harassment while on a co-op placement. To undertake this research, interviews and a website analysis will take place with similar MBA and MPA programs in Canada. These two programs were chosen because they are comparable - they are professional programs that are usually completed by students wanting to prepare for the traditional workforce and not pursue an academic career (UVic, 2018-b).

This Research is Important because:
● This research project is important because it examines how prepared MBA and MPA students are to deal with harassment while on a co-op placement, a subject area in which there is little existing research. Students on co-op are uniquely vulnerable due to the short-term length and precariousness of their work, coupled with their lack of institutional support (Dednya, 2005). Short co-op terms (four months) make it difficult to report harassment because due process for sexual harassment investigations is lengthy and likely to exceed the co-op term.

Participation:
● I am reaching out to you because of your position in the co-op program at your university.
● Your knowledge and experience in administering and preparing students for the co-op process can help demonstrate how schools are currently broaching the subject matter of harassment with students.
I would like to conduct this interview over the phone or on skype at a time that is convenient for you.
You are welcome to respond to the above questions in writing. In addition, we can also discuss your answers over the phone to address any further thoughts or questions.
by a phone Participation in this project is entirely voluntary.
Whether you choose to participate or not will have no effect on your position [e.g. employment, class standing] or how you will be treated.

Procedures:
- If you choose to participate you will be interviewed regarding the co-op process at your office. You will be asked ten open-ended questions
- Duration: Approximately 30 minutes
- Location: Over the phone, Skype, or at your office (depending on your geographic location.
- Inconvenience: The time taken

Benefits:
- This project will be beneficial because it will give insight to universities on existing practices at comparable institutions. It will assess if enough is being done to prepare students to understand what harassment is and how to deal with it if it occurs on co-op.
- Co-op is a requirement for some degrees and encouraged to students of all disciplines at UVic; an annual report is released by the Co-op and Career Office every year detailing information such as the number of students who participate, geographic location, salaries and more. It does not report on any issues related to harassment, for example rates of harassment reported and rates of harassment cases resolved. This study may identify strategies to better assess how to report and investigate harassment.
- There may be a knowledge gap if additional resources are needed or if existing resources need to be improved. In 2017, it was revealed in the annual Public Service Survey conducted by the federal government that 10% of students working in the federal government report experiencing harassment at work (Government of Canada, 2017). This study demonstrates harassment has occurred, but not whether students know how to respond if it occurs to them.
- The development of smart practices can aid in ensuring UVic and other universities are providing the best available resources and information to students.

Risks:
- There is minimal risk for participants taking part in this project.

Withdrawal of Participation:
- You may withdraw at any time without explanation or consequence.
- Should you withdraw, your data will be immediately destroyed.

Anonymity and Confidentiality:
- The identity of the participants is not needed. You may wish to identify your post-secondary institution as University A. Should you wish to have the university identified as part of the research study, you are able to withdraw disclosure about the program, position, and name should you wish to do so.
- Due to there usually being a small number of employees working at co-op offices in universities, it may be possible for someone to deduce who was interviewed. The names of the universities who were asked to participate will be revealed but depending on if a university wishes to remain anonymous, all participants will remain anonymous and be given a pseudonym in the report.
Research Results will [may] be Used/Disseminated in the Following Ways:
● Directly to participants
● Thesis/dissertation
● Published article
● Presentations at scholarly or university administration conferences

Disposal of Data
● Data from this study will be disposed of after the researcher's report has been defended and approved.
● All paper notes will be shredded and all electronic records will be deleted.

Questions or Concerns:
● Contact the researcher(s) using the information at the top of page 1.
● Contact the academic supervisor at kspeers@UVic.ca
● Contact the Human Research Ethics Office, University of Victoria, (250) 472-4545
ethics@UVic.ca

Consent
Your signature below indicates that you understand the above conditions of participation in this study and that you have had the opportunity to have your questions answered by the researchers, and that you consent to participate in this research project.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of Participant</th>
<th>Signature</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

*A copy of this consent form will be left with you, and a copy will be taken by the researcher.*

Waiving Confidentiality *PLEASE SELECT STATEMENT*

I consent to be identified by name / credited in the results of the study.
I consent to have my responses attributed to me by name/university in the results.

______________ (Participant to provide initials)

Future Use of Data *PLEASE SELECT STATEMENT*

I consent to the use of my data in future research: ________________ (Participant to provide initials)
I **do not** consent to the use of my data in future research: ________________ (Participant to provide initials)
I consent to be contacted in the event my data is requested for future research: ________________ (Participant to provide initials)
Appendix C - Case Study and Questions

Case Study A:

Lindsay is 24 years old and attending UVIC for her MBA. She is originally from Alberta. She decides to take a co-op position in Ottawa with the federal government. The position is four months long. She does not know anyone in Ottawa, her closest friends live in Toronto which is 4 hours away. During her week there is a social at a local pub. Her director, supervisor and seven other colleagues head over to Murphy’s pub together at 3pm. She feels obligated to go but is excited to make connections with her coworkers. At the other end of the table is a man named Jake. He is in his forties, in a senior position, and well known in the department. Due to being at opposite ends of the table they do not speak at all, she has only been told who he is.

The next day Lindsay sees an email from Jake in her inbox that was sent at 8:45am, it reads:

“Hey Lindsay,

Welcome to the team. I did not get a chance to introduce myself to you yesterday. I am Jake and I have been with the team for 6 years. If you have any questions shoot me a message, I know my way around the place.”

Jake”

Lindsay appreciates the email. She feels out of place and is happy someone has gone out of their way to talk to her. At 10:05am she responds:

“Thanks for reaching out :) Wow you must really know your way around here. Please be me guide. Want to go for coffee soon?”

Jakes responds at 10:06am:

“I am happy to guide you in any way you want ;) Coffee tomorrow?”

Lindsay feels the first part of the email is odd but ignores it, at 10:37am she replies:

“Sure. Dammit I just released I missed a new employee session. I am a bad employee; I hope I do not get punished :(

Jake responds at 10:38am:

“Oh a bad girl I like it. You should be spanked for your naughtiness”

Lindsay reads the email and immediately feels uncomfortable. It is her second day at work and she feels like an idiot. Was he flirting with her? Did she lead him on? She decided to ignore it.
Jake messages at 10:45am:

“you did the crime you pay the price ;)

Lindsay goes to the washroom and runs into Sarah. Sarah is on her team and a few years older. She confides in Sarah about the emails and she responds “we should have warned you he does this to all the pretty girls”

Lindsay is shocked and upset. When she is back at her desk, she see he has emailed again saying:

“SORRY, read the room wrong. I will not bother you again”

Lindsay feels relieved. She does not know if she should tell her male supervisor Toby because it feels embarrassing. She decides to do nothing. But quickly sends the email:

“I do not know you and what you said made me uncomfortable”

That night at home, her phone pings, Jake has sent her a Facebook friend request and a message request. The message says:

“Did not mean to make you uncomfortable. You are just so sexy and were being flirty. I thought you wanted it”.

Lindsay feels sick to her stomach. She is enraged. The next morning, she wakes up and he has “liked” thirty of her Instagram photos. This was all done between 2:05a.m and 3:00am. Lindsay does not want to go to work anymore and feels unsure.

Discussion Questions:

1. What would you do if you were Lindsay?
2. Did Jake commit a form of harassment? Why or why not?
3. Was Lindsay flirting with Jake? Does it even matter if Lindsay was flirting previously?
4. What do you think Jake’s intention was?
5. Why is Lindsay embarrassed to tell anyone?