

**UNIVERSITI TEKNOLOGI MARA**

**A STUDY ON SEXUAL HARASSMENT  
AT THE WORKPLACE:  
CASE OF POLITEKNIK MUKAH**

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**Dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment  
of the requirements for the degree of**

**Master of Business Administration**

**Arshad Ayub Graduate Business School**

**December 2014**

## AUTHOR'S DECLARATION

I declare that the work in this dissertation was carried out in accordance with the regulations of Universiti Teknologi MARA. It is original and is the results of my own work, unless otherwise indicated or acknowledged as referenced work. This dissertation has not been submitted to any other academic institution or non-academic institution for any degree or qualification.

I, hereby, acknowledge that I have been supplied with the Academic Rules and Regulations for Post Graduate, Universiti Teknologi MARA, regulating the conduct of my study and research.

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Faculty : Arshad Ayub Graduate Business School  
Dissertation Title : A Study on Sexual Harassment at the  
Workplace:  
Case of Politeknik Mukah  
Date : 20 December 2014

## ABSTRACT

This study examined the level of awareness of sexual harassment amongst the employees of Politeknik Mukah; to determine the types of sexual harassment predominantly found at Politeknik Mukah; identifying the types of actions normally taken by the victims of sexual harassment at Politeknik Mukah and suggest suitable recommendations to the management of Politeknik Mukah on creating a healthier working environment in response to sexual harassment complaints. A quantitative research approach was used after a set of questionnaires on sexual harassment awareness were distributed to the employees of Politeknik Mukah. The findings were analyzed using SPSS which emphasized on the organization climate, level of awareness on sexual harassment, types of sexual harassment, effects of sexual harassment and actions taken by the victims. A list of suggested recommendations was also given to the management of Politeknik Mukah in order to promote the Malaysian Code of Practice on Sexual Harassment in the Workplace as initiated by the Malaysian Ministry of Human Resource.

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# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 INTRODUCTION

Sexual harassment in the workplace has long existed in the organisational life. Sexual feelings are part of group dynamics, and people who work together may come to develop these kinds of feelings for one another. Unfortunately, however, often these encounters are unpleasant and unwelcome, as witnessed by the many reported instances of sexual harassment (Willness, Steel and Lee, 2007). United States was the first country to consider sexual harassment as a form of sexual discrimination that should be banned. In Malaysia, sexual harassment did not get much of an attention until mid 1970s. With more women entering the work force, the issue of sexual harassment in the workplace has become the centre of attention of non-governmental organisations (NGOs) which support women's right. (Aminuddin, 2011).

Sexual harassment is a negative phenomenon at workplace that can adversely affect employees who are victims. This behaviour became rampant if unchecked can affect productivity and increase the cost burden to the organization. Types of sexual harassment can be divided into two categories, namely in the form of a form of intimidation and threats to personal peace. Although sexual harassment is a universal problem, the interpretation and acceptance of behaviour in interpersonal relationships in the workplace depends on the perception and culture of a society. Much progress has been made in efforts to contain and eradicate the negative symptoms. In Malaysia, for example, the Ministry of Human Resources has introduced a Code of Practice for the Prevention and Eradication of Sexual Harassment in the Workplace as internal mechanisms for preventing, addressing and eradicating the problem.

Basically, sexual harassment can be understood as any unwanted conduct of sexual nature having the effect of verbal, non-verbal, visual, psychological or physical harassment that might on reasonable grounds, be perceived by the recipient as placing a condition of a sexual nature on his/her employment. Apart from that, it is also on reasonable grounds, be perceived by the recipient as an offence or humiliation, or threat to his or her well-being, but has no direct link to his or her employment.