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Contrapower Sexual Harassment in Collegiate Athletic Administration

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Contrapower Sexual Harassment in Collegiate Athletic Administration

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SUNY Cortland Sport Management

Transformations, 2020

CURRENT CLIMATE



#MeToo

Twitter sparks a movement of women coming forward to share their experiences of sexual harassment



Larry Nassar and US Gymnastics

Begin to see the prevalence of sexual harassment in sport



More Reporting

Increasing numbers choose to reveal their experiences to friends, family, and the public.

LITERATURE REVIEW

WORKPLACE SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Negative impacts on
performance and career
trajectory

CONTRAPOWER SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Contrapower harassment
involves a subordinate
harassing a superior



CULTURE OF ATHLETICS

Women play a unique role
in male dominated athletic
culture

HOSTILE ENVIRONMENT

Uncomfortable or offensive
work environment



PURPOSE

To better understand
how contrapower sexual
harassment is occurring
in collegiate athletic
administration

METHODS

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graph TD; METHODS[METHODS] --> A[Population Study  
(approximately 90,000  
individuals)]; METHODS --> B[Open-Ended E-Mail Survey]; METHODS --> C[187 Responses]; A --> D[46 (24.6%) responses dealing  
with cases  
of contrapower harassment]; B --> E[Open coded in Atlas T.I]; C --> F[Qualitative Thematic  
Coding];
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Population Study
(approximately 90,000
individuals)

Open-Ended E-Mail Survey

187 Responses

46 (24.6%) responses dealing
with cases
of contrapower harassment

Open coded in Atlas T.I

Qualitative Thematic
Coding



DATA ANALYSIS: EMERGING THEMES

Common Forms of Contrapower Sexual Harassment

What Contrapower Sexual Harassment Looks Like

Response to Contrapower Sexual Harassment

The Impact on Career/Life Choices of Contrapower
Sexual Harassment



THEME 1

COMMON FORMS OF CONTRAPOWER SEXUAL HARASSMENT



ATHLETE/STAFF



STAFF/STAFF

“Working within the NCAA I work alongside a lot of strong, confident, and outspoken men. **I am typically one of the few females in my field and I am constantly being pursued by not only my coworkers but by the male student athletes as well. I routinely have to shut down inappropriate comments as well as continuously remind student athletes that it is not appropriate.** Instead of being respected for my ability to coach I am instead seen as someone others want to be intimate with.”

THEME 2

WHAT CONTRAPOWERS SEXUAL HARASSMENT LOOKS LIKE

BYSTANDER WITNESS

"I was traveling with baseball and when I was in the van, they were all joking about a guy struggling to get a date. When the comments turned toward me and my appearance, I asked them to stop. When they continued to persist and started to reference what they would do to me and what it would be like if I had braids like the Wendy's girl (I have red hair) and how they could ride me like a bicycle. The assistant male baseball coach was there and never stopped the scenario and only yelled at them after they arrived at the field."

RUMORS

"I HAVE BEEN THE SUBJECT OF SEVERAL SEXUAL INTIMACY RUMORS AT MY INSTITUTION. ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS, MALE ATHLETES HAVE COME ON TO ME AND ASKED ME TO PARTICIPATE IN SEXUAL ACTS WITH THEM. WHEN I REFUSED THESE INDIVIDUALS, THEY THEN TOLD THEIR TEAMMATES AND MY STUDENTS THAT I DID SLEEP WITH THEM."

THEME 3

THE ORGANIZATIONAL RESPONSE TO CONTRAPOWER SEXUAL HARASSMENT

POSITIVE RESPONSE

"Report to Title IX officer, communication with the student-athlete about my feelings of discomfort, and a change in schedules so that contact was avoided."

NO RESPONSE

Organization cannot respond to unreported incidences

NEGATIVE RESPONSE

"1st told me I should have said something and to avoid looking in the hall, 2nd they kicked the kid out of school until I was fired when they let him back, 3rd nothing as I never told them."

THEME 4

IMPACT OF CONTRAPOWERS SEXUAL HARASSMENT ON CAREER AND LIFE CHOICES



CHANGE IN DRESS

"I am always more careful and aware of what I say or situations that I am put in at work. I do my best to not look what I would consider "cute" at work so that I do not attract unwanted attention (i.e. no makeup, hair always up, bigger clothes). I am sure to avoid being in the same room alone with another male athlete."

CHANGE IN ATHLETE CONTACT

"It made me question who I was as a person and what sort of vibe or reputation I was giving off. Even though the things they were saying about me were crude and rude and not at all accurate, it made me second guess my place and role within my job and how others were also perceiving me."

MENTAL HEALTH AND SELF DOUBT

LEAVING THE FIELD

"I will not remain in college athletics, likely not in athletics at all."



IMPLICATIONS

Train students and employees around sexual harassment



Set up support systems for students and young staff who are more likely to experience harassment



Clear point person for reporting and strictly enforced policies around harassment



If we don't change, we will continue to lose women in athletic administration



CONCLUSION

Contrapower harassment is a contributor to the leaky of women in athletic administration

Contrapower harassment can be experienced by students or staff

Contrapower harassment is about asserting power even when they do not have power in a workplace hierarchy

Athletic training staff, particularly student staff, are uniquely susceptible

QUESTIONS?

Feel free to contact me at

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THANKS!