5-2024

Emotional Labor Performed Among University Faculty Responding to Student Sexual Assault Disclosures

Cadi Imbody
cimbody@g.clemson.edu

EMOTIONAL LABOR PERFORMED AMONG UNIVERSITY FACULTY RESPONDING TO STUDENT SEXUAL ASSAULT DISCLOSURES

A Thesis
Presented to
the Graduate School of
Clemson University

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Science.
Social Science

---

by
Cadi Vaughn Imbody
May 2024

Accepted by:
Heather Hensman Kettrey, Committee Chair
Catherine Mobley
Heidi Zinzow

ABSTRACT

Given the barriers to formal help-seeking and the prevalence on college campuses, students who experience sexual assault may turn to faculty for assistance, as they are familiar faces they trust and can provide access to university resources. In these cases, faculty may become the frontline for providing official help within the university setting. Responding to these student sexual assault disclosures requires great emotional capacity and the ability to provide empathetic, supportive responses. In these interactions, faculty may need to perform what Arlie Russell Hochschild (1983/2003) theorized as "emotional labor" to handle such sensitive information appropriately. Initially focusing on the service industry, Hochschild's foundational work highlighted an often-overlooked form of gendered labor.

Within the context of structure in academia and the nuance of sexual assault disclosures, it is crucial to observe the ways in which Hochschild's emotional labor is performed by faculty. Thus, this study aims to examine faculty members' perceived preparedness for handling students' sexual assault disclosures, as well as their perceptions of the emotional labor that responding to such allegations entails through semi-structured interviews. Findings from this study suggest that the emotional labor faculty perform becomes more strenuous when they lack proper support or recognition from their institutions. Additionally, female faculty often perform this emotional labor more often and feel the burden of responding to disclosures unequally among disciplines and across universities.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to thank my committee members for their constant support and guidance throughout this experience and my graduate school journey. I am grateful for the mentorship of both Dr. Catherine Mobley and Dr. Heather Hensman Kettrey. Their unwavering guidance and support have been invaluable during my graduate career and in shaping my future. In addition, I would like to thank my committee member, Dr. Heidi Zinzow, for her consistently thorough and thoughtful feedback. Lastly, I want to extend my appreciation to my family and friends for always being a light of hope along my journey. Your compassion never goes unappreciated.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Table of Contents (Continued) Page

LIST OF TABLES

Table Page

INTRODUCTION

The high prevalence of reported and unreported sexual assault incidents on college campuses is a concerning issue for universities, faculty members, students, and the community as a whole (Cantor et al., 2020). As this problem continues, assessing the available resources for all those affected by these incidents is crucial. College students rarely report sexual assault to campus officials and/or seek support from formal sources such as campus police, their institution's Title IX office, or student counseling (Holland, 2020; Stoner & Cramer, 2017). Instead, they often seek help from informal sources such as friends and family (Sabina & Ho, 2014).

Although friends and family can provide much-needed emotional support following an assault, there are a number of services that may only be available from formal sources (e.g., professional counseling, medical care, separation from the perpetrator, academic leniency, alternative schedule/residential arrangements, etc.). Research indicates that, following a sexual assault, students are reluctant to seek help from formal sources for several reasons. These include fear of retaliation from the perpetrator, feeling the situation was not serious enough to seek support, and not wanting others to know about the assault or its circumstances, such as who the perpetrator was or what environment the assault occurred in (McMahon & Seabrook, 2019).

Given these barriers to formal help-seeking, students may turn to faculty for assistance, as they are familiar faces they trust. (Hayes-Smith et al., 2010) Additionally, students may disclose experiences of sexual assault to faculty members in order to obtain academic support and leniency on course requirements following an assault. In these

cases, faculty may become the frontline for the provision of official help within the university setting. However, this may place a significant burden on faculty, who may (1) lack training on sexual assault and, thus, may not be familiar with the appropriate language to use when responding to students and/or be aware of campus resources available to assist these students and (2) become overwhelmed by the emotional labor that responding to sexual assault disclosures involves.

Responding to such disclosures requires great emotional capacity and the ability to provide empathetic, supportive responses. Faculty may need to perform what Hochschild (1983/2003) calls "emotional labor" to handle such sensitive information appropriately. Emotional labor involves the "management of feeling to create a publicly observable facial and bodily display" (Hochschild, 1983/2003, p. 7). Within the work environment, the employee is expected to manipulate their feelings for the production of a result for the customer. This emotion work is socially expected to come naturally for women especially. Hochschild warns that, when used regularly in one's job, "emotional labor poses a challenge to a person's sense of self" (Hochschild, 1983/2003, p. 136). Faculty who lack preparation in handling assault disclosures and lack training on campus resources may experience emotional distress and struggle to support their students.

Importantly, student well-being after a sexual assault can be influenced by the level of support they receive from those they approach for support (Ullman & Najdowski, 2009). Thus, it reasonably follows that faculty members' preparedness to respond to student disclosures can influence students' academic and emotional outcomes. Yet, there is a dearth of research that examines faculty members' experiences with students' sexual

assault disclosure. Thus, this study aims to examine faculty members' perceived preparedness for handling students' sexual assault disclosures, as well as their perceptions of the emotional labor that responding to such allegations entails.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Campus Sexual Assault Prevalence

The prevalence of sexual assault among college students, particularly women, highlights the crucial need to identify effective methods of supporting victims following a disclosure (Sinozich & Langton, 2014). Sexual assault can be defined as any form of unwanted physical contact, coercion, or penetration without consent (Cantor et al., 2020). According to the Association of American Universities Campus Climate Survey, which surveyed 779,170 students at 27 universities, more than 24% of undergraduate women and approximately 5% of undergraduate men reported experiencing non-consensual physical contact, including physical force, since enrolling in college (Cantor et al., 2020). The effects of sexual assault can range from physical discomfort/injury, PTSD, self-blame, shame, internalized stigma, anticipated stigma, and negative social reactions to disclosing one's experience (Kennedy & Prock, 2018). Each of these adverse effects can impact victims in different ways depending on how they are experienced following an assault.

The early internalization of negative connotations and stigmas surrounding sexual assault can be attributed to various factors such as media, culture, neighborhoods, and families (Kennedy & Prock, 2018). Common rape myths such as "she asked for it" or "he

didn’t mean to” create a hostile normative attitude around sexual assault victims (Payne et al., 1999). Hearing common tropes about victims of sexual assault being shunned by their families or communities quickly spreads the message that being a victim is socially unacceptable. These layers of stigma can seem daunting to a victim who may be fearful of disclosing an incident formally or informally due to labeling and stigmatization that could occur after disclosure (Kennedy & Prock, 2018). One survey study found that victims who were stigmatized after a sexual assault incident were more likely to think the situation had changed them permanently and internalize feelings of unworthiness than those who were not stigmatized (Ullman & Filipas, 2001). These feelings can lead to victims experiencing greater severity of PTSD symptoms after a sexual assault incident occurs (Ullman & Filipas, 2001). The very real effects of stigma and shame can be observed in victims of sexual assault at many points after an incident occurs.

Sexual assault can have vast psychological consequences for victims that impact their daily lives. The environment where the assault occurred, the relationship of the perpetrator to the victim, and the response the victim receives after disclosure can all impact how victims experience post-traumatic stress (Mason & Lodrick, 2013). The duration of time that a victim experiences this distressing condition can vary from person to person and can last a few months or a few years. The consequences of experiencing a sexual assault can be long-lasting and significant, particularly in terms of its adverse effects on an individual's human and social capital, which can be highly detrimental to college-aged victims.

When a victim experiences sexual assault during college, PTSD can develop and have a profound impact on their education experience. For example, interviews with college sexual violence survivors have indicated that victims often feel isolated in class and experience difficulties performing daily tasks after the assault (Lorenzo & Rafael, 2020). Given the social stigma and the personal mental effects of an assault, many victims struggle with prioritizing their academic performance. In some instances, sexual assault incidents can cause students to drop out of their program, leading to a higher dropout rate among sexually assaulted students (Potter et al., 2018; Banyard et al., 2020).

Considering the adverse effects of sexual assault, student survivors must have adequate resources and support to cope with such violence. However, students rarely report sexual assault to formal sources, such as law enforcement, due to the sensitive and traumatic nature of the experience (Orchoswki & Gidycz, 2012). Victims may feel uncomfortable reporting the incident, especially if they know their assailant (McGregor et al., 2000).

Therefore, as sexual assault incidents can be extremely impactful and challenging to handle on one's own, victims may seek guidance and resources that faculty can connect them with. Given the sensitive nature and effects of the issue, victims may feel the need to seek assistance from faculty who have established relationships with them (Fisher et al., 2003). Faculty members often become the first point of disclosure for students due to their involvement in students' daily lives (Durfee & Rosenburg, 2009). A recent qualitative study has shown that faculty receive student disclosures of sexual assault post-incident when students are seeking support (Hayes-Smith et al., 2010). Of a sample of

faculty members who had received student sexual assault disclosures, 93% indicated they had received multiple sexual assault disclosures throughout their careers (Branch et al., 2011). As such, university faculty play a crucial role in supporting students who have been victims of sexual assault. They serve as a frontline resource and can provide much-needed guidance and assistance to students in need. This leads to the question of whether college faculty are trained and confident in their ability to process and respond to student disclosures and whether their levels of training and confidence prepare them for the emotional labor that responding to sexual assault disclosures may entail.

Emotional Labor Performed by Faculty

In her classic tome, *The Managed Heart*, Hochschild (1983/2003) describes emotional labor as managing inner emotions to control one's outward expressions. She specifically defines emotional labor as "the management of feeling to create a publicly observable facial and bodily display; emotional labor is sold for wage and therefore has exchange value" (Hochschild, 1983/2003, p. 7). Hochschild emphasizes how this emotional work is expected from women, noting that "these skills have long been mislabeled 'natural,' a part of woman's 'being' rather than something of her own making" (Hochschild, 1983/2003, p. 167). Studying flight attendants working for popular airlines, Hochschild explains how it is normalized to package and express certain emotions we may not necessarily feel when the situation calls for it (e.g., smiling when we are not happy). This is especially pertinent when a job contains a "service" element and consumers are involved. We can view university faculty members in this way as providing education, or a service, to students who are the consumers. Of pertinence to

this study, Waldbuesser et al. (2021) observed that faculty often expressed extreme excitement when discussing course material to keep students engaged and ready to learn, although this excitement may not align with their inner emotions. They also found that faculty reported concealing or redirecting "negative" or "dark" emotions to remain professional and keep their class dynamics under control. Their study suggests that emotional labor is a significant factor in faculty members' jobs and that providing more resources for managing emotions may significantly impact performance.

Faculty members utilize emotional labor during class, office hours, and student meetings. Findings from Coleman's (2022) study on faculty mental health emphasize the need for instructors to be prepared for students to disclose personal information, especially if it relates to course material. Courses such as Family Violence, Victimology, Women and Crime, and other violence-related courses may contain topical information that students find themselves relating to. Discussions around these topics in the classroom may trigger reactions in students that make them more likely to disclose a sexual assault incident to the faculty member (Branch et al., 2011). These are sensitive topics and often very emotionally charged, which can affect faculty members' mental well-being.

Along with the performance of emotional labor, the emotional dissonance that occurs when we manage our feelings "creates an unstable state within the individual and may lead to negative outcomes such as estrangement between self and true feeling" (Glomb & Tews, 2004, p. 2). Similarly, pointing to the adverse consequences of performing emotional labor, Berry and Cassidy (2013) found that emotional dissonance and burnout can quickly become an issue if faculty members cannot manage their

emotions effectively or reconnect with their genuine emotions. They emphasize that senior university management should be concerned with the high levels of emotional labor reported by faculty. Hochschild (1983/2003) warned of this toll of performing emotional labor and discussed creating space between one's presented self at work and their true self, in what she described as an act of depersonalization. Obtaining knowledge about how faculty members feel about their performance of emotional labor has the potential to make a meaningful contribution to the literature on how we can better assist faculty in supporting students who are survivors of sexual assault. Additionally, studying this topic tests Hochschild's original theory within a modern setting and context.

While many university faculty perform emotional labor in and out of the classroom, it is essential to note the significant differences in emotional labor expected of male versus female faculty members. In her work, Hochschild observed that in service positions, "females are asked more often than males to…listen to stories and give psychological advice" (Hochschild, 1983,2003, p. 176). We know certain types of work are valued differently based on the gendered nature of the work, which is not exempt from university classrooms (Bird, 2011). Faculty are expected to create comfortable, nurturing environments to help assist in the growing minds of their students. However, students' expectations of the learning environment vary depending on the gender of the faculty member teaching. Women are often expected to be more engaged with students during and outside class time (MacNell & Hunt, 2015). This requires more emotional labor than their male counterparts, who are not expected to provide emotional support for students' personal problems. In fact, male faculty often set a tone that discourages these

behaviors from students from the beginning of courses (Bellas, 1999). This can place significant stress on female faculty, who are often not rewarded or recognized for their copious amounts of time performing emotional labor and care work through their jobs (Bird, 2011).

Women's greater responsibility for performing emotional labor can pose a risk for women faculty who may experience burnout or dissonance from their authentic selves as a result of excessive emotional labor (Bartos & Ives, 2019). The receipt of disclosures of sexual assault from students could further exacerbate the already significant burden of burnout and stress experienced by faculty members, particularly in cases where they may be uncertain about how to respond to such situations appropriately. Hochschild also emphasized how this type of emotional labor, when expected from one's organization or employer, can further place strain on those who are in the position of managing their feelings for the benefit of others (Hochschild, 1989,2003). It is vital to understand how faculty perceive these expectations in academia outside Hochschild's original study population of the traditional service industry. Given that women are often expected to assume responsibility for addressing such disclosures, this could lead to a higher incidence of mental health problems and challenges for female faculty. Conversely, their male counterparts, who may receive fewer disclosures and may be required to perform less emotional labor, may experience fewer mental health struggles as a result.

While it is essential for university faculty to know the appropriate language and support resources when students disclose experiences of sexual assault, it is equally important that they know how to handle the emotional challenges that come along with

disclosures of this nature. When dealing with students disclosing sexual assault incidents, which can be traumatic, faculty members may perform a great deal of emotional labor by controlling or masking their emotions to best support the student.

Sexual assault victims often disclose their experiences to female faculty, creating an increased burden of emotional labor for them (Orchowski & Gidycz, 2012). This presents a potential challenge for universities, as female faculty may face disparate workloads and emotional stress compared to their male colleagues. As Bird (2011) points out, gendered work and norms can already be a systemic barrier to work through, and this unequal divide of emotional labor can only add to the disadvantages some groups face. Since female faculty members are more likely to take on the service burden of labor that is unrecognized by their university, they can often experience institutional betrayal (Pyke, 2018). Institutional betrayal is often felt as the institution's (in this case, the university's) failure to protect its members from inequity and discrimination or a breach of trust. Failure to address this issue through resources and training could negatively affect the balance of faculty workload and employment obligations within the university. It is imperative for universities to recognize and proactively address this issue.

Faculty members play a critical role in the healing and success of students who disclose sexual assault to them. By responding with empathy, support, and appropriate action, faculty can create a safe and empowering environment for survivors to thrive in their college experience. It is essential to understand faculty members' emotional responses to sexual assault disclosures and how this can make a significant impact on the students' lives and, ultimately, their academic and personal achievements.

The Role of Faculty in Student Disclosures of Sexual Assault

How university faculty process personal information from students and, in turn, provide support is essential to students receiving a formative college experience (Guzzardo et al., 2021). Having resource-informed faculty at universities is vital because students may need to disclose personal, sensitive information for optimal class performance. In some cases where faculty are not adequately prepared to engage with survivors, students may experience an adverse reaction. Being unable to properly assist students in need may increase the stress and emotional labor that faculty must perform. Instilling positive communication and proper trauma training for faculty will ensure survivors and faculty do not experience more emotional distress when disclosing information.

Providing proper training and resources for faculty is imperative at a university level to ensure that they are adequately prepared to handle student disclosures and understand how to communicate appropriately with a victim in need. Without proper training or knowledge of campus resources and supportive language, faculty could risk causing adverse consequences for the victim when a student opens up and discloses a sexual assault incident to them (Relyea & Ullman, 2013). When victims of an assault disclose their experience to another person, they can sometimes receive negative feedback such as victim blaming, stigmatizing, infantizing, controlling, or egocentric reactions. This can result in the victim experiencing negative feelings that may lead to maladaptive coping strategies (Relyea & Ullman, 2015). Victims of these adverse reactions may exhibit social withdrawal, self-blame, and decreased sexual refusal

assertiveness, which can sometimes lead to revictimization (Testa et al., 2007). Understanding how well faculty are prepared to handle student sexual assault disclosures is important in providing adequate assistance to students in need.

Not only could the student face adverse outcomes from faculty lacking proper training, but the faculty themselves may experience negative effects after a poorly handled disclosure. Faculty who respond to student sexual assault disclosures find themselves in a position where they are responding to trauma. Faculty are not trained to manage these types of situations, such as a counselor or therapist may be. Similar to the notion that faculty may not be trained to handle emotional reactions during a disclosure, the reporting aspect of sexual assault disclosures may also place faculty in a position of expending emotional labor. Prior research on teachers who are mandatory reporters for child abuse highlights how putting faculty in this position is time-consuming and draining (Goodman, 2021). Since teachers and faculty are often in close contact with students regularly, they may be placed in situations with students that require more emotional management than most of their day-to-day duties.

Although they may not be trained for this, faculty who receive student sexual assault disclosures will be in a position to perform emotional labor. In their meta-analysis on teachers within the classroom, Wang and colleagues (2019) found that performing emotional labor while trying to help a student without the proper training or knowledge of resources could cause emotional distress and burnout. Experiencing this emotional distress in the workplace could cause faculty to suffer and experience further adverse mental health effects. Understanding faculty members' roles in assisting students who are

victims of sexual assault and, subsequently, their use of emotional labor is imperative to ensure that universities are equipped with adequate resources for all members of the institution. When faculty members are appropriately trained and feel prepared to provide students in need with the proper resources, both students and faculty will benefit and get the most out of their interactions.

Previous studies on student disclosures of sexual assault have examined faculty readiness to receive them, how disclosures affect teaching behavior, and the stress they cause for university faculty. These studies, however, have not delved into the emotional labor faculty members are required to exercise when they receive sexual assault disclosures. In one specific study, Hayes-Smith et al. (2010) analyzed instructor role strain following student sexual assault disclosures. They interviewed female faculty and found they often did not feel it was within their job requirements and training to respond to a disclosure. In the study, the female faculty reported feeling strained in responding to a student in distress and maintaining boundaries. However, this study did not delve deeply into the struggles that faculty face when responding to sexual assault disclosures; instead, it focused on the strain that faculty experience when being expected to perform a role that falls outside of their job description. Most of the faculty members in this study reported that they did not receive the proper training or support from their department or university for these disclosures.

Similarly, Branch et al. (2011) interviewed thirty college instructors to understand how relevant sexual assault disclosures were and how they impacted teaching styles. Interviewers asked instructors how many/what types of disclosures they received and

whether they changed how they taught after receiving the disclosures (to either promote or prevent disclosures from happening again). The study found that instructors who teach gender or violence courses often receive sexual assault disclosures, and often more than one. In their interviews, Branch et al. also noted that instructors commonly did not know how to react to students' disclosures or what to do after they were exposed to this sensitive information about their students. Having a deeper understanding of what faculty members emotionally experience when a student discloses will help inform universities on what resources are still needed.

Like Branch et al. (2011), Richards et al. (2013) looked at what kind of disclosures different faculty received. They surveyed 180 participants to understand what courses the faculty members were teaching, what type of crime victimization was disclosed, and how the students disclosed it. This study aimed to determine what types of faculty students chose to disclose to and how they communicated this sensitive information to the faculty member. The study authors observed that faculty often received multiple sexual assault disclosures, typically during their office hours.

Consistent with research that indicates female faculty perform more general emotional labor than male faculty (Hayes-Smith et al., 2010; Richards et al., 2013), research has indicated that female faculty receive more student disclosures than male faculty. Numerous studies have been conducted to identify the types of disclosures and the disciplines in which they are most prevalent (Richards et al., 2013; Branch et al., 2011). A study by Richards et al. found a significant relationship between victimization disclosures among faculty who taught courses containing sensitive content (2013).

Research shows that women are more likely to receive student sexual assault disclosures and are often more likely to teach courses related to sensitive topics (Branch et al., 2011). Such information can be valuable in understanding the dynamics of disclosure and how best to prepare faculty in academic settings. Orchowski and Gidycz (2012) found that undergraduate women were most likely to report or disclose their sexual assault incidents to another woman.

While keeping the focus on victims of sexual assault, it is crucial to understand the critical role faculty can play in the healing and academic success of students who disclose sexual assault to them. Many studies have examined the role of student and faculty interactions in retention and success rates of students. Students who face personal challenges are able to find more success when they have responsive, inclusive, and engaged faculty (Guzzardo et al., 2020). Interactions between students and faculty members can result in a strong connection, and faculty's prompt response has led to high levels of motivation and positive perception toward learning among students. (Wilson, Ryan, & Pugh, 2010). For example, a recent study by Frisby, Hosek, and Beck (2020) examined students' academic progress facing personal challenges and how their relationship with their course instructors influenced their performance. They found a significant positive association between rapport with a faculty member and students' academic resilience. These studies give insight into the faculty's potential role in assuring students find success in the classroom after a sexual assault occurs.

Faculty members and students have a clear connection regarding accessing resources and communicating issues. In the case of campus sexual assault, faculty

members serving as a frontline for students is no different. The purpose of this study is to examine the perception of faculty members' preparedness for responding to students' sexual assault disclosures, as well as the use of emotional labor they perceive is needed to respond to such allegations. Three main questions guide this study and analysis. First, how do faculty members perform emotional labor when responding to student sexual assault disclosures? Second, what is the impact of emotional labor on faculty members responding to student sexual assault disclosures? And third, what are faculty members' level of preparedness to respond to student sexual assault disclosures?

METHODS

This study used an exploratory qualitative approach. It is important to use an exploratory approach on this subject since there is a perceived gap in existing knowledge of how faculty members are affected by sexual assault disclosure. Conducting one-on-one interviews was the best method for capturing language, emotion, nuance, and context in these sensitive situations. Interviews also allowed for directly lived experiences to be shared in a meaningful way that can inform others to help improve situations.

Study Population

Since the core of this research question is targeted at college faculty members, university and college faculty were invited to participate in one-on-one interviews. This study was focused on the way that sexual assault disclosures may create emotional labor for faculty. Therefore, eligible faculty had to have received at least one student disclosure about sexual assault in their career. There were no requirements on the duration of maintaining a teaching position or what discipline the faculty members originate from.

Study participants were recruited by circulating fliers on the campus of Clemson University as well as emailing fliers to faculty who are engaged in sexual assault research or advocacy at other higher education institutions. Additional participants were identified via snowballing. I stopped collecting when I reached data saturation, resulting in a sample of 17 participants. Of these 17 faculty members, two were male and fifteen were female. As shown in **Table 1.1**, participants came from 11 colleges/universities and represent a range of disciplines, such as criminology, marketing, nutrition, sociology, education, communications, and psychology.

Table 1.1: Study Participant Information

Participant's Pseudonym	Race	Gender	Age	Discipline	Geographical Region of University
John (P01)	White	Male	37	Communications	Southeastern US
Kara (P02)	White	Female	33	Psychology	Southeastern US
Matt (P03)	White	Male	32	Sociology and Criminal Justice	Southeastern US
Sarah (P04)	White	Female	36	Criminal Justice	Midwestern US
Nancy (P05)	White	Female	43	Criminal Justice	Canada
Samantha (P06)	White	Female	35	Nutrition	Eastern US
Amy (P07)	White	Female	38	Social Work	Eastern US
Katie (P08)	White	Female	39	Criminology	Midwestern US
Jane (P09)	White	Female	39	Criminal Justice & Criminology	Northeastern US
Sophia (P10)	Hispanic	Female	34	Criminal Justice	Western US
Liz (P11)	White	Female	44	Sociology	Canada
Jamie (P12)	White	Female	37	Criminal Justice & Criminology	Southwestern US
Tracy (P13)	White	Female	40	Criminology	Midwestern US

Lilly (P14)	White	Female	55	Marketing	Southeastern US
Kelly (P15)	White	Female	47	Criminology	Southern US
Hannah (P16)	Multiracial	Female	49	Educational Leadership	Southeastern US
Carrol (P17)	White	Female	55	Sociology and Anthropology	Southeastern US

Faculty completed a short online pre-survey before proceeding to be interviewed to ensure they were qualified to discuss the topic at hand. Those who participated in an interview received a $25 Amazon gift card via email after the interview was over. Gift cards were provided through funding from Clemson University's Department of Sociology, Anthropology, and Criminal Justice. Procedures were approved by Clemson University's Institutional Review Board (Appendix A).

Data Collection

This exploratory study focused on the emotional labor that college faculty perform when they receive student sexual assault disclosures. Participants who took the pre-survey and were eligible were invited to a one-on-one Zoom interview. I contacted them via email (provided on the screening survey) to schedule an interview at their convenience. Because participants came from various geographic areas, using Zoom as an interview platform benefited both the participants and the interviewer. Interviews were recorded and kept for transcription. Data collection took place in the spring of 2024.

Research Instruments

When gathering the sample of faculty, possible participants scanned a QR code on the recruitment flyer and were directed to an online screening survey. This Qualtrics survey began with a consent form and eligibility questions asking whether the participant

is currently or has ever been employed at a university and whether they have ever received a student disclosure regarding sexual assault during their time as a faculty member (Appendix B). If the participant indicated they had not received a student sexual assault disclosure, they were redirected from the survey and thanked for their interest in the research project. Participants who passed the qualification questions were then asked to fill out information regarding their demographics, their teaching department, and their scheduling availability. They were also asked to enter their email address so that I could contact them to schedule an interview. Pre-qualification survey data remained stored and securely locked on a secure platform (Box) for the duration of the research project.

The interview followed a loosely structured interview guide (Appendix C) to facilitate a natural conversation on select topics. The interviews aimed to get a sense of how prepared faculty felt for the disclosure, how they felt at the time of disclosure, how they feel after receiving the disclosure, and what they need to be more prepared. Questions heavily revolved around thoughts and feelings the faculty members experienced throughout the process of a student disclosure. Interview questions aimed to get a sense of the emotional labor faculty performed without using this exact term.

Analysis

Interviews were recorded (with the participant's consent) and transcribed using Otter.ai to be coded and analyzed. Throughout the interview and coding analytic process, memos were taken reflexively to store thoughts, ideas, and concepts emerging in the data to access throughout the study (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). Once transcribed and verified for accuracy, interviews were masked to remove any identifying information about the

participant. During this process of familiarizing myself with the data, more memos and notes were taken as I became more immersed in the data. Transcripts were then uploaded to Dedoose, a qualitative coding software. Coding followed an inductive approach using the thematic analysis method to find patterns and themes in the data (Terry et al., 2017). Since this study was exploratory, thematic analysis was well suited for analyzing the data. Interviews were read thoroughly and coded through an open-ended, ongoing process (Terry & Hayfield, 2021). Once initial coding was completed, the codes were compared and analyzed to create themes that covered the overarching messages. During the process, interview data were constantly reviewed to test themes and codes, as well as to develop and rebuild as needed. This ensured that the correct messages were received and analyzed from participant responses. Select quotes were used in the discussion to strengthen the conclusions of the analysis. This thematic coding method of analysis allowed for a participant-informed discussion around student sexual assault disclosures and the state of faculty members' mental well-being.

RESULTS

Faculty members interviewed for this study expressed a wide range of emotional responses and reactions regarding student sexual assault disclosures and their training relating to these experiences. Throughout the process of interviewing participants, masking interviews, coding, and comparing coded excerpts, three main themes were created from the data. These themes flow in a logical sequence from the order of the interview questions, but also in a chronological order of how responding to student sexual assault disclosures generally seems to proceed. The experiences that most stood out in the

data were the 1) emotional impact of disclosures, 2) labor impact of disclosures, and experiences of 3) inadequate institutional support. As informed by the research question, these themes focus on the thoughts and feelings faculty members felt or expressed during and after a student sexual assault disclosure experience. Their training, background knowledge, and institutional contexts also greatly influenced this process.

Emotional impact of disclosures

Grateful students disclose

When first describing student sexual assault disclosures, faculty expressed a feeling of gratitude towards students coming to them with these experiences. They often described emotions such as feeling happy, thankful, or grateful that the student felt comfortable enough to disclose to them. These faculty members felt they could be a safe place for students, which was very important to them. Lilly expressed her feelings regarding receiving a disclosure: "I think the student felt really comfortable…the things that she talked to me about led me to believe that she trusted me and that she felt safe talking to me, which is important." Jane described how she felt about the student disclosing to her as she was passionate about giving the student a proper response:

> I'm really glad I was there to help them. So, I do feel helpful in the sense that I'm very concerned about the number of people who don't respond appropriately. So, coming from a concern that most people will not respond appropriately, I'm incredibly thankful that that person felt okay coming to me and disclosing because then I can respond correctly and connect them. So, in that way, I do, I'm very thankful. And I do feel helpful.

Putting the student first

Providing a space for these disclosures to occur where students felt safe opening up was the first step in the disclosure process. Faculty discussed the importance of putting their feelings aside to help the student. Hannah described this process: “I definitely did not display all of the anger I was feeling. I definitely tamp that down in some ways.” They felt the weight of various negative emotions when they received student disclosures but often found themselves subduing or masking their own emotions to help the student in need. Amy explained this process of putting the student first:

> Oh, yeah, that's what we'd have to do, as I say, you know, like, you want to have empathy, and you want to demonstrate understanding, but it's not about you in that moment. And so it's about like, showing more strength support. But also, you know, being strong for them, so that they feel like they can continue providing whatever information they need to.

Many participants described how this process was a necessary step in the disclosure process to fully be present and focus on what the student might need next. Sophia remarked on several emotions she was feeling while working through her response with the student:

> And I, you know, I was just really heartbroken for them and wanted to make sure that I was being empathetic and giving them the time that they needed. I didn't get the sense that they had spoken to anybody else yet. So, being from being a primary or first exposure is a really big deal. So, I just tried to make sure that I was being thoughtful and receptive and warm. I remember at the time it happened

> to be a day that I had taught a couple of classes already. So I was so exhausted like already before the student came in. So just kind of like, you know, [snaps fingers] kind of like telling myself, you know, this is a really important moment to be there for this person… there was a problem at the forefront. And my feelings were not that problem. So it was more of just like turning it off, turning off my emotion. If that makes sense. So it's just kind of like a flip switch. And like I mentioned, I happen to be tired, really tired that day. And so switching into, okay, I want to help this person, I want to be open and caring and warm. But then also, I need to turn off the fact that I'm tired right now.

Helping/reassuring the student

While many faculty described containing their own emotions to put the student first, they also expressed the importance of showing emotions of care and concern for the student's well-being. Faculty described a powerful feeling of desire to help the student and provide reassurance. The main takeaway the faculty described wanting the student to walk away with was that they were supported and that the faculty member empathized with them. Kara outlined the way she felt about providing a response to the student in need:

> It was very clear to me like I wanted her…my biggest thing that I wanted to communicate to her was that I believed her. And that I recognize that, like, what she was telling me, was her real experience and that, you know that I believed her and that I was so sorry. Because it makes me tearful to kind of talk about it.

> Because it was really important to me to validate those feelings for her and to really help her. No, “I hear you, I believe you.”

Experiencing difficult emotions

This conflicting pattern of wanting to provide the student with a safe, reassuring environment while also experiencing very real, raw human emotions led faculty to experience various difficult emotions. Faculty described feeling helpless, sad, frustrated, and numb in response to these students disclosing their sexual assault experiences. Among these experiences, stress was a very common theme felt among faculty during the disclosure process. As Katie related:

> Yeah, yeah. I would say it was stressful. I think that there's a lot of pressure and you don't, I felt like I did feel like I really hope that I'm giving her information that's accurate. I really hope that I'm not doing something that's going to make her situation worse. I really hope that I'm accurately understanding what she wants and needs from me right now. Because it seems like this high-stakes interaction. There's a lot of teaching where if I misspeak, it's an easy enough fix, and I can, you know, correct myself. But interactions like this feel higher stakes, because it is so personal. There is a lot of room for error.

John described several difficult emotions he was faced with reacting to a student disclosing their experience to him:

> Yeah, I think one aspect of it, that was stressful, and in all three instances was I think there's a sense of helplessness that, you know, like, it's messy, it's like, there's nothing, there's nothing that I can do to make this better. There's nothing

> that they could do to make it not have happened. Right? Like, there's, I think, across multiple dimensions, there's this sort of inability to make the situation better sometimes. And so feeling that... Certainly, I think that was. Yeah, that's stressful to think about.

These difficult emotions often did not disappear after the student disclosed, and the compounding effect of feeling many serious emotions while also striving to help these students in need led faculty to experience some deeper impacts from student sexual assault disclosures.

Feeling the weight of disclosures

The emotional burden that often lingered after these personal disclosure experiences was very prominent among the faculty members interviewed. Faculty frequently described the toll it took that day, the strain placed on their job duties, and the impacting effect on their mood. Some also made note of the weight that these disclosures brought, given the nature of the information being discussed; Jane said, “I have to be careful about vicarious trauma to myself and to anybody else who overhears it.” Jamie described her emotions after receiving a student disclosure as feeling:

> Drained. I already take things to heart and so, obviously when somebody is sharing with you something that happened to them, and I don't think she even ever told me like exactly what happened. And she didn't need to, you know, but even so just like, seeing her reaction and seeing the toll it was taking on her and her emotions and her academics and all of that jazz. And the amount of that sheer amount of time spent with her, it was emotionally draining. I don't know how

somebody can talk to somebody all that time and work with them and not feel it weigh heavily on them. Yeah, so yeah, it was hard.

Kelly described her experience:

> Like, it can be stressful. Yeah, it definitely can. And I'm not a therapist. And so there's, you know, I'm tired by the end of the day, as well; I have decision fatigue from all the things that I've been doing. And then somebody wants to come in my office for an hour. But they don't want to go to a counselor, and they don't want to go to a victim advocate, and they don't want to do anything else. And so, yeah, there's some times where it's difficult to be present.

Faculty often acknowledged that this type of work does come with a burden. Sometimes, faculty members mentioned this burden as it related to how often they could teach a course relating to gender and violence. Tracy found herself limiting the frequency of teaching these types of courses because "it's just too much to teach every semester." Faculty discussed that these classes elicited so many heavy student disclosures due to the nature of the material in the course. As Sarah explained:

> When I first started receiving them, it was almost always with certain topics, certain weeks. You kind of were able to prepare for it, like we started to teach about sexual violence is the weeks you're gonna get a lot of students in your office. And so, I usually did not plan to do anything of substance for those days and for the days thereafter. Because it's a lot, right? I will always tell my students that I did not want to be a counselor… You know, when you're teaching this class that this is going to happen. And there have been semesters where I have been

> really strategic and said, like, I just can't teach this class this semester. This is not something right, the additional layers that come with teaching victimology versus research methods. I'm just I'm not going to be able to do it right now.

Student disclosing in distress

In interviews with faculty, many often expressed how the weight of disclosures was increased when a student was in distress. Faculty described more intense personal reactions and emotional responses when the student who was disclosing was in a state of anguish regarding their experiences. Lilly felt the vicarious trauma the student was experiencing, describing that "honestly, this situation, it scared the daylights out of me. And it scared me for her safety. I mean, it had nothing to do with me whatsoever, but I was terrified for her safety." This faculty member described how throughout the semester teaching this student, she was concerned for her safety and took on this student's personal problems as a source of her own strain.

Faculty relayed having especially pronounced emotional reactions when it was evident that the student was carrying a great weight from their sexual assault experience, and some took on some of the student's worries themselves. Liz, who received a particularly detailed, violent student disclosure hours after the incident said she was "really worried about, like, what resources the student needed...everything felt very, like, not at the level of the crisis." Samantha described a troubling student disclosure:

> And that was part of her kind of distraught, too, is that she was clearly in this acute state of hysteria and she needed help. But she couldn't get into the Counseling Center for a few days, and she couldn't get, she was struggling to get

> in contact with the dean of students and with the other departments kind of within a timeframe that she felt was appropriate, you know. Because when you're in a state of trauma, when you're experiencing this, you know, like, immediately is not soon enough. It was, she needed it now, like, not two days from now, not three hours from now, like right now.

Debriefing the experience with others

Following these intense, heavy, stressful experiences, faculty often described a form of self-care after these disclosures as debriefing the situation with someone else in their life. Whether that be a partner, colleague, or counselor, this discussion of the experience with someone else in their life helped them unpack the situation they experienced when the student disclosed to them. This dialogue allowed faculty to work through some of the emotions they had been feeling at the time that they might have subdued or didn't relay to the student. This may lend to the notion that these emotionally-heavy interactions do not just stop at the faculty that receive them and often have a lasting impact on many individuals within their sphere of influence. As Carrol described:

> I, in turn, talk to my friends and loved ones about stresses and strains and keeping things like not keeping them confidential to still talk about you know, this happened and that happened and you know, my own opportunities to my loved ones dump on them was dumped on me, right? That just makes it a train. So I think, the next person, the next person, but yeah. Having somebody to talk to you is important. Definitely.

Tracy also explained how she engaged in this type of debriefing experience with other colleagues after receiving a student sexual assault disclosure:

> So I'm pretty fortunate in that I have, you know, colleagues, some at my university, but also just like my collegial network, of faculty who teach what I teach. They research what I research, and so they also receive disclosures. And so at any given time, I can pick up the phone, and I can say, 'Hey, so and so, you know, a student just disclosed, can I talk to you? I just have this disclosure from a student.' And I can kind of, you know, share with them without sharing identifiers, but just share with them the disclosure, or what I did to kind of allow them to be a sounding board.

Participants experiencing these heavy student disclosures evidently needed to engage in some form of self-care. As Amy explained it, "my biggest self-care strategy is just to vent to people about it." This shows faculty are not handling this emotional work entirely on their own. They are often leaning on others around them to carry this emotional weight of receiving and responding to student disclosures. The emotions faculty members recalled experiencing were also closely tied to several factors of the disclosure process that had a great impact on their job roles and commitments. In this sense, the impact of emotional and labor constraints worked hand-in-hand against faculty placed in this position to respond to student sexual assault disclosures.

Labor impact of disclosures

Time spent

When receiving student sexual assault disclosures, emotions were not the only factor that significantly impacted participants. Faculty members described many aspects of receiving student sexual assault disclosures as having a significant impact on their job roles and labor commitments. Faculty often described the amount of time spent with students who disclosed these experiences as more than the time spent with an average student. Faculty spent time following up and checking in on the student's well-being and progress. This process usually entailed contacting the student through email, holding in-person meetings, or sometimes even offering the student their personal number for text messages and phone calls. Jamie described this typical process of following up with students after disclosures:

> A lot. To answer your question, how much time, a lot. So, this particular disclosure was in the context of a class, so that we talk a lot about this stuff anyway…I followed up with, I remember, I followed up with the student via email to make sure they're okay. I remember that student came to my office a number of times to go over the material separately. So she, she felt that it was going to be a little difficult to come to class, which I understood. But she wanted to still learn the material…kind of go through the material at her own pace. So I spent a lot of time with her both via email, and in my office and talking to her after class and all that other stuff.

Carrol discussed a particular disclosure with a student in distress and how this experience impacted both the labor and emotional aspects of her role:

> There was definitely an intervening period there, where it was me who she came and talked to, most often. And I don't typically give students my cell phone number, but I did give her cell phone number because she was at risk. She did contact me a few times where she didn't outright say she was suicidal, but it was possibly close. And so [I] talked her down, communicated, again, tried to encourage her to [seek] counseling and she eventually got counseling outside of campus and started, you know, she started to improve. But it was, so that was that was the one that was the biggest deal. And that was the most, you know, kind of on me being the counselor. When I'm not trained as a counselor. I mean, I have some psychology background, but I definitely it. I'm glad that I could be there for her but it was exhausting. And I got as emotional as she did.

Some participants highlighted how the time they spent with students responding and following up after disclosures is something that is often not recognized by their university. The time faculty had to create in their schedules to provide assistance to students was often time they would normally use to perform other required job duties. Amy mentioned how, given the amount of time she spent following up with a student who had disclosed, “the thing that likely suffered was my research.” These time constraints often added on to the feelings of stress faculty were experiencing. Faculty felt strongly about providing resources to these students in need, yet there were still aspects of their role that were negatively impacted because of these unplanned circumstances. As Hannah described:

> I mean, they definitely take up emotional bandwidth and like time, right? Because there were conversations I had with her which was outside of the classroom and extended out of class time. She's not one of my advisees. So ordinarily, we wouldn't be meeting for like, class or program related. So there's definitely increased demands on my time. And that demand is not just about time, it's also it's draining to talk about these things. It's hard to jump back into other conversations, whether that's like, a light and casual interaction, or if it's like jumping into working on my own research or literature reviews or what have you. So I do think that, yeah, of course, it has a different effect, right? Like it's taking the emotional, intellectual time, resources that I have, and those things are finite, right? At the same time, but the alternative not to do it like, not an alternative, right? So it's a reality that these times can be taken up and I don't, I certainly don't regret it. But absolutely, it's making demands on me that are unaccounted for within the institution. Like so, it's not a part of my promotion and tenure or my faculty activity reporting or anything like that.

Providing the student with resources/connections

Faculty members also spent time connecting students to and explaining university and community resources. Many faculty members found themselves to be the main source of connection for these students to other resources. A large portion of the faculty's role in responding to disclosures was connecting students to resources, whether that was within the university or the community. It was important for faculty to have this knowledge of resources, as many of the students required assistance that the faculty couldn't provide.

Sarah described how she had created a list of resources for student disclosures: “just having that of like, this isn't something that I can do. Here is someone you can go talk to.” Katie described the part she played in the student’s disclosure process as it related to resources within the university:

> There's, I would say that there was one incident in particular, where a student really wanted to talk and needed help. And in regard to the assault, and asked for my help. Basically, needing resources and just needing help navigating the university's infrastructure, and I guess as well, maybe even the county, I'm not sure which level. But needed assistance, navigating systems, I guess you could say related to sexual assault.”

Hannah described this process of providing the student with resources as an extensive meeting, giving detailed breakdowns of the student's possible support options:

> So I said, did anyone talk to you about your options, like, options for counseling, options for the Title IX process, options for the police, options to talk to somebody with Dean of Students Office so that you, you know, if you need any additional course accommodations, or anything, any other kinds of support? And she said, no… So let me tell you what your options are. Right? And so I walked her through some things, and then they contacted me. And, you know, I also walked them through, you know, you don't have to tell me any of the things that happened. But if you want to explore, like, not just what your options are, but maybe predict what kinds of things could happen if you go down any of those avenues of options, like I'm happy to have that conversation. So she did want to

> do some of that. So we talked about likely outcomes in the Title IX process we talked about, you know, she can do nothing…You can make a report and get resources and support services, you can get support services and not make a record, you can make a record, get support services and make a decision about whether or not you want to pursue any kind of charges. You can change your mind about those decisions, right? There's just all kinds of different options you have.

Throughout this process of faculty members providing the students with resources, a big theme in this step was ensuring connections were made. Many participants described how they personally knew some people who worked in certain resource areas or particular people that they could connect to the student. This was an important aspect of providing assistance to the student, creating connections that the faculty member knew could be meaningful. In this way, the participants often acted as an agent of change in the student's disclosure process and trajectory of receiving help. Another way faculty provided meaningful assistance was by taking physical steps to connect students with help. Carrol described how she did this by ensuring the student received care:

> And as it turned out, like I pointed out resources and referred her to counseling, and did a CARE report [university process for identifying students who need support]. And she was in touch with them initially. I ended up communicating directly with people at psychological counseling on [current university] campus and made sure she had an appointment and walked her over for her appointment.

Faculty as catalysts of involvement

As a common theme in receiving student sexual assault disclosures, faculty described the resources they provided to students and, oftentimes, how their role acted as a catalyst of the university or others' involvement in the student's case. Faculty not only provided these students with lists of resources but also often took the extra step to ensure others were getting involved in the student's situation. This was important to Amy that "just making sure those referrals meant something, other than like, it's all on your plate, here's more work to do." Faculty found themselves to be in a position where they could use their role within the university to directly involve others to provide assistance to the student that they themselves couldn't. These connections often came in different forms of resources. Tracy described this process:

> Oftentimes, I have students that have had these personal experiences or know someone, and that you know, I'm here to help refer them if they ever need anybody to talk to, right? That I'm not a counselor, I'm not a psychologist, but that, you know, I'm here to support their success in the class and then help them connect with actual service providers. And so that's what that student was looking for. Right? That is looking for a connection to an advocate, which I, you know, made a connection with our campus advocate via email and let the student know that they could follow up with the advocate. So I forwarded an email. I created an introduction email between that student and the on-campus advocate and let the student know who the advocate was and that I knew her and trusted her.

Jamie described using her position and connections to help get the student into university counseling:

> I was able, I distinctly remember connecting her to counseling. So, when she was in my office, we talked, and I asked if I could connect her to on-campus counseling. And with her permission obviously, I wouldn't contact someone without her permission. So she was sitting right at my desk and so she felt more comfortable if like, I made that contact. So I contacted somebody at counseling that I knew dealt with trauma situations and was able to connect those two. So I think that was helpful.

Many faculty expressed this desire to reassure the students, provide them with resources, and ensure those connections were helpful, which was something they couldn't put off to the side or ignore. Reacting and responding to personal experiences with students in need were a part of their role in their institution.

Responding is part of the job

Some faculty described that responding to disclosures is just part of the job and that this labor is expected of some faculty, although it is not discussed explicitly. The aspect of the time spent responding to the students in need and providing them with resources was something that faculty members couldn't just ignore. Showing supportive reassurance and connecting these students with others who were in better positions to provide help was something faculty felt was necessary for them to do. Katie expressed this sentiment:

> I mean, it's part I guess, I see it as it's become part of my job. That when students disclose these things, I mean, it becomes part of it. I mean, I guess you could say it comes to time I spent doing that was not time that I spent doing other things. But I see it as a part of my job. I don't think it would, I think it would be wrong of me to hear a disclosure like that and say, I can't help you. So yeah, I think I see it as in this context, or at least in my experience, responding to it and reacting to it is a part of my job, at least to get students to resources that can help. I mean, like, she had questions that I couldn't answer, you know, so at least getting students to someone that can help them or be more helpful.

Some participants explained that responding to disclosures was part of their job specifically because of the discipline they were part of. Faculty who taught gender, crime, interpersonal violence, or victimology courses often expressed how they expected to receive these types of student disclosures more than other faculty. Sophia, who taught a course on violence against women, explained, “I think that it kind of comes with the territory” regarding student sexual assault disclosures. This leads to the common experience of some faculty in particular disciplines or subject areas receiving more student sexual assault disclosures than their colleagues.

Some faculty receive more disclosures than others

Faculty often described the work associated with sexual assault disclosures as unequal compared to other faculty in their department or at their university. It is clear from participants’ experiences that some faculty receive the unequal weight of receiving more disclosures than others. This theme relates back to the idea of faculty who teach

certain topics expecting part of their work to be responding to more student sexual assault disclosures than others. Tracy described these multiple factors that come into play regarding student disclosures:

> There were times where I thought, I don't want to teach this class anymore. Right? Because, you know, it is an emotional burden that faculty take on receiving these disclosures. And it can be very time-consuming. I mean, just practical, you know, practically, can be very time-consuming to have, especially multiple students, because they often require a lot of care and a lot of, you know, assistance in terms of referrals and academic combinations. And you know, you, as a faculty member, can look around, and if you're the one teaching all the courses on victimology, you will be the one receiving all the disclosures, right? So it's this service burden and emotional burden that you have to take on that your colleagues don't, and you're not differentially accommodated, or compensated; it doesn't count towards your service, expectations on the faculty member, right? So it's a lot of kind of unpaid, and, you know, thankless work, if you will. Even though it's necessary for the students just, when you think about it from an employment perspective, it would be very hard on a few just, you know, one or two faculty in the department.

Jamie expressed similar sentiments around the idea that some faculty receive more disclosures than others:

> I think that the same people get the emotional burden of receiving disclosures. And I don't mean that like it's a bad thing that somebody discloses because it's

> not, you know, I wouldn't ever want to stifle a disclosure. But I think if you looked at faculty in the department and try to figure out like who was getting disclosures, you would see the disclosures centered on like one or two or three different faculty members, right? And that's a lot to get. That's, that's a lot when you're talking about like, it is emotionally, there is a like, you know, it is stressful.

When discussing this aspect of what Kelly called the "unequal burden sharing" of receiving student disclosures, many participants mentioned gender as a contributing factor to this type of labor. Carrol explained that by placing significance on the "stereotypical structure" in our society that assumes that "a woman is more nurturing," being a female is also a significant factor in receiving student sexual assault disclosures. This idea that the work that goes into disclosures is expected but not compensated or recognized and is often placed on a select few faculty members who may not have the preparation needed to provide assistance was expressed by a few participants. Sarah highlighted these sentiments:

> It is an extra layer to the job that is unrecognized. It is a level of service that is not required of other faculty. I think that yeah, I can do my job, this is my job. Right? But if you are doing more work that is often under-recognized, and I'm very curious about this in the work that you're doing. I am sure most of your participants are women. What that looks like for the emotional labor that goes into teaching these classes… it's the recognition of the labor that goes into this…I've never figured out a good way to document that extra work that goes into that that's often unseen. And that the research has largely shown is super gendered.

On top of this work being heavily influenced by gender, other intersectional identities such as race and sexual orientation could also play a role. Sophia described:

> I think it's part of the greater conversation around invisible labor and academia and specifically the labor that often women are doing, but especially women of color. And I'm in a Hispanic serving institution now. So, you know, it's something that yeah, I just wish there was more open conversations in academia that this is happening that there are certain people on campus that are hearing exposures regularly and how that can, over time, just be really heavy. You know, I used to teach a full semester domestic violence class. And I actually, for my own mental health, asked not to teach it every semester because it was very heavy. And that class comes with a lot of disclosures.

When breaking down the nuance of the emotional and labor impacts that faculty experienced, it is essential to note that the context and environment in which these disclosures occurred carried significant weight. The institutional contexts within which faculty members were placed largely framed the majority of conversations regarding responding to student sexual assault disclosures.

Inadequate institutional support

Inadequate University Training Fosters Lack of Preparedness to Respond

In addition to mentioning emotions and labor constraints, participants also heavily discussed their university's role in disclosures. Throughout the interviews, faculty members described their levels of preparedness to respond and their university's impact on the disclosure process. Most faculty discussed not feeling prepared to respond to

student disclosures at some point in their career. Some described an arc or trajectory that changed as they learned more about resources or experienced more disclosures. However, many faculty felt an overwhelming sense that student sexual assault disclosures were not a topic they were particularly prepared for. Many participants described their university training as lacking depth and significance to the intensity of these experiences. They noted how an absence of training and conversations around sexual assault plays into this notion. Kara described her experience responding to a disclosure and how her level of preparedness impacted her:

> I remember Googling, you know, what the appropriate response was. And I wasn't able to find a lot of guidance. So yeah, I think knowing what to do without overreacting or underreacting, what is the appropriate response to get the student help? That was stressful for me.

Almost every participant noted that their level of preparedness to respond to these types of disclosures was not informed by training they received from their university. Many couldn't recall training or, as Katie expressed, felt that they "didn't receive any specific training as a faculty" that helped them respond to student sexual assault disclosures. Most faculty members cited their professional knowledge and personal areas of interest as providing them with the most preparation for responding to student sexual assault disclosures. Finding the information they felt was valuable and helpful for students was often a task placed on the faculty member. Carrol described, "I had connections to university resources because of the research and the work I was doing on my own life." Through prior training, volunteering, or professional research, most faculty

came across the information they felt was helpful during the disclosure process. Hannah described how her background helped her:

> But in terms of, you know, again, I imagine if I didn't have extensive training and didn't have a Master's in Counseling. Like, if I didn't have a background that has prepared me for these kinds of disclosures, I think it would be a lot more stressful. But my background experiences, kind of insulated... And I think none of that, my entire response. None of that came from my training here, right like that. I did case management work and crisis response at previous institutions and also in the local community and the non-profit sector. Working with sexual violence response protocols and volunteerism. So it was my external training that drove that on anything that I got from my experience.

Amy, who felt especially prepared to respond to student sexual assault disclosures explained how she got to this point:

> So, any reason that I feel equipped to handle this situation was because of my professional training outside of the university. Nothing the university did, made me feel prepared to handle this. So I, you know, have social work education, clinical practice degree, so I have lots of training there. I was a crisis counselor for a crisis hotline. And I provided victim advocacy services through domestic violence and sexual assault resource center. So, I had lots of skills and felt well-prepared to handle it. University provided training on Title IX. And it was if you received a disclosure, you'd have to report, here are the resources, but it wasn't about any of the like, interpersonal skills required.

These responses point to a severe gap in the training available for faculty at their universities and the scenarios they find themselves in. This was especially problematic when faculty were faced with disclosures where students were in distress. As Kara noted regarding her prior training: “I didn't think it really transferred to this specific severity of a situation.” From most participants, there was a consensus that training regarding this topic was brief and not very robust. Katie complained that her required training was “generic” and not “anything specific to being a faculty” member. Jamie described her experience with training at her university:

> I don't think it was due to any kind of training I ever received. Because I think that's one thing that in grad school, they certainly don't teach you how to respond to a disclosure. And at the university itself, I mean, there are classes or what they call like onboarding sessions and stuff when you're like, first a faculty member, where they like talk about stuff. But they also talk about like your benefits and like, a million other things. And so while it's touched on, I don't really think very well. So I felt prepared because I had done it before and because of what I studied as, like, a researcher, but not because somebody had sat me down and taught me how to respond to disclosures.

In a similar regard, most faculty felt that there was no university training that gave any support to the types of emotional responses that are needed during these interactions. Student sexual assault disclosures are personal, emotional interactions that require a more thoughtful response than most faculty's everyday interactions with students. This intricate

experience and the way universities prepared faculty for disclosures was captured by Amy:

> It's just like, it's kind of like a hide and seek game where the university acknowledges that faculty get disclosures, but their response is report to Title IX, report to Title IX, and we'll take care of it. But what they failed to see is that the step before that, when this disclosure is happening, is an intervention point as well. And so they don't provide training on how to respond, you know, and I understand the intricacies and difficulties in doing that.

Many faculty members had quite critical views of their university's stance on training regarding sexual assault. Several participants discussed that the training (or lack thereof) was more so put in place as a way for the university to check a box. The training wasn't tailored to the faculty's needs, didn't address the scope of the issue, or lacked applicability to these real-life situations. Matt described his frustration surrounding the training his university provided:

> I think we go through these, you know, bullshit, like Title IX, I'm sure we do. And it's just, it's a HR formality, to make sure that the university doesn't get sued. It's not about making us actually prepared. And that's no shade to the people that probably put in a hard amount of work into those trainings that are wholly online. But at the end of the day, it's the university trying to protect themselves. And I don't feel prepared right now.

Understanding of Resources

Lack of university training played a massive role in the faculty's understanding of the resources available to their students and their overall preparedness to respond. In many cases, because there was inadequate training regarding sexual assault disclosures, faculty were unaware or unsure of the resources they had available to them. Some expressed frustration or anger at having these resources available but did not understand how they worked. Regarding helping a student who disclosed to her, Nancy said, "I think if I knew the policy, then I could better advocate". Much of the faculty's confusion and insecurities were specifically regarding Title IX resources and policy. Katie described the confusion many faculty members felt at her university regarding policies in place:

> So we as a faculty, yeah, had so many questions around this, we asked the Title IX rep to come to one of our faculty meetings and talk about this, which was helpful. And I think even, like, even as I sit here, even after all of this, I still have more questions than answers when it comes to like, what exactly, you know, if a student has a disclosure, what exactly happens when they tell somebody? Where does that information go? And like, if that student wants to, you know, not go through the university's bureaucracy or not be referred to the criminal justice system, you know, where would that student lose control over their narrative? Yeah, I still have, like, more questions than answers.

The few faculty members who did have a clear understanding of resources often received more comprehensive training from their university. Training that was tailored specifically to the university's own resources and that described processes and

procedures led faculty to greater understanding and a better level of preparedness to handle student sexual assault disclosures. As Tracy explained:

> I take, you know, an annual mandatory online training, I actually think the one that we have in our university is very good, and is an online training, but it's incredibly interactive. It's, you know, it uses the sort of definitions, resources and offices that we have on campus. So it's tailored to our university. It's not like a canned, you know, virtual course, or whatever.

Balancing student wishes and institutional policy

As much of the faculty's confusion around resources regarded Title IX, this led many faculty to feel very strongly about certain policies. An overwhelming majority of participants expressed intense frustration with Title IX policy, how it is dispersed within a university, and the aspect of mandatory reporting. Faculty members described how important it was for these students who disclosed to feel a sense of trust with the faculty member and control over their experiences and that mandatory reporting procedures often betrayed these components. Kelly described a student disclosure where she had to report the incident to Title IX, and when she heard back from the student, she "could tell she felt upset that I had done that." Faculty described how they often adjust their teaching to inform the students that they are mandatory reporters first to respect the student's wishes as much as possible. Even with this process of forewarning the student of mandatory procedures, many faculty, such as Jamie, felt this process "felt so unnatural… it just stifled communication." The mandatory reporting policy often put faculty under challenging circumstances, in terms of their role within the university and emotionally.

Faculty members felt like they had to put the university first at the expense of the students they were trying to help. Jamie expressed:

> I think that in balancing the two between, like what the survivor wants and what the university is telling me that I need to do. That was the most stressful part... And it is. I strongly feel that university policy isn't always looking out for the student. They're looking out for themselves. And so, some of what that policy might look like is so not survivor-centered, does not have the survivor in mind, does not even know about how to respond to survivors… And the survivor does not want the university to know, and like the position that the faculty member's then put in. Do I have to tell the university and say, like, it doesn't matter what you want survivor, sorry? Or do I do what the survivor wants? And what would help them in their recovery.

Matt discussed their thought process after receiving a student disclosure he had to report to Title IX:

> I said, you know, hey, based on what you disclosed here, I do have to report to Title IX, they will reach out to you, you don't necessarily have to do anything with that. But I just wanted you to know, because I don't particularly like that I have to report without your consent... And the stress of the reporting is more of just like, I just don't want to go around you to report. Yeah, I think that's it; it almost felt like a betrayal of trust when I have to do that. Part of the reason again, I don't, I don't like Title IX, or at least mandatory reporting.

Frustration with institution's response

The problematic situations faculty were placed in often didn't stop at mandatory reporting policies and Title IX. These experiences made many faculty members feel frustrated or angry with the university at some point in the reporting process. This frustration sometimes came from how inadequately universities assisted students after a report was made or how the university provided resources. Kara sought university involvement following a student disclosure and received "negative consequences from it," believing that, in some cases, this involvement "[did] more harm than good." These reactions by their university were disappointing and stressful for many participants and only added to the emotional weight brought on by disclosures. Amy described how the student who disclosed to her was significantly negatively impacted by the university's response:

> And like, it got reported to Title IX but Title IX didn't do anything. They didn't investigate it and put any protective measures in place and so she didn't have any accommodations…Yeah, I mean, it got really stressful for me when I felt like the student was being wronged by the university. So they didn't get, after it got reported to Title IX, they never reached out to her to offer advocacy or assistance. And so like, I know how things are supposed to go. And I think this was a particular situation that slipped through the cracks between a, you know, transition of leadership over Title IX, but it doesn't matter, like the student was impacted by it… But it was just like a very, it was stressful for her it took up a lot of time. It was stressful for me, it made me lose the institutional trust and just was a really difficult situation.

In a similar situation, John described how the student who disclosed to him required help advocating for more support from the university:

> She was a student on campus and was assaulted. And when she tried to get help and report to the university, she was not treated well and was treated with suspicion. And later, she was involved with a student organization trying to improve some of the support dynamics on campus, particularly for women who have been harassed or assaulted. And unfortunately, she had a really bad experience in the way that university leaders treated her and responded to her and some other students…And then on top of that, you know, the reason that she was coming to me was because, you know, she was just feeling like she and the group of students she was working with needed some kind of additional advocacy and support. And so then it's the challenge of, you know, my colleagues are making the situation worse. And so that's an additional layer of frustration. And so I mean, I was very angry.

Along with these sentiments surrounding complicated policies and resource confusion, it is vital to recognize how these institutional barriers also impact the student. If the process of reporting and accessing resources is complex for faculty who may receive some training, it is likely to be extremely difficult for a student who has experienced a traumatic sexual assault experience. One faculty member highlighted this experience, which, one might argue, should motivate universities to consider how these training and systems could be better structured. Katie described that:

> I think, to empathize with students like that. It's frustrating, how confusing these systems are for students to navigate. It's disappointing how unclear these systems can be, and you know, I just think the lack of clarity and tried to put myself in the students position this like a feeling of powerlessness. Like at what point do I tell somebody? And where does it go? And what happens to my information? And yeah, at what point might I lose control over my own story, my own narrative, my own experience?

Suggestions for university training/resources

The culmination of these emotional, time-consuming experiences where institutions sometimes failed faculty left many participants wishing things could be different. Every participant had suggestions for ways to improve training regarding sexual assault disclosures and resource information. Many faculty members expressed a great desire to have more conversations about these issues within the university. Liz said, "If there's no conversation collectively about this, like, it's just going to, it's not going to get easier to be there for our students when it happens." Most faculty members have discussed how this topic is not addressed within the greater community at most universities, which often leads to confusion and misconceptions. Participants craved more transparency regarding who is really doing this work, what it looks like, and how it can impact the faculty and students involved in the disclosure process. Participants expressed opinions that there were things they wished they had known before receiving disclosures regarding resources or training. As Kara explained:

> Yeah, I mean, I'd still like to know what, you know, is the appropriate response, both at the moment and then long-term follow-up? I'm still not 100% sure. I don't think I'd do anything differently if I was in that situation, again. But I wish there was more of a clear-cut "here is what to do in the moment right now." And long-term follow-up, at least, I guess, training that is not click through the buttons on a module.

Katie wished she knew from “the student's perspective, what is serving students and… how do the students in general feel about how faculty respond to these moments” to provide better care in moments of disclosures. Providing reassurance and support while connecting students to resources were significant themes among faculty receiving disclosures; these sentiments regarding what students might need at the moment came up often. Still, more participants had suggestions for the mode and type of training that they would find helpful. Designing training as a more conversation-style where faculty “have a scenario” where “you literally practice, what do I say to that” was a common response when faculty were asked what suggestions they had for university offerings (Samantha). John expressed this similarly:

> Being able to sit down and have a conversation and do the roleplay scenario where you sort of work through a situation can do a lot to help someone feel equipped to navigate a really challenging, like emotionally challenging conversation and feel better equipped to be able to offer some support and some guidance. So I think if the university were to invest more resources, both into like equipping these offices and funding, and staffing and all those kinds of things, I

> think that could have a good impact. Because I think, yeah, I think the university often sort of takes the path of least resistance from things like this.

Hannah, in particular, eloquently summed up the sentiments of many and expressed how this issue of responding to student sexual assault disclosures gets at a deeper root issue in university settings.

> I think that there's a misapprehension from some of my faculty colleagues that this kind of incident or circumstance or disclosure from a student has nothing to do with faculty…That's the responsibility of all these other people…And so these things about what's going on in the lives of students, that secondary or tertiary, and it's not my responsibility, and someone else needs to deal with it…And I would just say that maybe folks need to be sensitized to the fact that that's not how learning works…And so what's going on in students' lives and how they're able to show up in classrooms and participate in learning. And so if you're going to be in a classroom educating you have a responsibility to understand some of these things. And like you don't get to just wash your hands of it…And to pretend like, that's not you don't have to be a part of the response and solution is, you know, ethically questionable. But also it is a question of do you expect people to learn from you when they're not able to have their needs met? And this is a part of being in human relationship with one another. I just think that…we have forgone the self-importance of faculty research at the expense of investment in care and concern and learning and growth of students… And I think that there's lots more work we could do to dismantle it.

DISCUSSION

The aim of this study was to examine faculty members' perceived preparedness for handling students' sexual assault disclosures, as well as their perceptions of the emotional labor that responding to such allegations entails. Hochschild (1989/2003) conceptualized emotional labor as the work one does to manage their feelings and emotional display in a particular social situation (Hochschild, 1989/2003). Hochschild's research with flight attendants highlighted the ways that employees must concurrently manage their presentation of self and the emotions of patrons in the service industry. This kind of emotion work may require a level of "depersonalization" or the separation of one's true self from the situations requiring emotional management of self at work (Hochschild, 1989/2003). In her work, Hochschild's focus on gender highlights how our society expects women to naturally possess these skills. Although Hochschild's foundational work highlighted an often-overlooked form of gendered labor, her findings apply to a profession where employees expect to interface with the public in an accommodating way.

In contrast, faculty members often do not expect to manage students' disclosures of sexual assault, and findings from this study suggest that are not adequately trained or supported to fulfill this role. Thus, this study uses the case of faculty responses to sexual assault disclosures to expand on our understanding of the role that institutions play in delegating emotional labor to their employees. Findings suggest that higher education institutions push their employees into strenuous performances of emotional labor when students seek out faculty to compensate for inadequate campus resources for sexual

assault survivors. Additionally, this labor is compounded by institutional neglect to adequately prepare faculty to perform this vital role.

The lack of effective resources and in-depth training faculty receive from their institutions regarding the topic of sexual assault increases the burden faculty feel when performing emotional labor during student disclosures. The nuanced experiences of student sexual assault require a variety of emotional responses from faculty during these very personal interactions.Hochschild's work highlighted how, in order to perform emotional labor successfully in one's job, one must understand some level of separation from the emotional "deep acting" required of their position and their true self (Hochschild, 1989/2003). However, this type of depersonalization cannot be easily achieved in the case of sexual assault disclosures, which require highly personal, sensitive, and uniquely supportive responses. It can be observed from this study that faculty may often carry the emotions they experience during a student disclosure long after the experience occurs. This highlights how some of the strategies Hochschild theorized as helpful to offset the burden of emotional labor are not always effective given certain social situations.

Findings from this study suggest that the emotional labor faculty perform becomes more strenuous when they lack proper support or recognition from their institutions and when some faculty perceive themselves to be the primary responders to these disclosures. As this type of labor is not explicitly expected of faculty or discussed by their institutions, these faculty-student interactions are an extra workload that some take on. The emotional labor required of student disclosures is gendered, stressful work

that can lead to burnout and is often unrecognized or underappreciated by institutions (Cieslak et al., 2014; O'Meara et al., 2017). Given that it is primarily female faculty responding to sexual assault disclosures, the lack of recognition and compensation for this increased workload leads to a heavier burden from this emotion work (Orchowski & Gidycz, 2012). This, coupled with the lack of trust many faculty expressed or the institutional betrayal some experienced, caused the emotional labor provided to students to hold extra weight. Faculty members may question their role in the disclosure process and their ability to help students if they feel their institution's policies are not survivor-centered and they are not being properly supported.

Hochschild's theory of emotional labor tends to overlook some of the broader structural factors that can influence how feeling management is carried out in a work environment. Specifically within academia, looking at the way organizational structures emphasize documented work such as courseload or publishing, this study highlights how this environment is not supportive of the emotional labor heavily performed by some faculty. The lack of recognition, specifically among female faculty, led to some questioning whether their institution had their best interest in mind, especially regarding what some of them described as "invisible work" (Sophia). This level of institutional exploitation is something Hochschild oversimplified in her original work (Stulikova & Dawson, 2023). Along with this, recent critiques on emotional labor have focused on how the increasingly corporate style of workplaces since the 1980s has heightened the importance of performing emotional labor and the impacts this can have on emotional dissonance within individuals (O'Brien & Linehan, 2018; Veldstra, 2018). Hochschild

focused more on the surface and deep acting and the ways in which these performances, through one's position, can lead to devaluation. When we consider some of the more structural issues that contribute to this uneven burden some faculty feel, it is apparent that the sense of institutional betrayal couples with the unsupported weight of performing emotional labor within some social settings.

Faculty members who receive disclosures of student sexual assault are not receiving enough support emotionally and structurally. This lack of support makes it difficult for them to cope with the emotional labor that is required of them. Additionally, this emotional labor is often gendered, and certain disciplines receive more disclosures than others. Therefore, it is crucial to proactively support faculty members instead of ignoring this issue and letting fatigue and stress become more prevalent. This study has identified several factors that contribute to the complexity of faculty receiving student disclosures, and it is essential for universities to recognize and address these factors to ensure the success of faculty members and prevent burnout.

LIMITATIONS

The results of this study should be interpreted within the confines of some important limitations. First, part of the recruitment process involved targeting faculty who were involved in sexual assault research and/or advocacy. Thus, findings may be representative of faculty who are more knowledgeable about sexual assault. Relatedly, sampling procedures only yielded two male faculty members. Thus, the perspectives of men on handling sexual assault disclosures, as well as their ideas on how gender influences disclosures, is largely absent from the analysis. Finally, the lack of diversity in

participant demographics (mostly all white females, with one Latina and one mixed-race participant) and the fact that many participants came from social science/criminal justice disciplines may have also limited the variety of lived experiences and familiarity with the topic represented in the data.

FUTURE IMPLICATIONS

This study aims to provide valuable insights into the extent to which university faculty members are required to perform emotional labor when handling student disclosures of sexual assault. By interviewing faculty with lived experience, the research aimed to explore the level of preparedness among faculty members for such situations and how it affects their mental health during and after the disclosure process. The findings of this research can be beneficial for universities to understand how to better equip their faculty members with adequate training and resources to reduce the emotional labor involved in such situations and provide better support to students in need.

Throughout the interviews, there was a consensus among faculty members that more training styled as role play or open conversations would be beneficial. Updating current training requirements and information on resources or possibly adding some voluntary practice options would be great opportunities to start more of these conversations regarding student sexual assault among faculty. There was also a clear gap both in how faculty perceived their duties under Title IX and what students believed a report entailed. Having a better system of debriefing and explaining the Title IX policy, requirements, role would be greatly beneficial to both faculty and staff at the university level.

Along with bolstering training and educational opportunities for faculty, creating a more supportive work environment emotionally and structurally is crucial in valuing the emotional labor some faculty members perform regularly. Future research should further delve into the ways we can work towards evening out the distribution of work, both documented and undocumented, among faculty. As this study has shown, specifically finding a way to compensate for or at least recognize the unequal burden of emotion work many female faculty take on and create structural changes that support their well-being and balance of tasks would be highly beneficial.

REFERENCES

Banyard, V. L., Demers, J. M., Cohn, E. S., Edwards, K. M., Moynihan, M. M., Walsh, W. A., & Ward, S. K. (2020). Academic correlates of unwanted sexual contact, intercourse, stalking, and intimate partner violence: An understudied but important consequence for college students. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 35(21–22), 4375–4392.

Bartos, A. E., & Ives, S. (2019). 'Learning the rules of the game': emotional labor and the gendered academic subject in the United States. *Gender, Place & Culture*, *26*(6), 778-794.

Bellas, M. L. (1999). Emotional labor in academia: The case of professors. *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, *561*(1), 96-110.

Berry, K. E., & Cassidy, S. F. (2013). Emotional labour in university lecturers: Considerations for higher education institutions. *Journal of Curriculum and Teaching*, *2*(2).

Bird, S. R. (2011). Unsettling universities' incongruous, gendered bureaucratic structures: A case-study approach. *Gender, Work & Organization*, *18*(2), 202-230.

Branch, K. A., Hayes-Smith, R., & Richards, T. N. (2011). Professors' Experiences With Student Disclosures of Sexual Assault and Intimate Partner Violence: How "Helping" Students Can Inform Teaching Practices. *Feminist Criminology*, *6*(1), 54–75.

Cantor, D., Fisher, B., Chibnall, S., Harps, S., Townsend, R., Thomas, G., ... & Madden, K. (2020). Report on the AAU campus climate survey on sexual assault and misconduct. *Westat for the Association of American Universities (AAU)*, 1–362.

Cieslak, R., Shoji, K., Douglas, A., Melville, E., Luszczynska, A., & Benight, C. C. (2014). A Meta-Analysis of the Relationship Between Job Burnout and Secondary Traumatic Stress Among Workers With Indirect Exposure to Trauma. *Psychological Services*, *11*(1), 75–86.

Coleman, M. E. (2022). Mental Health in the College Classroom: Best Practices for Instructors. *Teaching Sociology*, *50*(2), 168–182.

Corbin, J., & Strauss, A. (2008). *Basics of qualitative research (3rd ed.): Techniques and procedures for developing grounded theory*. SAGE Publications, Inc., 1–379.

Durfee, A., & Rosenberg, K. (2009). Teaching sensitive issues: Feminist pedagogy and the practice of advocacy-based counseling. *Feminist Teacher*, *19*(2), 103-121.

Fisher, B. S., Daigle, L. E., Cullen, F. T., & Turner, M. G. (2003). Reporting sexual victimization to the police and others: Results from a national-level study of college women. *Criminal Justice and Behavior, 30*(1), 6-38.

Frisby, B. N., Hosek, A. M., & Beck, A. C. (2020). The role of classroom relationships as sources of academic resilience and hope. *Communication Quarterly, 68*(3), 289-305.

Fusch, Patricia & Ness, Lawrence. (2015). Are We There Yet? Data Saturation in Qualitative Research. *Qualitative Report*. 20. 1408–1416.

Glomb, T. M., & Tews, M. J. (2004). Emotional labor: A conceptualization and scale development. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, *64*(1), 1-23.

Goodman, J. F. (2021). Should teachers be mandated reporters?. *Phi Delta Kappan, 102*(7), 47-51.

Guzzardo, M. T., Khosla, N., Adams, A. L., Bussmann, J. D., Engelman, A., Ingraham, N., ... & Taylor, S. (2021). "The ones that care make all the difference": Perspectives on student-faculty relationships. *Innovative Higher Education, 46*(1), 41-58.

Hayes-Smith, R., Richards, T. N., & Branch, K. A. (2010). 'But I'm not a counsellor': The nature of role strain experienced by female professors when a student discloses sexual assault and intimate partner violence. *Enhancing Learning in the Social Sciences, 2*(3), 1–24.

Hochschild, A. R. (2003). *The Managed Heart: Commercialization of Human Feeling, Twentieth Anniversary Edition, With a New Afterword* (2nd ed.). University of California Press. (Original work published 1983)

Holland, K. J. (2020). Correlates of college women's intentions to use formal campus supports for sexual assault. *Psychology of Violence, 10*(2), 245–254.

Kennedy, A. C., & Prock, K. A. (2018). "I still feel like I am not normal": A review of the role of stigma and stigmatization among female survivors of child sexual abuse, sexual assault, and intimate partner violence. *Trauma, Violence, & Abuse, 19*(5), 512–527.

Lorenzo, L., & Rafael, S. (2020). Exploring the academic experience of college student survivors of sexual violence. *Open Access Library Journal*, *7*(05), 1.

MacNell, L., Driscoll, A., & Hunt, A. N. (2015). What's in a name: Exposing gender bias in student ratings of teaching. *Innovative Higher Education, 40*, 291–303.

Mason, F., & Lodrick, Z. (2013). Psychological consequences of sexual assault. *Best Practice & Research Clinical Obstetrics & Gynaecology*, *27*(1), 27-37.

McGregor, M. J., Wiebe, E., Marion, S. A., & Livingstone, C. (2000). Why don't more women report sexual assault to the police?. *CMAJ*, *162*(5), 659-660.

McMahon, S., & Seabrook, R. C. (2019). Impact of exposure to sexual violence prevention messages on students' bystander behavior. *Health Promotion Practice*, *20*(5), 711–720.

O'Brien, E., & Linehan, C. (2019). Problematizing the authentic self in conceptualizations of emotional dissonance. *Human Relations*, *72*(9), 1530-1556.

O'Meara, K., Kuvaeva, A., Nyunt, G., Waugaman, C., & Jackson, R. (2017). Asked more often: Gender differences in faculty workload in research universities and the work interactions that shape them. *American Educational Research Journal*, *54*(6), 1154-1186.

Orchowski, L. M., & Gidycz, C. A. (2012). To whom do college women confide following sexual assault? A prospective study of predictors of sexual assault disclosure and social reactions. *Violence Against Women*, *18*(3), 264-288.

Payne, D. L., Lonsway, K. A., & Fitzgerald, L. F. (1999). Rape Myth Acceptance: Exploration of its Structure and its Measurement Using the Illinois Rape Myth Acceptance Scale. *Journal of Research in Personality, 33*, 27–68.

Potter, S., Howard, R., Murphy, S., & Moynihan, M. M. (2018). Long-term impacts of college sexual assaults on women survivors' educational and career attainments. *Journal of American College Health*, *66*(6), 496–507.

Pyke, K. D. (2018). Institutional betrayal: Inequity, discrimination, bullying, and retaliation in academia. *Sociological Perspectives*, *61*(1), 5-13.

Relyea, M., & Ullman, S. E. (2015). Unsupported or turned against: Understanding how two types of negative social reactions to sexual assault relate to postassault outcomes. *Psychology of Women Quarterly*, *39*(1), 37–52.

Richards, T. N., Branch, K. A., & Hayes, R. M. (2013). An exploratory examination of student to professor disclosures of crime victimization. *Violence Against Women*, *19*(11), 1408–1422.

Sabina, C., & Ho, L. Y. (2014). Campus and college victim responses to sexual assault and dating violence: Disclosure, service utilization, and service provision. *Trauma, Violence, & Abuse*, *15*(3), 201-226.

Sinozich, S., & Langton, L. (2014). *Rape and sexual assault victimization among college-age females, 1995-2013*. Washington, DC: US Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Bureau of Justice Statistics.

Stoner, J. E., & Cramer, R. J. (2019). Sexual Violence Victimization Among College Females: A Systematic Review of Rates, Barriers, and Facilitators of Health Service Utilization on Campus. *Trauma, Violence, & Abuse, 20*(4), 520–533.

Stulikova, H., & Dawson, M. (2023). Stretching the Double Hermeneutic: A Critical Examination of Lay Meanings of 'Emotional Labour'. *Sociological Research Online*, *28*(4), 1130-1148.

Terry, G., Hayfield, N., Clarke, V., & Braun, V. (2017). Thematic analysis. *The SAGE Handbook of Qualitative Research in Psychology*, *2*, 17-37.

Terry, G., & Hayfield, N. (2021). Essentials of Thematic Analysis. Washington DC: American Psychological Association

Testa, M., VanZile-Tamsen, C., & Livingston, J. A. (2007). Prospective prediction of women's sexual victimization by intimate and nonintimate male perpetrators. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology, 75*(1), 52.

Ullman, S. E., & Najdowski, C. J. (2009). Correlates of Serious Suicidal Ideation and Attempts in Female Adult Sexual Assault Survivors. *Suicide and Life-Threatening Behavior, 39*(1), 47–57.

Veldstra, C. (2020). Bad feeling at work: Emotional labour, precarity, and the affective economy. *Cultural Studies, 34*(1), 1-24.

Waldbuesser, C., Rubinsky, V., & Titsworth, S. (2021). Teacher emotional labor: examining teacher feeling rules in the college classroom. *Communication Education, 70*(4), 384-401.

Wang, H., Hall, N. C., & Taxer, J. L. (2019). Antecedents and consequences of teachers' emotional labor: A systematic review and meta-analytic investigation. *Educational Psychology Review, 31*, 663-698.

Wilson, J. H., Ryan, R. G., & Pugh, J. L. (2010). Professor–student rapport scale predicts student outcomes. *Teaching of Psychology, 37*(4), 246-251.

Appendix A

IRB Approval Letter

To: Heather H Kettrey
Re: Clemson IRB Number:IRB2023-0971
Review Level: Exempt
Review Category: 2
Determination Date From: 07-Dec-2023
Determination Date To:31-Dec-2026
Funding Sponsor: N/A
Project Title: Emotional Labor Performed Among University Faculty Responding to Student Sexual Assault Disclosures

---

The Clemson University IRB office determined that the proposed activities involving human participants meet the criteria for Exempt level review under 45 CFR 46.104(d). The Exempt determination is granted for the certification period indicated above.
Principal Investigator (PI) Responsibilities: The PI assumes the responsibilities for the protection of human subjects as outlined in the Principal Investigator's Responsibilities guidance.
Non-Clemson Affiliated Collaborators: The Exempt determination only covers Clemson affiliated personnel on the study. External collaborators have to consult with their respective institution's IRB office to determine what is required for their role on the project. Clemson IRB office does not enter into an IRB Authorization Agreement (reliance agreement) for Exempt level reviews.
Modifications: An Amendment is required for substantial changes to the study. Substantial changes are modifications that may affect the Exempt determination (i.e., changing from Exempt to Expedited or Full Board review level, changing exempt category) or that may change the focus of the study, such as a change in hypothesis or study design. **All changes must be reviewed by the IRB office prior to implementation.** Instructions on how to submit an Amendment is available on the IRB webpage
PI or Essential Study Personnel Changes: For Exempt determinations, submit an amendment ONLY if the PI changes or if there is a change to an essential study team member. An essential team member would be an individual required to be on the study team for their expertise or certification (i.e., health expert, mental health counselor). Students or other non-essential study personnel changes DO NOT have to be reported to the IRB office.
Reportable Incidents: Notify the IRB office within three (3) business days if there are any unanticipated problems involving risk to subjects, complications, adverse events,

complaints from research participants and/or incidents of non-compliance with the IRB approved protocol. Incidents may be reported through the IRB online submission system using the Reportable Incidents eform or by contacting the IRB office. Review the IRB policies webpage for more information.

Closing IRB Record: Submit a Progress Report to close the IRB record. An IRB record may be closed when all research activities are completed. Research activities include, but are not limited to: enrolling new participants; interaction with participants (online or in-person); collecting prospective data, including de-identified data through a survey; obtaining, accessing, and/or generating identifiable private information about a living person.

New IRB Application: A new Exempt application is required if the research activities continue for more than 3 years after the initial determination. **Exempt determinations may not be renewed or extended and are valid for 3 years only.**

Non-Clemson Affiliated Sites: A site letter is required for off-campus non-public sites. Refer to the guidance on research site/permission letters for more information. Submit the Amendment eform to add additional sites to the study.

International Research: Clemson's determination is based on U.S. human subjects protections regulations and Clemson University human subjects protection policies. Researchers should become familiar with all pertinent information about local human subjects protection regulations and requirements when conducting research internationally. We encourage you to discuss any possible human subjects research requirements that are specific to your research site with your local contacts, to comply with those requirements, and to inform Clemson's IRB office of those requirements. Review the FAQs for more information about international research.

Contact Information: Please contact the IRB office at IRB@clemson.edu or visit our webpage if you have questions.

Clemson University's IRB is committed to facilitating ethical research and protecting the rights of human subjects. All research involving human participants must maintain an ethically appropriate standard, which serves to protect the rights and welfare of the participants.

Institutional Review Board
Office of Research Compliance
Clemson University
IRB Number: IRB00000481
FWA Number: FWA00004497

Appendix B

Pre-Interview Survey for Faculty

Pre-Interview Survey Items:

1. **Are you a faculty member at an institution of higher education? Or have you been?**

   Yes

   No

2. **Have you ever received a sexual assault disclosure from a student while in a faculty position at a university?**

   Yes

   No

   [If respondent selects "No" they will be ineligible for the study and redirected to receive thank you message]

3. **How many years have you been in a university faculty position?**

   0-5

   6-10

   11-15

   16-20

   More than 20 years

4. **What department do you work in?**

   [free response]

5. **Have you ever received training on sexual assault or education on related resources through your university employer?**

   Yes

   No

6. **What is your age in years?**

   [free response]

7. **What is your race? (Check all that apply)**

   White

   Black or African-American

   Asian

   Hispanic

   Other (please specify)

   Chose not to specify

8. **What is your gender identity?**

   Man

   Woman

   Trans man

   Trans woman

   Intersexed

   Non-binary

   Other not listed here (please specify)

   Chose not to specify

9. **What is your sexual orientation?**

   Straight

   Gay

   Bisexual

   Queer

   Pansexual

   Other (please specify)

   Chose not to specify

10. **What is your availability to complete this interview? Please enter preferred dates and times.**

    [free response]

11. **What is your email address so that I can contact you to schedule the interview?**

    [free response]

Appendix C

Interview Guide for University Faculty

Thank you so much for participating in this interview today. My name is Cadi Imbody, and I am
a graduate student in the Social Science program at Clemson University. My project aims to better understand the experiences of university faculty and how well-prepared they feel to handle sexual assault disclosures from students.

I am interested in learning more about what emotions you feel and express when a student discloses a sexual assault experience to you. I want to better understand how these interactions impact your mental well-being and ability to perform your job.

I am also interested in your perception of your training and preparedness for handling student sexual disclosures. That is, prior to or after experiencing student disclosures, how well were you prepared by your university to properly respond to these personal incidents.

I am going to ask you some questions, and you may choose not to answer any question for any reason. Please be aware that your identity will remain confidential for this study. For research purposes, I will be recording this interview. Recordings will be transcribed and destroyed at the end of the study.

Do you have any questions before we begin?

Guiding Questions

1. Tell me about your role as a faculty member at your institution.
    a. What department are you in? What classes do you teach? How long have you been teaching?

2. On the pre-interview survey you indicated you have experienced at least one sexual assault disclosure from a student. If you have received more than one disclosure, feel free to start with whichever experience stood out the most. We can talk about the other disclosure experiences as time allows. Please begin our discussion by describing this experience. Please leave out students' names to keep this anonymous.
    a. Did the student disclose to you in person?
    b. Did the student come to you with this disclosure recently after their experience?
    c. Was the student in distress when they came to you with this disclosure?
3. What was your reaction to this student disclosing their experience to you?
4. Could you describe some of the practical steps you took after this disclosure experience?
    a. For example, how much time did you spend following up with the student? Did you refer the student to support services on campus? Were you involved in a Title IX investigation?
5. How helpful do you feel you were to the student during/after the disclosure?
6. How did you feel emotionally after your interaction with the student disclosing a sexual assault experience to you, including any subsequent actions and responses after handling the incident?
    a. How did this experience affect your ability to perform your job?
    b. When managing a student sexual assault disclosure, did you feel you were masking internal emotions to better support the student in the moment?
    c. If you found the experience stressful, what aspects of the disclosure and subsequent responses made it stressful for you?
7. Describe any self-care strategies, if any, that you took after this interaction.
8. Please describe some ways that your gender has had an influence on the way students approach you with disclosures. Has gender had an impact on your daily role or expectations?

9. During this interaction, how well prepared did you feel to address this sexual assault disclosure?
    a. How did you know how to handle this type of interaction?
10. Prior to receiving a student sexual assault disclosure, how well had you been trained on the topic of sexual assault and university resources?
    a. How did this affect your response and reactions to the disclosure?
11. Looking back, is there anything in particular you wish you had known prior to receiving the disclosure? Is there anything you would have done differently?
12. Are there any suggestions you would make to your university to better prepare faculty for these situations? Just as a reminder, any suggestions you offer will stay anonymous.

That is all the questions I have for you today. Is there anything else you would like to share about the student disclosure you described or this topic in general that we did not specifically discuss today?

Thank you so much for taking the time to discuss these topics with me today. If you have any questions after this interview, feel free to reach out and email me. Be on the lookout for an email in the next week or two with a link to your Amazon gift card. When I send you this email, I will also include a follow-up question regarding any other university faculty that you know who may be interested in this study. Since this is a harder population to identify, I am trying to snowball with my recruitment.