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Teacher Candidates' Experiences of Sexual Violence on Practicum

Findings and Recommendations for Teacher Unions

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Introduction

Every year in Canada, tens of thousands of (mostly) young adults enter kindergarten to grade 12 (K-12) schools for a practicum placement which supports them in learning how to teach. They find themselves in a challenging position: straddling the line between teacher and student. These teacher candidates (TCs) observe, support, and eventually lead instruction, hoping to receive a positive reference from their supervisor or Associate Teacher (AT). Without these references and successful integration into school staff culture, landing a full-time position after graduation can be extremely difficult. The pressure to make a positive impression on one's AT while demonstrating their teaching capabilities can be overwhelming, especially in an environment where a single negative experience can have lasting impacts on one's future career prospects. The power dynamics and pressure of practicum can lead to a range of experiences, from supportive and constructive feedback to instances of unfair criticism, and even—as we had heard anecdotally as teacher educators and can now confirm with findings from the first study of this problem—sexual violence.[1] This report shares these findings and our recommendations for teacher education programs in Canada.

A Gap in the Literature

Prior to our own survey, no research on practicum sexual violence was published in English, whether in Canada or internationally. There is, however, a literature on in-service teacher (not TC) experiences of sexual harassment (e.g., Robinson, 2000; Santor et al., 2019; Variyan & Wilkinson, 2022). Three main personal factors make some teachers more vulnerable to sexual harassment: being a woman, being younger than the other teachers on staff, and being in a temporary position within the school (Robinson, 2000; Variyan & Wilkinson, 2022). A majority of teacher candidates are young women (Common University Data Ontario, 2022), many TCs enter schools where they are closer in age to their students than to most colleagues, and the role of teacher candidate is temporary in nature, all of which enhance TCs' vulnerability to sexual violence.

The literature on sexual violence in other experiential learning placements is also telling (e.g., Chang et al., 2020; De Costa & St-Gelais, 2023; Kim et al., 2018; Lee et al., 2011; Mahurin et al., 2022; Mennicke et al., 2020; Moylan & Wood, 2016; Phillips et al., 2019; Smith et al., 2023). Across medicine, nursing and social work placements, sexual harassment is an issue that students, predominantly women, experience. Participants in these studies reported fearing negative consequences and tended not to report these incidents. Lastly, they felt ill-prepared by both their post-secondary institutions and placement agencies to deal with sexual harassment.

Taken together, these adjacent literatures substantiate TCs' vulnerable position on practicum, even in the current absence of directly relevant literature, and suggests a need for more scholarship as well as improved prevention and response protocols. Our own study fills this yawning gap in the teacher education research literature.

[1] 1 In this report, we use the term 'sexual violence' to encompass a range of experiences from sexual harassment without contact to rape unless greater specificity is indicated.

Study Overview

The present study was guided by four research questions:

1. **What is the prevalence of sexual violence experienced by teacher candidates (TCs) on practicum?**
2. **How does TC social position *(e.g., identities and group memberships)* affect experiences and impacts of sexual violence?**
3. **How does sexual violence impact TCs?**
4. **What affects TC' decisions to report sexual violence and access related supports?**

Recruitment

Participants were recruited by circulating recruitment materials to TC and other student organizations at universities across Canada. Further recruitment was conducted via paid and targeted social media advertising.

A total of **138** current TCs or recent graduates completed the survey. Of these, **109** witnessed (n = 12, 11%), experienced (n = 13, 11.9%), or witnessed and experienced (n = 84, 77.1%) sexual violence on practicum. We share statistically significant findings from the analysis of these 109 participants' responses in this report. Participant demographics are in Appendix 1.

Measurement Instruments

To measure sexual harassment, an adapted version of the Sexual Harassment subscale of the **Courage to Act—Sexual Harassment in Experiential Learning Project** (Possibility Seeds, 2022) was utilized. The modifications made to the original survey entailed wording changes to be specific to teacher education, teacher candidates, and school practicum placements.

Teacher candidate mental health was measured using the 5-item **World Health Organization Well-Being Index** (WHO-5; World Health Organization, 1998). This test represented dimensions of general health and positive psychological wellbeing. Furthermore, mental health was also measured using the 10-item **Kessler Psychological Distress Scale** (K10; Kessler et al., 2002), which measures negative feelings such as nervousness, worthlessness, and depression. The WHO-5 (Topp et al., 2015) and K10 (Cairney et al., 2007) are frequently employed and validated measures of psychological wellbeing and distress.

Socio-demographic data was collected using a new tool, called the **SAFE Questionnaire**, designed to reflect multiple social position variables and provide a robust intersectional understanding of this phenomenon; the tool was developed by **Dr. Airton** and **Dr. Eun-Young Lee** (Lee et al., 2024). All

utilized measures are in the public domain (i.e., permission for use is granted for research or educational purposes).

In addition to these measures, participants were asked to provide information about their teacher education program and about the logistics of their practicum placement. To further examine the complex nature of sexual harassment and address items not contained in the pre-existing measures, and following from the existing literature and theoretical framework, two open-ended questions were also asked regarding additional experiences that were not addressed in the above measures.

The survey took approximately 45 minutes to complete. An option to withdraw was offered throughout the entire duration of this study. At the end of the survey, participants had the opportunity to enter their name and email address to receive a $30 Amazon.ca e-gift card. Additionally, participants were asked if they would be interested in potentially participating in an interview for a subsequent phase of the project, which is currently ongoing.

Data Analyses

A descriptive summary of sexual violence experiences, social position, relationships, and mental health impacts was generated using univariate analyses (e.g., frequencies, proportions), with accompanying graphics to visualize patterns and distributions. Data were examined for missing values and outliers prior to further analysis.

Given that all participants in the final sample had experienced and/or witnessed at least one form of sexual harassment or violence during their practicum, the 15 items assessing specific sexual violence behaviours were collapsed into five conceptually driven binary composite variables to streamline analyses:

1. **non-physical sexual harassment**
2. **physical/proximal Harassment**
3. **sexual coercion or pressure**
4. **technology-facilitated sexual harassment**
5. **stalking, attempted rape, or sexual assault** (See Appendix 2)

As nearly all variables in the dataset were binary, chi-square tests and t-tests were used to explore associations between the five forms of violence and a range of practicum-related variables, including perpetrator identity, participant response, outcomes, and contextual factors (e.g., school type, support received, social identity representation). Fisher's exact tests were applied in cases where cell sizes were small.

Comparisons by **social position** (e.g., gender expression, racial identity, sexual orientation) were also conducted using chi-square tests, or non-parametric alternatives as needed.

Results

The most common forms of sexual violence reported by participants were unwelcome verbal or written communications of a sexual nature, sexual jokes or comments, the presence of sexually explicit material, and sexually oriented conversations. However, just over half (n = 55) reported stalking, attempted rape or sexual assault during[2] a practicum placement. See Table 1 for a more in-depth breakdown of the types of sexual violence witnessed and experienced.

Table 1: Witnessing and Experiencing Different Forms of Sexual Violence

Experience Category	Experienced Violence		Witnessed Violence	
	Yes *n (%)*	**No** *n (%)*	**Yes** *n (%)*	**No** *n (%)*
Non-physical sexual harassment	83 (78.3%)	23 (21.7%)	84 (79.2%)	22 (20.8%)
Physical/proximal sexual harassment	85 (80.2%)	21 (19.8%)	77 (72.0%)	30 (28.0)
Sexual coercion or pressure (e.g., for dates or favours)	53 (50.0%)	53 (50.0%)	51 (47.7%)	56 (52.3%)
Technology-facilitated sexual harassment	54 (50.9%)	52 (49.1%)	44 (41.1%)	63 (58.9%)
Stalking, attempted rape, or sexual assault	55 (51.9%)	51 (48.1%)	47 (43.9%)	60 (56.1%)

Note. Participants could choose not to respond to questions, so numbers may not always equal 109.

Participant and Perpetrator Demographics

Most of our participants are cisgender, gender-conforming[3] women who rated themselves as typically feminine-presenting. The vast majority of perpetrators, across all categories of harassment, were men and boys **(68%).** When examining the relationship between the perpetrator and the victim, **23%** were Associate Teachers (ATs), **30%** were other school staff (e.g., other non-AT teachers, administrators, custodians), approximately **20%** were other teacher candidates (TCs), and **30%** were K-12 students.

[2] While participants could report multiple perpetrators, most of these incidents (144 out of 155 responses, 93%) involved individuals connected to the school or placement setting. Only 11 reports involved someone entirely unrelated to the practicum context.

[3] 'Gender-conforming' means that one's gender expression aligns with local expectations for people of one's gender identity: for example, a typically and perceptually feminine woman or masculine man. 'Gender non-conforming' means that this is not the case such that a gender non-conforming person may experience gender expression, gender identity or sexual orientation discrimination/harassment (as gender non-conformity is often read as a proxy for transgender status or non-heterosexuality). Transgender people can be gender-conforming (e.g., a typically and perceptually masculine transgender man) or gender non-conforming. The gender-conforming and gender non-conforming participant groups were created based on participants' responses to items from the SAFE Questionnaire (Lee et al., 2024) which includes a modified and expanded version of Klemmer et al.'s (2021) instrument for measuring gender conformity via survey methods.

Thirty-three TC participants self-identified as a **member of a racialized group**, and 30 were perceived as not White (see Appendix 1 for participant demographics). Among participants who were perceived as members of a racialized group, the most severe forms—stalking, attempted rape, and sexual assault—were significantly more common. Specifically, **70%** of participants who were perceived as racialized reported experiencing stalking, attempted rape, or sexual assault, compared to **45%** of their peers who were not perceived as racialized.

Socio-economic status (SES) also significantly impacted experiences of violence, with students who had higher SES experiencing higher rates of violence across all five categories. However, the highest distress occurred among participants from low-SES backgrounds (M = 26.0), followed by mid-SES (M = 23.5), and lowest among those from high-SES backgrounds (M = 20.1). These findings seem to contradict the fact that students from higher SES backgrounds reported more experiences of sexual violence. This highlights the need for more research to understand how socioeconomic status affects both exposure to violence and mental health during practicum.

Teacher candidates were less likely to experience sexual harassment or violence during their practicum when the **staff or students at the school shared parts of their identity**, such as their culture, language, or belonging within 2SLGBTQ+ communities. For example, only about **22%** of students placed in schools where *most* of the staff were like them reported serious forms of violence like stalking or assault. In contrast, **72%** of those placed in schools where only *some* staff shared their identity reported these experiences.

A similar pattern was observed among students: when most of the student body shared the TC's identity, only **19%** reported experiencing serious violence, compared to **59%** when only some students did. These numbers suggest that having a shared identity in the school may offer some protection. But unfortunately, TCs typically do not have a say in where they are placed. In many school boards, placements are decided through centralized systems that do not consider a TC's background or identity, a concern we discuss further in the next section.

Program and Practicum Characteristics

Teacher candidates placed in **middle and high school grades** reported higher rates of sexual violence than those in elementary placements. Physical harassment was reported by over **90%** of middle school and **85%** of high school TCs, compared to **61%** in elementary. Likewise, **65%** of high school and **56%** of middle school TCs experienced sexual coercion or pressure, while this was true for only 32% in elementary settings. While other forms of harassment, like digital or verbal, were common across all grade level placements, these findings suggest increased risk in older student environments.

Whether a TC is placed in a particular **school board type** may meaningfully affect their risk of experiencing sexual violence during practicum. Rates of non-physical sexual harassment, sexual coercion or pressure, and stalking, attempted rape, or sexual assault were consistently highest in Private/Independent and Public French Secular schools (see Appendix 3 for prevalence rates). The **location of the placement school** was statistically significant for the

most severe reported forms of sexual violence: stalking, attempted rape, sexual assault. Students placed in smaller towns reported higher rates of stalking, attempted rape, or sexual assault then those in city centres, suburbs, and rural areas.

Subject area also mattered. TCs with **Business or Math as a teachable** were more likely to report sexual violence. Nearly **65%** of Business TCs reported sexual coercion, and over **60%** experienced online or digital harassment. Meanwhile, Geography TCs were less likely to report serious violence, suggesting that what a teacher candidate teaches and where they are placed can influence their risk of experiencing sexual violence on practicum.

Program and practicum characteristics emerged as significant indicators of sexual violence experiences. Teacher candidates who spent **less time on campus prior to their practicum placement** were markedly more likely to experience certain forms of harassment and violence. Specifically, those with only a few days or one week of campus-based preparation reported the highest rates of technology-facilitated sexual violence, sexual coercion or pressure, and stalking, attempted assault, or sexual assault. While non-physical and physical/proximal harassment were not significantly associated with time on campus, their prevalence was still notably high across all groups. Notably, students who spent an entire term or semester on campus prior to practicum reported the lowest rates of violence across all forms (see Table 2) and reported the lowest overall distress—particularly those with a full term or semester— suggesting that more time spent on campus prior to practicum placement was met with lower experiences of sexual violence.

Table 2: Prevalence of Sexual Harassment and Violence by Time Spent on Campus Prior to Practicum

Time on Campus Before Practicum	Non-Physical Sexual Violence	Physical / Proximal Sexual Violence	Technology-Facilitated Sexual Violence	Sexual Coercion / Pressure	Stalking / Attempted / Assault
A few days	100% (13/13)	84.6% (11/13)	61.5% (8/13)	69.2% (9/13)	61.5% (8/13)
At least one week	80.0% (24/30)	90% (27/30)	73.3% (22/30)	66.7% (20/30)	66.7% (20/30)
At least one month	79.4% (27/34)	80% (28/35)	48.6% (17/35)	57.1% (20/35)	57.1% (20/35)
One term or semester	67.9% (19/28)	67.9% (19/28)	25.0% (7/28)	14.3% (4/28)	25.0% (7/28)

Responses and Reporting Behaviour

Participants reported avoidance (37%) as the most frequent action taken as a result of experiencing sexual violence on practicum, with 0 participants reporting filing a formal complaint through their university's sexual violence reporting process.

19% reported doing nothing, and **22%** reported informally reporting the behaviour to friends and family. Only 6 **(6%)** participants in the sample asked for a new practicum placement after experiencing sexual violence.

The role of the **Associate Teacher (AT)** was significant in several ways. First, the most common reporting pathway was to a participant's AT **(24%)**, which is unsurprising given that this person is a TC's closest contact and support on practicum. However, gender-conforming participants—largely cisgender women, given our sample—were more likely to report that their perpetrator was their AT **(23%)**.

Participants were more likely to say they were discouraged or pressured not to report when the perpetrator was their AT.

A greater proportion of TCs reported negative academic or professional consequences when the perpetrator was their AT compared to when it was someone else. Importantly, those who were discouraged, advised, or pressured not to report had significantly higher SES than those who were not. This suggests that teacher candidates with more social or professional capital may receive informal guidance aimed at protecting reputational networks. Additionally, avoidance strategies like joking, ignoring, or minimizing the experience were more common among higher SES participants.

Ten percent of the participants told us that they reported to someone from their teacher education program. If participants did not report the sexual harassment, the most frequent reasons were that the behaviour stopped **(19%)** or they resolved it on their own **(18%)**. In some cases, their program found out even if the TC did not report it themself **(13%)**, or a school staff member found out what was happening **(16%)**. Shame **(8%)**, guilt **(4%)**, and fears that their practicum **(7%)** or future employability **(12%)** would be negatively affected also contributed to TCs not reporting their experience of sexual violence. Among those who chose *not* to report their experiences of sexual violence, the highest mental distress was reported among participants who had concerns about the formal complaint process (M = 29.5), requested a placement change (M = 30.5), or did not disengage from the practicum after experiencing sexual violence (M = 35.5).[4]

Only 1 in 5 teacher candidates who experienced sexual violence during their practicum reported that corrective action was taken against the perpetrator.

Similarly, **only 1 in 5 participants** received any follow-up or information about the next steps after disclosing their experience. Other commonly reported impacts were: feeling less confident in their teaching abilities **(22%)**,

[4] In this sentence, M is equal to the mean of the distress scores.

missing days or arriving late and leaving early **(19%)**, and sleep difficulties **(20%)**. One in four experienced a loss of trust in their AT and one in five lost trust in their program. **30%** of teacher candidates worried about being seen as unprofessional because they experienced sexual violence. **1 in 3** agreed or strongly agreed that the harassment they experienced affected how they feel about becoming a teacher.

Notably, the few participants who took more assertive steps, such as threatening to report the perpetrator or formally requesting a new practicum placement, were all from higher SES backgrounds.

Discussion

These findings from the first study of teacher candidates (TCs') experience of sexual violence on practicum support the conclusions that can easily be drawn from the adjacent literatures on in-service teachers' experiences of sexual violence, and findings from similar experiential learning contexts, not to mention copious anecdotal evidence carried by many people who work in teacher education.

Teacher candidates experience sexual violence during practicum and most do not report.

While perpetrators are a mixture of school staff, other TCs and students, our findings suggest that reporting is particularly discouraged and unlikely when the perpetrator is a TC's AT: the senior colleague who, in most Canadian teacher education programs, is the only person who evaluates a TC's practicum performance. This, coupled with the fact that school boards typically require an AT's reference when seeking to hire a recent graduate, systemically aggravate TCs' vulnerability to sexual violence.

TC participants who are perceived to be racialized can be inferred to be even more vulnerable given our own findings as well as findings from decades of teacher education literature showing that these TCs' AT relationships are typically fraught due to racism and demographic misalignment (Alizai, 2024; Dlamini & Martinovic, 2007; Marom, 2019; Wilkins & Lall, 2011; see also Gabhi, 2024).

Across the board, our findings suggest that:

TCs are discouraged whether directly or indirectly from reporting these experiences within their practicum schools or to their program.

We acknowledge that it is teacher education programs who instruct TCs about their responsibilities on practicum. Some factors that may exacerbate TCs' vulnerability to sexual violence and lack of reporting are directly within our own and our colleagues' control: how TCs are prepared for practicum, specifically how they are taught in program coursework, conversations and materials about their own safety on practicum, appropriate TC-AT relationships, or what to do if they experience harassment or violence of any kind.

That said, **program faculty, staff and administrators may not be clearly informed about reporting and support pathways, or about TCs' actual obligations to union members who may be perpetrating sexual violence against them** (see Recommendations below). For example, in Ontario, there is a widespread perception that—regardless of where a TC is placed, for

example—that they may not report something negative about a union member to school authorities unless they are also willing to follow-up directly with that member—perhaps their perpetrator—in writing by name within 72 hours. Further, if they do not, TCs are often told that they may face 'consequences' (for example, from a body such as the Ontario Teachers Federation or the Ontario College of Teachers).

In a forthcoming publication (Airton & Andersen, Under Review), we share why this perception may not be accurate in terms of relevant laws and regulations (more below) but it is widespread and may significantly contribute to TCs' unreported experiences of sexual violence. Further research and our forthcoming interviews with survey participants will shed more light on these issues and enable more precise recommendations.

Spotlight on Ontario

Given the timing of this report, we wish to highlight that our findings carry implications for how the government of Ontario seeks to address the province's systemic teacher shortage.

Transitional Certificates

Even our preliminary findings suggest that **transitional certificates** may increase teacher candidates' vulnerability to sexual violence on practicum. Many TCs are acquiring the new transitional teaching certificate issued by the College which enable them to take on Occasional Teacher (OT) work in their practicum school during a practicum placement without any AT supervision. On OT days, they are members of a local bargaining unit with full rights and responsibilities toward other members; on TC days, they revert to not having these rights or responsibilities. This confusion about their role will, we predict, exacerbate their vulnerability to sexual violence and further disincentivize reporting. TCs with transitional teaching certificates will also not have secure board employment despite having all the obligations of fully employed colleagues during OT days. For all these reasons, **a transitional teaching certificate may significantly increase a TC's vulnerability to sexual violence in their practicum school** for those who obtain one. We return here in the next section.

Recommendations

Taking into account our findings, discussion and Ontario spotlight, our Canada-wide recommendations for teacher unions are as follows:

1. **Work with teacher education programs to ensure a shared understanding of TCs' rights and responsibilities** toward union members when they are placed in a school (whether as a TC or while holding a transitional certificate as may be the case in Ontario). This includes clarifying where TCs' rights and responsibilities differ from those of bargaining unit members, and examining relevant regulations and by-laws to ensure that any status held by TCs (for example, 'Associate Member' of the Ontario Teachers

Federation) is clearly understood by all parties and poses no barrier to TCs reporting an experience of sexual violence (or discrimination or harassment on a legally-protected ground); this includes enacting carveouts from mandatory 'adverse reporting' requirements in such cases if not already enacted.

2. Develop **educational materials for members** who wish to serve as Associate Teachers which reflect the above shared understanding and cover critical topics like the power differential between ATs and TCs, considerations for positive AT-TC relationships, and guidelines around AT-TC communications such as mode (for example, text messaging versus institutional email, private versus employer-issued devices), frequency and hours.

3. Ensure that **union presentations to teacher education programs** reflect the above shared understanding, and that accurate information is provided to TCs about their rights and responsibilities to union members; this includes providing accurate information to TCs about what to do if a member perpetrates sexual violence (or harassment or discrimination on a legally-protected ground) against them.

4. Encourage members who wish to be Associate Teachers as well as bargaining unit leaders and representatives to complete **sexual violence prevention and bystander intervention training.**

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Participant Demographics (N=109)

Demographic Information	*n* (%)
Gender Identity	
Woman/Girl	82 (75.2)
Man/Boy	24 (22.0)
Culturally specific (e.g., two spirit)	0
Questioning/unsure	0
Prefer not to answer	0
Not listed	0
Gender Expression[5]	
Gender Conforming	96 (88.1)
Gender-Nonconforming	13 (11.9)
Pronouns	
She/her	83 (76.1)
He/him	26 (23.9)
They/them	2 (1.8)
Sexual orientation	
Asexual	3 (2.8)
Bisexual	7 (6.4)
Gay	2 (1.8)
Lesbian	3 (2.8)
Pansexual	2 (1.8)
Queer	5 (4.6)
Heterosexual	90 (82.6)
Culturally specific (e.g., two spirit)	0
Prefer not to answer	0
Another term	1 (0.9)
Relationship Perceived by others as….	
Straight/Heterosexual	93 (86.9%)
Gay or Lesbian	8 (7.5%)
Bisexual	4 (3.7%)
Do not know	2 (1.9%)
Prefer not to answer	0
Apparent disability to others	
Yes, in most contexts	6 (5.5%)

[5] See footnote 1.

Yes, in some contexts	7 (6.4%)
Self-identified as…	
Disabled	1 (0.9%)
Having a disability	4 (3.7%)
Living with a disability	3 (2.8%)
Impaired	2 (1.8%)
Neurodiverse	3 (2.8%)
Disability type	
Sensory (related to hearing or seeing)	0 (0.0%)
Physical	6 (5.5%)
Related to learning	2 (1.8%)
Related to cognition	1 (0.9%)
Related to communication	3 (2.8%)
Chronic pain or illness	2 (1.8%)
Neurodiversity	1 (0.9%)
Not listed	3 (2.8%)
Prefer not to say	1 (0.9%)
Perceived by others as able-bodied	
Yes (perceived as able-bodied)	103 (94.5%)
No (not perceived as able-bodied or unsure/prefer not to answer)	6 (5.5%)
Self-Identified with Racial Identity	
Indigenous	1 (0.9%)
Black (African, Afro-Caribbean, African-Canadian)	20 (18.3%)
East Asian (Chinese, Korean, Japanese, Taiwanese)	4 (3.7%)
Latinx (Latino/a/e, Latin American, Hispanic)	3 (2.8%)
Middle Eastern (Arab, Persian, West Asian)	2 (1.8%)
South Asian (e.g., Indian, Pakistani, Sri Lankan)	0 (0.0%)
Southeast Asian (e.g., Filipino, Vietnamese, Cambodian)	3 (2.8%)
Not listed (open text)	0 (0.0%)
Groups not indicated above and not White	0 (0.0%)
Prefer not to answer	0 (0.0%)
Perceived as a specific Racial Identity	
Indigenous	4 (3.7%)
Black (African, Afro-Caribbean, African-Canadian)	20 (18.3%)
East Asian (Chinese, Korean, Japanese, Taiwanese)	6 (5.5%)
Latinx (Latino/a/e, Latin American, Hispanic)	2 (1.8%)
Middle Eastern (Arab, Persian, West Asian)	4 (3.7%)
South Asian (e.g., Indian, Pakistani, Sri Lankan)	0 (0.0%)
Southeast Asian (e.g., Filipino, Vietnamese, Cambodian)	5 (4.6%)
Not listed (open text)	0 (0.0%)
Groups not indicated above and not White	0 (0.0%)

Prefer not to answer	0 (0.0%)
Perceived to….	
Speak English	10 (9.2%)
Be born outside of Canada	18 (16.5%)
have a particular occupation	18 (16.5%)
practice a particular religion	22 (20.2%)
speak a particular language	22 (20.2%)
know about a particular cultural food, music, dance, or sport	25 (22.9%)
Perceived to be racialized (any 'yes' across domains)	30 (27.5%)

Appendix 2: Categorization of Sexual Harassment and Violence Indicators

To streamline the analysis, the 15 items assessing various forms of sexual harassment and violence were collapsed into five conceptually driven binary composite variables. The five categories were as follows:

- **Non-Physical Sexual Harassment**: Included unwelcome verbal or written communications of a sexual nature, sexual jokes or comments, presence of sexually explicit material, and sexually oriented conversations.
    - Unwelcome communications of a sexual nature (e.g., emails, phone calls, notes, text messages, social media contacts); Unwelcome sexual teasing, jokes, comments, or questions; Presence of sexually oriented material in any format (e.g., photos, videos, written material); People having sexually oriented conversations in front of others; Unwelcome sexually explicit or suggestive talk.
- **Physical/Proximal Sexual Harassment**: Captured unwanted physical proximity, touching, and sexually suggestive looks or gestures.
    - Unwelcome invasion of personal space (e.g., crowding, leaning over); Unwelcome touching; Unwelcome sexually suggestive looks or gestures.
- **Sexual Coercion and Pressure**: Comprised pressure for sexual favours or dates.
    - Pressure for sexual favours; Pressure for dates
- **Technology-Facilitated Sexual Harassment**: Included experiences of being sent or targeted with explicit sexual material through digital means.
    - Unwelcome sexually suggestive or explicit material shared with me; Unwelcome sexually suggestive or explicit material about me
- **Sexual Violence and Stalking**: Included experiences of stalking, attempted rape or sexual assault, and completed rape or sexual assault.
    - Stalking (e.g., unwanted intrusion, physically or electronically, into your personal life); Attempted rape or sexual assault; Rape or sexual assault

Appendix 3: Prevalence of Type of Sexual Violence by School Board Type

School Board Type	Non-Physical Sexual Harassment	Sexual Coercion or Pressure	Stalking, Attempted Rape, or Sexual Assault
Independent/ Private	96.6% (28/29)	75.9% (22/29)	75.9% (22/29)
Public English (Secular)	76.0% (38/50)	40.0% (20/50)	40.0% (20/50)
Public English Catholic	56.3% (9/16)	37.5% (6/16)	43.8% (7/16)
Public French (Secular)	100% (4/4)	75.0% (3/4)	75.0% (3/4)
Public Other	50.0% (2/4)	50.0% (2/4)	75.0% (3/4)
Public French Catholic	100% (1/1)	0.0% (0/1)	0.0% (0/1)

Note: Only statistically significant results are reported here, and teacher candidates could report experiencing and/or witnessing multiple forms of sexual violence.

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