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Normalization of sexual harassment towards young women in public spaces

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Abstract

Sexual harassment is an issue which numerous women have to experience in public spaces. Especially places associated with nightlife are highly sexualized places in which it is nothing extraordinary for women to become victims of sexual harassment. As a consequence, sexual harassment towards women is normalized in certain public spaces. Although the issue is highly problematic and negatively affects women on a daily business, it is widely unexplored. Hence, this thesis tries to investigate the research gap by analyzing the effect of the normalization of sexual harassment in public spaces towards young women. By conducting twenty semi-structured interviews with young women, a great amount of data could be gathered for the analysis. After having conducted and transcribed the interviews, the transcripts were analyzed by using a discourse analysis. Several interesting findings could be drawn from the analysis. Firstly, it can be argued that sexual harassment in public spaces is generally perceived as highly normalized in contemporary society by women and, thus, an issue which should be brought to the public's attention. Secondly, as a direct consequence of this normalization, women are often forced to endure forms of sexual harassment such as groping or unwanted verbal attention while spending time in a public space. Furthermore, the frequency of the incidents causes women to accept these forms of discrimination as normal characteristics of being a woman. Consequently, the normalization of sexual harassment towards women is anchored to such a degree in contemporary society that women are sometimes unaware of the fact that they experience gendered oppression in certain public spaces. In addition to this, the analysis revealed that both sexual orientation and race tend to influence a woman's experience in a public space. Hence, gender is not the only factor which influences the experiences of sexual harassment in a public space. Finally, the research revealed that women's desire for a society in which sexual harassment is not perceived as normal in public spaces will remain difficult to achieve as certain patriarchal structures are still deeply rooted in contemporary society.

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1 Introduction

Public spaces serve as spaces of interaction and socialization and thus, are of great importance for most human beings (Bravo and Guaralda 2016: 1). Unfortunately, public spaces are not completely safe to use as they entail the risk of being robbed, physically attacked or being infected with Covid-19. Another potential negative side effect of spending time in a public space is becoming the victim of sexual harassment. Sexual harassment is a form of discrimination which includes unwanted verbal or physical advances, sexual coercion and hostility towards members of one gender (Johnson et al. 2018: 13f). As this form of discrimination is more likely to occur to women than to men, women's freedom in public spaces such as clubs, bars or on public transportation is restricted and their behavior is affected (Street et al. 2007: 465; House of Commons 2018: 3). Moreover, sexual harassment becomes normalized as it happens to such a large extent in certain public spaces (House of Commons 2018: 3). As a consequence, women and girls are kept unequal to men and are often taught to accept this form of discrimination in public spaces (House of Commons 2018: 3). Although the problem of sexual harassment and the normalization of it have been an issue for a long time, sexual harassment has only recently received more awareness through campaigns such as the # MeToo movement (Siegel 2003: 3; Regulska 2018: 5). These awareness campaigns encourage women to share experienced sexual harassment with the public to highlight the frequency of the problem and eventually, to stop or diminish sexual harassment (Bhattacharyya 2018: 4). Nonetheless, there is still a wall of silence which surrounds the topic of sexual harassment towards women and its effect on the victims. As a consequence, this research tries to break this wall of silence and outline how the normalization of sexual harassment in public spaces affects young women in Switzerland. Hence, the following question will serve as a research question for this master's thesis: What effect does the normalization of sexual harassment in public spaces have on young women in Switzerland? Therefore, the research will focus on the present situation of the normalization of sexual harassment in Switzerland and does not try to outline how the normalization of the issue has changed compared to past times. In order to outline the consequences of the normalization of the issue, the impact of sexual harassment on women will have to be analyzed, too. As mainly women are affected by sexual harassment in public spaces, their wishes regarding improvement of the issue will be a part of the discussion. Additionally, this thesis will investigate whether women's race and sexual orientation influence their experiences of sexual

harassment. Finally, it will be analyzed whether women somehow contribute to the normalization of the issue.

2 State of Art

As this thesis investigates the normalization of sexual harassment in public spaces, this chapter will define the two terms public spaces and sexual harassment. In addition to this, the relevance and the importance of the topic in today's society and thus, this master's thesis, will be outlined. Furthermore, existing literature will be used to demonstrate why the issue of the normalization of sexual harassment towards young woman exists in most societies and what could potentially be done to diminish the problem.

2.1 Public Spaces and Their Importance

Public spaces have historically been defined as outdoor spaces and are usually associated with parks, streets, recreational areas and "other publicly owned and managed outdoor spaces" (Tonnelat 2010: 1). They are usually opposed to the private spaces of housing and work (Tonnelat 2010: 1). However, the idea of what a public space is changes over time (Worpole and Knox 2007: 4). The definition of public spaces evolves, as certain public spaces are managed by private partnerships and thus, public spaces and the public domain need to be differentiated (Tonnelat 2010: 1). A more accurate definition of public spaces defines them as spaces which are "accessible to the public" (Tonnelat 2010: 1). Therefore, places such as cafes, bars or clubs are categorized as public spaces as well since they are open to the public (Tonnelat 2010: 7). As a direct consequence of the growing world population, the number of public spaces is, contrary to popular assumptions, constantly increasing (Worpole and Knox 2007: 4). These different public spaces are used for different reasons and purposes. On a larger scale, public spaces are frequently associated with being the focus of public life, activities and events and can range from unknown street corners to "grand civic set pieces" (Carmona 2018: 47). On a smaller scale, they can also simply be places to rest, play or hang out (Carmona 2018: 47). In addition to this, it has to be noted that public spaces often show a particular rhythm of use (Worpole and Knox 2007: 4). For instance, adults usually frequent a town center at lunchtime, while young adults and teens usually occupy the same space in the evening to eat and drink (Worpole and Knox 2007: 5). Similarly, a specific event such as a concert can influence the use of a public space and its visitors (Worpole and Knox 2007: 5). Moreover, the time of the year or the weather influence the way in which a public space is used and by whom (Worpole and Knox 2007: 5). As Peter G. Goheen (1998: 479) claims in his paper, public spaces are, thus, created by people as they express their attitudes towards them and use them for their own purposes. In fact, certain public spaces are only created for the

people's enjoyment and would not exist otherwise (Goheen 1998: 487). The values or importance of a specific public space are, therefore, not created by policies or official records but are created by the use or enjoyment of its visitors (Goheen 1998: 493). Consequently, as people's interests and habits of using public spaces change over time, the values, importance and norms within public spaces are continuously adapting to the people's use of public spaces. For instance, the types and functions of public spaces have changed from bringing together political, social and symbolic contexts during the pre-industrial era to "single-minded places" which serve as traffic, aesthetic or recreational functions (Garcia 2011: 440). In general, it can be claimed that public spaces have changed over time and will continue to change. Hence, public spaces are not fixed and stable entities, but are co-produced and constantly changing places dependent on the people's individual needs and interests, the weather, the season or specific events (Worpole and Knox 2007: 8). Regardless of their specific purposes or the people they attract, public spaces have a great importance in today's society.

The reason for the significance of public spaces is based on the "people's attachment" to a specific locality (Worpole and Knox 2007: 5). Public spaces provide opportunities for social interaction and acceptance and offer a chance to escape from problems in private spaces (Worpole and Knox 2007: 5f). Others appreciate the therapeutic benefits of spending quiet time in a public space (Worpole and Knox 2007: 2). The benefits of public spaces, thus, have a vital role in the social life of most people (Worpole and Knox 2007: 1). Unfortunately, there are also negative aspects which need to be considered while discussing public spaces. A major concern regarding public spaces is the fact that not everybody is seen as equal in public spaces (Worpole and Knox 2007: 8). As Petra L. Doan highlights in her paper (2010: 635) public space is gendered which leads to the exercising of power and consequently, to the oppression of certain groups of people. The gendering of public spaces entails gendered expectations which can have "painful consequences for many individuals" (Doan 2010: 635). On the one hand, transgendered and gender-variant people suffer from the gendered division of public spaces as they do not conform to the existing gender dichotomy and thus, are often discriminated or harassed (Doan 2010: 635, 640ff). On the other hand, the gendering of public spaces has profound consequences on women (Doan 2010: 635). As gender describes what kind of activities are "possible, acceptable, or even safe within" specific public spaces, gender has an important role regarding the creation of specific gender norms (Doan 2010: 649; Pelzelmayer et al. 2020: 2). Moreover, Metropolis (2018: 9) claims that the threat of becoming sexually harassed in public spaces hinders numerous women in benefiting from the

opportunities which public spaces offer and thus, prevent them in their rights "to be equal citizens". Hence, the lack of safety which women face in public spaces often excludes women from using certain spaces and thus, creates a gendered power imbalance in public spaces which disadvantages women (Metropolis 2018: 5, 10). In addition to this, Pelzelmayer et al. (2020: 2f) claim in their paper that certain public spaces are differently appropriated by men and women based on existing gender roles, which further highlights the significance of gender in the discussions regarding public space.

However, gender is not the only factor which decides how public spaces are appropriated as age influences the appropriation of public spaces, too. As Sara Landolt argues (in print: 2), the appropriation of space often involves a restructuring of societal norms and power structures. As young people tend to use certain public spaces differently than older people, some people might become afraid of being displaced (Landolt in print: 5). Consequently, adults try to maintain the 'adult' order in public spaces by installing monitoring systems and thus, by exercising power over younger people (Landolt in print: 5). Hence, young people are often not seen as equal users in public spaces and are hindered in easily accessing specific public spaces (Landolt in print: 5). This coincides with the claims that certain people and their intentions of using a space are not always welcomed in specific public spaces and are consequently displaced (Worpole and Knox 2007: 8). Thus, it can be argued that public spaces are often accompanied by power structures which lie at the root for discrimination towards specific groups of people. As outlined above, especially young people, women and transgender people suffer from the power imbalance which exists in public spaces. Hence, this inequality often negatively affects certain users of public spaces. One negative effect of this power inequality in public spaces can be seen based on the frequent occurrence of sexual harassment towards young women.

2.2 Sexual Harassment

This chapter will outline what is generally seen as sexual harassment and illustrate the short-term and long-term consequences which the issue can have on women. Moreover, it will be illustrated to what degree sexual harassment in public spaces is normalized and how this normalization began. As will be highlighted in the following chapters, the risk of being harassed in certain public spaces is higher than in others. Consequently, this chapter will further focus on two specific public spaces in which sexual harassment frequently tends to occur. In addition to this, it will be discussed how women not only perceive sexual harassment differently but also have different reactions to experiences of sexual harassment.

2.2.1 Sexual Harassment – Definitions

Sexual harassment is not a new phenomenon, as it has probably been a problem since society's existence (Berdahl and Raver 2011: 641). However, the public only recently "recognized it as a problem in need of intervention", which might lead to the misguided notion that sexual harassment is a recent phenomenon (Berdahl and Raver 2011: 641). It was only forty years ago that it was publicly recognized as a problem which needs intervention (Berdahl and Raver 2011: 641). Fiona Vera-Gray and Liz Kelly (2020: 8f) argue in their paper that it was only during the 1970s that key feminist texts started to create awareness for the frequent harassment towards women. Consequently, the term 'sexual harassment' was originally developed in the United States in the 1970s in order to create public awareness for the problem (Pina et al. 2009: 127). Although sexual harassment is still studied today by numerous researchers and scholars, they have not managed to create a definition which is universally accepted (Pina et al. 2009: 127). A reason for this is that it is almost impossible to define specific behavior which clearly indicates sexual harassment (Pina et al. 2009: 127). For instance, sexual comments or sexual banter can be harassing, but they do not have to be based on the receiver's personal view (Pina et al. 2009: 127). Moreover, scholars have not yet agreed whether sexism represents a form of sexual harassment or whether it should be classified differently (Pina et al. 2009: 127). However, scholars argue that "practically all legal definitions" of sexual harassment include the notion of unwantedness as a main criterion (Maass et al. 2013: 341). Additionally, a working definition of sexual harassment which is frequently accepted defines it as a form of discrimination which includes unwanted verbal or physical advances, sexual coercion and hostility towards members of one gender (Johnson et al. 2018: 13f). Regardless of the fact that there is no universal definition of it, sexual harassment is a problem which is experienced by women around the globe (Madan and Nalla 2016: 81). Although both men and women can be victims of sexual harassment, women are more likely to experience this form of discrimination (Street et al. 2007: 465). While a remarkable amount of research has been done on sexual harassment in private spaces, the public space only recently gained attention in research regarding sexual harassment (Madan and Nalla 2016: 80).

Sexual harassment can happen in any public space such as streets, restaurants, universities or on public transportation (Madan and Nalla 2016: 81). Although systematic research about sexual harassment in public spaces is still "largely absent", scholars and the evidence which is available so far argue that the problem is more common than previously assumed and

possibly the most pervasive form of sexual harassment (Hoel and Vartia 2018: 33). This form of harassment is, in fact, extremely common, as majority of women experience sexual harassment in a public space at least once in their lives (Fileborn 2019: 223). For instance, surveys in Britain reveal that 85% of women between the ages of 18-24 have received unwanted sexual attention and 45 % of them have already experienced unwanted physical contact in a public space (Hoel and Vartia 2018: 33). According to a Swedish study, restaurants and clubs seem to be those public spaces in which sexual harassment occurs the most (Hoel and Vartia 2018: 33). As a consequence, academic literature recently started to focus on sexual harassment which takes place in presence of other people, "in many cases a crowd of people" (Hoel and Vartia 2018: 34). These crowded conditions are often exploited on public transportation, as it is difficult to see what is happening or for others to intervene (Hoel and Vartia 2018: 35). However, there are other factors besides crowded conditions which could increase the likelihood of an occurrence of sexual harassment (Hoel and Vartia 2018: 35f). In case an offense happens in a bar, pub or club, the high level of noise and the increased level of alcohol consumption combined with the aforementioned crowded condition increase the risk of an occurrence (Hoel and Vartia 2018: 36). Compared to sexual harassment in private spaces, offenders in public places are usually unknown to the victim (Hoel and Vartia 2018: 34). Regardless of whether the perpetuator is known or unknown to the victim, sexual harassment in a public space can have severe consequences on the victim (Hoel and Vartia 2018: 36).

2.2.2 Consequences of Sexual Harassment

It is undeniable that sexual harassment can have serious negative impacts on the victim (Maass et al. 2013: 346). Not only the mental health but also the physical health is often negatively affected by sexual harassment (Maass et al. 2013: 346). Although not every woman reacts in the same way to experiences of sexual harassment, it often causes pain and suffering as victims perceive sexual harassment as "annoying, offensive, upsetting, humiliating, intimidating, embarrassing, stressful, and frightening" (Burn 2019: 96). Moreover, it is argued that sexual harassment is linked to depression and anxiety (Welsh 1999: 183). Negative consequences in regards to physical health include "stressrelated psychosomatic symptoms such as headache, nausea, shortness of breath, fatigue, gastro-intestinal problems, sleeplessness, loss of appetite, and weight-loss" (Maass et al. 2013: 346). Typical mental health issues which are caused by sexual harassment are emotional exhaustion, anger, anxiety or depression (Maass et al. 2013: 346). Fear and diminished feelings of safety are

further frequent consequences of being harassed in a public space (Hoel and Vartia 2018: 36). This reduced feeling of safety consequently directs women to establish strategies of adaptation or circumventing (Monqid 2012: 113). For instance, certain victims might "voluntarily restrict or change their movement" by taking a different route or using another mode of transportation to avoid possible encounters with perpetrators (Hoel and Vartia 2018: 36). In addition to this, sexual harassment on streets often leads to women wanting to be accompanied while residing in a public space (Monqid 2012: 112). Apart from the specific location in which sexual harassment happened, the frequency of the occurrences can drastically influence the severity of the consequences (Hoel and Vartia 2018: 36). For instance, frequent incidents of sexual harassment are often experienced as humiliating and can lead to self-blame (Hoel and Vartia 2018: 36). However, the impact of sexual harassment "goes beyond the incident" as the fear of experiencing sexual offenses often leads to a higher fear for other crimes such as burglary, assault or robbery (Mellgren et al. 2018: 265). As a consequence, sexual harassment becomes a crime that women think about while they cogitate about the fears of other crimes (Mellgren et al. 2018: 265f). Thus, the threat of victimization does not only affect the direct victim but is able to terrify larger groups of women "regardless of individual victimization experiences" (Mellgren et al. 2018: 266). In addition to this, the damage which women receive through experiencing sexual harassment in public spaces can be even more far reaching (House of Commons 2018: 3). As women often already have to experience sexual harassment at an early stage in their lives, it becomes normalized and teaches them to minimize "their experiences of abuse" (House of Commons 2018: 3). Experiencing occurrences of sexual harassment at an early age creates the message that women have to accept and endure sexual harassment as acceptable behavior in their daily lives (House of Commons 2018: 3). This minimization of experiencing sexual harassment can have a "wider effect on society" as it contributes to a culture which excuses a form of oppression (House of Commons 2018: 3). As a consequence of this acceptance and normalization of sexual harassment in public spaces, the House of Commons (2018: 3) claims that women are kept unequal to men. Therefore, sexual harassment does not only negatively affect the individuals who are victims of an occurrence of sexual harassment, but also creates a gender inequality which is prevalent in most societies. Consequently, multiple governments are focusing on diminishing the occurrences of sexual harassment and the normalization of it to not only avoid direct negative consequences for the individual woman but also as a method of tackling sexual harassment as an issue of equality (House of Commons 2018: 3).

2.2.3 Normalization of Sexual Harassment in Public Spaces

As illustrated in the preceding paragraphs, sexual harassment towards women in public spaces is nothing extraordinary but rather something which happens on a frequent basis. While the consequences of sexual harassment are alarming, the frequency of the incidents is another unsettling fact. Certain places in which sexual harassment towards women occurs on a frequent basis are described by scholars as "sexualized social spaces" (Mellgren et al. 2018: 265). Typical examples for such places are usually different nightlife spaces such as nightclubs or bars (Mellgren et al. 2018: 265). For instance, a study in Ontario revealed that 75 % of randomly asked female bargoers have already experienced sexual harassment in the form of "touching or persistence" in a bar (Graham et al. 2017: 1419). Although numerous forms of sexual harassment in public spaces such as comments or wolf whistling are not felonious, the frequency of the incidents creates a cultural atmosphere in which sexual harassment is seen as normal (Kavanaugh 2013: 23). This existence of certain sexualized spaces in which sexual harassment regularly happens indicates a normalization of the issue (Mellgren et al. 2018: 265). This normalization of sexual harassment towards women can be further seen on the basis that numerous women are often unaware of the fact that they are experiencing sexual harassment as they have normalized their experience completely (Hoel and Vartia 2018: 34). In a similar sense, several people in a British poll argued that sexual harassment is simply a "part of a night out" (Hoel and Vartia 2018: 34). The fact that sexual harassment in public spaces, especially related to nightlife, are becoming the norm affects women (Mellgren et al. 2018: 272). On the one hand, the normalization of sexual harassment causes a feeling of degradation, disrespect and disappointment (Mellgren et al. 2018: 272). On the other hand, the normalization has caused women to either avoid certain places in order to not become victimized or to "deal with the situation themselves" (Mellgren et al. 2018: 272). The acceptance of sexual harassment as a normal part of certain public spaces diminishes the seriousness of the problem and, thus, hinders many women to report an incident to the police (Mellgren et al. 2018: 273). Therefore, direct incidents of sexual harassment are only one aspect which negatively affects numerous young women in today's society, while the normalization of sexual harassment is another worrying part of the discussion.

2.2.4 Spaces of Sexual Harassment

As mentioned above, sexual harassment towards women can happen in any public space and is not restricted to a few public spaces. However, there are a few public spaces in which sexual harassment tends to occur more frequently than in others. Streets, public transportation and

spaces associated with nightlife stand out in the frequency of occurrences of sexual harassment and thus, simultaneously in their normalization of sexual harassment. Whereas sexual harassment on streets usually includes minor forms such as whistling or sexual comments, public transportation and nightlife spaces are often spaces of more severe forms of sexual harassment. As a consequence, a detailed analysis of both public transportation and nightlife spaces is necessary for this thesis.

2.2.4.1 Sexual Harassment on Public Transportation

A public space in which sexual harassment frequently occurs is public transportation. For instance, a study in Bangladesh reveals that 84% of Bangladeshi women have experienced "staring, deliberate touching, groping" or sexual comments while using public transportation (Mazumder and Pokharel 2018: 1). On the one hand, overcrowding conditions on public transportation are often seen as a suitable condition for harassers as it is easy for them to claim that physical contact was not intentional (Gautam et al. 2019: 110). On the other hand, however, empty trains might provide the opportunity for perpetrators to sexually harass others without having to fear any possible witnesses (Mazumder and Pokharel 2018: 1). The fact that numerous individuals use public transportation as an access to work, university or free time activities adds to the severity of the problem (Gautam et al. 2019: 106; ITF 2018: 8). The potential of being sexually harassed on public transportation is seen as a threat and, thus, endangers many women who depend on these options to access "all of life's opportunities" (ITF 2018: 8). Moreover, these threats do not only occur in developing countries but also in wealthy nations. Consequently, sexual harassment in public spaces is a universal problem which requires "global action" (ITF 2018: 8). One of these wealthy nations which is affected is Switzerland. The Swiss public transport is extremely popular and the demand is constantly increasing (VÖV 2016: 6). For instance, the number of passenger journeys in 2014 was over 35% higher compared to 2004 (VÖV 2016: 6). A study revealed that 46% of 4358 women above the age of 16 have already experienced a form of sexual harassment while using a public transportation system in Switzerland (GFS.BERN 2019: 12). Moreover, the study further revealed that sexual harassment on public transportation is especially common among younger women between the ages of 16 and 39, as 53 % of them have experienced sexual harassment on a train (GFS.BERN 2019: 13). Thus, the high risk of experiencing sexual harassment on Swiss public transportation for young women emphasizes the importance of analyzing public transportation regarding the normalization of public spaces.

2.2.4.2 Sexual Harassment and Nightlife

Other public spaces which are frequently associated with sexual harassment are nightlife spaces. As mentioned by Kavanaugh (2013: 21), bars and clubs are extremely sexualized places. As Gunby et al. state in their paper (2020: 3), the experience of sexual harassment in the form of groping or unwanted comments is a key feature of time spent in nightlife venues. For instance, a study by Thompson and Cracco revealed that close to 80% of 264 American male college students admitted to have grabbed a woman's butt in a bar or party setting (Graham et al. 2017: 1420) Similar findings can be found in Britain. According to a survey of over 2000 female students between the ages of 18 and 24, 54 % reported having experienced a form of sexual harassment on a night out (Drinkaware 2016: par. 3). Among these 54 %, over half of them claimed that experiencing sexual harassment on a night out happens "most or every time they go out" (Drinkaware 2016: par. 3). Thus, experiencing sexual harassment while on a night out is nothing out of the ordinary for young women. According to Kavanaugh (2013: 21), the frequent occurrences of sexually harassing incidents such as touching, groping, attempts at coercion or verbal harassment in nightlife spaces can be traced back to the cultural atmosphere which surrounds nightlife. Gunby et al. (2020: 5) claim in their paper that it is now standard for most clubs and bars to "enforce sexualized norms of dress and behavior" through hiring attractive staff or using sexualized advertisements. As a consequence, gender differences are reinforced as women are positioned as "targets to be pursued" and clients are recruited on the promise of sexual interaction (Gunby et al. 2020: 5). Thus, nightlife spaces are frequently characterized as spaces in which femininity and women are formed to conform to men's wishes about how they want femininity to be, namely subordinate to male's dominance (Gunby et al. 2020: 6). Based on these findings, it can be claimed that nightlife spaces are highly sexualized spaces which do not only stand out based on their high occurrences of sexual harassment but also based on the way in which femininity is portrayed in them.

2.2.5 Risk Factors for Sexual Harassment

Although everyone could potentially become a victim of sexual harassment, there are certain people who are more likely to become victimized. In general, women are more likely to become a victim of sexual harassment than men. Laura Sheard (2011: 620) notes in her paper that women are becoming increasingly aware of their vulnerability in public spaces and the possible dangers within them. While certain behaviors or characteristics of a woman can potentially contribute to the risk of becoming victimized, "being there" is often enough to become a

possible victim for a woman (Sheard 2011: 621). Especially on a night out, there is still the assumption about women's sexual availability which already makes them vulnerable to sexual harassment (Sheard 2011: 621). However, while focusing on nightlife spaces, there are certain practices which could further increase the risk of becoming victimized. As Sheard mentions in her paper (2011: 622) not being vigilant while drinking on a night out can drastically increase the chance of becoming a victim of sexual harassment, as there is the chance that the drink is spiked. In addition to this, the absence of an escape route is another possible factor which could increase the risk of becoming victimized. As Nirmal Gautam, Nirmal Sapatoka, Sarala Shrestha and Dipika Regmi (2019: 106) claim in their paper, women often remain silent while being harassed because they are scared that this could lead to further harassment. However, while using public transportation, there is often not the choice to remove themselves from the situation as the women have to wait for their intended stop. Perpetrators are aware of the fact that it is difficult for victims to walk away from the situation, which explains the enormously high number of occurrences of sexual harassment on public transportation (Gautam et al. 2019: 106). Therefore, staying in a public space in which it is difficult to escape a possible situation of sexual harassment is another risk factor which could increase the likelihood of being harassed. Another topic which needs to be discussed while discussing risk factors of sexual harassment is clothing. There is a stereotypical belief by numerous people that women "invite their own rapes, sexual assaults, and sexual harassment by the manner in which they dress" (Lennon et al. 1993: 392). There are even courts who have held that women's choice of clothes welcomed sexual harassment or signified "implied consent to be sexually assaulted" (Lennon et al. 1993: 392). This can be based on the fact that both clothing and appearance are a form of communication in today's society (Lennon et al. 1993: 401). Unfortunately, appearance is a complex form of communication as its meaning can be interpreted differently depending on the social context and its observer (Lennon et al. 1993: 402f). As a consequence, some people falsely misinterpret women's sexual interest in them based on their clothing (Lennon et al. 1993: 404). Although it should be clear that a woman's choice of clothes is not an invitation for harassment, there is no doubt that women's clothing can increase the risk for harassment (Lennon et al. 1993: 404). Especially items such as tight jeans, a see-through blouse or low-cut tops are often interpreted by men as women's desire for sex (Lennon et al. 1993: 404). Therefore, regardless of women's actual intention in their choice of clothing, the way in which they choose to dress and appear in public spaces could be interpreted differently and consequently, increase the risk of becoming a victim of sexual harassment (Lennon et al. 1993: 404). Moreover, although every person can be a potential victim of sexual harassment, people

who threaten heterosexual male dominance are more likely to become a victim of sexual harassment (Burn 2019: 98). Examples of women who are under an increased risk to become a target are those in authority positions, feminists or sexual minorities (Burn 2019: 98). Thus, a woman's sexual orientation could potentially influence her experiences regarding sexual harassment in public spaces. Besides sexual orientation, race is another major aspect which needs to be discussed regarding factors which could increase women's risk of being harassed. These factors will be discussed in detail in the next chapter.

2.2.6 Intersectionality

As already mentioned in the preceding chapter of this thesis, certain women are more likely to experience sexual harassment than others. Women in a patriarchal culture do not only face disadvantages based on their gender, but discrimination is also "determined by intersectional systems of society, such as race, ethnicity, social class, and others" (Rosida and Rejeki 2017: 129). Regardless of this fact, most research focuses on white and heterosexual women while discussing sexual harassment (Welsh et al. 2006: 88). In contrast to this, sexual harassment in the LGBTQ community is extremely under-researched although some LGBTQ members experience heterosexist abuse specifically on account of their sexual orientation (Fileborn 2015: 1490, 1494). Moreover, there is still very little knowledge about how women of color experience sexual harassment, even though the issue might be even more problematic for them since it is "rooted in racial discrimination" (Richardson and Taylor 2009: 248f). Hence, most researchers do not include race or sexual orientation in their analyses about sexual harassment. However, as women's lives are constructed by "multiple, intersecting systems of oppression", an analysis of gender alone might be insufficient to fully understand the normalization of sexual harassment towards women (Carastathis 2014: 304f). Consequently, the concept of intersectionality has become the "predominant way" of outlining the relations which the multiple different forms of oppression have on women's identities (Carastathis 2014: 304). This "metaphor of intersecting categories of discrimination" was introduced and elaborated by Kimberlé Williams Crenshaw as a way to criticize the prevalent understandings in both law and social movement (Carastathis 2014: 305). However, the idea behind intersectionality had already been spread among several black feminists who analyzed the effect of race on women's oppression before Crenshaw established the term (Carastathis 2014: 305). Regardless of the origin of intersectionality, the term needs to be considered in an analysis of sexual harassment towards women. As Rannveig Sigurvinsdottir and Sarah E. Ullman (2016: 913f) claim in their paper, both race and sexual orientation of women greatly

influence the way and the amount of sexual harassment which they have to endure. For instance, homo- and bisexual women are "at greater risk for" sexual harassment than heterosexual women (Sigurvinsdottir and Ullman 2016: 914). In a similar sense, a woman's race can also be a risk factor regarding sexual harassment as women belonging to racial minorities are more likely to become sexually victimized (Sigurvinsdottir and Ullman 2016: 915). Furthermore, women of color are more likely to experience "severe forms of sexual harassment" than white women (Welsh et al. 2006: 89). Moreover, racial or sexual minorities tend to experience forms of sexual harassment which are specifically on account of their race or sexual orientation (Sigurvinsdottir and Ullman 2016: 913). For instance, women might have to endure sexual comments which are simultaneously homophobic or racist (Sigurvinsdottir and Ullman 2016: 914f). Hence, their experiences of sexual harassment are accompanied by concurrent discrimination based on race or sexual orientation (Richardson and Taylor 2009: 265). As a consequence, racial and sexual minorities are likely to experience sexual harassment differently than heterosexual and white women and might also respond to it differently (Sigurvinsdottir and Ullman 2016: 915; Richardson and Taylor 2009: 251, 255). Therefore, the social categorizations gender, race and sexual orientation "do not operate independently" but have to be viewed as intersecting forces (Richardson and Taylor 2009: 249). This coincides with Ashleigh Shelby Rosette et al.'s (2018: 3) statement that being both a woman and black is more than just "the sum of being a member of either category" as it creates an experience which is separate and apart from the originating categories. Consequently, women's experiences of sexual harassment strongly depend on both their race and sexual orientation.

2.2.7 Recognition of Sexual Harassment as a Problem

Although the normalization of sexual harassment in public spaces is alarming, there is reason for hope. Recently, sexual harassment has received more awareness through campaigns such as the # MeToo movement (Regulska 2018: 5). These awareness campaigns encourage women to share experiences of sexual harassment with the public to highlight the frequency of the problem and eventually, to stop or diminish sexual harassment (Bhattacharyya 2018: 4). The impacts of the # MeToo movement, for instance, have been far reaching and created worldwide solidarity among victims of sexual harassment (Thissen 2019: 5). As a direct consequence of the movement, hundreds of women have filed harassment complaints and thus, have broken the wall of silence which has surrounded the topic of sexual harassment for a long time (Thissen 2019: 5). For example, the number of complaints for sexual harassment

in France rose by 20% after the public began to focus on the problem (Thissen 2019: 6). However, while awareness campaigns and movements make the problem visible, they do not eliminate the problem of sexual harassment (Thissen 2019: 40). Consequently, the # MeToo movement was mainly praised for the debates which it caused and the potential for social change and not necessarily for stopping or preventing sexual harassment (Thissen 2019: 46f). Nonetheless, such awareness campaigns have significantly contributed in the discussions regarding sexual harassment. One of these contributions is the increasing "emphasis on developing and implementing" prevention strategies regarding sexual harassment (Quigg et al. 2018: 7). Thus, as a consequence of the increasing awareness about the frequency of sexual harassment, prevention strategies which help in fighting the problem were developed. Although most prevention strategies focus on sexual harassment at the workplace, there are a few who aim at preventing sexual harassment in public spaces such as nightclubs (Quigg et al. 2018: 1). One such strategy which seems to be effective is the offering of programs which try to change cultural and social gender roles (Quigg et al. 2018: 7). Therefore, it can be noted that awareness campaigns such as the # MeToo movement might not be able to stop the existence of sexual harassment, however, their contribution in stopping the normalization of the issue by breaking the wall of silence surrounding sexual harassment are undeniable.

2.2.8 Women's Reaction to Sexual Harassment

As the existence of sexual harassment movements demonstrates, incidents of sexual harassment are, despite the seriousness of their consequences, often something which goes unpunished (Garrett and Hassan 2019: 1). For instance, according to the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, only one out of four victims of sexual violence report the incident (Garrett and Hassan 2019: 1). The main reasons for not reporting sexual violence are shame, denial of the occurrence and fear of the possible consequences (Garrett and Hassan 2019: 1). Similar to sexual violence, any form of sexual harassment is only reported by few victims (Wasti and Cortina 2002: 395). Thus, instead of reporting the incident, most victims respond to sexual harassment by relying on support of friends or family members (Wasti and Cortina 2002: 396). In a similar sense, instead of reporting an incident of sexual harassment, women tend to avoid certain routes or train carriages on their way home or they wear headphones to avoid verbal harassment (House of Commons 2018: 3). Moreover, scholars argue that coping with sexually harassing behavior "varies with context or culture" (Wasti and Cortina 2002: 394). Gender roles and different values often define whether victims of harassment respond to an incident by confronting the perpetrator, denying the incident or

blaming themselves (Wasti and Cortina 2002: 402ff). The strategy of ignoring or avoiding a possible conflict is often chosen by women as they are scared that the harassment could become worse if they confront the harasser (Gautam et al. 2019: 106). Thus, although sexual harassment is never acceptable, women are often forced to endure it for their own safety (House of Commons 2018: 3f).

2.2.9 Patriarchal Structures and Sexual Harassment

A question which arises while discussing sexual harassment is why it is still happening in today's society. Women's abuse, including sexual harassment, is frequently blamed on the existence of patriarchal cultures (Ademiluka 2018: 339). While patriarchy originally referred to the position of a father in a household, it is now used as a term to describe male dominance over women (Ademiluka 2018: 340). As a consequence of these gender inequalities, males tend to be better positioned in economic, political and social hierarchies (United Nations 2015: 162). Although numerous organizations and "national strategy statements" focused on the reduction of gender inequality in the last years, gender differences have remained as characteristic of most societies (United Nations 2015: 162). The individuals within any social structure create inequalities linked to differences such as race, religion or class (Becker 1999: 23). Another inequality which people experience in today's society is based on sex (Becker 1999: 23). For instance, there is still the belief among many individuals in the United States that only white men "are fully human" (Becker 1999: 23). As a consequence, such belief leads to a society which is "male-centered, male-identified" and male-dominated (Becker 1999: 24). Such a society is called patriarchy. It has to be mentioned that it is not the goal of a patriarchy to oppress women, however, as a consequence of the aforementioned elements of a patriarchy, such a society "will inevitably value masculinity and masculine traits over femininity and feminine traits" (Becker 1999: 24f). Furthermore, women are often used to define masculinity and men in a patriarchal society (Becker 1999: 27). For instance, women are seen as trophies which signal "a man's success against and to other men" or women assuage male egos (Becker 1999: 27). Another defining aspect of patriarchy is the role of women regarding the topic of sexuality. In patriarchies, women are seen as objects, while men are seen as sexual subjects (Becker 1999: 28). This theme of seeing women as sexual objects rather than subjects points to the widespread male sexual abuse of women (Becker 1999: 37). Moreover, patriarchy can lead to a different perception of the same event. For instance, a woman who was raped by a man experienced the event as rape, while some men would simply describe it as a date (Becker 1999: 41). This difference in gender equality is one of the main reasons why

women have to experience sexual harassment so frequently. As suggested by Pina et el. (2009: 129), the hierarchical superiority of men over women is frequently mentioned as being one of the main reasons for the occurrences of sexual harassment towards women. As sexual harassment is an extreme violation of rights, but nonetheless occurs to such a frequent degree towards women, it endangers the goal for females' equality (Srivastata et al. 2017: 112). Srivastata et al. (2017: 111f) argue in their paper that it is necessary to fight and eliminate patriarchy and the male domination over women, which still exist to a certain degree in most societies, to stop or diminish the oppression in form of sexual harassment towards them. Therefore, experiencing patriarchy is something which numerous women still have to experience in today's society in form of sexual harassment in public spaces (Hlavka 2014: 1). As patriarchy is a social system in which "we all participate", it is, thus, important to not individualize responsibilities and recognize that collective efforts are necessary to overcome patriarchy (Neuenfeldt 2015: 20). Hence, women and men need to collaboratively create "a movement of resistance" which challenges today's social system and thus, tries to dismantle any inequalities which are based on an individual's gender (Neuenfeldt 2015: 20f).

2.2.10 Heteronormativity

Besides the normalization of sexual harassment towards women, patriarchal societies oppress women in other ways. One of them, which is closely linked to sexual harassment, is the bias of compulsory heterosexuality. The bias of compulsory heterosexuality leads to the perception of lesbian sexuality as abhorrent or deviant (Rich 1980: 632). This compulsory heterosexuality reinforces women's sexual subordination to men (Hlavka 2014: 3). Enforcing heterosexuality on women is one way through which male power is manifested and maintained (Rich 1980: 640). This subordination of women is closely connected to the patriarchal culture "that normalizes and often encourages male power and aggression" (Hlavka 2014: 3). Another aspect which reinforces women's sexual subordination to men is heteronormativity (Hlavka 2014: 3). The term heteronormativity includes the presumptions that there are only two sexes and that people of opposite sexes need to be attracted to one another (Kitzinger 2005: 478). This heteronormativity states that heterosexuality is privileged, natural and normal (Martin 2009: 190). As heterosexuality is normalized, it can be argued that heteronormativity contributes to the normalization of sexual harassment towards women, as it is seen as normal for men to be attracted to women (Martin 2009: 190). Moreover, heteronormative discourses normally link female sexuality to passivity and submissiveness (Hlavka 2014: 3). As a result, traditional gender roles and beliefs are reinforced which state that women are the gender which

should be submissive (Hlavka 2014: 3). The two different terms interact and influence each other in such a way that men's sexual aggression is normalized under the presumption that boys are simply being boys (Hlavka 2014: 3).

2.2.11 Perception of Sexual Harassment

Another aspect which needs to be considered in the discussion of sexual harassment towards women is the individual perception of sexual harassment which each woman has towards the topic. In fact, it is not possible to always categorize specific actions or comments as sexually harassing or not sexually harassing. While a certain behavior might be considered as harassment by some, others perceive it as complimentary (di Gennaro and Ritschel 2019: 1). As a consequence, it is, for instance, difficult to draw an exact line between a compliment and a catcall (di Gennaro and Ritschel 2019: 1). A compliment is defined as a speech act which "explicitly or implicitly attributes credit to someone other than the speaker" and is positively valued by both the speaker and the hearer (Holmes 1986: 485). Catcalls, by contrast, are defined as "the use of crude language, verbal expression, and non-verbal expression that takes place in public areas such as streets, sidewalks, or busstops" (Chhun 2011: 276). While it is possible that a catcall can be perceived as a compliment, the majority of hearers do not value a catcall positively (di Gennaro and Ritschel 2019: 3f). Another distinction between a compliment and a catcall is that the former is usually uttered to friends or acquaintances while the latter is addressed to strangers in a public setting (di Gennaro and Ritschel 2019: 5). Therefore, whether a certain action or utterance is perceived as complimentary or harassing depends on both the social context in which it is uttered and on the receiver. Moreover, it has to be mentioned that there are also gender differences in the perceptions of sexual harassment. As mentioned by Rotundo et al. (2001: 914) in their paper, women tend to perceive "a broader range of behaviors as harassing". For instance, women are more likely than men to experience sexual touching as a form of harassment (Rotundo et al. 2001: 920). In addition to this, while women are more likely to view physical sexual contact as a threat, men often see it as a form of compliment (Rotundo et al. 2001: 920). Similarly, men do not tend to perceive sexual jokes or comments as a form of harassment, whereas women often experience them as sexually harassing (Rotundo et al. 2001: 920). However, men and women seem to generally agree that sexual coercion or sexual propositions represent forms of sexual harassment (Rotundo et al. 2001: 920). Therefore, two aspects need to be considered while discussing the perceptions of sexual harassment. Firstly, it might often be the case that women feel sexually harassed, uncomfortable or uneasy due to an action which was perceived as

harmless by the 'harasser'. Secondly, while certain actions or comments might be experienced as harassing by some women, others might actually perceive them as flattering, depending on the context. Consequently, it is important to not generalize certain actions without considering the woman's perception towards them.

3 Methodology

As this research tries to understand and explain the phenomenon of the normalization of sexual harassment instead of measuring the frequency of the occurrences, qualitative data is better suited to the analysis than quantitative data (Ryan et al. 2009: 309). Moreover, qualitative approaches are preferred for this thesis based on their ability to analyze data "making an allowance for participants' social life" (Alshenqeeti 2014: 39). The fact that social life highly influences the choice to stay in specific public spaces justifies the use of a qualitative data collection method for this research. A commonly used method to collect qualitative data which reveals "participants' experiences, views and beliefs" are interviews (Ryan et al. 2009: 309). Interviews are usually defined as conversations with the purpose to gather information (Berg 2001: 66). There are three major types of interviews which are commonly used in qualitative research, namely standardized, semi-standardized and unstandardized interviews (Ryan et al. 2009: 310). Semi-standardized interviews, also called semi-structured interviews, are located between the completely standardized and completely unstandardized interviews (Berg 2001: 70). While semi-structured interviews usually implement a certain amount of predetermined questions, they offer a flexible approach to the interview process and thus, permit the inclusion of unanticipated issues and answers of the interviewees (Ryan et al. 2009: 310; Berg 2001: 70). Thus, the prepared questions are usually asked in a structured way, however, the flexibility of the semi-standardized interview allows the exploration of spontaneous issues which appear throughout the interview (Berg 2001: 70, Ryan et al. 2009: 310). The use of semi-structured interviews while discussing sexual harassment is based on the psychological fact that matters regarding sexual harassment can often cause pain or suffering (Burn 2019: 96). Consequently, a certain flexibility is necessary in order to respond to unanticipated issues or even emotions. At the same time the interviews should not be completely open to focus on the research questions and the sub questions.

3.1 Sampling

This chapter will outline which part of the population was considered as suitable for the interviews and justify the selection of the target population.

3.1.1 Sampling - Gender

In most researches, it is not possible to study an entire population due to the lack of human resources, high expenses, or population dispersion (Naderifar et al. 2017: 1). In such cases, it is preferred to study "only a part of the population" (Naderifar et al. 2017: 1). As it is not possible

to get data from every person who has experienced sexual harassment, a sample needs to be selected (Taherdoost 2016: 18). A first step which has to be conducted in the sampling process is to define the target population for this research (Taherdoost 2016: 19f). One aspect which influences the choice of the target population are gender differences related to sexual harassment. Although both men and women can be targets of sexual harassment, women are more likely to be victimized (Street et al. 2007: 464). Moreover, women are not only the main target of sexual harassment regarding incidence but also in terms of legal charges (Maass et al. 2013: 344). For instance, a study from 2012 in the United States revealed that 84% of all sexual harassment charges in the US were filed by women (Maass et al. 2013: 344). Moreover, the perception of sexual harassment differs between women and men (Zimbroff 2007: 1316). Most researchers argue that there is a gender difference, as women are more likely "than men to consider a given behavior harassing" (Zimbroff 2007: 1316). As a consequence of these facts, the target population for this thesis has been reduced in a first step to women. The next deciding factor which influenced the possible participants for this research is age.

3.1.2 Sampling - Age

A US national study on sexual harassment and assault from 2019 reconfirmed the findings of earlier surveys that sexual harassment is still a widespread problem which negatively affects women's lives across all age groups (UC San Diego Center on Gender Equity and Health 2019: 10). However, the representative surveys of 1182 women indicate that sexual harassment towards women varies by age (UC San Diego Center on Gender Equity and Health 2019: 23). As the participants were asked about experiences of sexual harassment, it was expected that older people were more likely to have experienced sexual harassment than younger respondents (UC San Diego Center on Gender Equity and Health 2019: 22). Surprisingly, women in the oldest category (65 and older) reported experiencing the lower prevalence of incidents of sexual harassment than younger women (UC San Diego on Gender Equity and Health 2019: 23). Based on these findings, this research focuses on younger women who are more likely to experience sexual harassment and thus, are more likely to contribute to the discussion of the normalization of the issue. In addition to this, the fact that spaces associated with nightlife are common places where sexual harassment is normalized influenced the choice of the participants' age. Nightlife spaces are usually the spaces of the youth and thus, more likely to be visited by younger people. In addition to this, the target group of most nightclubs and bars are people between the ages of 18 and 25 (Skinner et al. 2005: 115). Thus, it was decided to focus on younger women for this thesis. As 18 is the age where

people become adults and are allowed to visit most clubs, this age was used as the required minimum age for this thesis. The maximum age was set at 30, as those people still regularly visit clubs. Moreover, it facilitated the acquisition of sufficient number of participants if the maximum age was set at 30 instead of focusing on people who are not older than 25 years old.

3.1.3 Sampling - Intersectionality

As outlined in the state of art, there are multiple factors which could potentially influence the experiences of sexual harassment such as ethnicity, sexual orientation, education or income (Rosida and Rejeki 2017: 129f). This thesis focuses on the two factors ethnicity and sexual orientation and does not include income or education. Sexual harassment in public spaces is mainly carried out by people who are unknown to the victim. Thus, it seems unlikely that a stranger could guess someone's degree of education or their income based on simple appearance. However, it is possible to guess someone's ethnicity based on skin color or other physical characteristics. In a similar sense, two women holding hands in public or kissing is a strong indication that they might not be heterosexual. Therefore, adhering to the principle of intersectionality, this thesis also includes women who belong to a sexual or ethnic minority.

3.1.4 Sampling - Research Area

As the problem of sexual harassment differs between countries and cultures, it was decided to focus on citizens of a single country. As a consequence, it was decided by the interviewer to only interview women who have lived in Switzerland for a few years and are thus, able to have an opinion about the normalization of sexual harassment towards young women in Switzerland.

3.2 Sample Size

After having defined the target population, it is necessary to determine the sample size. A sample needs to be of adequate size to avoid any biases (Taherdoost 2016: 23). In a quantitative study, power calculations can be used to determine the necessary sample size which is adequate for an analysis (Malterud et al. 2015: 1). However, there is no similar standard to determine the sample size for qualitative interview studies (Malterud et al. 2015: 1). A first factor which influences the number of participants for a suitable analysis is the broadness of the research (Malterud et al. 2015: 4). As this research has narrowed down the possible interview partners based on their gender, age and their place of residence, fewer participants are needed for an adequate analysis than for a study with a broader aim (Malterud

et al. 2015: 4). Moreover, a successful analysis is not only dependent on the number of participants but also on the quality of their distributions (Malterud et al. 2015: 7). The more relevant information the sample holds for the actual study and its analysis, the fewer people need to be interviewed (Malterud et al. 2015: 7). Thus, the number of participants for an adequate analysis is closely connected to the usefulness of the actual data which is gathered from the interviews. As a consequence, there is no direct answer to the question of how many interviews should be conducted for an adequate analysis (Baker and Edwards 2012: 5). However, scholars argue that a sample of 20 is a reasonable number for a thesis which takes place over two semesters (Becker and Edwards 2012: 10). Based on these findings, it was decided that a sample of 20 is a reasonable number of interviews for this research. However, this number was seen as a guideline which could be increased in case if the information which was gathered from the interviews was seen as insufficient for an adequate analysis.

3.3 Snowball Sampling

Regarding the sampling process, it is important to decide whether the sampling for this research should be performed with probability sampling methods or nonprobability sampling methods (Naderifar et al. 2017: 1). As most researchers argue that nonprobability sampling is preferred in qualitative research, this sampling method was chosen for this research as well (Naderifar et al. 2017: 2). In more detail, the convenience sampling was used for this research, which allows the inclusion of members of the population "who are available to the researcher" (Naderifar et al. 2017: 2). One example of convenience sampling which was used for this research are passer-bys on the street (Naderifar et al. 2017: 2). Three out of the 20 participants agreed to participate in an interview as they were asked while walking on a street in a market area. Snowball sampling, which is another method of the convenience sampling, was used to find the majority of the people (Naderifar et al. 2017: 2). Snowball sampling is generally used if it seems difficult to find enough participants for a study (Naderifar et al. 2017: 2). As sexual harassment is a topic which not everyone is comfortable discussing with a stranger, it might be difficult to access enough women who are willing to participate in this study. In the snowball sampling method, existing study subjects "recruit further subjects among their acquaintances" (Naderifar et al. 2017: 2). Thus, a few interviews were done with friends and family members to get familiar with the role as an interviewer in such a precarious discussion topic. As the interviewer is biased and behaves differently in interviews if he knows the participants, those interviews were not used for the analysis. However, those study subjects recruited other participants for the study. Using this chain method to find participants for this research has

different benefits. On the one hand, it was a cost-effective method of finding willing participants who would otherwise be more difficult to find (Naderifar et al. 2017: 2). On the other hand, the fact that the participants are linked to the test sample and the test sample is linked to the researcher helps to create an atmosphere which creates better communication (Naderifar et al. 2017: 2). In addition to this, people are more likely to talk about uncomfortable topics to an unfamiliar person in order to prevent a loss of identity in front of family members or friends (Naderifar et al. 2017: 2).

3.4 Anonymizing Data

Before the interviews were conducted, the participants were informed and assured that the collected data will be anonymized and treated confidentially. The term anonymity is a form of confidentiality and implies that participants' identities will be kept a secret (Saunders et al. 2015: 617). Ideally, no participant should be traceable from the data which is presented in the thesis about them (Saunders et al. 2015: 617). Thus, the interviewed women were affirmed that the recordings of the interviews will only be heard by the researcher and only used to transcribe. Moreover, locations, places or names were disguised in the transcripts in forms of random acronyms to maximize the participants' anonymity (Saunders et al. 2015: 617). However, scholars argue that participants should be informed that even the use of pseudonyms does not guarantee complete confidentiality, since life stories or certain narratives can be linked to a specific person (Allmark et al. 2009: 51). Therefore, every interviewed woman was informed that, although the data was anonymized and treated confidentially, there is an extremely small chance of being identified.

3.5 Interviewer's Over-Involvement

Another ethical issue which needs to be considered regarding interviews is the potential over-involvement or dual role of the interviewer and researcher (Allmark et al. 2009: 50). Although qualitative interviews are conducted with the intention to gather information, they sometimes involuntarily become a form of therapy (Allmark et al. 2009: 50). In a similar vein, the researcher might take on a dual role "as a scientist and therapist" (Allmark et al. 2009: 50). In more detail, a researcher usually conducts interviews to obtain good quality material, however, "in order to draw out the participant", techniques of counselling might be used to increase the chance of receiving useful information (Allmark et al. 2009: 50). In addition to this, a certain degree of sensitivity is required while talking about sexual harassment. Victims perceive sexual harassment as intimidating, stressful, frightening or humiliating and thus, talking about such

manners might cause stress and pain (Burn 2019: 96). As a consequence, it is both necessary and desirable to be involved to a certain degree with the participants' emotions and thus, accept the role of a surrogate therapist (Allmark et al. 2009: 50). This means that a certain flexibility, spontaneity and consideration is a necessity for successful interviews. In the case that a woman seems visible uncomfortable about a certain topic, the subject should be changed and the participant should not feel pressured. Moreover, it is also possible that an interview has to be cancelled. In addition to this, the researcher should be able to read between the lines and decide whether it is appropriate to ask a follow-up question or not.

3.6 Role of the Interviewer

The primary goal of qualitative interviews is to understand the research area from the participants' point of view (Alby and Fatigante 2014: 239). As a consequence, an interviewer tries to develop meaning based on the subject's experiences or stories (Alby and Fatigante 2014: 240). Thus, the researcher is not simply asking questions, but is rather engaged in a conversation that "unfolds moment by moment" and is directed toward an institutional end (Alby and Fatigante 2014: 240). In these conversations, the interviewer has to stay neutral so as not to influence the respondents (Alby and Fatigante 2014: 241). This might be difficult while discussing sexual harassment. As has been discussed, in most occurrences of sexual harassment women are victimized by male perpetrators. Thus, a male researcher who interviews 20 female participants about their experiences regarding sexual harassment might be tempted to respond to possible generalizations about men. However, scholars recommend interviewers in structured and semi-structured interviews to refrain from disclosing personal opinions or perspectives in order to not influence the data with the interviewer's subjectivity (Alby and Fatigante 2014: 240). This should, however, not imply that an interviewer's subjectivity is not present during the interviews and influences the participants' answers in one way or another. However, this means that an interviewer should never judge or devalue a statement which differs from his or her personal views. These findings are supported by the arguments that interviewers should keep their interruptions to a minimum to let interviewees elaborate or explain as freely as possible (Alsaawi 2014: 152f). Therefore, in order to successfully obtain useful data while interviewing women about an upsetting topic such as sexual harassment, two major things are required from the researcher. On the one hand, the researcher is supposed to obtain interviews rich in data by asking relevant questions at the correct time. On the other hand, however, the interviewer needs to accept his dual role and prioritize the participants comfortableness over the intention to gather relevant data.

3.7 Planning of the Interviews

As mentioned in the preceding paragraphs, the snowball method was mainly used as a way of finding suitable and interested interview partners. Therefore, an initial contact by phone or in person which serves to see the participants' willingness and availability for the interviews was done by family members and friends and not the researcher himself (Bolderston 2012: 69). Firstly, the family members and friends thought about people who belong in the defined group of women between the ages of 18 and 30 and might be interested in participating. Afterwards, a text message was sent which asked them whether they were interested in participating as an interview partner for a master's thesis. Both the family members and friends informed the potential interview partners briefly about the topic of the interview. They were, thus, informed that the interviews will be about sexual harassment in public spaces, their experiences and their opinion about the topic. Moreover, all of the interviewees were informed that the interviewer is male and doing these interviews for his master's thesis. Sexual harassment is not a topic which every woman is comfortable discussing with a stranger, especially with someone of the opposite gender. Thus, to only select interview partners who are comfortable with the discussion topic and the fact that the interviewer is male, this relevant information was given prior to discussing further relevant information about the interviews. Afterwards, those women who showed interest were given further details about the interviews such as the estimated length of the interview (30 mins) and a date and time was discussed. As recommended by Bolderston (2012: 69) contact information was exchanged with certain participants in case the person had a change of heart about participating or needed to change the time or date of the interview. After having agreed for a date, time and location, the interviewer and the interviewee usually met for the face-to-face interview. However, due to the unexpected situation regarding COVID-19 and the government's recommendation to stay at home and limit social contact, a few remaining interviews had to be conducted remotely with the help of Skype or Microsoft Teams. Bolderston categorizes these types of interviews as internet interviews (2012: 68).

3.7.1 Setting of the Interviews

An aspect which should not be neglected regarding conducting qualitative interviews is the choice of the setting. The interviewer is supposed to provide an appropriate environment for the interviewee in which they feel relaxed and encouraged to talk freely. While a public space such as a restaurant or a coffee shop could usually be considered suitable for conducting interviews, it has to be considered that talking about experiences of sexual harassment is

extremely private and, consequently, not necessarily a topic to be discussed around strangers. As Amanda Bolderston (2012: 69) mentions in her paper, the interviews should be conducted in locations which are both convenient and comfortable for the participants. Therefore, the interviewer is supposed to respect the interviewees' wishes to either conduct them in a public or private setting, depending on the interviewee's individual wishes.

3.7.2 Internet Interviews

Online interviews make use of the potential of the internet as a useful tool for methodological research (Bolderston 2012: 68). As they are done remotely, the interviewer and the interviewee do not meet face-to-face, but rather have a conversation by using "online venues" such as Skype, Zoom or Teams (Bolderston 2012: 73). Doing interviews remotely can have several advantages (Bolderston 2012: 73). For instance, Bolderston (2012: 73) notes that being able to interview remote participants is both time- and cost-effective. Indeed, doing a few interviews remotely allowed this research to interview an interested participant who lives at the other end of the country. It would have been extremely unlikely that an interview would have occurred face-to-face with that woman as it would have been too time-consuming to meet in person. Moreover, doing interviews remotely allowed a certain flexibility and spontaneity which is often not possible with face-to-face interviews. For instance, it was easily possible for a few of the participants to use the time between classes for an interview. This would not have been possible with face-to-face interviews as it would have cost too much time to meet at a specific place. Moreover, Bolderston (2012: 73) notes that the reactive bias can be reduced if the interviews are done remotely. The reactivity bias states that participants of a study answer and behave differently if they are aware of the experimental conditions (Schlütz 2017: 1). Indeed, after having done a few interviews remotely, a difference in behavior can be seen between face-to-face interviews and remote interviews. It was notable that the participants in the remote interviews seemed to be more relaxed and spoke less reserved than in the face-to-face interviews. For instance, an interviewee was dressed in her pajamas while doing the interview remotely. It is safe to assume that she would have put on other clothes if we had met face-to-face. Moreover, several of the interviewees did not notice a change of the setting as they did the interviews. Most of the interviewees of the remote interviews were students who are, thus, used to listening to lectures or participating in an online class while sitting in front of their computers or laptops at home. Hence, while doing the remote interview, they did not experience a change of the setting as they did not have to meet in a coffee shop or at a private place but could do the interview from home. Bolderston (2012: 72) notes that this familiar

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environment which is enabled through remote interviews allows the participants to be more comfortable and truly express their opinions. However, there are also certain disadvantages about remote interviews which have to be mentioned. For instance, it is possible that participants are distracted or unfocused during the interviews as they have the opportunity to multitask and, for instance, use Facebook or check their emails while they are doing their interviews (Bolderston 2012: 73). Fortunately, this was not the case in the interviews which were done for this research, as all of the participants seemed interested in the discussion. Although there is no proof that they did not check their emails or use Facebook, all participants seemed active and no question had to be repeated because they were not paying attention. Moreover, it might be more difficult to recognize non-verbal emotions such as anger or discomfort during remote interviews (Bolderston 2012: 73). This is something that was noticeable in the interviews. It was sometimes difficult to read between the lines or interpret their answers based on the lack of non-verbal clues. For instance, some of the interviewees were not always looking directly at the camera but rather at their screen. Thus, the eye contact was not always given during the online interviews. As a consequence, it was sometimes difficult to evaluate whether they are avoiding eye contact because they are feeling uncomfortable at the moment and would rather move on to another discussing subject or whether they just preferred looking at the interviewer and not directly into the camera. Moreover, it was more difficult to analyze their emotions based on their facial expressions. Although the internet connection was stable during most interviews and there were hardly any technical problems, it was nonetheless almost impossible to recognize any emotions based on their facial expressions. Therefore, a lot of focus during the online interviews was put on the participants' tone of voice. Finally, the fact that it was not possible to meet the participants in real life, shake their hands and make a bit small talk before starting the interview should be mentioned as well. This introductory phase before the actual interviews usually helped to create a more relaxed atmosphere and to get more comfortable with each other. Although the online interviews had an introductory phase as well in which the interviewer and the interviewee could talk about subjects unrelated to this research, it was not possible to fully eliminate the lack of physical distance. As a consequence, there was usually a slower start into the online interviews as the participants seemed a bit more distant at first.

3.8 Positionality

Another aspect which has to be discussed for this research is the interviewer's positionality. According to Throne (2012: 56), a researcher should consider and reflect on his own viewpoint

and standing towards the topic of the research. It is important to recognize not only the participants' position but also one's own before starting conducting the research (Throne 2012: 56). In a similar vein, Brian Bourke (2014: 1) notes that the identities of both the researcher and the participants potentially influence the research process. As a consequence, England (1994: 242f) argues that research should be considered as a shared space which is often formed by both the participants and the researcher. For instance, the researcher's biases towards both the participants and the research itself shape the research process (Bourke 2014: 1). It is, therefore, important to recognize these biases to gain knowledge about how a researcher might approach his or her research or the participants based on these biases (Bourke 2014: 1). While it was common for traditional neopositivist methods to adapt a neutral and impersonal stance in order to conduct "good research", England argues that this objectivist neutrality should be rejected (1994: 242f). According to England, reflexivity about one's own biases or opinion is, contrary to neopositivist thinking, crucial to conducting research as it could lead to insights about the research (1994: 244). Researchers are thus, themselves, instruments to their own research, as their own belief, opinion or biases reveal new findings about the research (England 1994: 248). Consequently, positionality does not only consider the researcher's biases towards the research or its participants but also addresses the fact that the researcher tends to have an assumption about how he is perceived by others (Bourke 2014: 1). Everyone is a differently positioned individual with a unique biography, personal experiences and different opinions and thus, the researcher's subjectivity has a great influence on the research (England 1994: 248). Therefore, the interviewer's positionality will be discussed in the next chapter.

3.9 Positionality Researcher

I am a 25-year-old male student of the University of Zurich. As I am male, I have never been a victim of sexual harassment towards young women. I have experienced minor forms of sexual harassment from both women and men, however, as outlined in the theoretical part of this thesis, it is difficult to compare harassment towards men and women. As a consequence, I cannot completely understand and relate to what it feels like experiencing sexual harassment as a woman. Nonetheless, I have certain assumptions about the topic as I have read a great amount of literature about the topic and talked to female friends or relatives about their experiences. Before I started interviewing the participants, I had the assumption that sexual harassment is something which frequently occurs in public spaces towards women. However, I also thought that the majority of women would not perceive most of those occurrences as

sexual harassment. For instance, I thought that unwanted verbal comments or jokes would not be perceived as a form of sexual harassment. Referring back to the preceding paragraph, it was important to critically reflect about my own assumptions or biases towards the research and the participants. Although I had certain assumptions, I tried not to reveal those during the interviews in order to not influence the participants' answers. Furthermore, the fact that a male interviewer was talking with women about the harassment towards women created a different atmosphere during the interviews. As argued by England, the gender of the researcher can have a great influence on the way the participants choose to answer (1994: 248). Especially if the research topic focuses mainly on one gender, there is no doubt that the fact that the researcher belongs to the group of the opposite gender should be reflected on and thought about. My gender, thus, automatically created a certain distance between the participants and me, as I am not capable of sharing the same experiences with them. In addition to this, my gender was mentioned by the participants both within the context of the interviews and outside of it.

For instance, in multiple cases the interviewees wanted to know after the interview had ended why I am interested in such a topic. They often said that my research interest is usually a topic for women and some of them were surprised that a man was interested in researching about it. Moreover, two women admitted after the interview that they were a bit skeptical about doing an interview about such a topic with a male interviewer, but were positively surprised afterwards. Both of them mentioned that they did not perceive it as unusual in any way and that their scepsis was unfounded. In addition to this, it can be noted that there were also a few women who said after the interviews that they thought it was great for a man to write a thesis about such a topic. Thus, a few of them were positively influenced by the fact that I am male. Moreover, my gender was also noticeable during the interviews. For instance, a woman said that "for you it is different. You do not have to fear that". Although she did not directly say it, she implied that the fact that I am male and not female excludes me from the group of people who are at the core of the discussion

In addition to my gender, the role of my race should be considered as well. A quarter of the interviews was conducted with women who belong to a racial minority. I did not tell them that I would like to interview them based on their race. However, a part of my thesis was to see whether race influences the experiences of sexual harassment. Therefore, they stood out from the majority of the interview partners which were white. I did not have difficulties to find white interview partners, however, I had to actively find non-white women who were interested in

being interviewed about the normalization of sexual harassment. Based on these facts, I had to make sure not to shift the whole focus of the interviews on their race and interview them differently. Nonetheless, the fact that a white person was interviewing black women should not be neglected. Martina Tissberger (2016: 26f) talks in her paper about the term critical whiteness and argues that white people should be aware of the fact that they are empowered and privileged due to their whiteness, whereas non-white people are discriminated against based on the lack of their whiteness. Society tends to present 'white' as normal and every race is often defined by how it differs from this norm (McBean 2019: 71). As a consequence, Anna Greve (2013: 53) highlights in her paper that it is important for white people to reflect on their dominant position which they have based on their skin color. White people usually do not include their skin color in a description about themselves, but rather focus on, for instance, age, gender or profession (Greve 2013: 51). It is not relevant for them to highlight their whiteness, as it is the universally accepted norm which, thus, suggests that race is only relevant when it affects non-white people (Greve 2013: 52). This can also be seen in the way in which the interviews were conducted. While I was interviewing white women, I did not ask them whether they think that their skin color or race has an influence on sexual harassment. I did not ask them whether their whiteness in some way affects the frequency or form in which they perceive sexual harassment in public spaces. I asked the white women whether they think that women of a different skin color or race experience race differently or more frequently than them. While I was interviewing the non-white women, however, I asked them whether they thought that their skin color or race influences the way in which they perceive harassment. I did not ask them whether they think white women experience sexual harassment in public spaces differently, instead I focused on their own skin color. I, without having realized it, defined sexual harassment towards white women as the norm and as a reference which serves to compare sexual harassment towards other women. I did not do this because I thought that sexual harassment towards non-white women was less important or note-worthy but because I assumed that women who have a race which differs from the norm are more likely to become a victim of sexual harassment. This did not happen on purpose, it rather happened unconsciously. Before I started with the interviews, I wanted to make sure to be aware of the privileges which white people often have and not interview these women any differently but it happened nonetheless.

3.10 Analysis of the Interviews

After having conducted the interviews, the transcripts[1] were analyzed by using a discourse analysis. The discourse analysis was originally influenced by Michel Foucault and tries to create collectively shared knowledge (Diaz-Bone et al. 2008: 8). This method is used to detect similarity in different utterances and highlight dominant patterns between them (Drid 2010: 22). As a result, a discourse analysis can be used to group utterances and analyze them regarding specific social contexts (Drid 2010: 10). To be precise, a critical discourse analysis by Siegfried Jäger (2015) was used for the analysis of the different transcripts. According to Jäger (2015: 91) a critical discourse analysis is especially suited for explosive topics which are socio-politically relevant. As the normalization of sexual harassment towards women is an issue which affects numerous people but is not recognized as such by society, the topic is not only extremely sensitive but also relevant for today's society. Siegfried Jäger makes mention of the differences between discourse fragments and discourses. Discourse fragments are part of a text and explore a specific topic, whereas discourses consist of discourse fragments of the same topic (Jäger 2015: 81). Once the different discourse fragments are found and bundled, it is necessary for the discourse analysis to consider the specific context in which a discourse fragment was mentioned in the interviews (Jäger 2015: 82). Moreover, it is necessary for a successful discourse analysis to clearly outline the current state of art of the topic to define the aim of the research (Jäger 2015: 91). In addition to this, both the spaces which are relevant for the thesis and the objects under investigation should be carefully considered and justified before starting with the analysis (Jäger 2015: 91). The choice of the materials for the discourse analysis has to be clearly outlined as well (Jäger 2015: 90). As these choices and explanations have already been clearly elaborated in the preceding paragraphs, they will not be repeated at this point. The analysis was done with the help of MAXQDA, a program which is often used for qualitative data analyses.

3.10.1 Structure Analysis

As a first step in a successful discourse analysis, a careful structure analysis should be done (Jäger 2015: 95). Jäger argues that it is important to simply group different sentences of a text without considering the context in which something was said or mentioned (2015: 95). It is thus, significant for a discourse analysis to differ between statements and sentences as the former consider both the contexts and the sentences from which they were drawn (Jäger 2015:

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[1] These interviews which were done in English were also transcribed in English. The Interviews which were conducted in Swiss German were transcribed in standard German.

95). A discourse analysis, therefore, aims at determining statements by analyzing different discourse fragments based on both their frequency and content (Jäger 2015: 95).

3.10.2 Detailed Analysis

After the structure analysis has been done, Jäger argues that a detailed analysis can be conducted to create the basis for the following analysis of the whole discourse (Jäger 2015: 99). The detailed analysis should, in a first step, consider the institutional context in which a discourse fragment was uttered (Jäger 2015: 98). Every discourse fragment is directly connected to an institutional context, however, this context is more difficult to detect if the texts are based on spoken material (Jäger 2015: 99). The institutional context includes, for instance, the reason for a text or the author of it (Jäger 2015: 98). In an interview, the institutional context further focuses on the interviewee's view of the day-to-day world (Jäger 2015: 98). As an interviewer, it might be possible to learn something about the participants' direct view of the day-to-day world in preliminary talks, however, it is extremely difficult to reconstruct such contexts (Jäger 2015: 99). Moreover, the interviewees biography or profession can be included in the analysis if it is relevant (Jäger 2015: 100). Additionally, Jäger argues that it is especially important to consider whether the statements refer to actual or past experiences if the text is based on spoken material (Jäger 2015: 101).

The text surface is the focus of the second step in the detailed analysis (Jäger 2015: 100). In this part of the analysis, the different discourse fragments should be grouped based on the content of the addressed topic (Jäger 2015: 98, 102). The discourse fragments can be named with short and precise headings (Jäger 2015: 101f). Moreover, thematic blocks should be marked and highlighted as it is often the case in interviews where similar topics appear multiple times in an interview (Jäger 2015: 102). In addition to this, interrelations to other discourse fragments can be drawn once the labeling and marking of the discourse fragments has been completed (Jäger 2015: 102).

In the next step of the detailed analysis, linguistic-rhetorical devices of the texts should be considered (Jäger 2015: 103). For instance, Jäger argues that it should be analyzed whether a participant uses certain linguistic routines such as sayings or expressions which often give further insights about the addressed topic of a discourse fragment (2015: 103f). Furthermore, a precise analysis of the linguistic-rhetoric aspects of the texts helps to reveal what positive or negative assumptions an interviewee connotates to specific words or statements (Jäger 2015: 105f). For instance, certain linguistic elements often reveal norms or background knowledge

which a speaker refers to and discloses through the phrasing of the statement (Jäger 2015: 105). Therefore, it should be identified in which contexts certain words are used and whether they constitute positive or negative attributions to specific groups or people (Jäger 2015: 107). Moreover, the different strategies of argumentation such as generalizations or denials should be considered in the analysis (Jäger 2015: 107). Additionally, the length of statements or linguistic characteristics such as exclamations should not be neglected in the analysis of the different fragments (Jäger 2015: 107). Finally, special attention should be paid to pronouns as they reveal who is included or excluded in certain statements (Jäger 2015: 107).

In a final step, the ideologies which are connected to the different statements should be analyzed. According to Jäger (2015: 108) there are indications for the internalized beliefs or norms in almost every discourse fragment. Consequently, these internalized values reveal interesting findings about the society and its system of norms (Jäger 2015: 108).

3.10.3 Overview of the Interviews

Table 1 gives an overview of the interviews and helps to keep track of the women's race, sexual orientation and the language which was used to conduct the interview.

Table 1: Overview of the Interviews

Interview	Place	Sexual Orientation	Race	Language
1	Wil, public space	Non-heterosexual	White	German
2	Bazenheid, private space	Heterosexual	White	German
3	Bazenheid, private space	Heterosexual	White	German
4	Bazenheid, private space	Heterosexual	White	German
5	Kirchberg, private space	Non-heterosexual	White	German
6	Luzern, private space	Heterosexual	White	German
7	Wil, public space	Heterosexual	White	German
8	Zurich, public space	Heterosexual	White	German
9	Wil, public space	Heterosexual	White	German
10	Bazenheid, private space	Heterosexual	White	German

11	St.Gallen, public space	Heterosexual	White	German
12	Zurich, public space	Heterosexual	White	English
13	Winterthur, private space	Heterosexual	Non-White	German
14	Zurich, public space	Heterosexual	Non-White	German
15	Zurich, public space	Heterosexual	Non-White	English
16	Online	Non-heterosexual	White	English
17	Online	Heterosexual	Non-White	German
18	Online	Non-heterosexual	White	German
19	Online	Heterosexual	Non-White	English
20	Online	Non-heterosexual	White	German

3.11 Research Question and Sub Questions

Based on both the state of art and the outlined methodology, an attempt was made to answer the following **research question**: What effect does the normalization of sexual harassment in public spaces have on young women in Switzerland?

The following sub questions were used as guidelines to answer the research question.

1. How does sexual harassment in public spaces affect young women?

2. What improvements do young women wish to see to mitigate the frequency of sexual harassment?

3. What roles do gender and sexual identities have regarding sexual harassment in public spaces?

4. What role does race have in discussions about sexual harassment towards women?

5. How do the associations with certain public spaces contribute to the normalization of sexual harassment?

6. Do women contribute to the normalization of sexual harassment towards them?

4 Results

Among the 20 interviewed women, every single one of them had been sexually harassed in a public space at least once. These results reflect the claims that such offences are normalized in numerous public spaces (Hoel and Vartia 2018: 33). The participants listed different types of sexual harassment which they have personally experienced in a public space. Sexual comments, jokes, gestures and physical contact were the most frequently mentioned forms of unwanted sexual attention. In addition to this, a few participants felt harassed by unwanted staring or repeated unrequited flirting. Two participants experienced sexual harassment in the form of failed attempts of sexual assault. These answers represent the findings in the literature which claim that most forms of sexual harassment in public spaces cannot be classified as "serious sexual crimes" or felonious (Kavanaugh 2013: 21). The participants generally stated that experiencing sexual harassment in public spaces affects them negatively, as they feel shame, disgust, humiliation or even fear after an incident of sexual harassment. However, some women claimed that incidents of sexual harassment in public spaces hardly affect them and are merely seen as annoying. These findings coincide with Burn's (2019: 96) statement that although sexual harassment often has negative consequences for the victims, not every woman is affected in the same way. Additionally, experiencing sexual harassment has long-term effects on a few participants who, as a result, tend to avoid certain public spaces. This finding is directly linked to the normalization of sexual harassment which indicates that women are adapting their behavior and actions due to the frequent occurrences of sexual harassment. Moreover, the interviewees often stated that they accept certain forms of sexual harassment, as they see them as a normal part of specific public spaces. Hence, the normalization of the issue has caused women to accept a form of oppression as a normal part of their life.

4.1 Public Spaces and Sexual Harassment

As this thesis investigates sexual harassment in public spaces, the participants were asked what they associate with a public space. In case there were any ambiguities about the term, the interviewees were given a brief definition of public spaces. Moreover, this was done to make sure that the women focused on experiences in public spaces as they were interviewed. For instance, a few participants thought that work can be classified as a public space and public transportation belongs to the group of private spaces. Thus, it was ensured at the beginning of the interviews that the interviewees did not confuse public spaces with private spaces. During the interviews, certain public spaces emerged as spaces which were most

commonly associated with occurrences of sexual harassment. An analysis of the different discourse fragments reveals that nightlife spaces are most frequently associated with experiences of sexual harassment among the interviewed women. While the interviews indicate that sexual harassment has happened and could happen in numerous different public spaces, the majority of women answered with an example of a nightlife space as they talked about a form of harassment which they had personally experienced. As has been outlined in the theoretical part, both nightlife spaces and public transportation are frequently mentioned as places of sexual harassment. Thus, if the interviewed people did not already reveal their experiences in those two places, a follow-up question was asked. The findings further reveal that the participants do not only associate nightlife spaces as those places in which sexual harassment occurs the most, but have also personally experienced the most incidents of sexual harassment. Another public space which was frequently mentioned in the literature as a potential place of sexual harassment is public transportation. In contrast to nightlife spaces, the interviewees believe sexual harassment to be less prevalent on public transportation. Other public spaces which were further mentioned during the interviews regarding sexual harassments are streets, shopping centers, stores, gyms and outdoor swimming areas. However, incidents in those places were seen as exceptional cases and do, therefore, not necessarily indicate a normalization of sexual harassment.

4.1.1 Sexual Harassment and Nightlife

The connection between nightlife spaces and sexual harassment can be seen by the fact that multiple women automatically referred to nightlife spaces while talking about forms of harassment or personal experiences, although they had not been directly asked to refer to a nightlife space. The beginning of an interview illustrates these findings.

> I: So we are doing an interview … together. And it is about the topic of sexual harassment in public spaces towards young women. And the focus is on the normalization of sexual harassment which means that sexual harassment is becoming the norm, it becomes normal. … And now as a lead in: What do you personally regard as sexual harassment?

> P: … So … I often perceive … sexual harassment when I am reading about the topic that women are stupidly danced up on or touched on their asses on a night out or … get called stupid slurs as well[2]. (T 2)

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[2] I: So wir machen heute ein Interview … zusammen. Und es geht ums Thema sexuelle Belästigung im öffentlichen Raum gegenüber jungen Frauen. Und der Fokus ist auf der Normalisierung von sexueller

It was further often the case that a nightlife space was mentioned as a first example when the participants were asked to describe an incident which happened to them in a public space. Although other places such as public transportation, streets or outdoor swimming spaces were mentioned as places where the interviewees have already experienced sexual harassment, places associated with nightlife stood out. Different interviewees even directly mentioned in the interviews that it happens to them more frequently in nightlife spaces compared to other public spaces.

> I: Okay. And could you give a concrete example which you have personally experienced? Where you have felt harassed? In a public space.

> P: Yes, in my case it is mostly on a night out. So it has never occurred that somehow on public transportation or so something happened. Or simply on a street or so neither. It happens more on a night out in a bar or in a club[3]. […] (T 11).

> I: And could you give an example which you have personally experienced - in public spaces? So what exactly happened and how did you react?

> P: So sometimes I am just walking on the street and then there is a … whistle, catcall or so. I don't like that but I ignore it and keep walking as … well it is not that important to me. But it happens more often on a night out, - partially – on the street it happens frequently too, but it is worse on a night out[4]. (T 14)

Belästigung, das heisst, dass die sexuelle Belästigung zur Norm wird, dass es normal wird. … Und jetzt als Einstieg. Was verstehen Sie persönlich unter sexueller Belästigung?

B … Also … Ich nehme da oft wahr, … sexuelle Belästigung, wenn ich über das Thema lese, dass Frauen im Ausgang blöd angetanzt werden, am Arsch angefasst werden oder … auch blöde Sprüche zugerufen werden. (T2)

[3] I: Okay. Und kannst du mal ein konkretes Beispiel geben, welches du selber erlebt hast? Wo du dich belästigt gefühlt hast? In einem öffentlichen Raum.

B: Ja bei mir jetzt halt am meisten im Ausgang. Also es ist jetzt noch nie vorgekommen, dass irgendwie im ÖV oder so, so etwas vorgekommen ist. Oder einfach so auf der Strasse eigentlich auch nicht. Es ist mehr so ein wenig im Ausgang in einer Bar oder halt im Club. […] (T 11)

[4] I: Und kannst du mal ein Beispiel geben, welches du selber erlebt hast – in öffentlichen Räumen.? Also was genau passiert ist und wie du reagiert hast?

B: Zum Teil bin ich einfach auf der Strasse am Laufen und dann kommt so ein … Pfeifen, Catcall [Pfeifen] oder so. Mir passt das dann nicht, aber ich ignoriere es dann und laufe weiter, weil … ja ist mir dann auch nicht so wichtig. Im Ausgang kommt es aber häufiger vor, - also zum Teil – auf der Strasse ist es auch häufig, aber im Ausgang ist es schlimmer. (T 14)

As a consequence, public spaces associated with nightlife were the places in which the most incidents of sexual harassment occurred among the interviewed people. Every interviewee had already experienced a form of sexual harassment in a nightlife space. Moreover, nightlife spaces were associated as those places in which sexual harassment commonly happens.

> I: Do you think in a certain context, atmosphere or whatever, it happens more frequently? Sexual harassment.

> P: Yes – yes, absolutely. I think on a night out everyone is a bit more uninhibited, alcohol flows and you escape everyday life a bit. Sometimes you want to pick someone up or get to know someone. So there is a completely different context. It is a bit of an escape from everyday life. And I accordingly think the starting position is different than from, for example, at work or on public transportation. On public transportation you are being observed, it is light and you are not necessarily in the mood to flirt or whatever. So, I think it is more often the case that something happens on a night out[5]. (T 8)

The fact that every interviewed person experienced sexual harassment in a nightlife space at least once combined with the association of such spaces as intensely sexualized social spaces coincides with findings that nightlife spaces stand out regarding the frequency of sexual harassment in public spaces (Kavanaugh 2013: 21; Mellgren et al. 2018: 265). In a similar sense, most other public spaces were less commonly associated as places of frequent sexual harassment.

> I: What do you mean it is different in a club? Can you … elaborate on that?

> P: Well because it is more normal than in a club. If you are shopping and somebody touches you, then everybody thinks what a psychopath. Then it might be – then I would even call the police. But in a club, this would be like – it is just different. Many go there to get to know someone. Some

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[5] I: […]. Denkst du unter einem gewissen Kontext, Atmosphäre, wie auch immer, kommt das häufiger vor? Sexuelle Belästigung.

B: Ja also – ja absolut. Ich glaube im Ausgang sind alle ein wenig hemmungsloser, Alkohol fliesst, man entflieht ein wenig dem Alltag. Je nach dem will man jemanden aufreissen oder jemanden kennenlernen. Also es ist ein komplett anderer Kontext. Es ist so ein wenig entfliehen aus dem Alltag. Und ich glaube dementsprechend ist auch die Ausgangslage anders als zum Beispiel am Arbeitsplatz oder im ÖV. Im ÖV ist man auch beobachtet, es ist hell, man ist nicht unbedingt in Flirtlaune, was weiss ich was. Also ich glaube es ist sehr oft häufiger der Fall, dass im Ausgang irgendetwas passiert. (T 8)

might just be less decent. In a club there are just way more who are trying it because it is seen as less severe. There is just a different atmosphere[6]. (T 1)

Moreover, the analysis reveals that the specific form of sexual harassment seems to influence the feelings which a woman experiences after and while being sexually harassed. Whereas verbal harassment in a nightclub is often 'only' experienced as annoying, disgusting and unnecessary, physical sexual harassment often causes more severe negative feelings. Groping or other forms of unwanted sexual contact trigger feelings of humiliation, sadness and anger. It was further reported by a few participants that unwanted physical harassment creates a feeling of discomfort and is thus, more severe experienced than verbal harassment. However, there were also exceptions among the interviewees as some of the participants already associate verbal harassment with humiliation or anger. Hence, this reflects the common statements in the literature that sexual harassment is differently perceived and there is no universal feeling which emerges as a result of being sexually harassed (LaRocca and Kromrey 1999: 921f). In addition to this, it was stated by several interviewees that experiencing sexual harassment in a nightlife space does not always activate the same feelings as each incident of harassment is an individual experience. This coincides with the claims that factors such as the attractiveness of a perpetrator possibly influence the perception of sexual harassment (LaRocca and Kromrey 1999: 923).

4.1.1.1 Detailed Analysis of Sexual Harassment in Nightlife Spaces

As mentioned above, the interviewed women were informed prior to the interviews that they will be asked about their experiences of sexual harassment. Consequently, it seems plausible that women who have never personally experienced sexual harassment were not interested in participating in this research, which explains the fact that every interviewee has already experienced a form of sexual harassment in a public space. However, the fact that every interviewee has been sexually harassed on a night out is surprising, as the interviewees had not been informed that nightlife spaces will be a focus of the interviews. The institutional

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[6] I: Was meinst du mit, es ist anders im Club? Kannst du das ein wenig erläutern?

B: Ja schon weil es im Club halt normaler ist. Wenn du am Einkaufen bist und einer fasst dich an, dann denkt jeder so ein Psychopath. Dann wäre es vielleicht – ja dann würde ich sogar die Polizei rufen. Aber im Club, das ist ja wie – es ist einfach anders. Viele gehen dorthin um jemanden kennenzulernen. Manche … sind halt einfach weniger anständig. Im Club versuchen es einfach viel mehr, weil es da als weniger schlimm angesehen wird. Es ist einfach ein anderes Klima. (T 1)

context helps to explain these findings. Firstly, the interviewees are between the ages of 18 and 30 and thus, belong to the age group who are most likely to go to clubs and bars. Moreover, none of the interviewees are below the age of 18 and, thus, have access to most bars and nightclubs. In addition to this, the women voluntarily agreed to participate in this research which indicates that they probably have experienced sexual harassment and are interested in the topic of sexual harassment towards young women. As the preliminary talks with the interviewees were always rather short, it is not possible to say something about their immediate view of the day-to-day world. However, both curiosity and interest were noticeable among multiple interviewees in the preliminary talks which indicated that the topic of the interview was something which they are excited to talk about.

Nightlife spaces were often identified as those spaces which were commonly associated with sexual harassment by the participants. The interviewed women not only frequently described personal experiences of sexual harassments which occurred on a night out but also explicitly stated that incidents of harassment tend to happen in places associated with nightlife.

> I: And now first of all you just addressed being out. Why do you think that it – or nightlife spaces - are frequently called as those spaces where such things … can happen? Why do you think that it happens so frequently when going out?
>
> P: Well because it somehow belongs there. If you just simply talk about public spaces then it is nightlife spaces. […][7] (T 17)

Therefore, nightlife spaces were separated by the interviewees from other public spaces and identified as sexualized spaces which stand out regarding sexual harassment. As claimed by an interviewee "there are different rules" in places associated with nightlife (T 19). These different rules often imply that a certain behavior or action which would normally be perceived as sexually harassing is not experienced as a form of sexual harassment if it occurs on a night out. For instance, a participant stated that being touched in a club is unwanted but not uncommon and thus, seen as less harassing than the same form of harassment in a different public space.

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[7] I: Und jetzt als erstes hast du gerade den Ausgang angesprochen. Warum denkst du, dass es – oder also der Ausgang wird häufig als Ort genannt, wo solche Dinge passieren … können. Warum denkst du, dass es im Ausgang häufig vorkommt?

B: Ja weil es schon irgendwie dort hineingehört. Wenn man jetzt einfach von öffentlichen Räumen redet, dann ist es schon im Ausgang. […] (T 17)

I: So … can you elaborate a bit on that. How does it differ where – or in which public place sexual harassment happens?

P: Let's say it like that. If – if I am dancing and someone touches me – somewhere where he shouldn't do it … I am not gonna like that. Sure. But … that happened in a club – you … it's a bit sad but you have to get used to it. But if someone grabbed my butt somewhere else in … McDonald's or I don't even know. Now this would feel way – that would be more severe, although – both times he grabbed my ass. Do you see what I mean? It just feels different. (T 16)

Comparing sexual harassment in nightlife spaces to other spaces is something which was done by multiple participants. Consequently, while discussing sexual harassment in nightlife spaces, parallels and differences to other public spaces were drawn. This was usually done by the interviewees to highlight that sexual harassment is differently perceived in nightlife spaces compared to most other public spaces. This different perception of sexual harassment on a night out was identified by the participants as the reason for women being more likely to tolerate certain behavior.

I: And … what happens then exactly? Or what influence does it have if you are being harassed on a night out and not at another place?

P: … I assume that you are a on a night out a bit – how should I say - … more tolerant. If it happens on a night out that someone says something or touches my back or so, then I just go away or act as if nothing has happened. This is just – you do not behave in the same way everywhere, it highly depends on where you are and with whom and so on. Yes[8]. (T 14).

The participants, thus, noticed that being in a nightlife space differs vastly from spending time in other public spaces, as there are different norms in nightlife spaces. For instance, it was claimed that people visit nightlife spaces specifically "to pick someone up" or "get to know someone". Moreover, people tend to be "more relaxed" and willing to socialize with others compared to spaces such as public transportation. In addition to this, alcohol was identified by

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[8] I: Und … was passiert dann genau? Oder was hat das für einen Einfluss, wenn man jetzt im Ausgang belästigt wird und nicht an einem anderen Ort?

B: … Ich vermute schon, dass man im Ausgang halt ein wenig – wie soll ich es sagen - … toleranter ist. Wenn es im Ausgang passiert, dass einer etwas sagt oder mich am Rücken anfasst oder so, dann gehe ich eher einfach mal weg oder tue so, als ob nichts passiert ist. Das ist einfach - man verhält sich ja nicht überall gleich, es kommt schon stark darauf an, wo man ist und mit wem und so weiter. Ja. (T 14).

the interviewees as a main factor which is absent in most other public spaces. The consumption of high amounts of alcohol is seen as the reason for the frequent occurrences of sexual harassment. It was stated that "the inhibition threshold" is minimized due to the high alcohol consumption which leads people to behave inappropriately. The combination of a light mood, the willingness to get to know someone, the party atmosphere and the high alcohol consumption were often claimed to be the reason for the normalization of sexual harassment. Thus, the interviewees' statements reflect Kavanaugh's statements (2013: 23) that sexual harassment in nightlife spaces is often perceived as normal and has become internalized as a common occurrence on a night out. Similarly, as the participants identified sexual harassment as key features related to clubs and bars, it can be noted that the common association of nightlife spaces as highly sexualized places seems to be applicable to the situation in Switzerland.

As a consequence of the normalization and different expectations in nightlife spaces regarding sexual harassment, it was argued in the interviews that incidents of sexual harassment in nightlife spaces are less likely to be perceived as harassing compared to other public spaces.

I: What are then exactly the reasons, why it is on a night out – yes, more normal, than in other spaces?

P: Yes if – everyone is relaxed and drinking. Or almost everyone. You are dancing or trying to get to know someone. It is just a completely different atmosphere if you are on a night out than somewhere else. Many go out exactly because of that. Then, yes then it is somehow logical, that there will be flirtations or some guys … yes cross the boundary and harass someone. But then it is normal in this context that harassments might occur if there is such an atmosphere. This is not a book club or something *laughs*. No, but it is really that … yes that you do not necessarily perceive those forms of harassment as harassing anymore. It's put simply, but it is like this[9]. (T 1)

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[9] I: Was sind denn genau die Gründe, warum es im Ausgang – ja normaler ist, als an anderen Orten?

B: Ja wenn – es sind alle locker drauf und alle trinken. Oder fast alle. Man tanzt oder versucht jemanden kennen zu lernen. Es ist einfach eine ganz andere Atmosphäre, wenn du im Ausgang bist als anders wo. Viele gehen ja auch gerade darum in den Ausgang. Dann, ja dann ist es ja schon irgendwie logisch, dass auch geflirtet wird oder dass ein paar Kerle … ja die Grenzen überschreiten und jemanden belästigen. Aber dann ist es halt schon normal, in diesem Kontext einfach, dass es zu Belästigungen kommen kann, wenn so eine Atmosphäre herrscht. Das ist ja kein Buchklub oder so *lacht*. Nein aber es ist wirklich so, dass …ja, dass man halt Belästigungen dann gar nicht mehr unbedingt als Belästigung wahrnimmt. Jetzt ein bisschen einfach gesagt, ist aber so. (T 1)

This normalization of sexual harassment in nightlife spaces was claimed to influence the participants' expectations while visiting them. For instance, compared to other public spaces, the participants claimed that they "have to reckon" that it can happen before they go out, while they "are not expecting it" in a public space which is not related to nightlife. Consequently, the interviewed women described the measures they take before or while going out to avoid becoming a victim of sexual harassment. Not only do they carefully choose their clothes but several interviewees also avoid going out alone or without at least one male companion. Other interviewees reported having stopped visiting nightlife spaces as the chance of becoming a victim of sexual harassment is too high in such places.

The rhetoric linguistic analysis of the different discourse fragments referring to nightlife spaces indicates that the participants hint at internalized values about nightlife spaces. For instance, several participants implied in the phrasing of their statements that it is common knowledge that sexual harassment frequently occurs in nightlife spaces. Moreover, by leaving out certain parts of a statement, implications about nightlife spaces are noticeable. For instance, the statement "although it is on a night out, it should not happen" implicates that on a night out, such behavior is more likely to be expected. Moreover, the different discourse fragments reveal that in the context of nightlife spaces women often make use of the first plural form to indicate that women as a group are treated differently than in other public spaces: "Here we are more vulnerable", "We have to pay attention to how we dress", "We have to expect that if you are on a night out". In a similar sense, by saying that "it is different for you, if you go out" an interviewee implied that men do not have to fear experiencing sexual harassment on a night out.

Focusing especially on the strategies of argumentation, the discourse fragments reveal that the participants often use generalizations while talking about sexual harassment in nightlife spaces. The interviewees tend to differentiate between clubs and bars, however, this seems to be the only distinction which is made about nightlife spaces. The interviewed women thus, compared experiences of sexual harassment in nightlife spaces to other public spaces and did not try to relativize individual experiences. Finally, the discourse fragments about sexual harassment in nightlife spaces stand out compared to other discourse fragments based on the certainty in which these statements are made. The statements are often emphasized by words which radiate conviction instead of implying doubt or uncertainty.

According to the interviewees' statements, nightlife spaces are embedded in our society as places where sexual harassment has become the norm. The interviewed women's attitudes

and statements towards sexual harassment in nightlife spaces reveal that sexual harassment has become normalized in our society. Not only do the participants directly claim that sexual harassment has become normalized on a night out but that they also consciously or unconsciously adapt their behavior or actions to minimize the risk of becoming victimized. Moreover, as women are taught to minimize experiences of sexual harassment in nightlife spaces, patriarchal beliefs which are rooted in our society have become noticeable. Additionally, nightlife spaces can be identified as places which society accepts as sexualized places.

However, what needs to be mentioned is that there are numerous women who specifically go to nightlife spaces due to the different atmosphere. Consequently, it is almost impossible to prescribe what behaviors are seen as harassing and which are not in places related to nightlife. Referring back to the different perceptions of sexual harassment, the same behavior can be interpreted as flattering or harassing. Moreover, there are also numerous women who actively go to nightlife spaces specifically due to the fact that these places are highly sexualized. Especially for young people, meeting a potential romantic or sexual partner is "one of the main reasons" to go to bars or nightclubs (Duch et al. 2014: 10).

> I: Okay and what exactly – or how do you mean that exactly, what context do you mean exactly? If you are talking about going out.

> P: I mean – sure you can meet someone everywhere. Many relationships emerge – I don't know – it is not so that the absolute majority meets somehow on a night out, but if you are exactly looking for something like that, if you want to get to know someone, then you mostly go out. There it is just – there is the chance bigger, I have done this too. There you rather expect that you get to know someone or that someone chats you up. Going out is – yes I would argue a main …- meeting point, to get to know someone[10]. (T 1)

On the other hand, some interviewees claim to avoid nightlife spaces for the very same reason which others mention to visit those.

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[10] I:Ok und was genau – oder wie meinst du das genau, was für ein Kontext meinst du genau? Also wenn du jetzt vom Ausgang redest.
B: Ich meine – klar du kannst überall jemanden kennenlernen. Viele Beziehungen entstehen – ich weiss nicht – es ist nicht so, dass die absolute Mehrheit sich irgendwie im Ausgang kennenlernt, aber wenn man jetzt halt genau so etwas sucht, wenn man jemanden kennenlernen will, dann geht man meistens in den Ausgang. Dort ist es einfach – dort ist die Chance grösser, das habe ich auch schon gemacht. Da erwartet man eher, dass man jemanden kennenlernt oder dass dich einer anspricht. Ausgang ist schon – ja ich würde schon behaupten ein Haupt … -treffpunkt, um jemanden kennenzulernen. (T 1)

P: Yes this is exactly why I do not go clubs and so on anymore. This is exactly the reason. I have no desire to be hit on by random guys, if I only want to go to the club to dance. I can ignore them and not even look at them and they try it anyways. What should I do? I cannot prevent them from hitting on me or even worse, somehow groping me or so. I can – I can dress or style myself differently, to be less noticeable or to look as uninterested as possible, it does not help. I do not want to be hit on if I am not looking at you[11]. (T 20)

Thus, this different intentions of using the same public space is part of the reason for the difficulty of the problem. It is not always possible to clearly recognize specific behavior or actions as sexually harassing due to the fact that certain spaces are highly sexualized (Duch et al. 2014: 10). Moreover, it would not be reasonable to deny certain women the opportunity to meet someone in a nightlife space by prescribing rules of conduct which prohibit men to flirt with women in nightclubs because it might make other women uncomfortable. At the same time, however, it is exactly this lack of clear policies and laws about what is accepted and what is not which hinders women to be protected from unwanted attention (Thompson 1993: 314ff).

4.1.2 Sexual Harassment and Public Transportation

Another public space which was frequently mentioned in the interviews regarding sexual harassment is public transportation. However, in contrast to nightlife spaces, sexual harassment has not occurred to every interviewed woman on public transportation. In fact, a large part of the interviewed women claimed in their interviews that they have not yet personally experienced a form of harassment while using the public transportation system. Moreover, the discourse fragments reveal that public transportation is less likely associated as a space of an increased likelihood of sexual harassment than nightlife spaces. In fact, it was claimed by a participant that sexual harassment in public spaces is unlikely to happen as the setting differs greatly from a nightlife space.

I: So … How do you mean that … exactly? Why is it so unlikely that you – or in general women experience sexual harassment on a train or bus or wherever?

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[11] B: Ja darum gehe ich ja auch nicht mehr in die Clubs und so weiter. Das ist ja genau der Grund. Ich habe keinen Bock darauf, von irgendwelchen Typen angemacht zu werden, wenn ich nur in den Club gehen will um zu tanzen. Ich kann sie ignorieren und sie nicht mal anschauen und sie versuchen es trotzdem. Was will ich machen? Ich kann sie nicht davon abhalten, mich anzumachen oder noch schlimmer mich, irgendwie zu begrabschen oder so. Ich kann meine – ich kann mich anders anziehen oder stylen, um weniger auffällig zu sein oder so uninteressiert wie möglich kucken, es nützt nichts. Ich will nicht angemacht werden, wenn ich dich nicht mal anschaue. (T 20)

P: The thing is no one – or at least I cannot imagine anyone – would use the public transportation to hit on a girl. No guy sits at home and thinks: "Well – Let's go on a train and hit on some girls". There is – it would just be weird. … There is no music, dancing and flirting, there is no – I don't think someone is even in the mood to hit on someone while using public transportation. And also … the people. There are always – or at least when I am using trains – other people are there. And they would definitely also think that it is really weird, so people don't do it. But in a club – let's be honest – it is just – it is less weird than in a club. So I am not saying that sexual harassment cannot happen on a bus or train, it definitely can. … But … I really think it can only happen if the train is completely empty or if there are only drunk people on it. Otherwise it is really, really unlikely to happen. … Or maybe I was just really, really lucky, but I don't think that's the case. People are not on a train to party or to have fun, they are glued to their phones anyways. … Yeah, I think so. (T 16)

While the literature surveyed claimed that the overcrowdedness of public transportation might be abused by certain people as a way to harass women, the interviewed women often claimed that the presence of a large crowd diminishes the risk of experiencing sexual harassment. Hence, the interviewees' experiences of becoming victimized due to crowded conditions on public transportation contrast popular claims in the literature that overcrowdedness increases the risk of becoming victimized (Gautam et al. 2019: 110). The participants' different experiences and opinions compared to common claims in the literature can be explained with the fact that trains, buses or trams might be less crowded in Switzerland than in other countries. For instance, in India and other countries buses are overcrowded to such a degree that some passengers are "forced to ride on the outsides of vehicles" which is not imaginable in Switzerland (Pucher and Korattyswaroopam 2004: 101). Thus, whereas certain countries are not able to financially invest in public transportation to satisfy the huge demand for the use of public transportation, Switzerland has a well-developed transportation system (Pucher and Korattyswaroopam 2004: 95f). Thus, the overcrowded conditions which are mentioned in the literature that increase the risk of becoming victimized are hardly imaginable in Switzerland.

While there is a belief among the interviewed women that sexual harassment on public transportation is less likely to occur than in nightlife spaces, multiple participants nonetheless reported having personally experienced sexual harassment while using the public transportation system.

4.1.2.1 Detailed Analysis of Sexual Harassment on Public Transportation

Public transportation was less likely associated as a space of increased risk of sexual harassment than nightlife spaces. However, multiple interviewees nonetheless claimed feeling unsafe or uncomfortable using the public transportation system alone at night.

> I: So, what about public transportation. Have you ever experienced sexual harassment in any form on public transportation?

> P: … I don't think so. Not really. I think no one really talks to strangers on a train or so … that does not really happen. But still – I think it can certainly happen. I mean, I personally would not use the train … alone at night … because then I – sexual harassment or other – yes incidents might happen. I think at night, trains are unsafe for us. (T 19)

Nonetheless, several incidents of sexual harassment on public transportation were reported by the interviewees, which indicates that sexual harassment is definitely present on public transportation.

> I: So, can we come back to the train or public transportation in general? What about public transportation? What is your experience there with sexual harassment? … Or what is your opinion on this?

> P: Yes, it is rare. I have to think. … … Yes, there were maybe some comments. So yes, some comments or so – comments on my appearance which I did not want to hear. Now especially referring to my breasts. But besides that it was never – worse. It is – it [sexual harassment] has always been relatively mild in public transportation[12]. (T 13)

In the discussions about sexual harassment and public transportation, it was generally argued by the interviewees that they especially experienced verbal harassment on public transportation. Unwanted attention in the form of groping or physical contact was only reported by few participants. Moreover, physical harassment towards the interviewees on trains and buses differed compared to sexual harassment in nightlife spaces. Whereas the interviewees generally experienced unwanted physical contact on their breasts or buttocks on a night out,

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[12] I: Also können wir nochmals auf den Zug zurückkommen oder allgemein den ÖV? Wie sieht es denn im öffentlichen Verkehr aus. Was ist dort deine Erfahrung mit sexueller Belästigung? … Oder was ist deine Meinung dazu?

B: Ja, es ist selten. Ich muss überlegen. … … Ja es gab vielleicht ein paar Sprüche. Also ja, schon ab und zu Sprüche oder so – Kommentare zu meinem Aussehen, die ich nicht hören will. Jetzt vor allem halt so in Bezug auf meine Brüste. Aber sonst war es noch nie – schlimmer. Es ist – es war bisher immer relativ mild im ÖV. (T 13)

unwanted physical contact on public transportation usually occurred by touching women's knees or legs.

This comparison between sexual harassment on a night out and on public transportation was made in several interviews. The analysis of those fragments revealed that the common belief among the interviewees is that sexual harassment on public transportation is less likely to occur than in nightlife spaces. However, the interviewees claimed that if they used public transportation on their way home from a nightlife space, there might be an increased risk of becoming victimized as other passengers might still be in the nightlife atmosphere. Thus, if public transportation is seen as a space closely connected to nightlife spaces, the risk of becoming victimized tends to be interpreted as higher. In addition to this, the interviewed women differentiated in their answers between trains, buses and trams while talking about public transportation. However, the different discourse fragments revealed no significant difference between the individual means of transports.

In comparison to nightlife spaces, the interviewed women were less likely to use the first-person plural while talking about sexual harassment on public transportation. The participants rather used the first-person singular pronoun 'I' to describe their own experiences or assumptions instead of making statements about women in general. This indicates that the interviewed women believe that women make different individual experiences regarding sexual harassment compared to nightlife spaces in which sexual harassment seems to happen to most women. Moreover, the participants made fewer generalizing statements about sexual harassment on public transportation and rather highlighted their own experiences instead of claiming what tends to happen. Moreover, the statements about sexual harassment on public transportation by the participants tend to be shorter and described in less details compared to their statements about nightlife spaces. Finally, adjectives which are negatively attributed were frequently used to describe perpetrators of sexual harassment on public transportation. The use of these negative adjectives might indicate the general attitude towards occurrences of sexual harassment on public transportation compared to sexual harassment on a night out. Although both forms are unwanted, perpetrators on public transportation seem to be more despicable than harassers in nightlife spaces.

I: And … how does this make you feel? To be harassed or stared at?

P: Yes, I mean if some old fat guy stares at you all the time, while you are just sitting on the bus, browsing on whatever site – that sucks. But sure – it is not the end of the world. (T 15)

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These negative attributions to perpetrators in nightclubs were not used by the interviewees which indicates that sexual harassment on public transportation might be seen as more reprehensible than sexual harassment on a night out.

The discourse fragments further reveal certain societal norms. For instance, sexually harassing women on public transportation seems to be more morally reprehensible than similar actions in a nightlife space. The reason for this might be that sexual harassment on public transportation is less prevalent and thus, has not been normalized yet. Consequently, women have not yet naturalized experiences of sexual harassment on public transportation and thus, perceive incidents as more severe than in nightlife spaces. Hence, the popular belief expressed in the literature that women have to frequently endure incidents of sexual harassment on public transportation cannot be found in the analysis of the interviews (Gautam et al. 2019: 106). Further, it can be argued that there is a common understanding among the population that public transportation is not used as a space to get to know someone or to find a potential dating partner. Nonetheless, there is still the internalized belief among the interviewees that public transportation is a potentially dangerous public space if visited alone and late at night. Consequently, the ITF's statements (2018: 8) that using public transportation is seen as a threat by women coincides with the common belief of the interviewees. This indicates that women believe that the presence of others will protect them from experiencing sexual harassment, as harassing women on public transportation is seen as worthy of intervening.

4.2 Different Definitions of Sexual Harassment

As has been outlined, sexual harassment does not have a universally accepted definition. It is, therefore, not surprising that the participants' answers regarding the question about how they define sexual harassment vary. Every woman was asked what she associates with sexual harassment. This question was asked before any examples of sexual harassment were mentioned by the interviewer. An analysis of the different discourse fragments shows that women have different opinions about what classifies as sexual harassment and what does not. However, there is an important commonality which can be found in every answer, namely that the participants perceive unwanted touching or physical contact in any form as a form of sexual harassment. Some of the participants embedded unwanted verbal harassment in their answers as one of their associations with sexual harassment.

P: … That is a very broad concept. Sexual harassment already starts very early for me. It can even be a glance. It can be a comment. … It does not even somehow have to be that someone touches my ass or … - yes it can even be a comment. Or no idea, if my boss for example says: «Sweetie, could you do this till 6?". I think this already crosses a boundary. And I already feel harassed. I get into a situation in which I am uncomfortable and I do not want this[13]. (T 8)

As the interviewees answered the question, they listed different associations with sexual harassment. The example shows how some participants chose to answer the question by listing all types which they personally interpret as a form of sexual harassment. Others, however, did not give such a detailed list as an answer to the question and mainly focused on the unwanted physical contact.

P: Well if an unknown man, whom you do not know, touches you. So simply anything. So touching and that [stuff], that you actually do not want. … that comes unexpectedly. It can already be the touching of an intimate part or not even [intimate]. For me – yes.[14] (T 6)

Thus, for the interviewed women, sexual harassment is closely connected to unwanted physical contact. Based on the fact that every interviewed woman associated touching or groping as a form of sexual harassment indicates content-related ideological findings. Today's understanding of society and its internalized norms, thus, have led to the belief that unwanted sexual comments, remarks or jokes are often not perceived as a form of harassment.

I: So you have never – so no one else has ever touched you or some – so any verbal – a verbal harassment or so?

P: What exactly is a verbal harassment exactly? What do you mean with that?

I: Well if someone … sexually insults you. So, if he somehow says something about your appearance which you do not want to hear. A comment or something.

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[13]   … Das ist ein sehr grosser Begriff. Für mich fangt sexuelle Belästigung schon sehr früh an. Es kann auch ein Blick sein. Es kann ein Spruch sein. … Es muss nicht gerade irgendwie [sein, dass] mir jemand an den Arsch fasst oder so, sondern, … - ja es kann wirklich auch einfach ein Spruch sein. Oder keine Ahnung, wenn mir zum Beispiel ein Chef sagt: »*Schätzli* machst du das noch bis am sechsi [6 Uhr]?«. Dann finde ich überschreitet dies schon eine Grenze. Und ich fühle mich dann schon belästigt. Ich komme in eine Situation, die mir unangenehm ist und das möchte ich nicht. (T 8)

[14] Ja einfach wenn dich ein fremder Mann, den du nicht kennst, dich anfasst. Also einfach alles. Also einfach berühren und das was du eigentlich nicht willst. … Was unerwartet kommt. Es kann nur schon berühren an intimen Stellen sein oder auch nicht. Für mich – ja. (T 6)

P: Oh, no. Well sure, you hear that. But who cares? *laughs*. That sure happens, but for me it is not a form of harassment, if someone says something to me. I simply ignore it or say something stupid back. It depends on how I feel and what exactly he says. But to be honest, this is not a form of harassment. If this is a form of harassment – then I am getting – I don't know – harassed every week or so. Therefore, no.[15] (T 20)

This part of the transcript reveals that unwanted verbal comments are, although they are a form of harassment, not perceived as such. Consequently, this shows on the one hand that common definitions of sexual harassment in the literature do not necessarily correlate to actual perceptions of sexual harassment. On the other hand, it indicates the normalization of sexual harassment in the form of verbal harassment. Although it frequently happens and bothers the interviewed people, it is not always perceived as a form of harassment but rather as a normal occurrence in most women's lives. Moreover, the question of what women usually interpret as sexual harassment highly depends on their personal experiences. Therefore, Di Gennaro's and Ritschel's (2019: 1) claims that experiencing a certain action as sexually harassing highly depends on the personal interpretation can be applied here. A linguistic rhetorical analysis of the different transcripts highlights that the interviewed people tend to answer the question in different ways. A few people answered the question from an objective perspective and did not reveal personal experience while indicating what they associate with sexual harassment.

P: … Sexual remarks or … for example a contact which is inappropriate or not wanted by the other person[16]. (T 4)

This approach of answering the question highlights what the participants associate with sexual harassment without referring to their personal experiences. However, a few participants already referred to personal experiences while answering the question and were thus,

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[15] I: Also hast du noch nie in – also hat dich sonst noch nie jemand irgendwie angefasst oder etwas – also irgendein verbaler – eine verbale Belästigung oder so?

B: Was ist eine verbale Belästigung genau? Was meinst du damit?

I: Ja wenn dich jemand … sexuell beleidigt. Also wenn er irgendwie etwas über dein Äusseres sagt oder etwas das du nicht hören willst. Irgendein Kommentar oder so.

B: Ah nein. Also klar, doch hört man das. Aber juckt? *lacht*. Das kommt sicher häufig vor, aber für mich ist das keine Belästigung, wenn mir jemand irgendetwas sagt. Ich ignoriere das einfach oder sage etwas Behindertes zurück. Es kommt drauf an, wie ich drauf bin und was er genau sagt. Aber ganz ehrlich, das ist keine Belästigung. Wenn das eine Belästigung ist, dann werde ich ja jeden – keine Ahnung, jede Woche belästigt oder so. Darum, nein. (T 20)

[16] B:… Sexuelle Bemerkung oder … Zum Beispiel eine Berührung, welche unangebracht ist oder nicht von der anderen Person gewollt ist. (T 4)

influenced by past incidents of harassments. A typical indication for the fact that participants were influenced by their personal experiences regarding sexual harassment is the use of 'I' forms. The use of the first person singular instead of the third person highly indicates a personal bias. In the transcript, a linguistic change can be detected. The participant starts answering the question by using a neutral third person singular passive to refer to the perpetrators. However, within the answer, the interviewee changes to the first person singular and starts describing how she reacted in a situation. The fact that the interviewee then automatically changes from the topic of what sexual harassment is to a personal experience further indicates that participants automatically refer to their own experiences while answering a question which does not require such.

> P: For me it is receiving comments or actions from people that you don't want, that you are not interested in. Like for example if they – if they hackle you or whistle you or say something on the street. And I am like "No, I am not interested". So, the first comment already is like, "Why would you do that to an unknown person?". That is like … we can say, if we want to be nice, we can say that they didn't know that we were not interested, but when you tell them no, is like no I am not interested leave me alone and when they continue this is where I would definitely put it in the sexual harassment scenario. It is like for example if – I remember I was 18, I had never really been to a club and so I was with some people from uni and I went to get something to drink at the bar and a guy came and he offered like five times to pay for my glass. (T 12).

This example further illustrates that a certain 'innocent' action can become sexually harassing if it disregards women's boundaries. Whereas offering a drink once is seen as acceptable by the participant, insisting to buy her a drink and thus, disregarding her answer to the offer is the reason for her to feel sexually harassed. Hence, defining a certain action as a form of sexual harassment is dependent on whether it respects or disregards women's personal boundaries.

Additionally, the analysis further reveals that similar behavior or actions can be experienced differently by the same woman. As one participant claims, the context in which a certain action occurs and the person who performs it determine whether something is seen as flattering or unwanted. Hence, the analysis revealed that the interviewed women are more likely to perceive an action as unwanted if the person is unattractive or old. Referring back to the preceding paragraphs, the space in which an action is performed highly influences the interviewees' personal perception. Moreover, the participants only mentioned experiences of sexual harassment in combination with strangers or people unknown to them. This coincides with the statements in the literature that sexual harassment in public spaces is usually performed by

strangers (di Gennaro and Ritschel 2019: 5; Hoel and Vartia 2018: 34). Therefore, it can be argued that acquaintances or friends are usually not associated as potential perpetrators of sexual harassment in public spaces.

4.3 The Effect of Sexual Harassment on Women

As has been outlined in the state of art, sexual harassment can have multiple different consequences on the affected women. The analysis of the discourse fragments revealed similar findings, as occurrences of sexual harassment affected the interviewees differently. Whereas the interviewed women generally agreed that sexual harassment is unwanted and bothersome, occurrences of sexual harassment influenced them differently. For instance, an interviewee argued that sexual comments, jokes or unwanted attention are part of a night out and are thus, not something which affects her in any way.

> I: And what effect does that have on you? If you are harassed – frequently- when you go to clubs?

> B: I don't care that much. Of course, I would prefer it if it would not happen at all, but I just – I don't care anymore. It has happened quite a few times already, it does not bother me anymore. It just happens when you go out. Deal with it. (T 16)

The participant further argues that such incidents are quickly forgotten and do not occupy her thoughts for a long time. Others, however, claimed in the interviews that verbal sexual harassment makes them angry or disappointed. Therefore, sexual harassment has different direct consequences on women and there is not a universal effect which applies to all women. Other commonly mentioned effects of experiencing sexual harassment do not directly occur after an incident of sexual harassment but rather shape women's future actions or behavior. Thus, the analysis reveals that a distinction must be made between the long-term and short-term impact of experiences of sexual harassment. For instance, multiple women claimed that they would never go out alone in fear of being harassed. Furthermore, the discourse fragments imply that the effect of an incident of sexual harassment is connected to the severity of the incident. It was further stated by several participants that they feel safer on a night out if they are accompanied by at least one man. Others try to reduce the risk of becoming a victim of sexual harassment by not wearing revealing clothes on a night out. Regarding public transportation, several participants mentioned feeling unsafe using the public transportation alone at night and thus, try to limit the use. Finally, women make smaller adjustments in their lives such as avoiding certain routes or wearing headphones to ignore verbal harassment and being less likely victimized of sexual harassment.

4.3.1 Detailed Analysis of the Consequences of Sexual Harassment

A first thing which can be noted while analyzing the impact which occurrences of sexual harassment can have on the interviewed women was that the effect of the incidents varies extremely among the interviewed women. For some of the interviewed women, an incident of sexual harassment does not affect them greatly and is often quickly forgotten. Nonetheless, it was often mentioned by the participants that they adapt their behavior or actions due to incidents of sexual harassment.

> I: And if you remember such an incident – so if you reminisce about such an incident, can you maybe describe a bit how you felt there, when something like this happened to you?
>
> P: It is just a bit uncomfortable and … so you think back about the incident and wonder, if the other person does not think or if it is normal for them and always does that. … Yes …
>
> I: And … so does it have any consequences for you that something happens? You have said it mostly happened during carnival or on parties. Does it have any influence on you?
>
> P: So, for me, no, personally not, also the comments neither. Even if they don't happen only once, I think if it does not go beyond that, - it does not influence me. At the carnival, it is – so if you have not yet drunk anything and are still sane, you - you make sure you walk around in a group, because most of the times you see it, if they have already drunk a lot. Then you might go somewhere else and keep your distance. Yes so …[17] (T 4)

As this example illustrates, although the participant felt uncomfortable about the incident of sexual harassment, no long-lasting direct effects on her psychological health were mentioned. However, the participant nonetheless mentioned adapting her behavior by trying to walk around in a group instead of alone. Therefore, although the interviewed woman perceived the personally experienced forms of sexual harassment as something minor which does not have a lasting effect on her, preventative measures were taken to avoid possible situations of sexual

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[17] I:Und wenn du dich an irgend so ein Erlebnis, -also Erlebnis, zurückerinnerst, kannst du vielleicht ein bisschen beschreiben, wie du dich dort gefühlt hast, wenn dir so etwas passiert?

B: Es ist einfach ein bisschen unangenehm und … also man denkt sich dann, ob die andere Person nicht studiert oder ob sie das normal findet und das immer macht. … Ja …

I: Und … also hat das irgendwelche Konsequenzen auf dich, dass so etwas passiert? Du hast ja jetzt vor allem gesagt, das ist so an der Fassnacht, Partys passiert. Hat das irgendeinen Einfluss?

B: Also jetzt auf mich persönlich nicht, auch eben die Bemerkungen. Eben auch wenn sie nicht nur einmal vorgekommen sind, finde ich, wenn es nicht darüber hinaus geht, ist – also dann hat es mich nicht beeinflusst. Eben an der Fassnacht, ist mir- also, wenn man jetzt nicht getrunken hat und noch bei Sinnen ist, schaut man, dass man die Gruppe umgeht, weil meistens sieht man es, wenn sie schon viel getrunken haben. Dann geht man eben vielleicht irgendwo anders hin oder man hält Abstand. Ja also so… (T 4)

harassment. For others, however, incidents of sexual harassment can go beyond making the affected person feel a bit uncomfortable. In certain cases, women mentioned feeling scared during and after an occurrence of sexual harassment.

I: How did you feel when they did just not leave you alone? Also like the guy in the club who asked you five times if he could buy you something to drink and he did just not stop asking you. How did that make you feel that you are – that they did not respect what you had to say?

P: Well I definitely felt a bit scared, because at some point it was like if my no is not enough, will they decide to try and take it a step further, will they decide to hackle or are they just going to stay there and is it their aim to annoy every single woman that passes? And so you definitely have that moment where you are "okay, they are not following me, they are leaving me alone", that part. But then there is also – one thing that did help is I did ten years of taekwondo. So I am definitely like - even inside if I am scared, my outside is just like leave me alone, I am not scared, whatever you do won't bother me. And so I think that is – the most important thing is to not show them that you are scared. And if you feel you are in an environment where something might happen, if you are wearing earphones, make sure to cut the music, that way you can hear what is going on around you. Be aware of your surroundings if someone is following you or not. (T 12)

Moreover, similarly to the previous interviewee, this participant mentioned precautionary measures to avoid becoming a victim of sexual harassment. The participant suggests being careful and watching the surroundings at places where something might happen. The combination of the interviewee's preventative measurements and the fact that occurrences of sexual harassment scare her indicate that sexual harassments affect her feelings of safety in public spaces, which coincides with common statements in the literature (Hoel and Vartia 2018: 36). However, it is noticeable that the effect of an occurrence or incident of sexual harassment on the interviewed woman depends highly on the severity of the incidents. Whereas verbal sexual harassment such as comments or jokes often do not have drastic direct effects on the interviewed women, unwanted touching, groping or more severe forms of sexual harassment such as assault often have severe effects on the affected women. This can be seen in the transcript of an interviewee who was sexually assaulted and only narrowly escaped a more severe form of sexual harassment.

I: … And in such an incident. What emotions went then through your head? Or how did you feel then?

P: Fear. … Fear, panic. First you understand – at first it is like an adrenaline rush. You are completely … loaded. Then – I was only scared when – so when he ran away, I was at first simply angry and

still loaded. I only started getting scared on the train because – well, then I realized, he probably – he probably did not only want to kiss me. He wanted to rape me. … Only then did I realize what actually happened. (T 20).[18]

During and shortly after the incident, the participant experienced fear and panic and not only a slight feeling of discomfort or disgust as most interviewees who "merely" had to endure minor forms of harassment. Not only did this incident cause more severe short-term effects than, for instance, verbal harassment, but it is also at the root for extreme long-term effects.

> I: Okay and what effect does this trigger in you? So I mean … in the long run? What impact does this have … yes on life?
>
> P: … Yes, I now almost always avoid being alone when I'm going somewhere, at night. That definitely. I do not risk that anymore. And besides that – I mean I was lucky. He ran away. I was scared – very scared – for a few weeks but then – I don't know – I simply avoid being on the way alone this late. Then – I – during the day nothing happens anyway. If there are many people. I am now not scared anymore, I am simply more careful. More – I am now not – how do you say this – I do not suffer from a trauma or something like this. If he had raped me then maybe. But – yes. I cannot change it anyways.[19] (T 20).

The interviewed participant did not further experience verbal sexual harassment as a form of sexual harassment or as something which affects her in one way or another. This coincides with the common belief among the interviewed women that the more severe the form of sexual harassment the more serious the consequences for them. This trend was certainly noticeable among the participants and is further summarized by the following interviewee.

> I: And generally speaking, how bad is sexual harassment for you? What does it trigger in you?

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[18] I:… Und bei so einem Vorfall. Was sind dir dann für Emotionen durch den Kopf gegangen? Oder was fühlt man dann?

B: Angst. … Angst, Panik. Zuerst kapiert – zuerst ist es wie ein Adrenalinstoss. Du bist voll … geladen. Dann – ich hatte erst Angst, als – also als er weggerannt ist, war ich zuerst einfach wütend und immer noch geladen. Erst im Zug hatte ich dann Angst, weil – ja dann war mir klar, der hat wahrscheinlich – der wollte mich wahrscheinlich nicht nur küssen. Der wollte mich vergewaltigen. … Dann habe ich erst kapiert, was überhaupt passiert ist. (T 20)

[19] I:Okay und ja was für einen Effekt löst das bei einem aus? Also ich meine auf … längere Sicht betrachtet? Was hat das für einen Einfluss auf … ja aufs Leben?

B: … Ja ich meide jetzt praktisch immer alleine unterwegs zu sein, in der Nacht. Das *safe [sicher]*. Ich riskiere das nicht mehr. Und sonst – ich meine ich hatte ja Glück. Er ist noch weggerannt. Ich hatte Angst – sehr Angst – für ein paar Wochen, aber dann – ich weiss nicht – ich meide einfach, alleine unterwegs zu sein so spät. Dann – ich – am Tag passiert sowieso nichts. Wenn es viele Leute hat. Ich habe jetzt keine Angst mehr, ich bin einfach vorsichtiger. Mehr – ich bin jetzt nicht – wie sagt man das – ich habe kein Trauma oder so. Wenn er mich vergewaltigt hätte vielleicht schon. Aber – ja. Ich kann es ja eh [sowieso] nicht ändern. (T 20)

P: I have to honestly say, that not that much has happened to me so far. Thus, it is not so extreme for me. Others who have maybe been raped – for those it is terrible. Not for me. Or if it happened every week or so, then too. But for me – some comments once in a while or something like this, I can endure this. So, for me it is not so onerous. But I see, why it can be terrible for others.

I: And … how does sexual harassment affect you generally?

P: … Yes just so – so just – that you are more careful. I do not go walking at night, but this is due to fear of being raped and not some comments or something like this. So this has already exceeded harassment. And besides – I think you just avoid the opportunity that something happens. On a night out. But besides that, nothing special. I do not adapt my life out of – because I could be harassed.[20] (T 17)

Nonetheless, although the interviewed woman argues that she has not yet experienced any severe form of sexual harassment, precautionary measures are still taken by the interviewee to avoid encountering a potentially dangerous situation. Therefore, different conclusions can be drawn from the analysis of the different discourse fragments. On the one hand, as already indicated by the literature, sexual harassment is perceived differently and thus, has different effects on the affected women. While for some of the interviewees verbal harassment can already have a lasting negative effect on them, others claim to not be affected by even more severe forms such as groping or unwanted physical contact. There is nevertheless a certain tendency noticeable among the interviewees. Although verbal harassment is often seen as something unwanted and uncomfortable, it was rarely stated by the participants that it drastically affects their emotional or psychological wellbeing. Unwanted groping or physical contact, however, was generally described as an incident which had a more severe effects on their feelings of safety. Typical emotions which are connotated with any form of unwanted physical contact are anger, disgust or sadness. Moreover, regarding the long-term effects of

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[20] I:Und ganz allgemein, wie schlimm ist sexuelle Belästigung für dich? Was … was löst das in dir aus?

B: Ich muss ganz ehrlich sagen, mir ist es jetzt noch nicht so viel passiert. Darum ist es für mich auch nicht so krass. Andere, die vielleicht vergewaltigt werden bei denen ist es schlimm. Nicht bei mir. Oder wenn es jede Woche passiert oder so, dann auch. Aber bei mir – so ab und zu paar Sprüche oder so, das halte ich schon aus. Also für mich ist es nicht so belastend. Ich sehe aber schon, warum es für andere schlimm sein kann.

I: Und … also wie beeinflusst dich dann sexuelle Belästigung ganz allgemein?

B: … Ja einfach so – also einfach, dass man vorsichtig ist. Ich gehe nicht in der Nacht alleine spazieren, aber das ist wegen [der] Angst vor Vergewaltigung und nicht wegen irgendwelchen Comments [Kommentaren] oder so. Also das ist schon über Belästigung … weiter. Und sonst – ich denke man vermeidet einfach die Möglichkeit, dass etwas passiert. Im Ausgang. Aber sonst, nichts Spezielles denke ich. Ich passe nicht mein Leben an, weil etwas – ich belästigt werden könnte. (T 17)

experiencing sexual harassment, it can be argued that the difference between non-verbal and verbal forms of harassment are less noticeable. The existence of both, non-verbal and verbal sexual harassment usually leads to women being more careful in public spaces and using precautionary measures such as walking faster, taking different routes or streets or completely avoiding being alone in public during nighttime. Moreover, a few interviewees mentioned not wearing revealing clothes while going out to parties, clubs or bars so as not to give the impression of being sexually interested or available. Further common methods which were used by women were wearing headphones or avoiding eye contact with men. Another common strategy which was used by multiple women was being accompanied by men to avoid being a victim of sexual harassment.

In general, the analysis of the different discourse fragments regarding the consequences of experiencing sexual harassment in public spaces highly reflects the claims in the literature. Among the interviewed women, it was noticeable that most women associated sexual harassment as something which can be stressful and potentially damaging to their mental health. And indeed, Houle et al. (2011: 89) claim in their paper that sexual harassment is commonly associated with an "increased risk of anxiety, depression, and posttraumatic stress disorder as well as diminished self-esteem, self-confidence and psychological well-being". However, the participants further stated that only major forms of harassment, which were not experienced by the majority of the interviewees, could cause such severe effects. Hence, the analysis of the interviewees' answers mostly revealed the effects of experiencing minor forms of harassment which are discomfort, anger, sadness or disgust. Moreover, the effect of potentially becoming a victim of sexual harassment has frequently caused women to change their routes on their way home or completely avoid certain streets or neighborhoods due to an increased risk. According to Megha Dhillon and Suparna Bakaya (2014: 2), it is a common association among women that walking alone at night or using public transportation increase the risk of becoming a victim of sexual harassment. Thus, the belief that precautionary measures have to be taken, especially at night, to prevent becoming victimized is something which seems to be embedded in today's society. Consequently, it can be noted that a long-term effect or consequence of the ongoing sexual harassment towards young women in public spaces has caused women to adapt their behavior to such a great deal that it is not uncommon for them to completely avoid certain spaces in order to not become sexually harassed.

4.3.2 Ideological Analysis – Male Presence

The fact that multiple interviewed women mentioned that male presence helps to avoid becoming a victim of sexual harassment indicates the patriarchal beliefs which are still rooted in numerous contemporary societies. As argued by Preeti S Rawat (2014: 43) patriarchy imposes stereotypical characteristics about men and women and as a consequence, reinforces the power differences between males and females. One of these stereotypes is that men are often seen as having authority over women (Rawat 2014: 43). This common belief still seems to be rooted in today's society as multiple women have claimed that being accompanied by a man helps them avoid becoming a victim. Moreover, implying that you have a boyfriend to avoid further unwanted requests highlights the common belief among both men and women in today's society that men are seen as the authoritarian figure. These stereotypes of men and women, as suggested by Rawat, are internalized by both men and women (2014: 45). More generally speaking, Selda Tuncer claims that women's relationships with public spaces are highly formed by existing patriarchal norms (2015: 1). Public spaces were originally designed for the benefit for men and thus, women's presence in them can often lead to clashes (Tuncer 2015: 1). Women are, even today, still often connotated with the traditional norms of femininity and domesticity (Tuncer 2015: 2). Participating in public spaces while still often being connected to private spaces greatly affects women's experiences in public spaces (Tuncer 2015: 2f).

4.4 The Normalization of Sexual Harassment

While analyzing the different discourse fragments related to the normalization of sexual harassment, it is noticeable and undeniable that there is a strong belief among the interviewed women that sexual harassment towards young women in public spaces, has indeed become normalized in our society. As already discussed, most of the interviewed women are aware of the fact that the occurrences of sexual harassment towards them is not something uncommon or extraordinary. Consequently, several interviewees mentioned making small adjustments in their daily lives such as not wearing certain clothes due to the normalization of the issue. According to Mellgren et al. (2018: 272), although such adjustments might be perceived as small, they nonetheless limit women's lives. Therefore, as multiple women stated focusing on what they wear in public spaces, the normalization of sexual harassment towards young women directly affects women in their freedom.

Another effect of the normalization of sexual harassment among the participants is that they are more likely to accept and tolerate incidents if they happen in a public space in which sexual

harassment towards women is normalized. As discussed above, most women associate places of nightlife as those spaces in which sexual harassment is more normal than in other public spaces. As a consequence, it was mentioned by several interviewees that some forms of sexual harassment are tolerated, ignored or interpreted differently due to their occurrences in a sexualized place.

> I: Okay … This thing with the club that you mentioned at the beginning. This is also called normalization. This means that in certain places it is becoming more normal that women are being harassed. Or now also – you have said some comments and so on are not that bad you just have to ignore them. In what ways do you see that – so that there is a normalization of sexual harassment?

> P: For example, in a club – you especially see it there that it is normal somehow. They have less inhibitions to say something or touch someone. It is also somehow more normal in a club. You already notice it how the people speak or dress. And besides that – I don't know if it is becoming more normal. It is difficult to say how it used to be.

> I: And if you say it happens quite frequently – or it can happen frequently. How does this influence your behavior? Or asked differently, in what ways does this have an influence on you?

> P: For example, I would not go out alone. Or maybe that you react differently somehow. So in a club I do not think that someone makes a racket simply because someone says something. At other places maybe they would. But it intimidates you. I would never go out alone, this would not even cross my mind. I had no problem going to the movies alone or going eating. But on a night out – then you are also somehow unprotected, without friends. I think if something happens, then it is mostly that you were alone.[21] (T 17)

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[21] I: Okay … Das mit dem Club, was du am Anfang angesprochen hast. Das nennt man auch die Normalisierung. Das heisst an gewissen Orten wird es immer normaler, dass Frauen belästigt werden. Oder auch jetzt – du hast ja gesagt, gewisse Sprüche und so sind ja nicht so schlimm, die muss man einfach ignorieren. Inwiefern siehst du, dass es irgendwie – also dass es eine Normalisierung von sexueller Belästigung gibt?

B: Zum Beispiel im Club vor allem, da sieht man es schon, dass es schon normal ist irgendwie. Die haben da schon weniger Hemmungen, etwas zu sagen oder jemanden anzufassen. Es ist schon irgendwie normaler im Club. Man merkt es schon, auch wie die Leute reden oder sich anziehen oder so. Das schon. Und sonst – ich weiss nicht ob es normaler wird. Es ist schwierig zu sagen, wie es früher war.

I: Und wenn du sagst im Club passiert das ziemlich häufig – oder es kann häufig passieren. Inwiefern beeinflusst das dein Verhalten? Oder anders gefragt, inwiefern hat das einen Einfluss auf dich?

B: Zum Beispiel würde ich nicht alleine in den Ausgang gehen. Oder vielleicht dass man irgendwie anders reagiert. So im Club denke ich nicht, dass eine Krawall macht, nur wenn jemand etwas sagt. An anderen Orten vielleicht schon. Aber es schüchtert schon ab. Ich würde nie alleine in den Ausgang gehen, das würde mir gar nicht in den Sinn kommen. Ich hätte kein Problem damit, alleine ins Kino zu gehen oder etwas essen

The interviewed person first explains why it is more normal for her to experience sexual harassment on a night out and thus, refers to the common association of nightlife spaces as sexualized spaces. The participant further adds that the frequency of sexual harassment in nightclubs probably causes women to accept verbal forms of sexual harassment which they would normally not tolerate in other places. Several other interviewees made similar statements in which they declared that places in which sexual harassment is normalized have different rules and women are taught to tolerate forms of harassment such as unwanted physical contact. As the example further illustrates, the normalization of sexual harassment in certain public spaces has caused women to accept certain forms of harassment instead of defending themselves against this form of discrimination. Whereas women would normally fight back against sexual harassment in places where the issue is not normalized, they often choose to endure forms of harassment in spaces in which sexual harassment is perceived as normal.

P: And it is just a different setting in a bar. There are different rules there.

I: What do you mean by that. What are the different rules in a bar? And why are there different rules in a bar?

P: I mean – If you spend time in a – if you go to a bar, you are most likely – not all – but most people drink. I do, too *laughs*. And then the mood is just different. You talk differently, about other things than you normally would and maybe you talk to strangers. I guess … it is normal trying to start a conversation with a stranger in a bar but not in most other places. I - if someone tries to talk to me in a bar it is nothing unusual. But let's say … if I am eating in a restaurant with my friend or my sister, it – I don't think anyone has just tried to join the conversation. Or when I go jogging or something like this. It – bars or clubs – I don't go to clubs but I assume it is even more the case in a club. People expect to socialize and so on. Sure, not all – I mean I go there to spend time with my friends. But there are also – people try to meet someone, maybe. So, if someone tries to touch you it is a way of – well they might try to talk to you or flirt with you. But outside of … the pub and club scene, it is more – it will be seen as harassment. (T 19)

Thus, another effect of the normalization of sexual harassment towards women in public spaces is that women themselves are taught to see it as normal and accept it in certain places and situations. The normalization of sexual harassment has thus, caused women to be

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zu gehen. Aber im Ausgang – dann ist man ja auch irgendwie ungeschützt, ohne Freunde. Ich denke, wenn etwas passiert, dann ist es meistens so, dass man alleine war. (T 17)

oppressed and devalued as they frequently accept unwanted attention in forms of unwanted comments or contact.

This oppression of women was mentioned by another participant as a direct consequence of the normalization of sexual harassment. As sexual harassment occurs so frequently, women are perceived as subordinate and the weaker gender. Moreover, it was mentioned that men are seen as being worth more than women.

> I: Okay this, what we have now discussed for a bit, is the normalization of sexual harassment in public spaces. This means, in certain public spaces there is just – so there it happens so frequently that it is normalized. Now … so we have already talked about why that could be. But the question, what … yes what effect does it have on you that it is normal – in inverted commas – that you are being harassed? Especially in a room – regarding nightlife, there it is especially frequently noticeable. What impact do you think does this have on women?

> P: … I think that women are then becoming the less dominant gender. It is then probably like… a kind of gender – so that men are worth more. It probably also has to do something with – that this is also expected, still. For example – yes also at flirting or that women have to do the first step. This is also nonsense, but many still see it like that. Therefore – these things, they then do – that the man is still seen as dominant. Therefore, it is then also probably so that [forms of] sexual harassment, if they are not so severe, are accepted[22]. (T 18)

This oppression of women or the feeling of being worth less than men can have other consequences. Several interviewees stated that this gender difference or oppression of women which is caused by the normalization of sexual harassment makes them feel worthless or unimportant. Others argued that it can also cause a feeling of helplessness or desperation as there is nothing that the individual person can do to stop the normalization. These negative feelings caused by the normalization of sexual harassment are usually closely connected with

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[22] I: Okay, das, was wir jetzt ein wenig besprochen haben ist die Normalisierung von sexueller Belästigung in öffentlichen Räumen. Das heisst, in gewissen öffentlichen Räumen kommt es einfach – also dort passiert es schon so häufig, dass es halt normalisiert wird. Jetzt … also wir haben schon darüber geredet, warum es so sein könnte. Aber noch die Frage, was … ja was für ein Effekt hat das auf dich, dass es quasi normal – in Anführungs- und Schlusszeichen ist – dass man belästigt wird? Vor allem jetzt in Räumen von – also in Bezug auf das Nachtleben, dort sieht man das besonders häufig. Was denkst du hat das für einen Einfluss auf Frauen?

B: … Ich denke schon, dass halt dann Frauen als das weniger dominante Geschlecht … werden. Es ist dann wahrscheinlich schon so … eine Art Geschlechter – also, dass Männer halt quasi mehr wert wären. Es hat aber sicher auch einfach damit zu tun, dass das so auch erwartet wird, immer noch. Zum Beispiel – ja auch beim Flirten oder dass Männer den ersten Schritt machen müssen. Das ist ja auch Quatsch, aber viele sehen das immer noch so. Darum – diese Dinge, die machen dann halt, dass der Mann immer noch als dominant gesehen wird. Darum ist es dann auch wahrscheinlich so, dass es halt – dass sexuelle Belästigungen, wenn sie nicht so schlimm sind, akzeptiert werden. (T 18)

the fact that the interviewees are taught to accept the situation which strengthens the feeling of being oppressed. Closely connected to that are the statements by multiple interviewees that they are silenced and not really given a voice. In case they say or do something against a form of harassment, they are often stamped as prude or sensitive. Consequently, numerous harassed women chose to ignore the harassment and accept it, although they feel uncomfortable and would actually like to say something. Thus, their voice, opinion and feelings are silenced as they are taught by society to accept it and not cause a stir. For some of the interviewed women, this form of oppression through silencing is seen as humiliating.

Other interviewees argued that the existence of the normalization of sexual harassment towards women generally bothers them. It was mentioned that society's position and stance towards that topic is alarming and should be changed. It restricts women's freedom and their choices in how to spend their daily lives. Moreover, it was claimed that it creates the sense that being a woman is a disadvantage and creates a gender imbalance between men and women. As a result, an interviewee mentioned that women are seen as weaker compared to men.

Another effect of the normalization of sexual harassment towards women is that women are more likely to not perceive certain behavior as a form of harassment, which they would if sexual harassment had not become normalized. For instance, the analysis of the discourse fragments has revealed that although certain comments were not welcome or wanted, they were not seen as a form of harassment. The reason why it was not perceived as a form of harassment is most likely the fact that it happens on such a frequent basis that women are used to receiving unwanted verbal attention. An interviewee, for instance, argued that if she would feel harassed every time she receives a comment or saying, then she would be harassed on a weekly basis. Thus, it can be argued that the normalization of sexual harassment towards women has caused women to less likely perceive unwanted sexual attention as harassing. Moreover, she suggests that women who do not want to be harassed should avoid places where sexual harassment is normalized. The participant further claims that women who are aware of the fact that sexual harassment is likely to happen in certain places and nonetheless do not avoid those places should not complain about being harassed. Therefore, this example indicates that the frequent occurrence of sexual harassment in certain places has led women to internalize the belief that they should either accept the harassment or avoid certain spaces. The normalization has gone so far that some women, although they do not like harassment, are shaped to such a degree that they criticize people who do not adapt their behavior to this harassment. Similar

to this, another participant noted that if sexual harassment is normalized, forms of harassment are not experienced as harassment but as normal. She further elaborates that harassment should not be normal, but if it is becoming normal, forms of harassment such as groping will be stopped being seen as sexually harassing (T 3). In general, it can be noted that the normalization of sexual harassment has different negative effects on women. On the one hand, women tend to avoid certain public spaces or adapt their behavior to minimize the risk of becoming a victim. On the other hand, the normalization of the issue causes women to remain silent while they are being sexually harassed. Remaining silent while experiencing a form harassment instead of resisting against this oppression shows that the normalization of the issue has forced women to endure incidents of sexual harassment. Moreover, the normalization of the issue has created the notion that women who do not tolerate forms of harassment are 'prude' and should be reprimanded. Hence, the normalization of sexual harassment has not only serious negative consequences on the affected women, but also on the way women are seen society. By creating the notion that it is 'acceptable' to sexually harass women, they are viewed as inferior and subordinate to men.

4.5 Women's Suggestions to Stop the Normalization

A first analysis of the different discourse fragments which refer to women's wishes about how to diminish the normalization of sexual harassment shows that there is a variety of different ideas and approaches about what should be done. One aspect which could be improved in society as a way to reduce the normalization of sexual harassment is education. Several women highlighted in their interviews that boys should learn at a young age in school how to treat women and not cross any boundaries. In addition to the role of school and education, it was often stated by interviewees that the parents should serve as role models and educate them on the topic of sexual harassment. A possible point of improvement which was mentioned by most of the interviewed women was the demand for harsher punishment for sexually harassing women. However, the participants' answers frequently included doubt about the possible influence of such an improvement as they often argued that sexual harassment towards women is almost impossible to eliminate from our society. Therefore, the different discourse fragments indicate that sexual harassment is normalized to such a degree that the existence of a society without sexual harassment towards women appears highly improbable. Moreover, some of the interviewed women argued that the normalization of sexual harassment cannot be eliminated by making a single adjustment such as educating children about the issue in schools but a general recognition of the severity of the issue by society and the willingness

to actively counter it is necessary. Thus, such a statement indicates that the problem might be recognized and discussed, however, there seems to be a lack of active effort by society to take necessary steps to ensure that the issue is combated.

4.5.1 Detailed Analysis about Women's Suggestions to Stop the Normalization

All women who were asked about their wishes regarding sexual harassment uttered that they wish the situation, in regards to the normalization of sexual harassment, would change. Thus, none of the interviewed women think that the situation regarding sexual harassment in Switzerland is not improvable, which hints at the severity of the problem. Most women urge for complete equality which is necessary for them to eliminate sexual harassment. Several participants claimed that by making men and women equal, by removing all kind of gender differences which still exist in today's society, sexual harassment can be tackled and fought against. The interviewees highlighted that discrimination towards women in all aspects is a main reason for the existence of the normalization of sexual harassment and needs to be the core goal in fighting sexual harassment. Other frequently mentioned wishes by the participants were harsher punishments towards perpetrators of sexual harassment or sexual violence. The participants mentioned being aware of the fact that it is not possible to punish certain forms of harassment such as comments or jokes. However, several interviewees claimed that extreme forms of sexual violence towards women such as rape or assault should be punished more severely. It was highlighted that the punishment for the arguably worst form of sexual harassment, rape, is way too low and would thus, imply that minor forms of harassment are hardly felonious. However, the participants did not only urge for more legal punishments but also expressed the desire for owners of nightlife spaces to penalize perpetrators of sexual harassment by banning them. The interviewees voiced the wish for people to put the safety of women and their well-being above potential income through clients. Another frequently mentioned topic by the interviewed women related to their wishes in how sexual harassment could be stopped was education. According to them, education could be seen as a core factor in reducing the normalization of sexual harassment. A few of the participants claim that children need to learn at a young age what is considered as appropriate behavior and what is not. School and education were frequently mentioned as places which could potentially contribute in positively influencing teens and young adults and their view about harassment. In a similar vein, it was often mentioned by the interviewed women that the parents and the way they raise their children could potentially diminish the normalization of sexual harassment as well.

According to the participants, parents should teach their children at a young age to respect women and treat every woman as they would want their sister or mother be treated.

The role of the media was also mentioned by multiple participants. Several interviewees stated that they wish that the topic of sexual harassment towards women would receive more attention by the media. A few women claimed that there needs to be an increasing awareness of the problem among the population in order to stop or diminish the issue of sexual harassment. The media, according to several interviewees, helps to reach a large audience and could thus, create awareness of the problem. However, it was uttered by the participants that campaigns, advertisements or documentaries need to be produced and thought through carefully if they should serve to stop the harassment.

All these different wishes about what would change are obviously linked to stopping or diminishing sexual harassment towards women in public spaces. The interviewees are unhappy about the direct or indirect consequences which they face in their daily lives due to the issue of sexual harassment. All these minor points which were mentioned among the interviewees served to illustrate that the problem of sexual harassment is not an issue which can be resolved easily. As has been demonstrated, there are numerous different smaller issues which need to be removed according to the participants in order to possibly diminish sexual harassment. Furthermore, the different answers among the interviewed women demonstrate that the perception about what needs to be changed is different among victims of sexual harassment. As a consequence, it can also be argued that the women put the blame on different institutions, people or factors. Whereas some women mostly blame men for the existence of sexual harassment, others highlight that it is more the patriarchal society which is to blame and not necessarily men.

An interesting finding which can be found in several discourse fragments is that several participants assume that most men are not aware of the fact that some of their actions might be considered sexually harassing.

> I: What do you think could or should be improved that sexual harassment – that it is less normal in Switzerland?

P: Yes I generally think one has to offer men – offer them a course. That they see how to interact correctly with women. That they see, what is a form of harassment and what is not[23]. (T 17)

In this example, for instance, the interviewee did not claim that men tend to be unaware of the fact that some of their behavior might be sexually harassing, but presented the claim as a given fact. Hence, by presenting a questionable statement as incontestable, the interviewees' belief about what needs to be changed is revealed. These assumptions about men, which are often extremely generalizing, indicate that there is the belief among the interviewees that men and their behavior need to change. Further linguistic elements which indicate women's wishes about what needs to be changed can be seen on the basis of the phrase "boys will be boys". Several interviewees mentioned that men are often unaware that some of their actions might be perceived as sexually harassing as society has taught them to behave in that way. Some of the participants refer to the phrase "boys will be boys" which explains the phenomenon why some men tend to behave in a certain way. However, the fact that several interviewees refer to the same saying while explaining men's behavior indirectly indicates to what degree society has internalized the belief that certain actions can be explained by a person's gender.

Another linguistic characteristic of the discourse fragments which implies what the interviewed women would want to be changed in today's society can be seen on the basis of the increased use of direct speech by the participants. While talking about what women wish would be done to minimize the normalization of sexual harassment, the interviewees often used direct speech to present how other people should react to sexual harassment.

I: What do you wish – or how could the situation be improved? The situation regarding the normalization of sexual harassment? What do you wish would change?

P: That is not easy to answer. I guess I'd want people to say something and not ignore the problem – like even if it is not about you. "Hey, why did you have to say that to her?" Or "Don't touch her!". You know – if others intervene – that would be nice. We cannot just keep looking away all the time, just because – like only focusing on yourself. (T 16)

The frequent use of the direct speech in combination with exclamations implies that some of the interviewed women feel left alone with that problem and wish for more support regarding

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[23] I: Was denkst du, könnte oder müsste verbessert werden, damit halt sexuelle Belästigung – damit es weniger normal ist in der Schweiz?
B: Ja, ich denke grundsätzlich müsste man den Männern – wie einen Kurs anbieten. Damit sie sehen, wie man richtig mit Frauen umgeht. Damit sie sehen, was eine Belästigung ist und was nicht. (T 17).

experiencing sexual harassment. The change to direct speech reveals that the reactions of bystanders are worthy of improving.

In general, it can be noted that the interviewed women often based their suggestions about improvements on personal experiences or beliefs. For instance, the suggestion that a man should treat every woman as if she was his mother or sister implies that women are never abused by family members. However, while this might be true for the majority of women, there are still numerous women who experience sexual harassment by family members. In a similar sense, the claims that bystanders ignore sexual harassment might also be based on personal experience as there are numerous people who would intervene if they saw someone being harassed. Hence, it has to be mentioned that women's suggestions about what should be done to improve the situation regarding the normalization of sexual harassment are often influenced by their own experiences and beliefs.

4.6 Women as Part of the Problem?

Another frequently discussed topic in the debate of sexual harassment is whether certain women and their actions or behavior contribute in any form to experiencing sexual harassment. The analysis of the different discourse fragments reveals opinions of the participants which differ to a great extent. A few of the interviewees argue that some women can be blamed for being harassed and that being a victim of sexual harassment is sometimes their own fault. For instance, one participant said that someone who dresses herself "like a slut" should not be surprised to be treated as one. Other examples were less extreme in their views about how women contribute to the normalization of sexual harassment but the statements indicate a similar notion. It was stated by several participants that the way in which a woman chooses to present herself can contribute to seeing women in a sexualized way. It was thus, indicated that if women emphasize their appearance and normalize wearing revealing clothes, it becomes more normal for men to harass them. Furthermore, multiple participants stated that ignoring any forms of sexual harassment or not confronting the perpetrator could contribute to the normalization of the issue. In contrast to this, other interviewed women stated that women do not contribute in any form to the problem as it is never a woman's fault if she experiences a form of sexual harassment. It was further frequently stated by the participants that women should wear whatever they want without having to worry that it could increase the risk of becoming a victim of sexual harassment. Hence, the interviewed women wish that men would stop viewing the way they choose to present themselves as an invitation for unwanted sexual remarks.

An interesting finding in regards to women's contribution to the normalization of sexual harassment can be seen on the basis of the strategies of argumentation by the participants. After being asked whether women somehow contribute to the issue, multiple participants stated that it is never a woman's fault for being harassed and the interviewees made extremely generalizing statements that women and their behavior cannot be blamed for the existence of sexual harassment towards women. However, after being given a few examples of certain actions which might contribute to the normalization of the issue, the statements were often relativized. These findings suggest that women are not always aware that the way they choose to respond or not respond to sexual harassment might indeed contribute to the normalization of the issue. Moreover, the initial response to the question about how women contribute to the issue was not rarely a counterquestion which indicated surprise. The surprising reaction to the question implies that some of the interviewees have not considered that the victims' actions could contribute to the normalization of the issue.

4.7 # MeToo Campaigns

The effect of awareness campaigns, especially the # MeToo movements, was also discussed in the interviews. A first noteworthy thing which has to be mentioned is that some of the women brought up the # MeToo campaigns on their own while talking about factors which could diminish or stop sexual harassment. There were different opinions about the effectiveness and the benefits of awareness campaigns and # MeToo campaigns. Some of the interviewees pointed out the benefits of awareness campaigns which include helping victims, creating awareness of the problem and giving women a voice to stand up against both sexual harassment and gender discrimination. The participants further elaborated that such campaigns are especially useful if they reach a large audience and are frequently talked about. In contrast to this, other participants claimed that # MeToo campaigns are only partially useful and not really effective, as they were only temporary phenomena and are not really relevant anymore. Other participants claimed that these campaigns do only show the issues and problems related to discrimination and harassment towards women but do not improve the situation in any way. Therefore, the participants added that such campaigns are often misused for personal validation and belonging to a group activity. In addition to this, it was commonly mentioned among the interviewees that such campaigns have become a "joke" or something which people make fun about. It was argued that the frequent false accusations of women caused this movement to lose its relevance and is now frequently used as an insider joke

among people to show that women overreact and misinterpret everything as sexual harassment.

4.8 Discourse: Sexual Harassment and Sexual Orientation

Referring back to the concept of intersectionality, sexual orientation should be analyzed and considered while talking about sexual harassment towards women. Thus, the interviews tried to reveal whether sexual orientation influences the victim's experiences of sexual harassment. The risk of experiencing sexual harassment for young women who identify as lesbian or bisexual is higher than for heterosexual women (Dawgert 2012: 1). Thus, the interview transcripts of women who belong to a sexual minority were seen as the key texts for the analysis of sexual harassment and sexual orientation. However, as the majority of women in Switzerland identify as heterosexual, social norms are created within our society. These social norms can be understood as "a pattern of thinking" which often lead to prejudice or assumptions about people who do not adhere to the norm (Pereira et al. 2009: 577f). Therefore, it is relevant for a discourse analysis to include both the opinions of heterosexual women and non-heterosexual women as their opinions about non-heterosexuality and sexual harassment might differ. Thus, the institutional context requires the analysis of different discourses which might emerge from the different opinions and experiences of heterosexual and non-heterosexual women.

4.8.1 Non-heterosexual Women

Different topics were discussed with the participants who identify as non-heterosexual. The interviewed women were asked whether they personally think that their sexual orientation somehow contributes to being exposed to a higher risk of experiencing sexual harassment. The common opinion of the five interviewed women was that their sexual orientation has never mattered regarding sexual harassment. The participants often mentioned that their sexuality is unknown to strangers and thus, cannot possibly influence the way or frequency in which they experience sexual harassment.

> I: Do you think your sexuality influences the way in which you have to … in which you are harassed?
>
> P: I don't think so. It is not that they know, anyways. No one really thinks that I am into girls. Even friends after they find out are surprised all the time. So I doubt that strangers know. And I don't show it in public. When I am with my girlfriend – it is not like we are hiding or something – but we avoid kissing or holding hands in public. So … no one really knows that we are together. (T 16)

However, while it was argued that non-heterosexuality does not affect their experiences of sexual harassment, it was discussed that discrimination based on their sexuality exists. Thus, the interviewed women differentiated between sexual harassment and harassment or discrimination based on their sexuality. Consequently, some of the participants revealed having experienced homophobia in form of comments or glances, however, they did not identify those incidents as a form of sexual harassment.

> I: So you are not … heterosexually oriented. Have you never in this direction – seen or noticed something? Maybe not towards you – but towards your girlfriend or something?
>
> P: … Maybe sometimes someone looks at us a bit stupidly. But otherwise nothing. There are for sure those who have something against gays or lesbians. But in my opinion, this has nothing to do with sexual harassment. If someone hates me because I have a girlfriend, then he is homophobic. And those – so I do not see why he then should sexually harass me somehow. And yes, it is – not everyone really knows it [that we are lesbians]. (T 20)[24]

Moreover, the common stance regarding sexual minorities and sexual harassment among the interviewed homosexual women was that there is no connection between sexual orientation and experiencing sexual harassment. However, one interviewee argued that transgender women might be the exception to the rule and experience sexual harassment differently than heterosexual women. A final topic which was mentioned by several non-heterosexual women is the difference between homosexual women and homosexual men. Two out of the five homosexual women argued that homosexual men receive worse and more abuse and discrimination based on their sexual orientation than women.

A rhetoric analysis of the different discourse fragments reveals that the interviewed women seem to be uncertain while talking about the possible effect of non-heterosexuality on sexual harassment. The interviewed women do not use words of certainty but often use the phrases "I think" or "I do not think" which indicates that the interviewed women are uncertain about the possible effect of being homosexual on sexual harassment. In contrast to this, as the women

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[24] I:Also du bist ja nicht – heterosexuell orientiert. Hast du in diese Richtung nichts – also gesehen oder bemerkt? Vielleicht nicht bei dir – aber bei deiner Freundin oder so?

B: … Manchmal schaut vielleicht einer dumm. Aber sonst nichts. Es gibt sicher solche, die was gegen Schwule und Lesben haben. Aber das hat aus meiner Sicht nichts mit sexueller Belästigung zu tun. Wenn jemand mich hasst, weil ich eine Freundin habe. Dann ist er homophob. Und solche – also ich sehe nicht, warum der mich dann irgendwie sexuell belästigen sollte. Und ja, es ist halt – das weiss ja auch wirklich nicht jeder [dass wir lesbisch sind]. (T 20)

talked about sexual orientation and homophobic discrimination, their vocabulary changed to a more convinced tone. Instead of using words and phrases such as "maybe, I don't think so, or I can only guess" women start using words of certainty such as "definitely" or "certainly". Focusing especially on the verbs which were used, it can be noted that the participants stopped using verbs signalizing insecurity and started making statements which they were convinced of. For instance, the statements "lots of men get beaten and abused" (T 16) or "men have it worse. Not sexual harassment, but discrimination of gays. They are still being strongly harassed today" (T 18)[25]. Thus, the rhetoric-linguistic analysis of the different discourse fragments reveal that the interviewed homosexual women are not fully convinced about their statements regarding sexual orientation and sexual harassment and do merely reveal their personal opinion. However, they seem to be more convinced while talking about abuse towards homosexual men.

As has been mentioned in the different transcripts, the participants generally seem to agree that people with a different sexual orientation than heterosexuality are likely to experience abuse or discrimination. This belief is anchored on the concept of homophobia which is defined as a hostile attitude towards homosexual men and women (Fraissé and Barrientos 2016: 1). However, men and women occupy different sociological positions and sexual roles are usually differentiated between masculine and feminine (Fraissé and Barrientos 2016: 3f). Consequently, although homosexuality is seen as a violation of sexual roles, "gay and lesbian people are not seen as perpetrating the same transgressions" (Fraissé and Barrientos 2016: 4). Thus, although both gay and lesbian people belong to the group of homosexuals, they do not receive the same form of hostility (Fraissé and Barrientos 2016: 4). As a consequence, it has to be differentiated between gayphobia and lesbophobia (Fraissé and Barrientos 2016: 3).

Focusing especially on Switzerland, a recent study about hate crimes towards gays, lesbians, bisexuals and transgender mentioned that 95 incidents of hate crimes were reported between November 2016 and December 2017 (LGBT+ Helpline 2018: 3). However, the real number of hate crimes towards people of sexual minorities is undoubtedly higher as the majority of incidents will not be reported (LGBT+ Helpline 2018: 7). For instance, the 2016 hate crime report from the UK estimates the number of hate crime attacks towards the aforementioned sexual minorities at roughly 39'000 (LGBT+ Helpline 2018: 7). However, only around 4'000 of them are reported to the police per year (LGBT+ Helpline 2018: 7). These findings coincide

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[25] Bei Männern ist es schlimmer. Nicht sexuelle Belästigung, aber Diskriminierung von Schwulen. Die werden stark gemobbt, heute immer noch. (T 18)

with the participants claims that homophobia or discrimination towards sexual minority still exist in Switzerland. Looking specifically at the victims' genders, it can be noted that one gender seems to be especially at risk of being the victim of a hate crime towards people of sexual minorities. Out of the 95 victims, the great majority identified as male 65 while only 14 victims were female, 17 transgender and 2 crossdressers (LGBT+ Helpline 2018: 11). Although the numbers do not belong to a representative study but rather to a project which tries to reveal the problematic of hate crimes towards homosexuals and transsexuals in Switzerland, these findings are worthy of mentioning (LGBT+ Helpline 2018: 10). The tendencies, namely that non-heterosexual men are more likely to be victims of discrimination than non-heterosexual women match the statements of the interviewed women which uttered similar statements. In a similar sense, Herek and Capitanio (1999: 348) claim that heterosexual men often have a more negative attitude towards homosexual men than towards lesbians.

The fear of becoming a victim of a hate crime is likely to be the reason why the non-heterosexual women mentioned that they often hide their sexual orientation in public or avoid to openly show it. Dick (2009: 9) notes in his study that around 40 percent of LGB people are worried that they could become a victim of a homophobic hate crime. Consequently, numerous LGB members "will take steps to avoid victimization" by hiding their sexual orientation or changing their behavior (Dick 2009: 9). These claims coincide with the non-heterosexual participants' statements that they often choose to hide their sexual orientation in public spaces. Thus, the fact that the interviewed homosexual women tend to hide their sexual orientation strongly indicates that they are worried about homophobic hate crimes. Additionally, the bias of compulsory heterosexuality in contemporary society might be another reason why the interviewed women decided to hide their sexual orientation (Rich 1980: 632). Hence, these steps to avoid victimization might be part of the reason why the interviewed homosexual women do not seem to see a connection between sexual harassment in public spaces and sexual orientation. In a similar vein, Lester (1999: 90) claims in his paper that a great portion of sexual harassment towards women is committed because they are lesbian, or are perceived as such, however, the reason for the harassment is usually masked and not revealed to the victims. Therefore, it has to be mentioned that it might be difficult for LGBT victims of sexual harassment to identify whether the harassment was perpetrated due to their sexual orientation or not.

As can be seen, the interviewed non-heterosexual women do not think that the sexual orientation of a woman influences the way or the frequency in which sexual harassment occurs

in public spaces, however, they nonetheless decide to hide their sexual orientation in public spaces. This implies that, although some women might not be aware of, deviating from society's heteronormativity is seen as a risk factor which should not be openly shown in public. Moreover, it has to be mentioned that the fact that the non-heterosexual women decided to hide their sexual orientation in public spaces influenced their experiences of sexual harassment. As they chose to hide their sexual orientation, the interviewed women were perceived as heterosexual in public spaces and were thus, able to escape sexual harassment directed specifically towards non-heterosexual women. Moreover, it has to be mentioned that none of the interviewees were transgender. Interviewing transgender people could have created different results, as transgender people are frequently victimized in public spaces. For instance, a British study which quantitatively analyzed 873 surveys of transgender people mentioned that 73 % of them have experienced harassment in public spaces (Whittle et al. 2007: 16). In conclusion, it can be stated that there was a tendency among the interviewed homosexual women that sexual orientation does not necessarily contribute to occurrences of sexual harassment but is a factor which could lead to homophobic hate crimes.

4.8.2 Heterosexual Women

Among the heterosexual interviewed women, a more diverse opinion about the impact of sexual orientation regarding sexual harassment in public spaces can be found.

As has already been mentioned, both the heterosexual and non-heterosexual women were asked about the potential influence of belonging to a group of a sexual minority on sexual harassment in public spaces. Obviously, as the heterosexual women have never been victims of sexual harassment towards members of a sexual minority, they based their answers about the topic of non-heterosexuality and sexual harassment on belief, observations or assumptions.

Multiple of the heterosexual participants believe that sexual orientation could potentially contribute in any form towards receiving sexual harassment in public spaces. It was often mentioned by the participants that men might be aroused by the thought of women kissing each other or engaging in a sexual activity.

> I: And the second [fact] which could potentially play a role as well is the sexual orientation. There it is the same [question] again. Do you think, for instance, that homosexual, bisexual women – does this play a role – whether you are more frequently being harassed than heterosexual women?

P: I can only guess here again, but there are many men who are somehow into lesbian and then want to find out "are you bisexual, make out with her". And I also think this – this is very intrusive. So – why do I have to make out with her, because I am bisexual or lesbian, to satisfy you. So I identify myself as heterosexual, therefore I can – I can – I don't know how that is. So whether that happens more frequently. I can imagine – I can imagine that this happens, whether it happens more frequently with sexual orientation, I don't know. Additionally, you are starting to move in different areas so you know – I do not believe that a lesbian couple goes to a pub. I mean then you might go out in a lesbian scene or a queer scene where you are rather in your comfort zone where you exactly do not have such things. But I cannot tell whether it happens more frequently if you have a different sexual orientation.[26] (T 8)

What can be seen in the utterances of the participant is the eroticizing of lesbians by heterosexual men (Herek and Capitanio 1999: 349). Lesbians which, according to multiple definitions are attracted to the same sex are, thus, sexualized and eroticized regardless of their sexual disinterest towards men.

I: And what about homosexuality? Or generally, what role does sexual orientation have on harassment? So the women's sexual orientation?

P: … Lesbians are certainly – many men are turned on by this [lesbians make them horny]. There will certainly be some comments. I am not lesbian and I don't know any – so none of my friends are. I can only assume. But it is similar. Sexual harassment – if they know that one [woman] is lesbian – they are turned on by that[27]. (T 14)

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[26] I: Und das zweite was auch eventuell eine Rolle spielen könnte ist die sexuelle Orientierung. Da ist wieder das Gleiche. Denkst du, dass zum Beispiel homosexuelle Frauen, bisexuelle Frauen – spielt das auch eine Rolle, ob du häufiger belästigt wirst als heterosexuelle Frauen?

B: Auch da kann ich wieder nur mutmassen, aber es gibt sehr viele Männer, die irgendwie auf Lesben stehen und dann irgendwie wollen sie herausfinden «bist du bisexuell, mach mal mit ihr rum». Und das finde ich dann auch so, das ist sehr übergriffig. So - wieso muss ich jetzt mit ihr herummachen, weil ich bisexuell oder lesbisch bin, um dir zu genügen. Also ich bezeichne mich selbst als heterosexuell von da her kann ich – kann ich – weiss ich nicht wie das ist. Also ob das häufiger vorkommt. Ich kann mir vorstellen – ich kann mir vorstellen, dass das vorkommt, ob es jetzt häufiger ist bei der sexuellen Orientierung weiss ich nicht. Plus, du fängst dich ja an in anderen Kreisen zu bewegen also weisst du so – ich glaube nicht, dass ein lesbisches Pärchen in eine Stammbeiz geht. Ich meine dann geht man vielleicht in einen lesbischen Ausgang oder in einen queeren Ausgang, wo du eher in deiner Komfortzone bist, wo du solche Sachen eben genau nicht hast. Aber, das kann ich so nicht sagen, ob das öfter ist, wenn du eine andere sexuelle Orientierung hast. (T 8)

[27] I:Und wie sieht es dann bei Homosexualität aus? Oder ganz allgemein, was für eine Rolle hat sexuelle Orientierung auf Belästigung? Also die sexuelle Orientierung der Frauen?

B: … Lesben sind sicher – viele Männer finden das ja geil. Da kommen sicher Sprüche. Ich bin selber nicht lesbisch und kenne auch keine – also von meinen Freunden sind keine. Ich kann also nur vermuten. Aber es ist ja ähnlich. Sexuelle Belästigung – wenn die wissen, dass jemand halt homosexuell ist, das turnt die schon an [regt sie an]. (T 14)

Therefore, in contrast to the interviewed homosexual women, some of the heterosexual women focused in their interviews on the eroticization of lesbians by heterosexual men. Multiple participants, however, answered that they do not expect homosexual women to experience an increased amount of sexual harassment from women.

> I: And now to the topic of sexual orientation. Do you think the – that non-heterosexual women are somehow more frequently, differently harassed than heterosexual women?

> B: I think – it depends *laughs* If lesbian women – they might go to lesbian clubs then they will be harassed by women *laughs* No … I don't know, I am not lesbian. I don't think that women - hetero women would harass other [women] simply because they are homo[sexual][28]. (T 13)

The different perception on how both heterosexual men and women generally react to homosexual women might be traced back to the different reaction towards homosexuality by men and women (Herek and Capitanio 1999: 348). The two scholars (Herek and Capitanio 1999: 348) argue that heterosexual men tend to "manifest higher levels of sexual prejudice" towards homosexual people than heterosexual women. Thus, this different thinking about homosexuals by heterosexual men and women possibly explains the frequently mentioned assumption by the participants that sexual orientation of women might have an impact on how heterosexual men treat them.

Looking specifically at how the participants answered the question about the effect of women's sexual orientation on sexual harassment in public spaces, it can be noted that multiple participants highlight in their answers that they are mainly speculating and assuming and cannot provide an answer which they can fully support. Especially the beginnings of their answers with phrases such as 'probably', 'I think' or 'I assume' strongly indicate that their responses to the questions are built on opinions and beliefs and not on experience. In addition to this, it is worth mentioning that a few of the participants chose to make ironic or humorous statements while talking about the potential effect of non-heterosexuality on sexual harassment. The use of irony usually becomes obvious with accompanied laughter or a following statement which highly contradicts the ironic utterances.

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[28] I:Und noch zum Thema sexuelle Orientierung. Denkst du, die – nicht heterosexuelle Frauen werden, häufiger, irgendwie anders belästigt als heterosexuelle Frauen?

B: Ich denke – also kommt drauf an *lacht*. Wenn lesbische Frauen – die gehen vielleicht in Lesben Clubs, dann werden sie von Frauen belästigt. *lacht* Nein … ich weiss nicht, ich bin nicht lesbisch. Ich denke nicht, dass Frauen dann andere … [Frauen] belästigen, nur weil die homo[sexuell] sind. (T 13)

The aforementioned necessity of male presence which seems to be necessary for women to feel safer in public spaces seems to be rooted in our society. As Fiona Vera-Gray and Liz Kelly suggest, heterosexual women are able to find a safety in public spaces due to the presence of a male partner, however, women with female partners are denied this safety (2020: 6). The reason for this necessity of a male partner instead of a female one to decrease the chances of becoming a victim of sexual harassment lies in the visibility of lesbians' sexuality (Vera-Gray and Kelly 2020: 6). Sexuality which differs from heterosexuality can make women more visible "as targets of sexual harassment in public" (Vera-Gray and Kelly 2020: 6). Thus, as the data indicates, a sexuality which differs from the norm is often hidden in public and there is the internalized norm in contemporary society to hide a non-heteronormative sexuality while being in public spaces.

Another fact which seems to be anchored in today's society is that abuse, harassment or discrimination towards LGBT people in public spaces is not an uncommon occurrence. The frequent assumption by the participants that belonging to a sexual minority, especially for men, is seen as a risk for abuse or attack can be traced back on the fact that discrimination towards those minorities is not an exception, but rather something which happens on a daily basis. As is claimed by the Council of Europe (2011: 8) LGBT persons are indeed exposed to a serious risk of becoming victims of hate crimes. Moreover, this risk tends to be especially high in public spaces (Council of Europe 2011: 8). Multiple different studies show that a great portion of Europeans still believe that LGBT persons should not be visible in public spaces but rather "be discreet or confine themselves to private sphere" as non-heterosexuality is seen as something objectionable by numerous people (Council of Europe 2011: 31). The fact that there is no desire for LGBT people to be seen in public spaces by a large portion of Europeans has become a fixed component in today's debate about homosexuality in public spaces. Although not everyone feels offended by LGBT people in public spaces, people are aware that certain actions such as kissing or holding hands by members of the LGBT community are seen as offensive by others (Council of Europe 2011: 31).

4.9 Race analysis

Out of the 20 interviews, a fourth of them were conducted with women who do not belong to the white racial category. Similarly to the non-heterosexual women, it is important to consider what both white and non-white women think regarding the influence of race on experiencing sexual harassment.

4.9.1 Analysis of Non-White Women

Out of the five women, three of them grew up in Switzerland while two of them moved to Switzerland at a later stage in their lives. However, all five of them have lived in Switzerland for several years and were thus, suitable interview partners to offer their experiences about sexual harassment in the country.

It can be noted that the majority of the women do not think that their different origin or skin color contributes in one way or another towards different or increased experiences of sexual harassment compared to white women. It was stated several times by the participants that belonging to a racial minority might have led to racial abuse, however, they often do not see a connection between race and sexual harassment.

I: Let's talk about other factors. There is the concept of intersectionality which … kind of says that women – or yes, women are harassed not only based on their gender, but also based on other factors such as race or sexual orientation. Let's focus on race first. In what ways could race or ethnicity influence … the experiences of sexual harassment?

P: I think people of race – different race – they stand out. People see that I am from Asia. They – the first thing most people ask me is where I am from. And then we talk a bit about ABC [country]. I am not sure what or how it influences sexual harassment. I think Asian women are often seen as shy or reserved. So maybe that is why I have not experienced that many – why I am not harassed often. Maybe – I would say that race is – people assume things about different races. And then they act based on that. I am sure if I was … from South America, for example, guys would hit on me way more frequently. But – I don't know about sexual harassment. It is – I don't know if there is a connection or not.

I: Okay, so if I give you an example. Let's say if you see an old man and a young woman from Thailand, lots of people assume that he must have bought her or brought her from Thailand. So do you see – would you say that is sexual harassment?

B: I don't know. That's just an assumption or a cliché. As long as people think that – I would not say that is sexual harassment. Maybe it is racist but sexual harassment … I don't know. I can't say that.

I: So have you ever experienced sexual harassment based on your ethnicity?

B: … No, not sexual harassment. I had a few racist … a few times people were racist. But not in a form of sexual harassment. No. I don't think so. (T 19)

It was mentioned by the participant that belonging to a racial minority in Switzerland makes you stand out and more visible to others. She further mentions already having experienced racism, however, she notes not having experienced sexual harassment based on her race. Thus, although she thinks that racism in form of clichés or assumptions does indeed exist in Switzerland towards racial minorities, the connection between race and sexual harassment cannot be drawn. This clear differentiation between racism and sexual harassment is a common theme among the interviewed women who usually think that the two forms of oppression should be analyzed separately.

> I: Ok and if you look at it neutrally, so just. Do you think ethnicity plays a role in sexual harassment? So not the ethnicity of the – not of those who do the harassments.

> P: … I really don't know. It might be. But in most cases, it is racism and not sexual harassment. Why should racists sexually harass someone, they can simply harass someone racially. I have heard some comments such as "black cunt, bitch" But that was racism for me, although the comment was sexist somehow. Yes.[29] (T 13)

In contrast to such statements, however, it was discussed that race plays a major role in sexual harassment by another participant. In fact, the interviewed woman argued that her origin makes her the victim of sexual harassment more frequently than white women. Moreover, she claimed that one's origin heavily influences the way in how the sexual harassment occurs.

> I: So then there are two more topics which I would like to talk about. The first is the ethnicity. In the literature, it is argued that women are oppressed based on multiple … factors. Or they are sexually harassed based on their ethnicity. Do you think ethnicity or skin color plays a role here regarding sexual harassment?

> P: Absolutely. I mean I am DEF [nationality] and so obviously I am Orientalized. I look differently than my friends and people notice. Some comments refer to my origin. "Princess Yasmine". I have heard that more than once. And others- like when they try to flirt with me, it is often about my orient [oriental background]. About how exotic I am. So definitely, yes.

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[29] I:Ok und wenn du es neutraler ansiehst – also ganz allgemein? Denkst du die Ethnie spielt eine Rolle bei sexueller Belästigung? Also jetzt nicht die Ethnie der – also nicht die, die die Belästigungen machen?

B: … Ich weiss es wirklich nicht. Ich denke nicht wirklich. Aber es ist ja meistens dann Rassismus und nicht sexuelle Belästigung. Wieso sollten Rassisten jemanden sexuell belästigen, die können ja einfach rassistisch belästigen. Ich habe schon mal so Sprüche gehört wie «Schwarze Fotze, Schlampe». Aber das war für mich einfach Rassismus, auch wenn der Spruch irgendwie sexistisch war. … Ja. (T 13).

I: So do you think they pick you because of your origin – so you are more often harassed based on your origin or do they just use your origin – in a way – when they harass you?

P: That is difficult. Let me think … I – I think both. I think I am more often harassed, then let's say my friends. So I would say so. And if they mention that I am Arabian they must have – I mean that shows that they said something about where I am from.

I: Could you elaborate a bit on that. Like … what is said about being Arabian? Or in what ways are you harassed based on the fact that you are DEF [nationality]?

P: I am exotic. I am hard to get. They think I am some kind of special price, because I am different. Once someone said something like "I respect women, not like your people." *laughs*. Oh god, the irony. He assumes that men in our country suppress us and that he is better. And he judges a whole country and thinks he is respectful. But sometimes it is also indirectly what people think. They often assume we are used to getting oppressed, just because it happens in Arabia. So they think if they are nice to us that is sufficient to get us. They do not say it like that, but you notice it somehow. (T 15)

As stated in this example, it is certainly possible for women to experience sexual harassment specifically based on their origin. In this example, the interviewed woman claimed that her Arabian origin was used by men to 'Orientalize' her and she felt sexual harassment which was in direct relation to her ethnicity. The clichés about her race was used as a means to harass her verbally. These assumptions or clichés were another topic which was frequently mentioned by the participants in the interviews.

I: Okay than maybe an example … If you see some old man with a woman from Thailand, then many think he must have bought her. Or Russian women are often – so mainly, that they look for a rich Swiss man and the Swiss only wants her because she is pretty. Do you –

B: Ah yes, I know what you mean. This certainly happens of, sure. But somehow … this is not necessarily a form of harassment. This is simply a prejudice which many have and to be honest, it is often right, isn't it? It is not a form of harassment what I think about someone. I don't know what they think about me neither. They do not say it, so it is not so bad.[30] (T 17)

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[30] I: Okay dann vielleicht als Beispiel. … Wenn du irgendeinen alten Mann siehst mit einer Frau aus Thailand, dann denken ja viele die hat er sicher gekauft. Oder russische Frauen werden oft einfach als – also quasi, dass sie einen reichen Schweizer suchen und der Schweizer sie nur will, weil sie hübsch ist. Siehst –

B: Ah ja ich weiss, was du meinst. Das gibt es sicher viel, klar. Aber irgendwie … das ist ja nicht unbedingt eine Belästigung. Das ist einfach so ein Vorurteil, was viele haben und ganz ehrlich, es stimmt ja auch oft, oder? Das ist ja keine Belästigung was ich über jemanden denke. Ich weiss ja auch nicht, was die über mich denken. Sie sagen es ja nicht, also ist es ja nicht schlimm. (T 17)

These assumptions about people of certain races was another common topic among the interviewed women. However, as has already been mentioned, these assumptions were not always connotated to sexual harassment. Thus, it has to be noted that for some of the interviewed non-white women, assumptions and clichés which reduce certain women to sexual objects were not always seen as a form of sexual harassment.

According to Nancy Chi Cantalupo (2019: 8), different research has confirmed that women of color are "disproportionately targeted for sexual harassment". However, racial discrimination is interwoven with sexual harassment to such a degree that it might be difficult for the affected women to recognize the effect of their race on their experiences regarding sexual harassment (Cantalupo 2019: 8). This difficulty can also be seen in the participants' answers. Although it was claimed by certain interviewees that they received unwanted sexual comments based on their race, they did not identify them as sexually harassing but as forms of racism. This highlights that racial discrimination towards women is integrated in the discussion of sexual harassment to such a degree that the two forms of oppression have become extremely difficult to separate.

Another interesting aspect which can be found while analyzing the different transcripts is the normalization of racism. Experiencing racism was so universal among the interviewed non-white women that it was only mentioned in passing. This reveals that racism is embedded as a normality in today's society to such a degree that it has become unnecessary to even discuss its existence. As Linda M. van den Broek suggests in her paper, discrimination based on ethnicity or race has become an "everyday phenomenon" (2014: 257). Although discrimination of ethnic or racial minorities is prohibited in most countries, it is argued that depending on the country, almost half of the people who belong to an ethnic minority regularly experience discrimination specifically on account of their ethnicity (Van den Broek 2014: 257). This can also be seen in Switzerland. According to a report by the FRB (2019: 8) racism is a common occurrence for numerous ethical minorities and their daily lives in Switzerland.

A rhetoric linguistic analysis of the participants' answers indicates similar findings to the preceding analyses. Looking specifically at the example from transcript 19, the linguistic clues and the choice of words coincide with the findings above, namely that racism has become so universal as it is only mentioned in passing.

I: So have you ever experienced sexual harassment based on your ethnicity?

B: … No, not sexual harassment. I had a few racist … a few times people were racist. Sure. (T 19)

After having confirmed that she has already experienced discrimination based on her race, the participant added the word sure to her statement as to say that racism is obviously present in her life and not really worth discussing. A similar finding can be seen in another transcript which reveals that the participant is unsure whether there is a connection between race and sexual harassment, however, there is no doubt in her answer about the existence of racism.

I: So do you see there a connection between race or skin color and sexual harassment? And I mean the skin color of the victims and not the perpetrators?

B: … This – I don't know what I should say. Racism, for sure[31]. (T 14)

4.9.2 Analysis of White Women

Similar topics were mentioned in the interviews with the white women. A common topic which was talked about by almost all participants is the distinction between sexual harassment and racism. Similarly to the non-white women, the participants disagreed about whether sexual harassment towards women is influenced by their race or not. While some of them argued that race could influence women's experiences regarding sexual harassment, others claimed that racism and sexual harassment are two different forms of oppression and are not linked in any ways. In addition to this, the assumptions, prejudices or clichés about people of certain races was frequently mentioned in the interviews. However, in contrast to the interviews with the non-white women, the race of the perpetrators was discussed as well. Several of the interviewed women believe that foreigners are more likely to harass women than Swiss men. The participants were not asked any questions about the ethnicity or race of the perpetrators but introduced this discussing point on their own.

I: Good and then also the factor of race or ethnicity. There are such studies that say for example that black women – this is now mainly in the US – they are more frequently harassed compared to white women. What is your opinion on that in Switzerland? Do you think it plays a role here as well? Or have you experienced something, too? Or can you say something- a prognosis or your opinion to that?

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[31] I:Also siehst du da einen Zusammenhang zwischen Rasse oder Hautfarbe und sexueller Belästigung? Und ich meine die Hautfarbe der Opfer und nicht der Täter?
B: … Das – ich weiss nicht was ich sagen soll. Rassismus sicher. (T 14)

P: So I think in Switzerland I have never experienced something like that regarding women. I have also never heard anything like that – that black [people] are more likely to be harassed. Well no idea. Maybe one thinks that they are weaker. Because in most countries or especially in Switzerland they are a minority. Most are white and … I don't know. Maybe that is why one thinks that they are weaker. The only thing that I can say to this is that often the guys, who touch me or so – I often have the feeling, - so it is not like it is happening extremely frequently, but those who do it, I have the feeling that 70 percent of them are foreigners. So it is rare, that a Swiss [man] does it.[32] (T 11)

In this example, the participant made the claim that foreigners are more likely to harass women based on personal experiences. In other cases, however, the participants did not make that statement based on personal experiences but rather on assumptions about people of different ethnicities.

I: So to just quickly dig deeper … So is it – have you personally experienced it that it is more often that they are foreigners? Or – yes how did you come to this opinion?

B: No, it was now more – my personal opinion. I think they are more likely foreigners, but I do not have exact numbers or something. This is what you frequently hear from others or in the news.[33] (T 18)

Hence, it can be noted that compared to the non-white women, the white women tend to differ in their answers between race and nationality. Race and nationality are not the same, however, for several of the interviewed white women these two concepts seem to be identical. Thus, it

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[32] I: Gut und dann noch der Faktor ja «Rasse» oder Ethnie. Es gibt auch so Studien, die sagen zum Beispiel, dass schwarze Frauen – das ist jetzt vor allem in den USA – die werden häufiger belästigt jetzt im Vergleich als weisse Frauen. Was ist so deine Meinung dazu in der Schweiz? Denkst du bei uns spielt das auch eine Rolle? Oder hast du vielleicht auch schon irgendetwas erlebt? Oder kannst du irgendetwas dazu – Prognose oder deine Meinung dazu sagen.
B: Also ich denke in der Schweiz bei den Frauen selber habe ich jetzt noch nie etwas erlebt. Auch noch nie so etwas gehört, dass Schwarze eher belästigt werden. Ja keine Ahnung. Vielleicht denkt man bei diesen auch einfach, dass sie schwächer sind. Weil in den meisten Ländern oder vor allem in der Schweiz sind sie ja eine Minderheit. Die meisten sind ja weiss und … weiss auch nicht. Vielleicht ist es deswegen, weil man denkt, dass sie schwächer sind. Das Einzige was ich einfach dazu sagen kann ist, dass vielfach die Typen, die mich jetzt so anfassen oder so – habe ich bei vielen das Gefühl – also es ist nicht so, dass das so wahnsinnig viel vorkommt, aber bei denen, die es machen habe ich das Gefühl, 70 Prozent davon sind Ausländer. Also es ist selten, dass ein Schweizer das macht. (T 11)

[33] I: Also noch kurz zum Nachhaken. … Also ist das – hast du das persönlich so erlebt, dass es häufiger Ausländer sind? Oder – ja wie bist du zu diesem – zu dieser Meinung gekommen?
B: Nein, es war jetzt mehr einfach als – meine persönliche Einschätzung. Ich denke es sind eher Ausländer, aber ich habe keine genauen Zahlen oder so. Das was man häufig mitbekommt von anderen und in den News [Nachrichten]. (T 18)

can be claimed that it might be difficult for white women to fully comprehend how race influences the experiences of sexual harassment.

Finally, another protruding aspect which was visible in the interviews with the white women but not present in the other participants' answers were assumptions towards people of an ethnic minority. While most interviewees only mentioned that assumptions towards women of ethical minorities exist in today's societies, some of them revealed their own assumptions or prejudices towards them.

> I: The second aspect is race. Do you think race has an impact on sexual harassment? And I mean the race of the victim.

> P: … Well I don't know. I don't really have friends who – I can only guess. … It could be, I don't know. I think racism is – they might experience racist abuse, but I am not so sure about sexual harassment because of their race. … I mean if they – let's say they are from a different culture, so they are most likely used to it. It is not as unusual for them, for most of them it is okay that women are inferior than men. (T 16)

Looking specifically at linguistic or rhetoric clues, it can be highlighted that most participants are mainly speculating and assuming and do not base their answers on knowledge or personal experiences. Utterances such as "I am speculating a bit" (T 8) or "I can only guess" (T 16) are strongly hinting that the interviewees' answers should be analyzed as educated guesses and not necessarily as knowledge. Furthermore, some of the participants changed the pronouns from "us" to "them". This further highlights the fact that the interviewees are more distant from their answers, as their role in the interviews changed. While for the most part of the interviews the participants could reveal their personal opinions or experiences, they now had to answer questions about a group of people which they are not part of. Consequently, this shift of perspective from being able to base one's answers on personal experiences to speaking as someone who is not directly affected is visible in the analysis.

The analysis of the different discourse fragments regarding sexual harassment and women's race reveals that there is still not much known about the experiences of ethnic minorities regarding sexual harassment. This coincides with the majority of research which primarily focuses on sexual harassment of white women (Buchanan and Ormerod 2002: 107). Although the common assumption among the interviewed women is that non-white women are likely to be victims of racial discrimination, only few of them saw a connection between sexual harassment and race. Interestingly, several interviewees first denied the possible influence of

race on the experience of sexual harassment. However, after having received an example, numerous of them changed their opinion and agreed that there might be a connection between sexual harassment and race. This might be an indication of the existence of white privilege (Bivens 2005: 43). As Bivens notes (2005: 43), white people are often unaware of the fact that they are experiencing privileges based on their skin color and are simultaneously not recognizing the oppression and discrimination towards people of color. Moreover, the scholar argues that as a consequence of this white privilege, white people tend to diminish the problems and forms of oppression which people of color have to face (Bivens 2005: 43f). Thus, an ideological analysis of the different discourse fragments hints at the internalization of white privilege among the interviewed women. While most of them recognize the existence of racism in our society, only few of them are aware of the fact to what degree white people experience privileges. Furthermore, the analysis of the different discourse fragments mirrors what Bivens calls internalized racism (2005: 44). As people of color frequently get victimized based on their race, it might happen that people who do not belong to a racial minority develop certain ideas, assumptions or beliefs which unconsciously discriminates people of ethnical minorities (Bivens 2005: 43 ff). It can be noted that certain discourse fragments highly indicate this internalization of racism. As mentioned by Bivens, this form of discrimination often happens unknowingly and reflects the privileges which white people have and does not automatically imply that someone has racist tendencies.

5 Discussion

The analysis of the 20 interview transcripts coincides with the findings of the literature regarding the normalization of sexual harassment in contemporary society. As every interviewee has already experienced a form of sexual harassment in a public space, the claims that sexual harassment is widespread in public spaces can be confirmed (Mellgren et al. 2018: 263). However, it needs to be added that the participants are more likely to have experienced a form of sexual harassment than the average woman, as they had been informed about the topic of the interviews. Although those women who did not want to participate in this research were not asked why they were not interested in participating, it seems plausible that some of them refused to be interviewed as they have not personally experienced sexual harassment in a public space. As shown in the 2019 study about sexual harassment in Switzerland, only 64 percent of the roughly 4'500 participants personally know a woman who has experienced sexual harassment (GFS.Bern 2019: 9). Hence, the interviewed women might be overrepresenting the women who have experienced sexual harassment.

In regards to the effects sexual harassment can have on the victims, the analysis corresponds to the common claims in the literature that experiences of sexual harassment can have negative effects on the "mental health of the victim" (Maass et al. 2013: 346). However, whereas it is frequently claimed in the literature that experiencing sexual harassment can cause severe mental health problems such as depression, anxiety or burnout-related symptoms, the analysis of the transcripts revealed that sexual harassment did not severely affect the participants' health (Maass et al. 2013: 346). This can be explained with the fact that the interviewees mostly experienced minor forms of sexual harassment such as verbal harassment, staring or groping. Consequences of more severe forms of sexual harassment such as rape or being forced to participate in unwanted sexual activities were not discussed in the interviews, as none of the participants have experienced such severe forms of sexual harassment. As claimed by Myhill and Allen (2002: 7), women are "much more likely to disclose sexual victimization to trained female interviewers" during face-to-face interviews. As I am neither female nor a trained interviewer, women who have experienced rape or other severe forms of sexual harassment might not have wanted to participate in this study. Additionally, victims of severe forms of sexual harassment are in most cases assaulted by someone they know (Myhill and Allen 2002: 30). However, as outlined in the theoretical part of this thesis, perpetrators of sexual harassment in public spaces are usually unknown to the victim. Hence, although severe forms of sexual harassment might occur in public spaces, it has to be noted

that they are more likely to occur in private spaces. Thus, while discussing the normalization of sexual harassment regarding public spaces, it needs to be considered that not all forms of sexual harassment are normalized. Unwanted verbal attention in forms of comments or jokes and groping are normalized in certain public spaces, however, experiencing more severe forms of sexual harassment in a public space is, thankfully, still an exceptional situation which only affects a small percentage of women. This should not, however, minimize the severity of the issue and the impact the normalization of sexual harassment has on society and especially women. This should rather highlight that the interviewed women adapted their behavior and actions to the normalization of minor forms of sexual harassment, not to extreme incidents such as rape or sexual assault. While it might seem reassuring at first that women 'only' have to expect minor forms of sexual harassment in public spaces, the opposite can be disclosed at second glance. As most of the participants' experiences of sexual harassment in public spaces are minor forms, they were classified as not felonious. Consequently, the interviewees did not report the incidents to an authority figure, which coincides with the findings of the literature that most incidents of sexual harassment go unreported (Hlavka 2014: 337). Most women, thus, are not really given a choice except for either accepting these minor forms of sexual harassment or avoiding certain public spaces. Hlavka (2014: 339f) states that women are forced to endure the situation as it is often seen as normal and natural by society that female sexuality is linked to passivity and submissiveness whereas male sexuality is associated with dominance and aggression. The normalization of the issue of sexual harassment combined with the fact that women are taught to endure a form of oppression further dramatizes the situation and creates a vicious circle. As claimed in both the literature and several interviews, the traditional gender arrangements and beliefs in combination with the existence of a patriarchal culture are the main reasons for the normalization of sexual harassment towards young women (Hlavka 2014: 339). However, it can be argued that reasons for the existence of the issue might at the same time be the result of it too. Or to put it differently, the effect of the normalization of sexual harassment towards young women in public spaces is the reinforcement of traditional gender roles. As women are taught to minimize their experiences of sexual harassment in public spaces, they accept sexual harassment as a normal part of certain public spaces. At the same time however, scholars argue that sexual harassment creates gendered hierarchies (Hlavka 2014: 339). As these gendered hierarchies are often portrayed as being one of the main reasons for sexual harassment, we have come full circle.

The question that arises is whether this circle can be broken and the normalization of sexual harassment can be stopped. Looking at sexual harassment in private spaces, it can be argued that the situation has improved over the last decades. Especially regarding sexual harassment at the workplace, enormous progress in mitigating the frequency of sexual harassment towards women has been done. As argued by Becton et al. (2016: 3), the implementation of specific rules and an anti-harassment policy which clearly outline what is accepting behavior at the workplace protect women of becoming frequent victims of sexual harassment. These workplace policies have become especially successful since the # MeToo movement "took on wide momentum" (Johnson et al. 2019:1). A survey in the UK by Johnson et al. (2019: 1f) highlights that fewer women reported having experienced coercion or unwanted sexual attention following the # MeToo movements. The reason for this is that human resource departments started to see the prevention of sexual harassment as a priority and hence, women realized that they have the opportunity to ask for help (Johnson et al. 2019: 3). While the implementation of rules which protects women might be applicable in certain private spaces, this strategy is more difficult to use in public spaces.

The normalization of sexual harassment towards women in public spaces often causes women to embed the belief that it is simply part of being a woman to accept forms of oppression (Son 2017: par.1). As Deborah Son (2017: par.1) argues in her article, women might react with anger or offense towards a first experience of sexual harassment, however, the more the incidents happen, the likelier the women start to naturalize these forms of harassment and stop reacting. This can also be seen among the interviewees who often claimed to not respond to experiences of sexual harassment as they have started to see them as a normal part of their lives. Consequently, as it has become normal in certain public spaces to harass women, it has simultaneously become normalized for women to feel constant oppression based on their gender. As argued by the United Nations Development Programme (2019: 152), the existence of these social norms which prescribe "social roles and power relations between men and women in society" are the reason for women to face strong societal expectations. Thus, in a similar way in which women are often expected to accept the role of caretakers and homemakers, social norms can perpetuate the expectancy to accept sexual harassment (United Nations Development Programme, 2019: 152, 166f). This expectancy can also be commonly detected in the interviewees' answers. The analysis of the interviews reveals that it is the norm among the participants to not only expect sexual harassment to a certain degree in specific public spaces, but also to assign this form of oppression to the mere fact of being

female. Based on these findings, it can be concluded that the normalization of sexual harassment causes women to experience their gender as disadvantageous since problematic forms of masculinity are legitimized (Phipps et al. 2017: 5). As society attributes unwanted male attention towards women to the mere fact of their gender, women start to ascribe their experiences of oppression to their gender, too. Consequently, since numerous women tend to normalize their experiences of harassment and a substantial part of men have embedded their harassing behavior as socially acceptable, only a minority recognizes the normalization of sexual harassment towards women in public spaces as a problem. But it is exactly the differentiation of people into dominant and dominated groups which leads to forms of oppression (David and Derthick 2014: 3). Especially due to the fact that women often start to experience sexual harassment at an early age, the oppression can become internalized (David and Derthick 2015: 8). This internalization of oppression is argued to be highly problematic, as power structures are maintained that "benefit the oppressors" (David and Derthick 2015: 9). Hence, the normalization of sexual harassment towards young women in public spaces remains unchallenged and continues to contribute to gender inequalities.

A further topic which has to be critically discussed is women's responsibility in the discussion of sexual harassment and the normalization of it in public spaces. It is undeniable that victims of sexual harassment cannot be blamed for experiencing sexual harassment. However, it can be discussed whether their reactions to experiencing sexual harassment and their attitude towards the normalization of the issue add to the severity of the problem. It goes without saying that women should not risk their own safety to reprimand a perpetrator of sexual harassment. Moreover, women who do not personally perceive the current situation regarding the normalization sexual harassment in public spaces as an issue which is in need of intervening should not be criticized. However, those women who are negatively affected by frequently experiencing sexual harassment or generally want the issue to change should realize that stopping the normalization of sexual harassment is a fight. It takes an extra step to confront people who make a sexist comment towards others and it takes an extra step to report groping or unwanted physical while spending time in a nightclub. However, it is really necessary for women to be willing to go the extra mile to fight against the normalization of sexual harassment and thus, show that sexual harassment is not accepted and will not be tolerated. According to the WU (2018: 13) it is relevant to respond to forms of sexual harassment and victims should not remain silent as this silence could be misinterpreted as consent and thus, further contribute to the normalization of the issue. Therefore, it is important to clearly communicate if personal

boundaries have been violated to show that no further form of harassment will be tolerated (WU 2018: 13).

In conclusion, it can be claimed that that the normalization of sexual harassment towards women in public spaces and the general oppression of women in today's society are linked to such a degree that it is not possible to analyze one of the issues without considering the other. Hence, suggestions which only aim at minimizing the normalization of sexual harassment instead of eliminating gender oppression and inequality are not suited to solve the issue in the long run. This should by no means suggest that recommendations such as educating young people about the issue of sexual harassment or demanding higher punishments for sexually harassing women do not help to diminish the severity of the issue. On the contrary, there is a reason why sexual harassment towards women is 'less normalized' in certain countries than in others and why women experience 'less oppression' depending on the culture and society they live in. As stated above, the participants argue that, although sexual harassment towards women certainly exists in Switzerland, it is even worse in other countries in which women have less rights. For instance, a recent report by the World Economic Forum (2020: 8f) which measures gender-based disparities across 153 countries based on the criteria health, education, economy and politics indicates that the gender-gap varies greatly between the countries. As Switzerland is ranked 18th among 153 countries, the participants' claims that Switzerland is well-advanced regarding gender equality are found to be true (World Economic Forum 2020: 9). In a similar sense, Greetje Timmerman and Cristien Bajema (1999: 432) claim in their paper that there are cultural differences in the frequency of sexual harassment towards women. Hence, the implementation of sexual education (Gordon 2011: 175), national prevention campaigns or increased security measures on public transportation (Allen et al. 2018: 5) which are more prominent in certain countries than in others help to diminish the frequency of sexual harassment in public spaces. However, in order to completely eliminate the normalization of sexual harassment towards young women in public spaces, gender equality has to be reached. Fortunately, gender equality strategies which are frequently initiated by the United Nations Development Programme (2018: 3) constantly implement new findings from past strategies and aim for gender equality. Additionally, the International Planned Parenthood Federation, a worldwide movement of multiple national organizations (IPPF 2017: 3f) strives for a world where everyone is considered equal, regardless of one's gender. Thus, similarly to the # MeToo campaigns, creating awareness might be a first step into the right direction to tackle the issue of gender oppression and thus, simultaneously the

normalization of sexual harassment. Only time will tell whether this goal can be reached or not, however, there is no doubt that without taking steps into the right direction, the current situation regarding sexual harassment towards young women in public spaces will not improve.

6 Conclusion

The severity of sexual harassment in public spaces is widely under-researched and often repressed by discussions regarding sexual harassment in private spaces. However, incidents of sexual harassment in public spaces happen on such a frequent basis that they are becoming the norm. On the one hand, unwanted verbal attention, groping or sexual assault negatively affect women's health and restrict their experiences in public spaces. On the other hand, the fact that incidents of sexual harassment are normalized further affects the victims. This thesis, thus, tried to outline the consequences which the normalization of sexual harassment in public spaces has on young women. 20 interviews with young women were conducted for this thesis to identify the effects of the normalization of sexual harassment in public spaces. A discourse analysis was used to recognize that sexual harassment in the forms of groping or unwanted verbal attention are seen as 'normal' in places associated with nightlife. As a consequence of this normalization, women often remain silent while experiencing an incident of sexual harassment as they perceive them as normal features of a night spent out. As women often remain silent while experiencing a form of harassment, they have to endure being sexually harassed. Moreover, the analysis showed that women are often ridiculed for criticizing incidents of sexual harassment, which further highlights the severity of the issue. The analysis further showed that women adapt their behavior to minimize the risk of becoming a victim of sexual harassment. Consequently, it can be claimed that the normalization of sexual harassment in public spaces has devastating consequences on young women and, thus, should be brought to the public's attention.

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Appendix

Interview guide

What are public spaces?

- Which public spaces do you often visit?

- How often do you visit those spaces?

- To what purpose do you visit those spaces?

- How important are those public spaces for you?

- What feelings/emotions do you associate with those spaces?

What do you associate with sexual harassment?

- What places do you associate with sexual harassment?

What forms of sexual harassment have you personally experienced in public spaces?

- Towards you

- Towards others such as friends or even strangers

How did you react to the sexual harassment?

- Why did you decide to report/not report that behavior?

- How did other people (bystanders) react?

- How did the person who assaulted you or others react?

Can you describe the emotions that you felt when you experienced sexual harassment?

What impact did the incident(s) have on you?

- Daily life?

- In a similar or the same public space?

What impact did the experience have on your feelings of safety in similar public places?

- In what ways does it cross your mind before you go out/ use public transportation?

- Is there something that you do differently now, (after being harassed)?

- Methods to prevent harassment?

How often do you notice sexual harassment in public spaces towards other people?

- How do you react?

- How do the harassed people respond to the harassment?

- What is the general response to harassment?

How common is sexual harassment discussed among your friends or family members?

What role does a specific space have on being sexually harassed?

- Frequency of occurrence?

- Reaction?

- Expectations?

Why do you think space creates different boundaries / behavior/reactions?

What do you understand under normalization of sexual harassment?

- In what forms have you experienced the normalization of sexual harassment in public spaces?

- In what ways does sexual harassment restrict your personal idea of freedom in public spaces?

- What effect does the normalization of sexual harassment have on your daily life?

What do you think needs to be changed in today's society regarding sexual harassment?

- What are your wishes regarding changes?

- What ideas/methods could help to diminish the ongoing normalization?

- How will the normalization change in the future?

What could be improved in our society to stop the ongoing normalization of sexual harassment in public spaces?

- In your opinion: What led to the normalization?

- How severe is such a normalization for today's society?

In what ways do you think that the normalization of sexual harassment influences the perception of gender roles?

- Effect of normalization on perception of women?

- How do women themselves contribute to the normalization of sexual harassment?

What role does race have on experiencing sexual harassment?

- Frequency of incidents?

- Severity of incidents?

- Normalization of sexual harassment?

What role does sexual orientation have on experiencing sexual harassment?

- Frequency of incidents?

- Severity of incidents?

- Normalization of sexual harassment?

Transcription rules

Object	Description	Example
Interviewer	I:	I: What is your name?
Participant	P:	P: My name is Tobias
Filler words such as „yes", "mhhm", "ehm" etc.	Will be ignored in the transcription.	
Breaks (short/medium/long):	With dots: … / … … / … … …	P: Good question ! … … … I don't know.
Utterances	* *	P: *laughs* That joke was great.
Addtions which were made by the author	[ ]	P: These people [police officers] really annoy me.
Incomprehensible	{…}	P: I really don't like going to {…} alone.
Sentence interruption/ new thought.	–	P: Yesterday I went to the – ah yes, now I remember.
Words without a corresponding translation.	In *italics*.	P: Trains are *gäbig* [useful].
Srong emphasis	CAPITALIZED	P: It was GREAT.

Personal Declaration

I hereby declare that the submitted Thesis is the result of my own, independent work. All external sources are explicitly acknowledged in the Thesis.

J. Schriber