

Abstract

After the Me Too Movement: Current Status of University Student Victims of Sexual Violence in Arts and Culture, and Policy Issues Ahead

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Through the Me Too movement, which was sparked in early 2018, revelations of sexual violence in the arts and culture community became widespread. Through media reports, it became known that student voices in the education community were also demanding that victimization in the arts and culture sector be revealed, and that countermeasures be taken. Sexual harassment and sexual violence in educational programs for arts and culture at universities is an act that violates students' human rights and the right to study, and institutional improvement to eradicate it is demanded.

In this study, we examined the current status of sexual harassment

and sexual violence in university arts and culture education programs after the Me Too movement, and searched for related measures for improvement. To do this, we searched news articles about sexual harassment and sexual violence in arts and culture programs at universities and analyzed regulations on handling sexual harassment grievances. In-depth interviews were conducted with undergraduate students, graduate students, and university graduates to understand the aspects and structural context of sexual harassment and sexual violence occurring in university arts and culture education programs. In order to identify problems related to the handling of sexual harassment and sexual violence grievances within universities, in-depth interviews were conducted with counselors from grievance counseling organizations and students. In addition, we reviewed policy data related to the prevention of sexual harassment and sexual violence in the fields of education and arts and culture, and presented related measures for improvement.

The following is the current status related to the occurrence of sexual harassment and sexual violence in the culture and arts sector, which was revealed through in-depth interviews with relevant people, such as arts and culture university students. In university arts and culture education programs, there is a tendency to emphasize gender stereotypes, the sexual objectification of women, and male-centered hierarchy. Education with sexuality as a theme occurs more frequently than in other fields, and through misunderstandings about this, expressions about sexuality sometimes lead to sexual harassment. Sexual harassment and sexual violence targeting university students occurred in various locations, both inside and outside schools. Victims suffered psychological trauma during or after the incident, and also suffered from secondary attacks from the perpetrator or colleagues during the course of the statement investigation.

In response to university authorities' lukewarm response to sexual harassment and sexual violence, students formed student committees or task forces and demanded fair investigations and disciplinary action from schools on behalf of the victims. They delivered student opinions about the punishment of perpetrators to schools. Students also urged the preparation of regulations for supplementing the victim protection and support system, for performing efficient work at collaborative artistic work sites, and for preventing sexual harassment and sexual assault.

According to an interview with a sexual harassment grievance counselor, the gender sensitivity of arts and culture university students is high, but the gender sensitivity of some instructors and professors in their 50s and 60s is on the low side. These educators are said to have low awareness about sexual harassment and sexual assault and believe they are natural acts. Counselors said that professors and lecturers make indiscreet, sexually explicit expressions in class or in personal spaces, sometimes leading to sexual assault.

After the Me Too movement, student awareness and trust in sexual harassment grievance counseling organizations is higher than before, but it is said that efforts are needed to restore trust in these organizations and to improve perceptions of them. In particular, they point out that special approaches are needed in consideration of arts and culture students, who have many practical skills classes and on-site classes. In addition, the counselors' position is that sexual harassment and sexual violence prevention education should be adopted as a compulsory subject. In order to improve the ability of these organizations to carry out their duties, it was revealed that supplementing their professional human resources is urgently needed to resolve their heavy workload.

Based on the results of this study, our recommendation for policy improvement is as follows: In order to eradicate sexual harassment and sexual violence in arts and culture at universities, the Ministry of Education should modify related laws. The Ministry of Education should reflect universities' performance on preventing sexual harassment and sexual violence in evaluations, and the ministry should provide support so universities can conduct surveys on gender discrimination on a regular basis.

The Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism should cooperate with the Ministry of Education to allow university arts and culture students to use counseling centers for professionals in the arts and culture sector. The Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism and the Ministry of Education should prevent artist lecturers and professors who are perpetrators from receiving artist support funds or serving on art and culture juries by sharing information about them.

There is a sexual harassment grievance handling organization in almost every university, but they are run as a formality and need to be made substantial. Improvements should be made in the direction of supplementing the weak human and material resources of each organization, investigating regulations on preventing sexual harassment and sexual violence, protecting and supporting victims, and boosting the justice and effectiveness of disciplinary measures.