



## **Prevalence, Perception and Consequences of Sexual Harassment in Kenyan Institutions of Higher Learning**

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### **Abstract**

The issue of sexual harassment in academia is increasingly becoming the centre of discussion. Indeed, in most educational institutions, sexual harassment and gender-based violence have become an issue of research and discussion. More and more students are currently joining institutions of higher learning, many of which are not sufficiently equipped to handle sexual harassment on campus. Kenyan universities are a good sample representative of the larger society because their students are drawn from a cross-section of all communities. Exploring their pedagogical practices may, therefore, offer valuable insights into the broader understanding of how they play a meaningful role in empowering young Kenyans by promoting a harassment-free environment. However, the bulk of existing research has examined sexual harassment in non-academic settings, and only recently have social scientists begun treating sexual harassment in the academic setting as an important area of inquiry. Although several recent studies have established sexual harassment to be pervasive in learning institutions, little is known about the frequency, severity and types of sexual harassment occurring in specific educational institutions. This paper explores students' attitude and consequences of sexual harassment on campus. It also looks into the general perception that students have concerning harassment. In a cross-sectional survey, 389 respondents filled a questionnaire on sexual harassment. Quantitative statistical analysis revealed that sexual harassment was significantly prevalent in academia. Two-thirds of university students are subjected to sexual harassment before they join campus. Many of the respondents acceded to have been subjected to sexually harassing behaviours but were resistant to label themselves as survivors of harassment. The perception was high among undergraduate students. Recommendations for the improvement of the situation to create a freer and safer campus environment as well as suggestions for further research are made.

### **Introduction**

In 2006, a male student was allegedly raped by two female colleagues when he had gone to pick some notes in a Ladies Hostel in one of the leading universities in Kenya. In 2007 – 2008 while working at the same university, I noticed a consistency in complaints regarding peer-to-peer sexual harassment cases among the students. Several of the socially interactive forum for gender advocacy sessions majorly featured issues related to sexual harassment among students. It was noted that although female students were more vocal in protesting harassment from their male colleagues, male students were also being sexually harassed by their female counterparts. A gender harassment questionnaire administered during the gender awareness week in 2007 established that 75% of the female and 47% of male students had experienced sexual harassment on campus. In the same period, I documented an average of one case per week of peer-to-peer sexual harassment among students. In addition, one acquaintance and two date rape cases were reported and documented in one semester. Being one of the largest public universities, this trend could not be contrived as an isolated case. This paper therefore explores the forms, prevalence and perception of sexual harassment in higher learning.



## **Literature Review**

The issue of sexual harassment in academia is increasingly becoming the centre of discussion (Kayuni, 2009). Indeed, in most educational institutions, sexual harassment and gender-based violence has become an issue of research and discussion (Mohipp,& Senn, 2008; Martin, 2008). More and more female students are currently joining institutions of higher learning, many of which are not sufficiently equipped to handle sexual harassment on campus. Kenyan universities are a good sample representative of the larger society because their students are drawn from a cross section of all communities. Exploring their pedagogical practices may therefore offer valuable insights into the broader understanding of how they play meaningful role in empowering young Kenyans by promoting harassment-free environment (Chege, 2006). However, majority of existing research has examined sexual harassment in non-academic settings, and only recently have social scientists begun treating sexual harassment in academic setting as an important area of inquiry (Amanda,& Ashley, 2006). Although several recent studies have established sexual harassment to be pervasive in learning institutions, little is known about the frequency, severity and types of sexual harassment occurring in specific educational institutions (Young, Allen, & Ashbaker, 2004).

Sexual harassment as fundamentally a matter of misuse of power deeply linked in gender attitudes (Anderson, 2000). It generally constitutes unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favours, and other verbal or physical contact of sexual nature. As a gender-based socio-cultural, economic, political and legal problem, it dehumanises people by infringing on their human rights (Wanjala, 2002). Virtually everyone can be a victim of sexual harassment, although students are especially vulnerable because they are still developing their social, moral and psychological competencies.

Kastl and Kleiner (2001) argue that since the definition of sexual harassment entails description of behaviours, it has inherent challenges. Firstly, these behaviours have to be interpreted by an individual through his or her eyes and experience. Secondly, individuals have different sensitivity levels and interpret the same behaviour in various ways. Lastly, due to this individual interpretation of behaviour, subtle forms of sexual harassment are often hard to define

## **Definition**

The term sexual harassment emerged in the 1970's in the US, presumably established by the Working Women United Institute in 1976 (Thomas,& Kitzinger, 1997). Still, even now, for researchers as well as educational and health practitioners, sexual harassment is proving to be an unclear concept (Stockdale,& Vaux, 1993). Many who write about the issue assert with conviction that it is not 'about sex' at all, but 'about power', echoing equivalent claims often made about the motivations of rapists (Palmer,& Thornhill, 2003) although they seldom explain why it is important to view it that way (Brown, 2006).

At first glance, definitions of sexual harassment may appear straightforward. However, applying these definitions to real-life situations can be quite complex, especially for those students who struggle with processing social information and understanding the subtleties of sexual harassment. Additionally, adults are often challenged when identifying sexual harassment and understanding how these behaviours may be related to a student's disability (Young, et al., 2004).



Defining sexual harassment is, therefore, both simple and complex. It is simple because it is defined as unwelcome sexual behaviour; if it is unwelcome then it is harassment. It is complex because it can involve behaviours that in other contexts are considered positive and reaffirming (Skaine, 2001).

Ambiguity regarding what actually comprises sexual harassment is reflected in the various definitions of the term (Brant,& Too, 1994). Indeed, researchers in the area warn that the greatest difficulty is the lack of consensus regarding both the behaviours comprising sexual harassment together with the circumstances in which it occurs (Fitzgerald, 1993). Moreover, the confusion about what is meant by sexual harassment comes from those sympathetic to the issue as well as those hostile to it (Brant,& Too, 1994). Feminists who find the available discourse not always helpful in describing experiences of sexual harassment can make charges of exaggeration, oversimplification, inadequacy or inflexibility.

Harassment is usually made possible by a power imbalance between groups since it is a threatening restatement of the status quo (Bhattacharyya, 1994). Determining if sexual harassment has occurred in a school setting, therefore, requires an evaluation of (a) the context of the behaviour, (b) the power differential between the target and the harasser, (c) how the behaviour was perceived by the target, and (d) the behaviour's impact on the learning environment (Young, Allen, Ashbaker, & Smith, 2008). One's gender is not necessarily a factor in the perpetuation or mitigation of sexual harassment in academic institutions since both male and female students are likely to be victims in these settings (Amanda,& Ashley, 2006). Consequently, although these institutions should be a safe haven for young people, many students are sexually harassed and coerced there (Krug, Dahlberg, Mercy, Zwi, & Lozano, 2003).

### **Sexual Harassment in Academic Setting**

As students transition out of secondary school, they begin to expand their social relationships, especially with the opposite gender; romantic relationships tend to increase in importance (Berk, 2006). Some of the difficulty in identifying sexual harassment may be due to the blurred boundaries between sexual harassment and good-natured teasing and flirting. Flirting tends to be mutually acceptable, enjoyable, and pleasant when both parties willingly participate (Young, et al., 2004). In addition to identifying specific behaviours as sexual harassment, other factors such as the student's age, maturity, and cognitive ability influence the perception of and response to sexual behaviour must also be considered (Murnen,& Smolak, 2000).

According to Amanda and Ashley (2006), sexual harassment is widespread in universities the world over. Estimates of the frequency of sexual harassment of undergraduate and graduate students vary widely across studies, from 7% to 27% of men and from 12% to 65% of women (Rathus, Nevid,& Fichner-Rathus, 2000). Nearly two thirds (62 percent) of undergraduate students in US claim to have encountered some type of sexual harassment and nearly one third (35% of female and 29% of male students) say the harassment is physical (Whatley,& Wasieleski, 2001). A 2006 study on sexual harassment at colleges and universities revealed that 62% of female and 61% of male college students reported having been sexually harassed at their university, with 80% of the reported harassment being peer-to-peer (AAUW, 2007). In the same study, 51% of male students admitted to have sexually harassed someone in college, with 22%



admitting to harassing someone often or occasionally. In addition, 31% of female students admitted to having harassed someone in college.

According to National Coalition for Women and Girls in Education (NCWGE, 1997), most sexually harassing behaviour in learning institutions is student-to-student. One of the most common reasons reported for sexually harassing behaviour is because the harasser thinks it is funny to do so (AAUW, 2007). However, the true reasons for harassment align more with that of need to assert power and induce fear in others; more in line with bullying (Dzeich, 1990). These hazing behaviours develop in primary school; continue in high school and college, eventually moving into the work place (Boland, 2002).

The power structures and our cultural biases in academia predispose women to being overwhelmingly targeted for sexual harassment (Chamberlain, et al., 2008). As such, it is assumed that majority of perpetrators are male. This is echoed in Jones (1996) who avers that women are still subjected to violence, intimidation, discrimination, hostility and more subtle forms of control from men on university campuses. Several studies reinforce Paludi and Barickman's findings by showing that men rarely suffer from sexual harassment (Hurley, & Fagenson-Eland, 1996; Kastl and Kleiner, 2001; Whaley and Tucker, 1998). However, sexual harassment is not always unidirectional as males are also subjected to harassment (Kayuni, 2009). The problem with most studies is that they have been only focusing on the experience of women and in the process the harassment of males has not been discussed in the wider literature.

### **Vulnerability of University campuses**

Howard-Hamilton, et al., (1998, p.56) point out that although there is now more public awareness of sexual harassment than in the past, "studies show that higher education institutions continue to provide a fertile environment for this type of behaviour". The major problem is that students and lecturers are not fully oriented on the vulnerability of university campuses to this type of behaviour. The potentiality of increased peer sexual harassment in college campuses is mainly due to the residential nature of many college campuses that tends to assume that the social interaction between male and female students will be transparent and mature. However, this is not the reality at all since there is often much more unsupervised social interaction between students. Thus, students are more vulnerable to unwanted sexual advances. In addition, peers do not often communicate clearly the desire to be left alone. Any communication to be left alone is often misinterpreted as a sign of being interested in the opposite sex. Students may not perceive themselves to have behaved in a sexually harassing manner unless the behaviour is extreme in nature (Kastl, & Kleiner, 2001).

According to Kayuni (2009), student-to-student (peer) sexual harassment has great potential of creating a very hostile environment for the harassed student to the extent that she can seriously be affected academically as well as socially. The main danger with this form of harassment is that the interaction amongst peers is higher as compared to that of any other parties. Consequently, the peer harassment has a geometric multiplier effect on the victim through this unavoidable constant social interaction.

### **Coping Strategies Used on Campus**



Individuals use a number of different coping strategies to deal with sexual harassment. An example of coping mechanisms is 'The Typology of Target Responses to Sexual Harassment' by Knapp, et al., (1997). It illustrates various responses to sexual harassment following a thorough analysis of the existing literature. This combines a number of Gruber's (1989) categorizations based on the view that responses will vary in respect of two elements: focus and mode or type of response, to formulate a two-by-two typology of responses, illustrated by the four quadrants in Figure 1.

Responses to sexual harassment may be either self-focused or initiator-focused (vertical axis). Self-focused responses do not involve the perpetrator of the harassment, whilst initiator-focused coping responses address the perpetrator directly. The type or mode of response (horizontal axis) varies from self-response, where the person facing sexual harassment uses no outside resources to deal with it, to supported response, where they use other individuals, organizational resources and/or extra institutional resources (Hunt, Davidson, Fielden, & Hoel, 2007). According to their analysis, Quadrant 1 represents the least effective method of dealing with sexual harassment. Quadrant 2 responses are also generally ineffective, although they may, in time, encourage the individual to take more effective action. Quadrants 3 and 4 represent responses which have been shown to be the most effective. Sigal, et al., (2003) supported this typology by investigating students' reactions to sexual harassment scenarios; it was found that active coping strategies were seen to be the most effective method of dealing with sexual harassment.

Mode of response	
Self-response	
Self-focus	Supported response
<p><b>Quadrant 1</b> <b>Avoidance/denial</b> Most frequently used, yet least effective for ending harassment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Avoiding the harasser.</li> <li>• Altering the job situation by transferring/quitting.</li> <li>• Ignoring the behaviour.</li> <li>• Going along with the behaviour.</li> <li>• Treating the behaviour as a joke.</li> <li>• Self-blame.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Quadrant 2</b> <b>Social coping</b> Not effective for ending harassment, but may assist target in coping with negative consequences resulting from harassment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bringing along a friend when harasser will be present.</li> <li>• Discussing situation with sympathetic others.</li> <li>• Medical and/or emotional counselling.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Quadrant 3</b> <b>Confrontation/negotiation</b> Not frequently used, but very effective for ending harassment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Asking or telling harasser to stop.</li> <li>• Threatening the harasser.</li> <li>• Disciplining the harasser (if in a position to do so).</li> </ul>	<p><b>Quadrant 4</b> <b>Advocacy seeking</b> Not frequently used but very effective for ending harassment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reporting the behaviour to a supervisor, other internal official body or outside agency.</li> <li>• Asking another person (e.g. friend) to intervene.</li> <li>• Seeking legal remedies through the court system.</li> </ul>

Figure 1: Typology of Target Responses to Sexual Harassment



Source: Knapp, et al., (1997). Determinants of Target Responses to Sexual Harassment: A Conceptual Framework

### **Sexual Harassment Interventions**

Clearly, the hidden costs of harassment are enormous. It is in every institution's stakeholders' interest to be proactive and prevent the problem, rather than having to redress it after damages have been suffered (Ritchie, 2006). Aware individuals can play a major role by bringing the seriousness of harassment to the attention of administration, staff and students, by helping to formulate and implement appropriate policies, and by helping victims to deal with the consequences of harassment (Prekel, 2001).

Hunt, et al., (2007) proposes three basic types of intervention that can be implemented by institutions to prevent or deal with sexual harassment: preventative, responding to sexual harassment, and follow-up.

Preventative actions include a range of initiatives. First, policy formation is crucial. There are two distinct approaches to this: a 'top-down' and a 'consultative' approach. The consultative approach is advocated by researchers, who emphasize the importance of involving multiple stakeholders. Similarly, a bottom-up approach is the most successful, where students and student representatives are fully involved with management in developing and owning relevant policies and programmes. This should aim to develop a culture of respect and focus on the beliefs, behaviour and norms within an institution. Linked to this is the importance of a strong zero tolerance policy towards sexual harassment, although this may prove unpopular in some situations. Second, training can be used to raise awareness and understanding of sexual harassment and to help equip students with the necessary skills to deal with it. Few studies have looked at the effectiveness of training but those that exist suggest that it is particularly effective for changing students' attitudes.

Responses to sexual harassment include ways in which complaints are made and dealt with within an institution. It can be very difficult to make a complaint, especially if the institution does not have clear policies and procedures in place (Witkowska, 2007). For a complaints procedure to be effective it must be clear and well-communicated, students must have confidence that their complaints will be taken seriously and treated confidentially, feel reassured that they will not be victimized and that the whole process will be handled reasonably quickly. Follow-up interventions in the aftermath of a complaint of sexual harassment include rehabilitation of the person who has suffered sexual harassment, the perpetrator and others involved. It is vital that procedures are in place to prevent victimization or a backlash against the student who complained of harassment. A number of universities have published good practice guides covering sexual harassment. These include: changing the institutional culture to one where harassment is not tolerated; establishing effective policies and procedures; training for all employees; commitment and support from senior staff; providing those who experience harassment with independent support and effective monitoring systems (Hunt, et al., 2007).

As Milne (2003) claims, the person who has been sexually harassed is likely to have reservations about trusting those whom they regard as in a role of authority – including a therapist. The



counsellor thus may be experienced in the transference as a potential harasser. In working with the client, assertiveness training may come in handy (Bayne, 2006). A client who has been sexually harassed brings with him/her a lack of faith in justice, a feeling that he/she has been blamed and not heard or believed (Ritchie, 2006). Ritchie further claims that regardless of the therapist orientation, the dynamics of sexual harassment will be central to the therapist-client relationship. Unfortunately, as Sands (2000) asserts, for a significant number of clients, therapy has turned out to be – in spite of the therapists' duty to care – a negative and damaging experience. Issues such as abuse of power, one person controlling another, sexualisation of contact, humiliation or force are always close to the surface in any exchange (Ritchie, 2006).

Both the harasser and victim need counselling (Prekel, 2001). The harasser has needs which he/she meets and the victim has acquired a lot of symptoms from the ensuing trauma of sexual harassment. The best theory for both cases is the behavioural model, which provides techniques that can be applied in coping with specific problems. Individual psychotherapy, anxiety management training, behavioural change, communication training, relaxation training, social skills and assertive training are some of the skills the victim will need to learn (Lazarus, 1995).

## **Methodology**

### **Measures**

The survey was exploratory by nature, and the questionnaire employed had not been psychometrically validated. Thus, it may not fully have represented the higher order construct in which sexual harassment actually consists. In this study the researcher did not, at any point, use the behavioural scales as forming an additive representation of sexual harassment as a construct. However, the most important validity in this study was content validity, which was assured through doing collation of the structure of questionnaire with the research objectives and literature review. This was done with close consultation with research experts in the Department of Psychology, Counselling and Educational Foundations. Reliability for this research was enhanced through internal consistency of the questionnaire items. The instrument was piloted using 30 undergraduate students who were selected from campus purported to have similar characteristics as the actual population of study. Cronbach's alpha coefficient was used to determine the reliability of the instrument. The research yielded a reliability coefficient of 0.79 which is greater than the critical value (Cronbach's alpha) of  $\geq 0.7$  and therefore, the research was considered reliable as suggested

### **Sampling Procedure and Samples**

Respondents were purposively sampled from the Njoro Campus of Egerton University which has a population of over 7,000 undergraduate students. Stratified random sampling was then done at Faculty level to choose three out of the seven established Faculties. Further stratification was done by Year of Study where the researcher purposively sampled second, third- and fourth-year strata. Simple random sampling was then applied within each population stratum to generate the study sample ( $n = 389$ ). The sampled respondents completed a sexual harassment questionnaire that factored in forms, prevalence and perception. The questionnaire was distributed to respondents during the lecture time and collected at the end of the lesson.

### **Data Analysis**



Data generated by this study was mostly quantitative and therefore descriptive statistics were used in the data analyses in this study. Forms of sexual harassment were derived from sexually harassing behaviours witnessed, experienced and perpetrated on campus. Prevalence was derived from the mean frequency of sexually harassing behaviours witnessed, experienced and a general opinion rated from respondent's rating. Perception of sexual harassment was codified into two artificial categories, that is low and high perception based on students' percentage scores on a contingency table that comprised items scored on a 1 to 5-point Likert scale from 1 = Strongly Disagree (SD) to 5 = Strongly Agree (SA). Negative statements were scored in the reverse order and a mean score of 2.5 out of the maximum 5 points on the Likert scale was taken as the transition point for low and high perception. Data analysis was done using descriptive statistics (percentages, frequencies, and tables). This was done using SPSS - 15.

## **Results**

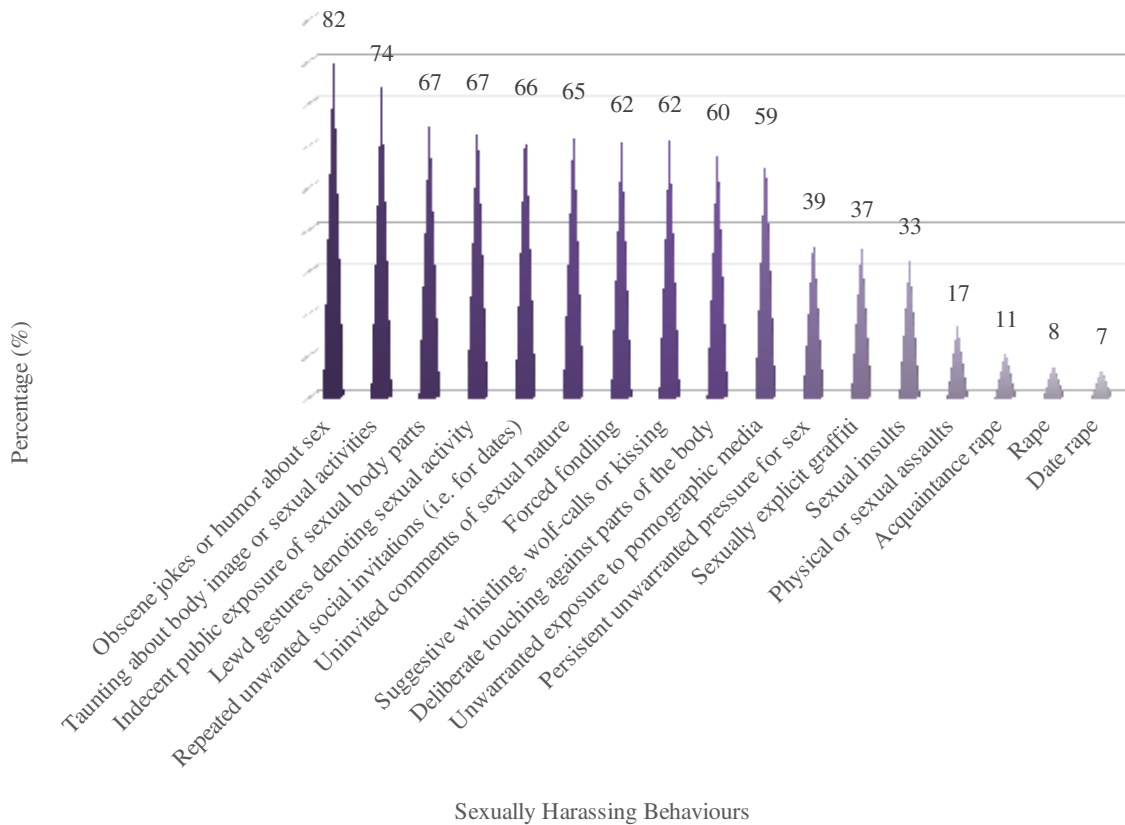
In a cross-sectional descriptive survey, a sample of 389 undergraduate students, 258 males (66.3%) and 131 females (33.7%) who were aged between 18 to 29 years filled a sexual harassment questionnaire. It was established that two thirds of these (65.3%) had been subjected to sexual harassment prior to campus life. These were composed of 65.5% males and 64.9% female. To objectively identify the major forms of sexual harassment experienced on campus, three items were factored into the questionnaire.

## **Forms**

Forms of sexual harassment were generated by examining the sexually harassing behaviours witnessed and/or experienced by respondents on campus. The general opinion of the prevalence of these sexually harassing behaviours on campus was also examined to confirm the major forms of sexual harassment in academia.

The major sexually harassing behaviours based on respondents' eye witness were: forced fondling 34%; unwarranted pressure for sex 25%; indecent exposure of sexual body parts in public 24%; Sexual insults

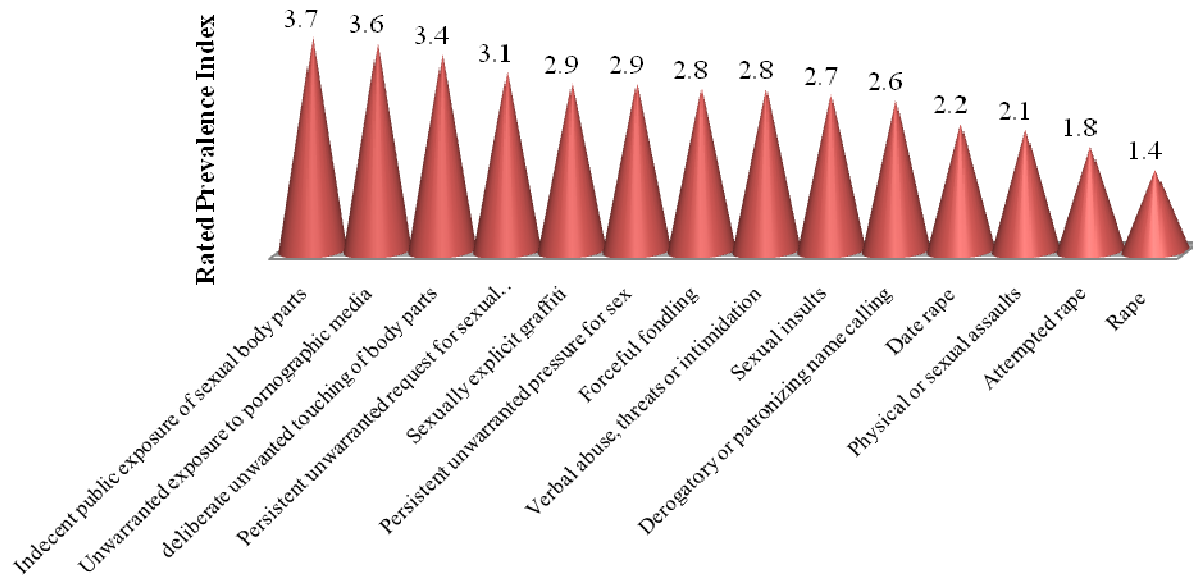




**Figure 2:** Sexually Harassing Behaviours Experienced by Respondents on Campus

As shown in Figure 1, the most prevalent forms of sexual harassment were derived from those whose experienced rating exceeded 50% threshold. These are:

1. Obscene jokes or humour about sex (82%)
2. Taunting comments about body image or sexual activities (74%)
3. Indecent public exposure of sexual body parts (67%)
4. Lewd gestures denoting sexual activity (67%)
5. Repeated unwanted invitations to social activities (66%)
6. Uninvited comments of sexual nature (65%)
7. Forced fondling (62%)
8. Suggestive whistling, wolf calls or kissing sounds (62%)
9. Deliberate unwanted touching of parts of body (60%)
10. Unwarranted exposure to pornographic media (59%)



**Figure 3:** Rated Prevalence Index for Sexually Harassing Behaviours on Campus

From the prevalence indexing of sexually harassing behaviours presented in Figure 2, the major forms can be derived. The most common was indecent exposure of sexual body parts in public (3.7) followed by unwarranted exposure to pornographic media (3.6) and deliberate unwanted touching of body parts of another student. Others are persistent unwanted requests for sexual favours (3.1) exposure to sexually explicit graffiti (2.9) and persistent unwanted pressure for sex (2.9).

### Prevalence

Operationally, prevalence of sexual harassment was defined as a composite variable derived from the mean score of non-missing students' responses based on frequency of perpetration, personal experiences and general opinion. A percentage of respondents who had witnessed their colleagues being subjected to sexually harassing behaviours was also generated.

Respondents admitted on a scale of 1 'never' 2 'once or twice' and 3 'often', the frequency with which they had sexually harassed a colleague on campus. The transition point for low, moderate and high prevalence based on perpetration index was therefore  $\leq 1$ ;  $\leq 2$  and  $\geq 2$  respectively. An overall index of 1.37 which  $\leq 2$  was generated to imply that based on this parameter sexual harassment was moderately prevalent.

Prevalence based on personal experience was derived from a composite variable derived from the mean score of non-missing students' response on 18 closed-ended question items on a YES = 1 and NO = 0 scale where the transition point low, moderate and high prevalence was  $\geq 0.33$ ,



$\leq 0.67$  and  $\leq 0.67$  respectively. The study yielded an overall mean index of 0.46 which implies a moderate prevalence level.

On 14 closed-ended question items on a 5-point Likert scale, namely: least frequent = 1; less frequent = 2; moderately frequent = 3; frequent = 4 and very frequent = 5, respondents rated their general opinion on the prevalence of sexually harassing behaviours within the campus. A transition point of  $\leq 1.7$ ;  $\leq 3.3$  and  $\geq 3.3$  was taken to constitute low, moderate and high prevalence respectively. The study yielded an overall prevalence index of 2.7 which is  $\leq 3.3$  and therefore moderate.

This was apparently contradicted by the fact that 75% of the respondents comprising 74% of male and 76% of female respondents claimed to have witnessed a colleague being sexually harassed on campus. If prevalence rating was to be based on these findings, it would have been concluded that harassment was highly prevalent. It was not established why respondents felt that sexual harassment was moderately prevalent when they had witnessed high incidence of perpetration.

### **Perception**

To judge the perception of sexual harassment among students, a contingency table was generated from the questionnaire items that were designed to measure this variable. The mean perception index was 3.83 which imply that university students are perceptive of sexual harassment on campus. However, when respondents were required to indicate whether in their opinion they had been subjected to sexual harassment on campus, only 43% of the total sample which comprised 37% male and 54% female students perceived themselves as victims. this implies that though there is high perception of sexual harassment on campus, there was also an observed strong resistance to label sexually harassing behaviours appropriately.

### **Conclusion**

The study established that two thirds of university undergraduates are subjected to sexual harassment before they join campus. Sexual harassment is highly prevalent on campus. Many students are subjected to many of the potentially offensive behaviours without labelling them as sexual harassment, despite the fact that they see the behaviours as problematic. Even though many people stereotype male students as the social aggressors and female students as the most likely recipients of sexual harassment, there is no gender difference in the perpetration of sexual harassment. Both male and female university students of are highly perceptive of sexually harassing behaviours within the university.

According to Prekel (2001), many practical steps can be taken as part of an integrated programme to counter harassment. First, a clear policy from the administration should be put in place. Awareness of the problem, one's own, and others' rights should be promoted through appropriate measures. The university should also set up clear complaints and disciplinary procedures. Although no policy can be expected to eliminate the problem, awareness of the problem and ways to deal with it will help to reduce its prevalence dramatically. The appropriate professionals must also assist victims of past and present harassment to overcome the negative effects of that experience (EEOC, 2001).



This study employed a very broad theoretical and operational definition of sexual harassment. However, there is no indication that this unreasonably inflated the results. Lack of questions establishing contextual factors of the incidents may be considered a weakness of the data collection tool. Nevertheless, this study asked about specific behaviours so that sexual harassment was operationalized and very specific. Therefore, from the study, there are several recommendations that can be put forth: Generally, greater efforts are needed to analyze and effectively counteract sexual harassment in academia. They need to employ more sophisticated measurements and adopt education and prevention strategies that incorporate an understanding of the complex nature of the phenomenon and perceptions of it. Aggressive awareness campaigns should be conducted in universities to raise the awareness of sexual harassment on campus. Awareness of the problem, one's own, and others' rights should be promoted through the appropriate measures. The university students counselling departments should organize a programme for psychological debriefing and trauma counselling for the students whose entry into the university is preceded by experiences of sexual harassment. Both perpetrators and survivors of sexual harassment should be accorded the necessary mental health assistance to help them cope with their experiences. Clear sexual harassment policy should be put in place adopting the consultative and participatory approaches to policy formulation and implementation to enhance the success index in combating the phenomena within campus premises. The universities should set up clear complaints and disciplinary procedures that should be well-communicated, so that students have confidence that their complaints will be taken seriously, treated confidentially with assurance that they will not be victimized, and that the whole process will be handled reasonably quickly. Training of all students' leaders (not just peer-counsellors and students union leaders) should be used to raise the awareness and understanding of sexual harassment and to help equip individual with the necessary skills to deal with it

There are some areas, which require further investigations in order to have more insight into sexual harassment in academia as well as enrich the present knowledge. First, an investigation into the factors that contributes to the perceived strong resistance of respondents to labelling oneself as a victim of sexual harassment. A survey on university student's harassment awareness training and its effectiveness in influencing their perception of sexual harassment could also be conducted with view to training needs assessment.

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