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Patterns and Causes of Sexual Harassment in Nigerian Universities as Perceived by Undergraduates of the University of Ilorin, Nigeria

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Abstract

The paper investigated the patterns and causes of sexual harassment in Nigerian universities as perceived by undergraduates of the University of Ilorin. A total of 600 undergraduates were selected using stratified random sampling technique. Data were collected from the respondents with the use of an instrument titled "Patterns and Causes of Sexual Harassment Questionnaire" (PCSHQ). The hypotheses generated were analyzed using the student t-test statistics and Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) at 0.05 alpha level. The study identified the major patterns of sexual harassment as asking questions about students' sexual life, telling sexual jokes and requesting for visits. Causes of sexual harassment as identified by the respondents include academic weakness, non-sanctioning of offenders and absence of national legislation on sexual harassment. The study indicated no significant difference in the perception of patterns and causes of sexual harassment on the basis of respondents' gender. However, there was a significant difference in the perception of causes of sexual harassment based on respondents' age. Recommendations were made on the desirability of establishing Counselling Centres in Institutions of Higher Learning in Nigeria. Students need to be educated on the behaviours that predispose them to causes of sexual harassment (e.g. indecent dressing and late submission of assignments). Procedure for reportage of incidence of sexual harassment should also be made known to the students.

Keywords: Patterns, Causes, Sexual Harassment, Nigerian Universities, Perception, Undergraduates.

Introduction

Sexual harassment is a deviant and coercive behaviour which involves exploitation of victims based on rationalization or in-born aggression. Some harassers may even rationalize the behaviour as intent to "help" the victim. The dynamics of sexual harassment usually involves the aggressor who holds a position of power over a victim (Sexual Harassment Support, 2007). Dzeich, Billie and Weiner (1990) asserted that sexual harassment involves a range of behaviour from mild annoyance to sexual assault and rape. Sexual harassment in education is an unwanted behaviour of a sexual nature that interferes with a student's ability to learn, study, or participate in school activities. Adedokun (2004) also asserted that in Nigeria, the subject of sexual harassment evokes spontaneous reactions from people whenever and wherever it is mentioned, but no legislation in Nigeria explicitly penalizes sexual harassment at work, including academic environment. Thus, sexual harassment is yet to be officially recognized as the violation of the right of an individual in the academic environment or in the workplace.

Sexual harassment is not limited to school administration. It can also be perpetrated by teachers or other school employees, and the victim can be a student, a teacher, or any school employee. Sexual harassment of students by teachers or other school employees can cause serious and damaging consequences for the victim (Sexual Harassment Support Organization, 2008). Sexual harassment is a form of violence especially against women. Mama (2000) opined that violence against women by men is widespread and it takes physical, verbal, psychological, economic and other forms. Sexual harassment is one of such forms that women and girls are subjected to in varying situations. Mama also asserted that sexual harassment is a form of intimidation and its emotional and physical effects may act to interfere with personal, educational, and career development of victims. Among members of the research community, it is generally acceptable that sexual harassing behaviours must be established based on certain criteria before accepting or deciding whether or not sexual harassment has occurred. Thus, before an act is regarded as sexual harassment, it must be unwelcome and offensive to the complaining party (Rodin, 2004).

Adedokun (2004) posited that sexual harassment includes sexual jokes or sexual comments directed at women and girls, catcalls to embarrass them in public places, sexual assault and violations in places of training and work. Sexual harassment in educational settings and the workplace (formal and informal) in Nigeria and other parts of Africa has in the last two decades received local and international attention and condemnation (International Labour Organization, 1992, Mama, 2000); but it remains the least understood, documented and focused on, of all forms of violence while policies and legislation against it are yet to be firmly put in place.

The American Association of University Women (AAUW, 2002) reported that sexual harassment is common at every stage of education. Verbal and physical harassment begins in elementary school, and 4 out of 5 children experience some form of sexual harassment or bullying. Also in its recent study on sexual harassment at Colleges and Universities, AAUW (2002) reported that while both men and women were targets of

sexual harassment, "women are disproportionately negatively affected. No doubt sexual harassment is an age long problem for its victims and potential victims, but a relatively new one for public concern and debate (Somers, 1982). Owuamanam (1991) conducted a study on sampled female undergraduates at the Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife close to one half of the subjects had been victims of sexual harassment and 67.9 percent of the subjects thought that harassment on campus was a serious issue occurring at a rate sufficient to warrant some concern and official action. Fatimchin (1992) reported a female undergraduate of Philosophy at the Ondo State University (now University of Ado-Ekiti) as saying:

There were some lecturers whose cases were beyond redemption, they pounced and preyed on anything in skirt. Only God knew what was responsible, perhaps, they were frustrated by their wives at home. (p.5).

Denga & Denga (2004) asserted that the issue of sexual harassment in institution of higher learning involves lecturers and non-academic employees of universities. He posited that there are a few known isolated cases that have been reported on some female lecturers who sexually intimidate their male students. Eleanor & Peter (1982) stressed that since the mid 1970s the feminist movement had succeeded in gaining legal recognition and helping to clarify and legitimize sexual harassment as a social problem, and this has facilitated inequality in employment and education opportunity. As a result, the conceptualization and discussion of sexual harassment has been clearly tied to the issue of social and economic equality of sexes and to related feminist issues. The magnitude of sexual harassment in Nigerian Universities was revealed in an interaction between the then Minister of Education, Mrs. Obiagali Ezekwesile who noted in 2006 that about 1,000 students complained about sexual harassment. She lamented that "Girl after girls spoke up about being pressured for sex by teacher in exchange for better grades..."

Hourelid (2006) asserted that what has emerged is a section of women being held back and denied passing grades for rebuffing teachers' advances, and being advised by other teachers to give in quietly. In February 1989, the National Council on Education (NCE) inaugurated a nine-member committee to study the problem of sexual harassment in Nigerian institutions and make appropriate recommendations. The constitution of this committee, according to the former Minister of education, Professor Jubril Aminu was a result of representations made to the Ministry by the National Council of Woman Societies (NCS). The committee defined sexual harassment as sexual exploitation of an innocent, unsuspecting, helpless or needy individual by another person who is usually in an advantaged position, who derives pleasure from his/her exploits. According to the committee, the advantaged position may be related to one or more of the following: examination marks or grades; employment; admission; scholarship; promotion; material acquisition; eloquence; and vital information. In a similar vein, Yahaya (1991) posited that because of the problem of sexual harassment, many students graduate from the universities obtaining grades which they do not deserve.

Studies carried out by Adamolekun (1989); Owuamanam (1990, 1991 & 1995) and Adedokun (2004) showed that female students in tertiary institutions were usually victims of sexual harassment. Documented evidences attest to the above claim that sexual harassment of female students in the tertiary institutions was a widespread problem affecting approximately one out of four women in the United States (Reilly, 1978). There are also empirical evidences confirming that the categories of sexual harassers in tertiary institutions in Nigeria were mostly academic staff. For instance, Owuamanam (1991) found that, of all the female undergraduates (the respondents) who had experienced sexual harassment at Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, 92.6 percent indicated academic staff members, 2.5 percent indicated non-academic staff, student and 1.7 percent indicated that were most frequently harassed by reporters of campus magazines.

A study of four Nigerian Universities revealed that students identified sexual harassment as being among the stressors hindering academic work (Ladebo, 2001). Akinrinade, Ilori, Usen, Smith (1997) reported that some students claimed that some academic staff members were greatest harassers on campus and some newspaper articles and magazines on sexual harassment confirmed the reports. Oyekola (1988), Bonny (1990) and Adeoye (2007) also reported that some teachers sexually harassed and victimized female students using their position as lecturers. Houreld (2006) also confirmed that some lecturers see young girls as fringe benefit.

The incidence of sexual harassment has increasingly become noticeable on university campuses in Nigeria. The issues mostly involve lecturers and non-academic staff of the Universities as it is more common to hear of lecturers harassing female students sexually (Denga & Denga, 2004). This phenomenon is complex and it is not always unidirectional; it is being played down by all parties. Harassment is common in schools and colleges in many African countries. As Houreld (2006) aptly puts it, teachers' advances are sources of concern to parents and in some rural areas; parents withdraw girls from schools, when they reach certain age because they are afraid they would be involved in sexual relationship with their teachers.

Sexual harassment and its negative physical and psychological effects on victims are seldomly reported by victims. Most victim of harassment exhibit avoidance behaviour, for example, they prefer to either stay away from the aggressors or from the environment that promotes such behaviour, or simply put up with the behaviour. In some cases, victims blame themselves for the situation, while others confide in friends or family members. Only a few actually filed a formal complaint against the offender (Kelly & Parson, 2000, Schneider *et al*; 1997 & Riger 1991). Victims of harassment, most especially women, are often not interested in reporting cases of sexual harassment because of fear of reprisal, ridicule, perceived indifferent attitude, and the nature of the grievance procedure which may be male-dominated (Riger, 1991; Adamolekun, 1989 & Schneider, 1987).

Popovich (1988) asserted that the consequences of sexual harassment even at low levels for the victims could include impaired psychological well-being, such as lowered

self-esteem, nervousness, irritability and anger. Female students who experienced harassment may also exhibit a form of "job withdrawal" behaviour in terms of changing their major subject choices, altering career plans, or avoiding a threatening situation (Schneider, Swan & Fitzgerald, 1997; Riger, 1991). Kelly and Parsons (2000) aptly support this assertion that victims blamed themselves for the situation, while others confide in friends or family members. Only a few actually filed a formal complaint against the offenders. According to Ladebo (2003), no case of sexual harassment has been known to come before the Nigerian courts. Ladebo further reported that a female judicial member during an interview on Nigerian legal system and sexual harassment stated that:

I am not aware of any case of sexual harassment in our records. Since there is no law on it, it becomes pretty difficult for anybody to allege harassment. What we have are assaults and rape, that is all. It is like rape, nobody wants to be associated with it because of the stigma.

It is, however, believed that sexual harassment permeates all facets of Nigeria's national life. The same respondents observed that even on the bench there is harassment, so, who is going to judge the case? Adedokun (2004) argued that an identified barrier to understanding and confronting sexual harassment in educational setting in Nigeria is the absence of reliable information and inadequate documentation of nature and extent of the problem across educational settings. According to Sexual Harassment Support (2007) noted that perpetrators of sexual harassment may choose their victims based on such characteristics as age, lack of assertiveness, poor education, low self-esteem, and other areas of vulnerability. However, this does not mean that individuals with these characteristics cause the harassment or deserve to be harassed.

The organisation further asserted that harassers often test out new victims with minor violations of social and interpersonal boundaries. They might tell sexual jokes or make sexual comments about their target, display sexual/crotic materials, or ask questions about one's sexual life, violate one's personal space with touching, and maintain that it is meant to be nonsexual, make requests or demands that the potential victim meets him or her outside of normal school hours. Harassers may also show a lack of regard for the feelings of their victims; even when assertive attempts are made to put an end to inappropriate behaviour. This can be confusing for the victim, and might make him/her feel as if there is no basis for complaining about the harassment, or feel as if they do not have the right to complain (Adedokun, 2005). When perpetrators of sexual harassment are being confronted about their inappropriate behaviour, they often act as if they are being victimized, or it is the victim who is at fault. This type of manipulation can make the victim feel guilty trying about to set limits or bringing a complaint against the harasser (Sexual Harassment Support, 2007).

Sexual harassment is considered a serious moral and social problem on the University campuses in Nigeria. Adedokun (2004) identified some reasons for the prevalence of sexual harassment in Nigerian Institutions of higher learning. These are:

- Cost-benefit: Some lecturers exploit the vulnerability of female students. For example, poor performance of some of the girls in tests examinations, and inability to cope with the demands of courses registered for are some of the factors that put female students in vulnerable positions, predisposing them to the risk of sexual harassment;
- Certain failures in the Nigerian educational system promote sexual harassment in the universities. For example, malpractices that repeatedly accompany the Senior Secondary Examinations and Joint Admissions Matriculation Examinations expose, female applicants in search of 'favours' to sexual relationships with males who have assisted them in various way;
- Integrity, self-esteem and intellectualism are virtues not properly cultivated by some lecturers; hence they may be involved in the sexual harassment of females. The abuse of power by males in positions of authority such as lecturers, administrators, class representations may also lead to sexual harassment of females;
- The attitudes and dressing of female students increase their vulnerability to sexual harassment; and
- Lack of respect for the female gender is another fundamental reason for sexual harassment on our campuses.

Statement of the Problem

Although, cases of sexual harassment in academia are becoming more frequent, the majority of sexual harassment research endeavours have been mostly conducted on populations outside the academia (Gutek, 1985 & Olson, 1995). To the best knowledge of this researcher, no comprehensive study has been conducted on the patterns and causes of sexual harassment in Nigerian universities and this has motivated the researcher to conduct this study. The study is expected to provide information on Patterns and Causes of Sexual Harassment and this could be useful to School Administrators, Counsellors, Teachers and other Stakeholders in education.

Research Questions

This study addressed the following questions:

1. What are the patterns of harassment in Nigerian universities as perceived by University of Ilorin students?
2. What are the causes of sexual harassment in Nigerian universities as perceived by University of Ilorin students?
3. Is there any difference in the patterns of sexual harassment in Nigerian Universities as perceived by respondents on the basis of gender?

4. Is there any difference in the causes of sexual harassment in Nigerian Universities as perceived by respondents on the basis of gender?
5. Does age exert any influence on the respondents' perception of patterns of sexual harassment in Nigerian Universities?
6. Does age exert any influence on the respondents' perception of causes of sexual harassment in Nigerian Universities?

Research Hypotheses

The following research hypotheses were generated to guide the conduct of the study:

- (1) There is no significant difference in respondents' perception of the patterns of sexual harassment on the basis of gender;
- (2) There is no significant difference in respondents' perception of the causes of sexual harassment on the basis of gender;
- (3) There is no significant difference in respondents' perception of the patterns of sexual harassment on the basis of age; and
- (4) There is no significant difference in respondents' perception of the causes of sexual harassment on the basis of age.

Methodology

Research Design

The research design adopted for this study was the descriptive survey method. Survey research design enables a research to obtain necessary information on the variables from a representative sample of the population in order to describe the situation as they exist. Descriptive survey research is considered most appropriate for this study because Best (1981) and Akinkuolie (1989) opined that it typically employs questionnaire to determine the opinions, facts, attitudes, preference, and perceptions of persons of interest to the researcher. The design also allows a researcher to collect data and describe it in a systematic manner (Nworgu, 1991). This research design was, therefore, considered very relevant and appropriate for this study as it is relevant in investigating the patterns and causes of sexual harassment in Nigerian Universities.

Sample and Sampling Procedure

The target population for this study consists of all the undergraduates in the ten Faculties of the University of Ilorin. In selecting the respondents, five faculties were randomly selected for the study. These faculties are: Agriculture, Arts, Education, Law and Science. The sampled population was done through stratified random sampling technique to select the 120 respondents in each of the five faculties to make a total of 600 respondents.

use of stratified random sampling technique in the study is in tendon with Daramola (1992) that stratification is a process in educational research whereby people are classified into groups according to desired characteristics of the variables such as age group, gender, nationality and other socio-economic groupings.

Instrumentation

Instrumentation is the process of selecting or developing measuring devices and methods appropriate to a given evaluation or research problem (Daramola, 1992). The main instrument that was used for this study is a self-developed questionnaire tagged "Patterns and Causes of Sexual Harassment Questionnaire" (PACOSHAQ). The questionnaire consists of four sections. Section A consists of five items on the respondents' demographic information (such as gender, age, marital status, and religion), section B and C consist of 30 items on patterns and causes of sexual harassment, and the respondents were required to choose from the available options to reflect the pattern and causes of sexual harassment in the university. The responses were fashioned after Likert Type 4-point rating scale of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD). The responding items were developed by the researcher through literature, personal observation and interaction with experts in the Department of Counsellor Education in the university.

4.1 Testing

The questionnaire was pilot tested on a representative sample of some students of the College of Education Ilorin, Kwara State. The administration was meant to assess the responsiveness and usability of the instrument to be used.

4.2 Psychometric properties of the instrument

4.2.1 Validity of the instrument

The content validity of the instrument was established through vetting by five experts in the Department of Counsellor Education, University of Ilorin. The lecturers offered valuable suggestions in terms of eliminating irrelevant items, modifying some and new ones were added.

4.2.2 Reliability of the instrument

In order to establish the reliability of the instrument, the test re-test method was adopted. The researcher administered the same instrument on the same group of students at the interval of four weeks. The two sets of scores were correlated using Pearson Product Moment Correlation Co-efficient formula. A correlation coefficient of 0.73 was obtained. This was considered an appropriate reliability measure for an instrument of this nature.

Procedure for Collection and Administration of Data

The researchers with the help of two research assistants and the Faculty officers administered the questionnaires to University of Ilorin Students. The questionnaire forms were taken to the five faculties randomly selected for the study. This afforded the researcher the opportunity to find the respondents in full house. With the help of the research assistants, it was relatively easy to retrieve the completed forms. The respondents were informed of the importance of the research and the need to provide objective response.

Procedure for Scoring the Instrument

In scoring the test items, the Four point Likert Type rating scale was adopted. This method was adopted because it gives respondents the opportunity to respond more freely to each of the items in the instrument. The demographic section of the instrument was scored using simple frequency counts and percentage distribution. Section B also consists 15 items on patterns of sexual harassment as perceived by the respondents while section D consists of 15 items on the causes of sexual harassment as perceived by the respondents.

Scores of 1 point for Strongly Agree (SA), 2 points for Agree (A), 3 points for Disagree (D) and 4 points for Strongly Disagree (SD). The highest possible score for any item is 4 and the lowest is 1. Hence, the highest possible score obtainable was 60 (i.e. 4×15), while the lowest possible score obtainable was 15 (i.e. 1×15). To determine the respondents' perception of sexual harassment, the Mean of obtainable scores of 1, 2, 3 and 4 was taken to be 2.5. Since there 15 items on the patterns of sexual harassment, therefore $= (2.5 \times 15) = 37.5$ was taken to be the cut-off point for determining whether the respondents agreed with the items on sexual harassment or not.

Method of Data Analysis

Frequency count and percentage, which are descriptive statistics, were used to compute the demographic data of the respondents. While the student t-test statistics was used to test the three generated hypotheses.

Results

Research Question 1: What are the patterns of sexual harassment in Nigerian universities as perceived by the students of the University of Ilorin?

Table 1: Mean Scores and Rank Order of Patterns of Sexual Harassment

S/N	Item No.	Items	Mean	Rank
1	5	Asking questions about ones's sexual life	2.28	1 st
2	2	Telling sexual jokes	2.22	2 nd
3	6	Disregard for the feelings of the victims	2.21	3 rd
4	7	Requesting for visits outside the normal school hours	2.13	4 th
5	8	Bullying the potential victims	2.09	5 th
6	3	Making sexual comments about a person	2.06	6 th
7	1	Violating another person's personal space with touching	1.99	7 th
8	9	Subtle pressure for sexual activities	1.86	8 th
9	12	Threatening a students with failure	1.86	8 th
10	4	Displaying sexual/erotic materials	1.84	10 th
11	11	Subtle demanding sexual activities	1.75	11 th
12	13	Denial of rights (e.g. grade) to compliant by the harassed.	1.74	12 th
13	15	Exhibition of sexual organ	1.74	12 th
14	14	Awarding of an undue high grade to students in exchange for sexual activities	1.65	14 th
15	10	Grabbling or placing hands on woman's breast	1.59	15 th

Table 1 shows the respondents' view as regards patterns of sexual harassment. The table indicates 1st, 2nd and 3rd item as the most common patterns while 13th, 14th and 15th items were views as the least common patterns.

Research Question 2: What are the causes of sexual harassment in Nigerian Universities as perceived by University of Ilorin student?

Table 2: Mean Scores and Rank Order of Causes of Sexual Harassment

S/N	Item No.	Items	Mean	Rank
1	1	Lack of morals	2.81	1 st
2	4	Academic weakness	2.36	2 nd
3	11	Non-sanctioning of offenders	2.33	3 rd
4	2	Absence of National legislation on sexual harassment	2.18	4 th
5	12	Abuse of power	1.88	5 th
6	13	Lack of respect for others	1.83	6 th
7	8	Provocative dresses	1.81	7 th
8	10	Sexual coercion of female students	1.79	8 th
9	5	Exposure to pornographic materials	1.78	9 th
10	7	Inability of the harasser to control his sexual urges	1.77	10 th
11	3	Inability to report incidence of sexual harassment	1.76	11 th
12	6	Unavailability or reporting procedures	1.74	12 th
13	9	Large population of female students	1.61	13 th
14	14	Drug abuse/misuse	1.43	14 th
15	15	Improper upbringing	1.33	15 th

Table 2 presents data on respondents' perception of causes of sexual harassment. The table shows that the 1st, 2nd and 3rd items were ranked as the most causes while the 13th, 14th and 15th items were ranked as the least causes of sexual harassment.

Hypotheses Testing

This section presents the results on the 4 null hypotheses that were generated and tested using the student t-test statistics.

Hypothesis 1: *There is no significant difference in the perception of the patterns of sexual harassment on the basis of respondents' gender.*

Table 3: Means, Standard Deviation and t-value on respondents' perception of the patterns of sexual harassment on the basis of respondents' gender

Gender	N	Mean	SD	Df	Calculated t-value	Critical t-value
Female	279	29.67	6.66	198	1.25	1.96
Male	321	28.42	7.30			

Table 3 shows a calculated t-value of 1.25 while a critical t-value of 1.96. Since the calculated t-value is less than the critical t-value at 0.05 alpha level, there is no significant difference in the respondents' perception of the patterns of sexual harassment based on gender. The null hypothesis is, therefore, accepted.

Hypothesis 2: *There is no significant difference in the perception of the causes of sexual harassment on the basis of respondents' gender.*

Gender	N	Mean	SD	Df	Calculated t-value	Critical t-value
Female	279	28.87	6.35	198	1.15	1.96
Male	321	27.93	5.22			

Table 4: Means, Standard Deviations and t-value on respondents' perception of the causes of sexual harassment on the basis of gender

Table 4 shows a calculated t-value of 1.15 and a critical t-value of 1.96. Since the calculated t-value is less than the critical t-value at 0.05 alpha level of significance, the null hypothesis is, therefore, accepted. This means that, there is no significant difference in the perception of the respondents in the causes of sexual harassment of the male and female students of the University of Ilorin.

Hypothesis 3: *There is no significant difference in the perception of the patterns of sexual harassment on the basis of respondents' age.*

Table 5: Means, Standard Deviations and t-value on the respondents' perception of the respondents in the patterns of sexual harassment on the basis of age

Age	N	Mean	SD	Df	Calculated t-value	Critical t-value
16-25	504	29.30	7.15	198	1.38	1.96
26-35	96	27.44	6.19			

Table 5 shows a calculated t-value is 1.38 and a critical t-value of 1.96. Since the calculated t-value is less than the critical t-value at 0.05 alpha level of significance, the null hypothesis is, therefore, accepted. This means that, there is no significant difference in the patterns of sexual harassment as perceived by the respondents' based on age.

Hypothesis 4: *There is no significant difference in the perception of the causes of sexual harassment on the basis of respondents' age.*

Table 6: Mean, Standard deviations and t-value on respondents' perception of causes of sexual harassment based on age

Age	N	Mean	SD	Df	Calculated t-value	Critical t-value
16-25	504	29.08	5.54	198	4.16*	1.96
26-35	96	24.63	5.64			

* Significant, $p < 0.05$

Table 6 reveals a calculated t-value of 4.16 which is greater than the critical t-value of 1.96 at 0.05 alpha level of significance. In this regard, hypothesis 4 is rejected.

Discussion of findings

The study indicates the major patterns of sexual harassment as asking questions about one's sexual life, telling sexual jokes and disregard for the feelings of the victims while the identified major causes of sexual harassment include lack of morals, academic weakness and non-sanctioning of offenders.

The first null hypothesis shows that there was no significant difference in the perception of male and female students of University of Ilorin on the patterns of sexual harassment. This means that gender of respondents did not influence their perception on the patterns of sexual harassment in the Nigerian Universities. This finding is in line

with those of Adedokun (2005) Sexual Harassment Support Organization (2008) and Dewene (1992) who submitted that both male and female students are victim of sexual harassment in higher institution of learning. This finding is also similar to that of American Association of University Women (2002) which revealed that sexual harassment happens to male and female students alike. The inference in these finding points to the fact that sexual harassment on university campuses seems to be a common feature.

The result on the second null hypothesis indicated that no significant difference existed among male and female students in their perception of the causes of sexual harassment. This means that all the respondents have a similar view as regards causes of sexual harassment. This finding is in line with the reports made by Adeokun (2004) & Onuma (1998) that the mode of dressing of some female students and some certain failures in the Nigerian education system promote sexual harassment in the Universities.

The result on the third null hypothesis showed that no significant difference existed among the students of the University of Ilorin in their perception towards the patterns of sexual harassment on the basis of age. The outcome of this finding is in line with the findings of the American Association of University Women (2002) and Onyenegeche (1989) which showed that most students perception of the pattern of sexual harassment were unfavourable. This finding indicated that sexual harassment was common at every stage of education.

The result on the fourth null hypothesis indicated that a significant difference existed among students of different age groups in their perception on the causes of sexual harassment in the university. This finding indicated that both young and old students had unfavourable perception towards the causes of sexual harassment but the older ones seem to be able to handle it than their younger counterparts. This may be due to the fact that the older students have more experience than younger ones. This finding contradicts the findings of Boland (2002) that while some forms of sexual harassment appeared to be positively correlated with age, the majority of the interactions have occurred at all age levels. Boland further asserted that students of different age levels might have experienced, seen or heard of victims of this campus malady at different age levels in the past.

Conclusions

Based on the findings of the study and the discussion that followed, the following conclusions are drawn:

- 1) That students of the University of Ilorin have similar perception of patterns and causes of sexual harassment irrespective of their gender; and
- 2) That the students of various age groups have similar perception of patterns of sexual harassment, but differ in their perceptions of causes of sexual harassment.

Recommendations

The findings of this study clearly showed that there is the need to address the issue of sexual harassment in Nigerian Universities.

In view of this, the following recommendations are considered relevant:

- Counsellors in tertiary institutions should plan and organize annual public enlightenment programmes and clubs for the university community. Through such group programmes, staff and students will be sufficiently educated to appreciate good morals and shun sexual harassment practices. Omotosho (1995) has advocated for the need to take counselling service to non-school settings as well. Such advocacy is still relevant and critical for stemming the tide of sexual harassment practices on our campuses;
- The Federal Government should provide necessary facilities such as textbooks, journals, and internet facilities needed in tertiary institutions to reduce students over dependent on lecturers and reduce the menace of examination malpractices;
- Indecent dressing on the part of female students should be discouraged. As such dress codes should be introduced in all higher institutions;
- Government and non-government bodies should introduce and finance anti sexual harassment programmes like workshops, seminars, demonstrations etc, during which participant can be exposed to techniques for handling sexual harassment in the Universities;
- Every student should study well, be dedicated to their studies and desist from sexual intimidation of their lecturers;
- Students should be encouraged to report cases of sexual harassment to University authorities; and
- Finally, there is the need to emphasize that counselling is a necessary tool for the achievement of social and behaviour change on campuses. Hence, it is expected that parents, education planners and policy makers should devise avenues for training more counsellors and teacher to help in correcting deviant behaviour such as sexual harassment among youths and teachers.

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