UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

SEXUAL HARASSMENT AGAINST FEMALE STUDENTS IN SENIOR

HIGH SCHOOLS IN THE KUMASI METROPOLIS, ASHANTI REGION OF

GHANA

FELICIA AGYEPONG

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GHANA

BY

FELICIA AGYEPONG

Thesis submitted to the Department of Educational Foundations of the Faculty

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for award of Master of Philosophy Degree in Sociology of Education

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DECLARATION

Candidate's Declaration

I hereby declare that this thesis is the result of my own original work and that no part of it has been presented for another degree in this University or elsewhere.

Candidate's Signature: …….……………….   Date …………………..

 Name: Felicia Agyepong

Supervisors' Declaration

We hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of this thesis were supervised in accordance with the guidelines on supervision of thesis laid down by the University of Cape Coast.

Principal Supervisor's Signature: ……………………… Date: …………………

Name: Professor J. A. Opare

Co-supervisor's Signature :   …………………… Date: …...……………

Name: Mr. J. A. Yarquah

ABSTRACT

The aim of this research was to investigate into the issue of sexual harassment against female students in Senior High Schools the Kumasi Metropolis, in the Ashanti Region of Ghana. The descriptive survey research design was used for the study. A multi-stage sampling procedure was used to select the participants. A total of 540 female students were selected from six co-educational Senior High Schools. The main instrument used for the data collection was a questionnaire.

The results showed that majority of the participants knew about the issue of sexual harassment of female students in schools. The respondents also identified the media and friends as their main source of information. It was also found that verbal sexual harassment was the most common form of sexual harassment, while female boarding students reported a higher level of sexual harassment than the female day students. Male students and male teachers were the worst perpetrators of sexual harassment in the schools. On the whole, it was found that the incidence of sexual harassment against female students in the senior high schools in the Kumasi Metropolis was widespread and a real problem to the female students.

It is recommended that school authorities should incorporate the issue of sexual harassment into their fresh students' orientation programmes, and create a female friendly school environment for the female students. Secondly, parents should show much interest in their female wards' education by complementing the effort of the school in educating students.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My interest in researching into sexual harassment against female students in Senior High School arose whiles serving as a member of the Disciplinary Committee in my previous school, Mpasitia Senior High Technical School in the Ashanti Region, where I sat on cases involving peer to peer sexual harassment, teacher to student sexual harassment and some cases of sexual abuse and assault. After enrolling on the post graduate programme, my interest in the subject further deepened as I read articles and reports on the issue of sexual harassment in schools.

At last, my desire to investigate into the incidence of sexual harassment against Senior High School female students in the Kumasi Metropolis schools has seen the light of day through the assistance of some individuals, whom I wish to acknowledge. I acknowledge the intellectual contribution and effort of my supervisors, namely Professor James Opare and Mr. J. A. Yarquah. Professor Opare, my principal supervisor, in spite of his busy schedule as Director of the Institute of Education, UCC, made time to guide and coach me to develop my ideas and research work from start to finish. I take this opportunity to express my great indebtedness to him. I also thank Mr. Yarquah for his assistance and effort.

My appreciation also goes to all the people who helped me in diverse ways to complete this research work successfully. I wish to thank all the head teachers, tutors and student participants in the various schools where I collected data for this thesis.

DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my lovely and supportive family.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Background to the Study

Sexual offences against minors including adolescents and other persons in society are one of many social problems that many communities around the world are faced with. In Ghana, the law enforcement agencies define domestic violence to include acts perpetrated by others to harm other persons such as sexual abuse, sexual harassment and emotional abuse (Domestic Violence Act, 2007). Reports from the Domestic Violence and Victim Support Unit (DOVVSU) of the Ghana Police Service indicate that the total national reported cases of domestic violence as at the second quarter of 2008 (April – June) were 2,240 cases. Out of these cases, sexual offences and related cases consist of 247 cases, representing about 11%, out of the total of 15 offences that constitute domestic violence. A comparative study of the national data of reported cases to DOVVSU shows an astronomical increase in the reported incidence of sexual offences by certain individuals against children and adolescents. For instance, reported cases of defilement, (having sexual activity with persons of 16 years or younger through natural and unnatural means) alone increased from 154 cases in 1999 to 1578 cases in 2007 (National Data for Child Related Cases, DOVVSU from the year 1999 – 2007). In all these cases, the victims are persons of school going age, and these offences against their human right and personality occur in different places

and locations, including homes, neighbourhoods, communities and schools. Thus, perpetuators of these crimes against children and adolescents include family members, close relatives, neighbours, and professionals such as bankers and teachers among others.

In the school system, sexual offences against school children and students usually occur in the form of sexual harassment, sexual abuse, attempted rape, rape, attempted defilement, defilement, sodomy and sexual assault. These sexually related offences have occurred at one time or the other in almost all schools around the world. According to the American Association of University Women (AAUW), reports of sexual harassment are a global experience that many (female) students go through on daily basis in their schools. Fineran and Bolen (2006) report that studies conducted in 1993 and 2001 by the American Association of University Women (AAUW) discovered that approximately 80% of students in U. S public schools experienced sexual harassment from peers and school personnel. A follow up survey in 2002 by AAUW to identify the incidence of sexual violence against girls in school showed that among 2064 students in 8th grade through 11th grade, 83% of girls and 78% boys had been sexually harassed.

In other countries, the issue of sexual harassment and violence has caught the attention of educational authorities, the general public and scholars in academia. For instance in South Africa, Prinsloo (2006) observed that the shocking reports in the South African newspapers from 1999 to 2004 indicated that sexual harassment of female students was a serious problem in many schools. Prinsloo indicated that more than 30% of girls were raped in schools, while many

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of these girls experienced sexual violence in schools. The Human Rights Watch (2001) reports that female students in schools experienced various forms of sexual harassment as such as sexual abuse and verbal assaulted by male learners and educators. In addition, they are harassed by the possibility of unwanted pregnancy and emotional pressure, and are denied their self-respect.

The seriousness of the situation in South Africa was further stressed by Kader Asmal, former Minister of National Education, in the following statement:

> There must be an end to the practice of male educators demanding sex from school girls or female educators. It shows selfish disrespect for the right and dignity of women and young girls. Having sex with learners betrays the trust of the community. It is also against the law. It is a disciplinary offence. Tragically, nowadays, it is spreading like HIV/AIDS and bringing misery and grief to these precious young people and their families (South African Department of Education, 2003, p. 3).

In the Netherlands' first large-scale survey among 2808 students, Bajema and Timmerman (1999) found that 24 percent of the girls and 11 percent of the boys had experiences of unwanted sexual behaviour in secondary schools. In Nigeria, just like in Ghana, the incidence of sexual harassment in public second cycle and tertiary institutions appears to be under-reported and even less reported (Adamolekum, 1989). However, in Nigeria, the Commission on the Review of Higher Education in Nigeria (CRHEN) suggests that the phenomenon is gradually assuming critical dimensions in Nigerian's higher education institutions. Ladebo

(2003) reports that a study of four Nigeria universities revealed that students (both male and female) identified sexual harassment as being among the stressors hindering academic work. In Ghana, the Ghana Education Service in Nkawkaw and the Nkawkaw Senior High School were jointly investigating a male tutor for an alleged sexual harassment against a number of the female students in the school (News in Ghana, 2008).

As a tutor in one of the Senior High School in the Ashanti Region, the researcher has on a number of occasions heard of complaints of sexual harassment among students (and on some occasions sat on disciplinary committees involving such cases among students). The researcher has also heard of cases of sexual harassment against students by either students or teachers in other Senior High Schools. The following examples of sexual harassment demonstrate the incidence of the problem in schools: (1) a group of male students repeatedly tell sexually offensive or suggestive jokes to a group of females in the class or during break, and some of the jokes make the girls feel uncomfortable about the topic; (2) a female student declines several polite requests from another student for a date. After the third request, she makes it clear that she now finds his attention bothersome and intrusive rather than flattering and politely insists that it stops. He then begins to send her notes and text message on her mobile phone and run into her after classes in an area where he did not usually go before; and (3) a male teacher approaches a female student and shows the student her results indicating her poor performance in the teacher's subject (and sometimes in other subjects), which can lead to the student's dismissal. The teacher than requests the female

student to date him so that he can help her with her results, in order for her to remain in the school and complete her secondary school education.

These reports from the global scene and the reported cases of sexual harassment in Ghanaian schools show the problematic nature of the issue of sexual harassment in our schools. It is worth noting that the school environment, where this unfortunate experience is taking place against female students in particular, is supposed to be a safe and harmonious place where teaching and learning should take place. It is also a place where students can socialize and develop healthy relationships among themselves and relevant others (including teachers) irrespective of class, sex, creed, ethnic background and age (Amedahe & Owusu-Banahene, 2007; National Association of School Psychologists, 2005). Unfortunately, the situation in our schools is far from this expectation.

In Ghana, just like South Africa, the United States, Canada, Europe, India, Nigeria, and other parts of the world, the incidence of sexual harassment and violence has been of concern to school authorities and parents alike.

Statement of the Problem

The enormity of the problem of sexual harassment and violence against students in schools have made the stakeholders in the Ghanaian educational system and the law enforcement agencies of Ghana put in various measures and directives to curb the problem. The Ghana Education Service (GES), for example, has since 1997 established a Girl Child Education Unit within the GES and has appointed Girl Child Education Officers at all the Regional and District levels. These officers are to oversee improvement of girls' participation in school and

also monitor gender violence issues in schools against female students. The GES has also strengthened its Guidance and Counseling Units in all its regional and district offices nationwide. Guidance and Counseling Coordinators have also been appointed in all Senior High Schools and Basic Schools to provide counseling services to students in schools. The Domestic Violence and Victim Support Unit (DOVVSU) of the Ghana Police Service has also scaled up its outreach programmes in schools and is collecting systematic data on sexual abuse of school children. Statistics from DOVVSU show that of all reported cases to the Unit, 6% of school children had been threatened by a school teacher or principal that the child's school would suffer if she (the school child) did not have sex with them (the teacher or principal). Of these reported cases, 66% of victims are adolescents between the ages of 15 to 18 years, who are largely students in Senior High schools.

School authorities in the various school levels, in conjunction with their school Governing Councils and Boards of Directors have been mandated to institute disciplinary action against perpetrators of sexual harassment of learners in schools. For instance, in Tamale Polytechnic, in the Northern Region of Ghana, the Polytechnic Council dismissed a male lecturer for his alleged sexual harassment of some female students in the school. In the pre-tertiary institutions (Basic School and Senior High Schools) teachers found to be guilty of sexual harassment against school children and students can have their professional certificates revoked and dismissed from the GES. Students who perpetrate sexual harassment against peers can also be given outright dismissal.

In spite of these measures in the Ghanaian schools and other similar measures by educational authorities and the law enforcement agencies in other countries across the world, the problem of sexual harassment and violence against students in school remains a bane for stakeholders of our educational system. Timmerman (2004) observes that sexual harassment of students is a problem that needs to be seriously addressed by educational institutions.

In an interaction between the researcher and the coordinator of the Girl Child Education Unit of the Ghana Education Service, Kumasi Metro Office, the officer expressed the belief that at least 2 out of 5 students in Senior High School in the Kumasi metropolis have experienced sexual harassment of a sort while in school. According to the Regional Coordinator of the Girl Child Unit, that was even an under estimation of the situation since most victims fail to report their experiences to the school authorities for a number of reasons. The coordinator estimated that about 70% of female students experience unwelcome sexual advances from others in school, while about 40% boys also experience some sort of sexual harassment in school. This information was corroborated by the Regional Guidance and Counseling Coordinator who confirmed the assertion that most schools do not want the Kumasi Metro Office and the Regional Office of the GES to know of cases of sexual harassment, hence they try to solve the problem amicably among the parties in their school because of harsh punishment for perpetrators. Again, some students also fail to inform the school authorities of sexual offences against them. This, according to the Counselor, accounts for the under reporting of such cases in their outfit. Hence, he hinted that the problem is real and does occur in most Senior High Schools.

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All the foregoing indicate clearly that in spite of all the measures put in place to ensure a harassment-free environment in the schools, the problem still exists in various forms in the schools. In view of this problem in our schools, and in the Kumasi metropolis in particular and the fact that the occurrences of these violations against students are underreported (Ladebo 2003), school authorities, parents, educational policy makers and the general public have raised a number of questions in their bid to have a good understanding and insight into this malady. A number of these questions have been asked during Parents' and Teachers' Association (PTA) meetings and Conference of Heads of Assisted Secondary Schools (CHASS) meetings. Some of the questions that stakeholders in the Kumasi metropolis frequently ask about the problem which are adopted in this study include the following: What type of sex-related behaviours are students exposed to in the school environment? What is the magnitude (prevalence rate) of sexual harassment against students in senior high schools? What is the perception of the students of these behaviours as problems in their school and how do they respond to, or handle the situation? How does the situation impact upon these students in school, and finally between male students and male teachers, which group are the worse perpetrators of the offence?

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of the study is to find answers to questions concerning the incidence of sexual harassment among Senior High School female students in the Kumasi metropolis. More specifically, the purpose of the study, is therefore, to

1. find out female students' level of knowledge about sexual harassment in schools

2. examine students' source of knowledge about sexual harassment

3. identify the type of unwanted/unwelcome sex-related behaviours that students are exposed to in the Senior High School environment;

4. find out the magnitude or extent of the problem of sexual harassment in the schools;

5. find out how victims of sexual harassment react or respond to acts of sexual harassment that they experience in their schools;

6. identify the location in the school where sexual harassment against female students occur most;

7. find out how female students are affected when they experience sexual harassment in the school;

8. identify the category of persons in the school who are the worst perpetrators of sexual harassment against female students in schools.

Research Questions

This research is guided by the following research questions.

1. How much knowledge do female students in Senior High School have about sexual harassment?

2. Where do female students get their information or knowledge about sexual harassment from?

3. What are the common types of unwanted/unwelcome sex-related behaviours that students experience in school?

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4.   What is the magnitude of the problem of sexual harassments against female students in schools?

5.   How do the female students react or respond to the incidence of sexual harassment against them in school?

6.   Which location in and around the school compound does sexual harassment occur most?

7.   How are students affected by the incidence of sexual harassment against them in school?

8.   Which category of persons in the school environment are the worst perpetrators of sexual harassment against female students?

Significance of the Study

It is the intention of the researcher to present the findings of the study at a seminar to be organised at the Kumasi metropolitan Directorate of Education. This study would, therefore, be of benefit to all stakeholders of our educational system as they would be enlightened on, among others, the nature and magnitude of sexual harassment in our schools, how female students perceive their school environment as far as sexual harassment is concerned, and how these acts negatively affect our students in schools. This would help them to take the necessary steps to handle the worrying issue of sexual harassment in our schools.

It is of interest to note that not only will this study highlight the issue of sexual harassment and violence against our high school female students in particular, it will also add up to the empirical studies that provide evidence of the existence of sexual harassment in our schools. It will thus sensitise educational

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practitioners and policy makers to make serious efforts to tackle the problem with all seriousness.

Delimitation of the Study

There are several dimensions of the problem of sexual harassment that call for investigation. However, this study focuses on, among others, the prevalence, knowledge level, nature and the location of sexual harassment against female students in Senior High Schools. The problem seems to exist all over the country but this study focuses on female students in Senior High Schools in the Kumasi metropolis of Ghana, because the complaints about the problem seems to be more frequent and persistent in that metropolis.

Again, Kumasi was chosen for this study because Kumasi had been listed among the cities with a high rate of (sexual) crime against minors by the Domestic Violence and Victim Support Unit of the Ghana Police Service. The occurrence of sexual harassment against students is a form of sexual violence against minors (including students), hence the need to study this phenomenon in the schools. Data from the DOVVSU shows that the total number of defilement in the Ashanti Region as at the end of 31st December, 2008 was 186 cases. The victims were all persons of school going age and the perpetrators could possibly include teachers and students.

Adolescent students in Senior High Schools were selected for the study because although they had achieved sexual maturity as adolescents, most are cognitively not mature enough to adequately make firm and accurate decisions concerning their sexuality. For instance, adolescent students are very concerned about their academic performance in school since it helps them shape their

identity during their adolescence period (Eriksson, 1959). So when some unscrupulous persons in the school approach some of these students, particularly those who are struggling academically, and request for sexual favours in exchange for grades or academic favours in school, or for any other reason, some of them fall victim to these teachers' request.

For purposes of this study, the scope of sexual harassment would include any unwanted sexual advances, requests for sexual favours and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when: (1) submission or such conduct is made a term or condition for participating in educational programmes; or (2) submission to or rejection of such conduct is used as a basis for academic decision affecting the individual; or (3) such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with a students' academic performance, creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive learning environment.

Limitations of the Study

The use of the report method, thus self-report and peer-report in the data collection process is believed to have posed some problems in the area of obtaining honest data from the respondents. Fraenkel and Wellen (2000) have identified this as one of the "threefold difficulties" in the use of the descriptive survey, which mostly make use of the report method. They observed that researchers are faced with the challenges of getting the respondents to answer the questionnaire thoughtfully and honestly. The researcher believes that this may have accounted for a situation where some respondents may not give true responses to some of the questions on the questionnaire, considering the fact that

some respondents may be of the opinion that disclosing information that they have been victims of sexual harassment in school amounts to self disgrace. Others may, as a result of the traumatic experiences that they encounter in the hands of their harassers, not even talk about it, hence they would give a false response to questions that may be posed on these issues. However, the researcher strongly assured all the respondents of the confidentiality of their information and also appealed for their cooperation since the research was solely for academic purpose. In collecting data for this study, interviewing should have also been used in order to collect in depth information and also probe into responses that the respondents would provide.

Secondly, the timing for the data collection also posed a challenge. The data collection was done during the revision week of the second term. This is the time when students are usually time conscious and would avoid other activities that they perceive as not being directly beneficial to their performance in their upcoming examination. In view of this, getting them to take enough time to go through the questionnaire and get responses as honestly as possible and also taking their time to recall some of their experiences during the term, in this case, experiences of sexual harassment, must have been very difficulty. In spite of this challenge however, the respondents were encouraged to take their time to respond to the questionnaires to the best of their knowledge.

Definition of Term

Sexual harassment: - any unwanted or unwelcome sexual advance, request for sexual favours and other unwelcome visual, verbal and physical conduct of a

sexual nature.

Rape: - is an assault by a person involving sexual intercourse with another person without that person's consent.

Sexual abuse: - is the forcing of undesired sexual behaviour by one person upon another

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter reviews and discusses some of the definitions of sexual harassment, theories of sexual harassment, the nature and forms of sexual harassment, its prevalence rate, students' views about the problem and the reported effects on learner-victims.

The Concept of Sexual Harassment

The term "sexual harassment" was coined by Catherine Alice MacKinnon in 1979 as part of a groundbreaking legal theory in which it was proposed that certain systematic behaviours occurring in the workplace constituted sex discrimination. MacKinnon referred to these behaviours collectively as forms of sexual harassment. Generally, the sexual harassment cited by MacKinnon included: (a) dispensing behaviour or rewards for work based on an individual's classification and/or (b) intentionally singling out a woman as the object of unwelcome sexual advances (Wetzel & Brown, 2000). Wetzel and Brown observe that as part of constituting her legal theory of sexual harassment, MacKinnon (1979b) noted that the position of women is that of a socially disadvantaged group, claiming that women, the world over, lived in a culture that assigned higher status and power to males. Thus, women were said to be experiencing a kind of forced inferiority, in which sexual harassment was but one

example of an institutionally grounded system that negatively stereotyped women as a group.

In recent times, the study of sexual harassment does not only focus on girls or women as victims, but also on men and boys who can be targets for sexual harassment by their perpetrators. For instance the first large scale study of sexual harassment in United States of America schools by the Association of American University Women (AAUW) in 1993 and 2001 included both male and female students.

Sexual harassment is a complex phenomenon that has many accepted definitions. Scholars and legal experts disagree about what behaviours should and should not be included in the definition of sexual harassment. For this reason, the definition of sexual harassment continues to evolve.

Sexual harassment is defined by the AAUW (2001) as "unwanted and unwelcome sexual behaviour that interfers with your life. Sexual harassment is not behaviour that you like or want (for example wanted kissing, touching or flirting)" (p.2). Du Plessis, Fouche and Van Wyk (1998) define sexual harassment as "unwanted conduct of a sexual nature. The unwanted nature of the sexual harassment distinguishes it from behaviours that are welcome and mutually acceptable" (p. 148). They further explain that sexual attention becomes sexual harassment if:

(a)   the behaviour is persistent (although a single incident of harassment can constitute sexual harassment)

(b)   the recipient has made it clear that the behaviour is considered offensive; and/or

(c)   the perpetrator should have known the behaviour is regarded as unacceptable.

This definition is corroborated by the Office for Civil Rights (OCR) within the United States Department of Education, which is responsible for enforcement of Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, which sees sexual harassment as a form of discrimination. In January 2001, OCR issued a "Revised Sexual Harassment Guidance" which defines sexual harassment under Title IX as follows:

> sexual harassment is unwelcome conduct of a sexual
> nature. Sexual harassment can include unwelcome
> advances, requests for sexual favours, and other verbal,
> or non-verbal, physical conduct of a sexual nature.
> Sexual harassment of a student can deny or limit, on the
> basis of sex, the students' ability, to participate in or
> receive benefits, services, or opportunities in the
> school's programmme.
> Office for Civil Rights, USDE (2001, p. 2)

AAUW (2001) observes that in education, sexual harassment, as an unwanted behaviour of a sexual nature, interferes with students' ability to learn, study, work or participate in school activities. This harassment is perpetrated by both peers and individuals in positions of power relative to the person being harassed. In schools, though sexual harasasment initiated by students is most common, it can also be perpetrated by teachers or other school employees, and the victim can be a student, a teacher, or other school employee.

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While sexual harassment is legally defined as "unwanted" behaviour, many experts agree that even consensual sexual interactions between students and teachers constitute sexual harassment because, they say, the power differential creates a dynamic in which "mutual consent" is impossible (Smithson, 1990). Dziech and Weiner (1990) write that, "physical intimacy with students is not now and never has been acceptable behaviour for academicians. It cannot be defended or explained away by evoking fantasies of devoted or sophisticated students being denied the right to "true love". Where power differential exists, there can be no "mutual consent"" (p. 23).

Du Plessis et al. (1998) suggest that sexual harassment may include unwelcome physical, verbal or non-verbal conduct, and is not limited to the following examples:

(a)   Physical conduct of a sexual nature, which includes all forms of unwanted physical contact, ranging from touching to sexual assault and rape, including a strip search by or in the presence of a member of the opposite sex.

(b)   Verbal forms of sexual harassment include unwelcome innuendoes, sexual advances, comments about a person's body made in their presence or to them, unwelcome and inappropriate enquiries about a person's sex life, and unwelcome whistling at a person or a group of people.

(c)   Non-verbal forms of sexual harassment include unwelcome gestures, indecent exposure of body parts, and the unwelcome display of sexual explicit pictures or objects

(d)   Quid pro quo harassment occurs when an owner, employer, supervisor, member of management or co-employee undertakes or attempts to influence or influences the process of employment, promotion, training, discipline, salary increment or other benefits of an employee or job applicant in exchange for sexual favour (p. 418).

A major element underlying the occurrence of sexual harassment is the influence of power (Smithson, 1990; Prinsloo, 2000). It is this power dynamics that makes students and subordinates at school or the work place more vulnerable to sexual harassment and violence. At the school environment, male students take advantage of the power of their masculinity to sexually harass female students, while male teachers also take advantage of their position as classroom figure heads to demand sexual favours from their female students for academic favour. Prinsloo (2006) observes that those in power of authority misuse this power to unfairly discriminate against subordinates, be it students or young staff. Power is the ability to execute authority. Gerber and Van Dyk (1998) distinguish between the following types of power:

(a)   Legitimate power (position power): This is the official authority delegated to a position. In terms of this power, the leader/educator has the right to expect subordinates to carry out their duties conscientiously, and to take disciplinary measures if they do not. In most cases of sexual harassment against students in schools, the victim finds themselves exposed to educators or fellow students who misuse their power of authority to intimidate and sexually abuse them.

(b)   Power by reward: This is used to give or withhold rewards such as recognition and appreciation, merits and promotion. The positive side of the power of reward is that it could be used to motivate staff or learners. But if this power is misused to get sexual favours, it is known as sexual favouritism. It happens where a person who is in a position of authority only rewards those who respond to his/her sexual advances. Girls in school are subjected to this serious form of unfair discrimination. The rewards could be in the form of financial support to an impoverished household (the Citizen, 20 February 2002) or for grades.

(c)   Coercive power: This is inspired by fear, either psychological or physical, in subordinates. The much higher incidence of sexual harassment and victimization among female learners than males is a good example of coercive power, which may be attributed to the patriarchal attitudes of most societies (Human Rights Watch, 2001).

Due to the multiplicity of definitions of sexual harassment, the New York State Governor's Task Force on Sexual Harassment in USA found "no single definition of Sexual Harassment can be meaningful for all situations, purposes and individuals" (cited in Brandenbury, 1997, p.1). Martin (2005) opines that the reason why the phenomenon of sexual harassment possesses a multitude of acceptable definitions is because it is so complex involving a variety of interrelated factors – individual and societal: gender socialisation and orientation, locus of control, traditional patriarchal values, issues of power, language and discourse and one's ability to appropriate them.

A Working Definition of Sexual Harassment in Schools

For the purpose of this research, and from the foregoing definitions of sexual harassment, the researcher suggests a working definition of sexual harassment in schools since most of the definitions focus on sexual harassment at the workplace. This working definition has been adopted and adapted from the definition given by the United States Department of Education.

Sexual harassment would be defined as any unwanted sexual advances, requests for sexual favours and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when: (1) submission or such conduct is made a term or condition for participating in educational programmes; or (2) submission to or rejection of such conduct is used as a basis for academic decision affecting the individual; or (3) such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with a students' academic performance, creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive learning environment.

The Office of the Students Affairs of the Foothill Community College in the US (Martin, 2005), observes that some examples of sexual harassment in schools may include but are not limited to the following:

(1) Creating an offensive learning environment by repeated written, verbal, physical and/or visual contacts with sexual undertones. Written forms may include suggestive or obscene letters, notes and invitations. Verbal forms may include derogatory comments, slurs, jokes and epithets. Physical forms may include assault, unwelcome touching, impeding or blocking movement. Visual forms may include leering, gestures, display of sexually offensive objects, pictures, cartoons or posters.

(2) Establishing a pattern of conduct that would cause discomfort and/or humiliate a person at whom the conduct was directed and that includes one or more of the following: unnecessary touching, patting, hugging or brushing against a person's body, remarks of a sexual nature about a person's clothing or body; or remarks about sexual activity or speculation about previous sexual experiences; continued expressions of sexual interest after being informed the interest is unwelcome.

(3) Making reprisal, threats of reprisal, or implied threats of reprisal following a rebuff of harassing behaviour

(4) Retaliating against a person for reporting or threatening to report sexual harassment

(5) Engaging in explicit or implicit coercive sexual behaviour within the educational environment which is used to control, influence or affect the educational opportunities, grades, and/or learning environment of a student, such as withholding or threatening to withhold grades earned or deserved; underserved performance evaluation; denying or threatening to deny a scholarship recommendation or college application.

Theories and Models of Sexual Harassment

Why Sexual Harassment Exists in Society

In providing an insight into why sexual harassment does exist in society, Marx's theory of alienation, objectification theory, conflict theory, and sexual terrorism theory are discussed.

Marx used the concept of alienation to describe the way that factory workers felt about their work in the early days of industrialisation. Marx argued that workers were alienated from their labour because they had no control over the product, over the means of production, and could therefore derive no satisfaction from it. Marx's theory of alienation has been used to describe gender relations and the situation of women under patriarchy by Marxist or socialist feminist critics. Bartky (1990) argues that women are *sexually* alienated in patriarchal societies for they are denied the right to develop, as do men, and help to define what it means to be human. As Rubin (1975) states, "it is precisely this 'historical and moral element' which determines that a 'wife' is among the necessities of a worker, that women rather than men do housework, and that capitalism is heir to a long tradition in which women do not inherit, in which women do not lead, and in which women do not talk to god" (p. 164). It is this alienation from being viewed and viewing themselves as conscious subjects that alienate women from their own desire. Often, women view themselves as objects suited to fulfill another's (male) desire.

Stemming from Marx's theory of alienation is Bartky's (1990) theory of women's sexual objectification which provides insight into why women are the most frequent victims of sexual harassment and also why sexual harassment was considered to be natural human functioning until the recent past. As Bartky argues, "sexual objectification occurs when a woman's sexual parts or sexual functions are separated out from her person, reduced to the status of mere instruments, or else regarded as if they were capable of representing her" (p. 35). In other words, women are often thought of in terms of the body, in terms of

sexuality, and thus they are often reduced to just that "sexual beings that are not on an equal plane with that of men" (p. 35). Bartky further opines that, "clearly, sexual objectification is a form of fragmentation and thus an impoverishment of the objectified individual; it involves too the implicit denial to those who suffer it that they have capacities which transcend the merely sexual" (p. 36).

Fredrickson and Roberts (1997) explain that the objectification theory suggests that sexual harassment may cause a higher self consciousness about one's body. Moreover, sexual harassment has been linked to problems with body image for adolescent girls and college women (Murnen & Smolak, 2000). As Fredrickson and Roberts state, "at a psychological level, perhaps the most profound effect of objectifying treatment is that it coaxes girls and women to adopt a peculiar view of the self" (p.13). The objectification theory, according to Fredrickson and Roberts posits that the cultural milieu of objectification functions to socialise girls and women to, at some level, treat *themselves* as objects to be looked at and evaluated" (p. 177). In other words, the objectification theory posits that the female body is objectified in American society through history, tradition, the media, etc. Because women are thought of largely in terms of their bodies, they are more susceptible to sexual harassment. Bartky (1990) observes that objectification itself, as well as its repercussions (namely sexual harassment), have damaging consequences for women.

According to Hartmann (1977), the conflict theories suggest that women, as well as people of colour, remain in secondary positions in society relative to white men because of the exploitation of the powers that be, i.e., powerful men. Hartmann further explains that in the not so recent past, women were considered

to be the property of men. Industrialisation removed much work from the household, but women were allowed only the lowest paying jobs. White men, according him, were unwilling to lose control over the labour of women or the labour force in general. According to conflict theories, sexual harassment was a way for men to control women in the workplace.

Sexual terrorism theory (Sheffield, 1989) suggests that violence against women, such as sexual harassment, instills fear in them. Thus, females may show more distress when experiencing sexual harassment than males because of the unequal power afforded to them by traditional gender roles. Also, sexual terrorism maintains traditional patriarchal power. As Sheffield (1989) states:

Sexual terrorism is a system that functions to maintain

male supremacy through actual and implied violence.

Violence against the female body (rape, battery, incest,

and harassment) and the perpetuation of fear and violence

form the basis of patriarchal power. Both violence and fear

are functional. If men did not have the power to intimidate

and to punish, their domination of women in all spheres of

society—political, social, and economic—could not exist.

(p. 17).

In other words, sexual harassment is merely one facet of sexual terrorism that serves to keep women in positions of fear and powerlessness. Marx's theory of alienation, Bartky's theory of sexual objectification, conflict theory and sexual terrorism theory all provide insight into the phenomenon of sexual harassment. Marx's theory of alienation suggests that all people within a capitalist society are

alienated. Critics, both Marxist and socialist feminist, have expanded this theory and have suggested that because women lack the formal power that men enjoy in a patriarchal society, they are more susceptible to sexual harassment and to sexual objectification. Conflict and sexual terrorism theories suggest that sexual harassment functions as a tool to maintain the status quo where men enjoy the lion's share of power, autonomy, and economic opportunity.

Philosophical Explanation of Sexual Harassment

There are numerous theories and explanatory models in the literature of the 1980s and 1990s that offer explanatory models regarding the origination of sexual harassment. Many theorists working in the area of sexual harassment have explored the behaviour through aspects of the sociocultural perspective that positions sexual harassment as a product of Western society which generally delineates male dominance over female (Malovich & Stake, 1990) by perpetuating beliefs, attitudes and actions that devalue women because of their sex (Tangri & Hayes, 1997). This class of models views sexual harassment as the result of culturally legitimated power and status differences between men and women (Gruber, 1992).

The second class of widely accepted causal models of sexually harassing behaviour is the organisational models that posit sexual harassment as a result of power and status inequalities within an organization (Gruber, 1992). In their earlier works, Farley (1978) and MacKinnon (1979) framed sexual harassment as an abuse of power to sexually coerce or intimidate women. Stringer, Remick, Salisbury and Ginorio (1990) further investigated the concept of power as a triad

achieved power, ascribed power, and situational power. A focus of these models is facilitatory factors or conditions within an organisation that make it more likely for sexual harassment to occur such as opportunity structures, sex ratios, and organizations norms.

A third class of sexual harassment causal models, the individual differences modules, seeks to explain sexual harassment through individual level characteristics and perceptions of harassers and non-harassers as well as victims and non-victims. Research on distinguishing characteristics of those likely to harass was linked to characteristics of those likely to rape by Gutek and Morasch (1982). Burt (1980) also linked sex role stereotyping as a precondition for targeting women as potential sexual victims and acceptance of rape myths. Further, Muehlenhard and Linton (1987) tied the acceptance of rape myths to people who had been involved in sexual aggression such as verbal coercion and rape.

Although somehow simplistic, some researchers define sexual harassment behaviour in a nature/biological format (Barak, 1995). These models assert that sexual harassment behaviour is simply a natural expression of sexual attraction and that men, more than women are naturally attracted to each other. These models rationalise that men, more than women, have an inner drive to be sexually aggressive (Barak, 1995), and that the sexual behaviour is not meant as harassment. Further, the nature/biological models tend to trivialise sexual harassment as normal and harmless and as the result of the behaviour of a few "sick" proclivities of a minority of men (Tangri, et al., 1982, p. 36).

Application of Theories and Models to Schools

Most of the theories and models discussed earlier attempt to explain the mechanisms of sexual harassment by focusing on adults in the workplace. However, children and adolescents in schools are at a different developmental stage and in a different environment. For these and other reasons, it is not possible to directly apply concepts and processes from these theories and models to sexual harassment against students in schools.

Wetzel and Brown (2000) observe that another complication in trying to apply these sexual harassment theories and models is that the reasons given in the AAUW 1993 National Survey for participating in sexual harassment tend to relate, in part, to the age and stage of development for these students. The adolescent stage of development is where sexual identity may still be emerging and some confusion may still exist. Wetzel and Brown (2000) further observed that, for instance, most theorists of sexual harassment believe that power and status inequalities play an important role or function in sexual harassment. However, in the AAUW sexual harassment survey of school children, power and status was the least important reason (6%) that explains why school children engage in sexual harassment. They observed that harassers often engage in sexual harassment because of the need for attention and affection.

According to Wetzel and Brown (2000), the most important difference however, is seen in the high proportion, over 90%, for both boys and girls, who noted that they were harassed and in turn became harassers. They are both victims and perpetrators. These are not the types of actions or behaviours reported in the literature on sexual harassment in the workplace. Thus, both the motivations and

the profiles of those who engage in sexually harassing acts seem to be different for students.

The findings of the AAUW sexual harassment study of 1993 again present some other differences that must be incorporated. For example, the study found a relatively large number of males (boys) who report that they were sexually harassed; females were harassers; the kind of behaviours that are different in sexual harassment; and the presence of one major group of authorities in the school, female teachers, who, as reported in the literature, do nothing to stop the harassing behaviour and/or are unsympathetic to the student who reports the behaviour of sexual harassment to them. In contrast, authorities and supervisors in the workplace are more likely to be male.

Wetzel and Brown (2000), however, noted out some commonalities do seem to exist between sexual harassment in schools and the one in the workplace. First, they report that the victim is more like to be female and the harasser, male. Another commonality is the power differential, where the harasser has the power resources to provide rewards, for example, grades, peer approval/inclusion, or to mete out punishment, such as withholding grades, spreading false rumours (for schools), or influencing raises, promotions, or job security (for workplace). The third commonality is the culture or climate that allows sexual harassment to exist or continue. These commonalities provide a rationale for presenting and considering the theories and models of sexual harassment that focus on the workplace.

The review of literature on the theories of sexual harassment that are applicable to the school environment reveals the following theories and models;

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abuse of power, psychological theories, social judgment-involvement, organizational theories and cultural theories. However all these theories are workplace-based, they have implications for understanding sexual harassment in schools. Each of the theory is discussed here.

Abuse of Power Theory/Model

Bargh and Raymond (1995), offer a psychological approach to understanding sexual harassment. In their model, they consider sexual harassment from a perspective of an abuse of power that has its origin in psychoemotional processes. The model holds that there is, in every situation, a possibility of holding the power will, for some, automatically and unconsciously trigger a sexuality schema, just as racial or gender features of automatically trigger stereotypes of that group. They observe that the possible origins of the automatic power/sex linkage are rooted in:

(1) dysfunctional parent-child relationship in which the opposite sex parent exerted inordinate control over the life of the harasser, and/or

(2) childhood instances of the harasser of sexual abuse where power also was exerted against the harasser as a child.

Johnson and Johnson, (cited in Wetzel and Brown, 2000), for instance, describe a situation where coercive power may be used to perpetuate peer sexual harassment in school. Coercion occurs when a person is forced to do something he or she does not want to do. In coercive power therefore, it is the situation where an individual (student) is forced to do something (sexual harassment) for fear of negative consequences. The harasser's group leadership may coerce the

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harasser to participate in the sexual harassment act against the harasser's will. But as long as the harasser wishes to belong and remain in the group as a group member, he/she will participate in the act of sexual harassment. The consequence of his/her refusal will be an expulsion from the group, which the harasser might not wish to experience.

Psychological Theory

Offering a psychological theory, Levant and Brooks (cited in Wetzel and Brown, 2000) connect sexual harassment to the tendency of many males to view sexuality as separate from the intimate relationship. Specifically, it is argued that men's tendency toward nontraditional sexuality (defined as the tendency to experience sex primarily as lust without any requirement for relational intimacy or emotional attachment) is not natural, not genetic and not a product of evolution. Levant and Brooks observe that it is rather thought that the tendency is closely linked to the traumatic socialization of boys, in which display of emotion are discouraged and emotional intimacy is equated with the loss of autonomy. This socialization is said to breed not only sexual harassment behaviour but also other more physical forms of violence and abuse (White, 2000).

Allied with the psychological theory of Levant and Brooks (cited in Wetzel and Brown, 2000) is the "male gender socialization" theory of Lisak, (cited in Wetzel and Brown, 2000). He proposes that there is a relationship between male gender socialization and their perception and attitude about female. Specifically, he states that the training most males receive to be "masculine" leads to their having stereotyped sex role beliefs, and particular attitude towards

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women; some have hostility toward women, and some end with hypermasculine belief.

Also connected to male gender socialization is the masculinization of sexuality, which teaches males to separate sex and emotions, thereby leading to the tendency to perceive the other person as an object and to be disconnected from empathizing with the other person (Lisak, cited in Wetzel and Brown, 2000). Lisak calls this condition an "empathy deficit". He further points out that there are considerable research findings indicating that lack of empathy is associated with aggressive behaviour, which includes sexual harassment.

These psychological theories contribute to understanding sexual harassment by males but do little to further our understanding of sexual harassment about females. Wetzel and Brown (2000) note that while they provide some information about females' reaction and acceptance, or non-objection to being sexually harassed, they do not explain it.

Social Judgment-Involvement Theory

Payne (cited in Wetzel and Brown, 2000) has offered a model of teacher-to-student and student-to-student sexual harassment on the basis of social judgment-involvement theory, which associates incidents of harassment with power, miscommunication, and myths about one's own sex and/or the opposite sex. According to the theory, harassers "key" their victims so that a power contest will begin but the victims do not understand what is happening.

According to Payne, miscommunication occurs when power myths about men and women intersect during the harassment episode. Such myths, according to Payne include:

(1) the "looking and touching" myth

(2) the "failure to report" myth

(3) the "macho man" myth

(4) the "consenting adult" myth (Payne, cited in Wetzel and Brown, 2000).

When placed in a harassment episode, females make decisions about both the action and the harasser. These decisions examined in light of social judgment-involvement theory, indicate that feelings of powerlessness are the single strongest element perpetrating sexual harassment (Payne, cited in Wetzel and Brown, 2000).

According to Payne (cited in Wetzel and Brown, 2000), both sexes help create an environment ripe for sexual harassment by incorrect decision on four basic courses of action. These are:

(1) trying not to respond and hoping it will go way

(2) attempting to impugn the reputation of the women; attempting to change the system and its support of harassment

(3) protecting the reputation of the men actively involved in the harassment, and

(4) generally ignoring the issue of sexual harassment, which until recently had received little attention (p. 1).

Based on this theory, Payne states that in order to reduce or prevent sexual harassment from occurring in educational institutions, "students should be informed about sexual harassment, and learn that they do not have to put up with it (p. 1).

Organizational Theories

Fiske and Glick (1995) present a theory that is based on events in the workplace. It could be argued that if schools are children's workplace, then some of what they propose for the workplace can be applied to sexual harassment in schools. Basically, Fiske and Glick propose that any organisation or institution, be it, educational or business, contains a complex interplay of ambivalent motives and gender stereotyping of females and the roles they are expected to fulfill. The ambivalence has as its source the conflicting motives for males of both dominance and intimacy. These in turn, produce both positive and negative feelings towards women.

Fiske and Glick (1995) model so called "cognitive-motivational" proposes an interaction of ambivalent, stereotyping of women, and gender stereotyping jobs. They propose four types of harassment:

(1)   earnest, where sexual intimacy is the motive

(2)   hostile, where domination is the motive

(3)   ambivalent paternalistic, where protections and sexual intimacy interact, and

(4)   competitive, where gender differentiation and sexual intimacy are the motive.

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Regardless of the type of harassment, the end result is the same. However, understanding or accepting that there may be different motives for the harassment means that there must be a multifaceted approach to addressing sexual harassment, either on the job or in schools.

Cultural Theory

Lee, Croninger, Linn and Chen (1996) propose that structural and ethical cultural theories are appropriate to explain sexual harassment in schools. Structural cultural theory is based on school or group norms. Ethical cultural theories use the concept of shared values and legitimate commonly held ethical and moral principles of group members as their basis. Both theoretical approaches use the prevailing culture and norms as explanations for why sexual harassment occurs, and is tolerated or addressed.

Beliefs, attitudes and values in the community, schools and other groups shape behaviour responses to sexual harassment. These theories, therefore, propose that such beliefs, attitudes and values have to be addressed if sexual harassment is to be prevented, reduced or eliminated (Lee et al., 1996).

Wetzel and Brown (2000) comment that it is easy to see why it would be difficult to successfully intervene to address sexual harassment if it is an integral part of the culture as many, if not all, the beliefs, attitudes and values are internalised and acted on without conscious thought. On the other hand, if sufficient numbers of people in the culture perceive that existing beliefs and attitudes are inconsistent with strongly held values, or that some behaviours are

harmful, then there can be successful intervention. Lee and colleagues (1996) acknowledge that changing perceptions is not easy, but it can be done.

Sexual Harassment in Schools

Martin (2005) notes that in the United States of America, institutions receiving federal funds, such as public schools and universities, have been held liable for hostile school environments that promote sexual harassment. She provides instances of law suits (legal cases) between certain individuals and public educational institutions, such as, *Davis v. Monroe* (1996), *Doe v. University of Illinois* (1998), and *Gebser v. Lago Vista* (1998). She reports that these cases found that peer sexual harassment claims may be brought under Title IX of the 1964 Civil Rights Law, where students are involved in school activities or are under school supervision if school officials were aware of the harassment and failed to take action.

Martin (2005) further observes that recent court cases have been filed in the US law courts because of a school district's failure to recognize or take seriously claims of sexual harassment. Perhaps one reason for this failure or denial of the problem is that such behaviour in teenagers is viewed as "normal." Fineran and Bennett (1999) argue that sexual harassment is not only often viewed as normal, but also it serves the function of maintaining the status quo.

In Ghana, although sexual harassment against persons including students is a legal offence under the Domestic Violence Act, 2007, the law courts are yet to persecute any person or group of persons or institutions (including schools) for sexual harassment offences or negligence to act on reported cases of sexual

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harassment by a person or a student. In the school environment, school authorities usually do not act on reported cases of sexual harassment against victims, as most school personnels (teachers, head masters, school administrators) perceive the sexual harassment, particularly against females as "normal" and "as part of school life" (Leach et. al., 2003).

The culture of viewing the phenomenon of peer sexual harassment as normal will not change or be reversed overnight. School communities have much work to do to make this change happen. Sexual harassment is a sensitive and complex issue involving many factors such as sexuality, power, language, gender roles, and abuse. All parties involved, students, parents, teachers, school personnel, and school officials, must educate themselves in all of these interrelated factors in order to make schools safer for students.

Perhaps the first step in approaching this new model of education about sexual harassment is to create an open dialogue between students and staff about the issue. As Stein (1996) states, "institutionalising and normalising the conversation about sexual harassment in schools might be one of the ways to reduce and eliminate sexual harassment in schools" (p. 23). If students are made to feel comfortable when discussing the issue, then they may be more likely to bring claims of sexual harassment to the attention of the administration; they may also be more likely to voice their disapproval when they witness other students engaging in behaviours that constitute sexual harassment. Before that is made to happen, however, staff members must learn to feel comfortable when dealing with the issue. As Shakeshaft, Mandel and Sawyer (1997) argue, "stopping peer sexual harassment requires changing the adolescent culture of the school. Because

students don't report harassment and because the peer culture requires that they act as though it doesn't affect them, adults must take the lead in behavioural change" (p. 25).

Sexual Harassment Research

According to Martin (2005), research on sexual harassment began in the employment realm and then trickled down to higher education, and then to the Junior High and Senior High educational levels. It has been argued that organisational cultures that tolerate sexual harassment show an *increase* in incidents of sexual harassment (Welsh, 1999). In a study conducted by Timmerman and Bajema (2000), it was found that unwanted sexual conduct is less of a problem in organisational cultures that are perceived as providing equal opportunities for both females and males. Likewise, routine sexism within the school environment contributes to and often fosters sexual harassment (Hand & Sanchez, 2000).

Research also indicates that gender role orientation, or what is considered appropriate behaviour for women and men, plays a large role in the phenomenon of sexual harassment (Brandenburg, 1997; Durham, 1999; Fineran & Bennett, 1999; Jordan, Price, & Telljohann, 1998; Stein, 1996; Trigg & Wittenstrom, 1996). Despite this consistent finding, there is much ambiguity within sexual harassment research in general. The ambiguities vary from how sexual harassment is defined and what behaviours fall into the category of sexual harassment to how sexual harassment should be measured.

Ambiguities in Sexual Harassment Research

Because of the various definitions and conceptions of sexual harassment there has been much inconsistency in empirical research on the subject (Arvey & Cavanaugh, 1995). There is a wide disparity in survey results involving the numbers of women and men who have reported experiencing sexual harassment: estimates have ranged from 42 to 53% for women and 3 to 15% for men (Stockdale & Vaux, 1993).

Also, there is discrepancy as to what behaviours actually constitute sexual harassment. As Fitzgerald and Ormerod (1991) state, "one of the most difficult problems for researchers investigating this problem has been the lack of agreement concerning what behaviours actually constitute harassment, and the circumstances under which they are seen to do so" (p. 282). To further complicate the situation, few victims of sexual harassment make formal complaints about their experiences (Stockdale & Vaux,1993). Stockdale and Vaux provide insight into why this may be the case. They opine that

> making a formal complaint is the end point of a complex
> process, and it may be inhibited by a variety of factors. Not least
> are the risks involved in filing a grievance; fear of retaliation, of
> challenging a person with organisational authority, of not being
> taken seriously, or of being held up to a gender-biased standard
> of reasonable behaviour (p. 222).

In other words, research that involves tallying the amount of formal complaints made to determine the prevalence of sexual harassment may be inaccurate because many fail to report it.

In addition, victims of sexual harassment do not often define their experiences as such. As Stockdale and Vaux state, "relevant experiences may not be recognised as sexual harassment for at least two reasons: (a) the psychological costs to identifying oneself as a 'victim' of sexual harassment, and (b) ambiguity in the 'lay person's definition of sexual harassment and variance in the definition across subgroups" (p. 222). In other words, researchers must decide what sexual harassment means to them and to respondents, as well as what behaviours constitute it. They also must deal with respondent ambiguity. If respondents do not view their own experiences as sexual harassment, although the behaviours they experienced might fall into a category of sexual harassment as defined by the researchers, researchers must decide how to label such occurrences.

A popular topic within sexual harassment research is the study of gender differences occurring when respondents are asked to deem whether or not behaviours constitute sexual harassment (Baird, Bensko, Bell, Viney, & Woody, 1995; Fitzgerald & Ormerod, 1991; Gutek, 1995; Gutek & O'Connor, 1995). Baird, et al. (1995) found that women rate scenarios as hostile environment in vignette surveys more often than do men, and that male harassers are rated as more harassing than female harassers. As Gutek (1995) argues, "there is a gap between women and men in their perceptions that sexual harassment has occurred. The gap disappears for severe forms of sexual harassment and is greater with regard to 'ambiguous' behaviours" (p. 132). The majority of sexual harassment research suggests that men are the most frequent harassers. Discrepancies have been reported between male and female respondents when it comes to viewing ambiguous behaviours, which often tend to be hostile

environment scenarios. However, when it comes to determining if serious behaviours (such as quid pro quo scenarios) constitute sexual harassment, both male and female respondents typically concur.

In other words, study participants tend to rate behaviours that are explicitly coercive as sexual harassment as well as threats of retaliation or promises of reward for engaging in some sexual act (Fitzgerald & Ormerod, 1991). However, hostile environment scenarios are rated more inconsistently and some studies suggest gender differences in reporting rates for women and men (Baird et al., 1995).

Gutek and O'Connor (1995) studied the perceptual gap between women and men when it comes to determining what behaviours in fact constitute sexual harassment and found that in many instances, the perceptual gap closes. Although women are more likely than men to view questionable behaviour as inappropriate and as sexual harassment than are men, such gender differences are consistent; the amount of variance in perceptions between women and men is small (Gutek & O'Connor, 1995).

Moreover, Gutek and O'Connor (1995) found that when scenarios of sexual harassment are not severe or the scenario is ambiguous, within-sex variation can be as large or larger than the variation between sexes. Consensus on whether behaviour constitutes sexual harassment among women only occurs among the most severe scenarios and under those conditions, there is consensus among men as well. Gutek and O'Connor argue that when determining if scenarios constitute sexual harassment, participants' perceptions are affected by

the following: the severity of the incident, the ages of the perpetrator and victim, and the power levels of both.

Till (1980) devised five behavioural categories of sexual harassment: *gender harassment*, sexist remarks and behaviour; *seductive behaviour*, typically not illegal, but often inappropriate and offensive; *sexual bribery*, a promise of reward for sexual activity or favour; *sexual coercion*, a threat of punishment if sexual request is not fulfilled; and *sexual imposition*, sexual assault or imposition. Till (1980) developed these categories from responses of a national sample of data where college women described incidents of sexual harassment that they experienced or had heard about in an open-ended format.

Fitzgerald and Ormerod (1991) devised a survey given to faculty members and graduate students at a West Coast University that tested Till's five categories of sexual harassment. They found that there is agreement between women and men that behaviours such as sexual bribery and coercion constitute sexual harassment. However, these types of sexual harassment are the most infrequent. The far more frequent behaviours, gender harassment and seductive behaviour remain the subject of much debate. They noted that

> Although our respondents of both sexes agreed that quid pro
>
> quo behaviours and the more intrusive forms of sexual
>
> approach are harassing, the gender of the participants became
>
> salient when the incident being judged was less explicit. This
>
> finding suggests that women students may feel harassed by
>
> behaviours that men consider innocuous or trivial (e.g., gender
>
> harassment) or acceptable forms of sexual approach (e.g.,

seductive behaviour) (p. 292).

The findings of Fitzgerald and Ormerod (1991) were slightly different from those of Gutek and O'Connor (1995). Although Fitzgerald and Ormerod and Gutek and O'Connor agree on what behaviours cause a perpetual gap based on gender in determining sexual harassment, Fitzgerald and Ormerod argue that this perpetual gap is more salient than the findings of Gutek and O'Connor.

Fitzgerald and Hesson-McInnis (1989) conducted a factor analysis on Till's five categories of sexual harassment and found that the five categories collapsed into three: *gender harassment* (Till's initial conception of gender harassment), *sexual coercion* (Till's conceptions of sexual bribery and sexual coercion), and *sexual harassment* also known as *unwanted sexual attention* (Till's conceptions of seductive behaviour and sexual imposition).

Stockdale and Vaux (1993) report that there has also been much research done on what constitutes severity when it comes to sexual harassment. For example, for many, gender harassment (e.g., sexist remarks) is not considered to be as severe a form of sexual harassment as is an unwanted and continual proposition for a date. Sexual harassment is often deemed more serious when it is on-going or if the harasser is known to have harassed others.

Research has emerged that questions how sexual harassment should be measured. That is, should it be measured in terms of the severity of the behaviour, the frequency of the behaviour, or by a combination of the two? As Stockdale (1998) argues:

> Which is more serious—a single request for a sexual

favour in exchange for a job-related benefit or multiple

exposures to sexist comments and jokes? More generally,

should the seriousness of sexual harassment be measured

by the *type* of act committed or the *frequency* of any form

of unwanted sexual attention? Consensus is beginning to

emerge that both metrics (severity of any given act or

pervasiveness of all acts) help define the seriousness of

sexual harassment (p. 522-523).

Measuring sexual harassment both in terms of severity and frequency of

the behaviour committed is crucial in understanding the complexity of the

phenomena. Because sexual harassment is so varied in terms of the behaviours

committed, from sexist comments to a quid pro quo act, it is important to not only

provide a clear definition of sexual harassment to be measured, but also to

determine levels of frequency and severity to truly capture the complexity of the

phenomenon.

The Nature of Sexual Harassment

The nature or types of sexual harassment experienced by students in

school has been well documented. In a study, Wolfe and Chiodo (2008) observed

that the forms of sexual harassment against students may take different forms. In

their study, they found that girls were much more likely to report being victims of

unwanted sexual attention than boys on almost all their questions. Their study

found that the most common form of harassment reported by girls in school was

verbal harassment, reported by 46% of their respondents. Specifically, these

students, mostly girls reported that "someone made sexual comments, jokes, gestures or looks at me". Their study also found that 33% of the respondents reported that they experience physical harassment in their school. The physical sexual harassment was in the form of "someone touched, grabbed or pinched me in a sexual way" or "someone brushed up against me in a sexual way".

In another study among adolescent school girls in South India, Leach and Sitaram (2007) found that verbal forms of sexual harassment were the most unpleasant experience that girls experience in their schools. The school girls reported that boys "teased girls, write love letters and notes which they passed on to girls, buy bangles for them and write the names of the girls who they "fancy" on their hands or on the school walls" (p. 265). Additionally, Leach and Sitaram found that the perpetrators of these verbal sexual harassment use strategies such as comparing a girl with a film star, sing film songs and so on, suggesting a romantic liaison. Leach and Sitaram observe that "this spreading of rumours was particularly alarming to girls" (p.266).

Similarly, Witkowsko and Menckel (2007) found that with regard to sexual harassment, the kinds of offending verbal behaviours could be divided into two categories in accordance with their findings, namely implicit and explicit sexual references. They found that the most common sexual harassment behaviour against students were implicit in nature. These included demeaning comments about gender and sexuality, sexualized conversation, attractiveness rating and sexual comments. Witkowsko and Menckel (2007) found that over 50% of their respondents were exposed to this harassment repeatedly (daily, weekly or monthly). They observed that less common behaviours were those with

an explicit sexual reference, that is, name-calling, pressuring for sexual favour and sexual rumours, which were reported by less that 40% of the respondents. Witkowsko and Menckel also found that non-verbal displays of sexual harassment were less common with a mean frequency of 26%, which is lower than verbal behaviours. Some of the unwanted sexual behaviours, that Witkowsko and Menckel categorised under the non-verbal harassment include sexualised contact seeking, sexual look, brushing up or rubbing against a girl, students pulling at other students' clothing in a sexual way and students showing, giving or leaving to other students sexual offensive pictures, photos or messages.

As noted earlier, sexual harassment in schools take various forms, but the literature shows that the most common form is the verbal form of sexual harassment. However, the other forms of sexual harassment that is physical, non-verbal and sexual favouritism are also present in the school system.

Prevalence of Sexual Harassment

The incidence of sexual harassment has been studied in most countries and the report shows that the situation is a real problem in schools (Fineran, Bennet & Sacco, 2003). According to the American Association of University Women (AAUW), girls experience more forms and higher frequency than boys. In their 2002 survey on 2064 students in 8th through 11th grade, the AAUW reports that 83% of girls had been sexually harassment, while 78% of boys had been sexually harassed in school. The report also presents this information about the problem in American school; 38% of the students were harassed by teachers or school

employees, 36% of school employees or teachers were harassed by students, and 42% of school employees or teachers had been harassed by each other.

In their later report (AAUW, 2006) on sexual harassment at colleges and universities, the AAUW claim that while both men and women were targets of sexual harassment, "women are disproportionately negatively affected". For instance, the study found that 62% of female college students and 61% of male college students reported having been sexually harassed at their universities. These reports strengthens an earlier work by a province wide study by the Ontario Secondary School Teachers Federation (1995), in which over 80% of female students and 64% of male students reported that they had been sexually harassed in the school setting.

Teachers and other school staff have also been found to perpetrate the behaviour of sexual harassment against female students, in particular. In a study of secondary schools in the Netherlands, 27% of students reported having been sexually harassed by school personnel. Timmerman (2002) also found that sexual harassment by school personnel appeared to be more disturbing and caused more psychosomatic health problems than peer harassment. Kelly and Parsons (2000) found that 39% of female students experience sexual harassment on university campuses. They also observe that the perpetrators in school differ markedly in the case of undergraduates where fellow students are the main culprits, where for the graduate students, male faculty members are the main offenders.

Gouws and Kritzinger (1995) conducted study among students at the University of Stellenbosch and found that a higher percentage of women than men experienced sexist comments, grading on basis of appearance, repeated

unwelcome invitations, and unwanted touching and fondling. Braine, Bless and Fox (1995) and Mayekiso and Bhana (1997) found similar results in convenience samples conducted at two high schools in India. Gouws and Kritzinger (1995) found that female students who had been sexually assaulted experienced shame and stigmatisation in reporting their abuse. These two studies examined sexual harassment from peers and found that both male and female students identified sexual harassment on campus from peers as problematic.

When examining sexual harassment from school personnel, Mayekiso and Bhana (1997) found that 35% of students identified academic staff as perpetrators of sexual harassment, and 28% of students identified administrative staff as harassers. Eight percent of students surveyed by Braine et al., (1995) perceived academic staff to be responsible for sexual harassment and Gouws and Kritzinger (1995) found that 2.8 percent of male students and 7 percent of female students were asked favour in exchange for more favourable grades.

Reporting on the incidence of sexual harassment of students by school teachers, the AAUW 2002 survey reported that of the students who had been harassed, 38% were harassed by teachers or school employees. One survey conducted with psychology students reports that 10% had sexual interactions with their educators, in turn 13% of educators reported sexual interaction with their students (Gallop, 1997). In a national survey conducted for the AAUW Foundation in 2000, it was found that about 290,000 students experienced some sort of physical sexual abuse by public school employee between 1991and 2000. Following these findings, a major study was commissioned by the U. S. Department of Education in 2004, on the incidence of sexual harassment of

students by school employees. The study found that nearly 10 percent of U.S public school students reported having been targeted with sexual attention by school employees.

In a study conducted in some selected Ghanaian schools, Leach, Fiscian and Casely Hayford (2003) found that abusive behaviours by male pupils, teachers and sugar daddies did exist in the Ghanaian school context. They also found that the greatest threat of girls came from older boys in the school. However, male teachers were also guilty of sexual misconduct with female students. Leach and her colleagues also found that ten out of 16 girls interviewed stated that they knew of a teacher having had sex with a girl in the same school and that they themselves had been propositioned for sex by a teacher. Five of them said that a teacher was having sexual relations with a girl in their class. Some of the girls also reported that they knew of a girl who had been made pregnant by a teacher in the school (12.5%) but that many more knew of a girl who had got pregnant by a boy in the school (62.5%), or by a man or a boy outside the school (37.5%).

In another study, by Women's Initiative for Self Empowerment (WISE) (2008), it was found that 75% of Ghanaian school girls suffered several harassment from male classmates, and 27% endured pressure from teachers for sex.

From the literature, the incidence of sexual harassment as a problem in schools, particularly among Senior High School students is high. However, there has not been much studies done in this area among Ghanaian Senior High Schools female students. This study therefore seeks to examine the subject of sexual

harassment in the Ghanaian context, with particular reference to its occurrence in the Kumasi metropolis of the Ashanti Region. The study would provide a good understanding of this issue within the Ghanaian context and also attempt to close the knowledge gap that exist about sexual harassment within the Ghanaian context.

How Students React to Sexual Harassment

Although recognised as a school malady, and despite its negative physical and psychological effects on victims, sexual harassment incidence is seldom reported by its victims (Ladabo, 2003). Studies show that most victims exhibit avoidance behaviour, for example, staying away from the aggressor or the environment that promote such behaviours; while others 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 file a formal compliant against the offender (Kelly & Parsons, 2000; Scheneider et al. 1997; Riger, 1991 & Schneider, 1987).

Leach and Sitaram (2007) also observe that teachers of South India schools consider much of the sexual harassment behaviours they observe against their female students as harmless teasing, "part of growing up", and nothing to agitate about; hence female students who fall victim to these are deterred from reporting the incident. Leach and Sitaram found that girls did sometimes report boys for ragging, usually to a female teacher, but such boys are only reprimanded, and/or the headmaster will be informed. Again it was found that because the parents of the victim withdraw their female child from the school for sexual

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harassment, most female victims do not inform their parents of the incidence of sexual harassment against them. Teachers, however, did alert parents as the last resort.

Literature shows that most victims of sexual harassment fear to make reports to school authorities because of the possible repercussions. Wolf (2008) opines:

> I am ashamed of what I tell them: that they should indeed not worry about making an accusation because what they fear is likely to come true. Not one of the women I have heard from had an outcome that was not worst for her than silence. One, I recall, was drummed out of the school by peer pressure. Many faced bureaucratic stonewalling. Some women said they lost their academic status as golden girls overnight; grants dried up, letters of recommendation were no longer forthcoming. No one was met with a coherent process that was not weighted against them. Usually, the key decision-maker in the college or university – especially if it is a private university – joined forces to, in effect, collude with the faculty member accused; to protect not him necessarily but the reputation of the university, and to keep information from surfacing in a way that could protect other women. The goal seemed to be not to provide a balance forum, but damage control (p. 7).

Location on School Compound Where Sexual Harassment Occurs

In the AAUW (2001) study on sexual harassment in US schools, they found that about 61% of the students study reported that they have experienced sexual harassment "in the hall" (that is on the school corridors), while another 55% indicated the they were sexual harassed "in the classroom". In another study, Stratton and Backes (1997) also found that "the hall way" and "classroom" were the most reported location of where sexual harassment against female students occurs the most. They found that 56.6% of female students reported experiencing sexual harassment in "the hallway" whiles "the classroom" was cited by 44.6% of the female students.

Making a contribution to the discussion on the location where sexual harassment mostly occurs in the school environment, Nulsen (2001) observes that about 60% of sexual harassment against female students occur at locations outside the school environment, such as during school sponsored field trips or sporting activities.

Effects of Sexual Harassment in Schools

According to Fineran and Bennett (1998), peer sexual harassment can cause performance difficulty including absenteeism, decreased quality of schoolwork, skipping or dropping courses, lower grades, loss of friends, tardiness and truancy in its victims. In a related study, Plan Ghana (2009) also found similar effects of sexual harassment against female students. They report that victims of sexual abuse experience distorted attention in class, loss interest in

schooling, become afraid of their perpetrators, feel stigmatised, withdraw from their peers and other school activities, such as games and sports.

Roscoe, Strouse, and Goodwin (1994) found that female victims of peer sexual harassment experience more detriment to their learning as a result of such experiences than do males. They also found that although many adolescents acknowledge that behaviours constituting sexual harassment are indeed wrong, most do nothing to stop them. Roscoe et al. also provided insight into why peers engage in sexual harassment:

> peer pressure; it is fun; to get the victim's attention; everyone does it; have seen others do it; do not recognise the behaviour as unwelcome and/or illegal; do not know other ways to show people of the opposite sex that they are interested in them; the entire area of sexuality is new and unfamiliar to them (p. 520).

Kopels and Dupper (1999) suggest that girls suffer a variety of long-term effects as a result of peer sexual harassment; these effects for female adolescents can adversely affect their learning. Sexual harassment can cause embarrassment and self consciousness, which not surprisingly can foster feelings of insecurity or loss of confidence. In addition to these feelings females have reported that they did not want to go to school, talk in class, or that they found it hard to pay attention, as a result of experiencing sexual harassment.

Furthermore, research indicates that many young women have dropped courses, received lower grades, have a decreased desire to socialise, and may leave school altogether (AAUW, 2001/1993; Fineran & Bennett, 1998; Shoop &

Hayhow, 1994; Stein, 1995). Such consequences of sexual harassment in the schools may serve to further strengthen female financial dependence upon men and serve to perpetuate traditional notions of gender.

Cleveland and Kerst (1993) argue that ignoring sexual harassment, with the hope that it will stop, may serve only to exacerbate the problem. As Cleveland and Kerst state, "two of the most common reactions that women have to sexual harassment are denial and to ignore the incident. . . . Ignoring sexual harassment, especially more subtle forms, may lead to continued harassment in the same or greater intensity" (p. 59). Some girls may be reluctant to come forward to report incidents of sexual harassment because such occurrences are downplayed in the school culture. As Shoop and Hayhow (1994) state, "what a man might consider innocuous, a woman might consider blatantly offensive" (p. 16). Simply because the feelings of females may not be validated by the male segment of the student population or the school culture in general does not signify that something inappropriate did not occur. As Hand and Sanchez (2000) state:

> Girls are far more likely to perceive harassment as more
> harmful than boys and to experience a far greater frequency
> and severity of harassment. . . . girls are more likely to be
> targets of physical sexual harassment than boys and that
> physical harassment rather than derogatory or verbal and/or
> visual forms of harassment exacerbate the gender gap in
> educational outcomes (p. 718).

This is why staff training on what behaviours constitute sexual harassment and the effects sexual harassment has on students is crucial. Jordan, Price, and Telljohann (1998) reported interesting findings regarding locus of control and peer sexual harassment in junior high school. They found that 67% of respondents believed they possessed the power to stop sexual harassment directed at them; 78% felt that if they took the correct actions, they could prevent their own victimisation; and 67% believed they would know how to handle the problem if they were to experience sexual harassment. Jordan et al. also found that while the majority of respondents felt they had the power to stop sexual harassment, 12-15% did not feel they possessed the power to stop sexual harassment.

The effects of peer sexual harassment on females are alarming. Martin (2005) found some of the effects as increase in absences and a decrease in the quality of schoolwork, dropping courses, truancy and a general decline in female victim's learning. He further suggested that victims failing to report incidents of sexual harassment may serve only to exacerbate the problem. Thus, in order to combat the problem of sexual harassment, it seems that schools may have to educate students on sexual harassment and the behaviours that constitute it. They may have to also publicise reporting procedures and make them accessible so that students do not feel intimidated to use them. Schools may have to also do in-service training of staff to be aware of behaviours that constitute sexual harassment and to intervene when they witness such behaviours. This will alleviate some of the burden from the victims.

Interesting findings dealing with locus of control and sexual harassment also provide some hope in dealing with sexual harassment. If females are

provided opportunities to increase their internal loci, that is, if a sense of empowerment is instilled within them, perhaps the effects of peer sexual harassment on them would be less damaging. As Schwartz (2000) argues, "because empowerment is one of the best ways to prevent harassment, schools need to build students' self-esteem. Girls can be taught 'assertiveness skills' to enable them to express their feelings clearly and help them stop harassment should it occur" (p. 3). Perhaps then students, particularly girls, would feel as if they could do something about the sexual harassment they experience.

Summary of Literature Review

In this chapter, a discussion on the relevant literature on the issue of sexual harassment has been made. The discussion started with the conceptual issues of sexual harassment and explored the dynamics of the concept. For purposes of this work, however, a working definition of sexual harassment was provided in order to set the scope within which the study will be looked at. Among other important issues, a good discussion of theories and models of sexual harassment were done as well as how these theories apply to the concept of sexual harassment in schools. The chapter also explored some empirical studies on the theme.

The literature reviewed revealed that sexual harassment as a major psychosocial issue in our educational institutions across the world, has been well studied and documented in the developed countries. However, very little research has been done in the African context (schools), particularly in Ghana. This study therefore aims at, among others, providing empirical answers to questions about

sexual harassment within the Ghanaian Senior High School context, and also adds

to the pool of literature on the subject from the Ghanaian perspective.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

In this chapter, the research methodology that was used for the study is examined. This includes research design the population, the sample as well as sampling procedure for the study. In addition, the research instrument that was used, data collection procedure and the procedures for the data analysis are also described.

The Research Design

The descriptive survey research design was used for the study. According to Fraenkel and Wallen (2000), descriptive survey "involves asking the same set of questions (often prepared in the form of a written questionnaire or an ability test) to a large number of individuals either by mail, by telephone or in person" (p. 11). Fraenkel and Wallen observe that when answers to a set of questions are elicited in person the research is called interview. Cohen and Manion (1991), in their view, also explain that descriptive survey gathers data at a particular point in time with the intention of describing the nature of existing conditions or identifying standard against which existing conditions can be compared or to determine the relations that exist between specific events. They identified the data collecting procedure to include structure and semi-structured interviews, self-completed or postal questionnaire and the use of telephone.

The descriptive survey was chosen because it has the advantage of providing the researcher with a lot of information from quite a large number of individuals (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2000). It also provides the researcher a meaningful picture of events and seeks to explain people's opinion and behaviour on the basis of data gathered. The descriptive survey could also be used with a greater confidence with regard to particular questions of special interest or value to the researcher.

On the contrary, the use of the descriptive survey has a number of disadvantages. Fraenkel and Wallen (2000) identify what they called "the threefold difficulty" in the use of the descriptive survey. First of all, the researcher has to ensure that the questions to be answered are clear and not misleading. Secondly, he/she is faced with the challenge of getting the respondents to answer the questions thoughtfully and honestly; and then finally, he/she is also faced with the challenge of getting a sufficient number of the questionnaire completed and returned so that meaningful analyses can be made.

In addressing these problems, items on the questionnaire that were found to be ambiguous due to poor wording or language structure were redesigned. Secondly, the researcher adequately explained to the respondents the purpose of the study, (solely for academic purpose), hence the responses they would provide will not be used to victimize them. Again, to assure them of their confidentiality, respondents were not required to write their names or school's names in the questionnaire. Finally, the researcher administered the questionnaire in person to all the selected schools, and then collected all the responses from the respondents

as soon as they finished responding to the items. With these measures, it is expected that the disadvantages have been minimised.

Population

Population is the target group for a study. It involves all the individuals (or objects) with certain specified characteristics (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2000). They further noted that it is for the population that the researcher will generalise his/her results. In the view of Rubin and Babbie (1989), the population for a study is the theoretically specified aggregation of study elements. They identified the "study elements" as the unit of individuals or objects about which information is collected and that provides the basis of analysis.

In this study, the target population was made up of all female Senior High School students in the Kumasi metropolis, while the accessible population was all female students in the 18 public Senior High Schools in the Kumasi metropolis. The total of the female students in all the 18 public Senior High Schools as at the 2008/2009 academic year was 10,829 (Students Enrolment and Teacher Population in Second Cycle Schools, 2008/2009).

Sample and Sampling Procedure

A sample refers to any group on which information is obtained. The procedure of zeroing in on this group from which the data will be collected for the study is referred to as the sampling procedure (Amedahe, 2002). The sample unit for the study was students in the senior high schools selected in the Kumasi metropolis.

Multi-stage sampling was used in selecting the participants for the study. For the first stage, stratified sampling procedure was used to select schools that are co-educational within the Kumasi metropolis. According to Amedahe (2002), in stratified random sampling, the researcher identifies the population of the study based on the variables of interest and control variables. The present researcher selected co-educational schools for the study because of her interest in the presence of boys and girls in the same school, since the literature indicates that boys are more likely to harass girls in schools.

Secondly, having selected the co-educational senior high schools in the Kumasi metropolis, the simple random sampling procedure using the lottery method, was used to select six co-educational institutions to be used for the study.

Thirdly, since the participants for the study are a homogenous group (all the female students are adolescents), selecting a fixed number of them from across the various academic programmes in each school would not put any of the sub-groups (by academic programme) of the participants in the schools at a disadvantage. Again, this will not affect the generalisability of the findings for the entire population. In view of this, a quota sampling was used to select a quota of 90 participants (female students) from each of the six co-educational institutions selected.

Finally, in selecting the 90 participants from each school, the simple random sampling procedure, using the lottery method was used to select 30 female students from each level (Forms 1, 2 and 3) in each school for the study. Hence there were a total of 540 participants selected for the study.

The list of senior high schools are as follows:

1. Kumasi Senior High Technical School

2. Kumasi Anglican Senior High School

3. Armed Forces Senior High School

4. Ashanteman Senior High School

5. Osei Kyeretwie Senior High School

6. T. I. Ahmadiyya Senior High School

Research Instrument

The research instrument used for the study was the questionnaire. The questionnaire was made up of four sections, Sections A to D. Some of the sections of the questionnaire were adopted and adapted, while other parts or sections were self-designed. The aspect of Section B that assesses the nature or type of sexual-related behaviours that female students experience in school was adapted from the questionnaire of Fjortoft et al. (1996) and Witkowska & Menckel (2005). In all, there are 17 types of sexually related behaviours that students are to choose from as forms of harassment that they encounter from their perpetrators. The 17 types of sexual-related behaviour can be categorised under verbal, non-verbal and physical forms of sexual harassment. Questions 2 and 5 of Section B of the questionnaire, which assesses students' reaction to sexual harassment, were also adapted from the questionnaire of Fjortoft et al. (1996). The questions were adapted to suit the Ghanaian context.

The rest of the sections of the questionnaire were self-designed to collect data from the respondents to answer the research questions. The questionnaire are in two main forms; open-ended and close-ended. With the exception of items 10

to 12 of Section D, which are open-ended, all the items in the Sections are close-ended questions. The open-ended items are meant to provide the respondents with the opportunity to provide their own responses to the items.

Validity of the Instrument

The questionnaire was given to the researcher's supervisors to study and make recommendations with regard to the face and content validity of the finally instrument. This was to afford them the opportunity to make valued inputs in establishing the validity of the instrument to be used for the data collection. The instrument was given to the supervisors because of their expert knowledge in research. Their comments and suggestions were used to improve upon the final design of the instrument.

Reliability of the Instrument

To ensure that the instrument was dependable, its reliability was assessed on the final questionnaire used for the study (after the pre testing of the instrument). The internal consistency of the instrument was therefore determined using the alpha coefficient (also known as the Cronbach alpha). The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) was used to compute the reliability of the instrument. According to Fraenkel and Wallen (2000), this coefficient is a general form of the KR20 formula that are used in calculating the reliability of items that are not scored right versus wrong as in some essay tests where more than one answer is possible. According to Dunn (2001), for an instrument to be deemed reliable, the measure must display a positive correlation (reliability coefficient)

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that reaches or have a reliability coefficient (r) of .70. The reliability coefficient for the questionnaire used for this study was +0.72.

The questionnaire was formatted to ensure that the questionnaire were spread out, that is uncluttered. No more than one question was presented on a single line because when respondents have to spend a lot of time reading a question , they quickly become discouraged from continuing.

Pre-testing of the Instrument

The instrument was pre-tested in 2 co-educational senior high schools outside the study area of the research. These schools were selected from the Nkawie District of the Ashanti Region of Ghana. These schools were Toase Senior High School and Nkawie Senior Technical School. In each school, forty (40) female students were selected from Forms 1 and 2 to respond to the questionnaire.

The purpose of the pre-test was to verify and confirm the face and content validity so as to amend any aspect of the questionnaire that might look ambiguous to the respondents. The pre-testing of the instrument revealed that there were some ambiguities in the wording of some items in some sections of the questionnaire. Again, some of the options given were not clear. In effect, the pre-testing of the instrument helped to make the questionnaire relevant and valid for assessing the phenomenon under study.

Data Collection

The questionnaire was administered in the selected schools and on the selected students personally with the assistance of some of the school teachers

after the requisite authorisation from the school head had been obtained. This was done for both the pre-test and the main data collection. The assistance given by the teachers helped to maintain discipline, orderliness and cooperation of the respondents.

The sampling procedure discussed earlier was rigorously followed in collecting data from the selected participants. Participants were adequately briefed on the concept of sexual harassment in school, the significance of the study, the confidentiality of their responses, and how they were expected to respond to the items. In each school, the respondents were selected and put together into a classroom after which the briefing was done. After they had responded to the items, the questionnaires were collected by the researcher. At the end of the data collection exercise the researcher received 522 out of the total of 540 questionnaires administered. This represents approximately 97% return rate.

Since the researcher was familiar with the Ashanti Region and also sought permission to conduct the data collection exercise ahead of time, it took only three weeks to complete the collection of data process.

Data Analysis

At the data analysis stage, all the questionnaire copies from the respondents were edited and cleaned. This was to ensure that copies that had not been properly responded to, those that were incomplete and those that had inconsistent responses were removed from the poll of data to be analysed for the study.

After the editing and cleaning of the data, the questionnaire responses were analysed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) for Windows Version 16.0. Simple frequency and percentage distributions were used to analyse and present the data to answer each of the research questions. However, for research hypothesis 1, the independent t-test was used in the data analyses.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In the previous chapter, a detailed description of the methodology used for the study was presented. This consisted of the research design, the sampling and sampling procedure, as well as instruments used. As noted in the earlier chapters, the focus of this study was to investigate into the issue of sexual harassment against female students in Senior High School in the Kumasi Metropolis. Some of the specific issues investigated include female students' level of knowledge of sexual harassment issues, their sources of this knowledge, the common types of unwanted sex-related behaviours that they experience, and how these unwanted sexual-related behaviour affect them, as victims.

This chapter, therefore, seeks to present the data analysis results and discussion of the findings. The background of the chapter presents the information about the demographics of the sample studied. This is followed by the presentation of research results and the discussion of the answers to the various research questions raised for the study.

Background

The demographic characteristics of the sample and the results together with the discussions regarding the research questions and hypothesis are presented

in this part of the chapter. The demographic items of the sample studied formed

Section A (personal data) of the questionnaire used (See Appendix A).

Demographics of Sample Studied

Table 1 presents the distribution of the respondents by age.

Table 1

Distribution of Respondents by Age

Age	Frequency	Percent
13-16 years	206	39.5
17-18 years	265	50.8
19 years and above	51	9.8
Total	522	100.0

Table 1 shows that majority of the participants were aged between 17 and 18 years; that is, they were in the late-adolescence period. During this stage of human development, the fat tissues increases to a greater percentage in the body composition of the female (students), especially the breasts, hips, buttocks, thighs and upper hands. These rapid changes in the adolescent female students make them look sexually attractive to potential harassers, thus making them a good set of participants for the study. Those in the other age brackets (13- 16 years and above 19 years) who constitute about 49% of the sample were also good candidates for the study.

Table 2 presents the distribution of the respondents by form (class).

Table 2

Distribution of Respondents by Form

Form	Frequency	Percent
SHS 1	173	33.1
SHS 2	174	33.3
SHS 3	175	33.5
Total	522	100.0

Table 2 indicates that there was an even distribution of the participants across the various year groups in the various schools selected for the study. This situation provides the opportunity to generalise the findings of the study to the various year groups in the senior high school. Again, the fair representation of the participants across the various year groups also increases the guarantee of a balanced input from the various groups of participants in the schools.

Table 3 presents the distribution of the respondents by residential status.

Table 3

Distribution of Respondents by Residential Status

Residential Status	Frequency	Percent
Day	168	32.2
Boarding	354	67.8
Total	522	100.0

Table 3 presents information about the distribution of the participants according to their residential status. From the table, it is observed that majority of the participants (67.8%) were boarders, with the remaining being day students. Since boarders spend almost all their days in the school environment during schooling sessions (when school is in session), their responses will provides us with an idea about the current situation about sexual harassment in schools, considering the fact that they are in the school environment all day throughout the school term. Again, the inclusion of the day students as participants of the study will provide the opportunity to compare the experiences of these two groups of participants on the issue of sexual harassment in our schools.

Answers to the Research Questions

Research Question1: How much knowledge do female students in senior high school know about sexual harassment?

Items 1 and 2 of the Section B on the questionnaire were used to investigate female students' level of knowledge about sexual harassment against female students in schools. Item 1 sought to find out about female students knowledge about sexual harassment in schools, whilst Item 2 further examined how much knowledge these female students have about sexual harassment against female students.

The distribution of the responses given by the respondents on the research question is presented in Table 4 and Table 5.

Table 4

Analysis of responses on knowledge of Sexual Harassment against female students in schools

Knowledge of Sexual Harassment	Frequency	Percent
Very much (Substantial)	405	77.6
Very much (Limited)	117	22.4
Total	522	100.0

The results in Table 4 show that virtually all the respondents know about the issue of sexual harassment in schools. The data seems to suggest that almost all the students are aware of the issue of sexual harassment.

These results seems to support the findings of AAUW (2001) where they found that most students reported being aware of the issue of sexual harassment in schools, and also indicated that they were also aware of the sexual harassment policies and procedures for reporting and seeking redress in their school. In the AAUW (2001) study, they found that as part of the students' orientation, all new students were educated on the school's policies and procedures for dealing with the problem of sexual harassment in school. This means that each student gets to know about sexual harassment, even if he/she did not have any prior knowledge about that. Among the respondents studied, it was likely that even if the school authorities do not educate fresh student on the issues of sexual harassment during their first year orientation programme, it is, however possible that the students may have heard or learnt about the issue from their colleagues on campus or in

their previous schools. Students reporting that they have some knowledge about the issue of sexual harassment against female students are desirable in that it assures educational authorities and parents that our female students are not totally ignorant of the issues of sexual harassment and its consequences.

Table 5 presents the distribution of responses on how much knowledge these female students have about sexual harassment against female students. This follow up question is important because although the respondents may report knowing about the problem, they may in actual fact have only a little information or knowledge about the issue.

Table 5

Analysis of responses on how much knowledge female students have about Sexual Harassment

How much knowledge	Frequency	Percent
I know just a little	221	42.3
I have a good knowledge about it	301	57.7
Total	522	100.0

To further investigate into the respondents' level of knowledge about sexual harassment, Item 2 sought to examine how much knowledge do the female student have about the problem being studied. The data on Table 5 show that majority of the sample studied (57.7%) were conversant with what the phenomenon actually mean. A good number of the respondents (42.3%) know from just a little. This is quite serious since it could suggest that a good number of

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female students have been sexually harassed but are not aware of it. These findings are consistent to that of AAUW (2001) findings. AAUW found in their study that female students in the US are aware (knowledgeable) of the issues of sexual harassment against (female) students in school. This is because the US federal laws (Title IX of the 1964 Civil Right Law) hold school authorities partly liable for sexual harassment against students that occur in the school environment or while students are engage in school activities (Martin, 2005). In view of this, public schools in the US ensure that students are adequately informed about the issues and policies concerning sexual harassment in school during their orientation programme, particularly for fresh students. The situation is not different in Ghana, and this may account for the reason why most of the sample studied seems to be knowledgeable about the issues of sexual harassment against female students.

Research question 1 sought to find out how much knowledge female students know about the issue of sexual harassment against female students. In answering this question, the data in Tables 4 and 5 and the foregoing discussion suggest that although majority of the sample studied reported that they know about the issue of sexual harassment against female students, further questioning reveal that only a few of the respondents are aware of all that constitute the issue. This suggests that just a few of the female students are not knowledgeable about the issue and may have been harassed without knowing. Again, since a good number of female students in the Senior High Schools do not have the in-depth knowledge about sexual harassment, they may not be equipped and empowered to

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handle and deal with these issue, when harassers in the school environment want to harass them sexually.

Research Question 2: Where do female students get their information or knowledge about Sexual Harassment from?

Research Question 2 examined the source of knowledge of sexual harassment in schools. Item 3 of Section B on the questionnaire was used to address Research Question 2. The distribution of the responses provided by respondents to this item is found in Table 6

Table 6

Analysis of responses on sources of knowledge

Source of knowledge	Frequency	Percent
The media	117	33.9
Friends	160	30.7
Parents	84	16.1
School	101	19.3
Total	522	100.0

From Table 6, it is observed that 33.9% of the respondents indicated that the "media" was their source of knowledge concerning sexual harassment against female; 30.7% of the respondents indicate that "friends" was the source of knowing about sexual harassment, while 19.3% of the respondents reported that "the school" was their source of knowledge about sexual harassment again female students in school. These findings support similar findings by Mwambete and

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Mtaturu (2006). In their study on knowledge of sexually transmitted diseases among secondary school students in Tanzania, they found that about 78% reported of hearing information about STDs through the radio or TV, except that the information was not detailed enough because of cultural and religious reasons.

As indicated by the respondents, majority of female students got to know about sexual harassment against female students through the media, which consist of the Radio and TV. As at October 2009, there were 20 Radio stations in the Kumasi metropolis alone, and five free to air TV stations as well. Since it is less expensive to own a Radio set and also considering the fact that most Radio stations air very interesting and youth-centered programmes, most (female) students listen to the Radio on daily bases. Of late, most mobile phone handset come with an in-built Radio device, making it possible for users (including students) to listen to Radio on-the-go. In view of this, and also in view of the fact that most of these Radio stations air educative programme, students who listen frequently will be informed on the issues of sexual harassment both at the school and in the larger society. The TV stations also host educative programme including social issues, such as sexual harassment against students, drug abuse, and teenage pregnancy among others. It is for these reasons that majority of the respondents identified the media as their major source of information about sexual harassment.

Again, from Table 6, the finding that 30.7% of the respondents reported that they learnt about sexual harassment from their friends is supported by the findings of Yaacob (2003) and Youniss (1980). Yaacob (2003) observes that adolescents perceive their friends as being more supportive than acquaintances,

and also help them in the acquisition of knowledge and skills (Youniss, 1980). Indeed, this shows that friendship has a greater influence on growing individuals, particularly adolescents. Laursen (1993) also reports that the friendship relationship that adolescents keep in school helps them develop their self-esteem and also build a sense of belongingness.

Because some participants studied are attached to their friends (a very typical feature in adolescence), and also learn a lot of things from among themselves, that may explain why most of the respondents indicated that they learnt about sexual harassment from their friends. Secondly, since parent feel reluctant to fully take responisiblity of teaching their growing children issues about their sexual development, including sexual harassment, their wards therefore learn these things from their friends. Parents do not take up these responsibilities for various reasons, including cultural reasons. This is seen from Table 6, where the respondents reported that parents are the least source of knowledge about sexual harassment.

The school was also rated as the third source of getting information about sexual harassment. Although the school seems to be doing its best by integrating into its curriculum issues about sexuality and personality development, including sexual harassment, it seems not to be doing much in this direction. The likely reason for this situation could be that there is not enough time allocated to the teaching of these issues, (sexuality and human development), or teachers assume that students also know enough so do not put in enough effort in educating the students on their sexuality and the challenges of adolescences.

Although it is commendable that the media and friends have taken the lead in educating adolescent students about issues of sexual harassment in schools, one cannot evaluate the quality of information being provided and the likely misinformation that is being given to the adolescent (female) students. Since the school is therefore mandated to give total education to the child, it should be seen as taking the lead in educating adolescent about sexual harassment in schools in particular, and their sexuality and human development in general, and the challenges that come along with this.

In answering Research Question 2, the data from the respondents indicate that the media and friends are the main sources of knowledge for the female students on the issue of sexual harassment. Since the media is a commercial entity, it usually devotes a limited air time to the discussion of most social and educative issues. This means that although the media may devote some airtime for programme on educative issues such as sexual harassment in school, discussion about these issues on air will not be exhaustive. This may explain why majority of the respondents indicated that they "know just a little" about the issue of sexual harassment. Again, their friends might not also know all about the issues of sexual harassment, hence cannot give them much information. The school and parents, who are supposed to be knowledgeable and responsible and can therefore be an effective sources of educating female students about the issue have not lived up to expectation.

Research Question 3: What are the common types of unwanted/unwelcome sex-related behaviours that students experience in school?

Research Question 3 sought to find out the common type of unwanted/unwelcomed sex-related behaviours that female students experience in school. Item 4 of Section B on the questionnaire, which consists of a total of 16 common types of unwanted/unwelcomed sex-related behaviours was used to investigate this issue. In all, 3267 valid entries were made by the respondents. The overall distribution of the students' responses to the items related to Research Question 3 is presented in Table 7. The analysis of the responses given by the respondents on the type of sexual harassment experienced by female students is presented in Table 7.

Table 7

Analysis of responses on types of Sexual Harassment against female students

Type of Sexual Harassment	Frequency	Percent	Rank
(a) Someone made sexual remarks or sexually offensive comment about you	209	40.0	7th
(b) Someone looked sexually at you that made you feel uncomfortable 2nd	354	67.0	2nd
(c) Someone has been spreading sexual rumours about you 10th	175	33.5	10th
(d) Someone touched or grabbed you which was sexually offensive to you 9th	184	35.2	9th
(e) Someone put pressure on you to go out with him 4th	305	58.4	4th
(f) Someone made sexually offensive gestures towards to you 5th	253	48.5	5th
(g) Someone has been asking you for a sexual relationship 3rd	326	62.5	3rd
(h) Someone has been displaying offensive pornographic (sexual) materials	119	22.8	12th
or pictures to you 119 22.8 12th			
(i) Someone has been giving you inappropriate gifts eg., giving female underwear as gift 16th 92 17.6	92	17.6	16th
(j) Someone has been exposing parts of his body to you 15th	95	18.2	15th
(k) Someone has made attempts to rape you 11th	121	23.2	11th

Table 7 continued

Type of Sexual Harassment	Frequency	Percent	Rank
(l) Someone engages you in sexual conversation most of the time 8th	201	38.5	8th
(m) Someone has been calling you names, eg., alomo, prostitute 13th	109	20.9	13th
(n) Someone attempted or forced to kiss you 6th	252	48.3	6th
(o) Someone has been rating or commenting on your attractiveness or appearance in public	363	69.5	1st
(p) Someone has been writing sexual messages about you at bathroom, in the Classrooms or on the school walls 13th	109	20.9	13th

From Table 7, it can be observed that the most common three types of unwanted/unwelcomed behaviours reported by the students are "rating or commenting on one's attractiveness or appearance in public" reported by 69.5% of the respondents, "someone looked sexually at you that made you feel uncomfortable", reported by 67.0% of the respondents, and then "someone has been asking you for a sexual relationship" reported by 62.5% of the respondents. The results show that the perpetrators of sexual harassment against female students in school most often harass their victims by commenting on their attractiveness in public and the perpetrators use this type of harassment more than any of the other identified types of harassment. It should be noted that the first and third highest rated types of sexual harassment behaviours reports by the respondents are verbal sexual harassment in nature, while the second highest rated type of sexual harassment against female students is non-verbal type of sexual harassment. This implies that female students most often experience verbal sexual harassment in schools than any other form of sexual harassment.

These results support the findings of Witkowsko and Menckel (2007) and Leach and Sitaram (2007). In both studies, they found that the most common form of sexual harassment exhibited against female students in schools were verbal in nature. In Leach and Sitaram's study, they found that verbal forms of sexual harassment were the most unpleasant experiences that girls experience in their schools. Witkowsko and Menckel (2007) also found that over 50% of their respondents were exposed to verbal sexual harassment (including sexualised conversation, attractiveness rating and sexual comments) on daily, weekly and monthly basis. The findings in this study also agrees with that of a study by Plan

Ghana (2009) in some selected towns in Ghana, which found that female school children in the Junior High Schools experienced verbal sexual harassment as the most frequent type of sexual abuse. In their study, 65.5% of their female respondents reported that they have been victims to "request for sexual favours" in the school environment.

There could be several reasons why perpetrators of sexual harassment against female students would mostly use verbal form of sexual harassment (such as attractiveness rating, asking for sexual favours, requesting for dating or making sexual remarks or comments). Among other reasons, these types of sexual harassment can easily go unnoticed by school authorities and not attract attention for punishment to be meted out against the perpetrator. When such behaviours are reported to school authorities (for example, teachers or headteacher), they are likely to explain the behaviour of the harasser away as being "part of school life" Leach and Sitaram (2007). Secondly, the use of verbal sexual harassment is easier to commit against a female student since the physical presence of the harasser may not be needed. For instance, a person may communicate a verbal behaviour by the use of a telephone (for example, mobile phone) to his/her victim whiles the harasser may be miles away from the victim. In recent times, with the advancement of technology and the use of mobile phones, some perpetrators of verbal sexual harassment against female students use the mobile phone, particularly if they do want to hide their deeds from the others who are physically around the victim. Using the phone also makes it easier to reach their victim at anytime and anywhere.

The data in Table 7 also show the least common four types of sexual harassment behaviours reported by the respondents. These are, "someone has been exposing parts of his/her body to you" that was reported by 18.2% of the respondents, "someone has been giving you inappropriate gift" that was reported by17.6% of the respondents, and then "someone has been calling you names, and "someone has been writing sexual messages about you at the bathroom, in the classroom and on the walls" that were each reported by 20.9% of the respondents.

The finding that "someone has been giving you inappropriate gifts" such as female underwear, as the least common sexual harassment behaviour agrees with the findings of Fjortoft, Han and Lee (1996) in their study on sexual harassment among pharmacist. They found that female pharmacists reported being given" inappropriate gifts" by either patients, supervisors, colleagues and others was the least of the sexual harassment that they (female pharmacists) experienced both at their previous and current workplace.

A plausible explanation to the fact that giving of inappropriate gifts as a type of sexual harassment against female students may be that such gestures or gifts could easily be used by the victim as evidence against the harasser should the victim decide to inform an authority (parents or teachers) about the sexual advances of the harasser. Secondly, harassers are also more likely to think that recipients of such gifts (female students) may inform their close friends about the intentions of the harasser, using such "unholy" gifts as evidence and then plausibly make mockery of the harasser before the friends. Thirdly, it is also possible that some female students may see such gifts as a "cheap way" of making some sexual advances towards students, which to them (the victims and other

female students) degrade the recipient of the gift, as if to suggest that the female students are not capable of buying such things for themselves.

In response to the Research Question 3, the data indicate that the three most frequent types of sexual harassment that female students experience in school are "the rating or commenting on your attractiveness or appearance in public", "someone looked sexually at you that made you feel uncomfortable" and "someone has been asking you for a sexual relationship". These types of sexual harassment against female students in school were reported by most of the students and they occur frequently in the schools. In terms of the category of sexual harassment experienced in the school, female students experience verbal sexual harassment above any other form of sexual harassment.

Research Question 4: What is the magnitude or extent of the problem of sexual harassment in the schools.

Research Question 4 sought to find out the magnitude of the problem of sexual harassment against female students in schools. To do this, Item 6 on Section C of the questionnaire were used. Table 8 shows the analysis of the responses given by respondents on Item 6 on the questionnaire.

Table 8

Analysis of respondents' personal experience of Sexual Harassment

Students' personal experiences of sexual harassment	Frequency	Percent
Never	43	8.2
Seldom	322	61.7
Occasionally	84	16.1
Often	36	6.9
Very often	37	7.1
Total	522	100.0

In determining the magnitude or seriousness of the incidence and occurrence of sexual harassment in schools, Stockdale (1998) argues that this should be done in terms of the frequency and the level of severity of the behaviour committed against the victim. From Table 8, the results show that almost 92% of all the respondents (sum of all percentages except that of "never") reported that they have ever experienced some form of sexual harassment within the school term that the study was conducted, with only 8.2% reporting that they have "never" experienced sexual harassment. This indicates that there is a high frequency of sexual harassment in our senior high schools against female students. These findings agree with similar findings by the AAUW (2002) to the effect that 83% of the 8th through 11th grade girls have been sexually harassed in school. The findings also support that of another study by the Ontario Secondary School Teachers Federation (1995) which showed that over 80% of female

students reported that that they have been sexually harassed in the school setting. These reports actually point to the fact that sexual harassment is a widspread problem in our school, for which reason school authorities need to take a good look at the problem and then stop its occurrence as much as possible. From the reports and findings, the problem of sexual harassment can be said to be a frequently occurrence in the school premises, with its attendant problems on the victims who experience them.

There are a number of possible reasons why female students will be sexually harassed in schools. First of all, as adolescents who have reached sexual maturity, the female students may look sexually attractive (due to their rapidly changing and maturing body and shape) to persons who harass them in the school environment. Such persons, most of the time male students and male teachers (AAUW, 2006; Plan Ghana, 2009), may take advantage of their position as teachers (academic authorities) or male classmates who help the female students with academic work to sexually harass them. This reason is supported by Payne (1991) model of teacher-to-student and student-to-student sexual harassment, which is based on the social judgment-involvement theory. Payne model of sexual harassment is associated with the incidence of sexual harassment with power. Here, since the teacher is an authority figure in the classroom and has the legitimate power to pass or fail a student, as it were, the teacher then takes advantage of this position and power, to continuously sexually harass his victim. In these situations, most victims find themselves in a dilemma as to whether they should expose such teachers or consent to such sexual request for academic favours. Secondly, some harassers may also be attracted to female students in

school due to the indecent dress that some female students wear to school. Although all (female) students do wear the prescribed school uniform to school, some of them have shortened their dresses, exposing certain parts of their bodies, such as their breasts and thighs. The indecent exposure of some of these sensitive parts of the female students could subsequently "spin the minds" of some male students and even male teachers around. This situation, coupled with the fact that some of the male adolescent students are already struggling to cope with the sexual developmental processes that they are going through as adolescent make the female students encounter some harassment from such male classmates or school mates. Thirdly, other male students engage in sexual harassment against female students because they have been exposed to pornographic films, thus developing some lustful fantasies and pleasure, and therefore see such harassment acts as opportunities to vent their sexual desires on their female counterparts in the school. Finally, others students who do harass their female colleagues in school do so because their friends are into these "game" and because they also want to belong or to be seen as being "hard", fall to such peer pressure, and also do harass their female mates. Such male students see these behaviours as being "part of school life" without even thinking about the consequences of their actions, should they be found out.

The data in Table 8 suggests that the issue of sexual harassment against female students is a major problem that needs to be addressed. The respondents report shows that almost 9 out of every 10 female students in senior high school have experienced some from of sexual harassment in the school environment. The

situation suggests that the issue is a widespread one, and, thus, school authorities should act to put an end to the issue.

Again in assessing the magnitude of the problem of sexual harassment, Item 8 of Section C of the questionnaire was also used to evaluate how the respondents perceive the seriousness of the problem of sexual harassment in their school. Table 9 shows the responses provided by the respondents.

Table 9

Analysis of responses on how students perceive the problem of Sexual Harassment in their schools

Students' perception of sexual harassment in schools	Frequency	Percent
Not really a problem, it is part of school life	58	11.1
It's a problem, but we are coping with it	55	10.5
It's a serious problem, the authorities need to act now	409	78.4
Total	522	100.0

Table 9 shows that majority participants of the study (78.4%) perceive sexual harassment as a serious problem in their school, and that the school authorities needed to act immediately to curb the problem. It was only 11.1% of the respondents who perceived the issue of sexual harassment as a normal school life, and that it was not really a problem.

These findings are consistent with earlier findings by other researchers such as Fineran, Bennet and Sacco (2003), AAUW (2002), Timmerman (2002), Gouws and Kritzinger (1995), and Witkowsko and Menckel (2007). Witkowsko

and Menckel (2007) report that the incidence of sexual harassment against female students occurs mostly on daily basis in the schools they conducted their study. The seriousness of this malady in the US school was also brought to light through the AAUW (2002) study that reported that 83% of the female students reported having fallen victim to sexual harassment in school. In Canada, as many as 80% of female students reported being sexually harassed in their school, while the Women Initiative for Self Empowerment (Ghana) (2008)'s study report that 75% of Ghanaian school girls suffer several forms of sexual harassment from male classmates and male teachers.

The results in Table 9 further indicate that female students in school might be feeling traumatised and unsafe in their school setting, since they go through these experiences of sexual harassment almost on daily and weekly basis, and also because they always come into contact with their harassers. This certainly could affect their ability to concentrate in class, and learn, and also engage themselves fully in school activities as expected. As Wallach (1994) observes, learners who continuously expend their energies to defend themselves against real or imagined danger have difficulty in learning.

In response to Research Question 4, the data show that female students reported a high incidence of the issue of sexual harassment against female students in their schools. They also indicated that they perceive the problem of sexual harassment as a serious problem in their schools. This therefore makes the school environment not female friendly since they (the female students) are most often victims of sexual harassment in the school.

Research Question 5: How do the female students react or respond to the incidence of sexual harassment against them in school?

Research question 5 sought to find out how female student react to or respond to the incidence of sexual harassment against them in school. To do this, Item 5 of Section B of the questionnaire was used. The Items were analyse independently. Table 10 shows the analysis of responses given by the respondents to Item 5.

Table 10

Analysis of students' responses on how they respond to Sexual Harassment

Students response to sexual harassment	Frequency	Percent
I reported the incident to a teacher or head teacher	34	6.5
I told a close friend about it	224	42.9
I told a family member or parents about it	79	15.1
I confronted the harasser directly	108	20.7
I did not tell anyone about it	77	14.8
Total	522	100.0

From Table 10, it can be observed that the respondents indicated that 6.5% of the victims of sexual harassment reported the incidents to either a teacher or the head teacher, 42.5% of the respondents also indicated that they reported the incident so their close friend, whilst 14.8% of the respondents reported that they did not tell anyone about their experience.

These findings are consistent with other studies on how female participants respond to sexual harassment. Kelly and Parson (2000) report that most victims of sexual harassment in school confide in their friends instead of telling a teacher about the incident. As shown on Table 10, most of the respondents, (42.9%) reported telling their friends about their ordeals, while only 6.5% informed their teachers. Yaacob (2003) opines that children of all grades perceive their friends as more supportive than acquaintance, and will therefore confide in them more than they do in other acquaintance, such as family members. In the school setting, female students see their female student friends, as being more understanding and empathetic than their teachers. They will therefore prefer to inform their friends about their sexual harassment experiences since they perceive their friends will understand them (and not blame them) and also help them cope with the possible effects. Again, some teachers do not take swift and decisive actions against the harasser when victims report incidence of sexual harassment against them to their teachers. Some of these teachers only explain the incidence away as been part of school life or growing up. Such victims might then decide not to inform a teacher again, should she be harassed again. It could also be the case that victims may fear reporting the incident of harassment to teacher or head teacher if the harasser is a teacher. Not knowing how the other teacher(s) or the head teacher will handle the case, the female student victim may therefore prefer to inform a close confidant (a friend) whom she can always count on her support and assistance. In a study by Leach and Sitaram (2007), they found that teachers in South India schools consider much of the sexual harassment reports by female students as harmless teasing, part of

growing up and nothing to agitate about, hence female students who fall victim to sexual harassment defer from reporting the incident to their teachers. Wolf (2008) also observes that when sexually harassed women report their experiences to heads of institutions, "… usually, the key decision maker in the college … join forces to, in effect, collude with the faculty member accused; to protect not him necessarily but the reputation of the University, and to keep information from surfacing … (p. 7).

Again, fewer victims of sexual harassment will inform a family member or their parents compared to their friends because of the higher level of attachment among adolescents during the adolescence period and the need to belong. Among others, some parents or family members turn to blame their female adolescents who fall victim to sexual harassment. These parents or family members may turn to blame the victim for being the cause of the harassment through their actions and inactions in the school.

It is worrisome to note that 14.8% respondents indicated that they do not tell or inform anyone about acts of sexual harassment against them in school. Such persons may suffer from repeated sexual harassment from their harassers hoping that one day this will stop (Cleveland & Kerst, 193).

For female students who are assertive and who know their rights as individuals, they are able to confront the harasser. The result in table 10 shows that 20.7% of the respondents indicated that they confronted their harasser directly. As noted, it is only a few of the victim who are able to boldly stand up against their harassers. These female students may have been schooled on how to defend themselves or handle sexual harassment and are therefore applying the

techniques they have been taught. They have also decided to take their destiny into their own hands to defend themselves from the inconsiderate advances of their harassers in their school, knowing the likely consequences of such sexual harassment on their personality and their schooling. Such assertive training and behaviours need to be taught to the other female students, so that they also resist their harassers to avoid multiple harassments in the school setting.

Research question 5 sought to find out how female students react or respond to the incidence of sexual harassment. The data show that most victims of sexual harassment informed their close friends about the incident, while others confront their harasser directly. It is only a few of the female students who fall victim to sexual harassment in school that inform a family member or the school head. Other students do not inform anyone about the problem. In response to the research question therefore, most female students either inform their peers (friends) about the incidence of sexual harassment or confront the harasser themselves. This suggests that they do not have confidence in the school authorities or are afraid to inform their parents about such problems as they encounter them in school. This further suggests that both parents and the school authorities may not be well informed about the incidence of the problem of sexual harassment against female students since this information is kept away from them by the victims (the female students).

Research Question 6: Which location in and around the school compound does sexual harassment occur most?

Research Question 6 sought to find out the location where sexual harassment occurs frequently. Item 9 of Section C of the questionnaire was used to answer this research question. Table 11 shows the analysis of the responses given by the respondents to Item 9 of the questionnaire.

Table 11

Analysis of responses showing the location where Sexual Harassment occurs in school

Location where sexual harassment occur	Frequency	Percent
During entertainment	240	46.0
During preps	32	6.1
During sporting activities	84	16.1
In class, when teacher is not around	29	5.6
In the dormitories	10	1.9
On the way from school to the house	35	6.7
When one is alone studying in the classroom	86	16.5
Visit to teacher's house	5	1.0
Total	522	100.0

The result shown in Table 11 indicates that 46.0% of the respondents reported that sexual harassment in school takes place during the entertainment period and/or at the location where the entertainment is being held. The other 2

locations on the school compound where sexual harassment occur most are "in the classroom when one is alone studying" reported by 16.5 of the respondents and "during sporting activities" reported by 16.1% of the respondents.

These findings are consistent with earlier findings AAUW (2001), Nulsen (2001) and Stratton and Backes (1997). Stratton and Backes reported that "the hallway" (reported by 56.6%) and "classroom" (reported by 44.6%) were the most reported location of where sexual harassment against female students occurs the most. Nulsen also identified other school sponsored programmes outside the school compound, such as sports and field trips as places where sexual harassment does occur.

A significant feature of the three locations where sexual harassment occur most in the Senior High School as identified in Table 11, is the fact that there is little or no supervision at these places. Since the activities of students are not properly monitored there, harassers find it conducive to harass their victims there. For instance, during entertainment in school, which is normally organized on Saturday evening, the entire boarding students' body are supposed to converge at the entertainment hall under the supervision of the entertainment master and the entertainment prefects and their team. Due to inadequate supervision of all the students during this period, most students stay outside the entertainment hall, or even remain in their halls or still hang around the hall in the dark and harass other female students at the blind side of the master on duty or the prefects. Some of the harassers hide themselves at certain vantage points on the school compounds and harass their targeted victims as they move to and from the entertainment hall. Most often, some activities lined up for the day's entertainment also provide the

harassers the opportunity to operate. Entertainment activities like record dance night and blind date just to mention a few provide the harassers the opportunity to harass innocent female students present at such gathering. Some adolescent male students are known to attend such programme under the influence of alcohol and other intoxicating substances which makes them to misbehave even under the broad day light. Unfortunately, such events have little supervision from school teachers.

The respondents also identified the following location in school, as the three less frequent locations where sexual harassment takes place. They are teachers' house, reported by 1.0% of the respondents, in the dormitories, reported by 1.9% of the respondents and during preps, reported by 6.1% of the respondents. Although male teachers are sometimes known to be part of the harassers in school, almost all the senior high schools in the Kumasi metropolis prohibit female students from visiting male teachers' quarters in and around the school compound. This policy is to forestall the occurrence of any act of sexual harassment by male teachers against any female students. The observation of this policy could therefore explain why "visiting a teacher's house" was reported as the least likely place or location among the eight location where sexual harassment in school against female students could take place. Again, since male students are prohibited from visiting the female students' dormitories, it stands to reason that such places cannot be a possible place for sexual harassment by harassers.

Preps periods are period where all boarders are supposed to be in their respective classrooms in the evening (after supper) to do their personal studies.

Teachers are assigned to supervise the activities of these students during the prep periods, and those who fail to turn up or are seen loitering around the compound or are found in the dormitories are punished. It is therefore a more organised learning environment where students who may wish to misbehave would have little or no room to do so. In the light of this, the Prep period would certainly not be an ideal place for harassers to carry out their undesirable activities.

From the foregoing, locations in the school environment where sexual harassments occur most are "during entertainment", "when one is alone studying in the classroom" and "during sporting activities". These suggest that the issue of sexual harassment occurs most in places on the school compound where there is no or little supervision.

Research Question 7: How are students affected by the incidence of sexual harassment against them in school?

Research Question 7 focused on how sexual harassment against female students affects them in school. To this end, Item 10 of Section D of the questionnaire was used to answer this question. The question was open-ended. Table 12 shows the summary of responses provided by the respondents.

Table 12

Summary of responses provided by respondents on how they felt after being

Sexually Harassed

Summary of responses on effects of sexual harassment	Frequency	Percent
Felt uncomfortable and ashamed	252	70.6
Caused personal harm to oneself	15	4.2
Felt embarrassed and abused	90	25.2
Total	357	100.0

Studies on the effects of sexual harassment against students show that victims at school and at the work place sometimes fail to report these incidences because of the stigmatization and guilt feeling that they experience (Stockdale & Vaux, 1993). Stockdale and Vaux opine that the "psychological cost" of identifying one's self as a victim of sexual harassment is so disturbing that victims may keep such experiences to themselves. As reported, majority felt uncomfortable and ashamed of themselves partly because they felt used, humiliated by their harassers and treated badly. Another 25.2% of the respondents stated that they fell embarrassed and abused. A disturbing phenomenon about how victims of sexual harassment feel is the fact that some individuals that they report the incidence to turn around to blame them for their ordeal, accusing them (the victims) as having called for the mistreatment by their own action or inaction.

This finding is consistent with that of Plan Ghana (2009) and Kopel and Dupper (1991). They observe that victims of sexual harassment generally feel embarrassed, stigmatised, become highly self-conscious of their environment and

sensitive to other people's comments and perception about them. Some victim become redrawn, feel insecure in the presence of others, particularly their harassers. The feeling of shame, guilt, embarrassment and abuse could explain why victims fail to report their experiences to authorities, such as parents, teachers or head teachers, but rather confide in their friends, who would not blame them but rather sympathize with them. These psychological hurts impact negatively and heavily on the psychosocial development of victims; and, in some instances, victims never recover from the mental shock and inhumane treatment they have gone through in the hands of the harassers.

In response to the Research Question 7, the data show that majority of the victims feel uncomfortable and ashamed of the sexual harassment experiences that they had gone through, while other feel embarrassed and abused. These negative emotional feelings that victims of sexual harassment go through could explain why they report the incidence to people they can trust and have confidence in, usually their friends.

Another issue that was of interest to investigate into was the issue of how sexual harassment against female students affects their academic work in school. Table 13 presents analysis of the responses to the issue.

Table 13

Summary responses of the effects of Sexual Harassment on academic work

Responses on effect of sexual harassment on academic work	Frequency	Percent
Unconcentrated mind to study	96	28.6
Becoming emotionally disturbed	93	27.7
Feeling ashamed	51	15.2
Does not affect me	96	28.6
Total	336	100.0

The data in Table 13 show that most of the respondents reported that sexual harassment experiences against them in the school affect their academic work. These findings are similar to that of Kopel and Dupper (1999) and Roscoe et al (1994). Roscoe and colleagues found that female students victim of sexual harassment experience more detriment to their learning than do male students. Kopel and Dupper on their part observed that victims of sexual harassment turn to feel embarrassed, become self-conscious, feel insecured and loss confidence. They also avoid school and classes, refuse to talk in class or participate in class activities. All these experiences turn to negatively affect the academic performance of the victim. In a similar study by Plan Ghana (2009), it was found that children who experience sexual abuse in school got their attention distracted in class, loss interest in schooling, became afraid of their perpetrators, felt shy of their perpetrators and also got stigmatised and redrawn from their friends and other school activities.

Because the harassers of these female students in school mostly turn to be their fellow male class/schoolmates and also male teachers, the victims then fell ashamed and embarrassed in the presence of such harassers. Again, some of the harassers do tell their friends (particularly the male students) how they harassed a particular female student (who might be in the same classroom). As the victim gets to know that other classmates are aware of their ordeal, they become unable to concentrate in class while teaching and learning is on-going and eventually loose interest in schooling. In the case where the harasser is a teacher, his presence in the classroom makes the victim feel resentful towards the teacher, loose her concentration, become embarrassed and feel used. These psychological battles that go on in the victims' minds negatively affect their academic work and school performance. They also cause the victims to develop hatred and dislike for other teachers and males, seeing them as all being the same and one. In some extreme cases, some victims change their schools in order to avoid their harassers and get themselves in new learning environments.

The data in Table 13, also show that some 28.6% of the sample studied reported that the experiences of sexual harassment in school does not affect them academically. Although these respondents may have experienced some form of sexual harassment in school, they may have learnt to either live with the problem because they think there is nothing they can do about the problem; or they see such experiences as been "part of school life", hence they are not so disturbed by their occurrences so long as they do not directly have impact on their studies and school life. Although victims have the liberty to keep their experiences to themselves without reporting such incidence to anyone, studies show that victims

who live in self denial or ignore the occurrence of the incident, experience continued exposure of harassment in the same or greater intensity (Cleveland & Kerst, 1993). It is therefore important that female students are encouraged to seek redress when they are sexually abused or harassed by others in the school or elsewhere.

In answering the research question on the effect of sexual harassment, the responses from the participants suggest that victims of sexual harassment feel emotionally disturbed and psychologically hurt. In examining the effects of sexual harassment on the academic performance of the victims, majority of the responses reported that these experiences cause negative effects on their school life in the areas of losing concentration to study, experiencing emotional disturbances and feeling of shame in class and/or in school. However, some of the respondents indicated that although they may become psychologically and emotionally disturbed after being sexually harassed in school, these experiences do not affect their academic work in school. This may be due to the fact that these female students perceive these experiences as part of school life, hence they cope with the aftermath of these experiences.

Research Question 8: Which category of persons in the school environment are the worst perpetrators of sexual harassment against female students?

Research Question 8 sought to find out which category of persons in the school environment are the worst perpetrators of sexual harassment against female students. To answer this question, Item 13 of the Section D of the

questionnaire was analysed. Table 14 shows the analysis of responses provided by the respondents.

Table 14

Analysis of responses on perpetrators of Sexual Harassment

Perpetrators of sexual harassment	Frequency	Percent
Male teachers	151	28.9
Female teachers	12	2.3
Male students	313	60.0
Female students	23	4.4
Male school staff/workers	16	3.1
Female school staff/workers	7	1.3
Total	522	100.0

The results as shown on Table 14 indicate that the two most common perpetrators of sexual harassment in schools are male students, identified by 60% of the respondents, and male teachers, indicated by 28.9% of the respondents. These findings are consistent with the findings of Plan Ghana (2009) which show that the two worst perpetrators of sexual abuse in school are (male) schoolmates, reported by 88.9% of their respondents and teachers, also reported by 20.5% of their respondents. In a similar study in Ghana, Leach and her colleague (2003) found that 62.5% of their respondents reported that they knew of a male school mate who had impregnated a girl in their school, while 27% of the girls in their (the participants') school were enduring pressure from male teachers for sex.

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As expected, male students and teachers are the worst perpetrators of sexual harassment against female students in school. Gutek (1995) also reported that the majority of sexual harassment reports suggest that men are the most frequent harassers against female. During adolescents the sexual development that adolescents experience makes them susceptible to trying out their sexual desires. Freud (1939) explains that at the genital stage of psychosexual development, adolescents experience an intense drive to engage in sexual activities that brings them sexual pleasure. This could explain why adolescent males, in particular would engage in certain sexual behaviours, such as sexually harassing their female colleagues in school. Secondly, some male students would be attracted to harassing female students due to peer pressure from friends to engage in such activities because they see that as part of school life, which they also need to engage in. Other male students harass female students with the explanation that they are attracted to such female students because of their suggestive dressing in school and in class, or simply because of their beauty.

As explained by Payne (1991) some male teachers also engage in sexual harassment against female students due to the power that they possess in the learning environment as instructors who can pass or fail students. These teachers solicit for sexual favours from female students in exchange of grades or academic favours in school. Some male teachers also take advantage of the unfavourable economic circumstances of some students to harass such students in school.

The data in Table 14 show that the worst perpetrators of sexual harassment against female students in the school environment are the male students and the male teachers. These two groups of persons in the school environment tend to

manipulate the female students in the school because of their personal strength and the power (authority that teachers) have over the female students as teachers. This could suggest an explanation on why sexual harassment might be widespread in co-educational senior high school than female only senior high schools.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter presents the summary, conclusions and makes recommendations to stakeholders in the education of female students in Senior High Schools.

Summary of the Study

Sexual harassment in schools was defined as any unwanted sexual advances, requests for sexual favours and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when: (1) submission or such conduct is made a term or condition for participating in educational programmes; or (2) submission to or rejection of such conduct is used as a basis for academic decision affecting the individual; or (3) such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with a students' academic performance, creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive learning environment. The main purpose of the study was to examine the incidence of sexual harassment among female students in Senior High Schools in the Kumasi metropolis. Eight research questions were posed and answered.

In studying this issue, a total of 540 female senior high school students were selected from the 18 public Senior High Schools in the Kumasi metropolis. In selecting the participants for the study, the stratified sampling procedure was used to select six co-educational public high schools. In each school, a quota of 90

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female students was selected using the sampling random technique. The main research instrument used for the study was a questionnaire. The data collected were analysed using simple frequency and percentage distribution to answer the research questions.

Summary of Main Findings

The research work has brought to the fore certain findings and these are as follows. Research Question 1 sought to find out how much knowledge female students have about the concept of sexual harassment. The results showed that majority of the respondents, and for that matter adolescent female students in the senior high schools in the Kumasi metropolis know only a little or nothing about some acts that constitute sexual harassment against female students. It is only a few female students who are knowledgeable about the issue. This may suggest that a lot of the female students in the high school have been sexual harassed without them knowing.

Research Question 2 investigated into the issue of how female students get information about the concept. Most respondents identified the "media" and "friends" as their main source of knowing about sexual harassment in schools. "Parents" and "the school" were the least identified source of knowing about sexual harassment

Research Question 3 had to with the common types of unwanted/ unwelcome sex-related behaviours that female students experienced in schools. Of the 17 different forms of sexual harassment behaviours identified, all were reported as exhibited by harassers against female students in the school. The most common three sexual harassment behaviours were, "someone has been rating or

commenting on your attractiveness or appearance in public", "someone looked at you that made you feel uncomfortable" and "someone has been asking you for a sexual relationship". The least common two sexual harassment behaviours reported by the participants were "someone has been exposing parts of his body to you" and "someone has been giving you inappropriate gifts e.g., giving female under wears as gift". It was also found that verbal sexual harassment, as a form of sexual harassment, was the most frequent type of sexual harassment exhibited against female students.

Research Question 4 concerned the issue of the magnitude of the problem of sexual harassment. The findings show that the incidence of sexual harassment against female students was a serious problem and also widespread with a lot of the sample studied reporting that they have being victimised by perpetrators in the school.

Research Question 5 looked at how female students react or respond to the incidence of sexual harassment against them, the findings indicated that most victims inform their "friends", while others informed their "parents and family members", than "teachers or head teachers" Some students do not inform anyone about their experiences.

With regards to the location in and around the school compound where sexual harassment against female students occurs more often, findings for Research Question 6 show that the three most common places where harassers get their victim are "during entertainment", "when one is alone studying in the classroom" and "during sporting activities".

Research Question 7 sought to find out the effects of sexual harassment on the victim. The study found that female students who fall victim to sexual harassment in school "felt uncomfortable and ashamed" and also "felt embarrassed and abused" after they have been sexually harassed by the perpetrators of sexually harassment. These experiences also affect their academic work. Among others, sexual harassment makes victims develop "unconcentrated mind to study", "becoming emotionally disturbed" and "feeling ashamed". Other respondents however reported that the experience of sexual harassment "does not affect them" in school.

Research Question 8 was concerned with identifying the worst perpetrators of sexual harassment in the schools. The study found that of the six categories of persons in the school environment, male students and male teachers were the worst perpetrators of sexual harassment against female students in school.

Conclusion

Sexual harassment has being a disturbing psychosocial issue in educational institutional worldwide, with Ghanaian schools being no exception. As found in this study, the occurrence of sexual harassment against female students in Senior High Schools in high and disturbing. Again the literature and the current studies have shown that the negative effects of sexual harassment in schools are enormous and impacts negatively on victims' academic performance and achievement, personality development and social adjustment. It is therefore imperative that school authorities and managers of the educational system take decisive steps to manage the issue of sexual harassment and its associated

challenges that it presents to both victims and the social image of our educational institutions.

Recommendations

In the light of the findings discussed above, and the conclusion drawn, the following section is devoted to a few recommendations made to address the problem of sexual harassment.

School Authorities

1. School authorities should make the issue of sexual harassment against (female) students as part of the issues discussed with new students during their orientation programme. Since all students are supposed to attend such programme, they will all be adequately informed about the issues.

2. Authorities should monitor students' activities during co-curricular activities, particularly on campus. Programmes such as entertainments should not be left in the hands of the entertainment prefects and the entertainment master or mistress only. As much as possible, a number of teachers should be assigned to supervise students' activities during such programme.

3. School authorities should create and promote a female friendly classroom environment where female students will feel confident and comfortable to report to the school authorities, teachers or school counselling coordinator, incidence of sexual harassment against them.

4. Authorities should make the school female friendly by being more responsive and proactive to the needs of the female students in the school. Finally, harassers who are reported to the authorities should be duly punished by the authorities. Sexual harassment should not be viewed as "a part of growing up".

Teachers' Union

1. Teachers' Unions such as Ghana National Association of Teachers (GNAT) and Graduate Teachers Association of Ghana (NAGRAT) should impress upon its members to live above reproach in the discharge of their profession.

2. Teachers who are found to have sexual harassed or abuse a student should be expelled from the association. The Teachers' Union should also strongly recommend to the Ghana Education Service to either demote or revoke the professional certificate of the teacher in question. For the non-professional teacher, the Union can recommend an outright dismissal of the person from the teaching profession.

Parents and Guardians

1. Parents and guardians should show much interest in their female wards education and development. Most female students fail to report the incidence of sexual harassment against them to their parents/guardian because of the perceived hostile attitude of some parents towards their wards when they report such incidence to them. Some parents blame their

female adolescents who fall victim to sexual harassment as being the cause of their victimisation.

2. Parents should be more sensitive to the plight of their female students and show concern in order for their wards to open up to them.

3. As parents win the confidence of their female students, they can also share with their wards some personal experiences of sexual harassment and how they combated such challenges in their personal life. For parents of male students, they should educate their wards on the damages and the consequences of their sexual harassment behaviours.

4. School authorities should use their periodic meeting with parents, particularly during the Parents Teachers Association (PTA) meetings to inform and educate parents on the issue of sexual harassment and the need to perform some to the parental responsibilities discussed above.

The Mass Media

1. The respondents reported that the mass media is a major source of getting information about sexual harassment against female students in school. It is therefore suggested that the media should take up the mantle to engage more in public education on such crucial social issues as school harassment, sexual abuse, aggression and violence and crime, among others. In doing this, the media house should fall on quality resource persons who are knowledgeable in the area they which to educate the public.

2. The media should devote a lot more time to this form of public education on their air wares, since this is one of their social responsibilities to the society.

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UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATIONS

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR STUDENTS

Research Topic: SEXUAL HARASSMENT AGAINST STUDENTS

IN SENIOR HIGH SCHOOLS IN THE KUMASI METROPOLIS

This is a research intended to investigate into sexual harassment and violence against students in senior high schools in the Kumasi Metropolis. The study is solely for academic purposes, and will therefore, not be used for any other purpose. Be assured that the confidentiality of the information you provide will be respected.

Instruction

Please tick [   ] inside the box provided to indicate your choice of response for any of the questions below (where applicable). You may also be requested to provide your own responses to some of the questions.

Section A   Personal Data

Age: 13 – 16years [   ]   17 – 18years [   ]   19years and above [   ]

Form: SHS 1 [   ]   SHS 2 [   ]   SHS 3 [   ]

Residential Status: Day   [   ]   Boarding [   ]

Section B

Background Variables

1. **Do you know about sexual harassment (an unwanted or unwelcomed sexual behaviour) against female students in schools?**

    (a) Yes   [   ]

    (b) No   [   ]

2   **How much do you know about this unwanted/unwelcomed sexual behaviour against female students in school?**

    (a)   I don't know anything at all   [   ]

    (b)   I know just a little   [   ]

    (c)   I have a good knowledge about it   [   ]

    (d)   I know a lot about it   [   ]

3   **What is your source of knowledge about the issue of sexual harassment?**

    (a)   The media   [   ]

    (b)   Friends   [   ]

    (c)   Parents   [   ]

    (d)   School   [   ]

4.   **Which of the following have you ever experienced in school before?**
      (Please tick as many as applies to you

(a) Someone made sexual remarks or sexually offensive comments about you []

(b) Someone looked sexually suggestive looks at you that made you felt

    uncomfortable   [   ]

(c)   Someone has been spreading sexual rumours about you   [   ]

(d)   Someone touched or grabbed you that was sexually

offensive to you   [   ]

(e)   Someone put pressure on you to go out with him   [   ]

(f)   Someone made some sexually offensive gestures towards you [   ]

(g)   Someone has been asking you for a sexual relationship   [   ]

(h)   Someone has been displaying offensive pornographic (sexual)

Materials or pictures to you   [   ]

(i)   Someone has been touching you inappropriately, eg. touching

your breast or other private body parts   [   ]

(j)   Someone has been giving you inappropriate gifts eg. giving

female under wears as gift   [   ]

(k)   Someone has been exposing parts of his body to you   [   ]

(l)   Someone has made attempts to rape you   [   ]

(m)   Someone engages you in sexual conversation most of the

time   [   ]

(n)   Someone has been calling you names, eg. alomo, prostitute   [   ]

(o)   Someone has been writing sexual messages about you at
        bathroom, in the classroom or on the walls   [   ]

(p)   Someone attempted or forced to kiss you   [   ]

(q)   Someone has been rating or commenting on your attractiveness
        or Appearance in public   [   ]

(r)   Please specify any other form (if any) …………………………………

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5.   **How did you respond to the incidence of sexual harassment against**

        you in your school?

        (a)   I reported the incidence to a teacher or head teacher [   ]

        (b)   I told a close friend about it   [   ]

        (c)   I told a family member or parent about it   [   ]

        (d)   I confronted the harasser directly   [   ]

        (e)   I did no tell anyone about it   [   ]

Section C

6.   **How often have you personally experienced sexual harassment in the**

        school since   last term?

        (a)   Never (not at all)   [   ]

        (b)   Seldom (about once or twice a term [   ]

        (c)   Occasionally (about once a month)   [   ]

        (d)   Often (about twice a term)   [   ]

        (e)   Very Often (almost weekly)   [   ]

7.   **How often do you hear that a student in this school has experienced**

        sexual harassment of any form since last term till now?

        (a)   Never (not at all)   [   ]

        (b)   Seldom (about once or twice a term [   ]

        (c)   Occasionally (about once a month)   [   ]

        (d)   Often (about twice a term)   [   ]

        (e)   Very Often (almost weekly)   [   ]

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8.   **Do you perceive sexual harassment against students in your school as a problem that need to be immediately addressed by the school authorities?**

    (a)   Not really, it is part of school life   [   ]

    (b)   It's a problem, but we are coping with it   [   ]

    (c)   It's a serious problem, the authorities need to act now [   ]

9.   **Which location in the school do these unwanted sexual beahviours against female students mostly occur?**

    (a)   During entertainment   [   ]

    (b)   During preps   [   ]

    (c)   During sporting activities   [   ]

    (d)   In class, when teacher is not around   [   ]

    (e)   In the dormitories   [   ]

    (f)   On the way from school to the house   [   ]

    (g)   When one is alone studying in the classroom [   ]

    (h)   Other (please state) ………………………………………….

Section D

10.   **When you feel you have been sexually harassed how do you feel?**

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11. **How does the experience the sexual harassment against you affect**

your academic performance?

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12. **What should be done to stop the problem of sexual harassment in**

school?

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13. **Which of these groups of persons in your school are the worst**

perpetrators of sexual harassment against students in your school?

Male teachers   [   ]

Female teachers   [   ]

Male students   [   ]

Female students   [   ]

Male school staff   [   ]

Female school staff   [   ]