

**Student Sexual Harassment at a Rural University in South Africa. A Case Study of the
University of Venda**

by

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Abstract

Sexual harassment is identified as a widespread form of aggressive behavior with severe consequences for victims, organizations and institutions. The objectives of this study were to explore the perceptions of students on sexual harassment, to discover the common type of sexual harassment among students, to find out locations where sexual harassment occurs in the university, to explore contributory factors influencing sexual harassment among students, and to explore the effects of sexual harassment on students. The methodology that was applied in this study is was qualitative in nature. The researcher used open ended questions in interview to assess sexual harassment among students in the university. Non-probability sampling was used to select 16 respondents made up of 8 males and 8 females. Data was analyzed thematically by identifying and expanding significant themes that emerged from the informants' responses. Ethical measures and trustworthiness were ensured. It appears common for sexual harassment victims to experience negative physiological effects and treatment for the victims and harassers is hindered because victims abscond reporting the incident. Sexual harassment occurs in and outside university buildings as shown in the study. Perpetrators of sexual harassment have evolved from males harassing females to female lesbians harassing other lesbians and male gays harassing other gays however, men are the harassers of others to a greater extent. Alcohol and drug use, dress code and age and level of study were major contributory factors of sexual harassment. It seemed common that verbal, physical and visual sexual harassment occur among students verbal sexual harassment being the most prevalent.

Key words:

Effects; rural; sexual harassment; student; university

Declaration

I, **Siduna Bongai**, declare that this dissertation is my original work and has not been submitted for any degree at any other university or institution. The dissertation does not contain other persons' writing unless specifically acknowledged and referenced accordingly.

Signed (Student)..... Date:

Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to God Almighty who has given strength to complete, the Siduna family, my friends and all the people who encouraged me to work hard. This dissertation is also dedicated to all University of Venda students.

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ABBREVIATION AND ACRONYMS

AAU	Association of American Universities
HIV	Human Immune Deficiency
LGBT	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender

NUS	National Union of Students
PTSD	Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder
SACE	South African Council for Educators
SPU	Sardar Patel University

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This study examines student sexual harassment in a rural university. Sexual harassment is a crime that seems to occur often on campuses. However, universities tend not to react to allegations of sexual harassment and rape in fear of damaging their reputation. A great need thus exists to improve the universities' commitment to the safety of their students (Crouch, 2001). Sexual harassment is unconstitutional and a crime. It is crucial that every university or college should have an ongoing evaluation of the effectiveness of the policies as well as monitoring of grievance procedures to ensure that those responsible for enforcement consider these violations seriously. South Africa Survey (2001/2002) show that education plays a vital role in ensuring career success and long-term economic security for youth. Crouch (2001) further states that, without a university or college degree, youth earn substantially less pay, receive far fewer employer benefits, and are less likely to be financially independent. This is true for some students who have failed to perform well in their studies due to disturbances and effects of sexual harassment. The university is a defining experience and also a gateway to economic success and security.

The chapter comprises the introduction and background of the study, problem statement, aim of the study, specific objectives of the study, critical research questions, hypotheses, significance of the study, delimitation of the study, definitions of operational concepts and chapter divisions.

1.1 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Sexual harassment was first documented in 1908 (Fitzgerald, Weitzman, Godd and Omenold, 1988). However, it was not until the 1970s that it was recognised as a problem and labelled; the first research in the area emerged then (Farley, 1978). Australian research surveys by Saunders, Skye and Easteal (2013) reveal that sexual harassment plays an integral role in a masculine homogeneous society which stipulates that man have power over women and that the notion of manhood is defined by exercising authority over women. Women have predominantly been the victims of sexual harassment. However, men over the years have become victims of sexual harassment. According to Wilson (2000) sexual harassment is a trending problem occurring in the educational sector in America midst of laws enacted against it. Hill and Silva (2005) argue

that tertiary education plays a vital role in ensuring economic security for the youth, but these institutions still display a tendency towards bias and harassment which has an influence on students receiving fair education. Most students experience some kind of sexual harassment, especially during their first year. Ranging from unwanted sexual remarks to forced sexual contact, these experiences result in students, especially female students, becoming upset, uncomfortable, angry and disappointed in their college experiences, consequently crippling the holistic development of the victims (UNESCO; 2003).

According to Hill and Silva (2005) student-to-student harassment is the most common form of sexual harassment on campuses in American colleges. More than two-thirds of students 68% say that peer harassment happens often or occasionally at their colleges, and more than three quarters of students 80% who experienced sexual harassment have been harassed by a student or a former student. Given that students comprise the vast majority of the campus population, it is perhaps not surprising that most sexual harassment occurs between and among students. Still, the prevalence of peer harassment among college students suggests a student culture that accepts or at least seems to tolerate this type of behaviour.

Furthermore, Skye and Easteal (2013) stipulates that the problem of sexual harassment is widespread in Egypt. A study of more than 200 youth was conducted at Menoufiya University and 96% of the girls from the population had experienced sexual harassment compared to males. Moreover, the Egyptian Centre for Women's Rights surveyed 2,000 Egyptian men and women and 109 foreign women in four governorates in the country, including Cairo and Giza, about sexual harassment on Egyptian streets. They published their findings which showed 83% of Egyptian women reported experiencing sexual harassment on the street at least once and nearly half of the women said they experience it daily. Moreover, 98% of the foreign women surveyed reported experiencing sexual harassment while in Egypt. Wearing a veil did not appear to lessen a woman's chances of being harassed and about 62% of Egyptian men admitted to perpetrating harassment (Human Rights Watch, 2008).

Harassment is not only rampant on Egypt's streets, but is evident on university campuses (Julie, 2013). A recent study conducted by the 'I Saw Harassment' documented cases of sexual harassment occurring on university campuses in Egypt, such as Cairo University and Assiut University. As a matter of fact, Cairo University has recently established the Anti-Harassment and Combating Violence against Women Unit which is headed by Cairo University President Gaber Nassarn (August and Martin-Storey, 2016). This was done in effort to curb the problem of sexual

harassment. In addition August and Martin-Storey (2016) found that in Lebanon, nearly 18% of 221 women surveyed from institutions, such as the American University of Beirut, University Antonine and Beirut Arab University, were harassed by their professors. Although Tunisia is one of the most liberal Arab states, sexual harassment by professors is commonplace in Tunisia (Lynch, 2013). In Libya, the prevalence of sexual harassment varies between universities but is common nationwide. It is pervasive on university campuses in Tripoli, and women and men are working against it (Julie, 2013).

Anju (2015) reported that in India there are a number of newspaper reports on sexual harassment of women in educational institution premises in recent years. The first report revealed that students beat up an anatomy professor from Versova, Andheri, for alleged sexual misconduct (The Indian Express, Mumbai Newslite 21-10-2004). Another report revealed that in 2014, in India again a female assistant professor at a college affiliated to Sardar Patel University (SPU) and who is working as a research student at SPU's Department of Psychology had registered a sexual harassment complaint against L.R Yagnik, a professor of department of psychology. In this case, the state education department issued directions to take appropriate steps to take up the complaint and to proceed with investigations according to the new laws framed by Indian Government on Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Times of India, Vadodhara 18-09-2014). These reports reveal the seriousness in the occurrence of sexual harassment in universities.

Moreover, Rademakers, van den Muijsenbergh, Slappendel, Lagro-Janssen and Borleffs (2008) found that sexual harassment was common in medical schools in the Netherlands. Similarly a study conducted by a Charles University research team reported that, over three quarters of Czech university students have, at some point, been the victims of sexual harassment (Borufka, 2010). A study revealed that 50% of students believe that sexual harassment is prevalent on university campuses in the United Kingdom (Rademakers *et al*, 2008). Recently, the National Union of Students (NUS) indicated that sexual harassment and a "lad culture" exists on university campuses in the United Kingdom (UK), with more than a third of women reporting being subjected to unwelcome advances in the form of touching, including inappropriate groping. The NUS defines the lad culture as consisting of behaviours and attitudes that belittle, humiliate, joke about or even seem to condone rape and sexual assault (Zandonda, 2010). It can be deduced from the literature above that the problem of sexual harassment in universities has continually escalated over the years.

A case study of selected public and private organisations in Ndola, Zambia (Zandonda, 2010) shows that sexual harassment was high with 69% of 169 respondents claiming that they had been victims. It shows that 75% of the respondents were not aware of any sexual harassment policies at their workplaces. In addition, Shumba and Matina (2002) carried out a study on occurrence of sexual harassment in educational institutions in Zimbabwe and the study viewed that 90% of the students agreed that matters of sexual harassment are under reported or not reported at all for fear of victimisation by those in authority. In the same study, female students were asked if they knew lecturers who use their authority to manipulate female students sexually. All the participants reported yes knowing such a lecturer. These results reveal that there is no doubt that sexual harassment is rife in institutions of higher education throughout Zimbabwe (Shumba and Matina; 2002).

Sexual harassment in South Africa, during the apartheid era, occurred openly and publicly to many young black people, women being major victims. Women and girls experienced all forms of sexual harassment physical verbal and non-verbal. Sexual harassment was one of the forms of violence against the black race due to the absence of constitutional laws that protected black community. It is, however, true to mention that other races in South Africa, during apartheid, also experienced sexual harassment. Many black girls and women during the apartheid in South Africa were raped especially in schools in their work places and almost anywhere whenever the harasser saw it fit (Department of Education, 2003).

After a research study 'Scared at school', which looked directly at the incidence of sexual violence against girls in South African schools, found that many girls experience violence in schools (Prinsloo, 2006). According to Leskinen, Cortina and Kabt (2010) girls are raped, sexually abused, sexually harassed and assaulted at school by male learners and educators. The report noted that, although girls in South Africa have better access to school than their counterparts in other sub-Saharan African states, they are confronted with levels of sexual violence and sexual harassment in schools that impede their access to education on equal terms with male students. Many girls interrupt or leave school altogether because they feel unsafe in such a violent environment. Other girls stay at school, but suffer in silence, having learned that submission a survival skill and sexual violence at school is inescapable (Human Rights Watch, 2001). This shows the prevalence of sexual harassment in learning environments in South Africa.

Despite the establishment of a new constitution in South Africa, with a Bill of Rights stipulating the protection of human rights of South African citizen, particularly young people and women, reports of sexual harassment in communities, work places and schools have gone up dramatically

(Human Rights Watch, 2010). The constitution of the Republic of South Africa stipulates that every citizen has a right to exercise his/her sexuality without any discrimination. However, according to Hill and Silva (2005), empirical evidence has proved otherwise because in many provinces of South Africa, lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender students are more likely to be harassed. Lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender (LGBT) students are more likely than heterosexual students to experience sexual harassment; be upset by experiences of sexual harassment; and feel self-conscious, angry, less confident, afraid, or disappointed with their college experience. Therefore at the University of Venda in Vhembe District, Limpopo Province, a research study was carried out to examine the extent of this problem and ways to foster a campus climate that is free from bias and harassment so that all students have an equal opportunity to excel in higher education.

1.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT

A huge population of youth around the world are enrolling into institutions of higher education to attain degrees which no doubt contribute positively to their holistic development. Achievement of these goals is possible when the learning environment is hospitable and conducive to carrying out academic activities and tasks. These include protection on the campuses from all kinds of harm and providing safety for the students with a culture that embraces respect and dignity to mankind. Campuses are ideal for students when the environment is free from explicit or implicit behaviour that has the effect of offending, intimidating or humiliating students. Provision of services to students, for instance, accommodation, bursaries and assistance to any academic work, should be delivered equally and fairly to the students without any coerced compliance to a sexual request. Students must be free to make decisions that concern their sexuality and not be forced to do anything against their will. The learning environment must facilitate academic and social activities without fear of unwelcome sexual attention from persons who know that such attention is unwelcome. A favourable learning environment advocates for the rights of students and equity and protection from any unwelcome conduct of any sexual nature. However, it is true that most students in universities experience unwelcome sexual attention from other students and staff in their daily activities on campuses.

In response to this problem this study assessed student sexual harassment in a rural university guided by Protection from Harassment Act 2011 Section 35 which states that sexual harassment is:

(a) Unwelcome sexual attention from a person who knows or ought reasonably to know that such attention is unwelcome;

(b) unwelcome explicit or implicit behaviour, suggestions, messages or remarks of a sexual nature that have the effect of offending, intimidating or humiliating the complainant or a related person in circumstances, which a reasonable person having regard to all the circumstances would have anticipated that the complainant or related person would be offended, humiliated or intimidated;

(c) Implied or expressed promise of reward for complying with a sexually oriented request; or

(d) Implied or expressed threat of reprisal or actual reprisal for refusal to comply with a sexually oriented request.

1.3 AIM OF THE STUDY

The main aim of the study is to assess students' exposure to sexual harassment at a rural university in South Africa. A case study of the University of Venda.

1.4 SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To explore the perceptions of students on sexual harassment;
- To discover the common type of sexual harassment among students;
- To find out locations where sexual harassment occurs in the university;
- To explore contributory factors influencing sexual harassment of students; and
- To explore the effects of sexual harassment on students' behaviour.

1.5 CRITICAL RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The critical research questions that this study aims to answer are as follows:

- What are the perceptions of students on sexual harassment?
- What is the commonest type of sexual harassment in the university?
- Where does sexual harassment occur in the university?
- What are the contributory factors of sexual harassment among students?
- What are the effects of sexual harassment on students?

1.6 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The study findings will benefit students in the university by ensuring that they are protected from sexual harassment and that they study in a safe learning environment. In addition, the legislative body of the university and the department responsible for facilitating security from sexual harassment will be able to perform its duties more accurately and effectively. Furthermore, the study will motivate the creation of a youth generation that has self-respect and high moral values for one another. The findings will essentially benefit the government of South Africa as it is responsible for formulating policies that aim to improve the social welfare of the citizens of South Africa.

1.7 DELIMITATION OF THE STUDY

The study focused on sexual harassment of students at a rural university in the Vhembe District. A major limitation of the study was the reluctance of students to share information on their experiences due to the sensitivity of the matter.

1.8 DEFINITION OF OPERATIONAL TERMS

- Sexual harassment is defined in South African legislation as “unwanted conduct of a sexual nature” The distinguishing characteristics of sexual harassment are that it is conduct with a sexual component, which is unwelcome, unsolicited and unreciprocated (Braine, Bless and Fox, 2011)

Sexual attention becomes sexual harassment if:

- The behaviour persists, although a single incident of harassment can constitute sexual harassment, and / or
- The recipient has made it clear that the behavior is considered offensive and / or
- The perpetrator should have known that the behaviour is regarded as unacceptable.

It is not only the intention of the alleged harasser that is the issue, but also the complainant's reasonable perception and experience of the alleged harasser's behaviour.

1.9 CHAPTER DIVISIONS

The chapters of this study were divided as follows:

Chapter 1

Chapter one contains the introduction, background of the study, problem statement, specific objectives of the study, critical research questions, hypotheses, significance of the study, delimitation of the study and the definition of operational terms.

Chapter 2

Chapter two provides literature on students' perception of sexual harassment, types of sexual harassment, locations where sexual harassment occurs, contributory factors influencing sexual harassment, commonest type of sexual harassment among students, prevalence of help resources, and the effects of sexual harassment. Chapter two also explained the theoretical frameworks that informed the study.

Chapter 3

Chapter three contains the research methodology. This includes the research approach and design of the study, study population and location, sampling procedures, data collection and analysis procedures, and ethical considerations.

Chapter 4

Chapter four focuses on data presentation and analysis.

Chapter 5

Chapter five concentrates on the summary of the findings, recommendations and conclusion.

CHAPTER TWO

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this chapter is to review related literature on student sexual harassment on campuses across the globe. Information that will be explored in this chapter includes models of sexual harassment, types of sexual harassment, perceptions of students on sexual harassment, locations where sexual harassment occurs, contributory factors influencing sexual harassment, the prevalence of help resource after experiencing sexual harassment, effects of sexual harassment and the theoretical framework. Hart (2001) state that the overall purpose of a research literature review is to assemble knowledge on a topic regarding what is known or what has been studied about the area and where knowledge gaps exist. A thorough literature review provides a foundation on which to base new knowledge.

2.2 MODELS OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Once sexual harassment is acknowledged as a problem that actually exists, the question arises as to why it exists? In this section various models are discussed to explain sexual harassment. Five models of sexual harassment are discussed in this section. These models are the natural/biological model, the organizational model, the sociocultural model, the situational individual factors model, and the four-factor model. The natural/biological model is discussed next.

2.2.1 Natural/biological model

According to Studd and Gatticker (1991) natural/biological model suggests that sexual harassment is not really harassment, but rather the natural result of men's stronger sex drive and of men and women's normal attractions to each other. On the contrary, Leskinen *et al* (2010) report that, actually, sexually harassing behaviour is carried out by only a minority of bizarre persons in the absence of normal human attraction. Leskinen *et al* (2010) goes on to state that, if the natural biological model is correct in saying that sexual harassment is usually just a stage in normal romantic attraction, then male–female pairs would be expected to be similar in age, race, attitude, and status, as is typical of couples observed in attraction studies.

August *et al* (2016) adds that the victims and harassers are usually unmarried or in some way eligible as partners. Each harasser directs his attention to only one person. O'Donohue, Downs

and Yeater (1998) refute the natural/biological model, stating that, if the romantic interest is mutual, victims should experience no negative consequences and no one should want to file a complaint. Likewise, if serious sexual harassment is due to the tendencies of a few despicable individuals, then the base rate of harassment should be relatively low and the harassing behaviour should be randomly distributed across men of all ages, statuses, and occupational positions with no systematic pattern (Prinsloo, 2006). Thus August *et al* (2016) and Prinsloo (2006) argue that the natural factor of attraction cannot be denied. However, it must be handled with responsibility to avoid violation of the other party.

2.2.2 Organizational model

The second model, which is the organizational model, holds that the organizational climate, hierarchy, and authority relations create opportunities for certain individuals to secure sexual gratification through harassment (Nielsen and Eirnasen, 2012). Aside from differential power, factors such as amount of contact with the opposite sex on the job, privacy of working area, sex ratio on the job, occupational norms, for example the revealing costume of a cocktail waitress, and availability of grievance procedures and job alternatives determine the likelihood of sexual harassment occurring (Abiodun, 2012).

Beninger (2013) adds that this model predicts that victims could be men or women. However, since women usually have lower organizational ranks, they tend to be both the victims most often. August and Martin-Storey (2016) reported that women with least organizational power suffer the most sexual harassment since their economic vulnerability leaves them feeling they have little recourse, while harassers would be those of higher power and greater security. Organizations that are highly stratified, or that discourage discussion of work-related concerns, or that have skewed sex ratios, or that have requirements for weekend or overtime work, that have expectations for “sexy” behaviour at work, or that have private work spaces, would be more conducive to the occurrence of sexual harassment (Anju, 2015).

2.2.3 Socio-cultural model

According to Durmus (2013), the socio-cultural model assumes that sexual harassment is a reflection of a patriarchal system in which social beliefs legitimise men’s rule. Thus, women are trained by society to be passive, acquiescent, avoid conflict, and be sexually attractive, to take responsibility for their own victimisation, and to distrust their own judgment (Kheswa, 2014). The function of sexual harassment would be to maintain male dominance occupationally and economically, intimidating women to leave the work arena. Predictions derived from this model

are that gender would predict victimization better than organizational power, harassers will usually harass more than one victim, and women in traditionally male-dominated occupations would be more vulnerable to sexual harassment (El Sayed, 2012). Women's powerlessness and sex role socialisation would prevent them from taking assertive action and, instead, cause them to react with damaged feelings about themselves and their work (Dastile, 2004).

2.2.4 Situational individual model

In another model that appears to account better for the complexity of determining the causes of sexual harassment than the previous models, La Rocca and Kromrey (1999) suggested that situational factors, as well as individual factors, contribute to the incidence of sexual harassment. These authors state that sexual harassment is much more prevalent in some organisational contexts than others, and that some individuals are more likely to harass than others. In short, those men or women who possess the appetite to sexually harass do not do so in all situations. Rather, they only do so when the environmental contingencies allow such behaviour to occur. The individual factors implicated by this model would be the harasser's or potential harasser's reasoning scheme relating sexuality and social dominance. In sum, this model looks not only at the environment as being a causal mechanism in producing sexual harassment, but at the characteristics of the individual that may make them more vulnerable to this type of behaviour under particular environmental possibilities (Maurice, 1991).

2.2.5 Four-Factor model

This model is based on Finkelhor and Hotaling's (1984) four-precondition model of sexual abuse. It is based on the assumption that the factors related to sexual harassment can be grouped into four preconditions that must be met for harassment to occur, namely motivation of the harasser, the ability to overcome internal inhibitions that act to prevent the offender from acting on his motivation, opportunity to overcome inhibitors in the external environment, and the opportunity or ability to overcome resistance by the potential victim.

The first precondition addresses the motivation to sexually harass. Sexual harassment may be motivated by a number of factors, including the need for power and control or sexual attraction toward a woman, in most cases, and man in rare cases (Till, 1980). Sexual harassment may also result from the uncertainty that exists with men and women now entering into new working relationships (Stringer, Remick, Salisbury, and Ginorio, 1990). Although little is known about the actual motivations for sexual harassment, researchers have suggested that the following factors

may motivate males to commit sexual offenses against women: unusual power needs, deviant sexual arousal, sexist beliefs, adversarial sex role beliefs, and anger toward women. Victim empathy training, clarification of the moral wrongness of the action, changing harassment myths and changing outcome expectancies may increase internal inhibitions (Braine, Bless & Fox, 2011).

The second precondition, overcoming internal inhibitors, refers to the ability of the potential harasser to overcome any internal inhibitors that would otherwise prevent him from acting on the motivation to sexually harass (Abiodun, 2012). Most members of society are taught to respect the rights and dignity of others and, therefore, would have some inhibitions to overcome in attempting to exploit, degrade, or to hurt another, as is the case in sexual harassment (Finkelhor and Asdigian, 2009).

In addition O'Donohue, Downs and Yeater (1998) state that fear of reprisals, such as a tarnished reputation or the loss of a job, may also act as an internal inhibitor. For some individuals, such as those with antisocial personality disorder, inhibitions against sexually harassing behavior may not even exist (Polit and Hungler, 2010). In other cases, when the harassing behaviour is motivated by sexual attraction toward a woman and there is no intent to degrade the woman, this precondition may not be necessary (Sutherland, 1992). However, for individuals who do have such inhibitions, motivation alone is not sufficient for harassment to occur. The inhibitions must first be overcome.

The third precondition, overcoming external inhibitors, addresses the situational factors that may either facilitate or inhibit harassment incidents. According to Cantor, Fisher and Chibnall (2015) external inhibitors and facilitators can exist at three different levels, the sociocultural context, the organisational context, or the immediate work environment. One of the situational variables that has been demonstrated to inhibit sexual harassment is the existence of explicit grievance procedures within the organisation (O'Donohue, Down and Yeater 1998). One study has shown that women who are more aware of the grievance procedures in their workplace are less likely to have experienced sexual harassment (Anju, 2015). Thus, establishing such a procedure, and making it widely known to employees appears to be one simple and straightforward step that could be taken in any prevention intervention.

The fourth precondition, overcoming victim resistance, addresses the fact that the attitudes, behaviours, and occupational positions of women play a significant role in whether or not they are targets of sexual harassment (O'Donohue, Down and Yeater 1998). Stringer *et al* (1990)

suggested that it may be that women who reject the stereotypical feminine role of being passive and of being sex objects, as well as who are knowledgeable about sexual harassment, and/or have high status positions within their organization, are less likely to be harassed than are other women. Correspondingly, Finkelhor and Asdigian (2009) found that these women may be better able to recognise harassment and to assert themselves to more effectively counteract or resist any harassing behaviour. Also, women's resistance to sexual harassment may be subtle because of their position of power or because of the attitude of personal power and control that they project, (Mehta, Johannes and Gandhi, 2006), a potential harasser may avoid such women as targets.

2.2 TYPES OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT

In this section, the following types of sexual harassment will be discussed gender harassment, seductive behaviour, sexual bribery, sexual coercion and sexual imposition.

2.2.1 Gender harassment

Sexual harassment is the expression of unhealthy human relationships. It is not just the violation of dignity, right to social security and right to equality guaranteed to human beings in every social system, but it is also a violation of right to life and peaceful existence guaranteed by law (Anju, 2015). Gender harassment refers to generalised sexist statements and behavior that convey insulting or degrading attitudes about women (Beninger, 2013). Examples include insulting remarks, offensive graffiti, obscene jokes or humor about sex or women in general. Braine Bless and Fox, (2011) reported that an individual can be sexually harassed just because they are female.

Gelfand, Fitzgerald and Dragsow (1995) argue that gender harassment is a type of sexual harassment which encompasses a range of verbal and non-verbal behaviours generally not aimed at sexual cooperation rather at conveying insulting, hostile and degrading attitudes about women. These include epithets, slurs, taunts and gestures, the display of obscene or pornographic materials, gender based hazing, and threatening, intimidating or hostile acts.

In an educational setting, sexist jokes and remarks that are offensive are common if the individuals are perceived to have transgressed gender roles (Cantor *et al*, 2015). For instance, female students who excel in the sciences and take up jobs such as a pilot, engineers and astronauts can face resentment from their male counterparts (Hill and Silva, 2005). These resentments usually lead to sexual harassment as way of demeaning the excelling female students (Cantor *et al*, 2015). El Sayed (2012) add that, due to, patriarchal setup men are expected to take the leading

role in all areas of life including academically. The opposite is true for male students taking up courses that have been generalised to be women courses such as fashion and design and cooking courses. These students receive demeaning sexual remarks from their male counterparts (El Sayed, 2012).

Martin-Storey and August (2016) highlighted that gender nonconformity, or the perception that an individual fails to conform to gendered norms of behaviour and appearance, is strongly stigmatised, and is popularly associated with sexual minority status. Findings from Martin-Storey and August (2016) highlighted that harassment due to gender nonconformity is a possible mechanism for depressive symptoms among sexual minorities (e.g., identifying as gay, lesbian, or bisexual). In addition, Leskinen, Cortina and Kabt (2010) argued that most sexual harassment in traditionally male domains entails gender harassment in the absence of sexual advances. A number of individuals perceive gender harassment to be intertwined with sexual harassment based on how the incident transpired (Durmus, 2013).

2.2.2 Seductive behavior

Seductive behaviour is any unwanted, repetitive action performed by the harasser to get the victim to comply with sexual or intimate requests. Examples of seductive behaviour include, but are not limited to, repeated invitations for dinner or dates. Seduction is the process of deliberately enticing a person, to lead astray, as from duty, rectitude, or the like; and to corrupt, to persuade or induce to engage in sexual behaviour (Adedokun, 2004). The word seduction stems from Latin and means literally "to lead astray". Examples of sexually harassing behaviours include attire that exposes sensitive parts of female students' bodies, teasing faculty or student males about their sexual prowess, suggestive text messages from female students often passing pleasant sexual remarks about faculty males and making frequent phone calls to faculty males (Abiodun, 2012).

According to Gilmore, Lewis and William (2015) gender harassment is by far the most common type followed by seductive behaviour where 99% of sexual harassment victims are female. Tang, Yik, Cheung, Choi and Au, (1996) add that peer sexual harassment in Chinese colleges was about twice as frequent as faculty sexual harassment. Furthermore, Tang *et al* (1996) discovered that 30-66% of the students knew about their peers being targets of sexist and misogynistic comments and various forms of physical and nonphysical seductive behaviours. About 13-30% of the students knew about peers initiating unwelcome intimate seductive behaviours such as kissing and caressing hands; 2-4% of the students also reported hearing about coercive sexual behaviours by peers (Tang *et al*, 1996).

De Almeida (2014) noted that seduction is a current topic in the clinical context, characterised by compulsive flirtatious behaviour that an individual has constantly and cannot contain. As such, one can deduce that seductive behaviour can be harmful. De Almeida, (2014) adds that the compulsive seducer feels the need to be involved in situations that refer to amorous conquest. It is possible that the prevalence is higher in men. In compulsive seduction, often there is no pleasure in consolidating the act, having sex or approaching each other in a more intimate way. Nonetheless the pleasure is circumscribed to the act of flirting, and feeling desire for the other person (Best, 2007).

2.2.3 Sexual bribery

Sexual bribery is promising a promotion in return for granting sexual favours (Farley, 1978). It is further indicated that sexual bribery by university professors of their female students, is a fact of campus life and that the silencing thereof is part of the reason for the historical invisibility of the problem (Anju, 2015). Silence is relatively promoted by the fear that somehow they (the victims) are responsible for the sexual harassment in one way or the other, and/or the fact that students know they are subordinate to faculty staff and administrators (Best, 2007). The South African *Sunday Times* of 23 November 2003 reported that 32 educators had been dismissed from 2000 to 2003, mainly for having had sex with learners (Smit and du Plessis, 2011). The South African Council for Educators (SACE) does not condone such behaviour even if there was consent. It points out that in the power imbalance situation where the educator has all the power, the educator is exploiting his position of trust (Durmus, 2013).

On the other hand, male faculty and male students have also received offers of sexual bribery from female students. Studies suggest an increase in women sexual harassment and perceive men as often the perpetrators of sexual harassment given that men usually possess higher organisational power over women who are often the victims. This view is capable of underestimating the actual number of men who are likely to be victims of sexual harassment globally (Abiodun, 2012). Studies show that some perpetrators of sexual harassment may not necessarily hold organizational power before harassment occurs (Cantor, Fisher and Chibnall, 2015; Fitzgerald, Weitzman, Godd and Omenold, 1988; Hill and Silva, 2005).

For example, Tang *et al* (1996) reported that both male and female faculty members (holders of higher organisational power) constitute targets of sexual harassment from students (holders of less organisational power). In other words, faculty males may experience sexual harassment from female students just as faculty females do from male students (Beninger, 2013). Respectively,

Abiodun (2012) showed that 54.8% of the respondents from a sample of male faculty from Adekunle Ajasin University in Nigeria reported that they received text messages that are suggestive from female students, while 52.4% affirmed that they have received frequent phone calls, with sexual undertones, from female students in exchange for marks.

2.2.4 Sexual coercion

Fair and Vanyur (2011) informed that when someone is manipulated into sexual activity be it intercourse or other forms of physical contact, such as kissing or genital touching, he or she is experiencing sexual coercion. Coercion is a form of pressure that can take place on the emotional and psychological level, and sometimes it can involve physical force (Anju, 2015). Psychological and emotional coercion are meant to convince a person to change his or her “no” or “maybe” into a “yes” through the use of mind games. While the use of physical force is easy to recognise, psychological and emotional coercion are much more subtle, making them harder to identify and react to in a way that upholds one’s values (DeKeseredy & Kelly, 2010).

In a study by Fair and Vanyur (2011), which examined college intimate partner violence 31.7% reported being victims of sexual coercion, and 78% reported having verbally aggressive partners. Participants who reported experiencing sexual coercion in their relationships were significantly less likely to consistently use condoms. Alcohol use was also significantly associated with heightened incidents of coercion and aggression (Fair and Vanyur, 2011).

This type of sexual harassment is evident in universities and colleges among students and faculty staff. Studying heterosexual couples, Brousseau, Herbert and Bergeron, (2012) found that childhood sexual abuse predicted female but not male sexual coercion perpetration. This implies that female students who have been victims of child abuse are more vulnerable to sexual coercion, than females without a child abuse history. Gamez-Guadix, Straus and Hershberger (2011), studying an international sample of 13,877 students from 32 nations, found that, for both men and women, childhood sexual abuse was related to perpetration of both verbal and physical sexual coercion. They also found that childhood sexual abuse was indirectly related to both forms of perpetration through measures of antisocial personality and criminal history (Gamez-Gaudix *et al*, 2011).

Mathes and McCoy (2011) found that both perpetration and being a victim of sexual coercion were correlated with sexual promiscuity, alcohol abuse, and pursuit of pleasure through sex and alcohol, and tolerance of sexual coercion. It should be noted that the above data are correlational; thus it cannot be concluded that victims of sexual coercion choose an early onset of sexual

activity, multiple partners and alcohol abuse. It may be that an unwanted side effect of early victimisation is an increase in sexual activity, multiple partners, and alcohol abuse. Supporting this interpretation, Young, Furman and Jones (2012) found that following an incident of sexual coercion, adolescents exhibit behaviours that increased the risk of revictimisation including more frequent intercourse, more partners, and alcohol and drug abuse.

2.2.5 Sexual imposition

Sexual imposition involves gross acts such as forceful touching or grabbing, sexual assault or rape. In a questionnaire type study conducted at Stellenbosch University in 1992, Gouws and Kritzinger (1995) performed research aimed at, amongst others, measuring students' perceptions regarding a range of incidents that constitute sexual harassment. The sample consisted of 1500 randomly selected students and 73% indicated that they had experienced incidents constituting forceful touching, grabbing and rape. The comparable differences in the prevalence rates of sexual harassment, as it existed in 1992 and in 2015 is more or less the same if not increased. In March 2015 the Open Stellenbosch members, in South Africa, staged a march at Stellenbosch University in a bid to hold the university accountable for its continuous disregard to sexual assault of (August & Martin-Storey, 2016).

Furthermore, the Rhodes University Silent Protest which took place in August 2015 was the biggest protest against rape and sexual violence in South Africa and aimed at drawing attention to, and challenge the culture of silence around sexual violence in campuses and South Africa as a whole. It also aimed to raise public awareness about the extent of the problem of sexual violence and offer to a space where, in large numbers, protestors can stand in solidarity with all survivors of sexual violence. The above activities, in different universities, reveals that sexual harassment on campuses is rampant (August & Martin-Storey, 2016).

The University of Witwatersrand conducted a survey on sexual and racial harassment in their Faculty of Health Sciences from September to October in 1996 (Dastile, 2004). The sample consisted of a total of 1083 students who were surveyed on their perceptions and experiences of sexual and racial harassment, as well as incidents of discrimination suffered during their undergraduate training. Almost 68% of the participants reported being victims of some form of sexual harassment. In 2013, the Principal and Vice Chancellor of Wits University, Professor Adam Habib, released a letter concluding the outcome of sexual harassment allegations of four academics in the University who were consequently dismissed with immediate effect in that year (August and Martin-Storey, 2016). The above information highlights the constant occurrences of

sexual harassment within the university campuses. South African Police Services reveals that 62 649 sexual offences were reported in South Africa between 2013 and 2014 (Department of Education, 2015).

2.3 PERCEPTIONS OF STUDENTS ON SEXUAL HARASSMENT

In this section, the understanding, interpretation and thoughts of students regarding sexual harassment will be explored. The following views on sexual harassment will be deliberated on: verbal sexual harassment, visual/non-verbal sexual harassment and physical sexual harassment.

Previous studies indicate that students perceive sexual harassment in different ways. This is mainly influenced by gender, cultural and traditional backgrounds of the individuals. Therefore, the extent and intensity of a sexual harassment deed depend on the understanding of the various groups in society. Most preceding research found that men perceive situations describing sexual harassing incidents as less harassing than women (La Rocca and Kromrey, 1999). Mehta, Johannes and Gandhi (2006) add that sexual harassment was earlier called 'eve teasing' or a frivolous pastime for boys and was considered a petty violation. It took time for high profile cases and protests to be called sexual harassment and to be seen as an offence. It is important to note that sexual harassment is an offence and, despite the different views around the matter, the common denominator should entail offence (La Rocca & Kromrey, 1999).

2.3.1 Verbal sexual harassment

Verbal sexual harassment, according to *Tang et al*, (1996) involves making sexual comments, jokes, gestures, spreading sexual rumours about a person and calling someone gay, lesbian or homophobic names such as faggot, dyke or queer, commenting on someone's sexual abilities, body parts or clothing and howling, catcalling or whistling. *Young et al* (2012) state that, the most common forms of faculty-to-student sexual harassment that the students know about are sexist remarks about body features and gender. With regard to men's personal experiences of various forms of sexual harassment, 3 to 5% reported receiving sexist remarks of sexually suggestive looks from their teachers (Dekerseredy and Kelly, 2010).

Students also regard sexual harassment which involves unwanted sexual conduct such as teasing, touching and forced sexual intercourse as perpetrated by males mostly and females as victims (Prinsloo, 2006) . Anju (2015) who investigated the impact of female perpetrators also found that both men and women judged a sexual harassing incident involving a female perpetrator as less harassing than the same incident involving a male perpetrator. The authors speculate that

this difference may stem from the fact that women are presently less likely to be in power positions that could warrant the role of perpetrator (Anju, 2015; Prinsloo, 2006).

Thus, when women are portrayed as perpetrators, their actions may be less likely interpreted as harassing or inappropriate, and more likely to be perceived as harmless. However, sexual harassment is offensive whether done by females or males; it still produces negative effects on the victim (Beninger, 2013). Furthermore, Mathes and McCoy (2011) observed that male academics experience significantly more body language, physical advances, and explicit sexual propositions from students compared to female academics.

Similarly, Frebs *et al* (2007), reported that 53% male professors experienced at least one sexually harassing behaviour from female students. From the foregoing, subtle, verbal/psychological harassment and sexual harassment when perpetrated by women against men may be difficult to establish particularly as it often leaves no injury on the victim. This form of harassment is silent and could be damaging to the psyche of men. Yet, it appears researchers have ignored this aspect of harassment which is targeted at men. Thus, researchers may be hidden under the shield of culture (patriarchy) to shy away from the fact that, as men are powerful, men are also powerless (Abiodun, 2012).

It seems that victims of verbal harassment rarely report the incidents to legal bodies due to feelings of shame, lack of awareness on what to do and where to go (Frebs *et al*, 2007). As a result, harassers are usually left unpunished and this reinforces their tendency to harass other people not only in the present but in the future too. According to social learning theory, people learn new behaviour from observing others. It is common to hear male students and off campus boys throw sexual words at female students (Brousseau *et al*, 2012). As a result, other students and off campus boys may mimic this behavior and display verbal harassment against female students (Jones, Boocock and Under-Hill, 2013).

According to Smit and du Plessis (2011), about 12% of women reported experiencing teachers' misogynistic remarks about the female gender and unwanted physical contacts such as leaning over, cornering, putting arms around shoulders, or taking hands; 5% of the women reported receiving sexist comments about their bodies, unwanted pressure for dates, and sexually suggestive looks or gestures from their teachers. The majority of female students reported being bribed into sex by their teachers and one woman was a victim of coercive sexual activity (Anju, 2015). In general, women reported experiencing more incidents of verbal sexual harassment than men (Brousseau *et al*, 2012).

2.3.2 Visual/non-verbal sexual harassment

De Almeida (2014) define visual/non-verbal harassment as the unwanted display of visual material of a sexual nature for example slides, photos, poster and pamphlets. Gilmore, *et al* (2015) concurs with the above definition stating that nonverbal sexual harassment items include, among other things, displaying body parts through revealing clothing or pictures of sexual nature through Facebook and e-mail, inappropriate eye contact (twinkling) and inappropriate gesture that shows someone's sexual intention.

In a study carried out by Cantor *et al* (2015), the nonverbal form of sexual harassment was the second most prevalent in colleges to verbal harassment. It is not surprising to see a high prevalence rate of nonverbal form of harassment when people have the means and easy access to technology nowadays which eases the exchange of information efficiently and rapidly (Frebs *et al* 2007). Kheswa, (2014) adds that the expansion and innovation of technology like e-mail, Facebook and mobile phones encourage people to communicate sexual messages or pictures to people around and, thus, could contribute to the consistent increment of nonverbal forms of sexual harassment.

Abiodun, (2012) discovered that 79% of faculty males in Nigerian universities have experienced visual/non-verbal sexual harassment. The same study reported that males have been in, at least, a situation with female student(s) whose attire exposes sensitive parts of their bodies. Similarly, Thomas (2015) reported that a study conducted with faculty males in Canadian colleges revealed that a good number of female students intentionally dress provocatively, leaving vital parts of their body uncovered, with the intention to seduce faculty males. Prinsloo (2006) also states that the majority of male students agreed that female students purposefully dress seductively when coming to the classrooms. They wear skimpy and transparent clothes that show their thighs, curves, cleavages, breasts, nipples, pants, pubic hair, and buttocks (Abiodun, 2012). These reports reveal the prevalence of nonverbal sexual harassment in the learning institutions.

2.3.4 Physical sexual harassment

According to Jones *et al* (2013), physical sexual harassment is unwanted touching of a sexual nature. It involves unwanted intimate behaviour such as putting arms around waist, pressing and caressing hands, pressing or caressing legs, kissing, grabbing, brushing up against someone's body, fondling and forced sexual intercourse. Hill and Silva, (2005) found that physical forms of harassment are prevalent; one-quarter of college students have been touched, grabbed, or

pinched in a sexual way, and nearly one-third of students know someone, personally, who has experienced this kind of harassment.

Jones et al (2013) reported that 54% of undergraduate students aged 18 to 24 say that they have been forced to do something sexual other than kissing and this figure translates into about half a million students nationwide, 71% of students who say they have been physically blocked, cornered, or followed in a sexual way translates into about a million students nationwide. Put another way, Gilmore *et al* (2015) argue that, at a campus with 10,000 undergraduate students, 500 students will experience some form of sexual assault while at college, and about a thousand students will be blocked, cornered, or followed in a sexual way during their college lives, no trivial matter for colleges and universities.

2.4 LOCATIONS WHERE SEXUAL HARASSMENT OCCURS

According to Gouws and Kritzinger (1999), most of the harassment in high schools and universities happens in hallways. Classrooms are the second most frequent location where harassment occurs. Durmus, (2013) further states that sexual harassment occurs nearly everywhere on campus, including student housing and classrooms. It happens in large and small campuses, at public and private colleges and universities, and at two-year and four-year institutions. It is most common at large universities, four-year institutions, and private colleges.

Jones *et al* (2013) recorded that around 50% of college sexual assaults happen on Friday or Saturday. The majority of college sexual assaults happen between midnight and 6 a.m and almost 90% of the assaults occur when the victim is incapacitated. More than 40% of college sexual assaults happen in either January or February and September or October when there is an influx of new students (Leach, 2013). Furthermore, Thomas (2015) indicated that around 80% of college sexual assaults happen in either the victim's or perpetrator's living quarters. A ten year study of college sexual assault in Massachusetts found that 81% of campus rapes and sexual assaults occurred in an on-campus dormitory.

Furthermore, a large number of student female heterosexuals and female homosexuals are prone to unwelcome explicit behaviour, messages and remarks as well as other forms of sexual harassment (Jones et al, 2013). Students holding authority offices responsible for provision of services to other students have implied promise of reward to financially disadvantaged peers if they comply with a sexually oriented request (Abati, 2006). Furthermore, some students are

threatened by their fellow students in power or staff members if they do not comply with a sexually oriented request. Section 12 of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa clearly states that:

- (1) Everyone has the right to freedom and security of the person
- (2) Everyone has the right to bodily and psychological integrity.

Constitutionally, the rights of students being sexually harassed are being violated and this puts their academic and psychological being at risk.

Correspondingly Beninger, (2013) states that sexual harassment may be carried out anywhere on colleges by administrators, trustees, educators, school staff, students, third-party service providers, visitors and others. Sexual harassment further results in a poisoned environment for students or school staff. In a survey of 27 universities in the United States of America carried out by Association of American Universities (AAU) among female college students, 23% said they experienced some form of unwanted sexual contact in different locations of the university ranging from kissing to touching to rape, carried out by force or threat of force, or while they were incapacitated because of alcohol and drugs (Cantor, Fisher and Chibnall 2015).

Nearly 11% said the unwanted contact included penetration or oral sex. For college women seniors, the number reporting nonconsensual sexual contact of any kind carried out by force or while incapacitated was even higher than the 23% for all female college students: 26% of female seniors said they had experienced it at some point during their four years in college. At some of the country's most elite schools, the number climbed even higher: 34% for University of Michigan female seniors, 32% at Yale and 29% at Harvard (Cantor, Fisher and Chibnall, 2015).

2.5 CONTRIBUTORY FACTORS INFLUENCING SEXUAL HARASSMENT

In this section contributory factors influencing sexual harassment to happen will be discussed. These factors include prior victimisation, substance use, age and year of study, residential status and dress code.

2.5.1 Prior victimisation

One of the strongest predictors of sexual assault is prior victimisation on individuals who have previously been harassed. Mamaru et al, (2015) state that 10% of first year students were raped prior to the start of the academic year in which the study was conducted; 11% reported a prior attempted rape (Beninger, 2013). Moreover, women who had experienced a prior sexual assault were shown to have an increased risk of sexual victimisation during the current academic year

(Julie, 2013). In addition, adolescents who experienced a completed or attempted rape are twice as likely to experience a subsequent sexual assault during their college years (Norman *et al*, 2012). Himelein's (1995) longitudinal study of college women found that women who had experienced sexual victimisation by a dating partner prior to entering college were significantly more likely to be victimised during college, with prior victimisation being the strongest predictor of victimisation during college. In Himelein's study, although precollege victimisation by a dating partner strongly predicted victimisation during college, childhood sexual abuse did not.

2.5.2 Alcohol and drug abuse

Alcohol and drug consumption by the victim is a major risk factor for sexual harassment. Taiwo *et al* (2014) found that heavy episodic drinking was the strongest predictor of both rape when intoxicated and other types of rape (physically forced rape and rape due to threats of force). High school heavy episodic drinking patterns were also significantly associated with the risk of rape while in college (Anju, 2015). The Harvard College Alcohol study also found that drug use was associated with an increased risk of rape (Finkelhor and Asdigian, 2009). More so, drug or alcohol use: binge drinking and drug use are related to increased rates of harassment among young females (Jones *et al.*, 2013). With regard to alcohol use by the victim, it is interesting to note the findings of studies that indicated that the effects of alcohol and group drinking increase the chances of a man interpreting female behaviours as possible sexual interest (Durmus, 2013).

Furthermore, a number of studies have noted that women who drink alcohol are at greater risk of sexual victimisation because men are likely to believe that a woman drinking alcohol is more sexually available and/or sexually promiscuous than would normally be the case and that men hold the belief that forcing sex on an intoxicated woman is more acceptable than a woman who do not drink or one who is not drunk (Finkelhor and Asdigian, 2009; Durmus, 2013; Till, 1988; Kheswa, 2014). A study by Beninger (2013) reported that substance use is associated with increased reports of physical violence among male college/university students and an increased risk of sexual victimisation among female students. This study, furthermore, noted that substance abuse is prevalent among both victims and perpetrators (Beninger, 2013).

2.5.3 Age and year of study

De Almeida (2014) argues that college students are in one of the most vulnerable age groups for sexual assault and the first six weeks of college are considered a "red zone" for incoming freshmen when it comes to rape. The first month and a half of college is the time when freshmen

women are most likely to be raped or experience attempted rape. This time period is known as the “Red Zone”, meaning a period of vulnerability for sexual assaults, beginning when freshmen first walk onto campus.

In addition, freshmen and sophomore women appear to be at greater risk of being victims of sexual assault than are upperclassmen (Mamaru *et al*, (2015). A recent study employing a convenience sample of university women, found that 84% of the women who reported sexually coercive experiences experienced the incident during their first four semesters on campus (Bennett *et al*, 2007). Age itself may be a related risk factor. Himelein, (1995), recorded that underage women were more likely to report being raped (including rape when intoxicated) than women 30 or older (Mamaru *et al*, 2015).

According to multiple studies, (Fisher and Martin, 2007; Prinsloo, 2006; Bennett *et al*, 2007; Thomas, 2015) female students are at an increased risk of sexual assault during the first few weeks of their first semester on campus. Most college students who are sexually assaulted are victimised by someone they know. Although stranger rapes occur, acquaintance rape is by far the most prevalent form of sexual violence among college students. Acquaintance rape is a misunderstood form of criminal violence. There is a common misconception that acquaintance rape is not as serious, not as criminal, and not as traumatic to the victim as stranger rape (Julie, 2013).

2.5.4 Residential occupation

University residences have are commonly known to be breeding grounds for sexual harassment. The Harvard College Alcohol Study found that students who resided in sorority houses and on campus dormitories were more likely to report experiencing rape than students residing off campus (Finkelhor & Asdigian, 2009). Fair and Vanyur, (2011) stated that female students who resided on campus had an increased risk for sexual victimization occurring on campus due to peer to peer sexual harassment. In another case, at the University of Cape Town in South Africa, two female students reported sexual harassment by the same male student in one residence. He was moved to another residence and was handed ‘no contact’ orders (Sexual Assault Response Team, 2016). The alleged perpetrator was also sent for a mental health assessment after concerns were raised about his mental wellbeing. Within a week of his arrival at his new residence, however, he allegedly committed a similar offence.

Studies by Abiodun (2012) and Beninger (2013) show that a traditional dormitory-style residence places young men and women in constant contact in a 'family' environment where males appear to have influence in establishing the organisational culture .A similar case was reported in another

residence by Sexual Assault Response Team (SART), (2016) where two female students complained of sexual harassment by a fellow male student in their residence. He pleaded not guilty, but cited a visual impairment (deteriorating sight) that he argued affects how he physically positions himself in other people's personal spaces. He was referred to Student Wellness for counselling and removed from the same residence where the complainants stayed. He also received a 'no contact' order, preventing him from contacting the two complainants (SART, 2016).

2.5.5 Dress code

Studies have indicated that provocative dress code by female can lead to attracting sexual harassment or cause sexual harassment to the next person. (Fisher and Martin, 2007; Prinsloo, 2006; Bennett *et al*, 2007; Thomas, 2015). When a woman's outfit is described as sexually provocative, the description generally suggests that her clothing is revealing, tight-fitting, or viewed as sexually suggestive in the context in which it is worn (Martin, 2007). According to this definition, wearing a bikini on a Florida beach is not provocative because a bikini is considered acceptable attire for the beach. However, wearing a bikini to a bar would count as provocative because in a bar, a bikini would be more suggestive of nudity or lingerie than of sunbathing or swimming at the beach (Thomas, 2015).

To say a woman dresses provocatively does not simply mean that she dresses in order to be attractive to others. To describe a woman's outfit as provocative is to say that her outfit is likely to create certain sexual feelings in observers, and that those reacting to her outfit are not fully responsible for their behaviour (Prinsloo, 2006). There appears to be consensus that certain types of clothing are sexy, sexually alluring, or sexually provocative particularly clothing that reveals the shape of a woman's body and sexual body parts, such as her breasts (Anju, 2015).

The classification of an outfit as "provocative", therefore, involves a complex relationship between dress codes for specific contexts, cultural and social stereotypes of women's sexuality, and inferences about the wearer's intention (Fisher & Martin, 2007). However, in many of these studies, men were more confident than women in assigning sexual meanings to women's outfits. They interpret women's verbal and nonverbal behaviors to be more sexually related than women intend (Prinsloo, 2006; Taiwo *et al*, 2014; Bennett *et al* 2007). In general, men routinely attribute sexual intent to certain kinds of women's clothing and behaviour. Thus, a woman's outfit may be judged sexually by men (Taiwo *et al*, 2014).

2.6 EFFECTIVENESS OF HELP RESOURCE USE

In this section hindrances to effective help resource functionality will be viewed which are: lack of awareness, unreported incidences and poor confidentiality.

2.6.1 Lack of awareness

Every help resource must be guided by a university policy to effectively help victims of sexual harassment. Almost every university, in this modern age has policy and programmes set in place to prevent sexual harassment and assist victims (Anju, 2015). A policy should clearly explain the types of behaviour that constitute sexual harassment and lay out possible disciplinary actions the school can take against perpetrators. In addition to defining sexual harassment as unwelcome behaviour of a sexual nature that interferes unreasonably with a student's educational experience, the official policy should provide specific examples of prohibited behaviors (Best, 2007). It should also make clear that all students are protected from sexual harassment regardless of who the harasser is and that harassment need not occur on school grounds to be prohibited (Kheswa, 2014). However most students are not aware of the policies concerning sexual harassment in their institutions. The majority of students are not knowledgeable about where to who to go to if they want to report sexual harassment. This, in turn, hinders the effectiveness of help resource use that has put in place to assist students (Abiodun, 2012).

2.6.2 Unreported incidences

August and Martin-Storey (2016) reported that about 80% of the students believed that sexual harassment was not a personal matter and that the university should intervene. However, some students refrained from reporting fearing of victimisation or that they would not be believed (Best, 2007). Several barriers to reporting were identified by victims, for example not having proof that the incident occurred, fearing retaliation from the perpetrator, fear of hostile treatment by the authorities, uncertainty that the authorities would consider the incident serious enough, not knowing how to report the incident, and desire to prevent family and others from learning about it (Cantor, *et al* 2015). In 42.1% of the incidents, victims did not report the incident because they were not sure a crime or harm was intended, and in 30% of the incidents, victims believed the police would not think the incident was serious enough (Gilmore *et al*, 2015). For rape victims in particular, a commonly cited reason for not reporting the incident to any police agencies is not wanting family members and others to know about the victimization (Frebs *et al*, 2007). Failure to

report contributes to help resource in universities to not functioning effectively and efficiently in assisting victims.

2.6.3 Poor confidentiality

In addition, Jones et al (2013) argues that the policy, should ensure that complaints will be handled with as much confidentiality as possible and that it should make clear that retaliation is strongly prohibited. Although it is impossible to guarantee complete confidentiality (the name of the person complaining will often need to be disclosed to the accused or to witnesses in the course of investigation), a policy that promises to investigate sexual harassment claims with as much confidentiality as possible will protect those who challenge harassment, as well as prevent potential defamation lawsuits by accused harassers and minimise negative publicity. Confidentiality will help to prevent retaliation against students or witness cooperating in an investigation, but it should also explicitly forbid such conduct in your official policy and provide specific illustrations of retaliatory acts.

2.7 THE EFFECTS OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT

In this section the effects of sexual harassment will be discussed. The effect and impact of sexual harassment varies from person to person depending on the severity of the harassing behaviour. The following effects will be discussed: isolation, illness from stress and trauma, alcohol and drug abuse, poor academic performance and depression.

2.7.1 Illness from stress and trauma

In their study of Jimma University female students in Ethiopia in 2014, Mamaru, Getachew, and Mohammed (2015) found that female students who were physically and nonverbally harassed suffered from psychological distress. Norman, Aikins, and Binka (2012), in their study found that sexual harassment negatively affected the victim's health. Their respondents suffered psychological trauma, depression, anxiety, and loss of trust. Kheswa (2014), also found that female victims of sexual harassment at universities in Africa suffer from (PTSD) post-traumatic stress disorder, neuroticism, and are most likely to contract (HIV) human immune deficiency and other sexually transmitted infections. Victims of sexual harassment may also develop intense anxiety, become melancholic, and exhibit irrational behaviours (Bennett, Gouws, Kritzing, Hames and Tidimane, 2007).

2.7.2 Isolation

It is not uncommon for the victims of sexual harassment to experience feelings of anger, sorrow, and loneliness (Durmus, 2013). They also suffer from fear and trauma (Taiwo, Omole & Omole, 2014). Braine *et al* (2011) asserts that there is a list of environmental changes that might occur to sexually harassed victims. If the people know about the harassment, the victim might wonder who knows and what they are thinking about the case. The victim might also overhear conversations from other students around about their case and might become the subject of gossip and derogatory information and speculations. As a result the judgements by all who know the victim, whether negative or positive can create a huge burden to carry through the university environment. This will cause the victim to isolate themselves from social settings (Hill and Silva, 2005). Gouws and Kritzing (1999), states that the victim can become publicly sexualized a walking icon of misplaced amorous attention.

2.7.3 Poor academic performance

Mamaru *et al* (2015) reports that the academic performance of the victims suffers because they find it very difficult to concentrate on their academic pursuits. This has resulted in victims' low participation to avoid unwanted attention from teachers. A study in Kenya shows that females who experienced sexual harassment developed a careless attitude in class, and no longer took their work seriously and became undisciplined (Thomas, 2015). According to Fair *et al* (2011) a persistently hostile learning environment increases student's loss of focus in their study and contributes to a distaste for learning, which in turn, results in less involvement in academic and social activities. Moreover, Julie (2013) reported that sexual harassment has a significant psychological effect on the academic performance of female students.

2.7.4 Alcohol and drug abuse

Finkelhor and Asdigian, (2009) argue that the relationship between sexual violence and substance abuse is commonly misunderstood. A popular perception is that being drunk or high makes one more susceptible to sexual abuse or assault; in fact, the first incidence of sexual abuse or assault usually precedes first alcohol or drug use. In other words, people do not get raped because they are drunk; they may get drunk because they have been raped. Female college students who were abused as children were more likely to drink heavily than those who had not. Fitzgerald *et al* (1988) adds that perpetrators may get drunk in order to justify their actions, or may try to get their victims drunk or high to facilitate sexual assault.

Again, the long-term consequences of sexual violence can be devastating. Studies have found that survivors of sexual violence are more likely to develop drug addiction and alcoholism, and are less successful in completing substance abuse treatment. Durmus (2013) states that it is usually necessary to begin therapy to replace substance use with healthier coping strategies before clients can be expected to maintain sobriety for any length of time. Moreover, both adolescent and adult survivors may "act out" sexually, engaging in high risk sexual activities with multiple partners (Beninger, 2013).

2.7.5 Depression

Depression is a state of low mood and aversion to activity or apathy that can affect a person's thoughts, behaviour, feelings, and sense of well-being. According to Gilmore *et al* (2015) cognitively, victims tend to form negative stereotypes in their minds about males and begin to ruminate and constantly check to see if there is anything that caused the male students or lecturers to sexually harass them and end up developing dissociative identity disorder (Anju, 2015). Individuals with dissociative identity disorder are preoccupied with constant checking of one's self in the mirror to an extent that their day to day functioning becomes grossly affected and they experience aloofness and neuroticism because they are demotivated (Prinsloo, 2006).

Victims of sexual harassment can experience long-term depression (Blackstone, 2011). In a recent study of 1,000 youths, Blackstone (2011) found that people who are sexually harassed in their teens and early 20s can experience depressive symptoms into their 30s. Many people who experience sexual harassment have feelings of self-doubt, Blackstone indicated that for some people, self-doubt turned into self-blame, and victims can feel responsible for what happened. Such self-blame may have a negative effect on mental health, including promoting feelings of depression.

This de-motivation can cause withdrawal and gradually develops into depression (Best, 2007). Various scholars postulate that sexual harassment can be very traumatic to the individual; female students can develop a phobia for men and may experience an intense anxiety, mood swings, become melancholic in the presence of men and prefer to stay inside the house (Bennett, Gouws, Kritzinger, Hames & Tidimane, 2007). Silva and Hill (2005) explain that sexual assault is one type of sexual harassment that causes victims to suffer severe or chronic effects, the same psychological effects such as rape. Victims become targets of retaliation, backlash or victim blaming after the incident of sexual assault. Indeed the treatment of the female victims during

investigation can be ruthless and it can add further damage to the victim's psyche leading to depression.

2.8 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

In this section theories guiding this study are discussed and these include: theory of motivation and socio cultural theory.

The motivation theory by Maslow proposed that motivation is the result of a person's attempt at fulfilling five basic needs: namely, physiological needs, safety needs, social needs, esteem and self-actualization needs. In other words a need precedes motive leading to an action or act to fulfill that particular need. Every sexual harassment perpetrator carries a particular need which lead them to find pleasure in causing discomfort to other people. Self-realization needs and self-esteem needs largely contribute to characteristics of the perpetrators.

With regards to lesbians, women whose sexual orientation centres on erotic, emotional and social connectedness to people of the same gender, it is socio-cultural theory that contributes to their sexual harassment because of stereotypic dimensions and gender constructs that women cannot be sexually attracted to other women (Lantolf and Poehner, 2014). The socio-cultural perspective is a theory used in various fields such as psychology and is used to describe awareness of circumstances surrounding individuals and how their behaviors are effected specifically by their surroundings, social and cultural factors.

According to Sanderson (2010), the sociocultural perspective describes people's behaviour and mental processes as shaped in part by their social and/or cultural contact, including race, gender, and nationality. Following Douglas and Wildavsky's (1983) argument of cultural risk theory, 'uncivilised' men expect women to be submissive and act according to evolution, whereby they are expected to be pregnant and not being intimately involved with other women. By behaving in contrast to heterogeneity, lesbians suffer a variety of abuses.

CHAPTER THREE

3.0 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

In this section the researcher discusses research design and methodology used to conduct the study. The chapter outlines the population of the study, sampling method, sampling size, data collection, data analysis and ethical considerations.

3.2 RESEARCH DESIGN

Research designs are the methods and procedures employed to conduct scientific research (Creswell, 2009). According to Feldman (2012), a research design is a detailed outline of how an investigation will take place in a scientific study. The researcher used qualitative method with field study as a research design because it enables the research to assess student sexual harassment in a rural university in South Africa.

3.3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

According to Yin (2010), research methodology is the process used to collect information and data for the purpose of making a decision or conclusion based on the study of interest. In addition, Strauss (2010) states that research methodology is the systematic, theoretical analysis of the methods applied to a field of study and it offers the theoretical analysis of body of methods and principles associated with a branch of knowledge. For this study the researcher is going to use a qualitative method.

Qualitative research method was used to gather and analyze data in this study. The qualitative method was appropriate for this study because it facilitated an in depth and detailed understanding of student sexual harassment on the University of Venda campus. A qualitative method is defined by Feldman (2012) as a research that is primarily exploratory which is used to gain an understanding of underlying reasons, opinions and motivations. Furthermore, Yin (2010) stipulates that qualitative methodology is a process that enables the researcher to identify unanticipated phenomena and influences, as well as generating new grounded theories and understanding the process by which events and actions take place.

3.4 STUDY AREA

This study was conducted at the University of Venda in Thohoyandou situated in south of Vhembe district, on the main road between Louis Trichardt and Kruger National Park Limpopo Province, South Africa.

3.5 POPULATION OF THE STUDY

According to Silverman (2013), a study population is the total members of a defined class of people, objects places or events selected because they are relevant to the research question. In addition Potter (2011) defines population of the study as a group of individuals taken from the general population who share a common characteristic such as age, sex or health condition. For this study, the population consisted of students at the University of Venda.

3.6 SAMPLING

According to Maisel and Persell (1997), sampling is a process used in statistical and thematic analysis in which a predetermined number of observations are taken from a larger population. In addition, Sukhutame (2014) states that sampling is a statistical method of obtaining representative data or observations from a group, lot, batch, population or universe. The sampled group of this study consisted of students at the University of Venda.

3.7 SAMPLING METHOD

For this study the researcher used a non-probability sampling method because the researcher judged the respondents knowing that they are interacting with problem every day of sexual harassment on campus of University of Venda. According to Silverman (2013) non probability sampling is useful where the goal is to understand the structure of a particular setting or group. This study aims to understand a group of students experiencing sexual harassment at the University of Venda. Moreover, the study used purposive sampling as a subtype of non-probability sampling. Maisel and Persell (1997) state that purposive sampling is a deliberate choice of an informant due to the qualities the informant possesses. The qualities of informants for this study was students who are experiencing and have experienced sexual harassment, students who have witnessed or know a victim or perpetrator only. Purposive sampling is ideal in that people who are unsuitable eliminated thus saving time.

3.8 SAMPLING SIZE

Sampling size is the act of choosing the number of observations or replicates to include in the and thematic and statistical sample (Maisel and Persell, 1997). The sampled respondents of this study consisted of 16 respondents. The sampled group comprised of eight males and eight female students at the University of Venda.

3.9 DATA COLLECTION

Schuman and Howard (1999) state that data collection is a systematic approach to gathering information from a variety of sources to get a complete and accurate picture of an area of interest. Potter (1996) adds that data collection is the gathering of data from surveys, or from independent or networked locations via data capture, data entry or data logging. For the purpose of this research, data was collected through interviews.

The main data collection method for this study was the interview. According to Strauss (2010), interview is a meeting of people face to face especially for consultation. Additionally Creswell, (2009) stipulates that interview is a formal meeting in which one or more persons question, consult or evaluate another person. For this study the researcher used interview guide as an instrument where open ended questions were asked of participants because open ended questions do not limit the respondents, for example face-to-face interview was used and the researcher made an appointment before any interview could be conducted.

During the interviews the researcher observed the nonverbal elements or cues of the respondents. The researcher studied the respondent's body language, facial expressions, tone of voice, gestures and deduced meaning from those activities. Permission of participants was requested to use a tape recorder as assistive device in order to capture maximum information from the interviews.

3.10 DATA ANALYSIS

Strauss (2010) defines data analysis as a process of inspecting, cleaning, transforming and modeling data with the goal of discovering useful information, suggesting conclusions and supporting decision making of the study. Feldman (2012) argues that data analysis is the process of evaluating data using analytical and logical reasoning to examine each component of the data provided.

For the purpose of this study data collected through interview were analyzed using thematic analysis. The information was grouped into themes, memos and coding. In addition the information was presented in a narrative form. The advantage of using thematic analysis is that the interpretation of themes is supported by data. Thematic analysis was applicable in this study as it enabled the researcher to acquire in-depth information from the responses given. A summary of the data analysis process will be provided in the table below:

Table 1: Summary of the six phase thematic analysis process which was undertaken

Phase	Process
1. Becoming familiar with the data	This is where the researcher immersed herself in the data by reading and re-reading the data searching for meanings and patterns.
2. Generating initial codes	Initial codes from the data were generated.
3. Searching for themes	Coded data was sorted into potential themes and all the coded data extracts within each identified theme were collated.
4. Reviewing themes	A set of candidate themes were developed. Themes were reviewed and refined.
5. Defining and naming themes	Each theme was identified in order to determine what it is about. The aspect of data which each theme captures was identified. A name was given to each theme.
6. Producing report	Final analysis was conducted and a report written.

Source: Braun & Clarke (2006)

3.11 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

According to Nueman (2011), ethics are rules of behavior based on ideas about what is morally good and bad or set of principles of right conduct. The following are ethical considerations:

- **Permission to conduct study**

The researcher will obtain permission to conduct study from the Research Ethical Review Committee of the University of Venda.

- **Informed consent for participation**

The researcher acquired consent from the respondents to participate in the research project and the respondents were informed of their rights. Reason for consent of participation was to allow respondents to enter the research project voluntarily and to ensure that the subjects are not exposed to risks that are greater than the gains they might derive. Feldman (2012) entails that obtaining informed consent involves providing information on the goals of study and the participant's involvement and the dangers which might ensue if there are any.

- **Respect for respondents**

The individual has the right to decide whether or not to participate in a study without the risk penalty or unfair treatment. The respondents have a right to withdraw from the study at any time, or to refuse to give information or to ask for clarifications about the purpose of the study.

- **Confidentiality**

The research was conducted in a responsible manner and no confidential data was recorded or published. The researcher did not violate the participants' right to privacy. The researcher used the information acquired only for the purpose of this study.

3.12 SUMMARY

The researcher in this section presented the design and methodology used in conducting the study. The research design which is descriptive was outlined in this section. Also the research methodology which was qualitative in nature was outlined. The study area, study population, sampling size which consists of 8 male and 8 female students, data collection, data analysis ethical considerations were also outlined. It appears common for sexual harassment victims to experience negative physiological effects and treatment for the victims and harassers is hindered because do not report the incident (Durmus, 2013). Perpetrators of sexual harassment have evolved from males harassing females to female lesbians harassing other lesbians and male gays

harassing other gays. However, man still hold a greater chance of being the harasser (Beninger, 2013).

CHAPTER 4

4.0 DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents and analyses the data collected for the purpose of assessing student sexual harassment at a rural university in South Africa. The data was gathered through interviews and from sixteen participants. Thematic data analysis was used as an overall approach of data analysis. The data presented were in line with the research aim, objectives and research questions outlined in chapter one of this study. The data analysis commenced with the presentation of biographical data. The latter is followed by the presentation and analysis of students' perception of sexual harassment, student's awareness of the university policy on sexual harassment, common types of sexual harassment experienced by students, reduction of sexual harassment through policy awareness, locations where sexual harassment occurs, some student groups experience sexual harassment more than others, contributory factors to sexual harassment, the effects of sexual harassment and prevalence of help resource for victims .

4.2 Biographical Information

This section presents biographical data pertaining to gender, level of study and sexual orientation of the respondents who were interviewed.

4.2.1 Educational level of participants

In this study, the respondents consists of four post graduates three are females and one male. Twelve are undergraduate students consisting five females and seven male students.

4.2.2 Gender

The study consists of eight male and eight female students from both post graduate and undergraduate level.

4.2.3 Sexual orientation

The respondents in the study were made up of five male heterosexual students, three male homosexual students and eight heterosexual female students.

4.3 THEME ONE: STUDENTS' PERCEPTION REGARDING SEXUAL HARASSMENT

This section discusses and analyses data on the perceptions of students on sexual harassment. All the respondents that were interviewed demonstrated that they identify sexual harassment as any unwanted sexual advance or gesture and that, sexual harassment can be verbal, physical and visual. Gruber, (1992) argues that there are three major elements to the behavioural definition of sexual harassment. First of all, the behaviour has to be sexual in nature which includes jokes, innuendos, flirting, forced fondling, and attempted or actual rape. In other words, the behavior must have a sexual connotation to it. The second element is that the behaviour has to be deliberate and repetitive. However, some first-time behaviours are so offensive that they can be considered deliberate, inappropriate, and illegal. In most instances, the behaviour has to be repetitive before it can be considered sexual harassment. The third element of the behavioural definition is that sexual harassment is unwelcome by the victim (Gruber, 1992).

4.3.1 Sub-theme: Sexual harassment can be verbal

The majority of the female respondents attested that they have been victims of verbal sexual harassment in the university. They also confirm that the perpetrators included faculty staff and student to student sexual harassment on campus. Verbal sexual harassment according to Tang *et al*, (1996) includes making sexual comments, jokes, gestures, spreading sexual rumors about a person and calling someone gay, lesbian or homophobic names such as faggot, dyke or queer, commenting on someone's sexual abilities, body parts or clothing and howling, catcalling or whistling. The respondents supported this view as substantiated by the following quotations:

I once passed by a group of guys near the sports hall one of them started whistling at me. The others followed by jeering and calling me hot yellow bone. It made me feel very uncomfortable, I continued walking fast like there were not talking to me.

In addition to this one respondent said that:

I went to the new student administration to enquire on something, then I was directed to a cubicle where a male staff was assisting me. After he was done he mumbled the words 'short thing' I pretended like I didn't hear then he wrote his phone number behind the receipt he gave me and winked at me.

Gruber (1992) who analysed court cases, proposed a typology in which he identified eleven specific types of harassment, which consisted of four types of verbal requests, three verbal

remarks, and four nonverbal displays. The verbal requests category includes sexual bribery, sexual advances, relational advances, and subtle pressure/advances. Verbal remarks include personal remarks, for example, offensive and embarrassing comments, jokes, or teasing directed to a particular woman.

One female respondent testified and said that:

I was sitting at the cafeteria waiting to attend a class when this guy approached me. We started having a normal conversation and then out of the blue he leaned backwards and said I really like your bums; I wouldn't mind having that in my bed I just stood up and left.

As highlighted above, sexual harassment which occurs at university include student to student and staff to student. Females in most instances are the victims of verbal sexual harassment. Stockdale (1993) proposed the misperception sexual model to explain why more females experience sexual harassment than males. The author suggested that males may misperceive women's friendliness as sexiness and a desire to have a sexual relationship, leading to their sexual advances and seductive behaviour towards females. The evidence above indicates that some of the students perceive sexual harassment as any unwelcome, unexpected, sexual gesture which is verbal.

4.3.2 Sub-theme: Sexual harassment can be physical

Besides sexual harassment being unwanted verbal sexual and seductive remarks. The majority of the respondents also from both males and females also defined sexual harassment as any unsolicited sexual physical conduct. This can be supported by the following extracts:

A guy I don't know grabbed my breast in the library by the book shelf passage as we were passing each other. I turned and hit him with an umbrella which I was holding. He kept walking like nothing happened. I was so infuriated, everyone looked at me like I was crazy because they didn't witness him touching me.

European Directive (2002) defines sexual harassment as a situation where unwanted verbal, non-verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature occurs. This violates the dignity of a person and creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment (European Directive, 2002). Moreover according to Sharma (2013), supported sexual harassment in education includes: inappropriate sexualised comments or gestures; unwanted physical contact such as touching, pinching or groping through to threats of exam failure; or sexual assault and

rape. Another respondent indicated that physical sexual harassment is prevalent on campus when he stated that:

I was attending a bash at the auditorium. A girl came squeezed my private parts and asked me to accompany her to her room. To be honest, I was surprised I also noticed that she was tipsy and politely declined her offer and told her that what she was doing is inappropriate. One of her friend came and grabbed her they left. It's really sad how sometimes girls throw themselves at guys.

The statement above is evidence that even male students are subjected to sexual harassment. Leach, (2013) states that sexual harassment could also include sexual favours in exchange for good grades or preferential treatment in class. The perpetrators can be students, lecturers, teachers or administrative staff. Correspondingly Owoaje and Olusola-Taiwo (2010), found that the majority of female respondents had been sexually harassed by male classmates and lecturers in several tertiary institutions in Nigeria. Of these 48.2% experienced physical sexual harassment, while 32.2% had requests to do something sexual in exchange for academic favours Owoaje and Olusola-Taiwo (2010). This same problem is occurring at the University of Venda. This is revealed by a respondent who reported that:

I had been failing a particular module my lecture called me in. I went to the office expecting to get assistance or something. After a long discussion about solving the problem, he stretched his hand towards mine across the table caressing the palm of my hand and said "you know there is always a way out especially for a beautiful girl like you, give me a good time and you will graduate". For that moment my brain froze, I stood up and rushed out of the office. I knew no one will believe me if I report this. I failed the exam that semester just as I expected. The following year I made application to change the degree; I didn't want to cause any trouble. I have not encountered a similar problem in my current degree.

In addition to this another female respondent further said:

I got an invitation from a guy who was supposedly then my friend during a weekend at Lost City boys' residence. I drink occasionally with him so he offered me a glass of wine he had drugged with silver bullet which sexually arouses you. I passed out and he forced himself on me. I slightly remember some of the things that were happening. The following morning when I had come back to myself we had a huge fight and he was denying it saying

I drank too much and I asked for it from him and I know very well that's not true. I felt disgusted by myself I still do ... I thought he was my friend but I was wrong. I have never talked to him since that day I chose to move on with my life and be more careful. I just want to finish and leave this place.

The above statements made by the respondents show that most students perceive or understand sexual harassment to be any unwelcome sexual physical conduct. These statements illustrate that sexual harassment is indeed a public health and public safety problem for both female and male students especially in the university. It can be noted from the above remarks that student sexual harassment is occurring among the students at the University of Venda.

4.3.3 Sub-theme: Sexual harassment can be visual

Data collected revealed that some of the students interpret sexual harassment as visual for example display of naked pictures or displaying body parts that should be covered, obscene gestures, display of sex related objects as well as long staring and sexually suggestive looks.

Many of us men lose concentration when we see sensitive parts such as the nipples, breasts, hips of female students in class. When this happens repeatedly, the shock lingers and affects one's concentration to school work. Girls dress so provocatively in this university they sexually harass us by revealing sensitive parts of their body.

Abiodun (2012) argues that 79% of faculty males in Nigerian universities have experienced visual/non-verbal sexual harassment. The same study reported that males have been in, at least, a situation with female student(s) whose dressing exposes sensitive parts of their body. Similarly, Thomas (2015) reported that a study conducted with the faculty males in Canadian colleges revealed that a good number of female students intentionally dress provocatively to school, leaving vital parts of their bodies uncovered, with the intention to seduce faculty males.

Another respondent highlighted the following:

Many a time female students visit our offices wearing revealing clothes you can even see the colour of the bra and panties. It's really destructive and sometimes sexually arousing if you find the girl attractive. They know we are students in positions of influence and they just want to get their way. I am a man and I'm naturally affected by what I see and these girls take advantage of that by harassing guys using their bodies.

The above response shows that a majority of male students regard sexual harassment as sexual act that is visual. This is due to the mostly the provocative way females dress around campus. Most of the male students in the sample claimed that they had experienced visual related sexual harassment from female students in the University of Venda.

De Almeida (2014) defines visual/non-verbal harassment as the unwanted display of visual material of a sexual nature for example slides, photos, posters and pamphlets. Gilmore, *et al* (2015) support above illustration by stating that nonverbal sexual harassment items include, among other things, displaying body parts through revealing clothing or pictures of a sexual nature through Facebook and e-mail, inappropriate eye contact (twinkling) and inappropriate gestures that show someone's sexual intention.

According to the majority of the respondents, sexual harassment constitutes of touching body parts, and suggestive gestures. When asked about their understanding of sexual harassment female students rated touching body parts and sexual remarks as being the most indicative action of sexual harassment. Among male students a little less than half the students rated exposing body parts as being the most indicative action of sexual harassment. Male students also rated provocative attire to be the most terrible sexual harassment they experience.

4.4 THEME TWO: AWARENESS OF THE UNIVERSITY POLICY ON SEXUAL HARASSMENT

The respondents gave different views regarding their awareness of the university's policy on sexual harassment. The majority of the respondents outlined that they had no knowledge about the sexual harassment policy. Only a few of the respondents indicated that they had little knowledge about the policy. Asked to give reasons why they are not aware of the policy all respondents construed that the university has not made proper and efficient effort to communicate with the students about the sexual harassment policy. Some of the respondents argued that awareness of the policy is only limited to the victims only if they report an incident. In addition a few of the respondents claimed that victims do not speak resulting in the policy being redundant Furthermore others indicated that policy makers are also perpetrators of sexual harassment.

4.4.1 Sub-theme: Sexual harassment policy is not readily worded to the students

On the question of the awareness of the sexual harassment policy majority of the respondents indicated that the policy is not readily worded to help them. The policy of the university clearly stipulates what consists of sexual harassment. However, some students are experiencing sexual harassment in their day to day activities but are unable to recognise it due to lack of awareness. This issue was indicated by what the majority of the students indicated below:

The policy is not well communicated and there is lack of awareness as to how to go about this sexual harassment issue. I mean every student knows when and if they will be a bash or Mr and Miss Univen such events draw crowds so why is the same not being done about sexual harassment policy and awareness. This just shows what both the management and the students are not prioritising awareness of sexual harassment.

Another respondent supported the above statement by stating that:

The sexual harassment policy is not readily worded or displayed at strategic points. That is why I don't specifically know it and what it states.

Leach (2013) indicated that some victims are also reluctant to report their abuse because they do not have knowledge of where to get assistance on campus. They believe that if they report incidents no action would be taken against the perpetrator, because many of the perpetrators are not punished, especially in undeveloped countries (Leach, 2013). In Zimbabwe, most students do not report their victimisation because perpetrators are not publicly disciplined for sexual harassment (Jamela, 2011). Many do not report their victimisation because some of the male perpetrators blame female students for wearing provocative clothes or behaving provocatively (Leach, 2013).

In addition, another respondent stated that:

It is just common knowledge that institutions should have a sexual harassment policy to protect the staff and students. However, I have been a student here for the past three years I have not received any communication regarding the sexual harassment policy or seen a notice about it.

In light of the above extracts, it can be deduced that students would be more safe and open to report any sexual harassment incidences if the policy was readily accessible. The culture itself of openly discussing sexual harassment has not been established at the University of Venda. This has led to an increase in the problem of sexual harassment. A large population of victims shy away from speaking up, causing perpetrators to continue with their unscrupulous acts.

4.4.2 Sub-theme: Policy information limited to victims

On the question of awareness of the sexual harassment policy some respondents demonstrated that the policy is only made known to victims who are brave enough to report their sexual harassment experiences. This is captured in the following extracts by the respondents:

Ok I do not personally know about the policy of sexual harassment maybe because I have never directly encountered the problem, but I do know a lot about practising safe sex because there are condoms lying around in every corner of this university like gates, toilets, residences... I can just say the university management and student representative board has not made any effort to make the policy accessible and knowledgeable to students. They can also put the policy everywhere for students to know and read about it like they do with the issue of safe sex.

A survey in South Korean universities found that 65% of the victims did not report their victimisation mainly because it was not clear which body is responsible for dealing with the issue and they were afraid of future victimisation which could include being blamed for the incident(s), stigmatization or ridicule (Wilson, 2014). Also the policies that are established by colleges and universities need to be implemented in order to be effective. Joubert, van Wyk and Rothmann (2011) found, in their study of higher education institutions in South Africa, that the implementation of the sexual harassment policies in South African universities was ineffective because very few academic staff members received training and any guidance on how the policies should be utilised. In addition one respondent had this to say:

I am not aware of the university policy on sexual harassment because it is conceptualized that such matters generally concern those who are affected. It's not possible to just come across the policy in this university. I am only concerned with getting literature that is useful to my modules. There is no chance I will just think of searching for a sexual harassment policy. I think it will be better if there can be a way where the policy is made compulsory in all schools and distributed to all students.

Jones, Boocock, Sem (2013) found that the New Zealand universities provide a poor level of information and support for students who think they may have been subject to sexual harassment. Jones *et al* (2013) recommended that universities in New Zealand place greater emphasis on the content and presentation of their policies and service information online so that students can have easy access to this information. They stated that “high visibility and easy accessibility should be the guiding principles of information provision for victims but it is also critical to ensure that the process and the bodies or individuals available to assist students are clearly identified” (Jones, *et al*, 2013). Moreover, another respondent supporting the above statement of lack of awareness said that:

I have no knowledge about the university’s policy on sexual harassment because sexual harassment is not taken seriously unless it’s in the form of rape. Not everyone is comfortable walking around admitting that they have been raped this has made the university management to be reluctant on making the policy awareness a priority. As a result it will promote other less aggressive sexual behaviours to happen to students in the varsity.

The statements listed above show that most students are not aware of the university policy on sexual harassment because it is not easily accessible to those who are not victims that is those who have reported the matter to the management. It can be supported that establishing the culture of discussing the issue of sexual harassment openly and making it compulsory knowledge will enable students to stand up for others and support victims by cooperatively fighting the perpetrator.

4.5 THEME THREE: COMMON FORMS OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT

This section covers the discussion and analysis of data on the common forms of sexual harassment among students. The data highlighted the common types of sexual harassment happening in the university. The following types of harassment were recorded to be occurring gender-based harassment, seductive behaviour, sexual bribery, sexual imposition, and sexual coercion.

4.5.1 Sub-theme: Gender-based harassment

This type of sexual harassment involves generalised sexist remarks and behaviour that convey degrading or insulting attitudes about women. The majority of female respondents indicated that they have experienced gender harassment in the university. This type of sexual harassment is supported by the patriarchal system which views men as superior to women in all facets of life. In this regard, even academically female students encounter experiences that degrade their humanity because of gender. The respondents reacted in the following manner with regard to this issue:

One of my lecturers always makes sexually offensive jokes towards women. He doesn't speak about anyone within the class in particular, but his jokes are always about sexual favours women should perform. He even makes suggestive jokes inviting females to offer him sexual favours for marks.

Similarly, another respondent gave a statement revealing gender harassment in classes and said that:

I had a lecturer in my first year who used an example of a prostitute to explain a concept, and he used me as the prostitute.

Female students attest to experiencing sexual harassment which is gender based in the University of Venda. Female students in Zimbabwe's universities report that they are increasingly subjected to sexual harassment by their lecturers (Jamela, 2011). Other research studies in different educational institutions of higher learning in many African countries revealed that sexual harassment by male faculty, staff and students included degrading verbal remarks, unwanted touching, and other types of gender based violence (Adedokun, 2004; Abati, 2006). Another respondent said that:

I was struggling with a module in Statistics and my lecturer told me that I took a degree which is not for women, he went on to say I just have the beauty and the sexy body but no the brains.

Another respondent supported the statement above and said the following:

I was in the stadium warming up for my soccer session minding my own business when one of the male athletes shouted, “don’t break those legs kicking the ball we still need them for baby-making”...that made feel so uncomfortable.

These comments show that most female students in the University of Venda experience gender based sexual harassment from faculty staff and their peers that is male students, when they are assumed to have transgressed gender roles. There still exists a mentality that women are inferior and cannot do certain things. In an education setting sexist jokes and remarks that are offensive are common if the individuals are perceived to have transgressed gender roles (Cantor *et al*, 2015). For instance female students who excel in sciences and take up jobs such as pilots, engineers and astronauts can face resentment from male counterparts (Hill and Silva, 2005). Another respondent supported with the following comment:

I took my application for Masters to the Head of Department for recommendation and he made a joke saying I should concentrate on finding a man to marry me. He continued that it is the man who should make more money than the woman and offered himself as candidate to marry me and that I will be his second wife.

Gender harassment is generalised sexist statements and behaviour that convey insulting or degrading attitudes about women (Beninger, 2013). Examples include insulting remarks, offensive graffiti, obscene jokes or humour about sex or women in general. Braine, Bless and Fox, (2011) reported that an individual can be sexually harassed just because they are female.

The majority of female respondents have reported to have experienced gender based sexual harassment in their day to day activities in the university. This reveals that despite the culture in Africa, some people still think it is normal to violate a woman in some way. The men might believe that as long as they are not raping the victim, it is alright to say or do anything else. This sort of behaviour is wrong. It does not matter if the aggressor meant it as a joke, because there are limits to jokes. No joke should make anyone feel uncomfortable.

4.5.2 Sub-theme: Seductive behaviour

Seductive behaviour is any unwanted, repetitive action performed by the harasser to get the victim to comply with sexual or intimate requests. Seduction is the process of deliberately enticing a person, to lead astray from duty, rectitude, or the like; to corrupt, to persuade or induce to engage in sexual behaviour. The majority of both male and female students reported to have experience

seductive behaviour from either peer students or faculty staff in the university. This is supported by the following statement below:

One of my co-supervisors tells me often that she wishes that I liked older women and that she wishes I was her age or vice versa, says we would be perfect.... Lord knows I cannot wait to be done with my research... The most confusing thing is that she has a husband.

Seductive behaviour is any unwanted, repetitive action performed by the harasser to get the victim to comply with sexual or intimate requests. Examples of seductive behavior include, but are not limited to: repeated invitations for dinner or dates. Seduction includes persuasive behaviour or induce to engage in sexual behaviour (Adedokun, 2004). Another respondent added that:

When I attended university in my first year, one male senior student told me to my face that he wanted to have a sexual relationship with me because I was the most beautiful thing he had ever seen... He would constantly come knocking at my door looking for me... despite having made it clear that I did not want him.

Similarly one of the male respondent said:

A girl I was in one of my classes kept telling me that she wants me and she will love me better than my girlfriend... She started sending me he nude pictures wearing just a bra saying that I was missing out on fun... okay it's very tempting but hey I love my girlfriend we have been through a lot together. I told her to stop, but she continued so I had to block her on my WhatsApp.

Examples of sexually harassing seductive behaviours include attire that exposes sensitive parts of female students' bodies, teasing faculty or student males about their sexual prowess, suggestive text messages from female students, often passing pleasant sexual remarks about faculty males and making frequent phone calls to faculty male (Abiodun, 2012).

In addition, another respondent a male student stated that:

A female friend of mine whom I usually hang out with on weekends introduced me to this other girl. We exchanged contacts and regularly chatted. Everything seemed okay until she started sending me messages telling me that she wanted me to break her virginity and that she really likes me... it came as a shock.... But I told her I was okay with just

being friends and I did not want to sleep with her but she kept on insisting and coming to my room unannounced I just started ignoring her from then. I really am not into forward girls you know.

Correspondingly female respondent said that:

There is a guy in all my classes who consistently touches me around my waist when I'm not on guard I really don't appreciate it... Sometimes he comes behind me and whispers in my ear that I smell nice... and everyone in class thinks that it's cute I have told him several times to stop but he just does it anyway and he won't stop.

The above reports by the respondents reveal that both male and female students are victims of sexual harassment of the seductive kind. Student-to-student harassment is the most common form of sexual harassment on campus. The majority of female and male students say that peer harassment happens often or occasionally in the universities and more than three quarters of the students who experienced sexual harassment have been harassed by a student or a former student (Joubert *et al*, 2011). Given that students comprise the vast majority of the campus population, it is perhaps not surprising that most sexual harassment occurs between and among students. Studies stipulate that the prevalence of peer harassment among college students suggests a student culture that accepts or at least seems to tolerate this type of behaviour (Jones *et al*, 2013).

4.5.3 Sub-theme: Sexual bribery

Sexual bribery refers to solicitation of sexual activity or other sex-linked behaviour by promise of reward; it also refers to unwelcome or inappropriate promises of rewards in exchange for sexual favours. Data collected provides sufficient evidence that some students are experiencing sexual bribery. Some services which the university is obliged to offer the students freely are being manipulated by those in power to offer those particular services. This is evident in the following extract:

A tutor offered me better marks for sexual favours because he had access to marking my paper.

Similarly, another respondent said that:

It was with a student representative working at the housing office he suggested that he could organise a room for me if I perform oral sex on him... at first I thought he was just making a joke then I realised he wasn't.. He repeatedly suggested it to me.

Studies reveal that student-to-student harassment is the most common form of sexual harassment on campus. The majority of students say that peer harassment happens often or occasionally at their college, and more than three quarters of students who experienced sexual harassment have been harassed by a student or a former student. Given that students comprise the vast majority of the campus population, it is perhaps not surprising that most sexual harassment occurs between and among students (Abati, 2006).

4.5.4 Sub-theme: Sexual imposition

Sexual contact has a specific meaning, which is defined as the touching of an erogenous zone, including the thigh, genitals, buttock, pubic region, or female breast, for the purpose of sexually arousing or gratifying either person (Beninger, 2013). However when the contact is forced on a person without their will it becomes sexual imposition. Most students in this study agree that sexual harassment is upsetting. Minority of female students reported to have encountered sexual imposition personally as well as male students however they have heard about some students who experienced it. This is shown by the data collected below:

My friend was raped when she was drunk. We were attending a pens down bash when we met some cool guys who were senior students we drank a lot. We were both drunk and out of it and slept in one of the guys' room. It was late to go off campus. My friend in the morning told me she felt someone having sexual intercourse with her it also showed on her body. When she confronted the guy he just said don't worry I used a condom.

Perpetrators of sexual imposition use force or take advantage of the impaired judgement of their victims. Sometimes perpetrators substantially impair the judgment or control the other person by administering any drug, intoxicant, or controlled substance to the other person surreptitiously or by force, threat of force, or deception.

4.6 THEME FOUR: PREVENTION THROUGH UNIVERSITY SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICY

It is accepted that most organisations, and especially most institutions of higher education in South Africa, have sexual harassment policies in place. A study conducted by Wilken and Badenhorst (2003) confirms this, but also points out serious deficiencies in the content and especially the implementation of these policies. According to Gouws and Kritzinger (2007) and Wilken and Badenhorst (2003), most higher education institutions in South Africa have introduced sexual harassment policies. However, questions arise about the effectiveness of these policies due to continuous occurrences of sexual harassment incidences.

In this study, the majority of the respondents agreed that awareness of university policy on sexual harassment can play a great role in eradicating occurrences of sexual harassment. This is shown by the following statement below:

Awareness of the sexual harassment policy will help to stop sexual harassment because every student will have knowledge of what constitutes the action and the consequences that follow breaking the rules stated in the policy.

Another respondent said that:

University policy on sexual harassment awareness will promote a culture of creating a safe environment hence reduce occurrences of sexual harassment among students.

However, a few respondents stated that reduction in the occurrences of sexual harassment will not only happen due to awareness of the policy but that the will power of individuals is important. According to Stockdale (1996), there is no perfect policy or procedure for dealing with sexual harassment. Three reasons are provided for this statement. Firstly, it is nearly impossible to design a system that will satisfy all its users. Some complainants may feel more injured or unfairly treated, especially if the only evidence is one person's word against another. Secondly, the differences between organisations in terms of their missions, rules, traditions and locations make it very difficult to have a perfect policy. The third reason refers to the differences between people regarding what constitutes a good policy (Stockdale, 1996).

This is supported by the following data collected which stated that:

The will power of the person determines whether they will choose to comply with the policy of sexual harassment or not because staff members and students are experiencing this problem on a daily basis in this university.

Another respondent added that:

Each year in this university there are scandals about sexual harassment between staff and students despite the existence of the sexual harassment policy.

A number of authors concur that the mere presence of a policy does not ensure its effectiveness (Owens, Gomes & Morgan, 2004; Paludi, 1996). A policy has to be effectively implemented, in order to have value and to avoid becoming another well-formulated, impressive sounding document compiled by consultants and filed by the human resource department.

4.7 THEME FIVE: LOCATIONS WHERE SEXUAL HARASSMENT OCCUR

This section covers the discussion and analysis of data pertaining to on locations where sexual harassment occurs. The most common location were identified which are classrooms, offices and residential rooms.

According to Gouws and Kritzinger (1999), most of the harassment in high schools and universities happens in hallways. Classrooms are the second most frequent locations where harassment occurs. Durmus, (2013) further states that sexual harassment occurs nearly everywhere on campus, including student housing and classrooms. It happens on large and small campuses, at public and private colleges and universities, and at two-year and four-year institutions. It is most common at large universities, four-year institutions, and private colleges.

The majority of the respondents agreed that sexual harassment happens anywhere on campus as long as it is a conducive environment for the harasser and the type of sexual harassment occurring. One respondent indicated the occurrence of sexual harassment in student housing and said that:

I had been drinking and went into his dorm room with him so I thought it was my fault. However, when I told him to stop, he did not, even though he knew I wanted him to stop. I knew I could not break away at that point in time. He was too strong for me, he forced

himself on me. I blame myself. I have to remind myself that if it had been the other way around and he told me to stop, I would have stopped... he did not... he raped me.

Apart from the student housing locations some students indicated that sexual harassment happens in the university administrative buildings such as offices of staff members. A large number of female heterosexual students and female homosexuals are prone to unwelcome explicit behaviour, messages and remarks and other forms of sexual harassment (Jones et al 2013). Students holding offices of authority are responsible for provision of services to other students have implied promise of reward to their financially disadvantaged peers if they comply with a sexually oriented request (Abati, 2006). Furthermore, some students are threatened by their fellow students in power or staff members if they do not comply with a sexually oriented request as revealed by this respondent:

My lecturer offered me better grades in exchange for a romantic relationship while in his office. I had 39% I just thought if I go negotiate for a 40% or get a special test I can write right the exam... I figured it will be better to repeat the module next year and pretend that conversation never happened... I really don't want any trouble.

Sexual harassment may be carried out anywhere on colleges by administrators, trustees, educators, school staff, students, third-party service providers, visitors and others. Sexual harassment will further result in a poisoned environment for students or school staff (Beninger, 2013). One of the respondent said that:

A guy in my class constantly sends messages on my phone... every time I walk in the lecture hall, he sends me a text telling me how sexy my breasts look in my clothes. He has made it a habit.... I have confronted him several times telling him to stop but he won't.

On the question of locations where sexual harassment occurs on campus majority of the respondents agreed that sexual harassment happens anywhere on campus. Depending on the conduciveness of the environment for the harasser and the type of sexual harassment occurring.

4.8 THEME SIX: CONTRIBUTORY FACTORS OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Data collected from the interviews with the respondents revealed different contributory factors of sexual harassment. The data highlighted the following factors: alcohol and drug use, age and level of study, residential occupation and dress code.

4.8.1 Sub-theme: Alcohol and drug abuse

The majority of the respondent in the study revealed that alcohol and drug abuse is a huge contributing factor as it puts the victim in a vulnerable state of not being able to defend himself/herself. With regard to alcohol use by the victim, it is interesting to note the findings of studies by Durmus (2013), which indicated that the effects of alcohol and group drinking increase the chances of a man interpreting female behaviours as possible sexual interest. Binge drinking and drug use are related to increased rates of harassment among young females (Jones *et al.*, 2013). This is supported by the following statements from the respondents:

My political party won they organised an outdoor bash Saturday night everyone was drinking including myself. One of the student leaders approached me we started dancing I didn't think anything was wrong everyone was in jovial mood...until he started brushing his hands everywhere around my body and shoved his hand into my under wear and touched my private area. I pulled away from him in shock walked through the crowd and left... I have never talked to him about it I didn't know how to say it or what to say."

One respondent said that:

I came across a bunch of drunk guys at Lost City parking lot coming from student bar on. I was studying for a test at the classes and writing the following morning. They started jeering and asking me to join them. One of the guys followed me asking for my number and pulling my hand when I got angry and told him to stop... he spanked my bum and ran back to the boys. They were all laughing.

Alcohol and drug consumption by the victim is a major risk factor for sexual harassment. Taiwo *et al.*, (2014) found that heavy episodic drinking was the strongest predictor of both rape when intoxicated and other types of rape (physically forced rape and rape due to threats of force). High school heavy episodic drinking patterns were also significantly associated with the risk of rape while in college (Anju, 2015). The Harvard College Alcohol study also found that drug use was associated with an increased risk of rape (Finkelhor and Asdigian, 2009).

The study indicates through data collected that the majority of the respondents attest to the fact that sexual harassment is highly possible when there is alcohol or drug use involved. Alcohol and drug use result in one becoming a perpetrator or one becoming vulnerable to being a victim of sexual harassment.

4.8.2 Sub-theme: Age and level of study

Freshmen and sophomore women appear to be at greater risk of being victims of sexual assault than are upperclassmen. A recent study employing a convenience sample of university women found that 84% of the women who reported sexually coercive experiences experienced the incident during their first four semesters on campus (Bennett et al, 2007). Age itself may be a related risk factor. Himelein (1995), recorded that underage women were more likely to report being raped (including rape when intoxicated) than women 30 or older (Mamaru *et al*, 2015).

Less than half of the respondents agreed that the age and level of study of the students is a contributing factor to sexual harassment incidence. Data collected revealed that first year students are taken advantage of because of their age and lack of familiarity with their surroundings. The above concept is supported by the respondent who commented and said that:

I experienced sexual harassment the first day I enrolled into the university as a first year student. Staying in the male dorm was horror because I am gay... guys would shout and make fun of my manhood in dorm corridors of how I have sex with other guys compared to how they have sex with girls... once I returned from class and found nude magazine pictures of girls spread on my bed by my roommate and his friends. The third week I had already moved and found a room off campus I couldn't stay on campus anymore... I didn't know where to report I also didn't want to create any unnecessary attention to myself.

Relatively another respondent indicated that:

During orientation days, in my first year, I became friends with one of the senior students, because he was kind and church going from the conversation we were having. I felt safe and comfortable. For days he came to my room just to see if I was settling in well. So I invited him to sit on my bed and we chatted as usual. That's when he started making sexual advances forcing his head inside my bra... he told me its ok I should relax he could become my boyfriend if I wanted... I shoved him off in panic, ran towards the door told him to leave or I would scream.

From the above comments it is apparent that age and level of study especially being a first year student contributes to being sexually harassed. Being a senior student also contribute to one being a potential perpetrator. De Almeida, (2014) stipulated that college students are in one of the most vulnerable age groups for sexual assault and the first six weeks of college are considered

a “red zone” for incoming freshmen when it comes to rape. The first month and a half of college is the time when freshmen women are most likely to be raped or experience attempted rape. This time period is known as the “Red Zone” meaning a period of vulnerability for sexual assaults, beginning when freshmen first walk onto campus.

4.8.3 Sub-theme: Residential occupation

Some of respondents highlighted that staying in university residences contributes to sexual harassment because students have no supervision and they exercise too much freedom. Studies by Abiodun (2012) and Beninger (2013) show that a traditional dormitory-style residence places young men and women in constant contact in a 'family' environment where males appear to have influence on establishing the organizational culture. One respondent reinforced the above concept and said that:

There is guy staying opposite my block who constantly knocks at my door asking me to take a shower with him...and that he wants to see my naked body in the water... it's also uncomfortable standing in the queues for a shower with boys. They intentionally come to use our showers to watch girls in towels.

Another respondent indicated that:

Girls come to my room very late at night unannounced wearing short revealing pyjamas to get help with school work... sometimes they intentionally rub their breasts on me pretending to reach out for something.

According to Anju (2015), both female and male residents agreed that a variety of behaviours which, under most current sexual harassment policy standards, would be considered as sexual harassment, occurred routinely at moderate to high levels of frequency in the day to day activities of the residence (Anju, 2015).

My neighbour always grabs me, squeeze my bum and carrying me when he greets me. I have told him I'm not comfortable... sometimes he listens sometimes he just does it these days I avoid going out my room when he is outside...I don't want to seem uncool by making a big deal of it.

Fair and Vanyur, (2011) stated that female students who resided on campus had an increased risk for sexual victimisation occurring on campus due to peer to peer sexual harassment.

4.8.4 Sub-theme: Dress code

Few of the respondents agreed that dress code that is sexually provocative is a contributory factor to sexual harassment incidences. To say a woman dresses provocatively does not simply mean that she dresses in order to be attractive to others. To describe a woman's outfit as provocative is to say that her outfit is likely to create certain sexual feelings in observers, and that those reacting to her outfit are not fully responsible for their behaviour (Prinsloo, 2006). This is supported by a respondent who said that:

Sexual harassment incidents of girls I have witnessed involved the female wearing extremely revealing clothes like see through tops you can see the bra and short skirts while others will be wearing long dresses but very tight fitting you can even see the lining of their under-wears. As a guy when you see these things it just provokes a reaction in you naturally.

There appears to be agreement that "certain types of clothing are sexy, sexually alluring, or sexually provocative, particularly clothing that reveals the shape of a woman's body and sexual body parts, such as her breasts (Anju, 2015). Another respondent said that:

It's easy to cat call girls who wear sexy clothes. It shows that they want attention so we give them the attention...they dress in short dresses because they know we will be drawn to them.

Men more than women assign sexual meanings to women's outfits. According to Prinsloo (2016) men interpret women's verbal and nonverbal behaviours to be more sexually related than women intend (Prinsloo, 2006; Taiwo et al, 2014 and Bennett et al 2007). In general, men routinely attribute sexual intent to certain kinds of women's clothing and behaviour. Thus, a woman's outfit may be judged as sexually provocative (Taiwo et al, 2014).

4.9 THEME SEVEN: EFFECTS OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT ON STUDENTS

Data collected from the interviews with the respondents revealed many and different effects of sexual harassment. The effect and impact of sexual harassment varies from person to person depending on the severity of the harassing behaviour. Data highlighted the following effects of sexual harassment on education, health and social life: isolation, illness from stress and trauma, alcohol and drug abuse, poor academic performance and depression.

4.9.1 Sub-theme: Isolation

The majority of the respondents identified isolation as one evident effect caused by sexual harassment. According to QuicoeDuco (2010), sexual harassment has a destabilising effect on the education of students. Some even lose interest in studying and as a result transfer to new universities or simply leave school because of feelings of hopelessness and pregnancy if they had unsafe sex with their perpetrators. Cementing these experiences is Astin's theory of student involvement, which states that, sexually harassed students may display avoidance behaviour, which includes avoiding the environment that promotes such behaviour (Okeke, 2011). One respondent expressed this view and said that:

Ever since the night I was taken advantage of because I was drunk by someone I thought was my friend, I can't stand being around guys for too long... the problem is guys are everywhere on campus... I feel safe and sane being in my room I only go to class if there is a test or exam.

Another respondent said that:

Being gay is unacceptable in this university especially to male students. They are cruel... I always avoid places where male students hangout and male residential places... I have learned to dependent on myself.

This harassment may curtail, academic growth and contribute to low self-esteem and low self-efficacy (Schwartz, 2000). The academic performance of the students involved suffers. Heterosexual female students and homosexual males find it very hard to concentrate on their work as they are mostly victims.

4.9.2 Sub-theme: Illness from stress and trauma

Some respondents revealed that sexual harassment can cause illness due to stress and trauma. Survivors of sexual assault often experience severe anxiety, which may manifest in physical symptoms such as difficulties in breathing, muscle tension, nausea, stomach cramps or headaches. These symptoms can be eased as they gradually deal with the issues underlying the stress, and employ relevant stress management strategies. This view is supported by one respondent who said that:

“I was sick for months after I realised from a rumour that the guy who forced himself on me intentionally spiked my drink so that he could make it look like it was consensual because we were both drunk... I suffered from headaches and nausea... I feel dirty and ashamed ... he was bragging to his friends about it to them it’s clearly not an assault.

Omole (2014) and Braine *et al* (2011) asserts that there is a list of environmental changes that might occur to sexually harassed victims. If the people know about the harassment, the victim might wonder who knows and what they are thinking about the case. The victim might overhear conversations from other students around about their case and they might become the subject of gossip and derogatory information and speculations

Another respondent said that:

There are days I have trouble sleeping because of headaches and stomach cramps... I'm constantly jumpy. A sudden noise, an angry voice, moving bushes and I am afraid... I know that if I had not taken the drink it wouldn't have happened.

During an assault, many victims fear for their lives. Often this fear is a direct result of the offender's threats. After the assault, a victim may be fearful of the dark, being alone or going out by themselves. They may experience fear generated by the possibility of pregnancy or STD's (sexually transmitted diseases) or live in fear of running into the offender again or facing him in court. All of these fears are very real concerns which cause illnesses (Beninger, 2013).

4.9.3 Sub-theme: Alcohol and drug abuse

One respondent indicated that a popular perception is that being drunk or high makes one more susceptible to sexual abuse or assault. In fact, the first incidence of sexual abuse or assault usually precedes first alcohol or drug use. In other words, people do not get raped because they are drunk; they may get drunk because they have been raped. This view is supported by the respondent who said that:

Since my friend was sexually assaulted, she drinks uncontrollably and hangs out with bad crowd. It's almost like she has lost will to live. I have begged her many times to report the incident to the management, but she refuses.

The long-term consequences of sexual violence can be devastating. Studies have found that survivors of sexual violence are more likely to develop drug addiction and alcoholism, and are

less successful in completing substance abuse treatment. Durmus (2013) states that it is usually necessary to begin therapy to replace substance use with healthier coping strategies before clients can be expected to maintain sobriety for any length of time. Moreover, both adolescent and adult survivors may "act out" sexually, engaging in high risk sexual activities with multiple partners (Beninger, 2013).

4.9.4 Sub-theme: Poor academic performance

Some respondents agreed that sexual assault at any stage has terrible repercussions on the academic performance of the victims. Mamaru *et al* (2015) reports that the academic performance of the victims suffers because they find it very difficult to concentrate on their academic pursuits. This has resulted in victims' low participation to avoid unwanted attention from teachers. This view is supported by a respondent who said that:

I have repeated my accounting module twice because I was failing to concentrate after my tutor asked for sex in return for a better mark ... I think he also intentionally failed me since he had access to marking my paper... our lecturer rarely comes to class and I couldn't go and complain to him I constantly bunked class because I felt uncomfortable being around the tutor... this year I can focus because he is graduating and leaving.

Another respondent said that:

My lecturer asked for a romantic relationship with me, I refused and he failed me for two years and I had trouble concentrating in class or submitting assignments in his office until I decided to switch degrees I didn't report this because there is no evidence it happened between the two of us no one witnessed.

From the responses above students lose zeal to concentrate on their studies as a result of unwanted sexual advances they encountered. This disturbs the normal academic focus that every student should have at average. Comparatively Fair *et al* (2011) stated that a persistently hostile learning environment increases students' loss of focus in their studies and contributes to a distaste for learning, which results in less involvement in academic and social activities. Moreover, Julie (2013) reported that sexual harassment has a significant psychological effect on the academic performance of female students.

4.9.5 Sub-theme: Depression

Depression is a state of low mood and aversion to activity or apathy that can affect a person's thoughts, behavior, feelings, and sense of well-being. According to Gilmore *et al* (2015)

cognitively, victims tend to form negative stereotypes in their minds about males and begin to ruminate and constantly check to see if there is anything that caused the male students or lecturers to sexually harass them and end up developing dissociative identity disorder (Anju, 2015). The majority of respondents indicated that depression is one of the negative effects caused by sexual harassment. One of the respondents said that:

I'm disgusted by myself, by the memories. I'm just worthless.

In addition another respondent indicated that:

If only I hadn't tried so hard to fit in and stayed in my room, no drinking, no parties I could have prevented it.

One of the respondents said that:

Sometimes I just want to die... I hate being different and I hate being judged for it and I hate myself Everyone thinks it's a choice to be gay.

Victims of sexual harassment can experience long-term depression, (Blackstone, 2011). In a recent study of 1,000 youths, Blackstone (2011) found that people sexually harassed in their teens and early 20s can experience depressive symptoms into their 30s. Many people who experience sexual harassment have feelings of self-doubt, Blackstone indicated that for some people, that self-doubt turned into self-blame, and victims can feel responsible for what happened. Such self-blame may have a negative effect on mental health, including promoting feelings of depression. One respondent supported this view and said that:

I felt helpless I wasn't in control of my life. My educational success depended on my complying with a demeaning act and I hated being in this university I felt lose and cheap and I couldn't report it... no one would believe me anyway.

The above responses reveal that depression becomes a serious effect to the victims affecting their day to day lives on campus, as well as their mental and physical health.

4.10 THEME EIGHT: SEXUAL HARASSMENT EXPERIENCES OF DIFFERENT STUDENT GROUPS

In this section data was collected to determine if some student groups experienced sexual harassment more than other in the university. The different groups comprised of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender group of students, first year female students and male heterosexual students.

4.10.1 Sub-theme: Lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender

Some of the respondents agreed that the lesbian, gays, bisexual and transgender group of students experience more sexual harassment than straight students or first year students. This is supported by one respondent who said that:

Lesbians and gays are more prone to verbal sexual harassment in this university that I have personally witnessed that... this also comes with the university rural set up it will take time before people adjust to gays and lesbians... communities here are pretty conservative and traditional.

Another respondent said that:

Gays experience sexual harassment in this university especially from their male counterparts. You see it when they walk around straight guys. The latter audibly pass nasty comments about their sexuality and people laugh.

A national survey conducted by the Gay, Lesbian and Straight Education Network (GLSEN) and administered to the (LGBT) Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender found that, more than four-fifths of LGBT youth experience verbal harassment, and 42% have experienced sexual harassment (Kosciw, Greytak, Villenas and Danischewski, 2016).

Correspondingly another respondent commented that:

I have a gay classmate. Every time he contributes during class, other guys whisper things like you should get a girlfriend or who are you dating now... it's really sad.

Verbal harassment is the most frequently reported type of sexual harassment by LGBT students because it contains no limitations (Jamela, 2011). Several studies have revealed that, among homosexual youth, there are more thoughts and actual suicide attempts than among heterosexual

youth. Kosciw *et al* (2016) strongly suggests that the above view is because sexual harassment is the main cause of suicide among homosexuals.

4.10.2 Sub-theme: First year female students

The Majority of the respondents indicated that first year heterosexual female students and lesbians encounter sexual harassment on campus more than male heterosexuals and LGBT students and male heterosexuals. Freshmen and sophomore women appear to be at greater risk of being victims of sexual assault than are upperclassmen in the universities (Mamaru *et al*, 2015). This view is supported by one respondent who said that:

A lot of first year female students are taken advantage of by male senior students... senior students exploit the first year students' newly found freedom... by inviting them to attend their parties organised to get the girls drunk and sleep with them without their consent this has been going on every year for the past three years I have been here.

Another respondent indicated that:

They call the first year female students fresh blood, fresh vegetables or projects... senior students intoxicate these girls and abuse them sexually. My friend was a victim of this culture. They always make it seem like it was consensual.

A study employing a convenience sample of university women found that 84% of the women who reported sexually coercive experiences experienced the incident during their first four semesters on campus (Bennett *et al*, 2007). Age itself may be a related risk factor. Himelein, (1995), recorded that underage women were more likely to report being raped (including rape when intoxicated) than women 30 or older (Mamaru *et al*, 2015).

During my first year a guy offered, to help carry my shopping bags to my room when we got to my room, he stayed for a while. Then he didn't want to leave at all saying he wants to sleep over because it was late... He forcefully hugged me saying I should start acting like a grown up because I'm now in college. I managed to kick him out of the room.

The above comments reveal that the majority of the respondents are of the view that first year females students are more vulnerable to sexual harassment on campus than other groups.

4.10.3 Sub-theme: Male heterosexual

Few of the respondents highlighted that the male heterosexual group experiences sexual harassment more than first year female students and the LGBT students. Although the most common direction of sexual harassment is male to female, a wealth of scholarship shows that men, too, are targets of sexual harassment in the workplace and educational settings (Owens *et al*, 2001). This view is supported by one respondent who said that:

I have seen incidents around campus where girls grope private parts of male students in public for attention. Especially popular girls they walk all over guys... its uncool to be mad that a hot girl touched your private parts without your consent in the university... as a guy you just have to pretend to be okay with it.

Another respondent said that:

These days, girls force you to be in a relationship. It starts with never ending messages to bra less pictures and even more being send on your Facebook inbox, email inbox WhatsApp messages everywhere... if you are not strong you will fall into the trap.

For instance, men may not find staring or whistling by women sexually harassing, but they may find these same behaviours by men harassing. The incongruity between men's and women's reactions to staring and whistling again suggests that men and women's experiences as targets of sexual harassment are asymmetrical and vary with the gender and perceived sexual orientation of the aggressor.

4.11 CONCLUSION

This chapter presented and analysed data collected for the purpose of assessing student sexual harassment at a rural university, in South Africa. Data were gathered through interviews and focus group discussions from sixteen participants. Thematic data analysis was used as an overall approach of data analysis. Chapter five will look at the overview of the study, summarises the research findings, makes recommendations and concludes the study.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses conclusions that have been drawn from the study and makes recommendations. These conclusions and recommendations are derived from the eight themes that came up from the discussions. The recommendations were made for the students, university policy making board and for future research. It is believed that the overall objectives of the study have been met and the research questions have been answered based on the findings of the study discussed in chapter four.

5.2 Theme one: Students' perception on sexual harassment

5.2.1 Conclusions

Evidence from the study has shown that all the respondents understand sexual harassment as any unwanted sexual behaviour or advances which can be visual physical or verbal made by person(s) towards another individual or individuals. Majority of the female respondents confirmed to have experienced verbal and physical sexual harassment on campus compared to the male respondents in the study. The majority of male respondents confirmed that they had encountered mostly visual sexual harassment and to a lesser extent, physical sexual harassment.

5.2.2 Recommendations

- Students must develop a culture where they treat everyone with respect and refrain from all forms of communication, action or behaviour that may be perceived as offensive.
- The university must take public action and give notice if a breach of the policy rules is experienced.

5.3 Theme two: Awareness of the university sexual harassment policy

5.3.1 Conclusions

Evidence from the study revealed that the majority of the respondents indicated that they are not aware of the policy and the specific details of the policy thereof. Whilst few respondents seemed to know about the policy but they do not know the contents outlined within the policy of sexual harassment in University of Venda.

5.3.2 Recommendations

- The university authorities can paste copies of sexual harassment policy in every room, class, bathroom and gate on campus.
- The university authorities can launch regular education campaigns on prevention of sexual harassment in every student residence every semester.

5.4 Theme three: Common forms of sexual harassment

5.4.1 Conclusions

The majority of the respondents revealed that sexual bribery, seductive behaviour and gender harassment are common forms of sexual harassment happening in the university. Some respondents also highlighted that sexual coercion and sexual imposition are occurring in the university.

5.4.2 Recommendations

- University management must set up a committee that carries out sexual harassment assessment among students every semester through questionnaires.
- The committee must give timely and adequate feedback to any complainant and report any complaint about intimidation, forceful request, attack or rape without delay.

5.5 Theme four: Prevention through sexual harassment policy

5.5.1 Conclusions

The findings of the study showed that the majority of the respondents supported the idea that, the sexual harassment policy is great tool to preventing incidences of sexual harassment through awareness. However, a respondents stated that sexual harassment has continued to happen despite the existence of the current university policy on sexual harassment.

5.5.2 Recommendations

- Sexual harassment committee must provide a progress report on the university website indicating complaints they have attended to and how they have handled them to measure the effectiveness of the policy.
- Sexual harassment offences must cease to be dealt with behind door rather students must be engaged as the jury.

5.6 Theme five: Locations where sexual harassment occurs

5.6.1 Conclusions

As revealed by the study the majority of the respondents showed that sexual harassment happens in different places on the university campus. These places include classrooms, staff offices and administration buildings, student residences and at the sport grounds.

5.6.2 Recommendations

- Students must be encouraged to intervene when they witness any sexual harassment incident around the university to promote a culture of safety.
- Both male and female students should immediately speak out to the perpetrator that they are not comfortable with their actions.
- University management must put up posters at strategic points indicating ways of how to deal with sexual harassment.

5.7 Theme six: Contributory factors of sexual harassment

5.7.1 Conclusions

The majority of female the respondents indicated that drug and alcohol use contribute to their sexual harassment experiences. While some female respondents revealed that being a freshmen contributed to their sexual harassment experiences on campus. The majority of male respondents revealed that dress code is a contributing factor of sexual harassment.

5.7.2 Recommendations

- Freshmen students should be educated during orientation phase about sexual harassment and places and people they should avoid until they know their surroundings.
- Females should avoid drinking and getting drunk around people they do not know or receiving drinks. They should get the drink on their own.
- The university should propose a policy which stipulates a dress code that is appropriate to prevent sexual harassment.

5.8 Theme seven: Effects of sexual harassment on students

5.8.1 Conclusions

It is evident from the study that sexual harassment has the following effects upon the victims: isolation, illness from stress and trauma, alcohol and drug abuse, poor academic performance, depression. The majority of the respondents highlighted their sexual harassment caused illness from and trauma that came experiencing sexual harassment. Some respondents also highlighted that sexual harassment affected their academic performance negatively others indicated that it caused depression and led to alcohol abuse.

5.8.2 Recommendations

- The university should create a confidential web-based method for submitting complaints to accommodate victims who are not comfortable making the issue public.
- Awareness campaigns of where students can go to report if they get harassed or witness sexual harassment happening should be carried out.
- Working surveillance cameras should be placed in residences, student bar, cafeteria and the grounds

5.9 Theme eight: Sexual harassment experiences of different student groups

5.9.1 Conclusions

Evident from the study the majority of respondents highlighted that female heterosexual students, experience sexual harassment more than any other group of students in the university. This is followed by the lesbians, gays, bisexuals and transgender group of students. Gays mostly encounter a great deal of sexual harassment on campus, while male heterosexuals experience sexual harassment however, to a lesser extent compared to the two former groups.

5.9.2 Recommendations

- Students must be encouraged to intervene when they witness any sexual harassment incident around the university to promote a culture of safety.
- Both male and female students should immediately speak out to the perpetrator that they are not comfortable with their actions.
- More research should be carried out on how to create and implement policies that promote a culture of speaking out against sexual harassment.

6 Recommendations for future studies

During the process of investigation the researcher identified some limitations and suggests further research should continue to assess student sexual harassment in the universities. This will enhance a safe learning environment for the students.

6.1 Conclusion

The findings of this study serve to reveal the existence and occurrences of sexual harassment at the University of Venda, the consequences of sexual harassment upon the victims and the University learning environment in general, how the students and the university can collaborate in preventing sexual harassment and create a safe environment for both students and staff strategies that can be used to promote speaking out against sexual harassment. It is hoped that these findings can contribute to more attention given to preventing sexual harassment on campuses.

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APPENDICES

ANNEXURE A

INTERVIEW GUIDE

I, Siduna Bongai, a student in the School of Human and Social Sciences, Institute of Gender and Youth Studies at the University of Venda, am hereby conducting a research on Assessing Student Sexual Harassment at A Rural University in South Africa. This research study is being conducted in the University of Venda campus which is situated in Thohoyandou in the Limpopo province of South Africa.

The best response is the one that you think is the most appropriate to your circumstance. Try to complete at a time when you are least likely to be distracted and not to spend much time on any one question, as your first thoughts are usually the best.

There are no financial or non-financial personal benefits to be given for participating in this research but however, the study results from this research will be used for academic assessment at the above mentioned university hence can also be used as a platform for conducting relevant studies in this area for the improvement of sexual harassment awareness and prevention campaigns in the nation. The information you give will be used for the purposes of this study only and will be kept safe for confidentiality reasons. Also for sake of clarity, the participation in this research is voluntary, as you have the right to withdraw from participation if ever you feel so.

Thank you for your participation, please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions pertaining this study.

Cell: 0783653998

Email: sbongai87@yahoo.com

Name (please note: do not provide real name(s)).....

Signature.....

Date.....

Section A: Background information

(Please tick where appropriate)

1. Gender

Male	<input type="checkbox"/>
Female	<input type="checkbox"/>

2. Level of study

Post graduate	<input type="checkbox"/>
Under graduate	<input type="checkbox"/>

3. Sexual orientation

Heterosexual	<input type="checkbox"/>
Homosexual	<input type="checkbox"/>
Bi-sexual	<input type="checkbox"/>

Section B:

(Fill your responses in the provided spaces below the questions)

1. What is your perception regarding sexual harassment?

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2. Do you know the university's sexual harassment policy? Please explain your answer.

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3. What is the common type of sexual harassment among students? Please explain your answer.

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4. Does awareness of the university's sexual harassment policy reduce the occurrence of sexual harassment? Please explain your answer.

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5. Where does sexual harassment occur in the university?

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6. Do some student groups experience sexual harassment more than others? Please explain your answer.

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7. What are the contributory factors of sexual harassment? Please explain your answer.

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8. What are the effects of sexual harassment on students?

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