

INFLUENCE OF INTERPERSONAL ENLIGHTENMENT CAMPAIGNS ON SEXUAL HARASSMENT AMONG FEMALE STUDENTS IN SELECT POLYTECHNICS IN SOUTH-WESTERN NIGERIA

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Abstract

The study investigated the growing cases of sexual harassment among male lecturers against female students in select polytechnics in the South-Western Nigeria. Using socio-cultural theory, the study explains how power differentials exist between men and women, strengthening the cases of sexual harassment and intimidation of women in many African societies. The study was a qualitative design using in-depth interviews to explore the psychological effects of sexual harassment on female students, non-reporting of sexual harassment and the effectiveness of interpersonal enlightenment campaigns on sexual harassment among female polytechnic students. Sixteen female-student survivors of sexual harassment were used for the study. Findings showed that female student-survivors of sexual harassment had the thoughts of committing suicide and got depressions. Findings showed that that stigma is the major reason for non-reportage of sexual harassment against the perpetrators by the student-survivors or student-victims of sexual harassment. Findings showed that

interpersonal enlightenment campaigns against sexual harassment of female students have been very effective. Therefore, the study recommended that a Unit to be christened as Sexual Harassment Counselling Unit should be established in each of the Polytechnics in Nigeria to deal with the psychological trauma and emotional stress that female student-survivors or female student-victims of sexual harassment might have undergone. Policies should be emplaced to support the victims of sexual harassment to speak up and break their silence without an iota of fear of retaliations by the perpetrators of sexual molestations and atrocities. Policies of each of the polytechnics against sexual harassment must be tailored towards making use of a group seminar, hostel-to-hostel, hall of residence-to-hall of residence and classroom-to-classroom campaigns to uproot the menace of sexual harassment among female students should be strengthened.

Key Words: Interpersonal Means, Enlightenment Campaigns, Sexual Harassment, Female Students, Polytechnics

Introduction

Due to poor anti-sexual harassment policies, the issue of sexual harassment is very high in the polytechnics in the South-West of Nigeria compared to universities. The tertiary education institutions have become a den of sexual harassers and sexual predators in Nigeria. At the centre of misdeamonor by the male academic staff are the sexual allegations against female students, sex-for-grades and illegitimate collection of money from students to enhance their success in the exams. Sexual harassment is an unwanted sexual attention and a gender-based sexual violence in form of physical, visual and verbal violence that causes depressions in victims. Many countries of the world have taken legal steps to recognize sexual harassment as an insulting action, to punish the perpetrators and emplace mechanisms to prevent recurrence (Ali et al., 2015). Feelings of guilt, shame and stigma have prevented the victims of sexual harassment from naming and disclosing the perpetrators. There has been an increase outcry against sexual violation and violence that young women of school age face daily in most developing nations. Like sexual harassment which has become a global issue, sex education has been a topical issue of debate among education stakeholders in Nigeria. Sex education, as many scholars affirm, enlighten women about gender-based violence and rape cases. Sexual harassment has become a global health issue (Wible, 2004). The effects of sexual harassment are very conspicuous but yet are overlooked by stakeholders in Nigeria (Puchakanit and Rehin, 2022). Sexual harassment has become a mental problem and its effects involve reduced productivity, loss of jobs, weak and psychological and physical well-being (Avina and O'Donohue, 2002).

Statement of the Problem

Perpetrations and all forms of sexual harassment in the polytechnics in the South-Western Nigeria have been under-researched. Although, women of all ages fall victims of sexual harassment, young university and polytechnic female students are the worst victims because most of them live away from the care and watch of their parents and guardians. A cursory look at the polytechnics in the South-Western Nigeria showed that most of the schools do not have mechanism in place to prevent sexual harassment or to punish the perpetrators. Thus, the study is designed to investigate the

influence of interpersonal enlightenment campaigns on sexual harassment among female undergraduates in select polytechnics in South-western Nigeria.

Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study are to:

1. understand the psychological effects of sexual harassment on female students of select polytechnics in the South-West;
2. to ascertain the factors that account for the under-reporting of sexual harassment in the select polytechnics in the South-West;
3. to find out the nature of interpersonal enlightenment campaigns on sexual harassment among female polytechnic students following the experience of sexual harassment; and
4. to find out the effectiveness of interpersonal enlightenment campaigns on sexual harassment in select South West Polytechnics.

Literature Review

Sexual harassment of female polytechnic students is a form of gender-based violence. One fundamental aspect of sexual atrocities which aggravate the harassment by the perpetrators is the failure of disclosure or reportage by the victims. While education and enlightenment campaigns are crucial to prevent sexual harassment among female students in the select polytechnics in the South-Western Nigeria, power imbalance between lecturers of polytechnics and female students of those schools has rendered the victims helpless and further emboldened the perpetrators to commit more of sexual atrocities. Given the widespread concern of worsening sexual harassment as public health issue in Nigerian polytechnics, it has attracted a considerable research attention and searchlight from scholars of health studies, sociology, psychology and health communication, including members of the public (Stroem et al., 2022). Female polytechnic students and young women are leaving their traditional roles of home-makers to seek jobs to contribute to the upkeep of their families, to seek better education, and get involved in more public life (Mosha et al., 2022). These daily engagements expose women and female students to all forms of sexual harassment from the male leaders of their communities.

Perception of support from the relevant polytechnic authorities to the victims of sexual harassment is very poor. Retaliations against the victims of sexual harassment are more common when the perpetrators are reported by the victims, especially when the Police are involved (Karami et al., 2020). Sexual harassment perpetrated by superiors is more common and more harmful than peer-perpetrated sexual harassment (Mapayi et al., 2023). Mapayi et al., (2023) found that sexual harassment takes many forms, including sexual comments, sexual advances, rape and unpermitted touching of sensitive parts of a female body. The culture of silence by the survivors of sexual harassment against the perpetrators in the higher institutions of learning is too deafening. The power imbalance between female students and their lecturers results in sexual harassment against female undergraduates in Nigeria (Mapayi et al., 2023). As a result of fear of loss of one's status, loss of

job, and attendant stigma among colleagues in the office, sexual harassers are hardly reported to the relevant authorities at the place of work (Mapayi et al., 2023). Experiences of sexual harassment by female students result in physical and psychological consequences for individual victims of sexual atrocities (Mosha et al., 2022). Sexual harassment festers in an environment that allows the perpetrators to go scot-free. Absence of institutional sanctions, untimely responses and failure to protect the victims of sexual harassment from retaliations by the perpetrators worsen the menace among female undergraduates in the higher institutions of learning in Nigeria (Mapayi et al., 2023). Victims of sexual harassment appease, seek social support or cave in to the harassers (Mapayi et al., 2023).

Empirical Review

Norcott et al., (2021) found that victimization experiences such as sexual harassment have an effect on the health of young women. They also found that female students who experienced sexual harassment are more likely to have multiple sexual partners and their probability of contracting sexually transmitted diseases is usually very high. Berdahl (2007) found that women with masculine personalities who are assertive, independent and dominant experience the worst sexual harassment (Berdahl, 2007). Karami et al., (2020) found that over 14% of sexual harassment-inclined assertions such as degrading, sexist comments, sexist comments and unwanted sexual attention were directed towards women, while 7% of the statements bordered on means favour was given in exchange for sex. Onoyase (2019) found that while indecent dressing is a major factor responsible for sexual harassment in the tertiary institutions in Nigeria, male academic staff and male non-teaching staff are the highest sexual harassers and the worst perpetrators of sexual harassment against female students on polytechnic campuses. Mapayi et al., (2023) found that most perpetrators of sexual harassment are the male lecturer in the tertiary institutions, while few female undergraduates also experience sexual harassment from their male colleagues. Onoyase (2019) also found that sex-for-grade syndrome in the tertiary institutions, provocative wears and unjustified intimacy between male academic staff and the female students account for sexual harassment. Mapayi et al., (2023) found that sexual harassment is done in a very hostile environment, affecting the performances of the victims at work and their work ethics. Mapayi et al., (2023) found that sexual harassment is associated with emotional violence, verbal assault, discrimination, intimidation which affect the physical and emotional health of the victims. Chairunnisa et al., (2022) found that 68.1% of the female students experience one form of sexual harassment or the other while they are in the tertiary institutions, 23.4% of them experience sexual harassment more than three times during their studentship. While most victims of sexual harassment maintained that most perpetrators are lecturers in their schools, 95.1% of the victims failed to report or disclose the incident because they felt it was not a serious problem.

Theoretical Framework

The study is anchored on socio-cultural theory. The main thrust of socio-cultural theory is that power differentials exist between men and women either in an organisation or a community. The cultural

beliefs that women are subservient to men in Africa have multiplied the cases of sexual harassment in many ways. Socio-cultural theory explains sexual harassment as a product of societal power relations and gender inequalities (Cuenca-Piqueras et al., 2023). The theory stresses that women are sexually objectified by men. The perceptions of women by men, as the theory states, border on home-makers, sexual objects and ultimately a source of sexual satisfaction. Socio-cultural theoretical approach explains organisational characteristics with regard to power relations and how they affect the level of sexual violence and harassment among top echelon who wield certain powers over others, especially young women (Cuenca-Piqueras et al., 2023). The theory analyses ways men have sexually dominated and conquered women in society and places of work. Sexual harassment of married and young school girls has been widespread in many polytechnics in the South-West Nigeria because young women are perceived by lecturers as sex objects to be turned to for sexual satisfaction.

The theory is relevant to this study and in sync with the sexual harassment of women. Socio-cultural theory explains the genesis of sexual harassment in patriarchal society (Cuenca-Piqueras et al., 2023). Sexual harassment is an un-consensual interpersonal sexual coercion and unwanted sexual advances sanctioned between a male lecturer against a female student, the act that has been widespread in many polytechnics in South-Western Nigeria.

Materials and Methods

The study is conducted in four selected polytechnics in South-West Nigeria. To maintain balance, two federal government owned polytechnics were selected: Federal Polytechnic Ado-Ekiti, Ekiti State, Federal Polytechnic, Ayeede, Oyo State. Also, two state government owned polytechnics were also selected, The Polytechnic Ibadan, Oyo State, and Rufus Giwa Polytechnic, Owo, Ondo State, to explore the psychological effects of sexual harassment on female students; reasons for the under-reporting of sexual harassment in the select polytechnics, nature of interpersonal enlightenment campaigns on sexual harassment among female polytechnic students and the effectiveness of interpersonal enlightenment campaigns on sexual harassment in the four select South West Polytechnics.

Study Design: the study is a qualitative design using in-depth interview to explore the psychological effects of sexual harassment on female students of select polytechnics in the South-West and to ascertain the factors that account for the under-reporting of sexual harassment in the select polytechnics in the South-West; and to find out the effectiveness of interpersonal enlightenment campaigns on sexual harassment in select South West Polytechnics.

Study Sites: the study sites were the four select polytechnics in South-West geo-political zone of Nigeria: The Ibadan Polytechnic; Federal Polytechnic, Ayeede; Federal Polytechnic, Ado-Ekiti; and Rufus Giwa Polytechnic, Owo, Ondo State.

Sample: the sample size was extracted from the population of the students in the selected polytechnics in the South-West. The researchers made sure that only the students who have

experienced sexual harassment from their male lecturers were co-opted as the respondents in the study. The female student-survivors were not under duress to participate in the study. They were met one-on-one and the purpose of the study was explained to them. They were made to understand the kinds of questions they were expected to answer. Their full consent was secured before each of them was interviewed. The researchers sampled the views and opinions of the female student-survivors of sexual harassment about the kinds of interpersonal enlightenment campaigns on sexual harassment that is available in their schools and to find out the effectiveness of interpersonal enlightenment campaigns on sexual harassment in select South West Polytechnics. Sixteen victims of sexual harassment were selected in all the four polytechnics selected for this study. Four victims of sexual harassment were selected in each of the four polytechnics selected for this study in the South-West. Of the sixteen survivors of sexual harassment, four declined to be included in the study. Two of the survivors stated that feeling of guilt never allowed them to participate in the study, while the remaining two said stigma is the reason for their rejection of being included in the study.

Procedure: respondents and participants in this study were purposively selected. The researchers made sure that only female students of the four select polytechnics who had been victims of sexual harassment in their respective schools were selected for the study. Selection of the female victims of sexual harassment was based on recommendations to the researchers of the survivors or victims of the sexual harassment by the Counselling Units or Security Units of the four selected polytechnics. Officers in the two units discussed the subject-matter of investigation to the victims of sexual harassment, introduced the purpose and the objectives of the study to them. The victims and survivors were later made to meet the researchers. The victims or survivors' permit and consent was sought for the face-to-face interview. Their consent was secured and was premised on the confidentiality of information given. The interview was conducted face-to-face on psychological effects of sexual harassment on female students, the factors that account for the under-reporting of sexual harassment in the select polytechnics in the South-West, the nature of interpersonal enlightenment campaigns on sexual harassment among female polytechnic students following the experience of sexual harassment and the effectiveness of interpersonal enlightenment campaigns on sexual harassment in select South West Polytechnics.

Instrument: the interview guide was used for data collection and was developed by the researchers. The interview guide was shared with other scholars in the field of health studies and psychology for their suggestions and inputs. The instrument was also shared with victims of sexual harassment for their suggestions and inputs before the instruments were finally administered to respondents.

Data Analysis: data obtained from the in-depth interview passed through a second reading. Two researchers in this study were particularly assigned to vet and re-vet the data gathered from the respondents to be sure they are in tandem with the objectives of the study. Data collected through in-depth interview were analysed using explanation building and were also analysed thematically in sync with the research objectives.

Ethical considerations: the study ensured a high level of confidentiality of information given by the respondents. Information given was treated with utmost confidentiality. For the in-depth interview session, the participants' identities were never disclosed either by their names, addresses or their departments or courses of study in the four polytechnics selected for this study in the South-West.

Results

In-depth Interview Reports

Qualitative Data Analysis, Interpretations and Presentation

3.1 Theme 1: Psychological Effects of Sexual Harassment on Female Students

Data from the in-depth interview showed different psychological effects of sexual harassment on female students of the four select polytechnics. The discussions revealed that female student-survivors of sexual harassment had the thoughts of committing suicide and depressions. Giving more insights about the psychological effects of sexual harassment, a female student-survivor at the Polytechnic Ibadan, Oyo State, said:

I experienced sexual harassment in the office of one of my lecturers in my department. The man, at first, was passing complementary remarks about my facial beauty. Later, he was talking about how he no longer enjoyed sex with his wife. He started to touch my breasts, ears and my hair, passing all manner of uncouth comments. Although, no penetrative sex was involved, I felt like committing suicide after I left his office. The experience has continued to haunt me since that day. Whenever I have a reason to consult my male lecturers, I make sure I go to their offices with either a female or male class mate or friend to prevent the previous experience. I have the feeling of suspicion against my male lecturers. At times, when I see the perpetrator of sexual harassment against me on campus, the thought of killing him usually come to my mind. The experience has not been palatable since it happened to me in the office of the perpetrator. I cry whenever I am alone and I remember the act.

Another in-depth interview participant, who is a female student-survivor at Federal Polytechnic Ado-Ekiti, Ekiti State, said:

Whenever I flash back about the experience of sexual harassment I had with my male lecturer, I am depressed and find it difficult to trust men again. He is one of my male lecturers in my department. I went to him because he is my Level Adviser. He instructed me to meet him at a beer parlour in town the next day to advise me on some of the courses I am to select in my level. He offered to buy me a bottle of beverage, which I accepted. Some minutes into our discussion about my issue, he started to touch the sensitive parts of my body. We were actually sitting in a corner of the place, and it was dark already. When I see my classmates in groups, I usually think they are talking about the incident. My mind has not been at rest since the experience of sexual harassment with him. I normally think the secret has been leaked. I usually eavesdrop on the conversations of my classmates to be sure they are not talking about it.

3.2 Theme 2: Reasons for the Non-Reporting of Sexual Harassment among Female Students

Data from the in-depth interview showed reasons for the under-reporting of sexual harassment among female students in the four select polytechnics in the South-West. The discussion showed that stigma is the major reason for non-reportage of sexual harassment against the perpetrators by the student-survivors or student-victims of sexual harassment. Providing more information on the reasons for under-reporting or non-reportage of sexual harassment, a female student-survivor of Federal Polytechnic, Ayeede, Oyo State, Said:

As much as I wanted to report the incident when it happened in his office in that fateful evening, stigma never allowed me to go ahead with reporting to the Head of the Department, Security Unit and our Dean of the Faculty. Besides, he is a senior and respected academic in our Faculty. So, if I should go ahead with the reportage of the sexual harassment against me, others may even blame me for reporting it. Besides, his colleagues who are my lecturers in the department may punish me for reporting him. Besides this fear, what evidence would I present if the panel is set up by the school's authority to look into the allegation against him? Had it been I made a secret record of him during our encounter, that would have salvaged the situation. Besides, no perpetrators of sexual harassment have been punished in this school since I got admitted here. I believe the authorities would have protected the perpetrator even if I had reported him to the school management.

Another in-depth interview participant, who is a female student-survivor at Rufus Giwa Polytechnic, Owo, Ondo State, Said:

When I had the experience of sexual harassment in his office on that fateful day, I had no courage to report the incident to the authorities. My parents must not find out the experience of sexual harassment I had with my lecturer. They may discontinue the sponsor of my polytechnic education. I find it difficult to also confide in my roommate in school because the secret may be leaked to other students. Besides, the attitude of other members of staff to process your allegation is not helpful because they are also deeply involved in sexual harassment against female students in the school. So, reporting the incident to the school authorities compares to reporting a corrupt judge to another corrupt judge. I strongly believe nothing will come out of my case against him even if I attempted to report it to relevant school organs in charge of investigating sexual harassment against female students. And if I decided to take the case against him to a Police Station, money would definitely exchange hands to leave me in the cold.

3.3: Theme 3: Nature of Interpersonal Enlightenment Campaigns on Sexual Harassment among female Students

Data from the in-depth interview revealed the nature of interpersonal enlightenment campaigns on sexual harassment among female students in the four select polytechnics in the South West. The discussion showed that leaders of religious organisations on campus and peer-to-peer enlightenment campaigns have been used to educate young female students who are newly admitted for the prevention of sexual harassment. Providing more insights about the nature of interpersonal

enlightenment campaigns on sexual harassment among female students, a female student-survivor at the Federal Polytechnic, Ado-Ekiti, said:

Peer-to-peer enlightenment campaigns have been used to educate young female who are newly admitted in this school. A group of female students are usually assigned, on the Matriculation Day and during Orientations for fresh female students, to talk to their junior school mates on the prevention of sexual harassment by male lecturers in this school. Peer-to-peer enlightenment campaigns against sexual harassment usually involve educating the newly admitted students on channels to which they can take the case of sexual harassment against any lecturer. Peer-to-peer enlightenment campaigns against sexual harassment involves senior student leaders, senior class representatives and senior class governors who are mandated to present the issues of sexual harassment policy to the newly admitted female students and the means they can adopt either to present or report it if it eventually happens.

Another in-depth interview participant, who is a female student-survivor at the Polytechnic Ibadan, said:

Leaders of campus religious organisations are also a factor in the interpersonal enlightenment campaigns against sexual harassment and molestations. Leaders of campus religious organisations are well-respected for their opinions on issues that border on the welfare of female students. Not only that, female students listen and heed instructions given by leaders of religious organisations on campus because they are perceived as credible on campus. When I was newly admitted, our student-pastor taught us so much about relationship with our male lecturers. A lot of issues were discussed that have kept me going since I was admitted in to this institution. Although, I had experienced sexual harassment in the past, but it did not happen in this school. It happened when I was a candidate of UTME in one of the Centres in Lagos.

3.4 Theme 4: Effectiveness of Interpersonal Enlightenment Campaigns on Sexual Harassment of Female Students of the Four Select Polytechnics

Data from the in-depth interview showed the effectiveness of interpersonal enlightenment campaigns on sexual harassment of female students in the four select polytechnic. The discussion revealed that interpersonal enlightenment campaigns against sexual harassment of female students have been very effective because it involves peer-to-peer, leaders of campus religious organisations who are not only credible but are well-respected and some lecturers who act as fatherly and motherly figures on our campus. Giving more insights on the effectiveness of interpersonal enlightenment campaigns on sexual harassment of female students, a female student-survivor at the Rufus Giwa Polytechnic, Owo, Ondo State, said:

When one examines the issue of sexual harassment critically, one comes to realisation that it is gradually decreasing. The reduction in the allegations of sexual harassment against male lecturers are due to several policies that have been emplaced by respective polytechnics to arrest and expose the culprits. Besides, this is the age of mobile technological devices. A female student may tape

record or even take the pictures of the perpetrators of sexual harassment against them without the knowledge of perpetrators. However, interpersonal enlightenment campaigns against sexual harassment of female students have been very effective because it involves peer-to-peer, leaders of campus religious organisations who are not only credible but are well-respected and some lecturers who act as fatherly and motherly figures on our campus.

Another in-depth interview participant, who is a female student-survivor of sexual harassment at the Federal Polytechnic, Ayeede, said:

The effectiveness of interpersonal enlightenment campaigns against sexual harassment of female students is not in doubt. When I was newly admitted in this place, my church student pastor was here to enlighten us on so many issues. One of those issues we discussed was the sexual harassment meted out to female students by their male lecturers. We were told in the seminar that we should not go alone to make a complaint to a male lecturer about our academic activities. The seminar conducted by my church really enlightened me on means to deal with the menace of sexual harassment by our male lecturers. My friends who are Moslems also had a similar seminar with the leaders of their Islamic Group, and they were enlightened on the menace of sexual harassment as well. The forum enabled us to ask questions face-to-face and the answers were given on the spot.

Discussions

Findings showed that female student-survivors of sexual harassment had the thoughts of committing suicide or getting depressed. Sexual harassment has contributed immensely to the rise in the cases of suicide attempts by the female student-survivors or victims of the sexual violence and molestations. A history of sexual harassment and abuse is a determinant factor for suicidal ideation among victims or survivors of sexual harassment (Timpka et al., 2021). The findings are in line with the position of Timpka et al., (2021) who found that female student-survivors of sexual harassment perceive life as meaning less, get easily depressed and have the thoughts for suicidal ideation.

Findings showed that that stigma is the major reason for non-reportage of sexual harassment against the perpetrators by the student-survivors or student-victims of sexual harassment. Many survivors of sexual harassment have been forced to live with stigma and discrimination either at home, in their places of work or in the school (Pradani, 2022). The findings are in tandem with the position of Wahyuni et al., (2022) who found that victim-blaming phenomenon in sexual harassment cases, especially when the student-victims are female students of the institutions, has debarred the female student-survivors of sexual harassment to pursue justice, leaving them frustrated and silent. The victim-blaming phenomenon has prevented many female student-survivors of sexual harassment from reporting to institutions' authorities for fear of being singled out for blame.

Findings showed that showed that leaders of religious organisations on campus and peer-to-peer enlightenment campaigns have been used to educate young female students who are newly admitted for the prevention of sexual harassment. The findings align with the position of Timilsina et al., (2024) who found that social organisation and religious-based group, collaborative efforts and peer

support networks are the major factors for breaking barriers and promoting access to justice for the female student-survivors of sexual harassment in the tertiary institutions. The findings also correlate with the findings of Rossler et al., (2020) who found that non-reporting of sexual harassment by the victims or survivors to leaders of social and religious groups has hindered the effective implementation of strategies towards nailing the menace in the bud.

Findings showed that interpersonal enlightenment campaigns against sexual harassment of female students have been very effective. Interpersonal enlightenment campaigns enable the female student-victims of sexual harassment to confide in the religious leaders, student union leader, or a counsellor in the school because such encounter involves a face-to-face situation. The findings are in sync with the position of who Pradani (2022) found that interpersonal enlightenment campaigns against sexual harassment of female students are very effective because victims and counsellors can bare their minds on issues that they may not be willing to disclose when the interaction involves a number of people.

Conclusion

Excessive familiarity between a male lecturer and a female undergraduate has been seen to heighten the issue of sexual harassment meted out to female students of the four select polytechnics in the South-Western Nigeria. Besides, indecent dressing among female students and using of good grades as a bait by male lecturers to lure the female students for sexual relationship are rampant among male lecturers.

Unjustifiable intimacy with the male lecturers and using of threat to have sexual relationship with female students, leaking exam questions to students, sending nude pictures to female students all account for sexual harassment meted out to female students by their male lecturers.

Recommendations

Female student-survivors of sexual harassment had the thoughts of committing suicide and depressions. A Unit to be christened as Sexual Harassment Counselling Unit should be established in each of the Polytechnics in Nigeria to deal with the psychological trauma and emotional stress that female student-survivors or female student-victims of sexual harassment might have undergone. The Unit must be equipped with qualified experts on counselling with regard to sexual harassment. Sexual Harassment Counselling Units should be established in each of the Faculties, Centres, Colleges and Schools in the polytechnics in the South-West and by extension, Nigeria.

Stigma is the major reason for non-reportage of sexual harassment against the perpetrators by the student-survivors or student-victims of sexual harassment. Ensuring sexual harassment disclosure system promotes a cover for the female student-survivors or victim-reporters of sexual harassment. The school authorities must emplace several mechanisms to prevent negative outcomes for reporting parties or student-survivors of sexual harassment. Policies should be emplaced to support the victims

of sexual harassment to speak up and break their silence without an iota fear of negative implications or retaliations by the perpetrators of sexual molestations and atrocities.

Leaders of religious organisations on campus and peer-to-peer enlightenment campaigns are partners in progress. Polytechnic managements and authorities must co-opt these people in the interpersonal enlightenment campaigns against female students of polytechnics in Nigeria. They must be used to propagate messages at homes, churches, mosques, football fields, school library, viewing centres, cafeteria and hostels within and outside the school premises.

Since interpersonal enlightenment campaigns against sexual harassment of female students have been very effective in the propagation of anti-sexual harassment against female polytechnic students in the South West, policies of each of the polytechnics against sexual harassment must be tailored towards making use of interpersonal means and media for the enlightenment of the female polytechnic students about sexual harassment and sexual harassers. A group seminar, hostel-to-hostel, hall of residence-to-hall of residence and class-to-class campaigns should be mounted to uproot the menace of sexual harassment from our polytechnic campuses in Nigeria.

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