**AN ASSESSMENT OF** **SEXUAL HARASSMENT IN CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION, ABUJA**

**BY**

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**SECTION ONE**

**INTRODUCTION**

**1.1. Background to the Study**

One of the crimes frequently committed globally is sexual harassment. Sexuality is part of human life and existence. Ideally, sexual relationship should be mutual and between two adults who consented without any form of coercion (Haruna Joseph, Samson & Aye, 2016), but that has not been the case in many work places today. Sexual harassment occurs when the sexual activity is unwanted, non-consensual and with application of physical force, threat or verbal intimidation of the victim. The form of sexual harassment experienced by employees within the government or public organisation varies; precisely at Lagos State Civil Service Commission, Alausa: it ranges from unwanted touch, sex-related gesture, sexual remarks, money enticement and intimidation (Yusuf, 2008). This phenomenon is internationally pervasive and it affects a substantial number of people, principally, but not exclusively, women. Hence, women are not the only recipients of sexually harassing behaviours, but they are victimized more frequently than their male counterpart. Sexual harassment being a brutal form of violation of the rights of women has attracted global condemnations.

When a sexual activity is as a result of intimidation of any sort, it becomes worrisome and an infringement to the individual’s human right (Ramakrishnan, 2019) and this intimidation into unsolicited sexual activity usually puts the victim at a disadvantaged position for lack of consent (Cassino & Besen‐Cassino, 2019). This is why Shaw, Hegewisch & Hess (2018) contended that in the workplace, sexual harassment is a serious crime with grievous cost to the victims, co-workers and the organization. This attribute makes sexual harassment in the workplace a much talked about organizational vice outside inherent job factors. Notwithstanding, workplace romances may benefit the participants with respect to factors such as preferential treatment, financial satisfaction, gifts or large promises but punitive managerial actions also abound such as denial of appointment or promotion, job relocation or redeployment and even termination of employment (Pierce, Byrne & Aguinis, 2005).

The prevalence data on sexual harassment suggest that it is a widespread problem among working women worldwide. As far back as 1976, Redbook published the results of a groundbreaking readership mail survey which found that 88% of the 9,000 respondents claimed they had experienced some form of workplace harassment in the course of their employment (Safran, 1976). The Redbook survey overlapped with an historical period that involved a large influx of women into the workforce and drew much needed attention to the then emerging issue of sexual harassment. If one is to take this survey at face value, then an astounding nine in ten women have been sexually harassed at work places.

Sexual harassment is a growing social problem in Nigeria. In Nigeria, the organizational climate may not have aided harassment-free workplace due to many industry-related problems which are not unconnected to institutional corruption (Ezeh & Etodike, 2016), uncontrolled abusive relationship between superiors and their subordinates in most public organizations (Ezeh, Etodike & Chukwura, 2018), high levels of incivility among workers (Ezeh & Etodike, 2017) and most importantly the prevailing organizational climate (Joe-Akune, Ogbeide, Davies & Otedike, 2018). In fact, sexual harassments have been exacerbated by the patriarchal nature of the society and the various cultures found amongst the various ethnic groups in the country. It is believed that these problems are transferred into work settings and have contributed to gender gaps found at senior management positions within organisations as well as create a hostile environment for women to earn a living. This partly supports arguments that the Nigerian society does not accept the concept of sexual harassment and does not perceive it as evil or violation of the right of individuals in the workplace (Okeke, 2011; Ladebo, 2003).  This view was corroborated by the submission of the defendant’s counsel in the recent case of Stella Ayam Odey v. Ferdinand Daapah & Cuso International (2016) who posited that it is expected among adults that a man would naturally chase a woman and make romantic overtures, even in the office… (National Industrial Court, 2016). This indicates that it is mostly perceived as a part of the societal fabric in Nigeria.

Sexual harassment remains a thoughtful and closely connected problem in the workplace. The absence of a complaint of sexual harassment does not mean the absence of sexual harassment (Jahan, 2013). Victims of sexual harassment may feel that there is no need to complain for fear of retaliation (Jahan, 2013); and it is unfortunate that many female workers die in silence than report sexual harassment for the fear of losing their jobs due to the growing unemployment rate in Nigeria (Etodike, Ezeh, Ogbeide, Davies & Ike, 2018). But sexual harassment reduces workers involvement in the work (Joe-Akunne, 2018) and reduces organizational effectiveness (Shaw et al., 2018) due to the emotional, financial and social cost associated with the menace (Haruna et al., 2016). In most cases, sexual harassment creates job insecurity among victims as an outcome of leader-member relationship or member-member relationship (Ezeh & Etodike, 2017). Sexual harassment can also influence the victim's behavior at work (Popovich & Warren, 2010). Merkin and Shah (2014) found that employees who were victims of sexual harassment recorded decreased job satisfaction, increased intention to quit their job, and increased absenteeism. In addition, the idea that sexual harassment is not taken seriously in the workplace can be detrimental to physical health (Merkin & Shah, 2014).

It is pertinent to state that the right to accept or reject sexual overtures is like other human rights and it equally extends to the workplace irrespective of its composition of authority and contextual circumstances (Shaw et al., 2018). In most circumstances in the workplace; whether a male or a female have the will to decline any form of relationship overtures may well be dependent on organizational climate and extant industry laws and the laws of the State or Country which protects the citizenry especially ones providing protection for women against all forms of discrimination, harassment and exploitation. According to Haruna et al. (2016), the position of the law in such case is not usually well defined in the Nigerian context and thus creates a safe haven for offenders. This situation makes sexual harassment a recurring decimal in the workplace and one which organizations should be wary of, if they must be successful.

Studies have emerged to address the social problem of sexual harassment in the workplace in Nigeria (Kofi, 2010; Ige & Adeleke, 2012), but the literature on its endemic nature in the workplace, where moral excellence is practiced, soaked and displayed is very thin. Few existing studies have focused on the emergence of sexual harassment in public universities (Okeke, 2011; Chukwudi & Gbakorun, 2011), and Joubert (2013; 2017) has highlighted cases reported in the media relating to civil servants being subjected to and/or perpetrating sexual harassment. The growing cases of this menace is not unconnected to the issue of under-reportage, and several reasons have been adduced for its under-reportage: because of the intent of protecting victims, avoidance of stigmatization, lack of successful prosecution of offenders and the fact that our society is predominantly male dominated. It is however unfortunate that its prevalence is on the increasing trend, especially in societies like Nigeria with high rates of poverty, social and moral decadence, drug abuse, breakdown of family values and general violent unrest (Gupta, 2014).

Unfortunately, Hersch discovered in his research that about Seventy-Eight (78) countries have nationally defined or structured legislative provision for defining the term ‘sexual harassment’ with the exclusion of Nigeria (Hersch, 2015). Also, evidence abounds that, of the thirty-six (36) States and the Federal Capital Territory, only Federal Capital Territory (FCT) and Lagos State have a precise definition of sexual harassment in the workplace and this applies to only residence of those terrains (Violence Against Persons Prohibition Act, 2015). In fact, the Nigerian labour/criminal law has no specific provision for sexual harassment in the work place to criminalize, prevent, prohibit and redress issues of unwanted sexual misconduct within the civil service alone till date. Hence, the focus of this study. That is a critical investigation into the causes and context of sexual harassment in Nigeria, with a particular focus on the Nigerian Civil Service Commission (NCSC), Abuja.

**1.2. Statement of the Research Problem**

Sexual harassment is an organizational vice with unpalatable organizational outcomes including ineffectiveness, indifference, low job involvement and general poor citizenship behaviour towards the organizational members and the organization. According to World Health Organization reports, one in every five women is a victim of sexual assault (cited in Garcia-Moreno & Watts, 2011) and globally, 35% of women have experienced either physical and/or sexual intimate partner violence or non-partner sexual violence (WHO, 2013). An International Labour Organization (ILO) report in 1992, for example, quoted from a study of 23,000 female employees of the U.S. Federal Government that indicated a 42% incidence rate, while studies in the Netherlands and Norway led to estimates of 58% and 41%, respectively, of female employees affected (ILO, 1992). In a survey published by the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR) Gender Staffing Program in January 1995, in fact, 13% of the 87 internationally-recruited women respondents (representing a 65% response rate) reported having experienced unwelcome verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature from supervisors or colleagues that caused personal offense and was, in many cases, very disturbing to the woman involved.

In a survey conducted among five commercial banks in Lagos, the workers, especially females, experienced and perceived various kinds of sexual harassment (Fapohunda, 2014). Another Nigerian survey conducted on selected workplaces revealed that 68 per cent of the sample size had been victims of sexual harassment in their work places (Idris, et al, 2016). In fact, the commonest form of sexual harassment experienced in the Nigerian workplace varies from sexual advances, unwanted touch, sex-related gestures, sexual remarks, money enticement, to intimidation (Yusuf, 2010). The percentage of victims of sexual harassment/violence at Nigerian work places can significantly rise if victims come forward to report cases as they should.

In the developed countries, especially the United States and the United Kingdom, there is a high level of awareness of the problem of sexual harassment and women’s willingness to report. Unfortunately, in Nigeria, general public awareness of the sexual harassment issue has never been stronger with the media focusing attention on it as they should over the years. Irrespective of the various opinions people may hold about the often-controversial topic of sexual harassment, it seems at the very least that the issue has finally been brought to the fore and is receiving deserved attention. However, the focus seems to be on civil servants in the educational sector than others.

Just recently, on 3rd of March, 2020, Sodiq Oyeleke reporting for the Punch Newspaper, noted that the Governing Council of the Modibbo University of Technology Yola at its 96th regular meeting held on Thursday 27th, February, 2020, approved the termination of appointments of three senior staff of the university for their involvement in acts of victimisation and sexual harassment. In October, a BBC documentary detailed a slew of sex-for-grades stories emanating from universities in Nigeria and Ghana through its *‘Africa Eye’* initiative. A Senior Lecturer, Faculty of Arts; and a former Sub Dean of the University of Lagos (Unilag), was seen in the documentary trying to sexually harass a BBC undercover reporter who posed as a 17-year-old, while sharing tales of sex for grades with her. The lecturer lost his job, was prosecuted and sent to jail. Also, there was a report from university of Abuja’s Head of Information and Public Relations, that the university took a decision to sack a Professor who was dismissed over an inappropriate relationship with a female student, which is a misconduct of ‘scandalous and disgraceful nature,’ as provided in Section 16, subsection 3(c) of the University of Abuja Conditions of Service for Senior Staff (1999) (Saharareporters.com>2019/12/16).

Sexually harassment wherever it is found is problematic as most often it is perpetrated by superiors against subordinates or between people of uneven status with one capable of taking advantage of the other or willing to exploit the other’s vulnerability as inferior (Sadler, Lindsay, Hunter & , 2018). Despite its devastating consequences, the majority of the research on harassment during this time dealt primarily with incidence levels and consequences of sexual harassment, using simple checklist methodologies. As noted by Gelfand (1995) these studies made little attempt to aggregate behaviors at a higher level of generality. In addition, little or no attention was given to defining the construct of sexual harassment, nor to identifying its structure. Consequently, the measures used had essentially no theoretical foundation. Furthermore, the various studies did not employ a standard definition of sexual harassment, which are the areas of focus in this study.

**1.3. Aims and Objectives of the study**

The aim of this study is a comprehensive investigation into the causes and consequences of sexual harassment on female employees at work place with particular reference to NCSC. The study is guided by these specific objectives:

1. To find out the remote and immediate causes of sexual harassment against women at work place?
2. To find out the role of the women in their sexual victimization.
3. To examine the negative effects of sexual harassment against the women.
4. To examine the measures put in place by authorities to curtail this menace.
5. To make recommendations based on findings on 1 – 4 above.

**1.4. Research Questions**

This study is proposed to answer these following questions:

1. What are the remote and immediate causes of sexual harassment against women at work place?
2. Do the women precipitate their sexual victimization?
3. What are the negative effects of sexual harassment against women at work place?
4. Are there measures put in place by the authorities to curb sexual harassment at work place?
5. How can the menace of sexual harassment be addressed at work place?

**1.5. Significance of the Study**

The significance of the study cannot be overemphasized. However, it shall be of great benefit to women because they are the most affected by the menace of sexual abuse. Addressing it will not only boost their confidence and increase their productivity and status; it will go a long way in enlightening them on their basic rights as employees and how to go about enforcing them.

Organizations shall benefit, not only on the benefit of sexual harassment free working environment, but they shall be informed on how to address sexual harassment for greater productivity.

Practically, the work is relevant as it seeks to serve an applied need in the area of policy formulation and implementation on how to address the menace of sexual harassment rampant at work place of the years.

The nation will also benefit as there would be some level of awareness of the impact of sexual harassment on employees of public organizations which usually reduce their level of productivity that would have contributed to the development of the nation’s GDP.

Law enforcement agencies would benefit also since victim’s awareness and reporting would pave way for them to swing into action and bring perpetrators to book.

Theoretically, the research serves an intellectual interest as it both adds to the body of existing knowledge on sexual harassment especially in public organizations. Hence, it serves as vital tool for theoretical formulation for further research on similar problems.

**1.6. Operational Definition of Terms**

The following terms are defined in line with their usage in this research work:

**Sexual:** Sexual, as used in this work refers to the sexual feelings, thoughts, attractions and behaviours towards other people, especially be men towards female employees. It includes unwanted and unwelcome words, facial expressions, sexual attention, deeds, actions, symbols, or behaviors of a sexual nature that make the target feel uncomfortable.

**Harassment:** Harassment as used in this thesis covers a wide range of behaviours of an offensive nature. It is commonly understood as behavior that demeans, humiliates or embarrasses a person, especially when it is sexually oriented and directed towards a particular person or group of persons.

**Workplace:** A workplace in this context is a location where someone works for their employer, a place of employment.Workplace harassment is the offensive, belittling or threatening behavior directed at an individual worker or a group of workers.

**Victim:** A victim as used in this study refers to a person who has suffered physical or emotional harm due to sexual harassment experienced at workplace.

**1.7. Scope of the Study**

**a. Geographical Scope:** The study population cover Nigerian Civil Service Commission (NCSC) located at Zone 3, Wuse, Abuja, in the Federal Capital Territory. The target population is women between the ages of 21 to 60 that are employed as civil servants working in the headquarters of the NCSC. The choice of this headquarters was influenced by the fact that sexual harassment is common at the leadership level where critical decisions are taken and women are chosen because they are the most victimized in cases of sexual harassment than their male counterpart.

**b. Geographical Scope:** The study is concerned with the assessment of sexual harassment. Essentially, the study seeks to explore the causes of this harassment and to find out the role of the women in the process of their victimization as well as the implication of this unlawful act on the job performances of the female victims. It also attempts to find out if there are measures put in place to address the menace and to offer viable and dependable solutions. This is very necessary now that women have constituted large percentage of labour force in public service and are mostly affected by the menace of sexual harassment which seems to impair their job performances.

**c. Time Scope:** The study shall cover a period of ten years: 2010-2020, which is the most critical era in history of Nigerian civil service, working under stable and uninterrupted democratic government where the fundamental rights of citizens and employees are highly recognized and prioritized.

**SECTION TWO**

**LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

This chapter deals with the review of relevant literature on the issue of sexual harassment in the society. Specifically, it touches on clarification of the concept of sexual harassment, forms of sexual harassment, causes of sexual harassment at work, empirical works on sexual harassment at work, consequences of sexual harassment, strategies for addressing sexual harassment and theoretical frameworks.

**2.1. Concept of Sexual Harassment**

There is a plethora of definitions of sexual harassment. While sexual harassment has been defined by various researchers, the overall concept remains the same, regardless of whether it was defined in the past or present. Fitzgerald, Drasgow, Hulin, Gelfand and Magley (1997) succinctly define sexual harassment as any unwanted sex-related behaviour that is perceived by a target(s)/victim(s), whether male or female, person of the same or opposite sex, to be unpleasant and intimidating. This definition clearly touches on the privacy of individuals and his or her right to consent to any form of relationship advances from an opposite sex. The European Commission’s (EC) code of practice defines sexual harassment as unwanted conduct of a sexual nature or verbal and nonverbal conduct. In a comprehensive context, the EC defines sexual harassment as any unwanted conduct of a sexual nature and conduct based on gender affecting the dignity of women and men at work (European Commission, 1999). Sexual harassment can thus be experienced by any of the sexes provided the baviour is unwanted by the victim.

Despite all these two clear definitions, it’s very obvious that in spite of national and international efforts to eliminate sexual harassment, there is still no formal or single definition pertaining to what behaviour is prohibited or unwanted. Generally, international researchers define sexual harassment broadly as a form of violence against women. This definition tends to ignore the plight of men in the issue of sexual harassment. However, the United States’ national laws focus on the illegal conduct rather than who is violated due to sexual harassment (Webb, 1994).

Sexual harassment is perceived as unwelcome sexual advances and invitation to activities which take the power of choice and free will from the victim while infringing on their fundamental human right (Burn, 2019). It is described as unwanted sexual advances, requests for sexual favours, and other verbal or physical conducts of a sexual nature, when submission to or rejection, explicitly or implicitly affects a person's employment or education, unreasonably interferes with a person's work or educational performance, or creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive working or learning environment (Menon, 2011). This definition covers sexual harassment in public organizations which is the area of concern in this study. Harassment definitions and other subjective definitions of sexual harassment describe it, at least in part, in terms of subjective of the victim, making unwelcome-ness to the victim a necessary condition for sexual harassment. Thus, in order to prove she has been sexually harassed, she has to prove that the perpetrator’s behaviour was unwelcome. Roberts (1979) asserts that the courts adopt a ‘reasonable’ person standard to determine when the harassment rises to an actionable level. It is difficult to know how the courts can, without attempting to provide a mathematically-precise test, prove that a victim is reasonable or not.

Sexual harassment is unwanted sexual behavior towards an employee, verbal or otherwise, such as physical contact or advances, sexually colored statements, or the posting of pornographic material in the workplace. Nevertheless, sexual harassment is based on power, abusive behavior, and harassment (MacIntosh, Wuest, Gray & Aldous, 2010). Most managers have the five powers of management and many have some of the five powers. The power of a manager is legitimate, rewarding, coercive, expert and referent (Jones & George, 2015). In general, the two powers that prevail in sexual harassment are reward (promise or retention) and coercion (intimidation and threats). The types of power used may be hidden, overt or implied or expressed. Theorist argues that sexual harassment is the product of a gender system that perpetuates itself and is inflicted on the basis of a dominant and normative masculinity.

Sexual harassment refers to the verbal or physical act forced on a victim by body language, verbal and nonverbal communication aimed at compelling women to have sex. Yusuf (2010) defined sexual harassment as any form of behaviour, such as sexual mockery, jokes, comments, or unwanted pressures to obtain a sexual favour or appointment. As a result, sexual harassment includes intimidation, intimidation, or unwanted or invasive coercion by a victim. A study by Sabitha (2008) describes sexual harassment as unwelcome behaviour or an offensive, embarrassing, intimidating or humiliating sexual nature that may affect the professional performance, health, career or life of the employee.

Sexual harassment is an unwanted behaviour of a sexual nature that violates the nobility of men and women at work and can be physical or verbal in nature It is acknowledged as a form of gender-based discrimination and is therefore against the principle of equal treatment among men and women. For a long time, this kind of violence was ignored in the normal life. It was observed that the males are usually perpetrators of sexual harassment while the females are mostly the victims (Akinfala & Tunde, 2017). Although, any person can be perpetrator or victim, one can assert that sexual harassment is a form of gender-based violence mostly against the female folk (Bondestam & Lundqvist, 2020). According to McDonald (2012) sexual harassment can be seen as unwanted or unwelcome, and which has the purpose or effect of being intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive. Yusuf (2010) defined sexual harassment as all forms of behavioral patterns such as sexual teasing, jokes, comments or unwanted pressure for sexual favor or date. Sexual harassment occurs in all occupations and industries, and organizational culture is key to understanding how and why it occurs in some places and not in others (Hunt, Davidson, Fielden & Helge, 2007). Sexual harassment is a chronic occupational health problem that first emerged in Journal of Occupational Health Psychology (James & Ann, 2017). Although both men and women are sexually harassed, international survey data revealed that a majority of victims are women. Victims are more likely to be younger, hold lower-position jobs, work mostly with and been supervised by members of the opposite sex, and, for female victims, work in male-dominated occupations (Joni, 2015).

In the United Nations, conferences and committees have indicated that sexual harassment in the workplace is a violation of the human dignity and health and safety rights of employees under the International Labor Organization treaties (Mallow, 2013). Power and behaviour play a part in the definition of sexual harassment. Power is defined as a display that degrades another employee (ITUC, 2008). Behaviour should be deliberate and/or repeated before it can be identified as sexual harassment. Once the behaviour is identified, it still depends on whether it is unwelcome. This behaviour could be of a verbal, nonverbal or physical nature (Webb, 1994).

The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) (1995) defines sexual harassment partly as ‘behaviours that have the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual’s work performance’ (Herbig, 2004). Hughes and May (1995) define sexual harassment as a ‘class of annoying or unwelcoming acts undertaken by one person (or group of persons).’ Aggarwal and Gupta (2000) define sexual harassment as any sexually-oriented practice that endangers an individual’s continued employment, negatively affects his or her work performance or undermines her sense of personal dignity. This Equal Employment Committee ‘Guidelines of Sexual Harassment’ which were adopted by the EEOC in the United States of America in 1980 earlier on defines sexual harassment as ‘unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favours, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature where:

(1) submission of such conduct is made explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual’s employment,

(2) submission to, or rejection of, such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment decisions affecting such individual, and

(3) such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual’s work performance or creating an intimidating or hostile working environment’ (Welzenbach, 1986).

The latter definition focuses on power and the work environment. Women’s experiences and the economic consequences of sexual harassment/violence in the workplace have suggested that sexual processes are a powerful force in the construction of women’s positions in the labour market. The configuration of gender, power and sexuality poses particular problems when located at work. Men tend to be bosses from all angles in the workplace. On the contrary, women have to be sexualized as part of the job where men’s economic advantage is enhanced through such sexual objectification. When women point out that sexual harassment is one of the employer-employee daily relations which have to be responded to, then how they relate to their work is negatively affected. They have to balance work and improper sexual harassment in any workplace situation. This gender harassment generally involves the display of insulting, hostile, and degrading attitudes toward women, unwanted sexual attention includes both verbal and nonverbal behaviour. It can range from repeated, non-reciprocated requests for dates, intrusive letters and phone calls, to touching, grabbing and cornering, and gross sexual imposition.

Nevertheless, the definition by Sabitha (2008) which describes sexual harassment as unwelcome behaviour or an offensive, embarrassing, intimidating or humiliating sexual nature that may affect the professional performance, health, career or life of the employee, is the most appropriate for this research project and hereby forms the working definition for this study.

**2.2. Forms of Sexual Harassment**

Sexual harassment could take many forms ranging from physical forms, verbal forms and nonverbal forms (Kahsay, Negarandeh, Nayeri & Hasanpour, 2020). Physical form of sexual harassment occurs when there is an unwanted and unwelcomed bodily contact with the victim such as embarrassing touch, kissing, cuddling, deeds, and actions, to behaviours of sexual nature. Verbal form of sexual harassment is experienced through utterances, discussions, cracking of jokes of a sexual nature that make the target feel uncomfortable and harassed. Non-verbal form of sexual harassment results from gestures, sending of symbols and nudes, staring to seduce and exposing one’s nude to the target individual. Hersch (2015) aligned with the above forms of sexual harassment while pointing out that sexual harassment includes a wide range of behaviors, from glances and rude jokes, to demeaning comments based on gender stereotypes, to sexual assault and other acts of physical violence. It was shown that different forms of sexual harassment against women include the following: inappropriate sexual comments, unwanted touching of female students’ breasts, tapping of the female students’ buttocks, and enticing of female students with high scores for sex (Onoyase, 2019). Similarly, Oni. Tshitangano & Akinsola (2019) observed that: unwanted touching, unwanted fondling, unwanted sexual advance, sex-related jokes, sex-related insults, unwanted sexual gestures and unwanted sexual oriented text messages, letters and phone calls are forms of sexual harassment against female folks

Sexually harassing behaviours are specified into three categories namely: gender harassment, unwanted sexual attention and sexual coercion (National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine (NASEM) (2018). Gender harassment includes verbal and nonverbal behaviors that are targeted at making the victim feel inferior based on one’s gender. Unwanted sexual attention includes verbal or non-verbal unsolicited sexual advances, directed at the victim as a person. Sexual coercion occurs when professional or educational treatment one is entitled to is conditioned in such a way that the person might not get them except by yielding to unwelcomed sexual activity. This becomes worrisome and problematic as sexual harassment denies the victim the right to choose and free will. Sexual harassment is like a canker which has eaten deep into the fabrics of the society. Literature indicated that it occurs in every society, organizations, workplace and institutions across the globe (Oni, Adeniji, Osinbajo & Heirsmac, 2014).

Sexual harassment can start with verbal approaches such as referring to an adult as a babe or honey. It may take the form of looking at a person up and down, giving a message around the neck or shoulders or even whistling at someone. Undoubtedly, the desire for sexual harassment may start from touching the person clothes, hairs or making sexual comments about a person’s body. International Labour Organization (ILO, 2010) included blocking a person’s path, hugging, kissing, patting and even romancing as sexual harassment practices. Furthermore, non-verbal forms of sexual approaches include making sexually gestures with hands or through body movements, putting someone hand around the shoulder, making facial expressions such as winking, throwing kisses, or licking lips. Additionally, intimidating a woman for sexual advances is also one of sexual harassment approaches (ILO, 2010).

What constitutes sexual harassment has provoked studies among scholars. In the view of Mohd, Lee & Chan (2007), forms of sexual harassment are comprehensively specified in the Code of Practice as follows:

•Verbal (e.g. offensive or suggestive remarks),

•Non-verbal or gestural (e.g. leering or ogling with suggestive overtones),

•Visual (e.g. showing pornographic materials),

•Psychological (e.g. unwanted social invitations),

•Physical harassment (e.g. inappropriate touching).

These are minor forms of sexual harassment because it ignores threat of job-related consequences for non-compliance. This crucial point, among others is located in the view of Stanko (1988). According to him, the following behaviours are regarded as sexual harassment (sexual teasing, jokes, comments or questions); unwanted pressures for sexual favour or date; unwanted touching or pinching; with implied threats of job-related consequences for non-cooperation; physical assault; sexual assault; rape. The striking aspect of Stanko’s (1988) view is unwanted pressure for sex with implied threats of job-related implications.

Nevertheless, Stanko’s (1988) view ignores unmerited benefits that go with sexual harassments for those who comply with the proposal. This flaw in knowledge makes the idea of Fitzgerald et al. (1995) crucial to this discourse. According to them, forms of sexual harassment include unwanted sexual attention such as touching, hugging, stroking and demanding a date; sexual coercion, which relates to sexual advances with the promise of job-related benefits; and gender harassment, which refers to those verbal and non-verbal behaviours (such as jokes, taunts, gestures, and exhibition of pornographic materials). Dwelling on Fitzgerald et al., (1995), sexual harassment does not only involve threat on jobs or academic performances, it equally goes with benefits, if complied with. However, it is necessary to state here that threat only goes with non-compliance while benefits go with compliance.

According to Fitzgerald, Magley, Drasgow and Waldo (1999), broader dimensions can be identified, which includes sexual coercion, gender harassment, seductive behaviour and same-sex harassment, as discussed below:

*Sexual coercion:* This term refers to sexual activities linked to a threat or punishment. A harasser could create a negative environment, specifically by withholding promotions or threatening employees with termination. Lim and Cortina (2005) refer to sexual coercion as an unreciprocated behaviour. The main purpose of this type of behaviour is to establish a form of sexual relationship. It is different from gender harassment in the sense that gender harassment does not focus on sexual interest.

*Gender harassment:* Gender harassment is behaviour where individuals may insult or humiliate someone else’s gender. More so, sexual attention may be the root cause of this behaviour. This may be either verbal or nonverbal behaviour, which could be considered offensive and unnecessary. According to Berdahl (2007), gender harassment takes place in a hostile environment where harassers appear to be motivated by hostility towards males and females. An example of this dimension is displaying pornography.

*Seductive behaviour:* Seductive behaviour is unwanted, inappropriate behaviour that pertains to offensive sexual advances. A common seductive act may include repeated sexual invitations and the harasser may come across as being very persistent. In developing countries such as Nigeria, women (especially those in managerial positions) are open to sexual abuse as there is a strong belief that women benefit from the supervisor’s seductive behaviour; such benefits include inter alia salary increases and promotions. Such instances are also influenced by the culture of a nation, for example, Zimbabwean women need to be subservient to men (Khan, 2005).

*Same-sex harassment:* Most research regarding sexual harassment focuses on the sexual harassment of women; however, recently the harassment of men by both women and men has become the subject of examination (Abelson, 2001). It is therefore important to acknowledge that same-sex harassment does exist, even though it is underreported or under researched (Gordon, Cohen, Grauer & Rogelberg, 2005).

According to Baker (2015) the following comprehensive classes of sexual harassment were identified.

*Power player:* Power players form part of a quid pro quo environment and are harassers who are very persistent in demanding sexual favours in exchange for some form of benefit. These individuals are at a senior level and are able to provide employees with promotions and other opportunities. The disadvantage of a power player is that immoral business decisions may be implemented, which could affect the workplace financially. Boland (2002) agrees with the above explanation referring to power players and elaborates on what types of opportunities are provided to employees, namely favourable grades, recommendations, credentials and projects.

*Mother/Father figure (i.e. The Counsellor-Helper):* This class of harasser creates a supporting/counselling/mentorship relationship with their victims and uses this role to cover up any sexual intentions or interactions. These types of harassers would generally gather as much information as possible about the targets’ interests and vulnerability and then adapt their behaviour to the targets’ needs.

*One-of-the-gang harassment:* This type of harassment transpires when a group of men/women or a mixed group embarrasses others with lustful comments. A simple initiation to form part of this type of group is to act individually to impress the group/gang by focusing on a specific victim as a target. Boland (2002) agrees with the above and further states that the particular class is often motivated by bravado harassment.

*Serial harasser:* These are harassers who carefully build up an image to ensure that individuals would find it hard to believe that that person is capable of harming anyone. Approaches are thoroughly thought out and harassers will victimize their target privately while no one is around. This is done so that, in the event of complaints from the victim, it would be difficult to determine whom to believe. This class of harasser may have some form of underlying pathology, and they privately advance with their plans to ensure that, in the event of their actions becoming public, it would be their word against that of the target. In addition, their image is portrayed in such a way that by standers and/or employers may find it hard to believe that such individuals are capable of such actions (Cape Peninsula University of Technology, 2012).

*Groper:* Gropers are opportunists who attempt to engage in unwanted physical contact when a chance/opportunity presents itself. Their actions may at first seem innocent, but it could lead to risky outcomes. The opportunist is similar to the groper; however, their transgressions may be of a more serious nature. Their behaviour can be very persistent and they will argue that a particular victim enjoyed the type of behaviour displayed. Their behaviour is promiscuous and they take advantage of a situation presented. Gropers scarcely show their presence publicly and will privately continue with their actions. They also assume that the actions are consensual and therefore do not take any responsibility for their inappropriate behaviour (Cape Peninsula University of Technology, 2012).

*Situational harasser:* Situational harassment arises from a negative situation, such as divorce, medical problems or stressful situations that a particular employee may experience. The harasser makes use of opportunities in which the target is vulnerable and caught up in their particular negative situation at hand and the victim may not realize that they are sexually harassed. The harasser, however, will stop if the situation changes or ends, but the harasser and target may have already been harmed (Prekel, 2001).

*The great gallant:* Great gallant is not a form of physical sexual harassment, but rather verbal harassment. Verbal harassment occurs when excessive compliments and personal comments are made, which makes the target feel embarrassed. Even though the harasser may see themselves as giving a compliment, the target may get annoyed (Western Cape Government, 2005). As indicated in the above definition, harassers may feel that they are appealing and desirable, but the recipient generally does not share their views (Cape Peninsula University of Technology, 2012).

**2.3. Causes of Sexual Harassment at Workplace**

There are several causes of sexual harassment all of which cannot be captured in this study. However, one basic cause of sexual harassment is socialization with literature indicating that social upbringing has an effect on behaviour (Levin & Sykes, 2005). In recent years, both social and political changes have altered power relationships, and some men had felt and may still feel threatened by the career advancements, independence and assertiveness of women (Western Cape Government, 2005). Gateway (2009) states that sexual harassment varies from one individual to another and that the work environment create proximity and fog boundaries that are often crossed, exacerbating the risk of sexual harassment.

Three main causes of sexual harassment at work are been discussed below:

***Socialization:*** Socialization refers to the way in which men and women are raised. An individual’s culture may therefore determine their experience or perception of sexual harassment. In the event of women being dependent on men, they may find it difficult to report cases of sexual harassment. On the other hand, women who are more independent are vulnerable when they reject advances (Western Cape Government, 2005).

According to Gateway (2015), moral values and cultural differences are at the root of sexual harassment. In societies where extra-marital relationships are widely accepted, some people equate monogamy with monotony. It is relatively easy for people to engage in sexual matters, whether they are unilateral or mutual. The person who tries and does not accept the rejection, or considers the reluctant colleague as a challenge, easily becomes a stalker or may victimize the reluctant colleague. The prevalence of marital stress and divorce in Western society, which today influences many cultures around the world, means that some men and women are working in a state of emotional distress that can make them vulnerable to sexual harassment. Some confusion results from cultural differences about what is acceptable or not in our fast-changing society.

***Aggressiveness or bravado***: Men who act out when they are in a group but behave differently when they are alone act in a similar manner to those described under “gang harassment” since they feel a sense of bravado in making inappropriate comments towards the victim. However, when these men are alone, they are harmless (Western Cape Government, 2005).

***Lack of organizational policy:*** Gateway (2009) states that sexual harassment is due to lack of policy. A lack of policy with respect to sexual harassment may have various repercussions and implications for an organization. According to Aaron and Dry (1992), some women prefer to resign rather than complain, since they are uncertain about what steps should be followed, what actions are considered a joke or if any action will be taken by management. In addition, they further distinguished that if management did not take sexual harassment seriously and victims are blamed, it would encourage perpetrators to continue such behavioural patterns. If management condones this type of behaviour or if the victim is blamed for the harasser’s actions, the harasser will be encouraged to continue their pattern, which in turn may affect more and more targets (IJCCR, 2014).

Additionally, “job gender context,” or the gendered nature of the workplace, has been found to predict harassment. Job gender context has been operationalized in several ways, including the gender ratio of the workgroup and/or industry, supervisor gender, and the nature of the job duties (whether traditionally masculine or feminine) with more heavily male, traditional occupations and workplaces being related to higher rates of sexual harassment (Cortina, Fitzgerald & Drasgow, 2002; Fitzgerald, et al, 1997). These indicators are thought to predict harassment based on the straightforward effect of contact (“contact hypothesis”): where the more contact a woman has with men the more likely she is to be harassed (Gutek, Cohen & Conrad, 1990). Additionally, these indicators are believed to predict harassment based on the “sex role spillover hypothesis” (Stockdale, Visio, & Batra, 1999). Women in traditionally masculine occupations are more likely to be subjected to harassment because they tend to stand out for their gender and be seen as women rather than co-workers, and are consequently treated differently (e.g., harassed).

Again, women in non-traditional occupations are seen as acting outside of their societally prescribed gender role, and therefore are subjected to increased ridicule or harassment (Stockdale, et al., 1999). The organizational climate with regard to sexual harassment, or the extent to which people perceive that harassment is tolerated, has also been found to be an antecedent of sexual harassment (Hulin, Fitzgerald & Drasgow, 1996). Specifically, higher levels of harassment are predicted by (i) greater perceived degree of risk to a victim if she were to report harassment, (ii) lack of seriousness with which the organization takes harassment complaints, and (iii) a lower likelihood that the organization would impose meaningful sanctions on the harasser.

According to Naylor, Pritchard and IIgen (1980), workplace climate and job gender context refers to workplace features that interconnect tolerance of sexual harassment. Overall, the sexual harassment climate is one of the finest single incident analyses of sexual harassment in a work place (Fitzgerald, Gelfand & Drasgow, 1995). Hulin, Fitzgerald and Drasgow, (1996) say there are three important aspects in workplace climate, namely (1) the perceived risk to victims for complaining, (2) the lack of sanctions against offenders, and (3) the perception that one’s complaints will not be taken seriously.

Workplace climate focuses on an employee’s perception of the workplace’s policies and procedures that are specifically related to sexual harassment, victims who are harassed and training (Williams, Fitzgerald & Drasgow, 1999). A study conducted by Williams, et al., (1999) identified policies and procedures in handling sexual harassment relating directly to the employees’ negative experiences. They also outlined a comprehensive taxonomy of these important workplace practices, including written guidelines for behaviour, grievance processes, investigating complaints, creating awareness, training programs that could be implemented and preventative measures.

Sexual harassment as behaviour is seen as a manifestation of power relations where women lack such power because most of them are in more vulnerable and insecure positions, for example, being a woman worker on the support staff. These positions affect women in the labour markets. Underlying this position, one cannot deny that women are harmed and weakened by social conditions. This means that when a woman’s means of support is waged labour, then she has little choice but to take jobs where toleration of sexualized aggression is part of the job. One could say that sexual harassment stems from gender stereotyping and gender bias or sexism. Regarding this view, the Employment Equity Act of the South Africa states that work should not be based on sex differences (Herbig, 2004). This means that acts of sex discrimination in the workplace have placed women as a group at a substantial disadvantage relative to men. These are the conducts that enact a demeaning conception of women’s status.

Eisenstein (1991) points out that Simone de Beauvoir presented a premise stating that the oppression of women stemmed from their differences from men: their biological functions and the social responsibilities and constraints derived from these and the psychological and social adaptations required of girls to become women. This makes sexual harassment appears normal at work place. The perpetrator may display inappropriate and excessive affection towards the employee. It could include a woman being told to have sex with her boss in order to keep her job and the case of the employee who gets fired when she responds unfavourably to her boss’s overture (Baxter & Hemle 1989). In this category, the harassed needs to be in a position of authority over the harassed employee. In the hostile category, the claims are less clear cut.

**2.4.** **Consequences of Sexual Harassment on Individuals and Organizations**

Sexual harassment in the workplace has negative effects on employees, and on the performance and image of an organization (Wright, 2010). The negative impact of sexual harassment in the workplace includes psychological and physical effects on employees (O’Reilly, Robinson, Berdahl & Banki, 2014), illnesses (Dionisi et al., 2012), and several negative work-related behaviors (Dionisi & Barlin, 2015; McDonald, 2012; Merkin, 2013; Merkin & Shan, 2014). The impact on the individual who experiences sexual harassment in the employment context can range from irritation to serious debility, with long-term physical and/or psychological implications. Such harassment can create a work environment in which a person feels constantly humiliated, degraded and angry. Some victims also experience guilt, the sense that they are somehow to blame for the treatment they receive. Always, victims worry about recriminations if they take action to report or otherwise speak out to discourage the treatment. Occasionally, victims feel they have no choice but to resign, and thereby they may suffer permanent damage to their careers.

The act of sexual harassment not only threatens their job security but also render victims to become social lepers by other workmates. The act would then be seen to hinder the effective contributions of women to the society by limiting their economic potentials at work. Any action which hinders women’s income earning capacities is detrimental to the interest of the society. Sexual harassment is therefore a major barrier that limits the possibilities of women to work. In addition to this, however, such conduct, if at all pervasive, can have serious impact on the organization that permits it—even tacitly—to occur. Survey has indicated that many harassed individuals resign, take undue sick leave and reduce their own and their team’s productivity as a result of poor job satisfaction and unhappy relationships with coworkers (MacKinnon, 1992). Costs to an organization in refilling vacant positions (a high-cost activity for the centers), in work left undone or performed by other employees on overtime and in paying medical claims of those who seek help for physical and emotional stress can be substantial (MacKinnon, 1992).

Workplace sexual harassment against female workers has many consequences and negative effects on both the victim and organization where it occurs (Akinfala & Tunde, 2017). Research has shown that generally, sexual harassment against women has many consequences ranging from negative effects on the woman as an individual to their work productivity (Idris et al., 2016). Similarly, Lindquist and Mckay (2018) reported decreased job satisfaction, organizational commitment, productivity, and increased work attrition among their respondents on consequences of sexual harassment. According to the study carried out in the legal sector, Aina-Pelemo, Mahanathan & Kulshrestha (2019) found that low performance, psychological and health challenges are among the consequences of sexual harassment against female workers. No wonder, Idris, Adaja, Audu & Aye (2016) found that most female employees in some selected organizations in Kogi State, Nigeria perceived sexual harassment as highly embarrassing, offensive while some perceive it as normal and solicited for. Empirical evidence also revealed prevalence of sexual harassment against female teachers in primary and secondary schools in Idah local government, Kogi State (Idri et al, 2016).

Generally, victims of sexual harassment suffer significant psychological effects, including anxiety, depression, headaches, sleep disorders, weight loss or gain, nausea, lowered self-esteem and sexual dysfunction. In relation to work, they experience job-related costs as well: from job loss, decreased morale, decreased job satisfaction to irreparable damage to interpersonal relationships at work. In the higher education setting, it can affect students indirectly and intensify the campus atmosphere for students, teachers and other workers. There are always physical and psychological distress associated with sexual harassment leading to a tense and unproductive working and learning environment.

Other factors that may be mentioned are feeling angry, irritated and powerless. Stress-related illnesses, high blood pressure and depression may also occur (McCann, 2005). A study conducted by Brown, Rospenda, Sokas, Konroy, Freels & Swanson (2011) revealed that general workplace harassment (GWH) and job threat and pressure are two relative sources associated with high risks to occupational injuries, illness and assault. A year later, Stock and Tissot (2012) determined that neck pains and unwanted sexual attention had an impact on individuals. Primarily, individuals’ experiences do not only have an impact on their perceptions and experience of sexual harassment. There are other related workplace issues that can be identified that have a negative impact not only on the employee personally, but also on the employee’s general work performance. It is therefore important to emphasize work-related impacts as well.

***Work-related impact***

Sexual harassment has been shown to be more common in certain social situations than in others and in workplaces with certain characteristics. Victim(s), and in some cases bystanders, are negatively impacted by sexual harassment. There may be an overall decrease in efficiency; productivity may decrease; teamwork could be compromised; and members may feel demotivated and demoralized by their experience. The overall progress and innovation within the workplace may be delayed within an environment that lacks trust and team spirit (Pryor et al., 1993).

Additional research (Howard, 2007) suggests that productivity can be negatively impacted and absenteeism and financial losses due to legal charges (and in some cases compensation due to sexual harassment) can occur. For example, in the United States, 500 companies lost an estimated $6.7 million per year due to absenteeism, low productivity and high employee turnover (Howard, 2007). According to Svedberg and Alexanderson (2012) sickness, absenteeism and gender discrimination are common consequences of sexual harassment in the workplace.

***Psychological effects***

Psychological effects of sexual harassment such as depression, anxiety, stress and loss of motivation may result from experiences of sexual harassment. Victims may also experience psychological effects ranging from irritation and frustration to anxiety, stress and terror. There can also be a fear of retaliation and backlash within the workplace (Women Centre, n.d.). Rarnsaroop and Brijball Parumasur (2007) concur with this, and maintain that sexual harassment may also result in increased absenteeism, a high percentage of sick leave and a decrease in morale. Norman, Aikins and Binka (2013) suggested that physical injuries, psychological trauma, depression, anxiety and a loss of trust in authority affect employee’s health. It is therefore clear that sexual harassment has a negative economical and psychological effect on the victim.

Studies have also shown that the consequences of sexual harassment even at low levels for the victims could include impaired psychological well-being, such as lowered self-esteem, nervousness, irritability, and anger (Popovich, 1988); negative job attitudes, work withdrawal behaviours may eventually lead to discharge from the organization. Negative outcomes to the organization include absenteeism, decreased productivity, high attrition rate, litigation expenses, and an impaired organizational climate. Harassed female department members are more likely to suffer strained work relations, view colleagues as professionally incompetent, and become generally dissatisfied with their jobs (Dey, et al., 1996). At other times, female department members have had to suffer detrimental consequences to their careers (Schneinder, 1987).

***Withdrawal related to attitudes***

Employees’ attitudes have various functions: they serve to guide their reactions to others, events and/or objects, impact on employee behaviour and even relate to their physical and mental wellbeing (McCormick & Ilgen, 1987). Within a workplace, attitudes are related to patterns of job behaviours (Hanisch & Hulin, 1991) and work dissatisfaction leads to levels of both work and job withdrawal. Researchers have suggested that when women are victims of harassment, they tend to distance themselves and withdraw from other employees (Chan, Lam, Chow & Cheung, 2008; Fitzgerald, Drasgow& Magley, 1999a; Willness, Steel & Lee, 2007).

***Work and job withdrawal***

Workplace withdrawal is measured using two concepts, namely work withdrawal and job withdrawal (Hanisch & Hulin, 1991). Work withdrawal refers to the avoidance of an employee’s daily responsibilities and may culminate in absenteeism and tardiness; while job withdrawals focused on turnover and retirement purposes (Hanisch, 1990; Hanisch & Hulin, 1991). Moreover, studies have measured and analyzed workplace withdrawal utilizing Hanish et al.’s (1991) job and work withdrawal scales, as they have been proven to be consistent. Due to this consistency, the correlation between sexual harassment and workplace withdrawal became slightly considered in victims’ reporting behaviours. This in turn leads to less formal complaints and prompted the harasser to leave their workplace or work situation (Schneider, Swan & Fitzgerald, 1997).

***Power and status***

Individuals with power and status have a strong impact on intergroup communications; on the other hand, individuals who belong to groups with less status and who have less secure social positions experience more intergroup discriminative behaviour (Sachdev & Bourhis, 1991). This is particularly true in multi-ethnic societies such as Brazil (Marger, 2011), and Nigeria. Power comes from opportunities presented by either power or authority relationships, which originate from categorized structures in a workplace. The results thereof may lead to an extortion of sexual gratification from subordinates (Dekker & Barling, 1998).

Sexual harassment exemplifies and promotes practices which disadvantage women at work. They are degraded, and worse, they are kept in their specified inferior job positions and kept sexually in thrall to men. MacKinnon (1979) points out that sexual harassment expresses and reinforces a sex-stereotyped perspective that women hired for women’s jobs are to be at the service of men in every way, are fair game for male sexual advances, and owe men sexual liberties-all of which work to their disadvantage as women workers. However, Adkins (1995) points out that Mackinnon’s definition does not demonstrate or explicate that sexual harassment produces gender division within the labour market because women provide men with structural economic power in relation to women. Men then use power to abuse women.

Saul (2003) maintains that sexual harassment has caused women to quit their jobs, accept less-paid jobs and sometimes leave the workplace altogether. Sexual harassment has played an important role in holding women back. It has created obstacles for women than men rarely have to face in the workplace. The Figures presented are ‘pregnant with words.’ Women want to be at work as they try to fight off the perpetrators of this abuse. Unfortunately, the Easter Cape has few job opportunities and this means victims have to persevere and stay at work despite many being faced with sexual harassment. Even if a woman gets suspended from work, she goes out to apply for another job opportunity. She does not stay at home.

However, it is important to state clearly that the costs of sexual harassment are not borne by individuals and groups alone: organizations bear the costs of withdrawal behaviors, via consequences such as increased absences (Fitzgerald, et al., 1997; Hanisch & Hulin, 1990, 1991; U.S. Merit Systems Protection Board, 1987, 1994), and decreased productivity (Magley, Waldo, et al., 1999). Sexual harassment is a complex problem with a vast array of interrelated organizational attitudes and outcomes. For example, Gutek and Koss (1993) proposed that organizational consequences of sexual harassment may include a deterioration of interpersonal relations at work; lower levels of organizational commitment, job satisfaction, and job motivation; and increased levels of job stress. It has further been suggested that sexual harassment may lead to decreased efficiency, poor morale, and a reduced level of job involvement (Terpstra & Baker, 1986). The total indirect consequences of sexual harassment are very difficult to ascertain. For example, it would be almost impossible to determine the costs associated with opportunities missed due to poor decision-making or decreased creativity (Terpstra & Baker, 1986), resulting from the menace of sexual harassment especially in the Nigerian Civil Service. To the extent that known cases of sexual harassment would damage the image of the organization, the damage to the recruiting process would be equally bard to assess (Terpstra & Baker, 1986). Consider an example from the context of a public organization like the Nigerian Civil Service Commission. If a public workplace experience known cases of sexual harassment, that workplace may have difficulty attracting and recruiting outstanding female professionals.

Several studies have reported tremendous organizational losses related to sexual harassment. Wagner (1992) reported that the Fortune 500 companies studied averaged losses of $6.7 million per company per year, excluding litigation costs. Faley, Knapp, Kustis, & Dubois (1994) estimated the cost to be $500 million for one year for the Army alone. According to the large-scale U.S. Merit Systems Protection Board survey of federal employees (U.S. Merit Systems Protection Board, 1994), over a two-year period, harassment cost the federal government approximately $327 million (due to turnover, sick leave, individual and work group productivity losses). These reports of staggering losses have helped move sexual harassment from the realm of merely a concern for equality, fairness and victim’s rights, to a concern with what is most companies’ main motivator: the bottom line.

Other studies show that sexual harassment affects the organization negatively and in the following ways:

•Decreased productivity and increased team conflict,

•Decrease in success at meeting financial goals (because of team conflict),

•Decreased job satisfaction,

•Loss of staff and expertise from resignations to avoid harassment or resignations/firings of alleged harassers,

•Decreased productivity and/or increased absenteeism by staff or students experiencing harassment.

•Increased health care costs and sick pay costs because of the health consequences of harassment,

•The knowledge that harassment is permitted can undermine ethical standards and discipline in the organization in general, as staff lose respect for, and trust in their seniors who indulge in, or turn a blind eye to sexual harassment,

•If the problem is ignored, a company's image can suffer,

•Legal costs if the problem is ignored and complainants take the issue to court (Boland 1990; Kamir 2005; Heyman 1994; Koss 1987 and Langelan 1993).

**2.5. Empirical Review**

Specifically, research within organizations has shown that sexual harassment is indeed prevalent. Numerous studieshave estimated that between40% and 68% of women are harassed (U.S. Merit Systems Protection Board, 1981, 1987; Gutek, 1985; Pryor, 1995; Schneider, Swan, & Fitzgerald, 1997), and that it has serious consequences both for the individual victim and the organization in which the harassment occurs. More recently, Fitzgerald and her colleagues (Fitzgerald, et al., 1997) began testing the relationships of sexual harassment, its antecedents and consequences simultaneously, through an integrated model. They confirmed previous results, finding that both job gender context and organizational tolerance for sexual harassment predict co-employee harassment. Additionally, they found the job satisfaction, health conditions and psychological conditions were all directly negatively affected by harassment. Furthermore, they found that work withdrawal, health satisfaction and job withdrawal were indirectly affected by harassment via job satisfaction and health conditions.

Merkin (2008) assessed the impact of sexual harassment on turnover intentions, absenteeism, and job satisfaction. The study tested the effects of sexual harassment on overall turnover intentions, overall absenteeism and job dissatisfaction in Argentina, Brazil and Chile. Multivariate and logistic regression was employed while controlling for age, education, gender, marital status and race. The findings revealed that Latin American employees who were sexually harassed were likely to have more turnover intentions, engage in more absenteeism; yet they did not experience a significant decrease in job satisfaction. These results differ from US findings indicating that there are cross cultural differences in the consequences of sexual harassment. The more costly outcomes of sexual harassment are consistent with US findings, indicating the need for multinational companies to establish sexual harassment policies in Latin America.

Biggs, Matthewman and Fultz (2012) examined romantic relationships in organizational settings: gender in Management. This study aimed to understand from an individual manager and employee perspective in the UK and US, what personal experience individuals had on workplace romance and what this meant to them personally and in terms of company policy. The study utilized qualitative interviews which were preferred over other methods, such as focus groups by the participants. The sample consists of 21 employees and 15 managers from Maryland, Oregon, Pennsylvania and England. They found out that Managers and entry level employees feel that workplace romance was acceptable if it has minimal impact on the workplace. The study concluded that managers and entry level employees agree on the importance of companies having a policy on how workplace romance will be handled.

Hendrick (2013) studied the effect of dissolved workplace romance on the psychosocial functioning and the productivity of involved employees. The study followed a qualitative research approach in that it covered employees’ experiences and productivity psychosocial functioning in the workplace amidst a relationship breakdown, a collective case study design was utilized. The researcher conducted a word and content analysis and an extensive literature study. They found out that different participants had different and unique emotional experiences and the impact of their functioning varied from time to time and from individual to individual. It concluded that there is overall negative breakdown of workplace romance on the psychosocial functioning on productivity of involved employees in the workplace.

The result of a study by Koss, Gidycz & Wisniewski (1987) across thirty-two (32) United States Colleges, showed a high incidence of and prevalence rates of sexual violence against women. They state that since the age of fourteen years, 53% were victims of some form of sexual abuse. Only 27% reported that they had been victims of rape or attempted rape. Daniels (2002) studied perceptions of sexual harassment amongst Stellenbosch University. The study revealed that respondents did not have a clear understanding of what constituted sexual harassment. Females at Pretoria Technikon reported a significantly higher incidence of the experience of unwanted sexual activity on campus than males (Hoffman, 2002). At the University of Cape Town, a Committee of Enquiry into sexual harassment was established in response to a concern that both sexual harassment and violence against women were occurring on campus. It was found that 45% of female respondents had experienced some form of sexual harassment within one month of being at university. At the University of the Transkei (UNITRA) two lecturers, Mayekiso and Bhana (1997) conducted a study aimed at assessing students’ perceptions of what constituted sexual harassment to ascertain students’ experiences of sexual harassment. They also wanted to find out if there were any significant gender-related differences in their perceptions and experiences of sexual harassment. Mayekiso and Bhana (1997) raised a concern that sexual harassment had become a serious problem in educational institutions and further pointed out that sexual harassment was prevalent at this institution. They maintained that very few cases were reported formally.

The European Union issued a Recommendation and Code, the EC code, to identify harassment by reference to the motive of the harasser and how it affected the person who was subjected to the harassment. The EC code contains terminology which describes sexual harassment as offensive, demeaning and affecting a person’s dignity (Williams, et al., 2003). The code defines sexual harassment as ‘conduct of a sexual nature or other conduct based on sex affecting the dignity of women and men at work’. Williams, et al., (2003) say this code is explicit in indicating that the conduct is unacceptable in the workplace if: the harassment is unwanted, unreasonable, offensive to the recipient of the conduct of the decision regarding the recipient’s training, employment, promotion or salary is dependent upon whether the conduct is rejected or accepted; or of the result of the conduct is to create an intimidating, hostile or humiliating work environment for the recipient.

Phiri, et al. (1995) in their study of violence against women in educational institutions in Malawi, say women have experienced some form of gender-based violence. These authors found that 67% of female respondents in Malawi had experienced some form of gender-based violence in their homes, workplaces, religious institutions, police stations, prisons, and hospitals as well as in institutions of learning in Malawi. They further report that of those girls and young women who completed the questionnaire, 69.9% reported that incidents of gender-violence had resulted in performance problems at school and work, with a further 12.8% reporting that it had negatively affected their home life. Of the 657 respondents who reported having experienced incidents of inappropriate touching, 69.2% stated that the assault had not affected their education, whilst the remaining 38.8% stated that their education has been adversely affected with 3.3% leaving school permanently.

Jennifer and Karl (2009) examined sexual behavior at work: fun or folly?. The research studied 238 manufacturing and social service workers about their psychological well-being, work withdrawal, and exposure to sexual behavior at work. Respondents indicated how often they were exposed to different sexual behaviors and how much they enjoyed or were bothered by them. They studied 1,004 university staff about their psychological well-being, drug use, feelings of being valued at work, and exposure to sexual behavior at work. They found out that some women and many men reported enjoying sexual behavior at work. The study concluded that sexual behavior at work predicted negative employee work and psychological well-being, even for employees who said they enjoyed the experience.

Idris, Adaja, Audu and Aye (2016) examined the causes and effects of sexual harassment on performance of female employees in some selected organizations in Kogi State, Nigeria. The researchers utilized data from both primary and secondary sources. The analysis was made using simple percentage while hypotheses were tested facilitated using the statistical package for social sciences (SPSS). The paper concludes that women at the lover cadre are mostly harassed and it affects their performance in the organizations. The paper recommends stringent rules be put in place to protect women against sexual harassment.

***Research Gap***

It is obvious that all the studies reviewed above focused more on the forms and effects of sexual harassment than clearly defining and unraveling the immediate and remote causes of the menace. Also, most of the studies are conducted at schools and not at other work places where male and female adults come together in large number. Hence, this study is set to bridge these gaps in research by clearly defining and tracing the immediate and remote causes of sexual harassment against women at work place.

**2.6.** **Strategies for Addressing Sexual Harassment**

Interventions and prevention can be implemented in all workplaces. A few studies have examined the effectiveness of interventions, policies and training to assist with this phenomenon that is still affecting some employees and employers in the 21st century. Primarily, employers are responsible for dealing with the problem of sexual harassment in a workplace and they are required to create awareness and encourage employees to take the necessary steps to and correct harassment within the workplace. The four most important prevention strategies to discuss are: 1) South African strategies; 2) sexual harassment policies; 3) training; and 4) Grievance process.

*South African Strategies:* Most institutions in South Africa have sexual harassment policies in place. Wilken and Badenhorst (2003) confirm this, but also emphasize concerns regarding the implementation of sexual harassment policies. According to Gouws and Kritzinger (2007) most institutions have introduced policies in South Africa but have not focused on the effectiveness thereof.

*Policies:* A guide for implementing a sexual harassment policy has been identified by Finnemore and Van Rensburg (2002); Laabs (1998); Orlov and Roumell (1999); Owens, Gomes and Morgan (2004); Paludi (1996); and Retief (2000):

•Create awareness by ensuring that the policy is included in various programmes relating to orientation, education, training and diversity. This may create a culture that emphasizes that any form of sexual harassment will not to be tolerated,

•Communicate the policy to all employees; provide them with a copy of the policy,

•Conduct regular training sessions or workshops to ensure that a harassment-free working environment is ensured at all times (Owens et al., 2004), and

•Ensure that managers and supervisors are aware of their duties and responsibility regarding compliance to the policy.

Thomas (2004) promotes the importance of designing and developing a strong sexual harassment policy. It should provide all employees with a clear view of inappropriate behaviour and ensure that sexual harassment will not be tolerated. Rather than the policy emphasizing a proactive and preventative programme of education, the approach tended to look at more reactive strategies, dealing with harassment when it actually occurred. The reactive strategy therefore focuses on measures that will be taken in terms of handling sexual harassment behaviour, once such behaviour has made itself noticeable within the workplace (Grobler et al., 2003).

According to Grobler et al. (2003), when formalizing the actual document, it is imperative to express the following:

•Defining sexual harassment: a definition must be included in the policy for those employees who do not understand what the term actually means,

•Illustrations of prohibited conduct: this should be included to ensure that individuals understand what may constitute inappropriate behaviours,

•Non-retaliation: employees should be assured that if any incidents are reported, there will be no critical retaliation by the accuser,

•Investigation procedure: a step-by-step process should be made clear to employees and the procedure should not be biased or subjective,

•Corrective action: this included remedies that will assist those employees who have been sexually harassed, for instance a counseling session,

•Confidentiality: all documents and communication should be kept confidential.

Management should also provide employees with regular updates on changes to policies and procedures. The policy should be reviewed periodically to establish whether the policy has been successfully implemented and has produced a positive, harassment-free working environment for all employees. If complaints of sexual harassment are made, the cases should be reviewed and procedures should be followed accordingly (Equal Employment Opportunities Commission, 2005).

*Training:* The purpose of having training programs is to educate all employees. Byers and Rue, (1991:206) state: “Training must be directed towards the accomplishment of some workplace goal”, in other words, a clear policy must be adhered to before actual training can commence. Training can be utilized at the primary intervention stage, where it would raise employee awareness and clarify misconceptions but also inform all employees and employers about their roles and responsibilities in the workplace (Laabs, 1995; York, Barcley & Zajack, 1997). Training activities may heighten awareness, are empowering and informative, and may involve internal and external sensitivity training to address interpersonal dynamics.

Ensuring that employees and employers participate in training sessions may assist with the identification and preventative measures before or after the occurrence of sexual harassment. Orlov and Roumell (1999:56) claim: “Without a training requirement and programme, a company’s sexual harassment prevention programme may be perceived by the workforce as nothing more than a paper tiger, without the muscle needed to make it effective”.

In a diverse country like Nigeria, there are employees from various socio-cultural backgrounds and ethnic and racial origins with diverse perceptions, values and belief systems. Interpersonal behaviour training is an important aspect to be focused upon. The aim of interpersonal behaviour training is to ensure that all employees understand that they come from different socio-cultural backgrounds. The primary focus of this training is therefore focused on preventing sex-role-work-role confusion. Once this has been achieved, employees might be able to interact with one another in a manner that would not be regarded as sexual harassment (Grobler et al., 2003). In a diverse workplace, interpersonal behaviour training is important as employees from various ethnic groups and economic and socio-cultural backgrounds may be required to engage with one another in pursuit of organizational goals.

*Grievance process:* Having a grievance process within an organization is a common and useful mechanism. It is the process that provides employees the right to raise their concerns/complaints. Organizational policies and grievance procedures provide organizations with a “no tolerance” policy for preventing sexual harassment from occurring in the first place (Parker, 1999).

**2.7. Theoretical Framework**

It is commonly accepted that there is no single cause of sexual harassment nor is there a theoretical framework that best explains it (Skaine, 1996). However, there have been plethora of accepted theories of sexual harassment that attempt to explain the phenomenon from different angles and perspectives. For the purpose of this study, feminist and organizational theories are utilized, but the researcher narrowed down to the latter.

**2.7.1. Feminist theory**

Feminist theories first emerged as early as 1794 in publications such as A Vindication of the Rights of Woman by Mary Wollstonecraft, "The Changing Woman". However, the more recent theories on feminism emerged from the 1970 in writings of scholars like Reed, Evelyn (1975). “Woman's Evolution: From Matriarchal Clan to Patriarchal Family.”; Showalter, Elaine (1988). “'Toward a Feminist Poetics: Women's Writing and Writing About Women' in *The New Feminist Criticism: Essays on Women, Literature and Theory.”*; Zajko, Vanda and Leonard, Miriam (2006), *Laughing with Medusa,* and a host of others. The global idea of feminism refers to the belief that men and women deserve equality in all opportunities, treatment, respect, and social rights.

In general, feminists are people who try to acknowledge social inequality based on gender and stop it from continuing. Feminists point out that in most cultures throughout history men have received more opportunities than women. There are quite a number of feminist theories, but this study covers three of those types as they attempt explanation of sexual harassment at work place - radical feminism, socialist feminism, and cultural feminism.

**Radical Feminism:** Radical feminism views patriarchy and sexism as the most elemental factor in women’s oppression – cutting across all others from race and age to culture, caste and class. It questions the very system and ideology behind women’s subjugation. The term often refers to the women’s movements emerging from the civil rights, peace and other liberation movements at a time when people increasingly were questioning different forms of oppression and power. Radical feminists, seeking to understand the roots of women’s subordination, have provided the major theoretical understanding that has served as the basis for the inspiration and analysis guiding women’s movements around the world.

Radical feminism is a movement that believes sexism is so deeply rooted in society that the only cure is to eliminate the concept of gender completely. In fact, radical feminists would argue that the entire traditional family system is sexist. Men are expected to work outside the home while women are expected to care for children and clean the house, hence men view women even at workplaces as those who are to render the domestic service of sexual intercourse.

Sexual harassment exists because of the views of women as the inferior sex, but also sexual harassment serves to maintain the already existing gender stratiﬁcation by emphasizing sex role expectations (Gutek, 1985; Malovich & Stake, 1990; Pryor’ 1987; Schacht & Atchison, 1993; Tangri & Hayes, 1997). Dworkin (1974:23) notes that most women, all too often, function at least some of the time as tools for male convenience, pleasure and self-affirmation. Gilligan (2001: 61) maintains that it is very clear that women are seen as sex objects. Halwan (2007) says the radical feminist, Andrea Dworkin insisted in 1974 that the battle against sexual objectification (a ‘battle to be waged by ‘asserting one’s humanness every time, in all situations’) is the core of our struggle.

MacKinnon (1979) maintained that women's inferior position in the workplace and society in general, is not only a consequence, but also a cause of sexual harassment. Tangri, Burt, and Johnson (1982) posit that sexual harassment serves to manage the male–female interactions according to accepted sex status norms, and therefore, serves to maintain male dominance occupationally, by intimidating, and discouraging women from work.

**Socialist Feminism:** Radical feminism is the most extreme form. The second type of feminism, called socialist feminism, is slightly less extreme but still calls for major social change. Socialist feminism is a movement that calls for an end to capitalism through a socialist reformation of our economy. Basically, socialist feminism argues that capitalism strengthens and supports the sexist status quo because men are the ones who currently have power and money. Those men are more willing to share their power and money with other men, which means that women are continually given fewer opportunities and resources. This keeps women under the control of men and vulnerable to sexual harassment.

Feminists, grounded in Marxist and socialist analysis, attribute women’s oppression principally to the capitalist economic system where global corporate power prevails. Many other feminists believe that this form of power seen in the class system is a crucial factor in women’s subordination but see patriarchy as the major force behind women’s subjugation. According to this feminist perspective, sexual harassment, regardless of its form, is linked to the sexist male ideology of male dominance and male superiority (Matchen & DeSouza, 2000; Stockdale, 1993). It associates sexual harassment with the dominant economic power of men over women (Farley, 1978; MacKinnon, 1979; Nieva and Gutek, 1981; Zalk, 1990). The political power of men over women can equally be used to account for sexual harassment. Majority of leaders and those who hold public offices worldwide are largely men, with women occupying only 20% (Williams, 2013). Therefore, where the traditional inequitable power relationship between men and women prevails, women who have less power and control are more likely to be harassed sexually. Studies have indicated that more powerful actors are likely to indulge in sexual harassment against lower status targets (MacKinnon, 1979; Pryor, 1985).

**Cultural Feminism:** Cultural feminism is a movement that points out how modern society is hurt by encouraging masculine behavior, but society would benefit by encouraging feminine behavior instead.Cultural feminism emphasizes essential differences between men and women in terms of biology, personality and behavior. Women are seen to have different and superior virtues that provide the foundation for a shared identity, solidarity and sisterhood. Since by nature women are viewed as kinder and gentler than men, it follows that if women were in power, the world would be a better place. In the 1960s and 70s, some women supported the idea of forming separate women-only cultures.

Extension of male dominance in society includes organizations, where the phenomenon is thriving (Farley, 1978; MacKinnon, 1979). Members/Workers of these organizations would therefore carry over their already existing gender roles, beliefs, and stereotypes into the workplace. Men and women are therefore socialized in such a manner that stereotyped interactions occur and are expected to occur; men are expected to be aggressive and dominant, and females are expected to be passive and accepting (Gruber & Bjorn, 1986). Therefore, according to feminist theory, men believe that their behaviors are justiﬁed whereas women blame themselves for being victimized (Vaux, 1993). Sexual harassment, hence, is viewed as an inevitable consequence of cultural experiences (Whaley & Tucker, 1998), therefore, it would apply to many different settings including the workplace (Barak, Pitterman, & Yitzhaki., 1995).

Connell (1987; 1992; 2002) posits that gender-based inequalities and discrimination are maintained and negotiated through interrelations among differently gendered (and therefore differently privileged) subjects within a larger gender system. Therefore, his theory of gender discrimination acknowledges multiple masculinities and feminities and takes account of the subjective experience of gender and harassment within a larger gender system. MacKinnon (1979) maintained that women’s inferior position in the workplace and society in general, is not only a consequence, but also a cause of sexual harassment. For him, gender and sexuality are similarly identified as systems of power and domination, with adult men wielding sexual power to assert and maintain dominance over women. Therefore, men and women are likely to experience and perceive sexually harassing behaviors differently because of gender inequality and culturally prescribed expressions of sexuality. Extension of male dominance in society includes organizations, where the phenomenon is thriving (Farley, 1978; MacKinnon, 1979). Sexual harassment, hence, is viewed as an inevitable consequence of cultural experiences; therefore, it would apply to many different settings including the workplace.

Therefore, the vulnerability of women as a weaker sex has traveled towards workplaces, where it is considered natural and normal for men to be responding sexually towards women as colleagues, subordinates and superiors.

According to these theories, sexual harassment is a logical consequence of the gender inequality and sexism that already exists in society (Gutek, 1985; Thomas & Kitzinger, 1997). During the early 1970s, feminist groups like the National Organization for Women and Working Women’s Institute began zealously to raise awareness of the problems of unwanted sexual attention on the job. According to the feminist perspectives, sexual harassment is linked to the sexist male ideology of male dominance and male superiority in the society. Therefore, feminists’ theories view sexual harassment as the product of a gender system maintained by a dominant, normative form of masculinity. Thus, sexual harassment exists because of the views on women as the inferior sex, but also sexual harassment serves to maintain the already existing gender stratification by emphasizing sex role expectations (Gutek, 1985).

A main strength of feminist theory has been the logical synthesis of gender issues, patriarchy, and dominance towards an explanation of sexual harassment (i.e., there is some evidence of unifying power). Furthermore, feminists' focus on gender inequality in the workplace has often been credited with bringing the issue of sexual harassment to light (Thomas & Kitzinger, 1997); thus, opening up new avenues of enquiry for researchers (some evidence of research fertility). Furthermore, there does appear to be some supporting evidence for feminist sociocultural explanations of sexual harassment. For example, as noted earlier, prevalence studies show that the majority of perpetrators is male, and some studies show that harassment is more predominant in male-dominated work forces (Brown, 1998; European Commission, 1998; Gruber,1992; LaFontaine & Tredeau,1986; Tangri et al.,1982; Niebuhr & Boyles, 1991).

The approach of feminist explanations of sexual harassment however, appears to be over inclusive and simplistic. Gender role socialization has evolved and expanded over time, to include more behaviors than the stereotyped expected gender behaviors, thus permitting more infusions of different behaviors to be accepted as normal for each gender (Bem, 1983). This, however, has not been accompanied by any measurable decrease in the phenomenon of sexual harassment (i.e., a lack of empirical adequacy). In addition, even though sexual harassment is a frequent phenomenon in society, it is not a normative behavior for men. Most men do not sexually harass, and the overarching nature of the feminist theory does not provide a sufﬁcient explanation as to why this is the case (lack of internal coherence and empirical adequacy).

**2.7.2. Organizational theory**

Modern organization theory is rooted in concepts developed during the beginnings of the Industrial Revolution in the late 1800s and early 1900s. Of considerable import during that period was the research done by of German sociologist Max Weber (1864—1920). Weber believed that bureaucracies, staffed by bureaucrats, represented the ideal organizational form and it is based on hierarchical flow of power or authority from the tope to the button. Over the years, researchers have long noted the role of organizational practices in constraining women’s career-related outcomes, highlighting the consequences of gendered role expectations, the crowding of women into disadvantageous jobs, and discrimination in assessment protocols and career advancement (Acker, 1990; Bielby & Baron, 1986; England, 1992; Jacobs, 1992; Kanter, 1977; Martin & Collinson, 1999; Tomaskovic-Devey, 1993). The organizational antecedents of women’s lived experiences on the job, such as sexual harassment, have received more attention in recent time.

According to organizational theory (Gruber, 1992; Tangri et al., 1982), sexual harassment may be explained by a wide variety of organizational-related issues including power and status inequalities within the organization, which increase the likelihood of sexual harassment occurring. So, similarly to socio-cultural explanations, the organizational theory acknowledges that power differentials within the workplace do affect the likelihood of sexual harassment taking place (apparent external consistency).

Proponents of this theory broadly accept that one of the central concepts that help to explain sexual harassment is power (Cleveland & Kerst, 1993). The norms that deﬁne western societies suggest that there are powerful and powerless individuals, the relationship of which should be deﬁned by hierarchy, and consequently the exercise of power within that hierarchy should be expected and accepted (Lips, 1991). Further-more, patterns in western societies suggest that men typically hold more power than women and the stereotypes prevailing between genders are that men are goal-oriented, powerful and aggressive, whereas women are passive–receptive and family-oriented (Allgeier & McCormick, 1983; Eagly, 1983; Eagly & Mladinic, 1989; Eagly & Wood, 1982). This western culture is not different from Nigeria’s in this regard.

However, organizational theory does not focus upon these power differentials as being gender speciﬁc. Thus, it could be predicted from the organizational theory, that although sexual harassment may be frequently perpetrated by males (due to workplace gender inequality), it may also be perpetrated by females who occupy positions of power (signs of unifying power). Furthermore, some researchers whose research could be afﬁliated with organizational theory suggest that sexual harassment by peers or subordinates can be seen as an attempt to gain power or equalize the power differences between the harasser and the victim within the organization (Cleveland & Kerst, 1993). So, in this sense, organizational theory may be able to explain sexual harassment perpetrated by subordinates since it presumes such individuals harass to reassert or equalize power differences.

The organizational theory deals primarily with the immediate context of the harassment. Thus, according to the organizational theory it is not simply power differentials within the organization that facilitate sexually abusive behavior. Other factors such as permissiveness of the organizational climate, gendered occupations, and organizational ethics, norms and policies affect the likelihood of sexual harassment occurring (Dekker & Barling, 1998; Fitzgerald, Drasgow, Hulin, Gelfand, & Magley, 1997; Gutek,1985; Gutek & Morasch, 1982; O'Hare & O'Donohue,1998; Whaley & Tucker, 1998; Willness et al., 2007). For example, in workplaces that are more tolerant of sexual harassment (e.g., no clear anti-sexual harassment policy, or complaints procedure), the organizational theory would predict that sexual harassment would be more prevalent. How permissive the organizational climate is, will determine the perceived risk of the potential victims to complain, the possibility and the availability of sanctions for harassers and the reception of one's complaints by the organization and colleagues with regards to seriousness.

A key strength of the organizational theory is that it attempts to unify a number of organizational factors in its explanation of sexual harassment (i.e., there is some evidence of unifying power). A further strength of the organizational theory is that many of its principal hypotheses have been both tested and identiﬁed as playing an important role in occurrence of sexual harassment (i.e., strong empirical adequacy and research fertility). For example, meta-analytical research shows that the organizational climate (i.e., tolerance of sexual harassment) and the gendered nature of an organization (i.e., proportion of women in a workgroup) play an important part in the occurrence of sexual harassment (Willness. Steel & Lee, 2007). In fact, the organizational climate is currently considered the strongest empirical predictor of sexual harassment (Fitzgerald et al., 1995; Pryor, 1995; Welsh, 1999; Williams, Fitzgerald, & Drasgow, 1999).

Weaknesses of the organizational theory revolve around its lack of attention to people's individual differences (actor variability) and how their everyday behavior, stereotypes, and expectations can inﬂuence the occurrence of the phenomenon (i.e., a lack of internal coherence and explanatory depth). Nevertheless, organizational theory has played a prominent role in directing professionals' focus towards the need for effective strategies to combat sexual harassment within the organization and its structural properties (Willness et al., 2007).

The organizational theory holds the most direct relevance to workplace harassment behaviour and serves as the basis for the organizational factors in the current study. The feminist and organizational theories fit into this study well, but the organizational theory is more appropriate. The organizational theory argues that the existing hierarchical authority relations and structures in organizations are responsible for the incidence of sexual harassment. The body of literature consulted has documented that public organizations like the NCSC as in other work environments, victims of sexual harassment in most cases have been women; though to a lesser extent, men have been the targets of harassment too (Dey, et al., 1996). In their sample of faculty staff in the United States, Dey, et al., (1996) report that 15.1 percent of female faculty staff compared with 3.1 percent of male faculty staff experienced sexual harassment. However, much higher incidence rates have been reported for the women, such as 63 percent by Schneider, Swan and Fitzgerald (1997). Schneider (1987) observes that 60 percent of female faculty staff who were included in a study experienced a form of harassment every working day. But, Kelley and Parsons (2000) suggest that women must not be viewed as being a homogenous gender group.

Regarding the organizational theory and sexual harassment at NCSC, the aura of the fighter (as most men know themselves to be) is prevalent, men see themselves as important and, in many ways, perfect. They then have the capacity for violence, lurking beneath the surface of a ‘real man.’ Actually, most victims point out that ‘real men’ are not supposed to sexually harass. On the other hand, male perpetrators might see themselves as heroes. A ‘real man’ is not supposed to be violent. He supposedly has control over events and over himself, thinks logically and should be committed to the right deeds. Sexual harassment behaviours seemed habitual. The behaviours have become so imbedded in the social fabric that they did not tolerate rejection of the sexual harassment behaviour. This study therefore utilizes the organizational theory for the explanation of the primary cause of sexual harassment in the Nigerian Civil Service Commission.

**SECTION THREE**

**RESEARCH METHOD**

This study is positioned within a quantitative research model. This is utilized to examine the cases of sexual harassment in Nigerian Civil Service Commission (NCSC). The research methodology that shall be followed within the present study is discussed in terms of the research design, population, sampling, data collection methods techniques of data analysis.

**3.1. Research Design**

To attain the standard required, the aims and objectives of this study; a descriptive survey shall be adopted for this study.Descriptive survey is one of the empirical research techniques which is aimed at describing systematically, the facts, qualities and characteristics of a given population, event or area of interest accurately to possibly answer the questions asked by the researcher. According to Adaeze (2004), descriptive survey method is the type of research in which the researcher is only describing what he/she has found to exist among the population he/she is investigating. The study therefore shall utilize the quantitative and qualitative methods to systematically describe the causes and effects of sexual harassment against women in the Nigerian Civil Service Commission, and the efforts of the appropriate authorities to address this scourge, as well as solutions to the menace.

**3.2. Population of the Study**

The population of study here is made up of civil servants, especially those working under the Nigerian Civil Service Commission in Abuja. The civil servants are classified into five categories: administrative class, executive class, professional class, the clerical class, and auxiliary class. The population of employees under the commission is totaling four hundred and two (402) (NCSC Headquarters, FCT, Abuja).

​

**3.3. Sampling Procedure**

Sample has been defined as a sub-set of the population. A sample is a limited number of elements selected from a population which is representative of that population. The choice of respondents is an important aspect of social research because of its impact on the reliability and validity of data that are ultimately collected.

The sample population of this study will be drawn using the multistage sampling technique which include Proportionate Stratified Sampling, Purposive Sampling and Random Sampling Technique to determine the sample size. In the first stage, the employees shall be stratified into five classes of civil servants in the NCSC headquarters Abuja. They are the administrative class, executive class, professional class, the clerical class, and auxiliary class, which shall be proportionately represented in the sample.

Secondly, the purposive sampling technique shall be used to select the respondents. A purposive sample is a non-probability sample that is selected based on characteristics of a population and the objective of the study (<https://www.thoughtco.com>> purposive-sampling). Specifically, the researcher utilized typical case sampling which is a type of purposive sampling useful when a researcher wants to study a phenomenon or trend as it relates to what are considered "typical" or "average" members of the effected population. This type of sampling can be very useful in situations when a researcher needs to reach a targeted sample (https://www.thoughtco.com>purposive-sampling-3026727).

Typical case purposive sampling is therefore suitable for this study because the objective of the study is a typical case which is specifically relating to sexual harassment experience. Thus, the respondents are those with typical knowledge relating to the phenomenon under investigation. Data from these respondents is peculiar and necessary to understand the plight of victims of sexual harassment in NCSC. These respondents shall be represented in the sample size to be drawn from executive class, professional class, the clerical class, and auxiliary class of civil servants in the commission. Each prospective respondent shall be asked if he or she has experienced sexual harassment in the past ten years before selection. Also, the purposive sampling technique shall be used to select twelve (12) senior staff of NCSC from the commission’s headquarters, Wuse 3, Abuja.

Thirdly, the respondents for the quantitative data shall also be randomly selected through the use of alternative numbering system on a flip paper where the next two persons, after a selected one among the employees that have experienced sexual harassment, in each of the five categories of the civil servants in the commission’s headquarters shall be skipped.

The sample size will be 200 respondents in which each category shall be represented by 40 respondents. This was determined using Taro Yamane’s formula thus:

n=   N

    (1+n)2e

Where:

N= Population size

n= Sample size

e= Degree of error

1= Constant

       402

1+402(0.05)2

        402

1+402(0.0025)

   402

1+1.005

402

2.005

n= 200

A total of one hundred and twenty-two (122) women shall be represented in the sample, and the remaining seventy-eight (78) shall be male respondents. The reason for the disproportionality in the selection of these respondents is that women are generally believed to suffer sexual harassment in workplace than their male counterpart.

**3.4. Method/Techniques of Data Collection**

The researcher shall utilize survey method of data collection. Primary data collection will be used to generate information that are of relevance in answering the questions raised in the study. The chosen instruments for the study will be questionnaire for gathering the quantitative data, while Key Informant Interview (KII) shall be used for collection of the qualitative data. The instruments are meant to complement each other.

The researcher will employ two field assistants and they will be trained and given details about data collection procedure. The researcher will distribute the questionnaire to the respondents directly, by hand, in their various offices at the headquarters of NCSC and they shall be given one week for them to be completed and then collected. After completion of the questionnaire, appreciation will be made and the questionnaire will be thoroughly cross-examined by the researcher for any omission or oversight during the interview session.

The KII will be conducted by the researcher alone. Appointments will be booked prior to the interview date because of the personalities involved. A total of twelve (12) Key Informant Interviews (KII) will be conducted with top officials of NCSC. The choice of top officials is based on the fact that they are better informed on the reports of sexual harassment in the commission and can better explain the position of the commission on how to address the menace. Interviews will be conducted in the offices of the interviewees or any other quiet environment. Consent will be sought from the interviewees for digital recordings to be used in the session.

**3.4.1. Questionnaire**

The questions for this study will be both closed ended/checklist or open – ended. The Sexual Harassment Perception and Experience Questionnaire (SHPEQ) shall be used to gather this data. The questionnaire shall be divided into two sections – A and B. Section A shall focus on the respondents’ demographic information to gain insight into their gender, age, marital status, period of employment, department, education and rank. Section B shall contain information regarding the nature, prevalence, causes, consequences, efforts by authority to stem the tide and remedies to the menace of sexual harassment in NCSC.

**3.4.2. Key Informants Interviews**

The researcher shall conduct twelve (12) key informant interviews (KII) with top officers of NCSC. From the Key Informants, the study shall source for information relating to the causes and consequences of sexual harassment against women at what place, and the efforts of the appropriate authority to address the menace.

**3.5. Method of Data Analysis**

This study shall employ two (2) levels of data analysis as follows:

1. Quantitative Analysis
2. Qualitative Analysis

**3.5.1. Quantitative Data Analysis**

The quantitative part of copies of the retrieved administered questionnaire will be presented in tables and analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) Version 21. SPSS is used by various kinds of researchers for complex statistical data analysis, but it is the most preferred research technique for analysis of survey data. When it comes to in-depth statistical analysis of this sort, researchers consider SPSS the best-in-class solution, hence the reason for the choice of this statistical technique. Once survey data is exported to SPSS, the opportunities for statistical analysis are practically endless.

**3.5.2. Qualitative Data Analysis**

Qualitative data will be transcribed and translated depending on the medium in which the interview will be conducted. All interviews will be recorded, transcribed, coded, and analyzed using the computer assisted qualitative data analyses software Nvivo and content analyses will guide the interpretation of the data. The data will be thematically analyzed based on the objectives of the study. Similar thoughts expressed across the participating KIIs will be identified, coded and grouped together.

**3.6. Reliability and Validity of Instrument Used**

Reliability has to do with the extent to which the study can be repeated and produce the same result. Though, no social science research can be cast on iron like in the case of natural sciences producing similar result in time and place, this research clearly articulates the methodology observed in the process of conducting the research which will always serve as a guide for any further empirical investigation.

On the issue of validity, the researcher shall embark on pre-testing survey which will hopefully reveal how valid the instrument is in measuring the facts under investigation, and corrections shall be made to the areas that confusions, that would affect the accuracy of the measurement, shall arise accordingly. Hence, the result of the study shall be valid because the instrument shall clearly capture the facts necessary for answering the questions under investigation.

**3.7. Expected Problems in the Course of Fieldwork**

Just like any other research endeaviour, the researcher is expecting certain problems in the course of fieldwork. These include time constraints in terms of combing tight work schedule and fieldwork. But the problem shall be solved by proper time management by which the researcher will adjust and re-adjust his time to ensure that the objectives of the study are achieved.

Again, the topic is very sensitive, hence the researcher expects non-coporation from some respondents who are likely to be shy to state the fact of the matter of sexual harassment that they may have experienced over time. This problem shall be resolved by the level of confidentiality assurance that the researcher will give to the respondents to enable them respond or speak boldly, knowing that their identity will be concealed.

Finally, getting the people for oral interview will certainly be a difficult task, especially due to the level of insecurity and the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic which require great caution and social distancing respectively. However, the researcher will resolve this problem by properly identifying himself and the purpose of the research and also comply with all the COVID-19 protocols by the Nigerian Center for Disease and Control.

**Letter of Introduction**

Faculty of Social Science,

Sociology Department,

Federal University Dutsin ma,

Katsina State.

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am a MSc. Sociology (Gender Development) Student of Federal University Dutsin ma undertaking research on the topic: Sexual Harassment in a Work Place: A Case of Civil Service Commission, Abuja. Your assistance at this point in providing relevant information is crucial for the success of the project and shall be highly appreciated. Your responses shall be treated in absolute confidence and only for the purpose of this study.

Thanks.

Yours faithfully,

**Lanshima, Sylvanus Shagbaor.**

**SPGS/SSC/2019/0299.**

**Questionnaire**

**SECTION A**

**Socio-Demographic Variables**

***Instruction:*** Kindly tick the appropriate option.

1) Sex:

a. Male​  ( )

b. Female ( )

2) Age:

a. 21-30​ ( )

b. 31-40​ ( )

c. 41-50​ ( )

d. 51+ ( )

3) Marital Status:​

a. Married​  ( )

b. Single​ ( )

c. Divorce​ ( )

d. Widow ( )

4) Educational Status:

a. No formal Education ( )

b. Primary Education​ ( )

c. Secondary Education​ ( )

d. Tertiary Education ( )

5) Income per month

a. N30,000 ( )

b. N31,000 - N60,000 ( )

c. N61,000 – 100,000 ( )

d. N101,000 + ( )

6) Religion:

a. Christianity ( )

b. Islam ( )

c. African Traditional Religion ( )

d. Other ( ). Specify…………………………………………………………..

**SECTION B**

**(Causes and Consequences of Sexual Harassment/Violence in NCSC)**

7. In your view, what do you consider to be sexual harassment?.................

……………………………………………………………………………………….

8. Have you or any of your colleagues experienced these/this act of sexual harassment at work place?

a. Yes ( )

b. No ( )

9. If yes to the above, describe in few sentences how it happened: ………………

……………………………………………………………………………………..

10. Was it from a man or woman? ……………………………………………….

11. Do you think women contribute to why they are sexually harassed at workplace?

a. Yes ( )

b. No ( )

12. If yes to question 11 above, please state how?........................................................

……………………………………………………………………………………….

13. What then was/were your reactions to these/this act/s of sexual harassment? ………………………………………………………………

……………………………………………………………………………………….

14. In the first instance, were you induced with anything (e.g. money, gifts, snacks, etc.) before this act took place?

a. Yes ( )

b. No ( )

15. If yes to question 14 above, specify what was given to you as an inducement:…………………………….……………………………………………

16. How often have you or any of your colleagues experienced these/this sexual harassment at work place?: ………………………………………………………….

……………………………………………………………………………………….

17. Did you report the case of Sexual Violence/Harassment you experienced at work to the management?

a. Yes ( )

b. No ( )

18. If yes to question 17 above, what was the response you got?..........................……

……………………………………………………………………………………….

19. Do you think the management of this commission is doing enough to address the issue of sexual harassment at work place?

a. Yes ( )

b. No ( )

20. Briefly describe how the management of this commission usually handles cases of sexual harassment:………………………………………………….……………..

……………………………………………………………………………………….

21. Are there rules guiding against sexual harassment/violence in this commission? a. Yes ( )

b. No ( )

22. If yes to question 21 above, identify any…………………………………………

23. Do you or any of your colleagues who frequently experience sexual harassment/violence report to the authority as frequently as it is being experienced? a. Yes ( )

b. No ( )

24. If no to question 23 above, give reasons………………………………………..

25. Do you think that the nature of your work environment breeds and encourages sexual harassment?

a. Yes ( )

b. No ( )

26. If yes to question 25 above, state how your work place often breeds and encourages sexual harassment ……………………………………………………….

……………………………………………………………………………………….

27. In your view, do people who succumb to sex advances at work place secure undue advantage over those who do not?

a. Yes ( )

b. No ( )

28. If yes to question 27 above, briefly explain how those who succumb to sexual advances at work place secure undue advantages over those who do not…………..

……………………………………………….………………………………………

29. Have you or any of your colleagues suffered any consequences of sexual harassment at work place?

a. Yes ( )

b. No ( )

30. If yes to question 29 above, give details……..…………………………………

…………………………………….…………………………………………………

31. Have you or any of your colleagues feel like not going to work due to the menace of sexual harassment?

a. Yes ( )

b. No ( )

32. Do you observe in any way that your organization has suffered in any way due to the menace of sexual harassment?

a. Yes ( )

b. No ( )

33. If yes to question 32 above, explain how your organization has been affected by the menace of sexual harassment:………………………………….………………..

……………………………………………………………………………………….

34. Do you think there are adequate measures on ground to address the problem of sexual harassment at work place in Nigeria?

a. Yes ( )

b. No ( )

35. If yes to question 34 above, place mention any of the measures you know:………………………………………………………………………………..

36. Can the mechanisms put in place by appropriate authorities be able to address sexual harassment if properly implemented?

a. Yes ( )

b. No ( )

37. What in your views can be done to tackle the menace of sexual harassment at work place in Nigeria? ……………………………………………………………….

……………………………………………………………………………………….

……………………………………………………………………………………….

Thanks for your wonderful cooperation.

**In-depth Interview Guide**

1. The issue of sexual harassment against women has continued unabated over the years, what is your immediate reaction to this?
2. What do you think amounts to sexual harassment, especially at work place?
3. How would you describe the extent of the prevalence of sexual harassment against women at work place, judging from your personal experiences?
4. Would you like to describe any of your experiences of sexual harassment against women at work place?
5. How would you describe the attitude of the top management of this organization in handling of issues like sexual harassment against women?
6. Despite numerous complaints, the issue of sexual harassment against women at work place has grown to be a very big monster that is almost consuming formal organizational setting, what do you think are aggravating the situation?
7. No doubt, female employees who are affected by sexual harassment have some challenges to cope with, would you tell any of your own experiences or that of any of your colleagues?
8. Organizational productivity largely depends on job satisfaction, and workers satisfactions toward jobs are greatly affected by sexual harassment at work place. What is the situation with your work place here?
9. The Nigerian authorities have put measures in place to address the issue of sexual harassment against women. Are you aware of any, and how would you describe the effectiveness of these measures in tackling the issue at work place?
10. Kindly make suggestions on how to go about addressing this high dreaded monster called sexual harassment against women that is ravaging the work environment today.

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