

**A STUDY ON SEXUAL HARASSMENT OF WOMEN
IN WORKPLACES:**

**A Case Study of Selected Public and Private Organisations in Ndola,
Zambia**

**BY
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**A Dissertation Submitted to the University of Zambia in Partial Fulfilment of the
Requirements of the Degree of Master of Arts in Gender Studies.**

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APPROVAL

This dissertation of PRECIOUS NGANDU NAMABILO ZANDONDA is approved as fulfilling the partial requirements for the award of the degree of Master of Arts in Gender Studies by the University of Zambia.

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ABSTRACT

Using qualitative and quantitative paradigms, this study investigated the extent and prevalence of sexual harassment of women in workplaces in Ndola, Zambia. It also examined the forms and patterns of sexual harassment, and assessed the channels available to lodging complaints related to harassment in workplaces.

The sample was drawn from a representative sample of 160 female employees from selected private and public organisations. The study used semi-structured questionnaires as a tool for data collection.

Findings showed that sexual harassment in workplaces is very high with 69% of respondents claiming having been victims; 75% were not aware of any sexual harassment policies in their workplace; and that sexual harassment exists in various forms and women have different views of what constitutes sexual harassment. These findings imply that female employees are being subjected to unsafe work environments that can affect their emotional and physical health. It also implies that sexual harassment is an uninvited embarrassing, humiliating behaviour and workplace violence.

In conclusion, this study, though exploratory in nature, clearly indicates seriousness of the problem. Sexual harassment policy and law must therefore catch up with this reality. Actors at different levels need to play a role in the prevention and in offering protection and support for victims.

To all **Zambian women and men** dedicated to eliminating gender inequality and
discrimination in Zambia.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

1.0. Introduction

This chapter provides an overview of the study by giving the background to sexual harassment in Zambia and the world at large. It also gives the problem upon which the study is based as well as its objectives. The chapter further outlines the research questions; the significance and the scope of the study.

Sexual harassment is a complex challenge, one that is often controversial, and has become a contentious issue not only in Zambia, but in the world as a whole. While there are still no binding international standards that specifically mention sexual harassment, a growing list of countries have taken legislative actions to recognise it as abusive behaviour, and to punish and prevent it. It is hoped that this report will help speed up the process of dialogue – to heighten awareness, provoke further discussion, and stimulate thinking on effective solutions.

2.0. Background

Workplace sexual harassment is a relatively new concern in most African countries and only recently has it emerged as a matter of public debate. Sexual harassment is a stigmatized and emotionally-charged issue not only in Zambia, but also in many foreign countries (Population Council 2009:4).

According to the International Labour Organisation (ILO, 2001), Sexual Harassment is a clear form of gender discrimination based on sex and a manifestation of unequal power relations between men and women. For the majority of victims, at least for those who have made their situation known, their complaints or cries for help have typically been ignored, trivialized, or denied.

The term 'Sexual Harassment' was first coined in the 1970s (Pasqual 2008:4). Since then the issue has become a recognised phenomenon throughout the world in all cultural and occupational contexts. Broadly, "sexual harassment includes a wide range of behaviours including unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favours, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature, when submission to or rejection of this conduct explicitly or implicitly affects an individual's employment, unreasonably interferes with an individual's work performance or creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment" (Anderson 2006:2).

The Zambia Penal Code, amendment No. 15 of 2005 explains that sexual harassment means "(a) seductive sexual advance being an unsolicited sexual comment, physical contact or other gesture of a sexual nature which one finds objectionable or offensive or which causes discomfort in one's studies or job and interferes with academic performance or work performance or conducive working or study environment; (b) sexual bribery in the form of soliciting or attempting to solicit sexual activity by promise of reward; (c) sexual threat or coercion which includes procuring or attempting to procure sexual activity by threat of violence or victimization; or (d) sexual imposition using forceful behaviour or assault in an attempt to gain physical sexual contact"(Zambia Penal Code, 2005).

Regardless of its legal definition, it is clear that sexual harassment is about power and status and is typically perpetrated by someone having power over someone with lower status or power. The problem relates not so much to the actual biological differences between men and women – rather, it relates to the gender or social roles attributed to men and women in social and economic life, and perceptions about male and female sexuality in society that can lead to unbalanced male-female power relationships, (Haspels et.al, 1996:20).

In Zambia, while public recognition of sexual harassment is growing, reliable data on the nature and extent of such violence are limited. The 2007 Zambia Demographic and Health Survey (DHS) gives some insight into the prevalence of physical and sexual violence in the country, although it is widely believed to be an under estimate due to methodological constraints. The survey demonstrates that 20 percent of the Zambian women between the ages of 15 and 49 have experienced some form of sexual violence in their lifetime (CSO 2007).

Recently, Zambia has seen increased emphasis on gender mainstreaming in all sectors of the Zambian economy (Ministry of Finance and National Planning 2002:113). This has resulted in more women entering the labour force and being empowered economically (Cabinet Office 2000:35). But does equal access to employment mean that women are treated equally with their male co-workers within the workplace? Are these individuals in the workplaces exempt from discrimination? Although Zambian women have begun to mobilise and respond to issues such as rape and violence from intimate partners (Cabinet Office 2007), the issue of sexual harassment in workplaces has not yet begun to be addressed systematically in order to bring out new knowledge and statistical data on the magnitude of the problem so as to attract the attention of policy makers and implementers.

Whilst both men and women may be harassers or victims of sexual harassment in workplaces, victims of this problem are usually female employees. An example can be drawn from a baseline study on sexual harassment among members of staff and students at the University of Zambia which indicated that the proportions of sexual harassment are higher among females than males: 17% of males indicated having been harassed compared with 51% among their female colleagues (University of Zambia, 2007).

This research will therefore aim at determining the extent of sexual harassment of women in workplaces, in order to bring out new knowledge and statistical data on the magnitude of the problem so as to attract the attention of policy makers and implementers.

3.0. Scope of the Study

This research builds on earlier research on sexual harassment conducted by several Zambian researchers; which have mainly targeted schools and higher institutions of learning. The general lack of official data and information on workplace sexual harassment in Zambia suggests that more research on the issue would be useful, as first steps, to determine the prevalence and awareness levels amongst people working in Zambia, and ascertain if certain trends were becoming evident.

This is what this study purports to do. It is not an attempt to examine countrywide prevalence rates, neither is it intended to be a comprehensive, exhaustive look at the problem in the whole of Zambia. Instead, the study hopes to shed some light on the issue as evidenced from cases reported at police stations (Zambia Police Services, 2009), and show through its findings some of the trends that may be developing that need to be addressed.

4.0. Statement of the Problem

Female employees are often subjected to sexually harassing behaviours at their places of work (*Fitzgerald, 1993*). Globally, it is estimated that between 40% and 50% of female employees have experienced some form of harassment or unwanted sexual behaviour in the workplace (*European Women's Lobby, 2009, <http://www.womenlobby.org>*).

Sexual harassment is a problem because it creates a hostile work environment for female employees; it compromises their work output and performance due to intimidation, ridicule and threats; and it has adverse psychological effects such as lack of confidence in their capabilities as productive workers, low self esteem and depression (*Khan, 1997*).

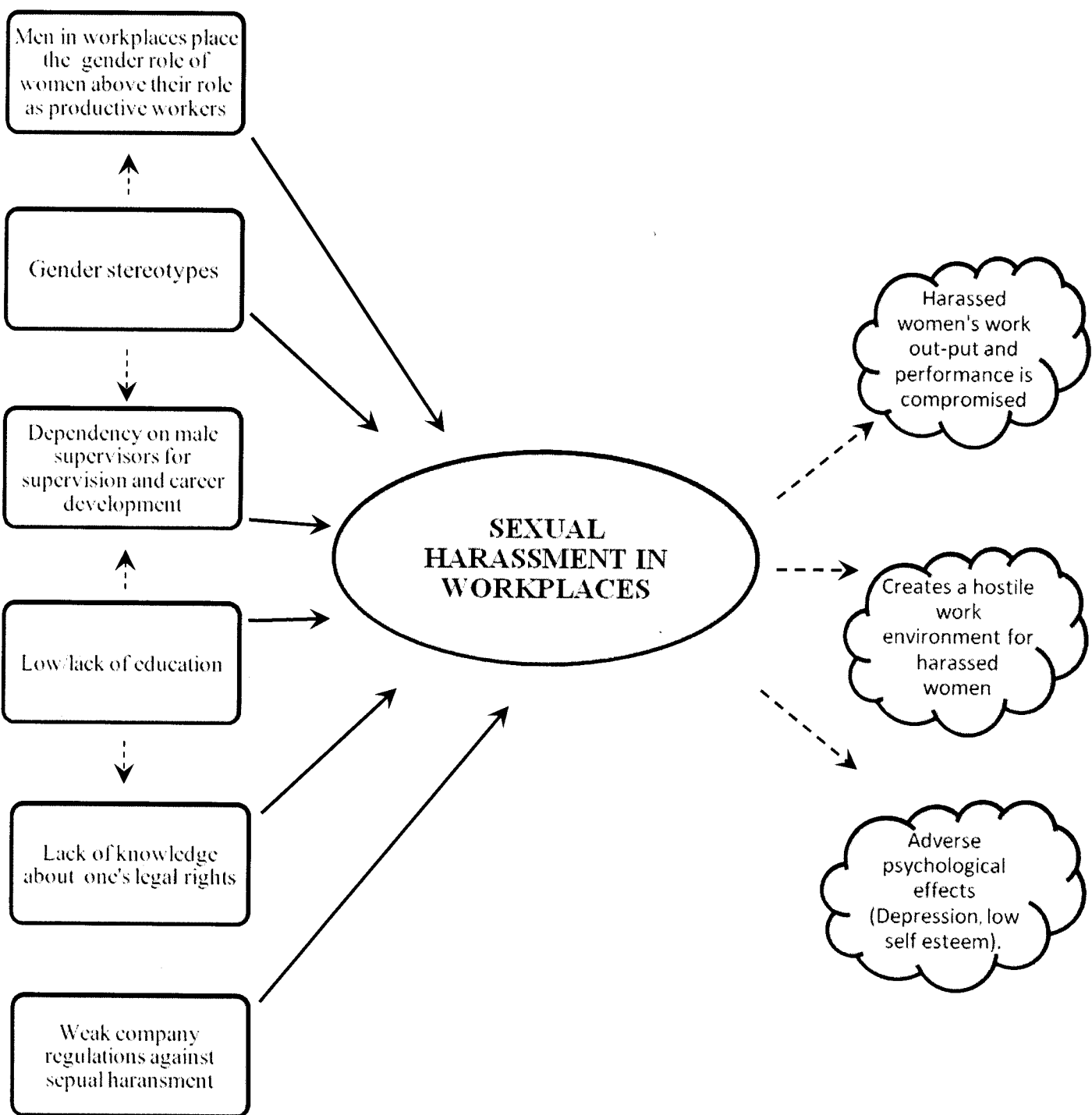
In Zambia, although women have begun to mobilise and respond to emotive issues such as rape and violence from intimate partners (*Cabinet Office 2007*), the issue of sexual harassment in workplaces has not yet begun to be addressed systematically.

A sexual behaviour survey undertaken by the Government of Zambia in 2007 revealed that 16.3% of female respondents from all age groups had experienced forced sex encounters. This survey however did not specify the issue of workplace sexual harassment. Sexual harassment has only been reported in schools and colleges, including a baseline survey conducted at the University of Zambia which reported that 51% of all female respondents reported having being sexually harassed (*University of Zambia, 2007*).

This study therefore determined the extent of sexual harassment perpetrated against women at their places of work, in order to bring out new knowledge and highlight the magnitude of the problem so as to attract the attention of policy makers and implementers.

Figure 1: Problem Analysis Diagram

The diagram below summarises the research problem; its contributing factors; and the effects or consequences of this problem:



5.0. Research Objectives

Main Objective

The primary purpose of this study was to determine the extent of sexual harassment of women in workplaces.

Specific Objectives

- i) To determine the prevalence of sexual harassment of women in workplaces
- ii) To examine the forms and patterns of sexual harassment perpetrated against women in workplaces
- iii) To assess the channels that exist for lodging a complaint of harassment in workplaces and how effective these channels are.

6.0. Research Questions

Main Question

What is the extent of sexual harassment of women in workplaces?

Specific Questions:

- i) What is the prevalence of sexual harassment of women in workplaces?
- ii) What forms and patterns of sexual harassment are perpetrated against women?
- iii) What channels exist for lodging a complaint of harassment and how effective are these channels?

7.0. Significance of the Study

Although Zambian women have begun to mobilise and respond to emotive issues such as rape and violence from intimate partners (*Population Council, 2009*), the issue of sexual harassment at the workplace has not yet begun to be addressed systematically, hence the need for this study.

The information obtained in this study can be used primarily to raise awareness about workplace sexual harassment in Zambia, in the hopes that it will stimulate discussion and thinking on the most effective ways to address it. It will be particularly useful to policy makers and various organisations in formulating gender sensitive policies and regulations to prevent and address sexual harassment in workplaces.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

1.0. Introduction

This chapter provides a theoretical framework and literature review upon which the study draws its analytical foundation. Several theoretical approaches or perspectives have been advanced in the study of sexual harassment. Most of these theories have focused on explaining what causes sexual harassment and how individuals and communities concerned respond.

It will be noted, through the theories discussed, that sexual harassment could be as a result of many different contributing factors, and that it not only negatively impacts the individual, but also those around them, including colleagues. It has the potential to affect the emotional well-being of an entire workforce, leading to loss of employee morale, decline in productivity, and an erosion of a company's public image. It is truly in the individual and the company's best interest to ensure a safe workplace.

2.0. What is Sexual Harassment?

Perceptions on what constitutes sexual harassment vary among and within societies. They depend on how men and women are socialized within that society, the existence of gender stereotypes, and set notions that may exist in the workplace (Haspels et al., 1996:pp.18-20).

For these reasons, it is impossible to compile an exhaustive list of harassing conduct that should be prohibited. Some acts may be easily identifiable as 'sexual' harassment, such as kissing, fondling and physical contact with genital areas, while many other kinds of verbal, non-verbal, physical conduct may not. This can vary according to cultural and social practices and according to the context in which it occurs.

In some cultures for example, a kiss on the cheek in greeting is considered normal behaviour, while in other cultures, this may be considered a sexual advance. What is acceptable in some workplaces, such as sexually suggestive posters for example, may not be tolerable in others (ibid:pp.18-20)

Internationally, legislature and organisations have in the last few decades recognised and defined the behaviours that constitute sexual harassment at the workplace. In the United States, the Equal Employment Opportunities Commission (EEOC, 1980) issued proposed guidelines and definition of sexual harassment in workplaces. It stated that “unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favours and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature constitute sexual harassment when:

- 1) Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual’s work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment;
- 2) Submission to such conducts is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual’s employment;
- 3) Submission to, or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as a basis for employment decisions affecting such individuals (EEOC 2009).

The United Nations General Recommendation No.19 to the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women defines sexual harassment to include “such unwelcome sexually determined behaviour as physical contact and advances, sexually collared remarks, showing pornography and sexual demands, whether by words or actions. Such conduct may be humiliating and may constitute a health and safety problem. It is discriminatory when an employee has reasonable ground to believe that his or her objection would disadvantage them in connection with employment, including recruitment or promotion, or when it creates a hostile working environment” (Wikipedia Encyclopaedia 2009).

Needless to say, the legal definition of sexual harassment is extremely difficult to enforce or identify in practice. Any legal conclusion depends on the specific facts of a particular situation. However, regardless of its legal definition, it is clear that sexual harassment is about power and status and is typically perpetrated by someone having power over someone with lower status or power.

Randall (2004) gives examples of female employees' harassment allegations, which include:

- Touching in a way that may make an employee feel uncomfortable, such as patting, pinching or stroking
- Intentionally pressing against another's body
- Unwelcome remarks concerning a female employees breasts or other body parts
- Continually asking out a female employee who is not interested
- Suggesting that the way to advance in the company is to sleep with the supervisor, or threats of no promotion if the woman does not comply
- Blackmailing a woman who has made a mistake at work; for example "come out to dinner with me and we will forget that you lost a big client".
- Sexually explicit jokes and suggestive stories
- Sending, forwarding or soliciting sexually suggestive letters, notes, emails, or images (Randall, 2004).

Researchers have used these behaviours identified to formulate three categories of behaviour which together form an overall concept of sexual harassment. These three subscales are gender harassment (gender related degrading remarks and behaviour); unwanted sexual attention (uninvited behaviors that explicitly communicate sexual desires or intentions); and sexual coercion (the soliciting of sexual activity by threat of punishment or promise of reward) (Fitzgerald, 1993).

Sexual harassment in workplaces normally occurs where the harasser has a position of authority (for example where a supervisor is able to affect another person's job or career), and may occur between members of the same or opposite gender. It can occur anywhere within the workplace, including the office, toilet, cafeteria, alleviator or corridors (University of Zambia 2007:4).

3.0. Theoretical Approaches to Sexual Harassment

There are several theoretical approaches to sexual harassment. Below are some theories and authors who attempted to theorise sexual harassment:

Token Theory

The theory of tokenism refers to the discrimination and marginalization of the members of a group in a minority position. This theory proposes that members of any social group will be discriminated against if their group makes up less than 15% of an organisation. The theory of token discrimination was developed using evidence from women's experience of harassment and marginality in male occupations. No support is found for negative tokenism effects when men are in the minority. Men entering female-dominated jobs are generally welcomed, or, at the very least, there is little evidence that they are marginalized by their female colleagues (Kanter, 1977).

Although the sex ratio of occupations is an important variable in many studies, the effects of tokenism are rarely examined in the studies. However, one survey, the Finnish national study, reported the finding that "women and men are more likely to experience sexual harassment if they are the only representatives of their own sex in their job" (European Commission 2006:34). This study showed that women in male-dominated occupations were more likely to experience sexual harassment than women in other occupations.

Misperception Theory

This theory highlights that sexual harassment results from men's misperceptions of women's behaviour and intentions. It is hypothesised that men who tend to misperceive women's friendly, outgoing behaviour as a sign of sexual interest or availability are more likely to endorse and engage in the sexual harassment of women. Some surveys in this review have discussed this perspective as a plausible explanation (e.g. Brandsaeter and Widerberg, 1992); however, none of them have examined it empirically.

Albert J. Mills

The work of Albert J. Mills (1996) provides a useful framework for the analysis of sexual harassment in the workplace. In his article, he examines how dominant notions of gender and of sexuality are reproduced and maintained in the workplace and states that "organizations develop discriminatory practices because of (i) the production of *gender divisions*; (ii) the creation of *symbols, images and forms of consciousness* that explicate, justify, and more rarely oppose, gender divisions; (iii) *interactions* between individuals, women and men, women and women, men and men, in the multiplicity of forms that enact dominance and subordination, and create alliances and exclusions; and (iv) the internal mental work of individuals as they consciously construct their understandings of the organizations gendered structure of work and the opportunity and the demands for gender-appropriate behaviours and attitude"(Mills 1996:78).

4.0. Who Experiences Sexual Harassment?

Several studies have revealed that women are the majority of victims of sexual harassment. It is very rare that men are sexually harassed (Sabitha, M. 2008:4; Fitzgerald & Ormerod, 1993; Gutek 1985). One of the reasons is because men are less likely to report when they suffer sexual harassment (Sabitha, 2003). According to Vaux (1993) this maybe because men are constrained by the 'sex role' they are supposed to fit in.

In these studies, the male respondents indicated that they would be embarrassed if they shared their sexual harassment problem with their colleagues, and worst still if they have to tell their family. Wayne, Riordan, and Thomas (2001) found that individuals were less tolerant of women's harassment of men. Similarly, women also face various repercussions when they complain (ibid: 5), whereby they felt that nothing can be done, it will be trivialized, or even ridiculed. However, efforts to encourage men to complain should be encouraged, because research has shown that relatively more women than men believed that they would report sexual harassing behaviours (Baker, Terpstra, & Larntz, 1990).

5.0. Extent of Sexual Harassment

Early studies on sexual harassment of women in the workplace found between 50% and 92% of the respondents had experienced some form of sexual harassment (Sandler and Associates, 1981). Many modern researchers have also revealed that a lot of female employees are subjected to sexual harassment at their places of work (*Fritzgerald, 1993*). At the global level, it is currently estimated that between 40% and 50% of female employees have experienced some form of harassment or unwanted sexual behaviour in the workplace (*European Women's Lobby, 2010, <http://www.womenlobby.org>*).

Another survey conducted by the American Association of University Women (AAUW) on 1632 students aged 8-11 revealed:

- 85% of girls have been sexually harassed
- 76% of boys have been sexually harassed
- 31% of girls experienced harassment “often”
- 18% of boys experienced harassment “often”
- 13% of girls reported being “forced to do something sexual at school other than kissing”
- 9% of boys reported being “forced to do something sexual at school other than kissing”
- Girls were five times more likely to find the incidents disturbing and three times more likely to feel the harassment had affected their grades.

- 25% of girls were harassed by school employees
- 10% of boys were harassed by school employees (Anderson 2006:16).

In South Africa, an academic research revealed that 76% of the women respondents said they had been harassed at work, while few of their companies had relevant policies (Baker et.al 1990:34)

In Zambia, the 2007 demographic and health survey (DHS) gives some insight into the prevalence of physical and sexual violence in the country, although it is widely believed to be an under estimate due to methodological constraints.

The survey showed that 20 percent of Zambian women between the ages of 15 and 49 have experienced some form of sexual violence in their lifetime (Central Statistical Office 2007).

The extent of sexual harassment in workplaces appears to be related to the sex ratio of the occupation. On the whole, women in male-dominated jobs have more experience of sexual harassment than women in balanced or female-dominated jobs (Anderson 2006).

Although patterns vary from one country to another, the European Commission (1998) generalised that women who are between 30 and 40 years of age, single or divorced, with a lower level of education are more likely to experience sexual harassment. Harassers are overwhelmingly men, who are mostly colleagues or superiors.

6.0. Causes of Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment can be explained as an abuse of power that is exercised by those with power, usually male supervisors over low-status employees, usually women. Most surveys have found some support for this view with (on average) 30% of the incidents involving sexual harassment perpetrated by supervisors or senior colleagues (European Commission 2006:32). Many of the causes are interrelated, and are linked to the culture and values in society and in companies, to the roles and status of the men and women in society. Workplaces, like any other social context, are the sites of power relationships between men

and women. The unequal power relationships between men and women that exist in the home also exist in the work environment (Plan International 2008:12).

As such, sexual harassment has been legitimized as "normal" in many workplaces. A United States Agency for International Development (USAID) study on related gender-based violence in developing countries noted that the problem "takes place in a context of gender inequality and specific cultural beliefs and attitudes about gender roles, especially those concerning male and female sexuality, a pattern of economic inequality, and in some instances significant political unrest and violent conflict" (Kim and Bailey 2003: iii).

In West Africa, as in other regions, patriarchal values and norms that encourage male aggression and female submissiveness are identified as key underlying reasons for sexual violence (Harber 2001; Nhundu and Shumba 2001).

Men who were brought up with beliefs like "real men pinch bottoms", "girls were made to hug and kiss", "the more, the merrier", easily carry these social values into the workplace, and treat their female colleagues accordingly. Such men often even think that women take their harassment as a compliment (Harber 2001:32).

According to Kim and Bailey (2003), many women have been brought up to believe women's highest calling is to please men, that popularity with men equals success, or that "real women look sexy". This can give the impression - usually unintended - that they invite sexual advances at work. Some women who see sexuality as their only power base, play along. If women see themselves as dependent on, or of lesser value than men, or are unassertive, they find it difficult to handle harassers or to complain. Often women who are breadwinners are vulnerable and fear victimisation or even job loss, if they reject advances or complain.

According to a study done in South Africa, social and political changes in recent years have changed power relationships. Some men feel threatened by the career advancement of women and people of color, or are uncomfortable with women's newfound independence and assertiveness at home and / or at work.

Other men who have recently gained positions of power (possibly after decades of discrimination) may also try to prove themselves by harassing women subordinates (Baker et.al 1990:34). With limited promotion opportunities, retrenchments and pressure on performance, there is a real danger that sexual harassment and trading of sexual favors will form part of the power games played.

In times of moral carelessness, when extramarital affairs and "one-night stands" are broadly accepted, it is relatively easy for people to indulge in office flirtations, whether one-sided or mutual. The person who tries, and doesn't accept rejection or sees the unwilling colleague as a challenge, easily becomes a harasser, or may victimize the reluctant colleague (Anderson 2006:3). The prevalence of marital stress and divorce in our society also means that some men and women come to work in a state of emotional distress that could make them vulnerable to sexual harassment.

Some confusion results from cultural differences about what is, or isn't, acceptable in our rapidly-changing society. For example, when action was taken against sexual harassment at the University of Cape Town, black male students claimed it was their cultural and traditional right to act in that way. They were strongly challenged by the then vice-chancellor, a black woman.

Black women complaining about harassment by black men have been accused of disloyalty to their own group; while whites may fear accusations of racism or prejudice if they reject or complain about such behaviour from black colleagues (Kalof et.al 2001:285).

The credibility of the victim is often called into question, as it is usually her word against that of the harasser/s (Lucero 2003:1463). Management may take the word of a senior person rather than that of a subordinate as they are likely to have known the senior longer, and a manager usually has more credibility in a dispute than a subordinate. Particularly if the managers concerned are all men, they may not understand the seriousness of the problem, or may "stick together" out of gender loyalty.

In addition, if the person deciding whether to take action or not, has himself been guilty of harassment, he is likely to go along with a cover-up, or at least give his "buddy" the benefit of the doubt. The harasser may also be a high-level or highly-skilled person who is difficult to replace, while the victim is likely to be on a lower level, and thus more expendable (ibid: 1464).

The common tendency of victim-blaming often causes the plaintiff to end up virtually as the accused. As in the case of sexual assault and rape, the dress, lifestyle and private life of the victim seem to become more important than the behaviour being investigated. Naturally it is advisable that women dress and behave appropriately at work. Yet any woman - whatever her appearance and lifestyle - has the right to decide whether, when, where, and from whom she wishes to accept any sexual approach or comment. And if she declines, she should not be victimised in any way. We should heed the saying: "However I dress, wherever I go My yes is Yes, and my no is No" (Gutek, B. 1985).

The victim may be very embarrassed by the events, or afraid of ridicule or revenge, and is likely to wait until matters become unbearable before she complains. She may then be blamed of having played along or condoned the behaviour initially.

Many women are also inclined to excessive guilt and self-blaming, and may even believe that they unwittingly did or said something to invite the unwanted behaviour. And if they are ashamed or afraid and don't discuss the problem, they often don't realise that it is a fairly common occurrence, and not their fault (ibid: 54).

Although gender mainstreaming has been advocated for in all government institutions, many small private companies don't have clear policies and complaint or disciplinary procedures to deal with harassment - or if they have them, they do not implement them (Fitzgerald 1997:36). Women often resign rather than complain, since they do not know where to go, or if they do complain, it is either treated as a joke, or no action is taken by management.

If management condones such behaviour or if victims end up being blamed, the perpetrator is encouraged to continue the pattern of harassment, affecting more and more women.

7.0. Effects of Sexual Harassment

Effects of sexual harassment vary depending on the individual, the severity and duration of the harassment. It carries a set of impacts and consequences such as having physical effects, emotional effects, job related effects and current and future financial consequences (Anderson 2006:3). Harassment also has negative consequences on the environment victims are in and can lead to a hostile and less productive work environment. It costs organizations and schools through damaged morale, lawsuits and absenteeism.

It allows for the degradation of women and the perpetuation of gender inequalities. (Ontario Women's Justice Network, 2006). Many case studies, experience and research have proven that sexual harassment can involve heavy costs, both to companies and to individuals concerned.

Personal Effects

The victims usually suffer the highest costs. Most women find it offensive, and it undermines their self-confidence and thus also their personal effectiveness. It may also undermine their trust in men and in people in authority. In the case of women who were sexually abused as children or as adults, another negative experience can cause serious psychological damage (Thompson, M.E. 1991:111.).

Women who resign because of sexual harassment problems, often have difficulty getting good references from their previous employers, or giving reasons for having left their previous job; and may therefore have difficulty in finding another position (Rowe, M. 1990:2). Obviously, this could disrupt such a woman's entire life.

Women who resist harassment or complain may be victimised, for example, overlooked for promotion (ibid). This can therefore hold back their career development and personal growth.

According to a study by Naira Khan (1997), workplace sexual harassment creates a hostile work environment for female employees; it compromises their work out-put and performance due to intimidation, ridicule and threats; and it has adverse psychological effects such as lack of confidence in their capabilities as productive workers, low self esteem and depression (*Khan, 1997*).

Although many situations of sexual harassment incidents fall into the category of “merely annoying”, some situations can, and do , have life threatening effects especially when they involve severe abuses and retaliation against a victim who does not submit to the harassment. Severe sexual harassment can have the same psychological effects as rape or sexual assault (*Koss, 1987*). For example, in 1995, Judith Coflin committed suicide after chronic sexual harassment by her bosses and co-workers (ibid).

An employee may also suffer negative actions after he or she has made a report of sexual harassment, filed a grievance, assisted someone else with a complaint, or participated in discrimination prevention activities. These negative consequences can include being fired, demotion, suspension, denial of promotion, unfavorable job re-assignment (Wikipedia encyclopedia, 2010).

Effects on the Organizations

The effects of sexual harassment on the organizations include decreased productivity , increased absenteeism by staff experiencing harassment and team conflict; decreased job satisfaction; and if the problem is ignored a company’s image can suffer (Boland 1990).

Harassment also costs companies money by reducing productivity, morale and motivation. If a worker is constantly concerned that the harasser may strike again, she is unlikely to be able to work effectively. At the same time, colleagues who are not involved may be demotivated if they are aware of unacceptable goings-on, or fear possible favouritism.

Companies may lose valuable staff. Many women resign rather than go through the unpleasantness of a confrontation.

A study by Berdahl Jennifer (2007) showed that in a division of a company employing many women, where the problem of sexual harassment was common, few women stayed longer than three months. This almost bankrupted the division due to high recruitment and training costs, and poor productivity (ibid: 425).

The knowledge that harassment is permitted can also undermine ethical standards and discipline in the organisation in general, as staff lose respect for, and trust in, their seniors who indulge in, or turn a blind eye to such behaviour. If word gets around that a company allows sexual harassment to go unchecked, the company's image among its staff, customers and the general public may also suffer (Fitsgeraled et al 1997:578).

Legal consequences

Companies can incur legal costs if the problem is ignored. The Industrial Court in J v M (1989, the first reported case of sexual harassment in South Africa) ruled that "an employer undoubtedly has a duty to ensure that its employees are not subjected to this form of violation in the workplace" (Anderson 2006:15). This shows that action may be brought against an employer who knows or ought to know about harassment and fails to take appropriate preventive action. Where there are inadequate channels of complaint, an employer may be held liable even if there was no knowledge of the harassment.

Whereas sexual harassment was in the past usually dealt with by the Industrial Court as an unfair labour practice, harassment of an employee or prospective employee by an employer or by another employee of the same employer is now expressly prohibited.

Because of being declared unlawful, such behaviour may lead to both criminal action and civil claims (European Commission 1998:40).

If a company has no clear policy on sexual harassment, it may also have problems if it needs to take disciplinary steps against a harasser. Lack of clear definition of unacceptable behaviour would make it easier for a harasser to take the company to court to appeal against disciplinary steps or dismissal. In a case a few years ago a senior manager in a large South African company was dismissed when many years of serious harassment of more than a dozen women came to light.

His behaviour had cost the company heavily in terms of productivity losses, the cost of favours, and company image.

However, when he appealed to the Industrial Court, the company settled out of court because they feared losing the case, as they had had no specific policy or clear definition of sexual harassment at the time (ibid:38.)

8.0. Sexual Harassment Law and Legislature

Sexual harassment is considered a form of illegal discrimination in many countries, and a form of abuse (sexual and physiological) and bullying (*Wikipedia Encyclopaedia* 2009).

Human rights have made a great deal of progress as moral and legal force since the Universal Declaration of Human Rights was adopted by the United Nations (UN) on December 10, 1948. The Declaration is the primary guide of the fundamental rights of all human beings and is also the point of reference for many treaties on women's rights that followed; including the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (*Panda* 2003).

The practice of developing workplace guidelines prohibiting harassment in workplaces was pioneered in 1969, when the United States Department of Defence drafted a Human Goals Charter, establishing a policy of equal respect for both sexes (*Equal Employment Opportunities Commission 2009*). In 1986, the United States Supreme Court recognized the first harassment suits against employers for promoting a sexually hostile work environment (*ibid*,2009).

In Zambia, the Penal Code amendment No. 15 of 2005 has listed laws addressing sexual harassment in workplaces. An extract from section 137, subsections 1,2 and 3 of the penal code with relevant laws on workplace sexual harassment is highlighted below:

137A. (1) Any person who practices sexual harassment in a work place, institution of learning or elsewhere on a child commits a felony and is liable, upon conviction, to imprisonment for a term of not less than three years and not exceeding fifteen years.

(2) A child who commits an offence under subsection (1) is liable to such community service or counselling as the court may determine in the best interests of the child.

(3) In this section, sexual harassment means-

(a) a seductive sexual advance being an unsolicited sexual comment, physical contact or other gesture of a sexual nature which one finds objectionable or offensive or which causes discomfort in one's studies or job and interferes with academic performance or work performance or conducive working or study environment;

(b) sexual bribery in the form of soliciting or attempting to solicit sexual activity by promise of reward;

(c) sexual threat or coercion which includes procuring or attempting to procure sexual activity by threat of violence or victimization; or

(d) sexual imposition using forceful behaviour or assault in an attempt to gain physical sexual contact.

From the above it is clear that the Zambian law clearly entitles women to equality with men in the workplace. However, many studies have shown that women are severely disadvantaged in formal employment. Married women who were employed often suffered from discriminatory conditions of service.

One of the most significant achievements of the last decade of the millennium has been the recognition given by the United Nations and a growing number of governments, including Zambia, that sexual violence and discrimination against women are a human rights issue. Zambia has also adopted and implemented the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.

According to the Zambia National Gender Policy (2000), any form of discrimination in workplaces is also illegal under the labour laws. (*Cabinet Office 2000:37-38*)

In Israel, the 1988 Equal Employment Opportunity Law made it a crime for an employer to retaliate against an employee who had rejected sexual advances, but it wasn't until 1998 that the Israeli Sexual Harassment law made such behavior illegal (*Kamir, 2005*)

In 2005, China added new provisions to the Law on Women's Right Protection to include sexual harassment. In 2006, the Shanghai Supplement was drafted to help further define sexual harassment in China (*Wikipedia Encyclopedia, 2009*).

In May 2002, the European Union Council and Parliament amended a 1976 Council Directive on the equal treatment of men and women in employment to prohibit sexual harassment in the workplace, naming it a form of sex discrimination and a violation of dignity. This directive required all Member States of the European Union to adopt laws on sexual harassment, or amend existing laws to comply with the directive by October 2005 (*European Women's Lobby, 2009*).

Sexual harassment experiences have more often been included in the framework of work stress, thereby being seen more as a result of how the work organization functions rather than being a result of poor characteristics among individuals (*University of Zambia 2007*).

9.0. Research on Sexual Harassment

Early studies attempting to document the prevalence of sexual harassment of women in the workplace found between 50% and 92% of the respondents had experienced some form of sexual harassment (Sandler and Associates, 1981). These studies were useful because they provided and served as a foundation for later and more detailed research, and they also provided valuable descriptive information on the nature and effects of sexual harassment at a time when very little was known about the problem (*University of Zambia, 2007*).

A Swedish national study found that sexual harassment in male-dominated professions was more frequently perpetrated by colleagues, whereas in female dominated jobs a superior is more often the perpetrator (University of Groningen 1997:21).

A study done by Romitio et.al (2004) titled “*Sexual Harassment among Female Personnel in an Italian Hospital: Frequency and Correlates*” examined the incidence of sexual harassment of female health professionals in Italy. The context for this study was based on a feminist analysis that views sexual harassment from a patriarchal framework and postulates that sexual harassment is born out of culturally legitimate power and status differences between men and women. “Results indicated that 54% of the women reported at least some kind of sexual harassment by another employee or by a patient. Of those, 46% reported gender harassment, 29% reported unwanted sexual attention and 3% reported sexual coercion” (Romitio et.al 2004:366). Another interesting finding of this study was that colleagues targeted women who possessed certain characteristics including, being separated, being the sole breadwinner, having financial problems and having a history of domestic violence experiences. Thus, a history of domestic violence and strong financial worries was shown to be the two strongest risk factors for sexual harassment.

An interesting study by Barak, Azy (2005) looked at “*Sexual Harassment on the Internet*”, and outlined the characteristics of online sexual harassment; identified its similarities and differences to offline sexual harassment; discussed how technology and cyberspace supports this behaviour and identified some prevention strategies. It revealed that online sexual harassment can be both active and passive. The active form specifically targets a specific individual directly through the use of verbal and graphical sexual massages that are offensive and typically occurs in chat rooms and forums.

Passive sexual harassment occurs when the harasser sends graphic and verbal offensive messages to multiple recipients through the use of use of pop-ups, offensive nicknames, and pornographic pictures attached to emails, etc. as opposed to sending offensive messages to a particular person (Barak 2005:pp77-92).

Menard, Kim et.al (2003) conducted a research on “*Gender Differences in Sexual Harassment and Coercion in College Students: Developmental, Individual and Situational Determinants*”.

This study examines sexual harassment and coercion tactics used by both males and females with a college setting. Participants included 148 males and 278 females recruited from psychology and sociology classes.

Participants were given questionnaires which measured their sexual attitudes and experiences as well as: 1) child sexual abuse experiences, 2) adult sexual victimization, 3) personality traits, 4) adverse heterosexual beliefs, 5) non-sexual aggression behaviours, 6) alcohol expectancies, 7) sexual harassment behaviours, and 8) sexual coercion indicators. It was very interesting that the study found that men were twice as likely to be sexually harassing and three times more likely to be sexually coercive as women.

This sexually harassment behaviour against men had higher scores on childhood sexual abuse, hostility, adversarial heterosexual beliefs (beliefs that sexual relationships are antagonistic) and alcohol expectancies (Mernard et.al 2003: pp 1222-1239).

Sandy Welsh (2000), in her study on “*The Multidimensional Nature of Sexual Harassment: An Empirical Analysis of Women’s Sexual Harassment Complaints*” determined the types of sexual harassment experiences of women in the workplace.

The results indicated that unwanted sexual attention was the most common type of harassment mentioned and occurred in 74% of the complaints, with gender harassment being mentioned as the second most common form, comprising 46% of the complaints filed.” (Welsh 2000: pp 118-141).

In Africa, however, understanding the magnitude of sexual harassment, its causative factors and effects is greatly hampered by the lack of well-designed population-based studies in many African countries including Zambia. Although there is research in progress in many countries, most of the completed in-depth research has only been from America and Europe. Data on the prevalence of sexual harassment in workplaces is even more difficult to find.

A national survey conducted in Zimbabwe in 1997 by the Training and Research Support Centre is one of the few nationwide studies in Africa which may give some idea of the magnitude of the problem. The study indicated that 29% of women reported being subjected to sexual harassing behaviours at the workplace (*Naira Khan 1997:7*).

In Zambia, the University of Zambia vice-chancellors standing committee on HIV and AIDS conducted a baseline study on sexual harassment at the University among academic staff, non-academic staff, and students. The results indicated that 37% of all participants reported having been sexually harassed, and that the proportions are higher among females than males: 17% of males indicated having been harassed compared with 51% among their female colleagues (*University of Zambia, 2007*).

Many other studies conducted in higher institutions of learning also show that female students are harassed significantly more than males, with males experiencing 5% sexual harassment or less of the time, while the prevalence among females averaged approximately 30% of the time (*Dziech and Weiner, 1984*).

The Sexual Harassment Education Project (SHEP) in Zambia also highlights that harassment in workplaces affects women more than men because most women are dependent on men as employers and supervisors for their advancement. This makes them vulnerable to the unequal power relations between men and women (*Charles Chisala 2003:21*)

The media in Zambia has also reported cases of harassment of women, though not in the workplace. In 2005, Times of Zambia reporter, Charles Chisala, wrote an article on sexual harassment being perpetrated in the streets of Lusaka. The article reported how callboys often pounced on women dressed in tight trousers and short skirts, and were often stripped naked (*Times of Zambia, 2005*). This abuse was highly condemned by media and Non-governmental organisations, and the harassers were arrested by police.

Although several studies have attempted to investigate the prevalence and frequency of sexual harassment in workplaces, the results of these surveys are somewhat difficult to compare because the definitions of sexual harassment, sampling procedures, population studied, and research methodologies often vary from one study to another. Taken as a whole, however, these studies clearly indicate that sexual harassment is a serious and widespread problem for men and women especially at workplaces today.

10.0. Debates on Sexual Harassment

Although the phrase “sexual harassment” is generally acknowledged to include clearly damaging and morally deplorable behaviours (*Fitzgerald 1988*), its boundaries can be controversial and misunderstandings can abound.

Some feminist groups criticise sexual harassment policy as helping maintain archaic stereotypes of women as “delicate, asexual creatures” who require special protection (*Patai, 1999*).

Feminist Jane Gallop sees the evolution of the definition of sexual harassment as coming from a “split” between what she calls “power feminists” who are pro-sex and what she calls “victim feminists” who are not. She argues that the split has helped lead to a perversion of the definition of sexual harassment, which used to be about sexism but has come to be about anything that is sexual (*Gallop, 1997*).

Sexual harassment law has also been highly criticised by experts such as Alan Dershowitz and Eugene Volokh, for imposing on the right to free Speech (*Watson, 1994*).

Sexual harassment policy and legislature have also been criticised as attempts to “regulate romance” which goes against human urges (*Harper, 1998*).

Other critics assert that sexual harassment is a very serious problem, but current views focus too heavily on sexuality rather than on the type of conduct that undermines the ability of men or women to work together effectively (ibid).

Another author raised concern over abuses of sexual harassment policy, and that employers and administrators sometimes use accusations as a way of expelling employees they want to eliminate for other reasons (*Westhues, 1998*)

There are many debates about how organisations should deal with sexual harassment. Some observers feel strongly that organisations must report, investigate and punish harassers while others write that those who feel harassed should have a choice of options (*Rowe & Bendersky, 2001*).

11.0. Conclusion

Although many issues have been raised in the theoretical framework and literature review, two points need re-emphasizing. Firstly, it is clear that the hidden negative implications of sexual harassment are enormous. It is therefore in every employer's interest to be proactive and prevent the problem, rather than having to redress it after damages have been suffered. Aware individuals can play a major role: by bringing the seriousness of harassment to the attention of management and of employees, by helping to formulate and implement appropriate policies, and by helping victims to deal with the consequences of harassment.

Second, the underlying causes of sexual harassment lie in the culture and socialization process. It is obvious that the unequal power relationships between men and women that often exist in the home also exist in the work environment. As such, sexual harassment has been legitimized as “normal” in many workplaces.

It is comforting that the Zambian penal code, amendment number 15 of 2005 has a clear law prohibiting sexual harassment of either sex in the place of work, clearly stating that *“Any person who practices sexual harassment in a work place, institution of learning or elsewhere on a child commits a felony and is liable, upon conviction, to imprisonment for a term of not less than three years and not exceeding fifteen years”* (Zambia Penal Code Amendment Act No. 15, 2005). This therefore helps form the basis for any interventions on sexual harassment.

Although no policy can be expected to eliminate the problem, it is possible that awareness of sexual harassment and of ways to deal with it will help to reduce its extent dramatically. Women, together with personnel and human resource officers, must take initiative and get their companies to act against harassment if a programme is not yet in place.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

1.0. Introduction

This chapter outlines the research methods used to carry out this study. It also describes the research site, sample size and sampling procedure.

Although studies on sexual harassment are relatively new, sexual behaviour research can be traced back to the 18th century and has over time employed a variety of approaches including the medical and psychiatric investigation of sexual disorders, anthropological investigations, and survey research based largely on volunteer samples (Fenton et al., 2001:84; Bullough, 2004:278). Academic investigation into sexuality heightened during the mid-20th century when the sexuality research by Alfred Kinsey, the American zoologist, was published (Bullough, 2004:277; Meyerowitz, 2001:72).

2.0. Study Design

In conducting this study, a descriptive, cross-sectional study design was used. Both qualitative and quantitative data were collected using a semi-structured questionnaire in order to strengthen the evidence collected. The study was undertaken to mainly establish the prevalence of sexual harassment experienced by female employees in selected public and private organisations. In addition, given the prevalence, patterns and effects of sexual harassment, the study endeavours to suggest ways of mitigating it.

3.0. Study Site

As highlighted in the research topic, the study intended to collect data from public and private organisations in Zambia. Therefore two organisations were purposefully selected in order to obtain the required data from a private and public organisation.

These included Barclays Bank in Ndola, Copperbelt Province; and Ministry of Community Development and Social Services also in Ndola

Ministry of Community Development and Social Services was selected, firstly because it is a public organisation and secondly because it is one of the public organisations which has taken large strides to mainstream gender (Ministry of Community Development and Social Services, 2009), thus it will be beneficial to determine if it has also addressed gender issues such as sexual harassment.

Barclays Bank was selected, mainly because it is one of the most prominent private organisations in Zambia.

4.0. Study Population and Sample Size

Given the available resources, and having a desire to get as many responses as possible, a total sample of 160 female employees from both organisations was used. These individuals were of diverse backgrounds in terms of age, education, profession and marital status. The number of female respondents selected from each organisation was determined by probability proportionate to size (PPS). Ministry of Community Development and Social Services had a total of 202 female staff and Barclays Bank had a total of 86 female staff. After calculation using PPS, 112 were selected from MCDSS and 48 from Barclays, making a total of 160.

At the end of the data collection process, 95 percent (152) of the 160 targeted employees responded (8 did not respond). Of these:

- 107 were from Ministry of Community Development and Social Services and
- 45 were from Barclays.

There were more respondents from Ministry of Community Development and Social Services than Barclays because Probability Proportionate to Size (PPS) was used to draw the sample. This meant that more respondents were selected from the organisation which had a larger number of female staff.

Age Distribution of Respondents

Most of the respondents were aged between 25 years and 29 years (40.1%) followed by those aged between 30 and 34 years (22.2%). The five year age group distribution of respondents is illustrated in the table below.

Table 1: Age Distribution of Respondents

	Public organisation		Private organisation			
Age Group	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Grand Frequency	Grand %
Below 20	0	0	4	8.9	4	2.6
20-24	7	6.5	9	20	16	10.5
25-29	47	43.9	14	31.1	61	40.1
30-34	25	23.4	9	20	34	22.2
35-39	22	20.6	2	4.4	24	15.7
Above 40	6	5.6	7	15.6	13	8.5
Total	107	100	45	100	152	100

Marital Status

The majority of respondents (52.6%) were married, followed by those who were single (40.1%). This coincides with the age distribution of these respondents. It was noticed that most of the females in the age group 25-29 were married and since they formed the majority of the respondents, the frequency of married respondents was therefore high. The table below gives a summary of the participants' marital status.

Table 2: Marital Status of Respondents

	Public organisation		Private organisation			
Marital Status	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Grand Frequency	Grand %
Single	36	33.6	25	55.6	61	40.1
Married	65	60.7	15	33	80	52.6
Divorced	5	4.7	4	8.9	9	5.9
Widowed	1	0.9	1	2.2	2	1.3
Total	107	100	45	100	152	100

Education Background

Over 80% of the respondents had tertiary education, followed by those who had a secondary school education. Very few had only primary school education and none had completely no education. This was expected because employment in these two organisations requires a minimum of a basic education certificate. The table below gives a summary of the respondents' education background.

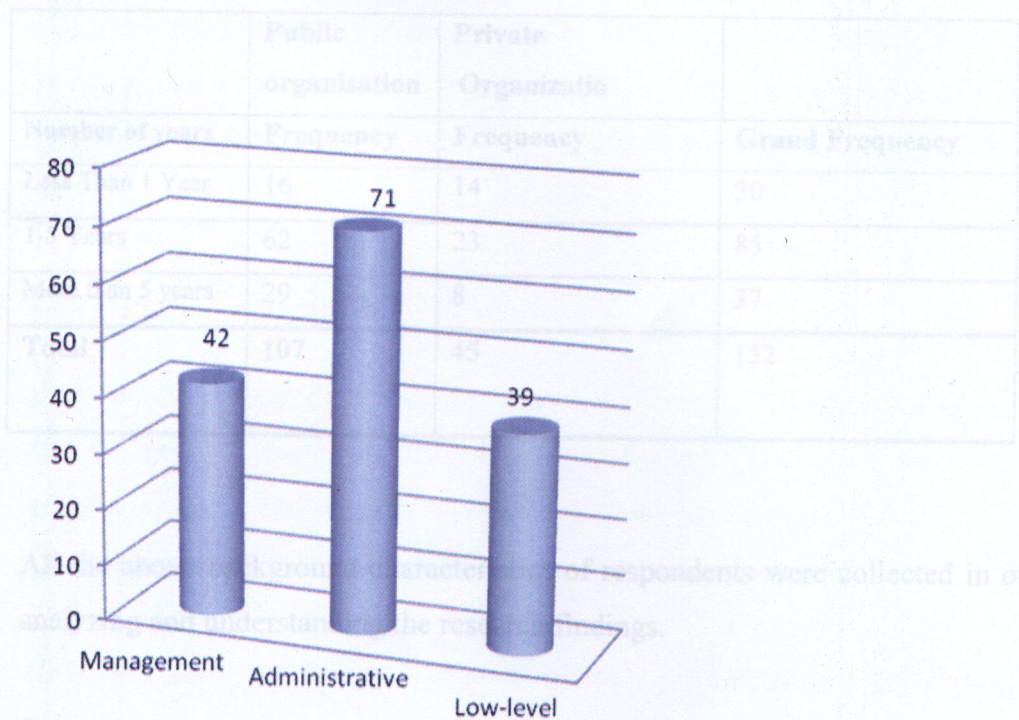
Table 3: Educational Background of Respondents

	Public organisation		Private organisation			
Educational Background	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Grand Frequency	Grand %
No education	0	0	0	0	0	0
Primary	2	1.9	1	2.2	3	1.9
Secondary	10	9.3	11	24.4	21	13.8
Diploma/Degree	95	88.8	33	73.3	128	84.2
Total	107	100	45	100	152	100

Occupation of Respondents

Participants were asked to write down their occupation, and during data analysis, these were categorised into three categories: management staff, administrative staff, and low-level staff. The table below gives a summary of participants' occupation.

Figure 2: Occupation of Respondents



5.0. Sampling Procedure

As indicated above, purposive sampling was used to select the two organisations. A list of organisations and their characteristics was obtained from Central Statistics Office and a desk review of organisational profiles was conducted.

Number of Years in Employment

Over 55% (85) of the respondents said they have been employed in their respective workplaces between 1 and 5 years; 37 (24%) said they have worked for more than 5 years; and 30 (19%) said they have worked for less than 1 year. This was ideal because it created an opportunity to compare prevalence of harassment between those who have worked longer and those who are relatively new in their current workplace.

Table 4: Number of Years in Employment

	Public organisation	Private Organizatio	
Number of years	Frequency	Frequency	Grand Frequency
Less Than 1 Year	16	14	30
1-5 Years	62	23	85
More than 5 years	29	8	37
Total	107	45	152

All the above background characteristics of respondents were collected in order to aid in analyzing and understanding the research findings.

5.0. Sampling Procedure

As indicated above, purposive sampling was used to select the two organisations. A list of established formal public and private organisations was obtained from Central Statistics Office and a desk review of organisational profiles was conducted.

Consequently, Ministry of Community Development and Social Services was selected, firstly because it is a public organisation and secondly because it is one of the public organisations which has taken large strides to mainstream gender (Ministry of Community Development and Social Services, 2009), thus it will be beneficial to determine if it has also addressed gender issues such as sexual harassment. Barclays Bank was selected because it is one of the most prominent established private organisations in Zambia.

Staff records were used to draw a stratified sample of female employees from both organisations. Probability Proportionate to Size (PPS) was used to determine the actual number of respondents to be selected from each of the two organisations. This meant that more respondents were selected in the organisation which had a larger number of female staff.

6.0. Data Collection Methods

Data collection methods on sexual related behaviour (including sexual harassment) fall into four main types: general population surveys, studies on population sub-groups, partner and network studies, ethnographic and qualitative studies (Fenton et al., 2001:84). These can further be grouped into two major categories: quantitative and qualitative approaches.

Data were collected using a self-administered, semi-structured questionnaire, developed through a review of previous literature. This questionnaire was designed to collect both quantitative and qualitative data. (Attached as appendix I).

This combination of both approaches was used to provide more insights into the research problem. The research questionnaire included questions pertaining to demographics (age, gender, education level, racial or ethnic group, the number of years having worked in the hospitality industry), perceptions of sexual harassment, behaviours of sexual harassment, awareness of a sexual harassment policy, and personal experience in reference to sexual harassment.

Many authors and researchers have written about the importance of using both methods in research analysis. For example, Jones (1995:1) mentioned that while qualitative and quantitative research may well investigate similar topics, each addresses a different type of question.

Price and Hawkins (2002:1327) also argued that a well-constructed quantitative method or statistical sample can provide important data on trends in social behaviour, but cannot necessarily inform the contexts in which different behaviours occur. They thus noted that qualitative research methods are also needed as they have potential to explore and probe more deeply into people's accounts of social life.

The questionnaire underwent an ethical review process at UNZA. An introductory letter was also obtained from the University Of Zambia Department Of Gender Studies in order for me to access Barclays and Ministry of Community Development and Social Services.

Data collection commenced on 21st August 2009 and ended on 18th January 2010. Selected participants were met in their offices, with consent from their supervisor. The questionnaires were then distributed and collected one or two days later. At the end of the data collection process, 95 percent (152) of the 160 targeted employees responded.

7.0. Data Processing and Analysis

All the completed questionnaires were edited, entered and processed immediately they were received. This helped to identify and correct any observed data errors before a lot of data were gathered.

Data were entered using EPI-data software package; and verified and processed using EPI-info software package which has standard consistent checks and editing procedures. Simple range and skip errors were corrected at data entry point, while verification and cleaning were carried out after data entry. Data was analysed using frequencies and cross-tabulations using EPI-ifo data analysis. Detailed information about statistical techniques used is provided in chapter 5.

8.0. Ethical Consideration

It was noted that sexual harassment may not be a topic that organisations or individuals are comfortable with and one that they would be willing to reveal. Therefore the study adhered to research ethics, and confidentiality and anonymity was maintained. The questionnaire underwent an ethical review process at UNZA.

I also obtained an introductory letter from the University Of Zambia Department Of Gender Studies in order for me to access Barclays and Ministry of Community Development and Social Services.

9.0. Limitations to the Study

One major challenge of this study was mainly due to the sensitivity of the topic. Very few women are often willing to disclose issues of sex, especially where it has a negative impact on them. Therefore, anonymity and confidentiality was stressed when handing out the self administered questionnaires.

The other limitation was that a number of targeted respondents did not return the questionnaires until after four or five attempts to collect them. This again may be due to the sensitive nature of the topic. This therefore delayed the data collection process, which took about four months.

CHAPTER 5

RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

1.0. Introduction

The research findings in this chapter have been presented in nine sub-titles as follows; Understanding of Sexual Harassment; Prevalence of Sexual Harassment; Forms of Sexual Harassment; Number of Times Harassed; Where Did Sexual Harassment Occur?; Relationship to the Harasser; Occupation When Harassment Occurred; Effects of Sexual Harassment; and Mechanisms for Redress of Harassment.

There were three main findings in this study. First, this study shows that sexual harassment in the workplace is very high; with 69% of respondents claiming having experienced some form of harassment at their place of work. Female employees are being subjected to unsafe work environments that can affect their emotional and physical health.

Second, it shows that almost 75% (114 out of 152) of employees surveyed were not aware of any sexual harassment policies in their workplace. It reveals that these employees are either not being protected, or are not aware of any protections in place.

Third, the study shows that sexual harassment exists in various forms, and women have different views of what constitutes sexual harassment.

These findings reveal the perception, nature, prevalence and effects of the problem. Generally, respondents perceived sexual harassment in the workplace as a gender issue, an uninvited embarrassing, humiliating behaviour and workplace violence. Common features of sexual harassment found during the study are verbal, gestural, and physical. It has also highlighted legal and other mechanisms available or not available to victims.

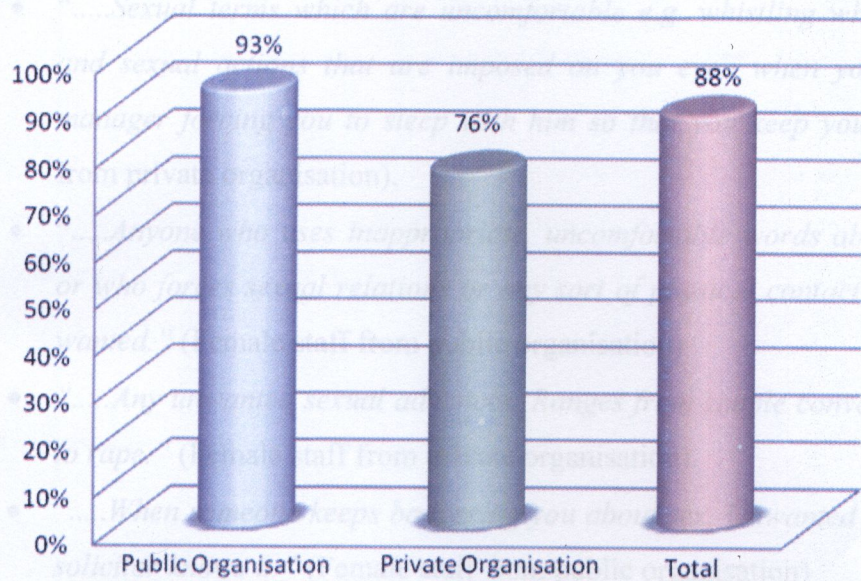
Recommendations on how to address sexual harassment in the workplace have also been given. The research findings, though exploratory in nature, clearly indicate seriousness of the situation of sexual harassment.

2.0. Understanding of Sexual Harassment

It was important to determine whether participants knew or understood what sexual harassment is. Interestingly, the majority of the respondents, 133 (88%) of the total 152 expressed knowledge of what sexual harassment is, while 19 (12%) expressed ignorance of the term “sexual harassment”.

When broken down into type of organisation, it was discovered that employees from the public organization had greater knowledge of sexual harassment than the private one. For the public organisation, 99 out of 107 respondents expressed knowledge of sexual harassment and only 8 said they did not know what it was. For the private organisation, 34 out of 45 respondents expressed knowledge of what sexual harassment was, while the remaining 11 did not know what it was. The graph below summarises these findings.

Figure 3: Percentage of participants who answered “Yes” to the Question “Do you know what sexual harassment is?”



When respondents were asked to further state what they understood by *sexual harassment*, results show that sexual harassment is generally believed to comprise of unwanted sexual behaviour from a person of the opposite sex, and any action that makes the other person uncomfortable such as touching a woman’s breasts, waist or buttocks; and describing sexual acts.

Some more specific definitions of sexual harassment included the following:

- “.....A workmate of the opposite sex forcing you to be in a relationship with them even if you don’t want” (Female staff from public organisation)
- “.....A man who behaves awkwardly in a way that makes you feel uncomfortable e.g. touching your hips, hands, hair etc” (Female staff from public organisation)
- “.....Being forcibly kissed or hugged, or being forcibly made to touch someone” (Female staff from private organisation)

- “.....*Touching and caressing a woman without her consent*” (Female staff from private organisation).
- “.....*Bribing an employee with sexual favours*”(Female staff from private organisation)
- “.....*Sexual terms which are uncomfortable e.g. whistling when a women passes, and sexual actions that are imposed on you even when you don't want e.g. a manager forcing you to sleep with him so that you keep your job*” (Female staff from private organisation).
- “.....*Anyone who uses inappropriate, uncomfortable words about your sex or you, or who forces sexual relations or any sort of physical contact upon you that is not wanted.*” (Female staff from public organisation)
- “.....*Any unwanted sexual advances. Ranges from simple conversation, to touching, to rape.*” (Female staff from private organisation).
- “.....*When someone keeps badgering you about sex. Unwanted propositions and the solicitor knows it.*” (Female staff from public organisation)
- “.....*Being sexually threatened.*” (Female staff from public organisation)
- “.....*When someone in a position of authority uses his/her position to demand sexual behaviour from someone.*” (Female staff from private organisation).

Other respondents understood sexual harassment as a broader gender concept. Several female staff described sexual harassment as:

- “.....*Making discriminatory remarks because of your gender*” (Female staff from public organisation”).
- “.....*Being biased especially against women just because of their sex e.g. a boss who does not promote a woman just because she is female*” (Female staff from public organisation).
- “.....*Segregating against female staff by teasing them in terms of to sex and gender*” (Female staff from private organisation).

The above different definitions of sexual harassment correspond with Haspels' (1996) explanation that women's perceptions of what constitutes sexual harassment vary among and within societies. They depend on how men and women are socialized within that society, the existence of gender stereotypes, and set notions that may exist in the workplace (Haspels et al., 1996:pp.18-20). This therefore explains why respondents in this study had different understandings of what exactly constitutes sexual harassment.

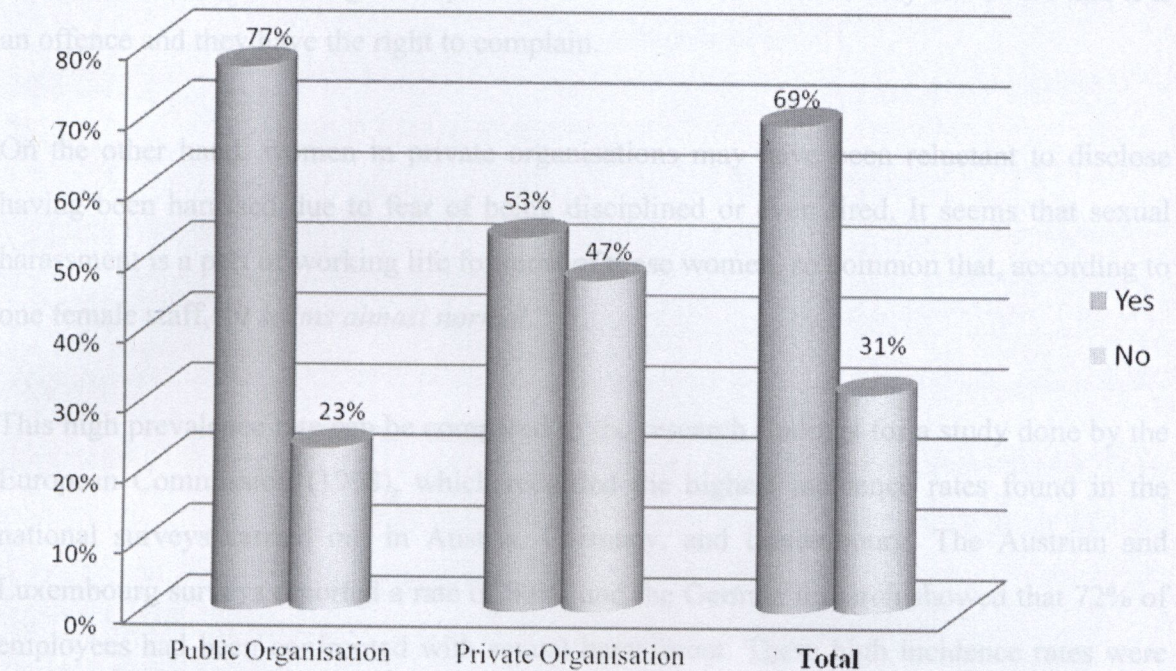
However, one thing that is clear from the respondents' definitions is that sexual harassment poses discomfort and is extremely unwelcome. It is clear that such behaviour especially from supervisors creates a hostile work environment for victims and may also interfere with work performance.

3.0. Prevalence of Sexual Harassment

This sub-section analyses sexual harassment experienced by working women according to age, marital status, occupation and education background. The analysis is preliminary and exploratory, and answers the main objective of this study; which is to determine the extent of sexual harassment in workplaces.

The research findings reveal that 106 (69%) out of 152 respondents claimed having experienced sexual harassment in the workplace. The remaining 46 (31%) respondents reported never experiencing sexual harassment. This shows that sexual harassment in workplaces is extremely high.

Figure 4: Responses to the question “Have you ever been harassed?”



Have You Ever Been Harassed?	Public organisation		Private organisation			
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Grand Frequency	Grand %
Yes	82	76.6	24	53.3	106	69%
No	25	23.4	21	46.7	46	31%
Total	107	100	45	100	152	100%

The figures above show that more women are being harassed in public organisations than in private organisations (77% from the public organisation and 53% from the private organisation).It is difficult to conclude the reason behind this variation.

However, it is possible that this may be a result of the fact that MCDSS has taken large strides to mainstream gender within the ministry (MCDSS 2009), meaning that more women are confident enough to report sexual harassment because they are aware that it is an offence and they have the right to complain.

On the other hand, women in private organisations may have been reluctant to disclose having been harassed due to fear of being disciplined or even fired. It seems that sexual harassment is a part of working life for most of these women, so common that, according to one female staff, “*it seems almost normal.*”

This high prevalence rate can be compared to the research findings for a study done by the European Commission (1998), which recorded the highest incidence rates found in the national surveys carried out in Austria, Germany, and Luxembourg. The Austrian and Luxembourg surveys reported a rate of 80%, and the German research showed that 72% of employees had been confronted with sexual harassment. These high incidence rates were partly attributed to the *comprehensive definitions* of sexual harassment used in the studies (ibid :16).

Personal characteristics were also shown to affect the likelihood of harassment, for instance age and marital status: younger women, aged between 20 and 40, and single or divorced women were more harassed than other women. The study also showed that women with a lower level of education are more exposed to sexual harassment. These characteristics are outlined in more detail below:

Prevalence According to Level of Education

The level of education does also influence the likelihood of being harassed. It was shown in the study that less educated women had higher incidents of harassment than their more educated counterparts. The table below shows that education is an important determinant of sexual harassment because the incidence varies according to level of education.

Table 6: Prevalence According to Educational Level

EDUCATION	Have You Ever Been Harassed?					
	Public Organisation		Private Organisation		Total Yes	Total No
	Yes	No	Yes	No		
None	0	0	0	0	0	0
Primary	0	2	0	1	0	3
Grade 12	3	7	6	5	9	12
Diploma/Degree	79	16	18	15	97	31
Total	82	25	24	21	106	46

Even though at first glance it looks as if women who have a diploma/degree have experienced more of the problem, it is actually women who only went up to grade 12 who have a higher chance of being harassed. This is because the total sample size in this study had 128 women with a diploma/degree and out of these 97 had experienced harassment. On the other hand, the total sample size had 21 women with only a grade 12 certificate, and out of these, 9 had experienced harassment. When ratios were calculated, it was discovered that those who only have grade 12 certificate education had experienced harassment more than the others.

Prevalence According to Age

The study showed that a woman’s age also has an impact on the likelihood of being harassed. The table below summarises these findings:

Table 7: Prevalence According to Age

AGE	Have You Ever Been Harassed?					
	Public Organisation		Private Organisation		Total Yes	Total No
	Yes	No	Yes	No		
Below 20	0	0	2	2	2	2
20-24	4	3	5	4	9	7
25-29	38	9	10	4	48	13
30-34	19	6	3	6	22	12
35-39	21	1	0	2	21	3
Above 40	0	6	4	3	4	9

When calculations were done in terms of ratios, it was shown that women in the age group 20-25 have experienced more harassment compared to the other age groups. It is obvious that young women, who are mostly single, are the targets of sexual advances from men. This also confirms the assumptions by Sutherland (1995) that men find young women as highly attractive dates. These men utilise their prestige and ability to pay to attract young women. There is thus a culture where young, attractive and educated women are exploited as prestigious acquisitions and even as property of rich supervisors or bosses.

Prevalence According to Marital Status

The study also revealed that sexual harassment varies among different marital status. Single women in the private organisation had the highest number of those harassed, while in the public organisation married women were the majority of those harassed. The table below gives a summary of these findings:

Table 8: Prevalence According to Marital Status

Marital Status	Have You Ever Been Harassed?					
	Public Organisation		Private Organisation		Total Yes	Total No
	Yes	No	Yes	No		
Single	23	13	15	10	38	23
Married	54	11	6	9	60	20
Divorced	4	1	2	2	6	3
widow	1	0	1	0	2	0
Total	82	25	24	21	106	46

4.0. Forms of Sexual Harassment

Respondents were asked to identify which forms of sexual harassment they had encountered from a list of examples provided in the survey. This list consisted of 8 instances of verbal, visual and physical forms of sexual harassment.

Male colleagues who *“frequently made discriminatory remarks, e.g. suggesting that women are too emotional to assume leadership roles”*, was most frequently experienced by 35% of respondents who reported having been sexually harassed.

The second highest reported incident was that of having someone *“treat you differently or put you down because you are a woman (e.g. mistreated, slighted or ignored you)*. 28% indicated experiencing this form of harassment.

“Habitually telling suggestive stories or offensive sexual remarks, either publicly or to you privately” was ranked third highest, with 13%.

9% reported males who *“implied faster promotions, reward or special treatment”* if they were sexually cooperative. This form of ‘quid pro quo’ harassment is considered ‘particularly reprehensible, since it represents a breach of trust and an abuse of power’ by those in a position to ‘give or take away employment benefit’.

7% reported being “given unwanted sexual attention, 5 reported men who attempted to establish a romantic sexual relationship with them despite efforts to discourage them, 2% confirmed to men who “touched them (e.g. laid a hand on their bare arm, waist or breast) in a way that made you feel uncomfortable? And finally 1% claimed that some men “treated them badly for refusing to have sex”.

The responses, as indicated in the bar chart below, show that respondents have experienced a wide range of forms of sexual harassment. While some may be perceived as more severe than others, they all create a negative work atmosphere, otherwise known as a ‘hostile working environment’.

Several respondents shared more particular experiences of workplace sexual harassment when asked to indicate “Any other” forms of sexual harassment they encountered. Overall, the most common forms of sexual harassment were verbal forms such as ‘sexual jokes’ and ‘remarks about body, clothes and sex life’. Furthermore, nonverbal forms such as ‘staring, whistling’ and physical forms such as ‘unsolicited physical contact’ were also frequently reported and these included the following:

- *“.....My boss said that I was wearing jeans that exposed my big hips in front of ALL my other colleagues, and he said that rather loudly and in a joking manner...”*
- *“.....Placing hand under the sleeves of my blouse by a male workmate and said "I want to feel the material".*
- *“.....Taking advantage by squeezing his way behind me in the elevator.”*
- *“.....I work in an office surrounded by male colleagues. Every other day I receive comments about my breasts, my thighs when am wearing a skirt and general talk about bedroom issues”*

- “.....Being in a situation where you are forced to have sex unwillingly”.
- “.....Abusive language based on sex”.

These findings correspond with many authors' conclusion that women have broader definitions of sexual harassment than males, have more negative attitudes, are less tolerant and consider teasing, looks, gestures, unnecessary physical contact and remarks to be sexual harassment (Mazer & Percival, 1989; McKinney, 1990, Sabitha, 2005a), and see it as a more serious problem (McKinney, 1990). They further state that men typically do not find the same behaviors to be offensive and label teasing, looks, gestures and comments as “normal” interactions between males and females (Johnson, Stockdale & Saal, 1991).

Men label fewer behaviours at work as sexual harassment and they tend to find sexual overtures from women to be flattering, whereas women find similar approaches from men to be insulting (Konrad & Gutek, 1986; Gutek, 1985).

Figure 5: Gave you unwanted sexual attention (Source: www.google.com)

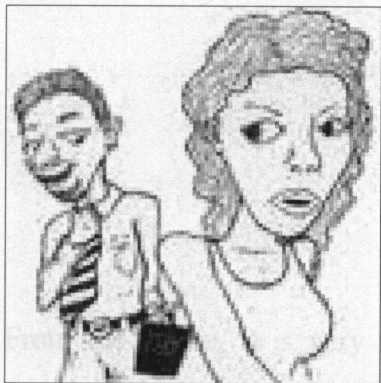
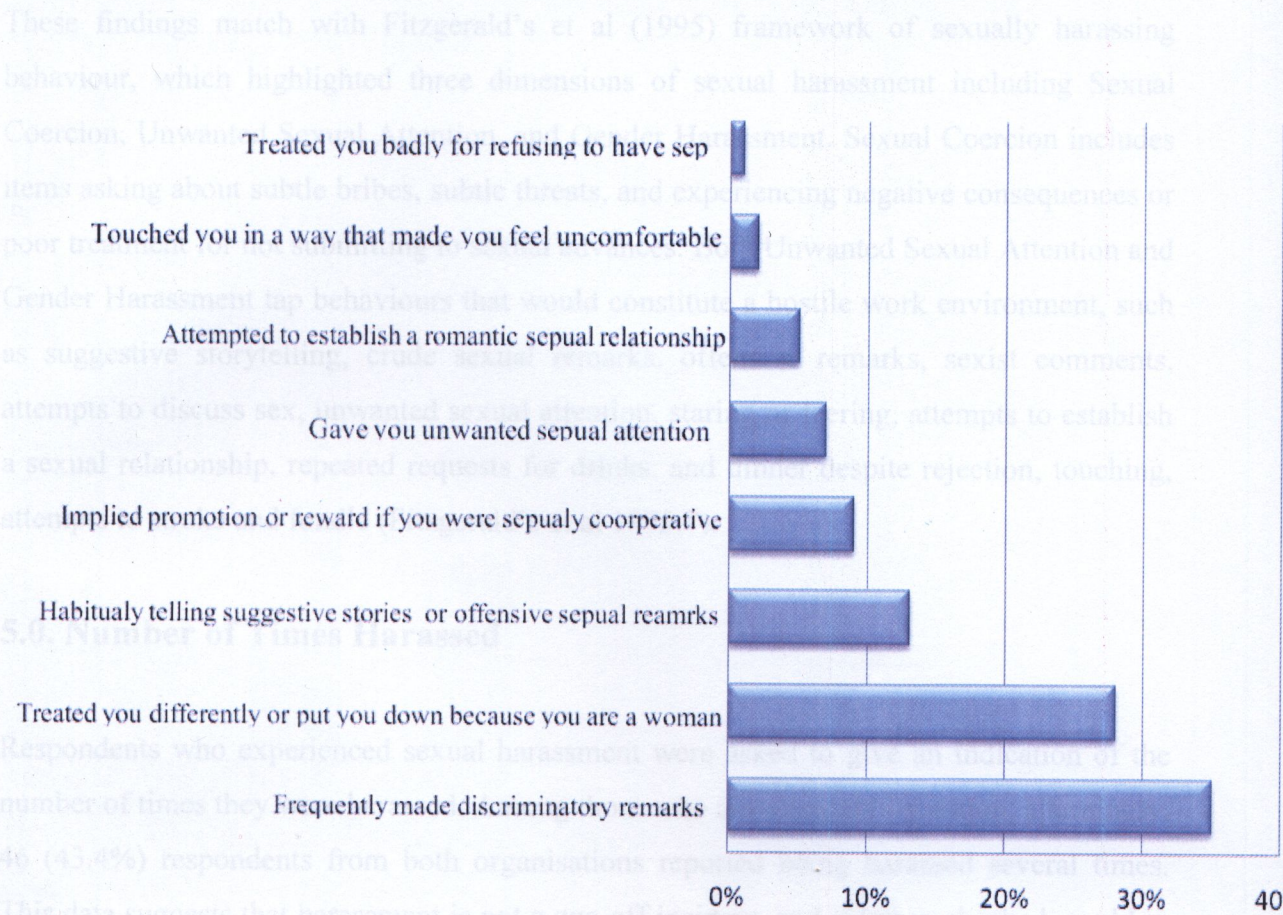


Figure 6: Types and Forms of Sexual Harassment Experienced by Female Employees



From the above, it is very interesting to note that the majority experienced “Frequent Discriminatory Remarks” at their place of work; while only a small number claimed being “Touched in a way that made them feel uncomfortable”. This therefore shows that in these workplaces, sexual harassment is more verbal than physical. However, despite the type of harassment experienced, it is important that employees are aware that such incidents are offences and punishable by law. All members of staff deserve a safe and conducive work environment in which they can work happily.

It is up to the organization to provide a safe environment for its staff members (Fitzgerald 1997), therefore programs to sensitise employees on sexual harassment may be essential.

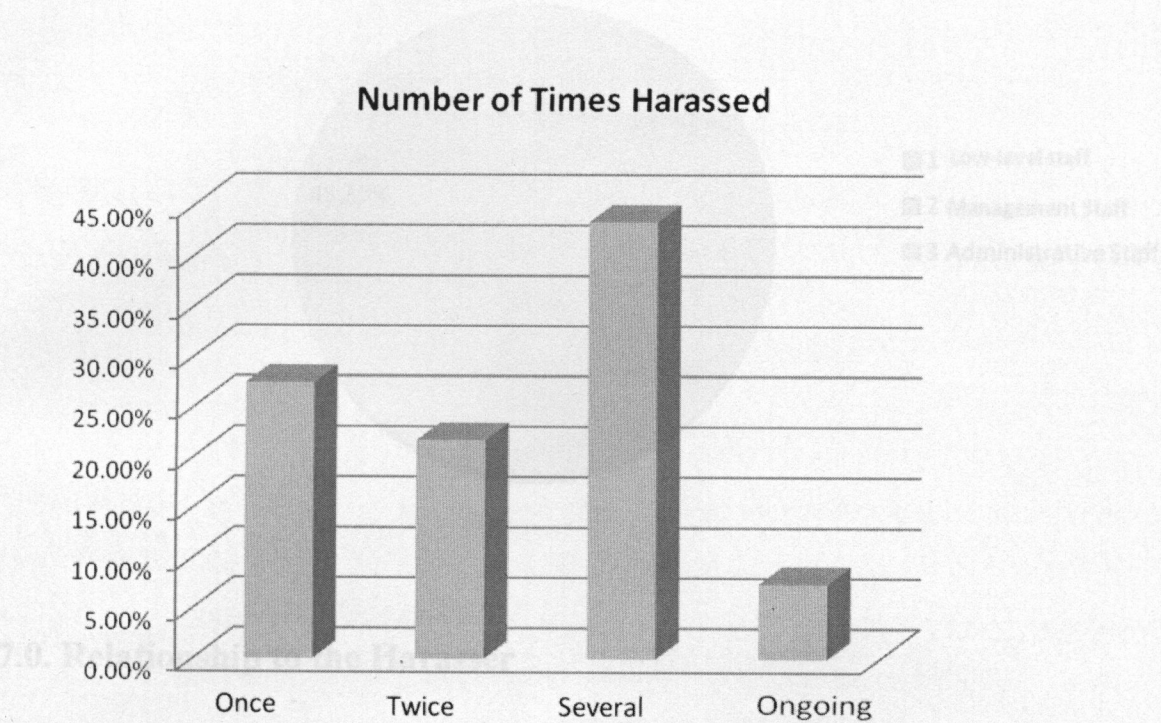
These findings match with Fitzgerald's et al (1995) framework of sexually harassing behaviour, which highlighted three dimensions of sexual harassment including Sexual Coercion, Unwanted Sexual Attention, and Gender Harassment. Sexual Coercion includes items asking about subtle bribes, subtle threats, and experiencing negative consequences or poor treatment for not submitting to sexual advances. Both Unwanted Sexual Attention and Gender Harassment tap behaviours that would constitute a hostile work environment, such as suggestive storytelling, crude sexual remarks, offensive remarks, sexist comments, attempts to discuss sex, unwanted sexual attention, staring or leering, attempts to establish a sexual relationship, repeated requests for drinks, and dinner despite rejection, touching, attempts to stroke and fondle (Fitzgerald's et al 1995:7).

5.0. Number of Times Harassed

Respondents who experienced sexual harassment were asked to give an indication of the number of times they were harassed. Among those who answered this question, alarmingly, 46 (43.4%) respondents from both organisations reported being harassed several times. This data suggests that harassment is not a one-off incident, and if left unchecked, could in some cases increase. Twenty nine (27.4%) reported being harassed once, and 23 (21.7%) indicated being harassed twice. It is also disturbing to note that 8 respondents (7.5%) continued to experience sexual harassment at the time of being interviewed.

Figure 8: Occupation When Sexual Harassment Occurred

Figure 7: Number of Times Harassed

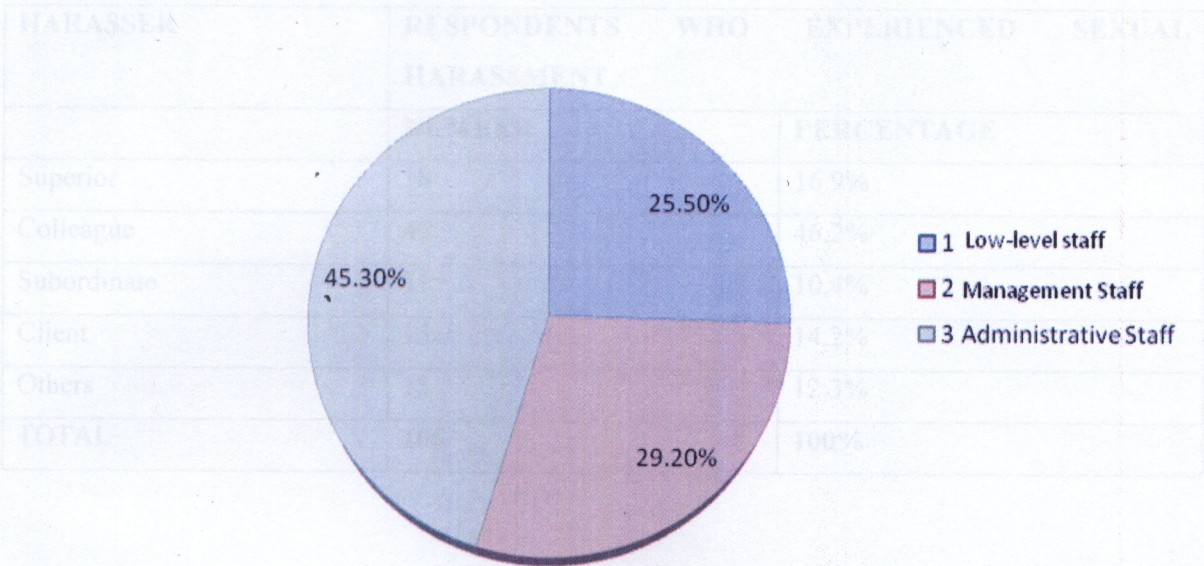


On average the harasser was a colleague in almost half of the cases. Supervisors are mentioned to a lesser degree in a third of the cases, and subordinates and clients were the

6.0. Occupation when Sexual Harassment Occurred

Women from various occupational levels were shown to experience sexual harassment. From the 106 respondents who reported having been harassed, the highest number of incidents of sexual harassment occurred to administrative staff, with 48 (45.3%) women in management positions. The second highest were those from higher occupational levels, with a total of 31 (29.2%) women). Interestingly, respondents from lower occupational levels seemed to be the least harassed with 27 (25.5%) women from lower positions.

Figure 8: Occupation When Sexual Harassment Occurred



These findings do not match with the findings of the Sexual Harassment Education Project (SHEP) in Zambia which highlighted in 2003 that harassment in workplaces affects women more than men because most women are dependent on men as employers and supervisors. They are therefore more vulnerable to the unequal power relations including sexual harassment from their supervisors (Charles Chisala 2003:21). This

7.0. Relationship to the Harasser

On average the harasser was a *colleague* in almost half of the cases. *Supervisors* are mentioned to a lesser degree in a third of the cases, and subordinates and clients were the least mentioned. The table below shows that out of 106 respondents who experienced some form of sexual harassment and answered this question, 49 (46.2%) experienced some form of sexual harassment from their colleagues, while 18 (16.9%) were harassed by their superior.

It is also shown that sexual harassment is not confined to any particular location in the workplace. When respondents were asked to specify where these incidents actually took place, responses included "office parties", "in the office", "boss' office", "room retreat",

Though smaller in number, 11 (10.4%) respondents reported being harassed by their subordinates. One respondent had reported being harassed by a vendor while another by a security guard.

Table 8: Relationship to the Harasser

HARASSER	RESPONDENTS WHO EXPERIENCED SEXUAL HARASSMENT	
	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
Superior	18	16.9%
Colleague	49	46.2%
Subordinate	11	10.4%
Client	15	14.2%
Others	13	12.3%
TOTAL	106	100%

These findings do not match with the findings of the Sexual Harassment Education Project (SHEP) in Zambia which highlighted in 2003 that harassment in workplaces affects women more than men because most women are dependent on men as employers and supervisors for their advancement. This makes them vulnerable to the unequal power relations including sexual harassment from their supervisors (*Charles Chisala 2003:21*). This research has shown that it is actually male colleagues who are in the forefront of sexual harassment.

8.0. Where Does Sexual Harassment Occur?

It was shown that sexual harassment is not confined to any particular location in the workplace. When respondents were asked to specify where these incidents actually took place, responses included “office parties”, “in the office”, “boss’ office”, “team retreat”, “guardhouse”, “cafeteria” “while with supervisor outside for meetings”, “meetings conducted outside the office”, “organisation events” and “some other place”.

The latter response, according to Hill et al (2005), may in part reflect the nature of some forms of sexual harassment, such as e-mail messages or harassment that takes place in multiple places (e.g., being followed). It may also reflect the classification of an incident as “related to their work life,” even if it happened off work premises.

The data shows that it is critical for the definition of the workplace to encompass more than the actual office space or place of business, and to take into consideration ‘work-related interactions that are often not considered as the workplace’. The bigger issue is one of the access that a perpetrator has to the persons being harassed by virtue of a job situation or relation. This is noteworthy as it can help to ensure remedies are able to provide employees with adequate protection.

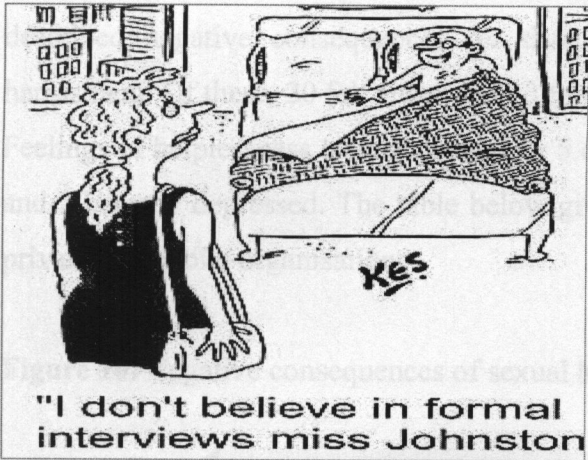


Figure 9: Sexual harassment is not only confined to the office. It can also exist in office related events outside the office. (Source: www.google.com)

9.0. Effects of Sexual Harassment

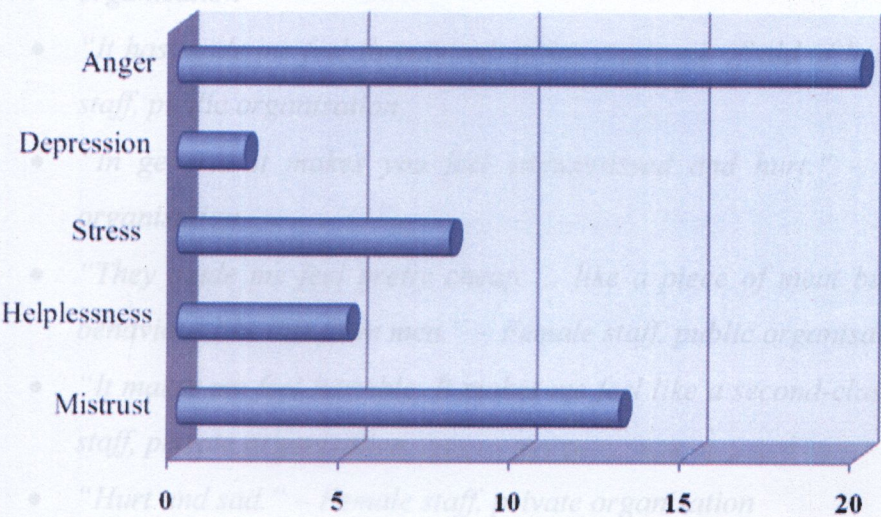
This study found that sexual harassment has negative consequences. It has an impact on the personal well-being of the harassed employees as well as on their work environment. Negative consequences on personal well-being included mistrust, fear, anger, humiliation, helplessness, headaches, sleeping problems, stress and depression. Further, these employees described negative consequences for their work environment, such as unwelcoming and stressful.

Effects on personal well-being

In general, out of the 106 women who experienced harassment, 48 of them (45%) described negative consequences for their personal well-being as a result of sexual harassment. Of these, 20 felt anger and 13 felt mistrust.

Feelings of helplessness were indicated by 5 of the respondents, 8 complained about stress, and 2 became depressed. The table below gives a summary of these findings for both the private and public organisation:

Figure 10. Negative consequences of sexual harassment on personal well-being



A few female employees (about 15% of those who were harassed) further went on to give a detailed explanation of how they felt after being harassed. These responses are listed below:

- *“They happen so often that I’ve become very immune to them. I get more annoyed by it than anything.” – Female staff, public organisation*
- *“I always felt Belittled, alone, uncomfortable.” - Female staff, public organisation*
- *“Slightly uncomfortable, but not threatened.”- Female staff, public organisation*
- *“I was self conscious, pissed off, and concerned, in that order.” – Female staff, public organisation*
- *“Abit annoyed but they don’t seem to be something to take seriously.” – Female staff, private organisation*
- *“It makes me feel like I have no control over my life.” – Female staff, private organisation*
- *“It was funny at first, but then they kept doing it.” – Female staff, private organisation*
- *“I don’t really like them but I don’t feel threatened or anything.” – Female staff, private organisation*
- *“I begin to question my morals and what I stand for.” – Female staff, private organisation*
- *“It has made me feel threatened. It has made me afraid of being raped.” – Female staff, public organisation*
- *“In general it makes you feel embarrassed and hurt.” – Female staff, public organisation*
- *“They made me feel pretty cheap ... like a piece of meat but I guess you expect behaviour like this from men.” – Female staff, public organisation*
- *“It makes me feel horrible. It makes me feel like a second-class citizen.” – Female, staff, private organisation*
- *“Hurt and sad.” – Female staff, private organisation*

- *“Bad at first but you learn to laugh it off.” – Female staff, public organisation*

These results confirm the social and economic effects of sexual harassment as highlighted in a national survey by Naira Khan (1997); explaining that workplace sexual harassment creates a hostile work environment for female employees; it compromises their work output and performance due to intimidation, ridicule and threats; and has adverse psychological effects such as lack of confidence in their capabilities as productive workers, low self esteem and depression.

Effects on Work Environment



Figure 11: Sexual harassment compromises work out-put (*Source: www.google.com*)

In addition to consequences on the personal well-being of harassed women, results showed that sexual harassment also negatively affected the work environment and motivation. When respondents were asked to describe their work environment, many sexually harassed women indicated that their work environment was stressful, challenging, unwelcoming or hostile

From the table below, it can be concluded that experiences of sexual harassment have a demoralising effect on the general atmosphere at work and on job satisfaction. This is very crucial for organisations because if members of staff are demoralised, work out-put is also affected.

Table 10: Description about work environment

Description of Workplace	Number of Responses		
	Public Organisation	Private Organisation	
Welcoming	7	0	7
Challenging	25	7	32
Supportive	6	2	8
Exiting	0	1	1
Intimidating	18	3	21
Hostile	4	1	5
Stressful	22	9	31
Total	82	24	106

These results indicate that most women felt their work environment was challenging (32 out of 106), followed by those who were stressed, and then those who felt intimidated were third highest. In summary, this basically shows that very few of these women actually enjoy their work environment.

While the statistical analyses presented in this study does not directly test gender differences in these organisations, other investigations (Street et al 2008, Kimerling et al 2007, Knaap et al 1996) suggest that associations between sexual harassment and physical health symptoms may actually be stronger for men than for women.

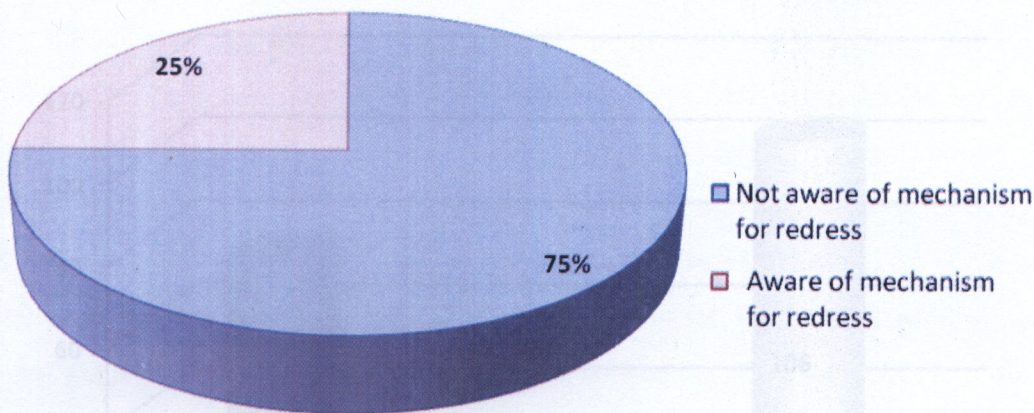
It is clear that sexual harassment affects victims in large and small ways. Female staffs that experience sexual harassment feel more self conscious, angry, and afraid and are less confident. For some, daily activities such as walking in the corridor, paying attention to work output, or sleeping are difficult because of sexual harassment. Occasionally the impact is so severe that a staff resigns, or transfers to a different department.

10.0. Mechanisms for Redress within the Workplace

Dealing with sexual harassment in a workplace is challenge for any victim, as evidenced from many of the responses in this study. For many female staff, drawing the line seems challenging. Nevertheless, according to Hill (2005:27) dealing with sexual harassment in the workplace is essential to ensure a safe, productive and welcoming climate for all employees.

Respondents were asked whether they were aware of any company policies in their workplace on sexual harassment and whether they knew who they could approach or make a report to regarding sexual harassment. Out of 152 respondents, only 38 (25%) said they are aware of the existence of company policies on sexual harassment and a person / department to approach or make a report of sexual harassment. 114 (75%) of the 152 respondents indicated that they were not aware of any policies in their workplace on sexual harassment.

Figure 12: Awareness of mechanisms for redress within the workplace

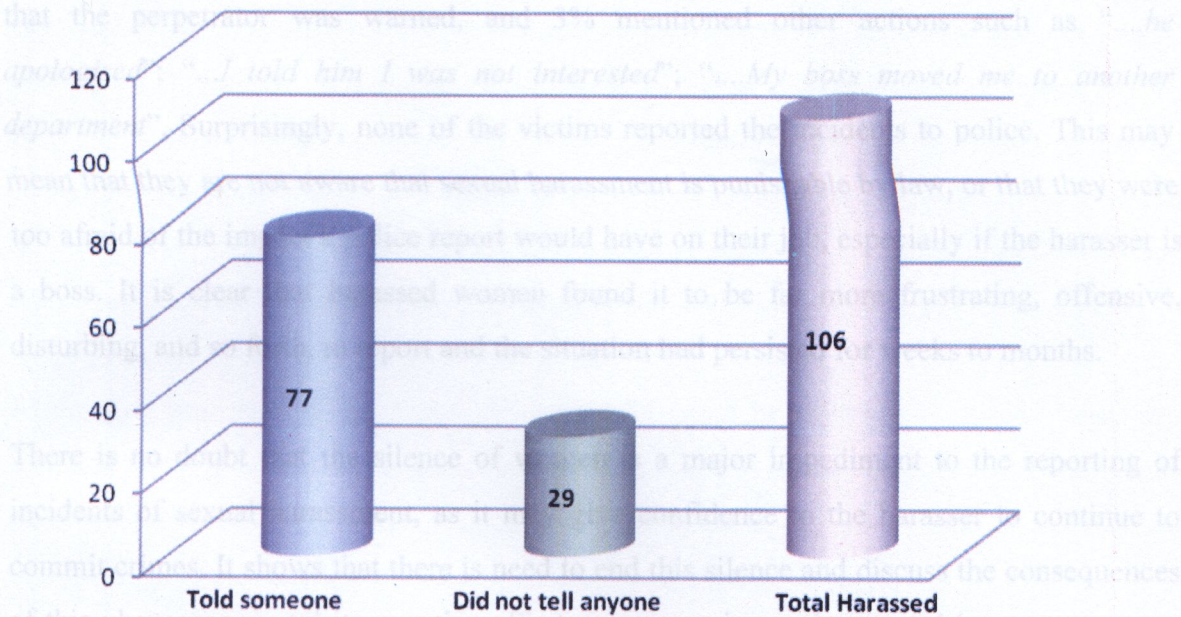


Although these findings show that very few women are aware of company policies on sexual harassment, most employees responded to sexual harassment by ignoring the behaviour (fear of negative consequences, the idea that the complaint would not be taken seriously, or respondents were too stunned or surprised to do anything) or by telling the harasser to stop (the assertive response). Further, informal responses such as discussing the incident with partner, friends, and colleagues are regularly reported. However, the formal responses of contacting a supervisor, confidential counsellor, and filing a complaint are rarely indicated.

According to the bar chart below, 50.6% (77) of the 106 respondents who experienced harassment indicated that they told someone about it. This perhaps provides employees with some avenue for redress even though it may not be a formal one or one that is equipped to specifically deal with sexual harassment.

Definite procedures for dealing with such complicated complaints need to be put in place, and staff need to be aware of various places they can report to outside the office, such as police stations.

Figure 13: Number of harassed women who told someone / did not tell anyone about the problem



It is clear from the above that 27% (29 out of 106) of harassed women neither made a formal complaint or told someone, thereby implying that there was probably no action taken. Of these, the most frequently reported reason for not telling anyone was “not expecting any action to be taken” (51%), and being embraced (44%). Those who were afraid came third (4%) and those who did not know where to make a complaint were the least (1%).

This therefore means that organisations have to put in more effort into encouraging victims of sexual harassment to make formal complaints about the problem. It is very sad to note that the majority of these women actually did not expect anything to be done about the problem, probably because the harassers were supervisors.

Definite procedures for dealing with such complicated complaints need to be put in place, and staff need to be aware of various places they can report to outside the office, such as police stations.

Among those who reported that they told someone about the problem, almost all of them (87%) reported that “No action was taken”. This is indeed very worrying. 10% mentioned that the perpetrator was warned, and 3% mentioned other actions such as “....*he apologised*”; “...*I told him I was not interested*”; “....*My boss moved me to another department*”. Surprisingly, none of the victims reported the incidents to police. This may mean that they are not aware that sexual harassment is punishable by law, or that they were too afraid of the impact a police report would have on their job, especially if the harasser is a boss. It is clear that harassed women found it to be far more frustrating, offensive, disturbing, and so forth, to report and the situation had persisted for weeks to months.

There is no doubt that the silence of women is a major impediment to the reporting of incidents of sexual harassment, as it may give confidence to the harasser to continue to commit crimes. It shows that there is need to end this silence and discuss the consequences of this phenomenon and its negative effect on women in employment. Many women may not be spared the threat of sexual harassment if men will not recognize the consequences of sexual harassment.

This finding has important practical implications, suggesting that personnel rarely bring workplace sexual harassment to the attention of management and authorities. Harassers would, more often than not, go unreported and uncorrected. This could help explain why sexual harassment can have such widespread negative effects as highlighted by the respondents. Organisations should thus monitor sexual harassment and reduce its consequences both for employees and the organisation as a whole.

11.0. Conclusion

These research findings have shown that sexual harassment is widespread and is a major problem in workplaces. A significant percentage (69%) of participants experienced one or more forms of sexual harassment, yet none of these victims reported the matter to police. Many of them decided to keep silent because they did not expect anything to be done. In addition, these victims claimed that the problem had a significant impact on their emotional wellbeing and their overall professional climate at the workplace.

It has also been shown that these incidents take place in various places. But what was interesting to note was that most of these incidences took place outside the office environments; including work related meetings outside the office and office related functions.

Most working individuals spend about 50% or more of their life in the workplace, according to Zimbardo (2007:30). Putting this into consideration, employees, in particular female employees, deserve a work “home” that is safe, supportive, stable, and free of discrimination, humiliation, and discomfort. All places of work have rules concerning dress, language, grooming, and behavior; there are few work environments that allow ultimate freedom. Such regulations which monitor behavior and conduct should be adjusted or expanded to incorporate prohibition of sexual harassment. The negative consequences of sexual harassment revealed in this study indicate that discriminatory harassing words and actions should have no role in the workplace. “I didn’t realize it was offensive” should not be an excuse in today’s world, where information about individual human rights is available. Sexual harassment policy and law must catch up with this reality. In addition, longitudinal research could be used to investigate into responses to workplace sexual harassment within individuals, across situations, and over time.

It is therefore important that organisations scale up efforts to try and redress this problem. They should go beyond having a mere policy on sexual harassment and include training, and if possible put in place an office counsellor who would be approachable for such sensitive matters.

Regarding the applied benefits of these findings, knowledge on individual reactions to sexual harassment sheds further light on a process that can trigger job dissatisfaction, performance decline and turnover among employees. With a better grasp of this process, organizations may be in better positions to intervene. The results suggest that management should not wait for formal complaints to take action against sexual harassment because most victims may remain silent.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

This study was motivated by the rise in the number of gender based violence cases reported to police in Zambia (Zambia Police 2007) and a desire to contribute to learning and understanding of issues surrounding this problem as there is very little evidence based information on workplace sexual harassment in Zambia. In order to address this and related concerns, this research pursued five specific objectives:

It has been shown through numerous international research studies that female employees are often subjected to sexually harassing behaviours at their places of work (*Fritzgerald, 1993*). Globally, it is estimated that between 40% and 50% of female employees have experienced some form of harassment or unwanted sexual behaviour in the workplace (*European Women's Lobby, 2009, <http://www.womenlobby.org>*). The findings in this report have shown that sexual harassment is clearly a problem because it creates a hostile work environment for female employees; it compromises their work out-put and performance due to intimidation, ridicule and threats; and it has adverse psychological effects such as lack of confidence in their capabilities as productive workers, low self esteem and depression.

In the review of literature, it was highlighted that in Zambia, although women have begun to mobilise and respond to emotive issues such as rape and violence from intimate partners (*Cabinet Office 2007*), the issue of sexual harassment in workplaces has not yet begun to be addressed systematically. A sexual behaviour survey undertaken by the Government of Zambia in 2007 revealed that 16.3% of female respondents from all age groups had experienced forced sex encounters. This survey however did not specify the issue of workplace sexual harassment.

Sexual harassment has only been reported in schools and colleges, including a baseline survey conducted at the University of Zambia which reported that 51% of all female respondents reported having being sexually harassed (*University of Zambia, 2007*).

This study has therefore determined the extent of sexual harassment perpetrated against women at their place of work and has generated new knowledge and highlighted the magnitude of the problem. It is hoped that this will attract the attention of policy makers and implementers.

This study has shown that workplace sexual harassment is a complex challenge, one that is often controversial, and has become a contentious issue not only in Zambia, but in the world as a whole. What is clear is that workplace sexual harassment does exist in Zambia, with 69% of respondents claiming having experienced sexual harassment in the workplace.

While there are still no binding international standards that specifically mention sexual harassment, a growing list of countries have taken legislative action to recognise it as abusive behaviour, and to punish and prevent it. Zambia is among the few countries which have highlighted in its penal code, amendment number 15 of 2005, that sexual harassment is a crime punishable by law. However, more needs to be done in terms of behavioural change at the individual level. It is hoped that this report will help speed up the process of dialogue – to heighten awareness, to provoke further discussion, and to stimulate thinking on effective solutions. It is only the start, and it is anticipated that other efforts will follow to more deeply examine the prevalence and scope of the problem, and the best ways to resolve it.

Many women are aware of what constitutes sexual harassment, and were able to explain and give different examples of the problem. However On one hand, it is encouraging to see that many women have knowledge of sexual harassment and how it affects them as highlighted in the results. On the other hand however, the results are distressing—if women are more aware of sexual harassment, why is it still such a problem?

It is clear that the hidden negative implications of sexual harassment are enormous, physiological, emotional, physical and environmentally. It is therefore in every employer's interest to be proactive and prevent the problem, rather than having to redress it after damages have been suffered.

Aware individuals can play a major role: by bringing the seriousness of harassment to the attention of management and of employees, by helping to formulate and implement appropriate policies, and by helping victims to deal with the consequences of harassment.

The study has indicated that women in employment experience a wide range of forms of sexual harassment, both verbal and physical. A high percentage experienced repeated incidents. While some may be perceived as more severe than others, they all create a negative work atmosphere as highlighted in the responses, otherwise known as a 'hostile working environment'

It was also shown that most harassers happened to be co-workers and not supervisors as is most commonly thought. In addition, these incidents actually happened outside the work environment, for instance in meetings and work related functions outside the office. This therefore shows that the definition of the workplace needs to be broadened to encompass more than the actual office space or place of business, and to take into consideration 'work-related interactions' that are often not considered as the 'workplace'

It was also interesting to note that most harassed women were those in higher management positions, unlike it is commonly believed that this problem mostly affects those in lower positions. Sexual harassment has become an overwhelming and very real problem experienced by all women in Zambia, often on a daily basis, in public places such as the corridor, as well as in private places such as a supervisors' home.

It may not be possible to make workplaces immediately responsive and active in eradicating sexual harassment in the short term. Some of these behaviours might be entrenched and it may be useful to make continued efforts to combat this problem.

2.0. General Recommendations

The Zambian government, employers, organizations, and individuals can all work together to create a more positive, healthy work environment in our country. Going forward, we first must strive to better understand and explore this problem, as this report's findings are just the tip of the iceberg. A no-tolerance climate must be expected by all stakeholders. This attitude can be cultivated by establishing a clear policy against sexual harassment, mechanisms for redress and awareness trainings for managers and staff.

Actors at different levels can play a role in the prevention, and in offering protection and support for victims. It is important to identify these actors not only at the company or organizational levels, but also at the national level. In addition, every individual can play a part in helping to create a no-tolerance environment for sexual harassment at the workplace, by either providing support to recipients of sexual harassment, or speaking up against it.

The Zambian government can lead the way by implementing policies and programmes that define the problem and enforce clear guidelines on preventative and corrective measures. This would help create a no-tolerance climate for sexual harassment at the workplace and encourage more employers to be socially responsible, and to maintain a safe and conducive work environment for their employees.

Employers need to do more than merely putting in place policies that prohibit sexual harassment. They also need to provide training for managers and staff to recognise and deal appropriately with the problem. For instance, assertiveness training and development of a healthy self-esteem will help women to deal with harassers; and will also reduce the need in some men to try to prove themselves by harassing colleagues.

Staff unions could also be instrumental in providing much-needed support and services to individuals who experience sexual harassment, especially if victims are reluctant or afraid to report incidents, or uncertain and confused about what to do.

Although it may be difficult to report such cases, victims should have the courage to tell the harasser to stop, expressing their feelings about the situation and making it clear that his / her behaviour is unwelcome and unwanted. It is also important to speak to a person that is trusted. Friends, family and trusted colleagues could help ease emotional distress. A report to the human resource department can also be made – requesting for appropriate disciplinary action and preventive practices. If all these fail, it may be necessary to make a police report, especially if there has been physical contact. Victims can also explore other avenues of support – organisations exist that can offer trauma counselling, information about rights, and help to determine what action is appropriate, for instance the Young Womens Christian Association (YWCA), Women and Law in Southern Africa (WLSA), or Zambia Legal Aid Clinic for Women

There is certainly a need for greater research into the prevalence rates and scope of workplace sexual harassment in Zambia, such as research into its occurrence, causes and impact as experienced by specific groups. Further study would be useful on the feasibility of specific legislation to deal with sexual harassment, as well as the possible establishment of administrative mechanisms to handle complaints; for example, a department within the Ministry of Labour.

Sometimes it takes a tragedy to startle people from old and destructive behaviour such as sexual harassment. On July 13 2009, Kenyans received such a shock when 271 teenage girls were attacked during a rampage by dozens of their male classmates. Chased into a corner of the dormitory where they were trying to hide, 19 girls died of suffocation in the crush. Doctors say another 71 were raped. 29 boys aged 14 to 18 were later charged with manslaughter and rape (A Safer Zambia 2009:19).

In conclusion, it is clear that sexual harassment is an issue that negatively affects female staff in workplaces. Therefore, it is important for managers to realize the importance of a sexual harassment-free work environment and understand how employees feel about the issue. Understanding employees' perceptions of sexual harassment will help managers to prepare appropriate sexual harassment policies for their organisations.

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WEBSITE RESOURCES

Equal Employment Opportunities Commission; (<http://www.eeoc.org>)

European Women's Lobby; (<http://www.womenlobby.org>).

Human Resource Consultancy; (<http://www.hrhero.com>)

Wikipedia Encyclopaedia; (www.wikipedia.com)

Google Images (www.google.com)

APPENDIX 1
Research Questionnaire

THE UNIVERSITY OF ZAMBIA
SCHOOL OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES
DE
PARTMENT OF GENDER STUDIES

Informed Consent

I am a University of Zambia student, conducting an academic research on sexual harassment at workplaces. I would like you to take part in this study by completing this questionnaire. The results of this study will be used for academic purposes ONLY, and any information you give will be treated with complete confidentiality. The information obtained will be useful to policy makers and various organisations in formulating gender sensitive policies and regulations to prevent and address sexual harassment in workplaces.

Thank you for your assistance, should you wish to clarify or discuss anything related to this study, please contact Precious Zandonda on 0977-319919.

THE UNIVERSITY OF ZAMBIA
SCHOOL OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES
DEPARTMENT OF GENDER STUDIES

QUESTIONNAIRE

**SEXUAL HARASSMENT IN WORKPLACES: The Case of Selected Public and
Private Organisations in Lusaka.**

Instructions: Please read the questions/statements carefully and answer by ticking the appropriate response. In some cases you will be required to write short statements/answers; please do so in the spaces provided below such questions.

PART 1: PERSONAL DETAILS

For Official Use

1. Age

- i) Below 20
- ii) 20 – 24
- iii) 25 – 29
- iv) 30 – 34
- v) 35 - 39
- vi) Above 40

☐

2. Marital Status

- i) Single
- ii) Married
- iii) Divorced

☐

3. Highest Qualification Obtained

- i) Primary school level
- ii) Grade 12
- iii) Diploma/Degree
- iv) Masters/PhD

☐

4. Occupation/ Job Title.....

5. Number of Years Employed In This Organisation

- i) Less than one year
- ii) 1 - 5 years
- iii) More than 5 years

☐

PART 2: PREVALENCE OF HARASSMENT

6. Which of the following best describes the atmosphere at your workplace?

☐

- i) Welcoming
- ii) Challenging
- iii) Supportive
- iv) Exciting
- v) Intimidating
- vi) hostile
- vii) stressful

viii) None of the above. Please specify.....

7. Do you know what “sexual harassment” is?

- i) Yes
- ii) No (*if NO, please skip to question 9*)
- iii) I have an idea, but not very sure (*please go to question 9*)

☐

8. If YES to question 7, what is your understanding of

sexual harassment?.....

.....
.....

☐

9. “Sexual harassment is any unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favours, and other verbal or physical conducts of sexual nature which can create an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment”.

Keeping the above definition of sexual harassment in mind, please answer the following question:

How much sexual harassment do you think there is at your place of work?

- i) Not any
- ii) Only a little
- iii) Some, but not a lot
- iv) A lot
- v) Not sure

☐

10. Have you ever been harassed by any of your male co-workers or supervisors?

- i) Yes
- ii) No (*If NO, please skip to question 16 in PART 3*).

☐

11. If yes to question 10, where were you harassed?

- i) In the office
- ii) In the toilet
- iii) In the board room
- iv) In the cafeteria

☐

- v) Outside
- vi) In the corridors
- vii) Any other, please specify.....

12. Who harassed you?

☐

- i) Co-worker
- ii) Supervisor
- iii) Subordinate
- iv) Client
- v) Other.....

13. How many times where you harasses?

☐

- i) Once
- ii) Twice
- iii) Several
- iv) Ongoing

14. Did you tell anyone or make a formal complaint about it to anyone?

☐

- i) Yes
- ii) No (*If NO, please skip to question 15*)

15. Who did you tell or complain to? (*Please tick ALL that apply*)

☐

- i) A friend
- ii) A family member
- iii) A co-worker
- iv) Head of department
- v) Director
- vi) Police
- vii) Workers union leader
- viii) Any other, please specify.....

16. After you made a formal complaint, what action was taken?

☐

- i) None
- ii) He was warned
- iii) Charged by police
- iv) Any other, please specify.....

17. If you did not make a complaint, why?

- i) Was afraid
- ii) Was embarrassed
- iii) Did not expect any action would be taken
- iv) Negative attitude of the individual in charge of receiving Complaints.
- v) Did not know where to make the complaint
- vi) Any other, please specify.....

☐

18. How did you feel when you were harassed?

.....

PART 3: FORMS AND PATTERNS OF HARASSMENT

For Official Use

When you answer the following questions, please answer them thinking only about work-related events or activities such as when you are in your office, cafeteria, corridors, or walking around work premises.

DURING THE PAST 24 MONTHS at this organisation, have you ever been in a situation where any of your male co-workers or supervisors.....

19. Gave you unwanted sexual attention

- i) Never
- ii) Rarely
- iii) Sometimes
- iv) Often

☐

20. Habitually told suggestive stories or offensive sexual remarks, either publicly (for example in the office), or to you privately?

- i) Never
- ii) Rarely
- iii) Sometimes
- iv) Often

☐

21. Attempted to establish a romantic sexual relationship with you despite your efforts to discourage him?

- i) Never
- ii) Rarely
- iii) Sometimes
- iv) Often

☐

22. Treated you “differently” or “Put you down” because you are a woman (e.g. mistreated, slighted or ignored you)?

- i) Never
- ii) Rarely
- iii) Sometimes
- iv) Often

☐

23. Touched you (e.g. laid a hand on your bare arm, your waist or breast) in a way that made you feel uncomfortable?

- i) Never
- ii) Rarely
- iii) Sometimes
- iv) Often

☐

24. Implied faster promotions, reward or special treatment if you were sexually cooperative?

- i) Never
- ii) Rarely
- iii) Sometimes
- iv) Often

☐

25. Treated you badly for refusing to have sex?

- i) Never
- ii) Rarely
- iii) Sometimes
- iv) Often

☐

26. Frequently made discriminatory remarks (e.g. suggesting that women are too emotional to assume leadership roles)?

- i) Never
- ii) Rarely
- iii) Sometimes
- iv) Often

☐

END OF INTERVIEW. THANK YOU!