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Walden University
2017

Abstract

Intervention Strategies against and Effects of Female Sexual Harassment in Workplaces

of Cote d'Ivoire

by

Mariam Lamine Breant

MS, Coppin State University, 2002

Doctoral Study Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

Of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Public Policy and Administration

Walden University

November 2017

Abstract

Workplace sexual harassment in Cote d'Ivoire has been documented as extensive and
commonplace, yet in West African nations, sexual harassment is not well studied or
understood. Specifically, little is known about whether intervention programs instituted
by the Ivorian law under Act No.98-756 forbid sexual harassment are viewed by female
workers as effective. Using Hendricks and Valasek's theory on gender mainstreaming as
the foundation, the purpose of this study was to evaluate the perceptions of female
workers in Cote d'Ivoire related the effectiveness of sexual harassment training
programs. Data for this study were collected from 15 women who worked in public or
nonprofit organizations in Cote d'Ivoire. Data were inductively coded and then subjected
to a thematic analysis procedure. Key findings indicated that interviewees believed that
exposure to sexual harassment in the workplace results in a loss of trust in the work
environment and reductions in work productivity.   Further, participants generally agreed
that intervention programs are promising in terms of ameliorating the effects of sexual
harassment and gender discrimination in the workplace. The positive social change
implications stemming from this study include recommendations to local governments in
Cote d'Ivoire to develop municipal ordinances that support the investigation and
prosecution of workplace sexual harassment and individual organizations should design
workplace policies to efficiently and effectively handle complaints of sexual harassment.

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Of the Requirements for the Degree of

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Public Policy and Administration specialty Policy Law

Walden University

October 2017

Dedication

I thank my chairperson Dr. Raj Singh for shepherding me through this journey. I also

thank my husband Thierry Breant who has lived through this entire process with me. It is

very fulfilling to irrevocably think of myself to be part of a congregation of scholarly

practitioners who boarded on and accomplished a doctoral study.

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Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

Background of the Research

Sexual harassment, a topic that is not only hard to confess but also to discuss, is one of the most constant prevalent and continuous old-age problems at the workplaces. This continuous old-age problem at the workplaces, in elementary sense, is defined as any unwelcome conduct that is of the sexual nature at the workplaces (Hernandez-Truyol, 2012; Ormerod et al., 2012; Banaszak et al., 2010; Hendricks & Valasek, 2010). Sexual harassment is not just reserved for the limited few areas of work or employment but it happens to the workers and employees range across all public and private services to large and small companies and enterprises to small services and local shops (Hernandez-Truyol, 2012). Some other areas where sexual harassment happens include, to traders and entrepreneurs in the market places, farms and plantations, to students and trainees at the schools, training institutions and organizations, in universities and vocational training institutions and even in some religious organizations as suggested by (Ormerod et al., 2012). Further, sexual harassment is unfortunately not just happened to the uneducated workers and employees but happened to educated workers from all age groups and employed at the all levels of the job hierarchy (Hely, 2008).

Even not just limited to the confines of the workplaces but outside the work premises, sexual harassment especially those that happened to female workers has continuously becoming the growing dilemma and challenge for the countries in the current day and age (Osman, 2007). In their empirical of research of examining the factors responsible for the sexual harassment at the workplaces, researchers (Hernandez-

Truyol, 2012) examined that need and obsession of power and authority is more prevalent

and responsible reason for the sexual harassment at the workplaces even more than the

obsession of having sexual relationship with other person.

Hendricks & Valasek (2010) also asserted that despite the common beliefs that

the prevalence of sexual harassment in the workplaces attacks significantly to the

employee morale and productivity, the experiences that follow after the sexual

harassment is much more damaging and attacking to the employee than the original

sexual harassment occurred to him/her at the time. They adverse effect of sexual

harassment has been proven in the available literature to be much damaging than the

attack itself (McDonald, 2012) and hence serious adverse impacts on the victims

workplace, victim's social life, victim's relationship with family and friends as well as

victim's attitude and belief towards the legal system protecting the situations of sexual

harassment since the victims are led to believe that legal system not effectively to prevent

such situations to provoke at the workplaces (McDonald, 2012).

In addition, numerous researchers such as Iliyasu et al. (2011) have shown

common consensus on the fact that sexual harassment is the form of gender

discrimination based on sex. However, they also indicated and supported the findings of

Morley & Lugg (2009) that prevalence of sexual harassment at the workplaces is not

much related to the biological differences between women however relates to the social

roles attributed to both men and women and how female and male employees at the

workplace perceive the sexuality in the particular society and organizational culture.

Bennett (2009) described that social harassment at the workplaces can been deemed as

clear manifestation of inequality of the power relations between male and female, hence this is not that something about driving the sexual pleasures out of the harassment related acts but actually asserting the power on the opposite gender. Irene van Staveren (2011) found in their empirical research that female employees or workers at the workplaces are the most vulnerable to the sexual harassment and encountered with sexual harassment within a few days of joining from male employees. The perception of female employees regarding sexual harassment behavior however varies accordingly per subject but research argued that there is strong presence of female sexual harassment at the workplaces.

Moreover, the research study on the "Workplace Sexual Harassment" by Aware (2008) indicated that female employees are more vulnerable with both intentional and unintentional sexual harassment behaviors from the male employees and majority of the male harassers are usually in the senior positions who abuse their power and authority over the female workers. The harassers in the senior positions due to the inherent designator control and power not only impact the decision-making of young employees and female workers but also influence in their career outcomes and their pathway to development and growth. The young employees or female employees are still considered the inferior in many societies even in that claimed to be not and hence suggest that these individuals have limited decision making power and lack of self-confidence which breed their insecure and vulnerable position at the workplace and to be better called to be socialized to suffer in silence (Aware, 2008).

The research indicated that over the last three decades, the number of women in the labor workforce has been considerably increased across the globe (Irene van Staveren, 2011). Accordingly, the cases of sexual harassment at the workplaces has been incredibly raised ten times as it used to be and unwanted attention towards the cases of women sexual harassment at the workplace is also increasing to their vulnerability. Despite, the increasing acknowledgement of the problem of female sexual harassment at the workplaces as the serious issues of not only the occupational hazard and violation of the human rights at various discussion forums, literature and empirical evidences, there is significant insufficiencies in the intervention strategies or programs to address the problem of female sexual harassment in the workforces (Irene van Staveren, 2011). According to the facts of International Labor Organization (ILO), sexual harassment of all kind and types whether intentional or unintentional is the violation of the fundamental rights of the workers, the problem of discrimination, health hazard and safety issue, a form of violence, unacceptable working conditions and most importantly an strong unacceptable act against women workers or employees.

Researchers such as (Morley & Lugg, 2009; Barak, 2010) indicated that employers who ignore to place the intervention strategies and programs for issue causing incitement of sexual harassment at the workplace may face much more harmful effects than the victim of such sexual harassment himself/herself. The organizations where sexual harassment is common practice may face the harmful effects such as low morale among employees, low productivity, declining productivity, dissatisfaction and unhappiness among employees, poor working conditions, show negative portrait of

organization and give negative implications of image of enterprise/corporation to their customers and outside stakeholders (McDonald, 2012). Further, sexual harassment in the organizations with no sexual harassment policies are found to develop unprecedented levels of workplace tensions that eventually impede their overall team work and performance as well as encourage absenteeism and hence ultimately leads to significantly lower levels of productivity in the organization (McDonald, 2012).

Researchers such as (Hely, 2008; Osman, 2007; Hernandez-Truyol, 2012) hence strongly emphasized that it is in their best interests of every organization to control the unacceptable and offensive activities at the workplace that might cause the organization to lose its most valuable employees with otherwise extremely good work performance and higher productivity as well as cause the organization to face the extremely unwanted situation of negative public image if the victims of sexual harassment in the organization goes public with their situations. Apart from that, the company with no sexual harassment policies might face financial risks in the form of legal lawsuits from the victims and their supporting bodies and also in the form of high payments of damages and fines (Aware, 2008).

According to a report of Society for Human Resource Managers that although more than 97% of the employers placed the written sexual harassment policies (accompanied with intervention strategies or programs) and that more than 62% of the employers provide trainings on the matter of sexual harassment in the organization, there is still a little evidence that show that these strategies have been successful in addressing the problem of female sexual harassment in the workforces (Blackman Legal Group,

2005; Banaszak et al., 2010). These findings are further supported by the researchers such as (Ormerod et al., 2012) that strongly asserted that even though many employers are increasingly considering the seriousness of sexual harassment at the workplace by acknowledging the value of preventive strategies and programs as well as implementing those strategies, the report of Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) revealed that despite these efforts at the workplace, it continued to receive an average of 15,000 cases of sexual harassment complaints each year. This indicated the fact that despite the present efforts of employers and government in enforcing the sexual harassment policies and preventive strategies or programs as well as making employees aware of the sexual harassment policies at the workplaces through the policy postings, trainings and handbooks, the problem is still highly prevalent calling forth the critical appraisal of the current gaps of preventive strategies and implementing new ones that could successfully address the problem of female sexual harassment at the workplaces (Ormerod et al., 2012).

　　While the available literature is not ignoring the fact that both male and female employees are subjected to the sexual harassment at the workplace, the prevalence rates of the female employees' sexual harassment cases are ten times higher as compared to males which call unprecedented attention to the female employees' sexual harassment at the workplaces (Ormerod et al., 2012). Also, majority of the qualitative and quantitative research studies in the available literature indicated that female employees are much more likely to be victimized as compared to their male counterparts in the societies globally. This is supported by a research in United States that concluded that sexual harassment is

consistently being found at the workplace and approximately 50% of women in any particular sample have experienced unwanted and offensive sex-related behaviors at work or school (Magley, et al. 1999). Not only this, the seriousness of the sexual harassment issue has been widely acknowledged by the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) by asserting that sexual harassment at the workplace is one of the most significant type of gender discrimination and form of gender-based violence as per the rules of CEDAW Committee's General Recommendation No.19 (Aware, 2008). Considering the gravity of the issue, the CDEAW Committee has emphasized on the need of various intervention strategies and programs by calling the various States parties from both developed and underdeveloped countries to the Convention to take some powerful steps to address the problem (Aware, 2008).

Furthermore, CEDAW Committee emphasized that each country and state across the globe should considerably provide the attention to this serious issue causing several adverse effects for the female employees and hence must make stringent measures to include in their reports information regarding the sexual harassment at the workplace as well as must focus on the effective and reasonable measures to protect female employees from the sexual harassment at the workplaces as well as other forms of violence and coercion cases they face at the workplace from the opposite sex (Aware, 2008).

CEDAW Committee also pointed that there is need of immediate as well as long-term actions to be taken in the from preventive measures to address the problem of sexual harassment across the globe and especially in the underdeveloped and third nation

countries where the circumference of sexual harassment issue is much more vulnerable as one might imagine. This is because in underdeveloped countries, there is not so much concern regarding preventive measures of the employee human rights violation and the factors that are responsible for inciting sexual harassment at the workplaces (Hendricks & Valasek, 2010). The available literature indicated that harmful effects of sexual harassment in such countries where not much concern and attention is provided to prevent the sexual harassment and government entities rarely forced the law and such harassment is prevalent and customarily approved as a social convention (Hendricks & Valasek, 2010).

In this regard, numerous researchers have common consensus that there is lack of concern of sexual harassment in developing countries where the rates of sexual harassment are highly alarming (McDonald, 2012). Most have agreed that concern for the sexual harassment in the regions for instance in Asia and West Africa is although relatively recent, there is an increasing awareness on the problem of sexual harassments in this part of the globe where sexual harassment is now increasingly recognized as the practice of discriminating and violation of human rights as well as an affront to the dignity of the persons (McDonald, 2012). The increasing awareness via research and media have shed light on this problem that show sexual harassment could further seriously result in undermining the equality of the treatment and opportunity between men and women, young and older workers (McDonald, 2012).

The researchers highlighted that over the past 10 years, many laudable initiatives with relation to intervention strategies and measures against sexual harassment have been

taken put into practice in the Western Africa and Asia and Pacific Regions (Hendricks & Valasek, 2010). Despite that there is still the need to critically appraise those existing intervention strategies and programs in those areas that are placed in practice for fighting against the sexual harassment at the workplaces. There is need of research in this area because besides the placement of these intervention strategies or programs against sexual harassment, particularly towards female sexual harassment, there is an increasing change advocated by the women's organizations, organizations have changed their policies and practices, governments have adopted new legislation and take other measures and significant change has occurred in the attitudes and perceptions of employees and workers towards the sexual harassment at the workplaces and how they take step against it.

Bearing this in mind, this research intends to investigate that do successful intervention strategies or programs to address the problem of women sexual harassment in the workforces exist particularly in the region of Cote d'Ivoire West Africa. In this regard, the following chapter explores the research topic by introducing the sections the problem statement, significance of the research, research aims and objectives, research questions, research hypotheses, conceptual framework, nature of research, limitations/delimitations, assumptions and definitions of key terms to better understand the aim, purpose and intended outcomes of this research.

It is thoroughly examined in the above discussion and research findings that sexual harassment in the workplace of Cote d'Ivoire is rampant. The previous research studies have widely reported that sexual harassment is the most common occurring

problem at the workplaces in both public and private organizations. However, addressing workplace sexual harassment is a relatively new issue in many West African nations. In Cote d'Ivoire, this issue is expected to worsen as a result of deteriorating economic problems. The law forbids sexual harassment; nonetheless, government entities rarely forced the law and such harassment is prevalent and customarily approved as a social convention. Further, despite the fees and penalties for sexual harassment are placed in Cote d'Ivoire between three years' prison time as well as a fine varying in between360, 000 CFA and one million CFA (approximately $720-2,500), this actually lead to discourage the incidences of female sexual harassment at the workplaces. The Ivorian law also forbids prejudice based on gender and exercised that sexual harassment in the workplace is illegitimate. However, an administrator or manager in Cote d'Ivoire does not take the concern to those they administer to offer a work environment that doesn't consent sexual harassment to prosper that is evidenced that many organizations do not formal sexual harassment policies in their workplaces.

Considering the gravity of the nature of problem of female sexual harassment at the workplaces, the current study will be conducted with an assumption that sexual harassment is contrary to organizational moral standards and values to equal employment opportunities and security for the employees and generally the violation of human rights, that recognize the importance of dignity and worth of each person according to law of Cote d'Ivoire as well as in all West African countries. Further, sexual harassment if exists in Cote d'Ivoire and West African region would seriously subvert the basic human rights, reduces the performance of employees and undermine the mission of the workplaces at

both public and private organizations as well as often the integrity of the Ivorian women workforce integrity. Hence, it becomes highly imperative and important to determine if problem of female sexual harassment exist in the organizations and do successful intervention strategies or programs exist in Cote d'Ivoire West Africa to address this most occurring problem at the workplaces. In this regard, this is the first study on this topic carried out at the Cote d'Ivoire West Africa. In essence, this study carried out on the whole Cote d'Ivoire West African community made up of arbitrary number of women in Ivorian workforce across the workplaces.

Problem Statement

The general problem addressed in this study is attitude toward and perception of sexual harassment in the workplace. Multiple researchers have elucidated the problems associated with episodes of sexual harassment in the workplace (Dejudicibus & McCabe; 2001; Ei & Bowen, 2002; Lee & Guerrero, 2001; McCabe & Hardman, 2005). Sexual harassment could be manifested in a subtle or ambiguous manner and may not be easily detected as a problem by staff members. Ambiguous sexual harassment can lead to lost job productivity, chronic stress, and mental health problems (Street el al., 2007).

The specific problem addressed in this study is attitude toward and perception of Cote d'Ivoire female workers towards sexual harassment in the workplace. While there is paucity of the available studies that describe the prevalence of sexual harassment in West Africa, sexual harassment especially the female sexual harassment at the workplaces still remains the most daunting problem not just in the West African regions but all across the globe. Addressing workplace sexual harassment is a relatively new issue in many West

African nations. In Cote d'Ivoire, this issue will be growing as a result of deteriorating economic problems. The law forbids sexual harassment; nonetheless, government entities rarely forced the law and such harassment is prevalent and customarily approved as a social convention. The fees and penalties for sexual harassment are between three years' prison time as well as a fine varying in between360, 000 CFA and one million CFA (approximately $720-2,500). In addition, the Ivorian law, in particular, also forbids prejudice based on gender by specifically explaining sexual harassment in the workplace is illegitimate under Act No.98-756 of December 23, 1998. However, an administrator or manager in Cote d'Ivoire does not take the concern to those they administer to offer a work environment that doesn't consent sexual harassment to prosper. This is because just like many other countries, the employers in Cote d'Ivoire do not consider the sexual harassment as the problem or ignore the intensity of the problem by labeling at as the activity of the entertainment at the workplaces.

The previous research studies have widely reported that sexual harassment is the most common occurring problem at the workplaces in both public and private organization (Parker et al., 2012). However, addressing workplace sexual harassment is a relatively new issue in many West African nations. In Cote d'Ivoire, this issue is expected to worsen as a result of deteriorating economic problems. The law under Act No.98-756 of December 23, 1998, forbids sexual harassment; nonetheless, government entities rarely forced the law and such harassment is prevalent and customarily approved as a social convention. This is reinforced by scientific studies authors like (Brown, Deardorff& Stern, 2012; Kodellas, Fisher & Gill, 2012; Menon et al., 2010) who stated

that majority of places of work in real-world have lifestyle that is referred to somewhat as peaceful, enjoyable caring and perchance playful as well as fun way of life this is the biggest dangerous for the stability concerns of employees than theissue itself.

　Further, despite the fees and penalties for sexual harassment are placed in Cote d'Ivoire between three years' prison time as well as a fine varying in between360, 000 CFA and one million CFA (approximately$720-2,500), this actually lead to discourage the incidences of female sexual harassment at the workplaces. The Ivorian law also forbidsprejudice based on gender and exercised that sexual harassment in the workplace is illegitimate. However, an administrator or manager in Cote d'Ivoire does not take the concern to those they administer to offer a work environment that doesn't consent sexual harassment to prosper that is evidenced that many organizations do not formal sexual harassment policies in their workplaces.

The research problem addressed in this study is attitude toward and perception of sexual harassment in the workplace. Multiple researchers have elucidated the problems associated with episodes of sexual harassment in the workplace (Dejudicibus& McCabe; 2001; Ei& Bowen, 2002; Lee & Guerrero, 2001; McCabe & Hardman, 2005). Sexual harassment could be manifested in a subtle or ambiguous manner and may not be easily detected as a problem by staff members. Ambiguous sexual harassment can lead to lost job productivity, chronic stress, and mental health problems (Street el al., 2007). A relationship of organizational factors to the perceptions and attitudes toward sexual harassment has been found (McCabe & Hardman, 2005). Yet, when examining the impact of occupational position on attitude and perception toward sexual harassment, the

nature of the relationship between attitudes and perceptions toward sexual harassment becomes less clear when considering Cote d'Ivoire workplaces.

Considering the gravity of the nature of problem of female sexual harassment at the workplaces, the current study will be conducted with an assumption that sexual harassment is contrary to organizational moral standards and values to equal employment opportunities and security for the employees and generally the violation of human rights, that recognize the importance of dignity and worth of each person according to law of Cote d'Ivoire as well as in all West African countries. Further, sexual harassment if exists in Cote d'Ivoire and West African region would seriously subvert the basic human rights, reduces the performance of employees and undermine the mission of the workplaces at both public and private organizations as well as often the integrity of the Ivorian women workforce integrity. Hence, it becomes highly imperative and important to determine if problem of female sexual harassment exist in the organizations and do successful intervention strategies or programs exist in Cote d'Ivoire West Africa to address this most occurring problem at the workplaces. In this regard, this is the first study on this topic carried out in Cote d'Ivoire West Africa. In essence, this study carried out on the whole Cote d'Ivoire West African community made up of arbitrary number of women in Ivorian workforce across the workplaces.

Significance of the Research

This study is very significant as no such study has been conducted before. This project is unique because it addresses an under-researched area in Cote d'Ivoire about sexual harassment. Research in United States consistently finds that approximately 50%

of women in any particular sample have experienced unwanted and offensive sex-related

behaviors at work or school (Magley, et al. 1999).One can imagine the corresponding

percentage in Cote d'Ivoire.

Today, the problem of sexual harassment in workplace is acknowledged as a

serious issue, as an occupational hazard and a violation of human rights. The results of

this study will provide much-needed insights into the processes by which women are

view and treated in workplaces in Cote d'Ivoire. Perceptiveness of this study should aid

the implementation and enforcement of the law prohibiting sexual harassment. By

addressing this issue will be a force for positive social change.

Findings from this study can be used to develop a curriculum related to sexual

harassment, particularly in regard to subtle or ambiguous behaviors. This may result in

modifications in existing training and can help a harasser to become cognizant of his or

her motivation as well as help the victim understand him or her being harassed and report

the incident.

Findings from this study can be used to make changes in the work environment.

The social change implications of the study are that it makes the issue of attitudes toward

and perceptions of sexual harassment a theme of education within the boundaries of a

mental retardation facility. Quirk, Lelliott, and Seale, (2005) researched in mental

health/mental retardation and focused on subjective experiences of the staff when

experiencing or observing sexual harassment in the work setting, and less has been

reported with issues associated with attitude and perception. Understanding perception of

and attitude toward sexual harassment in the workplace will help reduce feelings of stress in employees and improve their coping skills.

Procedures to change sexual harassment can be established when understanding the dynamics of the attitude and the tolerance of the participants and the organization. Examinations of different variables such as gender, occupational status, and self-esteem indicate which variables have greater influences on the attitude and perceptions of the employees. Thus, an analysis would then identify those areas on which an organization needs to place an emphasis, such as those that require further education and training to prevent sexual harassment. In addition, understanding perception of the sexual harassment will lead to adequately designed educational tools to reduce, if not eliminate, harm to the employees' psychological well-being and legal cost to the organization. A training manual can be developed to address individual as well as organization factors when educating the staff in the workplace.

Research Aims and Objectives

The research is centered on the following primary aims and objectives based on the problem statement of the research:

- To critically analyze the sexual harassment in the workplaces of Cote d'Ivoire and its impact on women across the workplaces.
- To critically explore the number of women in Cote d'Ivoire that is being sexually harassed across the workplaces.

- To critically analyze the different perceptions of female employees and workers at Cote d'Ivoire regarding gender based discrimination and violation of basic human rights of females at Cote d'Ivoire.

- To critically appraise on the existing intervention strategies, programs and workplace policies against sexual harassment in the workplaces of Cote d'Ivoire.

- To critically analyze the cases of female sexual harassment happened in the workplaces of Cote d'Ivoire and how organizations have responded.

- To analyze the differences in the perceptions and feelings of women from different professions and their associated dressing codes regarding the sexual harassment problem at the workplaces of Cote d'Ivoire.

- To analyze the differences in the perceptions and feelings of women from different age groups regarding the sexual harassment problem at the workplaces of Cote d'Ivoire.

- To analyze the differences in the perceptions and feelings of women from different ethnic groups regarding the sexual harassment problem at the workplaces of Cote d'Ivoire.

- To analyze the differences in the perceptions and feelings of women from different religions regarding the sexual harassment problem at the workplaces of Cote d'Ivoire.

- To analyze the differences in the perceptions and feelings of women with and without disabilities regarding the sexual harassment problem at the workplaces of Cote d'Ivoire.

- To analyze what recommendations could be made in the workplaces of Cote d'Ivoire to improve female sexual harassment intervention and training programs across the workplaces.

Research Questions

RQ1: What reasons do Cote d'Ivoire female workers give for choosing to disclose, not to disclose, or to delay disclosure of their experiences of sexual assault at workplace?

RQ2: What type of patterns can be established regarding to whom Cote d'Ivoire female workers disclose and under what circumstances?

RQ3: What feelings and consequences do Cote d'Ivoire female workers remember experiencing during their initial disclosure?

RQ4: In retrospect, how do Cote d'Ivoire female workers evaluate their self-disclosure decisions?

Research Approach

A general qualitative design was used to design and analyze the study. This approach is most useful when literature is limited and data allows for inductive analysis. Focus groups were used to gather information from open-ended questions and to promote discussion among women workers in ways individual interviews could not. The focus group design is a validated research method in the Cote d'Ivoire population. In order to

seek answers to these research questions, the researcher intends to gather data in two waves. First the researcher intends to gather an earlier data set of seven interviews with Cote d'Ivoire female workers. Secondly, the researcher intends to select among Cote d'Ivoire female workers who had been sexually assaulted to be recruited to participate in the current study. Recruiting the new set of participants will allow the researcher to add more questions to the interview to further clarify interpretations of decisions to disclose.

Conceptual Framework of the Research

To understand the sexual harassment of female workers in Cote d'Ivoire, such harassment needs to be conceptualized within organizational theory. An important aspect of an organization is the role of the Human Resources department, which carries out the regulation of rules, staff recruitment, and training (Daft, 2001). Human Resources create written policies for the development and operation of the organization and, at the same time, for the protection of the rights of the employees. The behaviors of the organization as well as the behaviors of the employees are ethically protected by the policies formulated by the institution. Ellerman and Kleiner (2006) stated that the form in which policies are written and the awareness of the culture and climate of an organization under its norms help to develop trust in the work environment. The policies in the work setting also help the organization to address issues that can cause harm.

In the absence of policies to prevent and correct sexual harassment in the workplace, the organization can be subject to litigation and loss of money in settlements (James & Wooten, 2006). However, fear of retaliation can inhibit employees from reporting such incidents (James & Wooten, 2006). The Human Resources department

needs to train and provide a written sexual harassment policy to staff and encourage the

reporting of episodes of sexual harassment to management, but not necessarily to the

immediate supervisor, as well as to initiate a prompt investigation (Lightle el at., 2007).

Appropriate responses of the organization will help to establish trust within the

organizational system and a defense in the event of a court case.

The awareness of the organization of improper behaviors in the work setting will

enable staff to report incidents of harassment to the administration. As a means to

encourage identification and reporting, the sexual harassment policy needs to clearly

explain which acts are considered sexual harassment (Reese &Lindenberg, 1999). T

Also relevant to the study is how organizational theory conceptualizes differences

in perceptions of sexual harassment, taking into consideration power within the work

setting (Levy &Paludi, 1997). Effective leadership that motivates employees relies on the

display of power. For example, distance power has been defined as the way in which

different levels of positions display authority behaviors in the work setting

(Triandis&Bhawuck, 1997). These power relationships define who is in authority and

who is subordinate in the work setting. Madzar (2001) discussed different forms of

power, including what he called expert referent power, which has an influence on

leadership behaviors in the workplace. This form of leadership provides knowledge and a

frame of reference that can lead employees to learn and to solve problems within the

organization. When leadership fails to provides effective guidelines within the work

setting, ambiguity of communication may lead to lack of comprehension and the

perpetuation of certain behaviors (Goldberg & Zhang, 2004), including sexual harassment.

Finally, organizational culture becomes a basis to consider attitudes and perceptions of sexual harassment in an organization. The rules and regulations of the organization affect the social climate and influence employees' behaviors (Fitzgerald, Hulin, &Drasgow, 1997). To ensure such an environment, the leaders need to develop norms that regulate work behaviors and protect employees from sexual harassment or a hostile work environment. Norms are a powerful means to ensure that an organization operates harmoniously.

Limitations/Delimitations of the Research

Some possible research limitations/delimitations of this study include:

1. This study is centered on the self-disclosed perceptions of arbitrary number of women involved in assessment clusters regarding sexual harassment at workforce and its effects and hence might vary from their actual behaviors.

2. Although, confidentiality and anonymity of the participants of this research have been ensured and protected, some of the respondents of the survey through both questionnaires and interview might have chosen to be less candid or reluctant to provide honest responses. This may have skewed the results.

3. Moreover, the correlation procedures applied on the answers of the respondents may or may not perfectly determine the causality, variability or other specific elements that are related with them.

4. Finally, that arbitrary number of women involved in assessment clusters at workplaces of Cote d'Ivoire has been selected in a study that has served in the organization not less than period of 3 months to examine the accurate prevalence of female sexual harassment in workplaces of Cote d'Ivoire, its effects on women as well as to determine the number of women being sexually harassed at the workplaces.

Assumptions of the Research

The research makes the following assumptions for the purpose of this research:

1. The study assumed that all respondents who participated in the research have understood the objective and terminology of this study as well as terminology of surveys sent to them.

2. Further, it is assumed that all respondents who participated in this study have answered the questions honestly and without bias.

Definition of Key Terms

Sexual harassment is the broader subject which entails various concepts and definitions. Hence, in order to better understand and evaluate the sexual harassment in the scope of the current investigation, some important key terms have been defined as well as clarified in order to facilitate a sound understanding of the research topic and in the manner in which it is understood in Cote d'Ivoire or West African regions such as through hostile environment, quid pro quo and sexual harassment itself.

Age: Different responses of younger and older staff to sexual harassment situations. Age also refers to the influences that it may have on employees' attitude and perception of sexual harassment (McCabe & Hardman, 2005).

Clinical staff: Operationally defined as psychologists, psychiatrists, and social workers who clinically diagnose consumers and provide behavior (modification) therapy, psychological evaluations, and psychiatric treatment, family therapy, and community placements.

Clinical support staff: Educational/habilitation/client coordinators; rehabilitation, recreation, and clerical staff; and mental hygiene therapy aides (MHTAs). Although operationally defined as clinical support staff, MHTAs administer prescribed behavior modification programs and direct care services 24 hours per day, 7 days per week.

Education: The ability to distinguish and identify sexual harassment in the workplace (Daugherty, 2006).

Gender: Men and women who engage in interpersonal relationships in the workplace.

Hostile Environment: The term hostile environment refers to the type of the sexual harassment at the workplaces that occurs to the female employees and workers from all religions, ethnicities, age groups, professions and exceptionalities and is subjected to unsolicited, unwanted and offensive comments or behaviors of sexual nature from their male coworkers, supervisors, human resource professionals and customers. Further, if any of the sexual related behaviors that are impacting the performance of the female employees, regardless of whether the victim and harasser are working in the same

department or location of the workplace, then the environment is considered to be hostile

in nature (United States, 2006, p.64).

Medical staff: Physicians and nurses who, in conjunction with the clinical/clinical

support staff, provide physical health treatment to patients.

Organizational behavior: The psychological aspects of the individuals in the work

setting and includes factors such as motivation, leadership style, personality, differences

in emotions and cognitive processes, and the reciprocal relationship between the

organization and the employee (Daft, 2001; Fitzgerald et al., 1997).

Organizational culture: Norms and beliefs that regulate behaviors and create

group cohesion (Frank & Fahrbach, 1999).

Organizational theory: Posits that the organization is an open system that

maintains ethical standards and internal harmony. An organization has a vertical or

horizontal hierarchy with an atmosphere of norms and rules that will shape the behaviors

of the employer and employees. The organization provides education and training to the

staff to encourage common goals and to achieve certain outcomes (Daft, 2001).

Power theory: Posits that management to achieve the goals of the organization

implements an organization's power. Employees are guided through the norms and

culture of the organization to achieve the desired outcomes (Dunbar, 2004; Herbert,

2008; Madzar, 2001).

Quid pro quo: The term Quid pro quo is a Latin term used for the type of sexual

harassment which entails the meaning of "this for that". Often, where sexual harassment

is not mentioned in the workplace policies and intervention programs of companies as

well as in legal framework, the Quid pro quo is define in place which entails the notion of gender based discrimination or providing person's career or terms of employment on the terms of retuning sexual favors. This also includes both, implicit and explicit threats of extreme and adverse action against victim where a victim refuses to respond and agree on such promises or conditions of favorable actions (United States, 2006, p. 64).

Self-blaming behavior: Individuals, generally women, who take the blame for being sexually harassed, see themselves, not the perpetrator, as the provoking agents (Gutek, 1985).

Self-esteem: Defined as self-worth, self-acceptance, and competence (self-efficacy). Wojciszke and Struzynska-Kujalowicz (2007) showed how high or low self-esteem influences the manner of responding to perception or experience of sexual harassment in the workplace.

Sexual harassment: Defined as including the following patterns of behaviors: unwelcome sexual harassment advances, request for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct, whereby submission to such a conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly as a term or condition of an individual's employment. Submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment decisions that affect such individuals; or such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment. A hostile environment is one in which unwanted attention or sexual staring occurs. Further, sexual harassment does not necessarily have a sexual connotation. When a person has been belittled due to his or her gender, this is also

considered a form of sexual (or gender) harassment (Orlove & Roumell, 1999). Sexual

harassment is operationally defined for the purpose of this research as any requests for

sexual favors, unwelcome sexual advances and any other physical and verbal behavior

and conduct of a sexual nature which result when some but not limited to the following

conditions.

1) Submission of any of the conduct that is made either implicitly or explicitly

   on the terms and conditions of an individual employment, promotion and any

   other material gains.

2) Submission to or rejection to any form of the conduct where a female

   employee is exploited for her employment decisions in the particular place

   affecting such individual performance and physical integrity.

Any conduct that has the purpose as well as the effect of unreasonably or

deliberately interfering with an individual work and performance or creating hostile,

offensive and intimidating work environment due to jealousy or gender discrimination.

Sexual harassment policy: The culture and the climate set by the organization to

educate, train, and prevent misconduct behaviors in the workplace. Condoning sexual

harassment or mismanaging the sexual harassment policy will harm the organization as

well as the psychological well-being of the employees (Reese & Lindenberg, 1999).

Support staff: Refers to employees who serve as drivers, automobile mechanics,

electricians, plumbers, food service providers, and safety officers.

Systems theory: Involves observation of the whole organization and how the parts

relate to each other, leading to a sequence of events (Daft, 2001).

Unwelcome Advances: The term defines any sexual behavior where the person unreasonably interferes with employment of female workers.

Outline of the Research

This dissertation is organized into five chapters. *Chapter one* presents the picture of whole research to be conducted that include background of the research, rationale of the research, aim of the research, objectives of the research, hypothesis of research, proposed methodology and limitations and delimitations of the study.

Chapter two of this research would present the search strategy, quality of information sources, and use of sources that would be utilized to review literature for current research and highlight the key findings in the previous research pertaining to the topic.

Chapter three of this research would present the research methods and highlight the data collection method, sampling, instrument and data analysis of research questions.

Chapter four of this research would present the analysis of the data findings with relation to research questions and provide discussions while synthesizing the findings of previous studies.

Chapter five of this research would finally present the conclusions of this study by summarizing all the chapter and research findings as well as highlighting future research.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Chapter 2 provides a review of the literature and research related to the topics of sexual harassment and its effects on the workplaces of Cote d'Ivoire West Africa. The objective of this study was critically exploring the perceptions of arbitrary number of female workers and employees in Cote d'Ivoire regarding the existence of sexual harassment and its effects on their health, safety, productivity and physical integrity and whether intervention strategies and programs against sexual harassment exist in Cote d'Ivoire West Africa.

This chapter is divided into different sections that include: (1) Introduction, (2) Historical framework of sexual harassment in organizations, (3) Theoretical framework of sexual harassment in organizations (4) Defining perceptions and employees in organizations, (5) female sexual harassment in workplaces, (6) significant factors responsible for sexual harassment at the workplace, (7) Nature of sexual harassment in the organizations, (8) High incidences of female sexual harassment in the organizations, (9) Impact of sexual harassment in workplaces, (10) Legal framework of action against female sexual harassment, (11) Intervention strategies or programs to combat sexual harassment in organizations, (12) Informal measures against female sexual harassment in the organizations, (13) Measures by women workers' groups and organizations, (14) Workplace policies and practical measures against sexual harassment and (15) Integration and summary of the literature.

Introduction

Over the past several years, the economic, political and social conflict situations in Africa have exposed the real picture or to be better said the worst forms of the abuse of rights of women and their objectification as citizens (Dartnall & Jewkes, 2012; Becker & Kuranchie, 2012; McLaughlin, Uggen & Blackstone, 2012; Barak, 2010; Irene van Staveren, 2011). Researchers in both past and present times have agreed that Africa is the most backward countries in terms of providing equal rights to the women that range from the essential human rights to get education, marriage and take up the employment (Schweinle, Cofer & Schatz, 2009; Benavides Espinoza & Cunningham, 2010; Frosch, 2011; Collinsworth, Fitzgerald & Drasgow, 2009). In essence to these facts, Estrada & Berggren (2009) asserted in their review of literature that African women experience the most worst forms of conflict differently from men and women living in other countries due to the subordinate treatment or gender discrimination or subordinate social statutes associated with their identities from the very beginning. This is further subordinated the research of (Fielden et al., 2010; Estrada & Berggren, 2009) that examined that girls and women across African countries are faced with the worst forms of gender discrimination and poor social status and physical integrity where they are considered to be fortunate for the economic instability and marriage and education where they have to rely on the men in the societies. The fate of African women is however not just limited to this form of the inequality and gender discrimination but also leads to the worst form where the women are considered as the objects of sexual exploitation at home, workplaces and societies (Estrada & Berggren, 2009; Fielden et al., 2010). As result, African women from the

centuries are being impacted by the sexual harassment, sexual violence, torture, trafficking, forced displacement, abdication, torture, forced prostitution and the like (Fielden et al., 2010).

According to one research, conducted by the Laporte & Mackie (2010) the women in Africa are the most affected from the conflict related forms of gender based violence than any other gender based discrimination related with their right to get the essential things in life and include the gender based violence across the continent that include but not limited to the random acts of sexual harassment, Quid pro quo, unwelcome advances, sexual assault, rape camps, mass rape, military sexual slavery, forced pregnancies and forced marriages and the like. African Union Commission also reported that because these acts are deemed as "random acts", they are not often recorded by the organizational workplaces and the government entities which consequently resulted in the commonly held beliefs between men and even in women that there is no such thing as sexual harassment, gender based discrimination, and violation of human rights (Laporte & Mackie, 2010). Further, even that minor percentage of women that agree that sexual harassment is either very afraid in reporting or protesting against the harassers or some have compromised sexual harassment and other role based and gender based discrimination as the normal part of their home, workplaces, societies and environment. This by itself indicated that how backward is the African countries in terms of not only providing the basic rights but also even considering the serious problems as any "significant problem". Further, even in some areas, where sexual harassment, sexual assault and other forms of gender based discrimination is recognized as the problem, have

contributed less in protecting their women and on contrary made the situations even worst by providing open environment for the harassers that have now considered themselves above of the any law or do not have awareness regarding the sexual harassment and other forms o gender discrimination (Laporte & Mackie, 2010).

In addition to that, researchers such (Benavides Espinoza & Cunningham, 2010; Schweinle, Cofer & Schatz, 2009) in their statistical research of female sexual harassment cases across the world and evidenced that women in Africa are the most vulnerable in the form of violence and sexual harassment. The research indicated that notion of violence and sexual harassment with female employees is more prevalent in the workplaces than in society in the general because the law strictly forbids the sexual harassment, there are no formal sexual harassment policies at the workplaces of African countries (Benavides Espinoza & Cunningham, 2010). The research also provided the findings that females in Africa are forced to compromise on the sexual harassment and other forms of the gender discrimination either in the name of cultural values, ethnic values, moral values and religious values. This has hence resulted in the increasing the circumference of more problems for the women that are already deprived from gaining their equal status, equal education opportunities and taking the high paid jobs. In addition, the researchers asserted that poverty ratio and low physical integrity among African women are highly associated indicators with increasing number of female suicide cases than another significant cause (Frosch, 2011). Finally, the researchers in their findings provided the evidences that number of increasing cases of female sexual harassment or any other gender based discrimination cases in African countries do not

have any significant association with increasing awareness of sexual harassment at homes, workplaces and society (Frosch, 2011).

The investigation of (Popovich & Warren, 2010; Menon et al., 2010; Gaanderse & Valasek, 2011) highlighted that violence and sexual harassment against women across the workplaces of African countries does not coextensive with the evidence of existence or prevalence of typologies of sexual harassment and violence that the women in real situation experience. They suggested that any data that suggest the workplace policies or intervention strategies or legal framework is quite independent with the prevalence of the sexual harassment at the workplaces. Therefore, they suggested other two important issues other than the actual prevention or strategies against problem of sexual harassment or violence at the workplaces. The first important issue researchers highlighted in their research is related with the notion in which the sexual harassment and sexual violence is considered unacceptable and disproportionally vulnerable of all kind of sexual unwanted behaviors that harm the equal employment opportunities and dignity of women. The second most important thing that sexual harassment policies at the workplaces provide is the set of the cultural values norms that are followed in majority of the African societies. Researchers argued that in practical sense, majority of the African societies have in common the cultural values and norms that teach the high tolerance of sexual harassment and violence towards women as well as indicate the abuse of basic female human rights at the workplaces.

In addition to that, the research of (Dartnall & Jewkes, 2012) highlighted that significant key or reason leading to sexual harassment and sexual violence against

women in the majority of the African countries, that have now considered it as something acceptable and legalized than offensive and unacceptable against their cultures, is deep seated with the beliefs of the gender discrimination or gender based inequality. The further highlighted in their research that such form of the gender inequality in the African societies could be effectively decreased with the widespread action of spreading the awareness and combating these inequalities accompanied with intelligent political strategies across the African countries. The authors suggest that since it is difficult to suggest which African countries and either from East, West, South and North are highly vulnerable with female sexual harassment and sexual violence due to unavailability of actual and accurate figure, it is assumed that almost all countries across all the four directions are highly vulnerable with sexual harassment and must require the intelligent political move and widespread action to combat with these inequalities.

Numerous researchers such as (Parker et al., 2012) further stated in their research that gender inequality in the form of sexual harassment and many other offensive behaviors with women is at the heart of West African societies and the families. The researchers examined that people in many West African countries both males and females at the workplace have increasingly emerging as the socialized individuals and consequently this has resulted in the positive impact of rigid orientation relation between men and women at the workplaces as well as opens the windows for the new direction and hope towards the understanding the problem and concept of sexual harassment across different workplaces in West African countries (Shepler & Routh, 2012). The researchers argued that it is obvious that through these lenses, one can glance through the subjective

realities about the widespread yet unnoticeable problem of sexual harassment against the girl and women across the workplaces of West African countries. The researchers in this regard suggested that one can observe the subjective realities in West African workplaces through the incidences of gender inequalities and underrepresentation inequalities of sexes at the workplaces. The researchers further added that different West African countries especially the Cote d'Ivoire is the most vulnerable in this regard that have high incidences of sexual harassment at the workplaces across both private and public organizations. The culture of Cote d'Ivoire in West Africa is extremely weak with regard to providing to protection against the sexual harassment despite the growing awareness among both men and women regarding the concept of sexual harassment, its effects as well as the fact that most of the people are emerging as the socialized and wants to built strong relationship between men and women alike at the workplaces. There is increase in incidences in the cases of female sexual harassment that range from simple unwanted sexual advances to rape to sexual violence because the state of Cote d'Ivoire does not attach the much importance on women in general. The women in generally considered to be depended upon the men for the food, cloth and shelter and hence do not considered for their equal rights despite the several state laws prohibits any form of the gender discrimination at the workplaces. Researchers also found in their studies that young and unmarried girls and women are highly vulnerable to the security issues at the workplaces as well as in the society despite that Cote d'Ivoire does not specifically state the regulations neither enforce the employers or managers at the workplaces to protect young girls and women against violence and sexual harassment. This is further supported by

(Laporte & Mackie, 2010) that examined that young and unmarried women are specifically not protected and considered with much importance because they are usually considered to be the married off and sent to another family where they protected by the men. Hence, (McDonald, 2012) suggested that women in culture of Cote d'Ivoire are either considered to the property or their father or their husbands when they get married.

Numerous researchers that the popular dictum in the West African counties "Charity begins at the home" fits well within the perspective of culture of Cote d'Ivoire (McDonald, 2012). The researchers in this regard emphasized that just like virtuous life of people is the reflection of good family upbringing, the reverse of this is also true that is a mischievous mind is an indication of the bunch of dysfunctional character home. Further, they emphasized on the fact that there is direct correlation between the conduct of a man in his home and how he behaves in the society or workplace. They emphasized that a man that honors his sister, mother and wife at his home is highly likely to give the same respect to his female coworkers, subordinates, and supervisors whereas the reverse of this is also true.

The research of (Hendricks & Valasek, 2010) highlighted the findings that sexual harassment and any its forms are not just reserved for the men or boys in the workplaces of West African and Cote d'Ivoire alone. Rather, sexual harassment is commonly found among the Ivorian men and boys where they have highly underscore the women on equal rights for jobs, education, marriage and other essential things as the result of traditional beliefs and values held in the culture of African countries (McDonald, 2012). In addition to that, researchers found in their empirical research that there is strong and direct

relationship between the sexual harassment in the workplaces against their coworkers, subordinates and even supervisors with the sexual violence that is prevailing the majority of the West African families and societies.

The family system in the majority of the West African counties is founded on the basic concept and strength of the patriarchy. Researches such as (Iliyasu et al., 2011; Irene van Staveren, 2011; McLaughlin, Uggen & Blackstone, 2012) argued that this indicated that husband in almost all West African countries is the skilled master, planner as well as the key provider and the sole bread winner for the family. In this context, the researchers further added that women in the culture of West African countries are highly considered as the subordinate to their husbands whereas in the majority of the cases a male-child's position supersedes that of the mother. Further, researchers such as (Schweinle, Cofer & Schatz, 2009; Benavides Espinoza & Cunningham, 2010; Collinsworth, Fitzgerald & Drasgow, 2009) examined in their research that values and norms in the culture of West Africa suggested that sex life of married couples solely lie on the sole direction and move of the husband and women in any case are obligated by the marital bond to respond to sexual demands of her husband regardless of the circumstances or the problems women faced with her sexual relationship. The basic objective behind their research is to highlight the subject realities of problem of female sexual harassment at the workplace which first initiate from their own homes (Banaszak et al., 2010). In this regard, any sexual harassment, sexual violence or any of its forms among the intimate partners is not regarded as the crime or offense as the normal part of the martial squabbles. The worst of this situation is that marital rape where married

women is constantly harassed from her husband or any other male in the home is not considered crime under the act of sexual harassment of West and act of Cote d'Ivoire against the sexual harassment. This is further highlighted by (Ormerod et al., 2012) in their research that since majority of people living in Cote d'Ivoire belongs to Islam and Christianity, the codes under their religious panel acts do not provide the clear protection for women against this form of crime that initiate from their own homes. Majority of the Muslims living are in majority Sunni Muslims groups whereas majority of Christians living are in majority from Roman Catholic groups and both religions are considered as the major in Cote d'Ivoire. The authors hence indicated that people have common perceptions that both major religions have not considered marital rape as the crime nor does it is prohibited against the Sharia Penal Legislation or Roman Catholic legislations of the northern regions of the country and in South states of Cote d'Ivoire under the criminal code of the country.

Further, (Kodellas, Fisher & Gill, 2012) asserted in their research that panel code of Cote d'Ivoire and majority of West African countries generally do prohibit the husband against treating his wife as he demands or wishes and also do not prohibit the husband to use every possible violence and harassment that wives should submit to their husbands at all costs. Apart from that, (Menon et al., 2010) argued and criticized in their research that panel code of West African countries actually recognizes that sexual harassment and sexual violence is the right of the married men over his women to have the sexual rights and hence actually violating the principle of equality between genders rather than intervening the emerging problem in the West African societies. Researchers

argued that as a result of this, both laws Criminal Code and Shaira Panel Legislation made very little contribution in actually hindering the husband to exert the full control over the wives for their sex life as well as liberate them at the same time any form of the remorse, domestic violence and sexual harassment. Relating these facts with the perspective of the Cote d'Ivoire culture and families to the sexual harassment with women across the workplaces, one can definitely argue that men and boys at any position, profession and roles at the workplaces must be husbands, brothers and fathers at home as well as well as the professional workers and employees of the organizations.

Researchers such as (Becker & Kuranchie, 2012) suggested that female sexual harassment is the most significant problem at the workplaces and if one wants to address this problem then he/she needs to address by breaking down the concept into different dimensions. Further, they suggested that since sexual harassment is mostly directed towards the offensive behavior of men in the Ivorian societies, families and workplaces, it is would be futile to assume that they can change their values, beliefs, practices and behaviors regarding the sexual harassment overnight because these are the people who they are.

Addressing the problem of sexual harassment hence might look simple by improving the awareness of people and legalize the sexual harassment with strict laws and punishments and penalties, however, this is not so easy because sexual harassment problem in West African countries is not related with these but with the commonly held beliefs and values of men regarding the sexual harassment and their superiority over the women that could not be changed overnight. Besides the societal culture certifies and

even applauds the men attitudes and behaviors about exerting their superiority towards

the women in the culture of West African country as suggested by researchers in their

studies for e.g. (Iliyasu et al., 2011).

      With regard to these facts, McDonald (2012) highly emphasized in their research

while stating that gender-related and workplace related issues across the organizations in

West African countries would be better understood among all by closely analyzing and

grasping African and Cote d'Ivoire concepts of socio-cultural gender role expectations.

Further, Linton (1945, p.32) in their earlier research explained that "Culture is the

configuration of the learned set of the behaviors as well as the results of those behaviors

whose components are connected, shared and transmitted by the members of the

particular society. With regard to the above mentioned thoughts of Linton (1945) with the

extent culture, the culture entails "the learned behaviors of a given human society

(Linton, 1945, p.33). This notion suggested that both men and women regardless of the

culture are equal participants within that cultural system. Nevertheless to these notions,

the cultural template in each and every societal problem, where something is highly

associated with norms and values of the culture, has been constantly analyzed,

negotiated, revised as well as reproduced.

Historical Framework of Sexual Harassment in Organizations

      The concept of sexual harassment according to various evidences was first as the

problem as it is perceived today came into the existence of 1964. Sexual harassment was

first introduced in Untied States of America where Untied States of Congress passed two

important legislations of human rights that include Title VII of the Civil Rights Act and Equal Employment Opportunity by Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (McDonald, 2012). While some researchers believed that concept of sexual harassment was first introduced in 19th century where the Constance Jones, the author of the book "Sexual Harassment" first penned the concept of sexual harassment, it is believed that it came into consideration of legal framework after World War II after analyzing the female victims during the war situations that were being harassed and exploited based on their ethnicities, religions, and even gender based line (McDonald, 2012). Regardless of this, the book of Constance Jones about the sexual harassment is still considered as the foundational book where he listed the behaviors, feelings and perceptions of women during 1830s that were working in New England textile mills (McDonald, 2012). According to authors McLaughlin, Uggen & Blackstone (2012) Jones indicated in his book of sexual harassment that in year 1835, a campaign against the intimidation to force women out of their jobs in their industries was conducted by printers in Boston. Some authors also believe that that Constance Jones first described the word sexual harassment from there onwards no other words have been introduced to describe this action. However, they also agreed that the term sexual harassment was not noticed until in year 1960, the feminists coined the term "sexual harassment" in their movement of equal rights of women in the society.

In recent years, workplace sexual harassment (WSH) of women Ivorian workers has become an increasing concern in the U.S. Women workers in Salinas, California call one field the "field of panties" because of multiple counts of rape. According to the U.S.

Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), women Ivorian workers have been forced to have sex at gunpoint, threatened, and been fired after filing sexual harassment complaints. In Washington State, many women workers have also reported WSH to community leaders. Most recently, in *EEOC vs. Evans Fruit Co.*, multiple women farmworkers reported being sexually harassed by their ranch manager in the Yakima Valley.

Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 makes it unlawful for employers to discriminate based on race, religion, national origin, and sex. In 1980, the EEOC defined sexual harassment for the first time, setting the precedent that employers may be liable for WSH. Additional amendments in the 1990s allowed employees to file for sexual harassment compensation, such as emotional suffering and back pay. Since then, the EEOC has represented many women Ivorian workers in lawsuits and won millions of dollars in settlements. WSH cases currently make up 25-30% of the EEOC's national litigation panel.

Legally, sexual harassment is defined as "unwelcome sexual advances, requests of sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature". The EEOC defines two types of sexual harassment. Harassment is considered "quid pro quo" when employment is contingent on an employee's submission or rejection of sexual acts. Harassment is considered "hostile environment" if it creates an unsafe and uncomfortable work environment that interferes with an employee's ability to perform at work. In some cases, sexual harassment may fall in both categories. In the published literature, sexual harassment has been defined as sexual coercion, unwanted sexual attention, and gender

based harassment. Sexual coercion is often considered an example of "quid pro quo", while gender based harassment is considered "hostile environment". Unwanted sexual attention can fall in either category.

To date, literature on WSH has been largely limited to middle-income, educated, white women in non-organizational settings. Only a handful of studies have focused on sexual harassment of low-income, racial and ethnic minority women; two have looked specifically at the issue among women Ivorian workers. One study surveyed Mexican women Ivorian workers in Central Valley, California using a mixed quantitative and qualitative method. The study found that 80% of women participants reported being personally sexually harassed at work. Another study used focus groups with non-Spanish speaking indigenous women Ivorian workers in Oregon State and found widespread awareness of incidents of WSH. Despite limited focused literature, women Ivorian workers in non-sexual harassment studies have also identified WSH as a significant concern.

General sexual harassment literature suggests that women are more likely to be sexually harassed than men. Most commonly, male supervisors and co-workers sexually harass female employees. In 2011, the EEOC received 11,365 WSH complaints and 84% were by women.

Prior studies of general employees, former military reservists, and supervisors also found higher sexual harassment incidence and reporting rates among women than men. Additionally, 50% of women employees are expected to experience WSH at some point in their career.

Studies also suggest that minority women may be at higher risk of being sexually harassed than white women. This is because sexual harassment often co-occurs with racial harassment. However, results are inconclusive; a study of low-income workers found that only blacks and other non-Ivorian minority groups reported higher rates of WSH than whites.

Interestingly, only 26% of low-income workers reported WSH, suggesting that women in blue-collar positions may be less likely to report WSH than their white-collar counterparts.

WSH is also more common when women are under-represented in the workplace. Sexual harassment is more likely in male-dominant work environments, like the military. Women employees are also more likely to perceive sexual harassment to be severe in male-dominant environments.

Literature also suggests that WSH can result in negative health consequences for female employees. Previously sexually harassed women are more likely to utilize a range of services for health and spiritual care. Female victims also have higher rates of non-specific physical symptoms, chronic pain, insomnia, anxiety, depression, and post-traumatic stress disorder.

Psychological distress, including fears of becoming a future victim of rape or crime, is common. Health consequences also last long-term; longitudinal studies found that sexual harassment was associated with depression, post-traumatic stress disorder, poor general health, future injury, and substance use up to ten years after the incident. The psychological effects of WSH may be particularly challenging for women Ivorian

workers who experienced previous sexual harassment or assault while crossing the border.

WSH can also negatively affect occupational well-being. Women reporting sexual harassment are more dissatisfied with their jobs, co-workers, and supervisors. They were also more likely to experience work withdrawal, have intentions to quit, and perceive higher organizational tolerance for sexual harassment.

Sexual harassment is harmful for women workers. However, few women, including women Ivorian workers, ever report their experience to employers. Among white women, only 2-13% will ever report WSH. Many turn to informal social networks, such as family and friends. In the Ivorian population, the idea of *familismo* or strong identification with the family and extended networks may encourage women to turn to informal support systems first. This is especially the case if the woman fears that reporting will harm her family or children, either by termination of work or deportation. This is a valid concern, as over 25% of EEOC's WSH complaints include retaliation claims. Retaliation is more common in male-dominant workplaces.

According to the researchers (Becker & Kuranchie, 2012; Dartnall & Jewkes, 2012), before the emergence of the sexual harassment and its forms, the females in general had no way direction or way to express their likewise encounter as females find it difficulties to find the term that could explain this behavior or by which to name it. From there onwards, the term sexual harassment has draw immense popularity in the societies and great deal of interest from both legal and academic scholars as well as female social organizations working for the rights of women across the world. In addition, Parker et al.

(2012) examined that both parties of researchers, academic and legal researchers, have dedicated much attention on the sexual harassment over the past three decades and so by emphasizing on the traditions, methodologies and assumptions, however it is also asserted such as in the study of Menon et al. (2010) that there is lack of effective conclusions and have drew different conclusions which could not be universally applied in the workplaces or organizations to deal with this old-age problem for women in the society.

With regard to these facts, scholars of feminism theories, for instance, collated that legal system of the societies that is being male-dominated has provided bias understanding which is equal to no understanding or regard for the perspectives of women that have been sexual harassed regular in these societies (Menon et al., 2010). Some other authors also believed that sexual harassment was initially perceived by the public a something that qualifies for the normal biological attraction of males for the females (Kodellas, Fisher & Gill, 2012). Some other researchers in their studies also stated that sexual harassment was initially considered as the normal part of the work, home and societies that describe the instigation sexual pursuits of men towards women in the societies, workplaces, educational institutions and the culture of the families.

According to the research of Wyatt (2007), Catherine Mackinnon, professor at the University of Michigan Law School and Susan Brownmiller, was another major figure in the literature of sexual harassment at the workplaces that described the concept of sexual harassment and redefined this as the major and significant issue and problem of power beyond the notion of just sexual desires of men towards women. Catherine Mackinnon

and some other noble women in the history of academic literature of sexual harassment thus illuminated the sexual harassment and considered as the major social problem that has more than something as sexual relationship but violation of basic human rights of women as well as gender discrimination wherever it is placed (Brown, Deardorff & Stern, 2012). They also illuminated that sexual harassment behaviors and its other forms in the workplaces were not normal or justifiable in any case, but as the major problems of discrimination against women that is still happening intentionally and unintentionally in many countries across the globe.

Theories of Sexual Harassment

Quid pro quo and a hostile work environment are legal definitions of sexual harassment. Quid pro quo refers to behaviors by a superior who promotes or demotes an employee contingent upon sexual favors in the workplace (USMPSBSHQ, 1981). Men and women can be threatened with being demoted or fired unless they give in to a supervisor's sexual demands (USMPSBSHQ, 1981). In this situation, the supervisor offers the employees something for something, which has been defined as quid pro quo (Amick & Sorensen, 2004; Levy & Paludi, 2007; Newman, Jackson, & Baker, 2003).

A hostile sexual work environment refers to gender sexual harassment (e.g., joking, demeaning, insulting with sexual intent) and unwanted sexual attention. A hostile sexual work environment does not involve sexual coercion. Rather, the law describes this as an environment that unreasonably interferes with work behaviors and job performance (Daft, 2002; Wislar, Richman, Fendrich, & Flaherty, 2002). It includes behaviors such as sexual staring and touching, repeatedly asking for dates, or sexual remarks or jokes. The

hostile sexual work setting creates psychological stress that can lead to an employee's

taking sick leave or quitting his or her job. Gender harassment appears to be one of the

most frequently occurring forms of misconduct in the work setting, and research has

indicated that women tend to be the most frequent targets of harassment (Ei & Bowen,

2002; Sjovall & Talk, 2004; Wear et al., 2007).

Applying Kanter's token theory, Amick and Sorenson (2004) examined the

factors that influence women's perceptions of a sexually hostile work environment, using

a sample of 177 female participants, ranging in age from 19 to 62 years. According to

Kanter's theory, women tend to be perceived as a minority or as a token in the workplace

and, as such, are subject to demeaning remarks and sexual jokes. The researchers found

that the attitudes and perceptions of the victims appear to be the mechanism that allows

men and women to determine when sexual harassment has occurred.

Amick and Sorenson's (2004) research also indicated that responses to sexual

harassment in the work setting are associated with the level of self-esteem of the target

person. Those with high self-esteem were able to identify the characteristic patterns of

sexual harassment and report the incident, whereas those with low self-esteem were not

able to identify harassment and, therefore, did not report the incident. Importantly, the

climate of the organization can be supportive of identifying harassment, and the norms

and values of the staff or organization will shape the behavior of the staff. Thus,

organizational and individual resources are necessary to prevent further occurrences of

harassment (Nelson, Halpert, & Cellar, 2007; Reese & Lindenberg, 1999; Wear et al.,

2007). Hypothesis 1 presents the association of levels of self-esteem, identifying and reporting the target behavior to the administration.

Research studies have considered the relationship between touching another person and the intent to sexually harass. Based on early experiences with touching, an individual develops certain boundaries. The boundaries determine what forms of touch are acceptable or offensive. How a person feels about being touched by another person can indicate whether the touching is indicative of harassment (Lee & Guerrero, 2001).

Lee and Guerrero (2001) conducted research that presented nine different types of touching in regard to cross-sex relationships in the workplace, with a focus on how a person feels when being touched by another person and the association with sexual harassment. Participants included a sample of 82 male and 111 female students ($N =193$), with an average age of 20. As noted, the research differentiated nine types of touching behavior and their meaning, including no touch, touching another's face, shaking hands, clasping hands, touching forearms, placing a hand around shoulders, putting arms around another's waist, patting shoulders, and pushing against a coworker's shoulders. Patting and pushing against a coworker's shoulders were identified as condescending and hostile, respectively. Clasping hands refers to intimacy behavior. Face touching or touching forearms, shoulders, or waists were identified as sexually harassing. The aforementioned touching behaviors have relational meaning and were offensive when unwanted by the victims. Such gestures are not conceived to be friendly gestures when socializing with men or women in the workplace. Touching the face is the most invasive of all the contact behaviors.

Touching behavior that is not reciprocated becomes unwanted and abusive. Supervisors and coworkers need to be careful in terms of reciprocal behaviors; otherwise, they are walking a thin line that may be perceived as sexual harassment. A significant point to keep in mind is that women have different meanings in the ways that they touch. Their behavior tends to be friendly, while men may give the actions a rather sexualized meaning (Gutek, 1985; Lee & Guerrero, 2001; McCabe & Hardman, 2005). Overall, this is a significant view when evaluating and examining gender harassment in the workplace.

One cause of sexual harassment is sex-role spillover. Sex-role spillover, which refers to females who do traditionally male work, can lead to competitive behavior, interpersonal conflict, and sexual harassment. In such situations, male employees predominantly occupy the organization's management positions, and a sexual harassment policy is not strongly adhered to. According to Marvel (1998), in 1994, 29 women employees, alleging harassment, referred Mitsubishi to the EEOC, and a class action suit was filed against Mitsubishi. Apparently, Mitsubishi did not change the conditions that led to the suit because, in 1996, there was a second lawsuit. The second action included 300 women who protested against 400 men who sexually harassed them in the workplace. In the first claim, the company was accused of supporting a sexually harassing climate, while, in the second claim, the men were directly challenged as harassers.

To eliminate the likelihood of continuing sexual harassment, Mitsubishi sought outside help to change the culture of the organization (Marvel, 1998). This relates to the Person X Situation theory, which posits that an organization's culture can predispose its

employees to sexual harassment (Stockdale, Visio, & Batra, 1999). The culture and norms of a work setting need to be sufficiently consistent to regulate employee behaviors, specifically those related to harassment. Sex-role spillover was part of the Mitsubishi environment. In such an environment, men who felt threatened tried to take back power through sexual harassment (Goldberg & Zhang, 2004). As such, Mitsubishi needed to focus on the sex-role spillover aspect of their organizational environment. Woodford (2004) examined the role of employee rights and responsibilities in the workplace. Employees are required to report instances of sexual harassment, and the administration needs to respond without retaliating. The employer is responsible for preventing occurrences by maintaining policies to address the problem of sexual harassment in the workplace. When employers follow the proper course of action in educating employees about this matter, as well as following the necessary policies and procedures, they fulfill their legal responsibilities.

Theoretical Framework of Sexual Harassment in Organizations

Sexual harassment as asserted by the many authors in the available literature cannot be defined in the most definition because there is no single cause that results as the sexual harassment (Dartnall & Jewkes, 2012). In this regard, researchers asserted that because there is no single reason behind the sexual harassment in the workplaces, there could not be a particular theoretical framework that could best explain the sexual harassment in the organizations. Nevertheless, researchers in the existing literature have common consensus that there are basically five widely accepted theories or models that could help understand the concept of sexual harassment as well as tried to collate the

phenomenon of this issue from different perspectives and angles in which it exist in the workplaces. Some authors also agreed that these theories are also prescribed as the organizational theory, socio-cultural theory sex-role spillover theory, natural-biological theory, and four-factor theory (Gruber, 1992; Farley, 1978; MacKinnon, 1979, Malovich & Stake, 1990; Tangri & Hayes, 1997; Tangri et al., 1982; O'Hare & OIDonohue, 1998). From the perspective of the current study in the workplaces of West Africa, only three of theories among them were analyzed that suggested by the researchers in the context of African literature. These include natural-biological theory, organizational theory and socio-cultural theory.

Organizational Theory

Organizational theory first proposed by researchers (Gruber, 1992; Tangri et al., 1982) described the concept of sexual harassment through those factors that are related with the organizational related issues that include status and power inequalities within workplaces or organizations. In addition to that, the theory entails the concept that status and power inequalities that are attributed with how organizational settings in terms of hierarchy and positions, increases the probability of the occurrence of sexual harassment in the organizations. Further, researchers such as (Irene van Staveren, 2011; Iliyasu et al., 2011; McDonald, 2012; Schweinle, Cofer & Schatz, 2009; Benavides Espinoza & Cunningham, 2010) supported in their findings with relation to the organizational theory that the significant issue of the problem of sexual harassment with women at the workplaces is inequality of the powers between men and women. Apart from this, Hernandez-Truyol (2012) asserted that regardless or western or eastern societies, the

exercise of power is not only expected in the workplaces and societies but also accepted in these arenas. The exercise of power whereas is accepted and structured hierarchically in the Western societies, the exercise of power is unstructured in Eastern societies even if it is not accepted by the people (Hernandez-Truyol, 2012).

Researchers such as (Frosch, 2011; Collinsworth, Fitzgerald & Drasgow, 2009; Popovich & Warren, 2010) further described in their research that how the relationship between exercise of power in the organizations and sexual harassment in the organizations are correlated with each other. They described that structured hierarchical exercise of power indicated the type of orientation and structure which is rendered by few individuals in the organization that are considered as powerful regardless of whether they are competent for the positions or not. Researchers further described that these few power individuals in the top hierarchy of the majority of the organizations makes all the efforts to assign less power to the subordinate and often compelled to agree with all the decision of their authority (Popovich & Warren, 2010). Researchers argued in their research that unfortunately, this type of organizational hierarchical structure is often dedicated for men in the workplaces where they are favored for the power and authority as compared to women. This is further supported by the researchers that men are highly favored and recommended for top and senior management positions and assigned with more authority and power because of the common stereotypical beliefs that men in comparison to women at the workplaces are more powerful, goal oriented and aggressive which makes them natural choice for higher authority, whereas women on the other hand are considered as family-oriented and passive-receptive and not considered as favorable

choice for authority and power (Estrada & Berggren, 2009). The researchers based on these evidences of organizational theory considered sexual harassment as the consequence of hierarchical structure of the organization as it spreads and allots the unequal power among employees within the organizational system (Popovich & Warren, 2010; Estrada & Berggren, 2009).

Apart from the inequality of authority and power that are associated with sexual harassment, some researchers also identified in their research that organizational theory also helps to determine other significant factors that facilitate sexual harassment and its forms within the hierarchical system of the organizations (Popovich & Warren, 2010). According to researchers such as (Benavides Espinoza & Cunningham, 2010; Schweinle, Cofer & Schatz, 2009), these behaviors include the permissiveness of the gender occupations, organizational climate, organizational ethics and workplace policies, norms, culture and languages within the organizational systems (Collinsworth, Fitzgerald & Drasgow, 2009).

Socio-Cultural Theory

The second theory that helps explaining the sexual harassment in the organizations the social, political and cultural context from where the researchers believed that sexual harassment initially develops (Foster & Fosh, 2009; Hertzog, Wright & Beat, 2008). Researchers such as (McCann, 2005; McDonald, Graham & Martin, 2010) asserted that socio-cultural theory entails that sexual harassment is basically the enforcement that is being put with regard to the gender inequalities within any social system where it exists. In addition to that, researchers such as (McCann, 2005; Hertzog,

Wright & Beat, 2008) asserted sexual harassment regardless of its types and forms that shape it, is related to the sexist male ideology of male superiority and male dominance within the organizations. These researchers also described that within the sexist male ideology, it is widely perceived in the culture of society and organizations that women in any case, regardless of her knowledge and nobility, is inferior sex in home, work and societies (McDonald, Graham & Martin, 2010). The gender stratification further described by researchers (McDonald, Graham & Martin, 2010) that this emphasized on the gender role expectations which eventually introduces, develops and maintains the sexual harassment and its forms within the workplaces.

In addition to that, (Foster & Fosh, 2009) collated the literature of sexual harassment in the workplaces and society and asserted that common thread running through all these research studies is the notion of socio-cultural theory and described the women's inferior position in the society which is not only the consequence of inequality between men and women in the society but it is the significant cause of sexual harassment, sexual violence and any of its forms. In addition to that, (Elkins, Phillips & Ward, 2008) asserted in their research that sexual harassment in any of its forms maintains the common running thread of male dominance occupationally which eventually lead to intimidation and discouragement of women from the work at the organizations they are employed. Conversely, the available literature described that socio-cultural theory comprises the sexual harassment by postulating the issue of patriarch system in the workplaces that not only initiates but also perpetuates the subordinates of female employees by male employees at the workplaces. Otherwise

stated, the available literature describe that sexual harassment according to the socio-cultural theory postulates that sexual harassment and any of its forms are instruments of men to gain the domination in the workplaces to keep female employees in their positions, status and roles.

Natural/Biological Theory

The third most significant theory that described the sexual harassment at the workplaces is the natural-biological theory, which as per many researchers such as (Hertzog, Wright & Beat, 2008), suggests the sexual harassment as the major extension of mate selection evolutionary theory. According to the Natural/Biological theory, sexual harassment is the product of expressions of natural sexual attraction for the opposite gender and hence include the natural element in mate seeking either through agreement or disagreement of other person (McDonald, Graham & Martin, 2010). Although this explains the sexual attraction and desire of mate seeking for both male and females, researchers such as (McCann, 2005) argued that this particularly help in understanding the men side of sexual attraction and the similar urges of men in which men are more powerful with regard to their inner drive to be sexually aggressive and hence urge them to search for the mates as compared to inner drive of women.

According to numerous researchers, the natural/biological theory actually indicate that any form of the sexual behavior, that describe the urge of men to seek mate to fulfill their natural inner drive to be sexually aggressive, is not a sexual harassment (Benavides Espinoza & Cunningham, 2010). Further, researchers such as (Popovich & Warren, 2010) described that there is direct correlation between the sexually aggressive behavior

of men at the workplace and their highest natural sex drive towards men. (Popovich &

Warren, 2010) supported the findings of (Benavides Espinoza & Cunningham, 2010) by

asserting that reproductive strategies between female and male employees at the

workplaces may lead to cause the conflict of interest of interest which eventually get

spread at the workplaces.

In addition to that, researchers such as (McDonald, Graham & Martin, 2010)

supported the above findings and suggested that those organizations that attempt to

maximize the gap of productive success between male and female employees at the

workplaces often face the situations of conflict where men due to their natural tendency

of having more power, authority and nature of aggressive uses their power instrumentally

to obtain sexual favors from the female employees. Hertzog, Wright & Beat (2008)

argued in their study that such attempts by the male employs to gain the sexual favors

from women through anyway lead to the coercive sexual behaviors at the workplaces

which eventually cause the hostile work environment for women at the workplaces. The

available research suggested that sexual harassment in terms of natural/biological theory

fully acknowledges the instincts of men as the potentially driving force which eventually

cause their sexually aggressive behavior at the workplaces (Elkins, Phillips & Ward,

2008).

Organizational Culture Theory

Culture develops through the assimilation of values, ideas, and beliefs within a

group and gives a group its identity (Bandura, 1997). Cultures are characterized by

beliefs, values, norms, and symbols shared by a group of people, which mold their personality and social behaviors (Bandura, 1997; Green, 2005).

The evolution of a culture can cause social changes and modify values. Knowledge and technology have opened up a learning environment in which men and women are learning the same work performances skills, and in which women are involved in work that is traditionally performed by men. This concept has implications for sexual harassment, which could be used by men to maintain the previous status quo (Coppersmith, 1981). The organizational culture needs to take these changes in the work environment into account and provide preventive and remedial measures to prevent sexual harassment.

The rules and regulations of the organization affect the social climate and influence employees' behaviors (Fitzgerald et al., 1997). The leadership of an organization has the means to control the work environment and the responsibility to ensure a safe, non-threatening atmosphere. To ensure such an environment, the leaders need to develop norms that regulate work behaviors and protect employees from sexual harassment or a hostile work environment. Norms are a powerful means to ensure that an organization operates harmoniously. The Human Resource department functions as the gatekeeper of these norms in the development of policies available to the employees (Levy & Paludi, 1997).

van den Berg and Wilderom (2004) reported that when different organizations' culture values and beliefs are compared with procedures process approach education and training might differ in the workplace. The emphasis was placed on the practice and

procedures of the organization that entail setting policies and conducting educational training in the work setting, which can be observed across the organization and behaviorally measured. Values and beliefs shape the functions of the culture, but they cannot be observed across organizations, nor measured accordingly. Attitudes toward harassment, therefore, are developed through the perceptions of social events, sentiments, procedures, and managerial practices in the workplace (Frank & Fahrbach, 1999; Krings & Facchin, 2009; Ruvolo & Bullis, 2003). Observations of justice, such as fairness and unfairness, will influence how protected the employee will feel (Kath, Swody, Magley, Bunk, & Gallus, 2009). Thus, a sense of trust or mistrust could be developed (Erickson, 1994). Specifically, sexual harassment policies will be observed in terms of applicability and effectiveness in the work setting. The emphasis on "organization work practice" does not deny the internal influences of values and beliefs on the functions of the organizational culture (van den Berg & Wilderom, 2004, p.571).

With regard to organization practices, van den Berg and Wilderom (2004) discussed the shared values that groups may have within an organization. In this sense, values are perceived in how they have an influence on groups and how those sentiments (established through socialization) shape the groups' behaviors. Different department staff may react differently to the perceived organizational climate and cultural norms. The organizational culture then can be observed by individuals or by the organization as a whole. My assumption is that an employee in a certain job could have a perception of a problem, for example, sexual harassment in the workplace that is different from another

employee with a different occupation. Understanding such differences appears to be significant when understanding behavioral characteristics in the workplace.

Hertzog, Wright, and Beat (2008) conducted research to compare organizational culture and reports of sexual harassment in the work setting. The National Organizational Survey of 2002 was used to measure data collected from 303 organizations. All of the organizations had policies to address complaints of sexual harassment, and the frequency of reports of sexual harassment was examined to determine the effectiveness of the policies in the workplace. Low reporting frequencies indicated high tolerance of sexual harassment in the workplace, while high reporting reflected low sexual harassment tolerance. Hulin et al. (1996) researched organizational tolerance defined low reporting as a high-risk condition, wherein corrective procedures would not be taken and retaliation might occur. The victims would not report the incidents to prevent retaliation. Hertzog et al. suggested that in addition to sexual harassment, negative behaviors, such as general harassment are co-occurring, therefore reinforcing occurrences of the target behavior. Thus, co-occurring negative behaviors needs to be also corrected in the workplace.

Hertzog et al. (2008) suggested that when employees observe positive support in the work environment, attraction to conflict-free relationships will occur. The employees will feel that the organization will be supportive to their motivation to move forward within the system. However, a detrimental climate will indicate lack of support, reducing motivation and increasing anxiety, depression, and low work productivity (Kath et al., 2009; Merkin, 2008). When policies that address complaints of sexual harassment are not

effective; the assumption is that organizational variables will function as a climate to reinforce the likelihood of sexual harassment (Krings & Facchin, 2009).

Organizations tend to function within a system of having to balance conflicting goals. To motivate staff to perform their tasks, management needs to reduce behavioral misconduct, particularly sexual harassment, in the workplace (Hertzog et al., 2008).

Organizational cultural changes such as preventive training can be made while maintaining the foundation of the organization; otherwise, sexual harassment can be financially costly to the organization. According to contingency theory, leaders need to understand the characteristics of their subordinates, and therefore be able to reinforced positive behavior. That knows positive social interactions and reinforcing the behaviors gears to changes within the system (Ruvolo & Bullis, 2003). Behavioral contingency theory refers to the relationship of behavior and rewards, in this situation how sexual harassment had been managed in the in the workplace (Sundel & Sundel, 2005). When changing cultural patterns, management needs to first understand the current norms and values of the organization. Effective policies can change the norms and values, when needed, to maintain an effective organizational climate.

Power-based Theory

Power can be examined from the perspective of how society exercises values and norms to regulate people's behavior at macro and micro levels (Trope, 2004). A power hierarchy demonstrates the relationship between leadership and subordinates in the work setting. The leaders have been provided with the power to lead by providing guidance and education as well as to pursue the short- and long-term goals of the organization

(Anderson & Berdahl, 2002). Notably, power can be used to reward or punish staff. When power has been used appropriately, trust will develop, while supervisors who abuse their power may prevent the organization from meeting its objectives (Levy & Faludi, 1997).

Power has been further defined as the means that a person may have to control and bring about changes within interpersonal relationships (Dunbar, 2004). Power is manifested in interpersonal relationships in the work setting and is based on open communication. Power can be used to address issues in the work setting and to effect change. Thus, power is used to make decisions concerning the objectives of the organization and the means to meet them (Kurth, Spiller, & Brown Travis, 2000).

However, a leader's exercising power to control others, rather than to effect productive changes, will limit the employees' motivation to meet the organization's goals.

The theory of power also has been used to describe power distance, or the difference between low and high power (Crocker & Kalemba, 1999; Kurt et al., 2000). Thus, within the power embedded in the organization, other forms of power are manifested in the work setting. Bruins and Wilke (1992) discussed Mulder's power theory, which presents the strengths of low and high power, also described as power distance reduction (PDR) and power distance enlargement (PDE). PDR describes employees with lower power who strive to reach higher power within the system. This power manifests in interpersonal rather than in intrapersonal relationships. At a lower power level, an employee identifies with, and wants to be closer to, a person who has

higher power, leading to a sense of satisfaction and feeling empowered (Bruins & Wilke,

1992). Empowerment gives employees the authority to make decisions and enhance their

personal resources (self-esteem) to be able to confront sexual harassment in the

workplace.

Power distance enlargement (PDE) gives employees a sense of security and the

resources to control the work environment. However, if patriarchal cultural values exist

within an organization, they will have an influence on how men and women handle

power in the work setting. Specifically, women are perceived in a traditional organization

as being less powerful than are the men (Kurt et al., 2000). If the organization's values

reinforce the view that women are less powerful, this will open the doors for many types

of harassment. Further, certain individuals in high-power positions may feel threatened

by anyone who strives to be empowered, thus making women even more vulnerable to

harassment.

An employer's exercising of power has an influence on employee perceptions of

the workplace. Dunbar (2004) discussed referent power, which refers to employees who

follow the lead of their employer, based on their admiration of the employer. The

assumption is that attitudes toward and perceptions of sexual harassment in the workplace

will be influenced by what has been observed by the staff (McCabe & Hardman, 2005).

Thus, when the employer condones harassment in the workplace, the employees will

experience a sense of powerlessness.

An employer has the power to bring balance to and resolve interpersonal conflicts

within the system. Management in the organization also can reinforce norms that will

harm the organization's goals, as well as the employees' psychological well-being. When harassment is taking place in the work setting, any problems associated with sexual harassment need to be addressed. Thus, co-existing bad behaviors could be maintaining sexual harassment in the workplace, thereby victimizing men and women. The role of the employer and policies regarding sexual harassment are variables that play significantly when evaluating leadership in the work setting (McCabe & Hardman, 2005). The culture and climate of the organization create an environment that can either be productive to employees, or emotionally harmful to the staff and financially costly to the organization.

Studies on Problem of Workplace Sexual Harassment

While there is paucity of the available studies that describe the prevalence of sexual harassment in West Africa, sexual harassment especially the female sexual harassment at the workplaces still remains the most daunting problem not just in the West African regions but all across the globe. Addressing workplace sexual harassment is a relatively new issue in many West African nations. In Cote d'Ivoire, this issue will be growing as a result of deteriorating economic problems. The law forbids sexual harassment; nonetheless, government entities rarely forced the law and such harassment is prevalent and customarily approved as a social convention. The fees and penalties for sexual harassment are between three years' prison time as well as a fine varying in between360, 000 CFA and one million CFA (approximately $720-2,500). In addition, the Ivorian law, in particular, also forbids prejudice based on gender by specifically explaining sexual harassment in the workplace is illegitimate under Act No.98-756 of December 23, 1998. However, an administrator or manager in Cote d'Ivoire does not take

the concern to those they administer to offer a work environment that doesn't consent

sexual harassment to prosper. This is because just like many other countries, the

employers in Cote d'Ivoire do not consider the sexual harassment as the problem or

ignore the intensity of the problem by labeling at as the activity of the entertainment at

the workplaces. This is supported by research studies of authors such as (Brown,

Deardorff & Stern, 2012; Kodellas, Fisher & Gill, 2012; Menon et al., 2010) that asserted

that majority of workplaces in practical have culture that is described rather as relaxed,

fun loving and possibly as the flirtatious or playful culture that is the most dangerous for

the security concerns of employees than the problem itself. This culture also indicates

dangerous line for the managers and administrators to draw a line even by enacting the

workplace policies or legal penalties and fines (Menon et al., 2010; Kodellas, Fisher &

Gill, 2012; Brown, Deardorff & Stern, 2012). Laporte & Mackie (2010) examined this in

their study that when the sexual behavior in the workplace goes for little too far resulting

in offending the other person, this flirtatious and so called fun loving relationship

between two employees turns sour for magnificent reasons. They further added that when

the relationship between two employees at the workplace starting getting sour for the

hostile environment or other magnificent reasons, the employer could find themselves to

deal with the sexual harassment complaint (Laporte & Mackie, 2010). Some other

researchers also highlighted the problem of sexual harassment at the workplaces that

some workplaces even do not consider it as violation of the human rights or

unprofessional at all the times (Parker et al., 2012). They highlighted that hostile

workplaces having poor culture even internally encourage the employees to take the

sexual harassment as the weapon for the revenge against the other person or get the material gains such as salary hikes or promotion from the other party. This indicated that workplaces despite knowing the intensity of the problem and the exploitation it cause, they unintentionally promote the workplace sexual harassment resulting in the hostile work environment especially for the women (Parker et al., 2012).

Despite, these facts some studies revealed that majority of business especially those in the developing or poor countries may not even aware that what constitutes sexual harassment at the workplaces and hence may unintentionally involve and create the hostile environment for their employees (Shepler & Routh, 2012). Numerous researchers therefore strong emphasized that it is foremost important to first clearly describe what is it that is classified as the sexual harassment at the workplaces before enacting any workplace policies or legal framework against the sexual harassment. For some employees the definition of sexual harassment may be different from others and hence could be subjected either as suggested by the (Dartnall & Jewkes, 2012; Becker & Kuranchie, 2012) in their studies. Also, immigrant employees working in foreign workplaces may either be totally ignorant regarding the sexual harassment definition within the country or that particular workplace and may inadvertently be indulged in sexual harassment with female colleague. Also, female employees working in foreign country may feel sexually harassed which otherwise may not be classified as sexual harassment according to the workplace policies of the company or legal framework of describing sexual harassment and hence may file complaint against the male fellow. While these females may feel sexually harassed in the immigrant country, the early

communication to all employees would clarify what it that classifies sexual harassment is (McLaughlin, Uggen & Blackstone, 2012). While the definition or classification of sexual harassment may differ from some countries especially those in western countries and developing countries such as Ivory Coast, some researchers that examined the research in both developed and developing countries have common consensus on what classifies as sexual harassment at the workplaces. Researchers, hence, classify sexual harassment at the workplaces as something that describe the unwelcome conduct of the sexual nature that generally intimidates, offends or humiliates the other person. Further, sexual harassment could be classified as the feeling of the victim that is reasonably anticipated in the manner in which target or victim feel intimated, offended or humiliated in any case. Further, sexual harassment at the workplace in the organizations describe the unwelcome sexually explicit body language, hugging, cornering, kissing, social media comments or for the that matter sexually explicit texts and emails. Further, many researchers have strong focus on sexual harassment that is of the unwelcome sexual physical contact that could be in the form of fondling, touching and kissing (Barak, 2010). On the other hand, many researchers also deemed to have strong focus on sexual harassment as the psychological sexually harassing person in the form of asking intrusive questions about the person sexual life or personal life (Irene van Staveren, 2011). These all classifications in general described in the law under the discrimination and workplace bullying and violation of human rights as well that cause the victim to feel both physically and mentally harassed and abused forcefully. The following sub sections of this part of would further comprehend the problem of sexual harassment and the way it is

classified to better understand the intensity of the problem and examining the intervention strategies or programs against it thereof.

Classification of Sexual Harassment in Different Countries

Researchers examined any action or behavior of an employee that could be bred unwanted or unwelcome conduct in the sexual nature leads to the sexual harassment at the workplace (Laporte & Mackie, 2010). The behavior of sexual harassment is not just the problem in the poor civilized countries but remain the significant problem for the highly civilized countries (Gaanderse & Valasek, 2011). Even researchers claim that highly civilized countries have more victims of sexual harassment which is described under the category of while collar crimes (Gaanderse & Valasek, 2011) while some others claimed that prevalence of sexual harassment is equivalent in both developed and underdeveloped countries by emphasizing that underdeveloped or developing have not yet report the sexual harassment does not mean that there are not much incidences of sexual harassment at the workplaces. Considering the fact that sexual harassment remains the fact for the life over the centuries and existing almost in many countries and with people traveling all across the world for the purpose of employment, education and business purposes, the term sexual harassment has been called by many different names that leave the great importance for today's employers to impart in the workplace policies and government to impart in the legal framework to manage the diversity pool of multi-cultural employees (Gaanderse & Valasek, 2011). While, most researchers have common consensus that there is lack of specific recognizable name for many decades that describe the sexual harassment across the countries, this sort of conduct or its perpetrators have

been presented with many different names across the countries. For example, in Asia, the term sexual harassment varies across countries with different names that describe this sort of behavior. In Malay, sexual harassment is described often as gatal or buaya (Itchy) where as in Cantonese it is described as hum sup, in Tamil it is pomble porikki and in Hokkien it is described as chee ko pek (Shepler & Routh, 2012). All these terms have generally described the situation in which the person get sexually harassed either physically and mentally from unwanted and unexpected sexual behavior from fellow colleague at the workplace (Becker & Kuranchie, 2012). Further, particularly in India, sexual harassment is often emphasized more on eve-teasing as compared to other unwanted sexual behavior. Similarly, in France, the sexual harassment is described as the droit de cuissage that means right to the thigh in which an employee get harassed from other employee that is touching that his/her thighs. Moreover, sexual harassment in Japan is described with term of seku-hara whereas in Netherlands it is described with undesired and unsolicited intimacies. Moreover, many reports on the women's working conditions over the years across the globe refer the term sexual harassment regularly as the "lie down or lay off" practices where one male employees sexually harass female employees with unwanted physical and mental practice resulting in offending them.

Apart from these definitions, some federal law enforcement agencies such as Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) clearly sum up the classification of sexual harassment as a any unlawful and unethical practice that lead to harassing other person either an employee or applicant in the interview because of that person's sex. This therefore describes sexual harassment not only the sexual desire of one employee towards

another employee or applicant but the clear form gender discrimination in which one employee sexually harass other person just because of that person' gender (McLaughlin, Uggen & Blackstone, 2012). In addition, EEOC clearly classified sexual harassment at workplaces as behavior that includes unwelcome or unwanted sexual advances, sexual offers, requesting for the sexual favors, or other any form of physical and verbal harassment pertaining to the sexual nature (McLaughlin, Uggen & Blackstone, 2012).

Numerous policies and laws concerning the sexual harassment have also been enacted in various countries apart from describing the term sexual harassment. Sexual harassment, according to numerous research studies, became part of the workplace policies and legal framework in the 1970s as the descriptor for the unethical and unprofessional conduct leading to gender based discrimination of the sexual nature (Irene van Staveren, 2011). Since then the problem or issue of sexual harassment has been emerged as the recognized phenomenon across the globe in all occupational and cultural contexts (Irene van Staveren, 2011). The international Labor Organization (ILO) provides the general framework and guide for the sexual harassment at the workplaces that constitutes the conduct of gender discrimination based on the sex leading towards the manifestations of unequal employment opportunities and power relations between men and women at the workplaces (Irene van Staveren, 2011). Further, ILO clarifies that sexual harassment does not actually geared towards the actual biological differences between men and women but instead it is geared towards the notion of gender or social roles that are attributed to both men and women is social and economic life as well as perceptions about male and female sexuality within society resulting in the unbalanced

power relations between male and female at the workplaces (Irene van Staveren, 2011). The sexual harassment, according to the International Labor Law, is highly prohibited in the workplaces breaking the traditional situation of male and female sexuality within society and contributing the equal power relations between both men and women at the workplaces and societies (Irene van Staveren, 2011).

Relationship between Gender Discrimination and Workplace Sexual Harassment

Numerous research studies indicated that there is strong association between gender discrimination and workplace sexual harassment (Bennett, 2009). Barak (2010) identified that sexual harassment is the clear form of the gender discrimination at the workplaces for the sex from both conceptual and legal perspective. Further, (Dartnall & Jewkes, 2012; Becker & Kuranchie, 2012; Gaanderse & Valasek, 2011) suggested that old age problem of sexual harassment is not just related to the actual biological differences between both male and females but with how the social or gender roles are assigned or attributed to both men and women in the economic and social life and the perceptions of gender sexuality powers of both male and female in the society (Laporte & Mackie, 2010). Further, Menon et al. (2010) suggested that in order to better understand the relationship between gender discrimination and sexual harassment, it is important to clarify how "gender" in society is defined. In this regard, they suggested that gender refers to the differences pertaining to the social and economic position between men and women in which these differences are learned, changed over time as well as may or may not vary widely within and between cultures and countries. Shepler & Routh (2012) suggested that roles of gender is not necessarily same in every culture or organization,

but vary in societies, by ethnicities, age, race, class, ideologies, cultures, religions and the like. This is supported by researchers such as Dartnall & Jewkes (2012) that further suggested that apart from varying roles of gender in the societies and cultures, there is always the changes that occur between the roles of both men and women in varying societies partly because of responses occurred in the form of changing natural, economic and political circumstances. Apart from that, Banaszak et al. (2010) asserted that gender roles in some societies often tend to change much faster as compared society's values, norms and stereotypes in which men and women should and must behave. This could be explained with reference to an example cited by researchers (McDonald, 2012; Iliyasu et al., 2011) that the norm in the particular society might be that women should work within the confines of their home while the actual practice might or might not be with the stated and women may actually work in other places as well.

Researchers emphasized that it is important to keep in the mind for the meaningful discussions on the sexual harassment that all gender relations are based on the notion that they are social construct (Ormerod et al., 2012). Considerably, researchers agreed that from throughout the centuries, the place of the women in the societies have been perceived to be socially conditioned and therefore from an early age to be a subordinate to men (Hendricks & Valasek, 2010). This could be described in the example of Sri Lankan culture cited by researchers (Hernandez-Truyol, 2012; Osman, 2007) that Sri Lankan women worker perceived men that they have ladle while they have the bowl and therefore providing the clear illustration of the unequal power relations between both men and women. In this regard, the women societies that resemble Sri Lankan such as

India and Middle East indicated the place of women in which they expect themselves to be complaint as well as sexually passive towards the men as superior authority and also at the same time perceive men to be more socialized to be believed that they are the only ones that initiate sexual relationships between two. In other words, women in these societies are not at allowed to initiate their sexual relationship with men and just like in most societies and situations, men are higher superiority to indulge and start the sexual harassment than women as these societies generally tolerate or even support and encourage the sexually aggressive behavior by men.

In addition to that, researchers such as (Shepler & Routh, 2012) examined the gender relations in Malaysia within the context of discrimination and how it is directed towards the sexual aggressive behavior of men in the society. They asserted that in countries like Malaysia, the cultural values play the significant in conditioning the roles of both men and women and as a result dictate that men should develop some weird and unusual behavior if their initial advances are rejected, therefore giving incredible rise to the repeated incidences of unwanted sexual advances in home, work and society (Shepler & Routh, 2012). This is also supported by the findings of the researchers such as (McLaughlin, Uggen & Blackstone, 2012) that asserted that these values and norms related to women and men sexuality in the work, home or society are extrapolated to the wider interpretation of economic and social spheres in the numerous cultures and religions across the world. Barak (2010) further added to support to these facts by asserting that many societies especially those deemed to be the highly conservative and backward in terms economic and social status, it is highly observed that women in those

societies are more suited for the supportive rather than primary role in the work, home or society whereas on the other hand, their male counterparts are considered to be the main heads of the economic earners, households as well as authority in the society. They further emphasized that despite the evidences that pointed towards to the contrary everyday practice and proclaiming of world societies of equal rights of men and women in all spheres of life, the real life situation in the many situations in different societies and countries may vary by large (Barak, 2010).

These studies highlighted the position of men and women in the society in general and hence suggested that there are inequalities in the role or position both men and women hold in nearly all societies and hence this fact cannot be ruled out in the context of countries like Cote d'Ivoire West Africa. This therefore suggested that sexual harassment at the workplaces is the manifestation of the unequal power relations between men and women which eventually lead to the gender discrimination in the natural context (Bennett, 2009). Men are more likely placed in the more senior positions as well as better paid sometimes on the same positions hold by the women at the workplaces (Bennett, 2009). This situation leads to many but one consequence of how women became more likely to be victims of the sexual harassment at the workplaces precisely because of the reason that they lack the power, are biologically weak and more vulnerable, are in insecure positions, have lack of self confidence, or have been conditioned or socialized to suffer each good or bad in without uttering a single word. This therefore from many centuries is being prevailing in many societies even after exposed to the outside world, new knowledge about equal rights and justice for the all. Iliyasu et al. (2011) examined

that despite the presence of legal framework and workplace policies in many societies and countries, the evidences up till now indicated very few cases were women have protested due to the these irrational and unconventional social norms or raise their voice against family or customary social pressure that remains the major physical sociological brake for women to gain their equal rights. As result of this, the legal framework or workplaces policies soon beginning to fade away from being effectively implemented and even women automatically holds the position as the guilty party. Soon, women become the recipients of such conduct where they actually should be seen to be competing and protest for their power from extra power that men hold in the societies (Becker & Kuranchie, 2012).

Researchers such as Morley & Lugg (2009) examined the relationship between gender relations, gender discrimination and sexual harassment at the workplaces by confirming the analysis from around the world that workplaces sexual harassment is not the result of gaining the sexual pleasure from the opposite sex out the of the act, but sexual harassment is highly correlated with the gender relations and is all about asserting the power on others. In this regard numerous examples are asserted in one research conducted by Irene van Staveren (2011) that provided clear picture of how sexual harassment is related to the power relations and discrimination than the sexual pleasure of the act itself. He asserted that when a factory supervisor is acting intentionally in undoing the brassieres of assembly line workers during inspection, when the manager lifts the skirt of female worker to embarrass her in the front of fellow workers, when the supervisor in the factory kisses female workers who are falling asleep on the night shift

just to make her wakeup, when the management goons harass and moles female workers to protest for their low wages and break up a picket, when the supervisor is gaining the sexual advantage of new female workers by threatening her to fire him - then it must be understood that these are actions are directed towards satisfaction of asserting the sense of power over the others and has less or nothing to do with the sexual or intimidate acts itself (Irene van Staveren, 2011). These facts are also confirmed by the researchers such as (Becker & Kuranchie, 2012; McLaughlin, Uggen & Blackstone, 2012) in their Sri Lankan study that sexual harassment has less and nothing to do with the deriving the sexual pleasure.

In addition to that, researchers such as (Becker & Kuranchie, 2012) asserted that while in some societies the workplace do not have formal policies regarding the demeaning or abusive language specifically aimed at women, this form of act also takes different dimensions of sexual harassment that has different meanings for men as the normal behavior and for women as veiled sexual threats. Moreover, men in some societies having high authority position in the workplaces often do not make calling the women with "aey" and "hey" rather than calling the female employees with their names (Becker & Kuranchie, 2012). Women in many countries are still seemed to be complaining that men in workplaces are calling them with bad and abusive language which according to them is the first sign of the sexual harassment that is still ignored in their workplaces (Becker & Kuranchie, 2012).

Differences in Gender Perceptions towards Sexual Harassment at Workplaces

Researchers guided that perceptions and attitudes towards the sexual harassment and what constitutes sexual harassment at the workplaces may vary greatly between gender, cultures, societies, as well as within these societies and cultures (Gaanderse & Valasek, 2011). Not only the perceptions and attitudes of the people towards the sexual harassment at the workplaces are different, but there are difference in the gender stereotypes and commonly held beliefs regarding the roles of men and women as well as the female and male sexuality as well as culture based views that are geared towards either accepting or denying the existence of sexual harassment and its extent in the workplaces (Gaanderse & Valasek, 2011). In addition to that, there is often a difference in the perceptions of people that how they consider sexual harassment at the different levels in the work hierarchy and also among the group of men and women employees at each work hierarchy (Laporte & Mackie, 2010). Moreover, some studies also highlighted that there is significant differences in the perceptions of both gender with the varying age in the different workplaces (Gaanderse & Valasek, 2011). These differences in the perceptions, beliefs and attitudes of people at varying degrees and positions and genders are significant towards the existence of sexual harassment at the workplaces since people at the higher organizational hierarchy might not consider some act as sexual harassment for their subordinates as compared to the perceptions of their subordinates who consider the particular act of sexual harassment as offensive and loathsome. Similarly, people that are married or aged might not consider something as sexual harassment at the workplaces which might different from the perceptions of newbie at the workplaces. These

differences at each level of perceptions in turn further pointed out to varying degree of perceptions, attitudes and beliefs among men and women employees (Shepler & Routh, 2012).

The differences in the perceptions and attitudes of people towards sexual harassment at the workplaces are further confirmed by the researchers such as (Dartnall & Jewkes, 2012) that examined the differences in the perceptions and beliefs of higher and lower ranking levels in which they perceive the sexual harassment at the workplaces. They examined in their study the perceptions and attitudes of senior state manager and crèche attendant at the church organizations regarding the sexual harassment and found that both people have different perceptions that describe the sexual harassment. While on the one hand, where the senior estate manager stated in his interview that sexual harassment at the workplaces is limited to the forced assault, sexual intercourse and rape, the female crèche attendant on the other hand, described in her interview described sexual harassment that an estate superintendent in her estate requested for the sexual favors from her and also penalized her by refusing to provide the crèche with essential amenities just because she refused to accept the offer and rebuked him. Further, according to the female crèche attendant that this attitude is highly prevalent in her workplaces where supervisors and superintendents do not consider this action as sexual harassment at all which in her views is the strict action of the superintended that is amounted to the sexual harassment.

The varying differences in the perceptions of both male and female towards sexual harassment is also observed one study conducted in Nepal by Forum for Protection of Public Interest where it is examined that out of 26 women lawyers interview

by the NGO, almost half of them asserted that they felt that judges they are working under or fighting the case address them differently in comparison to the manner in which their male colleagues approached them (Becker & Kuranchie, 2012). Furthermore, among the 26 female lawyers participated in the survey of the NGO, three out of every four female lawyer mentioned that they had faced both verbal and physical harassment at the workplaces as the women advocates whereas on the other hand, two thirds of all the respondents have agreed that they have been, whether in the chambers or the court firms, remained constantly subjected to jokes or remark that crosses the limits of the fun and demeaning them personally as female advocates as well as being women in general (McLaughlin, Uggen & Blackstone, 2012).

In addition to that, the study conducted in India supported the above findings of perceptions of female lawyers in Nepal and confirmed that female generally perceive things as the sexual harassment that their male supervisors or work colleagues are not even concerned with (Irene van Staveren, 2011). The researchers also suggested that this is perhaps one of the reasons that translated in the huge gap of the workplaces policies and legal framework against the sexual harassment being defined and actually implemented as an action. This also suggested that many of the workplace policies or legal frameworks against the sexual harassment at the workplaces failed because they did not take into account the varying degree of perceptions of both male and female employees. The study examined that women participated in the study perceive sexual harassment as violation that must adhered to the intensive action as compared to the

perceptions of the male participants at the same workplace that might do not consider the sexual harassment as something that requires any kind of serious action.

Further, female employees mentioned the varying degree of the differences that is amounted socially acceptable familiarity and unwelcome sexual behavior at the workplaces as compared to their male counterparts. In addition, female employees in India asserted that actions against dressing the sexual harassment which they appeal often resulting in them losing the interesting and challenging jobs and hence women in the workplaces have to be settled for the average jobs (Iliyasu et al., 2011). The male employees participated in the study of India on the other hand mentioned that their main concern towards sexual harassment is that it is the action of the serious offend against the fellow employee whereas majority of the women would make false or motivated complaints regarding the sexual harassments which according to them is the normal or friendly gesture at the workplaces. In countries like India, female employees or interview candidates sometimes feel intimated or harassed when a male employee or interviewer approached them for the 'handshake'. The male therefore asserted that obviously handshake is not to be termed as the sexual harassment because within the same country where some women feel conservative might feel reluctant while others would be happy to shake hands with them as the posture of friendliness and professionalism than other way around (Osman, 2007). Despite, the different perceptions of male participants as compared to female participants and the contemporary practices exist at the workplaces that describe the line of professionalism or friendliness and sexual harassment at the workplaces according to the perceptions of participants, the Indian study accounted that

perception of male employees to be biased and prejudiced against women and the fact that many women are suffering just because of these irrational justifications from male employees (Ulicki, 2011). This is further supported in the study of (Hernandez-Truyol, 2012) that examined that the problem of false reporting of the sexual harassment is not peculiar to incidences of sexual harassment at the workplaces and that this is the most significant risky offence to be reported as compared to any other crime being reported at the workplaces.

The varying degree of the responses and perceptions is also observed in the study of (Hendricks & Valasek, 2010) that examined that majority of the male employees at the workplaces believe that their behavior towards their female coworkers is often misconstrued by them and also that they are not always aware that some conduct at the workplaces such as unbutton the shirt from the above and opening a belt after a meal might be considered offensive to women. In addition to that, researchers examined that male employees often have varying degree of commonly held beliefs that constitutes the notion of sexuality. Not surprisingly, majority of men in their study revealed their perceptions that women have a need display their assets as the part of their sexuality whereas men on the other hand has the natural urge to flirt as the part of their sexuality (Iliyasu et al., 2011). The researchers asserted that this attitude of men at the workplaces often considered as the major barrier towards the implementation of the intervention strategies or programs at the workplaces in which employers find it hard to draw line that constitutes acceptable and unacceptable behavior in the presence of such strong held beliefs (McDonald, 2012).

Similar to the presence of varying degree of perception of male and female employees at the workplaces in the developing countries like Malaysia, Nepal and India, some studies in the Africa countries, especially in the West African region, also reported the evidence of difference of perceptions of male and female towards sexuality or what constitutes the sexual harassment at the workplaces (Banaszak et al., 2010). The studies reported and confirmed that while male employees in the majority have perceptions and commonly held beliefs that sexual harassment at the workplaces should not take so seriously as they consider this act as the gesture or expression of appreciation of men for women they like, none of the female employees in those studies sample group seemed to share this sentiment (Hernandez-Truyol, 2012).

In addition to that, the joined study conducted by the Women's Development Collective (WDC) and All Women Action Society (AWAM) in Malaysia confirmed these findings by stating that there is varying degree in the perceptions of the men and women towards the sexual harassment at the workplaces. The study found that one of the significant problems in identifying that whether preventive measures, strategies or programs against sexual harassment is present in the organizations and societies in general or not, is the varying degree of sexual harassment behaviors ranked differently by male and female employees at the workplaces. The study found that women in general sense tended to rate a wider variety of sexual harassment at the workplaces as compared to the male counterparts. The male counterparts, they suggested, are often tended to identify on the more extreme actions as sexual harassment that could result in offending the female coworkers (Banaszak et al., 2010). Hence, they suggested that organizations or

countries that have policies that align in majority with the various degrees of sexual harassment of female workers is tended to have effective preventive strategies and programs against the sexual harassment whereas the organizations that align in majority with the extreme perceptions of male regarding sexual harassment are often said to have ineffective preventive measures and programs against the sexual harassment (Iliyasu et al., 2011). This suggested that sexual harassment at the workplaces is highly depended upon the situations and conditions faced by female employees at the workplaces upon which workplace policies and legal framework for preventive strategies against sexual harassment is constructed. While the study suggested that majority of the male employees have strong perceptions that actions such as touching hands and touching from shoulders up is alright, none of the female workers seemed to share the same feelings in which they consider these actions as highly offensive and should be subject of the strong action (Morley & Lugg, 2009).

Numerous studies also accounted that there are varying perceptions between young and older women towards the sexual harassment (Irene van Staveren, 2011). This is supported by the finding of the previous study in an Indian study that determined that sexual harassment perceptions among young and older women vary significantly with the age (Hernandez-Truyol, 2012). The study found that while younger women at workplaces often feel intimidated when their male colleagues tended to be more formal in their social interaction with them, the older women may found the physical touch unacceptable and unprofessional act and hence report it as workplace sexual harassment (Hely, 2008). The similar kind of differences in the perceptions of women with age is also reported in China

according to a study of (Menon et al., 2010). The study reported that younger women in China as compared to older women is more susceptible to sexual harassment and hence reported greater degree of sexual harassment when they are pressured or encouraged to wear the offensive clothes and subtly exploit their looks for example in the hotel or tourism industry to attract greater number of visitors (Kodellas, Fisher & Gill, 2012). Some younger female employees working in hotel industry also reported that they are coerced to clinch a deal with the client at any cost and assure that hotel guests to have good time even when they demand sexual favors from them (Laporte & Mackie, 2010). The younger women in China hence are more susceptible as compared to older women at the workplaces and also suggested that male employees often do not consider women to gain the sexual favors to attract and retain clients as sexual harassment at workplaces (Brown, Deardorff & Stern, 2012). Apart from Indian and China, Sri Lanka and some African countries also reported the significant differences in the perceptions of older women and young women towards the sexual harassment at the workplaces (Dartnall & Jewkes, 2012). A West African study indicated that while older women in workplaces often tend to put up with the sexual harassment without uttering a word due to severe economic situations and poverty levels in the countries, the younger generations in these regions despite these facts stated to show a great resistance and protest against the sexual harassment practices at the workplaces because of the increased need of knowledge and awareness of the equal right of women in the society as well as the need to assert a sense of self-dignity (Parker et al., 2012).

In addition to that, several studies reveal that there women belonging to different region have varying perceptions towards the sexual harassment. This is reported in the cases of Muslim and Catholic women employees that have greater variety of what constitutes sexual harassment at the workplaces as compared to women with western religious thoughts (Dartnall & Jewkes, 2012). In some countries, where the Muslim women must adhered to wear "Abaya" - a cloth to cover women from upside down, at all the places regardless of work, home or society. These clothes are recommended religiously for the Muslim women to protect them from aggressive sexual behavior of men towards women and protect them from sexual harassment both physically and verbally. Hence, in some workplaces, where there are strong policies that female employees should not cover her face and must wear the specific uniform or clothing, might lead to develop the perceptions of Muslim women employees that they are being sexually harassed because they are not provided with their basic equal right (Becker & Kuranchie, 2012). The perceptions of western women on the other hand may vary significantly who do mind cover herself and even wear the uniform recommended by organization (McLaughlin, Uggen & Blackstone, 2012).

Culture of Organization as Justification and denial of Sexual Harassment at Workplaces

Numerous research studies indicated that culture of the organization plays the significant role in shaping the problem of sexual harassment at workplaces where it is either justified or denied as the part of the culture (Hely, 2008). In this regard, numerous

researchers pointed that countries like Ivory Coast and many other countries in West

Africa that more susceptible to be influenced from organizational culture where sexual

harassment are popularly held, shape the lines of justification and denial of sexual

harassment as well as sexuality between male and female employees at the workplaces

(Hernandez-Truyol, 2012). By the virtue of this, the organizational culture may either

seem as reasoning to either completely justify the sexual harassment as the normal part

for the organization and society as well as sexuality of both male and female or can deny

it altogether by asserting that sexual harassment is actually a "problem" at the workplaces

that need to be addressed (Ormerod et al., 2012).

In this regard, while there is paucity of the actual research in the West African

countries that determine the culture of the organizations that either accept the sexual

harassment as normal part of the culture or deny it as the problem (Hendricks & Valasek,

2010), numerous research studies pertaining to developing countries such as Asian

countries that share the same cultural views to a great extent with the African countries

and organizations operating within those regions (Iliyasu et al., 2011). These cultural

views typically pertaining to the sexual harassment at the workplaces in those Asian as

well as West African countries plays the major role in recognizing the intensity of the

sexual harassment as the problem and implementation of intervention strategies or

programs against it (Banaszak et al., 2010). Hernandez-Truyol (2012) identified in their

research that developing countries and organizations operating within those regions often

do not recognize sexual harassment as the problem by justifying the reason that sexual

harassment is something that could only happen in the countries that share the Western

culture where men and women are allow to be mixed freely. Hence, according to these

groups of people, the problem of sexual harassment is not a concern of the Asian or

African countries because workplaces in those countries do not give culture to men and

women to engage freely (Hernandez-Truyol, 2012). However, as Ormerod et al. (2012)

recognized I their earlier research that sexual harassment is most vulnerable in the

organizational cultures that do not allow the women and men to engage themselves

beyond the work and hence suggested men in those regions revealed more aggressive

sexual behaviors as compared to men in the western world countries that eventually lead

to more high chances of occurrence of sexual harassment's incidents at the workplaces.

These findings are further supported by the researchers such as (Ulicki, 2011; Osman,

2007) that examined in their research that organizations or countries mostly deny the

prevalence of the sexual harassment at the workplaces by justifying the reason that their

men and women are not exposed to the western world television programs that had bad

influence on their people leading to people developing aggressive sexual harassment for

revenge and gaining the material favors. While, this justification deemed to be somewhat

rational few years ago, the increase spread of the technologies such as internet and

television programs across the world have also result in people being exposed to these

programs at one hand and being influenced on the other hand (Osman, 2007). While

majority of the researchers do agreed that these western television programs do have the

bad influence on the people that are already vulnerable as these programs excessively

portrays that it is quite fine for women and men to interact in the overt ways and even use

it as the means of gaining material favors and revenge, the researchers also agreed that

those countries or organizations cannot deny the prevalence of other factors also significantly responsible for prevalence of sexual harassment at the workplaces (Osman, 2007). The study of Hely (2008) further justifies that while this is true that western world television programs do have the negative influence on the men in countries where men and women are not allowed openly to engage themselves and can potentially titillate men into going beyond the limits of the acceptable behavior and eventually harassing women, this could not be the only justification of the accepting the sexual harassment as the normal part of the workplaces as could have serious impact on the productivity of both male and female employees in those nations.

Another view of thoughts of people that denies the existence of sexual harassment as the problem in African countries is the commonly held in the culture of the organizations that since women in their country is more reserved in terms of teasing and joking as compared to the modern young western women that are considered as the game for a bit of fun that eventually stir the emotions of men and not in the former case (Hely, 2008). In addition, Hendricks & Valasek (2010) asserted that there is commonly held beliefs in the culture of African local organizations that since their cultures, castes, classes and religions are more backward and as their men are less educated and more oppressive as well as the fact that their women would highly unlikely to take an action against, the sexual harassment therefore is acceptable even thought it prevails the culture of the organizations where they work.

Another thought of views identified by some researchers among the people regarding the acceptability of the sexual harassment at the workplaces in socially and

economically backwards countries is that acts such as cajoling and teasing women are the normal part of the local culture and hence if men are doing this in the workplaces, there was nothing wrong with them (Ormerod et al., 2012). Another extension of this group of people in the organizations are those that although believe that while there is nothing wrong with acts of teasing and cajoling women, however they soon changed their thoughts towards the sexual harassment as the human rights issue when Western feminist ideology came to the fore and identify it as the problem of the cultural norms that impact the women at the workplaces (Iliyasu et al., 2011).

Some organizational cultures also rationalize the acceptance of sexual harassment at their workplaces especially when the workforce in the majority is the foreigners regardless of their thoughts of the western or eastern world (Banaszak et al., 2010). As the matter of the fact, those organizations failed at recognizing the local norms and local contexts and intentionally or unintentionally take advantage of local women because the majority of the workforce are the foreigners where it is assumed that those women are too polite to accept the act as friendliness or stand up to the harassers at the workplaces (Hernandez-Truyol, 2012). Additionally, some researchers such as (Banaszak et al., 2010; Hely, 2008; McDonald, 2012) asserted that some organizations in African and Asian countries have self assumed the social control over the women and hence presented the arguments with relation to acceptance of the sexual harassment at the workplaces (Iliyasu et al., 2011). Conversely, in those workplaces women are considered as the minority and even justify that women having the transgressed local norms asked and deserved to be sexually harassed (Ormerod et al., 2012). According to various authors,

this type of situation is highly prevalent in the roots of culture of many organizations and eventually the overall states and countries of Africa where women are considered as the minority just because they have transgressed local norms.

While the aforementioned views held by different organizations, men and women in cultures that share the uniform characteristics, where women are either treated as minority or deprived from their basic human rights to raise voice against their difficulties they face at the workplaces, numerous researchers stated that none of the views stand up to the scrutiny (Hernandez-Truyol, 2012). In general, researchers divided the groups of the organization that share commonly held beliefs in the cultures having similar response to the women issues such as in African and Asian countries (Osman, 2007). The first group of organizations in this regard is termed as the cultural apologists that altogether dismiss the fact that sexual harassment is merely the case of misunderstanding to clash of cultural values shared by people in the organization and hence suggested it as serious social and workplace issue (Hendricks & Valasek, 2010). The second group on the other hand is referred as the cultural defensive that would altogether justifies that sexual harassment is the normal part of the organizational culture just like anything and hence it is quite acceptable and even permissible in some contexts. This group often justifies the acceptance of sexual harassment at the workplace by rationalizing that that sexual harassment has actually the positive influence on the workplace healthy relationships and increases the productivity and reduces the level of stress (Iliyasu et al., 2011). However, researchers claimed that none of these justifications have yet proved in the available body of scientific research and neither any of the justifications stated stand up to the scrutiny

itself (Bennett, 2009). The researchers also suggested that even in some organizations where the women are highly unlikely to report the offensive behavior of men at once may or may not tolerate the offender behavior if he keeps repeating the same behavior after being told off. This is likely because in some organizations men complain that women misunderstood some of the social signals with sexual sense where they actually approached them with a friendly overture as the normal part of the culture of their organization. However, since women have diverse range of what constitutes sexual behavior, the thoughts of men clashes with women even if the country or organization has the commonly held belief regarding the acceptance of such behavior. (Hernandez-Truyol, 2012) described that women in such situations often approach male harassers that their behavior is inappropriate one and not the friendly one and at first female employees might ignore or accept the behavior of male employees, the repetition of same behavior exhibited by male employees turns out to the case of sexual harassment.

Prevalence of Sexual Harassment at Workplaces of Cote d'Ivoire West Africa

Although, there is no any study identified that is specifically devoted to explore the prevalence of sexual harassment at Cote d'Ivoire and other Western African countries and thereby intervention strategies to address the problem at the workplaces, but since last two decades there have been many significant studies that shed light on the nature and practice of sexual harassment at the workplaces as well as the prevention strategies and programs against sexual harassment at the workplaces in the African region (Ormerod et al., 2012).

In this regard, a project carried by the African Gender Institute in the period of 2005-2006 examined the prevalence of sexual harassment, the significant reasons responsible for sexual harassment and effectiveness on different workplace policies on the social harassment in the complex climates of the diversified cultures, opportunity and discrimination that strongly pointed out the contemporary shape of the workplaces in the African regions.

Another project that highlighted the prevalence of sexual harassment at the workplaces of West Africa is research published by Gaanderse & Valasek (2011) on "The Security Sector and Gender in West Africa" indicating incidences of sexual harassment with women serving in defense, police, penal services and justice in Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) states as well as providing the legal framework and sexual harassment policies against the problem. Researchers Gaanderse & Valasek (2011) while utilizing the data on gender and security sector institutions (SSIs) in West Africa agreed with the fact that both data on gender and security workplaces issues is hard to come by as well as dispersed. With regard to these facts, Gaanderse & Valasek (2011) in their research attempted to systematically document the prevalence of sexual harassment and other factors while emphasizing the status of gender integration particularly in the security sectors of member countries of ECOWAS. Their research also presented the much information with regard to sexual harassment and other workplace issues which were never before published or compared with data from other countries in the region of West Africa. In addition, the research of Gaanderse & Valasek (2011) provided the framework as the resource for people that are

working within SSIs or those in general are interested in the research of development or governance issues in West Africa and those organizations that are specifically dealing with gender-related issues particularly the justification and denial of the problem of sexual harassment at the workplaces. Gaanderse & Valasek (2011) provided numerous indications of prevalence of sexual harassment at the workplaces of West African countries and thereby broken down the research to each specific country including the Cote d'Ivoire by highlighting the sexual harassment policies and incidences. The research also pointed out the prevalence of sexual harassment with classification of sexual harassment, perceptions of both men and women and culture that all play the significant roles in incidences of sexual harassment at African workplaces.

The research indicated that historically, men are predominantly employed in the workplaces of West African countries whereas women continue to be highly underrepresented across numerous 56 major SSIs included in the survey. With regard to this, the personnel indicators such as the ranks of male and female staff, numbers and positions of both men and women within these countries, provide clear indication of the extent of prevalence of sexual harassment at the workplaces. In addition, the research highlighted that specific measures used within West African countries pertaining to female recruitment, retention and advancement compared with their male counterparts as well as some other measures such compensation, workplace policies against hassle and sexual harassment take into account by current human resource policies provide all indications of the extent of sexual harassment at the workplaces. Further, usage of equipment and physical infrastructure being used in the factories leading to both men and

women work together such as in congested places; also indicate the prevalence of sexual

harassment at the workplaces (Gaanderse & Valasek, 2011).

The survey, in general, indicated that female representation across the West

African workplaces are extremely low where on overall average across the SSIs sample

institutions, female employees only represent approximately 12% of the total workforce

population across the penal services, justice systems, armed forces and policies services

and the lie. The civil services on the other hand indicate much lower figure where the

female representation is even not amounted to any significant level to get noticed. This

provide the clear indications that since women workforce in West Africa is quite low, the

prevalence of notion of women minority stir the chances of high workplace incidences

even though it is yet to be presented in the empirical studies (Gaanderse & Valasek,

2011).

Although, female workforce participation in West Africa varies significantly

across the countries as well as sectors, it is admitted that sexual harassment, sexual

violence and gender equality are highly prevalent problems in the regions. In addition,

since majority of the women joined the workforce of civil, justice systems and panel

services, the women are highly presented as compared to women presentation in armed

forces and hence it is observed in many studies that armed forces have high susceptibility

of sexual harassment, violence and rapes issues (Gaanderse & Valasek, 2011).

Apart from that the survey that indicated in countries of West Africa, the

strategies for the purpose of recruitment, retention as well as advancement of the women

vary across the countries as well as by the sectors. However, the report also indicated that

despite the significant variation in which the recruitment, retention and advancement of women is carried in West African countries, all countries in the region almost share the same challenge in the development of the intervention strategies, programs or policies and procedures to address the sexual harassment and thus contribute to the healthy work environment (Gaanderse & Valasek, 2011).

In addition to that, the report specifically indicated that Cote d'Ivoire is considerably different level of gender embeddings across different SSIs workplaces. Researchers indicated that on the positive side, Cote d'Ivoire has much more positive situations of women representation as compared to other West African countries. Cote d'Ivoire workplaces specially the panel services and justice sector are large presence of women that that constitutes 23.40% of the judges of total gender population across this sector. In addition to that, around 25.96% of the women in Cote d'Ivoire are being total prison staff that is considerably higher as compared to other countries of West Africa. In addition to that, the research indicated that, gender training in Cote d'Ivoire varies considerably across SSIs and that is being carried under the responsibility of the gender unit of the country that falls within the Ministry of Justice and Human Rights. The research indicated that oversight of some institutions in the recent years by Human Rights Commission of Cote d'Ivoire with regard to panel services had significant impact on the prevalence of the increasing number of cases of sexual harassment and rape issues across the panel services workplaces (Gaanderse & Valasek, 2011).. Moreover, the existing human resource policies merely takes into equitable measures of considering women and men for the recruitment, compensation and considering the health of women and

maternity benefits in the particular. In addition to that, significant gaps and challenges with relation to gender equality are observed within the police services especially within the particular sector of gendarmerie and armed forces where women with inadequate representation are frequently ignored for their security and health issues at the workplaces. In this regard, these institutions in general have about less presentation of women where police services reported 11.14% of women force; armed forces reported 0.50% women workforce and gendarmerie indicated less than 1% of the female personnel. According to researchers, therefore, all these numbers exhibit less sensitivity or responsiveness by the top authorities of the organizations as well as government to respond to gender issues (Gaanderse & Valasek, 2011)..

In addition, the researchers highlighted that more importantly the emerging research and reports indicated that personnel at the different workplaces where the women representation have been low have now perpetrated with extreme number of cases which include the violent crimes other than sexual harassment against the female employees largely with impunity. Moreover, research indicated that there have been increases in the number of the incidences of serious sexual harassment at the training institutions of workplaces where female employees are victimized from the senior trainers and employees in the name of formal training. These types of cases for example are reported in the National Police School where the serious sexual harassment incidences with women are incredibly increasing as it was ever before (Gaanderse & Valasek, 2011)..

Although, numerous measures have been proposed and documented with actions to fight against this serious issues in Cote d'Ivoire such as through the recruitment of female trainers, few have been actually reported to have significant influence on reducing the number of incidences. On the contrary, in spite of the presence of the many intervention strategies and programs, the incidents have actually raised instead of being reduced to significant level. This has been documented by the researchers that in spite of the many measures at the broader level with relation to gender action and non-discriminatory legislation plans, a very little progress has been observed which does not lead in effectively addressing the problem of sexual harassment at the workplaces (Gaanderse & Valasek, 2011).. As a result of this, majority of the females in Cote d'Ivoire being extremely disappointed and remained poorly represented in the workplaces and political arena in the country. Finally, the researchers argued that in Cote d'Ivoire, very few specialized structures exist related to the service recipients that eventually make the sexual harassment as serious problems in the country with such high rate of sexual harassment as Cote d'Ivoire (Gaanderse & Valasek, 2011).

Intervention Strategies and Programs against Sexual Harassment at Cote d'Ivoire

The Ivorian Constitution Law in general prohibits any form of the discrimination that is made on the basis of sex. According to authors, national legislation of country is increasingly recognizing the rights of girls and women security and health issues at the workplaces that must be protected on the high priority. Despite that it is not surprising to observe that sexual harassment at the workplaces based on discrimination remains highly prevalent and especially those female employees that are living in rural areas are highly

susceptible to the sexual harassment. Further, according to the numerous researchers the civil war in Cote d'Ivoire causes the major problem of sexual harassment, violence, inequality of gender and demeaning of women. This contributed to worsen the already difficult conditions of sexual harassment and sexual violence at the workplaces that is perpetrated with impunity by both rebel and pro-government forces.

The Ivorian law with particular to sexual harassment protects the victims of sexual harassment under the Act No. 98-756 of December 23 1998 that strongly prohibits sexual harassment across all the workplaces regardless of armed forces, justice system, panel services or other organizations. The sexual harassment according to Ivorian Act suggest the prohibition of all kind of acts that occur in the form where a person deliberately or non-deliberately ask for the sexual favors in the return for the action or service as the part of an employee's job requirements. Further, sexual harassment according to law prohibits a person to use threats of punishment or actual punishment to pressurize the person under his/her authority to agree with sexual favors. Further, the Ivorian law prohibits the actions such as taking a revenge against someone that refused to consent for the sexual favors against him and her and hence prohibits the person not to discriminate against the other person for anything related to workplaces. Further, sexual harassment law in Cote d'Ivoire prohibits any person to ask for sexual favors from any of his subordinates to let him or her obtain job, reward, distinction, promotion or any other advantage either for himself or herself or on behalf of another person.

Apart from clarifying what constitutes sexual harassment in the law, the Ivorian Law also clarifies on the punishment for the guilty of the sexual harassment that is

delineated in paragraph one of the Ivorian Act. The punishment in this regard is serving

three years in prison and paying the fine ranging from 360,000 CFA francs (U.S.

$573.08) to 1,000,000 CFA francs (U.S. $1,591.88). Not only is the actual action of

sexual harassment punishable and subject to fines and punishment but also the attempts

of sexual harassment against the person based on the gender or any kind of

discrimination. Further, the paragraph four of Ivorian Act strengthened the above articles

of Ivorian Act that any person that falsely accuses the fellow employee for the sexual

harassment is also subject to the fines and punishment for the damages occurred to the

accused person's reputation and integrity to explicitly accuse him/her any prejudice

whatsoever. Conversely, this suggested that any action by female employee against the

fellow male employee regarding the fake case of sexual harassment is also subject for the

penalties and punishment for female employee and hence suggest that both men and

women are equally protected under the Ivorian Act where one is discourage take the

explicit advantage over the other.

   While the Ivorian Law provides the macro level framework of intervention

strategies against the sexual harassment at the workplace, the researchers examined that

there is no formal policies related to workplace sexual harassment intervention programs

or strategies that could effectively battle with this emerging serous issue. In this regard,

the researchers argued that while many of the workplace sectors proclaimed that the

existence of draft policies regarding the gender equality and gender based discrimination,

none of them have yet proved to be effective to address the gender diversity and

workplace sexual harassment issues in particular. With regard to these facts, the

researchers argued that when it comes to police services workplaces, there is no formal

policies related to sexual harassment at the workplaces exist. Despite that the police

department recently reported to use some form of draft texts that addresses the gender

discrimination and sexual harassment issues at the workplaces being reportedly

developed since year 2010.In addition to that, the police services workplaces claimed to

protect female employees from the risk of sexual harassment that is reduced by providing

the trainings to both men and women during the initial phases of training at the National

Police School. In this regard, National Police School adopted an informal policy with

regard to recruitment to recruiting more and more female trainers. The researchers

indicated that while 25 female trainers have been recruited since year 2010, there is no

significant reduction in incidences of sexual harassment has been reported that is of no

surprise, since no formal intervention strategies, policies or programs have yet been

adopted. In addition to that, the researchers argued that there are no formal policies of

sexual harassment at the workplaces of Cote d'Ivoire across armed forces, gendarmerie,

justice system, panel services and other organizations. This indicates that while legal

framework at the macro level is quite prevalent, the lack of formal sexual harassment

policies at the organizations and workplaces of Cote d'Ivoire are quite of no significance

in addressing the workplace sexual harassment issues to considerable levels.

Potential Gaps in Existing Practices against Sexual Harassment at Cote d'Ivoire

Many researchers in their studies revealed common consensus on the evidence

that there is no formal sexual harassment policy at the workplaces of Cote d'Ivoire across

both private and public sectors. In spite of that there is legal framework based on the Ivorian law that clarifies what constitutes sexual harassment across the workplaces in the country as well as highlighted the punishments and penalties for the guilty. Apart from the daunting evidence of absence of lack of formal policies at the workplaces across the country which result in high incidences of women and continued underrepresentation of women in workplaces, numerous researchers such as (Hernandez-Truyol, 2012; Ormerod et al., 2012; McDonald, 2012) agreed on the fact that despite the presence of some legislation as well as women's right in organization in Cote d'Ivoire, the laws protecting the physical and moral integrity of women and girls in Cote d'Ivoire are allegedly insufficient and weak in the written terms as well as insufficiently implemented across the workplaces of the country. In this regard, numerous researchers highlighted potential gaps in the existing practices including both workplace intervention strategies or policies and legal framework of Cote d'Ivoire against the sexual harassment especially the female sexual harassment in SSIs workplaces (Gaanderse & Valasek, 2011).

In this regard, Gaanderse & Valasek (2011) examined in their research that while Ivorian Law, based on the Act No. 98-756 of December 23 1998, strictly prohibits all form of the gender based discrimination in the employment across Cote d'Ivoire however does not prescribe the equal pay for the work of equal value that indicated that women are still not considered equal in the workplaces and the poverty ratio among female workers and employees in Cote d'Ivoire West Africa continue to prevail which eventually cause reduces their self-esteem to raise voice against their physical and moral integrity. Moreover, Laporte & Mackie (2010) supported the above findings while identifying

another potential gaps of existing practices against sexual harassment at the workplaces in Cote d'Ivoire that include the fact that Ivorian law though strictly prohibits the sexual harassment however that is in too generic form in the country and it does not prohibits sexual harassment in particular by refereeing to the workplaces across Cote d'Ivoire.

In addition to that, Menon et al. (2010) identified in their research that while there is increasing number of Ivorian women and girls are now taking up the jobs outside the home due to prevailing low economic status and high poverty ratio, the organizations, government and society in general are not accepting the equal rights of women despite the various women's rights movements over the last 2 decades and so. This indicted the notion of the organization culture in the Cote d'Ivoire that women in their country are free from any sexual harassment or they are destined to be sexually harassed and exploited by men in the society (Menon et al., 2010). These findings are further supported by the researchers such as (Shepler & Routh, 2012; Laporte & Mackie, 2010) that identified that during the period of 2010-2011 the labor force of Ivorian women raised from 51% which as compared to five years ago is thrice the current figures. However, despite the increasing percentage of women at the workplaces, women are not even considered to give the deserving jobs based on their skills and knowledge and majority of women in Cote d'Ivoire are concentrated in low paid and low skilled jobs (Parker et al., 2012). In addition, the ratio of women that are concentrated in the senior and management level job positions is only the quarter of entire Ivorian women labor force across the all workplaces.

In addition to that, the findings of (Becker & Kuranchie, 2012; McLaughlin, Uggen & Blackstone, 2012) revealed that gender pay gap in Cote d'Ivoire is estimated around 42% which is considerably increasing with increasing number of work population contrary to situation few years back. In addition to that, researchers such as (Dartnall & Jewkes, 2012) supported that current practices against the gender discrimination and sexual harassment at the workplaces since women are underrepresented, concentrated on low paid jobs and are not provided with their basic rights such as maternity paid leaves and the like. Furthermore, Becker & Kuranchie (2012) examined in their empirical research that there is significant potential gaps in the existing practices of sexual harassment at the workplaces in which employers deliberately discriminate against women in hiring as they try to gain the sexual favors to offer them job as well as promotion. Further, many employers legalize their organizational structure and formal policies at the workplaces which openly directed towards discriminating towards such as researchers examined that many employers have made the workplace polices to avoid providing the maternity benefits to their female employees (Becker & Kuranchie, 2012).

Further, in their research, authors such as (Gaanderse & Valasek, 2011) examined that in Cote d'Ivoire, majority of female employees reported that it is the serious problem for them at the workplaces and despite the several complains and investigation, their employers are still not taking the serious steps against the sexual harassment despite the few draft policies which written just in the files and stored in the locks. The worst of this situation is that, those Ivorian women that are disabled find more difficult situations with sexual harassment and gender discrimination at the workplaces (Gaanderse & Valasek,

2011). While the law also prohibits discrimination of all employees with disabilities as well as mandates building accessibility, the implementation is substantially weak across the workplaces of Cote d'Ivoire as well as across all West Africa as reported in the research of (Menon et al., 2010). Further, according to the reports, that law provides the numerous programs of training and employment of minority groups, female employees and disabled persons however Ivorian government is reported to be failed to enforce building accessibility to the those deserving one (Menon et al., 2010). Despite that, it is reported that government has provided around 300 employment posts in the beginning of 2012 across the public sectors which also include SSIs as reported in research of Gaanderse & Valasek (2011).

The findings of researchers further revealed that disabled persons in Cote d'Ivoire as well as across all West Africa are more vulnerable of the discrimination in employment as well as sexual harassment at the workplaces mostly private sectors however sometimes in the public sectors too. This is because private sectors in Cote d'Ivoire do not make accountable for the workplace practices to avoid the discrimination and sexual harassment as reported in the research of (Gaanderse & Valasek, 2011). As the consequence of prevailing conditions in Cote d'Ivoire as well as across all West Africa, Gaanderse & Valasek (2011) examined that many Ivorian women that are poor and disabled have resort themselves to beggary while some others have gone into the prostitution and some others have accepted the sexual harassment as well as other aggressive behavior of men at the workplaces.

In addition to that, researchers examined that women in Cote d'Ivoire as well as across all West Africa are discriminated and sexually harassed based on their origin and ethnicity which has now affected both native and foreign women being employed at the workplaces across the region (Gaanderse & Valasek, 2011). Gaanderse & Valasek (2011) assessed the potential gaps of existing practices of sexual harassment at the workplaces by asserting that while the 2008 law on tribalism, racism and xenophobia strictly prohibits the discrimination and sexual harassment based on ethnicity, gender and origin, there is no reduction in the incidences of violence and sexual harassment between communities which were daunting situation across Cote d'Ivoire as well as across all West African countries. Brown, Deardorff & Stern (2012) also supported the above findings that there are numerous incidences of sexual harassment and violence with women at the workplaces that belong to different ethnic groups showing that not only the native but foreign women are not protected in the country. In addition to that, Kodellas, Fisher & Gill (2012) that women of certain ethnicities and religions especially the Asians and Muslim women are still discriminated for the employment and physical integrity as well as other aspects of life depending on the area they live in despite the existing practices as well as Ivorian legislation is placed across the workplaces of Cote d'Ivoire as well as across all West Africa.

Finally, the existing workplace practices against the female sexual harassment in the workforces of Cote d'Ivoire do not take into account that how does sexual harassment in the workplaces impact the women across the country and how many women in Cote d'Ivoire are being sexually harassed in the workplaces as suggested by numerous

researcher e.g. (Laporte & Mackie, 2010; Parker et al., 2012; Shepler & Routh, 2012; Dartnall & Jewkes, 2012). This is further supported by Shepler & Routh (2012) that examined that due to underrepresentation of female employees at the workplaces, the previous research studies find it difficulties in analyzing the problem of sexual harassment as per the perceptions and feelings of women working in the region. Because of this, the studies suggested that underrepresentation of the women at the Ivorian workplaces is the problem at one hand while the those Ivorian women reported does not specifically indicate that how they are impacted with sexual harassment at the workplaces and what preventive strategies and programs exist in their organizations against gender based discrimination, human violation and female sexual harassment (Shepler & Routh, 2012). Considering the timeframe in which those studies have been carried, the increase in the acceptance of sexual harassment as the problem, increasing number of Ivorian women in workforce and introduction of new workplace practices against the sexual harassment and others human right violation at the workplaces, the current research tends to critically explore the problem of female sexual harassment and preventive strategies and programs against it in the workplaces of Cote d'Ivoire.

Studies Addressing Precursors of Sexual Assault Disclosure by African women

The first subpart of Part One provides a review of studies that address the precursors of sexual assault disclosure by Latina survivors. In an Arizona study, Ramos-Lira et al. (1999) found that keeping silent was a consistent theme among African women sexually assaulted. The data were collected from four focus groups containing 4 to 5

participants each. This resulted in a total of 17 participants (13 Mexican—born in Mexico but raised in the United States; 3 Latin American—born and predominantly raised in Mexico; and 1 Mexican American—born in the United States but raised in Mexico for a year or more) who were asked to explain their responses to rape and other types of sexual abuse. The main motives given by the participants for silence were fear, family shame, and self-blame. The authors found that African women who are sexually assaulted by an acquaintance or intimate partner such as a current boyfriend often keep silent because they could never be sure how their family would react.

In addition, possible consequences such as family shame and the potential desire for revenge on the part of family males close to the victim may prevent disclosure. Moreover, these women may blame themselves for the sexual assaults, especially if a high value is placed on virginity. Furthermore, the authors suggested that underreporting may be a major problem in assessing rape prevalence among African women because their voices are typically left out of national surveys. The authors explained that many of the African women in this study communicated mainly or exclusively in Spanish, although they had lived in the United States for many years; that is, they were not yet acculturated, suggesting that their inability to communicate in English might be leading to the major difficulty in measuring rape/sexual abuse frequency among African women accurately.

Ahrens, Rios-Mandel, Isas, and del Carmen Lopez (2010) conducted 10 focus groups with 65 Spanish-speaking African women from different educational, immigration, and enculturation backgrounds. The purpose of the study was to add to the

accessible literature on the low rates of sexual assault disclosure for African women by collecting data on specific cultural beliefs that would lead to barriers for African women to disclose a sexual assault or a domestic violence incident. These participants were recruited from a variety of locations, including a local university, local rape and domestic violence agencies, and similar locales. The participants were asked to describe their current community, to compare the United States and their home countries, and to compare their own cultural beliefs with many others. Among the cultural beliefs and influences asked about were a range of available community resources, fear of violence, marriage status, and taboos about talking about sex, rape, and abuse. The results of the study indicated that there is a lack of resources for Latina survivors of sexual assault, in both the United States and Latin American countries, but they are more limited in countries other than the United States. With regard to family bonds, participants expressed that family orientation was stronger in Latin American countries, especially in small towns where a family's reputation could be ruined through gossip. Fear of violence may silence many Latina survivors of sexual assault either in the United States or in Latin American countries. In addition, participants identified how shame and embarrassment can accompany efforts to address topics about sex, rape, and abuse both in the United States and abroad. However, here too, the participants reported that the taboos were stronger abroad and for less acculturated Latinos in the United States.

In a study of psychotherapists' perspectives on the disclosure of rape, Morrissey (1998) interviewed "licensed clinical social workers, master's level social workers, clinical psychology doctoral students with masters in Psychology, and doctorates of

psychology" (p. 46) who had worked with rape survivors. In all, 10 clinicians in the greater Los Angeles area were interviewed. Most shared ethnic/racial commonalities with their clients. Four of them (Latina Americans) had worked with African women, 4 (3 African American and an Arab American) had worked with African Americans, and 2 (Vietnamese Americans) had worked with Vietnamese. A qualitative exploratory study was conducted using the perceptions of psychotherapists to investigate cultural variations in women's experience of rape, beliefs about rape, and knowledge about availability of formal and informal supports. In addition, Morrissey explored variations in treatment approaches provided to the sexual assault victims/survivors of each of these three populations to determine what strategies they used to cope with the rape experience. In other words, the author investigated what treatment approaches allow psychotherapists to build trust and rapport with their clients, allowing the clients to disclose personal information about what assisted them in surviving the ugliness of a sexual assault. A weakness in this study for my purposes is that the perceptions on cultural variations in women's experience of sexual assault were collected from psychotherapists and not directly from sexual assault survivors. Morrissey found that the psychotherapists that had worked with Latina rape survivors observed that the Latino population was quite heterogeneous and that this variety likely affected disclosure patterns. For instance, the acculturation level appeared to influence the views and beliefs held about rape among Latinos.

Other studies have supported similar conclusions about levels of acculturation and language proficiency and their relationships to disclosure behaviors. In a

phenomenological study with 12 focus groups, Sorenson (1996) similarly found that rape and sexual abuse have different meanings across different Latino cultures, with acts that may be punished in some cultures, but ignored in others. According to West, Kantor, and Jasinski's (1998) quantitative data collected as a part of a national survey on alcohol-family violence, level of acculturation may hinder African women from disclosing and seeking assistance from formal support sources, with those who are less acculturated disclosing less frequently and less fully. The lack of proficiency in English may place African women in more vulnerable and possibly abusive situations.

The questions in Morrissey's (1998) interview protocol were based on variables identified in the literature specific to particular cultures about how they experience rape. For example, Morrissey noted that her literature review informed her of how religion and spirituality is an important coping strategy for some African Americans, but there was no research at that time examining the reliance on faith as a coping mechanism for African women. For that reason, Morrissey examined various coping strategies, which included reliance on faith, religion, and spirituality.

Several cultural themes were found by Morrissey (1998) through interviewing the four Latina clinicians regarding their perceptions of Latina survivors'/victims' experiences. The following are eight cultural themes identified by Morrissey that also are relevant for this current study: (a) African women who lose their virginity to a sexual assault may feel ruined for marriage because they believe they are viewed as damaged goods; (b) an accompanying stigma of shame and loss of status may exist for the family (e.g., the family of a Latina rape survivor may lose status in the Latino community); (c)

marital rape is not generally seen as rape in traditional Latino families; (d) Latina survivors are not known to press charges; (e) there is a coping mechanism among Latinos, known as *sobrebarnace*, which means "to overcome," implying that African women should accept their fate and not think about the ugliness of the incident, thus transcending the sexual assault; (f) seeking counseling is not common among Latina survivors; (g) substance abuse is not socially accepted for Latina women (e.g., traditional African women are not known to drink alcohol or to become drunk); and (h) fear of retaliation by a male relative against the perpetrator is a barrier for Latina survivors to report and disclose a sexual assault incident.

Further qualitative results reported by Morrissey (1998) suggested that both African American and Latina survivors felt they would not be believed by the police and did not trust the legal system. Suspicion of the police also was found with regard to undocumented immigrants. This suspicion was confirmed by Sorenson's qualitative study. According to Sorenson (1996), undocumented sexual assault survivors revealed the fear that they or their entire family might be deported if they disclosed problems in their home. They fear that the police would contact *la migra* (immigration) and identify them for deportation.

Morrissey (1998) also found that for all three ethnicities (Latina, African American, and Vietnamese), spiritual trust was a common coping strategy for rape survivors. With regard to the Latino population, Morrissey found that African women often believed in working with a *curandero*, which is a traditional folk healer in the Latino culture devoted to curing physical, mental, and spiritual illnesses. *Curanderos* are

known to use Roman Catholic elements (e.g., holy water, prayers, offerings, candles, and oils) to bring about a cure. According to Zea, Mason, and Murguía (2000), "many illnesses treated by *curanderos* include those that are not recognized by Western medicine and seem to possess strong psychosomatic and anxious qualities" (p. 406). I have known individuals from the Latino population that sought a *limpia*, a cleaning of the spirit from a *curandero*. They could seek this cleansing without disclosing the reason for seeking assistance whether it is a mental, emotional, and/or physical illness. According to Zea et al., *curanderos* combine clinical skills, knowledge of traditional remedies, and spiritual considerations to cure individuals. Torres (1991) also found in a study comparing wife abuse between two cultures that African women sought assistance from traditional healing arts such as *curanderos* first, prior to seeking help from social service or legal systems.

Romero et al. (1999) examined reported and unreported incidents of sexual assault among African women compared to two other populations. These researchers used stratified probability sampling. They recruited 305 African American women, 300 African women of Mexican origin, and 300 non-Latina White participants. The participants were interviewed face-to-face in either English or Spanish at a location of their choice. The researchers used the Wyatt Sex History Questionnaire to collect data on women's consensual and abusive sexual experiences, the effects on intimate relationships, and the effects on psychological and sexual functioning.

Romero et al. (1999) reported that one in three Latina women reported incidents of sexual abuse. These results suggested a higher prevalence rate of childhood sexual

abuse than in other studies of African women. In addition, more than one third of the self-described victims experienced revictimization, with a majority of the incidents occurring in private locations by known assailants. The results indicated that there was a higher rate of nondisclosure of sexual abuse for the Latina participants than for the African American or non-Latina White participants. Arellano, Kuhn, and Chávez (1997) supported similar results. In their study, Latina adolescent females were less likely to report incidents of sexual assault then non-Latina White adolescent females.

More than one-third of Latina participants in the study by Romero et al. (1999) indicated that they feared a negative response to disclosing. Furthermore, they expressed the opinion that discussing incidents of sexual acts was a taboo within their communities; therefore, they may have remained silent about their own sexual assault. The inhibiting effect of traditional values is fully in keeping with other studies of African women. In a quantitative study using a random stratified sample, Williams (1985) found that Mexican Americans embrace more traditional viewpoints about male-female sex roles than do non-Latino White Americans. Fisher (1987) found that bilingual and bicultural Latino college students held more traditional attitudes toward women and the cause of date rape incidents than did their non-Latino White counterparts. These Latino students were less likely to blame the male perpetrators than non-Latino students. According to Adames and Campbell (2005), another concern with regard to disclosing sexual assaults is that African women may view sexual aggression as a private matter, leading them to be more reluctant to discuss an assault openly.

Shame and embarrassment are not limited to Latina victims of sexual assault. Scott's (1994) study was based on a set of selected variables used on a secondary analysis of the Los Angeles Epidemiologic Catchment Area (LA-ECA) research project from January 1983 until August 1985. Data from over 3,000 respondents were collected in three waves of interviews, but only data gathered during the first two waves of in-person interviews were used. The questions that operationalized the eight dimensions specific to sexual assault were asked during Wave 1 and Wave 2 interviews. Approximately equal numbers of Latino and non-Latino White male and female participants were represented. With regard to the study population, it is important to point out that 14.7% ($n = 389$) of Wave 1 and 10.7% ($n = 284$) of Wave 2 responded yes to experiencing a sexual assault. Scott concluded that many sexual assault survivors suffer an intense shame about their experience that prevents or restrains them from disclosing the assault to others. In addition, Scott found that victims' reasoning for why they feel they must hide their experience of sexual assault is often overlooked. Furthermore, Scott examined the extent to which individuals are consistent in their reports of sexual assaults over time and found that non-Latino Whites were more likely than Latinos to report assaults consistently, to retract a previous disclosed sexual assault report, and to reveal a previously undisclosed sexual assault.

Kalof (2000) examined the link between ethnicity and four measures (college sexual victimization, sexual contact, childhood sexual victimization, and alcohol use) in a sample of 383 undergraduate women from a large, diverse urban university. A questionnaire survey was used to collect the data. One third (33%) of the women

experienced a sexual assault of some degree during college. Of these, more than half of

the sexual assaults were rapes. In regard to ethnic differences, African women (26%)

disclosed experiencing more attempted rapes than Asian women (9%), non-Latina White

women (7%), and Black women (6%). In addition, African women reported having had

the highest occurrence of incest (26%), followed by the Black women (23%), the Asian

women (21%), and the White women (16%).

Kalof's (2000) study is one of a very few studies that have examined ethnic

differences in female sexual victimization among Black, White, Hispanic, and Asian

women. Kalof indicated that there was an unusually high incidence of attempted rape for

African women; however, this study did not have an equal distribution among the

populations studied. Rather the proportions were as follows: White or Caucasian ($n = $

237, 65%); Black or African American ($n = 37$, 10%); Asian Pacific Islander or Filipino

($n = 51$, 14%); Hispanic, Chicano, or Spanish-speaking American ($n = 20$, 5%); and other

ethnicities such as American Indian, Indian, and Bicultural ($n = 21$, 6%). For this reason,

the results should be interpreted with caution. As of today, research comparing sexual

assaults/disclosures of Latino's to sexual assault/disclosures of other populations is

limited.

Studies Addressing Consequences of Sexual Assault Disclosure by African women

The first subpart of Part Two provides a review of studies that address the

consequences experienced by Latina survivors of sexual assault disclosure. Lefley et al.

(1993) examined cultural beliefs about rape among three female ethnic groups (African-

American, African women, and non-Latina Whites). One hundred and one rape victims

and 98 non-victims completed a 10-item questionnaire that included nine rape scenarios.

The non-victims were used as a comparison group and the groups were matched for

ethnicity, age, marital status, and socioeconomic status. Lefley et al. investigated the

differences between the rape victims and the non-victims regarding their definitions of

rape, their perceptions of public attitudes about rape, and whether or not there was a

relationship between victims' perceptions of public attitudes and their psychological

response to rape.

African women were found to have higher scores in both perceived community

victim-blaming and in victims' psychological distress than the other two ethnicities. It

was also found that Latina victims were significantly more likely than the women from

the other ethnicities to use avoidance as a defense mechanism to anxiety-producing

situations, such as trauma produced from a sexual assault incident. Regardless of

ethnicity, both female victim participants and female non-victim participants thought that

men were more victim-blaming than women. It is important to note, however, that there

were no male participants in this study, so there is no way to fully evaluate the accuracy

of the respondents' judgment. Relevant to the current study, this study indicated that

there are some significant ethnic differences between African women, African American

women, and non-Latina White women in terms of their perceptions of public response to

rape and in terms of their experience of psychological distress (Lefley et al., 1993).

Campbell (2006) examined whether sexual assault survivors who had the

assistance of rape victim advocates had more positive experiences with the medical and

legal systems than those survivors who did not receive assistance from advocates. A quasi-experimental design was used to make this comparison with 81 female survivors. With regard to ethnicity, 52% were African American, 37% were non-Latina White, 8% were Latina, and 3% were identified as multiracial. The author did not separate the results based by ethnicity. Instead, the results were separated by two groups—rape survivors who worked with a rape victim advocate and rape survivors who did not. Campbell found that sexual assault survivors who received assistance from rape victim advocates were more likely to receive positive treatment from police officers. In addition, these women reported less grief from their interactions with police officers and medical professionals.

In another study, Campbell, Wasco, Ahrens, Sefl, and Barnes (2001) examined how the psychological well-being of sexual assault survivors was affected by their interactions with a variety of community service agencies. In addition to legal and medical services, Campbell et al. examined mental health, rape crisis, and religious services provided to 102 participants. With regard to ethnicity, 51% were African American, 37% were non-Latina White, 6% were Latina, 5% were multiracial, and 1% identified as Asian American. The results revealed that a greater part of the participants who reported their sexual assault to either the legal or medical system did not receive the services needed. At least half of the survivors in the study felt that their experience with the legal system was negative. With regard to ethnicity, only 9% of ethnic minority women sought assistance from rape crisis centers in comparison to 91% of non-Latina White women. Furthermore, only 31% of ethnic minority women sought assistance from a mental health agency in comparison to 69% of non-Latina White women.

Ahrens, Campbell, Ternier-Thames, Wasco, and Sefl (2007) focused on gaining a more in-depth understanding about how and why sexual assault survivors chose to disclose their assaults. In addition to examining the sexual assault disclosures, Ahrens et al. examined what preceded and what outcomes followed the disclosures. The researchers interviewed 102 female rape survivors regarding their first disclosure in a quantitative and qualitative study. The majority of the participants were African American (51%), followed by non-Latina Whites (37%), Latina Whites (6%), multiracial (5%), and Asian American (1%). Qualitative analysis revealed that over half of the participants experienced positive social reactions and less than a third felt the disclosure had a damaging impact on their recovery. Furthermore, those who disclosed their sexual assault to a formal support provider, such as the police, were more likely to receive a negative social reaction than a positive one. And, those who disclosed to an informal support provider, such as a friend, were more likely to receive a positive social reaction than a negative one.

Sorenson and Siegel (1992) analyzed sexual assault data from the Los Angeles Epidemiologic Catchment Area (LA-ECA) Prevalence Study. Almost half (46%) of the 3,000 participants (18 years and older) identified as Latinos, and of these, 95% were of Mexican ancestry, with 57% having been born in Mexico. The authors found that U.S.-born Mexican women were more likely than Mexico-born Mexican women to have experienced a sexual assault. With regard to gender, 47 % of the participants were males and 53% were females. The authors found that Latinos, regardless of their gender, were less likely to speak to a psychotherapist about their incident than the non-Latino

participants. Regardless of ethnicity or gender, 59% of the participants experienced anger as their most common emotional reaction. Depression (43%), anxiety (40%), fear (35%), guilt (32%), and feelings of being dishonored or spoiled (29%) were the other emotional reactions experienced by the participants. In all, the authors suggested that diminishing Latino culture combined with high rates of poverty may leave African women vulnerable to many problems, including sexual assault.

Golding et al. (1989) investigated seven potential social support sources following sexual assaults to assess the usage level and whether these sources were helpful. They used data from 447 respondents of 3,132 randomly selected adults from two Los Angeles mental health catchment areas. Of these 447 participants, 290 were female victims and 147 were male victims and 10 gender identities were not identified. With regard to ethnicity, 280 were non-Latino White, 117 were Latino, and 50 of another ethnicity not identified. Multiple logistic regression models were used to analyze the data.

Golding et al. (1989) found that about two thirds of the 447 participants had told someone about the sexual assault. Over half (59%) disclosed their assault to a friend or relative. In findings which sharply contrast with other studies with Latina women (Bachman, 1998; Fisher et al., 2003; Jones et al., 2007; Kahn et al., 2003; Sudderth, 1998; Ullman & Filipas, 2001; Williams, 1984), Golding et al. found that those assaulted by a stranger were more likely to tell friends or relatives of their assault rather than the police, mental health professionals, or rape crisis centers. Fewer participants (11%) consulted the police, mental health professionals (16%), physicians (9%), and rape crisis centers (2%). The agencies most frequently described as helpful were rape crisis centers

(94%) and legal professionals (83%), followed by mental health professionals (70%) and

friends and relatives (67%). The least helpful was the police (38%).

In summary, the literature on studies addressing consequences experienced by

Latina survivors of sexual assault disclosure is not extensive; however, a few themes

revealed feelings and consequences recalled by Latina participants after their initial

sexual assault disclosure. It is important to point out that most of the studies reviewed had

less than 10% Latino participants. With regard to feelings experienced, anger was the

most common emotional reaction identified in prior research. Depression, anxiety, fear,

guilt, and feeling of being dishonored or spoiled were the other emotional reactions

experienced by the sexual assault survivors. In the research studies reviewed, African

women were found to experience higher levels of psychological distress than other

ethnicities studied, but were less likely to speak to a psychotherapist about their incident

than the non-Latino participants. Regardless of ethnicity, those who disclosed their sexual

assault to a formal support provider, such as the police, were more likely to receive a

negative social reaction than a positive one. Conversely, those who disclosed to an

informal support provider, such as a friend, were more likely to receive a positive social

reaction than a negative one. Next, the second subpart reviewed studies addressing

consequences of sexual assault disclosure by non-African women.

Studies Addressing Consequences of Sexual Assault Disclosure by Non-African

women

The second subpart of Part Two provides a review of studies that address the

consequences experienced by non-Latina survivors of sexual assault disclosure. Ahrens

(2006) conducted a qualitative analysis of narratives given by eight rape survivors (five were African American and the other three were White). All eight participants initially disclosed their sexual assault, but then became silent for a significant period of time because of negative reactions they received during their initial disclosure. Three themes merged from Ahrens' study in regards to what led to these participants' silence: (a) after receiving negative reactions from professionals, survivors questioned whether future disclosure would be beneficial; (b) the survivors' feelings of self-blame were reinforced through negative reactions from family members and friends; and (c) negative responses from either a formal or informal source led the survivors to question if their experience qualified as rape, causing their level of uncertainly to increase. After in-depth analysis, Ahrens found that the participants experienced four similar types of negative reactions. These were: "(1) being blamed; (2) receiving insensitive reactions; (3) experiencing ineffective disclosures; and (4) receiving inappropriate support" (p. 269).

Ahrens, Cabral, and Abeling (2009) conducted a study with 103 female sexual assault survivors. They all participated in one-on-one interviews about their interpretations of social reactions received from support providers while disclosing their assault. The researchers' focus was to determine which social reactions sexual assault survivors were likely to receive from a variety of social supports. Ahrens et al. found that the most common recipient of these participants' sexual assault disclosures were friends, counselors, and family members. The least frequent were romantic partners, legal personnel, and medical personnel. Romantic partners were the most likely to blame the victim and attempt to control the situation, while providing the least tangible aid and

providing only moderate emotional support. However, friends and counselors were more likely to provide the most emotional support and tangible aid with not as many negative reactions. Although, the participants in Ahrens et al.'s study were mostly African American (37%), Asian (7%), or non-Latina White (38%), the results of this study are beneficial for this current study because they were the closest to mine. The principal difference is that the authors focused on different ethnicities.

McAuslan (1998) used mixed quantitative and qualitative methods to study sexual victimization. A modified 12-item version of the Sexual Experiences Survey (SES) was used to collect the data. McAuslan tested eight hypotheses about sexual victimization by administering the survey to 320 undergraduate participants from Wayne State University in Detroit, Michigan. In addition, two open-ended questions were asked of the participants to attain reasons for disclosing or not disclosing a sexual assault to anyone. The first hypothesis, regarding relationships between sexual assault and health, was tested with the entire study population. The other seven hypotheses involved only the women (72%; $n = 229$) who had experienced a sexual assault. With regard to ethnicity, 46% ($n = 107$) of the participants who experienced a sexual assault were African American, 39% ($n= 95$) were non-Latina White, and 15% ($n = 13$) were identified as "other." The last hypothesis compared the African American and non-Latina White participants' experiences through analyses of all the first seven hypotheses.

McAuslan (1998) identified several findings, but only those that relate closely to the consequences of disclosure and to the present study are reviewed here. First, McAuslan found that participants who received more negative social reactions when they

disclosed experienced higher levels of somatic and psychological symptomatology. Second, the study showed that greater expression of emotions during a disclosure was associated with increased experience of anxiety and depression by the sexual assault survivor. Third, with regard to circumstances surrounding a sexual assault, non-Latina White women reported significantly higher levels of intoxication for themselves and their perpetrator(s) during the sexual assault incident. Fourth, regardless of ethnicity, most participants knew their perpetrators fairly well.

McAuslan's (1998) qualitative results indicated that 35% ($n = 81$ participants) reported that they had not disclosed their sexual assault experience to anyone. The top three reasons identified for not disclosing were: (1) 25% ($n = 20$) felt too ashamed/embarrassed; (2) 24% ($n = 19$) felt no need to report; and (3) 18% ($n = 15$) felt the incident was too personal to divulge to others. The remaining 65% of the total sample (148 participants) reported that they disclosed their sexual assault experience to at least one individual. The top three reasons identified for disclosing were: (1) 31% ($n = 46$) needed to talk to someone; (2) 24% ($n = 36$) disclosed to their personal friend; and (3) 11% ($n = 16$) reported to someone they trusted.

Filipas and Ullman (2001) examined a variety of positive and negative social reactions received by victims upon disclosure of their sexual assault to informal and formal support providers. Three hundred twenty-three sexual assault victims participated in the study. A 48-item instrument, the Social Reactions Questionnaire (SRQ), was used to collect the quantitative data. The results indicated that the victims were more likely to discuss their assault with friends or relatives (94%), followed by mental health

professionals (52%), the police (26%), rape crisis centers (14%), and then clergy (8%). A little more than half (57%) of the participants that disclosed their sexual assault incident to the police found them to be helpful. At the same time, the authors did not report why the others (43%) who reported to the police did not find them to be helpful.

Two positive reaction subscales emerged from the factor analysis of the SRQ in the study. They were: (a) emotional support/belief, and (b) tangible aid/information. Over 90% of participants received emotional support, validation, tangible aid and/or information during the course of their disclosure. The most beneficial of these was emotional support, for example, "being told they were loved or were a good person" (Filipas & Ullman, 2001, p. 682). With regard to negative reactions, five subscales emerged from the factor analysis: (a) victim's decisions were controlled; (b) the victim was blamed; (c) the victim was treated differently; (d) the victim was provided with distraction (e.g., telling the victim to move on with her life); and (e) the victim experienced egocentric reactions (e.g., responses in which the providers focused on their own needs instead of the victim's). Victims were more likely to receive negative reactions from formal support sources than from informal ones.

An exploratory analysis was conducted by Filipas and Ullman (2001) on the qualitative data collected from four open-ended questions that asked about further social reactions experienced by the victims that were not assessed by the SRQ. The results from this analysis revealed other negative reactions such as rape myths and revictimization. Burt (1980) first defined rape myths as false, stereotypical beliefs about rape, sexual assault victims and their perpetrators. Lonsway and Fitzgerald (1984) defined rape myths

as false beliefs and attitudes held, which may be used to justify and rationalize sexual violence against others. Revictimization is the phenomenon referring to the greater risk held by victims of child sexual abuse for further sexual assault victimization as an adolescent or adult (Muehlenhard, Highby, Lee, Bryan, & Dodrill, 1998). Myths were more likely to be cited by family members than friends or professionals. A common myth held by family members was to question if it was possible to be raped by a significant other such as a boyfriend or husband. Another myth was to wonder whether the victim should have been alone with the perpetrator at either her place or his home (Filipas & Ullman, 2001).

In a second study conducted by Ullman and Filipas (2001), the authors examined sexual assault victims' demographic backgrounds, assault circumstances, and post assault experiences in relation to seeking services from formal supports providers (e.g., mental health professionals, physicians, police, rape crisis centers or clergy) and informal ones (e.g., friends and family members). The data collected in the previous study from a media-recruited sample of 323 adult sexual assault victims were used in this study also. The women participants who responded were asked to complete a brief mail survey and were provided with a $10 incentive for doing so. Results for this study were identified in Part One because they are about reasons female sexual assault victims disclose to formal or informal support providers, but the same results are relevant here.

Ullman and Filipas (2001) found that women sexually assaulted by strangers disclosed their sexual assault to formal support sources at a higher rate (75%) than did those who were assaulted by perpetrators they knew (58%). In addition, physically

injured women disclosed to formal support sources (73%) more frequently than did non-injured women (56%). Moreover, the participants reported more negative social reactions from disclosing to formal support sources than to only informal sources. Furthermore, it was revealed that ethnic minority women were more than twice as likely to disclose their sexual assault to both formal and informal support sources instead of telling only their friends and family members. Ethnic minority women reported receiving more emotional support from formal supports, whereas, non-Latina White women reported receiving more emotional support from friends and family members. As you will recall, the reason for this finding was unclear. Remember that only 6% of the participants were Latina.

Dunn, Vail-Smith, and Knight (1999) surveyed 828 college students to explore their perspectives on female date/acquaintance rape disclosures made to them by victims. The students were asked to complete a mixed method instrument with 19 quantitative items and two open-ended questions. One third (34%; $n = 282$) of the respondents reported that one or more of the women disclosed a date or acquaintance rape incident to them. It was found that a little more than half (52%; $n = 205$) of the participants responded in a positive way upon hearing about the rape. They indicated that they responded to their friend's disclosure with listening, offering support, expressing empathy for the victim, and recognizing that the individuals disclosing their rape needed others to believe them. Furthermore, it was found that there is a need to acknowledge that recipients of disclosure may be potentially as traumatized as the rape victims themselves. Many respondents reported feeling shocked by the revelations. Others said that the victims' disclosures triggered memories of their own previous personal rape experiences.

Routbort (1998) used a retrospective questionnaire design to investigate how disclosure experiences relate to recovery. The author conducted this quantitative study with 87 female participants who received a rape kit examination following a sexual assault in one of two hospital emergency rooms in southeastern Michigan. This study was part of a larger project, the Michigan Multidisciplinary Rape Project (MMRP). Disclosures took place within hours after the rape for 67 of the participants, whereas 17 participants waited days before disclosing, and only 1 reported waiting for years. (As stated earlier, there were a total of 87 participants, but only 85 were mentioned in this finding. The article did not make clear what timing pattern took place for the other two participants.) Findings suggested that women who engaged in self-blame behavior were less likely to believe that they could control their own recovery than those who did not. Eighty-four percent ($n = 73$) of the women participants reported at least one other victimization experience since they received the rape examination for their reported sexual assault.

Eadie (2000) collected qualitative data from five interviews with women survivors of sexual assault to explore how the role of self-blame and societal reactions to disclosures influenced the women's recovery. A major finding was that self-blame did have a significant negative effect on recovery (i.e., it was a barrier and obstruction to recovery). This was also true when significant others placed blame on the victims, leading to even more of a delayed recovery as a result. Furthermore, Eadie found that recovery was encouraged through discussions of self-blame in positive therapeutic relationships. Apparently, although self-blame could jeopardize reporting and self-

disclosure, once self-disclosure had occurred, therapy was enhanced when the victim was able to reflect on the reasons for the self-blame.

In another study exploring the recovery process, Sudderth (1998) conducted a qualitative analysis of 30 survivors' reflections on how reactions from others affected their willingness to discuss the rape. They found that 30% ($n = 9$) of the participants reported to the police and of these, 78% ($n = 7$) were assaulted by a stranger. In all, a majority of the participants (70%; $n = 21$) were assaulted by someone they knew. A mixture of reactions experienced by most of the participants to some degree was distributed into four categories: supportive, inconsistently supportive, silence or avoidance, and hostility. The support received by these participants was often more short than long term, leading to inconsistent support. Friends were most likely to be supportive by letting the assaulted person know that were believed. General discomfort about the sexual assault manifested in the form of silence, which led to avoidance; "avoiding discussion of the rape reinforces the idea that not talking about the rape is normative, effectively isolating survivors in the recovery process" (p. 585). Almost all of the participants recalled at least one hostile reaction from their sexual assault disclosure. The two most important forms that hostile reaction took were to blame the victim/survivor and to believe that the incident was consensual. Campbell, Ahrens, Sefl, Wasco, and Barnes (2001) suggested that negative reactions may impede survivors' recoveries more than positive reactions. It may be much more beneficial for survivors not to receive any support than to receive negative reactions from others that can lead to hurtful effects on psychological and physical health outcomes.

Ullman (1996a) found that negative reactions were more common among women who disclosed their sexual assault to medical personnel or the police than to those who did not. Ullman's sample was mostly Caucasian, unmarried, childless college graduates; fewer than 20% of her participants were of ethnicities other than non-Latina White women. In another study with the same participants, Ullman (1996b) found that 63% of them reported being blamed and 62% reported that they were discouraged to talk about their sexual assault. The discouragement came most often from their physicians or the police. With regard to positive reactions, the most beneficial responses were being validated and/or believed and receiving emotional support. When the emotional support was given by friends it correlated with a higher level of recovery than when it was given by other support sources.

With regard to psychotherapeutic needs, Draucker (1999) interviewed 33 women about their therapeutic experiences. The women in the sample were non-Latina White (n = 24), African American $(n = 7)$, Asian American (n = 1), and 1 unknown ethnicity. Draucker found that these sexual assault survivors were more concerned about support, empowerment, and being respected for their individuality than about their therapists using effective clinical techniques. In other words, the survivors first simply want to be supported, empowered, and respected. With regard to the criminal justice system, Patterson and Campbell (2010) interviewed 20 sexual assault survivors who disclosed their victimization to the police. The authors found that most of the participants (80%) were assaulted by someone they knew. More than half of them hesitated to report for fear that they would not be believed. Three themes were identified as the factors that

influenced disclosure to the police: preventing additional rapes, being encouraged by others to report, and having others make the choice for them.

Defining Perception and Employees in Organizations

It is important to describe what constitutes perception and employees when studying the sexual harassment because most workplace policies confuse the perceptions as well as employees upon which to act against the sexual harassment at the workplaces (Foster & Fosh, 2009). which The available literature that one of the leading cause of problem of sexual harassment at the workplaces is attributed to inattention to the areas of defining perception and employees at the workplaces that accounted for different views that constitute the sexual harassment (Schweinle, Cofer & Schatz, 2009). This is significant because majority of the workplaces for instance consider that sexual harassment perceived by their employees is something which is physically felt and not as something which is mentally perceived and experienced. According to the researchers (Popovich & Warren, 2010), the term perception in the broad sense refers to manner or the way in which employees view sexual harassment differently and how they personally experience the sexual harassment different from other employees at the workplaces. The available literature of sexual harassment describes the perception as something which includes the insight or intuition gained by perceiving the sexual harassment at the workplaces (Estrada & Berggren, 2009). In addition to that, researchers such as (Estrada & Berggren, 2009) described that perception of sexual harassment is defined as anything that is either perceived through its act or its effects. This indicate that majority of workplaces and employees perceive the sexual harassment when its effects are physically

evident and not when it is actually occurring as the act (Schweinle, Cofer & Schatz, 2009). In addition to that researchers such as (Hertzog, Wright & Beat, 2008) described in their study that sexual harassment perception is not about gaining the clear view regarding what is sexual harassment at the workplaces because till now it is widely cleared to the people that what is sexual harassment. In this regard, the perceptions of sexual harassment are actually something which is gained by the way of detection, analysis and interpretation of its information that is available through the responses of both victims and harassers within the organizations.

Many organizations also confuse in designing the preventive strategies and programs against sexual harassment for people that are categorized as the employees of the organizations. For the some organizations, employees include only those people that are low staff and full time regular whereas it is evidence in studies for example of (Elkins, Phillips & Ward, 2008) that part-time employees are most vulnerable for sexual harassment in the workplaces, which are often ignored by the organizations in their workplace policies and governments in their legal framework against sexual harassment at the workplaces. With regard to this numerous researchers such as (Elkins, Phillips & Ward, 2008) described employee someone that is working for organization and is entitled to receive any numeration from the organization is considered to be the employee of the organization of the organization. Some legal framework of African countries, such as South African's law of Basic Conditions of Employment Act (1997) excludes all those employees that are described as the independent contractors (Altman, 2005), however as researchers (Elkins, Phillips & Ward, 2008) suggested that these employees are more

vulnerable as compared to the regular employees, it is highly imperative to investigate the sexual harassment and other forms of it in the workplaces for whom they are working. Considering the clear definition of both perceptions and employees by many researchers is the initial step towards understanding the sexual harassment, its effects and intervention strategies and programs to combat against sexual harassment at the workplaces (McDonald, Graham & Martin, 2010).

Attitudes Toward and Perceptions of Sexual Harassment

Women's perceptions of what constitutes sexual harassment, and the likelihood to label and report sexual harassment, have been found to vary depending on the context that the woman is in at the time the inappropriate behaviours take place. One factor that has been shown to influence the way women experience sexual harassment is the perception women have of how tolerant various organizations are of inappropriate and harassing behaviours (Bingham & Scherer, 1993; Fitzgerald et al., 1995; Handy, 2006). In a study of three diverse workplaces in rural New Zealand, Handy (2006) concluded that "the boundaries which women draw between acceptable and unacceptable male behaviours are highly context specific and vary between different settings" (p. 21). For example, one of the organizations in this study was a meat-processing plant, that was a male dominated environment known for its misogynist attitude toward female employees in the form of overt sexual harassment, intimidation, and the implied feeling that management and the union are not only aware of but actually supportive of the harassment. Some research has found that when women perceive their workplace to be more encouraging of sexual harassment they will respond more aggressively to the situation and report the behaviour

to a family member or friend— perhaps because they feel that the institution will not act on her behalf. For example, in the study by Handy, one woman was the target of requests for sexual favors by a male coworker. In response to the inappropriate requests, the participant confided in her father, who then spoke to the plant manager on her behalf in an attempt to resolve the situation and stop the harassment.

The research study presents the differences in reporting the experience of sexual harassment in the workplace. The USMSPB (1981) conducted a survey in part to determine the awareness of sexual harassment in the federal workplace. In regard to reporting experiences of sexual harassment, the USMSPB showed that 31% of high school female graduates reported sexual harassment, and 8% of high school male graduates reported sexual harassment. In addition, within the group who attended graduate school, 53% of women and 15% of men reported sexual harassment. Further, 48% of professional women and 17% of professional men reported sexual harassment.

McCabe and Hardman (2005) investigated gender and organizational differences in attitudes toward, perceptions of, and experiences with sexual harassment. Participants included 86 men and 107 women *(N = 176)*, with an age range of 19 to 57 (*M* = 31, *SD* = 7.73) in a large, international, white-collar organization. Individual factors included age, gender, gender role, and past experiences with sexual harassment; and organizational factors included gender ratio, sexual harassment policies, and the role of the employer. They found that the atmosphere of the work environment (or the staff environment) has an influence on employee attitudes and perceptions.

Age had an influence in that younger individuals were more tolerant of sexual harassment. However, younger women tended to be less tolerant of sexual harassment, with tolerance increasing until the age of 50, when again it decreased. In comparison men become less tolerant after the age of 50, than younger men (p.720). When men and women score high in masculinity (male behavior's characteristics), men are more tolerant and women are less tolerant of sexual harassment (p.720). Thus, women are still less tolerant than are men, even when the women have high scores in masculinity (p.721). The results also indicated that both genders experience sexual harassment in the workplace (p.727). Sexual harassment was described when men displayed the target behavior toward women, but not the other way around (p.727). Finally, the results indicated that gender harassment was the predominant type of harassment in the workplace (p.734).

Using 372 undergraduates at a large Western University, Kelsey et al. (2004) examined their attributions when perceiving and passing judgment on their professors in the classroom, with a focus on determining what influenced student perceptions. Participants ranged in age from 17 to 39 years ($M = 19.4$) and were compared with a second sample of 247 students of the same university. Kelsey et al. found that student perceptions were shaped by frequently observed behaviors. Based on observations of the professors, behaviors that impede or interfere with instruction were identified and categorized. Certain professors were identified as belonging to one of three categories: incompetent, offensive, or indolent. Based on this information, sexual harassment can be

identified by the patterns of behaviors that are displayed by some employees in the work setting and categorized as such.

The results indicated that professors were perceived as internally oriented when displaying misconduct behaviors. According to observations of the professor's interpersonal relationships, the students passed judgment on the professor. When the interpersonal relationships had been positive, there was a tendency for positive perceptions when passing judgment. Specifically, when a professor had displayed good social relationships with students and others, students experienced difficulties in stating that something was wrong. Thus, when passing judgment, positive information tended to overrule negative information. This indicates that a negative episode could be overlooked when there is a history of positive behavior. Perhaps this may be a reason to expect repeated behavior of harassment before reporting it as an issue (Kelsey et al., 2004).

Saliency and consistency of the behavior being observed will function to formulate and consolidate an attribute of a person's behaviors. That is, if a behavior has been repeated over a period of time in the workplace, then an attitude toward and a perception of the misconduct will be established (Kelsey et al., 2004). When subtle episodes of sexual harassment occur, the history of the professor's positive behavior will camouflage his or her negative intention, indirectly reinforcing the behavior (Kelsey et al., 2004). Thus, certain negative behavior will become the norm, setting up a certain expectation in regard to sexual harassment (Kelsey et al., 2004). This demonstrates that the chain of behaviors that eventually is experienced as sexual harassment needs to be known to change attitudes toward the target behavior (Reese & Lindenberg, 1999).

Hypotheses 1, 2, and 3 present situations of experiencing and reporting incidents of sexual harassment in the workplace. Factors of good conduct in individuals can prevent other people from identifying and reporting episodes of sexual harassment.

Research on students' perception of sexual harassment, in terms of student-professor relationships, was conducted by Ei and Bowen (2002) at Western University. The understanding at the university is that professors are leaders and mentors to students. The researchers found that students perceived any type of sexual approach by the professor as inappropriate. Doing a favor for the professor, such as allowing the professor to borrow money or doing activities alone with the professor, also were not considered appropriate. The results were used to formulate a sexual harassment policy at the university.

Mazer and Percival (1989) examined perceptions and attitudes toward harassment among university staff. The purpose of the study was to examine "whether or not those who report considerable harassment experience have different perceptions and attitudes from those who do not" (p.138). The three levels of sexual harassment reporting were defined as low, moderate, and high. The instruments administered were a sexual harassment questionnaire to measure experiences, and the Macho Scale and the Sexual Harassment Attitude Scale to measure attitudes, Study participants were recruited through random sampling that included 74 male and 136 female participants.

According to the study findings, participants who reported sexual harassment at high levels were associated more with frequency of actual experiences than with a perception of the problem. That is, the findings described a negative correlation between

attitude and perception (McCabe el at., 2005). Thus, attitudes and perceptions toward sexual harassment did not lead to reporting. However, the frequency of the target behavior eventually led to reporting (Mazer el at., 1989). Finally, individuals who have experienced sexual harassment thought that the same could be occurring with other staff in the work setting (Gutek, 1985; Mazer & Percival, 1989).

Women are victimized significantly more than are men in the work environment, particularly in certain cultures. Culture affects how individuals perceive and respond to sexual harassment (van den Berg el at, 2004). Cortina (2001) conducted research on the impact of harassment on Latinas. Cortina used the Sexual Experience Questionnaire with a sample of 476 Latinas to examine the following variables: sexual hostility (offensive remarks and comments), unwanted sexual attention, sexist hostility (misogynistic without sexual content), sexist behavior, and sexual harassment. The results indicated that 30% of the women experienced sexist hostility, sexual hostility, and unwanted sexual attention in the workplace.

Cortina (2001) stated that the form in which sexual harassment has been displayed appeared to be more significant than did sexual harassment. Latinas are socialized to conduct themselves with respect (respeto) and dignity (dignidad). Being exposed to sexual harassment violates their expectations of the organization's support and causes them to lose trust in their work environment (Erickson, 1994), in addition to affecting them psychologically and in terms of their productivity.

Cortina and Wasti (2005) studied the Turkish, Hispanic, and Anglo Saxon cultures, focusing on coping responses when facing sexual harassment behaviors in the

workplace. The results indicated that the use of avoidance, denial, advocacy seeking, and social coping is found in all three cultures. Moreover, they found that women were the primary targets of sexual harassment.

Cortina and Wasti (2005) noted that the negative consequences of reporting harassment deterred some women from reporting an incident. In collectivistic cultures, women refrain from engaging in sexual-related conversation, which could contribute to their reluctance to report the incident. Overall, the researchers found that reporting the incident is the least-frequent choice, than confronting and filing a report.

Ford and Donis (1996) administered the Sexual Harassment Scale Inventory to examine the relationship "between age and gender in workers' attitude toward sexual harassment" (p. 629). The research had a sample population of 241 participants employed in a blue-collar organization located in New England. The participants were 94 men and 147 women, with an age range of 18 to 50 years. An ANOVA was used to measure the results of the study. The sum of the scores indicated how the participants thought about the statements, therefore indicating whether sexual harassment was an organization problem that affected the staff. The main effect indicated significant differences when comparing results from the scores. The results indicated that men tended to display more sexual harassment behaviors than did women. Other research findings reported that younger men tended to be less inclined toward displaying these behaviors than did women; however, the attitude toward these harassment behaviors increased after the age of 50 (Ford & Donis, 1996; McCabe & Hardman, 2005).

Understanding how individual and group variables are associated with the dynamics of the target problem will make the staff cognizant of how the problem has been handled in the work setting, that is, how frequently one group is subject to harassment compared to another group. The present research shows not only the aforementioned variables, but also shows the differences in responding in departmental staff (e.g., clinical and support staff). Some researchers have conducted studies with nurse staff, with gender and age as factors, to examine subjective experiences of sexual harassment within healthcare centers (Celik & Celik, 2007; Ford & Donis, 1996).

Studies have also shown that the norms, culture, and standards of a particular workplace will play a role in the way that sexual harassment is expressed by employees, and in turn, will influence the way targets choose to respond. As previously discussed, when an organization is perceived by the target as being tolerant of harassment, the target sometimes chooses to respond by confiding in a friend or family member about the harassment, perhaps as a way to find the support that they do not think they would obtain if they were to disclose to someone within the organization. However, in a study of women's responses to sexual harassment in the United States military, Malamut and Offermann (2001) found that the more tolerant of harassment the women perceived the military to be, the more likely they were to deny that there was a problem and avoid the subject of the harassment altogether. This was consistent with a study of women in medical schools who felt that because of the traditional, male dominated culture of their medical school environment, they had to take on a "boys will be boys" attitude in order to

cope with the blatant prevalence of sexual harassment within the institution (Wear et al., 2007).

In addition to gathering data from a meat processing plant, Handy (2006) interviewed employees of a retail store about their experiences with sexual harassment. The retail store was a female dominated environment, and most of the harassment was perpetrated by male customers. In this context, because the organizational tolerance for sexual harassment was perceived to be low, management was trusted by the employees, who believed they would be supported if they complained of harassment by colleagues or customers. In this situation, women found the harassment "irritating", but it was not as pervasive as compared to those organizations in which women perceived institutional attitudes toward sexual harassment to be high. On the other hand, female employees in this business also had to deal with male colleagues from other organizations, such as security guards, and sexual harassment perpetrated by these individuals was often described as "normal" and was for the most part overlooked by female employees.

Organizational responses to complaints of sexual harassment will also influence targets' perceptions of the workplace and the investigative process (Elkins, Phillips, & Ward, 2008; Elkins & Velez-Castrillon, 2008; Nelson, Halpert, & Cellar, 2007); however, research indicates that some organizational policies may not be enough to prevent inappropriate behaviour and do not necessarily provide the protection targets are seeking (Chamberlain, Crowley, Tope, & Hodson, 2008; Hertzog, Wright, & Beat, 2008). In a study of organizational responses to sexual harassment, Nelson, Halpert, and Cellar (2007) explored employees' perceptions of which types of interventions were effective in

responding to and preventing sexual harassment. Participants were asked to rate which of the following they perceived as most effective in communicating organizational intolerance of sexual harassment: victim reassignment and transfer, perpetrator counselling and rehabilitation, perpetrator apology and verbal/written reprimand (scolding), perpetrator demotion and leave of absence, or termination of the perpetrator's employment. Results found that termination of the perpetrator was rated as most effective in communicating organizational intolerance of sexual harassment, while scolding the perpetrator was rated by participants as being the second least effective means of communicating organizational intolerance. It is important to note that results of this study indicated that participants rated any intervention that involved the victim (i.e., victim reassignment and transfer) as least effective in communicating organizational intolerance of sexual harassment. This study suggests that targets of sexual harassment believe that in order to communicate intolerance of inappropriate sexual behaviour it is important for organizations to implement consequences that directly impact the perpetrator of the harassment.

Research findings regarding how harassing behaviours are perceived cross-culturally seems to be inconsistent. Some studies have found that harassing behaviours are experienced similarly by targets, regardless of culture, and that measures of sexual harassment can be applied cross culturally as an organizational issue with similar occupational, psychological, and health related consequences (Bergman & Henning, 2008; Wasti, Bergman, Glomb, & Drasgow, 2000). For example, in a study of sexual harassment of female nurses by male patients in Japan, the most common type of

harassing behaviours were those that could be categorized as "gender harassment"—making sexual jokes and remarks, and teasing (Hibino, Ogino & Inagaki, 2006). Also, in their cross-cultural study on the structure of sexual harassment, Gelfand et al. (1995) found that behavioural relationships could be formed to support and fit into the three categories of harassment, even despite the fact that they were studying a culture whose language (Portuguese) has no word to describe the concept of sexual harassment. Other studies have found that sexual harassment will be experienced differently across cultures due to varying interpretations of everyday social interactions such as personal space, and verbal and non verbal cues (Li & Lee-Wong, 2005; Merkin, 2008).

Other research has indicated that distinct societal traits such as patriarchy, collectivism, and socially acceptable gender roles can influence the way that unwanted sexual attention is perceived and the coping strategies employed by targets (Cortina & Wasti, 2005; Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). In their research on coping responses across persons, organizations, and cultures, Cortina and Wasti (2005) found cultural affiliation to be one of the most influential components in the determination of coping styles. For example, women from patriarchal, collectivist cultures were less likely to engage in assertive, public, or more vocal means of coping. Instead, they reported using avoidance, denial, and social-coping strategies without seeking formal advocacy. Women from these cultures also reported using subtle, non-verbal cues as coping strategies (e.g. frowning) to convey displeasure with the behaviour, while still allowing the perpetrator of the unwanted sexual attention to "save face".

Gender Differences

Employees' social interactions in the work environment will shape how employees perceived social events and how those events might be interpreted in terms of organization power and sexual harassment (Dougherty, 2006; Hulin, Fitzgerald, & Drasgow, 1996). Dougherty conducted a qualitative research design in a large healthcare organization in the Midwest, with a sample population of 23 participants (11 women and 12 men), of a European –Americans, ethical backgrounds. Other ethnic groups were not part of the research. The focus of the study was to examine how men and women perceived and discussed power and sexual harassment in the workplace. The average age of the participants was 38 years, and they had been working for an average of 7.6 years at the healthcare location. The participants' educational background had a range from high school graduates to those with doctoral degrees. The procedures included nine group interviews from which information was transcribed and later transformed into themes. A phenomenological approach was conducted to examine and categorize the themes. The nine groups were split into three subgroups (i.e., a men's group, a women's group, and a mixed group), and triangulated with individual interviews for consistency of the data. Further, face validity form, member check, and comparison of themes were used as triangulation of the data collected and analyzed.

To achieve their short- and long-term objectives, organizations give power to their management to supervise their subordinates (Dougherty, 2006; Hulin et al., 1996). This can defined as hierarchical power in the workplace, which will have an influence on how the organization functions and shapes employees' behavior. Generally, top management

appears to be run by men, and less so by women. Thus, interpretation of power can have a different meaning to management and subordinate employees in the workplace. With regard to how men and women discussed harassment in the work setting, perception of power can have an influence on employees' self-perception of power. Men self-perceive power in terms of a hierarchical form, while women self-perceive power in terms of its functions within the work environment. Thus, women perceive and understand power as a process of negotiation with coworkers.

The results of the study indicated that there is a differential meaning of the concept of power in the workplace. Women saw power through a process of interpersonal relationships, and coworkers as well as management can display the target behavior (Dougherty, 2006). Male participants perceived a hierarchical power as the dominant force in the system and accepted that someone in power can commit sexual harassment (p.498). Moving upward or downward within the system can give and take power away from employees (p.499). In regard to themselves, the men saw harassment as sexual intimidation, or as a misunderstanding in which women can say *no* (p.502). This projected apperception by men of attitude and tolerance of sexual harassment in the workplace (Hulin et al., 1996; Mazer & Percival, 1989). Some degree of sexual harassment between coworkers was admitted. However, sexual harassment and its relationship to power were agreed upon by all the participants in the study at the health care organization (Dougherty, 2006). The male participants associated sexual harassment with hierarchical power and limited their observation of behaviors that have a relationship to sexual harassment.

The female participants in Dougherty's (2006) study discussed that sexual harassment occurs through a process of interpersonal relationships and that power is a function of who has been invested with it. In this sense, administrators as well as coworkers can manifest the target behavior. In addition, the female participants perceived this power process as valued within the organization, in regard with ascribing power to another person in the work environment, physicians' and nurses' relationships were discussed at the health care organization. A physician was described as a person who may feel more powerful than may a nurse. However, the power can be controlled, such as when a nurse perceives the doctor as an equal and not more powerful than he or she. The person can admire or have respect for another individual for what he or she can do and not feel powerless because of the individual's occupational status.

The personal resources of the female employee can function to make her feel a personal power to deny a harasser, or make the harasser feel powerless by her not responding to him (Amick & Sorenson, 2004; Dougherty, 2006; Wojciske & Struzynska-Kujalowicz, 2007). If the employee does not see the harasser as having more power, then the harasser will be confronted. However, fears of negative consequences when reporting a sexual harassment incident to the organization could have an influence on the type of defensive skills that the staff will use in the workplace (Hulin et al., 1996). In other words, the organization's power could function as a mediator and control negative behavior in the work social environment. When establishing a sexual harassment policy in the work setting, the organization needs to take into account the differential interpretation of power by gender differences

Sexual harassment research has been conducted with nurses as the focus of experiencing harassment in healthcare facilities (Celik & Celik., 2007). Celik and Celik measured factors such as marital status, education, age, and length of time worked when examining nurses' experiences with sexual harassment in the workplace and concluded that that nurses within the clinical field tended to be more vulnerable to sexual harassment in the workplace than did other clinical groups.

Celik and Celik (2007) used a logistic regression to examine sexual harassment in a healthcare facility with a sample population composed of 622 nurses in a Turkish hospital. Although the design does not give subsamples of male and female participants in the study, the data showed that female nurses were more sexually harassed than were men. In addition, nursing is a profession that is identified with characteristics of caring and being warm toward patients. The assumption was that nurses who work in a Turkish hospital appeared to be vulnerable to sexual harassment. The study indicated that physicians harass nurses 77.1% of the time. Nurses also indicated harassment by coworkers 29.5 % of the time, by patients 43% of the time, and by a patient's family members 34% of the time. I will present the same context of participants within an mental retardation developmental center (MRDC); that is, nurses are part of the clinical (medical) participants in the current research study.

The factors analyzed by Celik and Celik (2007), showed that 61% of the participants were married women and were less exposed to sexual harassment than were single women, who made up 42.3% of the participants. In regard to education and length of work, Celik and Celik, found that the longer the length of employment, the more

opportunities to experience sexual harassment were present. They found a higher frequency of sexual harassment reported by college graduates in nursing who worked for more than 10 years in a hospital than nurses who worked less than ten years in the workplace.

Multiple variables can influence the norms and values within an institution. A theme in the literature associated with sexual harassment has been the level of education that influences the attitude toward and perception of sexual harassment. Researchers have indicated that highly educated women report fewer experiences of sexual harassment and display fewer self-blaming behaviors (Gutek, 1985; Hulin et al., 1996) than women with higher education. They feel that they are not provocative people and do not reinforce a harasser's behaviors. However, less-educated women self-blame and generalize that other women do the same (Gutek, 1985).

Marital status is a variable that influences attitude toward and perception of sexual harassment (USMSPB, 1981). Individuals who are married display more sensitivity to harassment than do single people. Marriage functions as role deterrent to sexual harassment. Men and women feel that being committed to another person is meaningful and readily react to unwanted sexual attention (USMSPB, 1981). This places young, single women as targets of sexual harassment when compared to married, divorced, or widowed women. Marriage, for both men and women, tends to prevent acts of sexual harassment in the work environment. However, this does not imply that someone who is married will not be subjected to harassment. This is a common theme in the sexual harassment literature.

Power and Self-esteem

Wojciszke and Struzynska-Kujalowicz (2007), who believe that power increases feelings of self-esteem and vice versa, conducted research to examine the relationship between power and self-esteem,. Their sample consisted of 61 male and 51 female ($N =$ 112) university students, with an average age of 21.50 ($SD = 1.26$). They examined self-esteem and how individuals express their power. They found that the highest feelings of self-esteem are based on personal resources (e.g., self-worth and competence). High self-esteem elevates the motivation to engage in activities that create the means to obtain goals. In turn, self-esteem is enhanced when one receives the awards associated with achieving a goal. In other words, power and self-esteem function in a reciprocal relationship. Wojciszke & Struzynska-Kujalowicz stated that higher power leads to increased self-esteem, whereas a feeling of lower power leads to lower self-esteem.

Self-esteem relies on feelings of self-worth, acceptance, and competence (Bandura, 1997; Branden, 1995). A person's level of self-esteem will then influence his or her sense of power and, thus, his or her leadership behaviors. Leaders who have high self-esteem feel powerful to lead (Anderson & Berdahl, 2002; Herbert, 2008; Wojciszke & Struzynska-Kujalowicz, 2007). Wojciszke and Struzynska-Kujalowicz discussed the approach-inhibition theory, which concerns how a leader moves forward to resolve problems and attain objectives or displays avoidance behaviors that prevent positive actions from taking place. Leaders who are beset by inhibitions will exercise more egoistical behaviors such as personal interests.

Empowerment refers to having the right information and training that pertain to one's work role (Herbert, 2008). Empowerment in the work setting enables employees to feel that they are an important part of the work environment. In contrast, when employees are in a position of less power, their ability to set goals will be limited, they will feel less in charge when making decisions, and, as a consequence, their self-esteem will decrease (Herbert, 2008).

Individuals who have been stereotyped, based on personal or cultural characteristics, or who have been evaluated under discriminatory terms, may be subjected to harassment in the workplace (Wislar et al., 2002). This is related to the notion that an individual who is perceived by other employees as having low self-esteem is vulnerable to sexual harassment in the workplace. When sexual harassment is reinforced by an organization's norms, condoning the negative behavior can function as a norm (Skinner, 1965). Reinforced negative norms within the organization might function as predictor to sexual harassment; Behavior in the workplace can be redirected by a concerted effort management to prevent employees from stereotyping other employees, thereby reducing the possibility of sexual harassment.

Scope and Incidences of Female Sexual Harassment in Workplaces

The available literature indicated scope of sexual harassment where it widely happened with the female workers across the workplaces. According to the findings of (Fielden et al., 2010), sexual harassment is frequently occurred in private organizations, in public organizations and in both small and large enterprises as well as in shops and services. Further, researchers such as (Fielden et al., 2010) highlighted in their findings

that sexual harassment occurs with female workers on farms and plantation, with traders and entrepreneurs in the market and with trainers and students in the educational and vocational training institutions and universities across the globe. In addition to that, the researchers highlighted that sexual harassment occurs to both uneducated and educated female workers at the workplaces as well as on the all levels of job hierarchy systems within the organizations. Apart from that majority of the researchers agreed that sexual harassment at the workplaces can also occur to the men, where women, to gain the certain material benefits or revenge, may exploit the men by sexually attracting towards themselves (Hernandez-Truyol, 2012), the researchers suggested that majority of the victims of sexual harassment till date suggested that women are most vulnerable in any case.

According to the recent study conducted by the Human Rights Commission (HRC) of New Zealand that reviewed the perceptions, feelings and complaints of female sexual harassment field across the world during the period of 2000-2011, suggested that women in developing countries especially in Asian and African countries are most vulnerable with sexual harassment as well as gender based discirimitnion than any other women and men in the rest of the world (Parker et al., 2012). According to the findings of the research, nine out of every 10th compliant regarding the sexual harassment is directed towards the workplaces in the Asian and African countries which itself indicated the high prevalence and broad scope of problem of sexual harassment in the workplaces (Popovich & Warren, 2010). The study further suggested that despite the findings acknowledging the common assertion occurring from the collective responses of both

men and women that "women do also sexually harass men at the workplaces", more than 90% of the complaints, regardless of this fact, suggested that men are in the majority that are involved in sexually harassing women (McCann, 2005).

The study also highlighted that same sex harassment is the second most problem in the workplaces of Asian and African countries which is still highly unnoticed area in the available literature of sexual harassment at the workplaces. In essence, the study suggested that male to male sexual harassment complaints at the workplaces reported around 6% indicating it the second most problem at the workplaces whereas female to female sexual harassment complaints reported around 2% indicating it as the third most problem at the workplaces across the globe. Apart from that, less than 2% of the sexual harassment complaints at the workplaces were found to be "women sexually harassing men", however researchers such as (Benavides Espinoza & Cunningham, 2010) suggested that this type of sexual harassment is usually found in the Western countries whereas eastern and developing countries are still facing with the high incidences of sexual harassment complaints in which men sexually harass women at the workplaces.

In addition to these findings, (Benavides Espinoza & Cunningham, 2010) found in their research of more than 30 countries across the globe regarding the prevalence of sexual harassment victimization that women are the most vulnerable in the highest percentage of victimization at the workplaces with relation to the sexual harassment and its forms such as attempted rape, inclusive of rape, offensive behaviors, indecent assault and the like. Moreover, the researchers highlighted that sexual harassment at the workplaces of Africa across the four directions, south, north, east and west, amounted for

nearly 10 percent of the attempted rapes and indecent assaults as well as nearly 8 percent

of cases of rapes and violence at the workplaces (Popovich & Warren, 2010).

Researchers such as (Estrada & Berggren, 2009) stated in their research that age is

the most significant factor among all other demographic factor which amounted to

highest victimization of female sexual harassment at the workplaces. According to their

research, the highest victimization of sexual harassment at the workplaces often belonged

to the female employees in the youngest age categories (McDonald, Graham & Martin,

2010). Adding further, the researchers asserted that incidences of sexual harassment is

highly vulnerable with females in the age groups that are younger than 29 which

amounted to be nearly half of all the cases reported in their findings. In addition, nearly a

third of the arbitrary sample of women in their research that are sexually harassed were

lie in the age groups of 30 -39 years age (Schweinle, Cofer & Schatz, 2009). In addition

of the findings of the researchers asserted that nearly of the women in their sample are

victims of the worst forms of the sexual harassment incidences that include the sexual

violence and non-sexual assault and threats and majority of women that reported these

types of sexual harassment incidences fall between 16 and 34 years o the age.

In support of the findings of above research, (Popovich & Warren, 2010) authors

examined that differences in the factors of seniority and age are the most significant

factors of high incidences of sexual harassment at the workplaces. According to the

findings of the researchers, more than 72% responses of arbitrary number of sample

female employees with relation to the complaints against sexual harassment were against

the male employees that were in the higher authority position and higher ranks in the

hierarchy of the organizations. In addition to that, the researchers found in their responses

of interview with female employees that almost every female employee mentioned

somewhere that harasser was considerably elder than her and range from their supervisors

to CEO of the organizations that involved in sexually harassing them at the workplaces.

Researchers such as supported these findings and further asserted that this indicated the

worst form of the sexual harassment where those people are responsible for placing the

preventive strategies and programs against sexual harassment at the workplaces are by

themselves involve in the sexual harassment complaints (Benavides Espinoza &

Cunningham, 2010). The findings of the researchers also suggested that women that are

in the younger age less than 25 years are the complainants whereas their harassers

somewhere fall between the average ages of 42 years, indicating the significant

differences in age between both of 17 years (Schweinle, Cofer & Schatz, 2009).

Profile of Women at the Workplace

The available literature indicated that number of women in the employment is

considerably higher as compared to the number of women two to three decades ago

(Collinsworth, Fitzgerald & Drasgow, 2009). This has considerably suggested in the

available literature that scale of sexual harassment in the workplaces has increased

proportionately during the last 20 to 30 years before (Popovich & Warren, 2010). Further,

(McDonald, Graham & Martin, 2010) acknowledged that sexual harassment though if not

increased, remained the persistent in the workplaces and societies due to changing

patterns and poverty in the employment as well as job and shift demands for men and

women workers at the workplaces as it used to be two decades before. In addition to that,

majority of the researchers agreed in their research that most female employees at the

workplaces especially those in African countries are offered jobs that are low paid and

entail low security, low conditions of work, low bargaining power and low status in a

narrow range of occupations (Hertzog, Wright & Beat, 2008). The researchers argued

that all these areas are geared towards the many but one thing which enhances the risk of

becoming subjected to the sexual harassment and others forms of sexual harassment at

the workplaces.

Emerging Feminization of Employment and Sexual Harassment

The available literature increasingly recognizing that situations and conditions of

work is continuously changing that eventually lead to some drastic changes in the recent

past due to the increasing globalization (Foster & Fosh, 2009). This has now attributed

the workplaces to be open for the greater openness or liberalization of the markets, rapid

distribution of the information, technology, products and consumption patterns, free and

greater mobility of people and financial capital, and rapid adaption to the modern values,

norms and cultures within the organizations (Hertzog, Wright & Beat, 2008). In addition

to that, researchers such as (Schweinle, Cofer & Schatz, 2009) suggested that due to

increasing globalization and its processes across the world, the process of organization

are also proportionally changing with increased informalization, casualization and

increased flexibility in the employment as well as redefinition and expansion of the

typical and precarious jobs at the workplace across the globe. Moreover, the world-wide

regular full-time wage employment has considerably open new doors for the people

towards both broad range of specialized and regular jobs as well as broad range of

irregular forms of labor which are not even covered by the standard workplaces policies and standard labor legislations at the workplaces. This has resulted in such form of labor which has been considered as the product of globalization and includes contract labor, part-time work, home work, self-employment in the informal sectors and more importantly outsourcing which typically different from the regular or standard jobs at the workplaces in terms of compensations, policies and work timings. These jobs vary from country to country and according to great number of evidences in the available literature as identified by (Schweinle, Cofer & Schatz, 2009) that they are not covered with equal employment opportunity rights or policies against the hostile work environment and even many of these jobs are not even registered in the legislations of the countries where the government or state pay little attention to prohibit workplace harassment incidences occurring with great scale.

Some researchers such as (Kodellas, Fisher & Gill, 2012) acknowledge that while these types of jobs are not to be said as unethical as it provides the earning source for the many people in countries especially those with high poverty ratios, unemployment and low social status, these jobs have also widely exploited the workers especially the female workers in the many forms where sexual harassment at the workplaces also includes. The considerable rise of these jobs, as suggested by authors (Gaanderse & Valasek, 2011), is the part of the business response to the increased competition and changing market conditions across the globe with a view to respond quickly to volatile demand and supply of capital that has eventually required the workers to go outside their home places to achieve the goals of company or organization. This is however difficult for many

employees especially for females and those in the conservative and backward societies where they are not allowed to visit the other countries or work in the night shifts and the like. However, (Menon et al., 2010) suggested that this has played very insignificant role in actually evading the employers to get the female employers for the full time or standard jobs because they, due to increased competition and rising costs, cut their labor costs even by reducing the number of core works and hence relying on the irregular forms of employment and forcing their employees to work in order to avoid the labor surplus during the economic downturns and paying for fringe benefits commonly associated with standard or regular forms of the work (Shepler & Routh, 2012). This has considerably forced the female employees even in the conservative societies or undeveloped countries to take the night shift jobs and even work from distance for their organizations which has eventually expose them to high probability of sexual harassment evidences at the workplaces.

Increasing Poverty and Female Sexual Harassment

Researchers such as (McLaughlin, Uggen & Blackstone, 2012; Irene van Staveren, 2011) argued that despite the evidences of economic developments over the last two decades, the underdeveloped and developing countries still had around one-third of the families that are living in income poverty which is commonly amounted as the proportion of households spending or earnings less than US $1 per day. According to the research of (Hendricks & Valasek, 2010), in African and Asian countries between 2002-2008, the income poverty was the most pronounced in the West African countries which amounted to 45%, whereas amounted to 29% which is pronounced in the East Asian

countries including China while 14% is reported to be in the Asia Pacifica and South East Asian countries over the rest of the world. Researchers such as (McDonald, 2012) acknowledge that updated figures of the current years are hard to come by though it could be predicted considering these figures as well as recent-economic slowdown growth rates in the West African and other countries and further the effects of 2007-2010 global recession that people living in the poverty income might have further gone done this line in these countries.

Apart from that, researchers such as examined in their research that gender inequality in income poverty groups is the most difficult to measures as it is usually measured from the households to households level and thereby significantly ignoring the differences or disparities across the households. However, some other indicators regarding the poverty and gender inequality in income poverty group could be compared between men and women that are eventually associated with sexual harassment incidences at the workplaces (Irene van Staveren, 2011). This include the common indicators in developing and underdeveloped countries that women have higher incidences of poverty and this incidence in increasing with severe forms among women as compared to men as suggested in the report of (Hendricks & Valasek, 2010).

Apart from these findings, evidences form numerous other studies on the human poverty indicators in developing and underdeveloped countries of the world indicated that poverty is often measured in terms of education and health and this trend is confirmed not only in Asian countries but African countries too in the recent past (Irene van Staveren, 2011). Further, according to one research, more than 900 million illiterate

and uneducated individuals across the world, two third of these are amounted to women. Moreover, the report of (Becker & Kuranchie, 2012) that worldwide female literacy in year 2009-2010 is 41% in the developing countries which 63% include the African countries, 26% include the South and East Asian countries and 17% included the South East Asia and the Pacific countries. This indicated that in African countries, women amounted to the most illiterate individuals and considerably these women supply a significant amount of labor is such professions such as in plantations where the incidences of sexual harassment are considered as the normal part and more specifically the part and parcel of the daily life (Becker & Kuranchie, 2012).

Negotiating and Resisting Sexual Harassment

The available literature suggested that responding to the incidences of sexual harassment at the workplaces in both sexual and verbal coercion forms and beyond these types of offensive behaviors varies considerably depending to a great extent on the "job security" as well as the general work environment and individual economic circumstances at the workplaces (Hernandez-Truyol, 2012). Hendricks & Valasek (2010) found in their research that mostly sexual harassment incidences are not reported with due to certain fears associated with employment and eventually end up in resulting the situation where the female employee either resist or negotiate sexual harassment and not beyond to this. They suggested that among the fears of female employees associated with their jobs, the greats fear for workers in developing and undeveloped countries is loss of the job and less availability of the employment opportunities (McDonald, 2012).

McLaughlin, Uggen & Blackstone (2012) further suggested this notion that sexual harassment is often used in the workplaces as the weapon which is kept aside for dismissing the employees starting from dismissing the female workers considering the ease through which female employees could be dismissed as compared to men. This kind of fear is the most dangerous among female workers even from the actual situation of the dismissal and this fear of retrenchment casts as an omnipresent shadow in the minds of female workers in most of the developing and underdeveloped countries (McLaughlin, Uggen & Blackstone, 2012). As a result, when female employees are coerced with sexual harassment either for the reason of dismissal or common aggressive behavior from male employees, they due to fear, do not report or complain and rather end up negotiating and resisting this kind of behavior regularly at the workplaces for saving their jobs (McLaughlin, Uggen & Blackstone, 2012).

Significant Factors Responsible for Female Sexual Harassment

The available literature suggested that there are numerous significant factors that are responsible for problem of female sexual harassment at the workplaces. Like in the previous sections of the theoretical framework of sexual harassment and incidences and scope of sexual harassment with female employees at the workplaces, the researchers suggested that responsible factors for this kind of problem vary significantly form situation to situation and sometimes from person to person indicating this as rather subjective in terms of both situations and female employees at the workplaces (Dartnall & Jewkes, 2012). With regard to these factors, numerous researchers in the existing body of literature of sexual harassment have common consensus that sexual harassment has its

bearing on the major dimensions that entail the biological essences, fundamental political

categories and communicational practices, outcomes of social roles and finally the

discourses of power at the workplaces (Hernandez-Truyol, 2012).

Researchers such as (Thanem, 2008; Perry, Kulik & Field, 2009; McDonald,

Backstrom & Dear, 2008) suggested in their research that sexual harassment is nothing

but all about the sexual differences between females and males and occurred because the

sexuality becomes the instinctive sexual drives and libidos in the males towards the

females as well as the in females towards the males at the workplaces, though the former

is the most significant one (Blackstone, Uggen & McLaughlin, 2009). Because of this

natural or biological circumstances between sexes, men as well as women, as suggested

by authors (Perry, Kulik & Field, 2009), have sexual desires or urges which are normal

and natural. In addition to that, researchers such as (Thanem, 2008) agreed with the

above researchers, that in order to better understand the gender related issues between

males and females employees at the workplaces, it is imperative to look at the

constructions as well as reconstructions between the relations of both genders and how

these influence in the manner things are done at the workplaces. Researchers such as

(Blackstone, Uggen & McLaughlin, 2009) postulated that constructions between gender

relations are depending upon the roles of gender that society has generally prescribed. In

addition, the construction of gender relations suggested the notion that interaction of

gender roles open up the considerable room for detailed forms of sexuality especially for

men through which men enable to flirt with women in the workplaces without

considering it as something offensive at the workplaces. In addition to that, (Elkins,

Phillips & Ward, 2008) in their research examined that organizations have become a series of sites which pose the considerable dangers of offensive of sexuality relations that could be both exploited and repressed. In this regard, (Blackstone, Uggen & McLaughlin, 2009) examined that sexuality knowledge, historically therefore, widely acknowledges sexual interests. In addition to that, (Hertzog, Wright & Beat, 2008) suggested that both sexual identities and communities could be widely open to the change regardless of the rigid bureaucratic system or not.

In the available literature, all feminists, academic and legal scholars have agreed and even strongly emphasized that sexual harassment is not something which could be characterized as the individual problem at the workplaces but it the part of unnoticed problem of an organized express of male power (Schweinle, Cofer & Schatz, 2009). It is through this way that women in the workplaces are kept aside for their equal employment and security rights, re-enforced for their secondary status and kept out of non-traditional occupations across the workplaces. According to several researchers, this form of the perceptions is further re-enforced by the bureaucratic system of the most organizations that eventually increases the high probability of female sexual harassment at the workplaces.

Researchers such as (Collinsworth, Fitzgerald & Drasgow, 2009; Benavides Espinoza & Cunningham, 2010) strongly argued in their research that bureaucracy that was thought to be the progressive and ideal for providing the equal rights to both men and women at the workplaces as well as in societies has instead created patriarchal structures. Further, they agreed that bureaucracy reinforced the arbitrary power held by fathers and

masters in traditional has transferred the characteristics in male supervisors and male coworkers towards women in the workplaces. This is because in the bureaucratic cultures, male domination and male sexuality power in organizations are emphasized. In addition to that, researchers such as (McDonald, Graham & Martin, 2010; Hertzog, Wright & Beat, 2008) asserted that sexual harassment at the workplaces is the product of the competition between the genders for the domination. In this regard, the men that have traditionally held the dominant role within the societies and home, have reacted to the challenge from the women that have considerably pose them a threat by gaining the power and authority through their own competency and abilities and hence men eventually reacted by expressing the hostility as in the forms of sexual harassment in the workplaces.

In the context of Cote d'Ivoire and West Africa, researchers such as (Foster & Fosh, 2009; Blackstone, Uggen & McLaughlin, 2009; McDonald, Backstrom & Dear, 2008) suggested sexual harassment is strongly viewed as the western concept and hence there is generally held belief that this kind of issue or problem is non-existent in a typical African settings. However, this study specifically recognized that traditional beliefs are only the few among the other responsible factors that have come to fore for sexual harassment in the workplaces and hence further investigation of significant factors responsible for female sexual harassment at the workplaces is highly required (Blackstone, Uggen & McLaughlin, 2009).

Nature of Sexual Harassment in Organizations

Researchers such as (Hertzog, Wright & Beat, 2008) emphasized that an effective

way of understanding the existence and prevalence of sexual harassment at the

workplaces is first to define its nature and then determine what specific acts or omission

could or would be determined with regard to the specific context of the sexual

harassment. In this regard, (McDonald, Graham & Martin, 2010) in their research

specifically asserted that sexual harassment could be divided into four major categories

with relation to its nature. This includes 1) sex/role conditioning that entails the notion

that men are likely to engage in the aggressive sexual behavior towards women through

socialization at the workplaces, 2) biological/physical attraction that entails the notion

that men are physically attracted towards women because they are attractive physically

and sexually such as through their dress code or body language, 3)

intentional/instrumental that entails the notion that men harass the women simply because

they want to maintain their authority and dominant role of power over the women in the

organizations regardless of their education. Position and job profile at the workplaces and

finally 4) organizational that entails the notion that organizations are structured in such a

manner that enable or allot the men to be more dominant and powerful as compared to

women at the workplaces which eventually cause them to abuse their dominant and

power positions by sexually harassing female employees at the workplaces (Kodellas,

Fisher & Gill, 2012).

While these are the common consideration of defining the nature of sexual

harassment at the workplaces, some researchers argued that these specifically do not take

into considerations changes in both organizations and legal frameworks that are changing

from the traditional way women are perceived in the workplaces (Gaanderse & Valasek,

2011). With regard to this fact, many academic and legal scholars agreed that policies

regarding the sexual harassment must allow employees to be specific in addressing the

conduct of sexual harassment at the workplaces which include but not limited to physical

conduct (pinching, brushing, touching and patting), verbal conduct of the sexual nature

(suggestions, propositions, remarks, unwelcome advances, pressure for sexual activity,

remarks, innuendos and comments), sex based conduct describing the conduct of sexual

nature that (degrades, degenerates, offends, ridicules, intimates and is derogative in

nature) and finally include non-verbal conduct that include (leering, gestures,

pornographic or sexually suggestive pictures, written materials or objects and whistling)

(Irene van Staveren, 2011).

Researchers emphasized the value of stating these categories of nature of sexual

harassment as it provides more room of understanding what constitutes sexual

harassment in the organizations and leaves little doubt as what could be characterized as

offensive or sexually harassed behavior at the workplaces (Hernandez-Truyol, 2012).

This also enables the victims to be specific in appealing and complaining regarding the

problem rather than particularly addressing and recalling the earlier four stated categories

of nature of sexual harassment at the workplaces (McDonald, 2012). The researchers

however also agreed that the problem remains in the place in the aforementioned

categories of nature of sexual harassment at the workplaces in which many of these are

considered as innocent behavior that takes place in the normal contact between male and

female employees at the workplaces and hence do not always require to classified as the behavior of sexual nature and any of its forms mentioned above (Hernandez-Truyol, 2012). The researchers in this situation argued that it exposes both genders at the workplaces to reevaluate their gender relations as to the certain extent all these behaviors that are described as sexually may in fact be acceptable to both genders (Fielden et al., 2010). (McLaughlin, Uggen & Blackstone, 2012; Becker & Kuranchie, 2012) however argued that it is all in the end regardless whether these behaviors are classified as sexual harassment or not, depend on the way in which an individual employee perceives or experiences the stated behavior.

Types of Sexual Harassers Female Employees Face in Workplaces

Numerous researchers in the available literature asserted that when individual male employees or group of male employees at the workplaces embarrass female employees by means of unwanted advances and compliments, comments and even physical evaluation, gestures and lewd jokes and display sexually unwanted sexual posters, then all these male employees are classified in certain types of sexual harassers which female employees face at the workplaces.

The Opportunist

The Opportunist is the type of sexual harasser that is usually promiscuous and dedicated in his attention towards the female employees as well as female suppliers and clients at the workplaces (McDonald, 2012; Hernandez-Truyol, 2012). They are called the opportunist because they leave no stone unturned whenever the opportunity presents itself in the form of business trip, in the elevator, at the office party, when working late,

when alone with female coworker in the office room, cafeteria and car and many other situations that they eagerly wanted to express their inner sexual drive towards women (Hernandez-Truyol, 2012).

The Power-Player

These types of male harassers at the workplaces use the sexual harassment as the weapon in the power game where men leaves no opportunity to favor someone without exchange of benefits such as getting and keeping a job, position, promotion, salary hikes, bank overdrafts, getting a driving license and so on which they can promise in exchange of sexual desires to be fulfilled from female employees (Irene van Staveren, 2011).

The Serial Harasser

These types of sexual harassers at the workplaces are considered as the most dangerous among all which can harm the victim not only at the workplaces but also outside the workplaces as these individuals are highly compulsive in nature and often has serious psychological problems (McLaughlin, Uggen & Blackstone, 2012). They are also considered as expert criminal that seek the female employees at the workplaces by building up an positive image so that those female coworkers find it easy to get along with him as well as find it hard to believe any ill side of him towards them. They often plans their strategies and approaches against female coworkers very carefully and would only attack or strike in the private where it is his word against that of the female coworker or his subordinate (Collinsworth, Fitzgerald & Drasgow, 2009).

The Situational Harasser

These forms of sexual harassers are generally triggered to the above category however entails that person's behavior towards sexual harassment against female employees does not mainly psychological but more situational than compulsive. In this regard, researchers stated that these types of sexual harassers only acts in the particular behavior and any of its incidences that are usually associated with their specific life situations, medial or emotional problems (Fielden et al., 2010). The researchers also agreed that while these types of sexual harassers are dangerous too as serial harassers, the situation or the diseases they are encountering with could be brought under the control which eventually and usually leads the sexual harassment behavior to be stopped (Hernandez-Truyol, 2012).

Typical Types of Female Victims in Organizations

Apart from the typical sexual harassers at the workplaces, many researchers in their studies also identified typical forms of women that are highly victims of sexual harassment at the workplaces Among these women, those that are classified as heads of households and needs the jobs very badly are considered to be particularly vulnerable to sexual harassment and become victims of it at the workplaces by hands of sexual harassers classified as power-players (McDonald, 2012). In addition to that, widows and divorcees female employee at the workplaces are the most vulnerable to be victims of the sexual harassment psychologically either because of their loneliness or personal loss. Further, those women that are considered as insecure or timid in their nature due to their abilities, career-related education, physical beauty and lack of self-confidence are considered to be highly victims of sexual harassment at the workplaces. Further, these

types of female victims due to limited potential and advancement would agree to negotiate and resist sexual harassment due to fear to be replaced from their jobs.

In addition to that, researchers such as (Thanem, 2008) asserted that those women that are eager to be liked or accepted may find it difficult to be assertive or say "No" for the sexual offers and hence becomes the highly victims of sexual harassment at the workplaces. More generally, their helpfulness and sometimes their friendliness are misread by the harassers or their male coworkers at the workers that may find no harm in touching or harassing them sexually through other forms which eventually create the problems for these females to say them for No.

Finally, researchers asserted that those women that take up the profession of receptionist and saleswoman are regarded to be highly vulnerable with sexual harassment where they are forced by the high authority to please the clients through any means even by offering the sexual behaviors or client by himself can offer the benefits or sales in exchange to meet their sexual demands (Perry, Kulik & Field, 2009). The above classification hence suggested the distinct profile of only the victims but harassers too in which sexual harassment incidences in the workplaces surround and hence clearly indicating that certain categories of male employees are highly aggressive to become sexual harassers and certain categories of women are vulnerable to become victims than others (McDonald, Backstrom & Dear, 2008).

Highly Risky Areas of Female Sexual Harassment at Workplaces

According to numerous research studies, the quality statistics and evidences whether it be anecdotal, official or empirical on the subject of sexual harassment differ considerably from one region to another region, from one city to another city, from one organization to another organization and from one country to another country, depending on the type of quality of the data collection methods and levels of awareness people have regarding the sexual harassment at the workplaces. While it is evident that sexual harassment varies considerably from one area to another area and is highly subjective from organization to organization or industry to industry, most researchers have agreed that analyzing this as macro problem from the country perspective is significant as it usually it entails the large information accompanied with strong validations of the data collection methods (McDonald, Backstrom & Dear, 2008). In this regard, researchers such as (Foster & Fosh, 2009) argued that in some countries such as of West Africa and Asia Pacific region indicate the statistics of sexual harassment in the workplaces considerably higher as compared to other countries. This is because research in these countries have not only conducted the sexual harassment in single risky area of the workplaces through which it exists but compiled the statistics of other kinds of gender discrimination and volition of human rights that include sexual threats, sexual assault, modesty and the like which eventually present the true picture of prevalence of female sexual harassment victimization at the workplaces and the fact through which it is emerging from one level to another level (Blackstone, Uggen & McLaughlin, 2009).

Ina addition to that, (Hertzog, Wright & Beat, 2008) argued that findings of data of countries vary considerably across the groups of sample population with their level of awareness of problem, their size, their demographic and geographic characteristics and especially the nature of precise questions asked from the research participants. McDonald, Graham & Martin (2010) also suggested that in some countries the research of sexual harassment in highly risky areas that vulnerable with sexual harassment however get limited in their focus when entails the observation of both males and female employees as female sexual harassment should specifically based on the specified groups of female, their sample size, their demographics and questions asked from them to ascertain the prevalence of sexual harassment and existence of preventive strategies and programs against sexual harassment. In addition to that, researchers such as (Elkins, Phillips & Ward, 2008; Hertzog, Wright & Beat, 2008) argued that questions that participants are asked in some countries constitute the highly risky areas and validation of data collection. For instance, a question that intends to examine that whether or not the victim has experienced any kind or form of sexual harassment, unwelcome behavior and gender discrimination is more likely to elicit the positive answer than actually helping to ascertain whether the person has been sexually harassed or not. This is likely because those questions differ in the understanding across country to country and society to society that what constitutes sexual harassment at the workplaces (McDonald, Graham & Martin, 2010).

In this regard, researchers such as (Hertzog, Wright & Beat, 2008) suggested that in countries where there is high predicted probability of incidences of sexual harassment

may considerably differ in the responses of different groups of the research participants. Notwithstanding to this, many researchers have common consensus that majority of the overall research findings indicated that not only the sexual harassment at the work is highly prevalent but also exist as one of the most significant problems that people face at the workplaces.

High Risk Professions and Sectors

The available literature have discussed that besides the age and gender as well as lack of social protection and lack of labor, the selection of specific professions and sectors in another important factor that put the females at the high risk to become victimized and vulnerable to sexual harassment at the workplaces (McDonald, Graham & Martin, 2010). These professions include educational institutions, industrial areas, plantation and agriculture, vocational training institutions, hotel industry and not-for-profit organizations in Cote d'Ivoire West Africa that are highly vulnerable through from both employers and customers or clients' side (Foster & Fosh, 2009). In other words, these professions not only demand that women should present themselves to clients as the object of sexual harassment and sexual assault in the exchange of business and at worst forced by their employers or supervisors at the workplaces to meet the needs of their clients for the exchange of business. Further, the worst side of these highly risky areas is that there is no accountability of implementation of workplace policies or laws against the sexual harassment at the workplaces.

The women in young age group are found to be most vulnerable in these professions especially in the hotel industry as discussed in the previous sections. Further,

these women are even prepared and hired at the conditions of employment to provide the sexual favors to clients and supervisors at the workplaces regularly (McDonald, Backstrom & Dear, 2008). These women are soon fired whenever the employer or client find the women undesirable to meet their sexual needs and replaced with new victims that are suffering with high poverty and low social-economic status especially in the countries like Cote d'Ivoire West Africa. This indicated that these professions are not only male-dominated but also have little job security where large number of women are supervised by small numbers of men and are high risk groups with regard to sexual harassment in countries with high poverty levels and low socio-economic status (Thanem, 2008).

Training and Education Sectors

Educational and vocational training institutions where the fresh employees are sent for the gaining insight of their work either in different building of the organization or within the same building is also found to be another factor that put the females at the high risk to become victimized and vulnerable to sexual harassment at the workplaces (Blackstone, Uggen & McLaughlin, 2009). In addition to that, employees in the educational institutions and universities, fall under the category of training and education sector, are also found to be highly vulnerable with high number of incidences of female sexual harassment.

This is for example evident in countries like Japan where the public school teachers had been involved as harassers of the sexual harassment in the study of researchers such as (McDonald, Graham & Martin, 2010). The researchers stated that more than half of teachers in there had reportedly harassed and fondled their students

while majority of teachers have reportedly molested their colleagues and graduates at the schools (Benavides Espinoza & Cunningham, 2010). In addition to that, the study of (McDonald, Graham & Martin, 2010) revealed that around 1 among 3 female workers reported that they have been sexually harassed by the interviewers in their interview and around 1 among 4 reported that they have been sexually harassed during the training where the trainer intentionally indulge in some acts of training that cause them to touch their physical body. This literature hence indicated that this is most vulnerable or risky area of the sexual harassment for female workers that have reported high incidences rates at the workplaces.

Employment with Low Security Conditions

The available research indicated that employment with low security conditions is another significant factor that put the females at the high risk to become victimized and vulnerable to sexual harassment at the workplaces (McDonald, Graham & Martin, 2010). The research of (Elkins, Phillips & Ward, 2008; Foster & Fosh, 2009) indicated that part-time, casual and temporary workers or any other the combination are the most vulnerable with relation to high risk of the sexual harassment as they are neither protected by the workplace policies nor allotted the room to complain the sexual harassment behavior and ask for the penalties against the harasser. This found in one research of Thai Garment factory (Blackstone, Uggen & McLaughlin, 2009) that temporary employees that even want to apply for the paid sick leave would be dismissed for their jobs, let alone allotting the options to report the sexually harassment behaviors against the managers or others that have sexually harassed them.

Similar to these findings, (McDonald, Graham & Martin, 2010) examined in the hotel of in Asian countries that around 65-70% of the female employees at the workplaces are temporary workers. The study reported that around 25% of the temporary female employees across the Asian countries have reported that they have been sexually harassed. The study also suggested that these workers are not provided with the rights to protest against the sexual harassment and any of its forms against the male harasser or their manager because the evaluation of the manager was critical for renegotiating of the job compensation as well as the period of the contract.

Numerous researchers found in their research that young women in African countries are poorly paid and are mostly offered with low status and part-time work which eventually expose them to higher risk of sexual harassment at the workplaces (Schweinle, Cofer & Schatz, 2009). The young women are highly underpaid in hospitality and service industry where they would settle for their jobs even in exchange of sexual favors for clients or managers (Hertzog, Wright & Beat, 2008).

Domestic Female Employees and Workers

According to several studies in the available literature, the entertainment and domestic employees at African countries are often highly vulnerable to sexual harassment because of extreme degree of the subordination between the employer and worker (Foster & Fosh, 2009). The research of (McDonald, Graham & Martin, 2010; Hertzog, Wright & Beat, 2008) indicated that domestic services are generally excluded from the preventive strategies and programs against sexual harassment as well as from the protective labor legislation. In addition to that, (Foster & Fosh, 2009) identified that for domestic workers

it is assumed that sexual harassment is not existent and hence majority of the workplace policies are placed for foreign workers such as those from western countries where they are assumed that they have dealt with sexual harassment. Due to this, there are no legislations for the domestic female employees against sexual harassment as well as for the isolated working conditions, lack of social contracts and long working hours (Foster & Fosh, 2009).

Impact of Sexual Harassment in the Workplaces

The impact of sexual harassment in the workplaces is the most highlighted area in the literature of sexual harassment than the prevalence of sexual harassment itself (McDonald, Backstrom & Dear, 2008). Numerous researchers have highlighted that sexual harassment most significantly impact the individual victims as well as organizations and society, if not so important, in both short and long run (Elkins, Phillips & Ward, 2008). Majority of the researchers agreed that despite the growing statistics, that indicate that high number of female employees with sexually harassment, very few female employees have actually report or file their cases (Hertzog, Wright & Beat, 2008). The researchers also argued that this trend continued to prevail in the future as well in the countries of West Africa and Asia where women find it risky to report sexually harassment which eventually cause them to lose their jobs and face embarrassment situations in the society (Schweinle, Cofer & Schatz, 2009).

Impact on Individuals

Sexual harassment is detrimental to those who experience it, and can have serious and long term effects (Gruber & Fineran, 2007). Numerous researches have common

consensus that sexual harassment in any case has negative consequences for female workers as well as impact negatively to the organizations and societies as a whole (Foster & Fosh, 2009). The researchers agreed that for employees especially women at the workplaces, sexual harassment behaviors are highly sensitive which if perceived and experienced by them could be significantly devastating. While the employees have been provided with some procedures to file sexual harassment at the workplaces, in numerous instances when an employee intends to take an action, the action could be more devastating than the experience of sexual harassment. This is because organizations in workplaces of West Africa or other backward countries are male dominated where males are highly favored especially those in managerial or supervisory level even if they found guilty on these cases of sexual harassment. The women are therefore forced to take back their complaints otherwise they are warned to face the serious consequence which are more devastating for women's work and personal life than the actual experience of sexual harassment occurred at the workplace. This section therefore highlights the both consequences for female employees that are during the course of sexual harassment and consequences faced by female employees on reporting or complaining sexual harassment.

Female targets of sexual harassment have reported a wide range of symptoms as a result of the experience, some of which are consistent with the symptomology associated with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (O'Donohue, Mosco, Bowers, & Avina, 2006). Women who have experienced sexual harassment have reported a range of symptoms and emotions, including, guilt, embarrassment, fear, anxiety, anger, depression, difficulty sleeping, confusion, and the inability to concentrate (Canadian Advisory Council

Factsheet, 1993; Hibino et al., 2006; O'Donohue et al., 2006; Salisbury et al., 1986).

Studies of women who experience sexual harassment in both high school and post

secondary institutions have shown that the experience of being the target of harassment

can lead to increased psychological distress, lower academic satisfaction, and a decrease

in academic performance (Huerta et al., 2006; O'Donohue et al., 2006; Slotten, 2002). As

the frequency and intensity of harassment increases, so do reported symptoms of

depression and anxiety. Pryor (1995) found that 60% of women who have experienced

sexual harassment in their school or work place will experience negative feelings about

the institution in general.

Sexual harassment can also take away from a female target's performance in the

workplace; several studies have found that in their sample over half of women reported

that they experienced productivity problems after the harassing incident (Bowling &

Beehr, 2006; Chan, Lam, Chow, & Cheung, 2008; Huerta et al., 2006; Pryor, 1995;

Rederstorff, Buchanan, & Settles, 2007; Slotten, 2002). Studies of female nurses who

experienced sexual harassment on the job reported that at times they found the

inappropriate behaviours so distressing that they could not think clearly about assessment

or patient care, and distracting to the point that they were more likely to make mistakes

that were uncharacteristic of them (Hibino et al., 2006; Pryor, 1995; Valente & Bullough,

2004).

During the Course of the Harassment

The researchers reported that female victims of sexual harassment commonly

encountered with the range of physical as well as emotional effects that eventually impact

their productivity at the work and affects their personal life too (Schweinle, Cofer & Schatz, 2009). McDonald (2012) identified that the common physiological symptoms that female employees commonly face during the course of sexual harassment. This most common among them are stress and trauma which is further accompanied by fatigue, anger, loss of appetite, nausea, fear, headaches and anxiety (Kodellas, Fisher & Gill, 2012). In addition to that, Parker et al. (2012) identified that female employees usually face the emotional stress that comprises of depression, humiliation, anger, loss of inspiration and powerlessness when encouraging with sexual harassment at the workplaces. This also leads to increasing absenteeism, low productivity, loss of self-esteem and frustration from the hostile work environment as suggested by (McLaughlin, Uggen & Blackstone, 2012; Irene van Staveren, 2011; McDonald, 2012). The most dangerous and devastating negative impact of sexual harassment could lead to suicide as suggested by (Parker et al., 2012). This series consequence is highly found in the countries with increasing poverty and low socio-economic status such as West African countries where women are reported to have either attempted to suicide or committed suicide duet to extremely intolerable circumstances at the workplaces as well as lack of support from the family or other people at the workplaces.(Irene van Staveren (2011) found that cultural norms of West African countries often brand the sexual harassment where harassers are not blamed and instead women are blamed for their extreme actions and labeled as trained or loose or religiously rebellious. In addition to that, Hernandez-Truyol (2012) found that since in Cote d'Ivoire West Africa, many women are Muslims and catholic Christians, they found it more easier to accept the suicide than living in the

same of having to live with stigma of shameful in male-dominated societies (Fielden et al., 2010). In addition, some researchers reported extreme forms of sexual harassment such as attempted rapes and violence cause the women to suffer from unplanned pregnancies, sexual assault, HIV-AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases (Collinsworth, Fitzgerald & Drasgow, 2009).

Consequences of Taking Action

As discussed earlier that not only the actions of sexual harassment negatively impact the women but also actions that they are likely to face as the consequences for taking action against sexual harassment at the workplaces (Perry, Kulik & Field, 2009). The most reported incidences of reporting sexual harassment is occurred in the forms of life threats, sexual violence or further harm either to the female herself or to any other family member of the victim (Blackstone, Uggen & McLaughlin, 2009). In addition, researchers such as (McDonald, Backstrom & Dear, 2008) suggested that female victims at the workplaces often lose their jobs and promotions after reporting sexual harassment if it is legitimate and in accordance with workplace policies and legislations. Moreover, (Perry, Kulik & Field, 2009) examined that women at the workplaces face the consequences of reporting the sexual harassment through long drawn out legal battles which cause extreme level of mental and economic torture and they eventually end up in never ending legal battles against the harassers let alone the fact that they would be dismissed and issued the termination letter which pose more difficulties for female employees to find the job opportunities related to their prior work experience (Thanem, 2008).

Impact on Organization

Sexual harassment has also many adverse impacts on organizations or workplaces. In general, sexual harassment in the organizations leads to tensions in the workplaces which eventually impede the organization's collaboration, teamwork and weak performance among and within employees (McDonald, Graham & Martin, 2010). Further, according to research of (Benavides Espinoza & Cunningham, 2010), sexual harassment significantly reduces the productivity of employees and increase the absenteeism causing the significant loss for company in terms of both financially and ethically. In addition to researchers such as (Fielden et al., 2010) examined that there is direct association between the loss of concentration, absenteeism and decreased and sexual harassment at the workplaces which cause losses of around USD 90 million to companies in every consecutive year across the globe.

Furthermore, sexual harassment significantly cause the companies or organizations to loss the valuable, talented, professional and sophisticated employees with good work performance which are critical for the success of any organization in both short run and long run (Benavides Espinoza & Cunningham, 2010). In addition to that, (Collinsworth, Fitzgerald & Drasgow, 2009) examined that those organizations that try to adapt the culture of accepting sexual harassment as normal part or allowing the climate of tolerance for female workers towards the sexual harassment, would leave extremely poor image in the industry in which they value their human resources and take care of the victim's complaints and resolve their situations and traumas at the workplaces. In addition to that, the companies may face the heavy payments of damages and fines as

well as other financial risks due to sexual harassment cases where the court action is highly successful and strong (Elkins, Phillips & Ward, 2008).

Impact on Culture and Society

Similar to negative impacts of sexual harassment on individuals and organizations, it has also negative and devastating impacts on the society as whole (McDonald, Graham & Martin, 2010). Numerous researchers in the available literature have been increasingly recognized that sexual harassment is nothing but devastating in the partition of humans as it impedes the achievement of human equality between males and females (McDonald, Backstrom & Dear, 2008). The sexual harassment not only further strengthen the male-domination within the societies but also condones sexual harassment and its worst forms such as rapes and sexual violence that has significant impact on the well-being of the people and efficiency of the organizations, thereby deterring the development and productivity of the society as the whole (McDonald, Graham & Martin, 2010). Moreover, number studies have reported that sexual harassment is extremely wasteful in terms of social, human resource and economic development point of views and thereby encourage to invest the attention to selected parts of population through inequality and discrimination that is based age, ethnicity, gender, race or otherwise.

Legal Framework of Action against Female Sexual Harassment at Workplace

Workplace Legal Actions at Regional and International Level

The sexual harassment legislations have been widely discussed in regional and international level. According to numerous researchers that although sexual harassment is

widely recognized internationally as the significant problem for females at the workplaces, it is yet not explicitly illustrated as subject that requires any binding international convention and legislations (McDonald, Backstrom & Dear, 2008). In this regard, the researchers argued that perhaps the "International Labor Office (ILO's) Indigenous and Tribal Convention, 1989 (No. 169) is the only international convention that explicitly holds the legislations against the sexual harassment behaviors. In this regard, the article 20 of the international convection of specifically prohibits sexual harassment and gender based discrimination of tribal and indigenous between men and women.

Regardless of lack of explicit focus on the international laws towards the treaties and conventions between countries against the sexual harassment, it is widely hold that sexual harassment is the problem instead and does not mean that it is not been explored or addressed at the international level (McDonald, Graham & Martin, 2010). In addition to that, researchers such as (McDonald, 2012) asserted that it is widely acknowledge that supervisory bodies and international forums of International Labor Office as well as of United Nations have specifically highlighted as well as addressed the problem of sexual harassment across the globe and hence it is assumed widely that subject of sexual harassment is covered by the existing international instruments related to violence against women, gender based discrimination, occupation health and safety and human rights.

Apart from the international level where International Labor Office and United Nations are actively working for rights of female employees against the gender based discrimination and sexual harassment at the workplaces, European Union is probably the

leading organization that is actively protecting the rights of female employees against the sexual harassment in most vulnerable and high incidence areas (McDonald, 2012). According to numerous researchers, the council of commission, parliament and ministers of European Union has been actively involved in taking number of imitative against the gender discrimination at the workplaces and also culminated the commission of recommendations by adoption of the appended codes of practice that "How to combat sexual harassment at the workplaces" (McDonald, 2012).

In addition to that, numerous researchers asserted that level of measurements taken by the European Union with regard to sexual harassment are highly focused on the discriminatory aspects of sexual harassment and its effects on the person's work and his physical dignity at work and society (McDonald, 2012). According to the research of (McDonald, 2012), the European Union has recently taken the measure against sexual harassment through adoption of the proposal for direct modifying Council Directive concerning the fear treatment of both female and male employees at the workplaces. In this regard, the draft of European Union superficially redefined the sexual harassment where it is not considered to strong illicit form of gender based discrimination at the workplaces (Hernandez-Truyol, 2012; McLaughlin, Uggen & Blackstone, 2012).

Rights of Immigrant Employees Working Abroad and Policy Formation of Sexual Harassment

Despite both national and international attempts to eliminate the incidences of sexual harassment with women at the workplace, there is no single universal definition of what constitutes the prohibited sexual behavior with women at the workplace.

Accordingly, there are different approaches of conceiving the regional, national and international incidences of sexual harassments at the workplace largely because there are great differences in the immigrant workers in terms of religion, community, nationality, cultures and norms, ethics and the like which defines what sexual harassment constitutes and what not. Generally, international instruments for sexual harassment suggest the notion of sexual harassment broadly as a form of violence against immigrant working women and as discriminatory treatment, while national and regional laws more specifically centered on the illegal conduct with workers or employees at the workplace. All definitions and explanations of sexual behavior with immigrant and national workers, however, suggest a great consensus that any kind of prohibited behavior occurring as unwanted and causes harm to the victim is defined as the sexual harassment at the workplace.

The governments, employers, NGOs and workers' organizations of many countries across the globe have taken various detrimental actions to prevent sexual harassment to at the work for immigrants and provide aid to its victims. Some initiatives have been more specifically focused around enforcing legal rights and legislative prohibition while some others are aimed more specifically at raising the widespread awareness of sexual harassment with immigrant female workers at the workplaces. This, for instance, include the primary initiatives form governments, workers' organizations, employers and other bodies by strictly prohibiting sexual harassment against female immigrant workers and introducing policies and procedures to protect immigrant workers to combat sexual harassment occurring at all of the organizations' international offices

and events. In addition, some governments, instead of enacting the legislation and policies against workplaces, have issued the codes of practices on sexual harassment for both national and immigrant workers. Researchers such as McLaughlin, Uggen & Blackstone (2012), McDonald (2012) and McCann (2005) stated that codes of practice of sexual harassment for employment eights of immigrants contain similar provisions related to legislative measures and polices (i.e. similar definitions and assertions of sexual harassment, potential victims and perpetrators accompanied with measured to be taken by employers etc), but are not legally binding. In addition, suggested that although codes of practice phrased as suggestions to employers to combat against sexual harassment and eventually protect the employment rights of immigrant workers, they cannot be enforced by individuals since these codes can be highly influential on the content of compliant procedures and workplace policies.

Nevertheless, McDonald (2012) and McCann (2005) suggested that in the absence of legislation, the codes of practice are often taken into account by international courts and tribunals. In relation to this, one particularly influential measure to the guidelines issued by the EEOC (Equal Employment Opportunity Commission) act as the guide for international courts and tribunals to address sexual harassment against immigrant workers. EEOC is widely considered as the agency responsible for enforcing federal and international equality and employment rights and legislations. The guidelines of EEOC, which include the clauses on sexual harassment have been cited under "Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964" after approval in many international cases and legislative provisions interpreted in the light of their content.

According to EEOC.gov (2013a), immigrants working in foreign countries and employers are protected from employment discrimination by laws enforced by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC). EEOC plays a significant role in combating the sexual harassment with immigrants by answering the questions by the people who think that they have been suffered from the discrimination in the employment in a foreign country. The EEOC describes that what the law covers, how to file a complaint of discrimination including g sexual harassment, and other typical examples of employment discrimination. Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 of EEOC covers the full spectrum of employment decisions of sexual harassment, including those occurring during recruitment, selections and terminations and other decisions concerning terms and conditions of employment. The EEOC enforces laws prohibiting employment discrimination and sexual harassment occurring because of color, religion, national origin, sex, age (40 and over and physical or mental disability), and race. In addition, it is required for the employers with 15 or more employees (20 or more for age discrimination), as well as for those with employer-union apprentice programs, employment agencies, unions, and local, state and federal agencies to obey these laws. Apart from that, EEOC allots the strict time limits for filing a charge of discrimination and cases of sexual harassment. Moreover, EEOC in some cases will not have jurisdiction unless the charge is filed within 180 days of the occurrence of the discrimination. When a compliant of discrimination or sexual harassment is filed with EEOC, the EEOC conducts an impartial investigation to determine if the laws were violated to protect against the employment rights of immigrant workers (EEOC, 2013a).

Pursuant to the Title VII, the EEOC is the federal and international employment rights agency charged with preventing, investigating and remedying all forms of sex discrimination including the sexual harassment at the workplace. McLaughlin, Uggen & Blackstone (2012) suggested that EEOC has the wealth of experiencing the investigation as well as litigating sexual harassment cases generally, including experience with sexual harassment cases brought on behalf of immigrant women workers. Hence, the EEOC's participation in the immigrant sexual harassment cases is invaluable (EEOC, 2013b). There are various cases handled by EEOC to determine the occurrence and combat sexual harassment with immigrant workers at the workplace. Some of the prominent cases of sexual harassment against immigrant workers handled by EEOC under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 included the *River Point Farms*, where EEOC alleges that a Latina farm worker was subjected to sexual harassment, which include the sexual comments and requests for sexual favors among others, by her supervisor. The EEOC also alleged the supervisor that he encouraged the female immigrant worker's husband to engage in a domestic violence and abuse and culminating in his publically encouraging to kill he wife. After her husband made attempts to kill her, the supervisor was blamed for instigating her husband arrest and eventually fired the female immigrant worker due to this reason (EEOC, 2013c). Although, largest onion grower in the U.S, the defendant, rehired the immigrant female worker, the plaintiff, after her termination, the defendant subsequently laid her off and failed to rehire her in the retaliation for her complaints of harassments (EEOC, 2013b).

Another similar case was reported against the National Food Corp in 2012 where the EEOC alleged the Latina farm worker, the plaintiff, was subjected to sexual harassment, which included the incidences of demands for sex among others, by her farm manager. She along with various other Latino workers reported the harassment and was subsequently retaliated against either by being terminated or constructively discharged. The EEOC alleged the a major supplier of eggs to the Pacific Northwest and Midwest United States, the defendant, to failed to protect rights of immigrant works and failed to take the action to stop the harassment and discriminatory conduct (EEOC, 2013b).

Sexual Harassment and Reported Cases in Cote d'Ivoire West Africa

There are several cases come to the fore in Cote d'Ivoire West Africa concerning the sexual harassment at the workplaces that are based on gender based discrimination (Kodellas, Fisher & Gill, 2012). The significant differences in the group of ethnicities of female employees are found across the cases that are being reported across the country. Apart from the Koffi decision in Cote d'Ivoire West Africa, for French speaking African, no cases have been reported concerning the sexual harassment at the workplaces. On the other, there have been number of cases reported in Cote d'Ivoire for English-speaking African concerning the sexual harassment at the workplaces. The four cases reported in this regard are subjected before the industrial courts have relied heavily on the unfair labor practice prevision across the country through the provision of African Law of Labor Relations Act 1995 (Kodellas, Fisher & Gill, 2012).

In this regard, the popular case of J vs. M Ltd in Cote d'Ivoire West Africa has gained much attention although occurred slightly prior to the time period covered in this

review of literature. The case is highly popular because it merits the discussion which has clearly confirmed the certain trends of sexual harassment prevailing at the workplaces under the area of the law. In this regard, researchers such as (Menon et al., 2010) asserted in their research that Industrial Court concluded that dismissal of harasser for sexual harassment in employment is completely justifiable and fair as the male harasser in the given case clearly aware that his behavior is offensive, unwelcome and highly unacceptable regardless of receiving so many warnings from his female victim, immediate supervisor and yet had continued his behavior to harass the victim.

The case further explores and redefines the sexual harassment in the boarder sense where it covers the both earlier, narrower quid pro quo and hostile work environment types (Dartnall & Jewkes, 2012). Further, the court placed the responsible duty on the organization to employ professional and sophisticated employees to ensure that its female employees are not subjected to such unwelcome behavior and treatment in the future and thereby left the management with the important task to develop and setup the standard of code of conduct and workplace policies for every individual employee concerning sexual harassment behaviors and offensive behaviors at the workplaces (Becker & Kuranchie, 2012). Analyzing the above case, researchers such as (Irene van Staveren, 2011) asserted that since majority of the employees at the management level in the given case are male, the court was aware that standard of setting the conduct might not reflect the interests of female employees and hence emphasized over and over again that emphasis should be placed on polices against female employees sexual harassment at the workplaces.

Legal Position and Legal Resource for Women in Cote d'Ivoire West Africa

The Ivorian Law extremely prohibits all forms of sexual harassment at the workplaces under the Cote d'Ivoire Act No. 98-756 of December 23, 1998 (McDonald, 2012). The law of Cote d'Ivoire provide the framework in which employees should not include the sexual harassment that lead to the person "asks for the sexual favors in the turn for the purpose of the action or service as part of job requirements of employee by either using threats of punishments or pursuing the actual punishment to coerce a person under his/her authority consent to the sexual favors" (McDonald, 2012). Further, law prohibits the person to take the revenge against someone who refused such favors from him/her or requires a subordinate or employee to provide favors for the same type before letting him/her obtain promotion, distinction, rewards, jobs, decoration or any other advantage either for himself/herself or for another person thereof (McDonald, 2012). The Ivorian law hence clearly provides the framework against the sexual harassment at the workplaces that not only prohibits the conduct of sexual nature for favors but also for punishments or offers of monetary or non-monetary gains for himself/herself or on behalf of another person. Further, there are not just punishments for the sexual harassment guilty but also for the one that attempts the sexual harassment at the workplaces (McDonald, 2012).

While these laws in Cote d'Ivoire as well as in other countries are placed, evidences indicated that there is strong lack of their practical implications at the organizational levels which further leads the circumference of the issue to grow (Fielden et al., 2010). Majority of the victims of the sexual harassment especially female

employees and those working in developing countries have reported their cries or

complaints for the help have typically being ignored, denied or trivialized because people

and the cultures they are surrounding are male chauvinism and ignores the right of equal

rights of women (Collinsworth, Fitzgerald & Drasgow, 2009).

Self-blaming and Coping Skills

The concept of blaming the victim is also relevant to sexual harassment. Based on

his study of 366 individuals between the ages of 30 and 69, Itaru (2003) concluded that

there is an association between self-blaming in the workplace and sex-role spillover.

When the work environment encourages self-blaming behaviors, sexual harassment is

more likely. Itaru showed how certain workplaces support the notion of blaming the

victim, whereby the person is perceived by co-workers as being responsible for being

victimized. Such behavior is generally supported by workplace norms, and Itaru found

that other employees supported the actions of the harasser. With regard to education,

Gutek (1985) stated that women in the workplace who have completed a high degree of

education used fewer self-blaming behaviors than did women with a lower level of

education. Gutek further showed that many women who displayed self-blaming

behaviors assumed that other women self-blamed, as well.

To examine the association between sexual harassment and mental health, Street,

Gradus, Stafford, and Kelley (2007) studied former military reservist participants, who

were on active duty for 9 years. Their sample consisted of 2,319 women and 1,627 men,

with mean ages of 39.1 and 39.6 years, respectively. The researchers were interested in

the power differentiation within large organizations, such as the military. Two

assumptions were made about the military: Women tend to be devalued, and men experience greater mental health problems than do women. The men's mental health problems were attributed to same-sex harassment, whereas, in the civilian environment, women have more mental health problems than do men due to opposite-sex harassment.

Street et al. (2007) did a study on same-sex harassment and found an incidence of 77.9% for men and 12.5% for women. They also found that women more often reported sexual harassment occurrences in the workplace than did men. The results further indicated that sexual harassment was a significant predictor of depression and that, as the frequency of sexual harassment increased, symptoms of depression increased as well. Finally, they reported that the mental health scores for men were worse than those for women.

Chronic Stress

Sexual harassment can create a chronically stressful work environment that affects not only the employee, but his or her family as well. The writer's assumption is that negative effects of harassment in the workplace can spill over into the family and interpersonal relationships (Wang, Lawler, Walumbwa, & Shi, 2004). Further the stress of sexual harassment can lead to emotional and psychological problems for the victim, such as anxiety and depression, as well as physical health problems, such as "hypertension and coronary heart disease, migraine and tension headaches, ulcers, and gastrointestinal and asthmatic conditions" (Charlesworth & Nathan, 1984, p. 10).

Wislar et al. (2002) found that workplace harassment can lead to self-medicating in the form of employee's alcohol consumption. The researchers examined the

relationship between sexual harassment, generalized workplace harassment, and alcohol drinking behaviors in the work setting. The study was conducted at a Midwestern university, with 2,492 participants (1,336 women and 1,156 men), with an average age of 40. Wislar et al. used a sexual harassment questionnaire, the Michigan Alcohol Screening instrument, and the Sixteen Personality Factor Questionnaire, a scale that measures 16 personality factors. The results indicated a significant relationship between harassment and personality vulnerability. Individuals who were identified as demonstrating neuroticism and narcissism experienced a higher frequency of harassment when compared with participants who did not demonstrate these characteristics. Overall, the results indicated that individuals who were perceived as being vulnerable in the workplace were more likely to be subjected to harassment.

Wislar et al. (2002) also found that exposure to either sexual harassment or generalized work abuse led employees to deleterious alcohol-drinking behaviors to reduce interpersonal stresses or stressors. However, individuals with high self-esteem adapted to environmental harassment, thereby preventing physical and emotional stress. A sense of self-efficacy can allow individuals to manage sexual harassment and to develop solutions to solve the target problem (Bandura, 1997). Further research could show an association between self-esteem, sexual harassment, and alcohol consumption behavior in the work setting.

The results of Wislar et al. (2002) indicated that sexual harassment of coworkers by other employees could have a devastating and harmful effect on the behavior of an organization's staff and the victims. Examining misconduct of some employees by

management in a mental retardation center would address the variables that are associated

with attitude toward and perception of sexual harassment, and ameliorate the problem

when needed. Policies that prevent such patterns of misconduct in the work setting would

minimize or eliminate norms that support the target behavior. Accordingly, the current

research has presented individual factors that will have an impact on attitude and

perception of sexual harassment in an MRDC's staff, and has presented recommendations

for social changes. The literature has ample information that describes the attitude and

perception of sexual harassment in the workplace. However, the literature is limited with

regard to mental health staff that provides services in either a mental retardation or

psychiatric center.

Coping with Sexual Harassment

Coping is defined as "constantly changing cognitive and behavioural efforts to

manage specific external and/or internal demands that are appraised as taxing or

exceeding the resources of the person" (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984, p. 141). Lazarus and

Folkman argue that coping strategies can be divided into the two categories of emotion-

focused coping and problem-focused coping, and research is now employing this

distinction. Emotion-focused coping strategies take place when the target of the stressful

situation evaluates the threatening, harmful, or challenging environment and comes to the

conclusion that it cannot be changed. Emotion-focused coping consists of cognitive

processes that are intended to reduce distress to the target individual, and can include

behaviours such as avoidance, minimizing, distancing, selective attention, positive

comparison, and taking positive values from negative events. Individuals may also

engage in behaviours in an attempt to "take their mind off of the situation", such as strenuous exercise to express anger, meditating, indulging in alcohol or other mind altering substances, and seeking emotional support. Problem- focused coping strategies take place when the target of the stressful situation evaluates the harmful, threatening or challenging environment and makes the decision that it is able to be changed. Problem-focused coping strategies are directed inward, as the individual attempts to brainstorm solutions in order to alter the stressful situation, conducting a cost-benefit analysis on these solutions to determine their potential effectiveness and finally choosing from the pool of solutions in order to put a plan into place.

Skinner, Edge, Altman, and Sherwood (2003) elaborated on the categorization of coping strategies as either emotion focused or problem focused, and argued that "any given way of coping is likely to serve many functions" (p. 248). These authors suggested that there were five categories of coping that commonly appeared in the studies they critiqued, which included: problem solving (e.g., planning, logistical analysis), support seeking (e.g., seeking advice, comfort, or contact with other people), avoidance (e.g., avoidant actions, or cognitive avoidance), direct action (e.g., deliberate action on part of the individual to control situation), and distraction (e.g., engaging in some other, more pleasurable activity, [p. 225]).

Research on female targets' responses to sexual harassment has shown that minimizing the impact of the incident is a common strategy that women employ in order to cope (Salisbury et al., 1986; Slotten, 2002; Wear et al., 2007). Studies have found that women will "make light" of the situation, shrugging it off as unimportant or even as

acceptable, despite the fact that their behaviours may show otherwise. In a study of high school harassment, one young woman was the target of unwanted sexual touches and comments by a male teacher, but described the situation as "no big deal"; however, she also disclosed that she "hated" the class that was taught by the perpetrating teacher, and that she felt that she had to stay quiet in class in order to avoid contact with him (Slotten, 2002). The same study reported that many young female targets of sexual harassment described their experiences with sexual harassment as "not important enough to tell anybody", but also described general dissatisfaction with their high school experience. Women may also feel that they have no choice but to allow the harassment to "roll off their backs"; otherwise they will be unhappy in their school or place of work. A study of female medical students found that targets were likely to minimize frequent inappropriate sexual comments and behaviours made by male colleagues, stating in one sentence that it did not bother them, but later saying that they had to build up tolerance to this kind of behaviour because the only other choice was to be "miserable" during their residency (Wear et al., 2007). As previously discussed, women are hesitant to use the words "sexual harassment" to describe their experience with unwanted and/or inappropriate sexual behaviours, which can also be a way to minimize the experience. Instead of labeling the behaviours as harassment, female targets sometimes choose to frame the experience the most positive way possible, or to use "nice" or "academic" words to explain what happened, which serves as a way for targets to distance themselves from the impact of the experience and to separate themselves from the emotions involved (Salisbury et al., 1986).

Avoidance is another common way that female targets of sexual harassment choose to cope with the experience of harassment. Because the perpetrator of sexual harassment is typically in a position of power or authority over the female target of the harassment, women often fear the consequences of reporting or confronting the harasser. Therefore, it is not uncommon for women to report that in response to their experience with sexual harassment that they chose to "do nothing", choosing instead to avoid contact with the perpetrator both cognitively and behaviourally (Cortina & Wasti, 2005; Wilkinson, Gill, Fitzjohn, Palmer, & Mulder, 2006). Avoidance of the perpetrator can consist of negotiation with the accused to avoid being in the same place at the same time, quitting one's job, dropping out of a class, finding a new supervisor, and so on. Avoidance can also consist of cognitive strategies such as denial that the harassment ever happened and refusal to acknowledge or discuss the incident. Several studies have shown that women's satisfaction with the outcome of the situation of sexual harassment will decrease as the authority of the perpetrator and the organization's tolerance for sexual harassment increases, which will lead to a greater likelihood of employing avoidance as a coping strategy (Bingham & Scherer, 1993; Handy, 2006; Malamut & Offermann, 2001).

Seeking social support is an emotion-focused coping method employed by vulnerable people, including female targets of sexual harassment (Dakof & Taylor, 1990). Social support networks can act as a safeguard for vulnerable people in stressful situations, and they have been shown to decrease target individuals' levels of distress (Frazier & Burnett, 1994; Green & Pomeroy, 2007; Kocot & Goodman, 2003; Reynolds & Harris, 2006; Wethington & Kessler, 1986; Yagil, 2008). Studies have shown that it is

common for targets of harassment to disclose their experiences to close friends and family members, and that it is more uncommon for women to turn to formal support providers such as the department of human resources, labor unions, or the police (Ahrens, Campbell, Ternier-Thames, Wasco, & Sefl, 2007; Cortina, 2004; Cox, 2005; Wilkinson et al., 2006). In a study of immediate coping strategies among rape victims (Frazier & Burnett, 1994), women were asked to respond to the open ended question "what have you done if anything since the rape that has made you feel better?" Results showed that seeking social support and talking about the rape were among the most helpful actions mentioned by participants. In the same study, boyfriends, mothers, and female friends were listed as individuals to whom targets most commonly disclosed. One study examined the role that social support plays for victims of crime, and discussion of findings stated that "social support and emotion-focused coping appear to have a critical role in successful recovery from a crime event" (Green & Pomeroy, 2007, p. 109). A recent study also reported the benefits of social support in experiences of coping with sexual harassment, and interestingly found that having more female friends was positively associated with the act of reporting incidents of sexual harassment among both men and women (Elkins & Velez-Castrillon, 2008).

As previously mentioned, it is uncommon for female targets of harassment to report their experiences to formal support providers. There are a number of reasons why women may be hesitant to make formal complaints; they may feel that there is "no point", that they will not be taken seriously, or that the perpetrator will face no consequences. Research on female members of the United States military found that "a significant

number of military women who filed formal complaints expressed dissatisfaction with the complaint handling process" (Vijayasiri, 2008, p. 55). Reasons for participants' dissatisfaction included feelings that nothing was being done about their complaints, frustration that no disciplinary action was taken against the perpetrator of the harassment, and feelings that the harassing situation was not corrected. Research by Nelson, Halpert, and Cellar (2007) found that more severe responses to sexual harassment are perceived by participants as more effective in both communicating organizational intolerance of harassment and acting as deterrents to the inappropriate behaviour. Targets may also fear the consequences of reporting sexual harassment; one woman said that female medical students who experience sexual harassment "become concerned about what would happen to their evaluations if they reported. Faculty couldn't change your objective grade but they could say something in your subjective evaluation" (Wear et al., 2007, p. 23). A study of rape survivors' first disclosures found that women most often chose to disclose their experiences to close friends and family members as an attempt to receive emotional support, information, and to have the ability to talk and "get things off their chest" (Ahrens, Campbell, Ternier-Thames, Wasco, & Sefl, 2007). In a study of cancer victims' perceptions of social support, participants reported that it was most helpful when their spouse, friends, and family members provided emotional support, affection, and expressed concern or simply offered their physical presence. The same participants described that the situations they found most unhelpful and most hurtful were when family and friends would avoid social contact with them, or be critical of their situations (Dakof & Taylor, 1990).

Women who have experienced sexual harassment will also band together with other women as a means of coping. This can take the form of networking with other women who have experienced harassment, or simply making sure that they are not walking alone but are always in the company of another woman whenever possible (Handy, 2006; Slotten, 2002). This can help explain why group therapy is so helpful for female targets of sexual harassment; having the opportunity to share their experience with other women who have had similar experiences helps to validate the victim's feelings and reinforce the fact that she did not "make it up". It can also help women to feel less afraid, guilty, and alone when they have the opportunity to hear stories that are similar to their own and can identify with the feelings because they have "walked in their shoes" (Salisbury et. al., 1986; Sigal et al., 2003).

Intervention Strategies or Programs to Combat Sexual Harassment in Organizations

The main objective of prevention strategies or programs against sexual harassment at the workplaces is primarily based on preventive mechanisms. Researchers argued that main role of these preventive mechanisms are to ensure that sexual harassment would extract from its roots and does not take place rather than being confined to responding it (Dartnall & Jewkes, 2012). Furthermore, (Gaanderse & Valasek, 2011) asserted that effective workplace intervention strategies and programs actually protect the female employees from being exposed to the sexual harassers and thereby allowing the employees the freedom to report and file complaint against the harassing behaviors through identification and responding in their early states.

Researchers such as (Perry, Kulik & Field, 2009) argued that it is not important to emphasize on the policies that could combat against the sexual harassment, but what is important is to focus on the policies that could actually prevent or protect employees from sexual harassment behaviors. This is reported that in some organizations or workplaces, where the women are highly susceptible to the sexual harassing behaviors from male employees, have tried to deal with the problem of sexual harassment behaviors in the workplaces even if there were no policies or other workplace measures available in the place (McDonald, Backstrom & Dear, 2008).

While these measures could be applicable in initial stages of intervening against sexual harassment, they are not applicable in providing protection in the most severe and regular forms of sexual harassment cases at the workplaces (Blackstone, Uggen & McLaughlin, 2009). In addition to that, some researchers such as (Elkins, Phillips & Ward, 2008) emphasized that these kinds of actions sometimes as the only resource available and necessary took, in the workplaces that are highly vulnerable such as in West African countries, are unlikely to give the sufficient protection for the female employees which are often covered under the formal polices against sexual harassment at the workplaces. Further, as indicated in the above sections of the review of the literature, female employees that are being harassed at the workplaces are often highly reluctant to complain or report against the harasser due to the fear of losing jobs or facing the other series consequences of reporting against the harassers. In this regard, prevention does not remain the only measure as it fails to see the concerns of female employees being harassed in a serious manner as well as be the subject of the retaliation for the female

employees. For ad hoc measures against the sexual harassment might also failed in taking

account the extent of vulnerability of the sexual harassment victims as it does through the

formal enterprise level policies in creating an environment that highly discourage the

sexual harassment among the harassers and gender discrimination at the workplaces.

Workplace Policies and Practical Measures against Sexual Harassment

Researchers such as (Foster & Fosh, 2009) argued that because of the personal

and sensitive nature of the subject of sexual harassment as well as its complaints, the

organizations should design the workplace policies and practice measures that could

handle complaints and act against the sexual harassment specifically with such

complaints. Researchers such as (McDonald, Graham & Martin, 2010) argued that it is

widely acknowledge that main reason of failure of organization policies and practical

measures at the workplaces against sexual harassment is because their complaint

procedures are highly unsuitable concerning the complaints of sexual harassment. In this

regard, the researchers have discussed many workplace polices and practice measures

with conjunction of complaint procedures to combat against sexual harassment at the

workplaces (Benavides Espinoza & Cunningham, 2010).

Complaints Procedures

Researchers stated in their research that workplaces usually provide their

employees with either of two procedures or methods of filling complaint against sexual

harassment at the workplaces. This includes formal and informal complaint mechanisms

which are provided by employers under the sexual harassment policies. In the formal

procedure mechanism, the victim can fill the complaint against the harasser where the complaint generally involves the full investigation and apprising and culminating in adjudication against its merits and demerits with workplace policies and legislation Acts.

Informal mechanisms of reporting complaint for sexual harassment at the workplaces, on the other hand, tend to involve a more conciliatory approach of investigating and addressing the incidence of the sexual harassment claim. This therefore generally involves the discussion between the victim and the harasser whereas the facilitator either from inside or outside of the organization intervenes to see the claim against merits and demerits of the action and behavior of sexual harassment claim.

Establishment of a Sexual Harassment Committee

Apart from the formal and informal complaining procedures that are being part of the workplace policies and practical measures of addressing sexual harassment at workplaces, establishment of sexual harassment committee in case of most severe forms has also been found to be included in the workplace policies of some countries (Collinsworth, Fitzgerald & Drasgow, 2009). Researchers argued that it is common practices in the organizations to address the sexual harassment complaints by establishing the independent committee to investigate complaints, issue advice and take the necessary disciplinary measures as well as enforce the sanctions in some cases to address the issues of sexual harassment at the workplaces (Schweinle, Cofer & Schatz, 2009).

The countries that are highly vulnerable in sexual harassment similar to West African countries such as Philippines and India, have reported to inculcate the establishment of sexual harassment committees in addressing the sexual harassment

problems at the workplaces (Hertzog, Wright & Beat, 2008). The researchers asserted

that in Philippine, the sexual harassment legislation encourage the establishment of

committees within the organizations or independent committees on decorum and

investigation that should be based on investigating complaints of sexual harassment

related gender based discrimination (Collinsworth, Fitzgerald & Drasgow, 2009).

Further, in India is reported that Supreme Court required from each employer or company

to establish a "Sexual Harassment Committees" at their workplaces that could investigate

the sexual harassment cases and identify the harassers at the workplaces (Fielden et al.,

2010). Reportedly, almost all government departments of India in major public sector

organizations have placed and set up this kind of committee which has ensured sexual

harassment protection for female employees working in Indian Workplaces (McDonald,

Graham & Martin, 2010). However, researchers have suggested that this is limited within

the public sector organizations, as very few private and unorganized firms and sectors

have established such kind of workplace policies and practical measures to address the

sexual harassment a t the workplaces.

Sanctions and Disciplinary Measures

Sanctions and disciplinary measures is another important inclusion in the

workplace policies and practices measures to address sexual harassment at the

workplaces (Foster & Fosh, 2009). As researchers (McDonald, Backstrom & Dear, 2008)

asserted in their research that all sexual harassment policies must provide the suitable

deterrent sanctions to ensure that cases of sexual harassment behaviors are treated

explicitly as the trivial offence and dismissed in any case as the misread or poor judgment

by the harassers. In this regard, the workplace policies could place the heavy penalties on the guilty that range from notification in verbal and written writings, suspension, adverse performance evaluations, demotion, transfer, dismissal and ultimately to face the legal suit. All these sanctions and disciplinary measures are applied depend on the degree and nature of harassment and violation of such policies that include the extreme for sexual harassment such as attempted rape, violence and exchange of sexual favors for business ultimately lead to the dismissal of the person as well as the legal suit depending on the demand of victim. In addition to that where the harasser is not an employee such as client and guest of the hotel, the power to apply the sanctions and disciplinary measures would obviously be limited to the organizations as these actions are limited to form of sending the letters or notices of objection, requires to stop, a discussion of the behavior and refusal to conduct any business relationship with harasser in the future.

Informal Measures against Female Sexual Harassment

Apart from those formal measures to address female sexual harassment at the workplaces, the available literature also highlighted many informal measures that could be used to combat against problem of sexual harassment at the workplaces. According to researchers (Perry, Kulik & Field, 2009), informal measures could be much flexible, less stressful and swifter for the victim to get the justice. The informal measures are applicable where the victim does not relish the prospect of formal enquiry and is merely concerned with guarantee that no such offensive behavior would be repeated in the future. In this regard, some countries apply the informal measures where:

- Victims can directly seek their managers, supervisors or any other person in the charge and file a complaint to speak to the alleged harassers on their behalf on the private to warn that no such action would be repeated in the future.

- Complaints can directly seek the advice from their immediate supervisor concerning the addressing the situation themselves without exposing the manner to higher authorities.

- The complaints filed against the harasser could be dealt with counseling and conciliation where harasser might admit that he is unaware from his behavior towards his female coworker or subordinate.

- The supervisors and managers in charge, if they sense the unacceptable conduct from any male employee towards a female employee, can take the independent action depending on the case even in the case of absence of a complaint.

Although these measures are applicable to certain extent and in some cases, there are certain limitations of these measures that are being criticized as potentially inappropriate in workplace culture of unequal power relations between male and female employees (Elkins, Phillips & Ward, 2008).

Measures by Women Workers' Groups and Organizations against Sexual Harassment

Apart from the formal and informal measures to address sexual harassment at the workplaces, researchers also stated that there are some earliest actions from women workers groups and organizations against sexual harassment in different regions across the world which stemmed from the movement of feminization (Foster & Fosh, 2009).

This is for instance reported in Malaysia, where group of women workers take actions sexual harassment in the region since 1941 (McDonald, Backstrom & Dear, 2008). This entails that workers from around eight plantations during the period strongly demand "an end to the molesting of laborer womenfolk" led by the trade unionists went on strike (Perry, Kulik & Field, 2009). While these groups are not as such available in African countries, the strikes led by the workers sometimes through unions continued in the region that call the necessary steps to combat sexual harassment at the workplaces.

This chapter provided a definition of sexual harassment and reviewed existing literature. Chapter 3 will discuss the methodology used in the study and provide participant demographic information.

Integration and Summary of Literature

Sexual harassment is a pervasive societal issue that has been widely studied within the academic community. There is a great deal of quantitative research available which categorizes the behavioural responses of women who have experienced sexual harassment, as well as literature which describes the types of coping strategies that are employed by women who have been through a harassing incident. As a result of the existing literature, we know that the majority of women experience sexual harassment in schools or their place of work; however, they are also hesitant and even unwilling to independently label harassing behaviour as such, though they will agree the same behaviours constitute harassment when directly asked.

Sexual harassment can be emotionally and psychologically taxing for those who experience it, and it has been known to cause feelings of depression and anxiety, fear and

anger, and lack of concentration. It has also been found that when women are the victims of sexual harassment they report feeling less satisfied with their lives in general, and that they show a decrease in productivity in school and/or their place of work (Canadian Advisory Council Fact sheet, 1993; Hibino et al., 2006; Huerta et al., 2006; O'Donohue et al., 2006; Salisbury et al., 1986).

A hostile work environment and sexual harassment are detrimental to both the victimized employee and the organization. For employees, such harassment results in depression, anxiety, low work productivity, and physical health problems; for organizations, harassment leads to loss of financial resources due to decreased work productivity, as well as to individual and class-action lawsuits.

In the modern work environment, the self-esteem of the employee is a relevant concept which helps to analyzed and resolves problems such as sexual harassment. Low self-esteem can result in ambivalence when making decisions, which can affect workplace performance and the ability to cope with harassment in the workplace. Importantly, it also can make an employee more vulnerable to harassment and less likely to report it. In contrast, high self-esteem not only helps employees to cope with harassment, but also makes them more likely to report it. Also relevant is the concept of self-blame. Employees who engage in self-blaming behavior are similar to those who have low self-esteem in that they tend not to report incidents of sexual harassment.

The organization plays an important role in the prevention and amelioration of sexual harassment. The attitudes and perceptions of employees are influenced by the approach taken by the organization to prevent employee misconduct. When an

organization maintains policies and training to educate employees about sexual harassment and has norms that include reinforcing the rules, employees are more likely to report misconduct and are given the support that they need.

Researchers believed that while sexual harassment has seen the considerable progress in terms of the legal movements, preventive strategies and programs related with women's rights and sexual harassment since World War II in majority of the countries across the globe, the girls and women in the workplaces of Africa, particularly in Cote d'Ivoire West Africa, are still under-represented economically, socially, morally and politically across the region. Women in Cote d'Ivoire West Africa are still under-compensated economically to receive their equal work opportunities based on their skills, knowledge and qualification, restricted for receiving higher education, having fewer opportunities to access the authority positions in the organizations and sexually harassed and molested legally across the country. The available literature suggested that women in gender based discrimination and sexual harassment and sexual violence are among the major ways women and girls on the continent of Africa, especially in Cote d'Ivoire, have been continued to be denied for their fundamental rights to live, earn, educate themselves and to succeed in life endeavors (Foster & Fosh, 2009). Considering the thoughts of Linton (1945), the following section would provide detailed picture of sexual harassment problem in West Africa Cote d'Ivoire, what are the reasons behind it, what its effects are and how it could be addressed either through legal framework or workplace sexual harassment policies.

Due to the potentially sensitive nature of the topic, much of the existing sexual harassment research is based on participants' responses to hypothetical scenarios of inappropriate sexual behaviour. However, while the use of hypothetical situations could cause less harm to participants as opposed to the use of real life experiences, it also reduces the validity of the results (Bingham & Scherer, 1993). My study contributes to the literature by obtaining first hand accounts of real life experiences of coping with sexual harassment. Magley (2000) also explains that there is a lack of literature examining how women cope with harassment, and those studies that do exist simply categorize coping behaviours and the frequency with which these behaviours occur.

Chapter 3: Methods

This chapter will provide a rationale for my choice of methodology, a description of the Critical Incident Technique, and a summary of participant demographic information. Details regarding research procedures will be provided, as well as procedures for data collection and analysis. Finally, trustworthiness checks proposed by Butterfield, Borgen, Amundson, and Maglio (2005) will be reviewed and results of trustworthiness checks from the current study will be presented.

Rationale for my Choice of Methodology

Traditionally, research employs quantitative methods of data collection, in which large qualities of data are collected and analyzed in the form of numbers so that the researcher is able to statistically describe tendencies of the general population (Creswell, 2005). Due to the sensitive nature of the topic of sexual harassment, one of the limitations of the existing literature is that most studies have focused on participants' responses to hypothetical scenarios as opposed to real life experiences (Weiss & Lalonde, 2001). Bingham and Scherer (1993) stress that the use of hypothetical scenarios to study incidents of sexual harassment can be less harmful to participants, but it also weakens the validity and generalizability of the findings. Magley (2000) suggests that future research should utilize qualitative methods of data collection.

Qualitative research focuses on the collection of specific, detailed stories from a small number of participants. While analysis of qualitative data does not result in statistics that represent the larger population, it highlights the significance of each participant's story, and it is the uniqueness of the participant's situation that is thought to

be important. Qualitative research is important because researchers strive to learn more about the phenomenon under study from the participants' view, without placing them in contrived contexts with controlled variables, which results in a comprehensive look at experiences that are particular to a small sample of individuals (Creswell, 2005; Krefting, 1991).

A limitation to the existing published research is that although there are studies that identify women's coping behaviours when sexually harassed, most are quantitative and fail to provide a comprehensive account of coping (Magley, 2002). A qualitative methodology was determined to be most appropriate for exploring women's experiences of coping with sexual harassment.

Critical Incident Technique

This study applied the Critical Incident Technique (CIT) as outlined by Flanagan (1954) and Woolsey (1986). The CIT is a qualitative method of data collection that was originally developed by Flanagan and which stemmed from the aviation psychology program of the United States Armed Forces. The CIT uses a set of data collection procedures to accumulate direct, specific, and detailed observations of behaviour that are significant and subscribe to the criteria outlined by Flanagan and other experts in the field. The direct observations are classified as "incidents"; however, in order to be critical an incident must significantly add to or significantly take away from the phenomenon being studied. Finally, the categorization of critical incidents determines the specific behaviours that are fundamental to the general aim of the activity being studied.

The CIT is a flexible methodology and can be used for many different purposes. For example, it can examine effective and ineffective behaviours, helpful and hindering factors, functional or behavioural descriptions of events or problems, and characteristics that are critical to important aspects of an activity or event (Butterfield, Borgen, Amundson, & Maglio, 2005). This flexibility stems from the fact that the CIT does not embody strict methods of data collection, but can be tailored to the specific situation under study. The method has been used in a variety of fields to gather detailed incidents, such as in nursing (Dachelet et al., 1981; Kemppainen, 2000; Lindsey & Attridge, 1989), counsellor education (Doxsee & Kivlrghan, 1994; Tryon, 2000), management education and training (Ellinger & Bostrom, 2002; Ellinger, Watkins, & Bostrom, 1999; O'Driscoll & Cooper, 1996), counselling (Amundson, Borgen, Jordan, & Erlebach, 2004; Butterfield & Borgen, 2005), and social work (Weyers & VanBerg, 2006).

The present study applied the Critical Incident Technique to examine women's real life incidents of sexual harassment and what they found helpful and hindering in their experiences of coping. This methodology was appropriate for the study of the phenomenon of sexual harassment because it was able to provide first hand, detailed accounts of women's experiences, which allowed for the compilation of data to tease out specific processes that significantly added to and significantly took away from women's experiences of coping. Participants recalled particular incidents to provide valuable information regarding what was most helpful and most hindering in coping with sexual harassment based on the participants' observed and experienced incidents.

Participants

In order to recruit participants, flyers were placed in the community and in government and non-government agencies, Embassies would be the best places to post the flyers in Cote d'Ivoire. The posters were include an email address and phone number at which potential participants could contact me if they wished to receive further information or to volunteer for the study.

I conducted screening via telephone and/or email in order to ensure that participants met the necessary requirements to successfully participate in this study. The criteria for inclusion in the study were that participants: a) were working females; b) were at least 19 years of age or older; c) met the criteria of the operational definition of sexual harassment, which was that they had experienced one or more of the following: unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature; implicit or explicit employment or academic consequences to rejection of such conduct when such conduct interferes with an individual's academic or working performance, or when such conduct creates a tense or hostile working or academic environment; and d) experienced embarrassment, insecurity, discomfort, offense, or humiliation as a result of the harassing behaviour. In order to establish safety so that participants felt comfortable telling their story, I made certain that all participants understood that it was not necessary to discuss the details of the actual harassing incident itself if they were uncomfortable doing so, as the focus of the research was solely on helpful and hindering experiences of coping.

Interviews were carried out in confidential locations to protect the trust and confidentiality of the sexual harassed female. The respondents were asked to propose a location where they think was confidential to them. This ensure that the place is comfortable to the participants. When the participants were not willing to disclose themselves to the interviewers, interviews were conducted over the phone. However, researcher explained that not everyone were selected for the study.

During the interview, demographic questions were asked by the researcher to provide information of the survey. I included questions such as age, race, among others.

Sixteen women contacted the researcher regarding participation, and 15 women met criteria and participated in this study. One woman's story was not included because her experience did not meet the researcher's definition of sexual harassment. Participants ranged in age from 21 to 44 years, with a mean age of 30 years. Twelve participants identified themselves as Ivorian, while three defined themselves as being of "other" ethnic origin (Portuguese/Chinese, Native American, and Italian/Ukranian) working in different organizations of Cote d'Ivoire. Six participants had received a university undergraduate degree, five had completed some college or university, one had obtained a high school diploma, two had completed a college diploma, and one had obtained a university graduate degree. Eight participants had never been married, four were separated, one was in a common law relationship, and two were married. Twelve participants experienced their incidents of sexual harassment while at their place of work, one participant experienced the sexual harassment while outside office premises, and two

participants experienced the sexual harassment from coworkers in places unrelated to their offices.

Research Procedures

The Critical Incident Technique (CIT) consists of five major steps described by Flanagan (1954) to outline the entire research process. These steps include: 1) ascertaining the general aims of the activity being studied, 2) making plans and setting specifications, 3) collecting data, 4) analyzing the data, and 5) interpreting the data and reporting the results. These five steps describe procedures for creating a definition of the activity being studied, describing the type of situations that will be observed and who will observe them, data collection and analysis, category formation, and reporting research findings.

Step one of the CIT is, "ascertaining the general aims" and involves creating a serviceable definition of the activity being studied, as well as clearly pinpointing the "aim" or objective of the study (Butterfield et al., 2005). Butterfield and colleagues argued that this can be achieved when the researcher is able to answer the following questions: a) what is the objective of the activity, and b) what is the person expected to accomplish who engages in the activity? Flanagan (1954) argued that the aim of the activity under study could be determined by questioning professionals who are considered experts in the field or by questioning individuals who actually perform the behaviour. In the present study, the "activity" was a woman's attempt to cope with her experience of being sexually harassed. In order to create a working definition of the general aim of this "activity", I consulted many sexual harassment advisors from two

universities, as well researchers, who had themselves researched sexual harassment. After speaking to these experts, it was decided that the objective of women who are attempting to cope with the experience of being sexually harassed is a) for the harassment to stop, b) to feel safe in their everyday environment, and c) to move on with life. Along these same lines, it was decided that when coping with sexual harassment, a woman hopes to d) obtain a support network and a sense of understanding, e) a sense of justice against the harasser, and f) the opportunity to make sense of her experience. Flanagan argues that constructing a functional definition of the activity is required before any other planning or behavioural observations take place, as it defines the steps that should be taken if participation in the activity is thought to be successful. Woolsey (1986) states that creating a definition of the general aim is not only an important step, but also the most difficult. She argues that creating a definition requires "a good deal of hard thinking" (p. 244), and that the researcher must form a well worded definition, as it is the one that participants use in order to decide upon which incidents they will report.

Step two of the CIT is "making plans and setting specifications." One specification is to determine the types of situations that will be observed, and who will make the observations. According to Flanagan (1954), the observer should be as familiar as possible with the activity, and should have observed the individual engaged in the activity on more than one occasion. Woolsey (1986) wrote that the person making the observations can be anyone who has experience with the activity and who can make first-hand observations, but that training may be needed in situations where the observer is being asked to report on the actions of others. In this case, Woolsey suggests that it is

important to review the general aim of the activity with the observer, and to also provide

the observer with a clear explanation of the observations on which they are reporting. In

the present study, participants were the "observers" and were asked to report in detail on

the thoughts, actions and behaviours of themselves and others as it applied to the

experience of coping with sexual harassment.

Another specification is that incidents need to be "critical." Flanagan (1954)

argued that an incident was considered critical when it made a "significant" positive or

negative contribution to the general aim of the activity, with the definition of

"significant" depending on the nature of the activity being studied. In order for incidents

to be included in the present study, they had to be relevant to the general aim by either

adding to or taking away from women's attempts to stop the harassment, to feel safe in

their everyday environment, to move on with life, to obtain a support network and a sense

of understanding, to feel a sense of justice against the harasser, or to make sense of her

experience.

Data Collection

The third major step in the critical incident technique is collecting the data. When

using the CIT, data collection usually takes the form of an interview, and it is helpful to

send a copy of the interview questions to the participants prior to the actual interview

itself (Flanagan, 1954; Woolsey, 1986). Woolsey (1986) notes that it is important for the

interview questions to contain information about exactly what type of incidents are being

studied, so that observers are less likely to report on less important incidents, causing the

data to become diffused. Flanagan (1954) wrote that participants have better memories

when they are aware that an incident being observed needs to be remembered; therefore, it would be beneficial for participants to be shown the questions prior to the interview in order to increase the likelihood that participants will remember incidents in greater detail. Flanagan also noted that the accuracy of an incident can be judged depending on the amount of detail given, indicating that less detailed reports are less well remembered and the data could therefore be incorrect. For the current study, research questions were handed out to participants prior to the interview in order to allow them time to reflect and prepare answers. Interviews were range from 45 minutes to one hour in length were conducted. Only first-hand observations recalled in sufficient detail were included in the data pool.

The collection of helpful and hindering incidents were counterbalanced - that is, I inquired about helpful incidents before hindering incidents with the first participant, hindering incidents before helpful incidents with the second participant, and so on. The collection of incidents alternated between helpful and hindering to reduce the impact that participant fatigue might have on participant reporting. As details of the incidents were collected, I made some notes regarding my initial thoughts and impressions; this reflexivity assisted with subsequent analysis of the data.

Ethical Considerations

When conducting counselling research there are special ethical issues that need to be considered due to the potential sensitivity of the topics, with the main concerns being harms and benefits, privacy and confidentiality, and informed consent and deception (Creswell, 2005; Schultz, Sheppard, Lehr, & Sheppard, 2006). There were potential

emotional and psychological risks associated with the study of sexual harassment, and as principal researcher it was my responsibility to foresee and attempt to minimize these risks. In an effort to make sure that consent was informed and voluntary and that the participants' best interests were being served, I devised an information sheet with details on the purpose of the research, participants' commitment, confidentiality, where their information would be stored, who will have access to the data and when and how data will be destroyed. No deception was used, and I made certain participants were aware of how they could contact me if they had any questions or need for debriefing.

Potential Risks

There were no anticipated physical, social, legal, or economic risks associated with the present study. All participants chose to share their story on a volunteer basis with full knowledge prior to the interview as to what the study was exploring. Participants were informed that they could take a break during the interview process, or withdraw from the research at any time without penalty. However, due to the potentially sensitive nature of the topic, participants could possibly have experienced some psychological or emotional discomfort as a result of painful and/or embarrassing memories of their sexual harassment. A list of local counselling resources was provided at the time of the interview in the event that participants wanted information about where they could work with a professional to follow-up on any issues that may have surfaced as a result of participating in the study ("Ministere de la promotion de la Femme, de la Famille et de la protection de l'Enfant" at +225 20 21 77 02 / 20 21 76 26). Participants were also informed that it was not necessary to disclose information about the harassing experience

itself, as it was not the focus of my study; however, if they did choose to disclose this experience to me I was open and willing to listen. I also allowed time for participants to debrief with me after the interview, and asked for feedback on how the experience was for them as well as what recommendations they had for how I might have made the experience better.

Potential Benefits

The interviews were conducted in a confidential environment using empathic listening skills, which provided women the opportunity to express their true feelings about the incident, perhaps for the first time since the incident occurred. The study also provided women with the chance to reflect on and voice what was helpful and hindering to them during their attempt to cope with the experience of sexual harassment, and hopefully to return to these methods of coping in other stressful situations. Voicing their helpful experiences might also have helped women to feel more knowledgeable in the event that another woman should approach them on how to successfully cope with harassment or other stressful situations.

Another potential benefit of the present study was providing women with the opportunity to participate in a study that may help to make other women's experiences of coping with sexual harassment more effective than what they had experienced. Participants may have felt a sense of pride about participating in a project that will provide information regarding what women found to be helpful or hindering when coping with sexual harassment. Finally, this study allowed participants the opportunity to voice

what they found unhelpful in their attempt to cope with sexual harassment which may provide relief for participants who had not previously had the opportunity to do so.

The outcomes of this research can be used to enforce the law prohibiting sexual harassment and used to make changes in the work environment. That is why the findings of this research will be a force for positive social change for all people in Ivory Coast.

Another benefit of the present study was that stories were told and heard in the participants' own words, which I think was an empowering and positive experience for the women.

Data Analysis

The fourth step in the Critical Incident Technique is data analysis. Similar to other qualitative research, analysis of data collected using the CIT method is a subjective process during which the researcher strives to tease out common themes using an inductive thought process. In the current study, the first step in the process of analysis was to assign each participant a numerical code, and transcribe verbatim all 15 interviews.

Category formation is a highly subjective process in which the researcher attempts to make a universal claim about the activity being studied using the specific critical incidents that have been collected (Flanagan, 1954; Woolsey, 1986). Raw data from the current study was divided into "incidents", defined as direct observations of actions taken by participants or actions taken by others that were either helpful or hindering in an attempt to cope with the experience of sexual harassment. In order for incidents to be included in data analysis, it was necessary for participants to categorize

whether each incident had been helpful or hindering, and to describe to the researcher how each incident added to or took away from the experience of coping, which had to include at least one objective from the general aim. A total of 79 incidents were collected from the data; seven incidents were omitted from data analysis because they failed to add to or take away from the general aim of the activity being studied, leaving a total of 72 incidents to be included in the study. For example, one participant said "I basically just laughed it off and moved aside... to keep peace in the workplace" (09). In this case, the participant was able to identify the coping behaviour, but could not indicate how the behaviour added to or took away from the general aim of coping with sexual harassment.

Incidents were copied verbatim from participants' transcripts and placed separately on cards. Participant numbers and incident numbers were placed on each card which allowed the researcher to track incidents within their categories. Details from participants' critical incident data sheets were placed on incident cards when appropriate, and when necessary, I used the critical incident data sheet as a reference tool to provide contextual information for incidents.

Initially, all incidents were sorted into two major groups, "Actions of Participants", and "Actions of Others". This distinction assisted me with the organization of incidents and a place from which to begin more in depth analysis. Within these two major groups, incidents were further divided into groups of "helpful" and "hindering" incidents, which resulted in the formation of four major groups: "Actions of Participants, Helpful", "Actions of Participants, Hindering", "Actions of Others, Helpful", and "Actions of Others, Hindering".

Within each of the four major groups, incidents that appeared to thematically fit together were sorted into tentative categories. When this initial sorting was complete, the most representative incidents from each group were selected to act as a prototype for that group and assigned a color for identification purposes. A prototypical incident is the incident that best represents the category as opposed to one that only loosely fits the category. All other incidents were re-collected, individually compared with the various prototypes, and then re-sorted according to which prototypical incident they most resembled (Woolsey, 1986). Notes were kept by the researcher to track thoughts on the categorization process, and to document the formation of categories as a reference tool. Prototypical incidents remained consistent; however, all other incidents were collected and compared to the prototypes on numerous occasions. Once I was certain that all incidents had been placed with the appropriate prototype, categories were further subdivided until I was satisfied that they accurately represented the data that was collected. Subcategories emerged when I felt that an overall theme was being represented by small groups of specific, yet different, incidents. In order to assist with the formation of subcategories, a prototypical incident was chosen for each subcategory, assigned a color for identification purposes, and the categorization process proceeded as outlined above. Incidents were not "forced" into categories but emerged from the data itself. I then wrote descriptions of categories in order to summarize the type of incidents each category represented, and included direct quotes from the prototypical incident for each category, which I felt would embody the overall message being represented in each description.

The final step of the Critical Incident Technique is reporting the findings. At this point, findings should be laid out in clear and precise categories to make interpretation of the data as simple as possible. Flanagan (1954) suggests that during this stage it is important to revisit the other four major steps in order to be aware of any biases that may be associated with the technique up until this point. As suggested by Woolsey (1986), category descriptions incorporated direct quotes from prototypical incidents as a means of accurately reporting the findings of a critical incident study. By using an incident that is most representative of the category, the readers will develop a distinct sense of the findings and a firm grasp of the characteristics of the category.

Trustworthiness

Butterfield et al. (2005) proposed nine trustworthiness checks to ensure reliability of data and proper execution of the critical incident technique, seven of which were implemented in the current study. Researchers at the University of British Columbia have proposed a check that involves conducting a second interview with participants once the data from the first interview has been analyzed and placed into tentative categories. The second interview allows the participant to affirm that the categories for the data make sense, and provides opportunities for participants to review their story and make sure it has been adequately recorded and to add and take away from it as they see fit. In the present study I altered this credibility check and transcribed all interviews verbatim and sent a copy of the interviews to each participant for revisions and suggestions in order to ensure that the participants felt their story was being accurately represented (Ellinger & Bostrom, 2002; Ellinger, Watkins & Bostrom, 1999). Thirteen of

15 participants reviewed their transcripts and provided the researcher written confirmation of accuracy. A second attempt was made to contact the remaining two participants regarding their transcripts, and when no response was received accuracy was assumed and the data was included in the research.

As a second reliability check, 25% of the total number of incidents were randomly chosen and placed by independent judges into the categories formed by the researcher. In the present study two graduate students acted as independent judges, both of whom had taken courses in qualitative methodology and were completing their own qualitative research. The higher the rate of agreement between the independent judges and the researcher, the more reliable the category is thought to be (Barbey, 2000; Borgen, Amundson, & Harder, 1988; Butterfield, 2006; Duplassie, Macknee, & Williams, 2008; Ellinger & Bostrom, 2002; O'Driscoll & Cooper, 1996; Sherack, 2003). Existing literature suggests that an acceptable agreement rate between judges is 75% to 85% of incidents in major categories, and 60% to 70% of incidents in subcategories (Andersson & Nilsson, 1964). The researcher sat with each judge separately and provided an hour long training session which included a brief explanation of the categorization process, and finished with a minimum of four practice incidents which judges placed in the appropriate categories under the supervision of the researcher. Judges were then left with category descriptions for all four groups and 18 incidents to independently place in the appropriate category. Table 1 depicts the results of categorization of incidents by independent judges. The criterion for an acceptable rate of agreement between judges and the researcher was met for both major categories and subcategories.

Table 1 *The Percentage of Agreement between the Judges' and the Researchers'*
Category Schemes

| | % of Agreement | |
	Categories	Subcategories
Judge 1	100%	91.6%
Judge 2	100%	83.3%

Note. n = 36 incidents, 18 incidents per judge

Third, it is important that researchers track the point of saturation of the data,

which occurs when no new categories emerge from the data and redundancy takes place.

In critical incident studies, sample size is determined not by number of participants but

by number of incidents (Woolsey, 1986). Andersson and Nilsson (1964) explain that

saturation can be assumed when two thirds of the total number of incidents represents

95% of the total number of categories and subcategories used in a study. In the current

research, the categorization of 48 randomly selected incidents embodied 20 of 21

categories/subcategories, resulting in a 95.2 % saturation rate, which indicated that the

saturation criteria was met.

Fourth, the present study calculated participation rates within categories by taking

the number of participants who reported incidents in a particular category and then

dividing it by the total number of participants, with a participation rate of at least 25 %

for a category to be considered valid. Flanagan (1954) argued that the larger the number

of participants who report the same incident, the more relevant the incident is to the

general aim of the study. In the present study, participation rates were recorded; however,

no categories were excluded. The sentiment is that by excluding categories the researcher risks the loss of valuable information; therefore, regardless of the calculated participation rate, all categories were maintained and reported (Andersson & Nilsson, 1964; Barbey, 2000; Bedi, Davis & Williams, 2005; Woolsey, 1986). Table 2 represents participation rates for Actions of Participants, Helpful, and as indicated, two of the five categories met the participation rate requirements.

Table 3 depicts participation rates for the group Actions of Participants, Hindering. As shown in the table below, two of the five categories met the participation rate requirements. Table 4 portrays participation rates for the group Actions of Others, Helpful. As indicated, two of three categories fulfilled participation rate requirements. Finally, Table 5 illustrates participation rates for the group Actions of Others, Hindering. Of the three categories in this group, none fulfilled participation rate requirements.

Table 2 *Participation Rates: Actions of Participants, Helpful*

Category	Number of Participants	Participation Rate%
1. Discussing experience with a coworker	8	53%
2. Protecting younger coworkers	3	20%
3. Taking formal action	3	20%
4. Participant tells perpetrator to stop	3	20%
5. Participant removing self from situation.	6	40%

As a fifth check, Butterfield et al. (2005) suggest that researchers focus on theoretical validity. The reasoning behind this is that researchers be clear about the assumptions involved in their study and then examine them in comparison with the existing literature to see if they are supported (Barbey, 2000; Butterfield, 2006; Butterfield et al., 2005; Morley, 2003). In the present study, assumptions were compared with a review of the existing literature and findings have been carefully tracked and appear to be well supported by previous research (Chapter 5: Discussion).

As a sixth trustworthiness check, all interviews were audio-taped and transcribed verbatim from the tape in order to work directly from the transcript and be as precise as possible (Bormann et al., 2006; Ellinger et al., 1999; Ellinger & Bostrom, 2002).

The final trustworthiness check involved having an expert in the CIT method listen to a sample of interview tapes to make sure that the interviewer is correctly following the method. In the present study my supervisor, Dr. Corinne Koehn, acted as the expert and reviewed every 4(interview from my collection of tapes in order to ensure that proper interview techniques were being employed (Bormann et al., 2006; Butterfield, 2006).

Active listening was also used to increase accuracy in the present study. As described by Woolsey (1986), active listening is used during interviews to ensure the interviewer is developing a comprehensive understanding of the incidents being reported and the message that the participant is trying to convey.

Table 3 *Participation Rates: Actions of Participants, Hindering*

Category	Number of Participants	Participation Rate%
1. Minimizing harassment:	6	40%
a) Making light of harassment or minimizing severity	3	20.0%
b) Ignoring harassment	4	26.6%
2. Participant discusses harassment with perpetrator	6	40%
3. Use of drugs and alcohol	1	6.60%
4. Altering style of dress	1	6.60%
5. Avoiding perpetrator	2	13.0%

Table 4 *Participation Rates: Actions of Others, Helpful*

Category	Number of Participants	Participation Rate%
1. Support	12	80%
a) Providing assurance of future support	4	26.6%
b) Coworkers assure participant she is not doing something wrong	4	26.6%
c) Providing emotional support	7	46.6%
2. Protection	4	26.6%
a) Coworker protecting participant from perpetrator	3	20.0%
b) Taking action to stop harassment	2	13.0%
3. Problem solving	3	20.0%

Table 5 *Participation Rates: Actions of Others, Hindering*

Category	Number of Participants	Participation Rate%
1. Judgmental responses	3	20%
a) Criticizing participant	2	13.0%
b) Blaming participant	1	6.60%
2. Information giving in the absence of support	1	6.60%
3. Not taking action	2	13.0%

Chapter 4: Results

This chapter will report on the research findings of the current study, and

summarize findings from the critical incident data sheet. Category descriptions and direct

quotes will be provided and findings will be presented in the context of how they relate to

the main research question posed in this thesis: what is significantly helpful, and what is

significantly hindering in women's experiences of coping with incidents of sexual

harassment? Table 6 identifies the groups, major categories, and subcategories formed in

the findings of the current study.

Table 6 *Groups, Categories, and Subcategories*

Groups, Categories, and Subcategories	Number of Participants	Number of Incidents
Actions of Participant, Helpful		33
1. Awareness of workplace sexual harassment	6	10
2. Discussing experience with a coworker	8	8
3. Protecting younger coworkers	3	3
4. Taking formal action	3	3
5. Participant tells perpetrator to stop	3	3
6. Participant removing self from situation	6	6
Actions of Participant, Hindering		27
1. Risk factors for workplace sexual harassment	8	10
2. Minimizing Harassment:	6	
a) Making light of harassment or minimizing severity	3	3

b) Ignoring harassment	4	4
3. Participant discusses harassment with perpetrator	6	6
4. Use of drugs and alcohol	1	1
5. Altering style of dress	1	1
6. Avoiding perpetrator	2	2
Actions of Others, Helpful		23
1. Support:	12	
a) Providing assurance of future support	4	4
b) Coworkers assure participant she is not doing something wrong	4	4
c) Providing emotional support	7	7
2. Protection:	4	3
a) Coworker protecting participant from perpetrator	3	2
b) Taking action to stop harassment	2	3
3. Problem solving	3	4
Actions of Others, Hindering		9
1. Judgmental responses:	3	
a) Criticizing participant	2	3
b) Blaming participant	1	1
2. Information giving in the absence of support	1	1
3. Not taking action	2	4

Note. Participants provided more than one incident each.

As indicated in findings from the critical incident data sheet, all perpetrators of

sexual harassment were male, and 13 of 15 participants perceived the perpetrator of their

harassment as being in a position of power and/or authority over them. Eighty percent of harassing incidents were reported as occurring in the target's place of work, and all participants chose to disclose their experiences of harassment to some type of support provider. Informal resources such as co-workers, friends, family members, and the target's boss, supervisor, or manager were among the most common support providers to whom participants chose to disclose. More formal resources such as counsellors, and Human Resource personnel were among the least common support providers to whom participants chose to disclose.

Actions of Participants, Helpful

The first group consisted of 23 incidents that had been placed into five major categories. This group focused on all actions of participants that were significantly helpful in the experience of coping with sexual harassment.

Awareness of workplace sexual harassment

Women Ivorian workers described various forms of sexual harassment. Seventy-five percent of the participants shared a personal or another woman's story of being sexual harassed at work. When asked about what their understanding of sexual harassment was, they described unwanted staring, verbal taunting, and physical grabbing. Unwanted verbal comments were most common, followed by physical grabbing, then staring. Some women also reported that harassers threatened to terminate their employment if they did not comply with the harassers' requests.

Other women were offered better hours in exchange for sexual favors. Most harassers were male co-workers and foremen. One participant mentioned that the harasser was a

female supervisor. Foremen were more likely to use threats of termination or offers of employment.

> *"There are many ways, sometimes they stare at times…they are making flirtatious compliments but using dirty words and they keep doing this over and over. Or sometimes they get close to you… at some point just touch you… sometimes they make sexual insinuations with their lips and eyes and when they look at you from top to bottom that look alone sometimes makes you feel very uncomfortable"*

> *"I worked on a farm that when I was left alone, there was this man and I was very scared of him. Every time I saw him, I used to run, I even left the ladder, because on two occasions, he grabbed me and I couldn't move, he covered my mouth and he told me to be quiet otherwise he was going to fire me."*

> *"They intimidate you, by saying I will fire you, I will invent something, or I will call your husband to tell him even if it's a lie"*

> *"I was working by piece rate and one of the foremen told me if I wanted for him to give me more hours, I need to sleep with him"*

Sexual harassment was frequent and persistent in the Ivorian workplace. In some cases, women workers left their jobs in search of better work environments, only to find that other fields and warehouses were no different. Women workers understood that

sexual harassment was wrong, but accepted that it came with working in the Ivorian organizations.

> *"It always has existed, that always has existed here. That always has existed in the fields when there are many people, men do not pay attention if there are women around or people that don't like to hear that. They say things that we women shouldn't have to listen to. And that is wrong, and has been happening too long"*

> *"I did not like the harassment, I only stayed one week and I left because he harassed me constantly. I went to work at a [another] warehouse and it was the same story"*

Women workers also mentioned that they felt disrespected when sexually harassed. They preferred to be acknowledged for their hard work, but instead felt sexually objectified by male co-workers and foremen. Sexual harassment was undeserved and it affected not only the individual being harassed, but also the individual's family and co-workers.

> *"There should be rules and we all need to follow them, foremen and workers, we all deserve respect. We deserve that our dignity is respected when we work, we work hard and do our best."*

"It affects us in many ways, psychologically, our body, and psychologically

because there is a lot of vulgarity spoken, sometimes there is no respect for you,

or your family, and other workers."

Discussing Experience with a Coworker

This category consisted of incidents in which participants disclosed their

experiences of sexual harassment with a female friend, coworker or family member.

These incidents were considered significantly helpful because the participant reported

that it helped them to feel that they were not alone in dealing with their situation, and

because the opportunity to share their experience with someone else helped to take

weight off their own shoulders. For example, one participant said:

I had also talked to other women about it and they were all like 'yeah he's done the

same thing to me, he's a jerk, he's a pervert, he's all this... I didn 't feel alone I

guess, I felt supported that way (07).

One participant disclosed to a female coworker and reported that "*just talking to*

her yeah, kind of like it helped me get it off my own shoulders" (15) while another spoke

to other female students and said that "*it just kind of reassured me that I wasn 't the only*

one thinking that, you know?" (06).

Protecting Younger Coworkers

This category consisted of incidents in which participants came to the defense of a younger coworker to protect her from a situation in which she may potentially be sexually harassed. Participants described these incidents as significantly helpful to their coping because they felt they had gained their power back in the situation and took comfort in being able to prevent another coworker from potentially having the same negative experience with sexual harassment. One participant believed it was important to share her experience with younger coworkers and said "*so then it just became open for the whole floor and wasn 'tjust my own personal crisis and that just helped immensely and we were all just sort of on the lookout for each other*'" (04) and added,

> Knowledge is power, and to empower the younger nurses, that 'oh watch out for this kind of thing', or, if he was trying to get them alone you 'd make sure he didn 't, because you didn't want them to have the same experience (04).

> Another participant confronted the perpetrator of her harassment on behalf of a younger coworker who was also being harassed and said about the experience: He laid off her right away too because I cornered him and I felt, I felt like this huge amount of power so I was like 'what are you doing? '...I had this strength from all the other women in the workplace as well because when they found out he was doing this to her because she was just a young one right, so then all of a sudden it was like well he can't do that, so we 're all coming against him for her (07).

Taking Formal Action

This category consisted of incidents in which participants took formal action against the perpetrator of the harassment or the establishment in which the harassment took place. Participants described these incidents as significantly helpful in coping with their experience of sexual harassment because there was some form of justice against the perpetrator of the harassment, and because it validated that what they had gone through was unacceptable. Participants described feeling empowered by this action and therefore able to feel they had obtained closure in the situation and were comfortable moving on. One participant chose to file a complaint against the institution and said:

> It [sexual harassment] doesn 't have to be part of the job, and as long as you have those rights and that power that you know, you have, you can deal with it, and you can move on. So yeah, it definitely empowered me, as an individual anyway (01).

The same participant also said that the act of filing a formal complaint "*gives you that level of validation that you're like okay, what I did was the right thing, because now it's in his face that there are consequences*" (01). Along these same lines, another participant chose to bring legal action against the perpetrator for sexual touching, and explained that it was:

> Something that has helped me move on and I have had some more closure from that. I think it just, it kind of empowered me more to know that I could do that, I

had the right to do that, that I wasn 't at fault, that it wasn 't appropriate, I didn

'tfeel so vulnerable (11).

The final participant in this category chose to report the perpetrator's behaviour to

her boss and reported that it was helpful to her because "*I knew he didn't get away with it*

kinda thing. It was comforting to me knowing that he would actually be talked to about it

and not just continue doing it to other people" (14).

Participant Tells Perpetrator to Stop

This category consisted of incidents in which participants definitively told the

perpetrator to stop the harassing behaviour. Participants described these incidents as

significantly helpful to their coping because their actions helped to stop the harassment,

and helped the participant feel strong in being able to handle the situation themselves. It

is important to note that incidents in this category do not focus on the fact that the

participant confronted the perpetrator about his behaviour, but rather, the language that

was used by the participant while doing so. All participants in this category directly and

assertively instructed the perpetrator to desist the harassing behaviour. For example, one

participant responded to a perpetrator by saying "*get away from me, I don't need your*

help...get away from me, this is totally ridiculous" (08) while another reported that "*once,*

I told him not to touch me" (03). The third participant in this category chose to handle her

situation more aggressively and told the perpetrator "*I'm so sick of you doing this...this is*

bullshit, you know, you keep doing this and it's really inappropriate and if you 're not

careful I will slap a sexual harassment suit on you" (01).

Participant Removes Self from Situation

This category consisted of incidents in which participants removed themselves

physically from the environment in which the harassment was taking place, which meant

that there was no longer potential for contact with the perpetrator of the harassment.

Participants described these incidents as significantly helpful because once out of the

situation the harassment immediately stopped, and there was a sense of relief over no

longer having to "deal with" the perpetrator(s). For example, one participant walked away

from the perpetrator and returned to the place where she was staying and reported that it

was helpful because "*it removed me from the place, and it removed me from where he*

asked me, and it removed me from him" (12). Another participant in this category quit her

job and went home as a means of coping with the harassment, and disclosed that "*it made*

me feel much safer never having to see him [theperpetrator] again" (14).

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Actions of Participant, Hindering

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The second group consisted of 17 incidents divided into five categories and two

subcategories, and all incidents in this group were actions of the participant described as

significantly hindering to experiences of coping with sexual harassment.

Risk factors for workplace sexual harassment

Both personal and environmental risks factors existed for WSH in the Ivorian

organizations. Women workers mentioned they had to tolerate sexual harassment because

of personal economic and social circumstances. They needed the employment to support

their families. Most of them depended on the foreman's bilingual language skills to

communicate and keep their jobs. They felt that if they complained, they would lose their

jobs or get deported. The lack of economic security, English literacy, and legal

documentation increased their likelihood of being sexually harassed at work.

> *"We have to tolerate everything, because without legal documents and without*
>
> *anything to protect us, they are not going to believe in you, they going to believe*
>
> *what the foreman says. If they have years working there and you just arrived, they*
>
> *aren't going to believe you. They consider you the liar."*

> *"And we need to survive…so many humiliations so many things that we go*
>
> *through because we don't think about getting hurt, we think about the*
>
> *responsibility we have. And what, what are we to do?"*

> *"This, this happens I believe on all the farms, but no one says anything, because*
>
> *they want to continue working…"*

Women workers also felt that foremen took advantage of their difficult life

situations. The foremen had the power to hire or fire them and even threatened and

undermined their credibility by stating that no one would believe them even if they filed a

complaint. In some cases, the foremen were related to the growers and owners and this

made it more challenging for women workers to stop the harassment.

"I believe is the abuse of power, I believe that is a factor, they feel that they have

the power and it is exciting for them. That's why they do it. Why don't they do it in

the streets? Because they know they can go to jail. They do it here because they

feel that they have the power to control, manipulate, and be able to take

advantage. That's why it happens in the warehouses and fields and most of the

time it is the foreman"

"One time I worked in a place where the foreman told us before we started to

work, he said, "if you complain or sue the farm, you will not win because this

farm has very good lawyers and lots of money and you guys are poor"

Physical appearance and choice of clothing also contributed to being at risk for

sexual harassment. Women mentioned that male co-workers and foremen frequently

commented on their appearance at work. In the fields, dress codes were not common.

Participants felt that other women wearing provocative or revealing clothing suggested

the wrong idea. As a result, some women purposely wore baggier clothing to hide their

bodies and deter any unwanted attention from the men.

"They make fun of you, if you are pretty that you think you are better than

everyone, if are ugly, they use nicknames to call you…"

"It's okay to dress up but not for work. I have seen women with their blouses and

during the heat they take their shirts off, and there are some who bend over so

you can see everything. And they let others look, even the foremen can see

everything. And well, that's not right"

"I don't have a very nice body but I wear very big clothes, it doesn't matter if you

don't like to have very big clothes, you put on pants that are bigger than normal,

big shirts that cover your backside and sweat jackets, covering yourself they see

you as an ugly woman, fat, and they don't bother you"

Women workers reported that physical isolation was another risk for WSH. This was particularly a concern in the fields because the foremen often separated women workers from their husbands and co-workers, leaving them alone in isolated areas.

"It is when women are by themselves and they are not with their husbands. The

foreman will take advantage of women and do what he wants to do with the

person…"

"The father of my children, when I lived with him, went to look for work on a

farm and the foreman asked him, "are you working alone or bringing your wife?"

and he said, "I'm going to bring my wife." He [the foreman] said, "Oh yeah?

Well the men go over here and the women work over there." [My husband] said,

"And why do you separate them?" and the foreman said, "because they are going

to work by me where I can keep an eye on them to make sure they don't get

behind".

Women also described that being sexually harassed was an emotionally and socially isolating experience. Female co-workers often reacted unfavorably towards harassed women. They blamed the woman for provoking the men, especially if the woman was single. They gossiped and started rumors. Women workers were sensitive to how their female co-workers perceived them. The lack of cohesion and support among female workers discouraged women from reporting the harassment.

> *""They see you if you are alone [single] they say "that woman is looking for a man, be careful with your husbands." When it's not true and the only you want is to work because you have a need for the job"*

> *"Their wives think that you are promiscuous – they harass you, they signal you, when you are not doing anything bad, they even say that you provoked them that you're harassing them when it's them"*

> *"The lady that works with them saw me and told me that I like to gossip, I told her, "look, you have your husband here, not me. But I do not like it [going to the bathroom where others can see you] because it is disrespectful to other people."*

Minimizing Harassment

This category "Minimizing harassment" was divided into two subcategories: a) Making light of harassment or minimizing severity, and b) Ignoring harassment. a)

Making light of harassment or minimizing severity. This subcategory consisted of incidents in which participants "normalized" or laughed off the harassment in order to avoid conflict, or questioned whether or not their experiences were severe enough to disclose to anyone. These incidents were described as significantly hindering because the harassment continued, and because participants felt discouraged from seeking further support. One participant described her experience as being the only female in a vehicle full of men: "*I was like kind of going along with it and kind of like laughing because I was really nervous and uncomfortable*" (13). Another participant described discomfort after confiding in a counsellor because "*I felt it wasn 't severe enough to be talking to anybody about*" (02).

b) Ignoring harassment. This subcategory consists of incidents in which participants ignored the harassment they were experiencing. These incidents were described as significantly hindering because the harassment continued, because participants did not feel they had control over the situation, and that by ignoring the harassment they were unable to deal with the situation and move forward. One participant explained "*I think I ignored it to cope. Because I didn 't understand what was happening, so by ignoring it I didn 't even need to think about it*" (05). Another said "*when it first started I just thought that ignoring it would make it go away and obviously that didn't work out very well and it just escalated from there*" (11).

Participant Discusses Harassment with Perpetrator

This category consisted of incidents in which participants attempted to discuss the harassment with the perpetrator, and/or asked the perpetrator to stop the harassing

behaviour in an indirect or unassertive manner. These incidents were described as significantly hindering because they did not stop the harassment, and in some cases were perceived as contributing to the escalation of the harassment. The participant who had the prototypical example of this said: "*I tried to ask him, like what's this about? And in my nervous, naive way it wasn't coming across properly, he almost, he liked that more probably ...he would take it as a level of interest*" (04). This same sentiment is echoed by another participant, who explained,

> I said to him "what are you—why are you always following me like what the hell? Why ...you don't need to be following me why are you doing this ? And he said "Oh I want to get in your pants" and I was like, oh, okay and I didn 't... I said well, that's not going to happen and he's like yeah well I've got to try anyway... and I said something smartass back to him, and it was almost like he took it as encouraging him (07).

Use of Drugs and Alcohol

The third category consisted of an incident in which the participant used drugs and alcohol to cope with her feelings. This incident was described as significantly hindering because the participant was unable to effectively process her experience. The participant described her experience of turning to alcohol as hindering her ability to gain understanding of and to move on from her experience of sexual harassment, and said:

> It [alcohol] definitely kept me away from being able to do those things because I didn't want to do those things, I didn't want to deal with them, I didn't want them to be part of me, I didn't want to acknowledge them after... yeah I didn't want to

acknowledge them so alcohol kept me from all those things for sure because I didn't have to think I just had to be, I didn't have to think about these gross horrible things that they would say or do I didn't have to think at all I could just disappear into it, so it didn't help me cope it helped me escape (10).

Altering Style of Dress

The fourth category consisted of an incident in which a participant changed her style of dress in order to discourage the perpetrator from making comments about her body. This incident was perceived by the participant as significantly hindering because the harassment continued. The participant in this category chose to wear bigger clothing in an attempt to conceal her figure, and said:

It just progressed really gradually and I think where I got the point where I really started feeling uncomfortable that's when I changed the way I looked, like the dressing like not wearing skirts and making sure I wore baggy jeans and looking like the guys I guess you could say. Wearing an ugly shirt (03).

Avoiding Perpetrator

The final category consisted of incidents in which participants chose to avoid the perpetrator of their sexual harassment; however, the potential for contact with the perpetrator was always present and could not be avoided. These incidents were considered significantly hindering because the harassment continued, and because it affected the participants' ability to be effective at school and at work. One participant said "*I hated gym class, and it just like, it made me feel like really - I just didn't want to go to class so obviously that leads to skipping class*" (06). Another participant explained:

It hindered my job I think. Because I 'd always try and avoid him and so if he was

in the shipping area I wouldn 't go out there until he was gone like if I had to ship

something out, because he would stand by me and make comments (03).

Actions of Others, Helpful

The third group consisted of 23 incidents divided into three major categories and

five subcategories. Incidents in this group focused on actions of others that were

significantly helpful to participants' experiences of coping with sexual harassment.

Support

The first major category was titled "Support" and was comprised of three

subcategories: a) Providing assurance of future support, b) Coworkers assure participant

she is not doing something wrong, and c) Providing emotional support.

a) Providing assurance of future support. This subcategory consisted of incidents

in which the manager and/or supervisor assured participants that they would provide

them with further support if needed. These incidents were described as significantly

helpful because managers encouraged participants to come back and speak with them if

the harassing behaviour continued. Participants described this reaction from the managers

as supportive and reassuring. One participant explained that when she disclosed the

harassment to her boss an offer was made to discipline the perpetrator and she said that

this experience "*validated the fact that yeah it's wrong, the fact that the supervisor was*

willing to help me with it" (14). In a similar incident, another participant said,

When I told the managers, while they kind of brushed it off and said whatever, it

happens, at the same time they said if it happens again come talk to us and we '11

talk to him. Well then I felt supported. Then I felt like okay, at least I have that

support and if it happens again I can go talk to them about it (07).

b) Coworkers assure participants they were not doing something wrong. This

subcategory consisted of incidents in which coworkers to whom participants had

disclosed assured them that they had had similar experiences with the perpetrator and that

the participants were not doing something to "cause" the harassment. These incidents

were described as significantly helpful because they helped to alleviate participants' guilt

over the situation, which allowed them to realize that they were not the only person who

had ever been through this type of experience. One participant described a situation in

which a coworker told her she was not alone in her experiences, and assured her that

other female employees had been in similar situations with the perpetrator. When

describing this incident, the participant said: "*I definitely felt validation and acceptance

of it, that there's nothing wrong, that there's nothing I've done incorrectly*" (04). Another

participant explained:

> I had also talked to other women about it and they were all like... yeah he's done
>
> the same thing to me, yeah that's the way he is, he's a jerk, he's a pervert, he's all
>
> this and that so then there was this, there was this huge kind of all these women
>
> banding together and um saying yeah he's done that... You know whatever so just
>
> having those women behind you to support you was huge in, in kind of coping
>
> with it. And knowing that it wasn 'tjust me, he was just a big pervert (07).

c) Providing emotional support. This final subcategory consisted of incidents in which the individuals to whom the participant disclosed provided emotional support. These incidents were described as significantly helpful because participants felt comforted by the fact that other people understood what they were going through, that her feelings were valid and accepted, and that they were supported in the way they chose to handle the situation. One participant received empathy and understanding from her friends regarding her situation, and described this experience as helpful because "*you can talk about it with the person, just that you weren't the only one in the situation- that you weren't alone*" (15). Another participant disclosed that her manager had contacted her at home to offer support after an incident at the workplace. The participant said:

> The manager had called me at home and said 'you know I had heard that this had happened to you today and I am wondering how you 're dealing with it' and so they really just let me tell the story from my side and whatever I was feeling and thinking and they were letting me know that... it wasn't my fault and things could get better and they would and that it would be alright (11).

Protection

The second major category in this group was divided into two subcategories. This category was comprised of incidents in which individuals to whom participants disclosed took action or made suggestions to protect participants from perpetrators of the harassment.

a) Coworkers protecting participant from perpetrator. This subcategory consisted of incidents in which coworkers protected participants and did not allow them to be in

situations where they were alone with the perpetrator of the sexual harassment. These incidents were described as significantly helpful because they helped stop the harassment, and helped the participant to feel safe. One participant described an ideal prototypical incident for this category:

> If I went outside somebody noticed, one of the women noticed that he was following me—because I said he followed me all over the yard, they would either they would come out or they would send one of the guys out [to] 'go find (Participant's name) and get her to do this' so there was always an extra set of eyes and we would do that for each other (07).

b) Taking action to stop harassment. This subcategory consisted of incidents in which the individual to whom the participant reported took action on behalf of the participant to stop the sexual harassment. These incidents were described as significantly helpful because the harassment ended and the participant felt validated. In a prototypical incident for this category the participant's boss spoke to the perpetrator of the harassment in order to convey that the harassing behaviour was inappropriate. The participant said this incident "*was helpful in that it stopped the actual harassment*" (13). Another participant describes an incident in which HR personnel spoke to the perpetrator regarding his inappropriate behaviour; she says about the experience, "*there was that support there for me, and I felt... I felt vindicated after that one, for sure*" (07).

Practical Suggestions

  This category consisted of incidents in which an individual gave participants practical advice or suggestions on how to handle the situation. These incidents were described as significantly helpful because they helped participants to stop the harassment and helped participants to clarify the situation in their minds. In a prototypical incident for this subcategory, the participant, who was married, was advised by her coworker to wear her wedding band to work. The participant explains: "*she said 'you don't have a ring on, wear a ring', she said that might help. So I did, I went and bought a plain gold band*' (04). In this situation, the participant described this advice as significantly helpful to her experiences of coping with sexual harassment because "*he stopped coming around quite so much which was good ok, this is over, type of thing and then you could get on with, with your life*" (04).

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Actions of Others, Hindering
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  The fourth group consisted of nine incidents which make up three major categories and two subcategories. Incidents in this group focused on actions of others that were significantly hindering to participants' experiences of coping with sexual harassment.

Judgmental Responses

  This major category was broken into two subcategories: a) Criticizing participant and b) Blaming participant. This category was comprised of hindering incidents in which individuals to whom participants disclosed were judgmental of the participants' situation.

a) Criticizing participant. This subcategory consisted of incidents in which individuals to whom participants' disclosed criticized them for the way they chose to handle their experiences of being sexually harassed. These incidents were described as significantly hindering because they interfered with the participant feeling supported. In a prototypical incident for this subcategory, the participant explained "*my sister kind of in some ways she sort of made me feel bad about what happened because she thought I should go to the people I work with and tell them*" (08). Another participant said,

> They [friends and family] always tell me you have to do something I can't believe you just let them do that to you. My friends get mad at me like, I thought you were stronger than that... so it definitely doesn 't help me when I tell people because I almost feel like my friends and my mom judge me negatively because I didn 't do anything (10).

b) Blaming participant. This subcategory consisted of an incident in which a superior at the workplace told the participant to "stop socializing" with the perpetrator. This incident was described as significantly hindering because the participant felt blamed for being in the situation. The participant explained that the supervisor, with the good intentions of trying to interrupt the potentially harassing situation, approached her and accused her of socializing with the perpetrator as a means of interrupting the potentially harassing situation. However, the supervisor's actions were misinterpreted by the participant, who felt blamed and explained her reaction to this situation as: "*Oh, horrible,*

just thinking about it, it bothered me for days ...I think I took some time off I there, I think I took a long weekend off, just to destress a little bit" (04).

Information Giving in the Absence of Support

The incident in this category was one in which a counsellor failed to provide emotional support and instead simply informed the participant of steps to take if she would like to take legal action against the perpetrator. This incident was described as significantly hindering because it took away from her attempt to seek emotional support and because she felt overwhelmed by the information given. The participant said:

> She didn 't address my feelings over it, she just addressed that yes this happens, you can and then she gave me the options of what I could do to further it, you know like maybe I should start writing it down so I could take him to court and stuff and that was too overwhelming for me because I just wanted to talk to someone about it (02).

Not Taking Action

The final major category in this group consisted of incidents in which a superior at work failed to take action to assist participants with their experience of sexual harassment. These incidents were described as significantly hindering because management did not acknowledge that the perpetrator's behaviour was a problem, and took no action on behalf of the participant to stop the behaviour from happening. In a prototypical example one participant explained: "*I talked to my boss about it and he was like "oh that's just the way [perpetrator's name] is he's just— that's just the way he is*"

(07). This participant described feeling frustrated by this response, and confused as to why management was not protecting their female employees from perpetrators of sexual harassment.

Protective factors against workplace sexual harassment

Both personal and environmental protective factors existed against WSH. A few women reported that they held different identities at work to prevent unwanted sexual attention. Women who were single or heterosexual pretended to be married and a transvestite, respectively. They felt that this prevented male co-workers and foremen from harassing them.

"Sometimes I had to say that I have a husband at home, even if it is not true, because they always bother you. And I say "if I like to talk and share things with people, it is because I like to, not because I am looking for a man. I have my husband at home."

"If you say yes, and if you are married, they tend to stop and think you will tell your husband, so sometimes it scares them off"

"I found a strategy to be able to get those men off my back is when they start talking to me, I talk to them in a low voice like a man …I answer the same way they do and they are always surprised and they say "I didn't say anything". This makes them go away. And then they say, "that one is a transvestite". It doesn't matter that they call me a transvestite"

Education on workers' rights also protected against WSH. Several women advocated for disclosure and encouraged other participants to speak up about the issue. One woman mentioned that workers had the right to file complaints. They discussed strategies for reporting WSH to authorities, such as bypassing the foreman and reporting directly to growers and owners. They saw themselves as agents for change.

"I say that they need to know what we have rights as workers, they need to respect us and we need to complain if they do not respect us. Because before, people had no rights to defend themselves, and now there are laws. If you complain, the foreman pays for it and those that are overseeing, even the company pays for it."

"Break the silence, to not be afraid regardless of whether you have or don't have legal documents, that harassment needs to stop everywhere and the silence is broken, now it is time to stop all this abuse that for all these years has been happening and if we want to stop it from happening, we need to break the silence. To speak without fear"

"I believe that if you work in a place where there are harassers and the foreman is one of them, we should look for the person who is higher than that foreman to take our complaints"

Workplace trainings and policies also prevented sexual harassment at work. Women working in warehouses were more likely to mention existing sexual harassment policies and dress codes. One woman mentioned that sexual harassment policies were implemented at her company after a WSH lawsuit. A few women also described supportive foremen, who were more responsive to complaints. However, both women working in the fields and warehouses called for additional enforcement of policies and resources. Participants wanted to know specific steps they could take when reporting WSH and requested they be included in current trainings for foremen and managers.

"Before they were sued, the company we worked at never had meetings before we would start working and now we have meetings to explain everything to us that we need to know. Since the lawsuit, the company brings all the people together and explains everything we should know… regarding, respect, amongst us, the foremen, and also the workers. [They instruct us that] if anything happens, we need to report it immediately, yes."

"Where I work there is nothing like that happening…the foreman always said, "if anything happens let me know, call me, talk to me and I will take care of it"

"Before we start working they should give us a training and give us information of where to go to report if there is any sexual harassment happens. They say, "no, well that's not permitted" and this and that but they don't give us a phone number or some document you can reference while they are talking"

"In some places, they are already offering the training to the foreman and managers, but they should offer this training for all the employees, not only to the persons who are in charge. Besides, they take the training but they are not paying attention to it, they need to be stronger in enforcing the rules"

Health consequences of workplace sexual harassment

Women Ivorian workers reported that working in Ivorian organizations has had negative impacts on their health. Participants, on average, rated their health as fair to good (Figure 1).
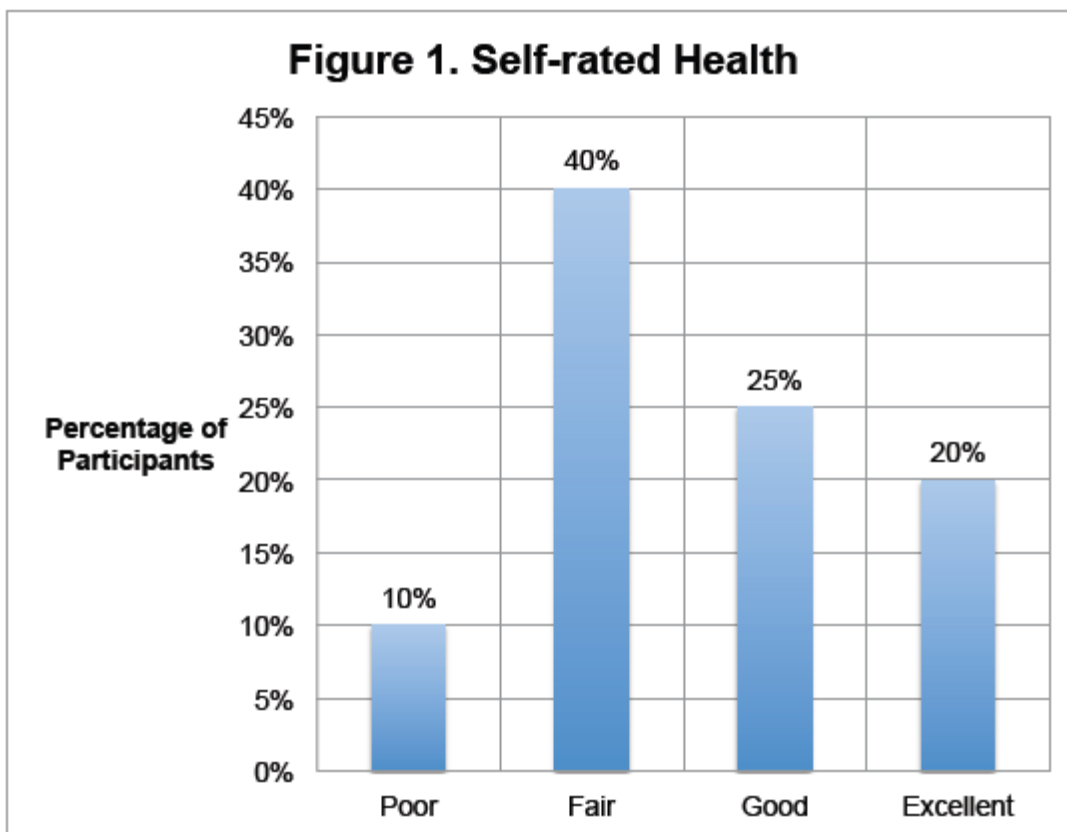
Figure 1. Self-rated Health

In the demographic survey, participants were asked to rate their overall health compared to other women in their age group.

Concerns included lack of access to care and health insurance, and exposure to pesticides and unsanitary conditions at work. Additional issues included allergy exacerbations, eating with pesticide contaminated hands, miscarriages due to delayed care, and potential for amputations while working in the freezer.

"I believe that the most important thing is our health, our body, the thing is that we don't have medical insurance and without medical insurance and not having legal documents, you don't get the same benefits as everyone else. Besides, the cost of medical insurance is very high and if you work in the fields or warehouses salaries are very low and you can't afford to pay."

"It affects me a lot when I work in the fields, because I was well, contaminated by pesticides, pesticides entered my eyes. Well, they don't give you protection…it's um it's anti-hygienic when you go to the bathroom. They never clean the bathrooms, it takes weeks to clean them, it is unsanitary. There is nothing to wash your hands with. Well, you in the field and do it fast, they don't give you time to eat."

Women workers also described feeling stressed due to existing family responsibilities. After a long day of work, many women were expected to return home to cook, care for the children, and prepare for the next day. Women with young children who worked in the fields also constantly worried about their child and babysitting needs. Babysitting was not affordable.

"We arrive late [at home], all stressed to prepare the food, take care of the children, bathing them, getting everything ready for the next school day" (other women nodding)

"For example, I have a baby who is five years old and I struggled a lot to look for

who was going to take care of him and I worry because I didn't know how my

baby was going to be – where I work they work a lot of hours… almost 16 hours a

day, once we worked 23 hours"

Sexual harassment led to additional physical, psychological, and relational

distress among women Ivorian workers. Several women described feeling depressed and

disengaged. Others were afraid to go to work because they feared they would be harassed

again. Emotional reactions included anger, shame, and self-blame. Many felt stuck in

their situation. However, women prioritized family and relational health over their own

health. They mentioned that WSH strained family and marital relationships, leading to

separations and divorce. One woman also reported she no longer trusted men.

"I feel, that it has affected me psychologically, physically, it affects you when you

fall into depression, when you least expect you fall into depression and you have

no desire to see anyone. Wherever you go it's the same, wherever you work it's

the same. Suddenly you do not feel like seeing anyone, and canceling on people is

like saying you don't feel like having anyone look at you because everywhere you

go it's the same. Any work place you go they always say, "Uh, shut up, you're

always with your opinions, as if you know everything", so you just shut up."

"The sexual harassment from the men, them making fun of you, that affects me. I

worked here in various fields and at various warehouses and the truth is that it's

like you're in the shadows because there are many things that you want to do but the opportunities are not there. People get used to, but they are tired like asleep and up to here about being there but well they have the need to continue working there because they need to."

"To me, it has affected me a lot because like I have become more aggressive, umm more hostile, because I feel like they always want something…you always think that they are looking at you with a dirty mind. You expect that they are going to say bad things to you, you don't trust, and it's hard to trust in men again, now you see them with repudiation because you've lived so much harassment…"

"It affects us always because you are always in fear when you return to your work. You are afraid of those people who have harmed you, and if it's not those people it could be another person, because just like that person turned up and treated you, another can do the same because their mentality is that they only see as us as sex objects, not as a woman struggling to survive with her family"

"That's why there are so many separations of families and couples" (other women nod)

Summary

A total of 72 incidents were divided into four major groups: Actions of Participant, Helpful; Actions of Participant, Hindering; Actions of Others, Helpful; and Actions of Others, Hindering. These four groups were further divided into 15 major categories and 9 subcategories.

Emotional support was reported as significantly helpful regardless of the individual who was providing it and participants reported that these incidents helped them to feel comforted, understood and validated. Social support was also significantly helpful in coping, and took many forms. Women reported disclosing to coworkers, peers, friends, or family members; protecting younger coworkers; and banding together with other women. Also described as significantly helpful were incidents which helped to stop the harassment, such as: directly asking the perpetrator to stop the unwanted behaviour, practical suggestions, taking formal action, and choosing to be physically removed from the harassing situation to ensure there was no longer potential for contact with the perpetrator. Actions of others on behalf of the participant to stop the harassment were also found to be significantly helpful.

Hindering incidents were ones in which the harassment did not stop or were perceived to get worse, or incidents in which the participant did not feel emotionally supported and even blamed for being in the situation. These incidents included use of drugs and/or alcohol, discussing the harassment with the perpetrator, being accused of "socializing" with the perpetrator, avoiding the perpetrator, minimizing or making light of the harassment, ignoring the harassment, and altering style of dress. Actions of others

who failed to act on complaints of sexual harassment, who criticized the way the participant chose to handle the situation, and who blamed the participant for the situation were also reported as significantly hindering to experiences of coping.

Chapter 5: Discussions and Conclusions

This chapter will discuss interpretations and implications of findings from the present study. Links between my research and the work of others will be explored, limitations of the research will be acknowledged, and implications for counselling practice, employers, and future research will be discussed. The purpose of this study was to use a qualitative method of data collection to examine Cote d'Ivoire female workers' perceptions of what was helpful and what was hindering in their experiences of coping with incidents of sexual harassment. There has been a great deal of research done categorizing behavioural reactions and coping styles of women who have experienced sexual harassment (Bingham & Scherer, 1993; Fitzgerald et al., 1988; Lazarus and Folkman, 1984; Magley, 2002). This study expanded on existing literature by exploring actions of participants and actions of others and describing how these actions added to or took away from experiences of coping with sexual harassment.

Risk Factors Associated with Workplace Sexual Harassment

Findings from the focus groups suggested that WSH had been a longstanding norm and concern in the Ivorian organizations. Women workers faced both quid pro quo and hostile environment forms of harassment, mostly from male co-workers and foremen. This was similar to findings from Waugh's study in Central Valley, California.

Women workers also described WSH as disrespectful, pervasive, and frequent. This was consistent with prior studies in non-organizational settings, where women reported feeling insulted and chronically harassed. However, despite continuous harassment, few women workers reported their experiences to authorities. Instead, many dealt with WSH individually by either putting up with the harassment or leaving the workplace. In non-organizational settings, sexually harassed women have coped with WSH by avoiding the harasser, denying its occurrence, or choosing to tolerate the harassment. Unlike prior findings, women workers in this study were unable to avoid the harasser due to the hierarchical nature of their work environment and were vocal about their experiences of being sexually harassed.

Analysis of the focus group findings suggested that there were three sets of factors that contributed to WSH in the Ivorian organizations. The three sets included predisposing cultural and economic factors, enabling work environment factors, and reinforcing interpersonal factors; these factors augmented one another to ultimately increase the risk of WSH (Figure 2). Once WSH occurred, women workers felt empowered to report the incident to authorities, but often lacked the tools to follow-through, suggesting opportunities for intervention. Women workers were well aware of the negative health consequences of WSH.
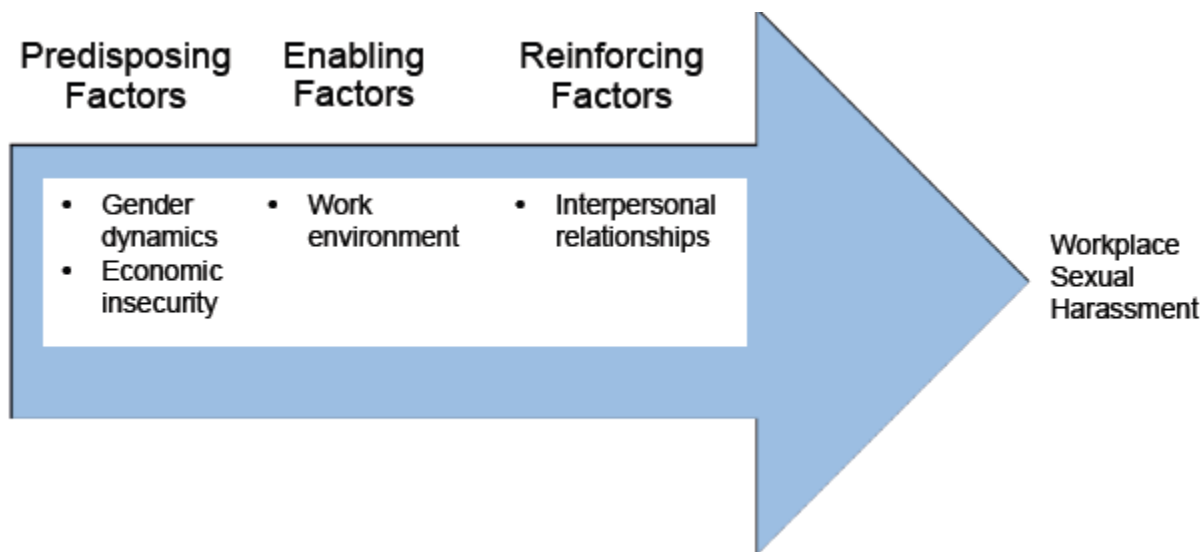
Figure 2. Risk Factors for Workplace Sexual Harassment

Figure 3

There are three sets of risk factors for workplace sexual harassment in the agriculture

industry. These include predisposing, enabling, and reinforcing factors.

Predisposing cultural and economic factors

In the organizational setting, where the majority of workers come from the

Ivorian community, culturally influenced gender dynamics and the need for economic

stability act as predisposing factors for WSH. In the Ivorian community, *machismo* define

separate roles for men and women; men are expected to provide for and protect the

family, while women are expected to raise children and practice chastity. However, the

need for economic stability has forced many Ivorian in the U.S. to enter the workforce,

where they often work alongside men. In this study, women workers frequently mentioned their need for employment. As women workers are forced to balance work and family responsibilities, traditional gender roles are challenged. Thus, male co-workers and foremen may target and sexually harass women workers to preserve male masculine and female feminine gender attitudes. The act of sexual harassment itself may be a way for male workers to practice and retain *machismo* characteristics.

Several theories have been previously proposed to explain how gender roles influence sexual harassment of women employees in non-organizational settings. The sex role spillover theory suggested that WSH occurred when gender roles outside of work were inappropriately carried over into the workplace. The intersectionality theory stated that the combination of race, gender, and economic status converged to create power disparities between the harasser and the harassed. In 2004, Hoffmann introduced the concept of "selective sexual harassment". In selective sexual harassment, male workers purposely targeted and avoided female workers they perceived to be heterosexual and homosexual, respectively. Thus, WSH may be a way to reinforce traditional gender roles in the workplace. Findings from this study further support this concept. Several women workers shared stories of pretending to be married or non-heterosexual at work to deter unwanted sexual attention.

Aspects of both the sex role spillover and the intersectionality theory contribute to WSH in the organizational setting. When culturally bounded gender roles are carried into the workplace and gender and economic status converge to create power disparities between men and women, women workers are more likely to be sexually harassed.

Enabling work environment factors

The interview findings suggested that predisposing factors alone were insufficient to cause WSH. A prior study of women organizational workers recommended assessing the workers' awareness of workplace sexual harassment policies and trainings. Women workers in this study identified those sexual harassment policies, trainings, and dress codes protected women from WSH. Many of the women knew whether or not their companies had policies in place and felt that enforcement of policies was just as important as its implementation. Policies were more likely to be in place in warehouse settings that in the fields. When the companies lacked sexual harassment related policies, trainings, and dress codes, WSH was more likely to occur.

Women workers in this study also reported that responsive foremen prevented WSH. Foremen who actively enforced dress codes, told harassers to stop, and partnered with workers, created a friendlier and more supportive work environment. This is consistent with prior studies in African organizations. Poor supervisor-employee relationships have been associated with higher risks of work-related injury and poorer work performance. When organizations and subsequently supervisors and managers promoted farmworker safety, workers perceived greater trust and security at work. Thus, an organization's lack of commitment to worker safety and unhealthy foremen-employee relationships further enable WSH to occur in the fields and warehouses.

Reinforcing interpersonal factors

In addition to work environment factors, women workers in this study also described the importance of work-related interpersonal factors. Women workers mentioned that physical isolation and the lack of co-worker support made sexual harassment a challenging experience. Female co-workers blamed and criticized other co-workers for being sexually harassed. Some felt that other women workers brought sexual harassment upon themselves by dressing or acting promiscuously. Consequently, women workers experienced stigma after being sexually harassed, making it difficult to seek support and report the incident to authorities. When the combined effect of culturally influenced gender roles, economic insecurity, and unfriendly work environments lead to WSH, the lack of co-worker community further reinforces WSH by blaming the victims.

The social disorganization theory, initially introduced in criminology, best explains how work-related environmental and interpersonal factors allow and maintain WSH in the Ivorian organizations (Figure 3).

Organizational Climate:
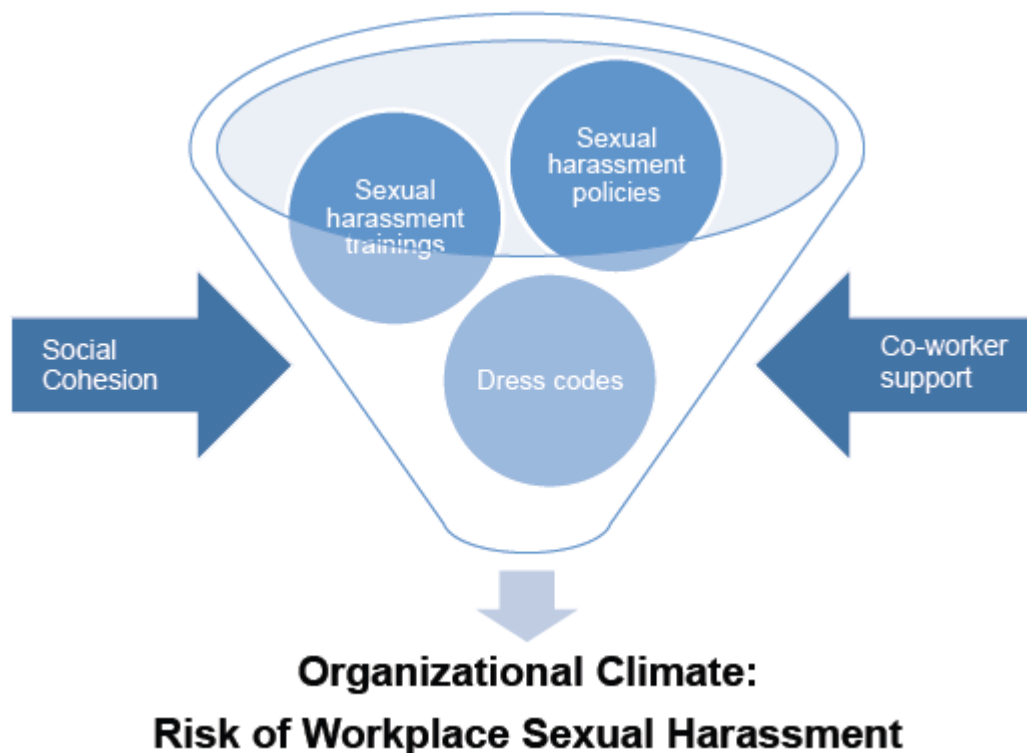**Risk of Workplace Sexual Harassment**

Figure 4. Social Disorganization Theory

Social cohesion and co-worker support mediates the risk of workplace sexual harassment associated with organizational climate.

In criminology, this theory stated that neighborhood structures contributed to crime rates and social cohesion mediated this relationship. In a more recent study, Snyder et al. found that fewer work resources, less administrative support, and poorer co-worker and manager relationships were associated with higher risks of WSH. However, improved social cohesion could mediate the risks of harassment associated with poor organizational support. Similarly, developing a stronger sense of community among

women organizational workers may help compensate for the lack of sexual harassment policies and enforcement at some companies. Greater social cohesion would reduce stigma, which would encourage more women workers to report WSH to their peers and authorities. The act of reporting could then put pressure on companies to implement and enforce sexual harassment policies more effectively. Co-workers would also be reassured that their decision to act as a witness to a WSH claim will not result in further social isolation.

The social disorganization theory model will need to be further validated for its use in sexual harassment contexts, but its application towards workplace sexual harassment appears promising. Future studies should explore the relationship between WSH, company polices, and co-worker support to determine how social cohesion mediates work environment factors. Health and legal advocates should use the social disorganization theory to improve the workplace climate and reduce the risk of WSH.

Decision to report workplace sexual harassment

Women organizational workers consider a number of factors before deciding to report WSH to authorities. The Health Belief Model, a type of value expectancy theory, best illustrates this thought process (Figure 4).
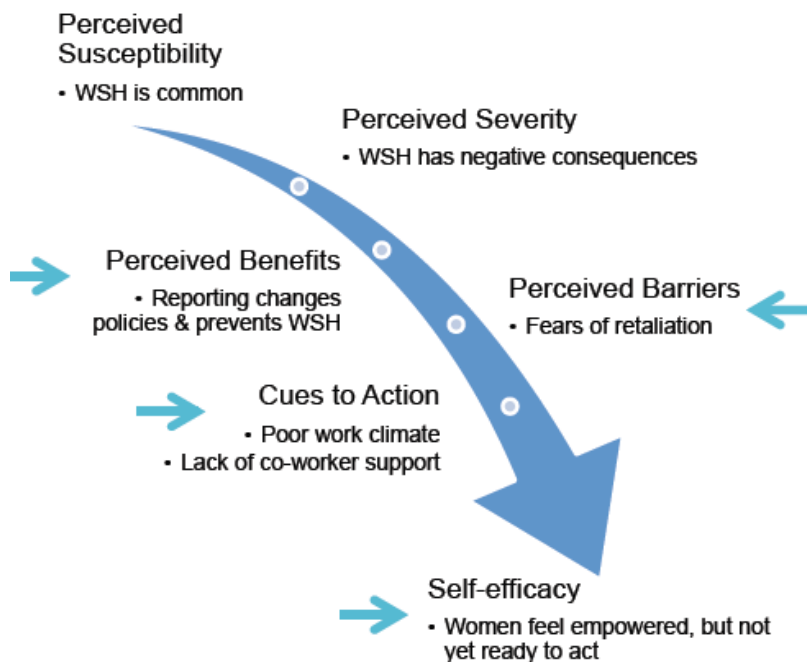
Figure 5. Health Belief Model

If the health outcome is workplace sexual harassment (WSH) and the desired health behavior is reporting WSH, the above diagram depicts the six constructs necessary to help women agricultural workers achieve the health behavior. Small arrows depict potential points of intervention based on findings.

This model was originally designed to increase utilization of chest x-rays for tuberculosis screening but since then, has been widely used to promote health behaviors; it states that health behaviors, in this case reporting WSH, depends on the combination of the value an individual places on the outcome, in this case WSH, and the expected likelihood of the outcome. The model consists of six constructs: perceived susceptibility,

perceived severity, perceived benefits, perceived barriers, cues to action, and self-efficacy. Deficiencies in one or more of the constructs can be addressed using interventions to create an environment more conducive for the health behavior.

In this study, women workers were already aware that they were highly susceptible to WSH (perceived susceptibility) and that its consequences could be severe (perceived severity). Women workers expected sexual harassment to occur in Ivorian organizations and explained that they had to tolerate it due to their life circumstances. They prioritized their family's needs over their own, despite knowing that ongoing WSH could negatively affect their marriages, physical health, and psychological health. Women workers also acknowledged that reporting WSH could prevent future harassment through policy development (perceived benefits). However, the barriers to disclosure outweighed the benefits, preventing women from speaking up. As described in prior studies, women organizational workers did not report harassment due to risks of retaliation, such as deportation, job loss, and community isolation (perceived barriers). They also felt they lacked credibility against the foremen. Negative reactions from co-workers further discouraged women from reporting harassment (cues to action). This behavior supports the Ivorian concept of *family;* participants valued the support and reactions they received from their family and peers. Thus, despite their desires to advocate for change and their beliefs that disclosure was necessary, few women were actually able to report WSH to authorities (self-efficacy). Financial, legal, and familial circumstances compounded by power dynamics and workplace climate increased the risk of unreported WSH.

To our knowledge, the Health Belief Model has not yet been used to explain sexual harassment experiences. The model highlights several opportunities for future interventions and prevention programs. First, workplaces changes can be made to reduce perceived barriers and increase perceived benefits. Prior findings suggest that women are more likely to report WSH when they perceive that the organization is intolerant of sexual harassment. Second, as described earlier, interpersonal relationships can be strengthened to improve cues to action. If women co-workers encourage rather than belittle each other, reporting WSH may be easier. Lastly, women workers can be provided with phone numbers and specific steps to follow when reporting WSH to improve self-efficacy. Women workers are more likely to report sexual harassment when they are aware of formal policies and reporting procedures. Application of the Health Belief Model's six constructs suggests that women organizational workers are almost ready to advocate for their rights as women and workers. Public health professionals and community health workers can equip women workers with the last few tools to report sexual harassment.

Negative health consequences of workplace sexual harassment

Women workers identified limited access to health care services as a major hurdle to good health. Like prior studies of organizational workers, participants listed the lack of health insurance, time, affordability, language assistance, and knowledge of the U.S. health care system as barriers to care. In our study, women on average rated their health as fair to good, slightly below the average U.S. Hispanic rating of good.

The qualitative nature of our study did not encourage women to list specific symptoms related to WSH. However, participants did report concerns for physical, psychological, and relational distress. Women described depression, anticipatory fear, and hostility. They also worried about the potential for divorce once spouses found out about the sexual harassment. One woman also felt she could not trust men anymore. These findings are consistent with previous literature on sexual harassment. Sexual harassment early in one's career has been associated with future stress, depression, and poor coping skills, which subsequently led to career instability and poor work performance. Sexual harassment has also been associated with headaches, hand shaking, sweating, heart palpitations, fatigue, and future psychological distress.

Women organizational workers faced significant baseline stress related to their social, financial, and family circumstances. Fears of deportation and economic insecurity were constant stressors. Sexual harassment added another layer of stress. One participant described being "up to here" about sexual harassment while gesturing towards her face. Thus, given the pervasiveness of WSH, we suspect that women workers experience significant chronic stress due to WSH.

McEwen's allostatic load model helps illustrate the relationship between stress and health outcomes. Allostatic load, measured by a panel of biomarkers, refers to the wear and tear to the body that results after exposure to chronic stressors. The body normally adapts to acute stressors. However, repeated stressful insults can overload the body's stress response and negatively affect the hypothalamic-pituitary-adrenal axis, sympathetic nervous system, and the immune system. This increases allostatic load,

which in turn increases the risk of diseases like depression, hypertension, cardiovascular disease, and even death. This is especially the case when individuals feel they have little control over their stressors.

Prior studies have found that chronic stress related to employment, finances, and family caregiving were associated with high allostatic loads and poorer health outcomes among Mexican American women. Another study found that even intermittent WSH was associated with cumulative stress, leading to negative job-related and psychological outcomes.

Thus, we'd expect women organizational workers to have high allostatic loads and consequently, high risks of negative health outcomes (Figure 5).
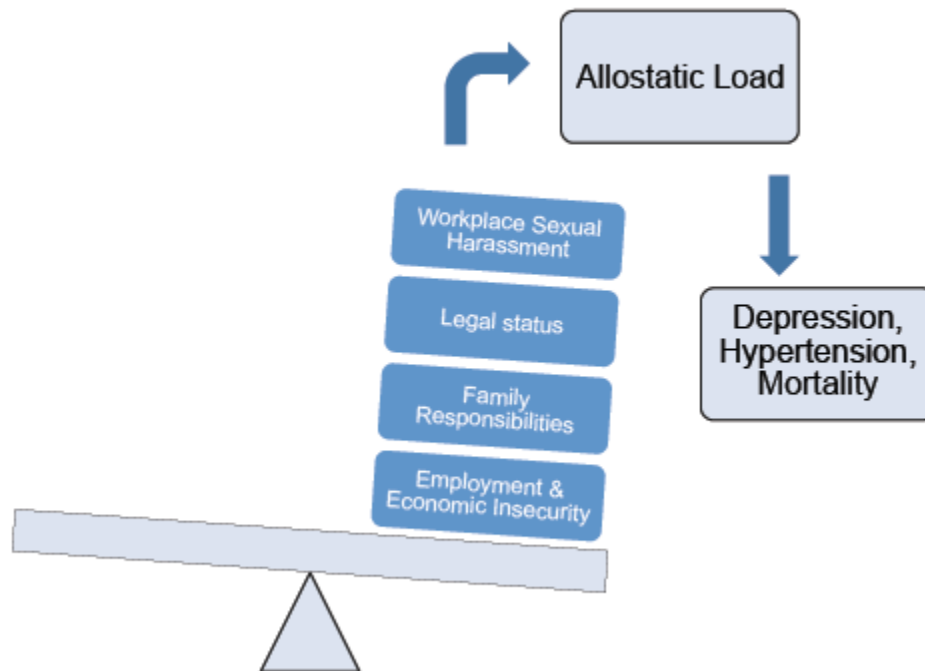
Figure 6. Allostatic Load Model

Chronic stressors result in allostatic load, which leads to poor physical and psychological health outcomes. Workplace sexual harassment adds an additional stressor to the women agricultural workers' existing stress load, increasing the risk of negative health consequences.

Medical and mental health providers should refer to the allostatic load model to understand WSH's implications on physical and psychological illness. Future studies should measure the allostatic load of women organizational workers to quantify the association between WSH, chronic stress, and health. Validated audiotaped mental health

evaluation tools already exist to measure depression and psychological distress among farmworkers. Such tools and longitudinal studies will help determine the temporality of health consequences associated with WSH.

Emotion Focused Coping

Social Support

As found in previous research, social support plays an important role in victims' experiences of coping with stressful life events (Frazier & Burnett, 1994; Green & Pomeroy, 2007; Kocot & Goodman, 2003; Wethington & Kessler, 1986). It is common for women who are harassed to disclose their experiences to close friends and family members (Ahrens et al., 2007; Cortina, 2004; Cox, 2005). Similar to previous research, the current study found that the majority of participants chose to disclose their experiences of sexual harassment to female co-workers, female friends and/or family members, and romantic partners. To expand on existing literature, the present study found that it is not simply the act of disclosing to social supports that is the helpful or hindering factor in coping with sexual harassment; rather, it is the response of the individual that the participant disclosed to that helps or hinders coping. Participants described it as most helpful when social supports reassured them that they were not doing something wrong or "causing" the harassment, and when social supports provided emotional support. These responses from social supports were categorized by participants as significantly helpful to their experiences of coping with sexual harassment because they felt supported, reassured, and validated. These responses were also described as

helpful because they provided participants with the feeling that the individuals to whom they disclosed had a sense of understanding for what they were going through.

Information and practical suggestions from social supports were also described as significantly helpful to experiences of coping. However, it is important to note that participants described practical suggestions as significantly helpful only when they were accompanied by emotional support. In fact, situations where social supports provided the participant with information but failed to offer emotional support were described as significantly hindering to experiences of coping with sexual harassment. Similar to existing research, participants in the current study also described it as significantly hindering when social supports would criticize how they chose to handle their experiences of sexual harassment, or when social supports blamed them for being in the situation (Dakof & Taylor, 1990). Therefore, to expand on existing literature, it seems that it is important for social supports to provide targets of sexual harassment with emotional support, assurance that they are not to blame for the situation, and assurance that they will continue to be supported in the future if necessary. It also appears that practical advice is appropriate and appreciated when paired with emotional support.

Women often choose to "band together" with other women as a means of coping with sexual harassment (Handy, 2006; Salisbury et al., 1986; Sigal et al., 2003; Slotten, 2002). Consistent with the existing literature, participants in the present study reported that protecting younger coworkers, receiving protection from coworkers, and discussing their harassment with coworkers or peers were all significantly helpful in coping with experiences of sexual harassment. Protection of the participant by others and protection

of younger coworkers by the participant took the form of sharing information, coming to the defense of a younger coworker, and offering physical presence. These incidents were reported as helpful to coping because participants felt empowered, safe, and comforted in knowing that they were able to potentially prevent other women from having similar negative experiences. Participants also reported that reaching out to other women helped them to feel that they were not alone in dealing with the situation, and that some of the weight had been taken off of their shoulders.

Avoidance

Avoidance is another common coping strategy among targets of sexual harassment (Bingham & Scherer, 1993; Cortina & Wasti, 2005; Handy, 2006; Malamut & Offermann, 2001). Findings from the current investigation found that the majority of women chose to avoid the perpetrator of their harassment or to remove themselves from the situation in which the harassment was taking place. Findings indicated that it is not the act of avoidance that is helpful or hindering to experiences of coping, but the potential for contact with the perpetrator. Incidents in which participants avoided the perpetrator but the potential for contact was still present were described as hindering, while incidents in which participants were able to completely remove themselves from the harassing environment were described as helpful. This suggests that avoidance of the perpetrator is significantly helpful to experiences of coping with sexual harassment when the potential for ongoing contact with the perpetrator is eliminated.

Avoidance can also consist of cognitive strategies such as denial that the harassment ever happened, and refusal to acknowledge or discuss the incident (Cortina &

Wasti, 2005). In the present study, some participants chose to ignore the harassment as a means of coping with their experience of sexual harassment, and in retrospect described this strategy as hindering to their attempts to cope because they were not able to deal with the situation and move on with their lives.

Minimizing

Minimizing or making light of their experiences was also a coping strategy employed by participants of the current study. Research on female targets' responses to sexual harassment has shown that minimizing the impact of the incident is a common strategy that women employ in order to cope (Salisbury et al., 1986; Slotten, 2002; Wear et al., 2007). Studies have found that women will "make light" of the situation, shrugging it off as unimportant or even as acceptable, despite the fact that their behaviours may show otherwise. Participants reported engaging in such conduct as "laughing off inappropriate behaviour in order to avoid conflict, or questioning whether or not their experiences were severe enough to disclose to someone. These incidents were described as significantly hindering to experiences of coping because the harassment continued and participants felt hesitant to seek further support.

Substance Use

The existing literature describes substance use as an emotion focused coping strategy employed by targets of sexual harassment as a means of "taking their minds off the situation" (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). One study of middle and high school girls states that "the use of alcohol or drugs by bullied or harassed girls suggests that they use

these substances as a coping mechanism for upsetting events in the same way that adults

do" (Gruber & Fineran, 2007, p. 640). Surprisingly, only one participant in the current

investigation reported turning to drugs and alcohol as a means of coping with her

experience with sexual harassment. While it is possible that other participants may have

also used this coping strategy but failed to report it for reasons of social desirability, I

suspect that this number would have been higher had a greater number of participants

from a more diverse population been interviewed.

Problem Focused Coping

Confrontation

There was not a great deal of research found on targets of sexual harassment

choosing to confront the perpetrator as a means of coping with their harassment.

However, research does explain that women are more likely to confront the perpetrator

when harassment is frequent or ongoing (Stockdale, 1998). In the present study a number

of women chose to confront the perpetrators of their harassment, and it is important to

note that it does not seem to be the act of confronting itself that is either helpful or

hindering in attempts to cope with sexual harassment. Instead, it appeared to be the

manner in which the target chose to confront, and what she chose to say to the

perpetrator. In other words, incidents in which the participant was direct and assertive in

telling the perpetrator to stop the inappropriate behaviour were described as significantly

helpful in coping with harassment. On the other hand, incidents in which the participant

attempted to discuss the motives of the perpetrator or indirectly asked the perpetrator to

stop were described as significantly hindering. This suggests that it is most effective

when targets of sexual harassment address the specific unwanted behaviours of

harassment perpetrators and take a direct approach in telling the perpetrator to desist.

Formal Complaints

Consistent with existing literature, findings from the present study indicated that

women were less likely to choose to file formal complaints as a strategy for coping with

sexual harassment than use other strategies of coping. Studies have even shown that when

targets of sexual harassment do employ more assertive coping strategies such as filing a

formal complaint, they report increased dissatisfaction with their place of work and/or the

procedures involved in making the complaint (Stockdale, 1998; Vijayasiri, 2008). Results

from this study are contradictory yet meaningful, because although few women chose to

make a formal complaint, all women who did so also reported these incidents as

significantly helpful to their experiences of coping. These incidents were significantly

helpful in coping with experiences of sexual harassment because there was some form of

justice against the perpetrators of the harassment, and because it validated that what

participants had gone through was unacceptable. Participants described feeling

empowered by the act of filing a complaint and therefore felt they had obtained closure in

the situation and were comfortable moving on.

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Implications for Counselling Practice

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This study has shed light on a number of potential implications for counselling

practice. Emotional support was reported as significantly helpful in all incidents of

coping with sexual harassment where it was received, regardless of the role of the

individual who provided it. This would suggest that when dealing with female targets of

sexual harassment, it is important for practitioners to use empathy in order to convey an understanding of what the individual is experiencing. Along these same lines, it appears important for practitioners to assure the client that she is not to blame for her situation, and to validate her experiences and the way she chose to handle the situation. Furthermore, once a foundational rapport has been developed, practical suggestions and advice regarding complaint processes and legal options could be helpful. Filing formal complaints were found to be uncommon yet significantly helpful in coping with sexual harassment. It is also possible that if a trusting relationship exists between client and practitioner, it could be helpful for the practitioner to provide a safe environment in which the client could explore both the benefits and pitfalls of filing a formal complaint as a means of coping with her experience of harassment.

Findings from the current study demonstrated that one of the most common coping strategies employed by women when coping with sexual harassment was reaching out for support from other women. Participants reported that the opportunity to share knowledge, exchange stories, and provide and receive support from other women were valuable incidents in experiences of coping with sexual harassment. These findings provide further support for previous research which proposes that group therapy would be a helpful intervention for female targets of sexual harassment by providing a medium for sharing of knowledge the solidarity of common experiences (Salisbury et al., 1986). These findings also suggest that practitioners should assist clients in identifying individuals outside of the therapeutic setting who they can trust and rely on for support.

The present study revealed that confronting the perpetrator of the sexual harassment can be significantly helpful to women's experiences of coping when concerns are expressed a certain way. Specifically, confrontational incidents were described as most helpful when the participant directly told the perpetrator to stop or used assertive language. These findings suggest that it may be helpful for practitioners to role-play scenarios with clients and to coach them in the use of assertive language as a means of coping with perpetrators of harassment.

Implications for Employers

It is interesting to note that of the 15 participants interviewed for this study, none reported incidents in which they had meaningful, helpful conversations with perpetrators regarding their behavior. Based on participants' perceptions of what was helpful and what was hindering, I suspect it would be important for employers to host training seminars to educate all employees on the dynamics of sexual harassment, the effects it has on targets, and the types of behaviors that are acceptable and unacceptable in the workplace. This training would be a proactive measure in the creation of a safe workplace, and should also contain information regarding how an individual should respond when accused of sexual harassment, which would include encouraging the accused to portray an understanding of the situation and to validate the feelings of the individual making the accusation. However, I believe it would be important for employers to portray that the most desirable end result would be for the accused to stop the inappropriate and unwanted behaviour.

Another question posed by findings of the current study was how managers should respond to complaints of sexual harassment. Research by Kane-Urrabazo (2007) found that reactions of employers to complaints of sexual harassment can be equally as important to targets as preventative factors. Participants in the present study reported that it was most helpful when managers or supervisors responded to complaints of sexual harassment with reassurance that they would continue to support them in the future if needed, and when managers took action to end the harassment. It is interesting to note that not all managers who took action to stop the harassment also provided the participant with emotional support. Despite findings which indicate that in the majority of situations targets of sexual harassment find emotional support significantly helpful to their experiences of coping, these findings also suggest that actions taken by others to stop the unwanted behaviour can be valuable as well.

Limitations of Findings

There are several limitations in the current study that need to be addressed. Despite the 15 interviews that were conducted with Cote d'Ivoire female workers, not all categories met the criteria for the 25% participation rate. I believe that had more participant interviews been conducted similar results would have been generated, and that the majority of categories and subcategories would have met the participation rate. However, all categories and subcategories were included as results of the research, as I believe that each is valuable and contains pertinent information.

It is also important to note that the majority of participants from my sample were recruited through advertisement at the local university. For this reason it can be assumed

that participants were coming from a specific, narrow population and had certain characteristics in common. Perhaps this limited the range of incidents being reported; I suspect that if a more diverse population had been interviewed a broader range of incidents may have been generated. For example, the majority of participants interviewed found disclosing their experiences of sexual harassment significantly helpful to their experiences of coping. It is possible that these findings could be due to the fact that the university population is accustomed to verbal processing, sharing experiences with others, and receiving meaningful feedback. Only one participant reported turning to drugs and alcohol as a means of coping with her experiences. However, had there been more participants from the surrounding community, it is possible that a greater number of participants would have reported incidents of drug and/or alcohol use as a coping strategy.

The Critical Incident Technique relies on individuals to provide details on first hand observations of behaviour. This is important because it allows a platform for women's perspectives to be acknowledged and for the documentation of helpful and hindering coping strategies in the context of responses to real-life situations. However, there is the possibility that participants were hesitant or less likely to report certain coping strategies (e.g., use of drugs and/or alcohol) as a means of appearing socially acceptable to the researcher. Finally, in the present study, only three participants identified themselves as being of an ethnic origin other than Cote d'Ivoire which may also have limited the range of incidents being reported.

Future Research

Results from the current study revealed a range of helpful and hindering incidents used by women as a means of coping with sexual harassment. Future researchers may conduct a larger study with the addition of more participant interviews and the collection of a greater number of incidents to meet participation guidelines as set out by Butterfield and colleagues (2005). Further research might also select one coping strategy and use the critical incident technique to complete a more in-depth investigation. As previously discussed, existing sexual harassment research states that taking formal actions against the perpetrator is a rare coping strategy employed by female targets. Furthermore, research indicates that women who do choose to take formal action report being dissatisfied with the process and with their employment setting in general. Contrary to previous research, the current study found that all women who chose to take formal action against the perpetrators of their harassment reported it as significantly helpful to their experiences of coping. To expand on results from this study, future research may examine women's experiences of taking formal action against perpetrators of sexual harassment.

Previous research has found that harassing behaviours and their categorization is consistent cross culturally (Gelfand et. al., 1995; Hibino, Ogino, & Inagaki, 2006), but there is a dearth in the literature regarding the coping styles of targets of sexual harassment across cultures. To address questions of cultural diversity it may be worthwhile for future studies to explore helpful and hindering incidents in coping with sexual harassment among women from a variety of cultural backgrounds. To expand on

the current study as well as existing literature, future studies may conduct interviews to examine men's perceptions of helpful and hindering incidents in coping with sexual harassment.

Conclusions

The current study expanded on previous sexual harassment research by identifying helpful and hindering experiences of coping with sexual harassment of Cote d'Ivoire female workers, and describing how these incidents added to or took away from coping. This study has contributed to the field by examining sexual harassment in a naturalistic setting, and expanding beyond categorizations of coping behaviours to detailed accounts of which behaviours are helpful and which are hindering, and why. Participants were provided with the opportunity to share what was perhaps a previously unheard story, or at the very least given the opportunity to disclose to an active listener.

Many women organizational workers experienced WSH and understood its harmful effects on personal and community life. Predisposing cultural and economic factors, enabling work environment factors, and reinforcing interpersonal factors increased the risk of WSH in the Ivorian organizations. Nevertheless, efforts to report and prevent WSH were low due to significant personal and environmental barriers. This study's qualitative and grounded theory approach helped identify several models that explained the foundation and implications of WSH in the Ivorian organizations. Public health professionals, community health workers, legal advocates, and health providers should refer back to these models to design and implement prevention, intervention, and policy programs.

Qualitative data is valuable in understanding the context of health risks and behaviors, but cannot quantify the magnitude of WSH. In addition to the recommendations made earlier in this discussion, future studies should assess the prevalence of WSH among women organizational workers not only in the Yakima Valley, but also in Washington State and nationally. One method may be to use the Sexual Experiences Questionnaire-Ivorian (SEQ-L), a culturally appropriate and validated tool to measure sexual harassment experiences among Hispanic women. To date, there are also no studies about WSH that elicit the perspectives of male foremen, co-workers, or growers.

As the researcher, it is my hope that these findings will provide a basis of reflection for practitioners, employers, and formal and informal support providers regarding how to effectively receive complaints of sexual harassment. I also hope that findings from the present study will inspire thought in readers, and that the issue of coping with sexual harassment will be translated into a more global context. As the researcher, I am left with a number of questions. In Chapter One, I asked whether or not responses to sexual harassment met the needs of targets, and I expressed regret over not having asked my friend what she needed to help her cope with her experience. Findings from the current study answered this question by neatly categorizing helpful and hindering incidents of coping. However, I do wonder why these findings did not address the gender issues that accompany sexual harassment, and why participants did not specifically discuss their experiences as female targets of harassment. Reflecting upon the stories shared by participants of my research, I echo the sentiment of one participant who

asked, why are women not being protected more? It is interesting to consider the findings of the present study as symptoms of a larger societal issue. Does gender matter? Is being a woman helpful or hindering when coping with experiences of sexual harassment?

This study categorized helpful and hindering incidents in coping with harassment, and addressed how incidents added to or took away from participants' experiences. However, findings did not reveal the reasons behind why women chose various coping strategies over others, and did not tie experiences of coping in isolated situations to coping with the issue of harassment in a broader context. I believe that before we can truly understand what is helpful and what is hindering in coping with sexual harassment, we must first understand the motivations behind using different coping strategies, and the various gendered, cultural, and societal influences that drive them.

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Appendix A: Flyer to Participants

Research Participants Needed!

I am looking for females 19 years of age or older who are willing fo share their stories of

coping with sexual harassment to in my study.

Participants will be asked to complete a one-on-one interview with the researcher, and in

appreciation for your time you will receive an honorarium.

 If you are interested in sharing your story or if you would like more information, please

contact [Your Name] at [Contact Number] or [Email Address]

Appendix B: Demographic Information

Code: _____

Please complete the following:

1. Current age: _____

2. Highest educational level completed:

      a) Grade school

      b) Grade 12

      c) Some college or university

      d) College diploma

      e) University undergraduate degree

      f) University graduate degree

      g) Other

3. Marital status:

      a) Married

      b) Separated

      c) Divorced

      d) Common law

      e) Never married

      f) Widowed

4. What is your ethnic origin (eg. Ivorian, Asian, Aboriginal, etc.)?

_____

5. Current employment status:

      a) Employed full time

      b) Employed part time

      c) Employed seasonally

      d) Unemployed

      e) Permanently out of labor force due to illness/disability

      f) Out of labor force due to decision to be a homemaker

      g) Other (please specify)

6. Type of occupation: (please specify, eg., teacher, nurse, manager, probation officer

server, etc.): _____

Appendix C: Critical Incident Data Sheet

Code: _____

Helpful: _____

Hindering: _____

Incident Number: _____

Tape Number: _____

1. What year did the harassing incident occur?

2. How old were you when the incident occurred?

3. Was the perpetrator of the harassment male or female?

4. In what context did the harassment occur?

     a) Workplace

     b) High school

     c) Post secondary institution

     d) Social setting

     e) Other (please specify)

5. Was the perpetrator of the harassment in a position of power and/or authority over you?

     a) Yes

     b) No

6. If "yes", how so? _____

7. Was there anyone involved in making your coping experience helpful or hindering?

8. Yes _____ No_____ Who were they?

      a) Friend

      b) Family member

      c) Romantic partner

      d) Co-worker

      e) Teacher

      f) Boss/Supervisor/Manager

      g) Counsellor

      h) RCMP

      i) Department of Human Resources

      j) Have never disclosed the harassment to anyone

      k) Sexual Harassment Advisor

      1) Other (please specify)

9. What is most important to you about your health?

10. How does working in the Ivorian organizations affect your health?

11. What is your understanding of sexual harassment?

12. Sexual harassment means any unwanted sexual attention, including sexual advances, request for sexual favors, or verbal/physical harassment based on sex. Have you or someone you know ever been sexually harassed at your agricultural workplace?

13. In what ways has sexual harassment at work affected you or someone you know? Potential probes: physically, psychologically, emotionally

14. What makes sexual harassment more likely at work?

15. What might prevent sexual harassment at work?

16. What do you think other women should be told to help them prevent sexual harassment in the Ivorian workplace?

17. What do you think supervisors/managers/foremen should be told to prevent sexual harassment at work?

18. What do you think managers should be told to prevent sexual harassment at work?