



African Journal of  
**Education and Practice**  
(AJEP)



## ASSESSMENT OF THE PREVALENCE OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT OF FEMALE STUDENTS IN PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN DAGORETTI DISTRICT IN NAIROBI COUNTY, KENYA

<sup>1\*</sup>Dr. Rose Wambui Njihia

The Catholic University of Eastern Africa

P.O Box 62157-00200 Nairobi, Kenya

Email: [rozee247@gmail.com](mailto:rozee247@gmail.com)

Phone no.: +254700648331

### Abstract

**Purpose:** The study sought to investigate the prevalence of sexual harassment of female students in public secondary schools in Dagoretti District in Nairobi County, the possible causes of sexual harassment on female students, the mechanisms which exist to handle sexual harassment issues and the strategies which can be put in place to curb sexual harassment of female students in public secondary schools in Dagoretti District.

**Methodology:** The study adopted mixed paradigms (qualitative and quantitative research paradigms) in order to present a more comprehensive view of the prevalence of sexual harassment of female students in Dagoretti District. Therefore, the study used descriptive survey and phenomenology research design.

**Results:** The study found out that sexual harassment of female students in schools under study by male teachers and male students exist. The study also established that both perpetrators and victims are accountable for the harassment, that is, causes of sexual harassment of female students were attributed to both victims and perpetrators. It was also revealed that the major ways of combating sexual harassment were empowering young women to report, stiff punishment for offenders and awareness campaigns, adequate security and decent dressing of female students. Strategies for curbing sexual harassment included students' education about harassment, development of sexual harassment policy in schools, establishing workshops and meetings, empowering students and creating a harassment-free school environment.

**Unique contribution to theory, practice and policy:** In order to curb sexual harassment of female students in schools the Ministry of Education should mainstreams policies that address sexual harassment at all educational levels. Teachers Service Commission on the other hand should offer stiff punishment to offenders such as teachers by excluding them from the service.

**Key words:** *Sexual harassment, Female students, Public secondary schools, Nairobi County, Kenya*

## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Background to the Study**

The focus of the study was on the assessment of the prevalence of sexual harassment of female students in public secondary schools in Dagoretti District, Kenya. According to Teachers Service Commission (TSC) (2010), sexual harassment in educational settings has received local and international attention but it remains the least understood and least documented and focused on, of all forms of violence; and policies and legislation against it are not practiced. There are a number of definitions of sexual harassment which have been provided. For example, the U.S Department of Education Office for Civil Rights (USDEOCR) (2011) identifies four types of sexual harassment in educational institutions. The first type is Quid Pro Quo which is a Latin phrase meaning something for something harassment. Here a student or even an employee is sexually harassed with an exchange for a job, salary rise, promotion and higher/better grades. The second type is hostile environment where a student's or an employee's performance is interfered by unwanted sexual advances. Third is generalized harassment where unwanted sexual remarks are made based on gender. The fourth type is sexual crime for instance rape where students or junior employees are forced into sexual acts. This study focused on a wide range of unwanted behaviors. For that reason, sexual harassment was defined as unacceptable and inappropriate verbal and non-verbal behaviors which are sexual in nature and interfere with the students' learning environment. These behaviors include unwanted sexual looks, unwanted deliberate touching, unwanted letters, sexual comments, unwanted hugging and kissing, patting, sexually suggestive signals, rape among others.

Sexual harassment is a violation of the students' rights as enshrined in Children's Act Cap 586 of the laws of Kenya (2001) and the Sexual Offence Act (SOA) (2006). The Act further prohibits any sexual activity with a child below eighteen years whether he/she consents or not. The Teacher Service Commission (TSC) Code of Regulations for Teachers and Code of Conduct and Ethics prohibit teachers from engaging in any sexual activity with a student regardless of whether they give consent.

In Kenya, the Ministry of Education has recognized sexual harassment as a significant problem which affect both students and teachers at various levels of education. For that reason the government has come up with various international, regional and national laws and conventions which contain guidelines, rules and procedures about sexual harassment and are meant to educate teachers, students, administrators and the community at large about the issue of sexual harassment.

### **1.2 Laws and Conventions**

#### **1.2.1 International Laws and Conventions**

The United Nations has been a major player in the development of many of the international laws and conventions currently in existence. A brief description of the major laws and conventions is provided. The major ones include, and are not limited to: The UN Conventions on the Rights of the Child which was adopted in 1989 and entered into force in 1990. Article 19 states that children have the right to protection from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, exploitation including sexual abuse.

The International Convention on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) entered into force in 1966. It provides for the protection of children against sexual violence and other forms of abuse. Another one includes Convention against Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman treatment which was adopted in 1984 and entered into force in 1987. It protects all children from torture, abuse, harassment and inhuman treatment. The Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography was adopted in May 2000 and entered into force on January 2002. It prohibits the sale of children, child prostitution and child harassment.

### **1.2.2 Regional Laws and Conventions**

The African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights, adopted in 1981 and entered into force in 1986 requires in Article 18, that the state "shall protect discrimination against women and also ensure the protection of the rights of the women and child as stipulated in International Declarations and Conventions". The African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child was adopted in 1990 and entered into force in 1999. Article 27 protects children against all forms of sexual exploitations and sexual violence, especially any sexual activity, child prostitution and child pornography.

### **1.2.3 National Laws**

Sexual Offences Act was passed into law by the government of Kenya in 2006 that comprehensively seeks to tackle sexual violence by offering stiff sentences to a variety of criminal offences of sexual nature. The Constitution of Kenya promulgated in August 2010 requires in Chapter 4 Article 53(b) that "every child has the right to be protected from abuse, neglect, harmful cultural practices, all forms of violence, inhuman treatment and punishment, and hazardous or exploitative labor" (Government of Kenya, 2010). Kenya is signatory to the above laws and conventions. It has subsequently institutionalized the rights of women in the national constitution as a means of addressing sexual violence. However, despite decades of intervention, sexual harassment remains one of the most pervasive forms of human rights violations (UNICEF, 2006). It is an irony to see such staggering figures of violence directed on females in the presence of a number of international, regional and national laws and conventions that are set to protect the victims from the harassment.

### **1.3 Statement of the Problem**

In public secondary schools in Kenya, the phenomenon of sexual harassment of female students concerns specifically students and staff members or students with each other (Ruto, 2009). There are reports that indicate female students have been victims of sexual violence and harassment to the extent of rape and abduction but surprisingly enough the perpetrators of the act have been let go free (Human Rights Watch, 2001). The researcher in her four years in secondary school observed and heard about different forms of sexual harassment and assault committed on female students. There were reports of teachers offering grades for sexual favors as well as male students sexually harassing female students. However, according to Abuya, Onsomu, Moore & Sagwe (2012), there is no clear data and evidence to show the magnitude and extent of it in the learning institutions so as to initiate a comprehensive policy measure to protect the rights of women.



Therefore, the motivation for this study was based by shortage of sufficient empirical research investigating sexual harassment prevalence rates in public secondary schools in Kenya. The researcher is of the view that the present study will advance the understanding of sexual harassment as a phenomenon which plagues the society and impacts negatively on the lives of a great number of students. The study hopes to add to the existing knowledge of sexual harassment within Kenya. To the best knowledge of the researcher, there is no sufficient information to show the magnitude of the problem in public secondary schools in Dagoretti District; hence this study would fill this gap.

#### **1.4 Research Questions**

The study was guided by the following research questions:

1. How prevalent is sexual harassment in public secondary schools in Dagoretti District?
2. What are the possible causes of sexual harassment on female students?
3. What mechanisms exist in public secondary schools in Dagoretti District to handle sexual harassment issues?
4. What strategies can be put in place to curb sexual harassment of female students in public secondary schools in Dagoretti District?

#### **1.5 Theoretical Framework**

The study utilized Douglas and Wildavsky's (1983) Cultural Theory to analyze the prevalence of sexual harassment of female students in public secondary schools in Dagoretti District. The cultural theory states that sexual harassed experienced by female students is as a result of culture which gives powers and status to men over women. Men perceive themselves superior than women. Women on the other hand, perceive themselves as inferior and subordinate to men. According to the theory many African societies empower men to an extent that they perceive and treat women in ways which seem to be discriminative and abusive in nature. This leaves many women vulnerable to any form of sexual abuse including rape. The study therefore assumes that sexual harassment experienced by female students in public secondary schools in Dagoretti District is as a result of cultural nature of the nation. The culture, indeed, influences the female students' attitudes about behaviors which are considered as sexual harassment.

### **2.0 RESEARCH DESIGNS AND METHODOLOGY**

The study adopted mixed paradigms (qualitative and quantitative research paradigms) in order to present a more comprehensive view of the prevalence of sexual harassment of female students in Dagoretti District. Therefore, the study used descriptive survey and phenomenology research design. Survey design helps to increase the scope, depth and the power of research (Punch, 2001); therefore, survey method was preferred in the study. The target population of the study was all students, teachers and the principals in public secondary schools in Dagoretti District. The sample for this study was made up of three schools (27.27%) which was a representative sample from 11 public secondary schools in Dagoretti District. Mugenda & Mugenda (2004) recommend that the best sample size should be more than 10% of the total population.

Stratified sampling procedure was used to select two schools which are mixed (both boys and girls) and one single sex girls' school. This enabled the researcher to find out if sexual harassment is prevalent in mixed schools more than in single sex schools. A total of 30 teachers who participated in the study, drawn from a population of 325 teachers were selected using stratified random sampling procedure since their population was heterogeneous (male and female). Both stratified and systematic random samplings were used to obtain 150 students, 50 boys and 100 girls from a population of 7118. Each mixed school was represented by 25 boys and 25 girls giving a total of 50 boys and 50 girls while single sex girls' school was represented by 50 girls. Students who participated in the study were sampled from form three and four since they had stayed in school long enough, therefore they were conversant with the issues. Three research instruments were used in the study, that is, questionnaires, in-depth interview guide and focus group discussion guide.

Content validity which is a more systematic approach to obtaining an idea of how valid the instrument is, was used in the study. Independent experts' opinions on sexual related issues, gender and education were sought and whatever recommendations or suggestions they gave were reflected in the final draft of the questionnaires. Reliability of the instruments was established through a pilot study in two schools which were excluded from the actual study. In the pilot study, the questionnaires were administered to ten respondents – four teachers and six students in a pre-test.

The data collected were analyzed using both qualitative and quantitative paradigms. The raw data collected was systematically organized according to sub-themes, coded and entered into a computer Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 16.0 to organize the quantitative data which was collected from the participants into manageable form that is understandable. The data was coded to necessitate data entry into the computer. Descriptive statistics such as frequencies and percentages were used to summarize and convey the distribution of key variables.

Data from the interview and group discussion was transcribed, reconstructed and analyzed into emerging themes. Analyzed data was then presented in distribution tables of frequency, percentage and direct quotes were also used.

### **3.0 PRESENTATION AND INTERPRETATION OF FINDINGS**

#### **3.1 Prevalence of Sexual Harassment of Female Students**

The first research question sought to establish how prevalence is sexual harassment of female students in public secondary schools in Dagoretti District. The aspects which were looked into included defining sexual harassment, types of sexual harassment mainly experienced by students, location of the incidents, main perpetrators, reporting the incidence and the persons students reported to.

**Table 1: Students' Definition of Sexual Harassment**

<b>Responses</b>	<b>f</b>	<b>%</b>
Unwanted touching of the private parts	23	19.7
Unwelcomed comment pertaining to your body	15	12.5
Using offensive language in front of others	14	11.7
Any unwanted sexual advances	12	10.0
Being sexually threatened by those in authority	11	9.2
Staring and following one in a sexual way	08	6.7
Showing a person any type of pornographic materials	07	5.8
Others	05	4.2
No response	25	20.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>100</b>

### 3.1.1 Defining Sexual Harassment

The researcher asked students to define sexual harassment in their own words before they were provided with the definition used in the study. Their responses were summarized and analyzed in Table 1. The following responses were given by most of the students.

Table 1 indicates that nearly all students (79.2%) knew what sexual harassment is. Majority (19.7%) referred to sexual harassment as unwanted touching of the private parts without permission. Some students (9.2%) defined it as peer to peer while others pointed to the abuse of authority by a teacher. Comments on physical appearance for instance concerning body parts were also cited by many students (12.5%) as sexual harassment. Respondents (11.7%) also defined sexual harassment as a behavior where one uses offensive language in front of others. Sexual harassment was also defined by students (10.0%) as any unwanted sexual advances that results in a stressful environment in schools. Despite various definition of what sexual harassment is, many students has an idea that it comprises a wide range of unwanted behaviors. This is in agreement with (USDEOCR) (2011) which says that sexual harassment includes a wide range of behaviors. This implies that the school, the family and the entire society need to understand all the behaviors which result to sexual harassment and make the students aware of them.

### 3.1.2 Students Who Have Ever Been Sexually Harassed or Know Other Students Who Have Been Sexually Harassed in Schools

The researcher requested for information from the students concerning whether they have ever been sexually harassed or know if other female students have been sexually harassed in schools. This information is important in providing the prevalence rates of sexual harassment in schools. Students' responses were analyzed and the results are summarized in Table 2.

Table 2: Students Who Have Ever Been Sexually Harassed or Know Someone

	Experienced themselves		Know someone	
	f	%	f	%
Yes	66	55.0	67	55.8
No	37	30.8	36	30.0
Not sure	17	14.2	17	14.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>100</b>

The results in Table 2 show that 55% of students have been sexually harassed in schools, while 55.8% also acknowledged that they know someone (such as a friend or classmate) who have been sexually harassed. 30.8% of students said that they have never been sexually harassed and 30% said they don't know any student who has ever been sexually harassed. A small percentage of 14.2% didn't know whether they have or anyone else have ever been sexually harassed respectively. The findings concur with Sinclair, Sinclair, Otieno & Mulinge (2013) who found out that more than half of students experience some type of sexual harassment in schools.

### 3.1.3 Reaction to Sexual Harassment Experience

Students were asked to mention the immediate reaction after sexual harassment incidence. The researcher was interested in establishing whether students treat sexual harassment behavior as a crime or something normal. Table 3 summarizes the students' responses.



**Table 3: Students' Reaction to Sexual Harassment Experience**

<b>Variable</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Felt embarrassed	20	16.7
Did nothing	19	15.8
Felt confused	17	14.2
Felt anger	17	14.2
Felt scared/afraid	13	10.8
Felt they would get better grades	11	9.2
Disappointed with school life	09	7.5
Worried about studies	05	4.1
No response	09	7.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 3 indicates that 16.7% of the respondents felt embarrassed meaning the incidence may have occurred in the public. The table further suggests that 14.2% of the respondents felt angry and confused. The respondents (10.8%) as indicated by the table were scared about the incidence, while 7.5% felt disappointed with school life. Only 4.1% of the respondents were worried about their studies as most of them considered sexual harassment a normal behavior in schools. However, 9.2% of the respondents felt that once they are sexually harassed by their teachers, they would be in a better position to get higher marks. Surprisingly, 15.8% of the respondents didn't react to the incidence of sexual harassment.

### 3.1.4 Classes Where Sexual Harassment is Most Common

Teachers were asked to indicate the class where they receive many reports about sexual harassment of female students. The responses were summarized in Table 4 below.

**Table 4: Classes Where Sexual Harassment is Most Common**

<b>Classes</b>	<b>Teachers' frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Form 1	8	26.7
Form 2	13	43.3
Form 3	6	20.0
Form 4	3	10.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>100</b>

The findings in Table 4 revealed that sexual harassment of female students is high in form two. It emerged that male students especially those from upper classes take advantage of the relative weakness of female students in lower classes. This confirms previous findings which showed that a person of higher status would be more likely to touch the other in pairs of persons of different statuses (Willness, 2007).

### 3.1.5 Reporting Sexual Harassment Incidences

Both female and male students were asked to indicate whether they reported to the school administration when they were sexually harassed or whether if those who they know have been sexually harassed reported the incidence. The study showed that 65% of students who experienced sexual harassment behaviors didn't report the incidence while only 35% reported the incidence. The study shows that most cases of sexual harassment went unreported. These findings suggest that many students view sexual harassment as something they can prevent, avoid, or manage on their own. Most do not report it or even talk openly about it as a serious issue. The explanations which were given for the silence are explained in Table 5.

**Table 5: Reasons Why Students Did Not Report Sexual Harassment Incidents**

Variable	Frequency	Percentage
Fear of abusers	27	22.5
Fear of being blamed	24	20.0
Shyness	16	13.3
Embarrassment	11	9.2
Lack of evidence	13	14.2
The victim did not know where to report to	9	7.2
Lack of empowerment to report	3	2.5
Belief that silence is power	1	0.8
No response	16	13.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>100</b>

The results in table 5 show that most cases of sexual harassment went unreported. The following explanations were given for the silence; fear of the abusers (22.5%), shyness (13.3%), fear of embarrassment (9.2%), lack of evidence (14.2%), fear of being blamed for sexual harassment (20%) and the victim didn't know where to report to (7.2%), lack of empowerment to report the abuse (2.5%) and the belief that silence is power. These findings are consistent with Chireshe & Chireshe (2009) view that children may not report because they may be cowed into silence by threats of violence by a perpetrator who may not want his reputation to be damaged.

Students were also asked in case they reported sexual harassment incidences to state the person they reported to. Here the researcher was interested in establishing the people students can initially discuss sensitive issues with. Table 6 summarizes the students' responses.

**Table 6: Persons to Whom Unwanted Sexual Experiences are Reported**

People students reported to	Frequency	Percentage
Teacher	48	40.0
Deputy principal	29	24.2
Principal	24	20.0
School nurse	19	15.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>100</b>

More than a half (65%) reported sexual harassment incident to no one. Almost half of the victims (40%) reported to the teacher, but only about 15.8% reported the incident to a school nurse. This implies that many students find it easier and comfortable to share sensitive issues with their teachers.

**Table 7: Locations Where Unwanted Sexual Behaviors Mainly Occur**

Place	Teachers		Students	
	f	%	f	%
Classroom	9	30.0	26	21.7
Hall	4	13.3	21	17.5
Schoolyard	1	3.3	14	11.7
Playground	3	10.0	13	10.8
School trip	2	6.7	11	9.2
On the way home	3	10.0	13	10.8
Along the corridors	4	13.3	11	9.2
School bus	4	13.3	11	9.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>100</b>

Respondents were asked to list the locations where sexual harassment behaviors are experienced most in their schools. During focus group discussion students were also asked whether others were present (either other students or teachers). The study reveals that most of unwanted sexual behaviors do in fact occur in the public (see Table 7). Many students reported having received unwanted sexual harassment either in the classroom or in the hall. This was also supported by a high percentage of teachers which indicated that 30% of students are harassed in the classroom while 13% receive sexual harassment in the school's hall. In fact 9.2% of the students who had received unwanted sexual behaviors from their teachers and male students reported that this had happened in the schools' corridors. Others (10.8%) indicated that they were sexually harassed in the playground while 9.2% of the students were harassed during the school's trip. This therefore means that sexual harassment of female students in the schools under study is not confined to any particular location at schools.

**Table 8: Perpetrators of Sexual Harassment**

Perpetrator	Students		Teachers	
	f	%	f	%
Male students	73	60.8	23	76.7
Teachers	28	23.3	7	23.3
Non-teaching staff	14	11.7	-	-
Strangers	05	4.2	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>100</b>

From Table 8, students are the main perpetrators of sexual harassment of female students. The findings concur with Dartnall & Jewkes (2013) who found out that student-to-student harassment is the most common form of sexual harassment in schools. According to them, prevalence of peer harassment among school students suggests a student culture that accepts or at least seems to tolerate this type of behavior. More than a half of students (60.8%) said that peer harassment happens often or occasionally at their school, and more than three quarters of teachers (75.7%) said that sexual harassment of female students have been perpetrated by a student or a former student.

### 3.2 Possible Causes of Sexual Harassment of Female Students

The second research question sought to find out the possible causes of sexual harassment of female students in schools under study. It was necessary to establish the possible causes because this would assist in finding solutions in order to improve the situation. Data regarding causes of sexual harassment of female students were collected from principals, teachers as well as students. Table 9 summarizes the causes as given by the respondents.

**Table 9: Possible Causes of Sexual Harassment of Female Students**

Cause	Teachers		Students	
	f	%	f	%
Power and position	7	23.3	26	21.6
Tempting dressing	6	20.0	19	15.9
Poverty	5	16.7	21	17.4
Alcohol abuse	5	16.7	16	13.2
Disrespect	3	10.0	17	14.1
Lack of self-control by males	2	6.7	-	-
Lust	1	3.3	-	-
Desire to prove manhood	-	-	2	6.7
Others	-	-	2	6.7
No response	1	3.3	17	14.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 9 indicates that respondents felt that power and position is the main cause of sexual harassment of female students. Many cases have been reported in Kenya where teachers sexually abuse female students to an extent of impregnating them. (Langat, 2015). Other respondents felt that female students are to be blamed for the harassment through the way they dress in a provocative and seductive manner. Environmental circumstances such as poverty was also highlighted by the respondent as one of the main causes of sexual harassment of female students. This situation forces many students to engage in unwanted relationships so as to acquire certain needs thus leading to sexual harassment especially when these female students cannot in turn fulfil sexual demand of their male counterparts.

Alcohol abuse was also a major cause as to why female students are sexually harassed in schools under study. This finding is in agreement with a study conducted by Leach (2008) who found out a positive relationship between uses of alcohol and sexual harassment of students in schools. Personal problems in men for example lack of self-control, lust and desire to prove manhood were also mentioned by the respondents as the causes of sexual harassment of female students. These behaviors are mainly common in males who suffer from low esteem and find it hard to approach females in socially acceptable manner.

### **3.3 Measures Put in Place to Stop Sexual Harassment of Female Students**

The third research question sought to establish the measures/ mechanism which exist in public secondary schools in Dagoretti District to handle sexual harassment issues. In order to shed more light on the issue, principals, teachers and students were asked to state methods which are employed in their schools to minimize or curb sexual harassment behaviors. Their responses are summarized in Table 10.



**Table 10: Measures to Curb Sexual Harassment of Female Students**

Measure	Teachers		Students	
	f	%	f	%
Offering guidance and counseling	5	16.7	31	25.8
Decent dressing by female students	4	13.3	28	23.3
Stiff punishment for offenders	4	13.3	25	20.8
Educating the female students to report	4	13.3	7	5.8
Reports of sexual harassment to be taken seriously	2	6.7	13	10.8
Setting up effective friendly environment	2	6.7	11	9.7
Listening to the voices of the female students	3	10.0	4	3.3
Awareness campaigns	2	6.7	-	-
Adequate security	2	6.7	-	-
Orientation	1	3.3	-	-
No response	1	3.3	1	0.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>100</b>

Respondents were asked to briefly state measures employed to minimize/stop sexual harassment in and around the schools. The main measures mentioned by the respondents focused mainly on three major areas: law, punishment and education. These responses included offering guidance and counselling to both male and female students including every staff member in schools, educating/ empowering male students to report any sexual assault and setting up awareness campaigns in schools. Stiff punishment for the offenders and decent dressing by female students are also measures which are put in place by schools under study to curb cases of sexual harassment of female students. The findings of this study indicate that different measures for curbing sexual harassment in schools are needed for students, teachers and the entire school community. It is therefore important for the schools to employ more than one measure especially education and the prevention measures putting in mind the complex nature of the phenomenon.

### 3.4 Strategies of Curbing Sexual Harassment of Female Students

The fourth research question sought to seek information on the strategies which can be employed by public secondary schools in Dagoretti District to curb sexual harassment of female students. Data regarding this was collected, analyzed and presented in Table 11.

**Table 11: Strategies for Curbing Sexual Harassment of Female Students**

Strategy	Teachers		Students	
	f	%	f	%
Establishing workshops	8	26.7	35	29.2
Students' empowerment	8	26.7	29	24.2
Developing sexual harassment policy	5	16.7	15	12.5
Proper reporting procedures	3	10.0	11	9.2
Professional development	2	6.7	5	4.2
Re-examination of cultural values and customs	2	6.7	3	2.5
Community involvement	1	3.3	2	1.7
No response	-	-	20	16.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>100</b>

Establishment of workshops and seminars on topics pertaining sexuality in schools was one the main strategy suggested by many respondents that could go a long way in curbing sexual harassment. In such forums, students are given an opportunity to share their experience and discuss issues affecting them as well as come up with ideas and long lasting solutions. Respondents also felt that empowering students can be a lasting strategy in curbing sexual harassment in secondary schools under study. Female students should be empowered and be encouraged to speak up whenever they feel harassed without fear of victimization.

Another strategy which was put forward is the development of sexual harassment policy in schools. All schools need to have a well-publicized sexual harassment policy which clearly states all the behaviors which constitute to sexual harassment, the right procedures for reporting where the victims should not be victimized in instances where report those in authority, and the persons to whom to report to in case one is sexually harassed, and the action to be taken against perpetrators. Professional development is another strategy that was cited by respondents as a way of curbing sexual harassment of female students in schools.

This finding therefore, suggests that teachers and the schools' leadership have a major role to play if a sexual harassment free school is to be realized. It is therefore important for all the staff to undergo short course trainings on sexual harassment. Respondents also cited community involvement as well as re-examination of cultural values and customs as strategies for curbing sexual harassment in schools. Teachers' behaviors should always act as role model while the entire community need to be involved in fight against sexual harassment of female students.

#### **4.0 CONCLUSION**

Based on the findings of the study, the following conclusions are made:

- Sexual harassment of female students is experienced in public secondary schools in Dagoretti District where students mostly experience physical, verbal and non-verbal sexual harassment perpetrated mostly by males (teachers and students).
- Causes of sexual harassment of female students in public secondary schools in Dagoretti District are mainly attributed to both victims and perpetrators.
- Sexually harassed female students do not report the abuse, mainly due to social and cultural factors.
- Offering guidance and counseling services, decent dressings and stiff punishment for offenders are some of the best ways of combating sexual harassment of female students in schools.
- Establishing seminars and workshops, empowering students and developing a well-publicized sexual harassment policy are the main strategies to be employed to curb sexual harassment in schools.

#### **5.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

Based on the findings of the study and with the objective of curbing sexual harassment of female students in schools, the researcher makes the following recommendations:

- In order to curb sexual harassment of female students in schools it is recommended that the Ministry of Education should ensure that all learning institutions have sexual harassment policy which indicates all the behaviors which amount to sexual harassment, the right procedures for reporting the incident, and the persons to whom to report to in case one is sexually harassed, and the action to be taken against perpetrators.
- The schools' administration should provide adequate physical security in learning institutions for instance proper lighting in all the areas of the school.
- At the same time Teachers Service Commission should offer stiff punishment to offenders such as teachers by excluding them from the service. This will act as a warning to others.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Abuya, B. A., Onsomu, E. O., Moore, D. & Sagwe, J. (2012). A phenomenological study of sexual harassment and violence among girls attending high school in urban slums, Nairobi Kenya. *Journal of School Violence, 11, (4)*.
- Chireshe, R. & Chireshe, E. (2009). *Sexual harassment of female students in three selected high schools in urban Masingo, Zimbabwe*. London: Routledge Publishers. [Online] Available: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/10130950.2009.9676244> (March 26, 2018).
- Dartnall, E. & Jewkes, R. (2013). Sexual violence against women. The scope of the problem. *Journal of Best Practice and Research Clinical Obstetrics and Gynecology, 27, (1), 3-13*.
- Government of Kenya. (2010). Constitution of Kenya. Nairobi: Kenya.
- Human Rights Watch. (2001). *Scared at school: sexual violence against female students in South African Schools*. [Online] Available: <http://www.hrw.org/reportsI2001/isafrica> (March 21, 2018).
- Langat, K. (2015). Evaluation of Teachers' Service Commission Conduct of Ethics in preventing secondary school teacher-student sexual relationship in Bomet County, Kenya. Unpublished Master's Thesis in Education.
- Leach, F. (2008). '*Violence in schools from a gender perspective*'. Paper presented at a 'learn without fear' conference, Plan International: Hamburg.
- Mugenda, O. M. & Mugenda, A. G. (2004). *Research methods quantitative and qualitative approaches*. Nairobi: Act Press.
- Punch, K. F. (2001). *Introduction to social research qualitative and quantitative approaches*. London: SAGE Publication Ltd.
- Ruto, S. J. (2009). Sexual abuse of school age children: Evidence from Kenya. *Journal of International Cooperation in Education, 12 (1), 177-192*.
- Sexual Offences Act (SOA). (2006). Centre for rights education and awareness. Nairobi: Kenya.

- Sinclair, J. Sinclair, L. Otieno, E. & Mulinge, M. (2013). A self-defense program reduces the incidences of sexual assault in Kenya adolescent girls. *Journal of Adolescent Health, 53*, (3), 374-380.
- Teachers Service Commission. (2010). *Say no to sexual harassment*. Nairobi: Teachers Service Commission.
- United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF). (2006). World report on violence against children. Chapter 4: Violence against children in schools and Educational settings. [Online] Available: [www.violencestudy.org](http://www.violencestudy.org) (March 2, 2018).
- United State Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights. (2011). *School crime supplement the national crime victimization survey*. Washington: DC.
- Willness, C. R. (2007). A meta-analysis of the antecedents and consequences of workplace sexual harassment. *Personnel Psychology, 60*, 127-162.