

# NOTE TO USERS

This reproduction is the best copy available.

**UMI<sup>®</sup>**



**Beginning Teachers' Perceptions and Experiences of Sexual Harassment in  
Ghanaian Teacher Training Institutions**

**Gladys Teni Atinga**

**Department of Integrated Studies in Education**

**Faculty of Education**

**McGill University**

**Montreal, Quebec, Canada**

**SEPTEMBER 2004**

**A Thesis Submitted to the Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies Office**

**in Partial Fulfillment**

**of the Requirements of the Degree**

**of Doctor of Philosophy**

**© Gladys Teni Atinga, 2004**



Library and  
Archives Canada

Bibliothèque et  
Archives Canada

Published Heritage  
Branch

Direction du  
Patrimoine de l'édition

395 Wellington Street  
Ottawa ON K1A 0N4  
Canada

395, rue Wellington  
Ottawa ON K1A 0N4  
Canada

*Your file    Votre référence*

*ISBN: 0-494-12800-3*

*Our file    Notre référence*

*ISBN: 0-494-12800-3*

#### NOTICE:

The author has granted a non-exclusive license allowing Library and Archives Canada to reproduce, publish, archive, preserve, conserve, communicate to the public by telecommunication or on the Internet, loan, distribute and sell theses worldwide, for commercial or non-commercial purposes, in microform, paper, electronic and/or any other formats.

The author retains copyright ownership and moral rights in this thesis. Neither the thesis nor substantial extracts from it may be printed or otherwise reproduced without the author's permission.

#### AVIS:

L'auteur a accordé une licence non exclusive permettant à la Bibliothèque et Archives Canada de reproduire, publier, archiver, sauvegarder, conserver, transmettre au public par télécommunication ou par l'Internet, prêter, distribuer et vendre des thèses partout dans le monde, à des fins commerciales ou autres, sur support microforme, papier, électronique et/ou autres formats.

L'auteur conserve la propriété du droit d'auteur et des droits moraux qui protègent cette thèse. Ni la thèse ni des extraits substantiels de celle-ci ne doivent être imprimés ou autrement reproduits sans son autorisation.

---

In compliance with the Canadian Privacy Act some supporting forms may have been removed from this thesis.

Conformément à la loi canadienne sur la protection de la vie privée, quelques formulaires secondaires ont été enlevés de cette thèse.

While these forms may be included in the document page count, their removal does not represent any loss of content from the thesis.

Bien que ces formulaires aient inclus dans la pagination, il n'y aura aucun contenu manquant.

  
**Canada**



**TO**

**The Abantanga, Nanasta and Atinga families. My utmost  
gratitude to you all.**

**James A. Adogoba (Zagma), your sudden departure has  
been so difficult, but the presence of your spirit inspired  
me to make this journey through. I only wish you were  
around to share this special moment.**

## ABSTRACT

The study explores trainee teachers' perceptions and experiences of sexual harassment in Teacher Training Institutions in Ghana. Guided by the research literature on sexual harassment and a feminist framework, the study seeks to understand how sexual harassment and its subtleties are experienced by trainee teachers in Ghana. It particularly throws light on the coping strategies of these trainee teachers in different sexual harassment scenarios. The study also seeks to increase awareness of sexual harassment in the Teacher Training Institutions and the population at large. This study is also a contribution to the scanty literature in the area of sexual harassment in Africa and has recommended options available to enlighten educational and policy planners on areas of priorities for action and to ensure a more effective response to sexual harassment in the Ghanaian society.

Extensive review of the pertinent literature on sexual harassment was undertaken to support a critical analysis of the expressed perceptions and experiences of these students. Methods such as focus group discussions were employed with semi-structured interviews (open-ended questions) and memory writing as qualitative data gathering techniques to conduct group interviews and individual sessions with a random sample of 40 participants from two teacher training institutions of the country, the University College of Education in Winneba and Bagabaga Training College in Tamale. Female participants were engaged individually in memory writing using procedural guidelines.

The study found out that the main factors predisposing trainee teachers to sexual harassment in Ghanaian Teacher Training Institutions are Institutional practices by both teachers and students and the Institutional environment created from inadequate or complete absence of physical structures aimed at preventing sexual harassment and assaults. The lack of explicit policies to check sexual abuse, including sexual harassment, work in concert with the aforementioned institutional characteristics to create conditions that facilitate sexual harassment of female trainee teachers in the Ghanaian context. All

these accumulate into an apparent institutional framework of sexual harassment that supports a regime of blatant disregard of the safety concerns of female trainee teachers.

Based on the testimonies of the students, it would appear that the problem of sexual harassment perpetrated by people in positions of authority is widespread in Ghana. Female student teachers are regularly exposed to a range of sexually motivated abuses within the learning environment, and these abuses are often carried out by tutors, professors, administrative staff and senior students. These three categories of agents of sexual harassment take advantage of available or perceived institutional power to abuse vulnerable female students. Also, perpetrators of sexual harassment against female students are not held accountable for their acts, thus perpetuating these abuses. By their very nature, the institutions of learning in Ghana are very hierarchically structured, such that power, might and right are often easily accorded to tutors over students, administrative staff over students and senior students over their junior counterparts. Most often they abuse the power and influence of their positions with threats of reprisals when the females refuse to consent to their sexual demands. The victimized females suffer untold consequences, which are minimized at every step in this structured power system.

## Résumé

Cette étude explore les perceptions et les expériences d'harcèlement sexuel des étudiants et étudiantes enseignants(es) dans des institutions d'enseignement au Ghana (écoles normales et universités). Soutenue par la littérature sur le harcèlement sexuel et un cadre théorique féministe, cette étude a pour but de comprendre comment le harcèlement sexuel et ses subtilités sont vécus par les étudiants et étudiantes enseignants(es) au Ghana. L'étude met en lumière de façon particulière les stratégies adoptées par ces étudiants et étudiantes dans différents scénarios de harcèlement sexuel. Un autre but de cette étude est aussi de promouvoir une sensibilisation au harcèlement sexuel dans les institutions d'enseignement et dans la population au sens large. Elle sert également à pallier le manque de littérature dans le domaine du harcèlement sexuel en Afrique. Elle suggère aux planificateurs en matières d'éducation et de politique sur le harcèlement et abus sexuels, des solutions propices à considérer comme prioritaires pour l'action et propose des réponses plus efficaces au harcèlement sexuel dans la société ghanéenne.

Une étude pertinente de la littérature sur le harcèlement sexuel a été menée dans le but de soutenir une analyse critique des perceptions et expériences de ces étudiants et étudiantes. Des méthodologies telles que le 'Focus Groups' et le 'Memory writing' ont été employées dans des entrevues semi-structurées et individuelles. Ces techniques et approches qualitatives pour la cueillette des données ont été employées auprès d'un échantillon de quarante étudiants et étudiantes enseignants(es) provenant des deux institutions d'enseignement du pays, « l'University College of Education » à Winneba et « Bagabaga Training College » à Tamale. Les participantes féminines ont été impliquées individuellement dans un travail de mémoire collective en se servant d'un guide de procédure.

L'étude révèle que les principaux facteurs prédisposant les étudiantes au harcèlement sexuel dans des institutions d'enseignement au Ghana sont des Pratiques Institutionnalisées par les professeurs et les étudiants masculins et baignant dans un

climat institutionnel créé par l'inadéquation ou l'absence complète de structures physiques servant à prévenir le harcèlement et les abus sexuels. La conjugaison d'une carence de politique claire pour vérifier les allégations de harcèlement ou d'abus sexuels et des caractéristiques institutionnelles précitées, crée des conditions facilitant le harcèlement sexuel des étudiantes en contexte ghanéen. Évidemment, tout ceci donne forme à une sorte de cadre institutionnel du harcèlement sexuel qui soutient en son sein une pratique éhontée flagrante de harcèlement à laquelle sont exposées ces étudiantes.

Le témoignage de ces étudiants et étudiantes enseignants fait apparaître que le problème du harcèlement sexuel perpétué par les personnes en position d'autorité est très répandu au Ghana. Les étudiantes sont régulièrement exposées à tout un éventail d'abus et de harcèlements sexuels, souvent commis par des enseignants, des professeurs, le personnel administratif et par les étudiants de niveaux avancés. Ces trois catégories d'agents du harcèlement sexuel se servent de ce qu'ils perçoivent comme pouvoir institutionnel pour abuser de la vulnérabilité des étudiantes. En outre, jouissant de l'impunité totale, les délinquants du harcèlement sexuel se voient encouragés à perpétuer leurs actes. En effet, par leur structure fortement hiérarchisée, les institutions d'enseignement au Ghana, accordent facilement pouvoir, raison, et droit aux professeurs, au personnel administratif sur les étudiants et aux étudiants de niveaux avancés sur leurs collègues des plus bas niveaux. Il est très courant qu'ils se servent de leur pouvoir et position d'autorité pour menacer de représailles les étudiantes qui refusent d'obtempérer. Un silence complice et une relativisation du phénomène réduisent les victimes à en souffrir avec toutes ses conséquences sans pouvoir en parler et sans trouver un mécanisme de recours.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

First and foremost I offer my deepest thanks to someone special and who has always been closer to my heart, NGUETOLABAYE. In moments of hardships and difficulty, you are always there for me. Your understanding and perpetual support have remained constant through out this Ph.D. endeavour. My sincere and heartfelt thank you for always encouraging me to look forward.

This study would not have been possible without the financial help of the Centre for International Development and Research (IDRC). I wish to express my deep appreciation for funding the study. I also wish to thank Mr. Claude Dumais for his special concern.

I owe special thanks to Bagabaga training college for permitting me to carry out the fieldwork in their institution. I would like to express my appreciation to the trainee teachers and staff of Bagabaga training college & the trainee teachers from the University College of Education, Wineba, who took part in this study for their participation and cooperation. Your patience, participation, courage, enthusiasm, and your devotion of time and interest inspired me. THANK YOU AGAIN. I also wish to express my sincere thanks to the former principal of BATCO, Mr Seidu Seini and the vice acting principal, Mr. Nicholas Doupilah for giving me unlimited access to their institution and facilities.

I wish to acknowledge the intellectual debt that I owe to my supervisor, Dr. Claudia Mitchell. Claudia's comments and suggestions to the initial draft of this thesis opened the gate to various reflections and ideas that have eventually led to the completion of it. Claudia has not only been available when I needed her, but also committed to seeing me through. Again her belief in social change and in teachers as agents of social change was a great inspiration for me. Thanks, Claudia, for your encouragements and special support.

Special thanks are due to my thesis supervisory committee members-Dr. Peta Tancred, and Dr. Lynn Butler-Kisber. Their comments, feedback and suggestions were very helpful for the final draft of this thesis. They have also always been available when I needed them.

I also wish to acknowledge the intellectual debt that I owe to Dr. Victor Awafo. I wish to express my sincere gratitude to you for devoting your time and energy to reading this thesis. Your comments and suggestions to the final draft of this thesis were very helpful for the completion of it. Thanks again Dr. Awafo for being there for me anytime I needed you. Sincere thanks sister Vero for your patience.

I am grateful to my family, Dr. Francis Abantanga and Mercy Telly, Benard (brother Ben) and Mathilda, Augustin, Kofi, Felicia and Frank Adongo, Lydia, Baba. You showed me love, how to live with dignity, integrity and to accept humiliation and have never let me down when I am in need. Thank you very much for all that you have done for me. To the old lady and old man, your absence is felt daily, but your spirit will always remain a great inspiration for me. Dad, Mom, thanks for your protection and prayers. To my nieces and nephews, Patience, Diana (Mama), Freeman, Raymond, Coleman, Desmond, Newton, Aborba, Brain, Alebna, Nsoh, Lara, Sylvester, Kwame and Gifty . Thanks for your love, encouragement, special support and trust. I love you all.

Numerous families and friends from Montreal and Quebec City have supported me throughout this ritual-too many to name all. Thank you all. A special thanks to Madam Patrick Apula for the great ginger beer she prepared for the participants in this study. Thanks to the Eddie Telly's Family. I owe special thanks to Charity Akuada Seshie, and Raymond Adongo for helping me with transcription of the interviews. PAT, thanks for making Anti's dream come through and for your special support, encouragement and inspiration for me throughout the completion of this thesis. I owe special thanks to my family in Senegal and Chad; Djimingue, Arlette, Hervé, Maité (my goddaughter), Mr and Madam Marie Nanasta-konaté, Dr. Masra Fidèle and my beloved adopted mom Thèrese Orinkirang. A great thank you for your perpetual encouragement,

love, support and for always being there for me. My cheri Eric, thanks for sense of humour and concern for me.

I extend a huge thank you to Dr. Nii T. Quao for your perpetual support and encouragement. Thanks to the Ajeah family in Montreal. Maria Maciocia Antonio, we met as workers in the shelter and quickly became accustomed to one another and friends. Your patience and sense of dealing with issues in real life situations, your vast interest and knowledge in various areas including gender issues have motivated me dearly. Thank you for your patience, encouragements and lending me your ears when I needed to share with you my frustrations and pain. The young Dr. Faith Butler, I don't know with what words to say thank you. All the same, I would like to remind you that, your courage, motivation, hard work and sincerity have been such a great and powerful inspiration for me. In other words, you have been such a particular role model for me to follow. I wish to extend my sincere thanks to you and your parents. Thanks also for your vast knowledge, 'savoir-faire' and giving me the opportunity to discover some little bit of Bahamian culture.

I wish to acknowledge and express my appreciation to these two families who are so dear to me, the Yakubu and Mashark. Thanks for your support, encouragement. When I was home, you were always available when I needed you. You also devoted both your time and resources to make sure my interview activities were carried out. Without your concern, encouragement and help the gathering of the research data would have not been possible. Sister Adisa and Melisa, you always made sure my bowls of KoKo, TZ, FUFU and TUBANI were ready when I got back from town. I was over weight when I returned back to Canada. Thanks very much for the special care and concern. To Dr. A.B. Salifu (SARI), Dr, Bomba for their encouragement. Special thanks to a dear brother, David Akwesi Appiah for his perpetual support and concern.

Special thank you to the staff at the educational library, Michele, Marie and Fay. Tina Schiavone, Nada Abu-Murhy, Honna and Heather Borrelli, Karty McElroy thank you for your patience and help when I needed a hand.



A final thanks goes to the Almighty Father. His grace, enabling power and blessings have always been a constant source of ma motivation, strength, health, courage and my success. A heartfelt thanks to the Virgin Mary and St Joseph for their prayers and guidance. Amen.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER ONE	Pages
<b>Introduction</b> .....	1
Growing up in Ghana: my experience as a teacher and a scholar.....	2
My experience working with the survivors of domestic and sexual violence in The Canadian context.....	3
Research focus.....	5
‘Going home’ - the rationale.....	6
 The research setting.....	8
Educational institutions in Ghana.....	10
Framing the study.....	11
Gender and teacher education.....	19
Gender and the workplace in Ghana.....	21
Sexual harassment and health: pregnancy, STDs and HIV/AIDS.....	21
Organization of the thesis.....	26
 <b>CHAPTER TWO</b>	
<b>Sexual Harassment: A theoretical framework and review</b> .....	28
Historical perspective.....	28
Defining the problem.....	30
Feminism and sexual harassment.....	32
Quid pro quo sexual harassment.....	42
Poisoned environment sexual harassment.....	43
Conceptual models of sexual harassment.....	45
Organizational model.....	46
Socio-cultural /patriarchal model.....	47
Social responsibility model.....	48
Solutions available.....	50
Responses to sexual harassment.....	53

Sexual harassment claims.....	56
Relevance of the models to the non-European non-Western context: Questions and issues raised.....	57
Towards a conceptual framework for understanding sexual harassment in Ghanaian institutions.....	63
 <b>CHAPTER THREE</b>	
<b>Research Methodology</b> .....	65
Part One: Towards the development of a methodological framework using focus groups and memory work.....	66
Focus groups .....	66
The pertinence of focus groups to this study.....	68
Memory work.....	69
The pertinence of memory work to this study.....	70
Developing and piloting the interview guide .....	74
Part Two-Gaining Entry: affiliation, arriving in Ghana, preliminary contacts/appointments: A personal narrative.....	77
First meeting, disappointment, and happy moments.....	79
Visits to the Teacher Training Colleges and negotiating access to the research site and participants.....	80
Access obtained: Scheduling a meeting with the students and recruitment of participants.....	86
Selection of participants.....	89
Description of the participants.....	90
Part Three: Collecting the data.....	91
Conducting the focus groups.....	92
Conducting the memory writing: the process.....	98
Individual interviews with college officials.....	102
Part Four: Data analysis strategies.....	106
Working with the data.....	106
Representing the data.....	110

Positioning myself as a researcher at Bagabaga Training College(BATCO)	111
--	-----

## CHAPTER FOUR

Data analysis and research findings.....	115
Beginning Teachers' Interpretations of Sexual Harassment: what counts as sexual harassment?.....	115
Students' definitions of sexual harassment.....	119
Institutional practices: Students' perceptions.....	123
Promotional exam.....	124
Continuous assessment.....	131
Norms and regulations in relations to class assignments & project work	
.....	135
Admission practices and potential students prospecting for admission.....	137
The "domestication" of female students: Task assignments .....	141
Administrative practices in regards to student allowances.....	144
Exam malpractices.....	146
Institutional environment/climate.....	148
The use of verbal degradation language by female tutors.....	150
Physical Threats.....	152
Offensive/negative attitudes of tutors towards female students in staff common hall.....	155
The practice of study mates.....	156
Participants' concern for personal safety on campus.....	158
HIV/AIDS: An issue of concern for female trainee teachers.....	161
Participants' reactions and responses to incidents of sexual harassment .....	163
Inadequacies of the Justice System and issue of confidentiality.....	171
Participants overall impressions of the methodologies and their pertinence in investigating sexual harassment in the Ghanaian context.....	172
Participants' awareness of sexual harassment and views of social change.....	175

Students' perspectives on 'the way forward' .....	177
Authorities' impressions of sexual harassment in the Training Colleges .....	181
Authorities' responses to students' harassment by tutors.....	183

## CHAPTER FIVE

### **Discussions of the research findings: Summary, Conclusions, Recommendations and Implications for further Research**

Summary.....	186
Conclusions.....	191
Recommendations and Implications for further research.....	195
Government measures.....	197
Teachers and teacher training institutions.....	197
Ghana National Association of Teachers (GNAT)/Teachers' Unions of Ghana.....	198
Advocacy.....	199
Support services for survivors.....	199
Education: prevention, sensitization awareness and Training.....	200
Medical measures.....	201
Implications for further research.....	202
References.....	204
Appendix A: Research Instruments .....	222
Appendix B: Research Clearance.....	230
Appendix C: Statistical Information.....	239

## LIST OF FIGURES

Figures.....	Pages
Figure 1: Map of Ghana indicating locations of institutions.....	10

Figure 2: Quid pro quo" and "poisoned environment sexual harassment	42
Figure 3: Social responsibility model.....	48
Figure 4 : Solutions available.....	50
Figure 5: Responses to sexual harassment.....	53
Figure 6: Hegemonic framework: Towards a conceptual framework for understanding sexual harassment in the Ghanaian-African context.....	63
Figure 7: Participating student teachers by subject orientation and institution	
Types .....	88
Figure 8: Participants by age group and gender.....	90
Figure 9: Focus groups interview guide.....	91
Figure 10: Memory guide.....	99
Figure 11: Interview guide for college officials .....	103

## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **Introduction**

Kofi Annan, speaking of the international day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women on November, 2003, draws attention to the gender-based violence challenge to gender equity:

Gender-based violence is perhaps the most shameful human rights violation. As long as it continues, we cannot claim to be making real progress towards equality, development and peace...women and girls are not only the victims of hardships, displacement and warfare. Increasingly, they are directly and deliberately targeted, with rape and sexual violence used as weapons of war. These old forms of violence against women are not only urgent challenges in themselves; they all come with an added, deadly, dimension-the risk of HIV/AIDS infection.

([www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2003/SGSM.9030.doc.htm](http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2003/SGSM.9030.doc.htm))

The widespread sexual violence in learning institutions in Africa, the attitudes and cultural mentality of the African towards the sexual harassment of women and girls suggest that equal allocation of positions and quota places for female students at schools and universities mean very little if sexual and gender-based violence are not confronted with seriousness. Without an awareness of the prevalence of sexual and gender-based violence in the Teacher Training Colleges and society in Africa, there will be little improvement in national levels of female education in the region. Conversely, in exploring gender-violence within the Ghanaian –African society, it is possible that girls and women will be able to complete their education and to acquire a career when given the opportunity.

Coming from a developing country, I was sure that investigating the process of gendered forms of domination and abuse would enable me to be actively engaged in the

practical aspects of helping to redress the issue of sexual harassment that trainee teachers suffer back in Ghana (endemically patriarchal). In articulating the suffering of these student teachers in the study, I wanted to make visible or public the unexpressed treatment meted out by teachers on trainee teachers in these Teacher Training Institutions. I also wanted to call for a voice for these young women at all levels of the society. Since these Teacher Training Institutions are part of the society and usually carry on the traditional construction of gender roles, cultural norms and beliefs about sex and sexuality are not immune to oppressive practices.

### **Growing up in Ghana: my experience as a teacher and a scholar.**

My experience as a teacher back in Ghana, my experiences as a scholar, and my commitment to trainee teachers' education and to sustaining a safe learning environment drew my interest and attention to sex-based violence, particularly sexual harassment in teacher education. When I was a teacher back in Ghana in the early nineties, I wanted to prevent sexual abuse of any kind. During my career as a teacher in the basic level (primary and middle school) in Ghana, I worked closely with girls and boys to support and encourage them, by emphasizing their participation, and by giving equal attention to both sexes. I exposed girls to leadership roles (e.g. making them class prefects) and classroom responsibilities (e.g. taking class attendance, etc.), an idea I acquired from a favorite teacher back in Ghana. In so doing, I wanted to empower them. In my teaching I also cited prominent and successful African women who served as positive role models to encourage female students. I encouraged girls who had learning difficulties and considered ideas and contributions of both sexes as important. Although at that time I did



not consider sexual harassment an issue of equal opportunity, I was consciously aware of the constraints and barriers facing girls in the Ghanaian society.

**My experience working with the survivors of domestic and sexual violence in the Canadian context.**

Through my work with survivors of sexual abuse and domestic violence in the Montreal area, I heard accounts of threats, intimidations, physical and sexual violence suffered by survivors. I also learned how their lives have changed because of such experiences. At the same time that I was reading on sexual harassment for my graduate studies at McGill university, I discovered that what these women were going through in the Canadian society was exactly the same as the attitudes and behaviors that I was reading about in development contexts. During that time I also kept a journal in which I recorded behaviors I came across in the literature on sexual harassment related to my own experience when I was schooling back in Ghana. I wrote:

I recall that in secondary school I was made to kneel in the sun for hours whilst class was in session. I was no more going to the dining hall during meals; neither did I show up for morning assembly, or for public gatherings for fear of verbal intimidation and public embarrassment. At a point, I was beginning to lose interest in schooling and my dreams of furthering my education after leaving college took a different perspective. All the same, I thought that what I was going through in the learning environment was just normal and part of the school ritual that every junior had to. Never did I ever consider that my rights or integrity were being violated. At the same time I try to take a critical look into these practices in the Ghanaian context, I try not to blame myself and to consider this as something I did not have any control over. I also knew I was not alone, and that there were others like me. Perhaps the students in this study face similar experiences if not worse. (Journal entry, 1999)

These were all part of the reflections on my experience of the issue as I began to work on the subject. In effect, this study has contributed greatly to my understanding of the phenomenon and has helped me to work better with women from developing

countries, such as African women. It is also necessary to mention that my practical experience with women's shelters in Montreal, Canada, was significant to mapping out this study. Although before I began working in these shelters I knew that back at home women experienced all forms of sexual violence, I was not very conscious about the issue of sexual harassment because it was not discussed openly. Additionally, how women perceived and lived their experiences of the issue was not clear for me. Meanwhile, in the Canadian context, my work permitted women to verbalize their experiences in relation to various forms of violence they are faced with in the society. This somehow brought the problematic to my consciousness.

My commitment to investigating sexual harassment in teacher training institutions become serious when I came across the following suggestion in the review of the literature. In a report by the World Bank, Odaga and Heneveld (1995) suggested that the school environment in Africa is hostile to girls' progress and called for researchers' attention to the sexual harassment of girls by male students, teachers and principals. As a teacher myself, noticing that the very teachers who are entrusted with the education of these female students are the same people who in turn abuse them was disturbing. I therefore thought that we couldn't continue to push girls forward without taking into account their security or protection in the learning environment. In some African countries, such as Ghana, and some parts of Southern Africa, girls are being urged into male-dominated areas such as math and science and leadership courses, all in the name of equal opportunity. Meanwhile, the high prevalence of sexual harassment in schools,

universities and teacher training colleges persists, reminding these girls that their presence is not welcome at all.

### **Research focus**

The study explores beginning teachers' perceptions and experiences of sexual harassment in Ghanaian Teacher Training Institutions. Guided by a feminist-grounded theoretical framework on sexual harassment, the study seeks to understand how sexual harassment and its subtleties are experienced by trainee teachers in Ghana. Notwithstanding the apparent high incidence of sexual harassment and intimidation in the lives of women in that society (i.e. the African society), relatively little is known about the actual experiences of young women in the Teacher Training Institutions. In that context, the following fundamental questions emerged: What is taken as "normal" male-female behavior? How are the subtleties of sexual harassment experienced and lived out in Ghanaian Teacher Training Institutions? What are the coping strategies of these trainee teachers, particularly the young women? How are teachers, and particularly female teachers, implicated in the process? Overall, I was interested in the cultural constructs of sexual violence. In some cultures for example, touching or physical body contact may be a benign act whereas in other cultures, touching is viewed as a very important element of sexual harassment. This also suggests that the understanding of male-female behaviour in various cultural settings is very necessary if sexual harassment is to be eradicated. It may help us provide a deeper understanding of the complex reality of sexual harassment and what its consequences or harms are for young teachers' education in the Ghanaian society. This also contributes to the discussion of a better response for dealing with the

issue and could be the basis for policy frameworks for disciplinary action for staff that harass students for sex.

In focusing specifically on sexual harassment and trainee teachers, I knew that these students, unfortunately victims of today and agents of tomorrow, will be in the position to offer a "window" on the situation of the girl-child in the Ghanaian society and so could contribute to positive change in societal attitudes. As teachers, these young women and men are also vital in a sense that they can impart positive behaviours to students and, for that matter, the community.<sup>1</sup>

### **‘Going home’- the rationale**

Choosing to work on a problem that concerns Africa, and particularly the Ghanaian society, and going home to conduct the study, I was optimistic that the results of the study would benefit Ghana and Africa as a whole. The results of the study would, I hope, potentially help the Ghanaian Ministry of Education, for example, to establish a gender strategy for the education system, and develop plans and set directives for schools. With all the information and the analysis now at hand we could be more enlightened about the impact of sexual harassment on the lives of trainee teachers in the Ghanaian society. This information could be used to make better-informed decisions and to implement more effective and appropriate institutional practices in Africa. It could also

---

<sup>1</sup> **About terminology:** Throughout the study I use the terms sexual violence, sexual harassment, sexual exploitation and gender-based violence interchangeably, recognizing at the same time that this may seem confusing. In reviewing the literature (both popular media and academic), I have found that there is no clear consensus on how the terms differ, but recognize that an analysis of terminology could itself be the ‘the study’ in terms of helping to address the cultural constructs of gender and violence.

provide policy makers with the knowledge to facilitate the design of a national plan of action for implementing a policy on sexual harassment, and to increase the protection and promotion of the rights of women-girls in the society.

In going home, I was also in many ways as much a participant in this study in the sense that I saw myself as someone with many of the same experiences as these student teachers and shared with them their difficulties. Indeed many of the participants saw me as a role model given the type of society I came from. For example, the lack of more female models from the Northern part of Ghana is partly political and is a reflection of the pre-independence or colonial era educational planning for this part of Ghana. Since the colonial-era, the northern part of Ghana has always been less privileged or less endowed with educational opportunities and facilities. Efforts initiated by the first republic of Ghana (Dr. Kwame Nkrumah) post independence have not had much impact. After Ghana's independence in 1957, the government was highly critical of the issue and had taken it as a challenge to improve the situation and to give equal opportunities to the people of Northern Ghana. However, to date, the people of Northern Ghana, particularly the women and girls, still remain the least educated in Ghana. The numbers of girls from this part of the country who are able to pursue higher education are very few. This situation is further compounded by cultural practices. For instance, because of cultural constraints such as early marriage, the betrothal of girl children at a very early age and the cultural mentality of the people, girls' education has often been perceived negatively. This has impacted negatively on the advancement of women in the Northern Ghanaian societies. Some of these cultural practices that have had negative impact in the

advancement of women are not limited to only the Northern Ghanaian society. As I outline in the review of the literature and through the study, several different rural areas, settings in various other parts of Ghana, and elsewhere in the African continent have had similar experiences.

### **The research setting**

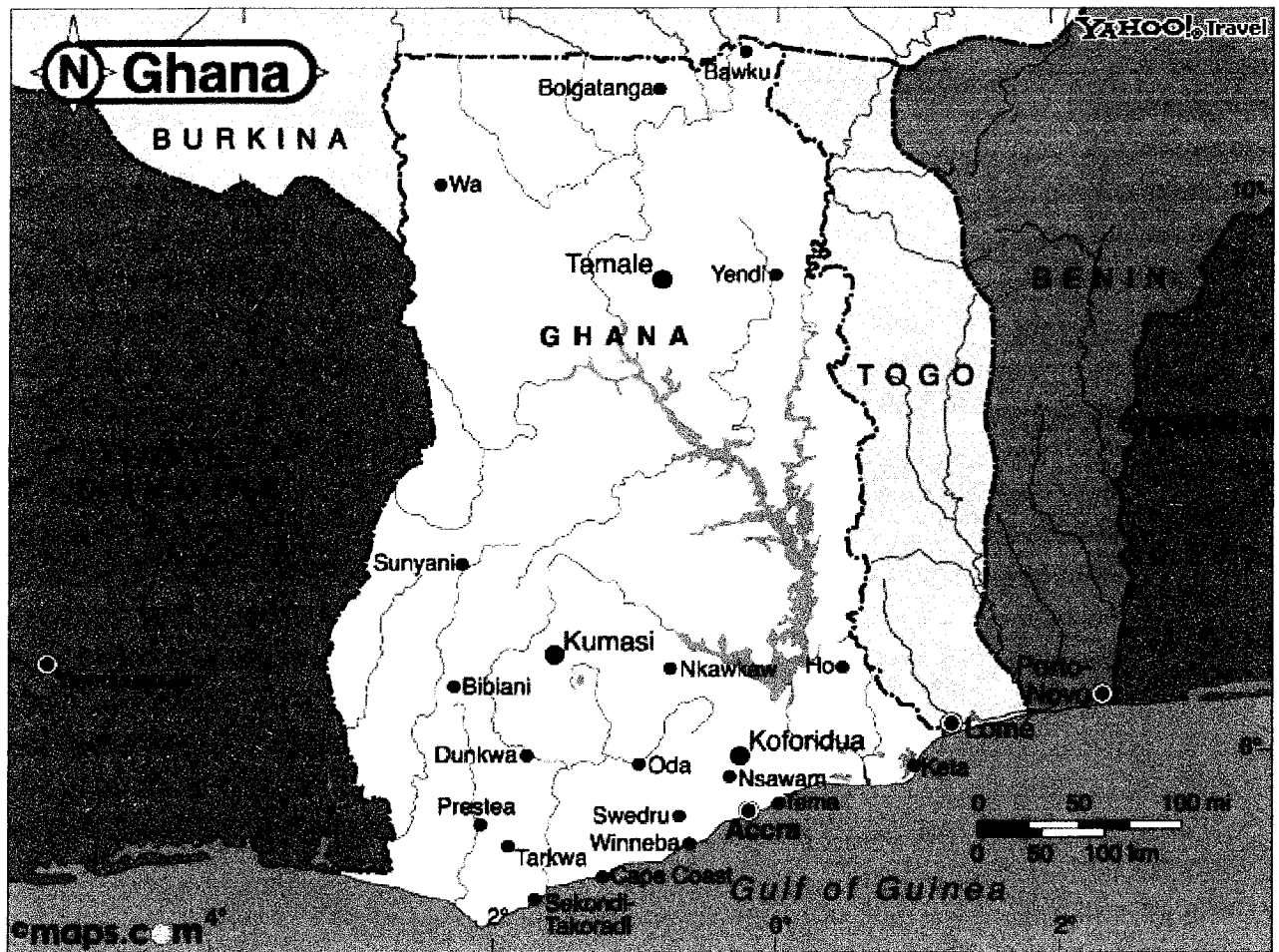
The study was conducted in Northern Ghana at the Bagabaga Training College(BATCO) in Tamale and Bolgatanga with undergraduate trainee teachers from the University College of Education in Winneba. Founded in the 1960s, Bagabaga Training College is primarily a three-year learning institution that offers college degrees in several subject areas. Courses offered include the arts, sciences and technical skills. Graduating students are offered a teaching certificate in General Studies with specialization in primary and secondary education.

The University College of Education at Winneba, until it became a fully-fledged university in the late 1990s, was a diploma-awarding tertiary institution. It was then called Winneba Specialist Teachers' Training College. The University College of education had always focused on teaching. It was therefore chosen for its role in training teachers in the country. At the University College of Education students are admitted with some level of previous teacher training teaching experiences. They all had previously earned a teaching certificate at the post secondary (college) level and had only returned to the University College of Education to obtain a Bachelor of Education Degree in specific disciplines.

The study involved two categories of trainee teachers. The first category was from a tertiary institution, the University College of Education, in Winneba, in the Central Region, although at the time of the study, these student teachers were on teaching practice in Bolgatanga, in the Upper East region of Northern Ghana. The second category was from a post-secondary institution, Bagabaga Training College (BATCO) in Tamale, in the Northern Region. Northern Ghana comprises the Upper East Region (Bolgatanga, the Regional Capital), Upper West Region (Wa, the Regional Capital) and Northern Region (Tamale, the Regional Capital), including parts of the Brong-Ahafo Region. The area came under British rule in 1902, and has a heterogeneous community of different ethnic groups (Bening, 2001).

As estimated by a 2000 Population and Housing census, the three Northern Regions have a combined population of over three million (3,346,005) inhabitants (Ghana Statistical Service, 2000). It occupies approximately 97,000 square miles, (156,000 sq. km), with over 85% of its population in the rural areas. Clan and extended family ties strongly define the daily lives of the people and their social values. The traditional Chief remains the highest political authority and with the assistance of the sub chiefs, law and order is maintained and enforced. The Ghanaian economy is largely agriculturally based, and in the north, over 90% of the population is engaged in small-scale Agriculture. Figure 1 shows the map of Ghana to highlight the three regions comprising Northern Ghana (Upper East, Upper West & Northern Regions).

**Figure 1: Map of Ghana indicating locations of institutions**



### **Educational institutions in Ghana**

In 2003 Ghana had about 12,130 primary schools, 5,450 junior secondary schools, 503 senior secondary schools, 21 training colleges (of which five are situated in the three Northern regions), 18 technical institutions, 2 diploma-awarding institutions and 5 universities (one in the North). In addition a few private universities have emerged in the past ten years. In contrast, at the time of independence in 1957, Ghana had only one university and a handful of secondary and primary schools. Students begin their 6-year primary education at age six. Under educational reforms implemented in 1987, they pass



into a new Junior Secondary School system for 3 years of academic training combined with technical and vocational training. After the Basic Education Certificate Examinations (BECE), successful students continue at the 3-year Senior Secondary School program. Entrance to universities is by examination following completion of senior secondary school. In 2003, school enrolment totaled almost 2 million: 1.3 million primary; 107,600 secondary; 489,000 middle; 21,280 technical; 11,300 teacher training; and 5,600 university. The medium of instruction in all Ghanaian schools is English.

### **Framing the study**

Sexual harassment of women and girls is not something new and is wide-spread in both the workplace and learning institutions around the world. Since understanding of the issue as a barrier to women's advancement in society has grown for the past decade, it has become a serious international public concern. In countries such as Canada and the United States, sexual harassment has now emerged as a serious public policy issue. There have been increasing studies on the topic in educational settings and the workplace as well.

In U.S. and Canadian schools, both student-to-student and teacher-to-student sexual harassment and abuse have been widely reported (Hendrie, 2003; Stein et al. 1993). In the U.S. research in various mixed sex schools with students at the high and junior high schools found that girls were routinely called by names by boys, who flicked girls' bra straps, flipped their skirts, and grabbed and fondled them. Boys were regularly called "dicks" and other sexually laden terms that the students perceived to be derogatory (Larkin, 1997). For students in urban centers, leering and sexual gestures were just some

of the harassing incidents to occur on public transport. In the U.S. it is also estimated that staff-student and employee-student harassment were 15 to 30%. At the higher cycle or secondary level, staff-student and employee-student harassment was about 30 to 65% (Brandenburg, 1997). A similar study by Shakeshaft and Cohan in the U.S. (1995) estimates that the vast majority (96%) of the abusers were males. "Of the students the males sexually abused, 76% were female, and 24% were male" (Shakeshaft et al., 1995).

At the lower grades, student-to-student harassment was said to be the most frequent in schools and colleges (Brandenburg, 1997; Epp & Watkinson, 1997; Layman, 1997; Aggarwal, 1995; Shakeshaft and Cohan, 1994) and the perpetrators were mostly boys of the same age as the girls or older. In the higher cycle, a study by Benson and Thomson (1982) reports that sexual harassment of students by male instructors was common. In a study with 111 students, 31 reported sexual harassment by at least one male instructor. The same study indicated that out of 158 transferred students, 24 reported sexual harassment in their original universities. Osborn (1992) reports comparable numbers for Canadian Universities. However, recent investigations suggest that as many as one out of two or three undergraduate students may have experienced some form of unwanted or inappropriate gender behavior (Fitzgerald and Shullman, 1993; Schneider, 1987; Popovich et al, 1986). In similar studies, McKinney and Crittendon (1992) and Grauerholz (1989), indicate that even female professors are not exempted from sexual harassment in the academic setting. In a report by Grauerholz (1989), 47.6% of female professors claim to have experienced a variety of sexually harassing behaviors from their male students. Meanwhile, the harassment of female

faculty members by male students was often referred to as "contrapower" harassment (Benson, 1984).

While in Africa and particularly Ghana, there has been little public discussion of sexual harassment in teacher training colleges and in other education institutions, the tendency has always been to blame or penalize the survivor rather than to confront the perpetrator. Various reports issued by the UNAID (2001, 2002); Wolpe (1997); Cotton and Synge (1998); United Nations (1995) and UNICEF (1994) reveal serious problems of intimidation and other harassment behaviors directed towards girls in African schools, including rape, physical assault and coercive sex.

In the Tertiary and Teacher Training Institutions of Ghana, particularly Northern Ghana, the prevalence and consequences of sex-based violence is less well documented. Where research studies, projects or interventions exist, they mainly focus on educating trainee teachers about HIV/AIDS (e.g. project SHAPE) or school-related, gender-based violence committed by teachers/adult men against both boys and girls and seem to lack specific intervention strategies on how to address the issue (Brown, 2003; Leach et al. 2002). To the best of my knowledge, no specific study has investigated or examined incidence of sexual harassment/gender-based violence against trainee teachers within Teacher Training Institutions in Sub-Saharan Africa.

Indeed, when I first started this study in the late 1990's, I could find almost no literature on sexual harassment or gender-based violence in teacher training institutions in

the context of developing countries that I could use to frame my proposed work on Ghana. What I did find were references in 'recommendations for further research' in documents like the Gender Equity Task Team report in South Africa (GETT, 1997), and occasionally in the work on girl schooling on barriers to education, references to unwanted pregnancies and sugar daddies. Rarely did examples of actual research that was being conducted surface even though I knew from my own experiences and those of my friends and relatives that teacher training colleges and universities were 'ripe' with such behavior. In short, it looked as though the findings in the North American context that looked at sexual harassment in schools and universities were being reproduced back in Ghana without attaching importance to the study parameters. Fortunately, the situation has begun to change. The prevalence of sexual based violence in educational institutions in Africa is beginning to be a public concern and indeed there is research now taking place and increasing reports of gender-based violence from around the world. We are also beginning to see an emerging body of literature in its own right on sexual harassment in Sub-Saharan Africa. Much of this work comes out of the gray literature of the donor world (unpublished reports, internal documents, briefing documents), or within the literature on actual programming on sexual harassment (e.g. Learning units, Modules, Training Materials and so on).

African Rights, a UK-based NGO, suggested that the prevalence of sexual violence in African schools represented “an extremely grave problem” and that the abuse is mostly initiated and carried out by male teachers (Hallam, 1994:1). This included abusive acts ranging from sexist jokes and innuendoes to pressuring female students for

sex and included behaviors such as fondling, verbal harassment and rape in the washrooms and empty classrooms. The promise of good grades or the threat of failure is often used by some male teachers to achieve sexual relations. According to one secondary school student from Malawi:

Some teachers are known to harass girls who refuse to have sexual relationships with them in such ways as being refused exit permits, punished for petty offence or no clear reason at all, ill treated in class. (Kadzamira et al., 2001:37)

Countries such as Ghana (Afenyadu et al., 2003; Leach et al, 2003; Brown, 2003); Cameroon (Mbassa, 2001); Ethiopia (Terefe et al., 1997); Malawi (Leach et al., 2003); Botswana (Rossetti, 2001; Fiscian, 2001; UNICEF, 2000) have reported that girls are routinely subjected to aggressive sexual advances by older male students and teachers, particularly in the rural areas. The abuse takes forms of sexual intercourse (e.g. coerced relation or rape), and often involves pressure, verbal abuse (e.g. intimidation), corporal punishment (e.g. Bullying, physical beating) and touching of private parts (e.g. fondling breasts, buttocks etc.). In some situations male students were said to confiscate girls' money for food. Male students were equally targets of coerced sex in both the Junior and Senior Secondary Schools. Girls from the Junior Secondary Schools (JSS), thus, from the lower grades, were said to represent the highest percentage (27%).

A study by Mbassa (2001) with 1,688 secondary students from ten institutions in urban setting in Cameroon reported that student-student violence represented the highest percentage (30%), followed by teacher abuse (8%), unwanted touching, caressing and rape represented 15% of cases reported and 16% for sexual abuse. In a similar study by Brown (2003) involving school children from three districts in Ghana, including the

North, teacher abuse represented 5.7% and that of student-student 28%. The forms of abuse included: fondling of breasts, pinching of buttocks, teachers lifting girls' dresses with a cane and sexual intercourse. In the Ghanaian context, some students were said to face harassment because of their sexual orientation.

In their study on the abuse of girls in three Zimbabwean coeducational junior secondary schools involving students of ages 13-15 (JSS) from urban and peri-urban setting, Leach et al. (2000) confirmed the widespread nature of aggressive sexual behaviour, intimidation, and physical assault by older boys and male teachers in African schools. As estimated here, the abuse of girls by older boys represented 46%. Sexual advances by male teachers were said to represent 19% of cases. In all, corporal punishment and verbal abuse by both female and male teachers on boys represented 97% and that of girls, 76%. Leach et al., (2003) also observed in the African settings that, adult or elderly men outside the school environment engaged in transactional sex (exchange for money, gifts or promises of marriage) with children under age of consent (in Ghana the age of consent is 16).

In Malawi, girls are often graded unfairly for refusing to sleep with teachers and those who are intelligent are teased and ridiculed by boys for being 'unfeminine' (Hyde, 1993). A recent Human Rights Watch report in South Africa (2001) refers to this as the "scared at school" phenomenon. In her study on the abuse of girls in some basic schools in the Central Region in Ghana, Fiscian (2001) observed that in one of the primary schools, about 95% of the girls have been sexually abused by their male teachers. With

regard to the harassment of students, Abraham (2003) speculates that sexual harassment by boys was less traumatizing for girls than the sexual harassment by the teachers. Too often these behaviors are tolerated by school authorities, and mostly perpetuated by them. What is most disturbing is that the very teachers entrusted with the care of these girls are said to be often the very ones who turn to sexual abuse and make them pregnant. Sexual harassment was also considered the cause of school dropout and low female enrollment in Africa.

At an awareness durbar (a formal reception held by African rulers) on the abuse of girls in Ghanaian schools, at Besease near Komenda in November 2001, Miss Fiscian in the *Press Review* under the headline “Teacher Sexually Abuses 95% of His Pupils” further deplored the attitude of school authorities with respect to how cases of sexual harassment and abuse are being handled by Ghanaian authorities. The researcher (Miss Fiscian) pointed out that in situations where official complaints were lodged, the authorities concerned often failed to discipline the perpetrators, and even when punishment was meted out, it was not a deterrent. She added:

Very often, the girl is blamed or reprimanded and asserts that the situation has flourished unchecked, making the school a safe haven rather than an arena against abuse.” (2 001)

In their study on girls’ education in Addis Ababa, in Ethiopia, Terefe et al. (1997) found out that the factors that contributed to low female enrollment rates in and high dropout rates from secondary schools included attempted rape and bullying. It has also been the concern of some educational authorities in Africa. For example, during a parade of school children to mark Ghana’s 45<sup>th</sup> independence anniversary in the

Tolon/Kumbungu area in Northern Ghana, the district director of education in the area attributed illicit sex and sexual harassment of schoolgirls by teachers to the high dropout rate and the transmission of HIV/AIDS among girls in Northern Ghana (The Ghanaian Chronicle, Friday, March 08, 2003). In some instances, students engaged in sexual relations with teachers for good grades.

On the front page of the Chronicle, Tuesday, March 27; 2001 it was boldly written "*A teacher at Bogoso Methodist Primary School seduced seven of his class girls aged 13-14 years and rammed them up in turns.*" On April 4, 2001 in the *Daily Graphic* it was printed boldly on the front page "*Pastor defiles Girl, 13, After Church Service.*" Such examples seem common these days in Ghana. Unfortunately, these same perpetrators are allowed to get away with it, unpunished for the offense. In the South African context, similar reasons were observed by Human Rights Watch (2001). In the Ghanaian context, statistics made available to a Ghana News Agency (July 27, 2000) by the Ho District Directorate of Education, in the Volta region, indicate that at the Junior Secondary School (JSS) level, 6,751 students were on the roll for the 2000/2001 academic year, compared to 6,841 students in the 1998/99 academic years. As demonstrated by the data, in the primary school, 17, 879 females were on the roll in the 1998/99 academic years. This figure dropped to 17,319 in the 1999/2000 academic years (The Ghana Press Review 2001).



## **Gender and teacher education**

In the Teacher Training Institutions, the situation is also critical. An example is Tamale Training College (TATCO), one of the training colleges in Northern Ghana. Statistics for 2000-2001 indicate that TATCO had a grand total of 486 enrolled students, of which 383 were males (78.8%) and 103 females (21.2%). Since TATCO, formerly Tamale Women's Training College, became a coeducational institution in the late 80s, the ratio of women continues to fall drastically due to sexual harassment. The male/female ratio is worse for Tamale's second teacher training institution, Bagabaga Training College, one of the institutions where the present study was conducted. For the year 2000/2001 it had a male enrolment of 86.9% and a female enrolment of 13.1%.<sup>2</sup> Besides, the number of girls who are not able to complete basic education as a result of sexual harassment and assault by teachers is substantial. However, significant numbers of girls continue to drop out of school or are infected with HIV/AIDS as a result of sexual harassment and abuse by teachers, male students and elderly men (Leach et al. 2003, 2000; USAID 2003; UNICEF 2002). Indeed, it is estimated that about 92% of survivors of sexual abuse are girls below the age of 15.

In Ghana, the growing understanding of the issue of sexual harassment as a barrier to girls' educational attainment has drawn the international community, researchers and the media's attention to the sexual harassment and abuse of girls by teachers in the region. However, a recent media report suggests that in Ghana, the public tolerance for the sexual exploitation and the inappropriate dismissal of young women at

---

<sup>2</sup> Official statistics from TATCO collected during an interview in Tamale (2001).

the workplace has begun to change as a handful of women advocates organizations (e.g. the Commission of Human Rights and Administrative Justice of Ghana [CHRAJ], the Police Women and Juvenile Unit of Ghana [WAJU], The National Commission for Civic Education [NCCE] and The Women in Law and Development in Africa [WILDAF] decide to take up incidences of sexual harassment at the workplace and to press charges against company directors and supervisors who harass women for sexual favors (Ghana Review International, 2002, 2001, 2000).

### **Gender and the workplace in Ghana**

It is also suggested by the Ghanaian Press that sexual harassment is not only widespread in the society, but that the workplace has become so unbearable and intimidating that most girls of ages 18 to 24 have been compelled to tender their resignation and to quit their jobs. In Ghana, company directors or supervisors use sexual demands as a condition for hiring or keeping a job. Such examples are the case of a Takoradi timber firm and the Continental Export Ghana Limited, a Tema based food-processing company. In the first case (Takoradi timber firm) the Newspaper stated:

Those who refused to give in to the sexual demands of the Lebanese but insisted on working with the company were given dismissal letters without Tangible reasons... those girls, who had nowhere to go if sacked, were however said to have yielded to the demands of their bosses to keep their jobs. (Ghanaian Review International, September 17, 2001)

In the second case (The Continental Export Ghana Limited), the factory manager was alleged to have been persistently harassing and proposing sex to female employees. Where his advances were rejected, he caused these girls dismissal from the company.

This suggests that in Ghana, sexual harassment represents as much a barrier for young women's survival and career advancement as does sexual harassment of trainee teachers and schoolgirls. However, demands for sex as a condition of hiring or keeping a job must be considered a serious manifestation of sexual coercion, as Lemoncheck and Sterba (2000:31) observe:

The outright demand for sex appears more serious for noncompliance is easily discernable and the consequences to both the woman who refuses and the woman who submits against her will are easily imagined. Sexual harassment is nevertheless an act of aggression at any stage of its expression, and in all its forms it contributes to the ultimate goal of keeping women subordinate at work. (p.31)

The lack of data on sexual harassment and sex-based violence is to the disadvantage of most African countries. The study therefore suggests that more research and information gathering is needed on sexual harassment of trainee teachers in Africa, including Ghana.

### **Sexual harassment and health: pregnancy, STDs and HIV/AIDS**

The added dangers to the lives of these young women as a result of the high incidence of HIV/AIDS make the situation even bleaker. In addition to the practices that serve as barriers and obstacles to female's education, the associated health risks are factors that are related to HIV/AIDS infection and unwanted pregnancy. For example, in South Africa, many cases of STDs and pregnancies were linked to sexual abuse and rape (Steenkamp et al., 1995; USAID, 2001, 2002). The increased risk of HIV/AIDS as a result of the prevalence of sexual-based violence and poverty in the region has also been well established by other researchers. In their review of studies, Panos, 2003; Fleischman,

2003; Luke et al., 2002; George, 2001; Omale, 2000 and Hallam, 1994 suggest that, in regions endemically infected with the AIDS virus, poverty compels young girls to compromise their body in order to survive in the society or satisfy their basic needs. Of particular concern was the “sugar daddy” phenomenon and the popular belief by older men that sex with virgins and younger girls cures AIDS (Heyzer, 2003).

Based on recent statistics, Sub-Saharan African is the region of the world the most affected by the HIV/AIDS virus (The Global HIV/AIDS Epidemic for July 2002). Apart from the economic and health consequences associated with the virus, the AIDS virus is said to be a contributing factor to the decline in school enrollment in Africa (UNAIDS, 2002, 2001). UNAIDS, (2002) reports that approximately 29.4 million people are living with the HIV/AIDS virus across the continent. What is devastating is that the vast majority (58%) are women most between the ages of 15 and 49. In Ghana, the latest statistics indicate that a population of 360,000 (3.5%) are living with the HIV/AIDS virus, of whom 170,000 are women (over 50%), representing the highest. Ghana’s education sector is said to suffer from at least double the national rate, “a critical blow to the capacity of teachers, student and parents to ensure quality education. (UNAIDS, 2002)

A study by Wood and Jewkes (1998) of violence in heterosexual relationships among pupils in a South African township reported that physical assault, rape, and coercive sex was making it very difficult for young women to protect themselves against unwanted sexual intercourse, pregnancy, HIV infection, and other sexually transmitted diseases (see also Leach et al. 2003). Other important factors that need to be taken into

consideration include the myth around HIV/AIDS, and the sexual abuse of virgins in most African societies (e.g. South Africa). Studies reviewed by Luc et al. (2002) suggest that the popular belief that sex with a virgin cures AIDS has led many older men to seek out younger females sex partners. In another study by Gregson et al. (2002), it was found out that there is a one-year increase in age difference between partners associated with a 4% increase in the risk of HIV infection. Adolescent girls have “limited” power to resist male pressure for sex and unsafe sexual practices (Luke & Kurz, 2002:16). It is clear that in the situation of rape, or where sex is coercive, survivors are vulnerably exposed and that the likelihood of contracting the virus is greatly increased. In countries such as Southern Africa, 45% of assailants arrested for rape were HIV positive (Colleen, 2003). It was also indicated by The UN (2001-2002) that in countries in Central Africa, 85% of teachers’ mortality between 1996 and 1998 was related to HIV/AIDS. In Zambia, 1,300 teachers died of HIV/AIDS in 1998. In Kenya, teacher deaths trebled in the last four years. Over 30% of teachers in parts of Malawi and Uganda are thought to be HIV-positive, 20% in Zambia and 12% in South Africa (UNAIDS, 2002).

In Uganda, as in most African countries, girls are said to be more vulnerable to HIV infection; HIV/AIDS related absenteeism, is rife in schools especially for the girls. In a similar observation, Leach et al. (2000) suggest: “The unsettling and sometimes violent nature of the learning environment is not conducive to girls’ learning and has implications for the spread of HIV/AIDS among adolescents in the region” (p.12). It is clear that within the school context, illicit sex could put girls at the risk of becoming pregnant, especially at the basic level of contracting HIV/AIDS. Unfortunately, the high

rate of sexual harassment and abuse/rape of girls reported in some parts of Sub-Saharan Africa served to strengthen parental fear of enrolling their daughters in school. This recalls the unbelievable rape tragedy in St. Kizito, Kenya, in 1991, where 75 schoolgirls were raped by boys in their dormitories, leading to the death of 19 (Odaga et al., 1995). Due to factors like these, some parents try to marry off their daughters at puberty for fear of exposing them to pregnancy, HIV/AIDS and other corporal peril (Holtedahl, 1993). In support of the above statement, Anousviran Deneshvar, The Deputy Regional Director of UNHCR, suggests: "How can a parent want to educate his daughters when learning institutions have been places and sites of rape and HIV/AIDS infection?" (USAID, 2002 no page number).

Another factor likely to expose young female students to HIV/AIDS in Africa includes the issue of poverty. In the Ghanaian context, the poverty factor was observed by researchers such as Afenyadu et al. (2003) and Leach et al. (2003).

In a specific study on in-school and out-of-school adolescents in Dodowa, a rural community in Ghana, Afenyadu et al. (2003) suggest that at the Senior Secondary School level (SSS), most peers engaged in sexual activities or intercourse with "sugar daddies" in order to meet their financial needs. In a similar study by Leach et al. (2003) in Ghana, Malawi and Zimbabwe, the authors concluded that abusive behaviours feed on poverty and that girls were routinely subjected to aggressive sexual advances from old male students and male teachers who often walked away unpunished, their behaviour unquestioned. Based on the observations of Afenyadu et al. (2003); Leach et al. (2003)

one may conclude that economic factors severely encourage young women and schoolgirls to compromise their bodies, even in situations they might perceive to be dangerous. In addition, the lack of power to negotiate or resist unprotected sex, particularly in situations of pressure and poverty, exposes young women to the HIV virus in the African society.

In effect, the failure to address the prevalence of abusive behaviours in African schools and institutions show the extent to which the educational system in Africa contributes to the dropout of female students and their exposure to STDS and HIV/AIDS in the region. In support of this, a report by the Human Rights Watch (2001) suggests that:

Left unchecked, sexual violence in schools has a negative impact on the educational and emotional needs of girls and acts a barrier to attaining education (...) Rape and other forms of sexual violence place girls at risk of contracting the HIV/AIDS virus [which has in turn] has taken its toll on the educational system and disrupted education (...) especially for girls (USAID, 2001: 3-4).

The number of young women and girls who are not able to complete basic education as result of sexual harassment and assault by teachers is considerable. In view of this, the issue of sexual harassment needs to be reflected upon seriously and addressed by the African society. The concern and written criticisms by international organizations and NGOs suggest that there is a growing dissatisfaction with the tolerance of sexual harassment by institutions and Governments in sub-Saharan Africa. Odaga and Heneveld (1995), in a report by the World Bank, suggest that in Sub-Sahara Africa, the learning environment is hostile for girls' progress and call for researchers' attention to the sexual harassment of girls by male students, teachers and principals in the region.

My study is one of the first of its nature in Ghana in that it focuses on beginning teachers. A study like this one is likely to have far-reaching implications for mainstreaming gender within teacher education or development projects in general. It could also be used to develop indicators of protection for schools, and to help policy and educational planners with information to properly formulate and implement clear policy and procedures on sexual based violence that aims at raising awareness and establishing culturally appropriate systems for various establishments and institutions in the country.

### **Organization of the thesis**

This is an exploratory study that seeks to understand how the subtleties of sexual harassment are perceived and lived out in Ghanaian Teacher Training Institutions. The reporting, therefore, is mainly descriptive, drawing from qualitative data from field participants /respondents. The thesis is made up of five chapters. Chapter one locates the study, and frames the problem. It includes my experience of growing up in Ghana (as a teacher and a student scholar in the Ghanaian society) and in working with survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault in Montreal, Canada. Chapter two reviews the related literature to the study. It provides the historical perspective and definition of sexual harassment as a concept. Next, it draws on the conceptual frameworks and includes the various theoretical models. It maps the territory, the relevant literature that frames the study and presents the various interpretations of the concept from a North American or Western perspective. I also try to represent my perspective on these interpretations based on a non-western view. Chapter three describes the research



methodology, the approach and procedures used for the data collection. It also presents a brief description of my experiences of gaining access to the research site and participants. Later in the chapter, there is justification for Memory work and Focus groups in investigating issues of sexual harassment in the Ghanaian context. Chapter three also presents the data collection and data analysis strategies.

Chapter four presents the research findings and data collection, which contain the experiences and perspectives of the participants collected through the group discussions, and memory writing in the study. These include the individual interviews of college authorities within the context of this study. Finally, in Chapter five I present discussions of the research findings presented in chapter four. These include summaries of the group discussions and memory narratives, conclusions, and recommendations for reform and implications for further research. In the recommendations, there are proposals for various strategies and interventions that need to be taken at all levels of the Ghanaian society.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **Sexual Harassment: A Theoretical Framework and Review**

Sexual harassment is not only complex as a concept, but it is also broadly defined, making it difficult for academics and feminists to arrive at a consensus on its usage and interpretations. For instance, in the review of the literature on sexual harassment a sexual behavior is considered actionable, when only the behavior/conduct is unwelcome, and regarded undesirable or offensive by the recipient (Lemonchech et al., 2001). Such definitions are also contained in the various conceptual models suggested in the literature and embody various perspectives on the issue. Given that the issue of sexual harassment is still a very recent debate in the developing world including Africa, it was necessary to draw on the Western literature. Therefore, this chapter seeks to outline the theoretical currents on sexual harassment in the recent literature and to point out their relevance to Africa, especially Ghana. This chapter begins with the historical origin and definition of the concept followed by the various perspectives. These include the relevance of such models or theories to explaining the sexual harassment of women in the Ghanaian and African context.

#### **Historical perspective**

Sexual harassment is both a social and public problem. It has existed for decades but only acquired a legal label within the past two decades, thereby making it visible. Historically, the origins and recognition of the concept can be found in the United States and date back to the mid-70s. The concept was first labelled and became a public concern

in the mid-70s and in recent years there has been a great deal of attention paid to it nationally and in the international community. Weeks et al. (1986) have traced the emergence of the concept, how it was labelled and subsequently theorized as having a detrimental effect on the working life of women. Before then, it had no social definition, or label and as such women had no such term as harassment to describe the behaviors that they had always experienced.

In the popular press the concept made its first appearances in *Redbook Magazine* and through the writing of the Working Women United Institute, and the Alliance Against Sexual Coercion in the United States in 1976. It was then followed by **average in** the magazine *La vie en rose* in 1982 in Quebec, Canada (Patry-Buisson, 1989). During this period, sexual harassment became legally recognized as a sex discrimination offence as defined by the courts in the mid 70s and early 80s. Although sexual harassment laws began to evolve in the workplace in the United States under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act, students (in educational settings) remained immune to federal legislation until 1980 (Dziech & Hawkins, 1998). Yale University (1980) first suggested that sexual harassment in academic settings constituted a potential violation of an individual's right and therefore should be brought under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act. Since then, sexual harassment has been recognized under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which governs employment, and under Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, which governs educational institutions. Before then, behaviors such as leering, fondling, and touching, which are considered today as inappropriate gender-related behavior, were considered normal by many societies. In relation to this, certain feminist academics argue that the

failure of society and the legal system to recognize these behaviors as sexual harassment in those days led to the dismissal of many incidents of sexual harassment (Dziech and Hawkins, 1998; Dourambeis, 1997). Since the Clarence Thomas versus Anita Hill hearings in 1991, the recent sex scandals involving the military, and the wide spread nature of sexual harassment in academia, particularly in the United States (McDaniel & Roosmalen, 1991; Dzeich & Weiner, 1990; Kenig & Ryan, 1986; Mazer & Percival, 1989; Pryor & Day, 1988; Pryor, 1987; Osborn, 1986; Reilly, Lott, & Galloghy, 1986; Benson & Thomson, 1982), the issue has drawn the attention of researchers, the media and feminists on the issue of sexual harassment in educational institutions and the workplace. It has also directed public attention to other issues related to sexual harassment such as child abuse. As a concept, sexual harassment may be considered not only a complicated issue, but the recognition and application of its legal definition by the courts and tribunals jurisprudence is quite recent and complex, as I try to indicate below.

### **Defining the problem**

A search in the literature of sexual violence and sexual harassment reveals that there is no consensus on a common definition of the concept of sexual harassment. In the literature, sexual harassment remains highly contested among feminists and academics. For instance, categories of behavior such as gender-based harassment, sexual assault, rape, seductive behavior, sexual bribery, sexual imposition, harassment based on sexual orientation, and sexual abuse are sometimes included under the general definition of sexual harassment. Other times, these same behaviors are considered separately (Zalk, Paludi, & Dederich, 1990; Fitzgerald 1990; Sev'er (1999); Webster, Smith et al., (1999),

Wiener, Hurt et al., (1997); Brandenburg, (1997). Mackinnon, (1979) in their work debate the lack of unanimity on the definition and generalization of the concept. This includes the legal clarification of its consequences on victims.

In 1978, the Canadian Human Rights Commission (CHRC) recognized sexual harassment to be a particular form of discrimination prohibited under the Canadian Human Rights Act. In Canada, other early attempts include the definition of the Alliance Against Sexual Harassment (AASH). Such definitions include:

Any unwanted sexually based or sexually oriented practice, which creates discomfort and/or threatens a woman's personal well being or functioning (mental, physical or emotional). Sexual harassment includes verbal abuse, jokes, leering, touching or any unnecessary contact, the display of pornographic material, the invasion of personal space, sexual assault and rape, or any threat of retaliation or actual retaliation for any of the above. (cited in Sev'er, 1999)

Grahame's (1985) definition further specifies that sexual harassment should include but not be limited to:

Persistent or abusive unwanted sexual attention made by a person who knows or ought reasonably to know that such attention is unwanted. Sexual harassment includes all sexually oriented practices and actions that may create a negative psychological or emotional environment for work, study, or the buying or selling of services. It may include an implicit or explicit promise of reward or compliance. Threats may take the form of actual reprisals or denial of opportunity for work, study, the purchase or sale of services (Grahame, 1985:112).

Meanwhile, in 1989, the Supreme Court of Canada ruled sexual harassment to be:

The gamut from overt gender based activity, such as coerced intercourse, to unsolicited physical contact, to persistent propositions, to more subtle conduct such as gender based insults and taunting, which any reasonably be perceived to create a negative psychological and emotional work environment. (Canadian Human Rights Commission, 1991:39)

International Human Rights Organizations have also tried to formulate their definition of the concept. For example, the International Labor Organization (ILO) during a meeting of experts in 1988 suggested that for an action to constitute sexual harassment, it must be perceived as a condition of continued or secured employment by the employee. The incident must influence decisions affecting the employee, undermine the employee's professional performance, or humiliate, insult or intimidate the employee (LeMoncheck et al., 2001). These varying definitions are cited in order to give a sense of the complexity of the problem. While these interpretations or definitions may vary based on gender, these same interpretations are contextual and as such may be influenced by culture. Below are some points of view and interpretations of the concept in the literature of some feminists and academics.

### **Feminism and sexual harassment**

Some feminists' analyses classify sexual harassment as species of unacceptable male sexual conduct/behaviour. For example, Lin Farley (see Lemonchech et al., 2001) thinks that "Sexual harassment is best described as unsolicited nonreciprocal male behaviour that asserts a woman's sex role over her functions as worker, adding that as species of behaviour, sexual harassment is a pattern of sexual behaviour that contributes to the oppression of women" (p. 62-67). The critical element here is gender. Meanwhile, considering sexual harassment a "nonreciprocal male behaviour" simply means that sexual harassment is a form of behaviour or violence perpetuated only by the male sex in society. Such a conclusion could provoke negative reactions and that may be dangerous. To support the argument here, hooks (2000) in her book entitled *Feminist Theory: From*

*Margin to Centre* argues that men are not the only people who accept, condone, and perpetuate violence, or who create a culture of violence:

By only calling attention to male violence against women, or making militarism just another expression of violence, we fail to adequately address the problem of violence and make it difficult to develop viable resistance strategies and solutions...While we need not diminish the severity of the problem of male violence against nations on the planet, we must acknowledge that men and women have together made the United States a culture of violence and must work together to transform and create that culture. (p. 66)

LeMonchech et al. (2001:52) underline such ambiguity in determining a judgment of sexual harassment. In their discussion on the definition of sexual harassment, these authors observe four factors they consider to affect the definition of sexual harassment. The first factor, *Characteristics of the behaviour*, suggests that the more physically intrusive and persistent the behaviour, the more likely it is to be defined as sexual harassment by an observer. The second factor, *The nature of the relationship between actors*, suggests that the better the two actors know each other (e.g. friends, spouses, long-time co-workers) the less likely the behaviour will be labelled sexual harassment by an observer. The third factor, *Characteristics of the observer*, advises that men and people in authority (e.g., senior faculty, senior managers) are less likely than others to label a behaviour sexual harassment. The fourth factor, *Context factors*, suggests that the greater the inequality (in position, occupation, and age), the more likely the behaviour will be labelled sexual harassment by an observer. When the “recipient” of the behaviour is of low status or relatively powerless (female, young, poor), the behaviour is more likely to be judged harassment than when the “recipient” is of high status or relatively powerful.

The critical elements observed here are gender or sex, age and status of the recipient (supervisor-subordinate, low or high, equal), nature of the relationship (friends, former lovers or the case of someone who previously declined to date the harasser). If judgment about sexual harassment is to be rated based on the status of the initiator/harasser, the extremity of the behaviour and all the above factors, there are fewer chances that the experience of the survivor will be taken into consideration if there is any familiarity between this one and her /his perpetrator. Three critical issues that need to be emphasized are 1) the sexual harassment of people of high status by subordinates, 2) harassment of people of same status or sex, and 3) the nature of the relationship. Meanwhile, I will suggest that in the Ghanaian or African situation, harassment of women, specifically single women of high status by subordinates or an equal, is very common. Other factors include harassment through intercultural friendly exchanges (e.g. Dagabas and Frafras in Ghana etc.). Often times, some of these exchanges which are deemed to be jokes could be very intimidating both psychologically and emotionally. Harassment by same sex, specifically female violence, is an area that needs particular attention because of the gravity or forms that these behaviors or offences take. It is present in the Canadian, North American and African environments and a constraint that could influence the judgment of sexual harassment, or policy and legal issues in regards to sexual harassment and/or sex-based violence.

While some academics argue that sexual harassment is an exploitation of a power relationship (Carr, 1991; Paludi, 1990; Zalk, 1990; Fitzgerald et al. 1988; Benson & Thomson, 1982 ), others focus specifically on the ways that sexual harassment is a



systemic form of discrimination against women. For many feminist activists and scholars (Brandenburg et al., 1997; Wood and Kreps; Bingham, 1994; McCaghy, 1985; and MacKinnon, 1979; Evans 1978) sexual harassment is “an expression of power and a form of sex discrimination ... rooted in the male dominance and privilege in the capitalist workplace, perpetuated through sex-role socialization and the sexual objectification of women .... and obscured by patriarchal myths.” A key concern of course relates to what happens when a woman internalizes patriarchal values to an extent that she considers it a normal experience and not an abuse. A typical example is marital rape. While in some cultures certain behaviors may be interpreted as marital rape (meaning a crime), others may consider or interpret such behavior as normal male behavior, proof of love or affection for one’s wife. This also means that a husband may claim the right to sex with his wife, at any time and at his convenience. In regards to this, Aidoo (1991) points out that in the African society:

Besides any 'sane' person, especially sane women, would consider any other woman lucky or talented, who can make her husband lose his head like that. (p. 11-12).

Based on such definitions and perspectives, it could be suggested that sexual harassment seems to confine its focus to forms of behaviours most commonly experienced by women. These include sexual harassment, coerced intercourse, threats (not physical) to unsolicited physical contact perpetrated by known and unknown assailants. Furthermore, the definitions suggested by the Canadian Human Rights Commission (CHRC) include a form of behavior characterized by "repeated" and "unsolicited" sexually connotative acts, gestures that could either undermine the dignity or the physical and psychological well-being of the individual. Consequently, sexual

harassment may lead to unfavorable working conditions and even dismissal. Patry-Buisson (1989) adds that sexual harassment consists of repeated acts, but that "a single serious action that results in continuing harmful effect can also be considered to as sexual harassment" (p.16).

Viewed from this perspective, sexual harassment as a concept is continual and repetitive in nature. In viewing sexual harassment as a continuum (Larkin, 1997; Shakeshaft et al. 1994, NiCarthy et al. 1993) and not a spectrum of violence, it means some forms of violence are less serious than others and that there is always something worse to come. Does a behavior become sexual harassment only if it is repeated? In what circumstances may a behavior, even if unsolicited, be serious and considered sexual harassment? Non-physical violence such as sexual harassment, threats of denial of opportunity and unwanted sexual attention are all serious crimes that have negative impact for girls/women who experience them in the society. However, such a view does not seem to take into account the negative impact and is likely to underestimate the effects of sexual harassment on survivors.

Also, the important key terms here include an abuse/misuse of power, sex based discrimination and an oppressive behavior. The argument stands that sexual harassment is a form of sex discrimination, but is not necessarily sexual in nature. This means sexual harassment is about power (not necessarily institutional power), sex and gender discrimination. Unlike these definitions, most definitions by Canadian or American schools and universities are based on the guidelines and regulations established by the

Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) and Office for Civil Rights (OCR):

These guidelines and regulations define sexual harassment broadly. For example, the updated EEOC guidelines state that:

[u]nwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature constitute sexual harassment when (1) submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment or academic advancement, (2) submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment decisions or academic decisions affecting such individual, or (3) such conduct has the purpose or effect of reasonably interfering with an individual's work or academic performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working or academic environment.(p. 3)

Various definitions suggest that a behavior constitutes sexual harassment only when it is sexual in nature and considered by the recipient as unwanted. For the behavior to be considered sexual harassment it must also affect the recipient's performance and participation (e.g. the behavior must create an intimidating and offensive learning environment). These definitions also include behaviors ranging from verbal innuendo to overt sexual demands. Does behaviour become sexual harassment only if it is sexual in nature? In what circumstances may a behaviour, even if not sexual in nature but which affects one's employment or performance, be considered sexual harassment? What happens where an individual of the same sex uses his/her authority as a basis for evaluation in making academic or personnel decisions affecting a student or worker?

The critical elements in these definitions are "unwanted" and "unsolicited and unwelcome" sexual attention. To describe sexual harassment as "unwanted", "unsolicited" or "unwelcome" sexual attention makes the issue more complicated. Brandenburg (1997) suggests that the subjective nature of the behavior makes it difficult

to define sexual harassment in a way that would apply to every instance. Yet a definition that is based on an individual point of view runs the risk of encouraging different interpretations. A behavior that may be considered normal by one recipient could be unwanted by another depending on the subjective experience of the recipient. With regard to this, Sev'er (1999) believes that the attempt to establish "unwantedness" may open the floodgates for questioning and scrutinizing the behavior of the victim herself, suggesting that even simple personal choices such as clothing or make-up may be construed as inviting the harassing conduct or provoking the transgression (p. 472). An example given was based on a recent sexual harassment case in Canada. The trial judge of the Supreme Court dismissed the case based on the arguments that the teenage survivor "was wearing a bonnet and crinolines" and was "not on her way to the nunnery" (The Toronto Star, February 26, 1999:A1. cited in Sev'er, 1999).

To help determine what "unwantedness" is, US courts have adopted the criteria of what they term "a reasonable person" or "a reasonable woman" standard. That is to say, the legal standard which is referred to as the "reasonable person" or "reasonable woman" standard asks whether a reasonable person would view the conduct of the offended as unwelcome or not. At the same time, there is the debate on what a "reasonable person" standard means and whether or not "a reasonable woman" and "a reasonable person" are likely to differ in judgments of what is offensive (Riger, 1991).

In regards to such an ambiguity, some academics suggest that women are more likely to be victims and to decode more behaviors as sexual harassment than men and for

that matter the "reasonable person" standard should be "the reasonable woman standard" (Riger, et al. 1991; in Shakeshaft and Audrey, 1994). Based on this argument, Sheffey and Tindale (1992) suggest that "If perceptions of sexual harassment differ as a function of the type of job and the characteristics of the perceiver, reaching a consensus as to what constitutes sexual harassment (in practical rather than legal sense) may be a nearly impossible task" (Sheffey et al., 1992).

This subjective aspect contributes greatly to the misunderstanding of what constitutes sexual harassment. The determination of whether or not the conduct is unwelcome depends to some extent on the subjective experience of the recipient. However, as Shakeshaft et al. (1994) point out "while some victims of sexual abuse let the abuser know that his or her conduct is unwanted, many do not. Fear of reprisals often keeps victims from complaining or from refusing sexual advances." (p.10)

It is also clear that in situations of power where there are relations of domination and subordination (e.g. teacher-student relationship), it is often very difficult for the subordinate to clearly state or indicate her feeling when the behaviour is unwanted. In the context of teacher-student relationship as I explore here, the student is in a position of powerlessness and may not be able to defend her/himself. For example, in the Ghanaian context where the nature of academic relationships is a type that encourages submissiveness, attempting to do so may mean that the student is challenging the authority of the teacher and can be taking a risk. Given the power games involved here, the authority of the other (teacher) is not easily contested. Meanwhile, not stating clearly

one's feeling in an unwanted situation might also lead to serious consequences for the survivor.

Although in the situation of power, most demands for sexual harassment are initiated and negotiated by the one in a position of authority, this role could be reversed, such that the person in position of subordination becomes the dominant player. For example, in particular situations or circumstances, a student may use his/her features to negotiate this power relationship to also benefit from certain favors or treatment or even discredit a teacher's reputation (e.g. get good grades or challenge the teacher's power or gain control over him). In the case of gaining something in return, both the perpetrator and the recipient may be considered winners, since they both have benefited from it. Consequently, in this type of relationship, a teacher has certain moral obligations founded on professional ethics to resist or turn down the offer and to correct the student.

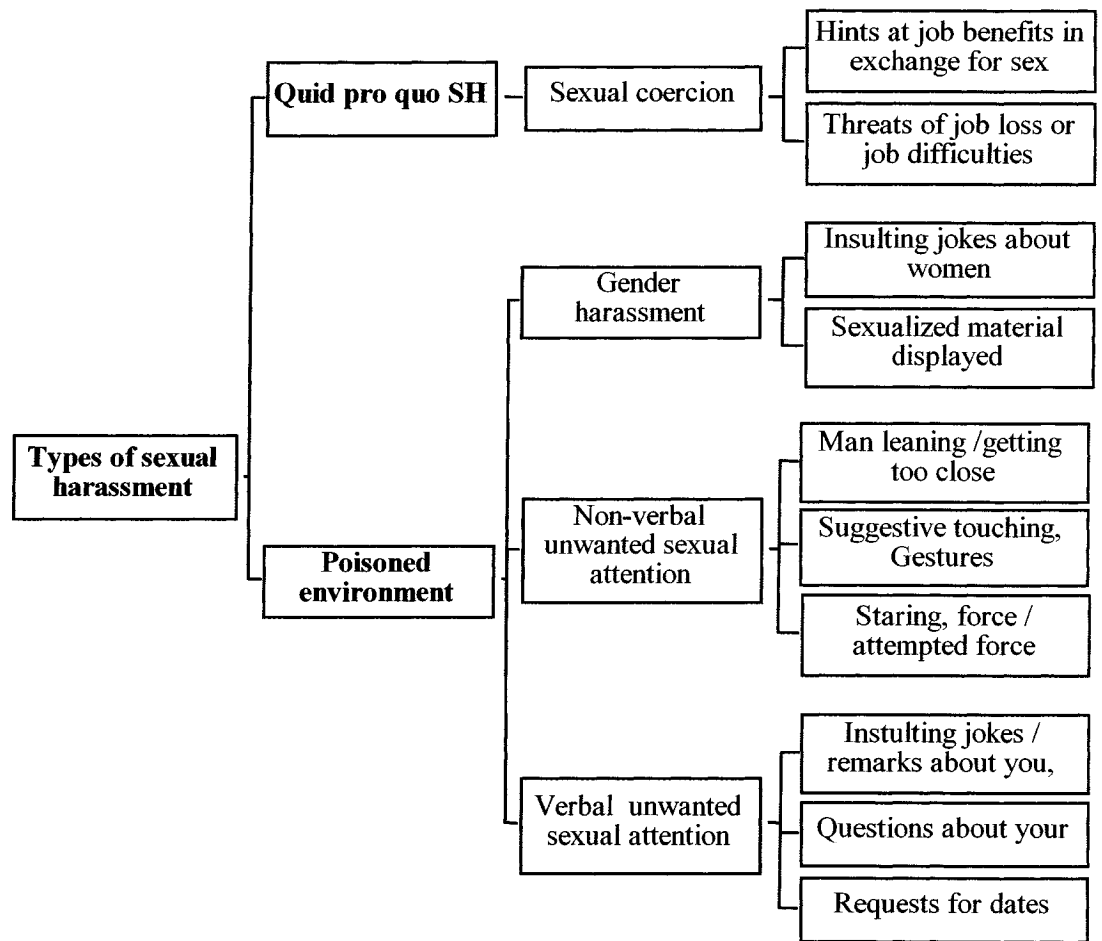
Again, this is an interesting dimension. If sexual harassment is based on the subjective experience, what then would be the outcome of behaviors achieved by manipulation or sexual bribery? As such, to give a broad definition of the concept, one may have to take into account a list of behaviors that may be considered to be sexual harassment. However, this may raise the issue of individual's rights and freedom, policies and procedures that are based on vague definitions of sexual harassment risk impinging on freedom of speech and academic freedom. (Brandenburg, 1997)

This also means that if sexual harassment is handled objectively from a third person's perspective and not that of the one who suffers it, then it doesn't make any sense.

Even then, a generic expectation of reasonableness is far from being the same for all women. Besides, because of cultural differences it is impossible to arrive at a common perception (irrespective of sexual orientation) or a definition that is applicable to all cultures and contexts. For example, in some cultures, when a woman walks out in her best make up and no man steals a look at her, she may feel inadequate as a woman. Yet others may consider the stealing of looks by men as visual harassment. In Ghana for example, it is considered normal and acceptable when a male steals a look at a woman. But where a woman steals a look at a fellow woman (whom she doesn't know), it could be considered as an act of jealousy or intimidation and can sometimes lead to physical confrontation.

In the legislation on sexual harassment, The EEOC has created two kinds of subcategories of sexual harassment. They are: *"quid pro quo"* and *"poisoned or hostile environment sexual harassment."* The two subcategories *"quid pro quo"* and *"poisoned or hostile environment"* are presented in a chart as follows:

**Figure 2: Quid pro quo" and "poisoned environment sexual harassment**



## **Types of Harassment "Quid pro quo" and "poisoned"**

### **Quid pro quo sexual harassment**

The Quid pro quo sexual harassment was treated by the federal courts as a form of sexual discrimination in employment proscribed under title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 since the mid-1970s. Meanwhile, the Poisoned or Hostile environment sexual harassment is a category accepted later than quid pro quo and with judicial reluctance.



Here, the behavior would have to be objectively injurious rather than merely objectively offensive (LeMonchech et al., 2001:247, 248).

*"Quid pro quo"* sexual harassment exists when submission to the behavior or conduct is based on a condition of employment, or when submission or rejection of such conduct affects decisions at the workplace or education environment. It corresponds to sexual coercion or extortion and usually involves the use of power in the context of a relationship of unequal status (e.g. supervisor-employee, teacher-student). *"Quid pro quo"* refers to a give and take sort of exchange. An example is sexual manipulation (from top-down). It hints at job benefits in exchange for sex, threats of job loss or job difficulties. Here, central to the concept is the use of power as basis to lever benefits or impose deprivations in another for lack of compliance. (Shakeshaft et al., 1994)

### **Poisoned environment sexual harassment**

Poisoned environment sexual harassment involves offensive attitudes and jokes and behavior based on gender (derogatory comments regarding one's gender), class and race and interferes with personal safety. In the educational setting, the *"poisoned or hostile environment"* sexual harassment is actionable only when the conduct or behavior is sexual in nature and is severe, persistent or pervasive and affects one's participation and involvement in classroom and extra-curriculum activities or creates a hostile, abusive learning environment. In the workplace, the *"poisoned environment"* may apply if such conduct has the objective or effect of interfering *"unreasonably"* with employees' work performance or creating an intimidating hostile offensive work environment (Oré-

Aguilar, 2001). The "*poisoned environment*" is considered the more subtle and more common form of harassment in educational institutions or workplace and mostly occurs between coworkers, people of the same status or same sex. This form of harassment is also considered under the EEOC (1990) as sex discrimination.

An accepted definition of poisoned environment is "unwelcome sexual conduct, that creates a hostile, an intimidating, or offensive working or learning environment" (E.E.O.C., 1980; Nemni, 1992; Brandenburg, 1997). The impact of "*poisoned environment*" may range from physical injuries, mental to emotional disorder. Within the school context, this type of harassment could affect the academic performance of the girl-child if she is found in male dominated areas or in competition with the opposite sex. Meanwhile, in determining a conduct based on frequency, duration and type, the "*poisoned or hostile environment*" seems to dismiss the fact that a single serious act is likely to have a more severe impact on the recipient than a persistent, pervasive, repetitive or series of instances.

This also indicates that for a conduct to be considered actionable, the behavior must be going on for some time and must take place throughout the environment of the recipient. The conduct must also be considered a threat for the recipient and supported by adequate proof. Again, a request for a date even when undesired is not considered hostile environment harassment, but only in a context where the request is made in an intimidating or threatening manner (LeMoncheck et al., 2001). What of an invitation that is made in a non-intimidating manner but may be secured through fear? In the Ghanaian,

and particularly the educational context, where students fear to reject proposals from teachers for reasons of failure, it would be dangerous to judge if a conduct should be considered actionable or not based on such criteria.

Again in a context where the impact of a conduct is emotional or psychological, it is often difficult to prove. This also suggests that the recipient must seek help of experts (psychologist, medical practitioner or psychiatrist) to demonstrate such effect, which is often not easy. Particularly in the Ghanaian or African context, this may be impossible. Where the perpetrator is someone in position of authority or is of a high reputation in the community, witnesses may refuse to come forward. However, the issue of sexual harassment is not only complex, it also draws researchers, and feminists, attention to the use of the concept. Based on such complexity, a conceptual framework is important for understanding the thinking behind the study and to provide a review of the theoretical arguments about the various perspectives on the concept "*sexual harassment*" in the literature, which may eventually serve as a guide for this study.

### **Conceptual models of sexual harassment**

As suggested above, the issue of sexual harassment is complicated not only by the different perspectives and definitions, but also by varying conceptual and theoretical models. Drawing from an extensive review of the literature (Sev'er, 1999; Brandenburg 1997; Bingham, 1994; Bingham, 1994; Paludi & Barickman, 1991; Tangri, Burt, & Johnson, 1982). Three theoretical models developed by Sev'er (1999) and Tangri and Johnson (1982) will be elaborated in an attempt to explain sexual harassment. These

models include: Organizational-power model, Sociocultural/patriarchal model, and Social responsibility model.

### **Organizational model**

The organizational model locates the cause of sexual harassment in institutional power and structures. It asserts that sexual harassment results from opportunities presented by relations of power and authority, which are derived from the hierarchical structure of organizations. However, Paludi et al. (1991) suggest that, since work (including academic) organizations are defined by vertical stratification and asymmetrical relations between supervisors and subordinates, teachers and students, individuals can use their authority or the power of their position (termed as legitimate power) to extort sexual gratification from their subordinates. An example is the feminist analysis of organizations. In the feminist analysis of organizations, Kanter (1977) suggests that gender differences in organizational behavior are due to structural rather than gender differences. She argues that the problems of women in organizations are due to structural placement, crowded in subordinate and powerless positions but not sex differences. In putting the argument as structure, or power, the organizational model analysis of sexual harassment applies as well to men in low-status positions but fails to account for the gender differences. Based on such a perspective, the model does not seem to take into account sex discrimination or harassment by subordinates.

Also the harassment between people of the same status, or people of color is unexplained. Sev'er (1999) reminds us that the organizational model ignores the fact that

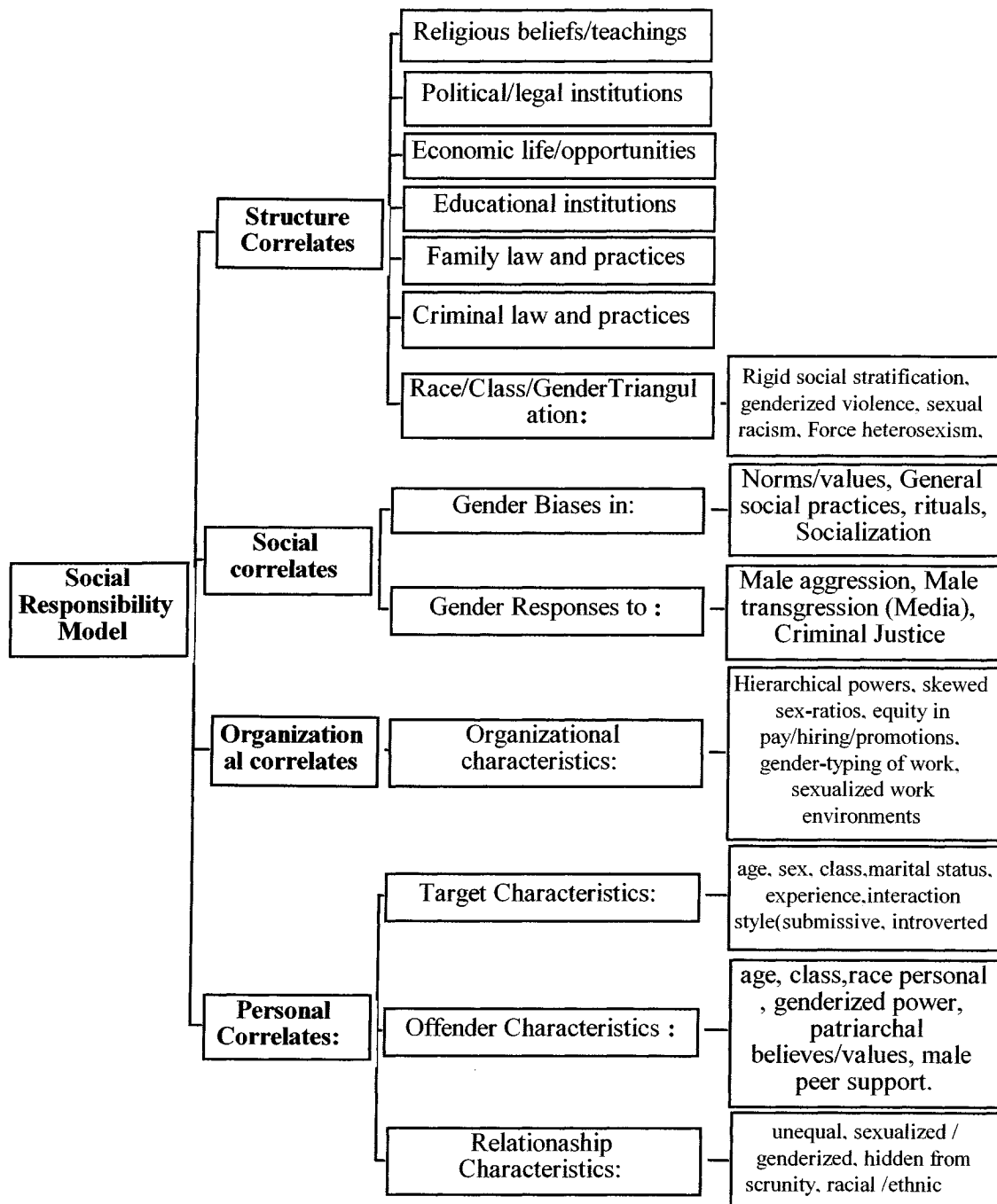
hierarchical power often interlocks with structural constraints such as class/race/gender and individual efforts are neither enough nor capable of neutralizing such constraints. From this perspective, the organizational model posits sexual harassment as an abuse of institutional power and as such seems to point out the need for laws, policies and fundamental social change. The second model, the sociocultural /patriarchal model, argues that sexual harassment reflects the larger society's differential distribution of power and status between the sexes. (Brandenburg, 1997; Bingham, 1994; Paludi & Barickman, 1991)

### **Socio-cultural /patriarchal model**

On sociocultural grounds, the power imbalance goes beyond simple physical differences to differences in gender roles. In the African context, this power differential is equated with gender roles or reflected in the hidden curriculum. Clearly, the sociocultural model suggests that society or patriarchy have the tendency of marginalizing or devaluing women. In the African context patriarchy or cultural practices has favored not only men over women and boys over girls, but has also acted as a fertile ground for sexual harassment of women in that society. An example of such is the practice of wife inheritance among the Grunsi in Northern Ghana. Widows given in leverage marriage are often molested, and sexually abused by their supposedly caretaker husbands. They come home drunk and where there is no food for them, because no provision was made for it, the woman is harassed verbally, physically and in some situations raped. She is quickly being turned into an object for the sexual satisfaction of

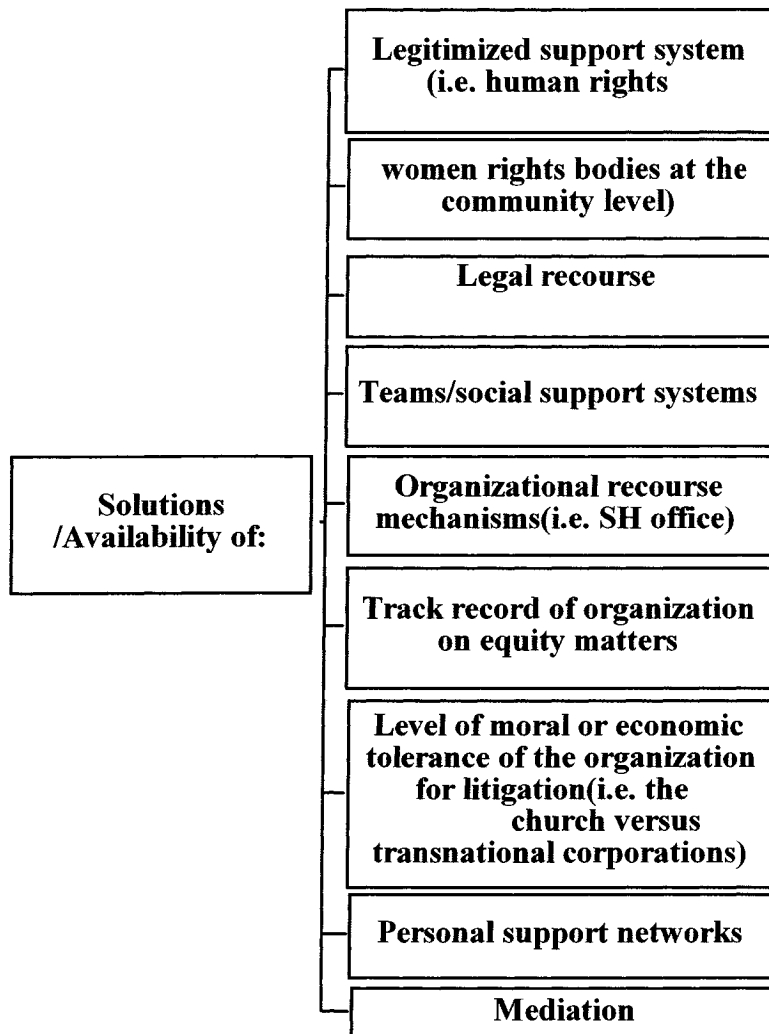
the new husband. Another model that seems more interesting is the social responsibility model suggested by Serv'er (1999). See figure 3 below.

**Figure 3: Social responsibility model**



The social responsibility theory attributes sexual harassment to three areas :1) Structure (e.g. Religious beliefs/teachings, Political/Legal institutions, Economic, life/opportunities among others); 2) Social (Gender bias, and Gender responses to male aggression or transgression or criminal justice); 3) organizational (e.g. hierarchical powers, skewed sex-ratios, equity in paying/hiring etc.) and Personal correlates (e.g. target characteristics, offender characteristics and relationship characteristics) in North American society, including Canada. It proposes solutions such as: legitimized support system; organizations for women rights at the community level; legal recourse; team/social support systems; organizational recourse mechanisms; track record of organization on equity issues; personal support networks and mediation. It also calls for structural reform to address the power imbalance between men and women.

**Figure 4 : Solutions available**



Other theoretical models that consider sexual harassment as an issue of discrimination, abuse of power or equal opportunity include that of the “cultural values model”, the “anti-discrimination model or the gender-based violence model suggested by LeMoncheck et al. (2001). The cultural values model presents sexual harassment as an attack against social and cultural values such as decency, modesty, and good morals. In contrast to the cultural values model, the anti-discrimination considers sexual harassment



as an attack against the principles of equality and nondiscrimination and calls for laws to condemn or penalize such conduct. The gender-based violence model considers sexual harassment as one of several forms of violence against women (LeMoncheck et al., 2001).

In viewing sexual harassment as part of gender-based violence, the gender-based model seems to represent a remedy in combating sexual harassment. While in some circumstances this difference may be acceptable, in other contexts it may be contested or considered as inappropriate. In some contexts sexual violence such as sexual harassment is often treated as different category by itself. Also, trying to establish a link between sexual violence (e.g. sexual harassment or abuse) with domestic violence (e.g. physical abuse) such as spousal abuse may be confusing when seeking to identify commonalities of approach. The problem therefore is largely due to ambiguity in these definitions and interpretations of the concepts. Also, if sexual harassment is to be considered from this perspective, this would suggest that there is no need for specific laws and policies for sexual harassment. This is another aspect that is very confusing and complex when it comes to dealing with the concept both as an abstract and a policy issue.

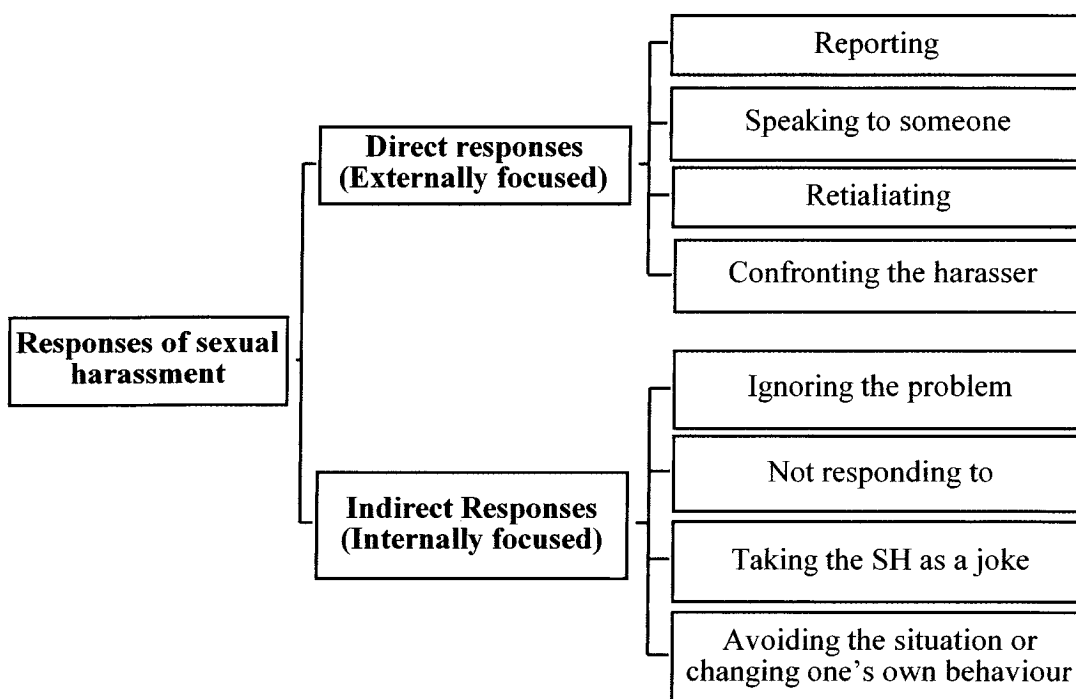
However, with reference to these models, one may argue that the theory of oppression is present in all. A common denominator among them is the component of power. By emphasizing relations of power, these models offer a mirror on our understanding of how in organizational, social and institutional spheres power can be a crucial means through which individuals are subjugated into relations of subordination.

The concept of power as suggested here goes beyond the physical control or use of authority, and in most situations may include the circulation of dominant ideology. These ideologies include norms and rules defined by the dominant and shared as common culture by the two classes (the subordinate and the dominant class).

The concept of power as defined by Sev'er (1999) includes the "ability to act," "physical strength and force," and "control, influence and authority." For Sev'er (1999) these concepts are extremely important since they allude to "persons" as holders of power, to their idiosyncratic ways of exerting or abusing it, and outcomes of this transaction on a one-to-one basis. Sherif (1982) argues that what goes beyond these individualized conceptualizations is the "institutionalization of power" where norms, rules, and sanctions deify some and silence others. There is a dimension that gives the powerful the control over resources, and the ability to punish the powerless by threatening to deprive them access to resources (Sev'er, 1999).

In the literature, how women handle sexual harassment appears to be varied. Fitzgerald and her colleagues (1988) propose a framework of response patterns strategies that are both internally and externally focused (figure 5).

**Figure 5: Responses to sexual harassment**



### **Responses to sexual harassment**

In situations of sexual harassment or abuse, victims may often choose to ignore the problem, hoping it will go away. In order to avoid conflict or face-to-face contact, some may simply choose to avoid places where men circulate or take other protective measures (e.g. walking with a dog or a whistle). Meanwhile, others may choose to confront their harasser or take legal actions. However, the choice of whether or not to pursue the issue also depends on the level of vulnerability of the victim. It is argued that the more vulnerable the woman/survivor, the more likely it is that she will choose a passive strategy, which may include no response at all (Sev'er, 1999). Vulnerability is attributable to several factors and causes. These may include the victim's age (too young),

race (non-white), experience (inexperienced), qualifications (little formal education), need (dependence on the particular job), and lack of alternatives (transferability of skills and access to other sources of income).

In addition, Murell (1996) and Gruber et al. (1986) suggest that in the United States, women of color, and particularly black women, may experience additional disadvantages than their white counterparts if and when they do report. They may also feel more trapped within the sexual racism that surrounds them and more torn between competing loyalties if their tormentor happens to be non-white (Murell, 1996; Coles, 1986; Bart & O'Brien, 1984). The preponderance of black women in hard pornographic images, the stereotypes of Latino women as hot-blooded love objects and of Oriental women as submissive sexual pleasers may partially account for this correlation. To support these arguments, Thomas (1989) emphasizes that women of color may feel a double jeopardy in relating to their male coworkers and supervisors, for the fear of being sexually harassed or being perceived as a "slut". These points "suggest that career implications of sexual harassment as well as the fear of sexual harassment may be far more taxing for women of color than for their white counterparts" (Sev'er, 1999:477). Meanwhile, Gays and lesbians are also likely to experience additional difficulties in dealing with their heterosexist harassers (Epstein, 1997).

Fitzgerald, Swan and Fischer (1995) interpret this lack of reaction on the part of some women as a psychological/cognitive strategy to deal with the impact of sexual harassment. However, doing nothing as they claim may enable women to ignore, deny or

endure what is happening to them, and thus may constitute an attempt to minimize the impact on their lives. In actual fact, by literally doing nothing, survivors make a "rational" choice to mitigate the potential negative consequences of reporting incidences. Some of the potential consequences of reporting sexual incidences range from being the target of jokes and ridicule to personal threats or being fired (Cleveland & McNamara, 1996; Thacker, 1996; Fitzgerald, Swan & Fischer, 1995; Coles, 1986 cited in Sev'er, 1999:478). At the same time, Jensen & Gutek, (1982), Koss, (1990), Gutek, (1996), Hulin, Fitzgerald & Drasgow, (1996) suggest that the type of response may also depend on the perceived position of the institution on sexual harassment issues and whether the work environment is sexualized or not. This may include the availability of sexual harassment policies, procedures and support systems, and the organizational stance on equity matters.

In regard to these responses, the organizational power theory (Tangri, Burt & Johnson, 1982) may contribute to one's understanding as to why most survivors of sexual harassment may not respond assertively to a harasser who is a superior (for fear of job consequences). Again, on the basis of these fears, this also means survivors of other ethnic or marginalized groups may also be less inclined to report to a superior if and when their perpetrator is of the same racial background as the latter. Also in the school context as observed by Barak et al.(1992), Bursick, (1992), Garlick, (1992), Riger, (1991) in the North American context, in the lower grades survivors of sexual harassment are often reluctant to report incidents of sexual harassment for fear of reprisal, the fear of

being blamed, or of suspension and degradation. Other complexity includes the ambiguity around sexual harassment claims as presented below.

### **Sexual harassment claims**

There are ambiguities that revolve around sexual harassment claims, mainly due to the motives of the claims. Most of the courts, especially in the U.S. establish two criteria in regard to sexual harassment claims: 1) economic loss; and 2) psychological detriment. Also the survivor must be in the position to show or demonstrate an adverse psychological and economic loss even if and when the behavior is unsolicited or unwanted. This is often very difficult to prove, particularly in situations where it does not lead to job consequences or loss. Despite the fact that the victim may be psychologically and emotionally traumatized, it is still considered not enough. If sexual harassment charges are based on both the severity of psychological and economic consequences, others may simply choose to suspend the perpetrator or simply dismiss the issue. This is a question that needs to be looked at seriously, be it in terms of policy, laws regarding sexual harassment claims, or charges.

All along I have been discussing the related literature that frames the study, including the various theoretical and conceptual models and interpretations of the concept from a Western perspective. In the following section, I turn the focus on the relevance of these models to a non-Western Context.

## **Relevance of the models to the non-European non-Western context: questions and issues raised**

Although the models referred above may very well explain the problems in relationship to sexual harassment, such explanations are mostly based on the Western experience and perspective of the issue. The power component may be present in all the models, but none of them is complete. For example, sexual harassment by subordinates, people of the same sex, or same status is lacking or unexplained in these models. Meanwhile, in organizational or educational settings, same sex harassment is quite frequent and often leads to serious consequences (e.g. job loss or problem of performance, emotional instability).

Again, with the exception of the Social Responsibility Model, none of these models (Organizational, sociocultural or patriarchal models) discussed in the study has exhaustively examined all the variables in a single theoretical framework. Compared to these models, the social responsibility model seems to stress the social (general social practice and beliefs etc.) and personal correlates (age, class/sex/race, patriarchy, social status etc.) and suggests legal solutions (e.g. legitimized support system; women rights bodies at the community level; legal recourse; team/social support systems etc.) and structural reform to address the power imbalance between men and women in work organizational setting. To eradicate or combat the sexual harassment of women and girls in society, we need a proper functional definition of what constitutes sexual harassment. We need definitions that reflect the experiences of women and survivors. The argument goes that sometimes women who experience behaviours that are legally defined as sexual

harassment do not identify them as such (Barak et al., 1992; Bursick, 1992; Garlick, 1992; Riger, 1991).

For most of these women, the legal definitions (definitions used by the courts, tribunals, and policies) do not necessarily reflect their experiences of sexual harassment. With regard to this, Bingham (1994) claims that inappropriate rules have been used to interpret and respond to acts of sexual harassment, exacerbating the problem. Usually, actions that are classified under this category are very diverse and often range from behaviors or conducts that are sometimes considered “conventional” or “normal” within a particular social context, to behaviors that are legally categorized as sexual crimes.

Although at the structural level, power imbalance may be the basis for sexual harassment, in the African context, a woman of high status is not exempted from harassment by subordinates or colleagues. In the Ghanaian context, for example, a single woman is considered available to any man regardless of her social status on the hierarchy. From birth, the boy and girl-child are educated to internalize the view that a woman can never be alone, and that in order to obtain her respect and sexual protection, she needs a male figure protector. Such thinking suggests that in the African society, both females and males have been socialized from birth to accept sexist thoughts and actions as norms. As a consequence, while women might see certain negative behaviors and practices directed towards women in the society as normal, they are likely to encourage their daughters to internalize elements of certain subordination and inferior rules as part



of the standard norm for a woman. As a consequence, the ‘afterlife’ is often perpetuated both for themselves and potentially for their daughters.

In addition, these theoretical and conceptual models seem to focus less on sexual harassment in educational institutions. In support of this argument, Sev’er (1999) suggests that the weakness of sexual harassment models is that they seem to focus on workplace harassment, with little attention to the various public forms of harassment (p. 485). Gardner (1995) indicates that there is an increasing amount of research in public forms of sexual harassment, theoretical models which address such complexities are still in their infancy. Sev’er(1999) further suggests that sexual harassment requires a theory such as the social responsibility model depicted above. Such a model she presumes can benefit from existing theories both within and outside of the sexual harassment area.

However, the current perspectives and definitions may be said to be based on a Euro-centric perspective and as such seem to lack other factors such as culture or traditional practices. These debates, views and theoretical arguments regarding sexual harassment in the literature suggest that sexual harassment cannot be generalized in all contexts and situations. What is clear is that cultural relativism insists that our aesthetic values, that is what we consider normal or abnormal, depends upon our cultural mindset. A classical example is kissing. In some cultures, kissing could be considered in public as display of affection for your partner, yet it may not be accepted in some cultural settings. Such examples include the practice in relation to “courtship” in the Ghanaian or African society. In some situations for example, where the woman is not willing to engage in

sexual relations and says “no” to the man, her “no” is in most situations interpreted as a “yes” and as such gives the man the excuse to push ahead. Given such cultural differences, the difference in courtship norms or sexual behaviour, it is impossible to arrive at a definition that is appropriate to all contexts. In support of this perspective, Brandenburg (1997) emphasizes that “No single definition of sexual harassment can be meaningful for all situations, purposes and individuals.” For such reasons, it is important that feminists academics and researchers should be able to define what is harassment based on the cultural or functional context. Also, what is important is that feminist academics and researchers should be able to promote the definition of power to be based on the person who suffers it (the survivor's perspective) and not from the aggressor's or a third person's point of view.

In addition to such complexity, the mystification and contextualization of sexual harassment as a culturally conventional behaviour is predominant in African societies. Such norms include the patriarchal discourse or ideology in relationship to the norm for courtship, conjugal rights (e.g. sexual privilege), intercultural or joking relationships, and the misconception that a woman can never be alone. Such are the patriarchal privilege and power used to maintain sexual harassment in the African society. For example, the woman or girl-child who argues that sexual harassment doesn't exist or views sexual remarks as part of the norm for courtship may accept to be harassed by men on the street.

The patriarchal or dominant discourse is not only accepted as conventional, it also means that girls and women living under these circumstances live under the values, rules

and ideas of patriarchy. Consequently, the parameters in which we behave are defined by these patriarchal values and the source of these values is the source of power. So both the girl and the boy child grow up not only to internalize these values, norms or dominant ideology, they are also made to believe that resistance is futile. Again these conceptions may vary from context to context, depending on whether or not this person is from a strong patriarchal society or setting. Indeed these women /girls are caught up within the ideological framework of patriarchy and as such fail to see that they are underprivileged in a patriarchal discourse.<sup>1</sup>

Two theoretical frameworks as described by Williams (1997) and Hall (1996) help define patriarchal hegemony, especially as they relate to the experiences of African women. The Patriarchal hegemony as a dominant culture shapes the African woman's thoughts in a way that supports masculine thinking. Hegemony as argued by Williams (1977):

...Is then not only the articulate upper level of ideology nor are its forms of control only those ordinarily seen as manipulation or indoctrination. It is a whole body of practices and expectations, over the whole of living: our senses and assignments of energy, our shaping perceptions of our world and ourselves. It is a lived system of meanings and values-constitutive and constituting -which as they are experienced, as practices appear as reciprocally confirming. It thus constitutes a sense of reality for most people in the society, a sense of absolute because experienced reality beyond which it is very difficult for most members of the society to move, in most areas of their lives. It is, that is to say, in the strongest sense a culture, but a culture which has also to be seen as the lived dominance and subordination of particular classes." ( p. 110)

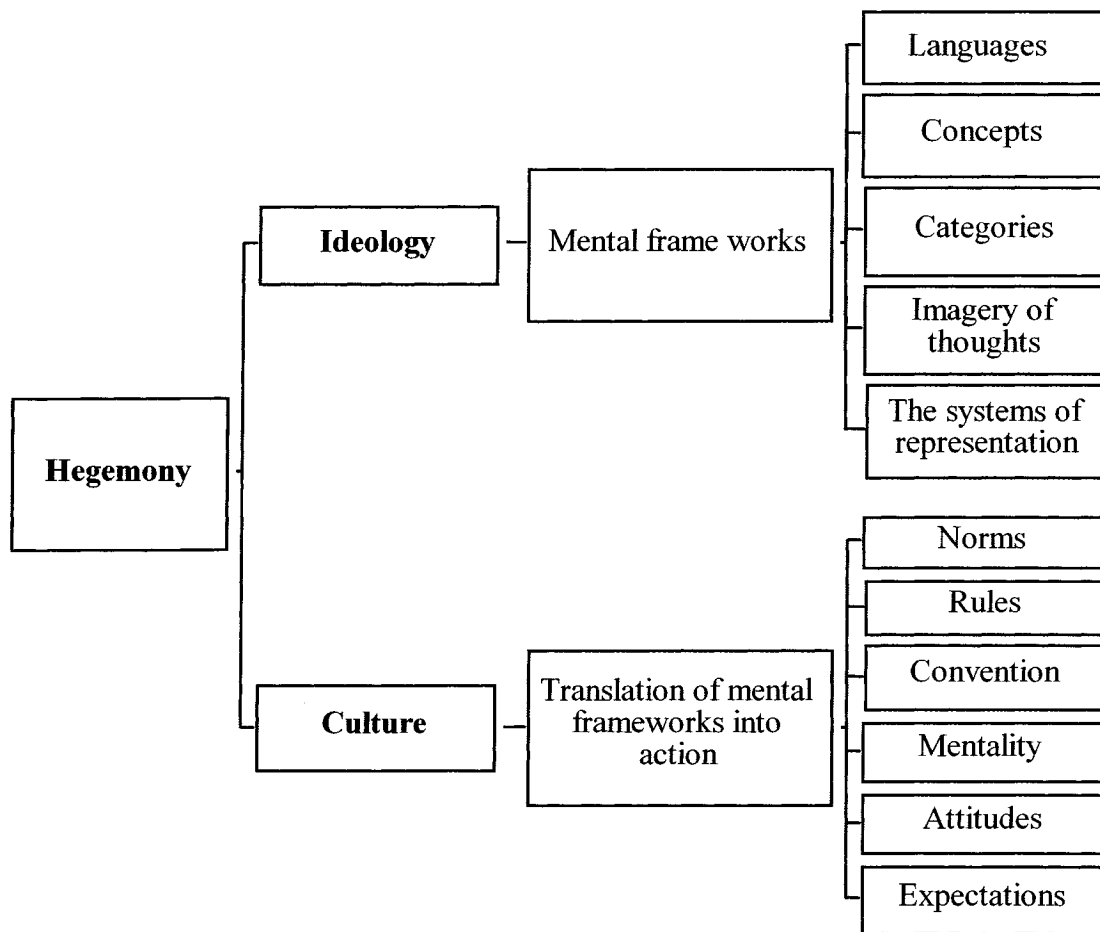
---

<sup>1</sup> A discourse consists of culturally or socially produced groups of ideas containing texts (which contain signs and codes) and representations (which describe power in relation to others). As a way of thinking, a discourse often represents a structure of knowledge and power. (Ziauddin Sardar et al. 1997:14)

Williams establishes the relationship between hegemony, culture and ideology. For example, in the case of female circumcision, some girls crave for it even if they are denied. For them it is an absolute, live experience. For Williams (1977) 'hegemony' is a concept which at once includes and goes beyond two powerful earlier concepts: that of 'culture' as a whole social process, in which men define and shape their whole lives; and that of ideology, in any of its Marxist senses, in which a system of meanings and values is the expression or projection of a particular class interest (p.108).

This also means the two concepts "ideology" and "culture" cannot be separated from one another because they interchange and influence each other. However, I found it useful as I was going through this study that the work of Hall (1996) could serve as a conceptual framework for understanding sexual harassment in Ghanaian institutions. Below, I am using the following tree to graphically illustrate the common predicament of the woman and girl in Africa. Their common adversary is the patriarchal hegemony. This framework could help in understanding sexual harassment in Ghanaian institutions. The following chart shows the channels and content of communication in the hegemonic framework presented by Hall (1996).

**Figure 6: Hegemonic framework: Towards a conceptual framework for understanding sexual harassment in Ghanaian institutions**



Hall (1996) defines ideology as the following:

By ideology I mean the mental frameworks-the languages, concepts, categories, imagery of thoughts and the systems of representation-which different classes and social groups deploy in order to make sense of, define, figure out and render intelligible the way society works. (p. 26)

That means that the how (channels) and the what (content) of discourse is the realm of ideology and culture. They are all tools of the mind with which we make sense of the world. Culture therefore as one may view it, includes both these mental

frameworks and actions described by Hall (1996). This means the two concepts "ideology" and "culture" cannot be separated from one another because they interchange and influence each other.

Also, systems of representation include all parts of the mental framework, which Hall defines as languages, imagery, concepts and categories. However, it is important to note that although the African woman may be a victim of patriarchal hegemony, patriarchy represents at the same time a site of resistance and that the subaltern (African woman) has agency. S/he can resist the hegemonic discourse by contesting the labels and symbols that the dominant ideology circulates.

As a consequence, this suggests that sexual harassment is encoded in African culture or that sexual harassment as used in the African context is very culture-based. Indeed, it is clear that to understand how sexual harassment works as patriarchal privilege in the African society, the notion of culture is vital or indispensable.<sup>2</sup> These include how the myths surrounding sexual harassment reinforce acceptances of such practices as norms. Although this goes beyond the scope of the study, It is still possible to think of a framework on Patriarchal hegemony in the context of the African woman and to include some of the features here.

---

<sup>2</sup> Sir E.B. Tylor (1871) Culture is that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, customs, and other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society; Margret Mead (1901-78) Culture is the learned behaviour of a society or a subgroup; Raymond Williams (1921-88) Culture includes the organization of production, the structure of the family, the structure of institutions which express or govern social relationships, the characteristic forms through which members of the society communicate; Clifford Geertz (b.1926) Culture is simply the ensemble of stories we tell ourselves about ourselves (in Ziauddin Sardar et al, 1997:4)

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **Research Methodology**

This chapter focuses on the processes and procedures of a qualitative inquiry which seeks to understand the particular phenomenon of sexual violence. As noted in the previous chapter, the idea of trying to ‘uncover’ women’s experiences of sexual violence is not easy for a variety of reasons, not the least of which relates to the fact that so often the very behaviours that might be construed as sexual violence have often become normalized within heterosexual relations. Culture itself is also an issue. For this reason I wanted to draw on feminist methodology as much as possible wherein I could relate to my participants (both male and female) ‘as a woman’ and as someone who understood something of their day-to-day reality because I had grown up in a similar environment. At the same time, I wanted to be able to give them a space in which to explore their own experiences and in their own words. For that reason I chose to use focus groups, a methodology that has been used successfully within feminist research, and memory work, an approach that comes out of the work of a number of feminist researchers in Germany, Australia and Canada. The first part of the chapter focuses on these particular methodologies. In the second part of the chapter, I describe the whole process of gaining entry, focusing in particular on issues of negotiation with the University of Development Studies even before the research could start. It also includes a discussion of the initiation of contact with the Affiliated University at the start of the research. This involved travelling from Canada to Ghana in 2001. It describes the difficulties, disappointments and includes happy moments of gaining access to the research site and participants in the study. In the third section I describe the actual data collection

procedures, including the individual interviews that were held with some college authorities and which are incorporated into the data presentation for the purposes of triangulation. I then go on to explore the ways in which I engaged in an analysis of the data. Finally, I include a short section about my own role as researcher, particularly in the context of Bagabaga Training College. While the role of the researcher is always an issue ‘somewhere’ in every study, in work that looks at sexual harassment and in the very environment where it is being experienced, I felt that it was important to include a section on the sensitivities of this research.

### **Part One: Towards the development of a methodological framework using focus groups and memory work**

As noted above, the idea of how to get at the issues of sexual violence as they are experienced by beginning teachers, and in a way that might contribute not just to understanding the issues but also contribute to a type of research as social change (Schatz & Walker, 1995) was central to my study. While I reviewed a wide body of work on qualitative methodologies, I was particularly drawn to approaches that would provide what Clifford Geertz (1987) calls ‘thick description’ and that would privilege group work as much as possible, with the idea that collective action itself is a key feature of combating sexual violence. Focus groups and memory work were two areas that seemed promising for a study like this.

#### **Focus groups**

Historically, focus groups as a method originated in the West and date back to the 1960s. The method was first used in three different contexts: first in social marketing in



the 1960s to study the reactions of consumers towards a product. Second, it was used in social demography in the 1970s to understand and explore the attitudes, beliefs or the resistance of the natives or others (people of third world countries). The third context was in applied anthropology by researchers from the University of Los Angeles to improve development program interventions and to elaborate communication strategies for different cultural contexts (Barbour, 1999; O'Brien 1993; Scrimshaw, 1987). Now it is widely used in communication studies and in the health sector for assessing health education messages, as well as examining public understanding of illness and health behaviors (1993-1994; Khan, 1992; Kitzinger; Morgan, 1988). Increasingly it is 'one more tool' that many qualitative researchers are using in the Social Sciences in order to complement individual interviews.

The choice of a focus group methodology for this study is that, as a technique, it permits researchers to acquire qualitative as well as quantitative data in a short period of time and at low cost. Another advantage of focus groups is that they provides researchers with a valuable tool for gaining insight into understanding participants' opinions and experiences that may not be available with individual interviews or the individual-oriented approaches like the questionnaire. I also wanted to encourage participants to engage with one another, and to illuminate their perspectives through a debate on the issues. The objective here was to understand how these students lived or survived the sexual harassment they face in their everyday life in the Ghanaian society and how this varies from woman to woman. The pertinence of focus groups is also described by and Kitzinger (1994), and O'Brien (1993). They describe it as an effective and relatively

inexpensive, quick and convenient means of collecting data from several people simultaneously, while requiring relatively little structure on behalf of the interviewer. In addition, given the simplicity of the methodology, group work may facilitate the collection of information from an oral society such as Africa. In Tanzania, Kivikuru et al. (1994) employed this methodology alongside other quantitative ones in their exploratory research on rural communication project. Obeng-Quaido (1987) also reports how effective the focus group methodology was in generating data on family planning in Ghana.

Focus groups also provides rich data in terms of both mapping out the issues but also seeing a way forward. The basis of the suitability of the Focus Group Discussion (FGD) in Africa is related to the tendency towards communalism, something not always evident in Western contexts. Thus, unlike the West, where individualism often prevails, doing things as a community or group is still the norm in Africa. By their very nature, Africans consider members of their extended and nuclear families, clan, tribe as well as members of their neighborhood as their important relations. For that matter, each one is always involved in the daily activities of the other's life (Obeng-Quaido, 1987). This communal spirit makes group interviewing a fairly reliable way of generating data in the African context.

### **The pertinence of focus groups to this study**

The advantages and possibilities that the focus group offers at the group level is similar to what exists among African women who live in compound houses or polygamous marriages. These women share the same domestic compound, sometimes the

same domestic kitchen and utilities (e.g. bathroom, toilet, pipes, food). Thus, their daily life is marked by group discussion and common topics that affect them in their daily lives. Oftentimes the situation is intimate. In addition, it is by sharing their experience in a group that they learn to build a solidarity that is based on looking for common solutions to their problems.

Morgan (1998), who claimed the techniques of focus groups as a research model, regards focus groups as fundamentally unnatural settings. From a Western or North American perspective, Morgan's remark may be acceptable, but obviously not in Africa, where the predominant mode of activity in natural settings is the group. However, by deliberately creating a marriage of convenience between the "focus group" and, as I describe in the next section "memory work", I not only provided participants with an environment to talk about their experiences of sexual harassment (issues concerning them) with comfort, I also re-enacted the daily or social practices existing in the African context. In effect, the group approach allowed me to discover information that might not come up in one-on-one settings and encouraged the emergences of a plurality of opinions. The individual approach would have only allowed me to explore aspects of the participants' individual experiences.

### **Memory work**

Memory-work as a method was developed within the fields of sociology and psychology. It was formally labeled by the German sociologist and feminist scholar, Frigga Haug and a group of other feminist socialist in the sixties (Schratz et al., 1995)

and continues to evolve within a feminist context. In developing this method, Haug (1987) and her associates were interested in how persons “become selves” and the part persons themselves play in that construction. The authors also used memory-work to explore a number of different realms in women’s socialization such as happiness, love, and marriage, among others. Some of the key people associated with feminist approaches to doing memory work include Crawford and her associates in Australia (1986), and Mitchell and Weber (1999) in a Canadian context.

### **The pertinence of memory work to this study**

The pertinence of memory work is espoused by Mitchell and Weber (1999), who maintain that memory work is an excellent methodology for gaining insight into childhood. In their book *Reinventing Our Selves as Teachers: Beyond Nostalgia*, Mitchell and Weber (1999) used memory work in a study with teachers to explore their experiences of childhood in relation to their identity and practice as part of professional development and to suggest how relevant memory work is in gaining insight into the experiences of teachers and students. They also suggest ways in which teachers can work back through personal memories of school to make the past usable in their teaching, drawing in particular on the systematic and deliberate approaches to memory work suggested by Crawford et al., 1992; Haug et al., 1987; Kuhn, 1991, and Zandy, 1995). Haug et al. (1987) suggest that women gain a practical experience through consciousness-raising groups of retrieving from the everyday life itself the means of transcending the everyday. The act of writing, Haug (1987) suggests, allows us to transgress boundaries, to explore new territory, and to enter a place where we can take

ourselves seriously—and where we are likely to take the past for granted (p. 36). Kuhn (1995) maintains that those who engage in memory-work:

may be conscientized simply through learning that they do indeed have stories to tell, and that their stories have value and significance in the wider world (p.8).

This means that memory work as a method may be considered both a political and a counter hegemonic tool. In her volume *Liberating Memory: Our work and our working class consciousness*, Zandy (1999) writes of the significance of memory work to the 'amnesia' that has surrounded working class experiences in North America:

It (memory work) is a bridge between the subjective and the intersubjective—the private and unprivileged circumstances of individual lives- and the objective- the collective history of class oppression. It is a way of moving from personal pain to public and cultural work. The 'stuff ' of one's life can be transformed into fruitful practices. Even grief can be put to good use."(p. 4)

These memories as she claims, recall pain and oppression, but also represent possibilities and models for resistance. Drawing on Zandy's notion of "grief", Mitchell and Weber (1999) believe that "This idea of grief being put 'to good use' when uncovering memories from type of amnesia is an interesting one." For Mitchell and Weber (1999), "retrieval of those memories can influence one's work both in the classroom and professional life generally." (p. 56)

From that perspective, Dehay (1994) reminds us that "remembering is also the process of reclaiming and protecting a past often suppressed by dominant culture, and in this sense, as re-visioning, it is essential in the process of gaining control over one's life" (p. 43-44).

In so doing, women and other groups are offered the possibility to participate actively in the reconstruction of their own history and to appropriate the right of becoming authors of the same history. Being authors of their own history, they also have the authority over their own lives. Remembering as suggested by Mitchell and Weber (1996), is an act of private and personal nostalgia (p. 9). As survivors, remembering and reflecting on their own experiences of sexual harassment in the Ghanaian society, I was interested in how these young women would be able to offer a "window" on the situation of the girl-child. As 'change agents' of tomorrow, as well, unfortunately, as the victims of today, how will these young women be in a position to "make a difference" in their schools and to consider new approaches or solutions through working back, reflecting, writing and creating new understandings of both their past and present?

In the group context, these beginning teachers were afforded the opportunity and encouraged to bring out their experiences of sexual harassment. At the same time, it permitted them to talk not only about themselves but also about the experiences of others that they were aware of. They were also provided with the opportunity to engage in dialogue, to view others' perspectives, and ultimately to actively participate in the construction of their own awareness and learning. This encouraged them to come out with various concrete suggestions and strategies on how to deal with sexual harassment issues. They were encouraged to challenge the negative practices and behaviours directed towards women-girls in the society and to consider new approaches and solutions through talking, sharing and writing. In so doing, they were able to discuss how their colleagues dealt with certain situations in terms of difficulty, successes, and disappointments.

Despite the anticipated challenges or difficulties associated with doing written memory work in oral societies (Africa), and the undermining of it by the scientific disciplines, the strength of the method lies in the fact that it is action-oriented, empowering and could also be considered an excellent pedagogical and powerful tool for conscientization. Conscientization as used here refers to Freire's notion of critical pedagogy/reflection. For Freire (1994) conscientization "implies a deeper reading of reality, (and) the common sense goes beyond the common sense."(p.12) It means going beyond the banal, thus questioning the everyday experiences and practices that are often accepted as conventional or taken for granted without interrogation. Conscientization clears the way for a critical understanding of the situation of oppression and the overcoming of it (Freire 1998 p. 12-13).

Memory work could also be viewed as an excellent basic tool for reaching out to the perspective of the particularity of a group that most scientific research could not bring out. For example, the individual stories cannot be explained by statistics. However, with narratives based on the memory of these students, one is able to gain valuable insights as to how female trainee teachers are sexually harassed or survive harassment in Ghanaian teacher training colleges. Statistics may be able to tell the number of women who are sexually harassed, but it cannot tell *how* these women are harassed or survive the harassment. The 'how' also varies from woman to woman and the details of this individual experience, and actions, cannot be quantified into statistics, but can only be understood through narratives or life stories. To add to this, Teski et al. (1995) claim "Numbers ... do not bring forth experience the way a repeat of our own history does." (p.)

Qualitative research can provide far richer information and data than any mathematical formulae or scores ( Knowles et al.,1994; Weber, 1993; Carter, 1993; Connelly et al. 1988; 1999a; Butt et al., 1987; Eisner, 1984; 1981; 1993.)

Dilthey (1996) is said to have expressed similar opinions over the past 25 years as he tried to indicate that although we can attempt to explain nature, the understanding of human life is as important. Also the underlying significance of memory work for this study is that, as a new and distinctive method, it could serve as a tool for reflective practice by the teacher training institutions in Ghana.

### **Developing and piloting the interview guide**

My overall interest was in developing an interview guide that would be based on focus group discussions and memory work. I knew that it was important to try to field test such a guide and for that reason I embarked upon a small pilot study with four young Ghanaian women in the Montreal area before I ever left for Ghana. I would describe this as a sample of convenience since they were young women whom I knew within the community in Montreal. These women were between the ages of 23-28. One of them was a certified trained teacher back in Ghana. Another was an office secretary and the two others had completed their basic secondary-technical education. The objective here was to explore input from these young women about the interview or memory guide and to use their criticism to re-evaluate these guides and to reflect on ways in which they could be appropriately used in the Ghanaian context. Before engaging in the writing exercise,



the four women were given details about the study, including the rationale for this initial methodology.

They were reminded as well that there was going to be a group discussion after the writing exercise, which they agreed to. Meanwhile, when I asked if I could record the group discussion, it was contested. One of the participants suggested she was not at ease with that, although I was permitted to take notes. In a group, the four young women were given sheets of paper on which they were asked to write about their experiences of sexual harassment in the Ghanaian society. The first question on their reaction to the interview guide demonstrated their overall reaction. The interview guide included sharing their story of their experience of sexual harassment in a group and impressions. These open-ended questions elicited various comments and criticism from these young women. I heard comments like:

I for instance would not talk about my experience before a group if I were sexually abused here. (Mam)

Me neither, particularly before the seniors or anybody I had no trust in. I wouldn't mind if we were all girls and of the same level. I don't know if you are aware that back home female senior students like to intimidate junior female students. I also wonder if my harasser were a senior and was in the same group I would like to talk about my experience. (Zelda)

Other comments included the following:

I for instance, find the rest of the open-ended questions very enlightening because by sharing our experiences as ladies here, I learnt a lot about sexual harassment from the group discussion. There are lot of things I went through as a student back home but I didn't know it was sexual harassment. At least I know now. (Guilma)

In my case, the exercise created emotions as I try to recall certain painful events. At a point I felt a psychological blockage. (Assam)

In regards to the writing exercise, their comments were as follows:

It is not appropriate to ask someone who has been abused or raped to share her story with someone she does not know. You know back at home if someone learns that a teacher abused you, they will not even take the time to reflect on it, instead they will go straight to blame you or say you are the one who initiated it. Although I had bad experience with some teachers back home, I did not talk about it here because I don't know what Assam or Guilma may think of me. (Mum)

I agree with you here. Although we are all women in this room, I am not ready to discuss some of my experiences. If it were you the researcher and I, I will do so because I know it is for a purpose. Ethically, I know you will not do so because you will fear to be held responsible for any information that I share with you. (Guilma)

Ooh me, it is the writing activity that I didn't feel comfortable with. I am simply not comfortable writing down my sexual experiences. Maybe it's because I am not used to writing about things that concern me. In addition I can't guarantee that what I am putting on the paper for you wouldn't get into someone's hands. (Assam)

I don't mind because our names are not on the paper. After all Gladys told us that she was not going to use whatever we write on paper as part of the data collection for her research. My problem here is that, I did not know what to say or how to start my story. I spent the whole hour thinking of how to put it. Maybe I was afraid that I might not be doing it the right way. (Gilda)

I also felt the same as Assam. I think I would have been more at ease telling my story orally instead of writing. (Gilda)

Based on their reactions to the memory activity, I decided that the use of collective memory work was not advisable. In general the participants in the pilot work felt that the group approach for the memory writing was inappropriate for a context like Ghana and as such suggested that the two interview guides be revised. Their comments permitted me to make important changes to the interview-guides and to consider

reformulating some of the questions. This included other ways of doing memory-writing activities. This experience also allowed for an improved approach in dealing with the issues while reflecting on the cultural reality of the context of the study. The input from this small group also provided a sense of the difficulties or frustrations I was likely to encounter with the type of methodologies I was using. The interview guides were later revised and the final version was then used for the actual study.

## **Part Two-Gaining Entry: Gaining affiliation, arriving in Ghana, preliminary**

### **contacts/appointments: A personal narrative**

The first approach for obtaining a place for conducting one's fieldwork involves contacting an institution or someone who could grant such permission or help in obtaining a place to conduct the study in a particular setting (Bodgan & Biklen, 1998; Ely et al., 1991). Indeed the most challenging part is often how to gain access to the research site, how to win the confidence of people and/or gain their cooperation. This often involves all sorts of negotiations and could be frustrating for the researcher. For Bogdan and Biklen (1998), Ely et al. (1991), it is the most tedious task and could be long. Although negotiation may be a very difficult task when it comes to gaining entry to a site for one's research, the issue of trust remains a major part of the negotiation process. While an unsuccessful negotiation or unnecessary delays could be disappointing, the issue of trust could also be complex and unpleasant. Meanwhile, it is all part of the negotiation process. For this study, the frustrations started right from the beginning when the first letter requesting affiliation to the University of Development studies was sent.

To initiate entry to the University of Affiliation, the first contact was made with the pro-vice chancellor of the University of Development Studies in Tamale in Northern Ghana (the only university of the region). The first contact was by phone and it took another year before an official response was obtained from the affiliated university. It must be emphasized that the key to obtaining the formal letter of affiliation included making several expensive telephone calls and having to make these calls at very odd hours because of the time zone differences between Canada and Ghana. The sleepless nights and frustrations were enough to have derailed the initial attempts at this study but all these initial frustrations seemed miniscule compared to what happened once the study commenced. In Ghana, the campus was changed from Tamale to Navrongo, the later being over 110 km away from Tamale, the original campus of choice for the study. It should be mentioned that my enthusiasm was never diminished, partly because it appeared to be an opportunity to relate personally with the people I grew up with and also because it offered an opportunity for me “to give back” to the community through these studies.

While the fieldwork outline was from May 2000 to May 2001, a period of 1 year, the fieldwork trip was modified due to certain inconveniences. Instead of May, I returned home to Ghana in August 2000. Upon arrival in Ghana, I discovered that schools and teacher training colleges were closed for the long vacation and the students were only due to return by mid-September. Meanwhile, to get the research site prepared before the students would return from holidays, I dedicated the four weeks to booking appointments and to meeting with my university of affiliation in Tamale. This included the selection of

colleges, establishing contacts with college authorities or administrators and negotiating my access to the research site.

### **First meeting, disappointment, and happy moments**

Having in mind that everything was okay and looking forward to a warm smiling welcome, I was full of disappointment when during my first meeting with the University of affiliation I was informed by the Dean of my supposed faculty of attachment that he was not aware of my arrival, nor was he informed about my attachment. He had also suggested he could not be of help to me and that the institution was faced with accommodation problems. I had expected to have at least library services of some kind, but there was nothing of that nature. Where such services existed, facilities were poor. Thus, I often had to use other private library facilities in the area, which were very expensive, and sometimes charges were in US dollars. The most disappointing part was that neither the university nor any of the authorities were in a position to help me establish contacts with the teacher training colleges or institutions in the area.

At the same time, there were some good moments. For instance, the affiliated institution assisted me in the establishment of contact with its professors, particularly with those working in the area of gender and development. It was also helpful in the sense that, when it came to the renewal of my visa they provided the necessary documentation that enabled me to extend my stay.

### **Visits to the Teacher Training Colleges and negotiating access to the research site and participants**

While in developed countries such as Canada and the United States, recruitment of participants can be done by means of telephone or emails, in most African societies, communication devices such as telephones and emails are still a luxury. Therefore, my contacts with the various Teacher Training Institutions were direct, and from door to door without any prior appointments. For instance, after presenting myself and a brief description of my research to the principal of Bagabaga Training College in Tamale, I was informed that the students were on holidays but were expected to be back within a month. All the same, I was immediately granted permission as soon as the study subjects were available.

The principal of Bagabaga Training College also introduced me to his colleagues in an adjoining training college (Tamale Training College). He was particularly proud the investigator was a female and a native of the area. He suggested: *"I am proud that a daughter of the community and of a working class background has been able to make it"*. Although this was our first encounter, my meeting with him was encouraging. He also shared with me his concern and frustration in regards to the education of girls in the society. He suggested: *"Despite the numerous efforts to encourage girls to apply for admissions in my institution, the number of girls who apply appear to decrease yearly."* He was not sure if it was already a lost battle. He also agreed with me that sexual violence was the biggest problem most institutions in the country were facing, including in Northern Ghana. He also shared with me the numerous difficulties institutions back home were facing when it came to dealing with issues such as sexual harassment. For

example, in the case of sexual harassment and abuse, he suggested there was much to be done in those areas. Meanwhile, he admitted that with the lack of policy and appropriate resources available, it becomes very difficult and most complex in dealing with harassment particularly when a staff member is involved.

He suggested I was well positioned to carry out such a study in the community because of my firsthand knowledge, experiences, and familiarity with the environment. Meanwhile, as he walked me out of his office, he said to me, *“Don’t forget to come back after your studies to help your sisters and brothers at home.”* At that moment, I had mixed emotions that he had so much confidence in me and yet a sense of guilt that I may not be in the position to help. This message was also intended to remind me of expected obligations towards the community and to encourage me to help redress the problems of sexual harassment and other forms of sexual violence that seem to be endemic in the Ghanaian society.

When the students of Bagabaga Training College resumed classes, I was invited by the Principal to meet with them and the teaching staff. I was introduced at an orientation workshop that was held for third year students going out for teaching practice. I was given the opportunity to talk to the students about my research and to invite them to participate. In the Principal’s speech, the students, particularly the female students, were made to understand that they should not see the training college as the end of their career. He suggested particularly to the female students: *“You should consider the training college as a passage for higher education; marriage is not the best solution in life.”*

I also shared with the students my educational experience and encouraged them that everything was possible where there was the will, commitment and sacrifice. Then I noted in my fieldwork notebook: *“As a sister, daughter and past student of the same community I would like to say a great thanks to you all and to let you know that I was very happy about the way I was received. As most of you may know, I was born and raised in Nyanpkala, ten miles from Tamale and of a working class background. Just like most of you, I obtained my teaching certificate here in Ghana and taught for a while before leaving for Canada. I therefore believe that if I am able to make it through, you guys are also capable. This goes particularly to my younger sisters (the female students), try to see the college as a step towards achieving higher education. I also hope that you will see me not only as a role model as stated by the principal, but also as a sister whom you can count on. In short, from deep in my heart I thank you very much for your trust, enthusiasm and interest in meeting with me and agreeing to participate in the study* (Field notes 2000-2001).

These student teachers were very happy that I agreed to share with them such a great experience and advice. They were also called upon to ask questions they thought necessary, be it related to their participation or the subject under study. Their questions were somehow general and not only in regards to their participations: *Does one have to be a victim to take part in the study? Is all the study about only female students or both?* I responded to their questions and told them the study addresses both male and female students and that both sexes were welcome to participate. Meanwhile, one male student made the following statement: *“Miss I hope we the male students are not going to be*



*accused in your study as harassers.*” I must admit that I wasn’t expecting such a comment and thus I did not know what response to give. I brought to their notice the fact that I was not there to investigate gender violence crimes as such, I was there only as a researcher and that my interest was to help create a healthy and safe learning environment for both girls and boys. At that moment I felt not only relieved, but also encouraged in regards to the students’ enthusiasm and curiosity.

I was also taken from class to class to be introduced to the first and second year students. After a brief introduction about myself, I talked to them about my research and invited them to participate. Again I was very proud and enthusiastic in regards to their reactions, openness and the anxiousness to participate in the study. I also became optimistic when I entered a classroom and found out that the teacher was my elementary school classmate. It was not only a shock but very emotional for both of us. He insisted that I stay back with them so that we could go for lunch and I agreed. In a conversation with this male colleague, he said: *“Teni! [my traditional name] do you realize that your subject of research is very important? Sexual abuse or harassment is now very common in our society. Before when women were less present in the workplace or in higher institutions we did not hear things like sexual harassment. Now from top-down, young women and particularly single women are being harassed daily.”*

A week later, I was walking towards the administration block and surprisingly, I walked into my former secondary school housemaster. He presented me to some staff members he was chatting with. I never realized my importance until I chose to carry out

this fieldwork at home, in Ghana. I remember when Claudia, my supervisor, suggested to me at the very beginning of the study that the issue I was dealing with was very important and particularly in the context of developing countries, I was sometimes not convinced, although I never expressed to her my fears, or the feelings and frustrations I sometimes had in dealing with the issue in my own community (African community) vis à vis the Canadian context. Other times I wondered how I could approach the issue when it came to conducting the fieldwork in the African context. Fear and desperation nearly shattered my interest for a subject that has always been so close to my heart. What I have learned in this study is that the Ghana I know today is not like the one I knew 10 years back. People are now very open-minded and issues that were often viewed as a taboo are beginning to be a concern for the society. The importance or significance of my study is not only strongly demonstrated here, the cooperation and attitudes of certain authorities of these colleges and messages they send to me, including friends and students, serve as witness for the need and importance of the study for the society.

I also recall that one afternoon I was invited by the students to come with them to lunch. To my surprise, we were served my favorite dish. "*Gari and beans*", often known as "*concrete*" (student's food). This, I must admit, reminded me of my student days in the boarding school where we were often served "*gari* and "*beans*" for lunch. Here the students began to call me "*madam or miss*" which was the sacred title and a privilege often reserved for female teachers. I began to miss the classroom scenario in Tahiya English and Arabic middle school (in Bolgatanga) where I taught before leaving for Canada. This also reminded me that I would always remain a teacher. Once into that

profession, it is a title that can never be undone. Again my sense of belonging grew stronger than ever. My identity and social status as a *big sister*, *Miss/Madam* (teacher), a doctoral student or an “*auntie*” began not only to take place, but was also felt with pride. I also used such opportunities to establish relations and to build new contacts for projects in the near future. Anywhere I went, there was this will for cooperation and solidarity, which encouraged me in the pursuit of my intellectual ambition and in the desire to come back home to serve my community after my studies.

The reasons for working with training teachers as mentioned in Chapter one, were several. First, as students and future teachers, they are presumably the ‘change agents’ of tomorrow, and potential victims as well. Secondly, the University College of Education was chosen for its role in the training of teachers. The decision to include them in the study came up during the fieldwork. Although it wasn’t part of the research agenda, I thought it would be important to do so. Since they already had the classroom exposure, it would also be interesting to understand what their perceptions of the issue were, and to what extent these perceptions differed from those of the college students. Also, given that these student teachers were products of the various training colleges in the country, their experiences were very important. Since these undergraduate students were already involved with pupils in school, there was a creation of a type of ‘research as social change’ orientation to the study.

### **Access obtained: Scheduling a meeting with the students and recruitment of participants**

With the student teachers from Bagabaga training college, recruitment of participants was done through the institution. One of the tutors on duty was asked to officially announce to the third year students who were willing to join the study to meet with me after lunch on a particular date, time and place within the college campus. Here I felt disappointed because I had scheduled for the group meeting with these third year students, and to my surprise most of them did not show up. However, I was told they had begun teaching practice and that it was impossible to be there at the usual time and days. I spoke with one of the vice-principals, who suggested I work with those who were teaching within the college environment. Another possibility was to include the first and second year students. There was also the issue of fasting that needed to be discussed since the Moslem community represented a majority. For that matter, I had to make changes in my population of study and to include first and second years as suggested. I also had to change the interview schedule to respond to the needs of these students and the meeting place for the group discussions were negotiated with the participants. This constitutes some of the advantages in doing qualitative research. As an instrument of investigation, it permits the researcher to make alterations, thus, to go back and forth and to make changes where and whenever necessary.

Meanwhile, during the meeting sessions with the participants of the study, I immediately observed an air of insecurity in discussing the subject of sex with some of the female students. There were no verbal utterances; instead what I noticed was a sudden change in their faces and a complete silence as I mentioned the term sexual harassment. I

therefore thought it was important to meet with them a second time, but in gender-specific groups. I suggested this to them and the idea was welcome. When we met the time, these students demonstrated their motivation to participate in the study. Meanwhile, those in the lower grade (particularly the first year students) suggested that they were not well-positioned to speak about their experiences. As victims and targets of the very issue under study in their present institution, these girls were afraid that whatever was discussed in the group could be used against them academically. To win their confidence, I assured them that all necessary precautions would be taken to ensure their security and the protection of any information that was going to be made available to me by the group.

While I was waiting for the post secondary student teachers to get back from holidays, a visit was paid to the next regional capital, Bolgatanga in the Upper East Region where my parents are originally from. While I was visiting a student teacher from the University College of Education, a niece who was on teaching practice invited me to meet with the rest of the group who were teaching with her. In the middle of a conversation, I told them about my research and they asked to know if the research was limited only to the training colleges or included students from other teacher training institutions in the country. They showed a great deal of interest in it and I therefore thought it worth including them. An appointment was then made for another visit, intended to give time for them to confirm a convenient and appropriate date to meet to finalize the interview schedules, and a place for the group discussions. I must also admit I came in contact with them at the time they were almost finishing their practice teaching

and getting ready to go back to school. Given the time constraint, these students suggested that we meet twice a week. However, with the undergraduates from the University College of Education, issues of security were less problematic. Although the question of trust was a preoccupation for them, it was not the same as with the post secondary students. The fact that these undergraduate students were found in an environment outside their institution of study made them feel less stressed and might have minimized their fear. They were also in the final year of their program, more matured and seemingly more sensitized on the issue of sexual harassment, and as such felt comfortable talking about it. Also it coincidentally happened that two of these students attended the same teacher training college as myself. This also served to facilitate my contact with them and helped inculcate trust among us.

**Figure 7: Participating student teachers by subject orientation and institution types**

Courses taken	Number	Type of institution	Total
Liberal Arts	8	University College of Education	8
Sciences including Mathematics	2	University College of Education	2
General cycle education	30	Bagabaga Training College	30
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>40</b>

Figure 7 shows that the majority of participants of the study came from the Teacher Training College, and where they are trained in general education. Participants

from the Teacher Training College were categorized into three levels: post secondary one (PS1), post secondary two (PS2), and post secondary three (PS3). The PS1 and PS2 participants do not normally have classroom exposure in teaching until they are in PS3. Participants from the university levels consisted of students in their third year and were from various subject areas of concentration. Clearly as Figure 6 indicates (p. 89), they were the minority (10 participants). In terms of subject orientation, eight out of the ten participants were studying the Arts (Ghanaian languages and physical education). The remaining two were males and in the area of science and mathematics.

### **Selection of participants**

The selection of participants was done on a voluntary basis, depending on the availability of the students. A total of 46 trainee teachers initially signed on to participate in the study, representing the two groups of students from Bagabaga Training College and the University College of Education. Both student populations were comprised of different ethnic groups from all over the ten regions of Ghana and the language of instruction as English. During the study, six students withdrew because of distance reassignments, thus leaving a total of forty. The choice for a small number of subjects allowed for an in-depth focus and offered greater opportunities for clarification and discussion of a problem as opposed to a survey of larger numbers.

### **Description of the participants**

Figure 8 presents the profile of the study participants by age group and gender

**Figure 8: Participants by Age Group and Gender.**

Age Group	Female	Males	Total
Under 20 yrs	5	3	8
21-25 yrs	8	6	14
26-30 yrs	7	5	13
31-35 yrs	1	1	2
36-40 yrs	0	3	3
Total	21	19	40

From figure 7, the majority of the study participants were between the ages of 21-25, followed by 26-30 years olds. The least number of participants were above 30 years old. Over all, the female participants (52.5%) were slightly more than the male participants (47.5%).



### **Part Three: Collecting the data**

The data was collected over a period of four months and involved work at two sites. See interview guidelines below:

**Figure 9: Focus groups interview guide**

<b>Focus Groups Interview Guide</b>
<p><b><u>Section 1:</u></b></p> <p>After an ice breaker exercise presented to the beginning teachers about the story of a Ghanaian teacher who seduced seven of his class girls aged 13-14, to critically examine (ice breaker exercise see an annex), the participants were asked the following open-ended questions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Have you ever-experienced or do you remember someone who has ever experienced incident of sexual harassment that you would like to talk about?</li><li>2. Based on your experience, what are the various forms of sexual harassment behaviours commonly found in the teacher training colleges and institutions?</li></ol>
<p><b><u>Section 2:</u></b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>3. How do you perceive the way Ghanaian institutions handle incidents of sexual harassment?</li><li>4. Do you feel sexual harassment is an important issue in schools in Ghana that beginning teachers need to be aware of and if so why?</li><li>5. How do you think an awareness of the issue will impact your teaching?</li></ol>
<p><b><u>Section 3:</u></b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>6. To your knowledge, what are the sexual harassment policies that exist for schools in Ghana?</li><li>7. How can policy on sexual harassment in schools ensure that it protects the victims/survivors of sexual harassment/abuse?</li></ol>
<p><b><u>Section 4:</u></b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>8. In what ways, if any, did your involvement in the group discussions change how you now think about sexual harassment?</li></ol>
<p><b><u>Section 5:</u></b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>9. What are some of the strengths and weaknesses of the Focus groups?</li><li>10. How did the group discussions contribute to your awareness of the issue of sexual harassment in the Ghanaian context?</li><li>11. Would you recommend other approaches in addition to focus groups? What are they and why?</li></ol>

### **Conducting the focus groups**

Focus group methodology was used to elicit information from the participants in this study on their perceptions and experiences of sexual harassment in the Ghanaian context. The following description illustrates the focus group method used. A total of 30 participants from two teacher-training institutions in Ghana were recruited for the focus groups and of various socio-economic backgrounds. The Focus group technique described by Krueger (1994), is normally made up of anywhere between 6 and 12 participants with similar characteristics using a predetermined, structured sequence of questions in a focused discussion. To make sessions relaxed, a comfortable setting, and sitting round in a circle was used to establish the right atmosphere. Procedures for conducting group discussions that have been suggested in the literature were utilized (Morgan, 1999).

Before conducting the group discussions with the participants, we addressed the issue of security and confidentiality in regards to where they would like the discussions to take place. However, this was negotiated with participants and included the time schedule. The post secondary students (training college) suggested that the discussions be held in a location within the institution. With the undergraduates, the group sessions took place in a community centre-location familiar to the participants. Next I provided them in both oral and written form a detailed description of the research study. Both groups were clearly informed about the purpose of the study, the procedures and how the results would be used. In addition, I ensured confidentiality and anonymity and made sure that

all necessary safety measures were taken to protect participants' identities and safeguard any information that was shared during the group discussions.

To begin the discussion, each participant at the table was asked to give a very brief self-introduction (name, year and area of concentration). The participants were then made aware that the purpose of the study was two pronged: 1) to learn more about their experiences and perspectives regarding the issue of sexual harassment in order to propose a theoretical model that permits policy makers a better understanding of the issue in the Ghanaian society; and 2) to create an atmosphere for this discussion to permeate in the educational institutions of the study and beyond. In each group, a student leader was chosen to facilitate the discussion for effective participation. At the beginning of each session, the facilitator elaborated on the focus group process guidelines. These guidelines included: one person speaks at a time, no side conversation, equal participation with no one dominating, respect for the turn of the other, lift up your hand if you want to speak, respect of individual views. Extra precautions included the establishment of rules by the participants themselves such as: any information that may emerge from the group discussions should remain within the group. Also issues such as punctuality, absenteeism and personal confrontation of any sort were said to be avoided. The use of the guidelines was to make sure that every participant had an equal opportunity to speak about his or her experience.

After introducing the guidelines, my role remained that of a moderator or animator, calling the discussion to order on occasion. To put participants at ease, I assured each group that there are no 'right' or 'wrong' answers and that the contribution

of each participant was very important. I assured them that if they considered during a discussion that we were getting off the topic of discussion, they themselves might refocus the discussion to the topic at hand. This suggestion kept me from dominating the discussion and also empowered them. They were also reminded that diversity of commentary was welcome. For example, I said, *“In some situations you may be talking about an experience you might have been through and another person might say that this experience is different to the topic of discussion.”* I added, *“You may also choose to talk of someone you know who might have had a different or similar experience. You are welcome to do so if you want to, so long as you don’t mention this person’s name.”* This was to stress the importance of each student’s experiences and to offer a protection for participants who might want to share or talk about their own experience without wanting to be identified by the other participants.

They were then called upon to discuss open-ended questions provided in the interview guide. In each focus group session, two to three questions were asked in a funnelling sequence that led from a general topic to the specific interest area—their perspectives and experience of sexual harassment in the learning environment. As an “ice breaker” activity, I issued each group a sexual harassment story (in the Chronicle-local newspaper) in which a teacher at Bogoso Methodist Primary in Ghana seduced seven of his class girls aged 13-14 and rammed them in turns and who, when arrested, was allowed an out of court settlement. These students were then asked to critically examine the issue and to express their views and opinions in relation to the story (See Appendix A).

To identify their points of view, I asked the participants the following open-ended questions: *“How do you consider the action of the teacher and the police whom we are told allowed the out of court settlement? Given that you were the judge or principal of the school what will you do here?”* The activity elicited various comments from the participants:

This is lack of professional morals;

I will consider that the girls and the teacher go for AIDS test;

The action of the teacher is abhorring, I consider it a very serious act;

I consider the action of the teacher a grievous offence, a serious crime. No amount of compensation will ever heal these girls, not even the chief justice will get me to allow the case be removed for out court settlement;

I will make sure that both the wife of the teacher who smuggled the girl out of town and the nurse who performed the abortion on the girl be jailed.

To conclude, one of the participants suggested:

It takes a sexual code of conduct for teachers in the Ghanaian society, so that any teacher who defiles a student or girl can be taken on severely.

The activity also permitted these students to raise issues about professional ethics, and teacher morals, which were not pursued further since they are not part of this study. Meanwhile, based on the overall reactions of these participants, it was clear that the discussions provided them an opportunity for reflective and insightful thought on what a teacher's responsibilities and obligations ought to be towards students and their own attitudes as teachers. The exercise also drew the students' attention to other important issues like HIV/AIDS and to debate further on teacher professionalism in the Ghanaian society.

However, as the discussion got underway, I slowly wove in the main research question contained in the interview guide. I asked, *“Have you ever experienced same or similar incidents or do you remember someone who ever experienced similar incident, that you would like to talk about?”* This question was designed to focus the discussion on their experiences of sexual harassment and eventually to allow the conversation to move toward a discussion of social interactions. In that way, these students were able to share their experiences by interacting and to know that they were not alone. After the first half of the discussion, a second main question was introduced. *Based on your experience, what are the various forms of sexual harassment behaviours commonly found in the teacher training colleges and institutions?*

I asked this question in order to identify the common practices and various forms in which sexual harassment takes place in the learning institutions. Where the first half ran overtime, the overlap with the second question allowed me to redirect it with a minimum of disruption. As a group drew to a close and a discussion was not ended because of time constraint, we continued with the discussion in the next session, before moving on to other questions. Sometimes a question took a whole session depending on the nature of the topic and level of motivation of the participants. The interview guide was also divided into five main sections. Some of these sections contained 3 questions, others contained 2 questions or less. They were all open-ended questions. Examples of the questions asked in section 2 are as follow: *How do you perceive the way incidents of sexual harassment are handled by the teacher training institutions? Do you feel sexual harassment is an important issue in schools in Ghana that beginning teachers need to be*

*aware of and why? How do you think an awareness of the issue will impact your teaching?* I asked these questions in order that specific interactions such as expression of their opinions on the issue would be identified (See Appendix A).

The third section contained the following open-ended questions: *To your knowledge, what are the sexual harassment policies that exist for schools in Ghana? How can policy on sexual harassment in schools ensure that it protects survivors of sexual harassment?* In the fourth section, I asked questions like: *In what ways, if any, did your involvement in the group discussions change how you now think about sexual harassment? What kind of change would you like to bring about or do you think you are capable of bringing about in your own teaching and how?* As each group drew closer to the end of the study, I asked the following open-ended questions (See section 5) in relation to the methodology: *What are some of the strengths and weaknesses of the focus groups? How did the group discussions contribute to your awareness of the issue of sexual harassment? Would you recommend other approaches in addition to the focus groups? What are these approaches and why?* In addition, identification of strengths of the methodologies may suggest the benefits and importance of the methodology to the participants (See Appendix A).

In asking these questions I wanted to know their personal experience and level of comfort with regards to the use of focus groups methodology in investigating a subject of such a nature. I also wanted their feedback in order to improve upon the uses of the methodology. Meanwhile, in a context where a participant spoke too much or all the

time, I listened to what s/he had to say and tried to use that information to reformulate a question which was then directed to those participants who spoke less. Discussions often followed up with final refreshment as a way to thank participants for devoting their time. The discussions ran for an hour and half, on average. Groups summarized their reflections at the end and notes were taken down by the researcher-facilitator (myself) from the daily observation to identify shared and common experiences and questions that yielded high or low consensus for further discussion and clarification.

### **Conducting the memory writing: the process**

As noted earlier in the chapter, memory-work is a whole process that involves various steps and rules for writing. Some of the rules described by Mitchell and Weber (1999); Crawford et al. (1992) and Haug et al. (1987), include:

- Writing a memory of a particular episode, action or event;
- Writing in the third person;
- Providing as much detail as possible;
- Withholding judgements as to what one might consider inconsequential or trivial detail; and refraining from importing interpretation, explanation or biography

The technique used here is based on the memory process described by Haug et al. (1987); Crawford et al. (1992) but modified to go with the study context. The authors maintain that, to create distance between the person who is doing the actual remembering and the memory itself, memories should be written in the third person and in as much detail as possible. The memory guideline for guiding the participants in their journal is as follows:



**Figure 10: Memory guide**

Memory guide
<b>Section 1:</b>
1. What are your memories of schooling as a student in the Ghanaian society?
2. Do you have an experience of sexual harassment you want to speak of? What is it?
3. Looking back on your life as a student, can you recall a particular situation where you were refused admission or made to fail an exam or embarrassed in public for refusing to cooperate with a teacher or a fellow student?
<b>Section 2:</b>
4. Tell me about the worst of this experience.
5. What impact do these memories or experience have on you today?
<b>Section 3:</b>
6. How did the memory writing stimulate your reflection on the issue of sexual harassment as a trainee teacher?
<b>Section 4:</b>
7. Would you recommend other approaches in addition to doing memory work and why?

In this study, the memory work focused on ten female trainee teachers from the post secondary sector (training college) and was conducted at the individual level where personal memories of sexual harassment were obtained. The aim was to retrieve the experiences of these female trainee teachers, and particularly female survivors of sexual harassment in the teacher training college and to stimulate reflection. Participants were recommended by individuals in the focus groups and were recruited with the help of the girls' prefect and one of the senior girls (a final year student) who later took part in the memory writing. These girls were chosen specifically because of their experience in

relation to the issue under study. The group was engaged individually in memory writing (in their dormitories), using procedural guidelines to guide them. The study group was individually briefed before the writing activity. The guide has been piloted by Mitchell and Weber (1999) but was modified to suit the present study objectives. However, open-ended questions were posed in a written form to help guide these students in their written work. For example, they were asked questions such as: *What are your memories of schooling in the Ghanaian society? Do you have an experience of harassment you want to speak of and what is it?* To encourage them to reflect in-depth, they were asked further questions such as: *Tell me about the worst part of your experience. What impact do these memories have on you today?* The memory guide was very simple and contained simple questions such as those listed above.

To help them recall things, they were asked to look back on their lives as a student. *Can you recall a particular situation where you were refused admission or made to fail an exam or embarrassed in public for refusing to cooperate with a teacher or a fellow student?* This included a series of individual follow-up sessions to enable the participants to refine their work. Each participant was involved once a week in discussing in-depth their experiences and each meeting lasted half an hour. Unlike the focus group situation, interventions were made on occasion with questions in order to encourage the participants to develop their reflections further. They were also told not to worry about grammatical errors since this was one of the reasons some of the students were afraid to get involved in any writing exercise. Realizing that some were uncomfortable referring to themselves in their story, they were encouraged to describe their experiences in the third

person, as if they were writing about someone-else's story. This approach has been suggested by feminist scholars such as Frigga Haug et al. (1987) and June Crawford and associates (1987) in their work on female sexualization.

On the individual level, they shared issues they considered problematic and which they held sacred but which they were prepared to confide to me. They said they did not want these issues included in the study and made me promise I was going to respect their choice. However, this showed the extent to which trust was established with the study participants. The trust appeared to have emanated from them identifying me more as a big sister than as a researcher. In all, the writing activity lasted eight weeks and was recorded with the permission of the participants. To explore the students' opinions in regards to the strengths and the benefits of the methodologies to them, three open-ended questions were posed. Such questions were: *How did the memory writing stimulate your reflection on the issue of sexual harassment as a trainee teacher? Would you recommend other approaches in addition to doing memory work? What are these approaches and why?* Through the process of memory-work and reflection, the stories of these young women could provide us with clues as to how trainee teachers live with and resist sexual harassment in the teacher training colleges in Ghana. These young women will also be able to offer a close re-evaluation of their attitudes and to understand how they have shaped themselves to conform to society while reflecting on their own experiences.

Adequate guidance was provided throughout without interference into their writing skills and memory recollections. However, I did share with them my experience of schooling when they asked if I ever experienced sexual harassment when I was growing up in Ghana. To do so, I identified with them by sharing with them my experience of harassment as a female student. This helped to establish a climate of confidence and generated a type of empathy and fellow feeling among these students and myself, and therefore developed an opening into their private lives. Sharing my story with these students helped to break the boundary of privacy and introduced an element of bonding that made the participants see one another as sisters in whom they could confide. These students were advised not to reveal their names in their memory writing. As indicated earlier, they were also reminded orally and in written form that they may withdraw from the study at any time and at their own discretion. They were then issued a copy of a consent form (Appendix B) providing information in regards to their participation in the study which they read and signed. They were allowed to request that certain shared information not be used in the results of the study and that at the end of the study, any data generated would be discussed with them before any publication.

### **Individual interviews with college officials**

While I was conducting the fieldwork, I was also accorded individual meetings with four college officials from the teacher training colleges in the region. This data would contribute to providing triangulation within the study in that I would be able to appreciate more where the students were coming from but also see how the administrators themselves regarded the situation. These meetings were individually based

and lasted an hour or more on average. They were held mostly in their offices and notes were taken (in some cases) during discussions after seeking their consent (meanwhile, I was not allowed to audio record). The objective of the meetings or interview was to explore their opinions and views regarding the issue of sexual harassment in Ghanaian teacher training colleges. Also, in my meetings with the college officials, three open-ended questions were asked. However, in the interests of respect and privacy I asked simple open-ended questions and very quickly I was driven to the depth of the issue. Such questions included: *What are the gender related problems female students are facing in the teacher training colleges? Is sexual harassment a concern for the educational institutions? why? What are your over all impressions of the sexual harassment of students by male tutors in the training colleges?* These questions are presented are as follows:

**Figure 11: Interview guide for college officials**

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Open-ended questions for college officials</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. What are the gender related problems that female students are facing in the teacher training colleges?</li><li>2. Is sexual harassment a concern for the educational institutions? why?</li><li>3. What are your over all impressions of the sexual harassment of students teachers by male tutors in the training colleges?</li></ol>
--

The contact was quite helpful and permitted me to attain access to statistical information on unpublished student enrolment. Meanwhile, I kept field notes on the

meetings, which consisted mostly of comments of the college authorities and were sometimes remarks made during a meeting with them. I noticed for example during my first encounter with one of the college authorities, I entered in my field notebook a comment that was interesting because it related to specific issues such as equity:

You know my daughter, if it is the issue of equity, it is not a problem. Between a boy who scores 75% and a girl who scores 60%, I will consider the girl. But this is the case the girls don't even want to apply. Everything is made easy for them but they don't seem to take that into consideration. So what do we do in this case?

Although I did not intend to engage in a discussion on equity issues, all the same, I thought it was necessary because sexual harassment may be one factor amongst many preventing girls from obtaining equal opportunity in Africa. Based on my experience of schooling in the Ghanaian context, I knew very well that the failure of most equal opportunity projects for girls in Africa has been a complete failure due to unsafe learning environments. To find out what his thoughts were in regards to the issue of equity that he had raised, I asked: *Sir, what do you think might have been the problem here?* His answer was: *Compared to the male students, most of the female students are not willing to work hard or simply do not have the inspiration. I am not saying that girls are not intelligent; contrarily these girls are very bright. They have all the potentials to make it but they are simply not serious. They want a fast way of making money, or they are only looking for wealthy or big men to marry.*

In another context, a male principal reminded me that female students go in for Sugar daddies because it is the fastest and easiest way of making money, so why should

that be considered sexual exploitation. I suggested while that I did not intend to challenge their opinions, I would like to know if such a conclusion was based on personal observation or if it was deduced from the responses of these young women, and what were his views in regards to the following conclusion: *“The learning environment in Africa is hostile for girls’ progress”* (Odaga et al., 1995). Their views on this subject are further elaborated in Chapter 4. Unfortunately comments or conclusions of this nature seem very common amongst most education professionals and authorities when it comes to dealing with girls’ education in the African society. What is pathetic is that there are female education professionals who also think that way about female students. As I walked out of their offices, I asked myself: *How could this study help to change the views and impressions that these education professionals have of young women back home?* As I reflect more, it worth nothing that my meetings with them were worth the while and that their opinions and views were going to help me understand better their positions in regards to sexual harassment of trainee teachers in order to help bring about awareness and positive societal attitudes to reinforce policies on the issue.

Another issue that was much of a concern was the issue of consent. I noted in my field notebook: *Even if there is consent, this consent is often negotiated based on power inequalities and often times involves financial manipulation.* Another disturbing issue is “How do we consider such practices under the law on sexual harassment if we are to come out with one for Ghana? Although I never expected such a question, sometimes issues that emerge unexpectedly lead us not only to further reflection, but also important discoveries.

## **Part Four: Data analysis strategies**

### **Working with the data**

There were three data main sources: 1) Transcripts of the audio-tape recorded group discussions with the beginning teachers; 2) The written data from the memory work by ten female students; and 3) field notes based on the whole process of gaining entry, working with the students, and my meetings with the various college authorities. As noted above, all sessions were audiotaped for the follow-up review and analysis. Audio-taping and hence transcribing the discussions allow the researcher to review the events, recall the experiences, and augment the details (Ely et al. 1991). This is appropriate for the proposed study because it permits the researcher to create patterns, themes, and categories that will emerge in the study.

Once the data collection was over, I transcribed all the audio-tapes of the group discussions and entered the memory data on the computer, along with my fieldnotes. During transcription of the data, no participant's name was mentioned, nor did any appear on any form of raw data, thus making unintentional disclosure impossible. When I was done with the transcription, I carefully read and analyzed responses of the group discussions and individual interviews and noticed that there were common themes emerging from the transcripts of the audio-tape recorded group discussions with the beginning teachers, the field notes based on the whole process of gaining entry, working with the students, and my meetings with the various college authorities. I concentrated on these themes. They were then coded and grouped together by major categories and subcategories on the basis of similarities and differences. The procedure consist of :



- Deconstruction of data;
- Identifying categories;
- Cutting out;
- Classification on the basis of similarities (Blouin, 1994, p. 18).

These major categories are Institutional Practices and Institutional Environment/Climate.

Under Institutional Practices, 7 sub-categories were identified. Under Institutional Environment are 5 sub-categories and are listed as follows:

#### **Institutional Practices**

- Promotional exam;
- Continuous assessment;
- Admission practices in regards to potential students prospecting for admission;
- Domestication of female students;
- Administrative practices in regards to student allowances;
- Exam practices by typists.

#### **Institutional Environment/ Climate**

- The use of highly abusive verbal language by female tutors;
- Physical threats;
- Offensive/negative attitudes of tutors towards female students in staff common hall;
- Public disgrace and intimidation;
- Sexual provocative comments;

The categories that emerged from the data as presented below were then used for each potential section of Chapter 4.

In fact, my overall approach to working with the data took place in two stages. In the first stage, what could be called a preliminary analysis took place as a result of reporting to IDRC, the funding source for my fieldwork. Because IDRC required a 'report back' in the first two months of returning from Ghana, I needed to try to get a sense of what the overall data looked like, what my initial impressions were and so on.

In reporting back to IDRC I had not completed the transcription of all of the audio tapes, and for that reason I had to rely on overall impressions and the inclusion of comments that stood out. Notwithstanding the difficulty of engaging in an analysis without all of the data at my fingertips, I was able to identify a number of issues that emerged in the responses of the participants and concentrated on them to develop my report. Example of such issues were: 1) The practice of class assignments and night preps; 2) the supervision of final year students' project work; 3) admission practices; 4) gender distribution of tasks; 5) the abusive use of authority by tutors and professors. Particularly in the training college setting, it was noticed that the handing over of classroom assignments was often left to the discretion of the teacher/tutor and done on (one-to-one) individual basis.

In the case of project work, these students were supervised by the same tutors who taught them. Therefore, in situations where a tutor was interested in a student and she refused, she was made to change her research topic several times. These issues included but were not limited to the use of material or financial aspect as a means to seduce female students to consent; 1) tutors' and male prefects' use of authority/ power to extort sexual gratification from female subordinates; 2) the lack of power to engage in

condom negotiation and discomfort discussing issues related to sex, such as use of condom or in a coercive situation; including 3) students' anxiety and pain regarding the sexual behaviour of certain tutors and the day-to-day incidents these student teachers had to confront on campus. Other issues included punishments such as disapproval of girls' hair, the use of make ups and dressing. When it came to issues regarding hair styles and dressing, male students were treated differently than female students. Inappropriate practices included assigning female students to duties in staff common hall, the practice of promotional exams, continuous assessment, and intimidation of female students by female tutors or male colleagues taking advantage of female juniors' situations, among others. Clearly these were key issues identified in the preliminary analysis, which were then used to develop the report for IDRC.

In actual fact, this type of 'preliminary overview' is a tool that qualitative researchers often use as a way to try to make sense of data in order to arrive at categories for analysis (Ely et al., 1991). Some qualitative researchers for example write analytic memos (Ely et al., 1991) that try to capture a sense of key issues and themes. Mitchell (1981) in her ethnographic work with adult readers of fiction used what she describes as 'snapshots' to try to get a sense of each reader in a holistic way before proceeding to an in-depth analysis of the data. Stage One of the analysis allowed me to at least get an overview of what the data looked like. Informed by my preliminary analysis in Stage One, these categories listed above (stage two) were then used to describe the experiences of these student teachers (See chapter 4).

Through close readings of these transcripts and analyzing the memory work assigned to the participants, I examined their work for commonalities and differences and to bring to light the common themes or categories, concerns, insights and experiences of the participants. Following from the work of Haug et al. (1987), the framework analysis involved a careful and detailed examination where the memories are:

- Compared in terms of similarities and differences;
- Scrutinized for clichés, metaphors, contradictions, gaps and silences; and
- Contemplated in light of theories, popular sayings and ideas about the subject at hand.

However, the goal here was not to quantify the data but to provide in-depth understanding of the information or data and to make sense of the responses of these participants.

### **Representing the data**

To maintain the exact meanings to responses of the participants while transforming the data into text, categories that emerged in the transcripts were carefully documented. These categories were then incorporated into the main body of the analyses in Chapter 4. Also included were comments and responses of interviews held with college officials that I considered important to the study. These responses include their views and opinions on the issue of sexual harassment in the educational institutions. Some of the participants' responses and memories are presented in italics.

What became obvious as I prepared the data for analysis was that I had a great deal of data to work with, and hence a challenge in terms of what to do with it. I thought of what Clifford Geertz (1988) and others (e.g. Denzin, 1994; Spivak, 1988) refer to as a “crisis of representation”, in terms of how to portray the voices of these beginning teachers drawing better from their lived experience without misinterpretation of what they want to say. While I could have engaged in a rigorous procedure drawing on the work of Ely et al. (1991) and others, my process was more one of reading and re-reading the transcripts and narratives. In the end, and as I describe in detail in the next chapter, what I opted for was a fairly direct and straightforward way of working with the data based on a number of critical points or critical moments that kept coming up in the texts, organized around the structures (physically and administratively) of the institutions and the actual pre-service teacher programs. Structures for example referred to the entrance exam procedures, assessment procedures, and so on, but also included the types of hierarchical structures and even the way the college campuses were laid out. The actual program data related to the nature of the course work, practice teaching, and so on. As I read and re-read these transcripts and narratives, I kept in mind the research literature itself.

### **Positioning myself as a researcher at Bagabaga Training College**

During the course of my research, particularly at the Bagabaga Training College, I was confronted with various day-to-day incidents by students that need to be included in my methodology chapter. I found that working out my role as a researcher was a big challenge, not because I couldn't handle it, but because as a researcher I found myself in

a position that was delicate and that could jeopardize my research. At the same time, I felt a sense of guilt and powerlessness towards particular situations. As a participant, I guess it was based not only on mutual confidence and the trust that some particular students agreed to share with me. They also expected some kind of help from me. However, I firmly believe that my position as a researcher ensured their confidence and dispelled the fears these students had towards their teachers. My questions were: *Now that I had to leave because my research had ended, would these young women still feel protected? Or would they be afraid because I was no longer around to protect them?* I am, of course, also left to ponder issues about how my study can contribute to improving the overall conditions of female students in teacher training institutions in Ghana, while ensuring a safe healthy learning environment and teacher professionalism. Although the interpersonal aspect was problematic in this research, this is a practical skill both in relation to doing qualitative research, as well as in relation to doing activist work with women who have been sexually harassed or assaulted.

In effect, in conducting this study, I have gained both knowledge and skills from this research experience. I have gained a greater understanding of the issues faced by trainee teachers in the Ghanaian society, and of how they live and survive sexual harassment in the training colleges. These include the various forms of harassment and how the issue is perceived by the survivors themselves. For example in the case of indirect harassment, the perpetrator is not directly involved at the initial stage, everything is done through a third partner. In most situations, it is done either through a close friend or relation of the victim.

While I explore these issues further in the final chapter, it is important to mention the issue of power dynamics in the context of methodology because I was meeting up with students at the very time in their lives when they might have been experiencing sexual harassment. I have come to an understanding on how the power dynamics are played out in the Ghanaian institutions. Often a teacher might chose to give a student poor marks for refusing to sleep with him/her. I have learned so much from the methodology of memory work both as an innovative method, and as a counter-hegemonic tool (for breaking silence). In terms of its being an innovative tool, I have learned to use memory work to help students develop and improve upon their writing skills. As a counter-hegemonic tool, memory work may be understood as an excellent tool for breaking silence and as such may be of great advantage to women and suppressed groups.

Meanwhile, I suggest that one cannot totally dismiss the difficulties associated with doing written memory work in the African context. However, there was slight resistance on behalf of certain participants, possibly because of perceived intellectual insecurity and mistrust of some sort. It was also related more to issues of confidentiality. I suppose that at the very beginning it was quite frightening for them because they didn't know how I was going to use these stories given that they were going to be analyzed within the very environment. Also, given the cultural nature of oral societies (e.g. Ghanaian or African society), where the keeping of personal journals, diaries, is very recent and not part of the culture of the society, there is likely to be a resistance on behalf of individuals when it comes to engaging in memory writing. Unlike the advanced written society where individuals are encouraged to record their experience, oral

societies, as in the case of African society, do not encourage individuals to record their experience even when they are formally educated.

In Chapter 4, a descriptive account of the findings and data are presented. Samples of responses were drawn from the group discussions as well as the memory writing and contain the student teachers' experiences and perceptions, as well as their responses to change and the use of the methodologies. In Chapter 5, a summary of the data and conclusions are drawn on the categories and themes that emerged from the written texts.



## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **Data Analysis and Research Findings**

The chapter is divided into sections, grouped by categories and subcategories identified from the memory writing and focus group discussions with the two groups of trainee teachers. Important key issues that emerged from their responses and their testimonies are included in full quotes. The ‘full memory’ pieces of the ten female participants are woven into the focus group quotes. These quotes consist of descriptions of the participants’ perceptions and experiences of sexual harassment in the Ghanaian society. False names have also been used in the citations to replace participants’ real names. In addition, the word survivor is been used to describe the experiences of the participants but represent the same meaning as “victim”.

#### **Beginning teachers’ interpretations of sexual harassment: what counts as sexual harassment?**

In the African context, sexual harassment is not perceived the same way as in Western societies. In the Ghanaian society for instance, sexual harassment is spoken of only within a context where coercion or physical force is involved. (e.g. rape or attempted rape). In the responses of the students, it was also observed that most of them had difficulty recognizing their experience as survivors. These students’ understanding of sexual harassment seemed to focus on rape, coerced sexual intercourse, particularly between tutors/professors and female students. Also, given that in the Ghanaian context there are no exact words to describe such experience

(sexual harassment), it was very difficult to come out with appropriate words that best described the feelings of these students from the Ghanaian perspective, and to let them understand that their experiences were serious.

Other times some experiences were viewed as normal or conventional. Unlike the word rape, which exists in the local languages and is easy to refer to, sexual harassment behaviour is often very difficult to describe because of the various cultural practices and norms in relation to practices such as courtship in the society. In some situations for example, where the woman is not willing to engage in sexual relations and says "no" to the man, her "no" is/can be interpreted as a "yes" and as such gives the man the excuse to push ahead even if the woman is suffering. One argument often used to maintain such a patriarchal privilege is that one tricky way of a woman's 'yes' indicating is to say 'no'; because of such myths, it is often difficult to predict in what situation or context exactly a behavior may be perceived as harassment or not. Sometimes the man is considered a failure when a woman says "no" and the man gives up. So the man has to persuade hard, even if the girl is not willing to give in. As this practice had been carried out by men for generations, it becomes accepted not only as normal practice by women in that society, but also as part of the culture, and a norm for courtship in such societies. Although the woman may suffer under these circumstances, the man knows that she wouldn't talk about it for the fear of being stigmatized by the society or for the sake of her self image and thus often gets away with it. As one female student illustrates:

But even when you say 'no', they will say ah! She is a lady and that every lady will say 'no' at first, so let me try again and there, they will

continue to pressurize you. You know our men will never accept defeat. They will continue to insist or keep coming, and in so doing most girls feel over pressurized and finally give in. (Mangaziah, 3<sup>rd</sup> year University)

Some students expressed the view that sometimes the attitudes of girls in such societies can be ambivalent. In some circumstances, a girl may not like a man but when he comes around, she will still show an amiable countenance, so it is sometimes difficult to say if that "no" means "yes" or "real no". As one female student points out:

As an African woman, when a man approaches you for the first time, it is so difficult to say no or yes. Although sometimes you may not like him, you cannot tell him directly or in the face because you don't want to embarrass him. Instead, you will say to him "I will think about it" Next time he comes around, you will tell him that you haven't thought about it yet. So he will continue to insist until you give in. Sometimes you don't say no, but from your behavior, you guess this man will deduce that his proposal is not welcome, but unfortunately this is often not the situation here (Nastou, 3<sup>rd</sup> year university).

Such behavior was said to encourage a man to persist further and to read the attitude of the woman as consent. Many of the students suggested that when the woman or girl says 'no', her 'no' has to be clear firm and final instead of saying 'no' only to succumb later. This can bring about a misinterpretation in attitudes as a male student illustrates below:

As a man, sometimes you think that the girl wants to observe your behaviour or character first. So you keep coming hoping that she will accept one day. And this is normal in our society. Any woman that says yes to a man at a first instance is considered loose. Because of such beliefs, it is considered that when a girl says no at the first time, it is normal. So if eventually she accepts, it could be that she had found out more information about you and that your character suits her. Sometimes you also think that by pressuring the girl, she is likely to

give in. So all these are reasons why we the males continue to insist when a girl says no the first time (Moley, 3<sup>rd</sup> year university).

To support the above argument, another male student suggested:

It's like when you are courting a girl or go to ask for her hand in marriage. The parents wouldn't accept the first time you go to see them. Sometimes they will ask you to come back in three to four weeks time or in the intervals of three markets days because they need to think about it. Other times you will go over three or, four times before they will give you an answer. All is because they also need some time to investigate on you, the type of family you come from, your character etc. Therefore it is sometimes difficult to make people understand that some of these practices are an abuse of one's right because it is part of the culture ( Ziggy, 3<sup>rd</sup> year university).

In regards to the complexity of some of the practices for courtship in the society, the majority of the students suggested in the group discussions that sometimes young women or girls should put up some action to clearly indicate that an action or pressure is not welcome in situations they consider undesirable. In some situations a man may not realize that certain behaviors are uncomfortable to the woman and is likely to believe that the woman is behaving in a sexual manner, and so will continue to persist. Also certain persistent verbal behaviours such as provocative sexist comments, physical advances of a sexual nature (e.g. sexist jokes, leering) were mostly associated with flirting and not considered an offence like that of rape. This is an example in the African and particularly the Ghanaian context, as described by a male student:

In our society, a mere look into a woman's face means admiration and she should even be proud of that. If I stare or make compliments about your beauty and you complain about it, you will be laughed at (Sousu, 2<sup>nd</sup> year post secondary).

Often times, a woman who stares at another woman is viewed as jealous and this can sometimes lead to a quarrel. One female student comment:

Here in the Ghanaian society, it is uncommon to see people of the same sex admiring or looking directly into each other faces. This is rare. When it happens, it means that the two have a problem. Sometimes they are chasing the same man or woman. So it is often done for jealousy purposes to provoke the other person. (Yayo, 3<sup>rd</sup> year university)

### **Students' definitions of sexual harassment**

On their interpretation of sexual harassment, the open-ended question elicited various descriptions from the student participants. Some of the words mostly used by the participants to describe sexual harassment behaviour included: "annoying", "public embarrassment", "insults", "shy", "uncomfortable", "private parts", "persistence", "insisting", "pushing", "intimidating", "force", "disgrace", "pressure", "verbal insults", "seducing", "bordering", "pressure", "offensive", "bad", "immoral", "hazardous", "unpuritanic", "disturbing", "lure", "immoral act", "provocative", "attractive", "enticing", "indecent", "bribery", "victims", "advances", "provocations", "physical struggle" and "force".

In the section that follows, the participants' interpretation of the term "sexual harassment" is presented using their own words where possible. A behaviour was considered sexual harassment when:

- 1) A man is pressuring a woman for sex and the woman makes it clear to her perpetrator that, his intention is known and that his behaviour is disturbing to her and yet he persists;
- 2) A man uses physical force or attempts to rape a girl;

3) One is disgraced/embarrassed before the public;

4) An annoying behaviour by the perpetrator is not clearly detested and the aggressor deems it consent or an approval.

Unfortunately, in such a context as observed, the consenting aspect is sometimes difficult to grasp. In most cases, this consent is often secured by hegemony. It is not imposed, rather it is negotiated by unequal forces in a complex process through which the subordination and the resistance are created and recreated. However, if a harassing behaviour is to be determined based on the assertiveness or reaction of the survivor, what of a consent that is obtained through manipulation or fear? This may lead to misinterpretation of behaviours or be considered dangerous. It is also clear that in situations of power, that is, relations of domination and subordination (e.g. teacher-student relationship) it is often very difficult for the subordinate or survivor to clearly state or indicate her feeling when even the behaviour is unwanted.

Meanwhile, when asked what they thought about sexual relationships between male lecturers and female students, it was somehow delicate because at that time, one of the female undergraduates was married to a lecturer and two others were in a dating relationship. Those participants who agreed with that idea suggested that sexual relationships between consenting parties (lecturers and female students) was not a crime and that since they were all adults there was no problem. Some suggested that sometimes it created hostility between male students and lecturers who were going out with female students. At the college level, the students seemed unclear as to

whether sexual relations between tutors and female students constituted sexual harassment or 'normal' sexual relations. Meanwhile, they agreed that in some particular situations it could be complex because of the power games involved. Tutors were in position of power and could use their formal authority to fail or threaten a student academically if one refused to consent or comply. This suggests that the issue of power relations in the case of sexual harassment is important. It is generally agreed that the serious form of sexual harassment occurs in a situation where coercion is implied, where a perpetrator abuses his position of power over the victim, so that the victim feels threatened academically. A lecturer or supervisor may use the formal authority and power of his/her position to coerce a student to render sexual favors or face victimization. This has led to the thinking that sexual harassment should be seen in the context of power relations where intimidation, coercion and victimization play a crucial role.

Also, as noticed in the group discussions, the students' understanding of harassment varied slightly between the tertiary (university) and post secondary level (training college). The university students were more familiar with the concept of "sexual harassment". The training college students often needed more explanation of the term. Most students from each of the two institutions admitted that sexual harassment is frequent in both the training colleges and the university settings, but seem to suggest that, in the university setting, most advances are often initiated by the female students (e.g. for marks). They insisted that in the universities in particular, some female students often practiced reverse harassment by luring male lecturers to

invite them over to their offices or bungalows, with the intention of offering sex for academic favors. One male student suggested:

I am not saying that it is wide spread, but I know it is a common practice here. In the various universities including non tertiary institutions, some girls are known to run after lecturers for good grades, particularly those ones who are not willing to work hard. Some simply use their beauty or whatever they can to attract lecturers for good grades. ( Moley, 3<sup>rd</sup> year university)

This was said to sometimes create confusion between fellow students because differences in marks were often observed between students in the class, and those who were seen as having unfair advantage. There were arbitrary increases of marks for certain female students. This female student suggests:

This is an unfair practice. Last semester we had two papers each to hand in, meanwhile, it was noticed that certain girls did not attempt working on theirs but had B+ in that course. We, those who did the work, were given C, C+. Not even a B. Meanwhile, we knew very well that our paper deserved even an A. It was clear that these girls never did the work but who were we to complain? In the universities, it is said that degrees are awarded and not acquired. (Mangaziah, 3<sup>rd</sup> year university)

The overall reactions of the participants in regards to these practices (e.g. sexual bribery, continuous assessment etc.) provide a window into the minds of victims or potential victims. Also as noted in their responses, another barrier preventing prospecting students' access to the colleges includes the arbitrary selection of candidates by tutors or professors. The participants also presented their opinions on other practices by educational institutions that were used to maintain sexual harassment of girls. Such practices are characterized as "*Institutional Practices*" and "*Institutional Climate*." The following section details such practices.



### **Institutional practices: students' perceptions.**

In this section, the key findings are drawn from the group discussions as well as the memory writing and contain the student teachers' experiences and perceptions, as well as their responses to change. The section includes their views of the methodologies and the field notes of interviews with the college authorities. As noted, Institutional Practices was identified as the "number one" major cause and Institutional Climate as the "number two" cause of sexual harassment of students in Ghanaian teacher training institutes. Under Institutional Practices, six key issues were raised around which sexual harassment can occur. These are grouped as follows:

- Promotional exam;
- Continuous assessment;
- Admission practices in regards to potential students prospecting for admission;
- Domestication of female students;
- Administrative practices in regards to student allowances;
- Exam practices by typists.

From these key issues of concern under Institutional Practice, student teacher attitudes during examinations for promotion to the next grade emerged in the responses of the participants as a great concern. All the other insinuating circumstances under which sexual harassment can occur include Continuous Assessment of students by the teachers during the school year, and taking advantage of unsuspecting potential prospecting for Admission. The rest of the circumstances are Domestication of female students, Student Allowances and Exam malpractices by typists. These various practices involve sexual coercion or extortion and the use of

power in the context of a relationship of unequal status. They correspond to what Shakeshaft et al. (1994) term as "*quid pro quo*" sexual harassment. Here, power of authority is used to impose sexual desires for which the consequences of non-compliance can result in the student not having any education at all. All these key concepts around which sexual harassment permeates in educational institutions are elaborated below from the participants' points of view.

### **Promotional exam**

Promotional exam was identified as the most important source of students' frustration, particularly in the teacher training colleges. The promotional exam is conducted at the end of the first year of the teacher-training program. In the college level, it is conducted in collaboration with one of the local Universities (mostly the University of Cape Coast). To be promoted from the 1<sup>st</sup> year, one needs to pass both internal and external subjects to be able to enter Post Secondary Two (PS2). When a student fails in a single subject, s/he is promoted and made to re-write that subject along side other exams in the second year. Where a student is deferred in more than one subject, s/he is definitely withdrawn from the teacher-training program. In their responses, these students reveal threats of failure and intimidation by professors/tutors as promotional exam approaches. One male student observes:

Presently it is very stressful for some of us because we are due to write the Promotional Exams. At least if you fail in a single subject you know they will give you a second chance to re-write while you are promoted to the second year. When you have to defer two or more subjects to the second year because you could not pass them, you now that you are doomed and will be withdrawn from the program and what will you do when you are sent home?. (Zandy, 1<sup>st</sup> year post secondary)

Another male student notes:

I think that using promotional exam or continuous assessment, as a means to get girls is unfair. I blame the institutions for the sexual harassment of girls in the society, because if they didn't approve of it, all these abuses that are taking place now would not have occurred. For example, a teacher will rape a student and the only consequence, as punishment is a simple transfer to another institution where invariably this will continue. This is another way of shifting the problem somewhere else. (Zandy)

This female student describes her fear as Promotional Exams approaches:

I try to read anything that I come across because some tutors pose questions in attempts to look for potential victims. For example, for simple class tests they sometimes ask questions that have nothing to do with what you are studying, just because they are looking for victims. (Shasha, 1<sup>st</sup> year post secondary)

Another female student expresses her views on the issue as follows:

As promotional exam approaches you are made to understand by some tutors that if you fail in their course you will be withdrawn from the program. Some of these tutors dramatize the issue in such a way that makes you panic. Particularly, first year female students are pressured for sex with a promise to offer them better grades in their subject areas. (Serina, 3<sup>rd</sup> year post secondary)

These sexual harassment situations are not limited to tutor-student behaviours.

Sexual harassment also pervades in student-student interactions. For instance, senior male students and students with some authority such as college prefects were said to also use the practice of the promotional exam as a strategy to extort sexual gratification from first year female students. Since these male students are aware that these first years turn to seek a protector for assistance, they will often promise to help these girls with their academic activities in order to protect them from sexual harassment by tutors. One participant stated:

These male students know very well that as first years, we feel insecure and scared. As such, they also try to play by the game. They make us believe that they are trying to sympathize with us meanwhile it is not true. They try to take advantage of our situation. (Sena, 1<sup>st</sup> year post secondary).

Most of the participants suggested that those who lack self-confidence in their capacity to meet these requirements are often likely to fall victims. One female participant noted the following:

What is serious about the whole thing is that, it is not only tutors who use promotional exam to get girls; senior prefects do it as well. As a first year student there is pressure from everywhere. If you are not good academically, you are likely to fall in the trap. Sometimes I say to myself "If we have struggle to get into this college the same way as the male students, it means that we are capable. Here they make us feel as if we cannot make it without them and this is sometimes hard. Although I am a girl, I know very well that I am far better than most of the male students in my class. In my science or mathematics course, male students come to me for help because they know that I am good. I am saying this because I was made to suffer greatly in my first year because of such practices by senior male students and teachers. (Lecar, 2<sup>nd</sup> year post secondary)

For most of these students, refusing to comply with a tutor/teacher's sexual demand could mean contesting the power or authority of this teacher and that could be potentially devastating to the student. Based on same perspective, this female student suggests that:

What is dangerous is that, these tutors are in collusion, and will do everything to protect one another in pursuit of their sexual demands, albeit perverted. To fail you in an exam, one doesn't need to be your teacher, he just has to ask another teacher who teaches you and it will be done without any problem (Hajiah, 2<sup>nd</sup> year post secondary).

The overall reactions of these students indicate that the use of the promotional exam by male tutors/teachers to threaten female students, particularly those in the

first years, has potentially negative lasting effect on their academic performance and, even worse, instills in victimized students the revenge attitude by which they feel they have deserved the right to victimize other students enrolled after them. Unfortunately, because of such practices many girls are withdrawn/dismissed from the program every year. In one of the neighboring colleges, twenty-seven first year students were dismissed from the program at the end of the 2000-2001 academic year because of failures in the promotional exams attributable in part to the silent cause of failing to give in to sexual demands for good grades. It is therefore not surprising that out of the twenty-seven students who failed the promotional exams, twenty-three of them (about 85%) were females. It is even more disconcerting since the initial female enrolment population is always small. For instance, statistics on the enrolment of students in the two colleges for 2001 indicated that in Bagabaga Training College, (where the research took place) the ratio of male to female enrolment was 87% (for males) to 13% (for females). Similar statistics were found in the neighboring college (Tamale Training College). In the Tamale Training College, it was 78% for males to 22% for females. The irony here is that Tamale Training College used to be a women's only Training College. It only became mixed in the late eighties.

Sometimes because of fear of reprisals, some students consider dropping out or changing career orientation in order to avoid such frustrations. One female student illustrates:

At one point I was thinking of withdrawing from the program but with the advice of a friend, I decided to continue. On the one hand I said to myself, "If I leave what will I do?" Maybe I could go to the

polytechnic or change orientation. Making any change involves money, and may take time.(Marina, 2<sup>nd</sup> year post secondary)

The following memory narratives offer similar views:

I also thought of dropping out my first year but for similar reasons I stayed back. At a point I was wondering what I would do next if I chose to take the gate. (Hardy, 3<sup>rd</sup> year post secondary)

Sometimes when I ponder over some of the things I was made to go through, I think I should have gone to the vocational school. In our first year, two of my classmates left for the Polytechnic because they couldn't handle things in this college. Sometimes the person to whom you go to report your case also tries to use such an opportunity to sleep with you.(Katia, 3<sup>rd</sup> year post secondary)

Based on these testimonies, it is evident that in the teacher training colleges in Ghana, tutors engage in both publicly and academic intimidation of girls who refuse to sleep with them. However, while male students bitterly blamed male lecturers/tutors as perpetrators, the female participants also blamed these male students for subjecting their female counterparts to sexual harassment. Junior students are bullied, intimidated and physically punished for turning down male students' sexual demands or for no reasons at all. Junior female students for example claimed to have experienced a variety of sexually harassing behaviours from seniors and male prefects. It was suggested that when a senior male student or a prefect approached a girl (junior or first year) for sexual favors and she refused, the prefect would use his position of power to inflict corporal punishment on the girl. To demonstrate, one male student noted:

I remember when we were in senior secondary, when one wanted a girl and could not approach her directly, it was possible to ask a

prefect or a senior colleague to impose physical punishment on her. In this way, you will come forward to free her and ask to go out with her. When she refuses, you will then make sure she is punished constantly until she comes forward. It worked very well as a strategy for some of us. (Zabzogu, 2<sup>nd</sup> year post secondary)

Sometimes it is a whole class that is punished. For this first year student, it becomes a nightmare for the whole class when a prefect approaches a female student and she refuses. One female student suggests:

It was the whole class that was punished when a prefect approaches a girl and she refuses. Anytime there was work to be done, the girl's class will be picked up first. In addition, this senior will always look out for other occasions to take you the girl on (Babby, 3<sup>rd</sup> year post secondary).

In addition to the above experience, this male student describes his view:

A similar thing happened to us last year. A prefect had proposed to a girl in our class and this girl objected to his proposal. The whole class was always made to work because of the girl. The reason for this was that, singling the girl would show something was wrong. So in order to hide things, most prefects or seniors will choose to punish the whole class. When we complained, we were told that it was normal that first years are made to work all the time. We were also called green horns, and green horns means someone who was naïve and had no rights. Even authorities will often support that idea (Abzougou, 2<sup>nd</sup> year post secondary).

This is corroborated by one of the female students:

The issue here is that, these male students know very well that as first years, we feel insecure and scared. As such, they know they can treat us the way they like and we would not report them. If you observe very well, you will notice that in the colleges or secondary schools senior prefects behave as if they were next to the tutors by rank of power. (Yayo, 1<sup>st</sup> year post secondary)

For this male participant, what is not funny here is that the learning environment tolerates such attitudes:

I also think that the authorities are a contributory factor to what the girls or juniors are going through in our institutions. A prefect is never wrong, no matter what he does to a junior. They think that they are in a position of privilege and as such they can treat others as they want.  
(Naslarma, 1<sup>st</sup> year post secondary)

The harassment of girls by male tutors is also perceived by these students to be psychologically traumatizing and may also have serious consequences on a student's performance or sometimes leads to her withdrawal from the program. Victimization, public intimidation and, particularly, fear of failure, prevented most female students from contesting proposals from tutors. Although corporal punishment is no longer acceptable in educational institutions in Ghana, it was said to still prevail in the training colleges. Adult students were sometimes made to feel they had no self-integrity due to the way they were treated by senior prefects. Other practices include the use of Continuous Assessment by tutors to subjugate female students to consent to their sexual demands or against male students who were dating the same girls with lecturers/tutors. Such practice is presented as follows.



## **Continuous assessment**

Continuous assessment consists of an evaluation of academic activities (e.g. class assignments, tests and includes class presence, final year project work) and represents 40% of the final exam. Based on the experiences of the participants, tutors/professors will often use continuous assessment as a strategy to subjugate female students to consent to their sexual demands. One female participant noted:

For example, a tutor may justify the failure of a female student who refuses to sleep with him by continuous assessment. He can choose to give you a D or a fail and there is nothing you can do about it. (Yali, 3<sup>rd</sup> year university)

Also a tutor may deliberately be dishonest in his bid to entrap his prey. In their responses, several students suggest that most tutors/professors will apply persistent pressure and verbal threats or intimidation in situations where a student refuses to consent. Reflecting on such practice, one female student suggests:

Does this means that we the girls have to sell ourselves to get a teaching certificate? If not, what message are these tutors trying to send across us with all the threats of continuous assessment or promotional exam that they are using against us (Asantuwa, 3<sup>rd</sup> year university).

In the group discussions, some participants suggested that the use of continuous assessment by tutors/teachers to extort sexual gratification from female students is widely practiced in educational institutions in Ghana. In the primary or junior secondary schools, girls were often seduced and sexually assaulted by teachers in turns. In certain situations, when a girl happens to become pregnant, the teacher implicated helps to abort the pregnancy. One male student suggests:

Whether in the secondary schools, the training colleges or universities, there are tutors who are known to have girl friends every year among the first year students. They know very well that first year students easily succumb to threats because the new environment they find themselves is without any system in place to guide or protect them from being victimized (Saditif, 3<sup>rd</sup> year post secondary).

In regards to that, a female student notes:

In the school I was posted to for my first teaching practice, rumors were going round that the national service men from the University were having sexual encounters with some of the female students and no person in authority appeared concerned. Particularly with the Physical Education Instructors, it was very clear but the headmistress was the least inclined to investigate. Contrarily, she will rain insults on these girls, openly accusing them for flirting with young male teachers (Babby, 3<sup>rd</sup> year post secondary).

The defilement of students by young teachers is also considered very common in schools in rural areas. Teachers were said to use such tactics (class assignment or what they term in the Ghanaian context as “do me a service” or “the kenkey girls”) to get teenage girls into bed. illustrates:

When I was in the secondary school, often teachers will give us their books to take to their houses, where they follow up themselves and try to rape us up. In a recent incident, a head teacher used the same old tricks on an elementary school girl and was charged with 25 years of imprisonment for infecting the little girl with the AIDS virus. This happened because the little girl was carried to the hospital where it was later diagnosed as such, so there was no way this head-teacher could get away with it (Serena, 3<sup>rd</sup> year university).

For this other female student:

The most serious aspect of such practice is that, usually, after defiling these girls, they make them swear that they will never speak about it. Sometimes these girls are threatened with death if they even as much as whisper about it. So these girls would never speak about it until they are caught up with health problems and are made to divulge what has been going on. (Davie, 3<sup>rd</sup> year university)

Girls from economically disadvantaged positions or of illiterate parents were said to be the likely targets of practices from continuous assessment or promotional exam in the institutions. This is how one male student summed up his experience:

In the secondary school I attended, the abuse of continuous assessment was serious. What they often said was that, the girls were not good. Particularly in subject areas such as mathematics and the sciences, the girls seemed to have suffered greatly in the hands of the teachers. (Nounou, 3<sup>rd</sup> year post secondary)

At the tertiary level, the power of the professor and his ability to use such power overtly or covertly for sexual favors cannot be over emphasized. This is what one female student noted:

There was this lecturer who likes to remind students, and particularly we the female students that if he fails us in the final year exam, and we think that we did better than that, the chief examiner in charge may be asked to re-assess the paper. Meanwhile, he would like us to bear in mind that, in the case of continuous assessment, nobody can challenge him for whatever mark he decides to put. If he does not award us the 40%, there is no way we can make it in the final exam (constitute 60%). Such are the kind of threats we are made to face daily in these institutions. (Melissa, 3<sup>rd</sup> year university)

In situations where these students refused to give in to the sexual demands, they were made to understand by these tutors/lecturers that they would pay for this by getting poor grades from continuous assessment. Such are the threats that usually make girls particularly feel insecure and succumb to sexual demands. One male student suggested that first year students were vulnerable because of being female:

I would like to talk about students and tutors relationships in regards to this practice of continuous assessment. With all the different exam practices, tutors can always find excuses to get us if we refuse to give in. Again with the introduction of internal exams in the system, things will get worse for girls. These tutors may choose to fail anyone they

don't want to see. If a teacher proposes to a girl and she refuses, he can capitalize on these exams to fail her. So if you look closely, you will understand that those girls who give in don't have the choice. Sometimes they refuse at the beginning but at the long round, they give in because they are afraid that the tutor will fail them in the exam, which means they will end up being dismissed. So those girls who have no place to go when dismissed from the program don't seem to have the choice other than give in to the sexual demands. (Sharify, 3<sup>rd</sup> year university)

Continuous assessment is often used as a basis to penalize male students who are in competition or even perceived to be in competition with their tutors or professors for the same girl. One male student shares his experience on the issue:

I suffered a lot in the hands of a lecturer because of a girl. This lecturer was interested in a girl I was going out with on campus, and when he approached the girl, she had told him openly that she was already dating someone and that it was I. Meanwhile, this man was aware of our relationship and suggested that the girl leaves me but she refused. To penalize me, he began to provoke me with offensive words in his lectures. One day I had enough of his nonsense and decided to openly stand up to him. Since he knew it very well that he couldn't fail me because I was one of the best students in the group, he openly told me he was going to get me with the continuous assessment exam if I didn't leave the girl. I was not going to end my relationship with the girl because of him. Some lecturers have done similar things to other students all because of the power they have from continuous assessment grading system. (Yacent, 3<sup>rd</sup> year university)

Another male participant noted:

This lecturer was not the first to threaten male students, in a similar situation last year, another lecturer failed a male student in his course because of a girl. This student attempted suicide because of that. I also remember that when I was in the training college a similar thing occurred to a mate and we organized friends outside the college campus to beat him up. Since then this tutor left our friend alone. I will also say that between the male lecturers/tutors and male students, it is more of a power issue with the ladies, because of sex. (Mougu, 3<sup>rd</sup> year university)

## **Norms and regulations in relations to class assignments and project work**

Another disturbing issue about continuous assessment includes the norms or regulations in relation to the practice of class assignments, and project work by tutors/lecturers in the institutions. Such practice was said to present a risk for students, particularly female students. In most of these institutions, it was noticed that the handing over of classroom assignments were often left to the discretion of the teacher/tutor and done on an individual basis (one to one). When it comes to handing over class assignment, tutors will ask students to pick up their work from their residences where they turn to lure girls into their rooms. In a memory narrative, one female student wrote:

I remember being told by my mathematics tutor that he was not satisfied with my class assignments. He then asked that I meet with him after lunch in his bungalow to discuss things. Not to take chances, I asked two mates of mine to accompany me. I entered his house while the two girls were waiting for me outside. Meanwhile, this tutor didn't know that I was not alone. While he was talking with me, he began to rub himself against me while offering me a glass of beer in the right hand. I said no thanks and that I didn't drink. He continued to push further trying to rip off my bra. I asked him to stop and he wouldn't listen to me. After a while, when my colleagues didn't see me, they came to knock at the door pretending that they had come to collect back their assignments. He told them to come back later and that he hadn't finished marking. While he was speaking to these girls, I walked quickly out of the door and said good-bye to him. He asked where I was going and that he had not finished with me. I said I had something to do and that I will be back. The two girls joined me up and we walked back to the dormitory. (Wabei, 2<sup>nd</sup> year post secondary)

Another student wrote:

I have chosen to speak of the practice of homework by the tutors in this college because I was a victim of such practice. Usually the tutors will chose someone to bring to their bungalows, the exercise books for

marking. I don't know why, but usually most tutors will delegate such tasks to girls. When it comes to time to turn them to the students, we have to go individually for our work. In my case, I was asked by this tutor to help him take our assignments to the house. Unfortunately, when I walked into the living room with the books, he asked me to send them into an adjoining room. To my surprise, it was his bedroom. Before I could drop the books on the desk, this man was already in the room with me. He quickly closed the door behind and invited me to sit with him on the bed for a chat and I did. To cut things short, it was my second day of menstruation and I was bleeding heavy. I used that as an excuse and he asked to see if I had a pad under and there he said to me that I could leave but never speak to anyone about it. I promised never to do so. All that I wanted was to get out there. (Awuraba, 2<sup>nd</sup> year post secondary)

However, in the group discussions, some of the students suggested that for their project work, they were made by their supervisors to change their topic of research or they would be failed. In the case of project work, these students are supervised by the same professors/tutors who teach them. In situations where a tutor was interested in a student and she refused, she was made to change her research topic several times. Such were the experiences of these two female students. One illustrates:

Based on my experience as a female athlete and a final year student in Physical Education, I had chosen for my project work, to work on sexual harassment of female students in sports. When I submitted the project to my supervisor, he warned me about the topic and proposed something else. Making comments like "If you don't know what to write on, I will get you a better topic." I changed the topic but this time, I chose to work on sex discrimination in sports, which was also rejected. I was not surprised by his reaction. I suppose he was afraid that I might talk about how he has been harassing the female students. Therefore, to discourage me, he disapproved the two topics. Finally I had to work on something else. (Nastou, 3<sup>rd</sup> year university)

In a different context, another student who went through a similar experience wrote in her memory journal:

I was made to change the topic for my project work over three times. Anytime I went over with my plan, this tutor will try to discourage me. On top of that, he subtracts some points from that. He was dangling failure in front of me for sexual motives. When he saw that I was fed up with everything or discouraged, he proposed to help me write if I didn't mind. From that time onwards, he will send for me at the weekends to work with him. When I go over, he tries to get me into bed. I think that the game he is playing here is unfair. I feel very bad and not happy with the way things are happening but there is nothing I can say now. I just want to pass that is it. (Hardy, 3<sup>rd</sup> year post secondary)

The promise of good grades and threats of failure are factors that oblige trainee teachers to consent in context of harassment and abuse. Other issues raised by some of the students included Admission Practices in regards to Potential Students Prospecting for admission.

#### **Admission practices and potential students prospecting for admission**

At the admission stage, candidates prospecting for admission are made to go through written and oral interviews. Here prospective female candidates are obliged by their interviewers to compromise their body in order to gain admission into these institutions and often suffer threats in the form of denial or promise of admission of some sort. Admission practices by most educational and teacher-training institutions as demonstrated in the responses of the student participants constitute a real obstacle to girls' access to education in the society. Such practices may also jeopardize girls' chances at a career. Some of the participants (both male and female) in the group discussions mentioned that they have been denied admission at least once. With the girls it was somehow complex. A majority of the female participants suggested that as they were prospecting for admission, they were obliged by their interviewers (tutors)

to compromise their bodies in order to gain admission into these institutions. Stated one of the female participants:

The first time I was invited for the interview, I was denied admission because I had refused to meet with the tutor outside the campus the next day. I remember that I had to stay home for two years before finally being able to obtain admission.(Marina, 2<sup>nd</sup> year post secondary)

A classical case is that of this female student whose admission file was said to have never existed, even though she was interviewed for admission. It turned out the tutor who had hidden her file did so because she refused his sexual advances during the interview. The following female memory narratives illustrates such an example:

I recall that after the interview for my admission I was heading towards home and to my surprise a car stopped in front of me, it was the very tutor who had just interviewed me. I was asked to get into the car and I asked “for what?” he responded “ Just for a chat” I refused and he insisted, trying to persuade me. I got into the car and he drove off to the staff clubhouse and asked that I come inside with him. I refused and said he could discuss whatever he wanted with me in the car. He said he needed to speak to me in private. I said I was not entering that building. I came out of the car and began to walk towards the roadside. He drove towards me and said, “Where persuasion fails force must be applied. *We* shall see whether you will get the admission.” He made sure that I was denied admission that year. When the results were out and I first went to check with my mom, I was asked if I was sure that college was my first choice, because there was no trace of my application form. I said I was even invited for an interview and showed them my letter, but they will still not believe me. Towards the end of the semester, someone came across my interview file on the desk of the college principal and told my mother about it. I went with her to the principal’s office and we were told that he didn’t know how my interview form got to his desk and promised to admit me the following academic year whether I pass the exam or not. (Mado, 2<sup>nd</sup> year post secondary)

However, the experiences of these student participants suggest that sexual harassment starts when candidates are prospecting for admission and continues once



access is gained in the program. The following memory narratives provide more of such examples:

I was told during my admission that my grade in mathematics didn't meet the college requirements, meanwhile, I was going to be offered admission based on the condition that I accept to upgrade my math average. I accepted and registered as a private candidate. When the results were out, I forwarded the original result slip for modification of my academic record; unfortunately it was neglected by the direction. One day I walked into this male tutor who was trying to let me understand that without him, I would not have been admitted into the program and that I did not respond fully to the admission criteria. I began to wonder how he got to know about that. That issue had gone round the college tutors and now everyone knew about my story. What was serious here was that, some tutors were now capitalizing on that to sleep with me. From all directions, I had advice and propositions, which most often ended up with threats of withdrawal. (Aboskei, 3<sup>rd</sup> year post secondary)

In the group discussions, another female student suggested:

During my interview, this tutor wanted to know if I was a virgin or not. I said yes but that I had a fiancée. I was seriously warned that in that college they had no place for married women or fiancées. This man asked me to get closer so that he could examine me well. He made me walk back and forth while he admired my buttocks. I wonder what that had to do with the interview. (Mado, 2<sup>nd</sup> year post secondary)

However, unlike the female candidates who are made to compromise their body or sexual integrity, some male candidates are made to financially bribe tutors or the college authorities in order to obtain admission. In a group discussion one male student suggested:

When you are a male student seeking for admission, sometimes you are made to offer money to the one admitting you even if you did well in the exam. The girls are made here to sell their bodies and the males to buy the admission places (Alkalain, 2<sup>nd</sup> year post secondary).

According to the comments of the participants, the problem faced by prospecting candidates is not new and is widespread in Ghanaian institutions, including the workplace. To illustrate, a male student suggested in the group discussion:

Sexual harassment is not only within the training colleges. I have a sister who is now in the Polytechnic. The first time she was invited for interview, she was denied admission because she had refused to sleep with the man in charge of admissions. Although this was a married man with children of her age, it didn't matter for him. My sister had to stay home for two years before finally being able to obtain a place in another institution and that was hard for her. (Sulé, 3<sup>rd</sup> year post secondary)

Another male student concludes:

Even at the work site, it is very common to see people in high positions harassing young ladies seeking employment. A lady would be seeking employment and the boss of that department would ask to sleep with her before she gets the job. Because of such behaviour, many girls who go looking for jobs will tell you that they are not offered the jobs because a boss of the department wanted to sleep with them and that is very common in Ghana these days. (Sharrify, 3<sup>rd</sup> year university)

A female student agrees to share her experience of the issue:

What is disturbing is not the fact that one has to sell herself. What is serious is that, once you sleep with them it must continue or else they will do all that they can to get rid of you. I am saying this because I had to leave a job because of such practice. Although I needed the money badly to help my little brother who had qualified for the Senior Secondary School, the pressure was so much that I couldn't take it anymore and had to leave. (Lecar, 2<sup>nd</sup> year post secondary)

The experiences of these students are similar to the sexual harassment allegations observed by CHRAJ, (2001) in Ghanaian factories in chapter two. Female employees who had refused to compromise their body were dismissed without

tangible reasons, and those who had nowhere to go if sacked had to yield to the demands of their bosses to keep their jobs. That it is at the job site or in context of learning, sometimes mere economic frustrations and despair oblige most young women to consent in particular situations. However, as these girls struggle to acquire admission into these training colleges or the university, they have come to understand that they will have to compromise their sexual integrity. In effect, admission practices by the educational institutions including teacher-training institutions as demonstrated by these participants in their testimonies constitute real obstacles for the young African woman, representing a barrier for career prospects for women in the African-Ghanaian society. Another practice that is said to be degrading and was emphasized by most female students in the group discussions was the domestication of female students by the educational institutions.

### **The “domestication” of female students: Task assignments**

In the group discussions, one of the important issues raised was the domestication of female students by the training colleges and secondary schools. An example of such is the practice of task assignment in relation to gender roles. In the training colleges or secondary schools, as suggested by the student participants, certain chores such as serving of tutors, washing of dishes in the staff common hall, cleaning of staff offices, and the carrying of water for staff members, are reserved specifically for female students. In most situations, junior students are made to do the laundry of staff members or go over to cook and clean for tutors, where they are often sexually harassed or forced to have sex.

One student suggested:

In this college, female first years are made to serve the teachers during lunch and breakfast in the staff common hall. They also do the dishes and fetch water for them to drink but not the male students. (Naomy, 3<sup>rd</sup> year post secondary)

In a memory narrative, another female student wrote:

One evening I was asked by this tutor to go and clean his lab. He followed me up later pretending that he was coming to check the work I did. To my surprise he suggested he could help me with my academic work and also financially. I said nothing and kept cleaning his lab. When I finished and wanted to leave, he insisted to have sex with me in the lab and I refused and walked out. (Yayo, 1<sup>st</sup> year post secondary)

In other situations, junior female students are made to baby sit for their housemistresses while they are out attending parties with their loved ones on the weekends. One female student illustrates:

In the secondary school, I was almost turned into a housemaid by my housemistress. Most often my weekends were spent at this housemistress's bungalow washing, ironing, doing her grocery and cleaning, cooking and baby-sitting. And I wasn't alone; we were always assigned in twos by the girls' prefect. Although we ate well there, we were not able to invest in our own studies because we never had the time. (Wabei, 2<sup>nd</sup> year post secondary)

With so many extracurricular activities aimed at pleasing the tutors, these female students, and particularly first year students, are often overwhelmed with these tasks such that they don't have the time for any academic or personal extracurricular activity. While their male colleagues use their time for academic work or leisure or are relaxing away from the hot sun in their dormitories, these girls are busy carrying out chores assigned to them.

The domestication of girls is said to also be common practice by schools in the rural areas. In addition to their household duties, female students are used by their teachers to carry out domestic chores, while their male counterparts carry out activities in their gardens and farms. This has often led to the defilement of female students. It was also suggested in the group discussions that teachers who had access to electricity or generators often used such privilege, to defile their female students. In permitting these practices as part of the unofficial program, both these institutions lay fertile grounds for the exploitation, harassment and sexual abuse of girls.

At the same time as these girls were commenting on their experiences in the various Ghanaian institutions, they also drew my attention to the domestication of young girls by the middle class or elites. To demonstrate, the following examples present the participants' views in regards to such practices. One female student illustrates:

What is also important to talk about is the way mistresses in the society treat their maidservants. Some of them severely beat their maids and on top, make them go to bed with empty stomachs. Sometimes these same mistresses will pretend the maid doesn't respect her or that she sleeps with the husband when she is away. In most cases it is not the fault of these maids. They are threatened and raped by these men and because of fear and shame, they choose not to talk about it. Some of them run away with pregnancy because it is a shame for them and their families. (Asantuwa, 3<sup>rd</sup> year university)

A male student shares with the group the story of a cousin:

My own cousin came from the village to work for one woman in town and was exploited economically, physically and sexually abused by the husband of the mistress. She finally took off to the south to do kayayoo. (Yacent, 3<sup>rd</sup> year university)

A female student presents her views in relation to such practice:

The domestication of girls is another way of refusing these girls the right to be educated. In most of the context, these little girls are denied access to schooling. With the exception of turning these girls into obedient wives, their future is less promising. They have no skills that may allow them to free themselves from economic dependency. So women who indulge into such practices must be made to understand that, education is a human right and as such they should take that responsibility to give these girls a formal education. (Darvie, 3<sup>rd</sup> year university)

This also suggests that in Ghana, as well as in most African societies, the domestication of young girls by middle class women or elites often results in the abusive use of girls and may involve sexual and domestic violence. These testimonies also suggest that the domestication of girls should be given great concern and needs to be addressed in the Ghanaian society. Other serious issues raised by these students included administrative practices in regards to the distribution of student allowances and exam malpractices by typists. Such practices are presented as follows.

#### **Administrative practices in regards to student allowances**

In the group discussions, students' allowance was considered somehow problematic in the training colleges. It was clearly indicated that members of the administrative staff (including bursars, accounts clerks or payroll clerks) were said to use student allowance as a means to promote their sexual desires. Victims and girls who were targets of such attacks admitted that anytime they went in for their stipends they were made to believe that their names were not on the pay list, and that this was due to computer errors from the head-quarters in Accra. Meanwhile, the staff will suggest to help them with financial assistance if there is the need. They would make

these girls feel they are doing them a special favor; meanwhile it was their allowances. One female student illustrates:

When you went for your monthly allowance some of the account clerks will tell you that your name is not on the list, and that it was a computer error from Accra, so you may have to wait for three or four weeks. When you begin to look worried, they will propose to assist you, making it look as if they were doing you a special favor. Meanwhile it is your money. If you also make that mistake and accept their offer, they will not only harass you for sex, they will also make it look as if you owed them. (Marina, 3<sup>rd</sup> year university)

Another female participant narrates her story:

I went in for my allowance one time and was told that they had forgotten to include my name from Accra and so I will have to wait for two weeks. I insisted it wasn't possible because I had no provisions and needed to buy a book for one of my classes. This administrative clerk quickly offered to issue me a check to cash if I didn't mind. I said to him that I could wait. His response was that "I am doing you a favor and you don't even seem to acknowledge it." I said thanks to him for his kindness and that I was not so badly in need. I thought it was an intelligent decision I made here. Although I knew very well that it was a lie and that they were only using that tricks to get me, I preferred to go through such punishment to being harassed. (Aboskei, 3<sup>rd</sup> year university)

As observed in the responses of these students, poverty may be considered a powerful factor contributing to girls' or female students' vulnerability to sexual harassment and abuse in the learning environment. In most instances, these men are clearly aware that girls of economic disadvantaged families are likely not to resist financial favors from administrative staff. This factor has been discussed by Fiona Leach (2001) and Erika George (2001) in their work on sexual harassment of schoolgirls in Africa. Another practice emphasized in the participants' testimonies was Exam Malpractices by administrative clerks in the educational institutions.

## **Exam malpractices by typists**

Much of the administrative work in Ghanaian institutions has not been computerized, so secretarial staff still use typewriters to do administrative work. Typists in the educational institutions have direct access to students' confidential files since they are the ones who create exam lists of students and also input grade sheets. As recompense, they will promise to change marks for those students who did not do well on their exams in return for sexual favors. One student wrote in her memory journal:

I did not know that typists have so much power over students until I myself fell a victim. This typist I used to joke with informed me that I had failed in a subject and proposed to help me if I didn't mind. I asked how? And he said that it was his problem, so far as I promise not to talk about it. I didn't also have access to my exam paper so it was impossible to tell if it was true or a lie. That very evening he came by the girls' dormitory and sent for me. I gathered the courage and went down to tell him to leave the marks as they were and that I didn't need his help. When the exam list came out, I went to check and to my surprise, the lowest I had in a course was a C+. (Hardy, 3<sup>rd</sup> year post secondary)

In a group discussion, a male participant suggested:

Exam malpractice by typists is very common in our institutions. The typists are the first to know before you the student, if you have performed well or not. Sometimes when they want you and you refuse, they will let everyone in the community, including your own schoolmates to know that you have not done well in an exam. They will do all their best to spoil your record. (Zabzogu, 2<sup>nd</sup> year post secondary)

These are the thoughts and views of another male student on the practice:

In some situations, they will openly propose to a girl to change her marks if only she will accept to sleep with them. If they can do so, this means they can equally punish a student by replacing his/her results with a low mark. Again, most of the tutors are so careless that, they



don't even bother to check things after they have corrected and handed over the results to the typists to compile the list. Other times these typists will discuss students' performance openly in drinking bars and that is unfair. Nothing is confidential in this system, everyone knows who is who, who does what and so on. (Sule, 3<sup>rd</sup> year post secondary)

One female participant suggested in a discussion:

Exam malpractices by typists are very common in the society, and since the majority are males, they use such practices to pressure we the girls for sex. (Shasah, 1<sup>st</sup> year post secondary)

In some societies, like Ghana, male typists are considered to be in position of authority given the type of privileges attached to their function. Meanwhile, in certain situations, these typists are said to use such privileges to sexually proposition female students. However, the experiences of these students demonstrate that the typists are part of the complex power game that characterizes sexual harassment. Unlike North America, where typists have little power and have indeed been phased out, in the African context, they are considered to be in a key position. Within the educational institutions, typists are the very ones who compile the exams of students, which gives them great power over students. In addition, as one may also observe in the society, male typists still dominate the educational institutions.

So far, I have been focusing on the Institutional Practices. I would also like to refer to Institutional Environment more generally. As the number two 'issue', the Institutional Environment itself is very hostile and a place where students, particularly female students, face threats of multiple forms of violence, ranging from psychological, emotional, to verbal degradation.

### **Institutional Environment /Climate**

In the Ghanaian context, particularly Ghanaian Teacher Training Institutions the Institutional environment created from inadequate or complete absence of physical structures aimed at preventing sexual harassment and assaults predispose trainee teachers to sexual harassment. The institutional climate is said to be very hostile, and public intimidation or embarrassment, emotional, psychological and verbal degradation or personal attacks were all forms of abuse said to be most frequent in the learning environment. It also corresponds to what Oré-Aguilar (2001), Shakeshaft et al. (1994), Brandenburg (1997), and Nemni (1992) term as *Poisoned environment sexual harassment*.

The majority of the participants (over 65%) felt that the learning environment was hostile for their participation and academic performance. Same sex harassment was a concern for these students as well. In most situations these attitudes create certain emotional instability or disorder in students. These attitudes include but are not limited to:

- The use of highly abusive verbal language by female tutors;
- Physical threats;
- Offensive/negative attitudes of Tutors towards Female Students in Staff

Common Hall;

- Public disgrace and intimidation;
- Sexual provocative comments;

- Institutional environment created from inadequate or complete absence of physical structures (e.g. Toilet/bathroom not appropriately located for students, particularly female students)
- Fears limit the movement of female students on campus at certain times of the day or night. When it comes to using physical facilities during certain time of the night, these students are limited in their movement

The abusive verbal language and negative attitudes of tutors or professors towards students and the attitudes of senior prefects towards their juniors are viewed to be psychologically and morally damaging for students, particularly female students. In the group discussions, a female student noted the following:

The learning environment encourages negative attitudes towards students. The attitudes of most tutors towards girls in class make us sometimes feel we that we don't belong there. Some situations make you just feel that you are in the wrong place at the wrong time and that leaves you with a sad thought or feelings. (Aboskei, 3<sup>rd</sup> year post secondary)

Another female student suggests:

Most often when you are asked a question in class and you don't have the correct answer, you are attacked openly by some of these teachers and that is not fair or healthy for progress. (Yayo, 1<sup>st</sup> year post secondary)

Such was the experience of this female student:

In my case I was very good in solving math problems, so anytime there was a problem on the board that everyone fears to attempt and I raised my hand, I was made by this math tutor to understand that, I was not the only brilliant student in the class. Sometimes I was called by names like: "Miss too known" or sometimes when I walk into the class, I will find funny mathematical formulas on the board with remarks like: Miss "T.T. if you know that you are genius solve this

problem” Because of such attitudes, I was no more participating actively in class.( Aboskei, 3<sup>rd</sup> year post secondary)

Within the learning or male-dominated area, this type of environment could affect the academic performance of a student or contribute to her withdrawal from class activity. In some situations such practice may even lead to her withdrawal or change of program. For instance, within the Ghanaian context as demonstrated here, a girl who ventured into subjects normally reserved for boys (Agricultural Sciences, Mathematics and physics) was often categorized as a "tomboy" or referred to by other negative remarks. These comments were pervasive to the point that female students felt discouraged and unwanted. Another disturbing issue that was raised by the students was the hostility of female tutors towards female students.

### **The use of highly verbal degradation language by female tutors**

Female students are not free from intimidation even by female tutors or fellow female students/colleagues. Female tutors would often vent their emotions on fellow female students for the sake of jealousy. The forms and nature of the harassment and abuse may differ from that of the ones used by male tutors, and may include but not be limited to emotional or psychological abuse. The uses of highly degrading language by female tutors seem to humiliate or affect female students' self-images, and class participation. According to the students, these included demeaning comments such as, “you are nothing but....” Particularly, when this tutor knew that the female student was dating someone of high rank in the community, she faced

constant verbal intimidation and public humiliation. This is illustrated by a female student:

My housemistress was a very perfect example. Sometimes she will walk into the class and because she hates you for whatever reason, she will ask you a question and if you are not able answer it, she will say something like, “You know nothing but only how to take care of your beauty”, or, “You know nothing but only to run after people’s husbands.” She will verbally disgrace you before the whole class. (Katia, 3<sup>rd</sup> year post secondary)

Two other female students share their experiences on such practices:

When I was in the training college, there was this housemistress of ours who was so jealous of the girls that she made us cut our hair very short. To keep your hair, you had to make “con roll” and here again everybody had to wear the same hairstyle. If you were caught with a beautiful hairstyle or dress, she will first of all verbally disgrace you before the student body and make you undo it. (Mangaziah, 3<sup>rd</sup> year university)

A female staff member emotionally abused me for such a long time back in the training college. Any time she met me in the staff common hall serving, she will embarrass me before other colleagues. Deep down me I was very hurt. That worried me so much and I was never happy when she was around. (Davie, 3<sup>rd</sup> year post secondary)

These testimonies suggest that in the training colleges, trainee teachers experience a range of feelings, from anger to frustration and helplessness and an increased sense of vulnerability and lost of confidence. Others spoke of feeling inadequate in class. Some of these comments were sarcastic and degrading (e.g., “It takes little intelligence to...”) In some situations where the given student was beautiful and brilliant or possessed certain features or qualities, she was made to suffer emotionally.

Mauritius Bunwaree (1999) also observed that in schools, female teachers prefer the use of high levels of verbal abuse to corporal punishment. In Zimbabwe, Leach and Machakanja (2000) came out with similar observation. Although this may be termed jealousy, it is still harassment. Psychologically or emotionally, such comments mentally hurt, and thus may isolate students in the learning environment. Other practices of this nature included the harassment of female students by senior or female prefects. These are the testimonies of two female students on the issue:

In my second year there was this house prefect who just hated me for no reason. Sometimes when I am asleep at night, she will order the senior under to kick me off the bed. Other times when I open my box to get some “Gari” (fermented cassava flour) I am immediately accosted by this prefect who takes as much of my food as she wants and prevents me from serving myself. (Serena, 3<sup>rd</sup> year post secondary)

In my first year, female students would intimidate me with insults of all kinds. At a point I began to hide from public gathering on campus. I also stopped showing up in the dinning hall because of fear of intimidation from these seniors. (Mado, 2<sup>nd</sup> year post secondary)

### **Physical threats**

Another offensive practice that was raised by the students, particularly the female students, was the physical threats of female students by wives of tutors and outside harassers. It was said that, within the training colleges, wives of tutors personally attacked or accused female students for going after their husbands, as one female participant illustrates:

When we were in the college, sometimes wives of these very tutors would walk into the girls’ dormitory to physically attack girls for allegedly going after their husbands. Meanwhile, it is the husband who goes around harassing these girls for sex. This is so common in the college. All this creates extra psychological tension and social embarrassment for the student. (Magaziah, 3<sup>rd</sup> year university)

Another observes:

In this college, immediately a tutor’s wife sees a female student standing with the husband it is a big issue. The woman will later come to fight with you in the dormitory. Some will go to the extent of hiring street (kayakaya) boys to beat you up. Sometimes there may be nothing between you and the tutor, but they will still act. They know their husbands womanize a lot, so in standing with a girl, they, will just conclude there is something between the two. These behaviours create an unhealthy learning environment for the female students (Hajiah, 2<sup>nd</sup> year post secondary).

Also in the learning environment, as observed in the testimonies of these students, friends of tutors were said to target female students on campus during evenings and weekends. Here tutors are said to use their authority to coerce female students to submit to the sexual demands of their male friends from outside the college community. In some situations, staff members will play the role of third parties in love affairs between female students and their friends. One female student illustrates:

I remember that when I was at the training college, during night when we are at preps (night studies), tutors will send for us, and particularly the juniors to meet with their friends from town. Officially our visiting days were Sundays and Saturdays, but these men didn't care, they will pop in anytime of the day with the apparent collusion of some tutors. Even the principal tolerated such things because he was also doing it. This often created tension between our male study mates and us. They will often accuse us of not being serious; meanwhile it was not our fault.(Yale, 3<sup>rd</sup> year university)

The following narratives are examples of such experiences. In her memory work one student wrote:

Almost every night I was sent for by this tutor to meet with a friend of him from town while I was in the middle of discussion with my study mates at night. I didn't want that idea because I quarrelled with my mates anytime I got back or I was lacking behind my studies. Emotionally, I was affected. I tried to explain things to this tutor hoping that he being educated and also knowing what it meant to be in the training college, he would have understood me better. Unfortunately, this wasn't the situation; all that was important for him was for his friend to take a student to bed (Niny, 3<sup>rd</sup> year post secondary).

This male student shares his views in regard to such practice:

Arranging for friends to meet with female students is a bad practice. Sometimes, these men may try to seduce students with money or provisions and the end can be fatale. Based on my experience, students who have received money or provisions and refused to sleep with these



men are sometimes raped or beaten up by these men in town. Other times they came to harass these girls on campus. This should not be tolerated anywhere by educational institutions.(Ziggy, 3<sup>rd</sup> year post secondary)

To support the above views, this female student suggests:

In our college, there was this matron who was indulging into such practices. She will send for girls to meet with some community gurus ( Alhajis, officers etc.) and they will buy her drinks, gifts or do her favours of all kind. As a college matron, she had access to the food store and provisions, so she will make these girls to prepare all these special dishes to receive these men. The end is always very bad because some of these girls run away with the money of these men, refusing to sleep with them. (Melisa, 3<sup>rd</sup> year university)

This form of harassment may also be considered indirect and often involves a third partner. The perpetrator is not directly involved at the initial stage; everything is done through a third partner, just like it is in the context of traditional courtship. Also material or financial aspect is used as a means to seduce the girl to consent. However, as observed in the African and particularly the Ghanaian context, most girls fall victims of such seduction because of their economic situation. Where there is resistance, persuasion may be used to get the girl to consent. In situations of strong resistance (where the girl is not willing to give in) as suggested in the testimonies of these students, physical or verbal intimidation (e.g. beatings, rape, degrading insults or intimidation) is applied. Another issue of concern included their comments and experience on physical touching.

## **Offensive/negative attitudes of tutors towards female students in the staff common hall**

Another issue that seemed degrading was the attitudes of staff members in open-air discussions in the staff common hall. They jokingly share amongst themselves their sexual conquests and circumstances under which some first year students were admitted, i.e. those admitted with low grades for less obvious reasons and those admitted through sexual bribery. It was also noted that gender-based insults, which could be perceived to create a negative psychological and emotional impact, were very common when these tutors met over lunch in the staff common room.

To illustrate, two students wrote in their memory narrative:

I recall that in my first year I was always unhappy anytime I was asked to go and serve tutors in the staff hall. Some staff members often reminded me that I was better off as an excellent housewife than a schoolteacher. Particularly, there was this tutor who was found of calling me his mistress and kept on harassing me anytime I went over to carry out my duties. Sometimes he would say things like: "When would you bring those your hard mangoes for me to suck for you." How can a tutor behave this way with his students. It is not fair at all; it is a lack of respect for the other. (Marina, 2<sup>nd</sup> year post secondary)

My experience of the staff common hall back in the secondary school makes me to believe that, there is no difference in the way we were being treated in the secondary schools and the way we are treated in these training colleges. Even our male classmates have noticed these differences in treatment and are also doing it to the junior female students. (Hajiah, 2<sup>nd</sup> year post secondary)

Physical touching and other sexual comments were sometimes disturbing and humiliating for students as this female student notes:

What I find annoying is unnecessary touching. Sometimes you will be sitting and a tutor or lecturer comes to play with your ear. There is this sports teacher who likes to touch me anytime I went for training and I

dislike that because he makes me feel uncomfortable. When you ask him to stop and that you don't like it, he will say that you like it but that, you are only pretending. (Nastou, 3<sup>rd</sup> year university)

The following female student views concurs with the above views:

Some of these tutors/lecturers who like to touch female students in public do it just to make them feel bad. It also depends which part of your body they touch. If it is your breast or buttocks, it is quite clear that you will feel bad. Others start this way before you are aware they will begin to harass you for sex. That is where the real danger lies. So it is better you put a stop to such behaviour before they push further. (Davie, 3<sup>rd</sup> year post secondary)

The student's descriptions of their experiences suggest that the poisoned environment harassment is a more common form of harassment in learning institutions in Ghana and in most situations involves same sex harassment. The overall reactions of the participants suggest that they face lot of emotional abuse by tutors, female prefects, particularly female tutors and personal attacks or physical threats from wives of tutors in the learning environment. The consequences of all this include social embarrassment, humiliation and self-deprecation and degradation. All these attitudes including unnecessary physical touching of intimate parts and seductive sexual jokes, were also troubling and undesired.

### **The practice of study mates**

Another critical issue that needs to be looked into seriously is the practice of study mates in educational institutions in Ghana, particularly by the boarding schools. The practice of study mates is common in the boarding institutions. As observed in

this study, such a practice in most situations ends up with coerced sex or sexual harassment. This is illustrated by a student:

What I find difficult is that, the male study mates expect that you cook for them and this is very common practice. Some go to the extent of trying to sleep with you and I think that is unfair. Where you refuse, they may try to remove you from the study group. (Katia, 3<sup>rd</sup> year post secondary)

Another female student suggests:

I believe that the real issue is that, our male counterparts don't understand the objectives for such practice (study mate). May be they think that we are here for them. They don't consider as the same way as themselves, they perceive us as wives or sexual objects. (Wabei, 2<sup>nd</sup> year post secondary)

In a memory narrative, a female student tells her experience of such practice and how such practice nearly led her into rape:

In my second year, I was nearly raped by a study mate because of such practice. I agree with that idea of encouraging girls and boys to work together. Another way to allow us to share our knowledge, see the different way of thinking and helping one another. I also believe that, as boys and girls, this is the best way that we can socialize or promote a better relationship between men and women in our societies. Meanwhile, I don't agree with the idea of study mates sleeping together. (Hajiah, 2<sup>nd</sup> year post secondary)

According to this male student, sleeping with study mates is a common practice in the colleges. He illustrates:

In the training colleges, it is very common to see study mates sleeping together. Some even live as couples, meanwhile, not even one quarter of them get married at the end of their program. Again such practice sometimes creates jealousy amongst students, or students-tutors. (Alkalain, 3<sup>rd</sup> year post secondary)

This is the same for tutors/professors who befriend female students. Whether there is consent here or not, there is the need for a clear policy and rules in regards to such practices, so that if the objective of such practice is based on learning experience (as usually expected), it should not have anything to do with sex. In the case of the tutors/professors–student relationships, such practices should not be encouraged. These practices as observed in the learning environment often have negative impact for the one in the position of subordination.

### **Participants' concern for their personal safety on campus**

Other related issues identified in their testimonies include issues of insecurity, such as personal safety and protection on campus. In the group discussions, the majority of the participants, particularly the girls, were concerned with their own safety on campus and protection against HIV/AIDS in situations of coercive sex. These students expressed their fears in regards to various incidents of attempted rape that they face in their everyday life on the college. They also emphasized that, as females, it is very risky using physical facilities within the college after certain hours of the night. One female student suggested:

The way in which the bathrooms and toilets are separated from our dormitories is very dangerous. I came down one night to use the toilet and noticed there was a man standing at the corner with bread in the hands. I quickly turned and took off, shouting for help and as such he took to the heels in a different direction. With the exception of the rest of the girls who were up with their lanterns running down to see what was happening, not a single watchman or tutor came around to find out what was happening. (Mado, 2<sup>nd</sup> year post secondary)

Other female students expressed a feeling of insecurity in regards to walking alone or using the toilet amenities on campus at night. One student illustrates:

It is so dangerous that I will never use the toilet or bathroom after 10:00 pm. It is very easy to get raped in these areas because we don't have watchmen to look after us. (Katia, 1<sup>st</sup> year post secondary)

Reflecting on a recent incident of rape on campus, this female student suggests:

These dormitories are not safe, it is very easy to walk into them and rape anyone. They have no gates; they are built in the open air without fence, and no watchmen to protect us. This is the case we are also not even allowed to leave the lights on at night. Sometimes we do not even have lights on at night. (Sana, 1<sup>st</sup> year post secondary)

Another female commented:

Fortunately that we are four or six per room. At least this is the only way we can protect one another. But when it comes to using the toilet or bathroom late in the night, you cannot go around waking everyone up to accompany you. What if you have a running stomach at night, what do you do under these circumstances?. (Hajiah, 2<sup>nd</sup> year post secondary)

A male student suggested his view:

Just like the neighboring college there are always incidents of attempted rape, so that can be scary for these girls. Toilets and bathrooms are areas of targets for such crimes because they know very well that these girls need to use them at nights. (Dube, 2<sup>nd</sup> year post secondary)

With respect to the above views, a female suggests:

Anytime these incidents of attempted rape occurs, we never get to know who it was. After sometime nobody talks about it and it dies off like that until a similar incident takes place and they will begin to talk about it again. (Babby, 3<sup>rd</sup> year post secondary)

In listening to the various testimonies expressed, this female student tells the story of how she copes with things at night:

When I feel like urinating in the middle of the night and I can't get someone to come down with me. I just do it in a container if possible and get ride of it the following morning. Meanwhile, this is not possible in the hot session, we are so crowded in the dormitories that one runs the risk of contaminating or poisoning everyone in the room. If you are also caught doing so, you can be suspended. (Shasha, 1<sup>st</sup> year post secondary)

In their memory narratives, some female students similarly stated that they were victims of sexual harassment in areas such as outside the dinning hall, water collection centers (bore holes), football field and paths that lead to the girls' dormitories. As one student observes:

When I was in college, I observed that the football was one of the areas for sexual harassment at night. Every night after preps, there was this tutor who will go to wait for me on the football field, sometimes at the common market (night market). Unfortunately, one day after night studies, I was returning to the dormitory through the football field and to my surprise I heard someone call my name from behind. I stopped and it was this tutor. It was in the dark and he tried to get closer to me, fortunately, there were students coming from behind us and so he took off on his bicycle so that he will not be identified. (Nastou, 3<sup>rd</sup> year university).

In another narrative, a female student told a similar story:

What I have noticed in this college is that, it is very risky to walk by staff bungalows. These are also areas for harassment. When we are going or coming from town we can only access the taxi station behind some of these bungalows or the boys dormitory. (Shasha, 1<sup>st</sup> year post secondary)

At both the University and Post secondary level, students also indicated that love affairs between male lecturers and female students made the classroom hostile ground for students. Based on the overall reactions of these girls, one may conclude that the insecurity of the learning environment presents a situation in which female students are routinely exposed to sexual harassment. Fears limit their movement on

campus at certain times of the day or night. When it comes to using physical facilities during certain time of the night, these students are limited in their movement.

### **HIV/AIDS: An issue of concern for female trainee teachers**

Although the focus group discussions did not directly address the question of sexual harassment and HIV/AIDS, it emerged as an essential topic, one which was discussed. These students spoke with anxiety and fear regarding the sexual behaviour of certain members of the administrative or teaching staff. Some particular individuals or tutors were noted for having risky behaviour and many sexual partners.

One female student illustrates:

Sometimes you are forced into conditions which extend beyond sexual harassment and that can be scary. I am worried because of the AIDS epidemic in the society. Also the fact that some of the tutors/teachers have many partners can be scary. You can never tell when you may be their next victim. Sometimes you say to yourself, "If the other girls were victims, what guarantees that you are not the next on their list." So I say it is scary, it is really scary. (Wabei, 2<sup>nd</sup> year post secondary)

Based on their personal experiences these students provided their opinions in regards to the risks involved. For example, one female student suggested:

AIDS is wide spread in Ghana these days, only that people don't talk about it. At the end of every term, there are students or teachers who don't come back because of the disease, so it is scary. (Naomy, 3<sup>rd</sup> year post secondary)

Another commented:

The issue is not only about AIDS, but also other sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) such as gonorrhoea and syphilis. There are teachers who have many sexual partners and don't even care to use condoms. This is how most female students end up with pregnancies and had to abort. (Lecar, 2<sup>nd</sup> year post secondary)



To support the views of these girls, one male student suggests:

It is true that in situations of rape, the victim cannot ask that the perpetrator put on a condom. Also, these days, most of the young boys are on drugs and as such have no morals. These are some of the causes for gang rape in our society today. Before we didn't know what gang rape meant, today, it has become a common practice and even in the elementary and junior secondary schools. My own sister was a victim of gang rape in the junior secondary school, so I understand what it means for these girls. (Santos, 1<sup>st</sup> year post secondary)

Another male student indicated:

In the Junior Secondary School I was posted for observation, two incidences of gang rape occurred. One of the girls bled seriously after four teenage boys raped her in her school. In the second case, there was this secondary school graduate who was invited to help students with their math who then capitalized on this to sexually abuse the girl. The irony is that the head-teacher who was a woman with some of the female staff members blamed the girl for everything and failed to protect her or take legal action against these perpetrators because their fathers were officers or friends of them. (Wawaya, 3<sup>rd</sup> year post secondary)

It is clear that in situations of rape, or coerced sex, survivors are vulnerably exposed and that the likelihood of contracting the virus is greatly increased. Also, in situations of power, that is relations of domination and subordination (e.g. the teacher-student relationship), it is often very difficult for the one in position of subordination (subaltern) to clearly state or indicate her/his feelings or to be able to negotiate safe sex. For these reasons, it is often more difficult to bring up the issue on the use of condoms in a coerced situation. In regards to this perspective, researchers such as Gupta (2001), Mitchell and Smith (2001), De Oliveira (1999), argue that safer sex negotiation presents a challenge for many young women. However, the lack of power to engage in earlier condom negotiation in coerced situations, and the discomfort discussing issues related to sex (such as the use of condoms among other

issues are factors related to HIV/AIDS infection and unwanted pregnancy in the African communities. The students' concern for HIV/AIDS could also be very significant to Ghana and the rest of Africa and could be used to facilitate the formulation of thinking on sex or gender-based violence, and HIV/AIDS within the context of teacher education or teaching and learning in developing societies.

### **Participants' reactions and responses to incidents of sexual harassment**

Other major factors that emerged in the discussions included difficulties in addressing sexual harassment in institutions. Such difficulties involved consequences and associated risks in reporting sexual harassment in the Ghanaian context. These consequences are presented in their reactions and responses to sexual harassment.

The students' overall reaction here suggests that educational authorities are not themselves sensitized to sexual harassment to the point that they know exactly how to proceed under certain sexual harassment situations. Examples of such may include attitudes of the police or educational authorities towards survivors, the influence of religious leaders, and law enforcement agencies on attitudes of parents of survivors. For a variety of reasons, as noted in the responses of these students, victims prefer to keep silent, particularly when the aggressor is a member of staff or someone in a position of authority. Here they run the risk of further harassment and serious threats. One male student illustrates:

The question of sexual harassment or abuse is so fragile that most people, particularly girls, prefer to keep it to themselves. Because when you come forward with a case, they may see you as a problem maker and even blame

you to have caused it. Particularly in the school setting, it is often difficult to win a sexual abuse or harassment case when the perpetrator is a teacher. In some situations, victims were punished for reporting tutors or the school.(Yacent )

The very few who did come forward to report admitted that not only were their cases dismissed, they were also survivors of further harassment and various types of intimidation on campus. For these young women, coming forward will only contribute to worsen their situation or open gates for further harassment. This student describes the huge price she was made to pay when, refusing to heed the college chaplain's advice, she brought her case of sexual harassment to the attention of her father:

In my first year, I was accused by my housemistress and some male tutors for sleeping with this male friend of mine. In an anonymous letter that was addressed to the vetting committee, it was said that everything took place during my stay back in school on holidays, meanwhile it wasn't true. I never stayed back during the holidays; I went home to my parents. The school chaplain called me to his house and I then told him that where the problem had got to, it was serious and so I had sent for my father to come down. He insisted that I stop him from coming and that he was going to see to it. I told him it was too late and that, there was nothing I could do. When my father came to meet with the school authorities, including my housemistress and the very tutors who accused me, they said there was no anonymous letter and that I had broken the student's code of conduct. That I was found several occasions in the male dormitory or standing with men in the darkness. My father became so furious and went to the extent of turning against me in their presence. With perceived great deception and annoyance, my father left. My fate was therefore left to the sympathizers of the victimizer. (Hajiah, 2<sup>nd</sup> year post secondary)

Another female student observes:

Be it in the secondary, tertiary or the training college, it is not all that easy to come forward with sexual harassment or an assault incident. Sometimes the attitudes of the authorities or the society alone can be discouraging. Even in the situation of rape, sometimes they will ask what you were doing there in the first place. So usually it is based on such attitudes that

makes victims feel guilty or ashamed in coming forward. So what happens in such a situation is for the victim to isolate oneself, and hope that your aggressor does not come her way again. (Davie, 3<sup>rd</sup> year university)

In particular, where survivors were students of their offenders, they were ostracized and ridiculed with questions such that they often felt embarrassed or disgraced before their colleagues. Some participants suggest that it is easier to contest the authority or report a senior student than to deal with a situation where the perpetrator is a tutor. One female student illustrates:

With the male students, you can always fight back or report them to the authorities, but with someone who teaches you, it is often very difficult. The same tutors or teachers teach and correct your exam papers and as such, they can choose to fail you when they want to. The consequences of either a reaction or inaction could be devastating. (Davie, 3<sup>rd</sup> year university)

In a similar experience, a student wrote:

Although in my first year I was often threatened by senior and male prefects who wanted to go out with me and I refused, it was not as scary as when it was a tutor. I think it is more dangerous to report someone when you are under his or her academic wings. (Mado, 2<sup>nd</sup> year post secondary)

Survivors also suggested they were not willing to report male harassment, knowing that no action would be taken against their perpetrators by the authorities. In regard to this, one male participant presents his point of view:

The college administration is a contributory factor to what the girls are going through in these institutions. A prefect is never wrong, no matter what he does to a junior. No matter where you go to report him, he is always right. They think that they are in a position of privilege and as such they can treat others as they want to. (Gaspa, 2<sup>nd</sup> year post secondary)

Reflecting on her experience of the issue, a student wrote in her memory:

I went through all kinds of corporal punishment, intimidation by prefects and teachers. I remember how they made the whole class cut sticks to make gardens for tutors and to weed around the fields in the hot sun for hours. What was painful about it was that, when I went over to report to the tutor on duty, I was asked to go and do the punishment before coming to explain my point. Instead of listening to what I had to say, he made sure I did the punishment first. (Naomy, 2<sup>nd</sup> year, post secondary)

In support of this perspective, another female student presents her views:

The real issue is that, we are in a society that encourages abusive behavior towards women. Where witnesses are even involved, they are not willing to come forward to testify against the perpetrator because of fear of losing their job or what so ever. Also, these perpetrators who are often senior men, have the ability to destroy your record, or grades so you are afraid to testify against him. (Melisa, 3<sup>rd</sup> year university)

Another female student comments:

In the case of harassment, people will even say that he did not physically rape you so what is your problem. Even if he physically forced you, they will ask what you wanted in his office or house. Other times public embarrassment alone will stop you from wanting to even talk about it to anyone. Just as you begin to talk about it, they will just conclude that if the person slept with you, it means that you wanted it. This sometimes leaves you with a feeling of guilt, so it is not easy to talk about incidents of harassment or abuse in our society. (Yayo, 1<sup>st</sup> year post secondary)

It was also suggested that in situations involving rape or serious consequences, parents were pressured by the police, elders of their community or religious affiliations to withdraw the case from the court for settlement outside. In return, they often compensate the parents with money (a couple million cedis) and the assailant is allowed to walk away unpunished. One male student illustrates:

In the case of rape, most police will take money from the perpetrators and convince parents to withdraw the case to settle outside. Some of these parents may not be happy about that, but because of pressure from the

police, neighbors, or immediate family members they are obliged to do so. (Gaspa, 2<sup>nd</sup> year post secondary)

Another male student suggests:

In person I believe that our judiciary system is very corrupt from top-down. For such reason, most incidents of rape or assault are not made public; they are often kept secret so we are made to believe that these incidents are rare in the society. Meanwhile it is not true. ( Naslarma, 1<sup>st</sup> year post secondary)

Such is the point of view of a female student in regard this issue:

As a victim, try going to report yourself. The police will intimidate you. Some of the police officers will even like to sleep with you before pushing your case further. Other times you will be surprised to find out that the police officer in charge of your case had even taken bribe from your perpetrator to withdraw the case from court. It looks as if some people wait for such occasions to take advantage of others and this is exactly what is happening in the system. (Naomy, 3<sup>rd</sup> year post secondary)

Another female student observes:

Everyone knows that with the poverty level in the society, most parents have difficulty making ends meet, so they take advantage of that. For instance, my church pastor lured this 13-year teenage girl into his room and forcibly had sex with her. When it was brought before the police, elders of the church put pressure on the girl's parents to withdraw the case from the police by paying 1 million cedis, in compensation to the girls' parents. The pastor walked away unpunished for the offence. Examples of such are very common in the society. ( Magaziah, 1<sup>st</sup> year university)

This is the view of a male student on such an attitude:

Although in Ghana there is law against rape, a parent who rapes his child or a minister who is indulged in such acts and is economically sound, will often buy his way out. Meanwhile, if you are of a low background, or economically disadvantaged class, definitely you will be put to jail. So at the end it is only the poor victims who suffer. (Moley, 3<sup>rd</sup> year university)

This also suggests that people of high ranks (e.g. ministers, officers, the wealthy, religious leaders etc) who commit sexual crimes, even crimes against their own children, are often allowed to walk away without being made to pay for their offences in the Ghanaian society. I would further argue that in the African context, when the assailant is someone of “high repute” or is economically well off, or someone influential in the community (e.g. a popular figure), the likelihood that a parent will pursue the case further is less. Fear for one’s own safety & economic threats (e.g. job loss), career consequences, and other forms of intimidation are all factors obliging most parents to withdraw or decide not to take up incidences of sexual harassment or abuse in the society. This is the same for the learning context. Particularly fear of dismissal or failure and public intimidation may prevent the survivor from taking action against her/his assailant. These students were also concerned about the lack of confidentiality in the health sector and inadequacies of the justice system. This included attitudes of health workers towards the handling of individual information.

It is quite clear that because of the consequences associated in reporting issues of sexual harassment ( failure, threats, constant intimidation and humiliation, etc.) or opportunities that candidates seeking for admission may have to lose, these students prefer not to come forward. Thus, these female trainee teachers have come to understand that to acquire a teaching degree to empower themselves, they must be ready to compromise their body as part of the unofficial program towards their professional certification. As illustrated through these testimonies, girls and female

students seem to be suffering a great deal in the hands of tutors, professors, administrators and male senior prefects. Meanwhile, unfortunately, solutions available to these students were always inappropriate, unfair or nonexistent. There is also the perception that there is no suitable place to lodge such a complaint, or a misplaced sense of shame on the part of the survivor. It is sad, what female students and girls experience in the educational institutions. In one study, Fiscian (2001) observed that in schools in Ghana, girls usually fail to come forward for similar reasons (e.g. fear of victimization, stigmatization and ridicule), and that their failure to do so has created “conducive grounds” for perpetrators.

Not only do these learning institutions take sexual harassment of girls for granted, they also have failed to initiate any disciplinary proceeding against these tutors/professors. No matter the degree of the seriousness of one’s situation, these officials were said to often conceal allegations amongst themselves (the staff), and perpetrators were allowed to continue their job. Most of these cases go unreported due to pressure from authorities and counselors not to embarrass the perpetrators or assailants, who are often viewed as important and respectable men in society. Also, survivors are often urged not to draw public attention to incidents under threat of being dismissed from their program. Officials will urge victims to remain silent and not to talk about abuse. According to some of these girls, even counselors or school chaplains they confide in will seriously advise them not to report the incident to anyone, even their parents or the police. One example is the memory testimony, where the Post Secondary student was made to pay emotionally and physically as she



refused to heed the college chaplain's advice and brought her case of sexual harassment to the attention of her father. This student's case was unusual because she had the courage to reveal the situation to her father.

However, the very few survivors who took similar risks admitted they never had any kind of support from their college or university officials. Again, in addition to the psychological or emotional impact that they suffered, they were accused for trying to destroy the reputation of tutors and, for that matter, were either punished or suspended.

Again, how survivors may see and respond to the violence they face in the learning environment may vary from context to context and may depend on the status of their assailant. For example, in the context of male student-female abuse, survivors may retaliate with a negative behavior. Such behaviors may include but are not limited to physical aggressive behavior (hitting or fighting back) and verbal insults. Where the assailant is a person in a position of authority or a teacher, survivors will respond with resignation or passivity. They may also seek for transfer to other schools, or choose to drop out of school in order to prevent further harassment by their assailants. Meanwhile, the consequences for reporting a teacher may include failure in his subject, victimization and intimidation. (Leach et al., 2000; Human Rights Watch, 2001)

### **Inadequacies of the justice system and issue of confidentiality**

The handling of confidential problems, particularly as they relate to sexual incidents, plays an important role in either encouraging or discouraging other victims in seeking medical help. It was suggested in the group discussions that individual health workers in their communities later betrayed students with health problems, or students who sought particular treatment. Such attitudes sometimes contributed to the dismissal or intimidation of female students who consulted health institutions for abortion or were treated for rape incidents. One female student illustrates:

Sometimes the attitudes of some health workers, particularly the lab technicians or theatre workers discourage students in coming forward to seek for help. In the case of abortion, some of the male nurses who run rural clinics make sure they sleep with you before helping the girl abort. Meanwhile you are paying for that. (Melisa, 3<sup>rd</sup> year university)

With regards to such attitudes, these students suggest:

Once a student goes to get tested for gonorrhoea or any venereal disease, everything gets back to the school authorities or the community. When I was in the secondary school, girls were dismissed because the school had discovered that she had aborted. (Mougu, 3<sup>rd</sup> year university)

In our society, confidentiality is often taken for granted and in some situations exaggerated. Go and get an abortion from any of the hospitals or to the police to report that you are beaten by your husband and the next day everybody is aware in the community. (Hajia, 2<sup>nd</sup> year post secondary)

Sometimes a student will confide in a school counsellor expecting to get some moral help but this person will end up betraying the trust that the student had in her/him. Other times they will reveal everything to your perpetrator. Even trained professionals do not play by the ethical rules of their professions. (Tina, 2<sup>nd</sup> year post secondary)

Similarly, because of inadequacies in the justice system, most female students and girls are not encouraged to come forward. In addition, the reactions of survivors

as to whether or not to report incidents of sexual harassment, to seek treatment or counseling, among others, is greatly influenced by the attitudes and responses they receive from these educational authorities, health workers and the law enforcement agencies as they come forward with their cases.

**Participants' overall impressions of the methodologies and their pertinence in investigating issues of sexual harassment in Ghanaian setting.**

When asked what for their overall impressions of the methodologies “Focus Groups” and “Memory Work” (See p. 176), some of the students commented on the benefits of the methodologies to them. For example, regarding the memory work, the memory participants suggested how the individual memory work was particularly beneficial to them, especially as it provided them with the occasion to express what they never dared to say for years out of fear. It also provided them the occasion to break the silence around incidents of sexual harassment in the education institutions. For example, one female participant wrote:

The writing allowed me to express myself freely on paper. I was able to speak out my pain, feelings, to think and to look back in order to understand why certain things are the way they are in my life without having to fear of being blamed or accused. Particularly in a society like ours where victims of sexual abuse are often blamed and considered the bad person, it is not easy to bring it out. I will also indicate that with the trust of the researcher, the writing activity was very beneficial. Although I am not the type that writes much, I was encouraged by the approach (Marina, 2<sup>nd</sup> year post secondary).

Another female student wrote:

Despite the fact that I wept when I had to remember my story and reading it over, I was able to break the silence. I think it was time to the society get

know what students were going through in these educational institutions. Some of us were longing for that. (Mangaziah, 3<sup>rd</sup> year post secondary)

Others thought that the writing activity could be an excellent reflective tool in teacher professional development and suggested that journal writing be part of the teacher-training program. Two females participants presented their opinions:

The writing activity seems to be a very good reflective tool for us and as such should be incorporated into our program of study. Although it was my first experience, I seem to like it. (Hardy, 3<sup>rd</sup> year post secondary)

Through the memory work, I have learnt to reflect on my own practices in the classroom and attitudes towards school children, particularly how girls are treated in schools. I am more sensitive to issues concerning the girl-child than before. (Serena, 3<sup>rd</sup> year post secondary)

In regards to the Focus groups, the three groups indicated that they appreciated the group discussions because the interaction permitted them the opportunity to engage in a dialogue, and to listen to others' perspectives, which were sometimes different from their own, and to learn how their colleagues dealt with certain situations in terms of difficulty and disappointments. For example, one female participant suggested:

The group discussions allowed me to understand that I was not the only person affected with the issue of sexual harassment. This allowed me to see the different opinions and views others had on the issue of sexual harassment. (Davie, 3<sup>rd</sup> year post secondary)

To some the sessions with other victims provided healing and a sense of closure since before these sessions everything was bottled inside them without an outlet to discuss with other victims. Also, as stated in the methodology chapter, in doing the memory writing, I wanted to stimulate the reflection of the participants on

their past and present experiences of sexual harassment and to encourage them to talk about them. Meanwhile, with the focus groups, I wanted to provide opportunities through group discussions where participants could interact, share their experiences, views and perspectives and to also feel comfortable to express their opinions without dominating one another.

Indeed, the reactions of the participants suggest that the two methodologies “Focus groups and Memory work” (p. 174) are appropriate to investigating issues of sexual harassment in the Ghanaian context; however, it may demand a certain affinity with the subjects and culture of study. Does this suggest that to investigate a topic such as sexual harassment requires some essentialist affinity with the culture under study? In the case of sexual harassment, a delicate and sensitive issue indeed, having affinity with the participants or culture of study may facilitate openness on behalf of the people or permit the understanding of certain aspects of the culture. The advantage here is that the native informant is dispensed with, thereby avoiding the possible mediation between the researcher and the participants and for that matter, problem of trust issues and fears of all kinds or mistranslation are reduced. Also, the cultural difference, the incompatibility of the two contexts, and the language barrier, may not facilitate particularly the use of a methodology like memory work in exploring sensitive issues such sexual harassment in a context like Ghana.

In effect, the advantage I had over an outsider researcher here was that identifying myself with the group as a native of the very society I was researching

helped me gain access to their private lives, thus eliminating any fear or suspicion between us. Again, by sharing with them my story of suffering and experience of harassment as a female student in the system helped to generate empathy between us. This helped to break the boundary of privacy and introduced an element of bonding that made the participants see one another as sisters and brothers whom they could trust and with whom they could share their experience.

As observed in the African, and particularly the Ghanaian context, sexual harassment is considered to take place only within well-defined established environments or institutions (formal work setting, institutions, schools), which suggests that to get people to talk about the issue, one must be located within these formal institutions. In this way, it may be easier to mobilize individuals to talk about it.

### **Students' awareness of sexual harassment and their views of social change**

Students were asked if they thought that sexual harassment was an important issue in schools that beginning teachers needed to know about and how they could bring about change in their own attitudes and in that of their students in the Ghanaian society. In their responses, the majority (85%) suggested that as educators of the nation's children, their role as teachers was indispensable. They also suggested that their awareness of the consequences of sexual harassment on the education and psychological health of learners would help them understand better the situation of students, and particularly the girl-child in the Ghanaian-context, and that it would also permit them to reflect on their own practice and to be able to bring about change both

in their own attitudes and teaching and in the attitudes of their students. One male student suggested:

It is true that if we know the consequences that sexual harassment has on the lives of students, we are more inclined to work hard to bring about changes in our own attitudes and that of the community. I think most people don't know the extent of harm they cause these girls with their actions. It is perceivable that if they were aware of such consequences they wouldn't go so far. (Shariffy, 3<sup>rd</sup> year university)

Another male student responded:

As teachers I believe that we influence the behaviour and attitudes of students. If I put in the boy-child's mind that he is superior to the girl-child, he will grow up to treat the girl as an inferior being. Meanwhile, if I make this boy-child understand, that the girl-child has the same rights and value as him, and treat this girl with the same respect in the classroom, both sexes will grow up to treat one another with respect. In the type of society I come from, traditional practices towards girls and women are what devalue them in the society. So as a teacher, someone who is listened by the society, or who is conscious of the various traditional practices, I believe I can help to bring about positive change in the attitudes of the community. (Yacent, 3<sup>rd</sup> year university)

Such are also the views of their female counterparts on the question:

I believe that as female teachers, we can be good role models for female students. In our teaching we can emphasize on women of progress or power in our own societies. Also in treating these girls with respect and dignity and not humiliating them as it is in our situation now, we will be able to make an impact in the lives and particularly build self-esteem of these girls (Aboskei, 2<sup>nd</sup> post secondary).

I believe that as female teachers, we also need to evaluate our own attitudes towards girls in the society. We could also serve as perfect examples for these so call female elites or middle class women who try to turn their maids into slaves (Nina, 2<sup>nd</sup> year post secondary).

Here, the testimonies of these student teachers may suggest that both as perpetrators and victims themselves, these teachers could play a positive role to bring

about positive change in both the attitudes of their students and that of their own communities as well. Given the influence that male and female teachers have on students as role models, they are likely to instill positive attitudes in their students and as such could become agents of change in their own communities. The participants were also asked their opinion regarding what they perceived to be an appropriate way forward towards dealing with sexual harassment in the educational institutions in Ghana. The following were their responses.

### **Students' perspectives on 'the way forward'**

The opinions of these students suggested a number of measures that could be undertaken as part of a strategic intervention in the area of sexual harassment. For example, they suggested to:

- Involve students in an education program (e.g. organization of debates, awareness campaigns etc.) to challenge negative and stereotypical attitudes towards sexual harassment and related gender issues;
- Investigate any formal complaint;
- Constitute a sexual harassment panel composed of people from various disciplines;
- Conduct training workshops and seminars on sexual harassment and gender violence;
- Institute measures to protect survivors from being harassed by teachers, professors and tutors;
- Provide counseling and effective support to victims;
- Sensitize potential harassers on the impact of sexual harassment on the education of students;
- Sensitize potential victims on strategies of prevention.



They also suggested that a committee be constituted, preferably of females but also males including students from various disciplines (lawyers, the police service, gender focal persons, social workers, counselors, educators, and parents, a committee outside the learning environment whom survivors and their family members can approach for assistance. Other suggestions included to, nominate an independent organization to investigate sexual harassment and abuse incidents instead of and to put in place policy for teachers' sexual misconduct and to ensure that teachers who defile their students be punished severely. The lack of an appropriate mechanism for reporting, insecurity and lack of trust has brought these students to reflect and to justify reasons why it is important focusing here on survivors' protection in relation to anonymity and confidentiality. One female student illustrates:

For our own protection, it will be better to have a sexual harassment and abuse committee composed of various disciplines with which we the students can trust and consult without fear of getting ourselves into further trouble. Here we can be assured that whatever complains that we may bring forward, our identity is not disclosed. Again when it is with a woman, we may feel at ease to confide in. (Shasha, 1<sup>st</sup> year post secondary)

Another female participant observes:

I think for security reasons, no teaching or administrative staff should be allowed as a member of the committee, if not, there will be no real justices. (Yayo, 1<sup>st</sup> year post secondary)

They also suggested the need for strong policies and procedures at school, university and college levels for making it clear that sexual harassment or abuse of students by teachers is a crime and a violation of professional conduct. Meanwhile, others suggested that the lack of awareness on the issue of sexual harassment and the

consequences on the survivor are contributing factors. They also seem to believe that appropriate training and sensitization programs could help put a stop to all the biases and prejudices around survivors of sexual and gender violence in the society. They therefore suggest that appropriate mechanisms be put in place, with a curriculum that includes issues of sexual and gender violence.

Two female students observe:

In the institutions and schools, they are always organizing science symposiums or debates where students are given prizes for participating. The same strategy could be used to develop awareness in schools and the public as well (Nina, 2<sup>nd</sup> year post secondary).

The government needs to come out with very severe laws on sexual and gender abuse and to make sure the justice system does its work fairly (Shasha, 1<sup>st</sup> year post secondary).

One male student notes:

The lack of awareness, information on gender violence in the society creates lots of confusions when it comes to dealing with that in the society. Until I participated in this study, I didn't know what sexual harassment was. All this is part of ignorance and that is really our problem. Ignorance and illiteracy is killing us (Saditify, 1<sup>st</sup> year post secondary).

Based on the experiences of the participants, one may indicate that policy alone is not enough in responding to issues of sexual harassment in the Ghanaian society. This also suggests that laws may exist for some of these practices, but these laws are such that they sometimes don't work. It is important to note that, in the African context, social and cultural norms (e.g. that of courtship, see above) condone sexual harassment and other forms of discrimination and harmful practices. The potency of these cultural norms is such that, they nullify the work of policy. A good

example is the law against female circumcision in Ghana. The law has existed since 1957, but people still practice it. Other examples include “The Criminal Code Amendment Act and Code of Professional conduct of the Ghana Education Service.” They have been in existence since 1989, but they are not effective. Thus in the African or Ghanaian context, policy may be used to criminalize or prevent sexual harassment, domestic violence, gender discrimination, and female circumcision or to promote girl-child education and affirmative action for women, but people will always find ways of subverting these laws. We therefore need to include meaningful interventions that will help to also bring about change in societal attitudes and cultural mentality of the people.

Also, these institutions should not be considered entities in isolation, they should be seen as located within a cultural setting which in turn forms part of the entire social system. And so the process of intervention must be seen as a counter cultural project. This is the only way the root cause of the problem can be tackled.

So far, the report on experiences of sexual harassment has been focused on those of the survivor. I have tried to distill the relevant testimonies that I gathered from talking to the students, who also happen to be either in the process of becoming teachers or have had some teaching experiences before returning to continue their education. I will now turn the focus to the college administrators and how they viewed and managed incidents of sexual harassment in these institutions. Their impressions are presented as follows.

### **Authorities' impressions of sexual harassment in Ghanaian teacher training colleges**

While my focus was primarily on the student teachers, I found it useful to also include comments of college authorities. Among the four officials I met with, some tried to indicate that the under-representation of girls in the teacher training colleges was not due to sexual harassment but was purely academic. Other major issues that emerged in my meetings with these officials included difficulties in addressing sexual harassment in the training colleges. Such issues included consequences in handling sexual harassment complaints. This included these college officials' responses in relation to the management of sexual harassment in these institutions, which I believe will be useful for further investigation in the area. One of the authorities admitted:

It is a fact that girls don't want to apply for admission, but this has nothing to do with fear of being harassed. These girls are simply not motivated and are not ready to work as hard as the boys. They are only interested in making themselves beautiful for wealthy-big men. Only a small number of them are serious.(Old major)

When it came to the female students and the various institutional practices, some of the authorities attributed the dismissal and failure of female students to a lack of seriousness and ambition. To illustrate, one of these officials stated:

Some of the girls spend most of their time making themselves look outwardly beautiful instead of their books. So when they are not able to make it at the end, they have to leave. We cannot continue to push them forward without any effort. (Gupy)

Some of these authorities accused female students of dressing provocatively with the intention of enticing male lecturers and young men on campus. To illustrate, one of these men suggests: "It is not only uncomfortable to see a student dressed in a transparent dress, such dressing calls unnecessary attention to the female and induces negative sexual attitudes from male students."

Other similar comments were:

I for instance don't allow my female students to keep their hair long or wear what they want. I believe that if they are given such chances or freedom, they will not study. For example, go to the universities to see how the ladies dress for lectures, as if they were going to the dancing club. Their dressing is not only indecent, but also very provocative trying to seduce male lecturers and young men. This is unpuritanic and disturbing for the society. And the most annoying part is that, when you comment on that they say that you are harassing them. (Mr. Bean)

Another official indicated:

Most girls have come forward with sexual harassment incidences and I dismissed some because they were the ones who provoked it. How do you dress in mini-skirts and other dresses that expose your body and will not expect it to contribute to sexual harassment. (Alion)

Indeed these were some of the reasons why female students were forbidden to grow their hair or made to wear uniforms within and outside campus. Also, the issue of dressing provocatively is being taken very serious by some African universities (e.g. in Ghana and Nigeria). For example, in some Nigerian university campuses, male students will deliberately drop items near girls wearing very short skirts, and when these girls bend to get the items and their underwears are exposed, they are verbally attacked by their male counterparts. In some situations, severe sanctions were imposed on young women who wore trousers to campus or work. In certain

states, dress codes were being prescribed for professionals who worked in the banks, advertising agencies and for multi-national companies. In both the Ghanaian and Nigerian contexts it was also concluded that the way students dress suggests that they were promoting permissiveness. Promiscuous.

However, one may dress to 'attract' the other sex without any intention of going further. Here a woman's actions may be read wrongly or misinterpreted by the other and he may want to push things further. Again, in viewing fashion or the dressing of young girls in the society as a major contributing factor for sexual harassment or a means of enticement, society is indirectly dictating to women what to wear based on their perspective of what decency should be for women and girls in that society. Another issue that was considered complex by these college officials was the sexual harassment and abuse by staff members. The following were their opinions and views in relation to students' harassment by staff.

#### **Authorities' responses to students' harassment by tutors**

Some authorities pointed out that, particularly where the perpetrator was a staff member, it was considered complex and dangerous to intervene. Apart from the fear for their own safety, involving oneself in such issues could lead to promotion or career consequences. One stated:

When the harasser is a member of staff, it is very complex. Sometimes you have to find ways to approach him without provoking physical or emotional threats. (Mr. Fanuja)

Another suggested:

Even though I know that there are lots of tutors harassing girls for sex on campus, there is not much I can do. My present position doesn't permit me to take decisions in regards to such complex issues. As an acting principal, my position is very fragile. (Mr. Dondjoin)

Such were some of the excuses said to hinder them from responding to complaints of sexual harassment by staff members. Furthermore, the systematic failure of the educational institutions to investigate or hold tutors, professors or teachers accountable for acts of sexual harassment against their female students demonstrate collusion. They also admitted that the lack of specific government policies and procedure on how to handle sexual harassment is a major factor that was hindering them from responding to sexual harassment incidents brought forward by students. As one of them observes:

The fact that we are not prepared to handle issues such as sexual harassment is very stressful when it comes to dealing with it. Most of all, to be able to take any legal action, it takes clear policy and procedure, without that it will be very difficult. (Mr. Fanuja)

In effect, the lack of policy on sexual harassment for educational institutions in Ghana remains a challenge and area of confusion among college and university administrators and officials in terms of how to deal with the issue. When it came to the female students and the various institutional practices by the colleges, they attributed the dismissal and failure of students, particularly female students, to a lack of seriousness and ambition. For example, some of them believed that female students often spend most of their time trying to look beautiful instead studying. However, most appeared to plead ignorance when they were interrogated on the existence of

sexual harassment and abuse scandals that were said to exist in their institutions. At the minimum, they were on the defensive about any sexual harassment incidents.

It is clear in their responses that they sometimes seemed to conceal perpetrators by defending them. Although I was not able to interview female tutors (they were very few and not easy to contact), based on the responses of the students, I may conclude that female tutors were likely to arrive at the same conclusion as their male colleagues. Thus, evidence from the focus groups suggests that the students' perceptions are closer to the truth than the authorities.

This chapter has focused on the presentation of data, and the final chapter which follows focus on to the summary of the discussions, conclusions and implications for further research.



## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **Discussions of the research findings: Summary, Conclusions, Recommendations and Implications for further Research**

#### **Summary**

This study concludes that the main factors predisposing trainee teachers to sexual harassment in Ghanaian Teacher Training Institutions are Institutional practices by both teachers and students and the Institutional environment created from inadequate or complete absence of physical structures aimed at preventing sexual assaults. These factors work in concert to create conditions that facilitate sexual harassment of female trainee teachers in the Ghanaian context. One will therefore expect that administrative policies will need to be put in place to protect those who are vulnerably located.

The problem of acquiring statistics on the sexual harassment of trainee teachers in Ghana is complicated by the fact that most incidents go unreported in the Teacher Training Institutions. Some of the underlying factors that cause these incidents not to be reported include the following:

- The fear of shame and stigmatization of survivors by society, particularly where the perpetrator is a member of staff (tutor, administrators etc.) or someone of alleged high “repute” in the community.
- The fear of further intimidation or failure from attitudes of college authorities.
- The lack of trust in the law enforcement agencies (police, courts, etc.)
- Absence of well-defined reporting mechanisms.

Even when sexual incidents are reported, statistics of these incidents are not available or are underreported because these incidents are often handled internally, and

not documented because no structures are in place to document sexual harassment incidents. In spite of these deficiencies, this study has shown that in Teacher Training Institutions in Ghana, the extent of sexual harassment is both widespread and overwhelming with underlying currents of inactions, excuses and outright laissez-faire attitude of prevailing ignorance about the extent of the problem.

Based on the focus group sessions and the individual memory work with the student teachers, one can state that the problem of sexual harassment perpetrated by people in positions of authority exists in Ghanaian institutions. It is evident that female student teachers are regularly exposed to a range of sexually motivated abuses within the Teacher Training Institutions and Colleges. As the testimonies of these students demonstrate, this sexual abuse is regularly carried out by tutors, lecturers, administrative staff, and senior students. These three categories of agents of sexual harassment take advantage of institutional power to abuse vulnerable female student teachers. By its very nature, the institution of learning in Ghana is very hierarchically structured, such that power, might and right are often easily accorded to tutors over students, administrative staff over students and senior students over their junior counterpart. Most often they abuse the power and influence of their positions, sometimes backed by threats of reprisals when the survivors refuse to comply.

The study did not find any evidence of physical abuse, but this may be because the survivors often yielded to the machinations of their abusers or they found other ways to resist. Those who resisted often paid dearly through undue loss of marks in their

academic work, leading to final failed grades. One form of resistance was to abandon the program and drop out of college altogether. One alarming note is that not only did the educational institutions refuse to address accusations of sexual harassment through a disciplinary process, they also seemed to be clueless about how to handle sexual harassment incidents and the consequential effects of these harassments on girls' education.

Most of the respondents in this study had in one way or another experienced instances of sexual harassment that had a direct impact on their academic performance and emotional health. Insecurity due to fear of sexual harassment or experience of it has therefore resulted in very low enrolment figures for female prospective students since the process of victimization starts from the moment the student starts prospecting for admission. An example is the experience of one of the respondents cited earlier, whose admission file was said to never have existed, even though she was interviewed for admission. She was interviewed by the very tutor who had hidden her file for refusing to compromise her body. Among the few females that are admitted, some drop out due to reasons directly or indirectly related to sexual harassment. For example, a female student may fail in the final examinations because of low marks given during continuous assessment for which she was supposed to have offered sexual favours to the tutor. The tutor is cognisant of the fact that nobody can challenge him on any grades he gives during continuous assessments and could even be deliberately dishonest in his bid to entrap his prey.

It was apparent during the study that in the process of becoming a teacher in Ghana, there may be unwritten subtle codes with gender and sexual connotations as part

of the program of studies targeted at female teacher-trainees. Female students have to contend with the additional burden of deciphering these unwritten codes to build defensive mechanisms against sexual advances or compromise their bodies as part of an unofficial but virtually institutionalized practice of abuse. In the admission stage, as has already been stated, most female students are denied access for refusing to cooperate and to submit to the demands of the interviewer. It is clear for these female students that, in order to obtain a teaching degree or a career in the Ghanaian society, they must be ready to compromise their bodies as part of the unofficial program towards their professional certification.

Although there is now a growing consciousness among these girls/women in regards to these practices, the majority dare not question them since such practices are often not easy to prove. It is also commonly accepted that the absence of public consciousness of the consequences these educational practices could have for girls' education and health makes the phenomenon worse. In the discussions, sexually transmitted diseases and pregnancy were mentioned as plausible results of sexual harassment and abuse. Concerned with their own health and the present AIDS situation in Ghana, more generally, the female students considered themselves vulnerable to HIV/AIDS by rape, and particularly in situations of coerced sexual intercourse (e.g. by tutors/professors, authorities or male students). However, the reactions of these students indicate their concern and worries about sexual harassment and the transmission of Sexually Transmitted Diseases (STDs and HIV/AIDS).

The increased risk of HIV/AIDS as a result of the prevalence of sexual violence in educational institutions in Africa represent a danger to the lives of these young women. In most African countries, the marginal drop in the enrolment of girls in schools and the widespread of HIV/AIDS is associated with sexual harassment and abuse by male teachers and students. Although the lack of accurate statistics on the direct effect of teacher-student sexual contact does not permit us to establish these links, the impact that sexual harassment and abuse have on girls' health or education is clearly documented (UNAIDS, 2001; World Bank, 2001). One may also deduce that educational officials and college authorities do not demonstrate any greater awareness on the issue than the other members of their communities.

The findings also indicate that female trainee teachers are not exempted from harassment by female tutors/professors and wives of tutors in teacher training colleges in Ghana. Even though harassment from female tutors is not known to be exactly sexual, the consequences of giving female teacher trainees household chores and passing them on to male friends for their sexual needs ends up producing consequences at the same scale as what the male teachers and senior male students do to the females. The study has also shown that the perpetrators (including tutors/professors, administrative staff, senior students) who commit acts of sexual harassment against female students are not held accountable for their acts. The resounding trend in all the memory narratives from the participants is that, overall, the female students have no better alternatives, and so they end up having to live with harassment in the learning environment for the duration of their courses.

## Conclusions

In effect, these debates, testimonies and views of the students, and theoretical arguments regarding sexual harassment in the literature, give us many reasons to consider why sexual harassment may not be generalized to all contexts. Based on the definitions and discussions provided here or the various practices described by these students, it is evident that the issue of sexual harassment within Ghanaian society and particularly the Teacher training Institutions is a question of power, sex discrimination and institutionalized privilege. Even though the study environment is often hostile and leads to sexual harassment, it appears that power abuse in a quid pro quo fashion for sex and exam grades ranks as the leading cause of sexual harassment observed in this study. Central to the concept is the use of power as basis to impose deprivations in these students or potential candidates for lack of compliance.

Also, in Ghanaian educational institutions, discrimination was a problem when it came to the distribution of duties. Girls were also discriminated on subject basis. In schools, female students were relegated to a general education cycle or technical education that emphasized Clerical or Home Economics skills. For instance, it was made compulsory for girls to study Home Economics and boys to study Agricultural Science. In her article *“An Overview of Women's Education in Africa”* Njeuma (1993) suggested that in most technical schools reserved for girls in Africa, the curriculum covers mainly home economics, commercial and secretarial studies, whereas that for the boys covers a much broader range subjects such as carpentry, welding, mechanical drawing, plumbing, electricity, mechanics, electronics, leatherwork and pottery. Based on such reasoning,

girls and women mostly end up in low paying jobs (secretarial staff, catering services, nursing, child care). (p. 128)

A similar research report by UNICEF (1997) suggests that in schools in Zambia, discrimination was not a problem when it came to the distribution of duties, particularly at the college level. On the other hand, when it came to subject bases, home economics were predominantly female while industrial arts was an area mostly reserved for male students. This disparity maintains and reinforces the notion that certain areas of studies and therefore certain jobs are reserved for men and others for women. With regard to this, a report by the New York Times Service (UNICEF, 1994 ) argues: " school is still a place of unequal opportunity where girls face discrimination from teachers and textbooks." (p. 65) On the one hand, one may argue that boys were also discriminated against since they were not allowed to do subject areas traditionally reserved for women. On the face of it, this may seem to suggest that boys are equally disadvantaged, until we learn that home science, for instance, is not valued, is a lower paying job and does not lead to a productive career. This means that girls are often of disadvantaged from the start and end up as losers in societies that promote this concept.

A classical example is the informal education of boys and girls in some African societies during pre-independence or colonial era. For instance, when we refer to the book *Growing up in Dagbon*, an ethnological study on education of children in the Northern Ghanaian Kingdom of Dagbon, notably, girls were not trained to assume important leadership roles in the Dagbon society. The Dagbon structure of education was

patriarchal. Boys were trained to become tradesmen, Drummers, Fiddlers, Diviners, and Mallams where they occupied various positions in their communities. This was not the case for girls. In the education of girls, instruction was limited to the domestic and not planned along the economic or career senses. It is quite clear that, the aim here was to model these girls into obedient, submissive housewives.

In some societies, girls are even discriminated on nutritional bases through cultural practices. For example, within the frafra culture of Northern Ghana, women are deprived from eating chicken, yet it is the most common source of meat in the society. From birth, the girl-child is encouraged to internalize elements of certain subordination and inferior rules as part of the standard norm for a woman in her society before she even reaches her womanhood. The girl-child is treated differently where she is also made to understand that she is inferior to the boy-child. A girl-child that has been discriminated against since childhood and who grows up to knowing that boys are treated differently or as superiors may internalize this inferiority in relation to men.

Also when we refer to the domestication of female students by the educational institutions (e.g. context of the training college experience), it is clear that the domestication of girls in Ghanaian educational institutions is directly derived from the main environment where these training colleges and schools are located. Also, both students and teachers in these very institutions are products of the same society, meaning that what goes on in these institutions should not be considered in isolation; they are built into the social structure of the society, and as such form part of the main social system.



So it is possible that both traditional, cultural and pre-colonial education influences may have helped in shaping the attitudes of the African society towards the sexual harassment of girls and women.

In the study, statistics of sexual harassment have been noted to be scanty partly because of the lack of understanding and convolution around the definition of sexual harassment, especially as it relates to the socio-cultural context. A broader and proper definition, which could inform and direct efforts and policies, is lacking, which leads to the inconsistent use of terms such as sexual harassment, sexual violence, school related gender-based violence. Sometimes, in the definition of sexual violence, behaviours such as physical beating or assault are included. In certain instances, harassment between people of the same sex, or racial discrimination, that is not sexual in nature, is sometimes considered as sexual harassment. These discrepancies create lack of clarity when it comes to dealing with sexual harassment both as an abstract and policy issue.

In effect, as we try to confront the problem of sexual harassment faced by young women in the Teacher Training Institutions in Ghana, we need to locate the concept within a broader context, a context which reflects the cultural factors or realities that underpins and facilitate sexual harassment of women in such societies. What is clear is that cultural relativism insists that our esthetic values, thus, what we consider normal or abnormal, depends upon our cultural mindset or what Hall describes as cultural mentality. All the same, it is essential to bear in mind that, in certain circumstances, men are likely to misinterpret or wrongly read the reactions of women. An example of this is the one

based on courtship, where the ``no`` of the woman is often interpreted as ``yes``, even though she is an unwilling participant in the sexual overtures or acts. Furthermore, in the case of seductive harassment, women dressing in certain manners are perceived to be sending out signals to the opposite sex or viewed as provocative, which may be completely contrary to the intentions of the woman.

### **Recommendations and Implications for further research**

As most countries of the Western world, including Canada and the United States, have taken initiatives to fight sexual harassment and gender violence (including sexual abuse) in their societies, including educational institutions, and to come out with serious policies and laws to protect women in these societies, there seem to be a lack of political will in most African countries to tackle the problem. In most African situations, the leaders prefer shifting the burden on the international community or non-governmental organizations and refuse to be accountable to what is going on in their own societies. There is no doubt that some African governments, including Ghana, have responded positively to the issue of equal opportunities or gender sensitive policy for girls and women in most aspects, but shouldn't this focus not include issues of security, and protection or sexual and gender violence in the institutions? The many acts of abuses and harassment that go on in the educational institutions are certainly what keep girls out of school. Some fall pregnant and have to leave; others drop out because they can no longer cope with these abuses. Others fear to enroll in these institutions because of the hostility of the learning environment and institutional practices.

Although there are proposals and recommendations at the primary and secondary levels from donor communities, NGOs and independent researchers regarding policy and reform plans for sexual harassment and gender violence, there are none for teacher education and the tertiary level as yet. In regards to this, Omale (2000) suggests that in developing countries, while sexual harassment is receiving some official recognition in the workplace, this is not the case for schools; there remains a “policy vacuum” in education. There are, however, ongoing studies in that area. Researchers such as Mirembe et al. (2001), and the authors of The Human Rights Watch study on South Africa (2001), recommend that to successfully help change the behavior of both teachers and learners in regards to sexual harassment in Africa it requires concerted efforts at all levels, including the need for Government initiative. Meanwhile, the findings of this study shed light on the major practices and factors that serve to perpetuate the sexual harassment of students in teacher training institutions in Ghana.

The study also suggests that the Ghana or African governments move from an emphasis on enrolment rate to focus on completion. This means that issues of protection and security measures need to be put in place so that when given access, these young women and girls will be able to complete their education. However, to properly attend to the problem of sexual harassment and other sex-based violence presently faced by the country (Ghana), the study recommends that clear policy framework is needed to define, prohibit, and carry penalties for acts of sexual and gender-based violence and that specific measures and actions be taken in the following areas:

### **Government measures:**

- Formulate and implement clear policy and procedures on sexual based violence and sexual harassment that aim at raising awareness and establishing culturally appropriate systems (practices and behaviours) for various establishments and institutions;
- Identify indicators of protection and mechanisms for reporting sexual based violence in order to prevent victims from further harassment by perpetrators;
- Assist local and international NGOs, universities, establishments and educational institutions and support national sexual based violence staff in the implementation of sexual based projects in communities;
- Institute a systematic analysis of the judiciary system from a gendered perspective.

The corruption of law enforcement agencies and the media sometimes aggravates a confusing legislative framework, where the law appears to promote abuse culture by protecting the rich and economically sound individuals who commit sexual crimes. The study therefore proposes that serious measures be taken in the area of law enforcement and proper legislation be put in place. Law enforcement officials also need to be educated on their responsibilities and complexities of sexual harassment.

### **Teachers and Teacher Training Institutions**

To prevent sexual harassment and better equip teachers professionally to respond to the problem, teacher training colleges and institutions should:

- Include in the program or curriculum for trainee teachers' gender or equity issues. This should include the consequences of sexual harassment as a discriminatory barrier or obstacle to women education. The curriculum should also inculcate into the student teachers different ways to intervene and stop sexual harassment in their schools;
- Develop in-service training programs for experienced/practicing teachers on the prevention of sexual harassment, and how to respond to sexual violence and sexual harassment in their schools;

- Appoint someone (preferably a gender focal person, but not necessarily a staff member) within each Teacher Training College to coordinate training efforts;
- Inform and educate teachers in their responsibilities under the teachers or professional code of conduct that may be available;
- Establish disciplinary and or sexual codes of conduct for assailants and ensure that a teacher or professor who is found guilty for a sexual relationship with a student is prosecuted or serious action is taken against him/her;
- Establish clear guidelines for teachers and students on sexual based violence with basic facts on STDs, HIV/AIDS;
- Take action to end practices such as corporal punishment, bullying and degrading treatment by teachers and senior prefects.

On this level, the findings also suggest critical elements, which should be considered prior to dealing with the sexual harassment of trainee teachers in Teacher Training Colleges and Institutions. Such elements include the Ministry of Education's need to analyze existing policies, institutional practices and their impact on female educational attainment and to introduce a gender sensitive curriculum in the Teacher Education program. Also the most important of all is prevention: ensuring that trainee teachers are not driven into sexual harassment and abuse of their students. Thus, they should be made to see their role as protectors and not future harassers.

### **Ghana National Association of Teachers (GNAT) Or Teachers' Unions of Ghana**

To mitigate sexual harassment and abuse of all forms against students and trainee teachers in Educational institutions in Ghana (Universities, Teacher Training Colleges and Institutions etc.), the study proposes that the teachers' unions (GNAT) should:

- Refuse membership to convicted teacher sex offenders;
- Cooperate with the ministry of education (both district and regional level) to advocate awareness to combat sexual violence and harassment in training colleges, universities and schools;
- Take serious action against teachers/professors/tutors who are found guilty by professional practice and sexual misconduct including rape, sexual harassment, or physical abuse of a student.

### **Advocacy**

The study also suggests that activists or female advocacy groups involve women at the grassroots in their advocacy campaign to combat sexual harassment and gender violence of all forms in the society. Local women should be invited to conference presentations (outside or within the country), meetings or workshops on gender issues: Even if these women don't understand or speak the language, they are likely to make a positive impact on other women in their communities (e.g. the Magazhias).

- Lobby with the government for change in the law and to see to it that laws, policies on sexual harassment and other forms of sexual violence are seriously implemented;
- Encourage women and human rights groups to organize mass campaigns to ban sexual harassment, sexual abuse and discrimination practices against women and girls in the society and to sensitize the population on consequences of sexual violence on women's education and Health.

### **Support services for survivors**

Issues of confidentiality can sometimes be complex. They relate not only the importance of maintaining the privacy of women survivors of sexual violence, but may also include confidentiality of how to handle information. Failure to ensure the protection and privacy of survivors may cause them to suffer further harassment. In the group discussions, the reactions of these students suggested that they did not have confidence in

the system and that the attitudes of survivors as to whether or not to seek particular treatment or counseling were greatly influenced by how personal information was handled by professionals in the environment. The findings therefore suggest special attention when it comes to handling sexual harassment complaints in educational institutions, so that survivors are not penalized or made to face further intimidation, embarrassment and social stigma within and beyond the learning environment. There is a need for establishment of safe, confidential and appropriate support services for sexual violence survivors in communities including counseling. Based on such assumptions, the participants in this study, particularly the female students, emphasized the importance of putting in place a sexual violence committee constituted mainly of people from multidisciplinary areas and outside the college or university community. Laws must reinforce this committee so that sexual harassment and abuse cases must be publicized and enforced.

**Education: prevention, sensitization awareness and training:**

Protection, sensitization and prevention must be seen as part of a government and institutions' responsibility.

- Develop sexual based violence awareness materials for educational institutions and implement community sensitization and education campaigns;
- Educate medical staff, the police, social workers, teachers and educators, lawyers and women groups and the community about the potential consequences of sex-based violence and sexual harassment on women and the girl-child's education and health or advancement the society;
- Inform the police, lawyers, on the needs of survivors in regards to the judiciary system, and guarantee confidentiality in regards to their protection;

- Use opinion leaders in society, chiefs and other community offices holders to campaign to uphold women's rights;
- Create sex-based and gender violence awareness and the existing rights of women and girls at all levels of the society;
- Use the media to sensitize communities on the consequences of sexual harassment and as a means to denounce sexual harassment and abuse of women and girls in the society, and to encourage survivors to come forward with their cases;
- Make certain that law enforcement agencies work consistently with the mass media, look at programs for increasing sensitivity in reporting, and create the opportunity for changing public awareness and sensitivity on the issue of sexual harassment and abuse.

There is a need for the training of personnel working with survivors of sexual harassment and abuse on how to handle cases. Social workers, the police and other personnel working with survivors should also be trained on the complexities of sexual harassment and other forms of sexual violence, the consequences for women's health and education, including the emotional and psychological impact of it on survivors.

- Inform the police and lawyers on the needs of survivors in regards to the judiciary system and confidentiality in regards to their protection;
- Support local institutions and schools in their capacity to enhance coordination of sex-based violence activities.

### **Medical Measures**

The study proposes that officials/institutions put in place a medico-legal system or kit for survivors of sexual violence who may need medical help. In addition to the risks involved for survivors, they risk further exposure or reprimand if their identities are not protected. This also means doctors, health practitioners and social workers need to be sensitized on the issue, and must know how to proceed with this kit and must be familiar with the legal rights of survivors.



### **Implications for further research**

Clearly there is the need for further research in the area of female trainee and women teachers' lives and sexual violence. As it gets closer to 2005 and the need to examine barriers to reaching the Education For All targets for girls and schooling, case studies such as this one suggest that the climate for teaching and learning for women is still fraught. There is a need for further work in relation to schooling/education and gender-based violence, women teachers' bodies, and the ways in which they are sexualized. While there is a greater amount of this work within the context of western research there is less work within developing contexts, although this appears to be changing. Issues of gender and human security are also being taken up more directly by UNICEF (2002). Questions are emerging within these frameworks on how we need a greater understanding of how men and boys can be involved in this research, and a greater awareness of the need for understanding male behaviour if we are to understand gender-based violence in schools ( Epprecht M., 2002; Frosh et al., 2001 and Morrell , 1998; 1999 ).

Indeed the experiences of these students suggest that access to education should not only focus on programs designed to attract a higher enrolment of girls. As African leaders stress the need to promote gender equality in access to education, they also need to bear in mind that a hostile and unsafe learning environment are barriers preventing the African woman and girl from attaining education in the society. In their effort to obtain basic education for all African citizens by the year 2015, a safe and conducive learning environment is an important factor.

## REFERENCES

- Abrahams, N. (2003). *School violence another burden facing the girl-child: A paper presented at the Second South African Gender Based Violence and Health Conference*. Johannesburg, South Africa.
- Afenyadu, D. & Lakshmi, G. (2003). *Adolescent sexual and reproductive health behaviour in Dodowa, Ghana*. Washington D.C, CEDPA. Retrieved April 2003 from [http://www.cedpa.org/publicity, pdf/Ghana arhbehaviour. pdf](http://www.cedpa.org/publicity_pdf/Ghana_arhbehaviour.pdf)
- Aggarwal, A. P. (1985). *Sexual harassment on campus: A guide for students and teachers*. Thunder Bay, Ontario: M. M. Publications.
- Aggarwal, A. P. (1992). *Sexual harassment in the workplace*. (2nd Ed.) Toronto: Butterworths, Canada Ltd.
- Aidoo, A (1991). *Changes: a love story* New York : Feminist Press at the City University of New York, 1993.
- Aidoo, A (1977). *Our sister Killjoy*. London: Longman,
- Allnutt, S. (1999). *Learning the body voice: Body memory work with women*. Unpublished M.A. Thesis. McGill University, Montreal.
- Alonso, A. (1988). The effects of truth: Re-presentations of the past and the imagining of community. *Journal of historical sociology*, 1 (1), 33-57.
- Amadiume, I. (1987). *Male daughters, female husbands*. London & New York: Zed books Ltd.
- Anderson, G. (1990). *Fundamentals of educational research*. London: The Falmer Press.
- Anderson, K., Armitage, S., Jack, D., & Wittner, J. (1990). Beginning where we are: Feminist methodology in oral history. In J. McCarl Nielsen (Ed.). *Feminist research methods: Exemplary readings in the social sciences* (pp.94-111). Boulder, CO: Westview Press.
- Anousviron Deneshvar in UNAID(2002). *Unsafe schools: A literature review of school related violence in developing countries*.
- Antze, P., & Lambek, M. (1996). *Tense past: Cultural essays in trauma and memory*. New York: Routledge.
- Assie-Lumumba, N. T. (1994). *Demand, access and equity issues in African higher education: Past policies, current practices, and readiness for the 21st century*,

Paper prepared for donors to African education working group on higher education.

- Bachouse, C., & Cohen, L. (1978). *The secret oppression: Sexual harassment of working women*. Toronto: Macmillan.
- Baker, D. D., Terpstra D. E., & Cutler, B. D. (1990). Perceptions of sexual harassment: A re-examination of gender differences. *Journal of Psychology*, 124(1), 409-416.
- Barham, M., & McGinn, M. C. (1991). *Overlooked issues relevant in sexual abuse*. U.S, Hawaii.
- Benavot (1989). *Education, gender and economic development: A cross-national study*.
- Benning, B. R. (1990). *History of education in northern Ghana (1907-1976)*. Ghana University Press. Accra.
- Bennell, P. Karin, H. & Swainson N. (2002) *The impact of HIV/AIDS epidemic on education sector in sub-Saharan Africa: A synthesis of the findings and recommendations of three country studies. Botswana And Uganda*. Retrieved April 2003 from <http://www.sussex.ac.uk/usie/cie/aidssynpublished.pdf>.
- Benson, D. J., & Thomson, G. E. (1982). Sexual harassment on a university campus: The influence of authority relations, sexual interest and gender stratification. *Social problems*, 29, 236-251.
- Bingham, G. S. (1994). *Conceptualization of sexual harassment as discursive practice*. Connecticut: Westport.
- Brandenburg, J. B. (1997). *Confronting sexual harassment: What schools and colleges can do*. New York & London: Columbia University.
- Brooks, L., & Perot, A. R. (1991). Reporting sexual harassment. *Psychology of Women Quarterly*, 15, 31-47.
- Brown C.K. (2003). *Sexual abuse of school children in Ghana*. University of Cape Coast.
- Butler-Kisber, L. (2005) "Arts-based qualitative research and self-research and self-study: A poetic approach". In C. Mitchell, S. Weber & K O. Reilly-Scanlon (eds), *Just who do we think we are ? Methodologies for autobiography and self-study in teaching*. London. NY: RoutledgeFalmer.
- Butler-Kisber, L. and Sullivan, A. (Fall 2003). Data poems as research. *Journal of Critical Inquiry into Curriculum and Instruction*, Special Issue.

- CAMFED Association (2002). *CAMMA human rights programme report Zimbabwe*.
- CAMFED Association (No date). *Human rights programme*. Retrieved August 2003 from [http://www.Camfed.org/html/human Rights/html](http://www.Camfed.org/html/human%20Rights/html).
- Calvino, I. (1987). *The literature machine: Essays*. (P. Creagh Trans.) London: Secker & Warburg.
- Casey, E. (1986). *The life of the transcendental Ego: Essays in honor of Willam Earle* (pp. 172-192). Albany: State University of New York Press.
- Cleveland, J. N., & Kerst, M. E. (1993). Sexual harassment and Perceptions of power: An under-articulated relationship. *Journal of vocational behaviour*, 42, 49-69.
- Cleveland, J. N. & McNamara, M. E. (1993). *Understanding sexual harassment: Contributions from research on domestic violence and organizational change*. (pp.217-40). In M. S. Stockdale (Ed.) *Sexual Harassment in the workplace: Perspectives, Frontiers, and Response strategies*. Thousand Oaks: Calif Sage.
- Climo, J. J. (1990). *Transmitting ethnic identity through oral narratives*. *Ethnic groups* 8, 163-179.
- Collins, E., & Blodgett, T. (1981). Sexual harassment: Some see it...some don't. *Harvard Business Review*, 5, 77-95.
- Coles, F. S. (1986). Forced to quit: Sexual harassment complaint and agency response. *Sexual roles*. 14, 81-95.
- CHRC. (1983). *Unwanted sexual attention and sexual harassment: Results of a survey of Canadians*. Ottawa.
- CHRC. *Annual Report, (1991-1992)*. Ottawa: Minister of Supply and Services.
- CHRAJ. (1999). *Complaints of sexual harassment cases low, short*. General News of Thursday, August 26, 2003, Retrieved from <http://www.ghanaweb.com>
- CHRAJ & WILDAF. (2001). *Sex for jobs in Takoradi timber firm*. GRI Press Review of Monday, September 17<sup>th</sup> 2003, Retrieved, from <http://www.ghanaweb.com>
- CHRAJ. (2001). *Report cases of sexual harassment*. Press Review of Monday, May 21, 2003, Retrieved, from <http://www.ghanaweb.com>
- Clifford, J. (1986) . Partial Truths. In Clifford, J. and George E. Marcus *Writing Culture: The Poetics and Politics of Ethnography*. University of California Press.

- Coward, R. (1995). *Female desires: How they are sought, bought and packaged*. New York: Grove Press.
- Cotton, A. & Richard, S. (1998). *The benefits of girls' education in sub-Saharan Africa*. CAMFED.
- Crawford, J.; Kippax, S., Onyx; J. Gault U., & Benton, P. (1992). *Emotion and gender: constructing meaning from memory*. London: Sage Publications.
- Crawford, J., Kippax, S., Onyx; J., Gault, U., & Benton, P. (1991). *Emotion and gender: constructing meaning from memory*. London: Sage Publications.
- Crull, P. (1982). Stress effects of sexual harassment on the job: Implications for counseling. *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry*, 52 (3), 539-544.
- Davison, J. (1993) School attainment and gender: attitudes of Kenyan and Malawian parents toward educating girls. *International Journal of Educational Development*, 13 (4).
- Dehay, T. (1994). *Memory, narrative, and identity essays in ethnic American literatures*. In S. Sing & Hogan. Boston: New Northeastern University Press.
- Denzin, N., & Lincoln, Y. S. (1998). *Collecting and Interpreting Qualitative Materials*. London & New Delhi: Sage Publications.
- Dekeseredy, W.S. (1990). Male peer support and woman abuse: The current state of knowledge. *Sociological Focus*, 23, (2), 129-139.
- Dekeseredy, W.S., & Kelly, K. (1993). The incidence and prevalence of women abuse in Canadian university and college dating relationships. *Canadian Journal of Sociology*, 18 (2), 137-159.
- Dekeseredy, W.S., & Schwartz, M. D. (1998a). *Measuring the extent of woman abuse in intimate heterosexual relationships: A critique of the conflict Tactics Scales*. U.S. Department of Justice Violence against Women Grants Office. Retrieved from <http://.vaw.umn.edc/research.asp>.
- Dekeseredy, W.S., & Schwartz, M. D. (1998b). *Woman abuse on campus: Results from the Canadian National Survey*. California, Thousand Oaks: Sage.
- Dourambeis, N. (1997). *Defining the issue: Sexual harassment in the University*. Unpublished M.A. thesis, McGill University, Montreal.
- Dzeich, B. W., & Weiner, L. (1990). *The lecherous professor: Sexual harassment on campus*. (2nd Ed.). Urbana: University of Illinois Press.

- Ely, M., Anzul, M., Friedman, T., & McCormack, S. A. (1991). *Doing qualitative research: Circles within circles*. London: The Falmer Press.
- Epp, J. R., & Watkinson, A. M. (1997). *Systemic violence in education: promise broken*. Albany: State University of New York Press.
- Epprecht, M. (2001). Unnatural vice' in South Africa: The 1907 commission of enquiry. *International Journal of African Historical Studies*, 34 (2).
- Epprecht, M. (2002). Male-male sexuality in Lesotho: Two conversations. *Journal of Men's Studies*, Spring, Special Issue on African Masculinities.
- Epstein, D. (1997). Keeping them in their place: Hetero/sexist harassment, gender and the enforcement of heterosexuality. In A. M. Thomas & C. Kitzinger (Eds.). *Sexual harassment: Contemporary Feminist perspectives*. Philadelphia: Open University Press.
- Fentress, J., & Wickham, C. (1992). *Social memory*. London: Blackwell.
- Fleischman, J. (2003). *Fatal vulnerabilities: Reducing the acute risk of HIV/AIDS among women and girls*. Washington D.C., Centre for Strategic and International Studies.
- Fitzgerald, L. F. (1990). Sexual harassment: The definition and measurement of a construct. In Michele Paludi. *Ivory Power: Sexual harassment on campus*. Albany: The State University of New York Press.
- Fitzgerald, L. F., & Hesson-McInnis, M. (1989). The dimensions of sexual harassment: A structural analysis. *Journal of Vocational Behaviour*, 35, 309-326.
- Fitzgerald, L. F., & Ormerod, A. (1991). Perceptions of sexual harassment. *Psychology of women Quarterly*, 15, 281-294
- Fitzgerald, L. F. (1993). Sexual harassment: violence against women at the workplace. *American Psychologist*, 48, 1070-1076.
- Fitzgerald, L. F., & Shullman, S. L., Bailey, N., Richards, M., Swecker, J., Gold, Y., Ormerod A. J., & Weitzman, L. (1988). The incidence and dimensions of sexual harassment in academia and the workplace. *Journal of Vocational Behaviour*, 32, 152-175.
- Fitzgerald, L. F., Swan, S., & Fisher, K. (1995). Why didn't she just report him? The psychological and legal implications of women's responses to sexual harassment. *Journal of Social Issues*, 51 (1), 117-138.

- Fraser, N. (1989). *Unruly practices: Power, discourse and gender in contemporary social theory*. Polity Press: United States.
- Freeman, M. (1991). Rewriting the self: Development as normal practice. *New directions for child development* (83-101).
- Freire, P. (1998). *Politics and education*. Los Angeles: UCLA Latin American Center Publications.
- Freire, P. (1970). *Pedagogy of the oppressed*. New York: Continuum.
- Frosh, S., Phoenix, A., & Pattman, R. (2001). *Young masculinities: Understanding boys in contemporary society*. London: Palgrave.
- Frosh, S., Pattman, R., & Phoenix A. (1998). Developing "boy-centred" research'. *Journal of Youth Studies*, 1, 125-142.
- Gardner, C. B. (Ed.). (1995). *Passing by: Gender and public harassment*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.
- Gardner, C. B. (1989). *Analyzing gender in public places: Rethinking Goffman's vision of everyday life*. (pp.42-56) *The American Sociologist*, Spring.
- George, E. (2001). *Criminal Justice? Tackling sexual abuse in schools*. New York: Human Rights Watch.
- Gergen, K. J. (1986). Correspondence versus autonomy in the language of understanding human action. In W. F. Donald & R. A. Schweder (Eds.) *Metatheory in social science*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Ghana Education Service Girls Education Unit (1997). *Report on STME zonal clinics: increasing and sustaining the participation of girls in science, technology and mathematics education*. Government of Ghana.
- Ghana. (2001). *Teacher sexually abuses 95% of his pupils*. General News of Friday, November 09 2003, Retrieved January 2004 from, <http://www.ghanaweb.com>
- Ghana Education Service. (2002). *Illicit sex contributes to high school dropout rate among girls*. General News of Friday, March 08 2003, Retrieved from, <http://www.ghanaweb.com>
- Glass, B. L. (1988). Workplace harassment and the victimization of women. *Women's Studies International Forum*. 11, 1, (pp. 55-67).

- Goody, J. (1981). *Literacy in traditional societies*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Grahame, K.M. (1985). Sexual harassment. In C. Guberman & M. Wolfe (Eds.). *No safe place* (pp.111-130). Toronto: The Women's Press.
- Grauerholz, E. (1989). Sexual harassment of women professors by students: Exploring the dynamics of power, authority and gender in a University setting. *Sex Roles*, 21, (11-12), 789-801.
- Grauerholz, E. (1996). Sexual harassment in the Academy: The case of women professors. In M.S. Stockdale (Ed.). *Sexual harassment in the workplace: Perspectives, Frontiers, and response strategies* (pp.29-50). Thousand Oaks, California: Sage.
- Gruber, J. E. (1989). How women handle sexual harassment: A literature review. *Sociology and Social research*, 74, (1), 3-9.
- Gruber, J. E., & Bjorn L. (1986). Women's responses to sexual harassment. An analysis of sociocultural organizational, and personal resource models. *Social Science Quarterly*, 67, (4), 814-826.
- Gruber, J. E., Smith, M., & Kauppinen-Toropainen, K. (1996). In M.S. Stockdale (Ed.). *Sexual harassment in the workplace: Perspectives, frontiers, and response strategies* (pp.151-73). Thousand Oaks, California: Sage.
- Gruber, J. E., & Smith, M. (1995). Women's response to sexual harassment: A multivariate analysis. *Basic and applied social Psychology*, 17, 543-62.
- Gupta, G. R. (2001). *Gender sexuality and HIV/AIDS: The what, the why and the how*. SIECUS report 29 (5). Retrieved April 2003 from <http://www.siecus.org/pubs/srpt/srpt0033.html>.
- Gutek, B. A. (1982). A psychological examination of sexual harassment. In B. Gutek (Ed.). *Sex Role Structure and Affirmative Action Policy*. Los Angeles. University of California, Institute of Industrial Relations.
- Gutek, B. A. (1985). *Sex and the workplace: The impact of sexual behaviour and harassment on women, men, and organizations*. London: Josey-Bass.
- Gutek, B. A. (1996). Sexual harassment at work: When an organization fails to respond. In M.S. Stockdale (Ed.) *Sexual harassment in the workplace: Perspectives, Frontiers, and Response Strategies* (pp.272-90). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Gutek, B. A, Cohen, A. G., & Conrad, M. A. (1990). Predicting social-sexual behaviour at work: A conflict hypothesis. *Academy of management Journal*, 33, 560-77.



- Gutek, B. A., & Koss, M. P. (1993). Changed women and changed organizations: Consequences of and coping with sexual harassment. *Journal of vocational Behaviour*, 42, 28-48.
- Gutek, B. A., Nakamura, C. Y., Gahart, M., Handschumacher, I., & Russell, D. (1980). Sexuality in the work place. *Basic and Applied Social Psychology*, 1, 255-65.
- Hall in Williams, R. (1977). *Marxism and Literature*. Oxford University Press
- Halbwachs, M. (1950). *La mémoire collective*. Paris : Presses Universitaires de France
- Halbwachs, M. (1992). *On collective memory*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Hallam, S. (1994). *Crimes without punishment: Sexual harassment and violence against female students in schools and universities in Africa*. Discussion paper no. 4. London. African Rights.
- Hampl, P. (1996). Memory and imagination. In J. McConkey (Ed). *The anatomy of memory: An Anthology* (pp. 201-11). Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Haug, F. (1992). *Beyond female masochism: memory-work and politics*. London: Verso
- Haug, F., Andresen, S., Buz-Elfferding, A., Hauser, K., Lang, U., Laudan, M., Ludemann, M., & Meir, U. (1987). *Female sexualization: A collective work of memory*. London: Verso.
- Hemming, H. (1985). Women in a man's world: Sexual harassment. *Human Relations*, 38, (1), 67-79.
- Henderie, C. (2003). States Target Sexual Abuse by Educators. *Education Week*, April 30:1.
- Holland, P. (1991). Introduction: History, memory and the family album. In J. Spence & P. Holland. (Eds.), *Family snaps: The meanings of domestic photography* (pp.1-14). London: Vergo Press.
- hooks, b. (1990). *Marginality as site of resistance In Russell Ferguson (Ed). Out there: Marginalization and Contemporary Cultures*. New York, Cambridge: MIT Press.
- hooks, b. (1989). Choosing the margins as a space radical openness. *Framework*, 36, 17.
- hooks, b. (1993). Eros, eroticism and the pedagogical process. *Journal of cultural studies*, 7 (1), 58-63.

- hooks, b. (2000). *Feminism is for everybody: Passionate Politics*. South End Press Cambridge. M.A.
- Hulin, C. L., Fitzgerald, L. F., & Drasgow, F. (1996). Organizational influences on sexual harassment. In M. S. Stockdale (Ed.). *Sexual Harassment in the workplace: Perspectives, Frontiers, and Response Strategies* (pp.127-50). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Human Rights Watch (2001) *Scared at school: Sexual violence in South African schools*. New York.
- Hyde K. A. L. (2001) *Girls' education: Thematic studies from the world education forum 2000*. Paris, UNESCO
- Heyzer N. (2003) *Enlisting African women to fight AIDS*. The Washington Post, July 8.
- Hyde, K. (1993b). *Forum for African women educationalists (FAWE)*. Paper presented at the FAWE executive committee meeting. Harare, Zimbabwe.
- Jensen, I. W., & Gutek, B.A.. (1982). Attributions and assignment of responsibility in sexual harassment. *Journal of Special Issues*, 38, 121-136.
- Jones, T. S., & Remland, M. S. (1992) Sources of variability in perceptions of and responses to sexual harassment. *Sex Roles*, 27, 3-4.
- Jones, T. S., Remland, M.S., & Brunner C. C. (1987). Effects of employment relationships, response of recipient, and sex of rater on perceptions of sexual harassment. *Perceptual and motor skills*, 65, 55-63.
- Kadar, M. (1982). Sexual harassment as a form of social control. In M. Fitzgerald, C. Guberman, & W. Wolfe (Eds.). *Still Ain't Satisfied* (pp.168-80). Toronto: The Women's Press.
- Kadzamira, E. C. & Swainson, N. (2001). *Risky behaviour. Can education help?* Insights, Special Ed.
- Kadzamira, E.C & Nicola Swainson, Dixie Maluwa-Banda, & Augustine Kamlongera (2001). *The impact of HIV/AIDS on formal schooling in Malawi*. Brighton, England. Centre for International Education, University of Sussex Institute of Education.
- Kanter, R. M. (1977). *Men and Women of the Corporation*. New York: Basic.
- Kaplan, J. R. (1980). *A woman's conflict: The special relationship between women and food*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.

- Kauffman, L. S. (1993). The long goodbye. Against personal testimony or, an infant grifter grows up. In G. Green & C. Kahn (Eds.). *Changing subjects. The making of feminist literary criticism* (pp.129-146). New York: Routledge.
- Kenig, S., & Ryan (1996). Sex differences in levels of tolerance and attribution of blame for sexual harassment on a University campus. *Sex roles*, 15, 535-549.
- Kerner, D. O. (1988b). *The social uses of knowledge in contemporary Tanzania*. Unpublished Ph. D. Dissertation, CUNY.
- Kitzinger J. (1994). The methodology of focus groups: The importance of interactions between research and participants. *Sociology of Health and Illness* (16:103-21).
- Kivikuru, U., Lobulu, W. & Moushiro, G.(1994). *Changing mediascapes? A study of nine Tanzanian villages*. University of Finland. Institute of Development Studies Research report, 38.
- Knapp, D.E., & Kustis, G.A. (1996). The real 'disclosure': Sexual harassment and the bottom line. In M. S. Stockdale (Ed.). *Sexual harassment in the workplace: perspectives, frontiers, and response strategies* (pp.199-213). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Koss, M. P. (1990). Changed lives: The psychological impact of sexual harassment. In M. Paludi (Ed.). *Ivory power: Sexual harassment on campus*. Albany: Sunny Press.
- Kuhn, A. (1995). *Family secrets. Acts of memory and imagination*. New York: Verso.
- Kumasi, Ghana (2001). *We can stop AIDS & rape*. Tabloid News of Friday, July 20<sup>th</sup> 2003, Retrieved from, <http://www.ghanaweb.com>
- Krueger, R. A. (1994). *Groups and focus groups*. London: Sage Publications.
- Kuhn, A. (1995). *Family secrets: Acts of memory and imagination*. Verso Publishing
- Kundera, M. (1981). *The book of laughter and forgetting*. (M. H. Heim, Trans.). Harmondsworth: Penguin Books.
- Lambek, M. & Antze, P. (1996). Introduction: Forecasting memory. In P. Antze, & M. Lambek (Eds.). *Tense past: Cultural essays in trauma and memory* (pp. Xi-xxxviii). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Landrinett, H., & Klonoff, E. A. (1997). *Discrimination against women: prevalence, consequences and remedies*. Thousand Oaks, Calif.: Sage.

- Larkin, J. (1997). *Sexual harassment: High school girls speak out*. Toronto, Ontario: Second Story Press.
- Layman, N. S. (1994). *Sexual harassment in American secondary schools: A legal guide for administrators, teachers and students*. Dallas: Contemporary Research Press.
- Leach, F. (2001) *Conspiracy of silence?: Stamping out abuse in African schools*. Insights, Special Ed. August 2001.
- Leach, F. Machakanja, P. & Mandoga, J. (2002). *Preliminary investigation of abuse of girls in Zimbabwean junior secondary schools*. Knowledge and Research Department for International Development. Education research paper . London.
- Leach, F. Fiscian, V. Kadzamira, E. Lemani, E, & Machanja, P. (2003). *An investigative study of the abuse of girls in African schools*. London. Policy Division, Department for International Development.
- Lemoncheck, L. & Sterba, J. P (2001) *Sexual harassment : issues and answers*. New York, Oxford University Press.
- Leonard, R., Ling, L. C. Hankins, G. A., Maidon, C. H., Potorti, P. F. & Rogers, J. M. (1993). Sexual harassment at North Carolina State University. In Kreps G. (Ed.). *Sexual Harassment: Communication Implications*. New Jersey: Hampton.
- Lewis, B. (1975). *History: Remembered, recovered, invented*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- LuKe et al. (2002). *Confronting the myth of sugar daddies: Recent findings linking age difference, economic transaction, risky behaviour in sexual relations in urban Kenya*. Paper presented at the Annual Meetings of the Population Association of America. May 9-11, Atlanta, Georgia.
- Mbassa, M. D. (2001). *Les abus sexuels en milieu scolaire au Cameroon*. Paper presented at The Committee on The Rights of The Child Day of General Discussion: Family and Schools. Geneva, Switzerland, September 28.
- Mabalane, P. et al. (2001). *Gender equity for all: An educator's handbook on mainstreaming*. Pretoria: National Department of Education
- Machakanja, P., & Leach, F. (2001). *The sugar daddy trap: Peer pressure pushes girls into sex*. Insights, Special Ed.
- McDaniel, S., & Roosmalen, E. V. (1991). *Sexual harassment in Canadian academe: Explorations of power and privilege*. Atlantis, 17, 1. 3-19.

- McKinney, K., & Crittenden, K. S. (1992). Contra power sexual harassment: The offender's viewpoint. *Free Inquiry into Creative Sociology*, Vol. 20, 3-10
- Mackinnon, C.A. (1979). *Sexual harassment of working women: A case of sexual sex discrimination*. New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press.
- MacKinnon, C. (1987). Women, self-possession, and sport. In *Feminism unmodified. Discourses on life and law*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press. (pp.117-124).
- Mazer, D. B., & Percival, E .F (1989). Students experiences of sexual harassment at a small university. *Sex Roles*, 20, 1-22.
- Miller, J. (1996). *School for women*. London: Virago.
- Miller, N .K. (1997). Public statements, private lives: Academic memoirs in the nineties, *Signs.Journal of Women in Culture and Society*, 22 (4), 981-1015.
- Mirembe, R. (2001). Mixed messages. *Id21 Insights Gender Violence special issue* (37). Retrieved April 2003 from <http://id21.org/insights/insights-gv..> Special-mirembe.html.
- Mitchell, C. & Weber, S. (1999). *Reinventing ourselves as teachers: Beyond nostalgia*. London and Washington, Dc.: Falmer .
- Mlamleli et al, (2001). *Opening our eyes: Addressing gender-based violence in South African schools - A module for educators*. Pretoria: National Department of Education.
- Mlamleli, O. Mabelane, P. Napo, V. Sibiyi N. & Free, V.(200). Creating programs for schools: opportunities and challenges in relation to gender based violence in South Africa. *McGill Journal of Education*, 35 (3), 261-277.
- Morgan, D. (1988) *Focus groups as qualitative research*. London, Sage.
- Morrison, T. (1996). Memory, creation and writing. In J. McConkey (Ed). *The anatomy of memory: An Anthology* (pp. 212-218. ). New York & Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Morell, R. (2000/2001) *Changing men in southern Africa*. Pietermaritzburg/London University of Natal Press/Zed Press
- Morrell, R. (2000). South African Men in the post-apartheid era: responses, dangers and opportunities. In I. Breines, R. Connell, & I. Eide (Eds). *Male roles, masculinities and violence* (pp. 107-115). Paris: UNESCO.

- Morrell, R. (1999) Boys, men and questions of masculinity in South Africa. In L. King (Ed.) *Questions of Intimacy: Rethinking Population Education* (pp. 31-59). Hamburg: UNESCO.
- Morrell, R. (1998). Gender and education: The place of masculinity in South African schools. *South African Journal of Education*, 18 (4): 218-225.
- Morrell, R. (1998). Of boys and men: Masculinity and gender in Southern African studies. *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 24 (4), 605-630.
- Morrell, R. (1997). Masculinity in South African history: Towards a gendered approach to the past. *South African Historical Journal*, 37, 167-177.
- Morrell, R., Deacon, R., & Prinsloo, J. (1999). Discipline and homophobia in South African schools: The limits of legislated transformation. In D. Epstein & J. Sears (Eds) *A Dangerous Knowing: Sexuality, Pedagogy and Popular Culture* (pp. 164-181). London: Cassell.
- Murrell, A. J. (1996). Sexual harassment and women of color: Issues, challenges and future directions. In M. S. Stockdale (Ed.) *Sexual harassment in the workplace: Perspectives, frontiers, and response strategies* (pp.51-56). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Murrell, A. J., Olson, J. E., & Frieze, I. H. (1995). Sexual harassment and gender discrimination: A longitudinal study of women managers. *Journal of Social Issues*, 51 (1), 136-49.
- Mykut, P., & Morehouse, R. (1994). *Beginning qualitative research: A philosophic and practical guide*. London: The Falmer Press.
- NiCarthy, G., Gottlieb, N. & Coffman, S. (1993). *You don't have to take it! A woman's guide to confronting emotional abuse at work*. Seattle, Wash.: Seal.
- Njeuma, D. L. (1993). An overview of women's education in Africa. In J. K. Conway, & C. S. Bourque. (1993). *The politics of women's education: Perspectives from Asia, Africa, and Latin America*. The University of Michigan Press.
- Obeng-Quaido, A. (1987). New development-oriented models of communication research: A case of Focus group research. *Africa Media Review*; 1, 2.
- O'Brien K. Improving survey questionnaires through focus groups. In Morgan, D. ed. (1993). *Successful focus groups: Advancing the state of the art* (pp 105-118). London, Sage.

- O'Brien K.(1993). Using focus groups to develop health surveys: An example from research on social relationships and AIDS-preventive behaviour. *Health Education Quarterly*, Vol. 20(3) p.361-372. Fall.
- Odaga, A. & Ward, H. (1995). *Girls and schools in sub-Saharan Africa: From analysis to action*. World Bank Technical Paper N° 298. Washington, D. C.: Africa Technical Department Series.
- Odaga, A. (1994). *The challenge of promoting female participation in education in sub-Saharan Africa*. Keynote address to the Ninth Symposium on Education, Development, and Research in Africa at Ohio University College of Education.
- Omale, J. (2000). Tested to their limit: Sexual harassment in schools and educational institutions in Kenya. In Judith, Mirsky and Marty Radlett. Editors, *No paradise yet: The world women take the new century*. London. Zed Press. P.19-38.
- Oppong, C. (1974). *Growing up in Dagbon*. Accra: Ghana Publishing Corporation.
- Osborn, R. L. (1992). Sexual harassment in Universities: A critical review of the institutional response. *Canadian Women Studies*, 12, 3, 72-76.
- Paludi, M. A. & Barickman R. B. (1991). *Academic and workplace sexual harassment: A resource manual*. State University of New York Press.
- Paludi, M. A. (1996). *Sexual harassment on college campuses: Abusing the Ivory power*. State University of New York Press.
- Patry-Buisson, G. (1989). *Policy aimed at countering sexual harassment in the workplace*. Commission des droits de la personne.
- Peltz, R. (1987). Who is speaking Yiddish in South Philadelphia today? Jewish language in Urban America. *International journal of the sociology of language*, 67, 145-166.
- Popovich, P.M. & Licata, B. (1987). A role model approach to sexual harassment. *Journal of management*, 13, 149-161.
- Popovich, P. M. & Licata, B., Nokovich, D. Martelli, T. & Zoloty. S. (1986). Assessing the incidence and perceptions of sexual harassment behaviour among American undergraduates. *Journal of psychology*, 120, 387-396.
- Popovich, P.M., Jolton, J. A., Mastrangelo, P. M., .Everton, W. J., Somers J. M., & Gehlauf D. N. (1995). Sexual harassment scripts: A means to understanding a phenomenon. *Sex roles*, 32, 5-6, 315-335.

- Powell, G. N. (1986). Effects of sex role identity and sex on definition of sexual harassment. *Sex roles*, 14, 1-2, 9-19.
- Pryor, J. B. & Day, J. D. (1988). Interpretations of sexual harassment of University students. *Sex roles*, 18, 405-417.
- Pryor, J. B. (1987). Sexual harassment proclivities in men. *Sex roles*, 17, 5-6; 269-290.
- Pagelow, M. D. (1984). *Family violence*. New York: Praeger.
- Panos (2003). *Beyond victims and villains: Addressing sexual harassment in the educational sector*. Report No 47. London
- Reilly, M. E., Lott, B. & Galloghy, S. M. (1986). Sexual harassment of University students. *Sex roles*, 15, 333-353.
- Riger, S (1991). Gender dilemmas in sexual harassment policies and procedures. *American Psychologist*, 46, 497-507.
- Ropers-Huilman, B. (1998). *Poststructural feminist perspective of power: Situating & knowledge in poststructural Classrooms*. New York & London: Columbia University.
- Rossetti, S. (2001). *Children in schools: A safe place?* Botswana, UNESCO
- Savoie, D. & Viateur, L. (1996). In Sexual harassment in schools: implementing a policy. "Recognize it, prevent it, stop it." Quebec.
- Schneider, B. E. (1987). Graduate women, sexual harassment and University policy. *Journal of Higher Education*, 58, 46-65.
- Schneider, B. E. (1985). *Approaches, assaults, attractions, affairs: Policy implications of the sexualization of the workplace*. Population Research and Policy Review, 4, 93-113.
- Schwartz, M. D., & Dekeseredy, W. S. (1997). *Sexual assault on the campus: The role of male peer support*. Thousand Oaks, CA: sage.
- Schratz, M. & Schratz-Hadwick, B. (1995). Collective memory-work: The self as a resource for research. In M. Schratz, & R. Walker (Eds.). *Research as social change* (pp. 39-64). New York: Routledge.
- Seid, R. (1989). *Never too thin. Why women are at war with their bodies*. New York: Prentice-Hall Press.



- Sev'er, A. (1999). Sexual harassment: Where we were, where we are and prospects for the new millennium. Introduction to the special issue. *The Canadian Review of Sociology and Anthropology* (CRSA) 36. 4 November.
- Sev'er, A. (1995). Subtle forms of violence: Sexual harassment of female faculty and teaching assistants. In I. Davis & P. Anisef, (Eds.). *Contested boundaries: different sociologies*. Toronto: ISR Publications.
- Shakeshaft, C., & Cohan, A. (1994). *Sexual abuse of students in schools: What administrators should know*. New York.
- Shariff, P. & Verlaque-Napper, N. (2002). Story telling change. *Id21. Education*. January 28. Retrieved from <http://www.id21.org/zinter/id21/zinter.exe?>
- Simon, R. (1982). *Gramsci's Political Thought*. London, Britain: Camelot Press.
- Smith, A. L. (1995). Social memory and Germany's Anti-Foreigner crisis: A case of collective forgetting. In M. C. Teski, & J. C. Jacob (1995). *The Labyrinth of memory: Ethnographic Journeys* (pp.61-92). Connecticut London: Westport, Bergin & Garvey.
- Swiderski, R. (1995). Mau Mau and memory rooms: Placing a social emotion. In M. C Teski, & J. J. Climo (1995). *The Labyrinth of memory: Ethnographic Journeys* (pp.96-111). Connecticut. London: Westport, Bergin & Garvey.
- Tangri, S. S., Burt, M. R. & Johnson, L. B. (1982). Sexual harassment at work: Three explanatory models. *Journal of social Issues*, 38, 4, 33-54.
- Tancred, P., Hearn, J. Brurell, G., & Sheppard, D. (1989). *The sexuality of organization*. London: Sage publications..
- Terefe, D & Mengistu (1997). Violence in Ethiopian schools: A study of some schools in Addis Ababa. In *Violence at Schools: Global Issues and Interventions*, edited by T. Ohsako. Paris, UNESCO International Bureau of Education.
- Tsakalis, G. (1998). *Memory work and gender socialization*. Unpublished M.A. thesis, McGill University.
- Teski, M. C, & Climo J. J. (1995). *The labyrinth of memory: Ethnographic journeys*. Westpor, t Bergin & Garvey: Connecticut. London.
- UNAIDS/UNICEF (2001). *Children and young people in a world of AIDS*. Retrieved April 2003 from [www. Childinfo.org/eddb/hivaids/young htm](http://www.childinfo.org/eddb/hivaids/young.htm).
- UNAIDS (1999) *Women, HIV and AIDS*. Retrieved April 2003 from [http://www.thebody.com/sfaf/winter00/perspective. Html](http://www.thebody.com/sfaf/winter00/perspective.html).

- UNICEF, ESARO. (2002) Life Skills Education with a Focus on HIV/AIDS in Education. Nairobi.
- UNICEF, Government of Swaziland, (2002). Trainers Manual on Gender Issues in Education and Children's Rights. Swaziland, Ministry of Education.
- UNICEF, ESARO. (August 2001). Operationalisation for ESAR of UNICEF Global Guidelines for Human Rights Programming. 'A draft report for UNICEF ESAR RMT meeting, Nairobi, Kenya.
- UNICEF (2001). *The State of the World's Children*. Retrieved July 2003 from <http://www.unicef.org/sowcol/short version/AIDS htm>.
- UNICEF Ontario. (1994). *The girl child: An investment in the future*. Ontario.
- U.S. Equal Employment Commission (1988). *EEOC. Policy guidance*. Report No. N915.035.5168.
- U.S. Merit System Protection Board (1981). *Sexual harassment in the Federal workplace: Is it a problem?* Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office.
- Van Manen, M. (1990). *Researching lived experience: Human science for action sensitive pedagogy*. Faculty of education, The University of Ontario
- Vidrovitch, (1997). *Girls and schools in sub-Saharan Africa: From analysis to action*. World Bank Technical Paper N° 298. In Odaga & Ward H. (1995) Africa Technical Department Series. Washington, D. C.
- Vilakazi-Tselane, L. (1998). *A situational analysis of the girl child*. Pretoria: South Africa. National Institute for Public interest Law and Research.
- Weeks, E.L., Boles, J. M., Garbin, A. P. & Blount, J. (1986). The transformation of sexual harassment from a private trouble to a public issue. *Sociological Inquiry*, 54, 2, 432-55.
- Welsh, S. & Nierobisz, A. (1997). How prevalent is sexual harassment: A research note on measuring sexual harassment in Canada. *Canadian Journal of Sociology*, 22, 4, 505-22.
- Williams, R. (1977). *Marxism and Literature*. Oxford University Press
- Women & Juvenile Unit (WAJU). (2002). *Israeli in trouble over sexual harassment*. General News of Sunday, September 01, 2003,, Retrieved from, <http://www.ghanaweb.com>

- Wood, J. T. (1994). *Saying it makes it so: The discursive construction of sexual harassment*.
- Wood, K., & Rachel, J. (2001). *Dangerous Love? Challenging male machismo*. Insights, Special Ed.
- Wolf, J., & Odonkor, M. (1997). *How educating a girl changes the woman she becomes: An Intergenerational Study in Northern Ghana*. ABEL, Technical Paper No 8.
- Wolpe, A. M., Quinlan O. & Martinez, L. (1997). *Gender equity in education*. A Report by the Gender Equity Task Team. Department of Education. South Africa.
- World Education (no date). *Ghana HIV/AIDS exchange*. Retrieved August 2003 from <http://www.worlded.org/projects/region/africa.html>.
- Zandy, J. (1995). *Liberating memories: Our work and our working class consciousness*. New Brunswick, N.J: Rutgers University Press.
- Zewdie, G. (1994). *The situation of girls' education in Anglophone Africa*. Presented to the Seminar on Girls' Education in Anglophone Africa.
- Ziauddin, S. and Borin Van, L. (1998). *Introducing Cultural Studies*. New York: Totem Books.

**APPENDIX A**  
**Research Instruments**

**Figure 9: Focus Groups Interview Guide**

### **Focus Groups Interview Guide**

#### **Section 1:**

*After an ice breaker exercise presented to the beginning teachers about the story of a Ghanaian teacher who seduced seven of his class girls aged 13-14, to critically examine (ice breaker exercise see an annex), the participants were asked the following open-ended questions:*

1. Have you ever-experienced or do you remember someone who has ever experienced incident of sexual harassment that you would like to talk about?
2. Based on your experience, what are the various forms of sexual harassment behaviours commonly found in the teacher training colleges and institutions?

#### **Section 2:**

3. How do you perceive the way Ghanaian institutions handle incidents of sexual harassment?
4. Do you feel sexual harassment is an important issue in schools in Ghana that beginning teachers need to be aware of and if so why?
5. How do you think an awareness of the issue will impact your teaching?

#### **Section 3:**

6. To your knowledge, what are the sexual harassment policies that exist for schools in Ghana?
7. How can policy on sexual harassment in schools ensure that it protects the victims/survivors of sexual harassment/abuse?

#### **Section 4:**

8. In what ways, if any, did your involvement in the group discussions change how you now think about sexual harassment?

#### **Section 5:**

9. What are some of the strengths and weaknesses of the Focus groups?
10. How did the group discussions contribute to your awareness of the issue of sexual harassment in the Ghanaian context?
11. Would you recommend other approaches in addition to focus groups? What are they and why?

**Memory Guide**

**Section 1:**

1. What are your memories of schooling as a student in the Ghanaian society?
2. Do you have an experience of sexual harassment you want to speak of? What is it?
3. Looking back on your life as a student, can you recall a particular situation where you were refused admission or made to fail an exam or embarrassed in public for refusing to cooperate with a teacher or a fellow student?

**Section 2:**

4. Tell me about the worst of this experience.
5. What impact do these memories or experience have on you today?

**Section 3:**

6. How did the memory writing stimulate your reflection on the issue of sexual harassment as a trainee teacher?

**Section 4:**

7. Would you recommend other approaches in addition to doing memory work and why?

**Figure 11: interview guide for college officials**

**Open-ended questions for college officials**

1. What are the gender related problems that female students are facing in the teacher training colleges?
2. Is sexual harassment a concern for the educational institutions? why?
3. What are your over all impressions of the sexual harassment of students teachers by male tutors in the training colleges?

## Teacher remanded for defilement

By Paul Awortwi-Mensah

AN Accra Circuit Tribunal has remanded a teacher in prison custody for allegedly defiling a 16-year-old school girl on several occasions at Weija, near Accra.

Lawrence Owusu, who was contracted by the victim's father as a part-time teacher for her and her brothers, took advantage of the absence of the father from the house and had sex with her on several occasions.

He pleaded guilty with explanation and the tribunal presided over by Mr. Justice Charles Quist who sat as an additional Circuit Tribunal Chairman, remanded him in custody to re-appear on May 17. He was not given the opportunity to offer his explanation.

Before Lawrence was remanded, the tribunal said since the victim was 16 years old, the charge should be changed from defilement to rape, under Section 98 of Act 554.

Presenting the facts of the case, Inspector Helena Sapomaa told the tribunal that the victim stays with her parents at Weija whilst Lawrence is a teacher living at Weija.

She said Lawrence was engaged by the victim's father as a part-time teacher for the victim and her brothers for some time.

According to the prosecutor, Lawrence took advantage of the absence of the victim's father from the house and had sexual intercourse with her on several occasions.

Inspector Sapomaa said on April 5, this year, Lawrence promised the victim ₵50,000 if she allowed him to have sex with her, adding that after the act Lawrence gave the victim only ₵2,000.

The prosecutor said the victim later reported the matter to her step-mother who confronted Lawrence and later reported the case to the police and Lawrence was arrested.



## STUDENT CONSENT FORM

Dear Students,

I am a Ph.D. candidate at McGill University in Montreal, Canada. My research focuses on sexual harassment, particularly Ghanaian teachers' perceptions and experience of sexual harassment in schools and the community. The study consists of two steps: The first step involves memory work (remembering and reflecting on your experiences and perceptions of sexual harassment through writing) and the second involves sharing your views, perceptions and experiences orally within a focus group context.

During the group discussions and conversations with you, I would like to have your permission to audio-tape your discussions. This will allow me to transcribe the events and to recall the experiences as well. I will also insure that your name and any affiliation will be kept confidential. All measures will be taken to ensure your privacy and confidentiality in any of the work that results from this study. Please note that your involvement in the study is *entirely voluntary*. Any time you wish to withdraw, you should feel free to do so.

The results of the study will contribute to the research and literature on sexual harassment in African schools. As far as I know, this study will be the first of its nature in Ghana. I believe that participation in this study will be relevant to you as prospective teachers in terms of your own professional development. Further, this study could play an important role in the Ministry of Education's effort to establish a gender strategy for the education system for Ghana and to use the information to develop plans and set directives for schools. It will also contribute to the efforts of policy makers to design plans of action for implementing a policy on sexual harassment, and to increase the protection and promotion of the rights of women, girls and children in the society. I would truly appreciate your participation in this project.

Yours sincerely,

Gladys Teni Atinga  
Doctoral Candidate (Ph.D.)  
McGill University

---

## STUDENT CONSENT FORM

I have read the above statement about the research project. I understand that my involvement in this study is *entirely voluntary* and that I may withdraw from the study at any time. I also understand that the discussions will be audio-taped but that my real name will not be used in any work resulting from this project. Finally, I understand that every attempt will be made to ensure my privacy.

I thank you for your cooperation

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**APPENDIX B**  
**Research Clearance**

**Updated January 2000**

**MCGILL UNIVERSITY FACULTY OF EDUCATION**

**STATEMENT OF ETHICS OF PROPOSED RESEARCH**

It is assumed that the responses to the questions below reflect the author's (or authors') familiarity with the ethical guidelines for funded and non funded research with human subjects that have been adopted by the Faculty of Education and that responses conform to and respect the Tri-council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans (1998).

**1. Informed Consent of Subjects**

Explain how you propose to seek informed consent from each of your subjects (or should they be minors, from their parents or guardian). Informed consent includes comprehension of the nature, procedures, purposes, risks, and benefits of the research in which subjects are participating. Please append to this statement a copy of the consent form that you intend to use.

Participants will be issued a consent form on which all aspect of the research will be presented. This will include the nature, procedures, goals and benefit of the research (see attached). The consent form will address as well the concerns relating to participants' confidentiality including their right to withdraw from the study. Audio-taping of any interview will be done upon their permission.

**2. Subject Recruitment**

2.1 Are the subjects a "captive population" (e.g., residents of a rehabilitation centre, students in a class, inmates in a penal establishment)?

Yes. They are beginning teachers in a training college in Ghana.

**2.2 Explain how institutional or social pressures will not be applied to encourage participation. (See attached guidelines)**

Recruitment of participants will be done on a voluntary basis and based on participants' free will.

**2.3 What is the nature of any inducement you intend to present to prospective subjects to persuade them to participate in your study?**

I will suggest to the students that through their participation in this study they will be contributing to the research and literature on sexual harassment in African schools. I will also suggest that participation in the study will complement their teacher preparation and professional development.

**2.4 How will you help prospective participants understand that they may freely withdraw from the study at their own discretion and for any reason?**

I will inform the students in oral and written form that they may withdraw from the study at any time and at their own discretion.

### **3. Subject Risk and Wellbeing**

What assurance can you provide this committee (as well as the subjects) that the risks, physical and/or psychological, that are inherent to this study are either minimal or fully justifiable given the benefits that these same subjects can reasonably expect to receive?

While I recognize that memory work could be a sensitive topic, the study poses no obvious psychological and physical risk to participants. However, they will be clearly informed about the purpose of the study, the procedures and how the results will be used (both in writing and verbally).

#### **4. Deception of Subjects**

4.1 Will the research design necessitate any deception to the subjects?

No, the research design will not necessitate any deception to the subjects or participants.

4.2 If so, what assurance can you provide this committee that no alternative methodology is adequate?

4.2 N/A

4.3 If deception is used, how do you intend to nullify any negative consequences of the deception?

4.3 N/A

#### **5. Privacy of Subjects**

How will this study respect the subjects' right to privacy, that is, their right to refuse you access to any information which falls within the private domain?

Participants will be informed in the consent letter of their rights to withdraw. The students may request that certain information that they will share not be used in the result of the study.

#### **6. Confidentiality/Anonymity**

6.1 How will this study ensure that (a) the identity of the subjects will be concealed and (b) the confidentiality of the information, which they will furnish to the researchers or their surrogates will be safeguarded? (See guidelines on confidentiality/anonymity section).

To ensure confidentiality all necessary safety measures will be taken in the study to protect participants' identity and safeguard any information that is shared during interviews and group discussions. No real names will be used in any written documents. Codes will be used for transcribed data and the field notes.

**APPENDIX C**  
**Statistical Information**

BAGABAGA TRAINING COLLEGE - TAMALE  
UPDATE OF STUDENTS ENROLMENT - 2000 '2001  
12TH MARCH, 2001

F O R M	M A L E	F E M A L E	T O T A L	REMARKS
1A	30	7	37	
1B	39	2	41	
1C	36	2	38	
1D	37	1	28	
TOTAL	142	12	154	
2A	34	9	43	
2B	38	8	46	
2C	38	4	42	
2D	42	5	47	
TOTAL	152	26	178	
3A	28	4	32	
3B	26	5	31	
Tech. Skills { 3C	31	1	32	
3D	31	8	39	
Social Studies { 3E	22	9	31	
TOTAL	138	27	165	
GRAND TOTAL	432	65	497	
PERCENTAGE	86.92%	13.08%	100%	

/IHS/

A & B - Social Studies

C & D - Technical Skills

UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA  
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION  
NOMINAL ROLL  
2000/2001 ACADEMIC YEAR

CLASS	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL
P.S. 1A	36	7	43
P.S. 1B	32	7	39
P.S. 1C	35	7	42
	103	21	124
P.S. 2A	35	7	41
P.S. 2B	33	6	39
P.S. 2C	33	6	39
P.S. 2D	33	6	39
P.S. 2E	34	5	39
	168	29	197
P.S. 3A	28	13	41
P.S. 3B	29	13	42
P.S. 3C	28	13	41
P.S. 3D	27	14	41
	112	53	165
GRAND TOTAL ..	383	103	486