



Contribution ID: 7

Type: **Research Paper**

## **PREVALENCE, PERCEPTION AND CONSEQUENCES OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT IN KENYAN INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER LEARNING**

The issue of sexual harassment in academia is increasingly becoming the centre of discussion. Indeed in most educational institutions, sexual harassment and gender-based violence have become an issue of research and discussion. More and more students are currently joining institutions of higher learning, many of which are not sufficiently equipped to handle sexual harassment on campus. Kenyan universities are a good sample representative of the larger society because their students are drawn from a cross-section of all communities. Exploring their pedagogical practices may, therefore, offer valuable insights into the broader understanding of how they play a meaningful role in empowering young Kenyans by promoting a harassment-free environment. However, the bulk of existing research has examined sexual harassment in non-academic settings, and only recently have social scientists begun treating sexual harassment in the academic setting as an important area of inquiry. Although several recent studies have established sexual harassment to be pervasive in learning institutions, little is known about the frequency, severity and types of sexual harassment occurring in specific educational institutions. This paper explores students' attitude and consequences of sexual harassment on campus. It also looks into the general perception that students have concerning harassment. In a cross-sectional survey, 389 respondents filled a questionnaire on sexual harassment. Quantitative statistical analysis revealed that sexual harassment was significantly prevalent in academia. Two-thirds of university students are subjected to sexual harassment before they join campus. Many of the respondents acceded to have been subjected to sexually harassing behaviours but were resistant to label themselves as survivors of harassment. The perception was high among undergraduate students. Recommendations for the improvement of the situation to create a freer and safer campus environment as well as suggestions for further research are made.

**Primary author:** Dr KAY, James (Kabarak University)

**Session Classification:** Media, Communication and Education

**Track Classification:** Media, Communication and Education