

**COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES AND STUDENTS' AWARENESS OF SEXUAL
HARASSMENT IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN UGANDA.**

**A STUDY OF SELECTED SCHOOLS IN
WAKISO DISTRICT**

BY

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DECLARATION

I, **MUZEYI FAIZO**, do declare that this research dissertation is my original work and has never been presented to any institution for any academic award.

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Date: 20/06/2023

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APPROVAL

This is to confirm that this research dissertation titled, “Communication Strategies and Students’ Awareness of Sexual Harassment in Secondary Schools in Uganda: A study of selected schools in Wakiso District”, has been done under our supervision and approved for submission.

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my sponsor, Mr. Bamwanga Med Kwesiga, without whom I would not have embarked and completed the academic journey.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

DECLARATION	i
APPROVAL	ii
DEDICATION.....	iii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	iv
TABLE OF CONTENTS	v
LIST OF TABLES	viii
ABSTRACT	ix

CHAPTER ONE: 1

INTRODUCTION..... 1

1.0 Introduction	1
1.1 Background to the Study.....	1
1.1.1 Historical Perspective	1
1.1.2 Theoretical Perspective.....	5
1.1.3 Conceptual perspective	6
1.1.4 Contextual Perspective	6
1.2 Statement of the Problem.....	9
1.3 Purpose of the Study	10
1.4 Objectives of the Study	10
1.5 Research Questions.....	10
1.6 Scope of the Study	11
1.6.1 Content Scope	11
1.6.2 Geographical Scope.....	11
1.6.3 Time Scope	11
1.7 Significance of Study.....	12
1.8 Operational Definition of Key Terms	12

CHAPTER TWO 13

LITERATURE REVIEW 13

2.0 Introduction	13
2.1 Theoretical Review	13
2.2 Conceptual Framework.....	15

2.3 Review of Relevant Literature	16
2.3.1. Effect of Message Design on Awareness of Sexual Harassment.....	16
2.3.2. Effect of Vehicles (Media) on Awareness of Sexual Harassment	19
2.3.3. Effect of Evaluation of Strategies in Creating Awareness of Sexual Harassment amongst students.....	23
2.4. Gaps in the Literature.....	25
CHAPTER THREE	27
METHODOLOGY.....	27
3.0. Introduction	27
3.1 Research Approach.....	27
3.2 Research Design	27
3.3 Population of the Study.....	28
3.4 Selection of Study Participants and Sampling Technique	28
3.5 Data Collection Methods	30
3.6 Data Collection Instruments.....	31
3.6.1 Interview Guide.....	31
3.6.2 Discussion Prompts	31
3.7 Data Analysis	31
3.8 Ethical Considerations	32
CHAPTER FOUR.....	33
PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS	33
4.0 Introduction	33
4.1 Effect of Message Design on Awareness of Sexual harassment.....	33
4.2 Effect of Vehicles (Media) on Awareness of Sexual Harassment	36
4.3 Effect of Evaluation of Strategies on the Creation of Awareness of Sexual Harassment amongst Students.....	41
CHAPTER FIVE.....	45
DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS.....	45
5.1 Discussion of Findings.....	45
5.1.1 Effect of Message Design on Awareness of Sexual Harassment.....	45
5.1.2 Effect of Vehicles (Media) on Awareness of Sexual Harassment	46

5.1.3 Effect of Evaluation of Strategies in Creating Awareness of Sexual Harassment amongst Students	47
5.2 Conclusions.....	49
5.3 Recommendations.....	50
REFERENCES	53
APPENDICES.....	65
Appendix I: Interview Guide (students)	65
Appendix II: Interview Guide (Key informants-Teachers and school administrators)	68
Appendix III: Discussion prompts	70

LIST OF TABLES

Table 3.1: Population Frame	28
Table 4.1: Opinions of Key informants.....	43

ABSTRACT

This study was about communication strategies and students' awareness of sexual harassment in secondary schools in Uganda, but focusing on selected schools in Wakiso District. The purpose of the study or the main objective of the study was to assess the effect of communication strategies in creating awareness of sexual harassment in selected secondary schools in Wakiso District of Uganda. The specific objectives of the study were; to examine the effect of communication messages on awareness of sexual harassment amongst students in selected secondary schools in Wakiso, to assess the effect of audience mapping on the students' awareness of sexual harassment in selected secondary schools in Wakiso, and to examine the effect of vehicles (media) used on creating students' awareness about sexual harassment in selected secondary schools in Wakiso. Using Riemer and Haines's (2008) theory of dynamic practice-based awareness creation in mediated communication to examine this problem, the study was qualitative in approach and was designed as a case study. It used convenient non probability sampling to arrive at 58 respondents comprising teachers, administrators and students. Purposive sampling was used to determine the schools examined. Data was collected through two methods; Focus Group Discussions and Interviews, and the tools of data collection were Discussion Prompts and Interview Guides respectively. The analysis of data was undertaken by thematic analysis whereby key ideas derived from the data were organized to answer the research questions formulated. The findings revealed that; messages about sexual harassment were designed and create some awareness about sexual harassment in the two schools. However, the consequences of sexual harassment were not included in the messages designed. Specific vehicles or media of communication were employed but only a few of those that would have been used were utilized. Only speeches e.g. in school parades, writings on school notice boards, posters and warnings by teachers and peer support groups were used. The schools did not hold debates or drama or publish magazines related to the problem. The finds further revealed that school administration had some idea about how effective the messages on sexual harassment were but did not have a specific monitoring and evaluation mechanism that would have completed their communication strategy and made it more effective. The study recommended that there is need to improve the design of the message to create awareness of the consequences of sexual harassment, include more vehicles or media for communicating the messages and a need for the schools to institute a monitoring and evaluation mechanism to ensure that the strategy is assessed to make modifications that can improve it. There is need for further research in the schools particularly experimental studies.

CHAPTER ONE:

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Introduction

In this chapter, the researcher discusses the background to the study, which includes the historical, the conceptual and the contextual backgrounds. Also the chapter presents the statement of the problem, study objectives, significance of the study, scope of the study and operationalization of key terms..

1.1 Background to the Study

In this section, the researcher discusses the historical, theoretical, conceptual and contextual backgrounds/perspectives.

1.1.1 Historical Perspective

The use of communication strategies to combat sexual harassment has taken forms in different phases of global development. The patriarchal nature of different societies initially obscured the problem of sexual abuse and sexual harassment for many years. The prevailing imbalances between men and women whereby men were elevated in power relations between the two genders made it difficult for different societies to focus on sexual harassment, which was considered a women's problem. From the third to the second millennium BCE (Lerner, 1990), women were blamed for any sexual predicament they faced because they were by nature considered to be promiscuous (Hooks, 1981).

Gradually as the mass media emerged as a platform for public discourse, various issues concerning society and not the least, sexual violence and sexual harassment began to make its way into the news and public commentary. Whereas there was no deliberate attempt to use the mass media as a communication strategy at this point, to fight sexual harassment and sexual violence against women, media coverage about incidents of sexual harassment began

to surface and were mainly informative in nature. For example, during the days when slavery was legal in the United States, abolitionist through *the abolitionist press* communicated to the public accounts of the sexual abuse of female slaves by their masters (Hoganson, 1993).

In 1878, a physician of forensics from France, Ambroise Tardieu documented hundreds of sexual abuse cases comprising primarily of children, and published their effects on children (Bourke, 2012).

In the 19th century, feminist movements levied campaigns against sexual violence against women, e.g., the social purity and temperance campaigns which hoped to encourage male constraint against brutality including sexual violence against women (Bourke, 2012; Tyson, n.d.).

The 20th century saw a surge in opposition to and speaking out against sexual violence against women, especially in the movements within the United States. Hence between the 1900s and 1940s, the coverage of sexual abuse and harassment cases, which was facilitated by the news wire services and a newspaper called the Hearst Empire, pushed debate about sexual harassment to the forefront of public discussions. Journalists, playwrights, novelists, and movie makers all took the cue from such coverage and began talking about sexual harassment more than it was spoken about before (Keire, 2019). In the British Press, increased attention was according to sexual abuse and harassment cases, particularly about children who were the focus of media coverage. In the period after 1918, such coverage offered brief and euphemistic (or indirect) reports of court proceedings about sexual harassment, which create awareness in the society that this had evolved into a big ‘social problem.’ The press undertook more explicit coverage of these abuses from the 1950s and 1960s and in the mid-1970s it began to highlight these issues as a serious social problem. However, beyond publicizing incidents of sexual abuse and harassment, the press did not do

anything more than this (Bingham, 2019). The movement to make known cases of sexual harassment continued throughout the 1970s, when the Anti-rape movement was created to speak against sexual the legalization and institutionalization of sexual violence against women (Center for American Studies, 2021).

However, although it is as old as civilization itself, the first reference to the term sexual harassment emerged in Mary Rowe's report in 1973 titled "The Saturn's Rings Phenomenon", which documented a litany of sexist glass ceilings in corporations, non-profit organizations, and educational institutions that precluded the activation of affirmative action in the United States (Kamberi & Gollopeni, 2015; Rowe, 1973). A grassroots movement of women's activities spread quickly and inspired many other women's movements in other countries of the world. These movements mainly evolved around women's groups that were based at universities either as staff or students. They began to make frequent and sporadic references to sexual harassment, a terminology that began to appear in the mainstream news media in the USA from 1975 (Jackson, 2021).

Rowe's reference to institutionalized sexism as such was seminal because thenceforth, the term sexual harassment made its way in English lexicons and in public discourses (Kamberi & Gollopeni, 2015). The 1970s therefore, may be inferred to have been a sexual renaissance (Siegel, 2003) to the extent that a once fringe idea (gender and sexual equality between men and women) became mainstream.

The above belief is fortified by the fact that a large number historians writing about women concur that action that was effective in discrediting violence targeting women was only achieved in the 1970's (Ryan, 1975), resulting in the enactment of laws and the creation of agencies in the United States and England, which broke the legal and institutional perpetuation of male privilege (Fox, 2002).

Moreover, given achievements against violence against women were scaled throughout the world through the enactment of U.N. Conventions and Declarations on the Elimination of Violence Against Women and the U.N. Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) (Fox, 2002).

Further, as a result, the Declaration and Platform for Action of the 4th World Conference on Women, held in Beijing in 1995, went further in acknowledging women's sexual rights as human rights;

“The human rights of women include their right to have control over and decide freely and responsibly on matters related to their sexuality, including sexual and reproductive health, free of coercion, discrimination and violence”, Cited in (Ramtohul, 2019).

The document proved beyond reasonable doubt that the international community was on par with the fact that sexual freedom is a right women are entitled to (Petchesky, 1995).

Africa has followed suit to recognize and protect the rights of women including sexual rights and prohibitions against sexual violence and harassment, including through the African Charter on Human and People's Rights, the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and People's Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa (the Maputo Protocol) and the Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa (Ramtohul, 2019). Similarly, coverage of sexual harassment in the African media has been consistent since the 1990s. In South Africa, newspapers were used in the period between 1999 to 2004 to particularly highlight the harassment of female learners in schools in the country. The coverage evoked a widespread condemnation of the practice, although little is yet to be done (Prinsloo, 2006).

The realization that combating sexual harassment requires more than media coverage, the United States, in 2001, April month was designated as “Sexual Assault Awareness” month, and this period is used to undertake a series of activities intended to publicize issues of sexual harassment and abuse for the eventual aim of reduce occurrence of sexual harassment

(Bishop, 2018). During the Sexual Assault Awareness Month (SAAM), the National Sexual Violence Resource Centre (NSRV) renders resources to anti-sexual harassment advocates in the US, to campaign against sexual harassment. These resources consist mainly of communication materials such as publications (e.g. booklets, directories and newsletters), prevention materials (e.g. online resources and palm cars), and products to raise awareness, such as posters, pins, postcards and stickers (University of Minnesota, 2023).

1.1.2 Theoretical Perspective

Considering that this study is intended to establish the effect of communication strategies on creating awareness of sexual harassment in the selected schools in Wakiso district, a theoretical framework that supports this analysis is embraced. A number of theories were examined in a bid to select a theory for this study. Two-Step Flow Theory by Katz and Lazarsfeld (1955) which argues that information tends to flow through two steps, 1. from source to opinion or peer leaders and 2. from opinion leaders to receives was explored. In addition, Selective Perception Theory which states that receives of communication tend not to receive all communication from various stimuli, but selectively choose what to receive was equally considered. However, both theories did not adequately explain how communication strategies impact on students' awareness of sexual harassment because they primarily focus on the receives than all the elements of the strategy. Subsequently the study became anchored on Riemer and Haines's (2008) theory of dynamic practice-based awareness creation in mediated communication. Generally, this theory proposes that awareness is the result of communication practices which are aligned to the medium or technology that is used in communication. For this reason, examining the vehicles used to communicate the messages about sexual harassment in the selected schools is key. The theory also places the audiences or uses of communicated messages at the centre of how awareness is created.

1.1.3 Conceptual perspective

A communication strategy is a plan designed to disseminate designed messages to a particular audience, using specific vehicles of communication intended to achieve an objective that is evaluated during and at the end of the communication program. USAID (Senegal) (2017) identifies the main components of communication strategy as objectives, implementers, message, audience, channels and monitoring. In this particular study, communication strategy comprises the messages related to sexual harassment that are disseminated to the students, the vehicles used to create awareness about sexual harassment and the vehicles (media) used in this communication.

Sexual harassment is not a new phenomenon in all societies – if it may be defined as unwanted cases of sexual relations are imposed by superiors on their subordinates (Siegel, 2003), but it has received considerable attention in fairly recent times. Yet, even today, sexual harassment continues to rear its ugly head in almost all sectors of society (Action Aid, 2022); whether that be in the political, social, professional, religious, and more unfortunately, in educational spaces.

Sexual harassment means a kind of unwanted sexual behavior that put individuals both male and female in a disadvantaged position (Kamberi & Golloperi, 2015). Sexual harassment consists of sexual advances that are unwelcome, requests to subordinates for sexual favors, and where there are other verbal that are sexually harassing or physical harassment that is of a sexual nature at the place of work or at an environment of learning, according to the US Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (RAINN, n.d.)

1.1.4 Contextual Perspective

In Uganda, the global movement against sexual violence and in particular, sexual harassment, led to the accession to and ratification, whatever the case, of international human rights

instruments e.g. the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (United Nations, 2009), including those of the African Union (e.g. the Maputo Protocol) (FIDH, 2010) that relate to the prohibition of sexual violations.

Moreover, Uganda has enacted several laws against sexual violence in general and in particular, the country has specific laws against sexual harassment and regulations intended to fight sexual harassment, including the Employment Act of 2006, and the Employment (Sexual Harassment) Regulations of 2012. It is noteworthy that sexual harassment in Uganda is understood within the meaning of Section 7 (1) of the Act, to constitute the following (Parliament of Uganda, 2006):

Figure 1. Legal Conception of Sexual Harassment in Employment in Uganda

7. Sexual harassment in employment

(1) An employee shall be sexually harassed in that employee's employment if that employee's employer, or a representative of that employer—

(a) directly or indirectly makes a request of that employee for sexual intercourse, sexual contact or any other form of sexual activity that contains—

(i) an implied or express promise of preferential treatment in employment;

(ii) an implied or express threat of detrimental treatment in employment ;

(iii) an implied or express threat about the present or future employment status of the employee;

(b) uses language whether written or spoken of a sexual nature;

(c) uses visual material of a sexual nature; or

(d) shows physical behaviour of a sexual nature.

Source; Republic of Uganda 2006

It is important to observe that the above policy and law relate to sexual harassment in workplaces only, not in educational environments. And, a literature survey has revealed that there is no dedicated law or policy requirement for the prohibition and punishment of sexual

harassment which occurs among students within secondary schools in Uganda. In this regard, the Education (Pre-primary, primary and Post primary) Act is reticent on sexual harassment in secondary schools. The National Gender Policy (2007), too, is silent on sexual harassment in secondary schools, although it commits to “increase the knowledge and understanding of human rights among women and men so that they can identify violations, demand, access, seek redress and enjoy their right” (cited in FAO, 2007).

Nonetheless, the prohibition of sexual harassment that occurs among students attending secondary schools in Uganda may be implied from the Children Act (Parliament of Uganda, 1997), which bars sexual abuse of children (under 18 years including those in school).

From the above background literature, it is clear that sexual harassment of students in secondary schools is not explicitly covered by any legal framework. Yet, it is also axiomatic that there are several negative voices in Uganda’s policy and legal frameworks against sexual harassment generally, which may undergird the assumption that sexual harassment is an outlier for students in school environments. Therefore, not only is sexual harassment of students in secondary schools in Uganda discouraged, students are also made aware of its dangers.

At the school level, there have been some attempts made to emphasize ‘talking compound’ that have messages that can promote the education of girls e.g. Sexual Reproductive Health is your right, Be proud of your Virginity, it is a virtue, early marriage blocks your future, and many others (Ministry of Education and Sports, 2013). These messages are all designed and geared towards promoting a school environment that is friendly for children especially for girls (Ministry of Education and Sports, 2013).

Some schools have also taken it upon themselves to communicate the ills of sexual harassment in secondary schools, through films, to shine a spotlight on the vice. A case in

point is the film (Never Again) by St. Augustine's College, Wakiso, spearheaded by a member of staff of the school (Daily Monitor, 2018).

A non-Profit organization has also stepped in to create more awareness of the sexual violence that are against young women in secondary schools in Uganda through story telling whereby victims of sexual violence are encouraged to share their experiences (UTNU, n.d.).

1.2 Statement of the Problem

In normal circumstances, communication strategies may create awareness about different issues being communicated by individuals and organizations. There have been various campaigns targeted at tackling sexual violence in some or several secondary schools in Uganda: from school-initiated "talking compound" awareness campaigns, cinema, as well as storytelling by victims of sexual harassment. Such campaigns are aimed at creating awareness of the problem or the gravity of the problem so as to reduce the prevalence of or to root the vice out of secondary schools through awareness.

Nonetheless, despite evidence of some efforts by schools (and assuming all schools in Uganda do likewise), 82% of secondary school students in Uganda have experienced sexual harassment while at school; 8% of female students under 18 (the legal age of consent) have been exposed to defilement; 24% of female students over 18 have been talked to in a sexual way, 18% have received a marriage proposal, 25% have been stroked in a sexual manner and 29% have been exposed to electronic sexual materials (Kebirungi, 2021). Magaji et al. (2019) have stated that female learners suffer from sexual harassment twice more than male students.

In Central Uganda, which also contains Wakiso district, sexual harassment in schools is reportedly prevalent. This was evidenced by a decision by students in the region to take matters in their hands to petition the Minister of Education in 2014 about the vice (Daily Monitor, 2014). Similarly, in 2018, a head teacher of Kibuli Secondary School was reported

to have been in the habit of sexually harassing or abusing female students (Ndyabahika, 2018). In 2017, the media was awash with allegations leveled against the proprietor of elite (St. Lawrence) chain of schools, at his funeral by his former female students (Matooke Republic, 2017), which is a pointer to the prevalence of sexual harassment and even abuse at the schools in the central part of Uganda. The gravity of the problem has been indicated in several media reports and official submissions to the Ministry of Education and Sports.

There is, therefore, evidence that sexual harassment in secondary schools is alive in spite of some efforts to sensitize students. What is not known is whether the communication strategies employed succeeded to create awareness of sexual harassment among students in secondary schools in Uganda, and/or its grievous harm.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study, therefore, is to assess the effectiveness of communication strategies in creating awareness of sexual harassment in selected secondary schools in Wakiso District of Uganda.

1.4 Objectives of the Study

1. To examine the effect of communication message design in creating awareness of sexual harassment amongst students in selected secondary schools in Wakiso.
2. To assess the effect of vehicles [media] used to communicate on the students' awareness of sexual harassment in selected secondary schools in Wakiso.
3. To examine the effect of evaluation of communication strategy to create students' awareness about sexual harassment in selected secondary schools in Wakiso.

1.5 Research Questions

1. What is the effect of communication message design in creating awareness of sexual harassment amongst students in selected secondary schools in Wakiso.

2. How do vehicles [media] used to communicate affect the students' awareness of sexual harassment in selected secondary schools in Wakiso?
3. How do evaluation of communication strategy used assist to create students' awareness about sexual harassment in selected secondary schools in Wakiso?

1.6 Scope of the Study

This part covers the content, geographical and time scope of the study.

1.6.1 Content Scope

The study covers information about communication strategies and students' awareness of sexual harassment in secondary schools.

1.6.2 Geographical Scope

The study was carried out in two secondary schools in Wakiso District, Uganda. In the interest of protecting the identity and rights of the schools, they are hereby reported as pseudonyms, namely, School "A" and School "B".

Wakiso District was chosen because previous research in the district showed that 80.4% of the secondary school students had first sexual encounter by the age of 16 years and nearly 50 % of those perceived themselves to be at risk of contracting HIV/AIDS (Osingada et al., 2016), possibly associated with sexual harassment.

1.6.3 Time Scope

The study covered the period between 2017 and 2022. This period is significant because it covers all the six years of secondary schooling to date. That means that all classes had a chance to tell their story up to the current year of the research.

1.7 Significance of Study

Although studies have been done on the prevalence of sexual harassment against secondary school students in particular and learners generally, there is no study that has focused on communication strategies and sexual harassment awareness in Uganda. Nor, has there been such a study in Wakiso District. Yet, as noted in the statement of the problem, sexual harassment is on an upward spiral. Thus, this study is necessary to assess the effectiveness of communication strategies in creating awareness of sexual harassment in selected secondary schools in Wakiso District of Uganda.

The findings will be beneficial to all stakeholders namely; government of Uganda and line Ministry of Education and Sports, schools and students in creating awareness and fight against sexual harassment.

1.8 Operational Definition of Key Terms

Secondary School Students: In this study, a secondary school student means a girl or a boy who is currently in one of the classes that constitute secondary schooling, namely; senior one to senior six.

Communication Strategies: In this study, communication strategies mean plans through which a school wants to achieve its communication objectives

Sexual Harassment: This includes actual or attempted rape or sexual assault, unwanted pressure for sexual favors, unwanted deliberate touching, leaning over, cornering, or pinching, unwanted sexual looks or gestures; unwanted letters, telephone calls, or materials of a sexual nature; unwanted sexual teasing, jokes, remarks, or questions; referring to an adult as a girl, hunk, doll, babe, or honey; Personal questions about social or sexual life; sexual comments about a person's clothing, anatomy, or looks; neck massage; standing close or brushing up against a person.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

This chapter discusses the theoretical framework and relevant literature according to the specific objectives set, as well as highlights the gaps that are identified during the review.

2.1 Theoretical Review

This study uses the theory of dynamic practice-based awareness creation in mediated communication by Riemer and Haines (2008) to examine how communication strategies affect awareness of sexual harassment amongst students in the selected schools in Wakiso district. Whereas the theory was formulated principally to understand communication strategies in technological environments, its principles are applicable to this study. The aims of the theory are three. First of all, the theory hopes to conceptualize the nature of awareness from an object centered term to a subject centered (user or human oriented) term. This means that the effect of the technologies used to create awareness are secondary to the analysis on the extents to which awareness is created and how the receivers of the communication participate in selecting the message they need most, and the vehicles or media that are used to communicate with them. The second aim of the theory is to explain the mechanisms of how awareness is created, by providing indicators that it is a part of social process, not only a technological one. The third aim of the theory is to identify the issue of awareness needs.

Riemer and Haines's (2008) theory of dynamic practice-based awareness creation in mediated communication bases on a human-centered practice-based approach that enables us to understand how and why awareness may successfully emerge through communication. It states that awareness is a product of communicative practices that are adapted to technology. This means that technology plays an important role in the nexus between communication

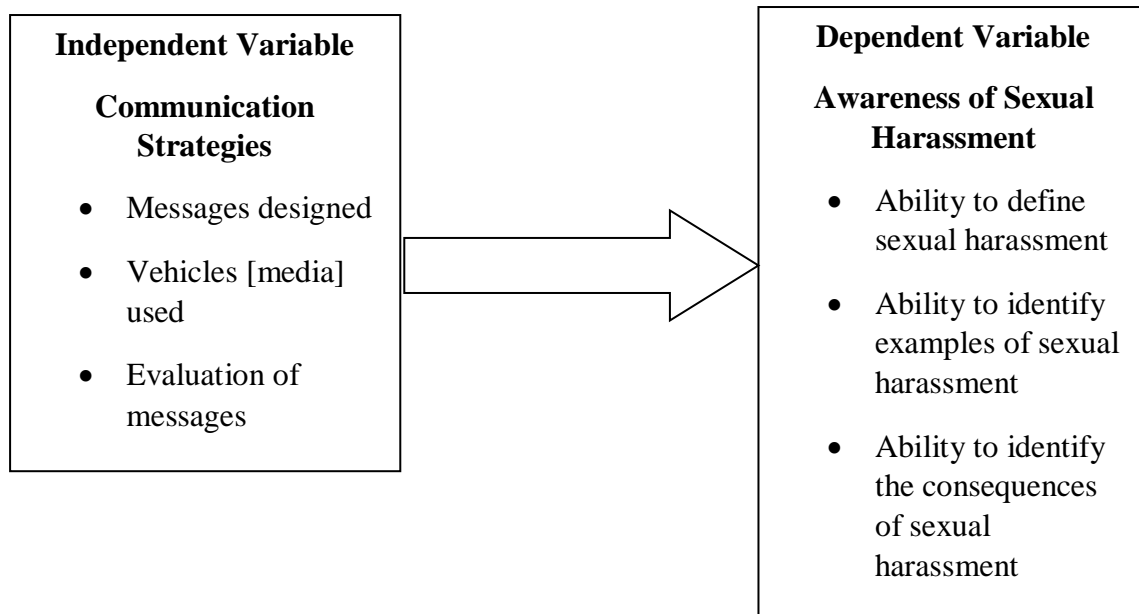
strategy and awareness. For this particular study, the focus then is on the vehicles or media used to communicate to students about sexual harassment. The theory of dynamic practice-based awareness creation in mediated communication proposes that awareness is created by directing streams of communication. The streams of communication consist of both the messages and the technology or media used to communicate.

Within the communication process, the users of communication, who are in essence the recipients of the messages, are in the theory of dynamic practice-based awareness creation in mediated communication conceived to be active as opposed to passive. Therefore, whatever message is communicated to them, they are in position to create new messages within themselves and amongst others. They are also capable of repurposing the tools or vehicles of communication to suit their interests, needs and desires.

The next proposition of this theory is related to the previous one. That in fact, users of communication have needs for different aspects of awareness and these needs do evolve as other awareness needs are satisfied. For example, if users who in this case are the students, are initially interested in understanding the meaning of sexual harassment or they do not know the meaning of sexual harassment, then at this point in time, defining sexual harassment becomes their need. If that need is satisfied, the next need may be what options do they have to fight corruption? Do they need to know where and how to report about sexual harassment and so on?

2.2 Conceptual Framework

Figure 2.1 Conceptual Framework of Communication Strategies and Students Awareness of Sexual Harassment



Source; The Researcher 2023

The conceptual framework presented above describes the relationship between the two variables in the study. The independent variable is communication strategies and the dependent variable is students' awareness of sexual harassment. Communication strategies are constructed as: 1. The messages designed to be communicated 2. The vehicles or media used in communication and 3. The evaluation of messages used in communication. The dependent variable is students' awareness of sexual awareness of sexual harassment has three constructs 1. Ability to define sexual harassment 2. Ability to identify examples of sexual harassment and 3. Ability to identify the consequences of sexual harassment.

2.3 Review of Relevant Literature

This section presents the review of relevant literature about the effect of message design on awareness of sexual harassment, the effect of audience mapping on awareness of sexual harassment and the effect of vehicles (media) on awareness of sexual harassment.

2.3.1. Effect of Message Design on Awareness of Sexual Harassment

Different studies demonstrate that how the message is designed could have an effect on how awareness is created or how the message impacts on the intended audience beneficiaries. Over time, there may be a need to modify the messaging strategy depending on how the audience changes (for example: the message may be changed from creating awareness amongst the recipients to another message that is intended to make them intervene in certain ways against sexual harassment). Based on research and experience, some messages may be the most effective messaging strategies against sexual violence (National Sexual Violence Resource Center, 2015).

In order to have effective messaging against sexual harassment in schools, there must be identification and understanding of the target audience. This understanding must focus on the audience's education, diversity, culture, experiences and knowledge. The audience should be able to relate to or identify with the type and content of the message (Potter et al., 2010). For example, framing a bystander campaign for a college-aged audience may include information on how to be an engaged bystander at a party, while a campaign focused on the workplace may include how to intervene when you witness sexual harassment (National Sexual Violence Resource Center, 2015). This argument is valid and I concur that without ensuring that the message is designed in such a way that the audience can identify with it, it may be difficult for the audience to be impacted by the message.

Secondly, it is important to structure the message in such a way that it connects with the core values of the target audience (National Sexual Violence Resource Center, 2015). When the message is connected with the values of the target audience, there are higher chances of the audience supporting the issue that is being promoted in the message (Gay & Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation & Movement Advancement Project, 2008). Furthermore, one other study established that when a message appeals to compassion, the public is moved by it (FrameWorks Institute, 2013). Based on the approaches to message designed by the three studies, I do acknowledge that indeed it is necessary to carve the message so that it can relate to the values of the audience that is targeted and is also compassionate so as to appeal to them.

Thirdly, it is important to state facts and statistics than myths and conjecture (Cook & Lewandowsky, 2012). Available studies demonstrate that when messaging is evidenced based in a bid to demystify or debunk a myth, the evidence makes the audience targeted to remember the myth and discard the facts that are presented (O'Neil & Morgan, 2010). In messaging, therefore, it is necessary to present information that is factual so as to reinforce the skills, the action and knowledge that the communicator is intending to mobilize among members of the audience (National Sexual Violence Resource Center, 2015). The idea that the message must be factual is valid because without facts, messages may not be treated as convincing by the audiences.

Fourthly, the messages need to be nonbiased, emotionally compelling and positive, since people are more attached to something that gives them hope, and they want to become part of a solution that is found (National Sexual Violence Resource Center, 2015). In my view, the messages should indeed be impartial in nature. Biased messages tend to be accepted by those they favor and rejected by those that are not favored by the messages.

Moreover, recent studies have established that when a full story is made shorter and concise, it tends to be more effective in taking messages to audiences (O'Neil, Simon, & Haydon, 2014). Therefore, an impactful message should state the problem, identify its issues that are underlying, or the factors that contribute to them, and provide solutions to address the problem (National Sexual Violence Resource Center, 2015). These findings by the two studies above present an accurate account of how the message should be designed. Complete messages that give different aspects of it are important for effective communication to take place.

In addition, sexual violence may occur because of some cultural dimensions. Here social norms in the community may actually be in support of such behavior, which is then encouraged by the people's awareness of their culture. To address this in messaging, there is need for the communicator to identify the social norms that are positive, and promote them. These can include respect, equality, intolerance of violence, and safety, all of which help to prevent sexual violence (Davis, Parks, & Cohen, 2010). Therefore, to create more impact, media campaigns should be structured to carry messages that foster behavior that is healthy and condemn behavior that is not health and which may destroy the norms of society (World Health Organization, 2009). The cultural aspect of communication is key to getting messages accepted. In my perspective I agree with the findings of those studies that state that communication must take into account the cultural context of the communication.

In addition, anti-sexual harassment campaigns should be presented as a problem that affects the whole community, not a problem that is restricted to or should be a burden of the individual survivors. There tends to a disconnect or a knowledge gap between the issues, things and people that the advocates against sexual violence know and the knowledge that the public has about who is affected by sexual violence. The latter believes it is the individuals who have been subjected to sexual violence (National Sexual Violence Resource Center,

2015). In general, from the perspective of the public sexual harassment is a burden or problem for the individual who is a victim to carry. It is seen as a problem that is not affecting the whole community. It is assumed to be solely the result of an individual's actions and another individual's experiences (O'Neil & Morgan, 2010). In actual sense, sexual harassment is a problem that affects the whole community, has an impact on everyone who is within a given community and if the social norms that are positive are applied, it can be prevented (National Sexual Violence Resource Center, 2015). I concur that to have effective messages, the messages should be designed to present sexual harassment as a bigger problem than just a problem of the victims.

2.3.2. Effect of Vehicles (Media) on Awareness of Sexual Harassment

Several studies have examined the efficacy of different vehicles or media used in creating awareness of sexual harassment. One of the communication strategies for raising students' awareness about sexual harassment in secondary schools is by the use of collegiate speech and debate programs. These provide a kind of methodology that administrators and students can utilize to develop and implement policies against sexual harassment (Christensen, 2013). This view has been supported by Hogan, et al. (2016), who have argued that speech and debates enable students to acquire adequate knowledge about some controversies that are important, in conjunction with the confidences and skills they need to be able to engage in civic life. Indeed, based on different cases I have observed, I do agree that debates can be a strong approach to fighting sexual harassment.

Cox (n.d.) has expounded that speeches on college or school campuses target students with information about a problem and that such speeches may be impromptu, whereby topics are derived from quotations; informative—entailing an original and factual speech by a student on a subject to fulfill the aim of informing the audience; dramatic duo which entails acting out a cutting that is derived from a play or plays that has literary recognition, serious or

humorous, involving two or more than two characters acted out by two individuals; extemporaneous speaking. The speaker is given topics that belong to a general area of an event that is current and then he or she can select one, and then speak persuasively with an original speech by a student that is designed to reinforce, change attitudes, values, actions or beliefs, and inspire the audience.

It is important to observe that the literature on collegiate speaking by students provides descriptions of what the speeches entail (Cox, n.d.); audience analysis by the speaker (Lawrie, 2021); public speaking disfluencies (Montes, et al., 2019). From the above studies that recommend speeches as effective tools for fighting sexual harassment, I share the same perspective that they are effective.

Another communication strategy is what has been termed as “Theatre of the Oppressed”. Techniques of Theatre of the oppressed have shaped several prevention programs against sexual assault (Christensen, 2013) The strategy has been reported to have been used in many universities which are in the United States. It is used to engage students in an experience of active learning in ways how to prevent possible sexual assault. Some of the universities where this has taken place have included University of Oregon in Eugene, the University of Texas at Austin, University of North Carolina in Chapel Hill and California State University at Long Beach. These universities have implemented these theories into practice (Christensen, 2013; Rodri’ guez, Rich, Hastings, & Page, 2006).

The strategy is peeled off from Augusto Boal’s (1985) Theatre of the Oppressed theory, which urges the use of public theatre for the purposes of creating social change. Boal’s main aim is to convert a spectator that is passive into one that is a performance that is active inside the space of theatre and eventually for these performers to perform their daily lives (Christensen, 2013). Boal, believes that all human beings are all actors who performing to

scripts that oppressive systems have written for us (Christensen, 2013). The assumption then is that we all perform a variety of roles, which are dependent on the type of audience we do engage and the various situations that we go through (Christensen, 2013). Boal is of the conviction that all human beings are capable of being creative if their consciousness about oppressive forces has been stimulated and raised. When creativity is utilized for social change, it is beneficial to the community. This notwithstanding, most people do not take up their creative responsibilities or at least they defer them and rely on outside forces to do it for them (Babbage, 2004; Boal, 1985). Hence, using public theatre, not only sensitizes, but also evokes emotion and sets into motion the spectator and participant to take action against an issue.

In a study of sexual assault prevention, the National Institute of Justice concluded that “theatrical presentations can simultaneously educate and entertain, adapting concerns to the interests, vocabularies and attention spans of their audiences” (Epstein & Langenbahn, 1999, p. 80). Several studies highlight that interactive methods provide more effective learning than instructive methods (Grey, Boland, Davidson, Li, & Tamborlane, 2000; Margalit, Glick, & Benbassat, 2004). This is based on the assumption that the interactive format made possible by theatre, for instance, results in a level of processing that is deeper and a change of attitude than if people were subjected to structured presentations or lectures (Milhausen, McBride, & Jun, 2006).

Nonetheless, it is important to note that the evidence of the effectiveness of theatre as a communication strategy in creating awareness of an issue, was done in universities, according to cited literature above. It is not clear whether theatre can have a similar effect on secondary school students, given that students at universities and in secondary schools are demographically different. It is also not given that the strategy is better than other competing strategies in creating awareness among secondary school students of sexual harassment.

Therefore, there is a knowledge gap that this study will fill. Nonetheless I do also subscribe to the view that theatre or drama are vital tools for creating awareness of sexual harassment amongst students or other victims of sexual harassment and they should be embraced.

Another communication strategy is mass media in facilitating awareness. The media performs a role that is significant because it helps to form and influence the attitudes and behavior of people (Saunders & Goddard, 2002). In a study on the role of the media in increasing society's awareness of and response to child abuse and neglect, Goddard and Saunders (2001) noted the role of the features and news that do report about cases of child abuse. The attention from the media to such cases, significantly influences the public responses as well as the political and professional responses that may be made to the situation that children and young people are going through (Saunders & Goddard, 2002). Whereas I agree that the mass media can play a pivotal role in fighting sexual harassment through awareness campaigns, it is necessary to find out which type of mass media the students consume and which time is best to use to communicate to them using mass media.

A review of the literature on mass media campaigns indicates that there are many examples in which campaigns do impact the knowledge of the public about various issues such as drug and alcohol use, work safety, speeding, drink-driving, AIDS, obesity, domestic violence and cigarette smoking (Saunders & Goddard, 2002). Attitudinal and/or behavioural change can also be influenced by campaigns although their results may not last beyond the campaign that is being implemented (Reger, et al., 2000).

Nonetheless, the literature cited above, which touts the awareness benefits of media campaigns is not calibrated to students in secondary schools. It is in reference to communities of adults outside the school environment.

The literature also says nothing about how this strategy stacks up with other strategies in terms of creating awareness, i.e., whether it is the best or not. This study is, therefore, needed to see if media coverage (news, features, opinion pieces produced within a school environment) of an issue affecting and existing with the school can have a similar outcome on student, and whether it is better than communication strategies or not in doing so.

Social media networks such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram Pinterest etc have the potential of carrying a message to a very large audience. Indications from research are that social networking sites are being used by 73% of adults. The most popular of those sites is said to be Facebook, which has the largest number of users. Young people have a strong preference for Instagram and Twitter (Duggan, 2013).

2.3.3. Effect of Evaluation of Strategies in Creating Awareness of Sexual Harassment amongst students

Communication strategies used to create awareness of sexual harassment amongst students need to be evaluated to determine whether they are effective or not and what modifications need to be made of them. The target of the messaging related to sexual harassment needs to be made very clear from the studies examined here. Sexual harassment is considered widely as one of the forms of violence that is gender based that is very common and known to affect girls in most cases (Berman, 2002). Nonetheless, there is a tendency for different stakeholders not to acknowledge that it exists and that it has harmful effects on girls, Because of this awareness about the vice has not been created. Although research has the prevalence of sexual harassment generally, very little attention has been accorded to the sexual harassment that takes place against adolescent females and young girls (Dahinten, 1999) affecting its awareness.

When behaviours that signify sexual harassment are seen, they are dismissed with the usual stereotypical language that normalizes them as the status quo. Boys are generally accepted to behave in a certain way as a sign of male power and control (Berman, 2002). These tendencies, weaken girls and makes them vulnerable, whereas boys are championed as a more powerful specie that can behave in whichever way they want against girls (Berman, 2002). Sexual harassment continues to take place despite the negative effects it has on girls, but there seems to be very little bother about it. As Rooney (1998) observed, through the because acknowledging the problem of sexual harassment has not been done, it has become a condonement of more explicit forms of violence.

Research has revealed that awareness of sexual harassment is generally low. Alizah Ali (2017) in one study about how much awareness about sexual harassment exists in the workplace found that there are different aspects that enhance or impede the awareness level, and these are shame, lack of knowledge about sexual harassment and fear etc. The study recommended that it government should take up the responsibility of organizing campaigns intended to stop sexual harassments from person to person (Berman, 2002). The findings of these studies demonstrate that sometimes communication strategies may be ineffective, and I do agree with their findings.

The study also proposed that within institutions, the authorities need to fulfill their responsibilities to make sure that the employees that work in these institutions are given a safe environment that they can work in without sexual harassment (Berman, 2002).

In a study by Berman (2002), there are considerable variations in awareness of sexual harassment amongst different age segments. Within younger groups such as those aged 8-10, they may have heard about sexual harassment but could not effectively define it. a slightly older age segment such as youth aged 11-14 are aware of sexual harassment, and can

describe it more than the younger group (Berman, 2002). However, the data from the girls studied indicated that they accepted sexually harassing behavior as the norm rather than the exception. They say them as an expected part of growing up, or an integral part of a girl's life. This led them not to be surprised or disturbed whether it occurred (Berman, 2002).

For participants who were older, such as those of the age group 15-18 they were more aware about sexual harassment and were able to effectively describe some of its features and could identify sexual harassment behavior that was unwelcome, unwanted, and persistent (Berman, 2002).

2.4. Gaps in the Literature

The following gaps were identified. There is hardly any literature that shows that collegiate speaking creates awareness of students on sexual harassment; hence, there is a literature gap to fill—which is what this study did.

Secondly, it is not clear whether amongst the vehicles presented theatre can have a similar effect on secondary school students, given that students at universities and in secondary schools are demographically different. Therefore, there is a knowledge gap that this study filled.

The literature, which touts the awareness benefits of media campaigns is not calibrated to students in secondary schools. It is in reference to communities of adults outside the school environment.

The literature on message design of sexual harassment does not reflect the realities in Wakiso District, the studies having been done outside Uganda. Therefore, there is a gap to fill in terms of whether or not in Wakiso, students are aware of sexual harassment.

With regards to messages, there are several effective or impactful messaging strategies that are given. However, they do not specifically apply to school settings and the literature does not show which ones rank above which ones, and that is what this study is also about.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.0. Introduction

This chapter discusses the research design, research approach, population, selection of participants and sampling, data collection methods and tools, data analysis, and ethical considerations.

3.1 Research Approach

The study used qualitative research approach. Shank (2002) defines qualitative research as a form of systematic empirical inquiry into meaning. It is intended to deeply explore, understand and interpret social phenomena within its natural setting (Creswell 2002; Pope & Mays 1995; Denzin & Lincoln, 1994). The main difference between qualitative and quantitative approaches is qualitative approach does not use numerical data to draw conclusions about an issue under investigation. The purpose of this approach was to flexibly describe the experiences of students with the messages intended to sensitize them about sexual harassment. A quantitative approach which uses numerical representation would not be effective in this case because it would not have a detailed explanation of their experiences.

3.2 Research Design

Kothari and Garg (2019) defined research design as an arrangement for collection and analysis of data in a manner that aims at combining relevance to a research problem with economy in procedures. Thus, a research design is an overall framework within which all research activities are undertaken. The case study research design was used for this study as it offered the opportunity to gain a greater in-depth understanding of the phenomenon. A case study is a design which uses an example of a phenomenon that is studied so as to apply its

findings to other phenomena. Selecting two schools was considered easier to accomplish than selecting a large number of schools that time and resources would not allow the researcher to complete.

3.3 Population of the Study

A population can be described as every possible case that could be included in any study. This is usually defined by the nature of inquiry (David & Sutton 2011).

A population is an entire group of individuals, events or objects having common observable characteristics; it is an aggregate of all that conforms to a given specification (Mugenda & Mugenda, 1999). The population size was determined after obtaining information of the number of students and teachers and school administrators in the two schools that were selected. School “A” had a population of 621 students. School “B” had a population of 356 students. The study therefore had a combined population of 977 students.

Table 3.1: Population Frame

SCHOOL	STUDENTS
A	621
B	356
Totals	977

Source: Field Data

3.4 Selection of Study Participants and Sampling Technique

This refers to the number of items to be selected from the universe to constitute a sample. The sample size should be optimum that is neither too large nor too small, however, it should be

one that fulfils the requirements of efficiency, representativeness, reliability, and flexibility (Kothari & Garg 2019).

In terms of the selection of the schools, the schools were selected using a multi-stage sampling procedure where schools in central region were the first strata/cluster, and then schools in Wakiso district were the second strata/cluster, and the two schools purposively selected were the third and final strata.

The sample size of respondents was determined by convenient sampling after the population size was obtained. But since the study was qualitative, it was not necessary to have a mathematically determined sample size. In qualitative studies, what is necessary is that a sample size should be large enough to sufficiently describe the phenomenon of interest, and address the research question at hand (Sakshi, n.d.). However, there is a risk that a large sample may yield repetitive data. Therefore, it was important for the researcher to pay keen attention to collect data until the saturation point, which occurs when adding more participants to the study does not yield additional new information (Sakshi, n.d.). Thus, the researcher stopped the process of the primary data collection at saturation, at which point the size of participants was 44 students as the sample size, from both schools. At this saturation point, the researcher determined that information from additional students was not yielding new information. It was, therefore, not necessary to continue collecting data from more students. Information, was however, also obtained from 5 teachers from each school and 2 administrators from each of the schools for the purpose of triangulating and validating the information provided by the participating students.

Table 3.2: Sample Size

Category of Sample	Sample Size
Student Participants	44
Teacher Participants	10
Administrator Participants	4
<i>Total</i>	<i>58</i>

Source: Field Data

3.5 Data Collection Methods

Data collection is the precise, systematic gathering of information relevant to the research sub-problems, using methods such as interviews, participant observation, focus group discussion, narratives, and case histories (Burns & Grove 2003).

The data collection methods that were used by the researcher to obtain information included interviews and focus group discussions. In School “A” the Focus Group Discussion Method was used, while the Interview method was used in School “B”. Moreover, the interview method was also used to collect data from teachers and school administrators. A total of 15 students were interviewed and 29 were subjected to the Focus Group Discussions. In total, 3 Focus Group Discussions were conducted consisting of approximately 10 students each. 10 school teachers and 4 administrators were also interviewed bringing it to 58 participants. Focus Group Discussions were selected because it would enable a fairly large group of students, rather than one by one to be interviewed at the same time. Also, the Focus Group Discussions were considered to be effective in respondents building upon the responses of others and providing an opportunity for unanimity of responses based on how the participants responded. Therefore, when false responses are given, the rest may contest them which assists the researcher to draw more accurate conclusions. In the case of interviews,

specialized information was required and in some kind of detail. This meant that interviews would be more effective than questionnaires which have brief statements that are quantified.

3.6 Data Collection Instruments

The instruments that were used to gather the information were Interview guide, and discussion prompts.

3.6.1 Interview Guide

The interview guide was compiled and designed to address all the key areas of the study.

The use of the interview guide was fundamental in directing and controlling the interview interactions with the respondents. The questions related to communication strategies comprised, the effect of communication messages on awareness of sexual harassment, the effect of audience mapping on the awareness of sexual harassment and the effect of vehicles used on creating awareness about sexual harassment. The three elements of messages, audience and vehicles were elements of communication strategy that were examined in the study.

3.6.2 Discussion Prompts

The study used discussion prompts to trigger discussions with students on the issue of sexual harassment in schools. It was used in Focus Group Discussions.

3.7 Data Analysis

Data analysis is the mechanism for reducing and organizing data to produce findings that require interpretation by the researcher (Creswell, 2016). Methods for analysis of data need to be systematic, disciplined, and able to be seen and described. A key question in assessing any piece of research is how a researcher arrived at a conclusion (Punch, 2014).

The researcher edited, segmented, and summarized the data collected from the interviews and Focus Group Discussions into themes and clusters. Therefore, thematic analysis was the analytical approach used. Thematic analysis is effective in that it presents information or data in the categories that are constructed to answer the research questions and achieve the objectives of the study.

3.8 Ethical Considerations

Bell and Bryman (2007) assert that a researcher must maintain maximum ethical behaviors when conducting research.

Introduction letter from the university was obtained. To ensure privacy, the respondents were informed that they needed not to submit their names and they had the right to leave questions unanswered for which they did not wish to offer the requested information.

To ensure confidentiality, the respondents were informed that the information they gave was solely used for academic purposes and data obtained on private matters were treated in confidence.

The researcher also obtained permission from the authorities in the schools to interact with their students in focus group discussions and in interviews. There were school administrators or teachers present during the group discussions to ensure that they were in line with the intended purpose. The researcher also obtained permission for two research assistants and also trained them in ethical data collection.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

4.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the findings related to the effect of communication strategies on students' awareness of sexual harassment in the schools in Wakiso. Up until data saturation was reached, focus group discussions and interviews were held. After conducting a total of three Focus Group Discussions for this study, and 15 interviews with students, data saturation was attained. There were between 9 and 10 participants in each Focus Group Discussion in this study. 10 school teachers and 4 school administrators were also interviewed to validate the data given by the students. Each participant gave their informed consent prior to the discussions and interviews, and all participants' demographic data was logged. The confidentiality and anonymity of the participants' participation and comments were assured.

Before discussions and interviews began, each participant was asked to give a pseudonym in order to maintain their anonymity. When analyzing the data and reporting the findings, the pseudonym was employed. The discussions and interviews were guided by interview guide questions and discussion prompts. Discussions and interviews were meant to focus on their knowledge or awareness of the communication strategies implemented by their school in creating awareness of sexual harassment at their school. The duration of each Focus Group Discussion was between 20 and 30 minutes. Interviews lasted between 10 and 15 minutes each. The researcher used the participants' pseudonyms to address them during the discussion and interviews. From the discussions and interviews, the following themes emerged:

4.1 Effect of Message Design on Awareness of Sexual harassment

During interviews and focus group discussions, respondents were asked to describe what sexual harassment is to them, how they came to have such understanding of sexual

harassment, and examples of what constituted sexual harassment in order to gauge their awareness of sexual harassment and whether what they understood about sexual harassment was a result of strategies implemented in their schools or not.

Sexual Harassment is about Unwanted Sexual Advances

Respondents offered the following responses to the first question: they described sexual harassment as sexual advances, jokes or comments about sex with the opposite sex, unwanted sexual touching, and sending pornography to the opposite sex.

One participant in the discussion observed that he understood sexual harassment in terms of unwanted sexual advances:

“Sexual harassment to me is pissing off girls by boys who ask them for sex, or touching their private parts or bums or breasts without their permission”

An interviewee suggested that “sexual harassment involves touching a girl on sensitive parts of her body.”

Another interviewee said sexual harassment is having conversations about sex with a person who is not interested or watching porn with her or him when he or she is not interested.”

When participants and interviewees were asked to give examples of sexual abuse, the majority of them classified sexual abuse into three forms which is physical, verbal and visual sexual abuse.

In relation to physical forms of sexual abuse, many participants in discussion groups believed that sexual harassment is about unwanted touching of an individual's body parts such as buttocks, breasts and private parts.

One participant's description of sexual abuse, however, included that indecent dressing by girls was a form of sexual harassment including wearing very tight dresses that expose their

body shape, long slits that expose their thighs, and tight trousers. These, he said arouses boys sexually when they don't want to and that this amounted to sexual harassment. One interviewee said that to him, sexual harassment also included girls who flashed their sexually exciting body parts including "the breasts, thighs, and bums"

Participants who mentioned verbal sexual harassment as a form of abuse, were asked to further describe and provide examples. Many participants perceived teasing somebody about their body parts was a form of verbal sexual abuse. Some female participants in the discussion groups suggested that whistling at them by boys and men was sexual harassment. However, there was disagreement about this claim during one of the discussion sessions. Some male participants argued that whistling is not a form of sexual harassment because it was not necessarily a sex gesture or act. However, all female participants agreed that it was a form of sexual harassment because men whistle at them when they want to "con" them or suggest sex. Therefore, there was no agreement between male participants and their female counterparts on this matter, as it was interpreted from the gender lenses.

While discussing different types of visual sexual abuse, one participant used the term "sexting." Many of the participants were familiar with the term and agreed with her when she defined it as the sending of sexually explicit text or picture messages via electronic devices such as mobile phones, laptop computers, or desktop computers.

Another participant pointed out that sending sexually arousing videos to her "turned her on" and was a form of sexual harassment. Participants also believed that it is common for friends of the opposite sex to take pictures of their naked bodies and send the pictures to their phones. One participant noted: "There is this boy who sexted pictures of his erected dick to me and asked if it looked romantic."

Participants were also questioned on whether they perceived staring as a form of visual sexual harassment. Many concurred. One participant said that looking at her made her feel uncomfortable and therefore a form of sexual harassment.

In conclusion, participants and interviewees exhibited a deeper understanding of sexual harassment. From their responses and debates, it can be said that they were aware of what sexual harassment contained or entailed.

Nonetheless, they were asked how they learned what they described and understood as sexual harassment. Some participants in the discussion groups suggested that they obtained that knowledge from the school environment, while others reported that they understood sexual harassment during the discussion the researcher had with them, and still others suggested that they had an idea of it from the Internet but it became clear to them what constitutes sexual harassment during the discussion and interview sessions. It can, therefore, be concluded that the communication strategies at the schools had a limited effect on the awareness of sexual harassment among students.

Consequences of Sexual Harassment

With the exception of one participant who said that sexual harassment of the female students made the female students uncomfortable, none of the other participants in the discussion groups was able to state the probable consequences of sexual harassment such as leading to expulsion, resulting in suspension, and other forms of punishment. This was a gap identified in the message design.

4.2 Effect of Vehicles (Media) on Awareness of Sexual Harassment

The responses from both School “A” and “B” indicated that the interviewees were aware of some form of communication strategies regarding sexual harassment in their school. The interviewees and participants in the Focus Group Discussions generally indicated that they

had heard about incidents of sexual harassment in their school. Participants in Focus Group Discussions from School “A” indicated that they had known about such behaviour from a variety of ways at school, including from addresses about the issue at school parades, writings on the school notice boards, warning by teachers and peer support groups established at the school. These were the vehicles or media used to communicate sexual harassment to the students.

This implies that school “A” implemented communication strategies in the fight against sexual harassment in the school through promoting awareness by students of the vice.

Findings from School “B” supported those from School “A”. One interviewee from School “B” said the following:

“It is not in the exact words as you ask about sexual harassment but I keep hearing about it at School that it is about unwanted sex..um..something like when a girl is forced or seduced to engage in sex. May be also when she is touched in the wrong parts of her body. Sometimes the teachers talk about on the assembly”, (Interviewee 6, 2022).

Another interviewee said:

“Yes, I read about it on the school noticeboard, though I don’t really know what it is exactly”, (Interviewee 3, 2022).

No School Debates as form of Communication to Students about Sexual Harassment

The results indicated that the schools did not hold debates specifically to communicate sexual harassment to students. During all the three Focus Group Discussions, participants were of the same mind that in their school, there was no such communication strategy. Yet, they reported that debates had been organized in their lifetime at the school but not to educate them about sexual harassment.

One interviewee had this to say:

“Debates, yes. I attend debates organized every last Friday of every month in the school main hall, but I don’t remember if students debated about sex while I am around”, (Interviewee 2, 2022).

Another interviewee stated that:

“I am in Form Two but I have never attended a debate where my friends are talking about sex or harassment.” (Interviewee 10)

Another student said:

“No, we have never discussed sex matters in our debates.” (Interviewee 1, 2022)

This was a confirmation that debates were not part of the strategies the schools used to communicate. A debate, according to (Infante et al., 2020), gives reasoned arguments for and against a claim since it requires listeners and opposing participants to compare competing options. A debate also necessitates critical thought, the raising of questions and obtaining answers that address misunderstanding or lingering doubts; hence a good strategy to create awareness.

No Poster Messaging on School Campuses

The students also reported no posters on school campuses that are specifically about sexual harassment. This was revealed by all the three Focus Group Discussions conducted. All participants denied having seen a poster by their school about sexual harassment, although some participants indicated that they had seen posters about HIV/AIDS.

From the Interviews from School “B”, one interviewee reported that:

“There are many posters every term, but they are not about seducing or forcing students to play sex. I only see those that are about abstaining from sex and using condoms. I also see those about pregnancy and marriage at a young age”, (Interviewee 9, 2022).

Another interviewee said that:

“At school there are posters about Aids and not getting married while young for girls. I don’t know if that is about harassment but I see the posters”, (Interviewee 13, 2022).

It is clear from the above discussions and interviews that the schools did not have posters as a means of communicating to their students about sexual harassment. According to (Samanez, 1987), a poster message elicits attention through its originality, contrast, and focus on the center of interest, and its visual attractiveness is also important.

There are Public Speeches on Sexual Harassment

The findings indicate that speeches about sexual harassment were made, but only rarely in School “A” and a bit more regularly in School “B”. In school “A”, discussion groups revealed that speeches at the school were made on school assemblies when there was an incident of sexual harassment by a fellow student. One participant in one of the focus group discussions reported that he recalled in a general assembly when the headmaster talked about “touching a female student in the bad places” was a high level of indiscipline. Another participant in a focus group discussion noted that it was the master on duty who spoke about sexual harassment on a general assembly parade. All participants in the focus group discussions reported that speeches were made by the members of school administration or teachers and only general assembly parades. This means that speeches were made upon being prompted by an incident of sexual harassment and only when an incident was a student-to-student incident. The speeches were limited and reactive at School “A”.

That was unlike what was reported from School “B”, about which students reported periodic speeches organized by the school. One interviewee noted that:

“Our school organizes speeches on various subjects and invites elders and experts to speak to students.” (Interviewee 15, 2022)

Another male interviewee reported that:

“I remember, counsellors have been invited to speak to us about how to behave when we are with girls. They advised us to respect their bodies because they are our sisters. Teachers also speak to us about how to treat our sisters at school, in class or assembly” (interviewee 14, 2022)

However, it is observed that no speeches were made by fellow students at both schools yet according to Cox (n.d.) the most useful speeches on school campuses should be made by a student, addressing fellow students. The collegiality afforded by a student-speaker makes fellow students to pay more attention because they identify with a student-speaker more than with a stranger.

No drama events on the subject of Sexual Harassment

The findings indicated that the schools did not organize drama events in respect of educating students about sexual harassment. Results from the Focus Discussion Groups revealed that at school “A”, the drama was part of the co-curricular activities in conjunction with music and dance, but was never organized specifically for educating students about sexual harassment. Participants in the discussions revealed that drama was for promoting talent and entertaining rather than educating or creating awareness about sexual harassment. One participant in one of the discussions revealed that *“I have acted in many plays for my house but I have never acted about sexual harassment.”* (Participant 4, 2022)

In a similar vein, interviews from School “B” also revealed that the school held Music Dance and Drama (MDD) but not specifically to create or raise awareness of sexual harassment.

One interviewee said:

“Every year, we hold an MDD day at which we compete in Music, dance and drama as classes, and each class can come up with any play and act it.” (Interviewee 10, 2022)

This means that there is no special arrangement at school “B” to create awareness on sexual harassment. The schools do not include drama as a deliberate strategy to raise awareness

about sexual harassment in their schools through drama as they should, to the detriment of the students. It is a missed opportunity because theatre results in a deeper level of processing and more attitudinal change, according to Milhausen et al (2006).

Schools do not have a Magazine

The findings from both Focus Group Discussions and interviews revealed that the schools did not produce a magazine, and therefore, did not use it as strategy to create or raise awareness of sexual harassment. Having a student-run print magazine would be a good strategy for creating or raising awareness about sexual harassment in schools because young people use journalistic vehicles to draw attention to issues of uniquely intense interest to a peer audience, issues that others may overlook (LoMonte, 2022). This can be said to be a missed opportunity by the schools that were investigated. It goes without saying that sexual harassment was not addressed by the schools in this way.

4.3 Effect of Evaluation of Strategies on the Creation of Awareness of Sexual

Harassment amongst Students

Creating awareness in a school community about sexual harassment of students can be done through seminars, speeches and debates, theatre, posters, student-run print magazine through media and through families. To understand if the schools did evaluate the effectiveness of the strategies such as message and vehicles used, teachers and school administrators in school “A” and school “B” were interviewed and the responses gave a mixed impression. They were asked to choose three strategies they thought were most impactful in creating students’ awareness of sexual harassment in their schools.

In school “A”, the majority of interviewees thought that theatre, debates, and seminars were the most impactful approaches. In school “B”, the majority thought that the most impactful

communication strategies were speeches, posters, and debates. Both schools were found to evaluate their communication strategies even though informally.

The opinions are captured in table 4.1. below

Table. 4. 1: Opinions of Key informants

SCHOOL	Key informant 1	Key informant 2	Key informant 3	Key informant 4
A	<p><i>“It is definitely theatre, debating and seminars” They are interactive and have a quality of engagement. Students get an opportunity to interact with the disseminators of the information about sexual harassment and in the process ask questions, obtain answers to their questions, clear doubts, and get a clear.”</i></p>	<p><i>“Debate, acting, and seminars, are the most impactful in my view because they are in part done by students themselves (drama and debate) and in part by experts (seminars). The blend offers benefits to students more than if it were one sided (either done by students alone or by experts alone).”</i></p>	<p><i>I think theatre is the best because it is captivating and draws the attention of students to the issue, especially if it involves a touching scene. But debate is also impactful because it involves the exchange of various viewpoints on an issue which gives a broader perspective and widens understanding. The other one is seminars.”</i></p>	<p><i>“Seminars create a good impact because they entail learning about sexual harassment from experts, but theatre leaves a lasting long-term impression on students about an issue. Debates help to form an informed opinion because they offer various dimensions of the issue.”</i></p>
B	<p><i>“I speak to students about several issues and speeches are both convenient and effective in conveying information about an issue, not least about sexual harassment at school. I see behavioral change as a result of speeches I make on several subjects and I think it is an impactful strategy. The second one is debates. This is also in my view impactful in creating awareness because it is done by students and offers various viewpoints. It therefore allows students to hear from</i></p>	<p><i>“Posters are good starting point for me. I am a fine art teacher and I understand the power of art and design on communicating messages simply but powerfully. I also think debates have impact on how people see things, as well as speeches, since words have power and well organized and delivered speeches have power to move hearts.”</i></p>	<p><i>“For me, it is posters, speeches, and debates in that order. Posters are simple but powerful if well designed. Well-crafted speeches have the power to melt hearts and lead to action. Debates are educative, interactive and informative; hence they have the potential to create awareness about sexual harassment in a unique way.</i></p>	<p><i>“Debates, speeches, and posters. Debates engage students’ thinking both the participants and the listeners. Speeches are instructive and motivation and informative, depending on how they are delivered to an audience. Posters are creative ways of communicating in a simpler way, and that’s where their power lies.</i></p>

their peers and to form an opinion from a pool of ideas.” Posters are also impactful in my view to the extent that they have the power to draw the attention of a viewer to the message they contain.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Discussion of Findings

This study was about whether the communication strategies designed and implemented in selected secondary schools in Wakiso to shine a spotlight on sexual harassment in schools result in students' awareness of the vice.

In specific terms, the study set out to ascertain the effect of messages designed as a communication strategy in selected Secondary Schools in Wakiso to fight sexual harassment, to assess the vehicles or media of communication used to create students' awareness of sexual harassment in selected Secondary Schools in Wakiso as a result of the communication strategies, and to examine if the communication strategies i.e. messages and vehicles (media) created students' awareness of sexual harassment.

5.1.1 Effect of Message Design on Awareness of Sexual Harassment

Students understood what constituted sexual harassment to be unwanted sexual advances, and were therefore generally aware of the vice.

Students were able to cite various examples of sexual harassment including indecent and unwelcome touching of sexually sensitive body parts, sharing of unsolicited sexual material including nude pictures and pornographic videos, and use of sexually explicit language. They also cited indecent and sexually revealing clothing as a form of sexual harassment.

Some participants in the discussion groups suggested that they obtained that knowledge from the school environment, while others reported that they understood sexual harassment during the discussion the researcher had with them, and still others suggested that they had an idea of it from the Internet but it became clear to them what constitutes sexual harassment during

the discussion and interview sessions. It can, therefore, be concluded that the communication strategies at the schools had a limited effect on the awareness of sexual harassment among students.

Regarding the message design, the findings show that some aspects of the message related to sexual harassment were omitted. Only one student was able to show that sexual harassment of female students made them uncomfortable. The rest of the student participants in the focus group discussions were not able to point out any other consequences of sexual harassment.

5.1.2 Effect of Vehicles (Media) on Awareness of Sexual Harassment

Findings showed that the schools used a variety of strategies including addresses during parades and public speeches. However, the findings indicated that the schools did not hold debates about the issue nor did they organize theatre acts about the issue nor have student-run magazines. It was also found out that the schools did not have posters specifically about sexual harassment. It can be inferred that the schools implemented extremely few strategies. This may imply that they did not have a sexual harassment communication policy, or if they had one, they did not implement it.

Despite the teachers being aware that debates, posters, drama events and magazines do create awareness of sexual harassment, these vehicles of communicating sexual harassment were not utilized. This affected the awareness of sexual harassment amongst students.

These findings are consistent with studies that indicate that attention must be given to all aspects of message design such that the message is effective by being related to the target audience and communicating the key points to be communicated (see National Sexual Violence Resource Center, 2015; Potter et al., 2010; Gay & Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation & Movement Advancement Project, 2008; FrameWorks Institute, 2013; Cook &

Lewandowsky, 2012; O'Neil & Morgan, 2010; O'Neil, Simon, & Haydon, 2014; Davis, Parks, & Cohen, 2010; World Health Organization, 2009).

These findings are consistent with research that portrays that there must be appropriate vehicles which should be chosen to communicate sexual harassment. While it was evident that some vehicles do not exist, the findings from teachers and administrators that these vehicles are useful resonates with other studies on the same (see Christensen, 2013; Hogan, et al., 2016; Cox, n.d.; Lawrie, 2021; Montes, et al., 2019; Christensen, 2013; Rodríguez, Rich, Hastings, & Page, 2006; Boal, 1985; Babbage, 2004; Epstein & Langenbahn, 1999; Grey, Boland, Davidson, Li, & Tamborlane, 2000; Margalit, Glick, & Benbassat, 2004 and Milhausen, McBride, & Jun, 2006; Saunders & Goddard, 2002; and Reger, et al., 2000; Duggan, 2013).

5.1.3 Effect of Evaluation of Strategies in Creating Awareness of Sexual Harassment amongst Students

The findings indicate that the schools had different preferences for the most impactful strategies. These preferences were revealed by teachers and administrators of the schools. In school "A", the majority of interviewees thought that theatre, debates, and seminars were the most impactful approaches. In school "B", the majority thought that the most impactful communication strategies were speeches, posters, and debates as strategy to create students' awareness about sexual harassment in selected Secondary Schools in Wakiso.

In conclusion, it can be said that each school can pursue its preferred strategy, although this does not mean that the schools that were investigated necessarily followed those strategies. Some of the strategies the teachers and administrators put forward as the most impactful were not implemented in the schools, as shown in the findings, including debates, theatre, and posters. Thus, this suggests that they gave their personal opinions.

It should be noted that several strategies mentioned by the key informants have been found to be effective in other contexts. One such example is the “Drama in AIDS Education” strategy, which utilized participatory theatre methods in South Africa to communicate to young people about HIV-related matters (Botha & Durden, 2004).

In KwaZulu Natal, South Africa, Teachers reported that after theatre presentations, cases of sexual harassment had decreased, and suggested that the dramas had helped girls gain assertiveness skills and the ability to say “no” to demanding boys (Mugira, 2009). The approach of using theatre has therefore been found to produce positive results to the extent that, live dramas effectively engaging audience members. Mobilized young men to care and challenged the way that young people approach issues of gender and HIV/AIDS. The approach also improved self-efficacy, self-esteem, and confidence among participants, including young women who demonstrated an ability to express their thoughts and feelings (Sutherland, 2000) cited in Njamba (2015).

This is also in line with Önen and Koç’s (2018) view that, by virtue of entertaining and addressing to feelings, theatre is effective in grabbing the listeners' attention and motivating toward improvement. Theatre was impactful in raising awareness and knowledge of HIV infected patients and how protection measures could be inoculated (Mbizvo, 2006).

Another example is print media, whether in the form of posters or magazines. They have been found to be effective in creating awareness in contexts that are similar to sexual harassment. Meena communication initiative that was implemented in Bangladesh, India, Pakistan, and Nepal used comic books, animated cartoons, posters, an interactive website, and radio series to portray the dangers of early marriage, the advantages of allowing girls to finish school, and other positive insights from which families and communities can learn

(Chesterton, 2004). When the initiative's impact was assessed, the results confirmed the initiative's ability to communicate and influence perceptions of girls' rights (Njamba, 2015).

There was evidence that the teachers had some form of evaluation of the vehicles used to create awareness about sexual harassment amongst students. However, evaluation of the messages and vehicles was not found to be part of the communication strategy itself. This indicated that the schools would not ordinarily be able to troubleshoot the messages and the vehicles used in communicating sexual harassment.

The need to evaluate communication strategies in relation to sexual harassment is consistent with studies that variously tackle how these strategies should be constructed and implemented. For example, the need to check whether the message is clear and comprehensive is discussed by (Dahinten, 1999). Other studies by Berman, 2002; Rooney, 1998; Ali, 2017 all show gaps in messaging about sexual harassment that could be addressed if frequently evaluated. These studies provide a framework for which this analysis was undertaken and the findings of the studies show that the findings of those studies were similar.

5.2 Conclusions

From the findings obtained, it was concluded that the messages about sexual harassment were appropriately designed to show the meaning and examples of sexual harassment to students, and how and why sexual harassment should be avoided. However, even when the messages were appropriately designed, it was concluded that some of the students were not aware of some of these messages. This implied that the delivery of some of the messages may not have been effective.

Pertaining to the vehicles used to communicate about sexual harassment, it was concluded that a number of vehicles were used while others were not used. This relates to the initial

conclusion about some students not being aware of some of the messages about sexual harassment. The selection of vehicles affected the delivery of messages to the intended student recipients.

In relation to evaluation of strategies to create awareness of sexual harassment among students, it was concluded that the schools tended to weigh the most impactful strategies which they adopted. Thus, the strategies preferred varied from school to school. However, even then, it was concluded that there was no deliberate procedure to evaluate the effectiveness of these strategies, which made it difficult for the schools to modify strategies that were not delivering the messages effectively to the student recipients.

5.3 Recommendations

Overall, the study recommends that the schools come up with comprehensive communication policies that spell out clear communication strategies that they want to pursue in creating or increasing awareness of sexual harassment in their schools. These policies can be designed through widespread consultations amongst stakeholders.

In relation to objective one, which was to examine the effectiveness of communication message design in creating awareness of sexual harassment amongst students in selected secondary schools in Wakiso, it is recommended that the messages designed to communicate to create awareness of sexual harassment amongst students should be modified to also include the consequences of sexual harassment on the victims and perpetrators. This can serve as a deterrent to those who engage in sexual harassment. The process of modification requires examining the content of the messages and ensuring that they meet the objective of combating sexual harassment.

In line with objective two which was to assess the effectiveness of vehicles [media] used to communicate on the students' awareness of sexual harassment in selected secondary schools

in Wakiso, it is recommended that the two schools should consider adopting the vehicles or media of communication that they identified as effective but are not in use. Therefore, debates, posters, drama events and magazines should be utilized to increase awareness about sexual harassment. Adoption of these vehicles should be done after thorough evaluation of their suitability to convey messages about sexual harassment, to the students.

In relation to objective 3 which was to examine the effectiveness of evaluation of communication strategy to create students' awareness about sexual harassment in selected secondary schools in Wakiso it is recommended that monitoring and evaluation of the communication strategy on a weekly basis, should be undertaken. The schools should ensure that they find out from the students whether they are able to define sexual harassment, give examples of it and show the consequences of sexual harassment. This is to determine that the message is being internalized and actions are being taken to address the problem.

The schools should carryout experimental research on the communication strategies that can create the most impact in their schools in increasing awareness about sexual harassment among their students and implement those. This research can be done by testing the different vehicles on students at a pilot level prior to implementation.

Religious and Cultural leaders who are powerful influences on society in Uganda should be coopted in the messaging related to sexual harassment in schools in Uganda. If campaign materials include their images and quotations about their views on sexual harassment, it can be effective. The religious leaders can be approached by the administrators of the two schools and the Ministry of Education and Sports. A specific campaign relating to their involvement can be undertaken at a national level.

The policy regarding sexual harassment in schools needs to be enacted and implemented in all schools. The Ministry of Education and Sports should be at the forefront of ensuring that

all schools in the country implement this for it to be effective. Also, sex education needs to be reinforced so that the students learn more about sexual issues.

5.4 Contribution of the Study

The study make a constribution to knowledge in specific ways. First of all, it demonstrated how communication strategy may create awareness amongst students in one district of Uganda where such evidence was lacking. It adequately responded to gaps in the literature that were reviewed by the researcher. For example, whereas there is hardly any literature that shows that speechs contribute to students' awareness of sexual harassment, this study establishes so.

Furthermore, the study was able to clearly show that theatre when used to create awareness of sexual harassment amongst students, does have a positive effect. By indicating that message design is an important element of communication strategy, the study was able to use data from Wakiso District, that was hardly available to showcase the importance of message design in successful communication strategy in creating students' awareness about sexual harassment.

The study was also able to address a gap in the literature, which does not show how messages are successful communication strategies, in school settings. While a lot of the literature points to the importance of messages in communication strategy, hardly any showed how this was important in school-based communication.

Finally, the study was able to find out why in spite of the extensive communication strategies schools in Uganda employ, sexual harassment goes on unabated. The design and implementation of such strategies are lacking in some aspects, which this study points out clearly.

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APPENDICES

Appendix I: Interview Guide (students)

Introduction

I am Muzeyi Faizo, a student of Kampala International University pursuing a master's degree in mass communication, and as part of the requirements for the award, I am required to undertake a research study.

I thought it would be a good idea to interview you because I think you possess the information I am looking for. Therefore, I would like to first of all, thank you for honouring my request to sit down with you for this interview.

The purpose of this interview is to obtain data for the completion of my Master's degree dissertation, whose topic is: **“Communication Strategies and Students’ Awareness of Sexual Harassment in Secondary Schools in Uganda. A study of selected secondary schools in Wakiso”**, and your school is among the two selected schools.

The data collected will be used for the academic purposes only. Therefore, rest assured that any information you volunteer will not be used for any other purpose and will never be used against you in anyway or form.

This interview will take not more than 5 minutes. I encourage you to be truthful to the best of your knowledge.

Let me begin by asking you a few questions about you:

Section A: Bio-information

How old are you?

Do you identify yourself as a female or a male?

Section B: the effect of communication messages on awareness of sexual harassment

Sexual harassment includes unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical harassment of a sexual nature.

1. Do you see or hear about such incidents in this school?
2. Does your school communicate to students about such things?
3. Does it organize debates on the subject?
4. Does it have posters on the issue?
5. Does it organize speeches on the subject?
6. Does it organize drama events on the subject?
7. Does your school produce a news magazine and if so, does the news cover sexual harassment?

Section B: the effect of audience mapping on the awareness of sexual harassment

1. What do you know sexual harassment as?
2. How did you know about it?
3. What are some examples of sexual harassment?

Section C: examining the effect of vehicles used on creating awareness about sexual harassment

4. Do you have sexual harassment messages in your school?
5. Do they resonate differentiated according to your class, age?
6. Do they hurt your cultural, religious beliefs?
7. Do the messages feel you with compassion?
8. Do they contain statistics and other facts?
9. When you read or see them, do the messages say that sexual harassment is a school problem or is the problem presented as minimal or isolated?

10. Which strategy is better in your view?

That's the end of the interview.

Thank you so much for your time.

Appendix II: Interview Guide (Key informants-Teachers and school administrators)

Introduction

I am Muzeyi Faizo, a student of Kampala International University pursuing a master's degree in mass communication, and as part of the requirements for the award, I am required to undertake a research study.

I thought it would be a good idea to interview you because I think you possess the information I am looking for. Therefore, I would like to first of all, thank you for honouring my request to sit down with you for this interview.

The purpose of this interview is to obtain data for the completion of my Master's degree dissertation, whose topic is: **“Communication Strategies and Students’ Awareness of Sexual Harassment in Secondary Schools in Uganda. A study of selected secondary schools in Wakiso”**, and your school is among the two selected schools.

The data collected will be used for the academic purposes only. Therefore, rest assured that any information you volunteer will not be used for any other purpose and will never be used against you in anyway or form.

This interview will take not more than 5 minutes. I encourage you to be truthful to the best of your knowledge.

Let me begin by asking you a few questions about you:

Section A: Bio-information

How old are you?

Do you identify yourself as a female or a male?

Section B: The impactful strategies in creating awareness of sexual harassment in school

Communication strategies for the awareness of sexual harassment among students may include debates, speeches, theatre, posters, student-run magazines, song and dance, etc about the issue. In your opinion, name three of the strategies that you think are most impactful.

Why?

That's the end of the interview.

Thank you so much for your time.

Appendix III: Discussion prompts

I am Muzeyi Faizo, a student of Kampala International University pursuing a master's degree in mass communication, and as part of the requirements for the award, I am required to undertake a research study.

I thought it would be a good idea to interview you because I think you possess the information I am looking for. Therefore, I would like to first of all, thank you for honouring my request to sit down with you for this interview.

The purpose of this questionnaire is to obtain data for the completion of my Master's degree dissertation, whose topic is: **“Communication Strategies and Students’ Awareness of Sexual Harassment in Secondary Schools in Uganda. A study of selected secondary schools in Wakiso District”**, and your school is among the two selected schools.

The data collected will be used for the academic purpose for which I collect it. Therefore, rest assured that any information you volunteer will not be used for any other purpose and will never be used against you in anyway or form.

Section B: the effect of communication messages on awareness of sexual harassment

1. Do you see or hear about such incidents in this school?
2. Does your school communicate to students about such things?
3. Does it organize debates on the subject?
4. Does it have posters on the issue?
5. Does it organize speeches on the subject?
6. Does it organize drama events on the subject?
7. Does your school produce a news magazine and if so, does the news cover sexual harassment?

Section B: the effect of audience mapping on awareness of sexual harassment

11. What do you know sexual harassment as?
12. How did you know about it?
13. What are some examples of sexual harassment?

Section C: examining the effect of vehicles used on creating awareness about sexual harassment

14. Do you have sexual harassment messages in your school?
15. Do they resonate differentiated according your class, age?
16. Do they hurt your cultural, religious beliefs?
17. Do the messages feel you with compassion?
18. Do they contain statistics and other facts?
19. When you read or see them, do the messages say that sexual harassment is a school problem or is the problem presented as minimal or isolated?
20. Which strategy is better in your view?

End

Thank you