Analysis of Victims' Attitude and Isolation from Sexual Harassment Among Athletes in South-South State Sports Councils of Nigeria

Obi Agburuga, (Ph.D) Department of Physical and Health Education, Federal College of Education (Technical), Omoku, Nigeria
Onoja Ugbedejo Department of Physical and Health Education, Federal College of Education (Technical), Omoku, Nigeria
Agada Enejo Department of Physical and Health Education, Federal College of Education (Technical), Omoku, Nigeria

Abstract
This study was designed to determine the prevalence and determinants of sexual harassment among athletes in South-South States Sports Council in Nigeria. Two specific objectives, two research questions and two null hypotheses guided the study. The study adopted descriptive survey design. The population for the study comprised of 1,647 male and 1,274 female athletes. They give a total of 2,921 sports athletes in South-South Sports Council which spread across the six states. The sample size of the study consisted of 336 male and 262 female athletes giving a total of 598 representing 20% of athletes from each of the state Sport Council. Instrument titled "Victims Attitude and Isolation as a determinant of Sexual Harassment of Athletes Questionnaire (VAIDSHAQ)" was used for data collection. The instrument was validated by three research experts, all from the University of Uyo. Instrument was trial tested on 20 athletes who were not part of the research sample. Cronbach Alpha Reliability Statistics and reliability co-efficient of 0.98 was obtained. The data was analysed using simple regression to answer research questions while the hypothesis was tested using F-ratio in simple linear regression at .05 levels of significance. The prevalence of victim attitudes and isolations from sexual partners are determined of sexual harassments among athletes. Based on the findings of the study, it is recommended among measures that individuals with records of sexual abuse should not be admitted into the sport council in order to avoid repetition of such act. Also, that victims of sexual harassment who refuse to report the incidence should be sanctioned by the sport council when noticed.

Introduction
Background of the Study
Sexual harassment is described as unwanted sexual advances, requests for sexual favours, and other verbal or physical conducts of a sexual nature, when submission to or rejection, explicitly or implicitly affects a person's employment or education, unreasonably interferes with a person's work or educational performance, or creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive working or learning environment [1]. Sexual harassment is correlated with many negative outcomes, including depression, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) symptoms, diminished mental health, perceived isolation and helplessness, internalized shame, disordered eating, problematic alcohol use, nausea, and sleeplessness. In the school environment, many harassed students experience negative academic effects, such as decreased academic satisfaction, perceptions of faculty, engagements and poor performance. However, the athletes in different sport councils are not immune to such sexual harassment.
Sexual harassment is an everyday situation that happens in all parts of the world, in such places like workplace environment, institutions, schools, and even the family. [2,3,4] in their studies have shown an alarming prevalence rate of sexual harassment among workers which vary considerably across studies, ranging from about 20% in Israel, the Netherlands and Taiwan; to as high as 90% in the U.S. [5,6]. Also in Africa, few studies have also shown a high incidence of sexual harassment among student athletes in universities. For instance [7] reported a prevalence of 67% among students athletes attending University of Malawi while another study in South Africa reported that 30% of female students were raped and sexually harassed by male students and teachers in high schools [8].

In most cases of sexual harassment, the victims are blame for being responsible for their undoing due to their appearance such as clothing, body make up and behaviour. People who endorse more politically conservative views are also more likely to blame victims of sexual harassment [9]. Sexual harassment Myth Endorsement is significantly correlated with restrictive beliefs about women’s roles and rights. Studies of victim blame in acquaintance rape have also documented a positive relationship between blame and endorsement of traditional gender roles.

Sexual harassment is isolatable but it requires more than just a causal effort because of the complexity of its nature. It is important to developed organizations and societies to maintain alertness and consolidate on isolation measures in places whilst the developing world could learn from the successes and failures of isolation measures that have been implemented in certain places. To this end, a purpose driven framework is needed to confront the challenges of sexual harassment isolation [10]. Special focused on perpetrator isolation, i.e. stopping the development of sexually abusive behaviour. This entails incorporation of perpetrator isolation into an ecological approach to the isolation of sexual harassment and involves the exploration of three of the risk factors linked with sexually abusive behaviour: gender inequality, the negative effects on athletes and young male athletes of media exposure to sexual harassment, and the increased risk of sexually harassed behaviour by males with a history of athletes sexual harassment and consequences [11].

**Victims Attitude as aDeterminant of Sexual Harassment**

The term victim is derived from a Latin word ‘victima’ meaning beast for sacrifice. According to [12] defines it as one who is harmed or killed by another, especially by someone committing a criminal or unlawful act: a victim of a mugging, whereas attitude is define according to [13] as a psychological construct, a mental and emotional entity that inheres in, or characterizes a person. [14] also define attitude, as psychological construct, the most distinctive and indispensable concept in contemporary social psychology. They further added that attitude can be formed from a person's past and present. Alternately, [15] considered it as romantic love stories, personal business, dirty secrets of sport, and abuse of power and trust. Kirby and Greaves in [15] in their findings confirm the occurrence of male-female athletes engaging in various sexual relationships, such as female athletes having intercourse with male figures in sport, intimate, romantic relationships and male-female-athlete marriages.

Evidently, the use of sexy dresses within the sports arena has been operationalized to the fact that, some female athletes victim say they use dress to communicate their sexual desire to male athletes and attract sexual attention from male [16]. For example, using reasoning based in evolutionary psychology, Grammer in [17] found that female athletes used alluring and bold clothes (that is, sheerness) to court a male partner, meet new people, and flirt. Additionally, researchers have reported that people believe female athletes use dress to indicate sexual interest or intent. For example, Koukounas and Letch in [8] reported both male and female athletes thought that women used sexy dress to indicate sexual interest and that males perceived more sexual intent than female.

In addition to specific styles of dress, researchers have been interested in dress colour as a sexual cue. [18] showed male business students a single photo of a young female athlete wearing a t-shirt. Compared to when the female athlete wore blue, green, or white, men rated female athlete wearing red as more attractive and as having more sexual intent. [19] continued research on the red-attractiveness-sexuality link in an African country as a step in determining whether response to red was universal. In that society the meaning of red was generally negative and had no link to overt romantic connotations. Thus, when a black and white photo of a female athlete was framed in red as compared to blue, men rated the female athlete as more attractive, indicated they were more interested in courting her, and were more likely to volunteer to meet her. Even though additional work is needed, an early indication is that the red-attractiveness-sexuality effect may hold true across cultures. Finally, [20] conducted experiments and found that women rated another female athlete wearing red as sexually receptive, were likely to derogate the sexual fidelity of a female athlete wearing red, and indicated they would guard their romantic partners from such a female athlete.
Isolation from Sexual Partner as a determinant of sexual harassment

Isolation is a state of separation between person or group while sexual partner means people who engage in sexual activity together. Sexual partners can be of any number, sex, gender, or sexual orientation. Sexual partners may be in a committed relationship, either on an exclusive basis or not, or engage in the sexual activity on a casual basis. However, from the above definitions isolation from sexual partner can simply mean to separate oneself or by others from people who engage in sexual activities together. It can be inferred that sexual harassment, like other medical, social or legal anomalies could be amenable to preventive measures through isolation from sexual partner. [11] is of the view that some elements could offer the means to prevention of sexual harassment through isolation from sexual partner in social gatherings.

The applicability of isolation from sexual partner toward the prevention of sexual harassment is therefore derived from previous studies in different parts of the world that highlight the viability of these interventions. Therefore, if one posits that sexual harassment can be prevented through isolation from sexual partners, certain responsibilities are imperative; some challenges must be anticipated and special needs/circumstances should be catered for. Public enlightenment has been shown to be a critical tool in changing behaviour, attitude, beliefs and value system of people [11]. Recently in Nigeria, the president of African Civil Society against sexual harassment, a Civil Society Organization, called upon Nigerians during a media parley, to join forces with the Civil Society Organizations in order to heighten public enlightenment in the fight against sexual harassment and sexual violence in the country.

It is important for the advocacy community in its attempt to provide victims safety and offenders accountability and more importantly in prevention of sexual harassment through isolation from sexual partners. They should not isolate themselves from other relevant stakeholders but rather take into account the criminal justice and treatment efforts to also address sexual offending behaviour [11].

Statement of the Problem

In recent time the productivity of athletes in states sports councils in south-south, Nigeria has been discouraging. This however is attributed to be caused by the rising cases of sexual harassment emanating from the state sports councils. Parents, athletes and some concerned stakeholders are lamenting over the rate at which the social menace called sexual harassment is becoming a regular occurrence in the south-south state sports councils. They claim that states sports councils lack the willingness to vigorously tackle prevalence of sexual harassments and other forms of sexual assaults such as sex-for-growth in the job coupled with lack of faith in the system to impartially dispense justice. Others believe that this growing social menace of sexual harassment is the reason most female athletes refuse to participate in sports and the few that summon courage to partake are likely to perform poorly in competition or even have less chance of being selected at all to represent their states except they yield to the pressure of being harassed. Some victims resort to take the law into their hands and some superior sports officials have been set up, stripped, beaten and humiliated by aggrieved victims who are desperate for revenge. However, the consequences may be poor performance and lack of willingness to voluntarily participate without being molested or intimidated.

Athletes in states sports council have their unique experiences of sexual harassments from staff and peers. Though, sexual harassment affects virtually men and women of all races, ages and colours; Nigerian victims experience more elusive types of harassment. In other countries or cultures, sexual harassment is a behaviour that is globally unacceptable in any public setting. Regardless of the form it takes, perpetrators disguise themselves but the society is not pleased with it. It is against this backdrop that this study seeks to investigate the prevalence and determinants of sexual harassments among athletes in South-South states sports councils in Nigeria.

Aim and Objectives of the Study

The aim and objectives of this study was to find out the prevalence and determinants of sexual harassments among athletes in south-south state sports councils. Specifically, the study seeks to;

i. Determine whether victims’ attitude is a determinant of sexual harassment among athletes in south-south state sports councils in Nigeria;

ii. Determine whether isolation from sexual partner is a determinant of sexual harassment among athletes in south-south state sports councils in Nigeria.

Research Questions

Based on the objectives of the study, the following research questions were formulated to guide the study.

i. How does victim’s attitude be a determinant sexual harassment among athletes in south-south state sports councils in Nigeria?

ii. How does isolation from sexual partner be a determinant of sexual harassment among athletes in south-south state sports councils in Nigeria?

Research Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were formulated to guide the study and each of them were tested at .05 level of significance.

i. Victims’ attitude is not a significant determinant of sexual harassment among athletes in south-south state sports councils in Nigeria.
Isolation from sexual partner is not a significant determinant of sexual harassment among athletes in south-south state sports councils in Nigeria.

**Research Methodology**

Descriptive survey design was adopted for this study. The population of this study comprised all the 1647 male and 1,274 female athletes in the south-south state sports councils spread across the six (6) states of the south-south geo-political zone. The sample for this study comprised 336 male and 262 female athletes given a total of 598 athletes drawn from the six (6) states that make up the South-South states sport council of the South-south geo-political zone of Nigeria using cluster sampling technique. The instrument used for data collection was entitled: “Victims Attitude and Isolation as a Determinants of Sexual Harassment of Athletes Questionnaire (VAIDSHAQ)”. Mean and standard deviation were used to answer research questions 1, 2 and 8 while simple regression was used to answer research questions 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 and 9. Hypotheses 1 and 8 were tested using Analysis of Variance, hypothesis 2 was tested using independent t-test, while hypotheses 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 and 9 were tested using F-ratio in simple linear regression. All the nine hypotheses were tested at .05 levels of significance. The SPSS version 23 was used to analyzed the data.

**Results and Presentation of Data**

**Research Question 1**

How does victim’s attitude determine sexual harassment among athletes in south-south state sports councils in Nigeria?

The value of regression coefficient (R²) was used in answering the research question and summary of data showed in Table 1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>R</th>
<th>R²</th>
<th>% Contribution</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Victims’ Attitude</td>
<td>.770a</td>
<td>.592</td>
<td>59.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexual Harassment</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: a. Predictors: (Constant), Victims’ Attitude  
Source: Field work 2021.

The result in Table 1 shows the value of the regression coefficient (R) and its’ corresponding R² of 0.770 and 0.592 respectively. The value of R² of 0.592 indicates that victim’s attitude contributed 59.2% to sexual harassment among athletes in south-south states sport councils in Nigeria. This implies that athletes’ attitude is a major determinant of sexual harassment in South-South States sport councils in Nigeria.

**Research Question 2**

How does isolation from sexual partner be a determinant of sexual harassment among athletes in south-south state sports councils in Nigeria?

The value of regression coefficient (R²) was used in answering the research question and summary of data showed in Table 2.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>R</th>
<th>R²</th>
<th>% Contribution</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Isolation from Sexual Partner</td>
<td>.644a</td>
<td>.414</td>
<td>41.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexual Harassment</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: a. Predictors: (Constant), Isolation from Sexual Partner  
Source: Field work 2021.

The result in Table 2 shows the value of the regression coefficient (R) and its’ corresponding R² of 0.644 and 0.414 respectively. The value of R² of 0.414 indicates that isolation from sexual partner contributed 41.4% to sexual harassment among athletes in south-south states sport councils in Nigeria. This is an indication that isolation from sexual partner is a major determinant of sexual harassment among athletes in south-south states of Nigeria.

**Result of Test of Hypothesis**

**Hypothesis**

Victims’ attitude is not a significant determinant of sexual harassment among athletes in south-south states of Nigeria.

**Table 3: Regression Analysis of Victims’ Attitude and Sexual Harassment among Athletes in South-South**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Sum of Squares</th>
<th>Df</th>
<th>Mean Square</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Regression</td>
<td>19083.218</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>19083.218</td>
<td>845.14</td>
<td>.000b</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residual</td>
<td>13141.492</td>
<td>582</td>
<td>22.580</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>32224.711</td>
<td>583</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: a. Dependent Variable: Sexual Harassment; b. Predictors: (Constant), Victims’ Attitude
The result in Table 3 indicated that the calculated F-value of 845.14 at 1 and 582 degrees of freedom is significant, since the p-value of 0.000 is less than the 0.05 levels of significance. Therefore, the null hypothesis which stated that victims’ attitude is not a significant determinant of sexual harassment among athletes in south-south states councils in Nigeria is rejected. Hence, victims’ attitude is a significant determinant of sexual harassment among athletes in south-south states council in Nigeria.

Hypothesis 2
Isolation from sexual partner is not a significant determinant of sexual harassment among athletes in south-south state sports councils in Nigeria.

Table 4: Regression Analysis of Isolation Use and Sexual Harassment among Athletes in South-South States

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Sum of Squares</th>
<th>Df</th>
<th>Mean Square</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Regression</td>
<td>13351.373</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>13351.373</td>
<td>411.72</td>
<td>.000a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residual</td>
<td>18873.338</td>
<td>582</td>
<td>32.428</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>32224.711</td>
<td>583</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: a. Dependent Variable: Sexual Harassment; b. Predictors: (Constant), Isolation from Partner

The result in Table 4 indicated that the calculated F-value of 411.72 at 1 and 582 degrees of freedom is significant, since the p-value of 0.000 is less than the 0.05 levels of significance. Therefore, the null hypothesis which stated that isolation from sexual partner is not a significant determinant of sexual harassment among athletes in south-south states councils in Nigeria is rejected. Hence, Isolation from sexual partner is a significant determinant of sexual harassment among athletes in south-south state sports councils in Nigeria.

Summary of Findings
Victims’ attitude is a significant determinant of the prevalence of sexual harassment among athletes in south-south Nigeria states.
Isolation from sexual partner is a significant determinant of the prevalence of sexual harassment among athletes in south-south Nigeria states.

Discussion of Findings
Victims Attitude as a Determinant of Sexual Harassment
The finding in table 1 shows that victims’ attitude is a significant determinant of the prevalence of sexual harassment among athletes in south-south Nigeria states. This finding is supported by [16] who opined that use of sexy dresses within the sports arena has been operationalized to the fact that, some female athletes victim say they use dress to communicate their sexual desire to male athletes and attract sexual attention from male. Again, using reasoning based in evolutionary psychology, Grammer [17] found that female athletes used alluring and bold clothes (that is, sheerness) to court a male partner, meet new people, and flirt. Additionally, researchers have reported that people believe female athletes use dress to indicate sexual interest or intent. For example, [17] reported both male and female athletes thought that women used sexy dress to indicate sexual interest and that males perceived more sexual intent than female.

Isolation from Sexual Partner as a determinant of sexual harassment
The finding in table 2 revealed that isolation from sexual partner is a significant determinant of the prevalence of sexual harassment among athletes in south-south Nigeria states. This result is supported by [11] who was of the view that some elements could offer the means to prevention of sexual harassment through isolation from sexual partner in social gatherings. He further noted that public enlightenment has been shown to be a critical tool in changing behaviour, attitude, beliefs and value system of people [11]. In addition, [1] recalled that in Nigeria, the president of African Civil Society against sexual harassment, a Civil Society Organization, called upon Nigerians during a media parley, to join forces with the Civil Society Organizations in order to heighten public enlightenment in the fight against sexual harassment and sexual violence in the country.

Conclusion
Based on the findings of this study on the prevalence and determinants of sexual harassment among athletes in south-south sports council in Nigeria, it was concluded that female athletes are more vulnerable to sexual harassment than male athletes in south-south states in Nigeria. It was also concluded that the use of drugs by athletes is the main determinant of the prevalence of sexual harassment among athletes in south-south states in Nigeria.

Recommendations
The following recommendations were made based on the findings of the study;

i. Individuals with records of sexual abuse should not be admitted into the sport council in order to avoid repetition of such act.
ii. Victims of sexual harassment who refuse to report the incidence should be sanctioned by the sport council when noticed.
Suggestions for Further Studies

Based on the limitations of the present study, the following suggestions were made for further research;

1. Determinants of sexual harassment among athletes in the post pandemic era among University Students in Nigeria.
2. Determinants of sexual harassment among athletes in Nigeria.
3. Attitude of University athletes towards sexual harassment in South-South Federal Universities.

References


