

Preventive Measures on Sexual Violence against Female Students in Two Selected Countries: Lessons for Polytechnics in South-West Nigeria

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Abstract

Sexual violence against female students is a thriving academic vice in tertiary institutions in most countries of the world, Nigeria inclusive. This derogatory act perpetrated by male lecturers robs the ivory tower of academic dignity and integrity thus making certification an exercise in falsehood. Sexual violence is a major problem in Polytechnics in South-West Nigeria. This paper therefore examined sexual violence and sexual violence preventive measures adopted in tertiary institutions in Australia and South –Africa to checkmate the menace and how such can be adopted by Polytechnics in South-West Nigeria. In the two countries where the incident of sexual violence is alarmingly high, institutions jointly organized campaign against sexual violence while men staged peaceful protest to show that they felt the pain of the women and that they are ready to support them to rid the society of the callous act. The paper suggested that all polytechnics in South-west Nigeria should come together to wage war against this demeaning act and also to involve men actively in sexual violence preventive measures in their institutions.

Keywords: Sexual violence, female students, polytechnics, preventive measures

Introduction

Violence against women can be described as any act that results in or is likely to result in physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty whether occurring in public or private life (WHO, 2016). There are five forms: physical violence, sexual violence, psychological violence, socio-economic violence and harmful traditional practices against women (WHO, 2002). Sexual violence, according to World Health Organization (2002),

Is any sexual act, attempt to obtain a sexual act, unwanted sexual comments or advances or acts to traffic or otherwise directed against a person's sexuality using coercion, by any person regardless of their relation to the victim in any setting, including but not limited to home and work.

This definition implies that sexual violence occurs when consent is not willingly given by the victim. It affects men, women and children. Anyone can be a victim or a perpetrator. Despite the fact that sexual violence is a global social problem, its prevalence in the tertiary institutions nowadays, is highly shocking. It is an academic menace that is a concern to all and sundry. This is because "every family in Nigeria has a victim. It could be your wife when she was younger or your daughter, your sister or even a niece who has gone through the tertiary education system at one point or the other" (Omo-Agege, 2017). It is disheartening to realize that sexual violence can occur at this level of the educational ladder that is a unique class of its own. It is a community of adults and the right place for people of both sexes, diverse ethnic groups and nations to meet, fall in love and even get married. As a community of adults, sexual consent can be given or withdrawn at will or even purchased and sold in extreme cases. It is absurd for male lecturers to attach academic success or failure of female students to sexual gratification.

In a study, titled "Sexual Violence against Female Students in Polytechnics in South-West Nigeria" Ijitona, Agboola & Olaniran discovered that:

- ❖ Sexual violence was a reality in Polytechnics in South-West Nigeria. Most of the victims did not report the act to Institutional Management thus the erring lecturers were not punished.
- ❖ The female students did not report to management of their institutions because they did not believe that they can get justice from them.
- ❖ The lecturers indulged in the act mainly to exercise power over the female students, and not just for the desire to satisfy sexual urge.
- ❖ The consequences of the act include low female enrolment in Polytechnic education, production of half baked polytechnic graduates that makes certification an exercise in falsehood.

It is as a result of this that this position paper is set to examine preventive measures adopted by selected countries to control sexual violence against female students in their tertiary institutions and how such can be adapted by Polytechnics in South-West Nigeria to get rid of this academic epidemic.

The Concept of Violence

Violence has been in existence since the time of creation. For instance, The Bible in Genesis Chapter 4 Verse 8, records the first violent act in human history. This is the killing of Abel by his brother, Cain. Violence, since then has been occurring in different forms amongst human beings. Violence is any act or behaviour involving physical force that is intended to cause hurt, damage or kill someone. It is often associated with the act of oppression, injustice and domination (Oladeji, 2009). Violence is not limited to the Western world, it is a global problem. Akintunde (2009) also asserts that violence cuts across, racial, class, status, cultural, and religious denominations. Men, women and children experience violence in diverse forms, but violence against women has been a serious problem in most societies throughout history (Oladeji, 2009). Violence against women can be described as any act that results in or is likely to result in physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty whether occurring in public or private life (United Nations, 1993).

It can be broadly categorized into five types:

- ❖ Physical violence: This is the most common form of violence against women and girls in which physical force is used to cause bodily harm, injury, permanent disability or death. Examples include battery, slapping, shoving, kicking, hitting with a weapon, acid bath and murder. The perpetrators are usually members of the immediate family of the women or that of their community (WHO, 2002, Ezeilo, 2011).
- ❖ Sexual violence: This manifests in a woman or girl being physically forced to have sexual intercourse. It encompasses a wide range of acts including coerced sex in marriage and dating relationships, rape by strangers, systematic rape during armed conflict, sexual harassment (including demands for sexual favours in return for jobs or school grades), sexual abuse of children, forced prostitution, and sexual trafficking, child marriage and violent acts against the sexual integrity of women including female genital mutilation and obligatory inspections for virginity. (WHO, 2002).
- ❖ Psychological violence: This occurs when a woman or girl is humiliated privately or publicly through verbal assaults like cursing or use of abusive language, threats, denial of freedom, isolation, blackmail and denial of access to financial and material resources (Ezeilo, 2011).
- ❖ Socio-economic violence: This involves depriving the woman or girl access to social, economic sources of power. For instance, denial of access to formal education and employment opportunities. Also, the man may place the woman on a certain monthly allowance which he may withhold or reduce if the woman fails to act as he desires (WHO, 2002, Ezeilo, 2011).
- ❖ Harmful traditional practices: This manifests in various forms such as female genital mutilation, denial of inheritance rights, marital rape, widowhood practices, forced and early marriage, child labour, etc. All these harmful traditional practices occur within the domestic domain (WHO, 2002, Ezeilo, 2011).

Considering carefully these five classifications above, one can assert that violence against women and girls “is a form of violation of human rights of women, in particular, the right to personal security, liberty and bodily integrity, including sexual and reproductive self-determination” (Ezeilo, 2011:234).

Sexual violence against women, as highlighted above, is perpetrated in diverse forms, but only rape, sexual assault and sexual harassment of female students shall be closely examined in this study. “Rape is the intentional penetration of the vaginal, anus and mouth of another person with the penis, when the person does not consent to the penetration and the perpetrator believes that the person (victim) does not consent reasonably” (United States Sexual Offences Act, 2003). Sexual harassment, on the other hand “is an unwelcome sexual advancement when it creates a hostile learning or working environment or when it makes individuals feel, either explicitly or implicitly that their employment or academic progress will be affected if they submit or reject such advances” (Ogunbameru, 2006:15). Sexual assault is another form of sexual violence which occurs when someone touches any part of another person’s body in a sexually suggestive manner, even though the clothes are on, without that person’s consent.

At this juncture, it is essential to assert that the three forms of sexual violence defined above are related in the lack of consent from the victim. The absence of consent in the three forms of sexual violence makes it a criminal act and not the age of the victim. The female students are adult, sane and not under the influence of drug or alcohol, hence they can give or not give sexual consent as they like. However, the fact that the male lecturers are in position of authority and in control of what the female students need –marks, this can intimidate them to consent. Lack of consent, on the other hand, can cause the female students’ to lose marks or be made to fail a course or courses. This is an abuse of position and power, which must be seriously handled. The reason is that if it is not timely and appropriately handled, it can have serious, detrimental consequences for the students as it constitutes a breach of trust between the school and the lecturer, because such conduct undermines the basic purposes of the educational system (Dosunmu, 2007). The impact of this on Polytechnic education is enormous. This is because the Polytechnic is a higher institution which offers both vocational and technological courses

through:

- ❖ Provision of full-time or part time courses of instruction training in engineering, other technologies, applied science, business and management, leading to the production of trained manpower.
- ❖ Provision of technical knowledge and skills necessary for agricultural, industrial, commercial and economic development of Nigeria.
- ❖ Giving training and impacting the necessary skills for the production of technicians, technologists and other skilled personnel who shall be enterprising and self-reliant.
- ❖ Training people who can apply scientific knowledge to solve environmental problems for the convenience of man.
- ❖ Giving exposure on professional studies in the technologies (National Policy on Education, 2013).

The achievement of these laudable objectives becomes a mirage in an environment where sexual violence is thriving and certification becomes an exercise in falsehood. Apart from this, it also serves as an impediment to female students' desire to acquire post-secondary education. This is because sexual violence is an intense personal offence which makes the victims to experience different forms of emotional trauma such as fear, humiliation, loss of control and embarrassment. The trauma is intense in this society because the victims are often blamed for this act, which is beyond their control. It should be noted that sexual crime is the fault of the perpetrator and not that of the victim.

Sexual Violence against Female Students in Tertiary Institutions in Nigeria

Sexual violence, as mentioned earlier, is indeed a problem in tertiary institutions in Nigeria. This vice, affects women negatively in all aspects and sets the nation backwards in its attempt to become a viable nation (Shehu, 2014). The post below by Ibekwe, N.(2015) presents the details :

How Nigerian Universities Encourage Sexual Harassment of Female Students

When Blessing, a 300-level undergraduate female student of the Sociology Department, University of Lagos, approached one of her lecturers for extra tutorial on a problematic module, she did not bargain to be the object of the lecturer's sexual fancy.

"He didn't even bother to explain the topic to me. Maybe he thought I was flirting with him but I'm sure I did not leave that impression," said Blessing, who refused to allow the use of her actual names.

Soon, the lecturer started inviting her to beer parlours outside the campus. Blessing said she initially responded out of respect but I stopped answering the lecturer's phone calls the day he tried to touch her breast in public. She completely avoided him after the man asked her to meet him at a guesthouse in Palm grove, in Lagos.

That was when all hell broke loose, she told PREMIUM TIMES in a recent interview.

Blessing claimed she was deliberately picked on and embarrassed in class, and at the end of the semester, despite her best effort, she was scored D by the lecturer.

"Because of what happened, I tried my best and I'm sure I would have scored at least 60 (B) from what I wrote but he decided to punish me by scoring me 45."

Blessing seemed lucky as thousands of mostly female university students in Nigeria have faced even worse situations at the hands of philandering lecturers, other university staff and even fellow students, anti-sexual harassment campaigners say.

Some lecturers have failed students repeatedly until they yielded to their sexual demands. Students who would not compromise have been harassed out of school. Well-known assailants have raped others with little attempt by university authorities to apprehend the attackers.

Joy Ezeilo, the Executive Director of Women's Aid Collective and a lecturer at the University of Nigeria, Enugu Campus, told PREMIUM TIMES the story of a female student who was chased into a classroom in a university and snatched away in the full glare of everyone to be raped by her assailants. No one raised a finger to protect her.

She also narrated the story of a lecturer who was nicknamed "Kiss-me-and-pass" because he often asked female students to kiss him if they wanted better grades.

Despite the prevalence of sexual harassment and sexual assaults in Nigerian

universities, PREMIUM TIMES investigation, which involved talking to students from at least eight universities, administrators, lecturers, members of university academic union from across Nigeria, revealed a near total neglect of the issue and lack of will to even discuss it.

In many cases, lecturers and other employees who were indicted were merely told to go and sin no more. Apart from few cases involving well-connected students, hardly do Nigerian universities fire lecturers for sexually harassing female students.

Universities, including privately owned institutions, have also unilaterally rejected calls by campaigners and human rights activists to implement sexual harassment policies as a means of tackling the problem.

Almost all the students who spoke to PREMIUM TIMES claimed that they have either been sexually harassed or know another student who had been harassed by a lecturer or other university staff...

Also worth mentioning is the visit of members of the Nigerian Female Students Association to the National Assembly-Senate, in May 2016, to show their unflinching support for the Bill on Sexual Harassment which had just passed its second reading. The president of the association –Miss Indongesit Micah, in a chat with Oni (2016) said “Female students are afraid of being humiliated by lecturers or being stigmatized among students. And even when she speaks up to the school authorities, little or nothing is always done about it”.

Apart from this, tertiary institutions in Nigeria do not have clear and consistent policy about sexual assault (Oni, 2016), which shows that management of the various institutions do not perceive this as an academic problem. It is not surprising then to note that this topic is always conspicuously absent in orientation talks for newly admitted students. If sexual violence is recognised as an academic crime, both student’s handbook and codes of conduct for teaching and non-teaching staff should contain well stipulated rules and regulations on it.

The Bill, which was passed into law in October 2016, imposes stiff penalties on offenders in its overall objective of providing tighter statutory protection for students against sexual hostility and all forms of sexual harassment in tertiary institutions. This law stipulates five year jail term for lecturers who abuse female students sexually and two year jail term for Vice-Chancellors, Rectors, Provosts and Chief Executives of higher institutions of learning who fail to act within a week of sexual harassment complaints made by students. The Bill also recommends expulsion or suspension for students whose claims of being serially abused by lecturers or educators are found to be false by any competent court.

Apart from these, the Bill, also provides a comprehensive definition of sexual harassment:

- ❖ An educator shall be guilty of committing an offence of sexual harassment against a student if he or she has sexual intercourse with a student who is less than 18years of age, an imbecile or of generally low mental capacity or blind or deaf or otherwise physically challenged.
- ❖ An educator shall equally be guilty of committing an offence of sexual harassment against a student if he or she solicits sex from or makes sexual advances towards a student when the sexual solicitation or sexual advances results in an intimidating hostile or offensive environment for the student .
- ❖ Or directs or induces another person to commit any act of sexual harassment under this bill, or cooperates in the commission of sexual harassment by another person without which it would not have been committed, grabs or hugs or strokes or touches or pinches the breasts or hair or lips or buttocks or any other sensual parts of the body of a student.
- ❖ Or displays, gives or sends by hand or courier or electronic (means) or any other means, naked or sexually explicit pictures or video or sex related objects to student.
- ❖ Or whistles or winks at a student or scream or exclaims or jokes or makes sexually complimentary or uncomplimentary remarks about a student’s physique (Akinloye, 2016).

There is no doubt that sexual violence against female students is an academic epidemic which requires the collaborative efforts of governments, individuals, corporate bodies and organizations as well as institutional authorities to get rid off. This is because “sexual violence diminishes the perpetrator and the institution that covers it up. Internal mechanisms should be set up to prosecute the guilty parties to the fullest extent of the law (Shehu, 2014).

Theoretical Framework

This study is based on two theories of rape- the Biological and the Commoditization theories. The Biological theory, according to Thornhill (1999), states that there is no gene that causes men to rape, but that there is the existence of a predisposition to rape, possibly, as a result of evolution. It is therefore possible that men who rape do so mainly for the purpose of creation. Corroborating this, Barash (1980:20) asserts that “if a man rapes a woman, then it may be because he is maximizing his chances of spreading his genes among as many females as possible. If the female is not willing to assist him in this task, she is simply taken by force”. The second theory is

the Commoditization theory which states that rape is a crime of property in which sex is a commodity which is stolen from a woman by a rapist (Baker, 1997). This implies that a woman is perceived as a sex object who should always be available for the pleasure of the man whether she likes it or not.

Related to these two theories is patriarchy which is firmly rooted in West African culture. Patriarchy is a form of social organization in which a male (the Patriarch) acts as the head of the family, household, holding power over female and children. In such a society, men as husbands and fathers tend to rule with unchallenged authority the lives of women and children (Akin-Alade, 2009). The implication of this is that the patriarchal nature of the society encourages violence against women and children to a certain extent. The fact that there are men who will never harm women and children, no matter the circumstance, implies that patriarchy is not the only cause of sexual violence against women and girls.

Statement of the Problem

Sexual violence against female students is a major problem in tertiary institutions in Nigeria (Ogunbameru2006, Dosumu,2007). The sadistic act, perpetrated mostly by male lecturers, is on the increase. Hardly will a week pass without one or two of such incidents being reported in the dailies or posted on the internet. For instance, the report in Premium Times, quoted above titled “**How Nigerian Universities Encourage Sexual Harassment of Female Students**” presents a gory picture of how male lecturers harass female students. It is in the light of this that this paper is set to examine sexual violence against female students in tertiary institutions in Australia and South Africa and preventive measures adopted to checkmate this academic menace and how such can be adapted by Polytechnics in South-West Nigeria.

Research Questions

Specifically, the study sought answers to the following questions:

1. Is sexual violence an academic problem in Australia and South-Africa?
2. What are the preventive measures adopted by tertiary institutions in Australia and South-Africa?
3. Can these preventive measures be adapted by Polytechnics in South-West Nigeria to checkmate sexual violence?

Aim and Objectives

The aim of the study was to examine sexual violence against female students in tertiary institutions in Australia, South-Africa and the preventive measures adopted to checkmate it and how such can be adapted by Polytechnics in South-West Nigeria. The objectives of the study were to:

1. Examine sexual violence situation in tertiary institutions in Australia and South-Africa
2. Identify sexual violence preventive measures adopted by Australia and South-Africa .
3. Suggest how some of the preventive measures can be adapted to checkmate sexual violence in Polytechnics in South-West Nigeria.

Significance of the Study

Sexual violence against female students has been in existence for quite a long time in tertiary institutions in Nigeria. For instance, in 2006 and 2007, both Ogunbameru and Dosunmu respectively conducted researches on sexual harassment in universities in Nigeria and concluded that it was a reality .Also,Alagbe (2016)in a report titled “School Where Prostitutes Assist Male Students to Get Marks” reported that female students in Auchi Polytechnic, Edo state slept with male lecturers to get good grades while male students hired prostitutes or offered their girl friends to the male lecturers to get good grades. Further, Ijitona, Agboola and Olaniran (2017) conducted a research and discovered that this academic demeaning act was still in existence in Polytechnics in South-West Nigeria. Therefore, this paper will enable all stakeholders in children upbringing and education- parents, society, management of institutions, religious bodies and government- to see sexual violence in tertiary institutions as a callous act which require joint efforts to get rid of. Also, it will embolden female victims of sexual violence to break the culture of silence surrounding this despicable act and speak out in order to get justice and necessary medical with counselling services.

Scope of the Study

This paper focused sexual violence preventive measures adopted in Australia and South-Africa. The measures were derived mainly from newspaper reports and published research works. This was done purposely because prevention is better than cure. Punitive measures provided by the countries’ legislation and institutional rules and regulations were not considered because by the time these are applied, female victims who would spend their entire life nursing the trauma would have emerged. Australia and South-Africa were chosen because newspaper reports, cabled television news and on –line posts indicated high rate of sexual violence in these countries.

Sexual Violence against Female Students in Tertiary Institutions in Australia

In Australia, the rate of sexual violence against female students is alarming. Davidson (2017) reports that universities, colleges of education, polytechnics and even religious institutions are involved. In statement credited to Catharine Lumby, she asserts that:

Alarming, many universities are compounding this trauma by falling to support survivors, and in some cases, actively seeking to silence them...Too often, our universities have dealt with sexual assault of students by turning a blind eye, by claiming it is not their responsibility, or most shamefully, by actively covering up assault. It is time to face the evidence and put a full stop to harassment and assault on campus.

Further, Branley (2017) reports that a survey by Human Rights Commission revealed that 51% of the students were sexually assaulted in 2016, at least once; and that 1 in 4 students was sexually harassed in a university setting in one occasion that year. Such university settings include the campus, travelling to and from the university and events held off-campus which were organized and endorsed by the university.

Sexual violence, according to Davidson (2017) is prevalent in Australia's higher institutions mainly because most of the institutions often view it as a police case, especially since most of the assaults occurred outside the campuses. Another reason is that the institutions, over the years, have not been punishing perpetrators as they ought to. Just like in the United States, the female victims are always blamed. Victims are often questioned about what they were wearing, drinking, and their behaviour at the time of the assault. These questions put on trial the character of the female victims. It should be noted that the fault of sexual violence is that of the perpetrator and not that of the victim. The victim deserves empathy and not stigmatization, while the perpetrator deserves severe punishment. Since the perpetrators are often left off the hook, more males are encouraged to commit sexual crimes with impunity. Apart from this, mild punishments such as payment of \$55 as fine, being asked to perform some community services and residential transfers are awarded. All these punishments are not strong enough to serve as deterrent to the act especially when the lifelong consequences of the act—depression, stigmatization and self-blame on the victims are considered. Stricter punishments are thus needed to serve as deterrent to other men who would have been contemplating such callous acts.

Efforts to checkmate this ugly academic trend led to the "Respect. Now. Always." campaign by the 39 universities in Australia in February, 2016. This initiative by the Australian Universities showcases the institutions' determination to ensure that all their campuses are places of safety and respect for female students. The objectives are to:

1. Raise awareness of sexual assault and sexual harassment and lift the visibility of support services for students,
2. Obtain data to guide further improvement in university policies and services; and
3. Assist universities in sharing global best practice resources across the sector (Universities Australia, 2016).

Another step worth mentioning is that of the Australian Governments' legislation on sexual violence. In 2016, the Sexual Harassment in Tertiary Institutions Prohibition Bill was passed. This bill makes it a criminal offence for any educator in a university, polytechnic, or any other tertiary educational institutions, to violate or exploit the student—lecturer relationship of authority, dependency and trust for sexual pleasures. An impressive aspect of the Bill is the stipulated punishment for educators who indulge in sexual violence and any staff who victimizes complainants; as well as the guaranteed protection for the victims by the universities. The punishment is imprisonment for up to 5 years, but not less than 2 years without an option of fine. Also, the university is mandated to provide protection for the victims (Law Pavillion, 2017).

Another landmark of the Bill is the comprehensive definition of sexual harassment. An educator commits an offence of sexual harassment if:

- ❖ He or she has sexual intercourse with a student—less than 18 years,
- ❖ A physically or mentally challenged,
- ❖ Has sexual intercourse with or demand sex from a student or prospective student as a condition to the giving of a passing grade or the granting of honours and scholarships, or the payment of stipend, allowance or other benefits, privileges or considerations,
- ❖ Solicits sex from or makes sex advances towards a student
- ❖ Directs or induces another person to commit any act of sexual harassment or grabs, hugs, rubs hair or lips or buttocks or any other sensual part of the student, displays, gives, or sends naked or sexually explicit pictures or videos or sex related objects to a student
- ❖ When the sexual solicitation or sexual advances result in an intimidating, hostile or offensive environment for the student,
- ❖ Winks, screams or exclaims at a student or makes sexually complimentary remarks about a student's physique.

This bill has been widely criticized to be of great benefits to students and this is highly essential, if the ivory tower is to regain her dignity and integrity which sexual violence has eroded.

Finally, worthy of mentioning is the call by anti-sexual violence groups such as: Fair Agenda, End Rape on Campus Australia, The National Union of Students and The Hunting Ground Australia Project; that the Federal Government should set up an independent taskforce to monitor tertiary institutions responses to sexual violence incidents on their campuses (Varga,2018).This monitoring exercise is highly essential to ensure that policy statements are transformed into actions which will create an atmosphere devoid of all forms of sexual violence.

Sexual Violence against Female Students in Tertiary Institutions in South Africa

Sexual violence against women is also a serious problem in South Africa. Out of all the forms of sexual violence, rape is highly prevalent. In fact, South Africa has been described as the rape capital of the world, and it is estimated that more than 70% of the women have experienced sexual abuse (Powell, 2013). One of the major causes of this is the country's culture of violence- the apartheid experience. The meaning of this is that "majority of the children and young people in the country grow up in an environment in which violence is part and parcel of daily life" (Dey, 2017). Other causes are patriarchy and the accepted rape culture. Patriarchy, as explained earlier, is a social system that favours men more than women, and as such, inequality is supported, facilitated and enforced. Male violence is thus used to assert the status of the man; and this becomes intense, if traditional displays of masculine virtues, such as possession of good jobs which will fetch good salaries and incomes are not available.

Rape culture, according to James (2017) is a belief that women are asking to be raped if they wear revealing clothes, walk alone at night, and are intoxicated in public. Questions such as: what was she wearing? Was she drunk?, which are usually asked, shift the blame from the perpetrator to the victim. It is also the belief that men have access to women's bodies for their own sexual benefit- where women are seen as objects and not individuals. Related to this is the issue of corrective rape in the country. This is a forced sexual intercourse indulged in by men with lesbians to convert them to heterosexuality (Thursday in Black, 2016). The sincerity of this act is questionable because some lesbians have been raped to death.

From this background therefore, it is not a surprise that sexual violence is rife in the tertiary institutions in South Africa. Between April, 2016 and June 2017, this horrid act has received several condemnations from individuals, corporate bodies and even protests from students. Worthy of mentioning is the protest march embarked upon by students of Rhodes University in April, 2016. "The students have had enough! They know of one rape too many, they have experienced sexism and misogyny, they are also aware of sexual abuse. Students, academics, tertiary staff are all guilty at the tertiary institutions" (Roberts, 2016).The students, who were mostly females, exposed their breasts and fiercely confronted the police with their ammunition, carrying banners with inscriptions such as: "Rhodes University Hires Rapists and Abusers", "Girls shouldn't Get too Drunk or they will be Raped" etc. The students, body did this because the executives and management of the university have not shown interest in getting rid of the academic vice. It is not that alone, it is even alleged that staff of the university always prevail upon victims not to lodge their complaints, so that the reputation of the perpetrators will not be ruined; or put up administrative bottlenecks to discourage complainants. The protesters demanded that the University should take steps against rape culture instead of acting as collaborators and that a team should be constituted to deal with cases of abuse and sexual assault.

Also greatly concerned about sexual violence against female students in South African tertiary institutions is the African National Congress Women's League (ANCWL). "The Universities must involve law enforcement agencies in dealing with rape cases; internal mediation will never resolve the scourge of gender- based violence in institutions...Expose sexual violence and report incidents to law enforcement agencies. Let us all move together towards a safe South Africa". (Mkhonza, 2016). This was in reaction to the report that both University of Rhodes and Stellenbosch had tried to cover up 13 and 9 reported cases of sexual assault respectively between 2011 and 2015.

Further, in May 2017, a group of South African men staged a peaceful protest against rape of women in Pretoria. The protesters marched behind a woman symbolically dressed head to toe in white, and under the theme "Not in My Name". The demonstration is actually the first active involvement of men in the horrific act of rape in the country. "For a long time, men have been very quiet. You hear a lady screaming next door, you decide to sleep when you know there is a problem next door. No man should beat a woman or rape a woman while you're watching...The time to take collective responsibility of our shameful action is now," (Masha ,2017). This involvement of men and boys in sexual violence intervention programmes is similar to the United Nations high profile ' **He For She**' project "It is a call to all men –not just those who are violent –to be part of the solution. They are asked to stand in solidarity with women and make equality one of their own personal missions" (Heise, 2014).

The effectiveness of the involvement of the law enforcement agencies is doubtful because "the criminal justice is a friend of patriarchy and not that of rape victims or survivors" (Mckaiser, 2016). In this situation

therefore, dialogue with men seems to be an effective preventive measure. Pumla Gqola (2015) opines “Rape engulfs our society. Rape must be spoken about if we are to create the tools to begin to eliminate this horrific brutality. ... We need to talk to young boys and pay attention to the lessons they are absorbing about what a man is and what a woman is.” This is essential because “We (men) express a range of attitudes of entitlement and ownership over women’s bodies and systematic disregard for the inherent dignity of women” (Mckaiser, 2016). This idea of involving men and boys in sexual violence interventions is a major control measure to rid the society of this shameful act (Nimani & Hamdela, 2015).

Findings

The discussion above revealed that sexual violence against female students is also a problem in both Australia and South-Africa. Remarkable preventive measures embarked upon to control it include:

1. The “Respect.Now.Always” project. This is a joint campaign against sexual assault and harassment of female students organized by 39 universities in Australia. The objectives are to:

1. Raise awareness of sexual assault and sexual harassment and lift the visibility of support services for students,
2. Obtain data to guide further improvement in university policies and services; and
3. Assist universities in sharing global best practice resources across the sector.

2. The “Not In My Name” rally. This rally, which was held on May 20, 2017, was organized by a group of South African men to protest against rape of women in Pretoria. The men who protested peacefully marched behind a barefoot woman dressed in white and carrying an old suitcase. This woman represented all women who had been abused or made to suffer by men. The main objective of the protest was to show the women that there were still men they could count on in their efforts to get rid of violence against women in South Africa. This demonstration is actually the first active involvement of men in the horrific act of rape in the country.

Conclusion

Sexual violence against female students erodes academic dignity and integrity that tertiary institutions are associated with. It is thus essential that this demeaning social vice is prevented through collaborative efforts by all educational institutions and active involvement of men in sexual violence preventive programmes.

Recommendations

Based on the findings, the paper proffers the following recommendations:

- ❖ All Polytechnics in South-West Nigeria should come together as a body to organize seminar, symposium and rally that will educate members of the academic community and the larger society of the danger of sexual violence and the need for all members of the society to rise up and defend the course of the feminine gender.
- ❖ Further, the management of Polytechnics in this region should provide a comprehensive policy on sexual violence and harassment. This policy should state clearly what constitutes sexual violence and harassment, punishment for perpetrators and protection for victims from perpetrators, their friends and relatives.
- ❖ Also, male lecturers in Polytechnics in this region should be actively involved in institutional programmes designed to checkmate sexual violence. Such programmes include orientation talks for newly admitted students, and anti-sexual violence rallies.
- ❖ Finally, boys and men should see sexual violence against female students as an assault on humanity. They should avoid it and respect the dignity of womanhood.

If all these suggestions are implemented, sexual violence against female students would be drastically reduced in our tertiary institutions. And this will in turn create a conducive learning environment for female students, thus certification will become a credible exercise.

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