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Executive summary:

Sexual Harassment is one of the major challenges that women in Afghanistan constantly face, which affects their progress in the society. According to this report ***“Muhit-e-Salim Research Report 2015”***, one of the major challenges in the way of women empowerment and leadership in the tribal, male dominated and religious society. Family dignity is the top priority and women as representative of family’s dignity are the very first to be victimized. In order to keep family’s honor and dignity, women sacrifices their basic rights such as education, right of social mobility, and the right of employment. The issue of sexual harassment in higher educational institutions not only affects women as individual but it also the whole society. The need of the time is to scientifically find out the magnitude, dynamics, and the context of these social problems and weed them out. This struggle of cleaning our environment is the responsibility of both men and women at all levels. We need to return to our high standards of ethics and make the environment at home, in public, in educational institutions, and at workplace safer for all women and men.

The research report shows the following main points which need immediate attention:

- The research report is indicating that 99.9% of the respondents say that many kinds of Sexual harassment do exist within educational environment.
- There is a greater need for a proper and official complain mechanism that harasser can be careful of his/her attitude and also the victim can seek justice by legal mechanism.
- 87% of the respondents say that any women faced with continuous sexual harassment leave their higher education and accept forced marriages and domestic violence silently.
- The figures are very high and shocking compared to the research report in 2007, policy makers have to take this issue very seriously and any investment in education and empowerment without addressing the issue of sexual Harassment will go in vain.
- There is need of breaking the chains of silence and Public awareness and raising attention among the population are very important. The

problem is increasing due to silence of the victims, policy makers and civil society.

The Research report is a situation analysis to see the magnitude, dynamics, and the context of Sexual Harassment found particularly in twenty higher educational institutions (government & private). The research study was designed and conducted during Oct – Nov 2014 addressing the concern about increased level of sexual harassment within educational environment, which has become a huge hurdle abstaining women from continuation of higher education. The main Goal & objectives were as follows:

Goal of the research Report: Understanding the forms of sexual harassment are prevalent in the educational institutions.

Objectives:

1. To find out the frequency at which sexual harassment is committed in educational institutions.
2. To recognize who the harassers are and the power dynamics associated with them.
3. To gather information about the social, psychological and physical effects of sexual harassment.

The research report in hand is a qualitative and quantitative research as a base for advocacy issues as well as a comparative study of sexual harassment in educational environment since 2007. In this report we have targeted four major cities (Kabul, Balkh, Ningarhar & Herat), 20 Universities (private and government) and 1458 male & female. Initially NECDO key managers and survey officer developed a questionnaire, and after approval by the core group of MSP it was shared with surveyors. The questionnaire focusing on the three above mentioned objectives within 4 chapters, with total of 10 questions.

10 surveyors were appointed based on HR Policy of NECDO on transparent and fair selection process. Seven surveyors were from Kabul (5 female & 2 male), one Male from Balkh, and one female from Herat also a female from Ningarhar. The surveyors were given five full days of ToT, which were three days of theory and two days of practical. The field interviews started from 11th Oct to 11th Nov Prior to conducting field interviews, we got support letter from Ministry of Education, Ministry of Women Affairs. In total 1458 interviews were conducted. According to the Morgan theory basically, the

data was cleaned up and a percentage of 5% was considered as error and finally the report was developed out of 1385 interview forms.

This research report has a comparative study between Research report in 2007 and the one in 2014 which show gravity of the situation. It also contains a number of real & true Case studies that give a better impression of the situation. The recommendations given are based on nine years of work experience by NECDO and member teams. 20% of the respondents said at least two times in a day they had the experience of harassment. The research report annex also contains a future plan for MSP by NECDO and members and strategy to address the issue from bottom to top and from top to bottom. The repeated acts of sexual harassment many times bring socially bad name to the victims who lose confidence and courage and let themselves be victimized. Fear of disgrace at the highest level of 64.8% and the lowest level of 7.3% were recorded in the victims . This fear of disgrace is the highest element of psychosocial illness.

NECDO cordially thanks **Counter Part International/USAID** and working Core Group (KANRAH members) to make this research report possible.

2.0 Muhit e Salim Project Background:

Muhit-e-Salim is a joint venture of women activists representing different national NGOs that aims to work for “an educational environment free of sexual harassment” in Afghanistan. The group is lead by a core team of dedicated activists who believe that Afghan society should and will take care of this problem. Though they acknowledge the problem at every level within homes, on streets, in public transport, in the markets, in educational institutions and at workplaces, however they have decided to begin their efforts to curb sexual harassment first in the educational institutions. They believe that education is a path to development of Afghanistan and they need to begin with removing the big hurdles that women face on this journey.

Through the leadership of NECDO, a group of women activists came together in 2007 to start working on a joint venture under title of “ Muhit-e-Salim Project” where posters, pamphlets, audio and video and training manual was developed and around 1000 youths (700 female & 300 male) in Kabul were trained. In order to find the gravity of the problem a research was conducted from 1150 individuals (800 female students, 200 male students, 150 professors and support workers). The main findings of the research report on sexual harassment in higher educational institutions are mentioned as under:

- All kinds of harassment do exist in educational institutions.
- Women safety and security is at risk inside and outside of educational institutions.
- The threats are not only from the class fellows, but also major threats from the teachers & professors.
- Street harassment is an act of violence and discrimination. In addition to making women feel endangered and vulnerable in public, harassment also discourages them from leaving their houses, and feeds the sadistic and discriminatory motivations of the assaulter by objectifying women, which leads to rape and sexual assault.

The group of Muhit-e-Salim was pressurized by concerned government departments, Kabul university Professors, and some of the civil society members who believed that silence is better than to address the problem. Since 2009 to 2014 NECDO with the help of a group of committed members continued the work with notion of “ Think Globally and Act locally” to address the issue. Therefore, awareness among youths within different Universities in Kabul, Ningarhar and Balkh was addressed by provision of series of workshop to mobilize youths. The workshops had the standard training manual including audio and video Materials. NECDO worked for establishment of youth Committees in Ghazni province and Kabul provinces which latter on got more structured by the name of “ Committee Inzbat and Insijam”¹ under university structure. We also paved the way for having a simple code of conduct by Kabul University through the pressure of youth committees. We also organized social campaigns for youth moral mobilization in Ghazni province and also convinced the NECDO’s Imams Network to condemn act of sexual harassment from Islamic perspective. The youth committees in Ghazni Province established a local Radio station, which on daily basis addresses the issue. The whole Ghazni city Friday Campaign through mosques was another successful movement of youth committees to address the issue of sexual harassment in public and schools. During 2014 the complains by youth committees in Kabul and Balkh convinced us to conduct another research report and address this issue with the new government and policy makers in order to have a systematic and legal complain mechanism within Government and Public Universities.

¹ Committees for discipline and regulation within University environment

THE MAIN FINDINGS OF THE Research in 2014:

Women and girls are subduing their suffering from sexual harassment in educational environment to safeguard their family dignity and honor. The research report shows that the victims of sexual harassment suffer from different kinds of Psychosocial illnesses. Beside that they silently accept forced marriages and stop continuation of their higher education. Any investment in the field of higher education for women without advocacy or addressing the issue of sexual harassment, will not produce the desired results. One of the most significant and shocking fact is that 99.9% of the respondents said they had heard many cases of SH within their educational environment. 87.1% of the respondents mentioned that victims of SH stop continuation of higher education to save their family honor. The victims of SH suffer from the fear of disagreement up to 64.8%. The domestic violence is increased against the victims within families up to 56.2%. The percentage of victims who were compelled to enter into forced marriages in order to save their families honor was up to 47.6%. The increased limitation on mobility of the victims was up to 41.5%. The victims who lost their trust on surroundings, their percentage was up to 41.1%.

To the dismay, the above mentioned figures and percentages were taken out of the research report conducted from 20 Universities from Kabul, Herat, Nangrahar and Balkh from 1385 including students (female, male) teacher, administrative staff. The gravity of the problem was very deep which need very urgent and abrupt attention by policy makers, civil society activists and parents and students for having a safe educational environment for all especially for women.

Comparing the current report with the report of 2007 another type of Sexual harassment is highly indicated. The 25% of the total of respondents mentioned about kidnapping of the victims and raping them. This was the way to compel families to marry their daughters to the harasser, and such a harassment type was not indicated in 2007 research report. 50% of the women that were surveyed mentioned about another type of harassment that was being followed by a car or motorbike by the perpetrator.

In response to the question, if there was any reaction by victims towards the perpetrator, out of 1385 respondents, 66% said mostly victims and their families subdue their feelings and keep silence fearing consequences of disgrace within the society. 87.1% of the respondents mentioned that families

compel their daughter to enter into forced marriages in order to escape from societal disgrace. The last destination for Afghan women is marriage, as women are not considered breadwinners of the families and they are depending on the male family members and this condition makes them vulnerable to compromise on their education and public participation. In response to the question that there was any complain mechanism system within your university to deal with such issues, 98% of the respondents had no idea if there was any such department or unit within Universities to deal with such issues. Only 2% of the respondents said there was complain to administrations of the Universities, but there was no follow up on the cases. When the same questions were asked from the teachers and administration of the universities 65% of the respondents said there was no need of such a department as no women would be ready to share the cases of disgrace in front of others. Usually, women were keeping silent in such circumstances. 35% were in favor of a special department with a specific policy to deal with the SH issues. In response to the question why there was no way to stop all this, 99% of the respondents said, corrupt educational system and involvement of lecturers and professors in the harassment were huge hurdles which did not allow them to get a solution. The third chapter of the questionnaire was about the psychosocial impact of the harassment on the victims, which had the following amazing figures that 64.1% of the victims got psychosocial illnesses without a proper treatment of resiliency. Around 32% of women victims lost a normal daily life.

2.1. Comparative Studies between 2007 & 2014

Research Report:

Women and girls are subduing their suffering from sexual harassment in educational environment to safeguard their families' dignity and honor. The research data shows that the victims of sexual harassment suffering from different kinds of Psychosocial illnesses. Beside that they silently accept forced marriages or stop continuation of their higher education. Any investment in higher education for women without advocacy or addressing the issue of sexual harassment in the higher education will be not fruitful. One of the most significant and shocking fact was that 99.9% of the respondents said they had heard and witnessed many cases of SH within their educational environment. 87.1% of the respondents mentioned that victims

of SH stop continuation of higher education to save their family honor. The percentage of victims of SH who suffer from the fear of disgrace was up to 64.8%. The percentage of victims suffering from increased level of domestic violence within the families was up to 56.2%. The 47.6% of the victims were compelled to enter into forced marriages in order to save their families honor. The increased limitation on mobility of the victims was up to 41.5%. 41.1% of the victims lost trust on the surroundings.

To dismay of the above mentioned figures and percentage out of the research report conducted from 20 Universities from Kabul, Herat, Ningrahar and Balkh from 1385 students (female, male) teachers, administrative staff. The gravity of the problem was very deep which needs urgent and prompt attention by policy makers, civil society activists and parents and students for having a safe educational environment for all especially for women.

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Out of 1385 respondents, 66% said mostly victims and their families subdue their feelings and keep silence fearing consequences of disgrace within society. 87.1% of the respondents mentioned that families compel their daughter into forced marriages with the harasser in order to escape from societal disgrace. The last destination for Afghan women is marriage, as women are not considered breadwinners of the families and they are depending on the male family members and this condition makes them vulnerable to compromise their education and public participation. In response to the question that there was any complain mechanism system within your university to deal with such issues the 98% of the respondents had no idea if there was any such a department or unit within Universities to deal with such issues. Only 2% of the respondents said that a complaint was made to administration of the Universities, but no follow up was done on the cases. When the same question was asked from the teachers and administration of the universities 65% of the respondents said there was no

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Historical background:

2.1. SEXUAL HARASSMENT IN EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

Education is both a cornerstone for building Afghan women human capital and a sine qua non for their equal enjoyment of rights and participation in national development. However, their access to a safer academic environment that can guarantee this is often infested with numerous constraints. Sexual harassment and violence in educational institutions is an abuse of power by teachers and lecturers and the corrupt education system. It has other severe consequences such as leading to girls and women dropping out of educational institutions, according to Transparency International's *Global Corruption Report, which was published in October 2013*.

Sexual violence in education has been largely ignored by policy-makers, education leaders and law enforcement agencies around the world. It is likely to be greatest in countries with poorly resourced education systems, low levels of accountability and high levels of poverty and gender inequality. It is also high in regions experiencing conflict, with young people in refugee camps particularly vulnerable. We don't have very many accurate data because this is a sensitive topic especially for the women and girls that have been harassed, and a culture of denial among many of those in positions of authority. There is also considerable under-reporting by students who fear victimization, including being failed in tests and exams, stigmatization or

ridicule; or because they believe that no action will be taken against the perpetrator if they report the incidents.

Families have often restrained their daughters from going to schools and universities when they learnt that their daughters' safety, dignity and integrity were in question at these institutions. This kind of family attitude has left less communication space for younger women to negotiate support from their families in dealing with the challenges they face in public. In public life women often deal with sexual harassment by suppressing her feelings and being silent about it. They also at times quit their jobs to escape the situation. There are hardly any professional ways to acknowledge or deal with this issue. Street mugging, touching and teasing of women, especially verbally, are generally exercised as right of men by birth. They use this attitude to suppress the women and keep their position of authority in the society. This leaves the women afraid, dependent, fatigued, uncomfortable, frustrated, hurt and sucks away her self-confidence throughout her life.

The magnitude of the issue has unfortunately been worsened in the years of war. Although harassment, especially sexual harassment, had never been clearly defined in the law before, the prevalence of impunity and absence of rule of law for years has made it to flourish more widely. Even larger universities in Kabul and other provinces have reputation of sexual harassment by the university professors² and teachers, in addition to harassment experienced by women from their fellow male students.

After the fall of Taliban, impressive progress has been made since 2001 with 6.2 million students enrolled in general education in 2008 in comparison with 2.3 million enrolled in 2002 much still needs to be done to increase the enrolment rate of female students. Of the 6.2 million children enrolled in general education, 36 percent were female. A major obstacle to the increased enrolment rate of girls, however, is the shortage of female teachers. In 2008, only 29 percent of all teachers were female. Similarly, the higher education system also faces disparities between male and female student enrolment rates. In 2009, for instance, 62,000 students were enrolled in higher education institutes in Afghanistan, 21 percent of which were women. While this percentage has risen considerably in comparison to the end of the

² A video report of sexual increase by a university professor from Balkh university has been shown in Tolo TV, as eye opening of heinous act pursued at university level (Tolo TV is one of the widely viewed private television channel, 2007)

Taliban period when no women were enrolled in higher educational institutes in Afghanistan, enrolment rates of male and female students are still far from equal. In technical and vocational education, only 16 percent of all students were female in 2008. The Ministry of Higher Education, however, aims to address this disparity by setting a goal of having at least 30 percent female students in higher education by the end of 2014. The report gave a succinct overview of the prevalence of GBV as well as recommendations that their purpose was to reduce its occurrence. Gender based violence, and in particular sexual violence, is a serious, life-threatening protection issue, primarily affecting women and children.

UNESCO guided by the three fundamental principles of Universality, Diversity and Dignity is working to promote gender equality in Afghanistan. In order to pave the way toward sustainable development, the broader goal of gender equality is a societal one in which education and all other social institutions, must contribute. In the framework of the ANDS, the NAPWA, the Constitutional guarantee to equality, the MDGs, the EFA goals as well as the CEDAW, UNESCO³ is supporting the Government of Afghanistan to mainstream gender issues throughout educational planning and reform. The full and equal engagement of women in all aspects of society is crucial to ensuring the sustainable development of Afghanistan. The report, which the United Nations has circulated only among senior Afghan officials at the Interior Ministry, found that about 90 percent of the policewomen interviewed described sexual harassment and sexual violence as a serious problem, and that about 70 percent of the policewomen said that they had personally experienced sexual harassment or sexual violence themselves, according to people who saw the report or had it described to them

3.1 Other Studies on Sexual Harassment in Afghanistan:

Another Study of Three Universities in Afghanistan⁴ jointly undertaken by UNESCO and the UNDP in March 2010 in conjunction with the universities of Kabul, Herat and Balkh. It is timely affecting Afghan women today: their human capital development and their security which can ensure their living free from intimidation, fear, threats and violence in both the public and

³ <http://en.unesco.org/countries/afghanistan>

⁴ <http://www.af.undp.org/>

private spheres of life and pursue activities that will develop their capacity and help to lead a full and satisfying life.

The Afghan constitution, endorsement of international treaties such as CEDAW and lately the Afghanistan National Development Strategy (ANDS) has put the Afghan state under firm obligation towards fulfillment of its commitment for improving women public participation. The ANDS benchmark requires 30% increase in public position in all level for women which perquisites development of new opportunities, and enabling environment where women can pursue their education and build their careers on equal bases as that of men and even further steps as ⁵affirmative action policy of the government.

3.2. Afghanistan Laws on Sexual Harassment:

Afghan civil law has not been updated or modified since the socialist period of the 1970s. As in many Muslim countries, Afghan civil law co-exists with Islamic Sharia law, as well as tribal and customary law, which are often used to resolve many conflicts in Afghan society. Understanding the proper balance between these varied bodies of law is highly complex.

Chapter two of the Constitution seeks to implement the Preamble's declaration into practice. Article 22 holds that "the citizens of Afghanistan, man and woman, have equal rights and duties before the law." Article 43 guarantees education to all Afghans and Article 44 imposes a positive duty on the government to "devise and implement effective programs to create and foster balanced education for women." Article 54 recognizes the family as the "fundamental pillar of the society" and requires the government to adopt "necessary measures to attain the physical and spiritual health of the family, especially of the child and mother, upbringing of children, as well as the elimination of related traditions contrary to the principles of the sacred religion of Islam."

To ensure that the rights provisions of the Constitution are properly implemented, Article 58 requires the state to establish and maintain the Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission (AIHRC), which is to

⁵ Article Forty-Four Ch. 2, Art. 23, Constitution (2004)

preside over claims of human rights abuses and refer cases to the legal authorities, as it deems appropriate

The AIHRC⁶ was created pursuant to the Bonn Agreement of December 5th 2001, and it currently operates outside the formal governmental structure. The AIHRC clearly states that one of its primary goals is “to promote, ensure women's rights and monitoring the situation of Women in Afghanistan and also make efforts to eliminate/reduce the discriminatory attitudes towards women in Afghan society.” The Commission aims to promote women’s rights through advocacy, training and education, and investigation of rights violations.

The penal Code, which is a mixture of socialist jurisprudence and ancient Islamic practice, did not contain any explicit prohibitions against rape, sexual harassment, or any other crimes against women until the enactment of the Elimination of Violence Against Women (EVAW) law in August 2009. The purpose of EVAW is to end “customs, traditions and practices that cause violence against women contrary to the religion of Islam”. It strengthens many areas of women’s rights and for the first time, various forms of violence against women are criminalized, including rape. However, there remain challenges to its incorporation and many perpetrators continue to go unpunished.

Afghanistan’s recent history, continued state of political unrest, and relative isolation from central authority make it difficult to determine how, or if, codified laws are implemented in practice. There is still not a clear defined law article in Afghan Civil Code to define harassment or clarify punishment for perpetrators. However the post conflict situation in Afghanistan opens space for law reforms, which also comes as one of priority of National⁷ Development Strategy (ANDS).

3.3.AFGHANISTAN’S CURRENT LEGAL POLICY

FRAMEWORK:

Sexual harassment is a major problem in Afghanistan and a major obstacle on the way of women getting higher education, where women and girls have had to struggle to regain their rights after being completely shut out of education

⁶ http://www.aihrc.org.af/media/files/VAW_Final%20Draft-20.12.pdf

⁷ Five year macro economic plan of Afghanistan for increase of growth and poverty reduction, same as PRSP else where

and employment during Taliban rule until their ouster in 2001. There has been significant progress in improving girls' access to education and integrating women into the Afghan parliament and civil service but unchecked sexual harassment has been a significant obstacle to women's employment and participation in public life. Sexual harassment within the workplace, including in government, is an especially serious problem, Human Rights Watch said. Government institutions have made almost no effort to prohibit harassment and assist victims. Only one government agency, the Independent Directorate of Local Governance, has developed anything resembling an anti-sexual harassment policy. The directorate's "anti-harassment policy guideline" cites a commitment in the government's 2007-2017 National Action Plan for the Women of Afghanistan to adopt and implement "a policy against sexual harassment" as the basis for the guideline. This sets out a detailed description of harassment and measures a victim can take, including anonymously seeking the assistance of a Conflict Resolution Committee. Although, the Afghan Constitution in its preamble stresses on human rights and personal dignity of citizen (women and men), equality and *For creation of a civil society free of oppression, atrocity, discrimination, and violence, based on rule of law, social justice, protection of human rights, and dignity, and ensuring fundamental rights and freedoms of the people, (constitution, 2004)* The efforts by women's rights activists and parliamentarians to ensure the 2009 EAW law – signed as a decree by president Hamed Karzai but not yet ratified by parliament – is passed were thwarted by conservatives objecting that it was "un-Islamic". Criticism of the law was so strong that, on 18 May 2013, the speaker stopped the parliamentary debate after 15 minutes and sent the law back to the joint commission of parliament, which prepares draft laws for further scrutiny. While the law can still be implemented, because the president has signed it, it must be passed by parliament to give it legitimacy. The EVAW Law is a step forward for addressing the issue of sexual harassment in the article 30th of the law it is clearly mentioned that under the title of Harassment/ persecution (If a person harasses/persecutes a woman, considering the circumstances he/she shall be sentenced to short term imprisonment of not less than 3 months. 2. If the crime mentioned in paragraph 1 of this Article has been committed by using authority and position, the offender considering the circumstances shall be sentenced to short term imprisonment of not less than 6 months)

According to the Human Rights Watch (New York) – Afghanistan's new government should take urgent steps to combat sexual harassment of women in education, employment, and public life. There are no laws in Afghanistan that specifically prohibit sexual harassment or protect victims. Government institutions lack effective policies to prevent and punish sexual harassment, Human Rights Watch said. On October 5, 2014, President Ashraf Ghani described levels of sexual harassment in schools as "shocking." He ordered the Ministry of Education to report every incident of sexual harassment in schools to enable action against harassers, and directed relevant ministries to develop a plan to counter sexual harassment in educational institutions. The Afghan government should promptly enact a law against sexual harassment and ensure that every government institution develops and implements an anti-sexual harassment policy." This is the responsibility of Afghan government to support this joint venture of civil society to fight against sexual harassment to pave the way for women leadership and empowerment. We since 2007 face many challenges and obstacle for the MSP due to corrupt educational system and men domination as well as systematic corruption in judiciary system of Afghanistan. Thus, so far the civil society could not work as active as it should, for law reforms and taking support of stakeholders.

5. 0. METHODOLOGY

5.1. Details of Methods:

Desk Research: NEDCO conducted desk research of the laws, regulations, provisions and the pre- established reports on sexual harassment, including the methods by which they are nominated or selected. Research reports, academic journals, newspapers, and other relevant sources were consulted. A special emphasis was placed on reports related to Ministry of higher education code of conduct, the united nation sexual harassment report, ministry of women affairs and AIHRC reports. The goal was to identify opinions and concerns that have been silenced. In fact, through the literature review, NECDO research report undertook a mapping of the contributions that women have been able to make to such negotiations and the conditions under which this have occurred. Contributions will be observed through voting records, public statements, and the prevalence of gender sensitive discussions and policies.

Development of Research Framework: NECDO developed the research framework including analytical framework of analysis to lay down the theoretical foundation for the organization of findings, development of questionnaire to conduct qualitative research for the sexual harassment in higher educational institutions.

Consultations with Partners: The sampling methodology was established to ensure that research results are representative of the views of the target groups. Partners were consulted, including KNAHR, SAF, AEWC, AWPEI and (donor), and government officials for feedback.

Training for surveyors and researchers: After the approval of questionnaire of FGD and In-depth interviews had been finalized, NECDO conducted training on research methodologies for the researchers and surveyors. The goal was to ensure that the two organizations capture similar information and that all findings are relevant, congruent, and representative of the views of the population.

In-depth Interviews and Focus Groups: After the research questions and training were finalized, NECDO deployed their team of researchers to conduct five in-depth interviews and three focus groups in the targeted universities in each province.

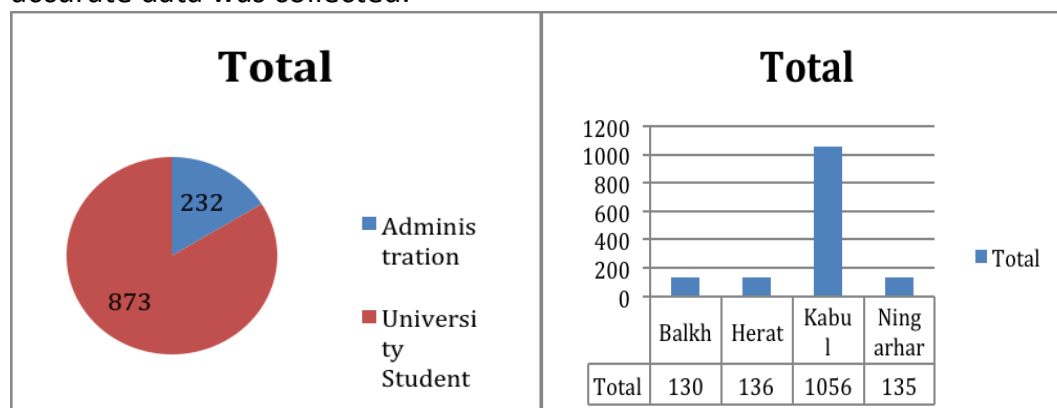
Follow up in-depth interviews and Focus Groups: It is important to mention that given the relevance of Kabul in regards to laying down the foundations for policy amendments. The research team interviewed female and male members of parliament, local CSO and university heads or lecturers who are supportive of elimination of sexual harassment against women's issues.

Data Analysis: Upon the conclusion of the qualitative research, NECDO processed and analyzed the data in which 5% of the data were separated and out of 1458 interviews we could extract solid information from 1385 forms. Findings were triangulated, used both primary and secondary sources - desk research - to ensure that they reflect the barriers that prevent women from becoming actively involved in the higher education and empowerment process.

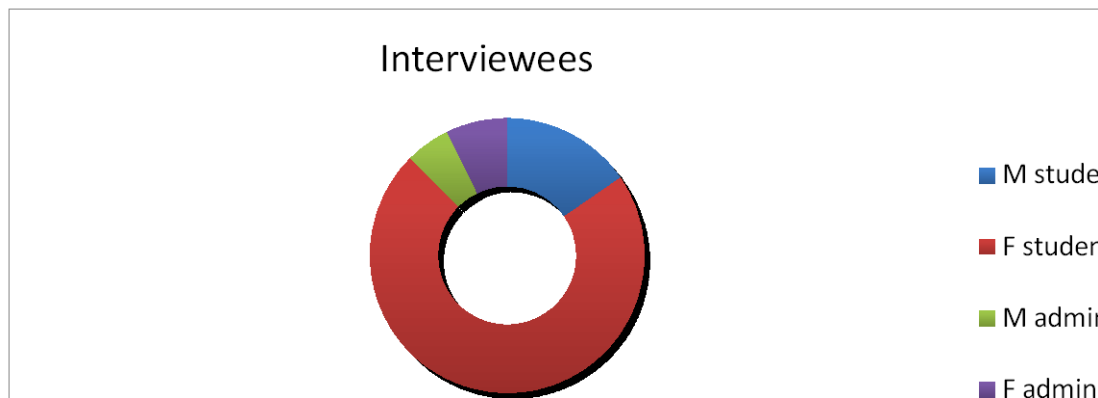
Report Writing: After the data had been processed in a general database, a final research report was developed. The barriers that prevented women from becoming actively involved were discussed.

5.3. Sample or Target Population:

Initially, educational administration and government agencies were interviewed to gain insight into current and possible policies regarding sexual harassment, the reporting mechanisms and the accountability procedures. After an overall understanding within the educational institution's context, 20 higher educational institutions were selected to get a close up on the dynamics. A survey tool was developed in the form of a questionnaire for quantitative data gathering and a question guide was developed for qualitative information gathering through case studies. Acknowledging the silence that envelops the issue of sexual harassment and the stigma it has within the social context, the questionnaire started with observed sexual harassment in the universities. This made the respondents more comfortable to answer the second part, which focused on their own experience of sexual harassment. In this way the sensitivity of the issue was kept in mind and more accurate data was collected.

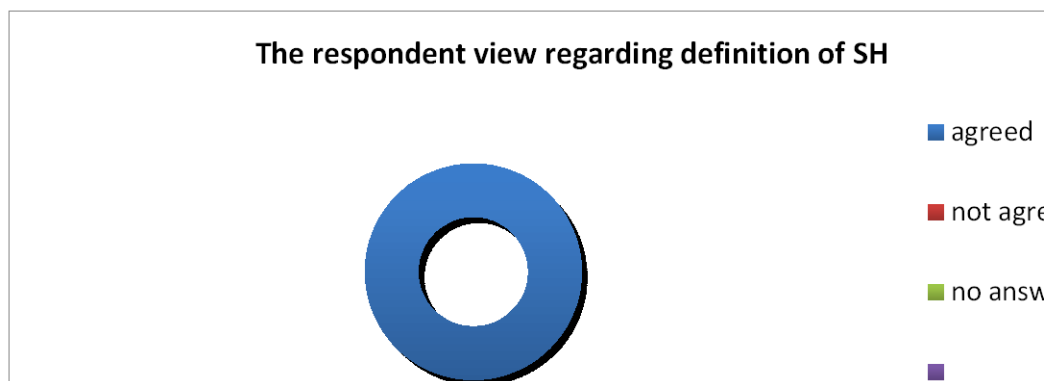


Experienced researchers from the Core Group members monitored the student interviewers. After their first ten interviews they were debriefed to clear up problems faced or clarify use of the survey and surveying techniques. Researchers continued to be present at the research site to follow up with the student interviewers and clarify any questions until all questionnaires were submitted. The total interviewees from administration were 21% and the rest 79% were students



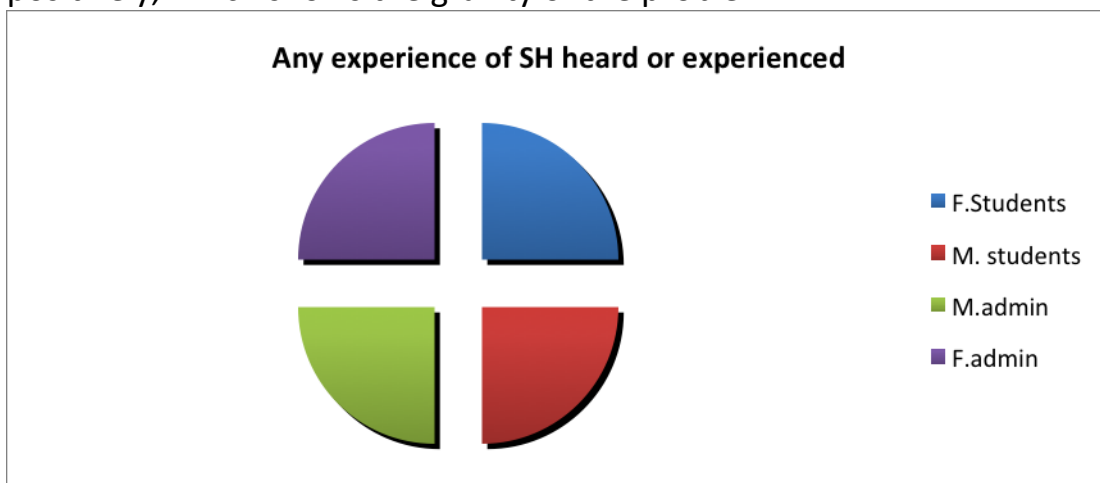
6.0. KEY FINDINGS:

6.1 Definition of sexual Harassment: Sexual Harassment is a form of gender based violence most commonly defined as “any unwelcome behavior, comment or action of a sexual nature that interferes with a person’s, comfort, performance or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment”⁸. It includes a range of behavior, leering, touching, colored, jokes to sexual assault. At times it is the peers whom with such behavior think they are having fun but create an intimidating environment for women to be outside in the public or in an educational institution. This can be one of the most crucial factors why women are not comfortable coming out of homes, go to public institutions by themselves, get education or take up a job. Many times, a person in authority may also demand sexual favors in order for the victim to keep or obtain certain benefits, or make personal decisions about the recipient based on whether the sexual demands have been met.

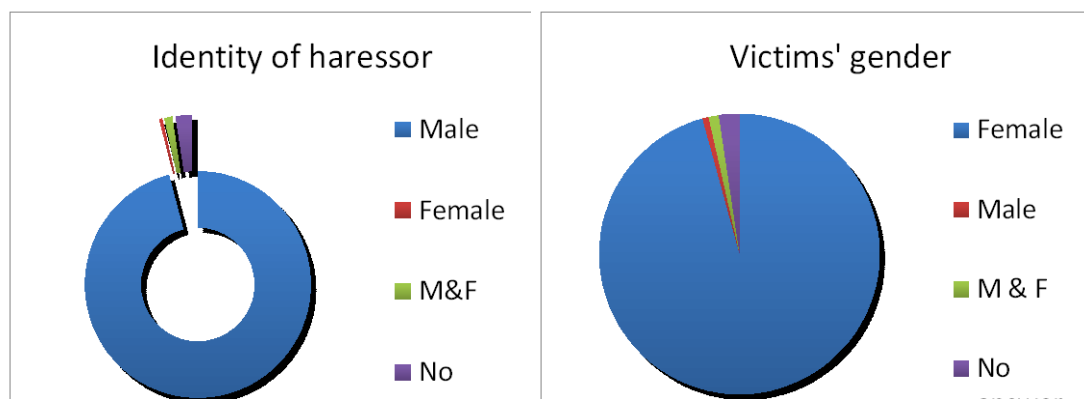


⁸ As defined by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) in 1980,

6.1.1. Experience of Sexual Harassment existence: In response to the question whether they have heard about any issue of sexual harassment incidents in your university or if they have encountered any problem?" All the response mentioned that they had heard many cases of sexual harassment 99% of the interviewees said they had many stories of harassment, which was shocking. In comparison with the research report of 2007, we had 34% interviewees responding positively, which shows the gravity of the problem.

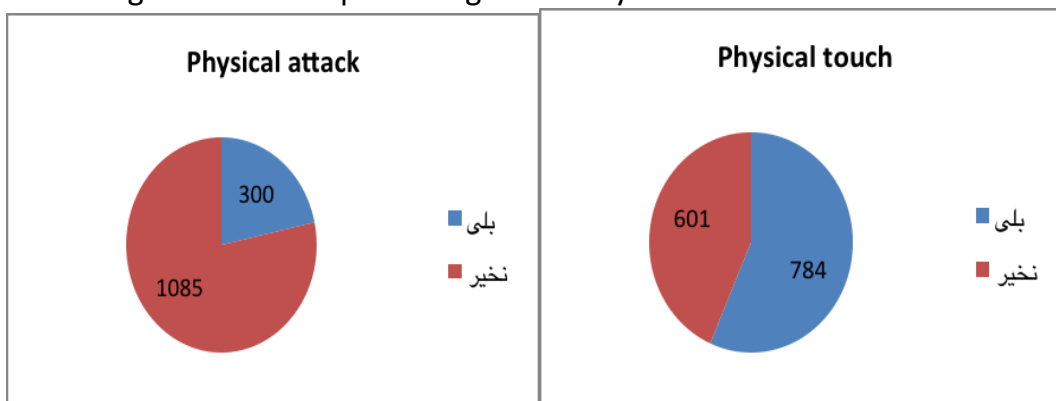


6.1.2. Identity of the Haressor and the identity of the victims: In response to who were the harassers and who were the victim, out of 1385 respondents it seems that almost 99% the interviewee's said "men" were the perpetrators and 99% women were the victims. Only 1% females were harassers and 1% of males were the victims.

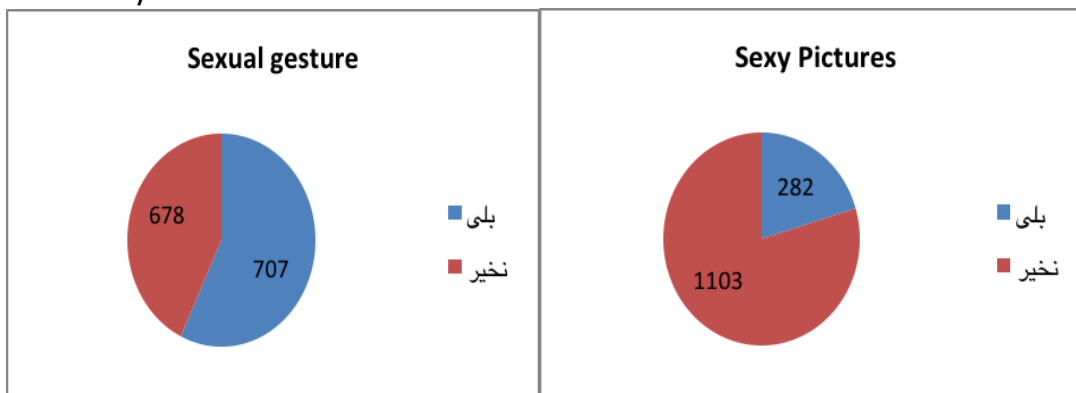


6.1.3. *Kinds of Sexual Harassment (physical attack and physical touch):*

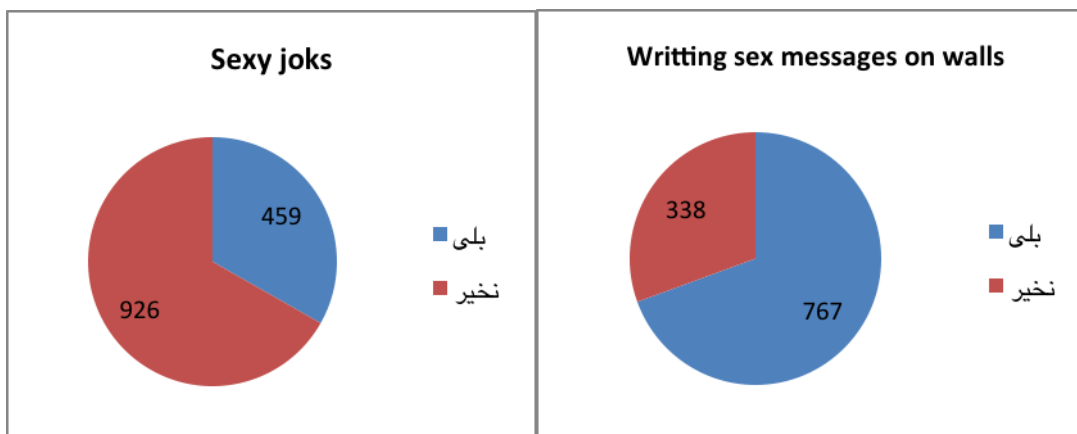
In response to physical attack, out of 1385, 21.7% said they had experienced of physical attack. The physical touch response was up to 43.4% which was very high as compared to the 2007 research report according to which this percentage was only 29%.



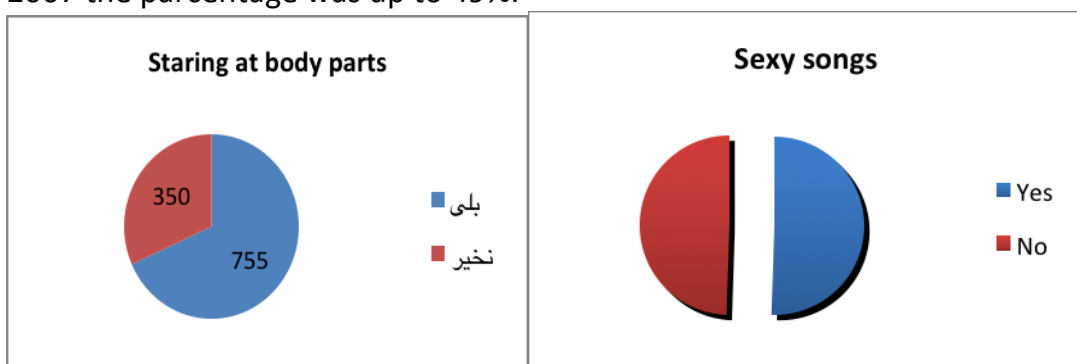
6.1.4. Sexual gesture & sexy Pictures: In response to sexual gestures, 51.1% respondents said yes, they had experience sexual gestures in the university environment. 20.4% out of the total respondents, said yes to the question and it means this is also a common way of harrassment within the University environment.



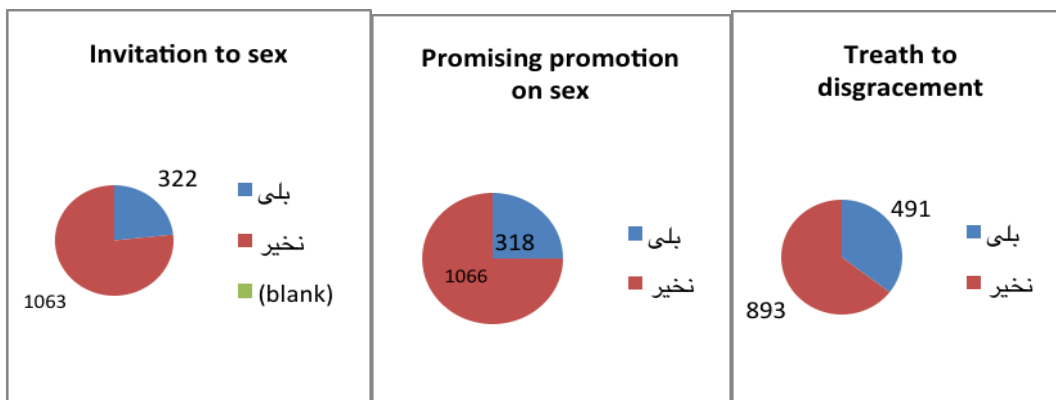
6.1.5. Sexy joks and written massages on walls: In response to the sexy joks which is another common practice out of the total, 33.2% respondants said yes it was a common practice. The writing on wall was a common practice according to 30.6 % of respondents. The practice of writing on the wall was also common in 2007 research report.



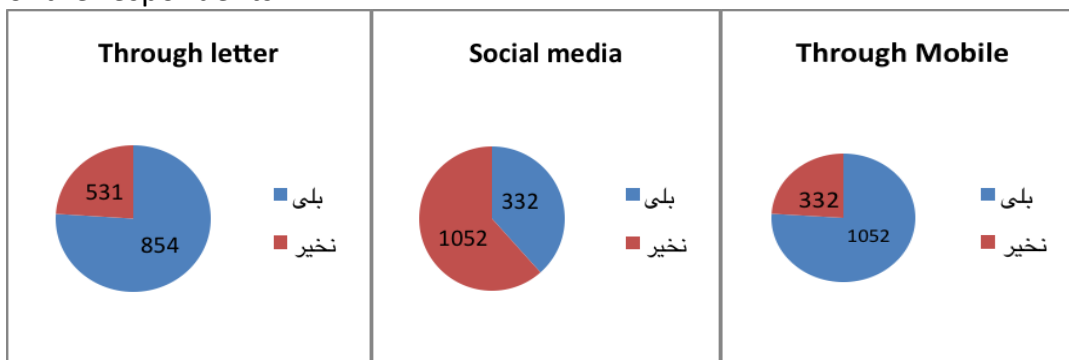
6.1.6. Staring at body parts and sexy songs: Out of total respondents, when asked about being stired by males within the university environment, 68.3% said yes which was shocking and 53% said they had experience of sexy songs within the univesity environment. In the report of 2007 the percentage was up to 49%.



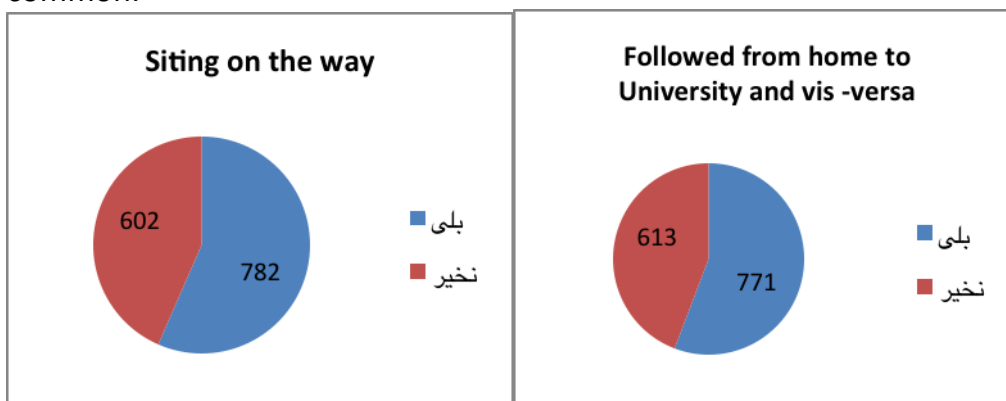
6.1.7. Invitation to sex, promising promotion or threats of punishment if favors not given: Referring to point above, *demanding sexual favors*. 23.3% women said that sexual favors were demanded with threats of punishment. 65% out of these said it was not just a one-time occurrence but also a frequent happening. 68% of those who confirmed this form of harasssment said that students did it, while 23% said teachers did it. The threat for disgrace forced 35.5% of females respondents, which was shocking. In the report of 2007 the percentage was only 15%.



6.1.7. Tools of sexual harassment: Haressment through letter was experienced by 76%, through social media 38.4% and through mobile by 24% of the respondents.



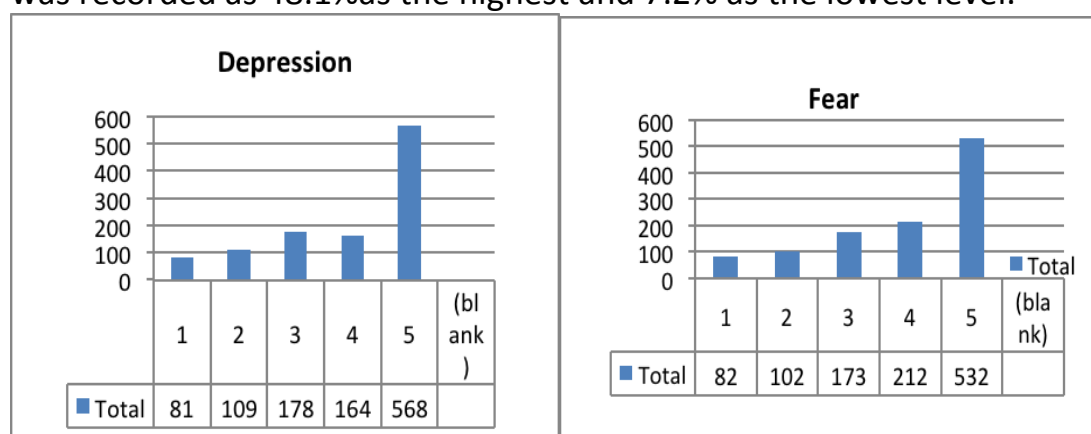
6.1.8. Following the victims by the haressor: In response to halting the way of a female student going to University, 56.5% of respondents said yes to it. On the question of a female student being followed by a male student, 55.7% out of total respondents accepted that these were very common.



6.2.0. Psycho Social impacts on the victims of Sexual Harassment:

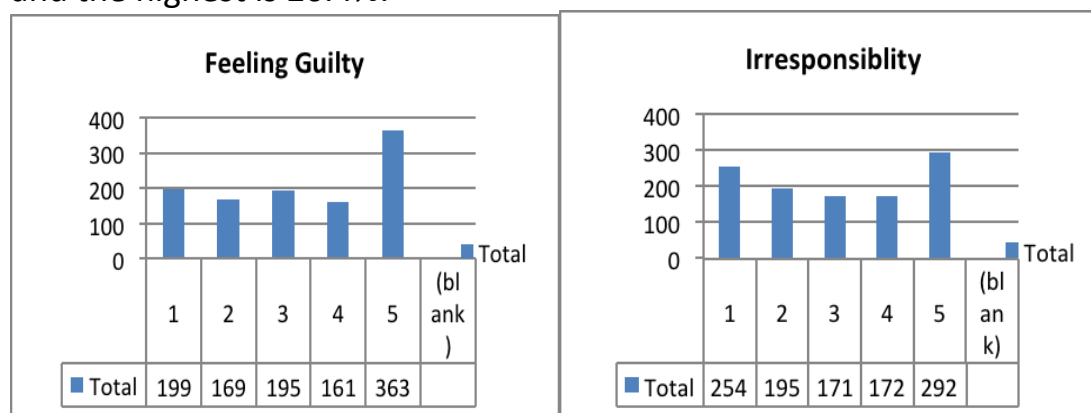
6.2.1. Depression and fear:

According to the questions format, it shows that depression was the highest level of psychological illness prevalent among victims of Sexual Harassment. 51.4% was the highest and 7.1% was the lowest percentage recorded among the victims. The levels of Fear among them was recorded as 48.1% as the highest and 7.2% as the lowest level.

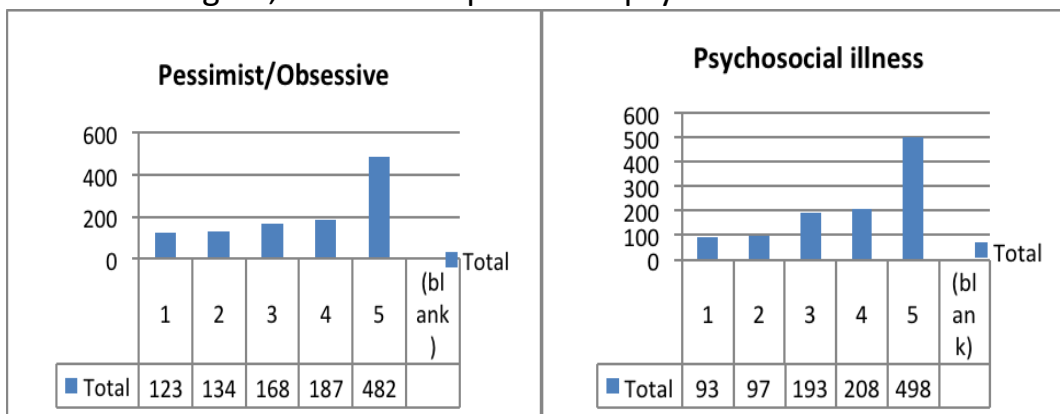


6.2.2. Feeling guilty & feeling irresponsibility by the victims:

Out of total of the respondents who mentioned about feeling of guilt by the victims of sexual harassment, 18% was lowest and 32.8 % as the highest level observed. Figures show that the victims exhibit irresponsible behavior. Their levels were recorded as such: lowest 22.9% and the highest is 26.4%.

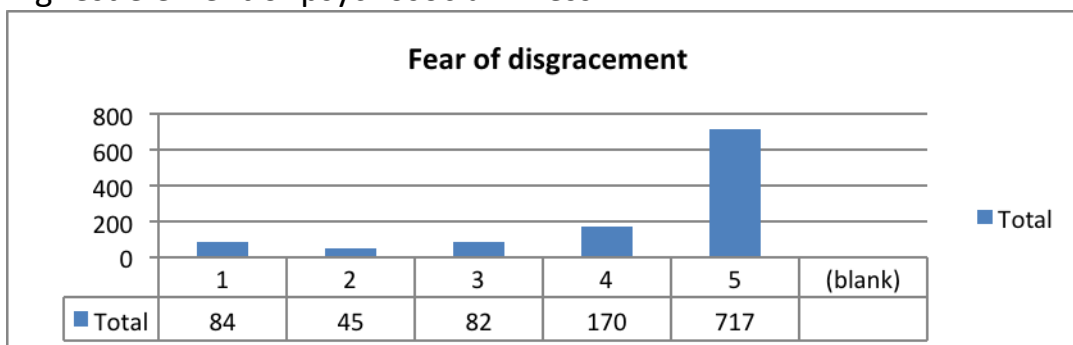


6.2.3 Obsessive and psychosocial illness of the victims: The range of loneliness among the victims was observed as 11.1% as the lowest, and 43.6% as the highest. The psychosocial illness's lowest percentage was 8.4% and highest one was 45% among the victims of the sexual harassment. The figures were shocking and it showed that every woman facing SH, remained a patient of psychosocial illness.



6.2.4. Fear of disgrace:

Fear of disgrace had the highest level of 64.8% and the lowest was 7.3% among those taking part in the survey. This fear of disgrace was the highest element of psychosocial illness.



6.3.0 Physical impacts:

6.3.1. Face color and increased palpitation in victims:

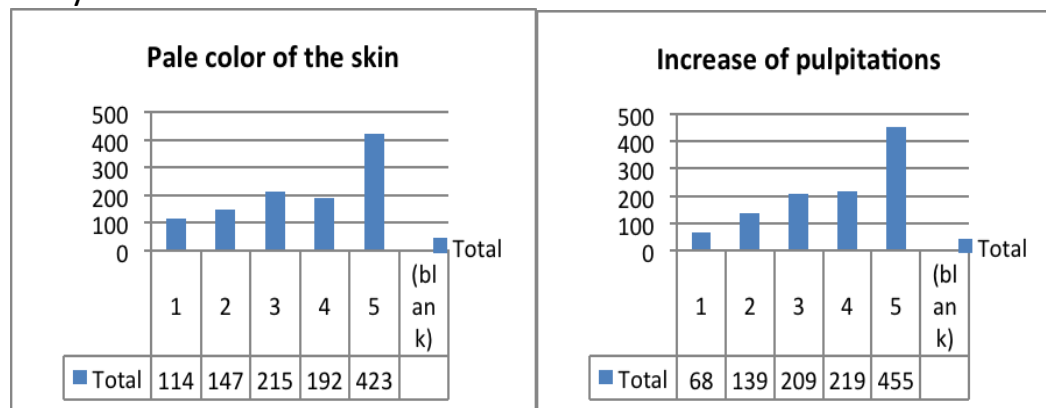
Change in face color,

38.2% highest, lowest 10.3%.

And increase in heart palpitation

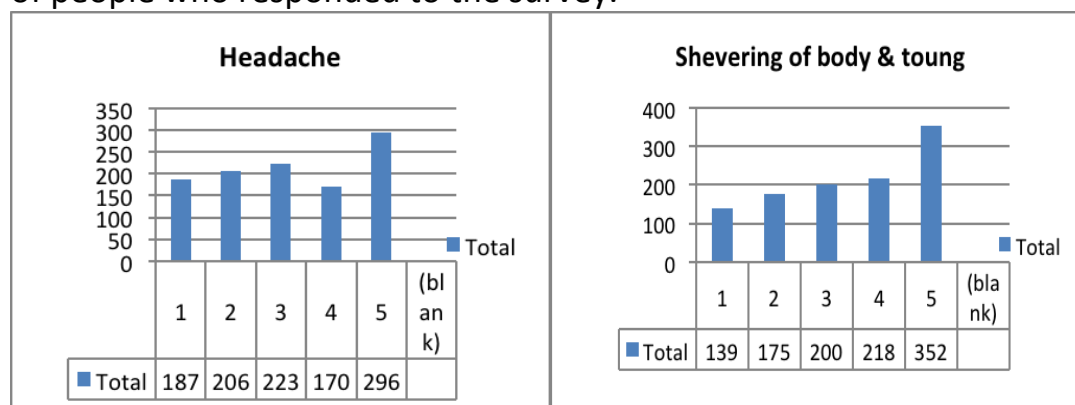
Highest level 41.1% and the lowest level 6.1%.

The figures show that the Sexual Harassment had very quick effect on body and mind.



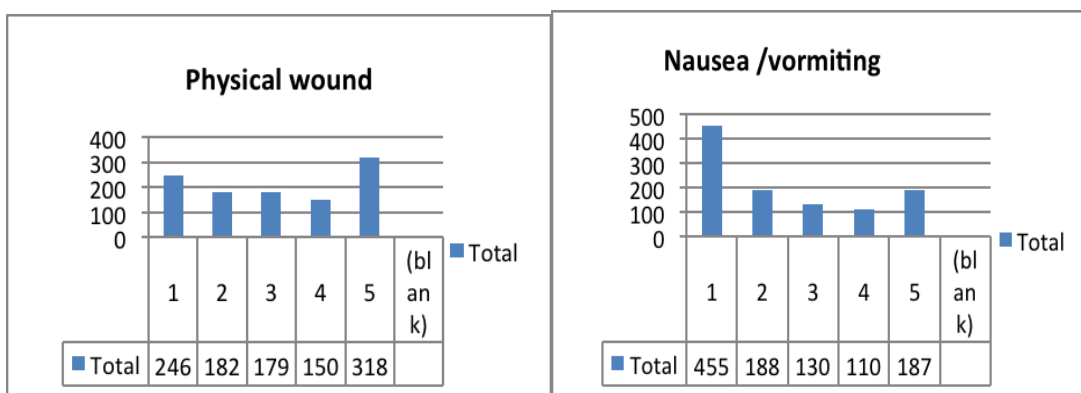
6.3. 2. Headache and shivering of body and tongue in victims:

The elements such as headache were observed in the range of 26.7% as the highest, and 6.9% as the lowest level, stammering was found in 31.8% as the highest and 12.5% as the lowest level in the total number of people who responded to the survey.



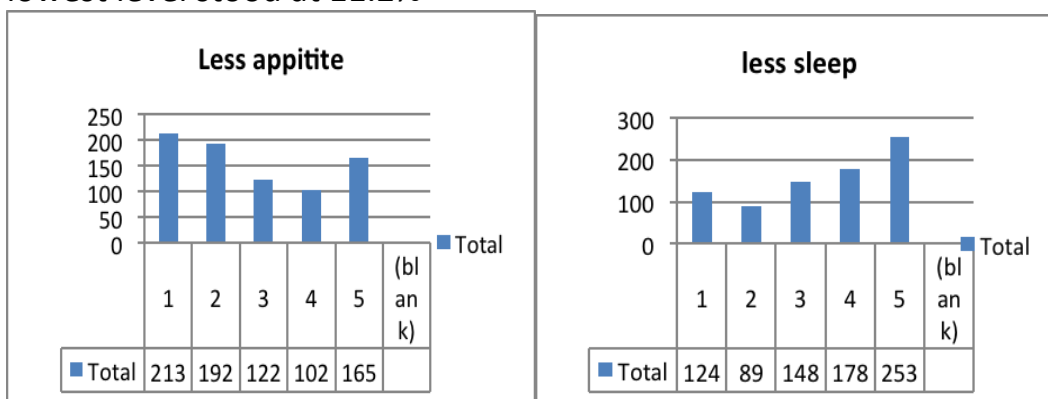
6.3.3. Physical wound and Nausea:

Total respondents had expressed that 28.7 % is the highest level of physical wounds whereas 22.2% was the lowest level recorded. The percentage of nausea and vomiting having highest level of 16.9% was observed in the victims. This shows a significant impacts of repeated sexual harassment.



6.3.4. less appetite and less sleep:

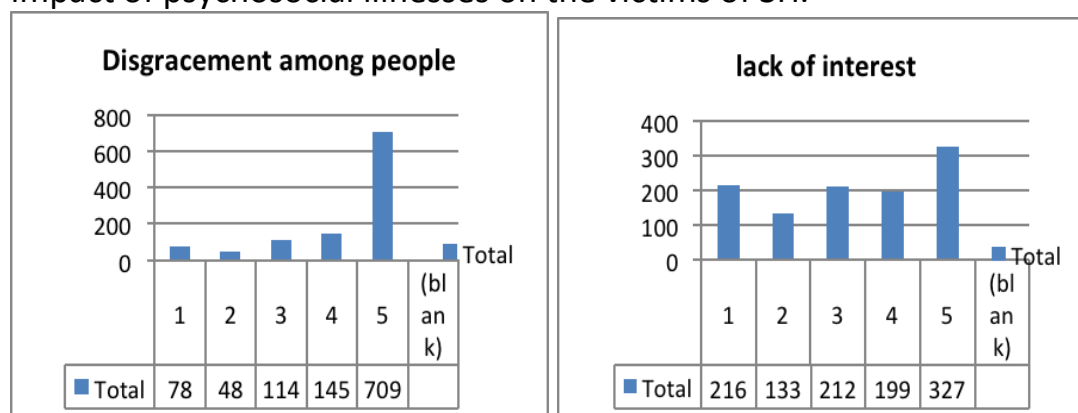
The victims of Sexual Harassment with repeated sexual harassment got very less appetite the percentage showed that lowest level was 19.2 %. The highest level of less sleep among victims was 22.8% while the lowest level stood at 11.2%



6.4.0. Social bad Impacts on the victims:

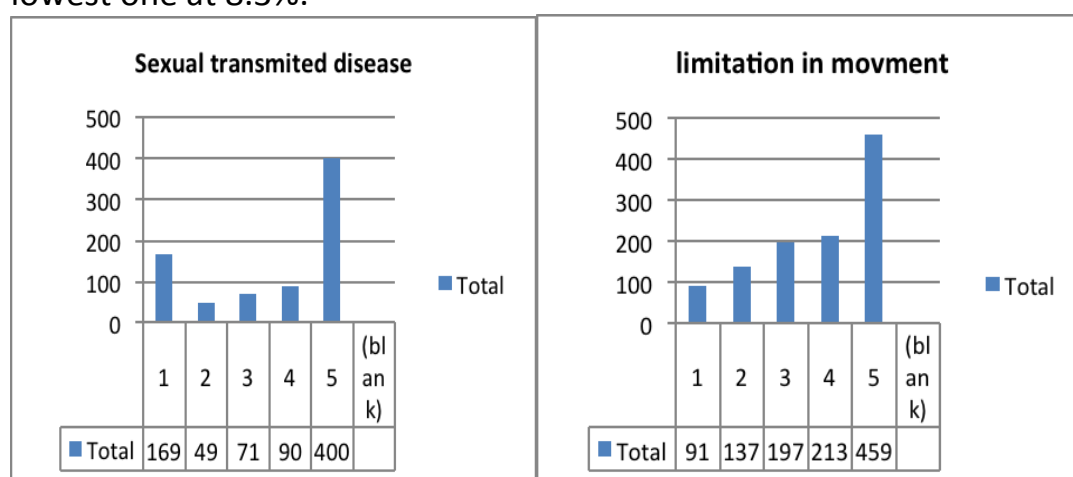
6.4.1. Disgrace among people & lack of interest:

According to the total number of the respondents, the fear of disgrace was having the highest level of 64.1% and the lowest level observed was 7%. The lack of interest, maintained a highest degree of 47.3% and the lowest one was around 6.3%. The indicated figures show gravity of the impact of psychosocial illnesses on the victims of SH.

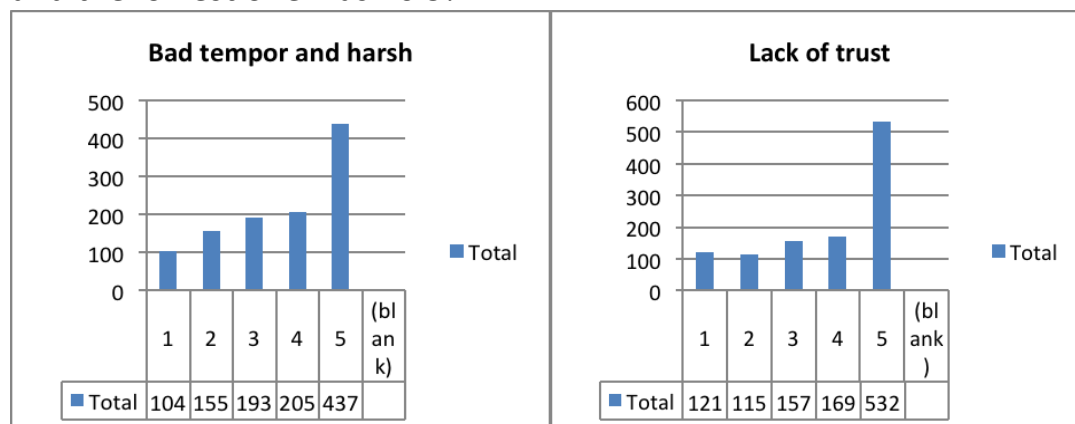


6.4.2. Sexual transmitted diseases and limitation in movement:

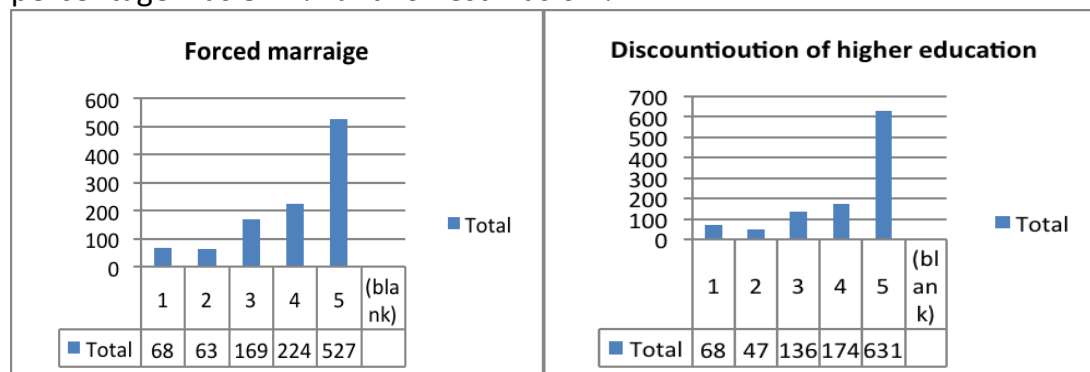
The highest number of respondents agreeing to Sexually transmitted diseases stood at 36.1% while lowest percentage was 15.2%. Limitation to movement of the victims by family had a highest level at 41.5%, and lowest one at 8.3%.



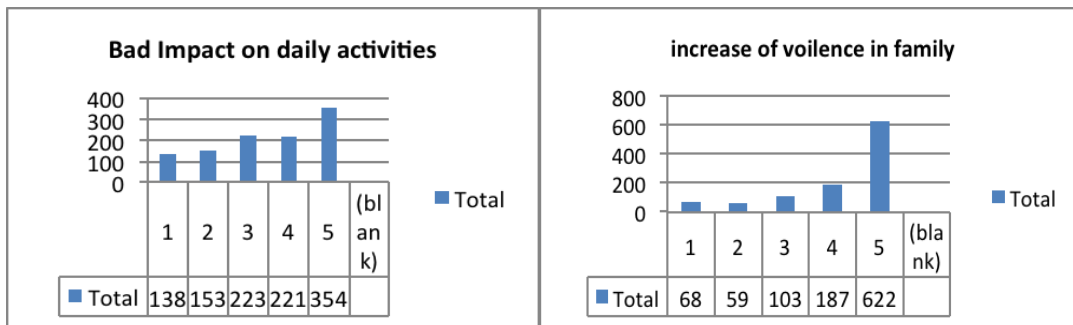
6.4.4. Bad temper and lack of trust by victims: Highest ratio of bad temper observed in the victims was 39.5% as against the lowest level of 9.4%. Lack of trust, the highest percentage observed was 41.1% and the lowest one was 10.9%.



6.4.5. Forced marriages & not continue the higher education: the victims were pressurized to enter forced marriages and the respondent's showed that as much as 47.6% women were forced to marry by the family to avoid public disgrace which is the highest level and the lowest percentage recorded was 6.1%. To stop higher education of the victims of SH, the highest percentage was 87.1% and lowest was 6.1%.

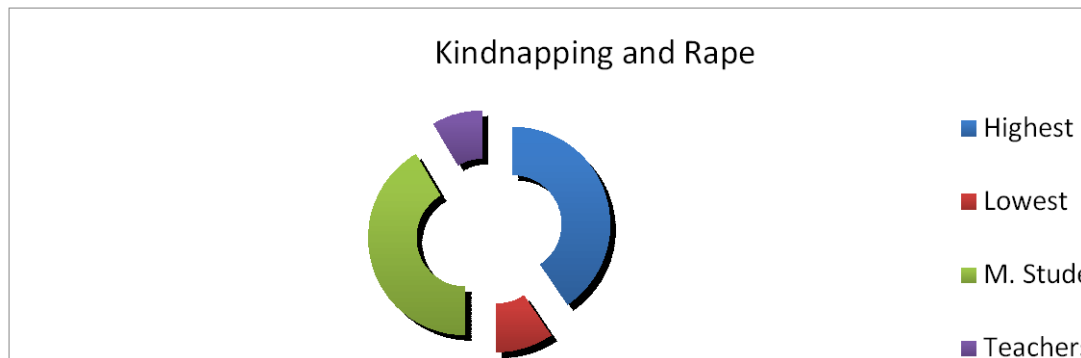


6.4.6. Bad impact on daily work and increase in family violence: Highest of impact on daily work of victims was 32% and lowest was 12.4%. The increase in violence within families had a highest level of 56.2% and the lowest level as 6.1%, which means that one of the major cause of increase in domestic violence is harassment.



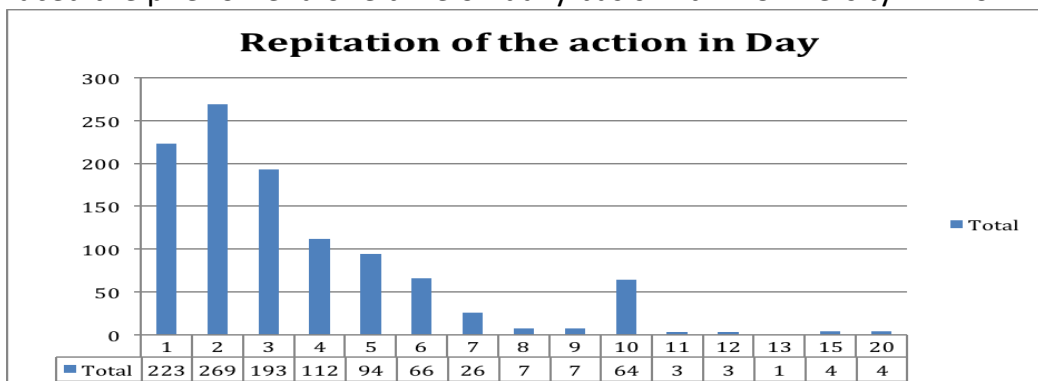
6.4.7. Kidnapping & Rape

Though rape is one of the most violent forms of sexual harassment, the study found out that 19% of the women had heard of rape being committed on campus. 51% out of them said it was a one-time occurrence while 27% said that the victim experienced it over and over.



6.4.8. Repetition of the harassment during a day within University Environment:

The below chart shows that most of the respondents 20% hadd mentioned at least 2 times in a day they experience harassment and 18% said that they faced the phenomena one time on daily basis within University Environment.



7.0 WOMEN'S OWN EXPERIENCE OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Women were first asked to state behaviors of sexual harassment that they had seen or heard about. Later they were asked to mention incidents that they had experienced themselves. There obviously was a slight difference in the two sets of data. We assume that because of the sensitivity of the topic, the stigma attached socially to the victim and the issue of honor and reputation that make it all more complex were factors that caused lower rating in this set of data.

This information might not reflect the actual numbers, which from our in-depth interviews seem to be much higher. However these figures become an indicator of the fact that sexual harassment does occur. It also gives us an insight into the various forms of sexual harassment they experience, including the lighter versions and the more violent forms.

8.0 CASE STUDIES:

8.1 Case study of Mariam: The very new and current which is on the desk of MoHE at the moment it's the case of Mariam. She is an intelligent and she had done very good paper but when she was failed, she was shocked and she asked her teacher to review her paper. The teacher says that I can do this only when you come to my room all alone. She knew from the past experiences of other girls and she says that she cannot come alone but with a group of other girls. The teacher does not except and Maryam is telling her teacher that she will commit suicide in order to save her family honor and her honor in the eyes of her family and get rid of the teacher. The teacher does not pay attention to her request and she attempted to commit suicide but thank God she is alive but the case is going on

8.2. Case Study Suray's: Suraya was in second year of her collage and she was one of the brilliant students. She was followed by a male class fellow and she tried to ignore him but the boy was getting extreme even he was reaching near her home's door. When she saw that the boy was not listening she complained to her mother and another day her mother brought a bottle of oil and put fire on the face of the boy and there was a big clash between two families. The Suray's family decided to marry her with an old man from their village and she had to stop her education and went to live with her

husband in Badakhshan. Almost two years have passed but still, her family is upset with her for putting family honor at to risk.

8.3. Case study of Nasima: Was an intelligent student of law, she was beautiful as well; a gang of 5 boys were harassing her again and again. She did not mention any thing to the family, as she knew the family would have only one solution to stop her higher education. She continued to suffer with silence and it affected her daily routine and her number went down. The depression on her was increasing day by day and her dream to become an advocate and fight for women's right was becoming a dream day by day. She started to give the Gang 5 harsh words and insult them in front of other class fellows. The Gang 5 kidnapped her and raped her and then dropped her on the corner of street. Her family begged the gang 5, one of them to marry her but they ignore and Nasima remained without any support with a bad psychosocial problem.

8.4. Case study of Gul Rukh: Gul Rukh was very intelligent and a treat for male class fellows. A gang of 3 boys kidnaped her and raped her to punish her for being more intelligent than them in the University.

8.5. Case Study Zarmina punished for a crime she did not commit

Zarmina was a student in one of the universities in Afghanistan. She was very enthusiastic about her studies. She experienced a very uncomfortable and scary incident. A young man who was also a student but was from a different town started following her when she finished her classes and came back home. This incident turned into a routine where this man would follow her from home to her university and back. She was very afraid of this intimidation.

Zarmina wanted to share the issue with her mother but could not find the courage. She was too afraid of her father and could not even imagine telling him. She was sure that he would get very angry and would stop her from going to the university. She somehow wanted to handle the issue to make sure that she could continue her higher education. She thought she needed to be brave and stop this intimidation her self. She repeatedly told the boy to stop following her because this could damage her reputation. With all her efforts she could not shake the man off.

Her fears came true! The neighbors started gossiping about the situation and soon her character was being questioned. Her brother came to know about this talk and became furious. One day her brother followed her from the university to verify what he had heard. He saw this young man following her. He also saw his sister turning around and saying something to him a few times. She as usual was trying to convince the man to stop doing it. When she reached home her brother beat her up badly. He blamed her for bringing such shame to their family. He also told his family that the tales of her bad characters were all over the neighborhood. Her father immediately declared that her studies should be stopped and she should be married right away. They forced her to marry an old man, who had quickly offered to help out despite her shady reputation. He was rich but not educated. Zarmina tried to protest but found herself helpless. Her family totally blamed her for attracting the man and ruining the family reputation. She was punished for a crime, which was not hers.

8.6 Case Study of Story:

Aziz was a student of University was searching for one of the professor for getting some advise on the assignment which was handed over to her. By entering the professor's room he saw that Ruqia was in the arms of the professor They both were shocked and Aziz too. The professor with anger said, "what was the matter?" with harsh sound Aziz replied with anger "I don't know? But what was the matter with you both???" Ruqia was crying rushed towards Aziz and said (protect me) and she was shivering badly. She started begging that he should not share this with anyone and she said the professor compelled her for doing so as he would not allow her passing marks and her family was also pressurizing her on getting high scores. When the professor heard this he came near Aziz with a meaningful smiling face said, "Dear Aziz if you keep the secret you will be one of the top students in my class. Ruqia was from a poor family and her mother wanted her to complete her education so she could be the breadwinner of her family and therefore the professor was taking advantage of her weakness in life.

8.7. Case Study of Hassina:

Hassina was beautiful and a charming student of University. A boy loved her and wanted to harass her, she never liked him and she was treating him badly. When Zubair was disappointed with her negligence he decided to take revenge from her. Zubair through some of his bad friends kidnapped Hassina

and passed rumors about her affairs with him and that she had escaped with him by her own will. When the boy forcefully sexually abused her and after that he let her free to go back, she had no choice but marrying him because such girls would never be accepted in the society. In order to save her honor and her family's honor, she unwillingly accepted that marriage proposal. Though, Hassina had told her family several times, she didn't like him and it happened forcefully, but her family never believed her. Besides, she could not complete her education, by such a violation of Zubair she lost her family and beside that she had no respect in Dubai family as they thought she had escaped with their son. She had a miserable life and many times she tried to commit suicide but she was worried about her young daughter.

8.8 Case study of Somaya:

Somaya, an orphan belonging to a poor family wanted to get admission in Kabul University and she dreamt of becoming a doctor as her father wished her to be one. She had dedicated her time only to education she was one of the high scorers during conquers exams. When she applied in the department of higher education for getting her graduation records one of the employees found that not only Somaya was beautiful but also she had no male member in her family to support her as her father was killed during the civil war. The employee always postponed her work for the other day and finally one day he found the chance to tell her that he loved her and wanted to date her. She could not accept his will. After many struggles when he was sure that Somaya would not fulfill his wish, then he destroyed all her documents and now she is sitting home and cannot go to fulfill her dream to be a doctor.

9.0 Complexities in devising a Proper Mechanism for SH

In order to understand policies, reporting mechanisms and accountability procedures interviews were conducted with policy makers, administrators and activists. Information was gathered from deputies of relevant ministries including MOE, MOHE, and MOWA. Chancellors and administrators of universities and schools were also approached and interviewed. Interviews also included parliamentarians, religious leaders, judges, and women's activists to understand the challenges surrounding anti-sexual harassment policies.

The Afghan constitution and overall policies of institutions do have potential mechanisms for dealing with sexual harassment however none of these have been explicitly developed. Furthermore, there is a lack of knowledge about these potentials resulting in a lack of accessibility and awareness needed to develop such mechanisms by cases and precedence. As mentioned previously in this document, Article 3, 22, 29 and 44 of the constitution establish the foundations for under which a sexual harassment policy can be developed. There is no direct policy dealing specifically with sexual harassment in government employment policies, education institution policies, and health policies. Various words dealing with appropriate conduct in Afghan law are not clearly defined in relation to sexual harassment. The challenge arises due to the lack of definition of sexual harassment as a crime, which in turn means it cannot have punishment or accountability procedures as Article 27, c of the constitution states:

“No person can be punished but in accordance with the decision of an authorized court and in conformity with the law adopted before the date of offense.”

In Afghan society, security is linked to honor and sexual harassment is a direct assault on honor. Sexual Harassment establishes spaces where women and men are dishonored and can result in shame, guilt and restriction of mobility. For this reason women and especially men are hesitant to express sexual harassment they have seen or experienced. Sexual harassment goes against Islamic code of conduct in Sharia and the Afghan customary code of conduct. However the effect of shame on the victim and their own and family's honor causes their experiences to be suppressed and offenders to get away with their sexual harassment actions. This is compounded by the lack of social mechanisms to hold the harassers accountable for their actions.

Civil Society organizations have set up various mechanisms to deal with more violent forms of sexual harassment. Interventions range from legal aid, family clinics, shelters and family courts. However these are not backed with strong government policies and specifically developed legal frameworks. Where the MOWA has contracts with such organizations they are still undermined by the police, the courts and the legal system. Police sometimes escort women to shelters but it is not enough support. In addition, the lack of coordination between these civil society organizations leads to a challenge in efficient coverage to deal with the problem.

There is no one to follow through with the conventions that Afghanistan has ratified that include clauses to ensure mechanisms to combat sexual harassment.

The lack of security for both Afghan individuals as well as Afghan society establishes spheres where sexual harassment can perpetuate unbound.

10.0 Suggestions:

Based on the suggestions from the people surveyed we had the following points:

- A code of conduct should be developed and enforced by the concerned departments in the universities and educational institutions and the violators must be punished
- The issue of Sexual Harassment should be addressed from the point of view of The Quran and Sunnah and must be included in the curriculum
- The media awareness should be designed which should be educational and informative
- A joint committee among MoWA, MoRA, MoCI and civil society should be developed and work for betterment of educational environment
- Imams must be involved to address the issue on regular basis from their stages on Friday Khutbas
- Prevention of the provocative TV shows which cause immorality among the youths
- Parents should pay special attention to the education and discipline of their sons and daughters.
- The girls and women should come out of their homes in proper and modest dress and must be careful of their attitude, which may aggravate the situation further.

Annex 3. Questionnaire

COUNTERPART
INTERNATIONAL



Safe environment in educational institutions

پرسشنامه عمومی راجع به آزار و اذیت در محیط تعلیمی

Main objectives of this survey
Finding the types of sexual harassment in educational institutions
Finding the percentage of sexual harassment and its continuation
Identification of the victims and its concerned parties
Data collection about social, psychological, and physical affects
Significant suggestions for outpouring these problems

Characteristics of interviewer

Date

Name

Organization's
name

Definition of sexual harassment

Any sort of behavior, attitude, interference, and any other acts that occurs for sexual purposes by physical, oral, vocal interactions and other connecting tools that cause depression and trouble are called as sexual harassment.

1. Do you agree with the above definition of sexual harassment or have any other idea?

2. Which type of sexual harassment have you faced or heard about?

--

Types of sexual harassment

3. Have you faced and/or heard about the following incidents at your university and/or any other institutions?

Types of sexual harassment	Yes/No	Types of affection or gender	Identification of irritator	Repeat of the act during the day
Close interaction with body				
Signal actions (sex)				
Showing naked pictures				
Comic nudes				
Writing of some points to the walls				
Staring to the body parts				
Murmuring abusive and				

annoying songs				
Physical and sexual attacks				
Invitation to sexual acts				
Demand of sexual harassment along with promising of the development and/or success				
By mobile or letter				
E-mail or Facebook				
Taking the paths				
Follow from home to school and vice-versa				
Threat of bad name				

4. Have you faced any other types of sexual harassment other than the above lists?

Side effects of sexual harassment:

8. In your view, what type of influence sexual harassment will have?

Note: Please mark (1) for the lowest and (5) for the highest.

A.

Types of psychological influence (انواع تاثیرات روانی)	1	2	3	4	5
Stress (افسردہ گی)					
Horror (ترس)					
Sense of crime (احساس گناہ)					
Irresponsible (عدم مسئولیت)					
Pessimism and ?					
Catching psychological disease					
Horror of bad picture					

Note: Please mark (1) for the lowest and (5) for the highest.

B.

Types of substantial influence	1	2	3	4	5
Color changing					

High degree of heartbeat					
Headache and fever					
Word trembling					
Substantial shock					
Allergy					
No Apatite					
Sleepless					
(in case of rape)					

Note: Please mark (1) for the lowest and (5) for the highest.

C.

Types of social influence					
Dishonor among people					
Living in corner					
Limitations of going and coming					
Furious and indignant					

Trust worthless					
Lack of taste					
Doing force marriages					
High educational barriers and/or any other barriers					
Family violence					

10. For solving these problems, what are your suggestions?

For youths	For parents	For governmental organizations	For your own organization

For official use	
Controller name	
Position	
Control date	
Signature of controller	