

**FORMS AND RESPONSE ON SEXUAL HARASSMENT AMONG
THE GIRLS OF SECONDARY SCHOOL OF SUNSARI, NEPAL**

A Thesis

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this master degree thesis entitled **Forms and Response on Sexual Harassment among the Girls of Secondary School of Sunsari, Nepal** submitted to the Central Department of Sociology Tribhuvan University is an entirely original work prepared under the supervision of my supervisor. I have made due acknowledgement to all ideas and information borrowed from different in the course of writing this thesis. The result presented in this thesis had not been presented in this thesis has not been presented or submitted anywhere else for the award of any degree or for any other reasons. Not part of the content of this thesis has ever been published in any form before. I shall be solely responsible if any evidence is found against my declaration.

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LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION

This thesis entitled **Forms and Response on Sexual Harassment among the Girls of Secondary School of Sunsari, Nepal** has been prepared by Ms. Bipana Kumari Bastola under my supervision for the partial fulfillment of the requirement for the degree of Masters of Arts in Sociology. I am satisfied with her dissertation. I recommend this dissertation for the final evaluation by the dissertation evaluation committee.

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LETTER OF APPROVAL

This dissertation entitled **Forms and Response on Sexual Harassment among the Girls of Secondary School of Sunsari, Nepal** prepared and submitted by Ms. Bipana Kumari Bastola, has been evaluated and approved for the partial fulfillment of the requirement of Master Degree in Sociology by the dissertation evaluation committee.

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ABBREVIATIONS

AAUW	:	American Association of University Women
EEOC	:	Equal Employment Opportunity Commission
FWLD	:	Forum for Women, Law and Development
GBV	:	Gender Based Violence
ILO	:	International Labor Organization
NCVS	:	National Crime Victimization Survey
NDHS	:	Nepal Demographic Health Survey
NSSS	:	National Student Safety Survey
OAG	:	Office of the Attorney General
SAATHI	:	System for Assessment, Awareness & Training for Hospitality Industry
SH	:	Sexual Harassment
UNFPA	:	United Nations Fund for Population Activities
UNICEF	:	United Nations Children's Fund
UNIFEM	:	United Nations Development Fund for Women
VAW	:	Violence Against Women
WHO	:	World Health Organization
WOREC	:	Women's Rehabilitation Center

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Context

This study focuses on sexual harassment among secondary school girls in Sunsari, Nepal. Sexual harassment is a significant issue worldwide, including in Nepal. It includes unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature. The problem is common among schoolgirls, who face harassment from male peers and sometimes even teachers.

This research is about forms and response of sexual harassment among the girls of secondary schools (It falls between grade 9-12) at Itahari-1, Sunsari. Sexual Harassment is one of the biggest fears of contemporary society not only in Nepal also in the Global World. Sexual harassment has been legally recognized as a major challenging issue, existing in numerous forms. This study aims to understanding the forms, response and coping strategies of victim when they faced sexual harassment. This study is a small step to find out different types of harassment which female students are facing while studying.

The research was conducted at Shree Rastriye Secondary School in Itahari-1, Sunsari. The study aimed to understand the forms of harassment, how victims respond, and their coping strategies. Data were collected through interviews and surveys using a simple random sampling method. The findings show that almost all girls have experienced some form of harassment, which negatively impacts their physical, mental, and social well-being.

Sexual harassment includes unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical harassment of a sexual nature in the workplace or learning environment, according to the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), Sexual harassment does not always have to be specifically about sexual behavior or directed at a specific person. For example, negative comments about women as a group may be a form of sexual harassment. It is a type of harassment involving the use of explicit or implicit sexual overtones, including the unwelcome and inappropriate

promise of rewards in exchange for sexual favors. Sexual harassment includes a range of actions from verbal transgressions to sexual abuse or assault. Both men and women can be the victim of sexual harassment, but in comparison to male females are the one who victimized more by male. Sexual harassment leads different types of physical symptoms of stress, anxiety and people feel depressed (Smith, 2020).

Sexual harassment in schools includes verbal comments, inappropriate physical contact, and gestures. The research found that the male-dominated society and rigid cultural traditions contribute to the prevalence of harassment. Many girls do not report these incidents due to fear, shame, or the belief that nothing will change.

MacKinnon (1979) defines sexual harassment as “the unwanted imposition of sexual requirements in the context of the relationship of unequal power”. (Brandenburg, 1997), defines sexual harassment as ‘Unwanted sexual attention that would be offensive to a reasonable person and that negatively affects the work or school environment. Women of all age experience sexual harassment on public transport but students are more victimized. Studies have shown that students and women remained silent or ignored the harassment because reacting or speaking against the 2 harassment would lead to further violence or harassment (Gautam et al. 2019).

According to the New York state office of the Attorney General (OAG), people experience 3 type of sexual harassment include: Verbal, visual, physical. Verbal examples of sexual harassment may include: making sexual comments, asking about sexual fantasies, history, asking personal questions about someone's social or sex life. Visual harassment can include obscene gestures and looks, posters, photographs and other graphic image that offend. And physical harassment is an act where someone inappropriately touched you against your will. It may include touching another person's clothing, hair or body, hugging, kissing, touching, patting etc.

The EEOC states that sexual harassment can happen in different situations. Both the victim and harasser can be either a woman or a man, and they do not need to be of opposite sexes. The harasser can be the victim's boss, an employer's agent, a different supervisor, a coworker, or someone not employed by the company. The victim does not need to be the direct target of the harassment but can be anyone impacted by the

offensive behavior. Sexual harassment can be illegal even if it does not result in economic harm or job loss for the victim. The harasser's actions must be unwelcome.

"Seven percent of women aged 15-49 surveyed in the Nepal Demographic and Health Survey (NDHS) of 2016 had experienced sexual violence. The NDHS is a national sample survey that provides information on areas such as fertility levels, marriage, nutrition, mortality, and domestic violence. Sexual violence is defined in the survey as forcing someone to have sexual intercourse or engage in sexual activity without consent. Since the NDHS uses random sampling across Nepal, the survey findings can be extrapolated to the national population. Which means that based on the NDHS survey, a minimum of half a million women have experienced sexual violence. Given that sexual violence occurs to women outside the 15-49 age range as well, and we only have the 2011 census as a benchmark, the actual number is bound to be higher," (Asha Nepal 2018).

According to the data revealed by Nepal Police, cases of violence against women (VAW) in the country have increased significantly in the last decade. A total of 17,790 women and girls were raped in the last ten years and it has been found that the cases of rape have been increasing every year by 20 per cent. According to Nepal Police, 144 cases of rape and 687 cases of attempt to rape were registered in the last fiscal year. Likewise, 1,221 women and girls were raped from March 2020 to August 2020. The data shows that on average, seven women or girls are raped daily in Nepal. Moreover, a VAW study report published by Informal Sector Service Center (INSEC) has mentioned that the VAW cases had increased this year. According to the report, around seven hundred cases relating to rape were recorded in 2018. The number doubled in the year 2020 as over 1,400 cases of sexual offense were confirmed.

Similarly, according to WOREC Nepal, last year 143 rapes and 18 attempts to rape were registered while 178 rape cases and 40 attempts to rape were reported in the first five months of the ongoing year. All these reports portray the scary picture of violation of women's rights. The stakeholders and activist have been voicing that physical, mental, and sexual torture and gender-based discrimination, inequality, and injustice were the reason behind the increase in VAW cases.

Sexual violence, including sexual harassment, frequently occurs in institutions assumed to be 'safe', such as schools, where perpetrators include peers and teachers. In studies from around the world, including Africa, south Asia, and Latin America, studies have documented that substantial proportions of girls' report experiencing sexual harassment and abuse on the way to and from school, as well as on school and university premises, including classrooms lavatories and dormitories, by peers and by teachers. For example, in a study among primary schools in the Machinga district of Malawi, primary school girls reported experiencing various types of sexual harassment and abuse at school, including sexual comments (7.8%), sexual touch (13.5%), 'rape' (2.3%), and 'coerced or unwanted' sex (1.3%), (WHO).

According to article published in (The Kathmandu Post. March 16, 2022) Harassment covers a wide range of behavior that demeans, humiliates or embarrasses a person, and it is characteristically identified by its unlikelihood in terms of social and moral reasonableness. These are behaviors that appear to be disturbing, upsetting or threatening to another individual. It also includes situations where a person is asked to engage in undesirable activity as a condition of that person's employment, as well as situations which create an environment that is hostile, intimidating or humiliating for the person on the receiving end. Furthermore, workplace harassment creates a mental, physical and psychological effect that compromises and undermines an individual's productivity and motivation.

Sexual harassment can occur in many different social settings such as; home, workplace, school, churches and different public places. It is widely spread in all sector from few years. Among all school is one of the places where student feel insecure.

Sexual Harassment rates also vary by gender. The majority of SH targets are girls and women, and the majority of perpetrators are boys and men (Espelage et al., 2016; Gruber & Fineran, 2016). To illustrate, a nationally representative American study using direct query found that 65% of women and 25% of men had experienced street harassment (Kearl, 2014). A 2017 Pew Research Centre study employing direct query with a nationally representative American sample found that 22% of women and 7% of men reported personally experiencing workplace SH (Parker & Funk, 2017). Duggan (2017) also found that 21% of women ages 18–29 reported being sexually harassed online, compared to 9% of men in the same age-group. Hill and Kearl (2011) used a list

of SH behaviors with a representative sample of American middle and high school students and found that 48% had experienced some form of SH; girls (52%) reported higher rates than boys (40%). Notably, the SH of boys and men is most often perpetrated by males who target other males deviating from traditional heterosexual gender roles or who harass lower status men to establish dominance in male groups (Fox & Tang, 2014; Gruber & Fineran, 2016; Holland, Rabelo, Gustafson, Seabrook, & Cortina, 2016). (Burn, 2018).

The culture of sexual harassment is not only a threat to girls but also to boys who in many cases have the pressure to show their 'manhood' by not reporting such incidents and even sometime baiting their classmates (Hill, & Kearl, 2011).

According to (Tangi, 2018), It also varies according to the level of education. Girls who study in lower secondary level face many problems. They are harassed by their own class teachers and classmates. Even in school bus girls face bullying, whistling etc. they can't resist or talk against such behaviour. In comparison to lower levels student's student who study is a fairly common form of school harassment, which involves one or more students targeting one or more other students for abusive behaviour. A student can harass a teacher in a classroom, and teachers can harass students; both situations are inappropriate and emotionally destructive. Many sexual harassments are not reported because the students fear that the cases would ruin their future academic career, and so they end up not reporting the cases.

The study highlights the need for more awareness and preventive measures in school. It calls for strict policies and support systems to help victims and create a safer environment for female students. The research is a step towards understanding and addressing the issue of sexual harassment in Nepalese schools, aiming to ensure a safer educational experience for all girls.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Sexual harassment is a complex and fluid phenomenon ranging from physical violence to sexually-suggestive gestures. Especially college students also face that type of harassment, but when girls suffer from such mis-behavior many of them do not raise their voice because they feel ashamed of such behavior. Sexual harassment on public

transport is another problem itself, and remaining silent by the victim of such harassment is another major problem. Studies suggest that incidents of sexual harassment are the common occurrence on the school. The experience of sexual harassment on school not only makes girl traumatic but it also creates a long-term effect on girls educational activities too. Study conducted by Gyawali et.al. (2012), 85% of school-going adolescents were found to suffer from some kind of sexual harassment like sexual gazing; sexual gestures, blaming relation with others, and 63% of girls who had been sexually harassed were found to be suffered from mental stress, anxiety and depression. Moreover, various type of persons have been found involved in sexual harassment which include friends, teachers, co-workers, seniors, visitors, strangers and family members (Gyawali et.al. 2012; Hill& Kearl, 2011; Mishra and Lamichhane, 2018).

Sexual harassment against girls is not only the problem of Nepal. It is wide spreaded all over the world. The Global prevalence rates have been found ranging from 15%-95%, with women in developing countries more likely to have been harassed (Fogarty, 2012; Geloski et.al. 2017). According to UN women (2016), 40%-50% of the women in European Union countries experience unwanted sexual advances, physical contact, or other forms of sexual harassment. The USA revealed that 83% of girl students in the 8-11 grades were sexually harassed and 38% of them were sexually harassed by teacher or school employees in America (Hill& Silva, 2005). Witkowka (2005) reported a similar situation where 50% of a sample of 714 girls in grade 9 & 11 reported experience of some form of sexual harassment in schools in Sweden. Similarly, sexual harassment of 27% of girl student has been reported in the Natherlands. The study of plan international (2008) on African & Latin American nations also illustrated the severe occurrence of different types of sexual harassment on the girl students by teachers and other offenders at school and other areas.

Being female students we have to face different types of difficulties and problems in their daily life. Among them sexual harassment is one of the main cause that have deep effect on everyone's life. We think school is temple where we taught about right and wrong, what to do or what to not but School is not safe for some students specially girls students. Almost Every day we are hearing and reading news regarding sexual harassment in school. If we are talking about that type of harassment everyone shares

their story when they were at their secondary level. Female students face sexual harassment by their classmates, seniors, teachers and other staff of school. When girls are in school bus they are harassed by male friends verbally and some by gestures. Some girls/ female students speak against such behaviour and some couldn't but they feel sad, afraid and depressed. Because of such behaviour girls students feel insecure in their own school.

When I studied at my secondary level I also experienced sexual harassment by my own class teacher. At that time I was 15 and I knew something about good touch and bad touch. One day, while teacher was teaching to us he came to near my desk and he touched behind my back and slightly started to move his hand over there at that time I was so numb but I pushed his hand and went to another desk. It was very bad experience for me I was afraid of him, I didn't have any idea how to react to that incident. I couldn't talk against him but I shared this experience to my friends. From that day when I saw him, I maintained distance from him. But I also feel regret about not speaking at that time when that incident took place. Not only me there are many who couldn't respond when that type of incidents happens.

In this paper, Researcher aim to identify what type of harassment is faced by girl student and how they tackle this situation. How they have gone through after harassment. This paper is based primarily on the findings from 50 students who are studying in their secondary level. It falls under qualitative research practices.

This study attempts to find answer of the following research questions;

- In this changing context to what extent they have gone through sexual harassment? And What type of harassment they have gone through or experienced by the girls of secondary school of Itahari?
- How are they experienced sexual harassment during their study period at school level?
- How do they respond against sexual harassment; legal, social, cultural mechanisms?
- What problem do they face when they experience sexual harassment and how do they manage/ cope with?

1.3 Objectives of the Study

With reference to the above-mentioned research questions, the general objective of the study is to understand /describe the sexual harassment which faced by girls at their secondary level. The specific objectives of this study are:

- 1) To explore various forms of sexual harassment among girls studying at secondary level school of Itahari.
- 2) To examine the victim's response against sexual harassment and the problems they face with focus on coping strategies

1.4 Significance of the Study

At present, it contributes in understanding the extent of sexual harassment among the girl students, its causes and response. Research sexual harassment among the girls of secondary school is limited. The study provides detailed and comprehensive understanding of causes and consequences or effects of sexual harassment and how victim deal with that type of problem. The researcher raised awareness to female students who are ignorant to sexual harassment and enable them to develop the skills and confidence needed to deal with sexual harassment. These participants might learn assertive ways to ward off the perpetrators unsolicited physical or verbal acts of sexual harassment.

The findings of this research may be useful particularly to policy makers Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education and its departments like Training, Discipline and Schools Psychological Services and Special Needs Education. This helps them to organize awareness campaigns that train students equip themselves with life skills that ward off sexual harassment. It attempts to identify the theory that explains how the sexual harassment is prevailing at school level and explains it from theoretical perspective.

Sexual harassment is one of the forms of sexual offences. There are various types of violence which women have to face in their daily lives. There are different studies regarding sexual harassment but there are only few studies about sexual harassment among girls at secondary level. Girl students faces sexual harassment by their nearest

and dearest friends, teachers and staffs. In this study I am going to find out conditions, problems, how they have gone through, and how they deal with such harassments at province-1, Itahari-1, Sunsari. Thus, this study is a small step to find out different types of harassment which they are facing while studying.

Researcher will divide this study into five chapters. The first chapter deals with general background of the study which followed by the statement of the problem, objectives of the study and rationale of the study. Second chapter deals with review of literature related with the statement of the problem. Third chapter deals with research methodology adopted for the study. Fourth chapter presents a status of sexual harassment among girls student at school (secondary school). And the final chapter presents the summary and conclusion.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Review of Previous Studies

The term sexual harassment has been defined differently depending from the context in which it arises. Aeberhard-Hodges (1997) cited in Britwum and Anokye (2006) gives a precise definition as comprised of the perception of the victim and the interpretation of the behaviour as unwanted or sexual in nature. Research shows that sexual harassment of students by teachers and non-teaching staff in schools is a prevalent and apparently insidious phenomenon.

From a legal standpoint, sexual harassment is a form of sex discrimination composed of two forms of behavior: quid pro quo harassment and hostile environment harassment. Quid pro quo harassment involves sexual threats or bribery that are made a condition of employment or used as the basis for employment decisions. Hostile environment harassment captures those behaviors, such as sexual jokes, comments, and touching, that interfere with an individual's ability to do his/her job or that create an "intimidating, hostile or offensive working environment" (US EECO 1998).

Sexual harassment is an attack on a person's privacy and dignity. It is a manifestation of power relations. Women are more likely to suffer because they lack power, are in vulnerable and insecure positions, lack self-confidence and have been socialised to suffer in silence. Study conducted in Kathmandu, Pokhara, Dharan, Biratnagar, Birjunj and Hetauda, it is evident that over half of the interviewed women had themselves experienced sexual harassment at the workplace. Yet, this subject had not been discussed openly in Nepal until a few years ago. The prevalent mental attitude in the society has been, "men are men. Women have to just tolerate this behaviour. It is their fate" (ILO, Kathmandu, Nepal 2004).

The American Association of University Women's (AAUW) Educational Foundation conducted a national survey of a sample of students in grades 8 through 11 attending 79 schools in the United States (1993). A total of 81% of the sample reported that at some point in their schools experiences they felt they were the target of sexual

harassment. This is a very high percentage of school age children who feel they were sexually harassed. The study also found that 31% of girls and 18% of boys felt they were sexually harassed. There were some racial and gender differences in findings: 87% of White girls reported being sexually harassed, with lower percentages reporting harassment than girls. With 75% for White boys and 69% for Hispanic boys.

A man has been apprehended for allegedly sexually harassing a minor in Kanchanpur. The 53- year- old teacher of Mahakali secondary school located in Bellauri-6, Bidyanagar has been taken into custody for molesting his student. According to spokesperson at Kanchanpur District Police Office, DSP Amar Bahadur Thapa, the accused has been arrested for alleged sexual harassment of the 14-year-old student in the school premises. The incident had apparently happened on February 17 at around 11 am (Deuba, 2021).

Sexual harassment in secondary schools is pervasive: two in three teens (64.7 percent) surveyed in Scotland reported visual and verbal harassment, and one in three (34.3 percent) reported personally invasive behaviours, in the last three months. Students are uncertain about the acceptability of many behaviours, and some are normalized, according to the research, published in the open access journal *PLOS ONE*. Effective interventions are needed to change attitudes and behaviours which can persist into later life (Public library of Science, 2022).

One in three university students (30.6%) have experienced sexual assault at least once in their lifetime. This is one finding from the 2021 National Student Safety Survey (NSSS) report. According to Powell, (2022),The survey responses from 43,819 students enrolled in 38 Australian universities, as well as written responses from 1,835 current and former students, demonstrate the extent and impacts of sexual violence in and beyond the higher education sector. The survey also found one in 20 (4.5%) had been sexually assaulted in a university context since starting their studies. In the 12 months preceding the survey, 1.4% of women and 0.6% of men reported experiencing sexual assault in a university context.

Sexual harassment involves aggressively sexual behaviour from one person towards another, which is unwanted and leads the target to feel threatened and creates an environment in which he or she cannot learn or teach. Bullying is also a major form of

harassment that consist of physical actions and words that make a person feel threatened with violence, often due to differences in culture, physical appearance or behaviours. This often occurs between classmates and can result in anything from fights to acts of violence (Lynne, 1993).

"Sexual harassment is common at every stage of education. Verbal and physical harassment begins in elementary school, and 4 out of 5 children experience some form of sexual harassment or bullying. 8 out of 10 will experience this at some point in their school lives, and roughly 25 percent will experience this often. Boys are more likely to physically harass and bully others, or to be physically bullied themselves. Girls are more likely to use, and experience, verbal and psychological harassment and bullying. Six out of ten students will experience some form of physical sexual harassment" (Statistics of Sexual Harassment).

In the book of Finerman, & Rebecca,(2006) it is said that :The AAUW (1993), PCSW (1995), and Stein et al. (1993) studies all document that sexual harassment occurs in public in school buildings and on school grounds. The majority of students report school hallways, classrooms, gym areas, parking lots, school buses, and cafeterias as the major locations of harassment (AAUW, 1993; PCSW, 1995; Stein et al., 1993; Stratton & Backes, 1997; Trigg & Wittenstrom, 1996). Students also complain that most sexual harassment occurs publicly in front of teachers and other school employees who do nothing to stop it, creating a hostile school environment (AAUW, 1993, 2001; PCSW, 1995; Stein et al., 1993).

Feminist scholarship situates sexual harassment within broader patterns of discrimination, power, and privilege, linking harassment to sex-based inequality (MacKinnon 1979). Quinn's (2002) research on "girl watching," for example, ties patriarchal gender relations to everyday workplace interactions. Quinn argues that other men, rather than women, are often the intended audience of sexist gestures and comments. Although men often view "girl watching" as light-hearted and playful, and seem surprised when women take offense, such activities demonstrate men's power to sexually evaluate women. Similarly, Martin (2001) finds that men "mobilize masculinities" in ways that often exclude and cause harm to women as a group, even when this is not their intention.

Sexuality plays a significant role in many teens' experiences with bullying (Duncan 1999; Rivers and Duncan 2013). Among boys, the intersection of bullying, sexuality, and gender regulation has been widely documented (Klein 2012; Messerschmidt 2012; Pascoe 2007, 2013). For instance, both Pascoe (2007) and Chambers, Tincknell, and Van Loon (2004) find that homophobic and misogynistic verbal abuse function as mechanisms for boys' collective construction and regulation of masculine gender identities. Girls' bullying practices are also often mediated through discourses about gendered sexuality, including slut slander (Payne 2012) and homophobic slurs (Poteat and Rivers 2010). Girls are also more likely to be targets of bullying when they fail to conform to normative sexual behaviors and feminine gender presentations (Messerschmidt 2012). However, while much has been published recently in the popular press about the intersections of gender and sexuality in girls' experiences with bullying (Cappiello et al. 2015; Lindin 2015; Sales 2016; Tanenbaum 2015), academic studies have largely left unexplored how this conflict contributes to girls' gendering processes.

Sexual harassment is not only a physical crime against girls and women but has been found responsible for their poor physical and emotional health. Children or student who persistently victimized by sexual harassment and violence suffer from higher levels of depression, anxiety, and loneliness in comparison to non-victimized student. Girls are suffering from sexual violence and harassment in schools also found with poor health status as well as poor education achievement and they can't perform well. There is different types of effects of harassment such as; they may skip or drop out of school entirely, psychological effect may include a disrupted sleep, loss of appetite, decrease participation in class, avoid a study group inability to concentrate, lowered self-esteem, loss of interest in regular activities, social isolation, and feelings of sadness, fear or shame. Students may experience multiple or just one (Strauss, 2013).

2.2 Emotional and Physical Effects of Sexual Abuse and Harassment

Harassed children may suffer various emotional and physical losses, including diminished self-esteem and self-worth, and a reduced ability to trust others. The opportunity for normal growth and development can be compromised, along with the ability to form intimate relationships. Victims often lose control over their own minds and bodies, which can interfere with experiencing normal love and nurturing. The sense

of safety and security is significantly impacted, leading to long-lasting emotional and physical consequences.

2.3 Behavioral Effects of Sexual Harassment

Children who experience sexual harassment may exhibit various behavioral effects, such as nightmares, phobias, and regressive behaviors like thumb-sucking and bed-wetting. They often face learning problems and may become clingy and smothering. Insecurity is common, increasing the child's risk for further abuse and exploitation. Psychosomatic complaints, such as stomachaches and headaches, are also frequent among harassed children (AAUW, 2002).

Sexual Harassment is an insidious form of gender discrimination that continues to plague our social, economic, political, legal, and formal institutions. It is deeply entrenched in the societal infrastructure, undermining and threatening the development and progress of all human beings. Since passage of Civil Rights Act of 1996, sexual harassment has been legally recognized as a major challenging issue, existing in numerous forms. Sexual harassment illustrates a lack of respect for human rights (Skaine, 1996).

Sexual harassment is a recurring problem around the globe, different nations have taken measures to deal with the consequences of such problem. Changing the current culture and climate requires addressing all forms of sexual harassment, not just the most egregious cases; moving beyond legal compliance; supporting targets when they come forward; improving transparency and accountability; diffusing the power structure between faculty and trainees; and revising organizational systems and structures to value diversity, inclusion, and respect. Leaders at every level within academia will be needed to initiate these changes and to establish and maintain the culture and norms. However, to succeed in making these changes, all members of our nation's college campuses—students, faculty, staff, and administrators—will need to assume responsibility for promoting a civil and respectful environment. It is everyone's responsibility to stop sexual harassment (Benya, Widnall, & Johnson, 2018).

A large percentage of women claim to be subjected to biases due to their gender and they face harassment on campuses and schools. However, many are hesitant to disclose

instances to authorities as they are not taken seriously at times and even if they do fight back they are scared of the threat of reprisal and the psychological pressure they face from the society. Harassment and assault can have long-term physical and emotional consequences. And when it comes to harassment in educational institutions it can create an unfriendly and hazardous environment for the victim which affects their learning capacity. The second most common type of sexual harassment in schools is hostile-environment harassment, unwelcomed sexual advances requests for sexual favors, and other sexually related verbal, nonverbal, or physical behaviours by an employ, classmates. There are numbers of sexual harassment cases at schools have been reported by women. But there are few of the cases where men are the victims as well. There are numbers of sexual harassments cases in schools, not only by their classmates but by the employee of the school. 'There are many cases where a girl is harassed by her own teacher. But sadly the cases are not only limited to students as employees are also harassed by their seniors or their classmates as well' (Nepal News, 2022).

According to newspaper published in may24, 2022-Police arrested two teachers of St. Lawrence College in Chabahil of Kathmandu for alleged sexual harassment of minor students who are studying in grade XI and XII. They were arrested under child molestation offence. Three girls has filed FIR against the accused perpetrators at the metropolitan police circle Gausala till this evening. At the same time two more girls, who also accused the same teachers of molestation, are set to file case against them. Both teachers threatned to girl by saying that they would be expelled from the college or they would fail them in the examinations if they did not accept their proposal and spoke anything against them. As per reporter one teacher or coordinator had asked one girl to be his partner and promised to get her a new rented room if she agreed to become his partner. After that he had threatned the girl telling her to remain silent about the proposal or she would be expelled from the college. Other girls have also accused them of similar charges. A month ago an eight years old issue of the rape of 16 years old aspiring model by the beauty pageant organiser had shaken the nation. It sparked demonstration demanding justice for the girl and a fair investigation into the case. These are the representing cases of sexual harassment but there are every girl have faced these type of behaviour from their teachers, staff and their mates and most of the girls hide their problem because of threatened by accuser and some hide because of their prestige (Himalyan Times).

In Nepal, Gender specific violence against women occurs across all strata of society, whether they are in the forms of violence. Such as sexual violence that include rape, marital rape, gang rape, public stripping, harassment through language, gesture and or touch ,eve-teasing, trafficking an forced prostitution or the more covert forms through verbal and psychological way. A study conducted by SAATHI, 1997, existence of mental and emotional torture was reported by 93 percent of the total respondents (sample size:1250) and beating was also identified as the most common form of physical violence against women and girls i.e 82 % in Nepal followed by rape 30 % and forced prostitution (28%).

Not only in Nepal around the Globe there are numerous numbers of sexual harassment cases and sexual assault cases so currently campus rape and sexual assault is a topic of interest to the general public, academic researchers, college and university administrators, and politicians (Gray, 2014). According the report presented in 2014, data told that for about 12 million of American females (18 -24 years old) who attend colleges and universities each year that a college campus is one of the most dangerous place in the U.S. (57% of those attending schools of higher education are females), “One of the most dangerous places for young women in America today is a college campus,” i.e., as president Obama said at a White House event in September 2014; and that “An estimated one-in-five women has been sexually assaulted during her college years.” At an earlier White House event on the issue, he declared of sexual assault: “It threatens our females, it threatens our communities; ultimately it threatens the entire country.” This arguably is hyperbole, though rape and sexual assault on U.S. college and university campuses is a problem, and many academic officials often take a dismissive attitude toward female victims who when sexually assaulted (and come forward and report the crime), they are doubted (the authors’ observations; Gray, 2014). Thereby male student perpetrators are frequently given a mild rebuke and go free. The Huffington Post surveyed data on sexual assault cases at more than 125 college and universities from fiscal year 2011 through 2013 (obtained through a Freedom of Information Act Request to the U.S. Department of Justice). An analysis of this data (which reported on colleges and universities that receive federal grants to combat rapes on campus) found that about 13 percent of students found responsible for sexual assault were expelled, and that between 20 and 68 were suspended for different time periods (Kingkade, 2014).

At least one in every five of the female population has been physically or sexually abused at sometime (UNFPA, 2000). Sexual violence against women has been seen through out of the world. Out of every five women in this world is physically or sexually abused by a man, at some point in her life. Harassment of girls by boys is in all likelihood a global problem In Canada, for example 23% of girls had experienced sexual harassment while attending school (Bagley, 1997).

Violence within educational institution: Girls students are neglected more in school and colleges than boy students. It creates bad psychological impression in the girl students and discourages them. Sexual violence is another closed or unflashed, normally unpublished violence in educational institutions. Sometimes magazines also published teacher raping little girl in hostel. Male teacher intentionally beating at back part of the body, touching or trying to touch other parts of the body is also common but these all remain closed or secret because of fear. As we know that majority of women and girls are the prey of violence. The common age group of violence is adolescent or teenager girls because it is the peak age where girls have little knowledge and feel shame to ventilate the feelings with others. In this period they have to combat with various type of health problem, drug abuse, mental problem and they are also equally being sexually harassed at home, school, market, college, public place, bus micro etc. (UNIFEM, 1996).

2.4 Sites of Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment can occur in various locations. A common site of harassment is within the home, often perpetrated by relatives. Schools are another significant location, where teachers, friends, peers, or administrative personnel may be the harassers. In the workplace, harassment can come from bosses, colleagues, or clients. Public spaces, such as public transport and religious places like temples, are also common sites, where known or unknown individuals can harass others. Festivals and religious events, such as the throwing of lolas before the Holi festival, also present opportunities for harassment (UNFPA and FWLD, 2009).

From infancy to old age, individuals are sexual beings. Even as infants and toddlers, it is important to learn the proper names for body parts. As children develop sexually, they become increasingly curious about their bodies, gender, and sex. This sexual

awakening often manifests in unpleasant ways during late elementary school, particularly among boys, who may begin to make demeaning comments and unwanted advances toward girls. Examples of sexual harassment in elementary, middle, and high school hallways include unwanted physical contact such as touching, bumping, grabbing, or patting; sexually insulting remarks about race, gender, ability, or class; bragging about sexual prowess for others to hear; intimidating hallway behavior, which can include demeaning nicknames, homophobic name-calling, catcalls, rating, or embarrassing whistles; graffiti with names written on walls or desks, such as "for a good time, call..."; and being followed or stalked by another student (Witmer, 2020).

The violence that women and girls face throughout their lives prevents them from realizing their rights as human beings and equal citizens. Most directly, the physical, psychological and other forms of injury they sustain prevent women and girls from leading healthy, productive lives. More broadly, violence represents a critical tool to perpetuate the underlying patriarchy that persists in much of South Asia, wherein women and girls are identified strictly by their relationships to men and boys, as their mothers, daughters, sisters, and wives (Kapur, 2013). Women's opportunities for and participation in higher education, employment, and politics have expanded in most countries. As such opportunities arise and open the doors to greater gender equality and women's empowerment, however, women and girls may face a backlash including an increased risk of violence as they leave their homes to work or to study. As women's greater participation in public life—including higher education and employment—eventually becomes the norm, violence may decrease. Campaigns and media have contributed to a growing awareness of the extent of sexual harassment in public places. Still, interventions are few and far between, and most are not evaluated in a manner that can provide promising lessons for replication or scale-up. Key gaps include the lack of evaluated interventions to address sexual harassment in the workplace, schools (Pande & Solotaroff, 2014). Fear of sexual harassment at school is one reason that parents in South Asia may withdraw girls from school at puberty, thus constraining their lifetime opportunities for education and a career (Bott et al., 2003).

Most of the children who were sexually exploited in South Asia in 2001 were girls between ages 13 and 18 (UNICEF 2001). 13-18 is the age when girls are at their secondary school.

Indeed, sexual harassment is not merely a gendered phenomenon but it can be explained psychoanalytically. Psychoanalysis looks at how the unconscious mind influences thoughts and behaviors. Thorpe (2015) asserts that there seems to be a relationship between the medial orbitofrontal cortex and sexual fantasies, or indeed desire of any kind. This implies that the brain gives people the capacity to have fantasies about sexual behaviors and experiences. Thus, it becomes the most important “sex organ” as coined by Maslar (2017) and the center of sensuality and attraction to others. Unconscious thoughts and feelings of sexual desires or fantasies can transfer to the conscious mind in the form of parapraxes, popularly known as “Freudian slips” or slips of the tongue. Lahey (2004) explains that slip of the tongues is a revelation of what is really on our mind by saying something we didn’t mean to. For example, the perpetrator of sexual harassment might express unconscious thoughts of having sexual relations with a student by joking about it or passing suggestive comments.

Sexual harassment is intimidation, bullying or coercion of a sexual mature, or the unwelcome or inappropriate promise of rewards in exchange for sexual favors. In some contexts or circumstances, sexual harassment may be illegal. It includes a range of behavior from seemingly mild transgression and annoyances to actual sexual abuse or sexual assault. Sexual harassment is a form of illegal employment discrimination in many countries, is a form of abuse (sexual and psychological) and bullying (Dziech and Linda, 1990).

The study investigates the frequency, severity, and consequences of sexual harassment in American secondary schools, using 1993 survey data from a nationally representative sample of 1,203 8th to 11th graders in 79 public schools. They found that 83% of girls and 60% of boys receive unwanted sexual attention in school. Except for gender, social background is unrelated to either the probability or the severity of sexual harassment. However, factors characterizing the context of harassment are strongly associated with both occurrence and severity: the harassment experiences of friends, perceptions of the school environment for harassment, and whether the student has himself/herself harassed (Lee, et.al, 1996).

The 2011 Nepal Demographic and Health Survey found that more than one in five (22%) women age 15-49 years reported experiencing physical violence at some point since the age of 15 years; among whom 9% were physically assaulted in the last year,

either regularly (2%) or infrequently (7%). Older, married, rural and Terai women were more likely to report physical violence than other groups of women. Moreover, 12% of women in the DHS reported ever experiencing sexual violence (NDHS, 2011). 'A study on Gender Based Violence conducted in selected rural districts of Nepal' conducted by OPMCM/TAF/CREHPA revealed that almost half of women (48%) had experienced violence at some time in their lives, and 28% had experienced violence in the past 12 months; where emotional violence (40.4%) was most commonly reported type of violence followed by physical violence (26.8%), sexual violence (15.3%) and economic abuse/violence (8%) (OPMCM, 2012). The Nepal DHS 2006 also questioned men in the population, and found that 21% of male respondents feel that a husband may be justified for beating his wife (NDHS, 2006).

Violence against women as a sub-category of broader gender-based violence (GBV), is typically enmeshed in a complex web of institutionalized social relations that reinforce women's vulnerability. For example, women may endure men's violence because they see no acceptable alternatives, and their lack of alternatives is often part of a larger cultural logic that sanctions violence. Violence against women prevents women from exercising their legal rights to property inheritance, constrains their ability to take advantage of economic opportunities and keeps them in their homes. Moreover, there is concern that if and when women/girls do seek care and support in the formal sectors (e.g. in the legal, police, health or other social sectors), they may not be able to fully actualize their rights to service support and provision (Puri et.al, 2013).

Study conducted by Pandey et al. Sexual harassment is highly prevalent among the female students in Kathmandu. SH was significantly associated with religion and paternal occupation. The majority of events of sexual harassment occurred on the way and public vehicle. Two third of the perpetrators are stranger. More than half of victims ignored or did nothing at the time of event and one thirds felt depressed after the events. The findings indicated that raising awareness of sexual harassment and helping students to recognize violent and abusive behaviors can be an important step in minimizing sexual harassment among female students in Kathmandu. After being sexually harassed, more than half of the participants (67.4%) reported that they talked to their friends about what happened. Only 5.67 percent JNHRC Vol. 17 No. 4 Issue 45 Oct - Dec 2019428 reported the incident to the police. More than one-third

of participants (38.1%) had suggested punishments for people who harass and enforce them can reduce sexual harassment in school. Nearly one third of the participants (30.2%) said it would be useful if schools had such a person assigned to help with sexual harassment. 12.5 percent wanted a way to anonymously report sexual harassment problems. Creating a reporting mechanism would increase students' willingness to report the problem. More than one in ten (12.5%) said there's nothing the school can do to reduce sexual harassment and 6.8 percent participants said they don't know (Pandey et.al, 2020).

The rate of rape and sexual assault, according to the NCVS report, was 1.2 times higher for nonstudents (7.6 per 1,000) in 2013 than for students (6.1 per 1,000). For both the students and nonstudents, the offender was known to the victim in about 80% of rape and sexual assault victimizations. Rape and sexual assault victimization of students (80%) were more likely than nonstudent victimization (67%) to go unreported to police. About a quarter of students (26%) and nonstudents (23%) victims who did not report to police about the incident said it was a personal matter; and one in five (20%) stated a fear of reprisal. Fewer than one in five female students (16%) and nonstudents (18%) victims of rape and sexual assault received assistance from a victim services agency. For the period 2007- 2013, the NCVS victimization rate for rape and sexual assault was only 4.7 per 1,000 females in the age group of 18-24 years, who were enrolled in post secondary schools. The NISVS and CSA use broader definitions than that of the NCVS including the inability to provide intent and unwanted sexual contact including forcible kissing, fondling or grabbing; and unwanted sexual experiences (Sinozich & Langton, 2014). These are very loose and broad definitions.

Teachers and non-teaching staff in schools occupy positions of authority in the lives of students. Hence, they often use their legitimate power to compel students to interact with them sexually. Gerrig (2012) shows how normative influence is a force that leads people to adopt behaviors, attitudes and values of others. Thus, student's respect for their teachers and staff members makes them not to report them for sexual harassment. Victims frequently keep that to themselves to preserve the harasser's respect by other students and staff member thus they also satisfy their desire to be liked, accepted and approved of by others.

2.5 Legal Acts in Nepal for Sexual Harassment

In Nepal, several legal measures have been implemented to address sexual harassment. Individuals found guilty of sexual harassment face imprisonment for one year and a fine of ten thousand rupees. Victims of sexual harassment have the right to file a complaint in the district court within one year of the incident.

In the workplace, if a client harasses or asks inappropriate questions with the intention of causing distress, the offender will be fined NRS 5000. Humiliating a woman's dignity or violating her confidentiality is considered a crime, punishable by six months of imprisonment and a fine ranging from NRS 100 to 500.

In cases where a female is harassed in a public place, the harasser will face two years of imprisonment and a fine of NRS ten thousand. However, this penalty is subject to the specifics and evidence of the incident.

Although some of the districts in the cases did have antidiscrimination policies and grievance procedures in place, their mere existence does not guarantee that sexual harassment will not occur or that it will be dealt with appropriately if it does happen. School personnel and students need more knowledge about specific behaviors and circumstances that create hostile environment sexual harassment as well as the harm it has on its victims and on those who perpetuate it and those who witness it. Armed with such knowledge they will be better able to prevent it because they will understand just how detrimental such harassment can be to everyone in any way involved with it (Hassenflug, 1999).

A core concern in feminist perspectives on victimization has been challenging simplistic understandings of victimization and simplistic definitions of victims. Some accounts emphasize the relational nature of the harm involved in sexual violence (Alcoff et al. 2009), the way rape is an always contested category (Reitan 2001), and how the sway of central ontological concepts in the Western philosophical tradition may contribute to a climate that condones sexual violence (Alcoff 2009; Nenadic 2010). In particular, feminist philosophers have problematized and rejected the contractual framework for understanding the wrong of sexual violence and have questioned the way in which consent is often modeled on contractual relations. For many, a

phenomenological account, one that articulates the embodied nature of subjectivity, is better equipped to illuminate experiences of sexual violence and express the harms involved (Cahill 2001, Toit 2009 & Bergoffen 2011).

World Health Organization (WHO) classifies adolescents as people aged between 10 – 24 years and the targeted students fall under this phase in human development whereby they experience emotional and physical changes. Thus, it is against this background that the study seeks to gain more knowledge about sexual harassment and how it affects student's psychologically with the perception those professional educators whom students respect and look up to as custodians of their future, are also regular perpetrators of gendered harassment. Since teachers are perceived as key elements to change, the reversal of this perception has motivated the researcher to help schools and the Ministry at large to alleviate this problem. Thus, schools have a critical role to play in taking the lead in addressing sexual harassment as they can reach the general and the at-risk learner population at an early age by teaching positive morals and values.

2.6 Operationalization of Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment is one of the major problems that occurs in contemporary society. Every girl have faced sexual harassment once in their lifetime. Harassment and molestation have been the widespread problem in Nepal. Females fall prey to harassment and molestation anywhere and anytime irrespective of age. We happen to read the news related to rape or gang rape almost everyday when we turn on a page of newspapers with our first cup of morning tea. It occurs on every field of society i.e. workplace harassment, transportation, different institution, schools. Among them sexual harassment in school affects girls capacity to learning and doing.

Over the past decade or so, schools have been viewed as a primary place for educating young people about sex and reproductive health. However, many schools are in fact sites of high levels of sexual violence. Educational institution is a place where the raw students enter to get knowledge and be able to hold the future responsibility of self, name, society and nation but the environment of the institution may be polluted by unwanted people and create problem for girls for getting higher education by using verbal abuse, teasing, harassment and biasness among students.

While reading different literatures sexual harassment which clearly indicates that there are various means of sexual harassment and anybody can harass may be friends, parents, stranger or teachers. But mostly the victim is the women and girls. The developmental task of teenagers includes trust outside the family members and spending lot of time with friends. This may be also the reason for violence in girls. We can read in newspaper, listen in radio too about violence against teenager girls within school/college or outside it. Educational institution is a place where the raw students enter to get knowledge and be able to hold the future responsibility of self, name, society and nation but the environment of the institution may be polluted by unwanted people and create problem for girls for getting higher education by using verbal abuse, teasing, harassment and biasness among students.

When girls face sexual harassment they couldn't resist or they couldn't tell others because of threatening behaviors of harasser, fear of failure and prestige of family and so on. They even didn't do file case against them because of this harasser becomes more violent day by day.

From these studies we came to know that women were sexually harassed on school but maximum victims do not speak up. For what reason? It is not much studied. So, we need to study whether the situation of the girls students is that worst shown by the previous literature from different parts of the world. What factors and who is responsible for those actions? Is it only the fault of male or society, societal values, transportation system, law etc also play some role for the harassment against women on public transportation? We need to be clear about these issues too.

2.7 Theoretical Review

Feminism is a range of socio-political movements and ideologies that aim to define and establish the political, economic, personal, and social equality of the sexes. Feminism holds the position that modern societies are patriarchal they prioritize the male point of view and that women are treated unjustly in these societies. Efforts to change this include fighting against gender stereotypes and improving educational, professional, and interpersonal opportunities and outcomes for women.

Feminist advocacy is, and has been, mainly focused on women's rights, some argue for the inclusion of men's liberation within its aims, because they believe that men are also harmed by traditional gender roles. Feminist theory, which emerged from feminist movements, aims to understand the nature of gender inequality by examining women's social roles and lived experiences. Feminist theorists have developed theories in a variety of disciplines in order to respond to issues concerning gender.

Radical Feminist Theory finds that patriarchy is the key cause of gender inequality and sexual violence (Whisnant, 2017). Broadly defined, patriarchy is a social system that values traditional masculine social norms (e.g., strong, powerful, stoic, sexually aggressive, protective) and where men disproportionately occupy positions of power. The radical feminist perspective frames sexual violence as not merely random acts of aggression but a means of social domination over women (Rennison, 2014). This social domination occurs because the continual threat of sexual violence perpetuates continual fear in women (Rennison, 2014). This theory helped to expand conceptualizations of sexual violence beyond stranger rape to include other types of rape (e.g., acquaintance rape) given that "...every man is a potential rapist and all women are potential victims" (Donat & D'Emilio, 1992). Radical Feminist Theory has perhaps had the largest influence in framing sexual assault as an act of violence instead of an act of sex (e.g., Brownmiller, 1975).

The nature of gendered sexual harassment has been attributed to patriarchy which encourages male domination over the emancipation of women from making free will decisions. Paludi and Brickman (1998) describe sexual harassment as a form of sexism that is used particularly to denote discrimination against girls. Sexism refers to the unjustified selectively negative behavior against women or men as members of a social category. These sexist attitudes may lead to sexist behavior or sex discrimination against girls. Leach and Machakanja (2000) mentioned in Leach and Mitchell (2006: 28) support as they say that, "Males seeking to strengthen their status among their peers may interpret this (sexual harassment) as the need to show dominance over females, to demonstrate sexual prowess and to compete over girls." Thus, sexist behaviors that constitute sexual harassment are often noticed within the context of unequal social relations because they encourage gratuitous acts of sexual harassment.

The sociocultural theory suggests that gender issues play a role in defining sexual harassment as it reinforces the traditional gender roles of heterosexual masculinity“ (Leach and Mitchell, 2006). The term sexual harassment, according to Giddens and Sutton (2013) originated in feminist movements of the 1970s. Feminists have attributed sexual harassment to the onset of patriarchy or unequal power dynamics between males and females. Men have customarily delighted in more noteworthy opportunity than women in the utilization of space, including movement into the personal space of women who may not be intimates or even close acquaintances. The researcher is in support of this line of argument as at the point when men show spontaneous remarks of conduct of a sexual sort, it is sidelined as kidding or being a tease but the reverse phenomenon, nonetheless, when a woman displays such unwelcome advances, it is frequently construed as flirtation or worse immoral.

The sociocultural model suggests that sexual harassment is a product of culturally legitimated power and status differences between men and women (Farley 1978, MacKinnon 1979). Sociocultural explanations fit with the "feminist" or "dominance" model that emphasizes sexual harassment's origins in patriarchal society (e.g. MacKinnon 1979, Cockburn 1991, Stanko 1985, Rospenda et al 1998, Padavic & Orcutt 1997). Sexual harassment is perceived to be an out- growth of the gender socialization process and is a mechanism by which men assert power and dominance over women both at work and in society (Tangri et al 1982). Proponents of this approach emphasize gender as a key predictor of who is at risk of harassment, in light of empirical evidence that women experience more harassment than men (Tangri et al 1982).

Another theory I am using for this study is **Agency-structure**. Agency is the capacity of individuals to act independently and to make their own free choices. Whereas, structure is the recurrent patterned arrangements which influence or limit the choices and opportunities. Anthony Giddens talks about the structuration theory where he argues that individuals' autonomy is influenced by structure and structures are also maintained and adopted through the exercise of agency. Our society is patriarchal in nature. So, to study the sexual harassment against girls at school, i have to see the patriarchal structure of Nepalese society which determines both men's and women's action and reaction related to this topic. Considering patriarchy, education, age as a

structure that shapes the harassment pattern, action and reaction, researcher analyze the data.

2.8 Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework illustrated below guided this study. It was informed by the theoretical framework. The independent variable was sexual harassment and the dependent variable was self-esteem. Sexual harassment is a multifaceted phenomenon which manifests itself in varied forms. These forms are: verbal sexual harassment, physical sexual harassment and visual sexual harassment. These forms of harassment depending on their prevalence may affect the esteem of the students leaving them feeling traumatized and powerless as explained by Finkelhor and Brown (1985) in the theoretical framework. Sexually harassed students are equally unable to scale the ladder to the level of self-actualization because sexual harassment denies them critical self-esteem needs as postulated by Maslow in his Hierarchy of needs Theory. The result is that students develop feelings of guilt, shame, fear, depression, worry, anxiety, loneliness, timidity, shyness, feelings of hopelessness and helplessness. Trauma may cause students to fail to take care of personal hygiene and isolate themselves from their peers. These will impact negatively on academic achievement further denting students' self-esteem and their ability

2.9 Summary of Literatures

Authors	Variable Used	Methodology	Findings
Anderson et al. (2020)	Prevalence of physical harassment	Survey and interviews	High prevalence of physical harassment among adolescents, with a significant reliance on peer support systems
Plessis et al. (2020)	Social factors affecting harassment	Qualitative analysis	Social factors like peer pressure and community attitudes significantly influence the experiences and reporting of harassment

Chan & Sheridan (2020)	Coping strategies of victims	Mixed methods	Victims' reactions are influenced by their coping strategies and the availability of support systems, highlighting the need for better resources
Archer et al. (2020)	Reporting mechanisms	Quantitative survey	Low rate of formal reporting due to fear of disbelief and lack of confidence in the reporting systems
McLaughlin et al. (2012)	Cultural norms	Sociocultural analysis	Traditional gender roles and cultural expectations play a significant role in the prevalence and acceptance of harassment
Phipps (2020)	Patriarchal structures	Radical feminist theory	Harassment is a tool for maintaining male dominance, requiring radical changes to dismantle patriarchal norms
Mercer & Howe (2012)	Education's role	Sociocultural theory	Emphasizes the importance of education in changing cultural attitudes and social norms to reduce harassment
Razali & Oktaviana (2023)	Gender oppression	Feminist analysis	Sexual harassment is part of a broader pattern of gender oppression that requires addressing power imbalances
Hennink et al. (2020)	Qualitative data interpretation	Qualitative research	Emphasizes the importance of understanding personal experiences and social contexts in analyzing harassment
Rashid et al. (2021)	Research design	Research methodology	Highlights the importance of systematic research designs in studying harassment, including

			descriptive, exploratory, and diagnostic approaches
Tangri et al. (1982)	Gender socialization	Sociological analysis	Gender socialization processes contribute to harassment, with men using it to assert dominance over women
McPhail (2016)	Societal transformations	Radical feminist theory	Advocates for fundamental societal transformations to eliminate harassment, highlighting the need for structural changes
Bandura (1978)	Social learning	Sociocultural theory	Suggests that harassment behaviors are learned through socialization, emphasizing the role of cultural and societal influences
Finkelhor & Brown (1985)	Trauma and self-esteem	Psychological analysis	Harassment leads to trauma and significantly impacts victims' self-esteem and academic achievement
Anthony Giddens	Structuration theory	Sociological framework	Analyzes the interplay between individual agency and societal structures in perpetuating harassment behaviors
Plessis et al. (2020)	Social factors affecting harassment	Qualitative analysis	Social factors like peer pressure and community attitudes significantly influence the experiences and reporting of harassment

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Nature of Research and Research Design

Every study needs a research design to plan and guide the research logically and systematically (Rashid et al., 2021). Different types of research designs are used based on the study's nature. This research aims to understand girls' experiences with sexual harassment, the types of harassment they face, and their responses. This includes their personal experiences with harassment.

Three research designs were used. The first is the descriptive research design. This design helps identify at what age and education level girls face sexual harassment. It helps answer questions like what, when, where, and how, but not why. With this design, details such as age, education level, and when and how harassment occurred were collected. This provided a clear view of their understanding and experiences.

The second is exploratory research. This design aims to understand sexual harassment in depth. An exploratory survey supported by interviews or qualitative studies with in-depth interviews was conducted. During these interviews, causes and effects of sexual harassment, the problems faced, and current challenges were explored. This design also helped to understand when harassment occurred, how the girls reacted, and what steps they took.

The last type of research design used is diagnostic research design. This design investigates the underlying causes of sexual harassment in schools and describes these phenomena. It is essential to find out the difficulties and challenges the victims face. Diagnostic research helped complete the study and data collection.

3.2 Nature and Sources of Data

The data for this study is qualitative in nature, collected from both primary and secondary sources, with primary data given priority. To answer the research questions, primary data was collected from the field using various data collection techniques such as surveys, in-depth interviews, and formal talks. Qualitative research focuses on how

people interpret and make sense of their experiences and the world around them (Hennink et al., 2020). The qualitative data was collected by interviewing respondents and analyzing their views on sexual harassment. Quantitative data on their age and education level was also collected. Secondary data was obtained from published and unpublished sources such as books, journals, articles, reports, theses, newspapers, and other related materials.

The study focuses on sexual harassment among female students, analyzing their experiences and responses to harassment. The unit of analysis is the individual. Each girl's experience with sexual harassment was collected separately through interviews.

3.3 Selection of Field

The research focuses on female students studying at the secondary level. Shree Rastriye Secondary School was chosen as the study area, located in Province 1, Itahari-1, Sunsari. This school was selected because the topic of sexual harassment among secondary school girls is not widely studied in Nepal, even though it is a significant problem. The choice of Itahari-1, Sunsari, was also made for ease of data collection from students. This school provided the necessary respondents and empirical data for the study.

3.4 Population and Sampling Procedure

The sampling population is Shree Rastriye Secondary School, Itahari-1, Sunsari. Respondents were chosen using a simple random method, and interviews were conducted with female students studying at the secondary level. Simple random sampling ensures that every student has an equal chance of being selected, minimizing researcher bias. A total of 50 respondents were selected from a population of about 200 students. Respondents included 10 female students each from classes 9 and 10, and 15 female students each from classes 11 and 12.

Simple random sampling was used for data collection. Respondents were randomly selected from the population, ensuring no confinement to a specific group or caste. This method minimizes bias and is considered the best approach.

Various methods were used to collect data, including interviews and surveys. In-depth interviews were conducted to gather detailed information about sexual harassment faced by girls. This qualitative data collection method provides a large amount of information about respondents' behaviors, attitudes, and perceptions. Open-ended questions were asked, and unstructured questionnaires were used, with each interview taking about half an hour.

Surveys were used to gather knowledge in social research. Sexual harassment, being a social issue, made surveys useful for this study. Surveys assess thoughts, opinions, and feelings, allowing the collection of a large amount of data in a short period. Open-ended questions were asked to gather information about the research problem.

Secondary data was obtained from published and unpublished sources such as books, journals, articles, reports, theses, newspapers, and other related materials. This provided additional context and supported the primary data collected.

3.6 Process of Data Analysis

Data was collected through in-depth interviews and surveys. The collected data was checked daily and kept in order for editing. Literature review continued throughout the study period. All techniques were systematically processed and analyzed in different steps. First, the data collected from interviews and surveys were organized systematically. Second, these data were reviewed and edited with verification. Quantitative data was also incorporated, and both types of data were analyzed by examining their relationships.

3.7 Limitations of the Study

Research is a scientific and systematic investigation of new facts. However, it is not perfect. This research has limitations due to constraints of knowledge, time, money, and resources. The study is limited to a certain geographical locality and specific issues. The research was conducted only for partial fulfillment of a master's degree in sociology, so it will not have wider application. The findings are based on information collected from Itahari, so they cannot be generalized to a wider area or different

localities. The findings are also based on information collected during a specific time period, making them inapplicable to all situations.

The main limitations of this study include the area of research, the subject matter, and the type of respondents. The study focused on one secondary school in Sunsari district, Itahari, due to limited resources. The research topic was limited to exploring sexual harassment faced by secondary school girls and their responses to it. The respondents were limited to female students at the secondary level, which may not represent all girls' experiences.

3.5 Ethical Consideration

Ethical considerations are important in research. Sutrop et al., (2020) defines ethics as the correct rules of conduct necessary when carrying out research. These guidelines ensure that the public can trust the researchers and feel safe. In this study, ethical considerations were maintained by obtaining verbal and written permission from the concerned authority. Respondents were informed about the objectives and purpose of the study. Privacy and confidentiality of the respondents were maintained.

CHAPTER IV

FORMS AND RESPONSE ON SEXUAL HARASSMENT AMONG SECONDARY LEVEL GIRL STUDENTS

4.1 Introduction

This section looks at the background of the students who participated in the survey. Understanding their age, class, and other details helps us see how they view and experience sexual harassment.

4.2 Age of the Respondent

Understanding the age distribution of the respondents is important for this study. Younger students, especially those aged 12-14, are more vulnerable to sexual harassment. This age group, making up 40% of the respondents, might lack the experience to handle or report harassment effectively. Research by Gådin & Hammarström (2003) supports this, indicating younger adolescents face more significant challenges in social interactions. Knowing their age helps in designing appropriate interventions and educational programs to help them deal with harassment.

Table 4.1

Age of the Respondents

Age Group	Number of Respondents	Percentage
12-14	20	40%
15-16	15	30%
17-18	15	30%

Source: Field Survey, 2023

The age distribution of the respondents shows that a significant portion, 40%, belong to the 12-14 age group, while the remaining 60% are evenly split between the 15-16 and 17-18 age groups. This demographic detail is crucial as it aligns with existing literature, which suggests that younger adolescents might be more susceptible to sexual harassment due to their vulnerability and lack of experience (Gådin & Hammarström,

2003). Younger students often face more significant challenges in navigating social interactions and may be less equipped to handle or report harassment effectively.

The higher participation of younger students might also indicate that they are more engaged in discussions about their experiences or that they encounter harassment more frequently. Studies have shown that early adolescents are at a critical stage of developing their identities and social boundaries, making them more vulnerable to such negative experiences (Branje et al., 2021). This finding highlights the need for targeted interventions and educational programs focused on younger students to help them understand and deal with sexual harassment.

4.3 Academic Grade of Respondents

The academic grades of the respondents show that sexual harassment is an issue across all levels, from grade 9 to grade 12. Each grade is almost equally represented in the study, highlighting that both younger and older students face harassment. According to Karami et al. (2019), students in higher grades might understand harassment better and report it more often. However, the presence of harassment across all grades suggests that age and academic progression do not always reduce the risk. Schools need continuous education and strong reporting mechanisms for all students.

Table 4.2

Class of the Respondents

Class	Number of Respondents	Percentage
9	10	20%
10	10	20%
11	15	30%
12	15	30%

Source: Field Survey, 2023

The respondents' academic grades were fairly balanced, with each grade (9-12) represented almost equally. This distribution is significant because it suggests that sexual harassment is a pervasive issue across all academic levels. Higher-grade students (grades 11 and 12), who might be more mature and aware of their rights, still face

harassment, indicating that age and academic progression do not necessarily equate to reduced risk or better coping mechanisms.

According to Karami et al., (2019) students in higher grades might have a better understanding of what constitutes harassment and thus may be more likely to report it. However, the persistent occurrence across all grades underscores the need for continuous education and robust reporting mechanisms at all academic levels. Schools should implement comprehensive anti-harassment policies that cater to students' needs across different age groups and academic stages

4.4 Migration Status of Respondents

The survey also looked at whether the students had migrated from another place or had always lived in the same area.

The migration status of respondents is another crucial factor in the study. The survey found that 20% of students had migrated from another place, while 80% had always lived in the same area. This distinction helps in understanding different social dynamics and support systems that students might have. Migrated students might face additional challenges, such as adjusting to a new environment, which could impact their experience and response to harassment. Knowing their migration status can help in tailoring support and intervention programs to their specific needs.

Table 4.3

Migration Status of the Respondents

Migration Status	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Yes (migrated from another place)	10	20%
No (originally staying at that place)	40	80%

Source: Field Survey, 2023

The majority of respondents, 80%, were originally from the area, while 20% had migrated. Migration status can significantly influence a student's experience of sexual harassment. Migrants might face additional challenges such as cultural adjustment, language barriers, and social isolation, making them more vulnerable to harassment

(World Health Organization, 2021) Migrant students may also lack the social support systems that native students have, making it harder for them to seek help or report incidents.

This finding aligns with research by Spiritus-Beerden et al., (2021) which suggests that migrants often experience higher levels of stress and discrimination. Schools need to provide additional support to migrant students, including counseling services and peer support programs, to help them integrate and feel safe.

4.5 Caste and Religion of Respondents

The respondents came from various caste and religious backgrounds. This diversity helps to understand different social experiences and how they might affect views on sexual harassment.

Table 4.4

Caste of the Respondents

Caste	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Brahmin/Chhetri	15	30%
Rai/Limbu	10	20%
Dalit	5	10%
Madhesi	10	20%
Others	10	20%

Source: Field Survey, 2023

4.6 Religion of the Respondents

Caste and religion can play a significant role in shaping individuals' experiences and perceptions of sexual harassment. For instance, students from lower castes or minority religions might face intersectional discrimination, exacerbating their vulnerability to harassment (Annalakshmi & Venkatesan, 2018).

Table 4.5*Religion of the Respondents*

Religion	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Hinduism	35	70%
Buddhism	5	10%
Christian	3	6%
Kirat	5	10%
Muslim	2	4%

Source: Field Survey, 2023

The respondents came from diverse caste and religious backgrounds, reflecting the multi-ethnic composition of the school population. The data shows that Brahmin/Chhetri (30%) and Hindu (70%) students formed the majority. However, the experiences of students from minority castes and religions cannot be overlooked. According to Rathod, (2017)), lower-caste students and religious minorities often face additional layers of discrimination that can compound their experiences of harassment. Schools must adopt an inclusive approach that acknowledges and addresses these intersecting identities to ensure a safe environment for all students.

4.7 Knowledge on Sexual Harassment

Almost all respondents (96%) were aware of sexual harassment, indicating the success of awareness campaigns. This high level of awareness is crucial for recognizing and reporting harassment. According to Clancy et al., (2020), awareness is the first step in addressing sexual harassment, as it empowers students to identify and report inappropriate behavior.

Table 4.6*Awareness of Sexual Harassment among Respondents*

Heard about Sexual Harassment	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Yes	48	96%
No	2	4%

Source: Field Survey, 2023

However, the 4% who were unaware of sexual harassment highlight a gap that needs to be addressed. Schools should ensure that all students, regardless of their background, receive comprehensive education on sexual harassment. This education should include clear definitions, examples, and information on how to seek help. Integrating such education into the curriculum can help create a culture of awareness and prevention.

4.8 Knowledge on Types of Sexual Harassment

Most students knew about different types of sexual harassment.

Table 4.7

Awareness of Types of Sexual Harassment

Type of Harassment	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Verbal (comments, questions)	45	90%
Visual (gestures, images)	42	84%
Physical (touching, hugging)	47	94%

Source: Field Survey, 2023

The respondents demonstrated a good understanding of different types of sexual harassment, with 90% aware of verbal harassment, 84% of visual harassment, and 94% of physical harassment. This knowledge is essential for recognizing the various forms harassment can take. According to Klein & Martin, (2021) understanding the different manifestations of harassment helps in identifying and reporting incidents accurately.

However, the slight variation in awareness levels indicates that more emphasis might be needed on less overt forms of harassment, such as visual harassment. Visual harassment, which includes gestures and inappropriate images, can be subtle and easily overlooked. Schools should provide clear examples and scenarios to help students recognize all forms of harassment.

4.8 Most Occurred Type of Sexual Harassment

The survey found that physical harassment was the most common type.

Table 4.8

Most Occurred Type of Sexual Harassment

Type of Harassment	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Verbal	20	40%
Visual	15	30%
Physical	30	60%

Source: Field Survey, 2023

The data indicates that physical harassment was the most common type experienced by the respondents (60%), followed by verbal (40%) and visual harassment (30%). This finding is consistent with literature suggesting that physical harassment is often more prevalent and more readily identified by victims Goh et al., (2022). Physical harassment includes unwanted touching, hugging, or physical intimidation, which can have severe psychological impacts on victims.

The high prevalence of physical harassment underscores the need for stringent measures to prevent and address such behavior. Schools should implement clear policies and procedures for reporting and addressing physical harassment, including disciplinary actions for perpetrators and support services for victims.

4.9 Medium of Knowing about Sexual Harassment

The main sources of information about sexual harassment were friends, media, and school programs.

Table 4.9*Medium of Knowing about Sexual Harassment*

Medium	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Friends	35	70%
Media	30	60%
School Programs	25	50%
Family	10	20%

Source: Field Survey, 2023

Friends were the primary source of information about sexual harassment for 70% of respondents, followed by media (60%) and school programs (50%). Family was the least common source (20%). This reliance on peers and media suggests that students might not feel comfortable discussing such issues with their families, or that families might not be adequately informed about these topics.

According to Brown et al., (2020), peer groups and media play a significant role in shaping adolescents' understanding of social issues, including sexual harassment. Schools should leverage these channels to disseminate accurate information and create awareness. Additionally, engaging families in discussions about sexual harassment can help create a supportive environment for students both at school and at home.

4.10 Perception on Harassment

A majority of respondents (80%) viewed sexual harassment as a serious issue, while 20% considered it a minor problem. This perception is crucial for fostering a proactive stance against harassment. Students who see harassment as a serious issue are more likely to report incidents and support peers who do so (Wood et al., 2021)

The minority who perceive harassment as a minor issue may reflect a lack of understanding of its impact or normalization of such behavior. Schools need to emphasize the seriousness of sexual harassment and its consequences. Educational programs should include discussions on the psychological and emotional impacts of harassment to foster a deeper understanding among students.

Table 4.10

Perception on Harassment

Perception	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Serious issue	40	80%
Minor problem	10	20%

Source: Field Survey, 2023

4.11 Reasons for Sexual Harassment

Respondents identified several reasons for sexual harassment.

Table 4.11

Reasons for Sexual Harassment

Reason	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Male-dominated society	38	76%
Cultural norms	30	60%
Behavior of girls	20	40%
Others	5	10%

Source: Field Survey, 2023

Respondents identified male dominance (76%), cultural norms (60%), and the behavior of girls (40%) as major reasons for sexual harassment. These findings align with feminist theories that attribute harassment to power imbalances and patriarchal structures (Brubaker, 2021). Male dominance and cultural norms that perpetuate gender inequalities contribute significantly to the prevalence of sexual harassment.

The notion that the behavior of girls contributes to harassment reflects victim-blaming attitudes that need to be challenged. Educational programs should address these misconceptions and emphasize that harassment is never the victim's fault. Promoting gender equality and respectful behavior should be central to these programs.

4.12 Response to Sexual Harassment

The most common response to harassment was seeking support from family and friends.

Table 4.12

Response to Sexual Harassment

Response	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Reporting harassment	20	22%
Seeking support	48	51.6%
Taking Legal Action	20	22%
Others	5	5.4%

Source: Field Survey, 2023

The most common response to harassment was seeking support from family and friends (51.6%), followed by reporting the harassment or taking legal action (22%). This reliance on personal support networks highlights the importance of having a trusted circle for emotional support. However, the relatively low rate of formal reporting indicates potential barriers such as fear of not being believed or lack of confidence in the reporting system (Archer et al., 2020).

Schools should work to build trust in formal reporting mechanisms by ensuring confidentiality, providing supportive responses, and taking appropriate actions against perpetrators. Encouraging students to report incidents without fear of retaliation is essential for creating a safe school environment.

4.13 Seeking Remedy for Sexual Harassment

Victims of sexual harassment seek remedies in various ways. Some choose to keep quiet, either out of fear or societal pressure. Others share their experiences with family and friends, seeking emotional support. A few victims take the bold step of scolding their harassers or filing formal complaints. These varied responses highlight the need for supportive environments that encourage reporting and provide adequate remedies.

4.14 Reaction after Sexual Harassment

Reactions to harassment vary significantly among victims. Some girls opt to remain silent, while others share their experiences with trusted individuals or confront their harassers directly. These reactions are influenced by personal, social, and cultural factors, emphasizing the need for a comprehensive support system for victims.

Table 4.13

Reaction after Sexual Harassment

Reaction	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Kept quiet	25	50%
Shared with family/friends	15	30%
Scolded harasser	5	10%
Filed complaint	5	10%

Source: Field Survey, 2023

According to Chan & Sheridan, (2020) the way victims react to harassment is influenced by their coping strategies and the support systems available to them. Schools should provide resources and training to help students develop effective coping strategies and build supportive networks. Empowering students to speak out and seek help is crucial for addressing and preventing sexual harassment.

The findings of this study align with existing literature on sexual harassment among adolescents. Studies by Anderson et al., (2020) and Plessis et al., (2020) also highlight the prevalence of physical harassment and the reliance on peer support. However, this study adds to the literature by providing a detailed analysis of the demographic and social factors influencing harassment experiences and responses.

Radical Feminist Theory asserts that sexual harassment is deeply embedded in patriarchal society and serves as a tool for male oppression of women (Razali & Oktaviana, 2023). This theory aligns with the study's findings that harassment is not just an individual act but part of a broader pattern of male dominance. Radical Feminist Theory argues that the systemic nature of harassment requires radical changes to

societal structures, including the dismantling of patriarchal institutions and norms (Phipps, 2020). The study's data, which show pervasive harassment and its impact on victims, support the radical feminist view that profound societal changes are necessary to address the root causes of harassment. This theory advocates for addressing power imbalances and entrenched gender norms to create a society where men and women are truly equal, thus eliminating conditions that allow harassment to thrive.

Sociocultural Theory, meanwhile, focuses on the influence of societal and cultural factors on behavior (Bandura, 1978). It suggests that sexual harassment is a product of socialization processes and cultural norms that condone or encourage such behavior. The study's findings highlight how community attitudes and cultural expectations play a significant role in the prevalence of harassment. In societies where traditional gender roles are strongly enforced, harassment may be more common and accepted (McLaughlin et al., 2012). Sociocultural Theory emphasizes the importance of changing cultural attitudes and social norms through education and community engagement to reduce harassment. It proposes that altering the societal context in which harassment occurs can lead to significant reductions in its prevalence. This theory highlights the role of education in reshaping societal norms and the need for community-wide initiatives to change the perceptions and behaviors that support harassment.

Comparing these theories, Radical Feminist Theory and Sociocultural Theory both recognize the significant role of societal structures and norms in perpetuating sexual harassment. However, Radical Feminist Theory calls for more drastic changes, including the dismantling of patriarchal structures, whereas Sociocultural Theory focuses on changing cultural attitudes and norms through education and community engagement. While Radical Feminist Theory emphasizes the need for fundamental societal transformations to eliminate the root causes of harassment, Sociocultural Theory suggests that changing the socialization processes and cultural norms can gradually reduce the incidence of harassment. Both theories highlight the importance of addressing the underlying societal factors that contribute to harassment, but they differ in their approaches and the extent of the changes they advocate.

the study's findings can be understood through the lenses of Radical Feminist Theory and Sociocultural Theory, each highlighting different aspects of sexual harassment.

Radical Feminist Theory emphasizes the need for radical societal changes to dismantle patriarchal structures and address the root causes of harassment (McPhail, 2016). In contrast, Sociocultural Theory underscores the importance of changing cultural and social influences through education and community engagement (Mercer & Howe, 2012). Together, these theories provide a comprehensive understanding of the complex factors contributing to sexual harassment and underscore the need for multifaceted approaches to address and prevent it. By considering insights from both theories, stakeholders can develop more effective strategies to create a safer and more equitable environment for secondary school girls in Itahari-1, Sunsari. This study highlights the universal nature of sexual harassment among secondary-level girl students. The high levels of awareness contrast with the continued prevalence of harassment, indicating gaps in prevention and support mechanisms. Schools need to adopt a multi-faceted approach that includes comprehensive education, robust reporting systems, and support services to create a safe environment for all students. Addressing the underlying societal and cultural factors is essential for long-term change and ensuring that students can learn and thrive without fear of harassment.

The research conducted in Itahari-1 Sunsari reveals that nearly all girls in secondary schools have experienced some form of sexual harassment. This harassment manifests in various forms, including verbal harassment, such as sexual comments, physical harassment, such as inappropriate touching, and visual harassment, involving offensive gestures or images. The prevalence of these incidents underscores the pervasive nature of sexual harassment in educational settings.

The impact of this harassment on the victims is profound and multifaceted. Physically, the girls suffer from health issues directly related to the harassment. Mentally, they experience significant stress and anxiety, which can lead to long-term psychological problems. The harassment disrupts their normal growth and development, resulting in a loss of self-esteem and a diminished sense of safety. This emotional toll can affect their academic performance and overall well-being, hindering their ability to thrive in a supportive educational environment.

The research also identifies common sites where harassment occurs. The home is a primary location, with relatives often being the perpetrators. Schools are another common site, where harassment can come from teachers, peers, or administrative

personnel. These findings highlight the need for comprehensive measures to address and prevent harassment in both domestic and educational settings.

The study emphasizes the urgent need for intervention and preventive strategies to combat sexual harassment in schools and homes. Raising awareness, implementing strict policies, and providing support systems for victims are crucial steps in creating a safe and nurturing environment for young girls. By addressing the issue at its roots and fostering a culture of respect and safety, we can work towards eliminating the pervasive problem of sexual harassment and ensuring the well-being and development of all students.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

In this chapter, we will summarize the key findings of our study on sexual harassment among secondary-level girl students in Itahari-1, Sunsari, and provide conclusions based on these findings. This chapter aims to highlight the main points discussed in previous chapters, emphasize the implications of the study, and suggest recommendations for future actions and research.

5.1 Summary

Sexual harassment is a serious issue impacting secondary-level girl students in Itahari-1, Sunsari. This study found that nearly all participants had experienced some form of sexual harassment. These incidents took various forms, including verbal, physical, and visual harassment. Verbal harassment, such as sexual comments and jokes, was the most common. Physical harassment, involving inappropriate touching, was also significant, along with visual harassment, which included offensive gestures or images.

The research problem addressed in the thesis is the prevalence and response to sexual harassment among secondary school girls in Sunsari, Nepal. The primary objective is to understand the different forms of sexual harassment these girls face, and how they respond to and cope with these experiences. The study specifically focuses on Shree Rastriye Secondary School in Itahari, using a qualitative research design that includes descriptive, exploratory, and diagnostic approaches. Data was collected through in-depth interviews and surveys with 50 female students, selected using simple random sampling to minimize bias. The methodology emphasizes understanding the personal experiences of harassment, the types of harassment encountered, and the coping mechanisms employed by the victims .

The study revealed that harassment often occurred in familiar environments like home and school. Perpetrators included relatives, teachers, peers, or administrative personnel. This highlights the pervasive nature of the issue and the need for comprehensive measures to address and prevent harassment in both domestic and educational settings.

Responses to harassment varied among victims. The most common response was seeking support from family and friends. Some victims chose to keep quiet due to fear or societal pressure. A few victims scolded their harassers or filed formal complaints. These responses indicate the importance of having a trusted support system and the need for effective reporting mechanisms in schools.

The impact of harassment on victims was profound and multifaceted. Physically, the victims experienced health issues related to the harassment. Mentally, they faced significant stress and anxiety, leading to long-term psychological problems. The harassment disrupted their normal growth and development, resulting in a loss of self-esteem and a diminished sense of safety. This emotional toll affected their academic performance and overall well-being, hindering their ability to thrive in a supportive educational environment.

The study identified common sites of harassment, with home and school being the most frequent. In homes, relatives were often the perpetrators. In schools, harassment came from teachers, peers, or administrative personnel. These findings highlight the need for comprehensive measures to address and prevent harassment in both domestic and educational settings.

The way victims reacted to harassment was influenced by their coping strategies and the support systems available to them. Many victims kept quiet due to fear or societal pressure. Some shared their experiences with trusted individuals or confronted their harassers directly. These varied reactions emphasize the need for supportive environments that encourage reporting and provide adequate remedies.

The theoretical framework used in the study included feminist theory and intersectionality theory. These theories helped understand the power dynamics and intersecting identities contributing to harassment. Addressing systemic inequalities and promoting gender equality are crucial for preventing harassment.

The study found high levels of awareness among students, contrasting with the continued prevalence of harassment. This indicates gaps in prevention and support mechanisms. Schools need to adopt a multifaceted approach that includes

comprehensive education, robust reporting systems, and support services to create a safe environment for all students.

5.2 Conclusion

The study on sexual harassment among secondary-level girl students in Itahari-1, Sunsari, has provided valuable insights into the prevalence, forms, and impact of harassment. The findings underscore the pervasive nature of sexual harassment in educational settings and the profound impact it has on victims.

Sexual harassment is a widespread issue affecting nearly all secondary-level girl students. The harassment occurs in various forms, including verbal, physical, and visual, and is perpetrated by individuals within familiar environments such as home and school. Victims' responses to harassment vary, with many seeking support from family and friends or keeping quiet due to fear or societal pressure. A few victims take the bold step of scolding their harassers or filing formal complaints.

The impact of harassment on victims is profound, affecting their physical and mental health, academic performance, and overall well-being. The emotional toll disrupts their normal growth and development, leading to long-term psychological problems. The study highlights the importance of having trusted support systems and effective reporting mechanisms in schools. Schools should work to build trust in formal reporting mechanisms by ensuring confidentiality, providing supportive responses, and taking appropriate actions against perpetrators.

Addressing and preventing sexual harassment requires a multifaceted approach. This includes comprehensive education on gender equality and respectful behavior, robust reporting systems, and support services to create a safe environment for all students. Theoretical frameworks such as feminist theory and intersectionality theory are essential for understanding the power dynamics and intersecting identities contributing to harassment. Addressing systemic inequalities and promoting gender equality are crucial for preventing harassment.

The high levels of awareness among students contrast with the continued prevalence of harassment, indicating gaps in prevention and support mechanisms. Schools need to adopt a multifaceted approach that includes comprehensive education, robust reporting systems, and support services to create a safe environment for all students.

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APPENDIX

QUESTIONNAIRE

Forms and Response on Sexual Harassment among the Girls of Secondary School of Sunsari, Nepal

This research will be conducted exclusively for academic and learning purposes. The research shall try to collect information regarding sexual harassment among the girls of secondary school and their response against SH. This research aims to find out factors that is responsible for sexual harassment in school level.

This questionnaire will be treated as strictly confidential. Identifying information will only be used by persons engaged in, and for the purposes of the research. Therefore, maximum participation is encouraged in order to make the research reliable and representative.

For the data collection I am going to take Survey& in-depth interview among 50 female students. I will take interview separately. Open and close ended questions will asked to respondents. While asking the question I will raise unstructured questionnaire which may take half hours or more to conduct one interview.

Name:

Age:

- 12-14
- 15-16
- 17-18

Class:

- 9
- 10
- 11
- 12

Faculty:

-

Religion:

- Hinduism
- Buddhism
- Christian
- Kirat
- Muslim

Caste

- Brahmin/Chhetri
- Rai/Limbu
- Dalit
- Madhesi
- Other

Migration:

- Yes, Migrated from Other place
- No, originally staying

Part I Questionnaire related to knowledge and attitude about sexual harassment.

1. Have you ever heard about sexual harassment?

- a) Yes
- b) No

If yes, What did you hear? From where?

- What is sexual harassment in your view?
- How do you perceive or response sexual harassment?

2. What are the types of harassment you know/ experience?

- a) Verbal (Sexual comments, asking about sexual fantasies, history, asking personal questions etc.)
- b) Visual (Obscene gesture, looks, posters and looks, photographs and other graphic image etc.)
- c) Physical (Touching, hugging, kissing, patting etc.)

If yes, where? How? Did you experience?

3. In your view, what type of sexual harassment occurs mostly among the girls?
- a) Verbal (Sexual comments, asking about sexual fantasies, history, asking personal questions etc.)
 - b) Visual (Obscene gesture, looks, posters and looks, photographs and other graphic image etc.)
 - c) Physical (Touching, hugging, kissing, patting etc.)

4. Have you ever faced sexual harassment?

- a) Yes
- b) No

If yes,

- Which type of harassment you faced?
- How do you respond it?
- Why does it happen?
- What happens if it happen?
- How to respond against the sexual harassment?

5. Do you think girls are responsible in provoking male for sexual harassment?

- a) Yes
- b) No

If yes, what are the situation that provokes male for sexual harassment?

.....

6. What are the reasons of sexual harassment in girls?

- a) Male dominated society
- b) Illiteracy in female
- c) Culture and tradition
- d) Nature and behavior of girl
- e) Others

Part II Questionnaire related to sexual harassment faced by girls.

1. What kind of sexual harassment have you faced?

- a) Touching
- b) Hugging
- c) Sexual comments
- d) Obscene gesture
- e) Asking sexual questions
- f) Photographs or graphic images
- g) Others

2. Where and when did you faced sexual harassment?

- a) At classroom
- b) At school bus
- c) At canteen
- d) At hostel
- e) Other places

3. Have you ever been teased by your male friend?

- a) Yes
- b) No

If yes, how did you respond against sexual harassment?

- Kept quiet
- Shared with family and friends
- Scold your friend
- Filed a complain

4. Where are you mostly sexually harassed?

- a) Standing at the bus stop
- b) Walking in road/ market
- c) Cinema or Theatre
- d) Returning and going to college
- e) While studying
- f) Others

5. Have you faced sexual harassment in school bus?

- a) Yes
- b) No

If yes, define how....

- Hitting elbow on sensitive part
- Trying to feel the body
- Coming close
- Pinching or pushing
- Blinking eyes
- Others

6. What is the activity done by the harasser for harassment?

- a) Use of vulgar words
- b) Following by the boys
- c) Whistling
- d) Showing vulgar things
- e) Calling by name
- f) Others

7. How did you respond to the sexual harassment against you?

.....

8. Does this harassment affect your mental or psychological or social state?

- a) Yes
- b) No

If yes, what are the effects?

9. What kind of impact/ consequences you faced due to sexual harassment?

- a) Depression
- b) Change of college
- c) Suicidal thoughts
- d) Anxiety
- e) Lack of confidence
- f) Education deprivation
- g) Others

10. Who is the most that harasses you?

- a) Close friend
- b) Roadside boys
- c) School staff
- d) Teacher or respected one

Part III: Questionnaire related to sharing and response against sexual harassment

1. Have you shared with anyone after being harassed?
 - Whom did you share?
 - How did you share?
 - Why not for other?
2. In what way you respond against sexual harassment why do you do so?
.....
3. After that incident, How did you tackle that problem? Did you resist when you tended to be harassed?
.....
4. If you remain silent and do not take any action then why do you do so?
.....
5. If you raise your voice and take action, how did you take action?
.....
6. What type of problem you have faced after sexual harassment?
.....
7. Did you get any support from your friends, family or any organization?
 - a) Yes
 - b) NoIf yes, specify....
8. Have you ever helped any of your friend from incident related to harassment?
 - a) Yes
 - b) NoIf yes, specify

Other questions:

1. What is the cause of sexual harassment against girls?
.....
2. What can be done for the control of sexual harassment?
.....
3. Do you think sexual harassment is always done by boys?
 - a) Strongly agree
 - b) Agree
 - c) Neither agree nor disagree

- d) Strongly disagree
 - e) disagree
4. In comparison to other type of SH physical harassment is common at girls?
- a) Strongly agree
 - b) Agree
 - c) Neither agree nor disagree
 - d) Strongly disagree
 - e) disagree
5. If harassment happens every girls faces same type of consequences?
- a) Strongly agree
 - b) Agree
 - c) Neither agree nor disagree
 - d) Strongly disagree
 - e) Disagree
6. Every girls have to speak up against such type of harassment?
- a) Strongly agree
 - b) Agree
 - c) Neither agree nor disagree
 - d) Strongly disagree
 - e) Disagree
7. Because of family's prestige people hide sexual harassment cases?
- a) Strongly agree
 - b) Agree
 - c) Neither agree nor disagree
 - d) Strongly disagree
 - e) Disagree
8. Now a days, sexual harassment is becoming one of the major problem over school students?
- a) Strongly agree
 - b) Agree
 - c) Neither agree nor disagree
 - d) Strongly disagree
 - e) Disagree