

SOCIAL MEDIA DISCOURSE OF SEX FOR GRADES PHENOMENON IN NIGERIAN UNIVERSITIES

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Abstract

Social media has enabled the evolution of movements, campaigns and platforms of expression on social issues, using hashtags. Sexual harassment is a global issue and its prevalence is significant. This study examined the social media discussion on the sex for grades phenomenon in Nigerian Universities, premised on an expose documentary by the BBC: Africa Eye. A quantitative content analysis was conducted on 453 posts which carried the hashtag #sexforgrades, on Facebook and Twitter. The central findings are: Males slightly superseded women in the discourse and the #sexforgrades phenomenon was limited to the discussion of the events in the documentary. The stance of the public on sexual harassment is provictim. A more conscious media social responsibility in the framing of controversial matters such as sexual harassment and other human rights issues that are shared to the public is recommended, to enhance audience understanding and creation of safe space for victims.

Keywords: social media, sexual harassment, university undergraduates, BBC expose documentary, sex for grade

Introduction

The occurrence of sexual abuse in its myriad forms is neither novel in any part of the world nor sector of a society (Chukwu-Okoronkwo & Okoronkwo, 2015; Khatua, Cambria & Khatua, 2018; Akinbobola, 2019) including the virtual space (Kamaku & Mberia, 2014; Maghfiroh & Muqoddam, 2018). Nevertheless, its prevalence has been elevating at an alarming and disturbing rate, partly due to the low reportage and connection to other intricate social ills such as, gender based bullying (Fairbairn, Dawson and Bivens, 2011). In the face of the many sexual abuse cases that occur around the globe, some have been in the front pages and headlines of media productions while some have been left out of media focus; getting less or no attention, sometimes because of the low disclosure rate of the crime by victims for fear of disbelief, blame attribution and stigmatization and also for lack of evidence. At other times, it is to protect the reputation of involved persons or organizations including the non-newsworthiness of the crime (Akinbobola, 2019). The academic terrain is one of such places where sexual abuse has been

perpetually obfuscated for the preservation of institutional reputation. Nonetheless, its existence and pervasiveness in such places has been affirmed (Chukwu-Okoronkwo & Okoronkwo, 2015; Ernest-Onuiri, Bolaji & Jegede, 2015; **WRAPA** in Gbulie, 2018). This emphasis however, is not to trivialize or divert focus from the established fact contained in empirical studies that sexual abuse in different forms by a member of the family is more rampant than that of a stranger in a public environment (Chukwu-Okoronkwo & Okoronkwo, 2015; Khatua, Cambria & Khatua, 2018).

This trend of low attention to academic institutional based sexual crime by the media has also been replicated in the field of research, where majority of the studies carried out on sexual abuse is mostly to the exclusion of what surrounds sexual harassment of female students in tertiary institutions, in relation to sexual favours solicited by some of their lecturers, in order to provide certain incentives such as good grades. Meanwhile, the few studies (compared to its prevalence) that have engaged this topical issue have mostly done so from a victim perspective. That is, researching into victim narratives, regarding their experiences, in a bid to ascertain the level of dominance as well as advocate awareness (Menon, Shilalukey, Siziya, Musepa, Malungo & Serpell, 2011; Ojo, Oliver, Louis & Abidemi, 2013). In some unique studies, the narratives of the perpetrators have also been analyzed (Hipp, Bellis, Goodnight & Brennan, 2015). Irrespective of these, the critical role of the media in raising awareness, influencing discourses and perception, creating an atmosphere for easy disclosure of sexual crime, as well as responding-cum influencing government and policy makers' action or otherwise inaction (Saunders & Goddard, 2002; Wearthered, 2015; Qayyum, 2018; Nair, 2019; Afolabi, 2020) in responding to these societal menaces that threaten social sanity is arguably non-negotiable. While this might be the civil-social responsibility of the media as endorsed by the government and expected by the society (Nair, 2019), there are still facts as contained in media probing studies, as to how this investigative and social responsibility role is effectively carried out by the media including their contribution in the escalation of sexual vices and chaos in the society (Ernest-Onuiri, Bolaji & Jegede, 2015; Naglaa, 2015; Galdi, Maass, & Cadinu, 2017; Egbegi, Ajah & Onyejebu, 2019). With other studies adding that there exists a correlation within victim blaming, sexual abuse myths and culture, criminal justice practices and the media which further results in more sexual abuses (Cromer, 2010; Klein, & Cooper, 2016). Consequently, the media are considered one of the foremost primary sources perpetuating rape culture. Adding to this allegation is also the position taken against some traditional news media as being biased in favour of perpetrators as against victims of sexual crime in cases where there is a yawning gap in the economic, social and political and even religious status of such perpetrators compared to the victims (Thacker, 2017; Khattri, Kothari & Bisen, n.d.).

Meanwhile, the open discussion of sex, especially in public arenas, has a sensitivity to it that has often hushed the voices of those who have anything to say about it. It often carries the air of a taboo, thereby creating a culture of silence and consequently influencing the disclosure of all kinds of sexual crime. Inadvertently this, encourages victims to recede into the background, for fear of becoming social pariahs (Wellman, Reddington & Clark, 2017; Okunlola, Gesinde, Nwabueze & Okojide, 2020), therefore, preferring to maintain anonymity.

The advent of social media seems to have stirred a revolutionary movement away from the norm; advocating the exposition of all social injustices against all marginalized and oppressed groups all over the world especially the female gender. The transparency and freedom backed by anonymity and a joint social demand for justice on social media platforms seem to have made it a safer space for sexual violence victims' experiences to be put on display with lesser fear of being identified and or stigmatized (Tiwari & Ghosh, 2017). Also, Rehr (2017) asserts that online awareness serves as a catalyst for effective and tangible societal and policy changes towards social ills like sexual abuse. More so, the vibrancy of social media platforms has made it a space seemingly more accommodating to the discourses (in their unique frames and narratives) on societal issues (Mendes, Keller & Ringrose, 2018). Thus, social media is identified as a great instrument for advancement in the lives of many, especially when it comes to social or global issues (Awobamise, Jarrar & Nnauife, 2019). Also, in recent years, the world has seen virtual movements advocating against social injustice, gender inequality racism as well as sexual violence. Such social media platforms that have greatly advanced this movement include: Twitter, Instagram, Facebook and the likes and they have written on hashtags like, #sexforgrades, #metoo #endsarz #whydidntireport #blacklivesmatter. These characteristics of the medium have encouraged researchers to carry out studies probing into the efficacy of the social media in influencing behaviour, perception and creating awareness on sexual ills (Mendes, Keller & Ringrose, 2018; Ulla-Carin & Lane, 2020).

Against this background, this study considers it pertinent to investigate public perception of social media discourses on sexual crime. This need is also heightened by the 2019 BBC African Eye documentary based on an undercover mission designed to expose what the Television station considered the harsh realities of illicit sexual relations between lecturers and students. This followed their assertion that West African academic institutions have had several sexual harassment allegations from lecturers thrown at them, but were never proven irrespective of its prevalence. In Nigeria, there are limited studies focusing on lecturers' exchange of educational incentives for sexual favours. This study will bridge this gap by analysing the discourses which surrounds the prevalence of sex for grades, the framing of sexual harassment cases in tertiary institutions by the media, the response and stance of the public as influenced by media portrayals of the cases, and the consequences of the crime for the perpetrator (if any).

Sexual Harassment: The African Narrative in Context

Sexual harassment and its prevalence in universities of West Africa has given way to the destruction of self-esteem and self-perception of the victims, and as a ripple effect, taken its toll on the larger society. To this regard, reporter Kiki Mordi of the BBC African Eyes and a survivor of this type of abuse led the investigation by going undercover, using other female journalists as decoy students set to be in the process of gaining admission or attending University of Ghana and University of Lagos. The reporters were sexually manipulated, harassed and pressurized by prominent lecturers in their institutions and it was aptly captured by the secret body cameras which they used. Reacting to this, Lawal and Diamond (2019) said the release of the expose documentary brought the country under a global spotlight. Prominent cases like this can propel different sectors of a society to react differently to the issue of sexual

crime. It could alter media framings and social media discourses of sexual abuse in Africa. Hinging on these, this current therefore examined the discourses in the #Sexforgrades phenomenon revealed by the investigative division under the British Broadcasting Corporation: African Eye, at a higher magnitude to the world through a documentary released on multiple media platforms. The documentary featured institutions in West Africa involved in the exchange of sexual acts for academic achievements and favours.

According to Pm News (2019), a new #metoo movement on social media sprung up in Nigeria after a rape accusation against a renowned pastor came to light, thereby empowering women to share their stories of sexual abuse and demand for justice. Busola Dakolo, a renowned Photographer and wife of singer Timi Dakolo announced on an interview with a local television station that she was raped as a teenager by Biodun Fatoyinbo, the head pastor of a prominent church in Abuja, the Federal Capital Territory of Nigeria. Her story caused an uproar on social media platforms such as Twitter and Instagram as the hashtags #MeToo, #ChurchToo and #SayNoToRape were frequently used in what was said to have been the first major movement against sexual abuse in Nigeria; various social media users shared personal stories of themselves in similar instances revealing the identities and acts done to them by the perpetrators. This movement also prompted a protest with hundreds of people present in the major cities; Abuja and Lagos. The case was taken up when the audio recording of both of them went viral and the professor admitted to the allegations; it was later established that the victim had no inclination she had scored the pass mark. The lecturer faced the institution's disciplinary council and was liable to all the claims of misconduct made against him according to the evidence provided to the council. Thereafter, the Vice-Chancellor of the institution released a statement confirming the perpetrator's dismissal from the university (Gbulie, 2018). Following this, it was reported that the perpetrator was given a total of 6 years jail time to run concurrently for deleting evidence, demanding for sexual benefit in exchange for grades and falsification of age (Osogbo, 2018). In a similar case, as detailed by Mynewsgh in Ghanaweb (2019), Prof. Ransford Gyampo and Dr. Paul Kwame Butakor, two senior lecturers were also featured in the renowned BBC exposé. On the one hand, Prof. Ransford, married with children was seen persuading another undercover journalist to meet him outside the school environment besides several other sexual advances that had been made towards the student. Dr. Kwame, on the other hand, was admiring and pursuing another journalist posing as a final year undergraduate and a proposed Master's Degree program applicant in his department. Both lecturers were inhibited until finalization of investigations by the Committee for Anti-Sexual Harassment.

Not unlike sexual abuse victims in other parts of the world, the victims in Nigeria also receive the blame game from the public even in social media discourses. However, Awobamise, Jarrar and Nnauife (2019), found a shift in blame giving when it is a case of sexual abuse, there is a general state of sympathy with rape victims for only victims who are below 18, if the victim is above the age of 18 or the alleged rapist is a celebrity or a person of public interest, then the public resorts to blaming them for their predicament. Yet, Gundersen and Zaleski (2020) elucidated in their study that the larger number of survivors who share their stories receive positive feedbacks from the public.

Sexual Harassment and Media Participation

The media's prominence for its information dissemination role is undisputable; this is in tandem with consistent documentations in studies on social crime that the media is major and sometimes only means the public learn about crime, even more so, sexual crime (Greer, 2003). This seems to go against the often castigated notion that traditional media report of sexual crime is scant (WHO, 2007; Morrison, 2004). Notwithstanding, the media plays a huge part in shaping the opinion or thoughts of the public about themselves and towards each other in a particular situation. The Advocates for Human Rights (2009) affirmed the role of media, media campaigns and communication platforms as substantial tools in the battle against sexual violence, harassment and abuse of any kind against all genders. They can influence attitude towards sexual harassment conduct and employer practices regarding sexual harassment. Adding to this, they can also be used as a medium to empower women and men of the workforce or educational environment to speak up about sexual assault and the government to establish laws against such criminal acts. However, media reports on sexual violence are tilted towards atypical cases of sexual harassment with dominating discourses surrounding it framing the problem as more of a personalized issue of improper staff conduct than a creation of a wider inequality of gender or a systematic issue. More so, various theorists and scholars believe social and cultural factors also affect sexual harassment excuse sexual harassment and violence against women and men thereby minimizing the problem (McDonald & Charlesworth, 2013).

In as much as these media platforms can sometimes be destructive to survivors of sexual harassment and a major reason hindering victims of this crime in the work and educational environment from speaking up, it can and is beginning to become an avenue for change, with the advent of movements on social media platforms such as Facebook and Twitter where social movements and reforms such as #sexforgrades, #metoo #takebackthenightHU and many more are facilitated. This is aided by the supposed dissatisfaction of youths with the justice system as well as disciplinary actions on institution and organizational based sexual harassment cases (New, 2016). Rehr (2017) explains that only social media platforms- Facebook and Twitter break fifty percent for advocacy use. Twitter ranks first with 75.34% a few over three-fourths of persons using the platform and Facebook in second place with 69.86%. Chaffey (2019) states that over 4.388 billion persons worldwide use the internet whilst 3.484 billion are active social media users in 2019 with an annual increase rate of 9.1% and 9% respectively.

Nonetheless, it remains a debate as to whether media influences public perception or the media simply reinforces existing social beliefs, myths and stereotypes. While it seems more plausible that the media tend to tilt towards public opinion, the former stance has also been proven a lot of times through researches especially when it concerns sexual crimes (Mann, 2018).

Social Media Discourse: New Trends for Old Problems

Through the creation of a collective hash tag message, social media has been used to facilitate many social crime advocacy campaigns whereby they create awareness, inform and educate people, share opinions, offer advice and solution to said issues affecting all gender and race of people, institutions and organizations around the world. It has further prompted community

policing which have since dropped the crime rates in various countries worldwide through the public unification against a common or worldwide phenomenon (Chiluwa, 2012; Lortz, 2017; Wellman, Reddington & Clark, 2017; Smart Social, 2019). Following the assertions about the positive sides to social media in the movement against sexual violence, Puckett (2016) averred that education is the only key to end sexual abuse but firstly believing the survivors, irrespective of their race, gender, age, and socio-economic background, when they come forth with their stories and not further shame them for their experiences is a major practice that needs to be adopted. However, some believe that the most efficient approach towards the issue of violence is from the view of a feminist. But there is a need to find out even how such discourses are engaged on social media as well as its resultant effect on key players. Considering all these, social media is to be handled with importance because, not only does it have the power to influence perception and actions but also, it reaches a multitude of online people.

Sexual Harassment Laws in Nigeria

There are laws and punishments against sexual offences in Nigeria. Some of these laws according to Ezeamalu (2015) have a penalty of life imprisonment for rapists and culprits of sexual crime who have sexual intercourse with children below 11 years, 10 years of jail-time for child pornography, 10 years for incest and a fine of N2million along with 14 years for sexual offences. It is also clarified that the law encompasses deliberately infecting a partner with HIV among other diseases, gang rape, child sex tourism, prostitution and sexual harassment of the mentally impaired. The law also calls for the filing and uploading of sexual offender's names and crimes in the database for due social discrimination, this will enable the society to safeguard innocent persons liable to be victims to their crimes.

A bill which was passed by the Senate on June 3rd, 2015 and sponsored by Chris Ayanwu (APGA Imo East), which was later made a law, states that anyone who is found guilty of sex tourism, deliberate passage of HIV/AIDS to guiltless citizens or rape will be sentenced to life imprisonment (PM News, 2015).

The Daily Trust newspaper (2019) stated that the Senate has proposed a bill to stop the prevalence of sexual harassment of students in tertiary institutions. The bill which was first read on October 9th and later on November 6th has a penalty of 14 years in jail with a minimum of 5 years without an option of fine for anyone in the academia who commits sexual crimes in tertiary institutions. Offences indicated in the bill include- demands for sexual favours from a student or prospective student, sexual relations with a student or threatening or creating an unprofessional, hostile and uncomfortable environment for a student by making sexual advances or pleading for sex.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework reviewed were - agenda setting theory, perception theory and social responsibility theory. Agenda Setting Theory maintains the stance that the media's presentation of a report or issue influences the thoughts opinions and realities of the public. For the media to make reports more important than another and have the audience perceiving them as it is portrayed by the media effort must be made to structure it just the way it is intended to be

perceived as a result the BBC through the documentary pronounced an alert on sexual harassment whilst showing us how it operates in the academia and giving us a detailed information about what to do next. The second theory – Perception Theory, argues that media audiences pay attention to the messages or information disseminated by the media house or person, they understand the message, it message prompts a change in beliefs or attitudes and ultimately produces the preferred effect. Due to the pivotal depiction of the issue as portrayed by such a trusted broadcasting corporation and the content of the documentary, the perception of everyone was geared towards sexual harassment and its prevalent effect on the society at large. The final theory, Social Responsibility Theory agrees for freedom of the press without censorship but argues that the content dispersed by the press should be conversed publicly and the media should be willing to accept all responsibility from the public; the theory also states that information released but be within the rights of individuals and alignment with the interest of the society. The BBC released factual information about sexual harassment within the academia and exposed some of its perpetrators; the documentary sparked a conversation among the general public, spread awareness on the severity of this social ill, its consequences and prompted the public to take a stand along with the government to put an end its prevalence.

Methodology

This study adopted the Quantitative content analysis research method. Using coding sheet, coding manual as well as a unit of analysis, data was collected from the media platforms of choice. The quantitative design was adopted in this research work to systematically categorize textual and visual material which was analysed to answer the research objectives of this study and examine social media discuss on sexual harassment. The media platforms for this study were Twitter and Facebook due to their high user percentage of information dissemination and advocacy, they are platforms for which opinion formation, discussions, information dissemination and interactions between various persons was their sole purpose. The population for the quantitative content analysis of this study consisted of the number of times the #sexforgrades was used in posts on Twitter and Facebook which were 14,800 and 2000 respectively according to ‘Twitter and Facebook Analytics’ from the duration of October 7th to October 21st, 2019, which was the height of the sex for grades investigation documentary release and surrounding social media discourse.

Approximately 453 posts were reviewed with a division of 226 and 227 posts per media platform Facebook and Twitter using the #sexforgrades. The population for the content analysis of this study was 2 social networking sites – Twitter and Facebook, user’s posts under each of the sites which was used to derive the sample size used. The content was analysed within a two week period which saw the snippet release, main release and post conversation of the sex for grades documentary by the BBC Africa Eye;

For the data collection portion of this research study, the instruments used were a coding sheet and manual. The coding sheet was used to analyse the social media accounts within the sample size of Twitter and Facebook users of the sex for grades hashtag. The categories within the posts gathered to determine discourse of the phenomenon were the predominant gender of the

media user, the major form of interaction between the users, the main subject of discourse on the phenomenon and the stance of the users on the subject matter. The data used for this study was gotten from the accounts of various social media users on two social networking sites – Twitter and Facebook from the period of October 7th to October 21st 2019. The data was retrieved using the coding manual and its unit of analysis - the dominant gender of media user, the main form of interaction; the social media subject of discourse and overall user stance, as a guideline to finding out the results and answer the objectives of this study. The posts gathered were the first 226 and 227 to come up when the hashtag #sexforgrades was typed in the search engine for the sites during the time frame; the posts were then put in two separate tables for Facebook and Twitter in accordance with the coding sheet. A total number of four hundred and fifty three (453) posts and mentions including the #sexforgrades were split amongst social media platforms- Twitter (227) and Facebook (226) using a systematic approach to gather data for this research.

The research work adopted the two prominent social media platforms; Facebook and Twitter, to determine the discourse among the netizens on the sex for grades BBC expose documentary and social issue. These platforms break over 50% for advocacy use in comparison to other media platforms and had a high level of frequency in media users who discussed the events of the documentary along with other sexual harassment related instances and responses to it all.

Results and Discussion

This study sought to determine the overall discourse on the societal issue of sexual harassment in exchange for educational favours in Nigerian Universities. The study was anchored on the tenets of the Agenda setting, Social Responsibility and Perception theories. Four research questions whose results were obtained from an analysis are explained below:

Table 1: Distribution of Coded Sex for Grade Posts on Facebook and Twitter

Social Media	Frequency	Percent
Facebook	226	49.9
Twitter	227	50.1
Total	453	100.0

[Table 1 Here]

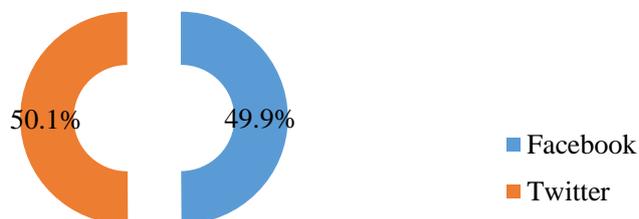


Figure 1: Distribution of Coded Sex for Grade Posts on Facebook and Twitter

[Figure 1 Here]

Predominant gender in the social media discourse for #sexforgrades on Twitter and Facebook

Predominant gender in the social media discourse for #sexforgrades on Twitter and Facebook implies the gender (male or female) which was more involved in the social media conversation on sexual harassment in Nigerian Universities and by relation, the #sexforgrades documentary. The researchers endeavoured to determine what gender had more input on the subject matter.

Table 2 Dominant Gender in the Social Media Discourse on Twitter and Facebook

		Social Media		Total
		Facebook	Twitter	
Male	Freq (%)	130(57.5)	122(53.7)	252
Female	Freq (%)	96(42.5)	105(46.3)	201
	Total	226	227	453

[Table 2 Here]

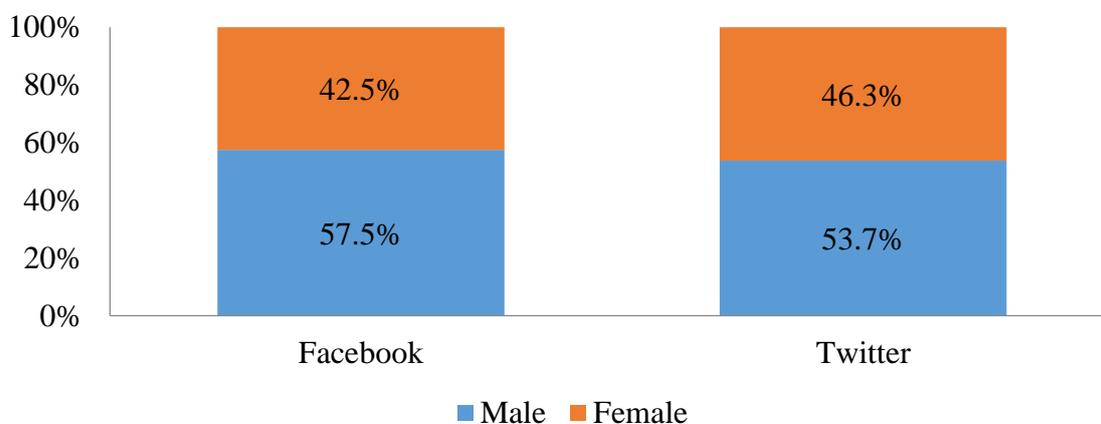


Figure 2: Dominant Gender in Social Media Discourse on the #Sexforgrades on Twitter and Facebook

[Figure 2 Here]

As demonstrated in table 2 and figure 2, the male gender was slightly more involved participant in the discourse surrounding the #sexforgrades phenomenon on Twitter and Facebook. They took the lead on Facebook (57.5%) and Twitter (53.7%) in comparison to females on Facebook (42.5%) and Twitter (46.3%); it was an unpredictable result considering sexual harassment is largely recognized as a women fronted movement due to the higher rate of female victims in comparison with male victims. On the one hand, this finding was corroborated by the publication of *Women (2000)* and *Beyond (2008)*, which stated that men’s involvement in sexual harassment activism is as a result of their desire to represent the highly under-represented females in the fight against sexual harassment and show their disapproval of these acts which other members of their gender participate in. On the other hand, this finding is contradictory to the study by Dookhoo (2011) which explored the effect of online activism in instigating offline behaviours, and results revealed female participants were twice the number of males who participated in the study, it was further uncovered that millennial women do indeed have self-perception as activist regarding any issue and therefore defend the rights of others in the society but most often do not have the means.

Common form of interaction on the #sexforgrades discourse on Twitter and Facebook

Common form of interaction on the sex for grades discourse on Twitter and Facebook denotes the frequently used method of social media interaction (posts, mentions) on sexual harassment in Nigerian universities. The researchers sought to determine which method of social media messaging (posts or mentions) was adopted in the conversation. The results of this research question revealed posts as the more employed form of interaction in opposition to mentions on Twitter (46.2%) and Facebook (28.4%). They are measured as in-depth individual media responses to information and messages whilst mentions are specifically dispersed messages to other individuals on an individual’s online page about a particular media message or conversation.

Table 3: Common Form of Interaction on the Sex for Grade Posts on Twitter and Facebook

		Social Media		Total
		Facebook	Twitter	
Posts	Freq (%)	145(64.2)	166(73.1)	311
Mention	Freq (%)	81(35.8)	61(26.9)	142
Total	Total	226	227	453

[Table 3 Here]

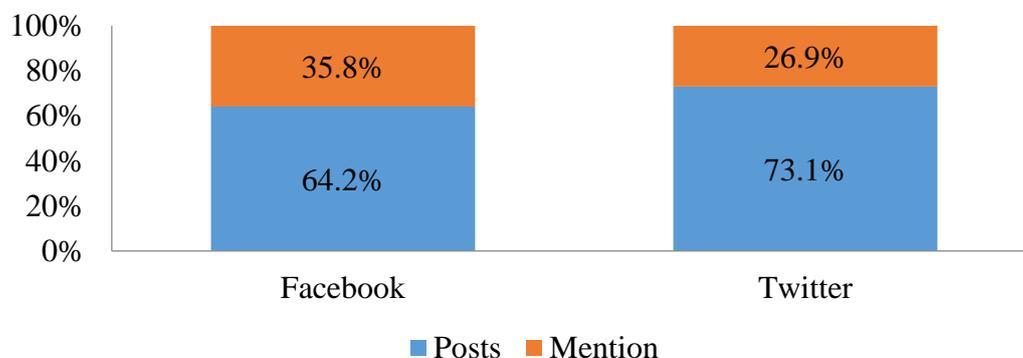


Figure 3: Common Form of Interactions on the #Sexforgrades Phenomenon on Twitter and Facebook

[Figure 3 Here]

Subject of social media discourse by users on hashtag #sexforgrades

Subject of social media discourse by users on the hashtag #sexforgrades refers to the main topic of the online discourses on sexual harassment in Nigerian Universities. There were different themes for analysis however, the subject with the highest frequency of occurrence amongst media users was what the researcher sought out to identify. According to the first set of observations in determining the subject of social media discourse of #sexforgrades, events which took place in the sex for grades documentary prevailed on Twitter (41.6%) and Facebook (28.2%), users’ account of either themselves or others involved in sexual harassment came up next and the topic on sexual harassment instances which took place in workplaces were subsequent subjects with the highest frequency. Following this, there was a change in the flow of conversation from the focus of events surrounding the sex for grades documentary, accounts of sexual harassment and workplace sexual harassments to the posts relating to social change, taking dominance, followed by policy change and justice seeking posts on sexual harassment phenomenon. The users added seeking change, justice and policy formations to help all the survivors emotionally and prevent more people from becoming victims of such a cruel act to

their main topics of discourse of knowledge about types of harassment and discussing details about the documentary. Finally, there was a regression in social change posts and the topic shifted its focus final to Policy change posts and justice seeking posts before the conversation diminished in frequency. Consequently, the research findings revealed discussions surrounding events of the #sexforgrades documentary as its dominant subject. It was one of the main reasons the documentary was released, to spread awareness about sexual harassment and also expose all the perpetrators and accomplices to the crime.

Table 4 Progression of Social Media Subject of Discourse on Sex for Grades

		Social Media		Total
		Facebook	Twitter	
Discuss the events of the sex for grades expose documentary	Freq (%)	1(0.5)	0(0)	1
Gives account of sexual harassment cases	Freq (%)	0(0)	2(1.6)	2
Workplace sexual harassment	Freq (%)	44(24)	3(2.4)	47
Social change posts	Freq (%)	71(38.8)	62(49.6)	133
Policy change posts	Freq (%)	24(13.1)	25(20)	49
Justice seeking posts	Freq (%)	22(12)	20(16)	42
Story shifting	Freq (%)	21(11.5)	13(10.4)	34
Total	Freq	183	125	308

[Table 4 Here]

Overall stance of Twitter and Facebook users on the sex for grades phenomenon through their posts

Overall stance of Twitter and Facebook users on the sex for grades phenomenon through individual posts elucidate the position of netizens regarding the documentary on sexual harassment in Nigerian Universities. Out of many potential stances of the media public, the researcher through analysis sought to determine the stance which obtained the highest frequency on both social media networking sites.

The first set of observations regarding the stance of media users on Twitter and Facebook showed the most prevalent stance of the media public as victim support, with slightly over a 100 posts from each platform Facebook (111) and Twitter (116). It was followed by culprit blaming with (67) and (48) posts. These results assert that majority of the online community took a general stance to support the victims of sexual harassment in relation to the sex for grades documentary as well as other harassment cases. The users were shown backing the victim, blaming the perpetrators of the crime and ensuring their acts are brought to light to avoid future cases involving the same or new individuals.

The second observation as shown progressed from just the prevailing stance of victim support and culprit blaming in the previous observation to that of users sharing updates on sexual harassment and the documentary, alongside bashing of the institutions involved. In explanatory power, the revelation of victims and their harassers, new policies introduced by Governments

and institutions, restructuring of institutional policies, the whereabouts of lecturers who were revealed to be perpetrators of the act in tertiary institutions, amongst other new information on the event were a contributing factor to the conversation in this second level of progression.

The third and final progression had a pointed emphasis on institution bashing and less on updates on the sex for grades phenomenon; the flow of conversation was understood to be in the appropriate reactionary order as a direct effect of the documentary. The online community took to protect the victims, blame continuously the offenders, give further updates on the wrongdoers and the phenomenon in the countries involved and calling out the institutions. The final stage of interaction exposes the negligent regulations of the institutions and their approach to the topic of sexual harassment which allowed for its prevalence in the organizations and most especially within those in a high position of authority.

Table 5 Observed User Stance on Sexual Harassment

		Social Media		Total
		Facebook	Twitter	
Victim blaming	Freq (%)	23(10.2)	20(8.8)	43
Culprit supporting	Freq (%)	7(3.1)	11(4.8)	18
Victim support	Freq (%)	111(49.1)	116(51.1)	227
Culprit blaming	Freq (%)	67(29.6)	48(21.1)	115
Gives update on sex for grades phenomenon	Freq (%)	16(7.1)	21(9.3)	37
Institution bashing	Freq (%)	2(0.9)	11(4.8)	13
Total	Freq	226	227	453

[Table 5 Here]

Conclusion

Sexual harassment today has become greatly recognized as a result of social media support, their platforms have offered to various members of the online community who have chosen to use their opinions to advocate for the victims, demand justice from the perpetrators and draw attention to institutions who allow such acts to continue in their institutions.

The study revealed that, males were the most predominant gender involved in the discourse on the social media platforms – Facebook and Twitter. Also, the main subject of discourse was the discussion around the events of sexual harassment which took place in the BBC sex for grades documentary. Media posts were the most identified form of interactions between media users and victim support stood as the major stance by media users on the sex for grades

phenomenon. Although there were other major subsets of each category which revealed other frequency levels of the media users in relation to them, the above stated were the highest. As a presently known issue, Sexual harassment in the academia has not been dutifully covered on multiple social media platforms and seeing the positive response of the public towards the documentary as stated in the findings of this study, there is a lot more to be done to curb, bring to its barest minimum or totally eradicate this educational threat. This would require the efforts of the media (print and electronic) through intensifying their agenda setting and social responsibility roles to the society.

Campaigns on sexual harassment in the academia and/or workplace are often trivialised, not paid attention to and as a result the problem has become normalised. The society should ensure that everyone is well aware of sexual harassment, its forms, how to stop it in the event that it occurs and ways of preventing it. It will provide a form of security to anyone who may become or has been a victim. Government should ensure that all policies and regulations regarding sexual harassment in the workplace and academia are upheld with maximum effectiveness to avoid more cases of sexual harassment, traumatized victims and tarnished image of organisations and the government if the issue persists. Generally, the education of the general populace, particularly adolescents and young adults on the on sexual abuse of any kind within and outside the educational system is aptly required.

Finally, more research studies on social media discourses surrounding sexual harassment in the academia and other workplace environments should be carried out using other research methodologies such as Focus Group Discussions and Survey, in order to provide in-depth information on the views of media users to the findings of the study. Further studies can also look into the media's framing of sensitive issues such as sexual harassment in the public, their reaction to the message and its ability to provide a safe space for the victims to speak out.

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