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**Sexual Harassment and Students' Academic Performance in Olorunsogo Local Government Area, Oyo State, Nigeria**

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**Abstract**

Sexual harassment is a serious and universal societal problem and it is one of the most prevalent forms of misconduct in school settings. The purpose of the study was to investigate the relationship between sexual harassment and students' academic performance in Olorunsogo L.G.A., Oyo State. The variables taken into consideration were age, class level, and religion. The study was survey research. The population of this study comprised all students in secondary schools in Ilorin metropolis, Kwara State, while the target population was students in public secondary schools out of which a sample of 200 respondents was selected using the sample was selected using stratified and simple random sampling techniques. A questionnaire was used to collect data for the study. The instrument was subjected to face content validity and a test re-test reliability method which yielded a coefficient index of 0.78. Quantitative data was analyzed using descriptive statistics in form of percentages, means and rank order analysis while Pearson's correlation and Multivariate Analysis of Variance were used to test the null hypotheses at 0.05. Findings from the study revealed that sexual harassment experienced by secondary school students was high while secondary school students' academic performance was low. The study further revealed that there was no significant relationship between sexual harassment and academic performance. The findings of the study also indicated that there were no significant differences in the sexual harassment experiences of secondary school students in Olorunsogo L.G.A., Oyo State based on class level and religion; however, significant differences were observed based on age. Similarly, there were no significant differences in the academic performance of secondary school students in Olorunsogo L.G.A., Oyo State based on age, class level, or religion.

**Key words:** *Academic Performance, Sexual Harassment, School Setting, Unsocial Behaviour, Mental Health*

## 1.0 Introduction

Sexual harassment (SH) is a global issue that has permeated the fabrics of higher education institutions and many workplaces as long as humans (males and females) have reasons to interact. In recent years, media coverage and academic publications on sexual harassment have increased significantly within workplaces locally and internationally especially in the higher institutions of learning where the victims are faced with psychosocial challenges as a result of sexual harassment. SH refers to as persistent, unsolicited, and unwelcomed sexual advances and also as “unwanted conduct of a sexual nature”. The “unwanted and potentially coercive or disruptive nature” distinguished sexual harassment from consensual behaviour that is welcomed and mutual (Oni, Tshitangano & Akinsola, 2019)). According to Hoel and Vartia (2018), it is any form of unwanted non-verbal, verbal or physical conduct that violates the dignity of the victim such that it creates threats, hostility, humiliating and degrading environment. SH is the commonest form of sexual violence; sexual violence as any sexual act, attempt to obtain a sexual act, unwanted sexual comments or advances, or acts of traffic, or otherwise directed, against a person’s sexuality using coercion, by any person regardless of their relationship to the victim in any setting, including but not limited to home and work (Cass, 2017). According to Imonikhe, Aluede, and Idogho (2016), SH is any sexual act performed by one person on another without the person’s consent and it includes genital, oral, or anal penetration by a part of the accused body or by an object. SH is categorized based on personal relationship as marital, acquaintance, incest and date rape, or legally in terms of age as statutory rape and child sexual abuse.

Wood et al., (2021), and Kabaya (2016) asserted that SH include unwelcome sexual statements such as dirty or sexual jokes, remarks on physical features, disseminating rumours about or ranking others as to their sexual skills, chatting about one’s sexual activity in front of others, and exhibiting or distributing obscene sketches, images and/or written material. Undesirable sexual comments can be made in person, in writing, electronically (email, instant messaging, blogs, web pages, Instagram, etc.), and otherwise. Unwelcome personal attention includes letters, telephone calls, visits, pressure for sexual favours, pressure for unnecessary personal interaction, and pressure for dates where a sexual/romantic intention is unwanted. Unsolicited physical or sexual advances include kissing, hugging, touching, stroking, touching oneself sexually for others to view, sexual harassment, intercourse, or other sexual activity. However, types of sexual harassment such as sexual harassment, rape, pornography, slander, or defamation of character require serious legal action to be taken (Imonikhe et al., 2016; Kabaya, 2016; Nwikpo et al., (2022).; Mishra & Lamichhane, 2018).

Sexual harassment in universities and other higher educational institutions is not limited to Africa (Morley & Lussier, 2019). As a global challenge, sexual harassment deserves to be mainstreamed into the academic curriculum, particularly for reducing vulnerability among students and increasing access to restorative care for victims. Wood et al., 2017 reported a higher prevalence of sexual harassment and unethical intimacy between postgraduate students and their supervisors than undergraduate students due to frequent face-to-face interaction when seeking advice on their research studies in the United States. Higher education institutions in Nigeria are not left out of this saga, for instance, it has been affirmed that in Nigeria, sex for grades in tertiary institutions is a reality and the male lecturers in particular, perceived themselves as thin gods and such unprofessional behaviour can be perpetuated unchecked (Imonikhe et al., 2016). Gruber and

Fineran (2016) found that sexual harassment experiences among adolescents were common in both school and community settings. A study by Charmaraman, Jones, Stein and Espelage (2018) found that digital forms of sexual harassment were increasingly common and often intersected with in-person experiences. Similarly, Lichty, Rosenberg and Laughlin (2019) reported that students experienced a range of harassing behaviours, including unwanted sexual attention and physical harassment, both within and outside of school settings.

In Nigeria, a study in Benin City showed that females (82%) compared to 48% of males experienced harassment, (Okoro & Osawemen, 2015) while 13.8% prevalence rate was found in female Maiduguri students (Kullima et al., 2020). Adams, Mabusela and Dlamini (2013) also reported a high prevalence of sexual harassment both in the educational institution and in the workplace. Sexual harassment takes on various trends and nature, but most importantly, it emanates from unequal power relations that are also associated with gender-based violence and violation of human rights. In most cases, the harasser is usually older, powerful, and poses something of value that is beneficial to the harassed (Kleinman & Thomas, 2023). The trend of occurrence was reported to take several forms: from male lecturer to female student, from male students to female students, from male lecturers to female lecturers and non-academic staff, and so on. In most cases, female students are most at risk as victims while both staff and students of the university could be the perpetrators (American Association of University Women, 2005).

Among the causes of sexual harassment identified include young age, alcohol consumption, drug use, previous experience of rape or sexual abuse, multiple sexual partners, and poverty (Jewkes & Abrahams, 2022). Previous studies have shown that female in-school adolescents are at greater risk of sexual harassment than female adolescents of comparable age in the general population. The reinforcement of male heterosexuality and the authentication of male masculinity are often the predictors of females becoming victims of sexual harassment in an education environment (Morrison, 2022). Previous victimization, including experiencing and /or witnessing violence in childhood, has also been linked with future victimization (Iroegbu et al., 2024; Gibson et al., 2016). Portes et al., (2016) described past sexual victimization in childhood as an accurate predictor of experiencing future sexual victimization. Ford and Ivancic (2020) identified predictors of sexual harassment among females to be socialization, aggressiveness or bravado, and lack of an organizational policy. Karami et al., (2021) found that predictor factors that contribute to sexual harassment are individual factors, organizational factors, workplace factors, and environment factors.

It is perceived that sexual harassment has a psychological and physical impact on students or victims. However, it also depends on the severity of the harassment. Norman, Aikins, and Binka (2013) found that physical injuries, psychological trauma, depression, anxiety, and a loss of trust in authority affect victims' health. It is therefore clear that sexual harassment has a negative psychological effect on the victim. Fribog et al., (2017) (2017) opined that sexual harassment may also result in increased absenteeism, a high percentage of sick leave, , and a decrease in morale. According to Shahjalal et al., (2023) , sickness, absenteeism, and gender discrimination are common consequences of sexual harassment in the workplace. Kane- Acquadro et al., (2022) reported that when women are victims of harassment, they tend to distance themselves and

withdraw from other employees. Sexually harassed students have also been shown to perform worse academically (Fineran, & Bolen, 2006); Turchik & Hassija, 2014).

According to Trickett, McBride-Chang, and Putnam (2014), measures of academic performance include: school records, teachers' ratings of classroom performance and behaviour, and parental reports of academic performance. History of child sexual abuse predicts academic performance as it is directly negatively related to ratings of classroom social competence ratings, competent learner, and overall school performance, and positively related to school-avoiding behaviour. Academic performance was a small portion of a study on sexually abused children in secondary schools. Many studies focused on the negative factors such as post-traumatic stress disorder, and alcohol use which could lead to poor academic performance (DeGue et al., 2014).

Poor academic performance is influenced by several factors, including socioeconomic status (SES), quality of teaching, and parental involvement. Students from low-income families often have limited access to educational resources and attend schools with fewer qualified teachers and inadequate facilities, which hinders their academic success (Li & Qiu, 2018). Additionally, the quality of teaching and teacher-student relationships significantly impact student engagement and learning outcomes (Agharuwhe, 2013). Positive parental involvement is also crucial, as students whose parents support their education tend to perform better, while those lacking such support are more likely to struggle academically (Morrison, 2022). Gbollie and Keamu (2017) who found that secondary school students' academic performance was below average. Adeyemi and Adeyemi (2020) revealed that secondary school students' academic performance was generally low, citing factors such as inadequate teaching facilities and poor teacher motivation as contributing factors. This could be as a result of the psychological impact of experiencing sexual harassment, which can affect students' focus and engagement in their studies. Knox, Davidson and Cooper (2017) found that sexual harassment has a significant emotional and psychological impact, but not all students experience a direct academic decline as a result. Student-related factors, such as poor time management, lack of motivation, and mental health issues, also play a critical role in academic performance. Students who struggle with self-regulation or suffer from anxiety and stress often experience lower grades (Zimmerman & Kitsantas, 2016; Loe & Feldman, 2017). Peer influence is another important factor; students surrounded by high-achieving peers are more likely to adopt positive academic behaviors, while negative peer pressure can lead to absenteeism and other distractions that hinder academic success (Wentzel, 2017).

Sexual harassment has been shown to interfere with students' academic persistence. A study by Molstad et al., (2023) revealed that students who faced sexual harassment were more likely to disengage from their academic responsibilities, skip classes, and avoid participating in campus activities. This reduced engagement in the academic environment can have a direct impact on their performance, leading to lower grades, missed opportunities for learning, and in severe cases, withdrawal from educational institutions. Knox et al., (2017) found that sexual harassment has a significant emotional and psychological impact, but not all students experience a direct academic decline as a result. In contrast, the finding negates the study of Gordon Rey and Fernandez (2020) who found that sexual harassment has a more indirect or long-term effect on academic performance.

Fry et al., (2018). attested to the fact that there is a significant relationship between d sexual abuse and students' performance. Sexually abused children continue to function more poorly than their non-sexually abused peers on a variety of academic and socio-emotional measures. They also manifested multiple forms of academic risk and showed more externalizing and internalizing behaviour problems (Afifi & Macmillan, 2011)). Child sexual abuse is not easily noticed because of the intimate, concealed, and covert nature of the offence. Therefore, it is frequently only based on a noticeable change in the behavioural patterns of the child such as loss of interest in academic work and a drop in their academic performance and achievement that suspicion is aroused (Gubbels et al., 2021).

Certain moderating variables influence students' experiences of sexual harassment differently. While class level and religion did not significantly impact students' exposure to sexual harassment, age was a determining factor (Fineran & Bolen, 2017; Omotoso & Omotosho, 2018). Similarly, religious affiliation may not create significant differences in harassment experiences, possibly due to shared cultural influences (Oladeji & Afolayan, 2018). However, older students (19 years and above) were found to be more affected, aligning with studies that suggest increased exposure to harassment due to physical maturity and social interactions (Timmerman, 2020). Additionally, previous studies have reported high incidences of sexual harassment among female students, further suggesting that gender may play a crucial role in vulnerability to harassment (Fawole et al., 2018).

Regarding academic performance, moderating variables of age, class level, gender, or religion may influence students' performance. This suggests that students across different demographics perform similarly in their studies, likely due to uniform teaching methods and access to educational resources (Olaniyi, 2018). The absence of gender-based differences may indicate equitable learning opportunities for both male and female students (Adeyemi & Bolarinwa, 2018; Gbadura, 2010). Moreover, religious background may significantly impact academic performance, as previously noted by Innis et al., (2000), who found no differences in vocational education outcomes based on religious affiliation. Based on the background information, the present study investigated the influence of sexual harassment on students' academic performance in Olorunsogo L.G.A., Oyo State, Nigeria with a focus on age, class level and religion as the moderating variables.

### **1.1 Statement of the problem**

Sexual harassment is a serious and universal societal problem in a school setting. It is a widespread and prevalent form of misconduct affecting secondary school students globally. There is an increasing number of sexual harassment cases in schools and the media have described it as social cancer. It has been observed that SH is yet to be officially recognized as a violation of the rights of an individual in some communities such as Olorunsogo Local Governmentt Area, Oyo State due to its high occurrences. Whereas, the problem of sexual harassment constitutes more health hazards to both victims and the entire community where it is being perpetrated than could be imagined. The occurrences had led to emotional, physical, intrapersonal, societal challenging issues such as suicide. In essence, sexual harassment has serious implications for the victim's psychological well-being as well as for the society at large. As a result of sexual harassment, many secondary school students experience mental and emotional challenges which in turn may lead to their poor academic performance.

Several researchers had conducted studies on sexual harassment. For instance, in 20214, Menon, Sanjobo et al., conducted a study on knowledge and perception of sexual harassment in an institution of higher education in Sub-Saharan Africa. The study found that the majority of the participants (54.1%) knew what sexual harassment was. It was further found that Fifty-seven (57%) of the respondents acknowledged that sexual harassment does occur at the university with more females indicating the occurrence of Sexual harassment acts. Focusing on teenagers, Okoro and Osawemen (2015) worked on sexual harassment: the experience of out-of-school teenagers in Benin City, Nigeria. The findings indicated that sexual harassment is common out there in the streets, to the extent that it was viewed as the norm in the society by the youths. It was also found that more females (82%) compared to 48% males experienced harassment and that anger was the most common response to the experience.

Another research was conducted by Sang, Kemboi, and Omenge (2016) to examine sexual harassment among university students at university of Eldoret, Uasin Gishu County, Kenya. The harassments among students were found to include rude sexual jokes, showing/passing pornographic materials, indecent gestures, attitudes, behaviours, insults, and touches resulting in discrimination against the victims by violating their rights physiologically, sexually, and physically. Looking at what operates in work places, Ford and Ivancic (2020) examined the experience and perception of sexual harassment in the workplace and the results indicated that there are statistically significant differences between males' and females' experiences of sexual harassment in the workplace. Furthermore, there were statistically significant differences between divorced employees and single and married employees in terms of their experiences and perceptions of sexual harassment. Lastly, the perception of sexual harassment was found to differ according to respondents' educational levels.

Despite extensive research on sexual harassment, little attention has been given to its direct impact on students' academic performance in Oyo State. This study aims to bridge this gap by examining the effect of sexual harassment on students' academic outcomes in Olorunsogo L.G.A., Oyo State."

### ***1.2 Research questions***

The following research questions were raised and answered in the study:

- 1.What are the experiences of secondary school students regarding sexual harassment in Olorunsogo L.G.A., Oyo State?
- 2.What is the level of academic performance among secondary school students in Olorunsogo L.G.A., Oyo State?

### ***1.3 Research hypotheses***

The following research hypotheses were formulated and tested for this study:

H<sub>01</sub>: There is no significant relationship between sexual harassment and the academic performance of secondary school students in Olorunsogo L.G.A., Oyo State.

H<sub>02</sub>: There is no significant difference in the sexual harassment experiences of secondary school students in Olorunsogo L.G.A., Oyo State based on age, class level, and religion.

H<sub>03</sub>: There is no significant difference in the academic performance of secondary school students in Olorunsogo L.G.A., Oyo State based on age, class level, and religion.

## 2.0 Materials and Methods

The study adopted descriptive survey research design of correlation type. This is the quantitative analysis of the strength of relationship between two or more variables. According to Kothare (2022), descriptive research of correlation type are studies which are concerned with describing the relationship of between identified groups. Based on this, the design is considered appropriate for this study because it allows the researcher to garner respondents' views on the relationship between sexual harassment and students' academic performance.

The population for this study comprised all secondary school students in Oyo State while the target population consisted of public secondary school students from various secondary schools in Olorunsogo LGA, Oyo State. Two hundred (200) secondary school students constituted a sample for this study. Random sampling technique was used to select 10 Secondary schools in Olorunsogo LGA, Oyo State. This was done using the dip-hat method. Using this method, the researcher wrote the names of all the secondary schools in Olorunsogo LGA, Oyo State on different sheets of papers, puts them in a bag, shakes them and then dipped a hand into the bag to pick a paper. This method was used until 10 schools were selected for the study. The researcher also adopted the stratified sampling procedure to divide the population into strata of gender, class level and religion. Stratified sampling technique involves dividing the population into smaller subgroups. Also, simple random sampling technique was used to select 20 students from each of the school selected. This made a total of 200 respondents that were sampled in this study.

A researcher-developed questionnaire entitled "Sexual Harassment and Students' Academic Performance Questionnaire" (SHSAPQ) was used to collect data for this study. The questionnaire consisted of three sections (that is Section A, B & C). Section A focused on the demographic data of respondents, Section B consisted of statements on the sexual harassment and Section C consisted of students' academic performance. A four-point Likert scale was used for section C which required the respondents to choose the option that best applied to them: Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D), and Strongly Disagree (SD). The copies of the structured instrument were given to experts in Counselling for vetting. Corrections made on the instrument were affected and the instrument was then be adjudged valid for the study. In determining the reliability, a test re-test technique was used. The researcher administered the instrument on 20 students who were not part of the final sample for the study in an interval of three weeks. The two set of scores were correlated using Pearson's Product Moment Correlation statistics and the reliability coefficient of 0.78 was obtained. This implies that instrument was reliable for this study.

The format of each section (A & B) of the questionnaire holds the weight of scoring. Section ‘A’ was analysed using percentages. The four-point Likert type scale was used in scoring the instrument. Hence, the procedure for scoring the instrument was as follows: Strongly Agree (SA)= 4 Points; Agree (A) = 3 Points; Disagree (D) = 2 Points; Strongly Disagree (SD) = 1 Point.

In section B, any item that has the aggregate mean score of 2.50 and above was regarded as sexual harassment having negative influence on students’ academic performance while any item that has the mean score that is below 2.50 and above was regarded as sexual harassment having less negative influence on students’ academic performance.

The data analysis of the study was done using both descriptive and inferential statistics. The data obtained from the Section A was analyzed using descriptive statistics of percentages. Research questions were analyzed using percentage, mean and rank order while, the inferential statistics of Pearson’s Moment Correlation Coefficient Formular and Multivariate Analysis of Variance was employed in testing the three null hypotheses. All the hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance.

### 2.1 demographic data

The analysis of the demographic data showed that 62 (31.0%) of the respondents were male while 138 (69.0%) of the respondents were female. Also, 79 (39.5%) of the respondents were in Junior Secondary School classes while 121 (60.5%) of the respondents were in Senior Secondary School. A total of 3 (1.5%) of the respondents were practicing African Traditional Religion, 85 (42.5%) of the respondents were practicing Christianity while 112 (56.0%) of the respondents were practicing Islam.

## 3.0 Results and discussion

### 3.1 Analysis of research questions

**Research Question 1:** What are the experiences of secondary school students regarding sexual harassment in Olorunsogo L.G.A., Oyo State?

**Table 1:** Mean and Rank Order of the Respondents’ Experiences on the Sexual Harassment

Item No.	As far as I am concerned:	Mean	Rank Order
4	unwanted sexual attention happens to me in both school and non-school setting	3.07	1 <sup>st</sup>
1	I have experienced unwanted sexual advances from others	2.74	2 <sup>nd</sup>
2	I have been physically harassed in a sexual manner	2.68	3 <sup>rd</sup>
5	I have experienced sexual harassment in the form of online messages from others	2.57	4 <sup>th</sup>
3	I experience frequent sexual harassment	2.46	5 <sup>th</sup>
	<b>Aggregate Mean</b>	<b>2.70</b>	

Table 1 presents the mean and rank order of respondents’ experiences on the sexual harassment. Results from Table 1 show that items 4, 1, 2 and 5 ranked 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th respectively with mean scores of 3.07, 2.74, 2.68 and 2.57 which is above the mean cut-off point of 2.50. Since the

mean scores of 4 out of 5 items ranked above 2.50 cut-off point. Furthermore, the table indicates the aggregate mean score of 2.70 which is above 2.50 mean cut-off point. This indicates that sexual harassment experienced by secondary school students was high; they experienced unwanted sexual attention in both school and non-school setting, unwanted sexual advances from others; physical harassment in a sexual manner and sexual harassment in the form of online messages from others.

**Research Question 2:** What is the level of academic performance among secondary school students in Olorunsogo L.G.A., Oyo State?

**Table 2: Mean and rank order of the respondents' level of academic performance**

Item No.	As far as I am concerned: I,	Mean	Rank
3	actively participate in class discussion	2.34	1 <sup>st</sup>
4	achieve high grades in my school subjects	2.24	2 <sup>nd</sup>
2	complete my school work on time	2.18	3 <sup>rd</sup>
6	am satisfied with my academic performance	2.07	4 <sup>th</sup>
5	consistently meet the academic goal set for me	2.05	5 <sup>th</sup>
1	take my school work seriously and I have good grades	2.04	6 <sup>th</sup>
<b>Aggregate mean</b>		<b>2.15</b>	

Table 2 presents the mean and rank order of respondents' level of academic performance. Results from Table 2 indicate that the aggregate mean of 2.15 which ranked below 2.50 mean cut-off point. This implies that secondary school students' academic performance is low

### 3.2 Hypotheses testing

Three null hypotheses were formulated and tested for this study. The hypotheses were tested using Regression and Multivariate Analysis of Variance statistical method at 0.05 level of significance.

**Hypothesis One:** There is no significant relationship between sexual harassment and secondary school students' academic performance in Olorunsogo L.G.A., Oyo State

**Table 3: Pearson's Correlation between sexual harassment and students' academic performance**

Model	N	Mean	Std. Dev	r	p-value
Sexual Harassment (SH)	200	345	1.12	-0.08	0.237
Academic Performance (AP)	200	65.32	10.45		

Table 3 shows the Pearson's correlation analysis which examined the relationship between sexual harassment and students' academic performance in secondary schools within Olorunsogo L.G.A., Oyo State. The result revealed a weak negative correlation ( $r = -0.08$ ), indicating that as sexual harassment increases, academic performance slightly decreases. However, the relationship is not strong. Additionally, the p-value (0.237) is greater than 0.05, meaning the result is not statistically

significant. Therefore, the null hypothesis is not rejected, thus concluding that there is no significant relationship between sexual harassment and students' academic performance.

**Hypothesis two:** There is no significant difference in the sexual harassment experiences of secondary school students in Olorunsogo L.G.A., Oyo State based on age, class level and religion

**Table 4: Multivariate Analysis of Variance showing the differences in the sexual Harassment experienced by Respondents based on age, class level and religion**

Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Squares	Cal. F-Value	p-value
Corrected Model	1408.791 <sup>a</sup>	19	74.147	7.20	.000
Intercept	5199.728	1	5199.728	505.04	.000
Age	88.644	2	44.322	4.30*	.015
Class Level	16.008	1	16.008	1.55	.214
Religion	19.275	2	9.637	.936	.394
Error	1853.204	180	10.296		
Total	39739.000	200			
Corrected Total	3261.995	199			

a. R Squared = .432 (Adjusted R Squared = .372)

\* p < .05

Table 4 shows the result of the Multivariate Analysis of Variance based on class level and religion. The calculated F-value of age is 4.30 with a corresponding p-value of .015 which is less than 0.05 level of significance. Similarly, the calculated F-value of class level 1.55 with a corresponding p-value of .214 which is greater than 0.05 level of significance. Also, the calculated F-value of religion is .936 with the corresponding p-value of .394 which is greater than 0.05 level of significance. Since the calculated p-value for age is less than level of significance and p-values of class level and religion is greater than level of significance, thus, the hypothesis is not accepted. Therefore, this implies that there is no significant difference in the sexual harassment experiences of secondary school students in Olorunsogo L.G.A., Oyo State based on class level and religion but significance differences were found based on age.

In order to ascertain where the significant difference lies, Scheffe Post-Hoc was carried out and the output is shown on Table 5.

**Table 5: Scheffe post-hoc where the significant difference lies based on Age**

Year	N	Sub set for Alpha = 0.05	
		1	2
15-18 years	123	12.70	
11-14 years	59	13.46	
19 years and above	18		15.89
Sig.		.064	.160

Results from Table 5 indicates that respondents between 15-18 years and 11-14 years are in the same sub-set with the mean scores of 12.70 and 13.46 respectively, while those who were 19 years

and above is found (in subset 2) with the highest mean score of 15.89. This implies that respondents who are 19 years of age and above contributed to the significant difference.

**Hypothesis Three:** There is no significant difference in the academic performance of secondary school students in Olorunsogo L.G.A., Oyo State based on age, class level and religion

**Table 6: Multivariate Analysis of Variance showing the differences in the Respondents' Academic Performance Based on Age, Class level and Religion**

Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Squares	Cal. F-Value	p-value
Corrected Model	590.605 <sup>a</sup>	19	31.084	1.560	.071
Intercept	5326.835	1	5326.835	267.351	.000
Age	21.231	2	10.615	.533	.588
Class Level	.008	1	.008	.022	.984
Religion	14.461	2	7.231	.363	.696
Error	3586.415	180	19.925		
Total	37614.000	200			
Corrected Total	4177.020	199			

a. R Squared = .141 (Adjusted R Squared = .051)

Table 6 shows the result of the Multivariate Analysis of Variance based on age, class level and religion. The calculated F-value is .037 with corresponding p-value of .848 which is more than 0.05 level of significance. Similarly, the calculated F-value of age is .533 with a corresponding p-value of .588 which is greater than 0.05 level of significance. Similarly, the calculated F-value of class level .022 with a corresponding p-value of .984 which is greater than 0.05 level of significance. Also, the calculated F-value of religion is .363 with the corresponding p-value of .696 which is greater than 0.05 level of significance. Since the calculated p-values for age, class level and religion is greater than level of significance, thus, the hypothesis is accepted. Therefore, this implies that there is no significant difference in the secondary school students' academic performance in Olorunsogo L.G.A., Oyo State based on age, class level and religion

### 3.4 Discussion

The finding of the study showed that sexual harassment experienced by secondary school students was high. They experienced unwanted sexual attention in both school and non-school setting, unwanted sexual advances from others; physical harassment in a sexual manner and sexual harassment in the form of online messages from others. This multifaceted nature of harassment indicates that students are vulnerable to such experiences not only within the school environment but also in non-school settings and digital spaces. This finding aligns with Gruber and Fineran's (2016) study, which found that sexual harassment experiences among adolescents were common in both school and community settings. A study by Charmaraman, Jones, Stein and Espelage (2018) found that digital forms of sexual harassment were increasingly common and often intersected with in-person experiences. Similarly, Lichty, Rosenberg and Laughlin (2019) reported that students experienced a range of harassing behaviours, including unwanted sexual attention and physical harassment, both within and outside of school settings.

Conversely, the finding also showed that secondary school students' academic performance was low. This implies that a significant number of students in this educational level are not achieving the expected academic standards. The finding of this study relates to the study of Gbollie and Keamu (2017) who found that secondary school students' academic performance was below average. Adeyemi and Adeyemi (2020) revealed that secondary school students' academic performance was generally low, citing factors such as inadequate teaching facilities and poor teacher motivation as contributing factors. This could be as a result of the psychological impact of experiencing sexual harassment, which can detract from students' focus and engagement in their studies.

Hypothesis one revealed that there was no significant relationship between sexual harassment and academic performance in Olorunsogo L.G.A., Oyo State. This suggests that, within the context of this study, the occurrence of sexual harassment did not have a measurable or direct impact on students' academic outcomes. The finding of this study did not support the study of Knox, Davidson and Cooper (2017) who found that sexual harassment has a significant emotional and psychological impact, but not all students experience a direct academic decline as a result. Similarly, the finding negates the study of Gordon Rey and Fernandez (2020) who found that sexual harassment had a more indirect or long-term effect on academic performance. This could mean that other factors, such as personal resilience, school support systems, and family background, may mitigate the potential negative effects of sexual harassment on students' ability to perform academically.

Hypothesis two revealed that there was no significant differences in the sexual harassment experiences of secondary school students in Olorunsogo L.G.A., Oyo State based on class level and religion but significant difference was found based on age. Based on class level, this suggests that students across different class levels are equally vulnerable to sexual harassment. The finding of this study supports that of Fineran and Bolen (2017) which revealed that sexual harassment is a pervasive issue across various age groups in schools, affecting students irrespective of their academic level. Similarly, Omoteso and Omotosho (2018) found that sexual harassment in schools was a widespread issue that did not significantly differ based on students' academic level. This could be that the risk or occurrence of sexual harassment does not vary significantly whether a student is in junior or senior classes.

Based on religion, the finding implies that students from different religious backgrounds (e.g., Christianity, Islam, or traditional religions) appear to face similar levels of sexual harassment in their school environments. The outcome of this study agrees with the finding of Oladeji and Afolayan (2018) who found no significant difference in the prevalence of sexual harassment among secondary school students based on their religious affiliations. This could be that shared cultural background may lead to similar experiences and perceptions of sexual harassment across religious groups.

Based on age, significant difference was found and this suggests that the likelihood or nature of sexual harassment varies depending on the student's age. The result of Scheffe post hoc revealed that respondents who were 19 years of age and above contributed more to the significant different. The finding aligns with the study of Timmerman (2020) who found that older students, particularly

those in their teens, experience sexual harassment that includes physical or verbal assaults due to their appearance and social interactions with older individuals. This could be that younger students might experience different forms or frequencies of harassment compared to older students.

Hypothesis three revealed that there were no significant differences in the secondary school students' academic performance in Olorunsogo L.G.A., Oyo State based on age, class level and religion. Based on age, the finding showed no significant difference. This indicates that students of varying ages, whether they are younger or older within the secondary school age range, perform similarly academically. This finding relates to the submission of Olaniyi (2018) who asserted that factors such as teaching quality, student motivation, and resource availability were more critical determinants of academic success than age. One possible reason is that the curriculum and teaching strategies in place are designed to accommodate students of different ages, allowing them to engage with the material effectively regardless of their age.

The result of the hypothesis also revealed that there was no significant difference in the students' academic performance based on class level. This implies that the students, regardless of their grade or class, performed similarly in their academics. The finding of this study disagrees with the study of Gbadura (2010) who found significant difference based on between junior and senior class. It was concluded that student's academic performance varies according to individual differences such as high, average or low academic performance. The reason for no significant difference could be that schools in the region may employ uniform teaching strategies across all class levels, ensuring that students at different stages of their education receive similar quality instruction. Based on religion, the finding revealed no significant difference. This implies that students from different religious backgrounds (e.g., Christianity, Islam, or traditional religions) appear to face similar levels of academic performance. The outcome of this study agrees with the finding of Innis, Hartley, Polesel and Teese (2000) who reported that performance of students in vocational education was not different irrespective of their religion affiliation. Similarly, the lack of variation in academic performance across age groups and class levels may imply that external factors such as quality of teaching and student motivation may be more influential than demographic characteristics.

#### **4.0 Conclusion and Recommendations**

The study investigated the relationship between sexual harassment and secondary school students' academic performance in Ilorin metropolis, Kwara State, Nigeria. It was concluded that sexual harassment experienced by secondary school students was high with experiences in unwanted sexual attention in both school and non-school setting, unwanted sexual advances from others; physical harassment in a sexual manner and sexual harassment in the form of online messages from others. It was concluded that the secondary school students' academic performance was low. The study further revealed that there was no significant relationship between sexual harassment and students' academic performance in Olorunsogo L.G.A., Oyo State. There were no significant differences in the sexual harassment experiences of secondary school students in Olorunsogo L.G.A., Oyo State based on class level and religion but significant difference was found based on age. Also, there were no significant differences in the secondary school students' academic performance in Olorunsogo L.G.A., Oyo State based on age, class level and religion.

Based on the findings of the study, it was recommended that school managements should implement comprehensive educational programs to raise awareness about sexual harassment, its forms, and its consequences. This can empower students to recognize and report harassment.

1. Schools should establish robust support systems for victims of harassment, including counselling services and reporting mechanisms, can help students feel safe and supported.
2. Counsellors should collaborate with teachers, school administrators, and parents to promote awareness about sexual harassment and encourage a zero-tolerance policy.

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### Conflict of Interest

The researchers do not have any conflict of interest.