

OSUN FEMALE JOURNALISTS' PERCEPTION OF HARASSMENT ON DUTY (QUANTITATIVE ANALYSIS)

ARIWODOLA, MARYANN ABISOLA

Department of Mass Communication

Redeemer's University Ede, Osun State, Nigeria

ariwodola13849@run.edu.ng

+2348037212437

&

ALADE, MOYOSORE, (PhD)

Department of Mass Communication

Redeemer's University Ede, Osun State, Nigeria

alade@run.edu.ng

ABSTRACT

This study used Osun State, Nigeria, as the study location to evaluate how female journalists perceived harassment while on the job. This study aims to assess the prevalence of harassment and any potential effects it may have on female journalists, and the effectiveness of the media as a whole, which most likely also have an impact on the victim's mental health. The study assessed harassment existence, and effects in Osun State, Nigeria, using a descriptive design. It used a survey research methodology in which 100 respondents were purposively chosen from a population of 118 female journalists from media organizations to complete the questionnaires. The Osun State chapter of the Nigeria Association of Women Journalists, NAWOJ was the demographic chosen as the union housing the female journalists in the state. According to research, among other consequences, verbal, sexual, and the danger of job instability were among the most serious effects of harassment. The female journalists in the media industry should be protected by legislative provisions to create a gender-free working environment for the flourishing of both males and females, particularly female journalists who are part of the common victims of harassment and its vices in this region of the country.

Keywords: Harassment, Female Journalists, Media, Victims, Nigeria Association of Women Journalists.

INTRODUCTION

Harassment on duty occurs as a threat to productivity, which its happening once in a while at every workplace and cannot be ruled out, despite the campaign against such an indecent act. The female journalists are not left out, irrespective of their age. They face intimidation daily as they discharge their roles while on duty.

This harassment which could be physical, psychological, or sensual aspects is not only faced at their respective workplace, but also on the field, where female journalists in the line of duty, encounter the opposite sex and others who choose to harass them because of their gender, and myth that Women are believed to be the weaker gender created to be developed as assistant, MacDermott (1995).

It is sad to note that, some men are aggressive in their harassing, implying that a woman's place is not at work but rather in her home kitchen, serving her husband. While performing their jobs in public, female journalists frequently come into contact with men, these guys, who are frequently wealthy, find them attractive and decide to harass the women because of their status, regardless of the victim's objections. God gave women a special ability to multitask, which is demonstrated by the attributes of female journalists who successfully balance their jobs as wives, mothers, and employees without any of them interfering with one another.

Additionally, as the push for gender equality and empowerment in all spheres gained momentum around the world in the early 1950s, more women-focused stories began to emerge in Nigerian publications. In Nigeria, Coker (1952) provides a history of how women entered the field of journalism. The Nigerian Daily Times' establishment saw the first appearance of colorful feature stories with boxed title-heads, marking the first time that women were discovered in the traditionally male-dominated area of feature writing.

Female Journalists have come a long way, in participating in the industry as practitioners, editors, managers, and owners, but it is sad to note that males frequently get away with harassing female journalists, and as a result, there are gender gaps in the legislation and laws currently in effect, implementation gaps, and a lack of enforcement of existing laws in accordance with international and regional standards.

Aggressive pressure or intimidation is harassment, and even while female journalists continue to endure harassment, men and women journalists are nonetheless given the same beats, work the same hours, and run the same risks while on the job. With the support of the Nigeria Association of Women Journalists NAWOJ, the organization that manages female journalists throughout the nation, the representation of female journalists is improved, though noting that one issue that makes it difficult for many Nigerian journalists to do effective journalism is harassment.

Comrade Ladi Bala, NAWOJ national president, is well known for being devoted to the association's members and defending them as tenaciously as she can. However, there are still certain men in the community who enjoy tormenting female journalists.

In Osun state, the Nigeria Association of Women Journalists, NAWOJ, a seasoned professional body that focuses on women and is known as the voice for women, children, youths, and people with disabilities in society, is aware of the difficulties that Nigerian women face in their efforts to support the development of their country, which is why it has established itself as a union that monitors the welfare of its female members in media outlets all over the state. Because of its parent organization, the Nigeria Union of Journalists, which is connected to media outlets in Osun state, female journalists are easily identified and registered with NAWOJ as its professional body.

According to Shaw et al. (2018), sexual harassment at work is a serious offense with severe consequences for the victims, other employees, and the company. The consequences of harassment decreases employee commitment to their work Joe-Akunne (2018), as well as organizational effectiveness, and as a result of leader-member or member-member relationships, sexual harassment frequently results in employment insecurity for victims.

Sexual Harassments

The physical form of sexual harassment: occurs when the victim is subjected to unwanted physical contact, including touching that is embarrassing, kissing, snuggling, acts and behaviors, and sexual behavior.

Verbal form of sexual harassment: is demonstrated by remarks, conversations, and sexually explicit jokes that harass and embarrass the subject.

Non-verbal form of sexual harassment: It happens as a result of gestures, transmission of signals and nudes, staring to seduce, and showing one's nude to the target person.

Sexual harassment encompasses a wide variety of actions, from sexist looks and crude jokes to insults based on gender stereotypes, to sexual assault and other physical violence, unwanted fondling, unwelcome touching, unwanted sexual advances, sex-related insults, sex-related jokes, unwanted sexual gestures, letters, unwanted sexually explicit text messages and phone calls.

Sexually harassing behaviors

Sexually harassing behavior is maltreatment that is unwelcome, occurs against the female gender without her agreement, and is perceived to be sexual in character. It is divided into three categories: sexual coercion: that involves spoken and nonverbal acts intended to make the victim feel inferior due to their gender, unwelcome sexual attention: that encompasses unwanted verbal or nonverbal sexual approaches made against the victim specifically, and gender harassment: occurs when one is denied access to professional or educational services they are entitled to because of a condition that may prevent them from receiving them without consenting to inappropriate sexual conduct, and being deprived of the freedom of choice by sexual harassment makes this worrying and problematic.

Sexual harassment has eaten deeply through the society. According to published research, it happens in every community, organization, workplace, and institution on earth (Oni et al., 2014). As examples, even with the recent occurrences in the banking industry and some churches, institutions, sexual harassment and assault occur often in Nigeria in practically all spheres of life.

It should come as no surprise that harassment on duty and at the workplace, especially against female journalists and employees, is not just unethical but also widely criticized. This is due to the fact that harassment of female employees has a wide range of repercussions and adverse impacts on both the victim and the business in which it takes place (Akinfala & Tunde, 2017). In an ideal world, media companies would be set up to nurture the greatest amount of dedication, which would in turn enable and support high-quality performance.

Harassment or Sexual harassment is a contentious topic in organizations because it negatively impacts employees' jobs, employers' businesses, and society at large. Some Nigerians view it as highly embarrassing and offensive, while others see it as normal and requested. According to Bistand (2009), there is still a pay disparity between male and female journalists in the majority of countries.

The majority of the time, working mothers are forced into part-time, temporary, or freelance roles due to the high level of stress, bullying and harassment, intolerable workloads, and antisocial working hours. These considerations frequently place females in much more precarious situations with regard to their capacity to obtain promotions, maintain their status as employees, and enjoy the same legal protections as their hired male coworkers. It was noticed that female journalists face career-related obstacles not because of how well they do at work, but rather only because they are female.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Like other human rights, the freedom to accept or refuse sexual advances also applies to the workplace, regardless of the structure of power and the environment (Shaw et al., 2018). In most workplace situations, a man or woman's decision to reject any form of romantic advances may depend on the culture of the organization, current industry regulations, and state or national laws protecting the populace in general and women in particular from all forms of discrimination, harassment, and exploitation. Akinfala and Tunde (2017) also revealed that the rate of sexual harassment against female workers in the banking sector in Nigeria. The literature also revealed negative perception of Owerri Residents' on Women in Journalism Practice, recommendation of good image portrayal was made to that effect, Sheba et al (2019),

Harassment

Harassment is when someone is subjected to repeated unwelcome contact without a justifiable reason, insults, threats, touching, or insulting language. According to the Oxford Dictionary, the United Nations recognized and supported the campaign against gender-based harassment in 1995 at the Fourth World Conference in Beijing, which included a statement that harassment of the female gender falls under the category of violence against women harms women and girls, and impairs their ability to thrive in a variety of ways. An unprecedented two-thirds of nations have passed domestic abuse laws since the Beijing Conference. However, there are still inconsistencies in the legislation, a lack of legal protection, and a lack of access to basic services for women all over the world, and Osun State, Nigeria is not left out in the campaign of harassment against the female gender.

Human rights apply to people of the female gender, and it is believed that women and girls have a right to fully and equally exercise all of their human rights. The Beijing Platform for Action affirms that the government's primary duty as well as organizations' work is to safeguard and advance human rights. Nigeria, a member of the international community, aims for equality, progress, and peace for women worldwide. However, there is still a lack of protection against harassment and gender discrimination, largely due to the patriarchal nature of Nigerian society.

Gender discrimination against female journalists in Nigeria often leads to a loss of output, and a shortage of qualified employees, and discourages women from pursuing careers in the field, with sexual harassment being a significant issue, however, when a sexual activity is a result of intimidation of any sort, it becomes worrisome and an infringement of the individual's human rights (Ramakrishnan, 2019).

Women's Rights and Harassment

Women's rights are human rights, including the freedom from abuse and discrimination, the right to the best possible level of physical and mental health, the right to an education, the right to own property and the right to vote, as well as the right to a living wage (Women's Rights; Amnesty International). The United Nations declared women's rights to be fundamental human rights that apply to every person on the earth. It is clear that women continue to experience discrimination all around the world in a variety of settings, including the family, the job, and society at large.

Despite countless awareness programs, legislation, and regulations, the lives of women continue to be far more complicated than those of men. The human rights for the female gender is supported by legislation focus on bodily integrity and autonomy, to be free from sexual violence, vote, hold public office, enter into legal contracts, freedom from harassment, have equal rights in family law, work, fair wages or equal pay, freedom from discrimination, have reproductive rights, to own property, freedom from assault, and to education are among the issues frequently associated with notions of women's rights, Hosken (1981).

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Although some critics have blamed harassment on the way a female gender dresses, harassment is positioned on duty and in workplaces where employees or job seekers are harassed by their coworkers, bosses, or employers. Sometimes it is found that the harassment a female journalist experiences while on the job is the result of a male colleague feeling that the woman shouldn't have the position she earned on the basis of merit.

In Nigeria, some male journalists and the general public hold the belief that the field of journalism is male-dominated and exclusively for men. They believe that a woman's job is to care for the home and children while men work outside the home, but female journalists have made great strides despite a rocky start (Sanusi and Adelabu 2015). The narrative has changed, and female journalists now do more than just look after their home.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Asemah et al (2017) argue that feminist muted theory suggests a male-dominated society where women are often seen as inarticulate, based on women's experiences, she argued in her presumptions that "since men are the dominant group in society, the male perception is always dominant. Women's views and systems of perception are typically ignored since they are considered to be less competent. This hypothesis is especially pertinent to the current study because the media environment, which is the focus of this work.

PROTECTION BILL OR POLICY FOR FEMALE JOURNALISTS AGAINST HARASSMENT IN OSUN STATE

Nigeria's 2016 law prohibiting sexual harassment mandated a 5-year prison sentence without a fee for offenders. Despite these measures, sexual harassment continues in Nigerian workplaces, including Osun State, despite efforts to combat the issue.

In the glaring empirical evidence of sexual harassment against female workers in many sectors in Nigeria, there is no documentation of cases of sexual harassment against female employees in media organizations in Osun State, Nigeria. This study was inspired by the gap in the

literature. The study's conclusions should serve as empirical support for subsequent studies on related areas. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to investigate the frequency, perceptions, and effects of harassment towards working female journalists in Osun State and to suggest ways to stop the harmful trend from spreading, lack of appropriate policy or laws calls for concern in the state, such allows violation of the law, that abuses the power of choice and free will of the victim while trespassing on their fundamental human right

The Place of Law on Harassment

In order to ensure that women's problems are taken into account, the 2006 National Gender Policy requires aggressive government action to address women's issues in a number of economic areas, including decision-making, legal reform, legislative protection, agriculture, employment, health, and education. State governments in Nigeria have enacted laws addressing sexual assault, with the Federal Government not having exclusive authority. The National Industrial Courts are addressing workplace sexual harassment, and Nigerian courts are working to prevent the rise in such incidents, ensuring fundamental human rights are respected.

The Criminal and Penal Code

The criminal code in Nigerian states criminalizes sexual harassment, with sections 351 to 361 defining the offense. Unlawful assaults result in one-year imprisonment, while those intent on having carnal knowledge face 14-year imprisonment. Indecent assaults against women or girls result in two-year imprisonment. The punishments for such offenses vary. Section 281 of the penal punishes individuals who gratify another person's passions, even with consent, with imprisonment of up to seven years and a fine. Section 285 punishes those who commit gross indecency without consent or force, with imprisonment of up to seven years and a fine. Consent given by a person under sixteen years old is not considered consent.

States sexual and gender-based violence laws

Nigeria's states, including Abuja, have SGBV-specific laws to combat sexual assault, with Lagos being the first to pass such legislation, and Abuja's federal legislature has passed a creative anti-violence ordinance. In Osun state, there are Violence Against Persons Prohibition VAPP laws. The main thrust of the law is to eliminate violence in private and public life and prohibit all forms of violence against persons to provide maximum protection and effective remedies for victims and punishment of offenders and other related matters.

Consequences of harassment

On female genders who are victim of harassment and its vices, the consequences ranges from physical to mental-health. The victims of harassment or sexual harassment suffer significant psychological effects, such as headaches, anxiety, sleep disorders, depression, weight loss or gain, lowered self-esteem, nausea, and sexual dysfunction. Also, in relation to work, they experience job-related costs as well: ranging from decreased morale, decreased job satisfaction to irreparable damage to interpersonal relationships at work, as well as job loss similarly, there is also the existence of physical and psychological distress related with sexual harassment leading to a tense and fruitless working environment.

METHODOLOGY

The study utilized a quantitative research approach to measure opinions and perceptions of harassment of women in the journalism industry, using a descriptive survey design across 10 media chapels in Osun state, with 118 female journalists participating in the study. A study of 100 respondents was conducted using a multi-stage sampling technique, with 88 questionnaires answered and recovered. Purposive sampling selected media organizations, while simple random sampling selected Nigeria Association of Women Journalists members with at least 10 years of journalism experience. Measure - A structured questionnaire titled Harassment against Female Journalists, (HFJ) was used in eliciting responses from the respondents. The questionnaire contained 8 questions.

DATA ANALYSIS

Descriptive analysis was employed for data analysis, which comprises frequency counts and simple percentages.

Table A

Demography of Media Chapels and some Organizations recognized by Nigeria Association of Women Journalists NAWOJ, with the number of females in the chapels

S/N	CHAPEL NAME	ORGANIZATION NAMES	Frequency
1	OSBC Chapel	Osun State Broadcasting Corporation, OSBC TV and Radio, Orisun FM, Odidere FM Reality Radiovision,	35
2.	State Information Chapel	Osun State Ministry of Information and Public Enlightenment	15
3	Rave FM Chapel	Rave FM, Western-Spring TV	6
4	Correspondent Chapel	Correspondence Chapel	4
5	NTA Chapel	NTA Osogbo	2
6	Fresh FM Chapel	Fresh FM	4
7	Radio Nigeria; Gold FM Chapel	Radio Nigeria, Gold FM	8
8	Federated Chapel	Unique FM, Freedom TV, TimsedFM,	11
9	Local government chapel	Local Government Information	31
10	Osun defender chapel	Osun Defender Newspaper	2
	TOTAL		118
		Tungba FM (Not yet affiliated to a Chapel) 1-member	
		Crown FM (Not yet affiliated to a Chapel) 3-members	

Source: Field Study, 2023

Table A above shows the chapel names of mediums and the organization names, as categorized and recognized by the Osun state chapter of the Nigeria Association of Women Journalists. Figures show that some of the operational organizations which were government-owned, classified as chapels, are Osun State Broadcasting Corporation: OSBC Television and Radio, Orisun FM, Odidere FM, and Reality RadioVision, while Rave FM and WesternTV(privately owned belong to the same employer, Unique FM, Freedom TV, and Timsed FM are

classified with federated chapel. The total number of organizations grouped into chapels in Table A are 118, and there was extra 4 unregistered NAWOJ members, from two mediums (Tungba and Crown FM), which have female journalists in their employ, but they are not affiliated with the Female Journalists Association in Osun state.

Table 1: Showing existence of harassment of female journalists in Osun State

Respondents Responses	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Strongly Disagree	14	16.5%
Disagree	10	11.0%
Strongly Agree	24	28.0%
Agree	28	32.0%
Neutral	12	14.6%
Total	88	100%

Source: Field Study, 2023

According to table 1 above, a total of 14 (16.5%) strongly disagree that harassment of female journalists exists in Osun state, 10 (11.0%) disagreed, that it doesn't exist, 24(28.0%) strongly agreed that it exist, 28(32.0%) agreed and 12(14.6%) were neutral on their responses regarding the existence of female journalists harassment in Osun State.

Table 2: showing protection policy for female journalists employed by media organization

Respondents Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	54	63.7%
No	20	22.0%
Neutral	14	14.0%
Total	88	100%

Source: Field Study, 2023

According to Table 2, 54(63.7%) said yes to the existence of protection policy by media organizations in Osun state, 20(22.0%) said no to the availability of the protection policy and 14(14.0%) were neutral about it.

Table 3: showing due process treatment by media organizations when harassment occurs

Respondents Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	24	28%
No	44	51.9%
Neutral	20	20.0%
Total	88	100%

Source: Field Study, 2023

According to Table 3 above, 44(51.9%) said yes to the question that media organizations follows due process when harassment occurs against the female journalists, 24(28.0%) said no, and 20(20%) were neutral about their responses on whether their organization follows due process in the occurrence of harassment.

Table 4: Showing performance rating of law agencies in Osun state in tandem with the laws on harassment of female journalists

Respondents Responses	Frequency	Percentage%
Strongly Disagree	41	48.3%
Disagree	21	23.1%
Strongly Agree	10	11.7%
Agree	5	5.0%
Neutral	11	11.9%
Total	88	100%

Source: Field Study, 2023

According to Table 4 above, 41(48.3%) strongly disagreed on the performance of law agencies in Osun state in tandem with the laws of harassment of female journalists, 21(23.1%) disagreed about it, while 10(11.7%) strongly agreed that law agencies perform in relation to harassment of female journalists, 5(5.0%) agreed and 11(11.9%) were neutral on the performance of law agencies in Osun state in tandem with the laws of harassment of female journalists.

Table 5: showing prevalence of harassment of female journalists in Osun State

Respondents Responses	Frequency	Percentage%
Strongly Disagree	18	21.2%
Disagree	14	16.0%
Strongly Agree	26	30.2%
Agree	20	22.2%
Neutral	10	11.8%
Total	88	100%

Source: Field Study, 2023

According to Table 5 above, 18(21.2%) strongly disagreed that there is prevalence of harassment of female journalists in Osun State, 14(16.0%) disagreed, 26(30.2%) strongly agreed that there is prevalence of harassment of female journalists in Osun state, while 20(22.2%) also agreed, and 10(11.8%) respondents were neutral on the question asked about the prevalence rate of harassment of female journalists in Osun State.

Table 6: showing the culture of silence as it affects female harassments of journalists in Osun State

Respondents Responses	Frequency	Percentage%
Strongly Disagree	15	17.7%
Disagree	10	11.8%
Strongly Agree	33	38.9%
Agree	27	31.8%
Neutral	3	3.5%
Total	88%	100%

Source: Field Study, 2023

According to Table 6 above, 15(17.7%) strongly disagreed that there is culture of silence on harassment in Osun state, 10(11.8%) disagreed on this notion, while 33(38.9%) strongly agreed

that there is culture of silence on harassment of female journalists in Osun state, and 27(31.8%) agreed with the question, but 3(3.5%) respondent were neutral on the culture of silence question on harassment of female journalists in Osun State.

Table 7: showing cover-up by some media organizations, under the pretext of protecting a female journalist victim of harassment

Respondents Responses	Frequency	Percentage%
Strongly Disagree	10	11.8%
Disagree	29	34.2%
Strongly Agree	25	29.5%
Agree	20	23.6%
Neutral	4	4.7%
Total	88%	100%

Source: Field Study, 2023

According to Table 7 above, 10(11.8%) strongly disagreed that some media organizations cover-up, under the pretext of protecting female journalists, victim of harassment in their employ, 29(34.2%) disagreed on the cover-up by some media organization on female journalists harassment, 25(29.5%) strongly agreed that some media organizations in Osun State, do cover up on female journalists harassment, while 20(23.6%) agreed with the question that some media organizations do cover-up, but 4(4.7%) were Neutral on the question asked about covering up of some media organizations on female journalists harassment in Osun state.

Table 8: showing the protectiveness of female journalists, members of the Nigeria Association of Women Journalists NAWOJ

Respondents Responses	Frequency	Percentage%
Strongly Disagree	0	0%
2.3Disagree	0	0%
Strongly Agree	64	75.5%
Agree	22	25.9%
Neutral	2	2.3%
Total	88%	100%

Source: Field Study, 2023

According to Table 8 above, on the question of protectiveness of female journalists by NAWOJ, 0 (0%) strongly disagreed, and another 0(0%) also disagreed, while 64(75.5) strongly agreed that Nigeria Association of Women Journalists NAWOJ is very protective of its members, the female journalists, practicing in the state, 22(25.9) also agreed, and 2(2.3%) were neutral on its answer about the protectiveness of NAWOJ of its female journalists members in Osun State.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Analysis of data revealed that 24(28.32%) of the respondents strongly agreed that harassment of female journalists exists in Osun State, 12(14.6%) were confirmed to have neutral perception on harassment of female journalists in Osun state. By implication female journalists are

portrayed from a negative angle as victims of harassment in Osun state, and that their performances are dependent on their gender.

Analysis of data further revealed that 44(51.9%) of the respondents answered yes to the question, that some organizations do not follow due process whenever harassment occurs, and this to a very large extent affects the contributions of the female journalists to the media. The analysis of the finding showed that discrimination against women in journalism profession can limit their overall performance to the media. This finding is in tandem with that of Asogwa (2018) which says that female journalists face harassment from news sources (field), and on duty. It is clear that female journalists that faces harassment on duty are bound to underperform, due to the after effect of the challenges of harassment encountered. In view of this finding, On the silence of culture, 23(34.9%) strongly agreed that harassment of female journalists exists in Osun state, and this finding corroborates the feminist muted theory which explains that certain groups in society are muted, silent or not heard (that is, the women). Analysis of findings further revealed that 26(30.2%) of the respondents strongly agreed that women face challenges in journalism and these challenges may include: sexual harassment unnecessary preference of male journalists to female journalists. No doubt, female journalists in some cases faces constant sexual harassment while carrying out their assigned duties. Similarly, challenges such as maternity leaves, irregular payment of salary, sexual harassment as well as the silence of culture also exist, and the odds are against the female journalists in this male dominated society where the men dominate the media just as the feminist muted theory adopts.

CONCLUSION

The study examined the perception of female journalists of harassment on duty. Harassment of the female pen professionals have affected their delivery and the consequences spelt out in the profession as the study observed. The study observed that female journalists faces risk of harassment on duty, yet they have to perform their journalistic roles. The key findings of the study adapt to other empirical studies studied in this work. Responses by respondents in the study showed that harassment of female journalist exist in Osun State, that media organizations at times cover up on cases of female journalists harassment on the pretext that they are protecting them, that Osun state does not have female journalists protection law, and that the Nigeria Association of Women Journalists is proactive in its protection of its female journalists members in Osun State.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Media organizations should improve on the protection policy of the female journalists.
- Osun state government should sign into law, female journalists protection law.
- Law agencies should follow due process and prosecute any offender of harassment against female journalists.
- Female journalists working in the state should be affiliated to NAWOJ, the professional body that will fight for their right and interest.
- Even though levels of harassment differs, stakeholders and the government should station more determination into eradication of harassment in its total.
- The public should not view the female journalists as just women, or gender to be harassed.
- The government should also provide more awareness, and sensitization on the protection of journalists, particularly female journalists in the Osun State.

- The female journalists in the media industry should be protected by legislative provisions to create a gender-free working environment for the female journalists.
- The Female Journalists should not be influenced by the culture of silence on harassment.

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