Sexual Violence and Development Implications in Uganda Universities: The Case of Kyambogo University

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Abstract

Sexual violence (SV) remains a menace in society, a stonewall hindering the coexistence and holistic growth of all genders. It is a challenge in higher education despite the fact that relevant legal and policy frameworks intended to curtail its prevalence exist. The unwinding subsistence of SV forms the basis of this study, which specifically aims to establish its nature, causes, development implications, and the way forward for the Kyambogo University (KyU). This study was qualitative in nature, and adopted a case research design in which SV phenomenon as a lived experience was studied, described and interpreted from the victim's point of view. Qualitative data derived from an interview guide was processed with the help of content analysis tools, while observing standard ethical considerations. Results indicate that sexual violence takes the form of sexual harassment, sexual exploitation, intimate partner sexual assault, unwanted sexual contacts, rape, showing ones genitals, masturbation and peeping at people in private sexual acts. The causes are male chauvinism, poverty, difficulty to secure evidence, corruption and stigmatization; all of which have resulted into far-reaching negative effects on the health, education achievement, research and innovations, returns on higher education and self-esteem of the victims, and the institution as a whole. Conclusively, therefore, SV is a reality in KyU, perpetuated largely by the male gender. Since it is socially constructed, it can be deconstructed. Thus, the study recommends awareness creation, enacting more stringent gender and anti-SV policies, gender responsive budgeting, plus monitoring and evaluation of every step in the SV direction so as to end this vice.

1. Introduction

Sexual Violence (SV) is a form of gender violence evident in all countries of the globe, and continues to permeate society as a result of history, perception, and practice. The WHO estimates that 736m women—or over a third of all women globally (aged 15 and above)—have been victims of intimate partner violence, non-partner sexual violence, or both, at least once in their lives (WHO, 2021). More information reveals that in some countries, nearly one-third of adolescent girls report forced sexual initiation, and nearly one-quarter of women report sexual violence by an intimate partner. For example, in North London, England, 23% of the women said they had been victims of an attempted or completed rape by a partner at some point in their lives.

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The same was reported in Guadalajara, Mexico, and Lima, Peru (23%); as well as in the Midlands Province of Zimbabwe (25%) (Krug et al., 2002). Hundreds of thousands of women and children are believed to be sold into prostitution or sexual slavery each year; or are subjected to SV in schools, workplaces, healthcare centres, and refugee settings around the world (ibid.). According to the 2016 Uganda Demographic and Health Survey, up to 22% of Ugandan women aged 15 to 49 have suffered some sort of sexual violence. According to the same research, 13% of the women aged 15 to 49 reported experiencing sexual violence on a yearly basis, which translates to more than one million women being exposed to sexual violence every year in Uganda. According to Uganda's 2016 police crime report, the number of reported rape cases climbed from 1,419 in 2015 to 1,572 in 2016. According to a survey from the Makerere University College of Health Sciences, one out of every five females with hearing impairments has been raped in the last year, demonstrating that SV knows no bounds. It is no surprise that 7,091 students were estimated to be experiencing—or having experienced—sexual violence at the Kyambogo University (KyU), despite of its tight standards the fact that it is an institution where students are expected to be busy with their academic work. With the use of cyber-bullying and abuse through social media and cell-phones in Uganda, violence against women has become more sophisticated, with significant physical and psychological consequences on women.

The study was guided by the cultural feminism of Brooke Williams (1975) that arose in the early 1970s during the women's liberation movement, and which championed a variety of political goals, critical platforms, and approaches. Its proponents defined women's oppression as largely cultural constructions and representations of gender identities that assign different social, economic, and political roles based on sexual difference. The initiatives of cultural feminism centred on everyday life, the family, the body, and sexuality; with the goal of challenging established gender norms and institutions. The proponents thought that women (and men) can only be liberated by dismantling deeply ingrained cultural norms and representations of 'the feminine' and 'the masculine' in the context of gender stereotypes and roles. As such, they argued, improving women's political and economic status requires more than just legal or economic changes and formal equality, but also a much deeper cultural shift. They also proposed that patriarchy would be destroyed by the creation of countercultural alternative spaces, the development of new living practices, rejection of normative gender roles; and the establishment of women's centres and platforms, as well as spaces, that are safe and free from patriarchal violence.

The World Health Organization (WHO) defines sexual violence as "… any sexual act, attempt to obtain a sexual act, unwanted sexual comments or advances, or acts to 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 at home and at work" (WHO, 2021). SV generally occurs through acts of rape, defilement, marital rape, forced marriage, human trafficking as well as sexual harassment; and once the affected party feels offended, then SV has taken place.

Development, on the other hand, means increasing and becoming more advanced in all sectors of life (politics, economics and social). It is about making positive changes and progress in all aspects of life (Lubaale, 2020). Peaceful coexistence, human rights protection, and a gender-responsive society are all essential for development. Therefore, sexual violence -- which causes gender imbalances and interferes with peaceful coexistence of genders -- indeed hampers development; and eventually leads to underdevelopment.

Established in 2003, the KyU, like all the other 46 universities in Uganda, experiences SV. Using the international percentage estimates of SV at 22%, it is then implied that out of its 39,452 students in 2020/2021 academic year, 8,679 students were estimated to be experiencing—or had experienced—SV in spite of the existing laws and policies in Uganda that are meant to curtail such a vice. These violent actions have a direct and indirect bearing on the development process of the KyU, hence this study with a thrust to establishing the nature of SV at the KyU, its causes and development implications. The study will provide the necessary data that the university may need for policy formulation and regulatory practices to curtail the vice so that learners can peacefully complete their studies.

2. Literature Review
2.1 International and National Instruments
Articles 1 and 5 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 1948; and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) of 1985, both provide for equality of all people. Goal No. 5 of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of 2015–2030 emphasizes gender equality, which in effect has no space for sexual violence (SV). Article 44 of the 1995 Constitution of the Republic of Uganda provides for freedom from torture, cruelty, and inhuman degrading treatment as non-derogable rights for all people. Article 33 of the same constitution further accords women "… full and equal dignity of the person with men" and prohibits "… laws, cultures, customs or traditions" that undermine their welfare, dignity or status. The National Gender Policy (NGP) of Uganda of 2007 emphases the reduction of cultural/other factors or conditions (including SV) that inhibit the progress of women (NGP, 2007). The National Strategy for Girls Education of 2014–2019 puts emphasis on girls' education; including the elimination of high drop-out rates of girls due to SV. On its part, the Gender in Education Policy (2017) emphasizes child protection and elimination of violence against children in school, with special emphasis on SV. The National Strategic Plan on Violence Against Children in Schools (2015–2020), as well as the Reporting, Tracking, Referral and Response Guidelines on Violence against Children in Schools (2014), all propagate the same thing: no SV in education institutions. However, despite of the existence of these well-intentioned policies, there are glaring SV cases in Uganda, the KyU inclusive. It is on these widespread cases of SV around which this study gathers its momentum: to establish the nature, causes, development implications, and the way forward in terms of policy, programmes and practices.

2.2 University Context

Universities around the world continue to violate the rights of learners, faculty and management with women as the majority victims (Dolamore et al., 2020). According to a non-representative survey of students at 27 US universities conducted by the Association of American Universities (AAU), 11.7% of the students had experienced unwanted sexual behaviours by either physical force or incapacity to self-defend since starting college. Also, nearly 10% had experienced SV; with female students reporting higher rates than males at all levels (undergraduate and postgraduate) (Cantor et al., 2015). Similar findings were reported for South Africa, with both male and female students having been sexually harassed (Oni et al., 2019). As well, a study in Nigeria established that 67% of female graduates were sexually harassed by their male classmates and lecturers in exchange for academic favours (Anierobi et al., 2021). Sexual harassment, as cited by Ondicho et al (2019), begins as early as in secondary schools given the evidence he got in public and private secondary schools in Kenya. Such evidence in universities all over the world foregrounds this study on SV in the context of the KyU.

2.3 Forms of Sexual Violence

Sexual violence includes coerced sex in marriage and in dating relationships, stranger rape, systematic rape, sexual harassment, sexual abuse of children, forced prostitution and sexual trafficking, child marriage, and violent acts against women's sexual integrity, e.g., female genital mutilation and mandatory virginity inspections. In police custody or in prison, both men and women may be raped. Women and girls experience more sexual violence acts than men and boys. Nevertheless, coercion of young men into sex by older women has also been reported (Krug et al., 2002). In the same line, Brooke (2017) published that sexual violence in colleges occurs and manifests mainly through sexual assault, sexual coercion, dating violence, sexual harassment, and stalking. These forms in general terms will aid in identifying the exact forms of SV at the KyU.

2.4 Causes of Sexual Violence

The likelihood of SV and the response to it are influenced by factors in the social environment. According to previous studies, males who are sexually violent are more likely to have coercive sexual fantasies, prefer impersonal sexual interactions, and are generally more antagonistic to women than men who are not. Witnessing family violence and having emotionally distant and indifferent fathers have both been associated with sexually violent behaviour in men. Also, poverty or living in a society that tolerates sexual assault, and/or has insufficient penalties for it, are additional contributing factors. These findings are consistent with the World Bank's (2016) assertion that poverty is one of the causes of violence. Sexual violence is also more likely to occur in countries with strong views on male sexual entitlement, rigid gender norms, and high rates of other sorts of violence, e.g., wars, insecurity, and political instability (Krug et al., 2002). Hendricks (2019) also discovered that in societies with more tight gender role notions and strong societal stigma, higher levels of internalized self-stigmas are created, making the weak gender vulnerable to sexual violence.

2.5 Development Impacts

Sexual violence has a significant impact on its victims' physical and mental health. Victims suffer injuries as a result of compulsion, which can result in a wide range sexual and reproductive health challenges, with both short- and long-term implications after assaults. Mental health repercussions can be as equally devastating as physical ones, and they can last a long time. Suicide, HIV infection, and murder—either during the attack or later in 'honourable killings'—are all possible causes of deaths linked to sexual violence (Krug et al., 2002). These findings are consistent with those of McQueen et al. (2021), who found that sexual violence leads to physical, psychological, and social-health consequences. Also, as a result the net effects of sexual violence, many people have turned to drugs and alcohol as coping methods, which are equally harmful. Even Brooke (2017) confirms the aforementioned in his work, indicating that SV has both immediate and long-term mental and physical health implications; frequently with severe and life-changing consequences. As a result of SV, traumatic experiences and victimization in educational institutions significantly derails the victims' academic achievements and career progress in higher education. Furthermore, Mahlet (2018) found that women survivors of sexual violence continue to experience unresolved and untreated trauma, restricted health care that prolongs their suffering, and financial challenges as a result of community stigma. Similarly because a member of their family has endured SV and is struggling to cope, family members are also vulnerable to secondary traumatic stress, stigma, and humiliation. It was also discovered that after survivors confessed SV experiences, relationships were frequently damaged in terms of faith/trust, separation if previously married, having children out of marriages or wedlock, and stigma on SV new-borns. Also, victims of SV—like rape or defilement—struggle to get marriage partners.

3. Materials and Methods

This study, which was qualitative in nature, took a case research design in which sexual violence (SV), as phenomenon, was studied, described and interpreted from the victim's point of view as lived examples (Pritha, 2020). The Kyambogo University (KyU) was chosen out of the 46 Universities (National Council for Higher Education, 2021) in Uganda because of its large number of students and high prevalence of SV. KyU had a total of 39,452 students in the academic year 2020/2021 (Kyambogo University, 2020/2021 Enrolment). The target population were victims of SV estimated at 8,679 (22% of the 39,452 students),[1] from whom 21 were interviewed as respondents till reaching data saturation (Mugenda & Mugenda, 1999). The sample size of 21 was identified through the snowball sampling framework, in which the researchers started with known SV victims who had either reported the matter to the Kyambogo University Police Station or to the Dean of Students. These helped to identify others given the stigma it carries. Qualitative data were derived from interviews through a face-to-face approach with respondents using an interview guide. The study

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[1]According to the 2016 Uganda Demographic and Health Survey, up to 22% of Ugandan women aged 15 to 49 had experienced some type of sexual violence. Thus 22% served as estimates for the prevalence of SV in the KyU.

used content analysis for data processing that involved the tabulation, classification and coding of data into themes for ease of comprehension for analysis and reporting (Pope et al., 2007). Prolonged engagement, persistent observation, thick and rich description, negative case analysis, debriefing, clarifying researcher's bias, member checking, external audits, and triangulation were among the strategies used to ensure instrument validity and reliability (Morse, 2015). In terms of ethical considerations, the major focus and practice was placed on ethical approval, maintaining participants' confidentiality, and using informed permission (Bean, 2005).

4. Results and Discussions
4.1 Forms of Sexual Violence in Kyambogo University
Through interviews, the respondents mentioned the various forms of sexual violence at the KyU, and their responses were recorded and tabulated according to the frequency. Table 1 summarizes the results

Table 1: Forms of Sexual Violence at the Kyambogo University

S/N	Sexual Violence Act	Actual Response	% Response
1.	Sexual harassment	20	96
2.	Sexual exploitation	19	90
3.	Unwanted sexual contact or touching	18	85
4.	Intimate partner sexual assault	16	76
5.	Rape	12	57
6.	Showing nakedness or genitals.	07	33
7.	Masturbation in public	05	23
8.	Peeping at people in a private sexual act.	02	09

Source: Primary data, 2021

Table 1 clearly shows sexual harassment as the most frequent form of SV (96%) and peeping at people in private sexual acts without their knowledge or consent being the least (9%).

Sexual Harassment: The Faculty of Law of the Makerere University defines sexual harassment as "Unwanted, frightening, offensive, and non-recipient physical, visual, verbal, or non-verbal sexual conduct" (Gender Mainstreaming Division, 2007). Respondents noted that sexual harassment primarily occurs at the KyU in improper greetings, clothing, sitting, applauding, and hugging. Other forms include intimidation in sexual requests as well as abusive or vulgar language in a sexual context; needless phone calls as well as letter-writings; and overall seductive body languages (sexy eye-contacts, and walking styles).

Sexual Exploitation: This refers to a situation in which persons in love end up having sex, and when it happens that one of the party has been left, dumped, made pregnant and by the other party who is not willing to take responsibility, or is insensitive to the actions; the former party feels to have been sexually exploited as the latter has breached the terms agreed upon before having sex.

Unwanted Sexual Contact or Touching: This occurs when a male touches a female unnecessarily, and without consent, making her feel offended; with the reverse also being true. In other cases, a male may try to ask for sex through touching sexual parts of a female like breasts, bums, stomach, thighs and parts near the vagina, thereon offending her. The reverse is also true, though less common.

Intimate Partner Sexual Assault: This occurs when one of the party in people in relationships violently, abruptly or intentionally attacks the other and forces her/him into sexual related activities, which may include sexual intercourse, kissing, touching, and attempted rape, among others; and making the other party feel offended.

Rape: This is forced sex among adults in which one party feels offended. It is a criminal case in Uganda, and once found guilty on conviction, one may be imprisoned for up to 10 years. All respondents reported this as a male-dominated vice, in which the males force the females into sex; no reverse case was reported.

Showing Nakedness or Genitals: This is a situation in which a person -- either knowingly, intentionally, wilfully, or ignorantly -- walks with an open zip, fallen trousers or skirts, naked breasts, sits badly with no pants on thus exposing genitals or other sexual body parts: all these making onlookers feel offended.

Masturbation in Public: This means making oneself sexually activated or excited by touching one's sexual reproductive organs in public, and making onlookers be offended.

Peeping at People in Private Sexual Acts: It was established that, though in limited occurrences, there are instances where people of the opposite sex peep at others when having sex either by using naked eyes or ICT gargets.

Therefore, the above clearly shows that SV is real in the KyU and manifests itself in various forms as outlined above, which are in line with those found by Krug et al. (2002). It is important to recognise such SV forms so we can establish the causes, identify development implications, and make appropriate recommendations for a better university learning environment.

4.2 Causes of Sexual Violence at the Kyambogo University
The study found it vital to get respondents' own views and experiences on the causes of sexual violence at the KyU; which were revealed as *male chauvinism, poverty, hard-to-come evidence, corruption* and *stigmatization*

Male Chauvinism: This means male arrogance, feeling powerful and strong over female counterparts to the extent of demanding sexual favours; and in case of refusal, insulting and assaulting the females in various forms as evidenced above. Respondents cited this as the most popular cause.

Boys know that they are powerful and thus say or do anything of sexual nature to girls, hence sexual violence (Female Student A1 from Science, in December 2020).

Boys know that it is within their power to advance their sexual interests to females at any time, and in the process of doing so, a lot of violence occurs verbally or physically (Female Student A2 from Arts, in January 2021).

It is clear from the above that male chauvinism perpetuates sexual violence as men keep doing it with the knowledge that women will not reciprocate in the same currency, and even if they do, it is to their advantage. This is relates to the findings by Krug et al. (2002): that sexual violence largely occurs in societies that hold strong beliefs in male sexual entitlement, and where gender roles are more rigid; as is the case with Uganda, hence also explaining SV in KyU. Hendricks (2019) had similar findings: that more conservative gender role beliefs in a society where men are dominant over women, spur SV.

Poverty: Limited resources among students, particularly females, is a great causes of sexual violence in a number of ways:

A number of men, at the university and outside, fall in love with female students and in the process end up sexually assaulting them, raping them, and abusing them; and women end up complying and not even reporting anywhere of such violence because these men pay them money (Female Student A3 from Science, in December 2020).

Given the fact that women need money, men will continue to exploit women sexually using their money because they [women] are vulnerable (Female Student A4 from Engineering, in January 2021).

From the above, one can easily see the effects of poverty on people's lives, even in a university setting. The international poverty line of $1.90 per day remains difficult for many Ugandans to jump as evidenced by the fact that, as of 2016, 41.7% of the population still live in extreme poverty (World Bank, 2016). During the launch of the 2021/2022 national budget, it was revealed that 25% of Ugandans are back to living below the poverty line, up from 21% at the beginning of 2021. The poor—including poor university students—will continue to suffer SV in an attempt to offset their financial challenges. Also, the victims will always fail to get justice because of their poverty.

Hard-to-come Evidence: The victims of sexual violence struggle with gathering sufficient evidence to convict SV perpetrators, hence a continued challenge; which even the culprits know:

Sexual violence -- like sexual harassment, sexual exploitation and sexual assault by an intimate partner -- are very difficult to prove with sufficient evidence to convict someone (Female Student A12 from Special Needs, in December 2020).

When a man rapes you in his room when you have just visited him, and even willingly removed your shoes, it is difficult to produce evidence in court. If he rapes you on the way and runs away, what evidence do you produce… (Female Student A7 from Education, in January 2021).

Men know well that it is difficult to produce sufficient evidence in court enough to convict them, for example in cases such as abusing a female, rape, sexual harassment, sexual intimidation, etc. (Female Student A20 from Vocational, in December 2020).

The study findings show that that a lot of SV continues to occur at the KyV not because the victims are unable to go to court to prosecute the culprits but due to limited evidence. For example, in the case of rape, courts in Uganda demand one to demonstrate the whole process from the beginning to the end on how one was raped, which is such a humiliating process on the part of a victim; hence forcing some to remain silent. According to the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions (ODPP), just 57 percent of the 1,594 rape and 7,618 defilement cases reported in 2015 and 2016 were successfully prosecuted due to this limitation. According to the CEDOVIP, between 2012 and 2017, around 5% of all sexual violence cases handled by the ODPP in a year were closed owing to the lack of evidence. Such a small number fosters the impression of impunity to perpetrators, and encourages other criminals to continue committing SV knowing it will be tough to apprehend and convict them: thus exacerbating SV.

Corruption: Corruption was reported to have increased incidences of sexual harassment. It was reported that some perpetrators who are reported to the police usually bribe their way out, leaving their victims in more vulnerable states, and without other options for immediate help. This frustrates reporting and justice, which contributes to the perpetuation of sexual violence:

Others [victims] *were denied a fair or confidential access to support services and instant justice. Such actions undermined accountability and transparency among institutions and agencies that are mandated to manage cases of sexual violence* (Female Student A13 from Science, in January 2021).

Female students lose track of reported cases due to poor police case-handling, time-wasting and intimidation, which becomes very frustrating and hence making some to abandon their cases, which becomes a plus for culprits; hence the continued sexual violence (Female Student A15 from Arts, in January 2021).

Therefore, as long as there is corruption in the society that allows cases of violence to be mismanaged, culprits to doge justice, and victims to receive no justice, incidences of SV will continue unabated in the society.

Stigmatization: There was evidence from respondents that they know the law and were aware that SV cases should be reported to authorities so that offenders are brought to book. However, reporting was at minimal in spite of the existence of legal institutions for fear of retribution from their perpetrators, and the stigma associated with rape as stated by respondents in interviews:

You know that when you report and the male student is arrested, you can even get hurt even more because everyone will get to know that you had sex and you are a source of the arrest of their peer. The perpetrator can easily kill you. After all, because of police corruption, they are released on bail pending investigations which never end. Sometimes you keep quiet because you do not want your boyfriend to know, especially when he has promised to marry you. You just keep quiet and life goes on (Female Student A19 from Education, in December 2020).

> *For me I have never heard of a male being sexually harassed. Men fight women or fight with their fellow men over a woman, which is called assault. A woman fell in love with me, frequently visited my room, as well as making many phone calls: which was sexual harassment. I felt offended but could not report this. The choice remained with me to make up my mind. How do you tell me to report to the police that a woman has expressed interest to have sex with me? It would be a disgrace to my clan if I did so* (Male Student B1 from Education, in January 2021).

From the above observations, stigma and fear engulf victims of sexual violence to the extent that they cannot report such violence, which in turn perpetuates the situation as offenders go un-reported and unpunished. This is in line with findings by Hendricks Annie (2019), which revealed that more inclined gender roles/ stereotypes beliefs and social stigma are associated with higher levels of self-stigma that becomes internalized as true, and which makes the female gender vulnerable to sexual violence; and in the event of occurrence, render them unable to report for justice.

4.3 Development Implications

Sexual violence, as depicted above, has far-reaching ramifications in the development process of KyU—and Uganda in general—in the following ways.

Gaps in Health: There is overwhelming evidence that sexual violence has created gaps in the health sector as a whole, with far-reaching implications in the development process as evident in the quotes below:

> *Many women contract sexually transmitted diseases (STDs), including HIV/AIDs, which lead to deaths and huge financial expenditures; both public and private* (Female Student A9 from Science, in December 2020).

> *A lot of unwanted pregnancies lead to the births of unplanned children, which has a huge expenditure on the health budget, which undermines development* (Female Student A10 from Education, in December 2020).

> *Psychological frustration as a result of rape, sexual torture, verbal and nonverbal sexual abuses impacts negatively on people's lives and wellbeing; and indeed undermines development in the society* (Female student A18 from Arts, in January 2021).

> *Unfounded fear for sex and opposite sex members is on the increase among young people, as well as suspicion and counter-suspicion among people, which is detrimental to harmony, marriage, having children, and the co-existence of all genders* (Female Student A9 from Arts, in January 2021).

It is clear from above that sexual violence creates huge health challenges in terms of public expenditure, contracting STDs, and unplanned population as equally found by Krug et al. (2002). McQueen et al. (2021) also revealed that sexual violence results into physical, psychological and social health burdens on the victim, university, and the nation. Even Brooke (2017) concurs that SV leads to mental and physical health consequences, notwithstanding the traumatic experiences that were found true in the KyU. Besides, Mahlet (2018) reveals the same: that women survivors of sexual violence continue to suffer from unresolved

and untreated traumatic experiences. This, when coupled with the limited health facilities/provisions in the university -- and the nation as whole -- exacerbates the ill-health and suffering of SV victims, which eventually leads to low academic achievements and under-development of the KyU.

Gaps in Education Achievements: As previously said, educational attainment among students (male and female) has been unequal for a long time, in part due to sexual violence, resulting in gender gaps as revealed in the following responses:

> *Such low female achievement in comparison to male leads to gender inequities, which suffocate current and former students' motivation, self-esteem, independence, and hope* (Female Student A11 from Special Needs, in January 2021).

> *Many women's scholarships, mentorships, and research contributions at the KyU are lost as a result of low female achievements, which becomes a stumbling block to the nurturing of women's academic abilities* (Female Student A17 from Education, in January 2021).

> *While gender discrepancies appear natural, they are socially generated and continue to perpetuate gender imbalances, which influence individual and collaborative work* (Female Student A14 from Arts, in January 2021).

From the foregoing, it is obvious that sexual violence, which results in gender imbalances, is contributing to KyU's current development drawbacks. This is due to the restricted abilities, nurturing, and research contributions of women, which have impeded combined participation with males in development initiatives. There was evidence that some victims of SV had disruptions in their career and academic accomplishments, which Brooke (2017) confirmed when he stated that victims of SV in colleges frequently have their careers and academic achievements interrupted.

Research, Innovations and Publications: Throughout the world, universities are ranked based on the evidence of research, innovation, and publications, as well as gender considerations. During the interviews the respondents noted:

> *Given the ongoing sexual violence, which disproportionately affects women, their contribution to research, innovation, and publication in internationally known journals is negligible, undermining KyU's ranking and development* (Female Student A6 from Education, in January 2021).

> *We have really missed out on financing and research collaborations that demand gender balance as a requirement because some women have been discouraged as a result of sexual abuse* (Male Student B1 from Education, in January 2021).

It is no surprise that KyU was ranked the fourth best university in Uganda in 2021 (Webometrics ranks, 2021) partly because of the limited contribution of women's publications in foreign journals, which has an impact on the university's success in the eyes of the public and funders. This goes without saying that if student's careers and academic achievements are derailed as a result of SV effects—as established above, and even by Brooke (2017)—gaps in research, innovations and publications will automatically suffer because of limited motivated personnel of all genders.

Returns on Higher Education Investment: Education investment yields both public and private returns. According to the human capital theory, the most efficient way to national growth for any society is to equip its population with human capital-productive potential (Ingemar & Saha, 1989). Even most economists agree with the preceding thesis that a country's human resources—not its physical capital or natural resources—define the type and pace of its development (Todaro, 2020). As a result, sexual assault that leads to gender inequalities in human resource development impedes growth, as evidenced by the following responses:

> *The public returns on education investments primarily come from one gender, which is not healthy for holistic development* (Female Student A5 from Arts, in January 2021).

> *Private returns on education investments disproportionately benefit men rather than women, resulting in economic disparities* (Female Student A16 from Vocational, in February 2021).

> *A beneficial development should be shared equally by men and women, but the one at the KyU is not* (Female Student A8 from Science in, January 2021).

It is clear from the foregoing that the primary occupation of human beings is to accumulate money and use natural resources to establish social-economic infrastructure, strengthen political organizations, and propel national progress forward. As a result, a country that ignores factors that influence the cognitive, affective and psychomotor development of her citizens, both male and female -- as evident in KyU and Uganda as a whole -- will be unable to develop holistically.

Self-esteem: Sexual violence, manifested in sexual harassment, sexual exploitation, rape, and other forms of sexual assault of all kinds, has greatly contributed to gender imbalances in our societies in general, as well as gender imbalances in the enrolment and completion of university education at the KyU in particular, as a result of history, perception, and practice. The following statements were made by the respondents during interviews:

> *Sexual violence actions are not natural, but socially constructed, with far-reaching implications for KyU women, who are subjected to a tremendous deal of pain, stress, abuse, and insults; all of which have a severe impact on their self-esteem in a variety of ways* (Female Student A13 from Science, in January 2021).

> *Sexual violence perpetrators abuse women's minds, lowering their self-esteem, freedom, motivation, and ambition* (Female Student A6 from Vocational, in January 2021).

> *Women's access to higher education, achievement, and leadership at the KyU and beyond is inherently hampered by low self-esteem* (Female Student A20 from Arts, in January 2021).

These comments show that sexual violence is a reality at the KyU, owing to the patriarchal nature of higher education that limits women's self-esteem, freedom, desire, and ambition to finish their careers on time. This is consistent with Mahlet's (2018) findings: that women survivors of sexual violence continue to experience untreated trauma, as well as internal and external stigmatization, which prolongs their suffering, lowers their self-esteem, and ultimately leads to low achievement in all areas of life.

Even Ondicho et al. (2019) had nearly the same findings in Kenya. As a result, serving KyU in various leadership and management roles for holistic development and beyond becomes increasingly challenging for females due to the negative effects of SV.

Conclusion

According to the study, sexual violence (SV) in the form of sexual harassment, sexual exploitation, intimate partner sexual assault, unwelcome sexual interactions, rape, revealing nakedness or genitals, masturbation, and snooping people in their private sexual activities is a reality at the KyU. Given Uganda's patriarchal society structure, this reality is socially created as a product of history, perception, and practice. The reality of SV in KyU has had significant development implications for the learners' and institution's health, educational achievement, research, innovation, publishing, self-esteem, and returns on higher education. The twenty-year-old university's aim of being a centre of academic and professional excellence in terms of equal access to higher education, which is critical in mentoring and shaping the dreams of the younger generation, is yet to be realized.

Recommendations

*Awareness Creation***:** The University Council of the KyU, through the Directorate of Gender, should educate all stakeholders (students, staff, and managers) about what constitutes sexual violence, how to avoid becoming victims or perpetrators of the crime, and the intangible consequences it has on victims and the institution. This type of understanding will go a long way towards reducing the vice.

Gender Policy: The Director of Gender Mainstreaming at the KyU must guarantee that the gender policy of 2014, which has a wide goal of attaining gender equality in all areas of the university, is followed to the letter. In the process, SV will diminish when all genders realize the need to work together and care for each other responsibly. This study further recommends increased funding to the Directorate by the University Council to enable the unit recruit the requisite personnel, and acquire the necessary physical and ICT infrastructure that will help expedite the promotion of gender equality at the KyU.

Anti-Sexual Violence Policy: The KyU must adopt an anti-sexual violence policy as soon as possible, so that every violence directed at victims is explained to stakeholders on a regular basis with the purpose of prevention. In the event of an incidence, consequences should be stated out in unambiguous terms, and should include everything: from a warning, caution, counselling, compensation, taking responsibility for motherhood or fatherhood, dismissal, and/or imprisonment. The KyU's Gender Mainstreaming Directorate must provide technical assistance in developing the policy, and ensuring its implementation.

Gender Responsive Budgeting (GRB): The Kyambogo University Council should realign its budget to include clear resources dedicated to eliminating any sort of sexual violence that arises from the lack of resources so that it may be addressed as

it arises. A proper budgeting will enable all genders to have more equitable access to resources, distribution of benefits, and access to services. The Gender Mainstreaming Directorate of the KyU must provide technical assistance in this area, as well as ensure monitoring and assessment of effective progress.

Sexual Violence Monitoring and Evaluation: The KyU's Gender Directorate should continue to monitor and evaluate how policies, rules, programs, and legislation in respect of curbing the SV vice are performing, and ensure that loopholes are removed immediately. It should continuously guarantee that appropriate alternatives are implemented, and that anti-sexual violence policies and programs are effective and cost-effective in the eyes of the intended beneficiaries.

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