
THE REALITY OF SEXUAL ASSAULT AND GRADE-BASED SEX IN NIGERIAN HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS

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ABSTRACT

Sex has frequently been used throughout history to influence events, choices, or to gain unfair favouritism or an advantage over people in different social positions. It is possible for people of any gender to use sexual attraction to further their personal status or achieve their desired goals. The degree of success they achieve in doing so may differ based on the dominant standards and beliefs of the community in which they function. Before now, there had been relatively few cases of sexual harassment, sexual coercion, or the trade of sexual favours for academic progress. In fact, it was considered extremely shady for a female student or a male lecturer to spread such information. The rising number of interactions between male instructors and their female students has sparked widespread curiosity, leading some to wonder what the underlying causes of this phenomenon might be. There were 295 responders in all who returned questionnaires for analysis. According to the data, there are 175 females and 120 males. The data indicates that 40.7% of the population is male and 59.3% is female. Of the total respondents, 175 hold the view that female students trade sex for marks, accounting for 59.3% of the total. 120 respondents, or 40.7 percent of them, indicated that they agreed that lecturers demand sex as payment for score or marks from students.

Keywords: *Sex, Sexual Assault, Grades, Scores, Tertiary Institution*

INTRODUCTION

The phenomenon of engaging in sexual activities in exchange for academic grades has persisted over a considerable period of time, particularly within institutions of higher education. They have become increasingly widespread in the majority of secondary schools across the nation. Instances of sexual assault perpetrated by teachers are reported in various educational institutions, including universities, secondary schools,

and even primary schools. The issue of sexual favours being exchanged for academic benefits has become pervasive within the educational institutions, particularly in settings where individuals of different genders regularly interact. The prevalence of this issue has escalated to epidemic proportions within universities and other educational institutions, particularly in Nigeria. The prevalence of certifications has led to an excessive focus on their attainment, particularly evident in certain prominent corporations that establish their employment standards at a minimum requirement of a second class upper division.

Sexual misconduct in academic settings, commonly referred to as "sex for grade," is a well-documented issue that has persisted for a significant period of time, particularly within higher education institutions such as universities, polytechnics, monotechnics, and colleges of education. In recent times, there has been a proliferation of narratives concerning the prevailing conditions within Nigerian tertiary institutions, with a specific focus on instances involving the sexual harassment of female students perpetrated by their male educators. The phenomenon of male teachers engaging in harassment of female students or coercing them into sexual acts as a condition for course completion has garnered significant societal condemnation. The aforementioned behaviour is subject to condemnation and is inherently unethical within the context of educational institutions. However, it is crucial to acknowledge the emergence of various concerns surrounding this matter (Omonigho, 2019).

Instances of sexual harassment, sexual coercion, and the exchange of sexual favours for academic advancement were notably infrequent in previous times. Indeed, the dissemination of such information by a male lecturer or a female student was deemed highly disreputable. There is a prevalent curiosity surrounding the increasing frequency of interactions between male lecturers and their female students, prompting individuals to question the underlying reasons behind this phenomenon.

This study aims to investigate this particular phenomenon within the confines of the study objectives presented.

Aim and Objectives of the Study

The aim of this study is to check the prevalence for the sex for grade scandal in tertiary institution(s). The Objectives below drives the aim of this study:

- i. By establishing that sexual assault from lectures to student has become a phenomenon in our tertiary institution
- ii. By establishing that most female student are solicitors for sexual scandal by their immoral dressing,
- iii. By establishing that most sexual assaults are initiated by female students
- iv. By establishing the most prevalent gender been sexually assaulted.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Throughout history, the utilisation of sex as a means to manipulate outcomes, decisions, or obtain unwarranted favour or advantage over individuals in various positions within society has been prevalent. According to Amuchie (2021), individuals of both genders have the ability to employ sexual allure as a means to attain their desired objectives or enhance their personal status. The extent to which they are successful in doing so may vary depending on the prevailing norms and values of the society in which they are operating. The global issue of sexual harassment persists across various societal levels, prompting increased recognition of its prevalence and the detrimental impact it imposes. Currently, the issue of sexual harassment targeting both female and male individuals within Nigerian higher education institutions is a matter of significant importance, representing a form of violence that demands attention (Nwachukwu, N.D). The narrative also encompasses the participation of higher education institutions in Nigeria. It has been substantiated that the exchange of sexual favours for academic grades is a prevalent occurrence within tertiary institutions in Nigeria. Male lecturers, specifically, perceived themselves as superior beings, and this unprofessional conduct could potentially persist without being questioned (Ibrahim, Sogbanmu and Omoju, 2020).

Sexual harassment has been associated with a range of underlying motivations, including desires driven by lust, the pursuit of personal happiness, a deficiency in moral principles, a lack of ethical conscience, the pursuit of immediate pleasure, a lack of self-restraint, intense passion, habitual behaviour, personal values, certain personality disorders, feelings

of inferiority, immaturity, a disregard for others' worth, abuse of power dynamics, and belief in supernatural forces. Moreover, the manner in which female students attire themselves, often resembling a state of undress, can potentially contribute to the perpetuation of sexual harassment. A significant number of female students exhibit a deficiency in moral values, leading them to heavily rely on their femininity as their primary means of attaining exceptional academic performance, often without engaging in adequate preparation.

In a recent investigative report conducted by the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) Africa Eye, evidence of a sexual harassment scandal at leading universities in West Africa was unveiled. Over the course of a comprehensive year-long investigation, journalists, assuming the role of students, surreptitiously captured audio recordings of male academics engaging in acts of harassment and abuse towards young women. The documentary titled "Sex for Grades" is presented and showcases the personal narrative of Kiki Mordi, an investigative journalist, radio presenter, and filmmaker. Mordi recounts her personal experience of being subjected to sexual harassment by a university lecturer. The individual's aspiration to pursue a career in medicine was thwarted due to her refusal to engage in sexual activity with her instructor in exchange for favourable examination outcomes (Ebirim, 2019).

Following the release of the documentary titled "Sex for Grades: Undercover inside Nigerian and Ghanaian universities" by the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC), which exposed instances of university lecturers engaging in inappropriate amorous or sexual advances towards undercover reporters, there has been a significant influx of reactions on both traditional and social media platforms. These responses have varied greatly, ranging from rational and logical arguments to completely irrational and absurd viewpoints (Anele, 2019). Following the release of the BBC documentary, the administration of the University of Lagos (UNILAG) took disciplinary action by suspending Boniface Igbeneghu, a senior lecturer in the Faculty of Arts, and Samuel Oladipo, a staff member in the Department of Economics. The suspensions were imposed pending the completion of investigations. Additionally, the university promptly shut down the "cold room," which had been identified as a location facilitating illicit sexual activities on the campus. Undoubtedly, the decision made by UNILAG may appear commendable in theory; however, it fails to provide solace to numerous female

undergraduate students who endure silently the inappropriate conduct of amorous instructors. In the year 2018, the academic institution known as Obafemi Awolowo University, located in Ile-Ife, took disciplinary action against a professor named Richard Akindele due to his involvement in sexual misconduct. One of his previous students, Monica Osagie, lodged an allegation against him, claiming that he required her to engage in five instances of sexual activity in order to secure a passing grade. The individual in question documented their dialogues, the auditory content of which elicited a profound reaction from the populace. A two-year prison sentence was imposed on Akindele by the Osogbo high court.

In the year 2018, a faculty member holding the rank of associate professor in the field of Economics at Lagos State University, Ojo, was implicated in a situation involving the solicitation of sexual favours from a female student, facilitated by the assistance of a non-governmental organisation (NGO). Other students at Ekiti State University, Ado Ekiti, witnessed an incident in which an accounting lecturer was caught inappropriately engaging with a female student. In October 2011, Silas Omebe, the provost at the time of Ebonyi State College of Education, Ikwo, made a public declaration regarding the suspension of five lecturers. The reason for their suspension was attributed to allegations of engaging in extortion and sexually exploiting students. In yet another instance, a female student reported an incident involving a dean at the University of Abuja, who was discovered engaging in a sting operation wherein he solicited sexual favours in return for academic marks. The impact of this pandemic has been observed in nearly all higher education institutions. The individual who held the position of the English Department's head at the University of Ilorin reportedly tendered his resignation subsequent to the emergence of a video wherein he was observed engaging in behaviour that could be interpreted as harassment towards a female student in her second year of study.

According to Opanuag (2023), the installation of Closed Circuit Television (CCTV) cameras in offices and classrooms at Nnamdi Azikiwe University (UNIZIK) in Anambra State aims to mitigate the prevalence of sexual harassment perpetrated by lecturers against students. The disclosure was made by Charles Esimone, the vice chancellor of UNIZIK, in a statement. Esimone stated that these initiatives were implemented with the intention of monitoring and controlling the disruptive activities within the university. The authorities of the institution

have additionally devised a strategy known as Operation Speak Out, with the objective of providing victims a platform to disclose the identities of the perpetrators. According to Esimone, the impending launch of "Operation Speak Out" is deemed necessary due to the prevalent fear among students that speaking up may result in increased victimisation by their lecturers (Eleweke, 2023 & Opanuga 2023).

Methodology and Results

The use of questionnaires was used to obtain the primary data used for this study. The returned questionnaire by respondents were analysed using SPSS. The results are presented below.

The analysis was done based on the sectional presentation of the questionnaire. The questionnaire has a Likert scale of 4. Namely: Agree, Not Really, No and Disagree.

Table 1 AGE

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	16-20 YEARS	35	11.9	11.9	11.9
	21-24 YEARS	195	66.1	66.1	78.0
	25-29 YEARS	50	16.9	16.9	94.9
	ABOVE 29 YEARS	15	5.1	5.1	100.0
	Total	295	100.0	100.0	

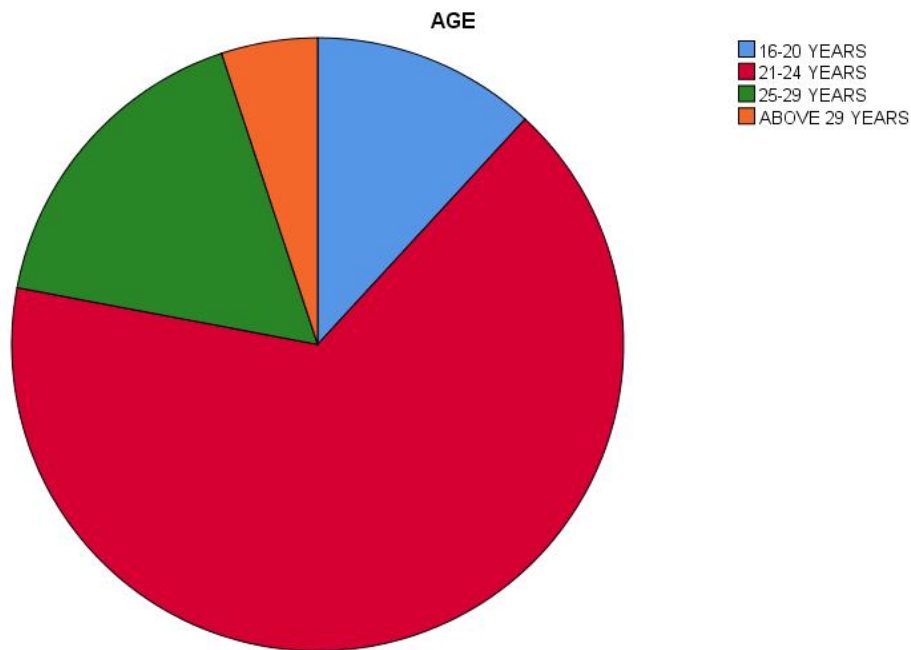


Figure 1. sex distribution

Table 1 and figure 1 presents the age distribution of respondents. The total respondents who responded to this were 295. 35 are aged between 16-20 years, 195 are between 21-24 years, 50 and 15 respectively are between 25-29 and above 29 years. The percentages are 11.9, 66.1, 16.9 and 5.1 percent respectively.

Table 2 SEX DISTRIBUTION

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	MALE	120	40.7	40.7	40.7
	FEMALE	175	59.3	59.3	100.0
	Total	295	100.0	100.0	

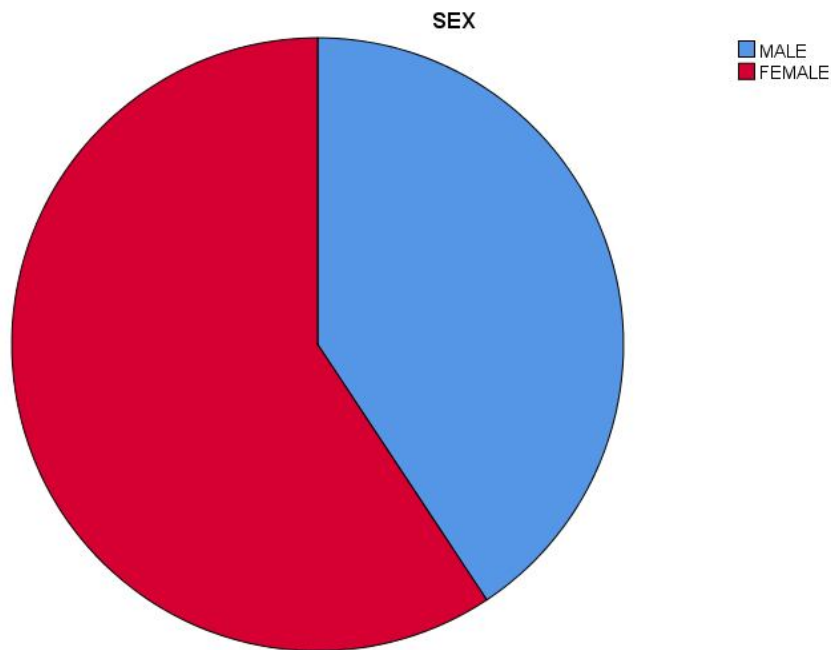


Figure 2. Sex distribution

Table 2 and figure 2 showing sex distribution of respondents. The information show that 120 are males and 175 we females. The percentages show that male makes up 40.7% and females 59.3 %.

Table 3 SEXUAL ASSAULTS IS REAL IN TERTIARY INSTITUTIONS

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	AGREE	280	94.9	94.9	94.9
	NOT REALLY	10	3.4	3.4	98.3
	DISAGREE	5	1.7	1.7	100.0
	Total	295	100.0	100.0	

Table 3 and figure 3 presents respondents' perception of to the question whether sexual assault is a reality on campuses in Nigeria. 280 agrees with the statement, while 10 are of the perception that 'not really' and 5 disagrees of the total 295 questionnaires returned. This gives a percentage of 94.9 percent.

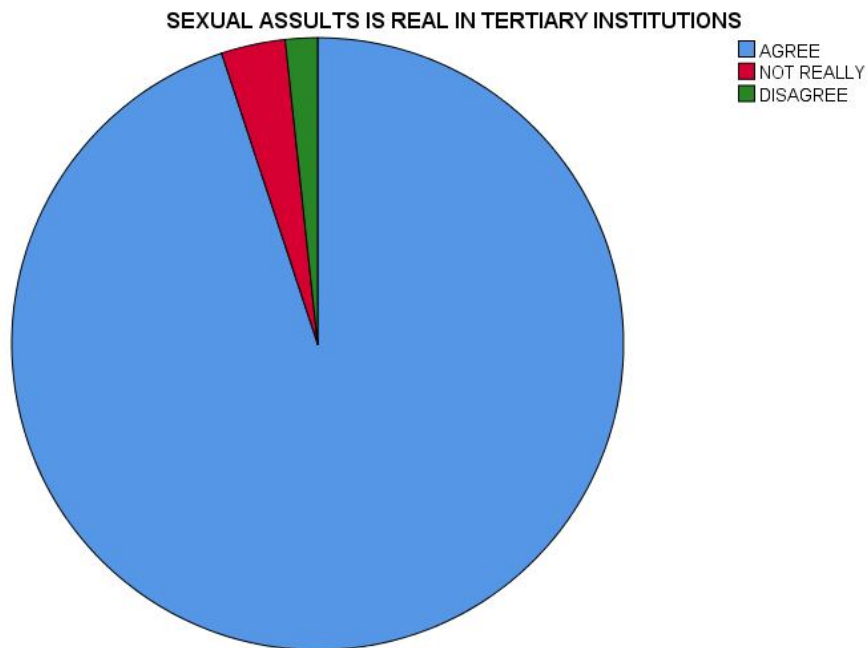


Figure 3. Sexual assaults is real in tertiary institutions

On the perception on higher institution staff sexually assaulting students, table 4 and figure 4 presents the information on this. The total respondents who responded to this were 290. Of this 250 agrees with the statement, while 35 said not really and 5 disagrees. 84.7 percent are in affirmation of the statement.

Table 4 STAFF SEXUALLY ASSAULTING STUDENTS IS REAL

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	AGREE	250	84.7	86.2	86.2
	NOT REALLY	35	11.9	12.1	98.3
	DISAGREE	5	1.7	1.7	100.0
	Total	290	98.3	100.0	
Missing	System	5	1.7		
Total		295	100.0		

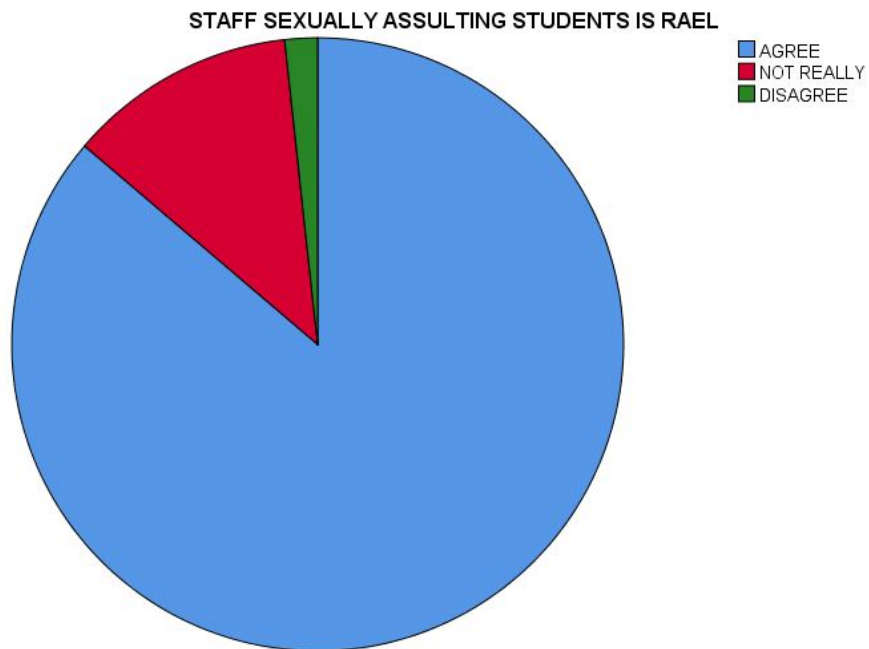


Figure 4. Staff sexually assaulting students is real

On the fact that academic staff are more engaged in this act of sexual assaulting of students, 161 respondents making 54.6 percent agrees, while 89 respondents making up 30.2 percent are of the opinion of 'not really', 35 said no and 5 disagrees as shown in table 5 and figure 5.

Table 5 ACADEMIC STAFF ARE MORE PRONE TO SEXUALLY ASSAULTING STUDENTS

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	AGREE	161	54.6	55.5	55.5
	NOT REALLY	89	30.2	30.7	86.2
	NO	35	11.9	12.1	98.3
	DISAGREE	5	1.7	1.7	100.0
	Total	290	98.3	100.0	
Missing	System	5	1.7		
Total		295	100.0		

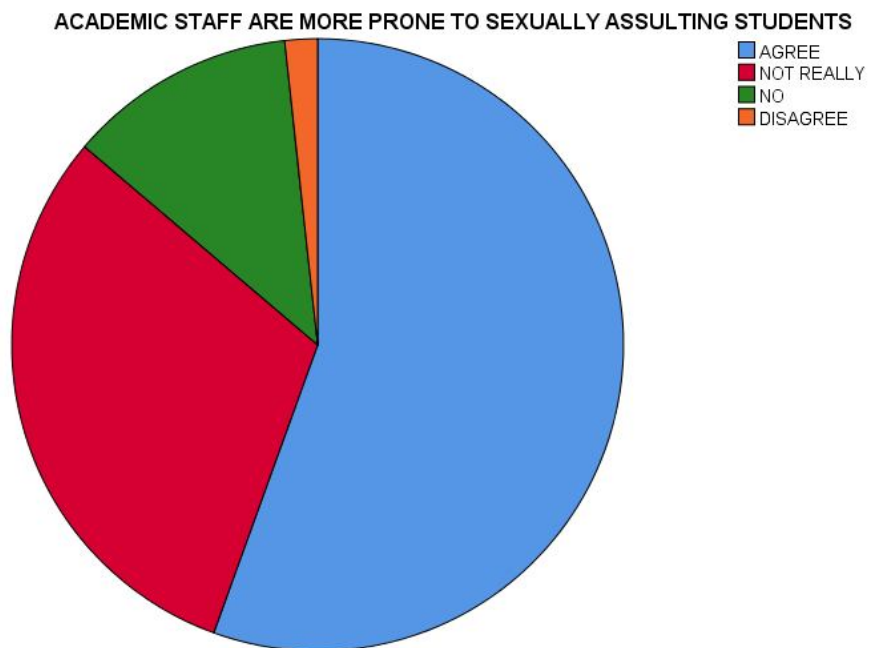


Figure 6. Academic staff are more prone to sexually assaulting students

Table 6 and figure 6 was in relation to whether female students are at the receiving end of this whole thing. 190 respondents were in agreement to the statement. 75 were of the opinion of not really, 15 respondents each for 'No" and 'Disagree'. The percentage values are 64.4, 25.4 and 5.1 percent respectively.

Table 6 FEMALE STUDENTS ARE AT THE RECEIVING END

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	AGREE	190	64.4	64.4	64.4
	NOT REALLY	75	25.4	25.4	89.8
	NO	15	5.1	5.1	94.9
	DISAGREE	15	5.1	5.1	100.0
Total		295	100.0	100.0	

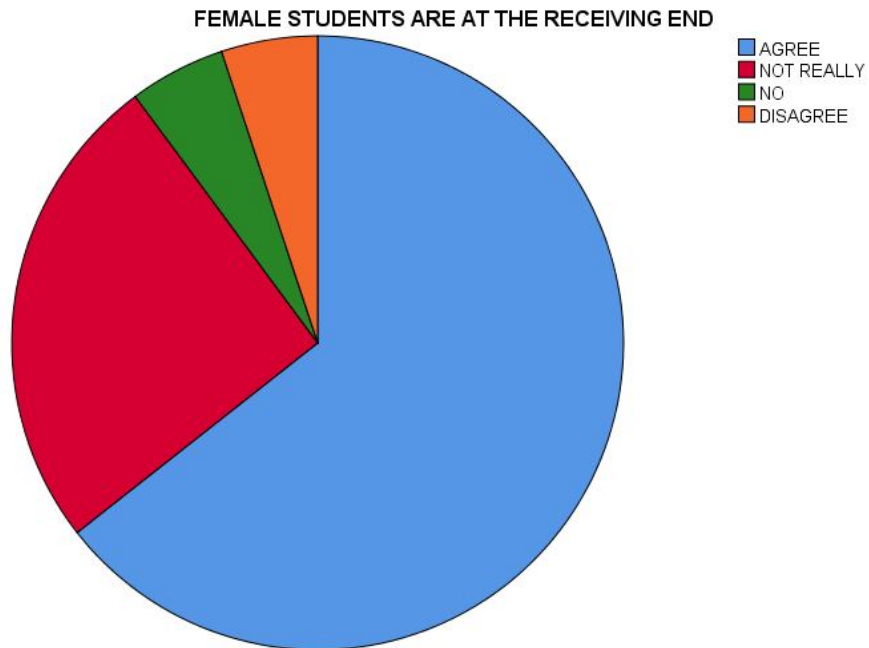


Figure 6. Female students are at the receiving end

The statement on whether responded have experienced sexual assault in school is the subject of table 7 and figure 7.

10.2 percent agreed with the statement that they have been assaulted, 15.3 percent were of the opinion of not really, while 170 and 50 making 57.6 percent and 16.9 percent respectively were of opinion of No and Disagreed.

Table 7 I HAVE BEEN SEXUALLY ASSAULTED

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	AGREE	30	10.2	10.2	10.2
	NOT REALLY	45	15.3	15.3	25.4
	NO	170	57.6	57.6	83.1
	DISAGREE	50	16.9	16.9	100.0
	Total	295	100.0	100.0	

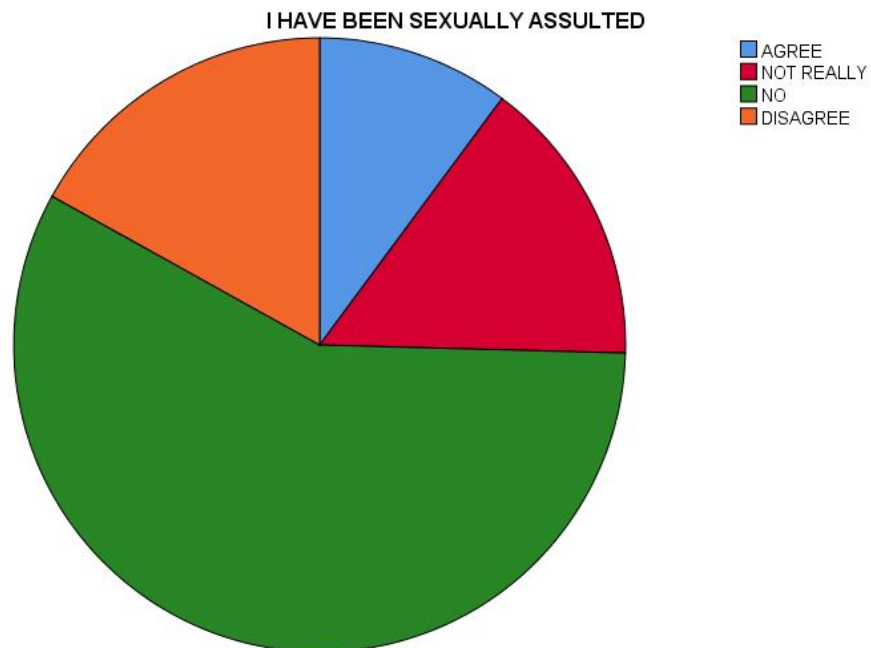


Figure 7 i have been sexually assaulted

In other to further find out the prevalence of this social vice respondents were further asked if they know of any students who has been assaulted too. 22 percent agrees, 40 responded Not really, while 52.5 percent and 8.5 percent were of opinion of No and Disagreed. This is presented in table 8 and figure 8.

Table 8 I KNOW STUDENTS WHO HAVE BEEN SEXUALLY ASSAULTED

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	AGREE	65	22.0	22.8	22.8
	NOT REALLY	40	13.6	14.0	36.8
	NO	155	52.5	54.4	91.2
	DISAGREE	25	8.5	8.8	100.0
	Total	285	96.6	100.0	
Missing	System	10	3.4		
Total		295	100.0		

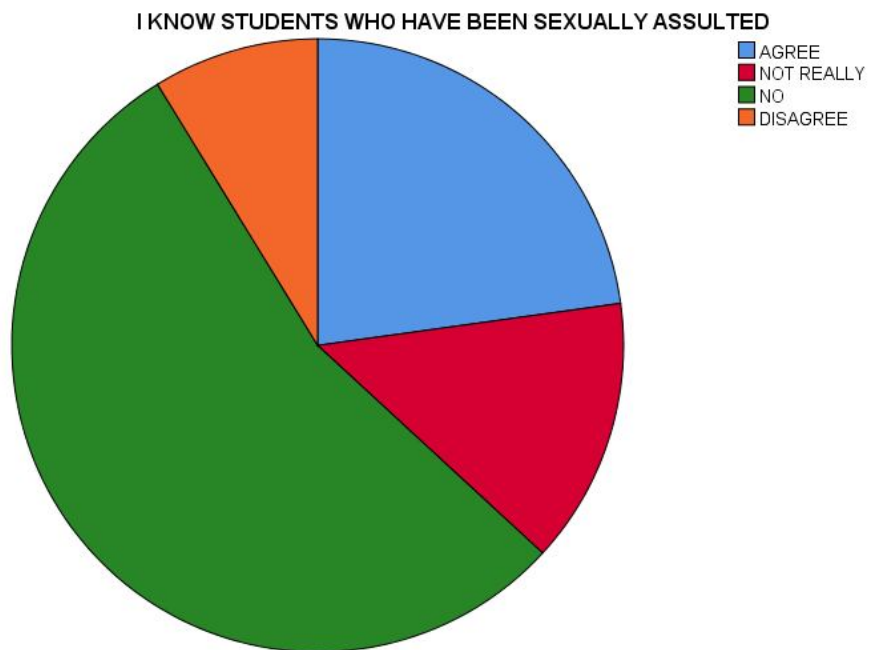


Figure 8. I know students who have been sexually assaulted

Female students engaging in sex for scores how prevalent it is the information presented in table 9 and figure 9. 95 respondents making 32.2 percent affirms to the fact that their female class mates engage in it for marks. 95 also are of opinion 'No" making 32.2 percent. Not really make up 22 percent and 'Disagree' make up 11.9 percent.

Table 9 MOST FEMALE STUDENTS IN MY CLASS DOES THIS FOR MARKS

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	AGREE	95	32.2	32.8	32.8
	NOT REALLY	65	22.0	22.4	55.2
	NO	95	32.2	32.8	87.9
	DISAGREE	35	11.9	12.1	100.0
	Total	290	98.3	100.0	
Missing	System	5	1.7		
Total		295	100.0		

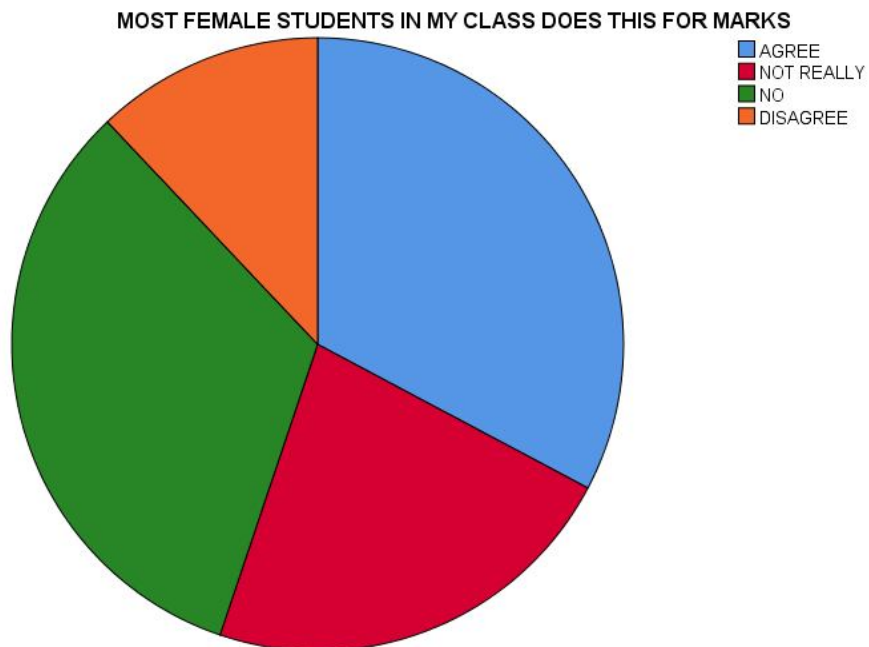


Figure 9. most female students in my class does this for marks

59.3 percent actually are of the opinion that female students actually trade sex for marks making 175 of total respondents. 60 respondents making 20.3 percent are of 'Not really" opinion and 'No and Disagree' are 50 and 10 making up 16.9 percent and 3.4 percent respectively (table 10 and figure 10).

Table 10 FEMALE STUDENTS ACTUALLY TRADE SEX FOR MARKS

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	AGREE	175	59.3	59.3	59.3
	NOT REALLY	60	20.3	20.3	79.7
	NO	50	16.9	16.9	96.6
	DISAGREE	10	3.4	3.4	100.0
	Total	295	100.0	100.0	

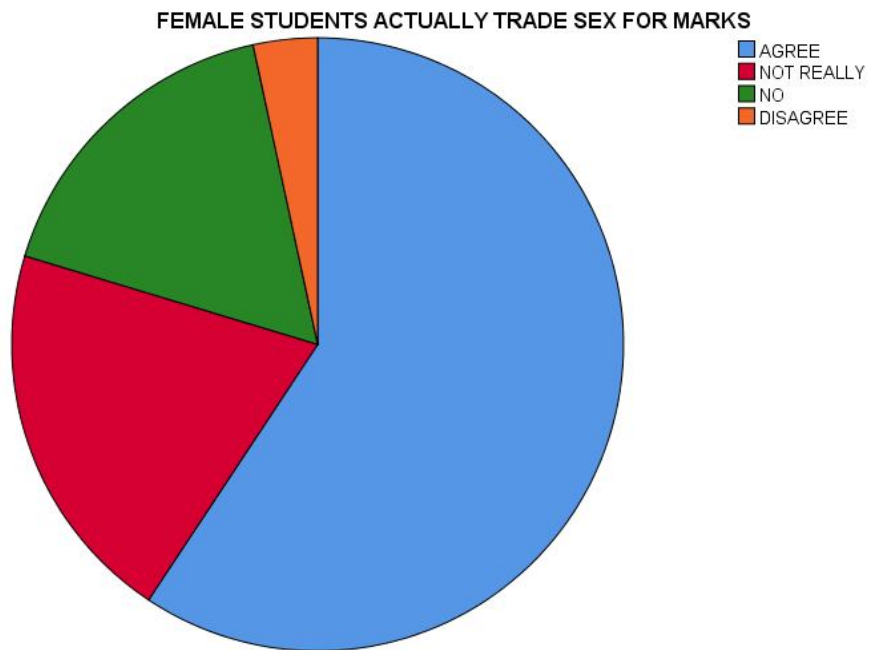


Figure 10. female students trading sex as payment for scores

Lecturers demanding for sex as a payment for score or mark is presented in table 11 and figure 11. 120, 110, 45 and 20 are responses of respondents correlating to 40.7 percent, 37.3 percent, 15.3 percent and 6.8 percent. These are for responses of 'Agree', 'Not really', 'No' and 'Disagree' respectively(table 11 and figure 11).

Table 11 LECTURERS DEMAND SEX AS PAYMENT FOR SCORE

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	AGREE	120	40.7	40.7	40.7
	NOT REALLY	110	37.3	37.3	78.0
	NO	45	15.3	15.3	93.2
	DISAGREE	20	6.8	6.8	100.0
	Total	295	100.0	100.0	

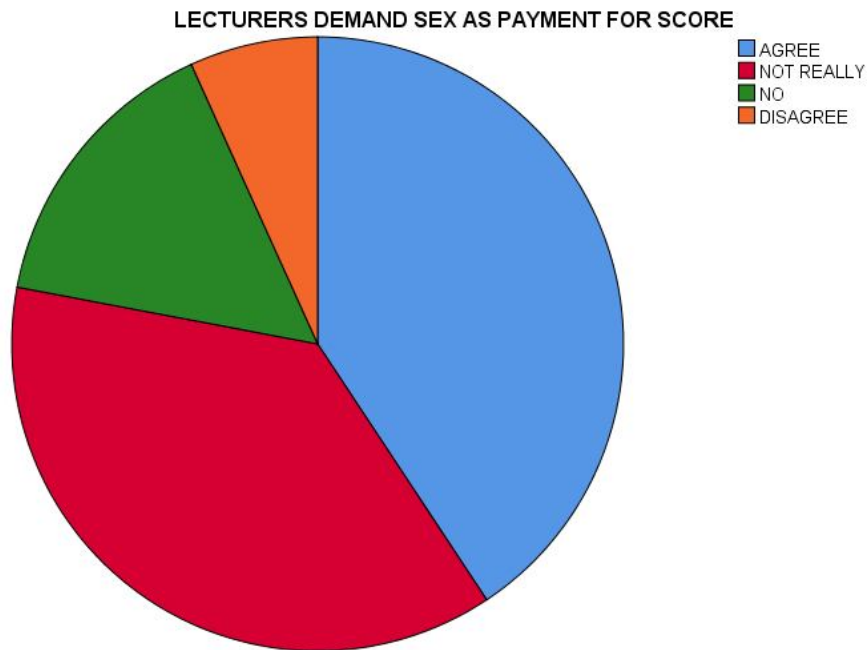


Figure 11. lecturers demanding sex as payment for scores

Conclusion

Sexual assaults and the exchange of sexual favours for academic benefits, such as grades or scores, are indeed prevalent and pose a significant threat to the integrity of our esteemed academic community. This study provides access to and supports prior research in this field by citing evidence that justifies concerns. The subject of inquiry pertains to the extent of respondents' experiences with sexual assault within educational institutions. A total of 10.2 percent of respondents concurred with the assertion that they have experienced an act of assault. In order to ascertain the extent of this societal problem, participants were additionally queried regarding their awareness of any instances of student assault. A total of 22 percent of respondents concur.

95 respondents of the survey, making 32.2 percent confirmed that their female classmates engage in academic misconduct for the purpose of obtaining higher grades. A total of 175 respondents, accounting for 59.3 percent of the sample, hold the belief that female students engage in sexual activities in exchange for academic marks. The responses provided by the respondents are as follows: 120, 110, 45, and 20. These responses correspond to percentages of 40.7%, 37.3%, 15.3%, and 6.8%, respectively. The following responses correspond to the categories of

agreement, partial agreement, disagreement, and strong disagreement, respectively.

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