

8/15/2011

UTRECHT
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‘GENDERED SCRIPTS’ – NARRATIVES OF
UGANDAN WOMEN WHO EXPERIENCED SEXUAL
HARASSMENT IN THE WORKPLACE

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Annex I

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Acronyms

CEDAW – Convention on elimination of all forms of discrimination against women

DSK – Dominique Strauss Khan

EEOC – Equal Employment Opportunity Commission

FIDA – Uganda Association of Women Lawyers affiliated with – Federation Internacional de Abogadas

GBV – Gender based violence

ILO – International Labour Organisation

IMF – International Monetary Fund

MDG – Millennium Development Goals

MGLSD – Ministry of Gender Labour and Social Development

MOLG – Ministry of Local Government

NGO – Non-governmental organisations

RMO – Research Medical Officer

SNO – Senior Nursing Officer

UBOS – Uganda bureau of statistics

UN – United Nations

UNFPA – United nations population fund

UNHCR – United nations refugee agency

UNHS – Uganda National Household Survey

UWOPA – Uganda Women Parliamentary Association

Chapter 1 – Uganda!

Introduction & Literature review

Uganda is the 'Pearl of Africa' (Winston Leonard Spencer-Churchill - 1908¹)

When I embarked on this thesis venture, I had a few ideas on areas I could contribute to meaningfully with my thesis research, areas of interest to me. During the summer of 2010, I was privileged enough to work as a gender specialist intern with the World Health Organisation (WHO) in Geneva, the project I worked on was within the framework of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) 4&5 targeting maternal and infant health. I was part of the team developing a 'mother baby safer birth tool' which would potentially place the safety power in the mother and community's hand. This was an area I wanted to explore further but would have involved bureaucratic process of requesting to use the WHO tool, a laborious and time consuming process. I also considered exploring the intersection of HIV and women in 'same-sex' relations in Sub-Saharan Africa; this however would have proved hard to carry out in Sub-Saharan Africa where 'same-sex' relations are illegal and considered immoral and taboo by many African societies, time factor was a major challenge as rapport building is key for this exercise. What brought me to my current thesis topic was an enlightening conversation I had with the Director of the department of Gender at the International Labour Organisation (ILO) in Geneva during my 2010 summer internship, who hinted about the paucity of research on sexual harassment in the workplace in many countries in Africa. In addition to this, over the last year, I have watched a close friend go through sexual harassment and abuse in the workplace, which brought the issue closer to home for me. A quick scan of literature confirmed the paucity of research within the Ugandan context, making it an 'unmarked territory' motivating me to contribute to an information gap as well as provide some evidence for advocacy and possibly feed into policy framework on sexual harassment in the workplace.

1.1 Research question and positioning

In this thesis, I will analyse the narratives of women in Uganda on the impact of sexual harassment in the workplace, through the rubric of gender based violence (GBV)², as patriarchy, male dominance and power relations are common threads in both these instances. With this in mind, I am NOT speaking for the women but projecting their voices through 'telling their experience' and therefore putting forth my reading of the sexual harassment within the boundaries of my research question and objectives. When I set out for this research, I framed it within the following objectives:

¹ http://www.associatedcontent.com/article/6038740/uganda_pearl_of_africa_winston_spencerchurchill.html

² Throughout this thesis, I will interchangeably use sexual harassment and gender based violence through my interpretation that patriarchy, dominance and power relations are a common thread, I do however recognise that one does not equate to the other.

- To examine the gap between reform/acts on GBV and actual implementation of these within the workplace.
- To look at the effects of GBV on productivity in the workplace through examining the physical, psychological/emotional and social interaction effects/impact.
- To explore what programmes are in place in the researched context in relation to addressing the needs of victims of GBV within the workplace.

These objectives will encapsulate my analysis and discussion whilst drawing in a number of theoretical frameworks, with the main one being poststructuralist through a gendered reading of Foucault's (1978-1986) notions on the *body, sexuality and discourse*. My reading and understanding of the manifestations from the abuse such as emotional and physical aspects are what I will refer to as 'gendered scripts' of sexual violence inscribed on these women.

Sexual harassment is by no means a new phenomenon, and one of the key issues that sprang up during the second wave of feminism. The historical overview of this together with key theoretical voices in this field will be elaborated on in detail in Chapter 3 on theoretical framework. Since the 2nd wave feminist movement, an anti feminist backlash with sexual harassment being centre stage emerged in the 1990s, Thomas & Kitzinger (1997) contend. They give an example of Rophie and others who were opposed to the extension of sexual harassment legislation/policies/codes of conduct to cover what they saw as 'trivial' cases relating to 'ordinary', 'everyday', 'natural' interactions between men and women such as 'leering and ogling, whistling, humour and jokes about sex'; claiming that women should be able to handle such things at a personal level. Brooke & Hesse-Biber (2007 pg 1-2) also account over-hearing a conversation between two young university graduates speaking on the train about how 'feminists have gone too far, as they think that women are treated unfairly all the time ...ranting and raving about how women are underpaid and are harassed in the workplace'. I have also heard such comments informally from friends, which was somewhat disturbing to me as indeed a significant number of women still face severe sexual harassment in the workplace such as my interviewees. Although in general terms most workspaces display an egalitarian gendered ethos, this does not apply to all as sexual harassment is still a problem.

Indeed not all women are underpaid, oppressed or harassed but that doesn't mean that we should close all doors and stop making noise about such issues, as there are still a significant number of women who are underpaid, oppressed in a number of ways such as those who are sexually harassed and abused in the workplace. We are not living in a fully egalitarian society as social injustices are still rife for many women, even those in fairly 'well off' social positions, such as the women I interviewed for my thesis, one being a programme officer for the UN and the other a fairly high

ranking politician in Uganda. Over the past year, I have observed a close friend of mine have a break down from being sexually harassed and abused at work (with this being the second it is happening to her), exhibiting 'gendered scripts' of the abuse such as developing an anxiety disorder and depression. I recently saw her and could not believe it! She used to be a confident, outspoken 'no nonsense go getter type of girl', and now she is a broken, anxious person with low self-esteem and confidence, suffering from insomnia and surviving on pills for her mental health well being. As Superson (1993 pg 56) points out, there is no doubt that many women are bothered by sexually harassing and abusive behaviour, often with serious side-effects including anything from anger, fear, and guilt to lowered self-esteem and decreased feelings of competence, to anxiety disorders, alcohol and drug abuse, coronary disturbances, and gastro-intestinal disorders. The bottom line is, sexual harassment may not happen to every woman but it is still rampant in many workplaces, with women bearing the brunt. A recent study by de Haas et al (2009) on the 'impact of sexual harassment policy on the Dutch police force' highlights no decrease in sexual harassment after the implementation of the sexual harassment policy/programme between the period of 2000 and 2006. In addition to this, the media is littered intermittently by sexual harassment cases from different countries and workspaces. The UN has recently been in the lime light with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) former chief 'DSK'³ sexual assault incidence in the Sofitel hotel in New York this past May, surfaced 'talks' on his previous work place sexual harassment investigation. Another public incident was that of the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCHR) high commissioner's resignation over allegations of sexually harassing several staff⁴. The sad reality is with a few of such high profile cases becoming public and detested by many, there are thousands that go un-noticed and un-voiced. I reckon we should not stop 'making noise' about sexual harassment because it has been classified by some as 'old school feminist activism', but should rather be 'screaming louder', which I this thesis will in part accomplish. Honing in on the violence within the workplace in Uganda, although there is no national data on sexual harassment in the workplace; a recent article I found through my literature search by a local Ugandan Newspaper⁵, the New Vision on a poll commissioned by it shows that Ugandan workers, both male and female have experienced sexual harassment. This article reports that 16.2% of the 10,228 respondents had experienced sexual harassment in the workplace, of which 86.5% were female (New Vision 2011). Sexual harassment, sexual violence and GBV in the workplace manifests in numerous forms from sexual jokes, inappropriate sexualised touch to rape. A quick literature scan reveals numerous definitions on what stipulates sexual harassment in the workplace. The various

³ <http://www.nytimes.com/2011/07/02/nyregion/new-yorkers-and-french-await-latest-dominique-strauss-kahn-legal-turn.html?hp>

⁴ <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A39901-2005Feb20.html>

⁵ New Vision newspaper published on 8th January 2011 - <http://allafrica.com/stories/201101100088.html>

definitions I came across however underscore the fundamental nature of sexual harassment to be any undesirable sexual conduct that interferes with an employee's ability to perform their job (Fiedler & Hamby 2000, Gabor 2006, Mrkwicka 1994, Kaye 1996, Williams 1996, Superson 1993, Bronner et al 2003). Superson (1993) classifies definitions on sexual harassment to fall either in the subjectivity or the objectivity category. Basing herself on the *Black's Law Dictionary*, *American Heritage Dictionary* and the *EEOC⁶ Guidelines*, she describes the subjectivity category as making reference to behaviour such as 'unwelcome', 'annoying', 'disturb or irritate persistently', 'denotes sexual misconduct that merely annoys or offends the person to whom it is directed'. The objective definitions base themselves on elements falling within law as either a 'quid pro quo' or 'hostile work environment'.

'The essence of a quid pro quo harassment claim is an individual's reliance upon his actual or apparent authority to extort or attempt to extort sexual favours from another employee by conditioning work-related benefits on sexual favours. To be actionable, the plaintiff must show that a term or condition of her employment was linked to her acceptance or rejection of sexual advances. A claim for hostile work environment harassment, in contrast, requires a showing that the workplace was permeated with a 'discriminatory intimidation, ridicule, and insult'. A hostile work environment is actionable only if the conduct is 'sufficiently severe or pervasive to alter the conditions of (the victim's) employment and create an abusive working environment'. (Gabor, 2006, pg 104)

I will also provide another definition which is somewhat broad but fits within the analysis of sexual harassment in this thesis, which is:

'Sexual harassment is referred to as behaviour which is sexual in nature and directly or indirectly adversely affects or threatens to affect a person's job security, prospects of promotion or earning, working conditions, or opportunity to secure a job...' (Knox 1995 in Bronner et al 2003 pg 638)

The analysis of the women's narratives draw on both these two definitions, with the first definition appealing to policies and partly to the women's narratives whilst the second definition being mainly used in relation to the women's narratives. The two main participants' experience of sexual harassment threatened their job security, prospects of promotion as well as their working condition. I will note that I am in favour of the second definition because it provides room for the impact of sexual harassment to these women and consequently the manifestation of the 'gendered scripts'.

1.2 Brief context on Uganda and situating the women (interview participants)

⁶ EEOC stands for Equal Employment Opportunity Commission – An American Organisation.

Uganda often referred to by many as ‘Africa’s friendliest country’ and others as ‘gifted by nature’⁷, is a truly tropical lush country with breathtaking scenery, diverse culture and a relatively booming economy. This country, once referred to by Churchill as ‘*the pearl of Africa*’ is situated within east of Africa, bordering Kenya on the east, Tanzania and Rwanda on the South, Democratic Republic of Congo on the west and the Sudan on the north. The Uganda National Household Survey (UNHS) 2009/10 estimates the current population at about 30.7 million. Of the total population, 49% are male while 51% are female⁸ (UNHS 2009/10). Of these, the household survey reports that the proportion of persons aged less than 15 years constitutes about 51% of the total population while that of persons aged 65 and above constitute only 3.1%, which highlights a country with a generally young population (UNHS 2009/10). In addition to this, the spatial distribution of the population shows a predominantly rural one, of about 85% (UNHS 2009/10).

With this brief overview, I will then situate the interviewed women within the broader Ugandan context of labour structures and the status of women. The 2009/10 UNHS estimates the current total labour force at 11.5 million people, which is roughly 36% of the total population (UNHS 2009/10). Of these, the majority are self employed, estimated at 76.4%, the bulk of which fall within the agricultural sector (UNHS 2009/10). The numerous household and economic studies carried out by the Uganda Bureau of Statistics (UBOS) highlight agriculture as the sector in which most Ugandans are employed, comprising of 65% of the total labour force⁹ (UNHS 2009/10). There is a strong gendered dimension to the labour layout in Uganda (see Annex I for statistics), where women are mostly employed within the low paying non-secure jobs such as domestic work, agriculture, cleaning etc, which hampers their development and dictates their class within the social structures in Uganda. Although progress has been made on some levels with women breaking through to numerous professional jobs as well as formally masculine workplace terrains across the labour force, the majority of women in Uganda are far from this egalitarian ethos and hanging on in marginal positions. The 2009 CEDAW¹⁰ report highlights the following disparities in employment:

- Women are paid less than men in both the private and public sectors; but wage differentials are more pronounced in the private sector where men’s wages double those of their female counterparts.
- Women constitute 79% of the labor force in the agricultural sector which is characterized by uncertainty, low returns and yet employees in this sector earn the lowest wages in comparison to other sectors.
- There are more women employed in low paid jobs or sectors of the economy than men.
- Women constitute only a third of all employed persons.

⁷ <http://www.africanpearlsafaris.com/safari/tourism-time-to-re-brand-uganda.html>

⁸ <http://www.ubos.org/UNHS0910/unhs200910.pdf>

⁹ www.ubos.org

¹⁰ CEDAW Report on combined 4th, 5th, 6th & 7th periodic report on implementation of CEDAW in Uganda – Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development (2009)

- Women spend 9 hours on care labor activities compared to 1 hour for men per day. Care labor activities have no monetary value attached to them. Care labor activities include cooking, fetching firewood and looking after the young and sick.
- Women in the informal sector are not covered by the social security system and efforts are underway to transform the entire system to increase coverage. (Source 2009 CEDAW Report pg 22)

In addition to this, women's low economic status has been attributed to their low literacy levels, limited access to productive assets such as land, credit and other resources, most of which are enforced by gendered disparities. The meagre economic independence dictates class within society and to some extent the social status of women in Uganda. Inequalities such as those highlighted above maintain women's low socio-economic status as well as contribute to their vulnerability to sexual harassment in the work place where speaking out about the harassment could lead to loss of income.

In general terms, the status of a woman in Uganda is fairly low although strides have been made to address some key gender disparities. The 2010 Ugandan Convention on elimination of all forms of discrimination against women (CEDAW) report highlights some of the achievements made such as repealing and putting in place laws that promote gender equality; gender mainstreaming is visible in many aspects of society, women comprise a distinct number of the economically active unit in Uganda as well as holding positions with decision making abilities; women's access to credit and land is marked although a privilege mainly for urban dwellers; access to education and social welfare aspects such as health; to mention but a few! This is progress that indeed deserves an applause, yet benefiting a few, with the majority of women still being perceived as 'second class citizens'¹¹. Patriarchy is still a dominant social institution in Ugandan society, ingrained within the day today social codes and 'grammatical' principles. For instance, in some cultures in Uganda, practices such as 'bride price' and female genital mutilation are still part of the norm as well as presumed heterosexuality with rife homophobia. Essentialism is unchecked as sexual difference very much stipulates the roles in a number of households, with usually the man as the head of the family. The relatively big families in Uganda have huge domestic implications for women as they are the primary careers of children and the home. The interviewed women have relatively big families and are responsible (both financially and domestically) for both the immediate nuclear family as well as the extended family, a common feature in many households in Uganda. To add to the dynamics and status of women, although access to primary education has increased within the last decade or so, there is still a high drop out of girls as stated by the UNHS 2010, to take up domestic related task or unpaid agricultural tasks. On top of this, gender based violence against women is unbridled in all

¹¹ Interpretation from my take on the Ugandan society

social spheres; at home, at work, on the streets, at school etc... Although the above paints a grim picture, it is not all gloom and damn for women in Uganda.

1.3 Literature review - studies in the 'Global South' on sexual harassment in the workplace

Although I do want to fall in the trap of 'othering' and politics of representation, and use these terminologies with discomfort, I do recognise that these geopolitical divisions of the 'global north' and 'global south' exist. My extensive literature search resulted in a handful of studies carried out on sexual harassment in a number of countries in the 'global south' such as Kenya, Nigeria, Israel, India, Peru, and South Africa. A common thread runs through these studies; they were empirical studies carried out with women in either 'feminised' or marginal jobs; for instance two the studies were carried out on nurses (Israel and India) and one on domestic workers (Kenya) both of which are 'feminised' jobs. Another common thread is that these studies were conducted with both female and male participants, and the results mirror the global trend of largely more women experiencing and being affected by sexual harassment in the workplace than men. A lack of national statistics is also cited by a number of the studies, echoing a similar situation in Uganda in addition to sexual harassment being a 'normal' occurrence in the workplace in a number of these settings as well (Nyabuti 2007, Okoro & Obozokhai 2005, Chaudhuri 2007, Bronner et al 2003).

The overwhelmingly dominant discourse 'screaming' out of these studies is the gendered cultural, structural and socio-economic elements that not only contribute to but also reinforce sexual harassment of women in the workplace. Heterosexuality and heteronormativity is a key feature with dominant masculine behaviour considered a norm in many of these workspaces. Poverty is given by Chaudhuri (2007), Nyabuti (2007) and Okoro & Obozokhai (2005) as a major cause of many social ills in society today, fuelling violence against women in general terms. In addition to this, these same authors highlighted poverty as one of the reasons women are silent or put up with Sexual harassment in the workplace because access to income, even though meagre for many far outweighs speaking out against Sexual Harassment and GBV in the workplace. Chaudhuri (2007) and Bronner et al (2002) articulate some of the main reasons women do not report or put up with Sexual Harassment and GBV in the workplace as; fear of dismissal and loss of income, blocking promotion, victimisation in work assignments with the following factors underlying non-reporting: social norms, lack of awareness of rights and recognition of power dynamics and their implication on the job such as loss of a job. Identified common feelings and emotions as a result of sexual harassment, what I am referring to as 'gendered scripts' include guilt, shame, self blame, lowered self esteem and confidence, performance difficulties to list but a few (Nyabuti 2007, Okoro & Obozokhai 2005, Chaudhuri 2007, Bronner et al 2003). I will locate my research within these current debates on

discourses that fuel sexual harassment in the workplace as well as the impact of workplace violence on women.

1.4 Conclusion

Over the last decade or so, the debates on sexual harassment have revolved around laws/policies in the workplace for instance scrutinizing the terminologies/clauses as well as evaluating the outcomes of cases that have been put through. Within the 'global south', the issue of sexual harassment in the workplace has developed alongside that of the 'global north', gaining momentum within the last decade or so. The bulk of studies and texts in the 'global south' highlight sexual harassment in the workplace as visible and yet an invisible problem and considered a norm within many workspaces. For women in the 'global south' socio-economic factors dictate in maintaining discourses that fuel sexual harassment such as threatening women with their job security, fear of job loss and the issue of silence/not reporting for those women who have been sexually harassed. And yet with limited support structures in place for women who experience sexual harassment in the workplace, contributing further to the invisibility. The current governance in Uganda, which deserves and applause for the progressive development of women across the board is commendable in one breath and critical in another as this development is largely shy of meeting the need. GBV is one area that pace has been noticeably slow in picking up with scanty data available for domestic violence and none at all for sexual harassment in the workplace. In addition to this, there are barely in structures in place to address domestic violence and none at all for sexual harassment in the workplace. And yet the effects of the abuse on these women are highly visible through various 'gendered scripts'. All these issues will be tackled by this thesis.

With the above in mind, this thesis will be laid out in the following manner. Chapter 2 is on research methodologies highlighting the data collection process employing reflexivity, challenges faced as well as my 'encounter' moments in and of Uganda in drawing on Ahmed's (2000) notion of 'encounter'. This chapter also points out the limitations to research as well as what the challenging data collection process says to GBV in Uganda. Chapter 3 is on theoretical framework and this employs a mix of theoretical aspects such as poststructuralist through a gendered reading of Foucault's (1988-1986) take of the body, sexuality and discourse. This will be woven into feminist theories on sexual harassment in the workplace such as those of Thomas (1997) and Mackinnon (1978) whilst tying in socio-economic aspects. Intersectionality will be the overarching framework linking these three different schools of thought. Chapter 5 will present the results mainly from the two main interview candidates and analysis of these narratives drawing on a discourse analysis

whilst weaving in the above mentioned theoretical aspects. Chapter 6 forms the conclusion and recommendations.

Chapter 2 – Reflective moments

Methodology

‘...knowledge can be produced in structured encounters organised around “telling about experience”.

(De Vault & Gross 2006 pg 176)

2.1 Feminist research

Feminist research has evolved over the last couple of decades, ‘connected in principle to the feminist struggle’¹². As I embarked on this research, right from planning phase to fieldwork and write up; I was equipped with and employed numerous aspects of feminist research most of which are discussed in the volume of text below. In relation to feminist research, Brooks & Hesse-Biber (2007) provide the following definition;

By documenting women’s lives, experiences, and concerns, illuminating gender-based stereotypes and biases, and unearthing women’s subjugated knowledge, feminist research challenges the basic structures and ideologies that oppress women. Feminist research goals foster empowerment and emancipation for women and other marginalized groups, and feminist researchers often apply their findings in the service of promoting social change and social justice for women’ (Brooks & Hesse-Biber 2007, pg 4)

Although a somewhat ‘touchy’ subject for some, I consider myself to be a feminist, as broadly speaking I acknowledge differences among women and aim towards promoting women’s interests, health and safety. The above quote speaks true to my research theme and thesis; indeed I sought to illuminate a ‘silent’ topic especially within the Ugandan context, and by doing so, destabilize the status quo of a structural and ideological ethos that contributes to the oppression of women in the workplace through sexual harassment. Although my research seems like ‘a drop in the ocean’ to what seems like a vast and unacknowledged problem, I see my research as contributing to the preliminary steps of promoting social change through projection of Ugandan women’s voices. Indeed I do not ‘speak for’ the interviewed women but rather projecting their voices, through my reading of not only the interviews and interview interactive process but also of my experiences of collecting data with the numerous personnel and texts I interacted with including the challenges faced. The whole research process then ‘informs’ the topic of sexual harassment in the workplace in Uganda. In addition to this, particularly in relation the difficulties I faced with finding research participants as well as getting participants in the focus groups to speak openly and freely about sexual harassment in the workplace speaks volumes about what this topic is and means in Uganda. What does this noticeable ‘silence’ about this topic mean and yet there is a common language for gender based violence. Was the silence mainly because I was probably perceived as an ‘outsider’ as there was not enough time for building rapport? Or was it because this truly is a ‘silent’ issue? These

¹² Brooks & Hesse-Biber (2006), DeVault & Gross (2006)

are some of the issues I will be entangling in this chapter. I will start off by accounting my different 'encounters' throughout the whole research process emphasizing the methodological approaches used with reflexive¹³ interpretations. I will start off by explaining the methodological approach, how this evolved/changed over time. I will then zoom into the interactions with the informants and interview participants dwelling on power relations as well as what I will refer to as micro-politics; mainly within the different workspaces I interacted with. The limitations to research will follow, ending with a conclusion that highlights what the difficulties faced during collecting data mean in relation to sexual harassment in the workplace and GBV in Uganda.

2.2 Encountering Uganda

I will draw on Ahmed's (2000) notion of 'encounter' where she tackles it in various forms such as 'encountering a stranger' among other things. I will particularly hone in on where she articulates 'encounter' as the coming together of two elements and not necessarily a 'face-to-face' interface, but also including interactions such as those between a reader and text. She contends that...

'Encounters involve, not only the surprise of being faced by another who cannot be located in the present (mainly making reference to a stranger here), they also involve conflict. The fact to face meeting is not between two subjects who are equal and in harmony; the meeting is antagonistic. The coming together of others that allows the 'one' to exist takes place given that there is an asymmetry of power' (Ahmed, 2000, pg 8)

This time around, I did 'encounter' Uganda with different spectacles on, i.e. those of a researcher, which was a somewhat strange encounter because I saw things in a somewhat different light, with my interactions being 'different' from my usual when in Uganda. It felt like 'encountering' a 'stranger' as Ahmed articulates as this time Uganda was the 'research subject' contextually and hence I reflected on many of my various interactions/events, theorizing some and making hypotheses and conclusions on others, even those un-related to my research. My meeting of Uganda was antagonistic, filled with a sense of familiarity - 'being at home' whilst at the same time feelings of conflict especially with the data collection process as the topic under discussion is a somewhat a taboo topic. My questions and interactions were to some extent destabilizing the status quo, which resulted into the conflicting moments in interaction for me in this usually comfortable setting. Politics of interactions and power relations were evident in my interactions, all of which I will dissect in the discussions to follow below.

¹³ Abbott & Wallace define reflexivity as "...the researcher must be constantly aware of how her values, attitudes and perceptions influence the research process, from the formulation of the research questions, through the data-collection stage, to the ways in which the data are analysed, explained and disseminated" (Abbott & Wallace; 1990:369). Descriptive and analytical reflexivity will both be observed and engaged with accordingly.

2.21 Mapping encounters with the Ministry – website, personnel, and policies

Being Ugandan, although I have been residing out of my country for the last 15 years, with regular visits back, this time around, I *encountered* my country through scholarly prisms. I was well aware that there is a government ministry dealing with gender and women related issues within the cabinet, the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development (MGLSD). Before I left for my research, being digitally up-beat in the current digitised world, I looked through the ministry's website¹⁴, to familiarise myself with what sort of activities they were involved in, as well as find out if the ministry did anything remotely close to sexual harassment in the workplace. I got extremely excited when I found a booklet and training manuals on sexual violence in the workplace, an *encounter* that gave me hope on the prospects of my research. The website also gave links to a number of 'Acts'¹⁵, which I clicked through and browsed, one of them being the 'The Employment Act No 6 2006'. An additional outcome of this digital era is the easy access through e-mail; I made contact with one of the personnel at the MGLSD and sent them my research proposal. Their response was positive and encouraging stating that they were looking forward to receiving me upon my arrival and pointing me towards the right people in the field of my research. My expectations before I left for Uganda were quite high, I was quite positive that the research process would be a smooth one without many hiccups as in addition to making contact with MGLSD, I had a fairly solid network of people (whom I will refer to as 'connections') to link me up with the right organisations/personnel. I was quite comfortable!

Upon arrival in Uganda my first stop¹⁶ was the MGLSD, and the first point of contact was the personnel I sent my thesis proposal to. For the purpose of this thesis, I will refer to her as AP. During the early stages of the research process, still quite up-beat and ready to face the research head on, during an informal conversation I had with AP, she made a comment my topic was an 'untouched' territory in Uganda. I did not pay much attention to this as at the back of my mind, the MGLSD website and her previous e-mail communication alluded to some form of framework in place and I trusted that to be. I did not probe further with what she really meant with that, however in hindsight, this comment should have been my first alarm bell going off. She led me to the department that deals with domestic and GBV, on the door to the main-entrance of this office was a big noticeable poster of UNFPA¹⁷, stating its big presence as a funding body. My previous experience has been that government bodies do receive quite a substantial amount of financial support from

¹⁴ http://www.mglsd.go.ug/?page_id=1004

¹⁵ Such as the employment act, equal opportunities act to mention but a few

¹⁶ Because of my earlier communication and internet search, I thought this may be a one 'stop shop' where I would find most, if not all that I required for the thesis.

¹⁷ UNFPA stands for United Nations population fund

donor agencies, as most government funds are not as near enough to meet the need. This for me was not a surprise and brought back memories, I guess that is why I noticed it. AP and I met a group of young interns sitting around a table; it was just about lunch time. The interns were quite friendly and pointed out that I was in the right place upon verbally explaining what my research topic was. One of the interns explained what the department does, but said their boss; the head of the department was at that point in time away on a meeting. She also emphasized, upon request that they could not pass on any reading material for me to browse through as they were not authorised to do so and had to wait for the boss for this. She took down my mobile number and promised to get in touch once she had spoken to her boss and managed to set up a meeting. Again, I was hopeful and quite grateful to the friendly intern who took on the responsibility of setting up a meeting for me to meet with her boss.

Whilst waiting for the meeting to be set up, AP suggested I look through the MGLSD resource centre, which is like a library, where all the books/pamphlets/policies were stored. I welcomed the idea and up to the top floor we went. I was also very grateful to AP for her time and taking me around like that. AP and I went through to the resource centre; she introduced me to someone at the front desk, who had the role of the librarian, a very friendly and helpful person. She directed me to where policies and books in relation to GBV are sectioned, which I looked through with enthusiasm. I picked up a few books/pamphlets/booklets/ring bound documents on GBV which I browsed through, one of which was the hard copy of the booklet I alluded to earlier detailing what Sexual violence is in the workplace. I asked the librarian if I could have a copy but she declined although they had a handful of them saying they were the entire ministry's property and was not up to her to give out a copy. I asked her if she had any idea if the booklet had been distributed to workplaces, she expressed not knowing and said the Director of Gender might have a better idea. After the browsing and making of notes on what seemed relevant, I thanked the librarian and ventured down to find AP, whom I discussed my findings with.

At the back of my mind, I was worried that I was keeping AP away from her work. AP is a friend of my mother's whom I know really well, I refer to her as 'my aunt' and I am very comfortable with her, talking about anything and everything. In essence, we were catching up as well since we hadn't seen each other in a while and she was happy to spend time with me, taking me around her familiar work environment and introducing me to office personnel as 'her daughter'. In reference to the latter comment, we bonded well within kinship realm! She has been working within the MGLSD for about 5 years and holds a significant position, which made access to other personnel within the ministry

easy. In line with Ackerly & True (2010), this widened my boundaries¹⁸ of access to information and in my understanding somewhat blurred the ‘researcher’/‘researched’ divide as the relationship and interaction AP put forth was a comfortable one, Ugandan style! AP’s introductions to the various people we met all started with her introducing me as ‘her daughter’ at university in Holland and ended with her asking whoever we were speaking to, to help me with my research and that she would be terribly grateful for that. The fact that I was from overseas played to some extent in my favour, there is a certain ‘admiration’ and sometimes respect for Ugandans based overseas. In my opinion (and I have had discussions on this issue with a number of my African friends residing overseas), it all boils down to money as the tendency and perception is that Ugandans overseas are ‘moneyed’ and hence the admiration. This added another dynamic to my research as well as breaking down those interaction boundaries as most of the informants I spoke with were more than happy to speak to me. Within this realm, I was perceived in a Ugandan sense as and in line with Merton (1972) an ‘outsider’¹⁹ (not in the authentic sense) and hence the ease in speaking earnestly during our conversations and interactions.

I was in a dynamic and probably somewhat privileged position that resonated and swung from ‘outsider’ to what Merton (1972) refers to as ‘insider’²⁰ (none authentic insider in my case). An ‘outsider’ mainly because I have resided outside Uganda for over a decade and an ‘insider’ - one of the ‘family’ being Ugandan as well as being ‘connected’ to AP who was conversant with the MGLSD personnel. The power relations that goes with the epistemological standing of the researcher and ‘subjects/objects’ being researched were more within the kinship realm with AP. The interactions and ‘chats’ between us, although with a clear hierarchy between AP and me; due to age, and generally speaking knowledge among other things, it was warm, comfortable, pleasant and respectful. Although AP was quite helpful and open to me about the ins and outs of the ministry, it felt as if she was ‘parading’ me to the numerous ministry’s personnel we interacted with, somewhat happy to be associated with this (me) overseas ‘outsider’²¹ as to some extent, although AP can be located in the middle class of Uganda, this association may have benefited her social stance. Although I write this with uneasiness, perhaps this underscored her class stance to her work colleagues as ‘belonging’ to a given class is visible in Uganda and ‘show offs’ a commonality. AP was

¹⁸ Ackerly & True, (2010 pg 29) point out that a feminist research ethic entails a commitment to a research process that requires being attentive to many kinds of boundaries – those related to our research and those related to our discipline.

¹⁹ Merton (1972 in Hellowell 2006 pg 484 - 485) defines *outsider* research is where the researcher is not *a priori* familiar with the setting and people s/he is researching.

²⁰ Merton (1972 in Hellowell 2006 pg 484) who defines who defines an *insider* as an individual who possesses *a priori* intimate knowledge of the community and its members.

²¹ By overseas outsider here, I make reference to some of the perceptions that go with this in a Ugandan context – privileged, moneyed etc...

well aware that there was no programme on sexual harassment in the workplace in place. Looking back, it felt like a 'performance' where she did not want to be perceived as not doing enough to help with the research so if things did not work out, as it turned out they didn't, she does not take any form of blame; as she had done her best.

2.3 A change in methodological approach

My subsequent interactions with government personnel led me to nothing concrete in relation to sexual harassment in the workplace. The 'nail in the head' was when I finally had a conversation with the Director of the department of Gender's office. Prior to this, a couple of 'bells went off' but I was hopeful that with the 'employment act' stipulating sexual violence and harassment in the workplace as well as the booklet and training manual, that surely there something on the ground. The office confirmed that although the law has been out for about 5 years, there was/is no programme in place overseen by the Ministry, as implementation has not yet started. The issue of funding as this area is perceived by decision makers as a non priority area has mainly led to the slow implementation of the law/act, making sexual harassment invisible to policy makers. The Director Gender is however passionately promoting the policy against sexual harassment in the workplace as a key priority area for her, something she herself as well as personnel within her office voiced to me. This 'encounter' brought my whole wall crumbling down. What was I to do if this ministry, the main role-player did not have a programme in place? This meant it was close to impossible trying to identify potential research participants i.e. women who have experienced sexual harassment in the workplace, especially within the sectors I had proposed, domestic workers²² and feminised jobs such as nursing, cleaning. A number of MGLSD personnel I spoke with pointed me towards possible organisations/people that could help, but these pointed their finger to someone else, which turned out to be a 'chasing the wind' type of venture. My 'outsider' position and class may have contributed to this lack of access. My numerous efforts to access and speak to domestic workers were futile. My privileged position due to class may have been a distancing factor as I was perceived an 'outsider' and not 'belonging' making it hard to break through the class wall barrier. Although I do not consider myself located in any given class with a transcending philosophy, I was perceived in a different light from their point of view and that maintained the class barrier. In hindsight, spending more time building rapport in an ethnographic style may have broken this barrier, the five weeks I was in Uganda did not allow for this. Frustration does not even begin to describe what I was going through, literally felt like I was just 'bumping into walls' left, right and centre! Ethnography

²² This was especially difficult because it is considered a 'private' sphere within people's homes. The employment act doesn't even address domestic workers and yet most of the people I spoke with informally did affirm that domestic workers do experience numerous form of abuse including physical and sexual violence. The majority of domestic workers in Uganda are young girls who have migrated into the city/towns from rural areas.

With the original plan falling apart, I put my thinking cap on coupled with conversations/venting to family and friends about my debacle, suggestions came through of what to consider/try out next. Through friends and family ‘connections’, I managed to speak to academics at Makerere University, UN agencies, organisations such as Uganda Human rights Initiative, the police, law association, prisons’ officers, nurses, hospitals, Non-governmental organisations (NGOs) dealing with ‘women’s issues’ such as FIDA Uganda²³, Akina mama wa Africa, Uganda Women Parliamentary Association (UWOPA) and Uganda research council. I met with a number of senior personnel within these organisations, most of whom were friendly and happy to talk to me and point out where they thought I might find help, whilst others just did not know who to approach/talk to as they reckoned (mainly men) the issue I was investigating was non-existent. At one point, I was literally talking to anyone who crossed my path as time was not on my side and I was panicking! Because the situation on the ground was drastically different, as Ackerly & True (2010) point out, I had to broaden my boundaries of inclusion and exclusion beyond what I had proposed, i.e. domestic workers and women within feminised jobs. Through my numerous searches and contacts with the various personnel from the above listed agencies, I was trying to identify any women who had experienced sexual harassment in any given workplace to interview.

2.31 Focus groups

A common methodology employed by studies such as Russell (1975), Okoro & Obozokhai (2005), Bronner et al (2002), Chaudhuri (2007) on sexual or physical violence has mainly been questionnaires, mainly because this is a sensitive personal experience. This method works especially well in contexts without a visible programme in place where screening questionnaires are used followed by in-depth interviews upon identification of participants. This type of methodological approach crossed my mind but I did not have much time in the field and hence discarded it. I instead employed the focus group methodology. I managed to get two groups organised, one with a group of nurses (5) ranging in age from 25-40 and the other a group of prisons officers (6) ranging in age from 28-55.

	Focus group 1	Focus group 2
Number of participants	6	5
Date of focus group	18/04/2011	22/04/2011
Location	Outside the prisons office under a mango tree	Senior Nursing Officer’s office

²³ FIDA Uganda is the Uganda Association of Women Lawyers affiliated with Federacion Internacional de Abogadas

Occupation	Prisons guards	Nurses
Age range	25-40	28-55

The plan was to use this as a screening process for identifying women who had experienced sexual harassment and if found, take it further with in-depth interviews for any who were willing. The latter did not materialise and instead we spoke generally about sexual violence and harassment in the workplace, with the information gathered being important and useful to this research. The first focus group I conducted was with prisons officers. I managed to get this organised out of interest because I met two female prisons officers who guard male prisoners, through family on a non research related venture. I had a long conversation with one of the two female prisons officers, which was quite interesting and very informative; just shed some light on women in a position of 'power' and men (prisoners) in a primarily 'submissive' position. Through family 'connections', the focus group was set up thereby opening boundaries and inclusions leading to some useful data, mainly on the women's opinions towards sexual harassment or violence in the workplace, as all participants stated nothing of that nature had happened to them. I will dive into some of the reasons I perceive as why they were not so forth coming during the sections below on reflection and research limitations.

The second focus group materialised on failure to secure nurses to interview individually. Initially I had requested to interview nurses in my home town, through official means as the Senior Nursing Officer (SNO) of the hospital had suggested. I wrote a formal letter with my proposal attached and sent it through to the medical officer (who happened to be male), in charge of research at the hospital – the Research Medical Officer (RMO). Despite rigorous follow up, this avenue fell through as time was limited on my side and the RMO had rigid requests, for instance he asked me to re-write my proposal according to the hospital's 'standards'. I had a long discussion with him which was unfruitful. Gender power dynamics, intersecting with age, gender and experience; were clearly evident during this interaction. The RMO felt he was superior to me in age and experience, and despite my efforts on trying to suggest probable alternatives it his way (re-writing my proposal with guidance from him) or no way at all. A young woman (student for that matter) reasoning with an older man was somewhat laughable to him as the norm is what an older man says in such a position of power at the hospital goes. Hegemonic masculine dominance was key factor and I was clearly in a subjugated position as a young female student. This was the peak of my frustration, I was full of emotions filled with anger, despair and hopelessness, I cried as I drove home late that evening. A researcher's plight!

My family 'connections' stepped in and intervened after my infuriating frustrating encounter with the RMO. The SNO (who happened to be female) of the hospital rounded up a few nurses (5) during lunch break, and because they were still on duty, not much time was permitted and had about 20-30 minutes of their time, which I appreciated regardless. The SNO was very sympathetic towards my challenging experience with this research and that is why she made this exception. We had a quick a 'chat' amongst the 5 participants more than your 'typical' focus group. Once again, the information gathered, despite the time and place of the meeting was somewhat useful to my research. A couple of the participants expressed that they knew of someone who had experienced unwanted verbal sexual jokes and forceful sexual propositions from male doctors.

2.32 On reflection – focus groups

My positioning within the Ugandan context as pointed out earlier – the 'insider'/'outsider' dichotomy was evident with the focus group meetings. Being Ugandan as well as being linked to the 'connections' that facilitated the focus group positioned me on the 'inside'. This had its advantages, it brought me close to the women I was interacting with, and on some level, spoke the same language literally and symbolically. There was a connection and mutual understanding as both focus groups were conducted in my home town. We used a mix of English and my mother tongue – Lusoga to communicate. The family/friends 'connection' played an even bigger role in the soliciting of information. The participants felt obligated to help as they had been asked by someone senior to them to take part in the focus group, which was somewhat 'forceful' as they were not given a choice to opt in or out. In hindsight, I should have asked the women if they wanted to participate in the focus group or not. My desperation for information and limited time in the field 'blinded' me to the fact that these women were somewhat 'summoned' to speak to/engage with me. Was it out of respect or fear or curiosity of this 'insider'/'outsider' (me) or a combination of all that contributed to their participation or lack within the focus group. Having said that, it is however not uncommon in Ugandan where submission to authoritative figures, such as those in the workplace is quite common. Hierarchy is quite clear within office settings and junior officers being summoned by their bosses to do something like participating in an informal focus group is not unusual. The fact that the women who participated were well aware that I had a link with their bosses through family/friends may have hindered full disclosure with fear of repercussions, despite my repeatedly saying that what was discussed amongst us was confidential and they therefore only mentioned what they might have felt was 'politically correct'. The place of the meetings were also not overly conducive as well as the time for the meetings was not enough for me to build significant rapport as the issue we were discussing

is sensitive and very personal. With all the above mentioned limitations; I was grateful for the information I got from the focus groups, however scanty it was.

Power relations and power dynamics in the researcher/researched as well as ‘insider’/‘outsider’ dichotomy evidently contributed to the lack of ‘depth’ of information discussed during the focus groups. Difference dictated, I stood out ‘like a sore thumb’ – ‘outsider’. Intersectionalities of class in its many dimensions such as up-bringing, educational background, presentation were present and evident. I am not fluent in my mother tongue and this was evident, especially with the prisons officer focus group who would have rather the entire meeting have been conducted in Lusoga, most of it was. I struggled to express myself in a simple but understandable way in my mother tongue and the women noticed, teasing me about my accent which accentuated further my ‘outsider’ position. The class divide was also highly evident, I have indeed had much better access to opportunities such as education and work, which placed me in a privileged position in a disadvantageous way and further distanced me from the women. My awareness in terms of articulation of gender relations added to my epistemological standing as well as contributing to the power relations and dynamics that go with the ‘researcher/researched’ divide. Fully equipped with feminist research methodologies, I was well aware of and did not want to fall within the entrapment of traditional positivist methods, where research participants are perceived as research objects. I did not in any way perceive the women who participated in the focus groups as objects of research consciously and yet in hindsight, the limited time available for fieldwork did not allow for rapport building placing Uganda and the participants in my research within the ‘object’ realm.

2.33 The interviews

These were in-depth interviews, as my proposed research project had stipulated. I conducted 4 interviews in total, two with women who had experienced sexual harassment in the workplace and two with professionals, the latter were support interviews of which one was with an academic at Makerere University – Dr Sylvia Tamale and the other an ex Member of Parliament (IK)²⁴. Dr Tamale is an activist on policy/programming relating to sexual harassment in the workplace and played a leading role in having a sexual harassment policy and programme implemented at the University. All these interviews were arranged through ‘connections’ who were aware about my research topic and felt that these voices need to be projected. I conducted the first interview with a woman who had experienced sexual harassment at a United Nations office in Uganda. This interview took me by

²⁴ Real name not used due to confidentiality and anonymity

surprise as I was clueless when my UN 'connection', a former colleague of mine (H)²⁵ whom I consider a friend and mentor insisted I meet Caroline²⁶. I met Caroline in her office during my second week in of field work, we chatted, more like a get to know each other and had quite a few things in common such as residing in similar parts of the world. Towards the end of this meeting, she mentioned that H had told her what my research topic was, she then came forth saying she is what people refer to as 'victim' although she does not classify herself as one. That caught me by surprise, completely unexpected! We then set up the date for the actual interview. This interaction prior to the interview was, although un-planned played a key role in rapport building consequently influencing the interaction during the interview.

I conducted the second interview during my last week of field work. I was having an informal conversation about my research with IK an ex Member of Parliament who mentioned she knew of a close friend who had experienced sexual harassment in the workplace. She rung her up and Fiona²⁷ joined us half an hour later. IK introduced us, we had a brief catch up conversation in terms of who we are and how IK and I know each other. IK then mentioned to her what my research topic was and asked her if she was happy to be interviewed by me, which she agreed to. On reflection Fiona was summoned by IK just like the women in the focus groups - did Fiona agree to be interviewed because she perceives IK as her mentor and has a great amount of respect for her, or was it out of her wanting to voice out her experience? I rung her up when I got to Holland during my 'reflective moments' of the field work and she voiced that initially she felt compelled but once the interview started and she told her story, it felt somewhat therapeutic and empowering.

2.34 On reflection - interviews

The dynamics and interactions of the interviews were quite different to those of the focus groups. I had some time to build rapport with the two women prior to the actual interview, which helped a great deal. The 'insider'/'outsider' dichotomy discussed earlier was somewhat blurred and not that distinct. The informal meetings/'encounters' I had prior to the actual interviews, which were not officially planned for but just happened (a common occurrence in Uganda) with mutual sharing of life histories, broke the 'stranger' or 'outsider' barrier. I can place this in line with 'collaborating interviewing style' where the 'interaction' between the researcher and respondent 'produces the data' (Anderson & Jack 1991; Charmaz 1995 pg 9 in Brook & Hesse-Biber 2007 pg 15) This swung the

²⁵ Will refer to this connection as H, again for anonymity reasons. I had already told H many times during our e-mail contacts prior to my Uganda visit what my research topic – for me this was a strategic move as I anticipated I may have to call on him for help in terms of linking me up with relevant organisations

²⁶ Not real name, real name changed for anonymity.

²⁷ Not real name, real name changed for anonymity.

pendulum from a 'stranger' or 'outsider' to 'acquaintances' or 'familiarity' laying ground for fairly comfortable space to share freely about the abusive incidents. This proved to work out well as opposed to the focus groups where that kind of bonding was non-existent resulting in 'less' intimate disclosure/talk on matters relating to GBV. The class barrier, which was visible during the focus group discussions, was also somewhat blurred with the individual interviews, almost non-existent. I relate this to initial interaction of getting to know each other as well as that fact that neither of us valorised it.

During the interview sessions – 'structured encounters' (De Vault & Gross 2006), I reflect on power relations being two-sided, one of which was the interview participants 'holding' the information I was looking for. I was more of a listener and prober, they were in a position of power as they 'possessed' the precious information I was seeking, having had prior knowledge of how difficult it was for me to find women to interview. In those interactive moments, they held the power of what they chose to tell in their story, in the boundaries of my research questions. I asked open-ended questions which were not as many as I had anticipated; Caroline and Fiona spoke with ease as they narrated their experience. The 'disclosure' was a comfortable one, my prior experience as a therapist may have contributed positively, I was able to pick up verbal and non-verbal cues as guides towards the next step. Caroline and Fiona's prior knowledge of my research difficulties made the power dynamics quite interesting, they were empowered subjects who wanted to speak out rather than 'objects' of research. The other side 'of the coin' of power dynamic played along the lines of my epistemological standing as well as Nielsen's (Nielsen 1990 in Brooks & Hesse-Biber 2007) reference to researchers carrying their particular worldviews, histories and biographies with them to their research projects. Through the setting of boundaries based on my research question, these interviews were steered along those lines.

2.4 Micro-politics of the office

This entails my reading of some of the interactive moments during the research process. One such reading is the issue of hierarchy within many of the offices I 'encountered' which was crystal clear and thriving. Generally speaking, Ugandan society 'promotes' hierarchy and a significant amount of respect is awarded to those in higher positions. Age is part of this intersection together with other axes such as class, background experience and sometimes family name (which falls in the class bracket). A certain kind of status is awarded to those who hold a certain hierarchical position because they have some sort of power that goes with it. This was glaringly obvious within the staff interactions in the numerous offices I visited. For instance, the refusal of junior staff in the MGLSD to

give me documents/booklets when I asked for them, with their response being they were not in a position to pass on an information booklet to me and I had to ask their bosses/superior falls within this hierarchical micro-politics. An information booklet is meant to be given out to the general public generally, having this simple activity being up to the boss to decide exudes power relations and politics in the office. Another example of this is the summoning of junior officers by the bosses/senior officers to speak to me. This was evident with the two focus group meetings, where in both instances the Officer in Charge for prisons and one of nurses summoned a few women to come speak to me. The women responded respectfully with no option of opting out, which was evident especially with those who were quiet in the focus group discussions/chat. The quiet women during focus group discussions were either shy or this was their way of showing their disinterest in participating. In both these examples drawing on Foucault's (1987) power being productive, these subjectivities have emerged which work for the Ugandan context.

2.5 Limitations to the research

My discussion above has teased out many of difficulties I faced during the data collection phase. These were further compounded by limitations to accessing information on GBV in the workplace in Uganda. Although not exhaustive, the following highlight what I identify as limitations to my research experience.

1. Limited infrastructure - The lack of programming in place in many workplaces in Uganda to support women who have experienced GBV in the workplace meant limited access to women who have experienced such. The 'red-tape' within many organisations did not make the data collection process any easier. Such as the run in with the hospital RO who, despite following the required procedural request, he still made further 'red-tape' demands.
2. Normalcy of sexual and gender based violence as well as the silence around it for fear of repercussions. This is discussed in detail in the theoretical framework and results chapter. The silence issue in relation to sexual harassment in the workplace was quite evident with the focus groups conducted as well as the numerous informal conversations I had with many Ugandans.
3. Language. I am neither fluent in my mother tongue (Lusoga) nor the commonly spoken language in central Uganda i.e. Luganda. This had an impact on articulation as well as breaking through the class boundaries I alluded to earlier in this chapter especially with the focus group discussions.
4. Location: The location in both focus groups were conducted was not conducive which was beyond my control – one outside the prison under a mango tree with many passersby and

interruptions, consequently having effects speaking freely about violence against women. The other focus group took place in the SNO's office who is an authoritative figure, which may have caused feelings of un-easiness amongst participants resulting in not opening up freely. All individual interviews were also conducted in public places – restaurants.

5. Political tension/instability in Uganda during the data collection period. There were violent protests staged by the opposition leaders on high prices of fuel and cost of living generally; with the government suppressing the mostly peaceful protests 'iron handedly', which resulted in spouts of violence in major cities across the country. There was a general tense atmosphere towards this with fear of a 'revolution' witnessed in the Middle East erupting in Uganda. This greatly influenced my lack of access to certain offices during certain times as personal safety was at risk, impinging further in my limited time in the field.
6. Nasty drugging incidence. During my second week in Uganda, my drink was drugged whilst waiting at a five star hotel for a meeting with a research informant in Kampala (the capital city). This incident demoralised me and made me extremely wary of the Capital City, where most of my data collection was taking place. It made me feel extremely vulnerable as a woman which impacted on my research pace, I slowed down somewhat.
7. 'Connections' – my direct link to the connections that led to the setting of the focus groups may have contributed to the non-disclosure. The participants were well aware that there was a relationship between me/my family and the participants' bosses.
8. Time. I had about 5 weeks in the field, which was nowhere near enough to get to the brunt of GBV in the workplace in Uganda. Although not intended that way, this could be interpreted within the traditional positivist research methodology of 'extracting' information as one is 'in' and 'out' fairly quickly.

2.6 Conclusion

My data collection process in Uganda was quite challenging. Many of my friends/colleagues have joked that I could write a thesis on my data collection process in Uganda, which is somewhat true. Although this chapter is quite descriptive with specific details of my research methodologies, it is nowhere near exhaustive of the whole experience. My philosophy of being an 'open book' during this research opened up my boundaries of inclusion as articulated by Ackerly & True (2010) and positively contributing to the change in methodological approach upon facing difficulties with the proposed research methodology. I have employed reflexivity in my writing by looking at the different ways my position can serve as both a hindrance and resource towards achieving knowledge in the research process (Brooks & Hesse-Biber 2007). The lack of support and structural programs in place

for violated and abused women in the workplace dictated my limited access. An emotion provoking thought when the Amnesty report (2010) spells out that violence against women and girls remains widespread in most parts of Uganda, with an estimated two thirds of Ugandan households having experienced domestic violence. This report goes ahead to illuminate the fact that women in Uganda are four times more likely than men to be targeted for both physical and sexual violence. Violence against women is compounded by discrimination on the grounds of ethnicity, sexual orientation, social status, class and age. Such multiple forms of discrimination further restrict women's choices, putting them at increased risk of violence and making it even harder for them to obtain justice as there are no proper legal and social mechanisms in place deal with this issue. For instance women are often blamed for violence against them; in addition, the resources and structures/infrastructure put in place to enforce/handle this are meagre and scanty. There are no comprehensive statistics on cases of gender based violence²⁸ – an indication in itself that this type of human rights violation is not taken seriously and prioritised by governance. Along similar lines, although the government has undertaken measures to address violence against women by drafting laws such as that on Domestic violence, marriage and divorce, sexual offences and trafficking of persons; despite these being submitted to parliament several years back, they have not been passed as laws, which speaks volumes about this not being a priority area. Attitudes that accept and justify violence against women are widely held within Ugandan society, which further aggravates the problem. This narrative of violation is not only rampant within the domestic sphere but in other spaces such as the street and workplaces in Uganda.

No wonder it was close to impossible trying to find women to interview with such attitudes towards violated and abused women from governance and the general public. The 'silence' in relation to GBV I experienced with the participants of the focus group depicts the general silence on this issue with barely any laws or infrastructure in place to protect women. The social protection of women in the home and the workplace is basically non-existent. How then can women in the workplace who have been violated voice out abuse when it may have repercussions/implications on their economic standing, and only possible means of income. My interpretation of this 'silence' is survival! These women have to put up with the abuse in the workplace because of the rampant socio-economic, cultural and other gendered disparities that dictate their position, as the abuse taps into their sexuality. This then brings me to my next chapter, which attempts to unpack these inequalities

²⁸ Although comprehensive statistics are unavailable, the Uganda Demographic and Health Survey of 2006 provides credible, nationwide data showing that about 60 per cent of women in Uganda have experienced physical violence since age 15. The government does admit that domestic violence rates are high in Uganda but because it is under-reported, and official statistics are largely absent, domestic violence rates are difficult to measure with any accuracy. (Source – 2010 Amnesty International Report)

drawing on through gendered prisms theoretical aspects such as Foucault's notion of the body, sexuality and discourse.

Chapter 3 – ‘Gendered scripts’

Theoretical Framework

“I feel very strongly that this subjugation of working women to the power of men who have economic control over them must be stopped!” Oestreich in Baker (Baker, 2007)

As previously mentioned, sexual harassment is one of the gigantic issues that came straight out of the 2nd wave of feminism in the 1970s. Since then, scores have written on this issue which is cross-cutting drawing on many different disciplines such as psychology, gender studies, law and management. In addition to this, numerous definitions have been developed to describe what sexual harassment in the workplace is, since the term was formally named. This chapter will lay out key theoretical concepts employed to interpret my research results, with the main framework drawing on post-structuralism - Foucault’s (1978-1986) notion on the body, discourse and sexuality as well as Bordo (1989) and Bartky’s (1988) interpretation of Foucault’s concept of discipline and the female body. I will engage a gendered reading of Foucault in relation to GBV of women in the workplace through the prism of sexualized subjects. In addition, I will employ intersectionality to connect post-structuralism with theorise on sexual harassment drawing on Thomas (1997) psychosocial concepts and MacKinnon’s (1979) take on the gendered power elements in relation to sexual violence. As most literature from the ‘global south’ on this matter points out, one cannot see sexual harassment in the workplace in isolation without considering socio-economic factors. I will therefore weave into the above theoretical aspects of feminist theories that draw on socialism in relation to male domination through male’s control of resources and their relatively greater economic power; tying in aspects that deal with structural and socio-economic inequalities facing women in Uganda.

The workplace will therefore be analysed through the prisms of culture, race/ethnicity and economic aspects within the backdrop of patriarchy and legacy of colonialism all of which emphasise the control and reduction of female sexuality to reproduction, a ‘private’ sphere a world away from the public space of work. Hearn & Parkin (1987) introduce the concept of “organisational sexuality” which illuminates the intersection of sexuality and work, elements which are perceived as antagonistic by some. They argue that organisational construction of sexuality and the power of sexuality to reconstruct organisations exist in dialectical relationships placing emphasis on ‘genderic powers,’ predominantly the institution of patriarchy which promotes powers²⁹ all of which subject and control sexuality in different ways and these powers are maintained, reinforced and contested in the process of organisational sexuality(Hearn & Parkin 1987:131-132). This reflects the workspace

²⁹ power of men over women, the ‘public’ over ‘private’, production over reproduction and heterosexuality over other sexualities (Hearn & Parkin 1987:132)

situation unpacked in this thesis where sexuality is a key feature as well as gendered power relations. Along similar lines of antagonism, the theoretical framework I choose to draw on i.e. poststructuralist theoretical aspects as well as psychosocial and socio-economic elements may seem unfriendly. I will employ intersectionality as the main framework to amalgamate these somewhat diverse theories. Intersectionality, as put forth by Wekker/Lutz (2001) means that human experiences and interaction are always structured by various axes of difference, such as gender, class, race, sexuality, age and ability. This is a key framework and highly relevant to this research as the issue being tackled is men in position of economic power and social privilege abusing/exploiting women in a subordinate status in relation to their age, social and economic stand in the two designated workplace.

One might question why I am tapping into what may be considered as 'dated' texts such as Foucault, Mackinnon, Hearn & Parkin, Bartky and Bordo. I argue that these texts set the basic arguments in relation to femininity, sexuality and the female body as well as sexual violence in the workplace, which hold true even today and therefore in my opinion, far from 'dated'. Theories that have evolved in recent times on sexual harassment do have 'power relations' and female sexual subjects still standing as the basis for sexual harassment, a flavour of which will be highlighted below. In addition to this, the bulk of recent articles have been on laws and policies in relation to sexual harassment with a commentary on court cases in the same area. To begin with, I will give a brief historical overview of how the issue of sexual harassment gained visibility mainly within the Euro-American context, followed by a summary of present work/theoretical aspects on sexual harassment in the work place. I will then dive into the theoretical arguments used for this thesis after which I will conclude.

3.1 Historical overview

In her article 'the emergence of organised feminist resistance to sexual harassment in the United States in the 1970s', Baker (2007) gives a riveting and detailed historical account of how a group of women, fed up with the nameless behaviour at that point in time, now referred to as sexual harassment, mobilised themselves, named this phenomenon and 'made some noise' about it. The first activism against sexual harassment emerged in the early 1970s Baker writes, in the form of lawsuits opposing sexual coercion in the workplace where several women who had been fired by their bosses for refusing sexual advances brought forth lawsuits against this behaviour. These women alleged this treatment was a form of sex discrimination in violation of Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 which prohibits sex and race discrimination in employment; several of these

women were African American. She accounts that the coining of the term sexual harassment was in the mid 1970s in Ithaca New York, by a group called 'Working Women United', formed under the direction of 'Human affairs programme' at Cornell University. The naming and labelling of sexual harassment coupled with the spotlight shed on this issue brought forth a key social injustice that women had suffered for centuries. Thomas & Kitzinger³⁰ write that by 1997, sexual harassment was identified by feminists as one manifestation of the larger patriarchal system in which men dominate women. Indeed this thesis tackles sexual harassment as part of a continuum of gender based violence against women as patriarchal power relations are evident in both sexual harassment and GBV. Today, numerous cases worldwide have been put forth in court and won by many women who have been Sexually harassed and violated in the workplace, with a viewed recent case (June 13th 2011)³¹ detailing the first ever biggest pay out to a woman who lodged a sexual harassment case against an American electronic and furniture company - Arons. In this sexual harassment incident(s) which took place in 2006 with a young woman employee in her mid 20s, her boss in one incident masturbated over her at work whilst in another, grabbed her hair and slapped her head with his penis³², a disturbing note that such masculine behaviour that dehumanize and reduce women to objects still happens.

Although efforts have been made by a significant few³³ in speaking out against sexual harassment in the workplace in Uganda, and hence destabilising the status quo in some work spaces, the opposite is still rampant in a number of workplaces where this is invisible³⁴ and considered a taboo topic by many. This however does not paint a dire situation for Uganda, mind you, there are a number work spaces with an egalitarian ethos and free of GBV; and there are other workspaces where men experience sexual harassment and violent behaviour(s) from their female bosses/colleagues. However, the bottom line remains that women are more prone to Sexual Harassment and GBV in the workplace as their bodies are a 'site of oppression'³⁵.

3.2 Feminist theories on sexual harassment

³⁰ (Thomas & Kitzinger, 1997, p. 1)

³¹ <http://www.2oceansvibe.com/2011/06/13/biggest-sexual-harassment-payout-ever-after-manager-hits-woman-on-head-with-penis/>

³² <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2002112/Woman-hit-head-bosss-penis-awarded-95-million-largest-single-sex-case-award-Aarons.html>

³³ Such as Dr Sylvia Tamale, The Director Ministry of Gender in Uganda

³⁴ Although GBV in the workplace is visible to women experiencing it, it is quite invisible to governance and policy makers as minimal or no effort has been put in place to support women on this front.

³⁵ Foucault (1978)

Feminist theoretical voices in sexual harassment are numerous, many of which are radical voices, I will attempt to give an overview of the key voices over time from past to present. I will start off by mentioning the founding theorist on this matter - Mackinnon (1979), whose first book on sexual harassment has had a huge influence on the writing/theories that have followed on. She provides the 'quid pro quo' and 'hostile environment' definitions on sexual harassment based within her grounding, which is law. Her arguments are multi-faceted but mainly draw on power-relations in sexuality and economic realm thereby tackling the two inequalities: the sexual and the socio-economic fuelling sexual harassment. Another key theoretical voice on sexual harassment in the workplace is Gutek (1985) whose theories are within but not limited to "sex-spillover" denoting "the carryover into the workplace of gender-based roles that are usually irrelevant or inappropriate to work" (Gutek 1985 pg17). Gutek points out that women are expected to behave in a "more natural or loyal" way and located at the bottom of the labour structures within feminised positions of cleaning or helping jobs without much progress to managerial positions. She points out that sexual harassment is likely to occur in a position where a woman is employed in a role usually held by a man as her gender is highly visible or in traditionally feminised position as a women's sexuality is seen as part of the job. Cockburn (1991) is another key theoretical voice in this area who argues that "women's presence in the workplace is a highly political issue for men" as their claims to economic independence in the workplace have led to a reassertion of male supremacy in the workplace with one of the means used being sexual harassment.

Recent authors have not diverted much from the traditional ones, whose grounding was mainly within the sociological take on sexual harassment. Thomas (1997) whom I will be discussing at length below provides a psychosocial input on sexual harassment that combines sociological and psychological elements. Epstien (1997) another psychosocial standpoint authorial voice mainly looks at dominant masculinities that engage in harassing women, arguing that the harassment of women and of gay and/or 'effeminate' men is rooted in the enforcement of heterosexuality. She points out that the avoidance of stigmatization of men as well as production of acceptable masculinities seems to partly depend on harassing women and other men; making harassment to be strongly implicated in the production of heterosexual gendered identities and can therefore not be seen simply as sexist but heterosexist in nature. Later texts such as Samuels (2003), Gabor (2006), Weizer (2002), Saguy (2003) have provided an analytical take on sexual harassment cases with commentaries. Most of these later texts (such as Konik & Cortina 2008, Epstien 1997, Weizer 2002) have been quite inclusive of sexual harassment and abuse of people who identify as gay in the workplace, with a similar take on power relations, as gay men or women deviate from heterosexual norms and

consequently 'punished' for that. The descriptions above mainly relate to euro-American authorship and are not in any way exhaustive but just a flavour of some theoretical voices in this field. Texts and voices from the global south on sexual harassment have developed alongside those of euro-American, picking up momentum within the last decade or so. Some of the studies on this matter I came across were carried out in Nigeria, Peru, Kenya, India, Israel and the list goes on. Similarities and common themes were picked up, some of which will be discussed in the next chapter.

3.3 Dissecting power

In his work on the body, discourse and sexuality, Foucault (1978-1986) analyses the 'body as one of the sites of struggle and discursive conflict where power is enacted and resisted'. He draws attention to the body as 'a historically and culturally specific entity' which can also be seen as 'the inscribed surface of events' (Foucault 1986 b). The two female bodies in discussion, who experienced sexual harassment in the workplace can be located within the above mentioned references to the body and power, even though their experiences are specific, contextualised to Uganda/UN and personal, they exhibit scripts of cultural and social texts through the enactment of power with resistance. These scripts of abuse manifest in a number of ways such as through the physical realm as physical illness or the emotional realm as emotional turmoil/unwellness. Although Foucault's texts offer polemical take on power, sexuality, discourse, the body, knowledge among other concepts, he has been especially critiqued by many feminist scholars for his texts/concepts being 'gender blind'³⁶. None the less, many feminist scholars have interpreted some of his concepts with a 'gendered lens', such as Braidotti (1994, 1998), Bartky (1988) and Bordo (1989)³⁷. Bartky and Bordo, although their articles relatively dated time-wise, their take on Foucault's notion of discipline and the female body (discussed below) rings true today, certainly for female bodied Ugandans in many aspects of their daily lives. Both these authors offer a polemic take on discipline, femininity, sexuality and the female body, the specifics of which will be elaborated on in the section below. I will argue out sexual harassment in the workplace through my interpretation of the numerous 'vulnerabilities'³⁸ of female bodied subjects on whose bodies power is enacted. I refer to these as vulnerabilities mainly because within the confines of violence against women, these attributes place women in a subjugated position. These vulnerabilities will be argued out in three main tiers.

3.31 Vulnerabilities

³⁶ Bartky (1988), Bordo (1989), Braidotti (1994) and the list goes on

³⁷ To mention but a few

³⁸ This is my interpretation of vulnerabilities and not Bartky and Bordo's, although I draw on their notion of discipline to explain these vulnerabilities.

Social/cultural imaginaries

Female bodies that experience sexual harassment exhibit vulnerabilities, some of which are 'coded' within social imaginaries that govern norms such as heteronormativity and patriarchy. Sexual harassment is viewed by many feminist authors such as Farley (1978), MacKinnon (1979) through the rubric of patriarchy in which men dominate women, where men use sexuality in exerting control or exercising power over women. As Bordo (1989) points out, the body is a medium of culture, and not only a text of culture but also drawing on Foucault and Bourdieu's arguments, a practical, direct locus of social control. With patriarchal social control looming in all aspects of women's lives, feminine attributes in Uganda are often associated with life giving, nurturing, taking care of men, submissiveness to men, gentleness, motherhood to mention but a few whilst masculine virtues³⁹ are associated with dominance (physical & sexual), strong, muscular, provider/'hunter' and the list goes on. Drawing on Bartky's interpretation of Foucault's notion of discipline, these female & male bodies are then groomed through social disciplinary regiment to embody some of the above-mentioned feminine & masculine virtues, in this predominantly heterosexually normative Ugandan society. Some of these virtues, written within the social codes promote female subjugation and male dominance within the overall patriarchal school of thought and presumed heterosexuality, coupled with the social construction of 'micro-physics of power' - located gendered male domination, control of women and female sexuality as well as female subjugation all of which promote women's vulnerability to sexual harassment in the workplace.

I will link the above with Thomas (1997) take on masculinities that engage in sexual harassment in the workplace where Thomas argues that in relation to social codes that inform masculinities, those men who exhibit sexual violence/harass women are not in any way acting in a 'deviant' manner but simply over-conforming to what is a widely accepted masculine model of behaviour. Thomas has a psychosocial take on sexual harassment rather than the sociological one, the latter of which mainly locates it within the wider asymmetrical power relations between men and women in society. Thomas argues that like many feminists sociologists, she sees acts of sexual harassment not as occasional consequences of uncontrollable male lust, but rather as instances from a continuum of male behaviours through which men consciously or unconsciously act to assert and maintain their dominance over women. This therefore goes beyond patriarchal structures and hones in on certain choice of masculine behaviours by those who engage in abuse of women. This therefore points out that not all men are abusers as well as why some men engage in abusive behaviour from a psychosocial point of view. I do agree with this take on Sexual Harassment because it is not

³⁹ This is my interpretation of Bartky for masculinities as Bartky mainly talks about production of femininity.

pathologizing or exonerating men who engage in Sexual Harassment, it is rather another form of dissecting social power relations and masculine behaviours that some men identify with/conform to that result in sexual and GBV towards women in the workspace. Masculine behaviours that are informed by social codes and cultural archives and therefore mostly acceptable and uncontested. In addition to this, gendered power relations and ‘micro-physics of power’ inform the daily interactions where abused women in the workplace constantly negotiate their subjectivity and citizenry in the workspace. Intersectionality encapsulates the localized gendered power relations such as sexuality, class, age and race/ethnicity all of which will be discussed at length later on in the results chapter.

Social inequality

As part of tackling women’s vulnerabilities, I will also draw on MacKinnon’s take on sex discrimination. MacKinnon (1979), asserts that sex discrimination can be understood within two approaches through the prisms of inequality. The first is that women and men are not similarly situated sexually due to pervasive social inequality and not biological or personal aspects. The social codes and societal arrangements dictate this difference in situatedness which locates female bodies in a disadvantaged and subjugated position. Patriarchy and other cultural structures hail and promote men and masculine dominance across society including the home, streets and the workplace. Intersections of class, sexual difference and social as well as cultural norms maintain these evident social inequalities, which will be unpacked further below. The other approach that MacKinnon argues out is men and women are not in comparable circumstances and under current social conditions; no man can be located in the same position as a woman. This does indeed mirror the Ugandan context where, male dominance is a norm and part and parcel of day to day lives. The introductory chapter lays out the status of women in Uganda, who are largely situated in a less privileged position than men across the board. In her article “eroticism, sensuality and “women’s secrets” among the Baganda: a critical analysis, Tamale (2005) articulates how historically and still a present phenomenon for many, sexuality is a key site through which Ugandan women’s subordination is maintained and enforced in this postcolonial society. In Uganda, she adds, the colonialists’ constructions and perceptions of Africans as profligate and hypersexual led to intensified surveillance and repression, of African women’s sexuality in particular (Tamale 2005 pg 10). Tamale contends that one result of this was the suppression of women’s sexuality, erotic culture and sexual expression where colonialist and African patriarchs developed inflexible customary laws that evolved into new structures and domination; all this locating men in a dominant/privileged position far different from women as MacKinnon points out. This coupled with other privileges such as literacy, better access to economic means and other axes of difference, places men in Uganda in a

position non comparable to women. Female bodies in Uganda generally encapsulate a subjugated vulnerable position.

Socio-economic/Structural

Just like Wekker (2006) articulates the socio-economic situation of women in Suriname, the political economy in Uganda is highly gendered and racialized with women consistently positioned at less favourable and marginal locations than men of their class and ethnic background. The majority of Ugandan women are working in the agricultural sector, the informal sector and low paying jobs in the formal sector, all of which comprise of scanty income without much security. Wekker (2006) points out how the global capitalist exploitations dictate a structure of labour market segmentation where workers of the peripheral countries receive no more than one sixth of the wages received by advanced industrial counterparts⁴⁰; women in the 'third world' bearing the brunt of this as they represent a *cheaper than cheap*⁴¹ segment of the international workforce. The World Bank broadly classifies Uganda's economy within the category of 'least developed' despite strides being made by current governance in reviving the Ugandan economy after the civil wars in the early 80s. Men are largely the majority benefactors of the progressive economy in Uganda, a number of who are in position of authority, management and decision making. In addition to the capitalist exploitation of women in the open labour market, other axes of difference such as biological/reproduction, education and other cultural factors contribute to women's socio-economic position. Although the Ugandan culture is described as 'erotic' by Tamale (2005), the 'public'/'private' divide is quite distinct with domestic tasks relegated to the 'private' sphere, dominated by women and considered to be of low status. In addition to this, Uganda is going through what I will refer to as a 'baby boom' period with one of the highest fertility rates in the world said to be at 3.2% (MDG Report 2010). This further dictates accessibility to jobs and consequently income, as women are the primary caregivers. Although not yet researched, my view is that the high fertility rate may be a contributing factor to the decline in access to jobs by women as reported by the 2010 MDG report. This report (MDG Report 2010) highlights a significant decline of employment of women in the non agricultural sector from 39% in the year 2002/2003 to 28% in the year 2005/2006 which is a significant figure highlighting the vulnerability of women in the open labour market in Uganda. This is an indication of continued gender disparities in the labour market and is exacerbated by other differences confronting women, such as less secure employment, lower skills levels and lower wages the report states.

⁴⁰ Amin (1980) in Wekker (2006)

⁴¹ Harrison (1998) in Wekker (2006)

Education is the other axis of difference contributing to socio-economic structural inequalities. Although education of the girl child has gained momentum in the last decade or so, the effects of this being the great advocacy work from women's movements; the historical effects of the previously disadvantaged girl child's access to education are still evident in Uganda. This implies access to a well paying job or any job for that matter is minimised, more so for a certain generation of women. And as Wekker (2006) articulates the situation in Suriname, poverty in Uganda goes hand in hand with one's educational level as well as most importantly, not having effective networks of relationships, locally but far more consequently globally. Within the Ugandan context, many of these networks are crucial or access to employment and other economic opportunities through what the local lingual refers to as 'technical know who'⁴².

3.4 Conclusion

This chapter 'pulls together' the main theoretical framework engaged with for this thesis, in addition to providing an overview of feminist texts on sexual harassment in the Euro-American context. Through the rubric of poststructuralism, psychosocial theories on sexual harassment and socio-economic aspects, axes of difference that position women in vulnerable locations in the workplace resulting in sexual harassment were teased out. I shed some light on the fact that women continue to be crowded into the narrower and lower paying set of occupations than men. Just like the global trend, the arrangement of labour structures in Uganda greatly contribute to economic inequality and the huge discrepancy of the ratio of men versus women employed. The dominant arrangements are such that the proportion of women decreases at progressively higher levels in managerial and decision making hierarchies which are still dominated by men, in addition to having more men employed than women. This places men in a position of economic power to that of women, with some women experiencing the brunt of this through poverty. With abuse of power and the interplay of intersectionalities such as gender, sexuality, class, ethnicity sexual harassment in the workplace ensues. This is reinforced by dominant discourses such as heteronormativity and dominant masculinities, which are informed by the social codes.

Mackinnon (1979) argues that the abuse of economic power should be likened to a violent violation just as rape is considered a violent act. She points out that the excursion of economic power towards women with numerous vulnerabilities is a violent act, with this being the best way to explain it. These acts of violation, heavily gendered result in manifestation of 'gendered scripts' imprinted/inscribed on feminine bodies; 'scripts' such as anxiety, low self esteem or high blood

⁴² 'technical know who' is slang in Uganda largely implying knowing someone in a high position in a given work setting could be drawn on to get a job.

pressure. These were some of the examples provided by the women I interviewed that had a direct link from the abuse, which will be discussed at length in the next chapter – chapter on results. Despite these negative effects and manifestations, these women are far from docile, exhibiting agentic moments as Foucault (1978) points out that ‘power is productive’. The emerging subjectivities from sexual harassment are two pronged, on one hand women draw on their own personal support means to deal with the abuse, whilst on the other due to the lack of formal structures in place coupled with structural inequalities, women are silent about speaking out openly about the abuse. This links in with the results chapter where these issues will be discussed at length.

Chapter 4 – Violated bodies

Results and data analysis

“...I am not doing this only for myself, but I am standing in for all these women who experience this and have no voice, have no platform, they are probably junior in the hierarchy and cannot speak out and cannot defend themselves. So whether it stays at an individual level, at least it will go on record that this happened within such a high reputable organisation, that stands up for the rights of women, that advocates for protection and legislation against gender based violence, and we are not practising what we speak, so that will give me personal satisfaction...” Caroline

My main research aim was to project narratives of women who had experienced GBV in the workplace in Uganda. As briefly mentioned to in the introduction and in line with Samuels⁴³, I will tackle sexual harassment in the workplace in the light of patriarchy and as a continuum of sexual and gender based violence with the common thread being the fear and threats women experience, which may affect them at particular times or may pervade their daily lives. The discussion in this chapter will be two pronged and presented in two layers. To begin with, I will spell out the findings with some discussion on the research I carried out in Uganda, within the borders of my research objectives. Secondly, I will analyse common discourses in the women’s narratives of abuse drawing on a discourse/narrative analysis⁴⁴ as well as tapping into some aspects of grounded theory⁴⁵, whilst paying attention to power, boundaries of inclusion and exclusion and relationships. I will analyse the narratives of the women through the prism of intersectionality drawing on poststructuralism, psychosocial theories on sexuality/sexual violence/sexual harassment as well as socioeconomic aspects.

As reflected on in the methodology chapter, data collection proved more of a challenge than anticipated resulting in scanty interviews of women who had experienced sexual harassment and abuse in the workplace. This results chapter will therefore mainly focus on the analysis of the two main interviews with women who experienced abuse in the workplace, whilst drawing on, where possible/appropriate input from the focus group discussion. I will start off by introducing the two workplaces; give an overview of the programs in place in relation to GBV in the workplace including an analysis of the two policies. I will then situate the two participants within these followed by examining the process and impact of the violation on the two female bodies as well as their support

⁴³ Samuels (2003) p. 468

⁴⁴ De Vault & Gross (2006 pg 184-185) define discourse/narrative analysis as looking at longer stretches of talk and especially the stories people tell, and how they tell them offers distinctive possibilities for maintaining the coherence of a person’s perspective.

⁴⁵ Clarke (2006 pg 364) defines grounded theory representing a general way of generating theory (or even more generically, a way of having ideas on the basis of empirical research) with the theorizing generated abductively by tacking back and forth between the nitty-gritty specificities of empirical data and more abstract ways of thinking about them.

and coping mechanisms. Discourse that came out of the on similarities and contrasts of the two narratives will be analysed.

4.1 THE RESULTS

4.1.1 The workplace

The work spaces where the two main interview participants worked are quite different, although both firmly based the Ugandan. One is situated in the government – ministry of local government at district level; whilst the other is a UN agency in Uganda. I will tease out the discourses in these two work spaces starting with the context, policy/programme and then the violations/abuse. To begin with, Fiona⁴⁶, one of the two interviewees works as a ‘women’s youth representative’ at the local district council level in my home town. Because of anonymity, confidentiality and the protection of the interviewee, the home town and interviewee will not be referred to by her real name. Uganda has a decentralised system, with the district local council divided into five levels, from level I to V, with the latter being higher in hierarchy. According to the Ministry of Local Government Website⁴⁷ (MOLG);

The system of Local Government in Uganda is based on the District as a Unit under which there are lower Local Governments and Administrative Unit Councils. Elected Local Government Councils which are accountable to the people are made up of persons directly elected to represent electoral areas, persons with disabilities, the youth and women councillors forming one third of the council. The Local Government Council is the highest political authority in its area of jurisdiction. The councils are corporate bodies having both legislative and executive powers. They have powers to make local laws and enforce implementation. On the other hand Administrative Unit Councils serve as political units to advise on planning and implementation of services. They assist in the resolution of disputes, monitor the delivery of services and assist in the maintenance of law, order and security. (MOLG Website)

This office is generally held in high esteem and perceived by those interested in politics as their entry point towards climbing the political ladder. On general terms, people working in any of the elected positions of the local council are awarded a certain position and status of respect, as these elected candidates have a say towards local laws and implementation of services. The remuneration and benefits are somewhat higher than any given government job where the salaries are meagre, another contributing factor to the status awarded to this job. Fiona has been in office for one term, she was contesting for re-election in the month of May 2011. Two other contestants were competing for the same office as her for this round of elections. Fiona is a single mother of three, and is in her mid thirties. Her previous occupation prior to this was a primary school teacher, which she gave up to join politics for a number of reasons such as working towards increased access of services such as health for rural Ugandans. Fiona’s case will be situated within the Uganda government context.

⁴⁶ Real name, age and workplace concealed due to anonymity and confidentiality issues.

⁴⁷ <http://molg.go.ug/local-governments/>

Caroline⁴⁸, the other interviewee works as a programme officer for a United Nations (UN) agency in Uganda. Due to confidentiality and anonymity issues, the specific UN agency will not be mentioned as well as the name of the interviewee. The UN is generally a highly acclaimed agency, with different agencies implementing numerous mandates within various realms of development such as health, social welfare, with gender, empowerment and protection of women's rights being high on their agenda across the board. The UN has had a presence in Uganda for many years and employees of the UN are held in high esteem, not only because of the status that goes with the organisation; the remuneration and benefits of UN employees are significantly higher than many in most organisations, all of which contribute to their social status and standing. Having previously worked for the UN both in a 'developing' and 'developed' context, I have experienced this first hand.

Caroline is in her mid to late forties and has been working with the UN for just over a year; she has extensive experience with working in international agencies, with her background being gender and public health. Caroline is a single mother of 5, who is well travelled. Although the UN agency where Caroline works is based in Uganda and she is on a 'local' staff contract (versus international staff), her case will be discussed within the UN system.

Both Caroline and Fiona have a few things in common such as the abuse and being single mothers. They also have significant differences such as Caroline is somewhat senior to Fiona both in age and job station including remuneration. Caroline is well travelled, elite and quite affluent within the Ugandan context. Fiona is not as well travelled as Caroline but affluent with a reasonably good job that awards her a certain status in society. Fiona and Caroline can be located within the middle class of Uganda, where class distinctions are crystal clear. The subjectivities in relation to class are quite present and evident in Uganda. The one thing that goes with this 'comfortable' lifestyle is the silence towards abuse as the expectation from society, especially the working class, such as the women from the focus groups, is that such people do not experience abuse as 'they have it all'. Therefore Caroline and Fiona speaking out about their abuse unsettles the status quo.

4.12 The workplace policies and programs

4.12 (a) The government

My findings were that Sexual and GBV in the workplace is covered within a clause in 'The Employment Act No 6 2006'⁴⁹. This employment act is meant to be implemented by all employment agencies in the public and private sector and overseen by the MGLSD. The Ministry also has a

⁴⁸ Real name, age and workplace concealed due to anonymity and confidentiality issues

⁴⁹ http://www.mglsd.go.ug/?page_id=11 & <http://www.mglsd.go.ug/wp-content/uploads/2010/04/in%20the%20world%20of%20work.pdf>

booklet, both in print and on-line on what Sexual and GBV in the workplace is; this booklet is a joint venture between the Ministry and a donor agency - UNFPA⁵⁰. One of UNFPA's main mandate is addressing gender related issues such as violence against women, reproductive health etc. This booklet falls within the initiative of stepping up on GBV in Uganda, an issue the government is slowly (and I emphasize slowly here) picking up as priority. Information gathered from MGLSD highlighted that sexual and GBV generally is becoming a key priority area although structures in place to address this spell out otherwise. The implementation phase of the above mentioned employment act has not started yet, although the Director of Gender is promoting it with vigour. The above mentioned booklet plus a training manual and a few other initiatives are the only results of this Act so far, with ground being laid for implementation. Plans for awareness campaigns about the law are underway as the Ministry does indeed acknowledge that sexual harassment in the workplace is rampant and considered a norm in many. Although they could not provide a figure as no study has been carried out yet, MGLSD did acknowledge that awareness of both sexual harassment and the employment act in many the workplaces is relatively low. Consequently, sexual harassment programmes in many work spaces in Uganda are non-existent at the moment, with hope that the implementation of the employment act will reverse this.

The Employment act in discussion has a section on sexual harassment, which addresses discrimination and clearly stipulates what sexual harassment is in the workplace is. The act gives examples of what is considered to be sexual harassment such as 'sexual favours', 'inappropriate sexual touch' as well as provides the 'quid pro quo' and the 'hostile environment' definitions. The act also places emphasis on who a sexually harassed employee reports to in addition to what employers can do to prevent sexual harassment. Although this is not a standalone policy but incorporated in a bigger law, it clearly acknowledges and attempts to sketch the procedure an organisation should follow to either prevent or address sexual harassment in the workplace.

4.12 (b) The UN

The UN has a policy and programme in place in relation to sexual harassment in the workplace. This applies to all offices, at national and international level. My research was futile as far as history is concerned, in terms of when the policy and programmes were first put in place. The UN policy in discussion is dated to September 2004 with the opening sentence stating:

'It is the policy of this office that every person has the right to be treated with dignity and respect and to be free from all forms of harassment in the workplace...' (UN 2004 Sexual Harassment Policy)

⁵⁰ UNFPA stands for United Nations Population Fund, a UN agency that deals with reproductive health among other things.

This policy clearly stipulates that the UN is a diverse multi-cultural environment and states the expected behaviour as well as the standard code of conduct in the workplace. It acknowledges that sexual harassment is detrimental to one's physical and psychological well being, lowers morale and is disruptive to the work environment. Definitions of sexual harassment are given in the policy, making reference to the 'quid pro quo' and 'hostile environment' definitions. The policy then clearly provides the disciplinary sanctions, reporting as well as investigations procedures that are followed upon sexual harassment of an employee.

The above two policies in discussion are both legally binding. What I find striking about these two policies is their reference to the 'quid pro quo' and 'hostile' environment, a legal definition of sexual harassment which further emphasises the legality of these two documents. Despite this legality, the interviews suggest that sexual harassment is still quite evident in both the workspaces under discussion. For Uganda, the law and intervention is a relatively new terrain with ground still being set; nonetheless, a law exists that is meant to be enforced, a gradually growing feeling in the general population. The UN on the other hand has had a long standing policy and programme in place and yet sexual harassment exposures surface in the public on a regular basis! Sexual harassment has had a few media exposures in recent times in Uganda. A recent newspaper⁵¹ article highlights female Ugandan MPs complaining about sexual harassment from their male counterparts whilst in the not so far past, the Ugandan police was exposed by the same newspaper⁵² on sexual harassment of female officers. These are just a few examples of public exposure with many undisclosed cases going un-noticed/unreported. The UN has been littered with public exposures of sexual harassment such as DSK⁵³, the UNHCR⁵⁴ managing director, with a number of un-publicised cases such as that of my friend going unnoticed to the 'critical' public eye. What is paradoxical about this is that the two agencies in discussion have and still promote the rights and protection of women and yet they have employees who 'undoing' their women's rights cause by abusing women in the workplace. Honing in on the paradox, this is what Caroline makes reference to, towards the end of the opening quote of this chapter.

'...at least it will go on record that this happened within such a high reputable organisation (the UN), that stands up for the rights of women, that advocates for protection and legislation against GBV, and we are not practising what we speak...'

⁵¹ <http://www.weinformers.net/2011/07/19/rebecca-kadaga-to-tackle-sexual-harassment-in-uganda-parliament/>

⁵² <http://allafrica.com/stories/200904130492.html>

⁵³ http://topics.nytimes.com/top/reference/timestopics/people/s/dominique_strausskahn/index.html?scp=1&sq=ds k%20case&st=cse

⁵⁴ <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A39901-2005Feb20.html>

It goes without say that the UN and the MOLG for that matter have for a long time stood up, promoted and protected the rights of women, especially against violence. Is it an over expectation that such institutions should be 'clean' of such sexual scandals and completely practice what they preach? This expectation does imply that workspaces are 'desexualised', a common perception by many of work being an antithesis of sex/sexuality.

I will 'unpack' the above through the female bodied sexual subject in a sexualised work environment and Foucault's (1980) *power/knowledge* and institutional power within the structure of the organisation. I will argue in the discussion below that sexuality is the backdrop within which female bodied subjects are constructed in many of these workspaces. Hearn and Parkin (1987) who developed the concept of "organisational sexuality" explain the centrality of sexuality to organisational theory, arguing that sexuality permeates through the workplace in terms of spatial arrangements as well as the jobs people hold including the language used and the relations between employees. They emphasize that "organisations construct sexuality and yet contradictorily sexuality constructs organisations" (Hearn & Parkin 1987 pg 5). This paradox is similar to the organisations in discussion, based on the theme and quote above, where on hand they stand for and protect the right of women, whilst on the other some of their employees violating these. Along these lines of organisational sexuality, Samuels (2003) adds that others have argued that it is male sexuality that dominates. This then inherently implies sexuality does co-construct the work space interactions and if that is the case, female bodied subjects are more at risk of abuse as masculine sexuality dominates especially for those who over conform to such behaviour as argued by Thomas (1997). Although I write this with uneasiness, the implication is that no workspace then is fully 'safe' from non sexual behaviour and sexual harassment and hence from my point of view, the need to ensure policies and programmes are enforced. With a sexualised work environment, the expectation and practice for some is interactions drawing on sexuality is part and parcel of this space. The women in the focus group discussions confirmed this by expressing that the workplace is where courtship happens for some. However, the trend is male dominance with women on the receiving end; although the reverse is true in some workspaces. The Foucauldian (1980) notion of *power/knowledge* then adds to this dynamic where the policy makers/decision makers put such policies in place like the ones in discussion, much success on the ground. A clear example of this is the UN, which has had a long standing policy, yet sexual harassment is still rampant as the interview and above highlighted cases suggest. The study by de Haas (2010) on the Dutch police force also highlights no change in sexually harassing behaviour over six years with a policy and programme in place. This implies that having a

policy/programme in place is not enough as both the two cases in discussion spell out, making the policies/programmes in my opinion a reactive approach to the problem rather than a pro-active one.

4.13 The Incidents

As part of the above discussion, I briefly mentioned that the two institutions under discussion go with a certain status, as work spaces and institutions within the global domains of economics as well as on a micro country level. Drawing on the Foucauldian⁵⁵ concept of how power operates within everyday relations and institutions; he argues that it is in the relationship between the individual and the institution that we find power operating most clearly. A number of his texts (1973, 1977, 1978, 1980) analyse the effects of various institutions on groups of people and the role these groups of people play in affirming or resisting those effects⁵⁶ (Mills 2003 pg 33). 'Everyday' power relations are part and parcel of the two work spaces in discussion, exhibited in their numerous performativity, something I am not going to unpack in this thesis. What I will however try untangle in the discussion to follow is, in a Foucauldian sense, what Tangri, Burt & Johnson (2000 in Samuels 2003) argue out that organisational approaches to sexual harassment tend to see this form of harassment as a simple abuse of power made possible by the structure of the organisation.

4.13 (a) The abusers

Fiona referred to her abuser as a 'conservative' and 'respectable family man' in his 50s and has held his local government post for two electoral terms. He is Ugandan, born and raised. He manages a large office of about 30 district local government employees. Fiona described him as having low level education but an intelligent person who made his way through politics using his charisma and people skills.

'He has a way with words... and able to communicate effectively with people, bringing them to his side. That is how he has succeeded in politics...' Fiona

Reading in-between the lines, Fiona's abuser seems like a dominant masculine whose presence is felt both at work and in the community at large. His name is quite popular in my hometown and he is referred to in a respectable manner with those I interacted with who spoke of him. My findings from my 'connections' in my home town revealed that he is a devoted Christian who attends one of the main churches in town.

Caroline referred to her abuser as someone in his 60s. He has been in the UN system for a number of years, at international rotational level. He is of African heritage from the Caribbean. Unlike Fiona's abuser, he is a single man without a family at his duty station in Uganda. Caroline did not have much

⁵⁵ (Foucault, *The Archeology of Knowledge of Knowledge*, 1972)

⁵⁶ Mills S (2003)

of a positive language to describe him. She mostly described him in relation to his persistent harassment and anger directed towards her once the case was public and under investigation.

'...he felt so insulted by my request for a meeting over his sexual advances; and indeed he was very very harsh at the meeting ...And ahhh continued to ahh to use an intimidating language...'

Caroline

Caroline's abuser comes across as a dominant masculine as well who seems either oblivious or unaware of having 'crossed' the boundaries leading to sexual harassment. To him, this behaviour was 'normal' masculine courtship behaviour and was quite puzzled by Caroline's and subsequently the agency labelling it as sexual harassment. The latter also applied to Fiona's abuser, who was baffled by her initial rejection and subsequently confronting him after the coercion incidence. The interviews suggest that both these men have a history of previous work related sexual harassment in the workplace and the current incidents in discussion were not their first. I find the fact that the abusers thought that their behaviour as described above being 'normal' absolutely atrocious spelling out the 'grey area' of what some men do or do-not consider abuse. The sad reality is that this 'grey area' is mainly in relation to female sexuality and as contextualised in the introduction; with the status of women in many workplaces in Uganda being low, this 'grey area' is passed on as 'normal' and hence no intervention. Dominant masculinity pervades the abusers with what Tangri, Burt & Johnson (2000 in Samuels 2003) term as abuse of power made possible by the structure of the organisation directly tapping into the status of the organisation and positions held by the abusers adding to this dynamic. This implies that the status position both these men hold in the two organisations in discussion is a key contributing factor to the abuse, as it is the economic power that they hold, a theme that will recur later on in this chapter, which fuels the abuse of women. In addition to this, the dominant masculinities being considered a norm, representing hegemonic masculinities in Uganda may be a contributing factor to the silence around sexual harassment in the workplace, another theme that will be discussed at length in later sections.

4.13 (b) The abuse

With Caroline, the harassment/abuse incidents started about a year prior to our interview in April 2011. Her abuser/harasser is the country coordinator. Within the UN employment dynamics, this post is an international FTE⁵⁷ and a prominent position for that matter, going with a certain status coupled with economic and social benefits that go with it. The advancements of a sexual nature started soon after he took office on realization that she was a single woman. She expressed her disinterest and inappropriateness of this on numerous occasions initially verbally and then in writing.

⁵⁷ FTE – Full time employment

'...there was this change in administration and now we have the current boss who is a man and definitely as soon as he arrived in the office, finding that I was a single woman sort of made him think that I was available for a relationship..., yeah, so he immediately made an advance to me and persisted despite all efforts to be very open about my lack of interest...' Caroline

The process took what is referred to as a 'typical' sexual harassment course of action⁵⁸, with advancements from the harasser, rejection from Caroline both verbally and formally; the latter tipped the scale towards verbal and one experience of near physical violence where on one particular late afternoon in November, he stormed into her office furious and slammed his fists on her desk, slammed/threw books on her desk, almost grabbed her but was refrained by fellow work colleagues who came rushing into her office. Consequently, marginalisation and taunting followed upon lodging of a formal sexual harassment complaint. My reading of the harassment is it took the form of; sexual advances with promise of promotion and international travel; un-wanted and inappropriate touch; unwanted and inappropriate jokes, as well as upon placing a formal complaint verbal harassment and taunting; marginalisation, and ridiculing from the abuser as well as some co-workers.

For Fiona, it all started when she started the campaigning for the last election round in 2006 about the beginning of the year. The harasser/abuser was the chairperson at the local council level V, commonly referred to LCV Chairman, who was the person overlooking the election process.

'You know, bwenkilowozaku buti (thinking back/looking back), his propositions dhatandhika (started) when I was running for office in 2006... awo ni weya tandikira okunkwana, yatandika mpola mpola, nze na mu loba aye (that is when he started making his moves on me bit by bit, I refused/rejected him but) he just kept on...' Fiona

The abuse/harassment took the process of sexual advancements, which increased in intensity; due to the circumstances surrounding Fiona's life at that point in time, she succumbed to the coercions. The incident became public knowledge as word got out. Fiona however gathered up enough carriage a year or so later and confronted her boss about the coercion, with dismissive response from him. The nature of sexual harassment was sexual advancements with promise of promise of career advancement, promise of money and salary increase; unwanted and inappropriate touch, unwanted and inappropriate jokes, as well as marginalisation and anger once the sexual incident became public knowledge including shunning and ridiculing from co-workers.

⁵⁸ According to Dr Sylvia Tamale, a typical course of action in the sexual harassment process of the abuser is advancements/harassment – rejection by the abused – confrontation/placing formal complaint by the abused – anger/taunting/marginalisation of the abuser towards the abused.

For both Caroline and Fiona, being perceived as sexual subjects first (without sexual agency) and then employees second, their abusers 'pounced' on them as soon as their work interaction started. With sexuality as the backdrop of their construction of interaction with their bosses within the workplace, the bosses/abusers failed to see these women as full employee subjects who can provide meaningfully and productively outside of the sexuality realm. How then can their meaningful productivity at work be taken seriously by the bosses if they cannot look beyond women's sexuality? And if Fiona and Caroline fell immediately culprit to this, so could any other woman working in those organisations, something voiced out by both Caroline and Fiona as something that indeed did happen. Some of the women in the focus group discussions also asserted that sometimes they find it hard being taken seriously by men at work because some of these men perceive them as sexual subjects rather than women at work. In order to survive the constant 'othering' from their male counterparts, these women then have to navigate the rules of masculine dominance in the workplace whilst negotiating their own marginalised position, a position that reflects class, sexuality and gender.

Another dynamic emerging from this is the co-workers. Both Fiona and Caroline expressed that some co-workers were supportive whilst others were out rightly unsupportive, shunning, ridiculing and ostracizing them for speaking out and laying a formal complaint in Caroline's case and giving into the coercions and later confronting the boss about it for Fiona. There seemed to be no gendered dynamic to this as both men and women of all ages engaged in such behaviour. A number of interpretations can be placed on this; I will not elaborate on in detail due to constraints of space in relation to the thesis. However, in brief terms, the internalisation of women as sexual subjects in the workplace in a subjugated position to men may be a reason for this type of reaction. This is also in line with what Hooks (1992) and Collins (2005) refers to as internalization of gendered norms where women see the world through the lens of male dominance thereby reinscribing and normalising such behaviour.

4.14 Impact of abuse/harassment

The introductory chapter gives an overview on sexual harassment affects one's emotional well being in varying degrees such as one's confidence or self esteem is 'knocked' as well as feelings of anger, bitterness and guilt have been noted. Caroline and Fiona expressed similar emotions towards the incident(s) of sexual harassment. Fiona singled out feelings of helplessness and powerlessness towards her situation whilst Caroline highlighted her self esteem and confidence being affected and feelings of anxiety around work. These feelings/emotions are the manifestations and 'scripts' of the abuse.

Nali nga nzira kya kukola... nga ezira asobola ku namba... (I couldn't do anything... I had no one to help me...) Fiona

'...I then returned to work but up to day I am now on medication for high blood pressure I got because of the anxiety around the office. So the anxiety is so much...' Caroline

These feelings of helplessness and powerlessness that result from the abuse, are what I will refer to as 'gendered scripts' of the abuse. In Foucauldian⁵⁹ terms, the described emotions/feelings are the resultant gendered and sexual 'scripts' of the female body being a site of struggle and discursive conflict and a site where power is enacted and resisted. Intersections of class and access/a lack of access to economic means; which will be elaborated on below also dictate and contribute to these emotions. Along similar lines, Caroline also expressed manifestation of physical illness as the stress of the incident took its toll on her. She had bad migraines and on a physical check up, her blood pressure had shot up resulting in a dependency on medication for this. For Caroline, this physical condition is a textual script of the effects of the abuse. A gendered sexual 'script' manifesting through migraines and high blood pressure directly resulting from the abuse.

'So I couldn't imagine the links between violence against women and women's health generally if I did not experience such... I mean it is a triple jeopardy for women, because they are in the office under going this... but somewhere where there is no income, one has no idea that it could affect your emotional side of things and so you are just there and so you get all these mental illnesses...' Caroline

This 'triple jeopardy' clearly provides, drawing on Wekker & Lutz⁶⁰ what I will refer to as 'intersectionalities of abuse' for female bodied subjects encounter. The burden of having to work in a productive manner, provide an income to run the house, as well as coping/dealing with the emotional and physical manifestations of the abuse on top of running a home. Caroline and Fiona were expected to meet the work demands and set work milestones. Both being single mothers, had to keep working hard to provide an income for their households. In other words, being able to meet their required work and home maintenance responsibilities whilst at the same time dealing with the gendered 'scripts' of the physical and emotional manifestation of the abuse.

4.15 Support system and coping mechanisms

'... but I feel stronger, originally I couldn't talk about it and I was so emotional for quite a long time, but the counselling has been so helpful ... every time it weighs me down, I say a prayer and somehow I am lifted, and then there is a silver lining on every dark cloud, I believe that there is probably many more women with similar experiences and after the counselling I am actually prepared for whatever I

⁵⁹ Foucault 1978 – History of sexuality vol 1

⁶⁰ Wekker & Lutz (2001) definition of intersectionality appeals to interaction of axes of difference, in this paragraph, I am drawing on the interaction of the axes of difference in relation to the 'burden of abused women'.

have to face and of-course he has continuously showed that he is the boss and I am an officer...' Caroline

It goes without saying that support in such an abusive situation is part and parcel of the process. Caroline had the advantage of organisational support whilst Fiona didn't. Despite the lack of for Fiona and organisational support for Caroline, they both drew on personal agentic means and sort out support through talking to friends, family thereby doing something about the abusive situation. The last part of the quote above highlights the taunting from the boss Caroline had to put up with, drawing on personal support and coping means for that as she had to put up with this on a regular basis. Foucault's (1978) concept of oppressive measures are in fact productive, giving rise to new forms of behaviour rather than simply closing down or censoring certain forms of behaviour is quite evident in both Caroline and Fiona's situation. Caroline and Fiona were certainly no docile bodies who sought out all possible means at hand such as support from friends and family, drawing on spiritual means as well as consulting with fellow professionals.

'... muna naguma, nalwoza ekya okukola ensonga eyo gyetwogeraku nga ewire... nasaba katonda anambe (my dear I hang in there, I thought hard on what to do after the coercion incident... I prayed to God for guidance) on what to do.... nayogeraku ni mikwano gyange (I spoke with some of my friends) both in and out of work, who helped me through.' Fiona

Although Fiona did not have much organisational support and gave in into the coercion, her inner self was not destroyed by this incidence, reaching out for internal and external means to get through the stressful situation. The same applies to Caroline. Both of them when asked looking back on the incidents what they felt, one thing was clear for them, they did not refer to themselves as 'victims' or 'survivors' but strong Ugandan women who have managed to pull through an abusive ordeal.

4.2 THE ANALYSIS

Analysing discourses of similarities in the situation

4.21 Power dynamics

Foucault (1978) articulates the notion of power to put it simply as 'power is power does' making it a verb rather than a noun⁶¹. Power is relational, not simply repressive but productive; it is exercised throughout the social body and operates at the very most micro levels of social relations and hence omnipresent at every level of the social body in a strategic and war-like manner⁶². Patriarchy is still an omnipresent informant of the social fabric and cultural archives in Uganda. Scholars, such as Harcourt (2009) have written extensively about the widespread violence of men against women,

⁶¹ Drawing on Braidotti's interpretation of this, with reference to the Braidotti tutorial I attended in Utrecht Nov 2010 – Feb 2011.

⁶² Foucault (1978) in Mills (2003)

whether physical, sexual or psychological, has its roots in patriarchal power structures, ideas and practices. This greatly mirrors the situation of female violated bodies within the workplace in Uganda and will be discussed below in the overall framework of intersectionality. For the female violated bodies in discussion here, patriarchal powers intersects and interacts with economic class, race/ethnicity and other axes of difference, enacting power in its various forms and dimensions with the subordination of women being a resultant. Women within the workspace have not escaped the confines of patriarchy as membership is not 'optional', despite some form of economic empowerment/liberation and career progression.

Sexuality is on axis of intersectionality that stands out in both women and the two work places under discussion. As pointed out earlier that sexuality is a key phenomenon in the construction of femaleness in the two workspaces in discussion, an aspect that taps into patriarchal social codes and cultural archives in Uganda. Although sexuality is divorced from work generally and considerably a taboo topic in many workspaces in Uganda, its interface with the public/private divide in the workspaces in discussion is evident in both Caroline and Fiona's case. For instance Caroline narrated how at one point her harasser in one work/social related interactive moment touched her in public in-front of other staff, of which she expressed discomfort; he then made a comment about how touching a woman in his culture, who is rejecting sexual advances heightens their (women) sexual anxiety (and hence giving in to the sexual advances). In another occasion along the lines of intersectionality with gender and sexuality in the workplace, Caroline expresses...

'...he used to say I am such a good presenter whenever you make a presentation, you are so convincing and that does a lot to me as a man, the way you speak!(exclamation mark mine) So it waters down the professional side and it goes back to sexuality'.

This quote highlights a professional activity seen within the rubric of sexuality, which is an ever present negotiating aspect, in the daily day to day work activities of these women; a sad but common reality for many as articulated by the women in the focus group discussion as well. Fiona expresses similar sentiments in relation to her sexuality as a key feature in the coercion incident. She narrated about her boss used to make comments about her dressing, which intensified with time. She also pointed out that sometimes she felt as though he was 'undressing her with his eyes' which made her feel uncomfortable, which she expressed to him at some point, with no repentance from him. What the above confirms is, as alluded to earlier is sexuality cannot be divorced from the workplace as it is ever present, with some men feeling it is their god given right to 'access' it, for some forcibly as the two men in discussion; making any woman vulnerable to such men. With such men, sexuality as an axis of difference is used to exert their dominance over women, a theme that will be discussed in detail in section below on heteronormativity.

Within the realm of power dimensions and intersectionality; Mackinnon (1979) contends that incidents of Sexual and GBV in the workplace suggest that male sexual desire itself maybe aroused by female vulnerability; as much of what makes subordinate women so sexually irresistible is that they are so defenceless. Vulnerability is a common feature within power relations and many aspects of this were part of Caroline and Fiona's narrative of the Sexual harassment experience. They are both single mothers, which brings in the gendered aspect within the realm of reproduction and gendered expectations that go with it, which is nurturing and caring for the children and having a job is part of fulfilling this responsibility. A job is a necessity for day to day living and survival, not only for Caroline and Fiona but for many single mothers in any given setting. This was also a common theme of expression by the women in the focus group, some of whom were single mothers.

'...You have to consider the children and family members depending on you at home... as taking priority over what goes on at work...' Participant in focus group of nurses

Economic independence is part and has always been parcel of day to day life for many in this capitalist age. For some women however, a job, however meagre the salary is, is their only means of survival for them and their dependants such as children and the extended family in a Ugandan context. I will emphasise here that extended family economic dependants (such as parents, grandparents, aunties, uncles, cousins) are very common feature and a norm in the Ugandan context, which is a mostly communal society. The above sheds some light on the 'burden' of single motherhood in Uganda, vulnerability that Mackinnon (1979) makes reference where this vulnerability is a catalyst in the abuse. My reading of this is that the male abusers, who are well aware of the women's situation, exploit it to solicit sex, knowing well that most women have no choice but to give in and keep the job. Economic independence then, however meagre may come at a cost, such as putting up with harassment/abuse in the workplace for the sake of maintaining the family.

The above description draws on the class axis of difference, where there is a clear distinction in terms of means and economic well being. This class axis adds to the privileged position of power the bosses, enhanced by their access to more economic resources within the work setting such as having a say in salary increase, power to terminate contracts, budgetary allocations and the list goes on. This situates women, such as Caroline and Fiona in an economically subordinate position to their bosses/abusers. Caroline narrated how some employees (on national/local work contracts⁶³) who

⁶³ UN offices have employees on local contracts and international contracts. UN employment contract system is in two tiers, international contracts which are managed at the headquarters of the given agency e.g. Geneva or New York. The local contracts are at country/field offices such as the Uganda office and the management of

witnessed and gave their testimony on the near physical 'fracas', their contracts were deliberately not renewed by the boss. Another of the many examples from Caroline and Fiona's narratives is both their bosses/abusers during their sexual advances promised them promotions, work related international travel (Caroline) and increase in salary. What has just been described falls in line with Mackinnon's take on abuse of economic power as stated in - "*Economic power is to sexual harassment as physical force is to rape*" (MacKinnon, 1979, pg (Fiedler & Hamby, 2000) (Mrkwicka, 1994) (Kaye, 1996) (Williams, 1996) (Fitzgerald, Drasgow, Hulin, Gelfand, & Magley, 1997) 218). Mackinnon equated this abuse of power to violation during rape as the intent of this abuse of economic power is domination, violation and humiliation emphasising the subjugation of the female bodied subject experiencing the abuse. For Mackinnon, the male domination and exertion of power during a rape act is the same light as the male domination and exertion of economic power leading to abuse. In essence, the men in discussion here greatly violated and humiliated the female bodied subjects in discussion through abuse of economic power as a rapist would to a woman.

Another axis of intersection that contributed to the vulnerabilities of both Fiona and Caroline is their age; they were both at least 15 years younger than their bosses/abusers. Contextualising this further, (in relation to patriarchy and other power structures discussed in the previous chapter) culture contributes to the power dynamics that contribute to the vulnerability of women where some older men see it as 'a given' to make sexual advances to younger women. For some dominant masculinities, the tendency is to see younger women through the rubric of children and hence the expectation that these younger women will accept and give in to whatever requests the adult male asks for, including sexual requests. Saying no, in relation to sexual requests from men, older men for that matter is not a common language in Uganda, as this language although emerging for some women at the moment, is not part of the Ugandan cultural archives.

Capitalism and patriarchy have been tied together by a few (such as Cockburn 1991, Gabor 2006) as dominant forces within the realm of power and discipline. Capitalism is an omnipresent stronghold within the economic sphere, with men holding a privileged position as generally speaking, they are the main benefactors of this institution and hence control the economy in many aspects. This trickles down to individual organisations such as the ones in discussion here, i.e. the UN and ministry of local government, where that privilege is carried over contributing to the power interactions that are imposed in sexual harassment incidences in workplace. Along similar lines, Cockburn (1991)

these contracts is at the country office. The country coordinator (boss of the agency) has a direct say in the recruitment/termination of local contracts but not for those on an international contract. (This explanation is from my experience having worked with the UN at local and international level)

argues that capitalism and patriarchy cross lines with one of the outcomes being men not taking women seriously within the workplace. This may ring true for women in certain workspaces, in addition to what has been discussed above. A quote from Caroline given above about her boss making in relation to her boardroom presentation skills ‘turning him on’ is a clear example of this. In the case of Fiona, the political ‘seat’ she holds is part of the gender quota ‘seats’ the government implemented as part of gender mainstreaming. Although elected in office by the people; this ‘seat’ is perceived as ‘given’ by some, probably her abuser, which further contributes to the marginalisation and the not being taken seriously that Cockburn alludes to consequently contributing to Sexual harassment.

Another key element in the realm of power dynamics is the blame being put on the woman in incidents of sexual violation generally as well as specifically within the workplace. Both Fiona and Caroline expressed that some of their colleagues commented about the way they dressed, as ‘asking for it’ which adds to the overall blame game being placed on them. Along similar lines, women face the burden of making it clear that certain behaviours and conduct from men is un-welcome in the workspace. Once again, the blame falls on the woman if she does not make it clear to a man that certain behaviour was unwelcome, contributing to the power dynamics as some women due to prevailing circumstances may not be in a position to voice this out openly, such as Fiona. In addition to this, with sexuality a taboo topic, stigmatising those who speak out about abusive situations is a known fact. Some of the female participants in the focus group confirmed this, highlighting that they would ostracize a woman who spoke up as some perceived such behaviour for men as ‘men being men’ and their right to engage in it. Caroline and Catherine were also subject to this.

‘...Muna, abantu bandhogeraku, abandi bansekerera, nti (my dear, some people spoke about me (backbiting) and others laughed at me, as such) how can a female youth representative give in to sexual relations with the chairman...’ Fiona

‘... it is now very very difficult because the stigma is so much, word went around the whole building that this was going on in the office...some women have lived with violence and male oppression so much that it has become part of their lives, normal so a few of them (women)... made a comments to say how could she, I mean it is common, it happens to us everyday...’ Caroline

The stigma in relation to women who experience abuse is a sad reality. The interesting dynamic these two specific quotes point out is that women were doing the stigmatising⁶⁴. As Caroline rightfully points out, ‘some women have lived with violence and male oppression so much that it has become a part of their lives’ encapsulates the stigmatisation. Internalisation, a lack of awareness and

⁶⁴ Please note that men did the stigmatising as well, as pointed out earlier, it is just that these two specific quotes point out women.

taboo in relation to sexuality are all depicted in the above quotes which enhance the issue of silence in relation to gender based abuse of women. The silence theme is yet to be untangled further in the section below.

4.22 Discourses that maintain sexual harassment in the workplace

4.22 (a) Heteronormativity

The heteronormative discourse is evident within both cases being discussed on sexual harassment, for these two situations and others experiencing the same in Uganda and the UN. This mirrors largely the Ugandan society and global social discourse where heteronormativity is a dominant factor that asserts itself across the board. Drawing on Bartky's (1988) interpretation of Foucault's notion of discipline and the 'manufacturing' of femininity, I will draw on the same concept to interpret the 'manufacture' of masculinities, all of which are informed through socio-cultural codes and archives. This results in certain masculine and feminine characteristics or traits and subjectivities such as gentle, sensitive, nurturing, emotional for femininity and strong, muscular, rational for masculinity. Male dominance is a resultant subjectivity of this, and asserts itself in certain behaviours such as sexual dominance.

'...abasadha batyo balina okwe ganza ni ensonga lwaki olusi bakuba abazi... katonda atyo nib we yabatonda..'.(men are like that, they have to exert themselves sometimes... God created them that way...) Focus group participant with prisons officers

This quote from one of the focus group discussion illuminates that. Epstein (1997) argues that the production of acceptable masculinities seem to depend in part on harassing women in order to avoid stigmatisation by fellow men. This may be in line with the above quote, which points out the exertion of dominance for men as a 'norm'. This domination is one of the traits for hegemonic masculinities in Uganda, where the ideal man, as the quote points out exhibits this. This behaviour then ties in with what Thomas (1997) points out, with those masculinities that over-conform to this dominant behaviour resulting in abusive behaviour as not all dominant masculinities may be abusive. Having said that, some abusive masculinities in certain contexts are considered part of the norm, consequently normalising such behaviour. With patriarchy ingrained in the social codes as part of the drivers, dominance is exerted through sexual encounters in a society where this is acceptable and considered a norm, spills-over into the workplace. This therefore goes unnoticed, considered acceptable by the majority perpetuating and maintaining violence against women in the workplace without much intervention or change as in many workspaces in Uganda. This essentializes not only male dominant behaviour but also normalises gender differences of masculinity and femininity.

4.22 (b) *The discourse of silence*

In relation to power, at a societal, economic, cultural, social or individual level, together with other rampant inequalities; subjectivities such as silence and non-reporting emerge. The normalization and internalization of certain dominant male behaviours and certain feminine ones make GBV in the workplace a silent and a taboo topic. With presumed heterosexuality, and evident masculine dominance, such behaviour is condoned by many making it the status quo in a number of workspaces. A taboo topic mainly because of the aspects of sexuality involved, which is a topic relegated to the 'private' sphere and therefore not meant to be spoken of 'in public' in the fairly conservative Ugandan Society. These coupled with other factors such as economic inequality propagate the silence around sexual harassment in many workplaces in Uganda. And therefore applying Foucault's (1978) notion of power/subject, subjectivities that have emerged, with numerous of the above mentioned factors dictating have effected normalisation, silence and ignoring of such behaviour within the workspace. This is evident within the Ugandan generally, as well as within the two workplaces being discussed in this chapter. Both Caroline and Fiona expressed some of their colleagues verbalising that sexual advances/harassment from men within the workplace is a normal ordinary occurrence and they had no reason to take offence from it as pointed out earlier on with some quotes in the section preceding this. The women in the focus group discussion cemented this further with their approval of silence towards abused women in the workplace, preferring this rather than speaking out due to a number of reasons some of which will be highlighted below. As hinted on earlier, internalisation of certain ingrained gendered norms is a contributing factor of this. In addition, a lack of awareness of what constitutes sexual as well as the lack of support structures in place for abused women in Uganda aggravates this further.

In addition to what has been pointed out above, my findings also teased out the following. In summary, Fiona, Caroline and the couple of focus groups I conducted also expressed the following as the reasons for not speaking out:

- Fear of dismissal or repercussions that may happen upon speaking out publicly.
- Loss of income, which would be especially detrimental for many women with meagre salaries, some of whom are single mothers. Women in focus group discussions and Fiona highlighted this as there are no support structures in place for them.
- Blocking of promotion or other progression activities.
- Victimisation in work assignments such as marginalisation; side-stepping. Upon placing a formal sexual harassment complaint, Caroline experienced this. Her boss was casting her in

bad light with partners⁶⁵. For instance in one meeting with partners, he claimed they were funds available to support certain activities within Caroline's work activities/terms of reference⁶⁶; which wasn't true according to Caroline. She protested at the meeting with no success and followed this up later on, and indeed there were no funds, which she put in writing both to her boss and partners. This depicts one of many of Caroline's agentic moments, a premise that will be unpacked below.

Many of the above-mentioned points have also been highlighted by a few other studies carried out within the developing contexts such as Chaudhuri (2007); Okoro & Obozokhai (2005); Bronner et al (2003) and Nyabuti (2007). The socio-economic aspects is highlighted by these studies as playing a bigger role as the fear of repercussions such as loss of income, silence emerges. For instance, Chaudhuri (2007), in her research on sexual harassment of women workers in 4 hospitals in Kolkata, India, underscores factors underlying none reporting as social norms, a lack of awareness of rights and the recognition of power dynamics and their implications on the job. Whereas, authorship from the 'developed' contexts points out 'ignoring' the abuse without necessarily tying it to socio-economic factors or job loss. Authors such as Fitzgerald et al, (1997), Gutek, (1985), Konik & Cortina (2008) note that the most common initial response is to ignore the harassment. This therefore contributes to this behaviour being seen within the realm of the normal, resulting in under reporting.

4.22 (c) Class

The two workspaces in discussion have men as bosses; which reflects a significant number of workplaces in Uganda. Gendered differences are a contributing factor, where historically within the Ugandan context based on the colonial legacy; it is the boy child who was privileged to go to school and the result being greater access to economic means, with women only breaking through at a later stage. This historical privilege places men within the category of bosses/leaders en masse more so than women especially among the generation of the bosses in the two workspaces we are discussing, who are in the age range of 55-60. Annex I provides statistical figures showing the number of men employed in the open labour market in Uganda is by far greater than women, with older men taking up a big chunk of this representation. This places the economic power within reach of such bosses and consequently the abuse thereof as highlighted earlier on through sexual harassment.

⁶⁵ Partners here are other agencies this UN offices works with collaboratively, such as other UN offices, government entities and NGOs

⁶⁶ By work terms of reference, I am referring to the milestones, activities and expectations of the job as stipulated by the work contract.

4.22 (d) 'Getting away with it' – repeated offence

Another dominant discourse that reinforces sexual harassment in the workplace is what I will refer to as 'repeated offence'. Caroline and Fiona articulated that their bosses had done this to other women, and got away with it. Fiona narrated that when the harassment first started, she resisted his aggressive sexual advances towards her, he tried to counter this resistance by expressing to her that other women in office whom he had pursued 'gave in' easily with no resistance. Caroline as well narrates her boss telling her straightforwardly that he managed to get away with a similar complaint against him in his previous location/post as it was settled officially that the girl had 'mis-read' his requests. When Caroline's incident went public and the office got to know that, a few other women, such as the driver, an officer in a different office (a partner office to this UN office) as well as a member of parliament working closely with this UN office all confided in her about the same boss making sexual advances to them.

'...there is another too who kind of expressed that, that is our female driver. She told me the occasions she had been driving the (boss)... he has given her money and encouraged her to have sex with him, to get some alone time, she actually left him in Entebbe (Entebbe is a town 1hr's drive from the capital Kampala where the UN office is), just handed him the car the keys and found public means/transport back. This lady went further to say look I thank you (to Caroline) for bringing this (placing a formal complaint of the abuse) up because I am a mere driver, I have no voice and I mean I am more at risk than you of losing my job, and I am a single mother too so if I got my situation out, it could affect me negatively. And indeed he gives me money once in a while so maybe I can put up with it...' Caroline

The quote is loaded with not only the repeated offence but some of the reasons highlighted above as to why some women are silent about being sexually harassed contributing to the 'repeated offence'. Internalisation, silence, economic power, essentialization of masculine dominance and gendered differences and many more of the issues discussed above propagate this further. In addition to this, for some offenders, their lack of awareness that their behaviour is abusive to women further proliferates the abusive situation as well as repeated offence. A subjectivity that continues to emerge as a 'norm' with repeated offence even for those who are well aware as they get away with it. Take for instance of public situation of DSK, who seems well aware of what he is doing but keeps engaging in such abusive behaviour.

4.23 Agency

Despite the dire sexual harassment experience for both Caroline and Fiona, their agency came through in the way they handled the situation and employing coping mechanisms, even though differently. Caroline exercised agency in many ways with ultimately standing up against her abuser by laying a formal sexual harassment complaint, thereby challenging the dominant power discourse. She highlights on numerous occasions standing up against her boss, such as the first formal letter she wrote as well as requesting for a meeting on the matter when the sexual advances first started;

when she picked up the phone and rung security on her boss during the near physical ‘fracas’; publically in front of fellow colleagues expressing discomfort to her boss with un-wanted touch; challenging the boss on the issue of extra partner funding mentioned above and many more. Caroline’s agency also came through when she could have worked at home but chose to work at the office in order to maintain interaction between colleagues and partners. Although Fiona did not have organisational support and succumbed to the sexual coercions in the end, her moments of agency came through when she expressed to her abuser earlier on that she did not like the way he looked at her and made comments about her dressing. She also initially resisted the sexual advances which challenged the power structures that came into play then. Fiona does look back at the incident regrettably now she expressed that she is now in a better position to handle such in a ‘mature way’, which illuminates experiential empowerment. Both Fiona and Caroline’s coping mechanisms were agentic, where they sought support from family and friends. I also find telling their narrative of sexual harassment to me exceptionally agentic as both expressed the need for a change of the situation of women in the workplace who experience such, they were a ‘voice for the voiceless’!

Although sexual harassment in the workplace is rampant and experienced by a number of women in Uganda, these female bodies are in no way docile and non agentic. Caroline and Fiona’s agentic moments described above are testimony to this. Foucault’s (1978) notion of *power/resistance* is evident here where the female bodies are the locus on which the different dimensions of power discussed in this thesis are enacted. Foucault (1978) argues that relational power is not repressive but productive where through resistance, different subjectivities emerge. Within abusive situations such as that of sexual harassment, scores such as (Chaudhuri 2007, Gutek 1985, Bronner et al 2005, Konik & Cortina 2008) have written that agency is exhibited those abused such as laying a formal charge within a supportive environment, seeking out support from friends and family, speaking about the incident(s), as well as many other coping mechanisms that are drawn on. This affirms Foucault’s notion of emerging subjectivities as these women do not ‘just take it’ but do something about the abuse even in workplaces where there is no formal support structures in place like Fiona’s and the many workspaces in Uganda. By drawing on their own personal coping mechanisms, these subjectivities that emerge ‘resist’ the abuse and manage to find ways to go on with their daily lives. Women who have experienced sexual harassment, although perceived as ‘victims’ or ‘survivors’ by some, the two women I interviewed did not see themselves through this rubric.

4.3 Conclusion

GBV and sexual harassment in the workplace are by no means a new issue but still affecting women globally in a vast manner, as the two narratives in discussion point out. The common perception of the workspace, as a 'public' space is that it is void of and separate from sexuality, a 'private' phenomenon. As Hern & Parkin (1987) unravel the 'organisational sexuality' paradox in their text, this has been brought to light by the narratives of Fiona and Caroline whose sexuality was the backdrop on which their femininity in the workplace was constructed by the abusers.

Intersectionalities of sexuality, age, class/economic aspects, littered with power relations in a Foucauldian sense unravel their oppressive power on the two female bodied subjects through dominant masculinities resulting in the manifestation of gendered textual 'scripts' of abuse. Despite these 'scripts' which they have to deal and live with, these women are far from broken and facing their daily lives in a productive and efficient manner.

Although this chapter results from a significant proportion of the data collected with the interviews, what has been presented is by no means exhaustive and mainly draws on the dominant discourses within the boundaries of my research aim. Dominant discourses such as heteronormativity and male dominance – dominance that appeals to hegemonic masculinities in Uganda, silence around sexual harassment in the workplace, the textual 'gendered scripts' of abuse, the many gendered structural, cultural and socio-economic inequalities. Fiona and Caroline had to continue working in the same environment with their abusers, an environment that was 'hostile' and intimidating at times; heightening their anxiety but had to 'keep going' in a productive manner, at times a big challenge. Coping mechanisms employed facilitated the latter through agentic means. The support system in place, personal for Fiona, and both organisational as well as personal for Caroline were invaluable in their coping with the abuse. The organisational support, which is largely un-available in many Ugandan workspaces, may be a contributing factor to the discourse of 'silence' in relation to sexual harassment in the workplace, in addition to socio-economic and other gendered inequalities. I will draw out the fact that even though Caroline had organisational support, the effects of the abuse were quite vivid for her and what I am driving at is the fact that the support in place is not doing much towards preventing the abuse. Both the UN policy and the Uganda employment act spell out means of preventing sexual harassment in the workplace, yet this seems to be lacking in both these women's narratives and doesn't feature in both these workspaces. A cause for concern!

CONCLUSION

When I set out on this research project, I wanted to project the voices of women in Uganda who had experienced sexual harassment in the workplace; thereby ‘setting the record straight’⁶⁷ by revealing silenced/forgotten experiences of women. I am referring to these women as ‘silenced’ or ‘forgotten’ as this area is an ‘unmarked/unresearched territory’ for both the Ugandan and UN context, with a paucity of research and minimal activism. This thesis highlights multifaceted axes of gendered difference in the social, cultural and class realm as well as the socio-economic inequalities contributing to sexual harassment of women. These women have to constantly negotiate their citizenry in these workspaces against a backdrop of sexuality, class, and gender inequality. Both the workspaces under discussion have a policy/law (and programme for the UN) and yet as the narrative suggest, sexual harassment still takes place, making the policies/programs reactive than pro-active. Fiona’s narrative highlights a big gap between the policy in place and what is on the ground, with little or no support in place for sexually harassed women in the workplace. A cause for concern in a country riddled with sexual and gender based violence with figures as high as an estimated two thirds of Ugandan households having experienced domestic violence and women are four times more likely than men to be targeted for both physical and sexual violence (Amnesty International Report 2010). Organisational support was invaluable for Caroline as she narrates but there are gaps in this; such as Caroline having to put up with a hostile environment work situation in close proximity with her abuser during the prolonged investigation period (of up to 6 months). And yet the ‘gendered scripts’ are real and vivid for both these women who have to live with them on a daily basis. This is an indication that something robust has to be done in workspaces to deal with sexual harassment. De Haas et al’s (2010) study on the Dutch police force which shows no change over six years in sexually harassing behaviour upon implementation of the policy/programme highlights that more needs to be done. My research illuminated the intersectionalities of sexual harassment – the ‘triple jeopardy’ for women who bear with the effects of the abuse (‘gendered scripts’) whilst at the same time expected to work productively and be fully functional for domestic responsibilities in the home. With the findings from this research, I would like to make some recommendations that could be useful for policy/programming.

- Consider a pro-active way of dealing with sexual harassment as opposed to the current reactive response. This could greatly contribute to reduced incidents of sexual harassment as well as effects of it, such as the ‘gendered scripts’, and costs of dealing with harassment.

⁶⁷ (Hesse-Biber & Brooks, 2007)

Awareness raising and dialoguing about this issue in the workspace is an example of a proactive response.

- The onus has been placed on women to speak up against unwanted sexual advances in the workplace. Awareness raising and office related training on self esteem could contribute to this. Involving men in this type of training would be an added advantage.
- The time between inception of investigation and verdict from the investigation should be kept to a minimum – for instance 6 months is just too long as the ‘victim’ has to work with the abuser in the same environment which is sometimes a hostile environment and anxiety provoking resulting in enhanced ‘gendered scripts’.

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Annex I

Table VIII: Percentage of Labor Force and the Growth Rates (%)

Employment status	Women	Men
Composition of Labor force	51.4 which is a decline from 52.6	48.6 an increase from 47.4
Labor participation rate	80.9 an increase from 80	83.5 an increase from 80.5
Labor growth rate	2.9	4.4
Employment growth rate	3.6	4.75
Composition of non – agricultural employment	36	53
Unemployment rate	2.1 a decline from 4.2	1.7
Self– employment	40	52
Unpaid Family Worker	50.1	23.5
Permanent employee	2.6	6.5
Temporary/Casual employee	6.4	17.4
Time spent on economic activities (hours)	6	7.3

Source 2009 CEDAW report