A Qualitative Study Exploring Female University Students' Experiences of Sexual Harassment

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Declaration

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Date: 20 July 2020

i

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Table of Contents

Glossary of Terms

Bakkie: A South African term for a lightweight pickup truck.

Black: In South Africa, the term "Black" is used as a socially-constructed racial classification, developed during the Apartheid system (South African History Online, 2019). This term is recognised as part of South Africa's population census.

Coloured: In South Africa, the term 'Coloured' refers to an individual of mixed European (White) and African (Black) or Asian ancestry (Taylor et al., 2011). This term is recognised as part of South Africa's population census and is also a socially-constructed category which was developed by the Apartheid system of racial classification (Taylor et al., 2011).

CSCD: Abbreviation for the Stellenbosch University Centre for Student Counselling and Development.

CDA: Abbreviation for critical discourse analysis; it is used to examine what is written between the lines, does not take any text at face value, and is used to provide a rich description of the role of language in power relations (Fairclough, 2013).

Emoticon: A pictorial representation of a facial expression.

Equality Unit: A facility at Stellenbosch University that assists staff and students with sexual harassment (and other) complaint procedures, and directs those who need them to other appropriate services, such as counselling and health (Personal Communication, 2019a)[1].

GBV: Abbreviation for gender-based violence.

HTT: Abbreviation for Stellenbosch University Historical Trauma and Transformation Unit.

HK: Abbreviation for Huis Kommittee, which is an Afrikaans term for 'House Committee'; this, essentially, refers to the Student Representative Body of a residence.

MFM: Abbreviation for Matie FM, a campus radio station based in Stellenbosch, South Africa.

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[1] This information was gleaned through my personal communication with the Stellenbosch University Equality Unit. I conducted informal interviews with staff members of the Equality Unit and Transformation Office to find out about the roles and functioning of the units.

Matie Media: One of the University of Stellenbosch's news sources.

SAPS: Abbreviation for South African Police Service.

SU: Abbreviation for Stellenbosch University; Stellenbosch University is a public research university situated in Stellenbosch, a town in the Western Cape Province of South Africa.

Transformation Unit/Office: A Stellenbosch University office that provides resources and support to the institution by creating transformation infrastructures; assessing certain structures that may contribute to discriminatory behaviour; presenting workshops, and training students and staff to be advocates for equal rights, and on institutional culture (including rape culture) (Personal Communication, 2019b).

UCT: Abbreviation for University of Cape Town; the University of Cape Town is a public research university located in Cape Town in the Western Cape Province of South Africa.

Unisa: Abbreviation for University of South Africa; the University of South Africa (Unisa) is the largest university system in South Africa by enrolment. It attracts a third of all higher education students in South Africa.

UWC: Abbreviation for University of the Western Cape; the University of the Western Cape is a public university located in the Bellville suburb of Cape Town, South Africa.

White: In South Africa, the term "White" is recognised as part of South Africa's population census. Within South Africa, many white individuals dominate the economic sector (Verwey & Quayle, 2012).

Abstract

Within the South African context, gender violence and sexual harassment have become 'normalised' to the extent that many women[2] live in fear of being violated in many different ways. Many accounts of sexual harassment shed light on what the victim has done to initiate the harassment and what they could have done to prevent it from occurring. This has created a culture of victim-blaming where the victims experience repeated victimisation. There is a serious need to address the complex layers of women's experiences. The aim of this thesis is to explore female Stellenbosch University postgraduate students' lived experiences of sexual harassment that occur on campus.

Drawing on a social constructionist approach and critical discourse analysis, this study sought to explore women's narratives of their experiences of sexual harassment on the Stellenbosch University campus. This allowed for the understanding of their experiences within the social and patriarchal context, as well as an examination of some of the discourses surrounding femininity and sexual harassment. Data was collected through the use of in-depth, semi-structured interviews with 10 participants. These female students were interviewed because they self-identified as having experienced sexual harassment on campus. Critical discourse analysis was used to identify underlying discourses and meanings based on the language the students used.

Three broad themes emerged from the narratives, namely 'the nature of sexual harassment', '(not) naming sexual harassment' and 'confronting patriarchal discourses and resisting victimhood'. The findings show that the participants experienced sexual harassment within lecture halls, residences, and other social spaces throughout the university. While reflecting on this analysis, this study argues that sexual harassment should be understood within the broader social and patriarchal context that challenges and/or makes it difficult for women to speak about experiencing sexual harassment. In particular, the social constructionist and feminist theoretical lenses provide insight into the power relations that fuel sexual harassment, and the persistence of such experiences within university contexts.

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[2] I acknowledge that there are many different genders, but within this thesis, the terms woman/women are used to describe those born with female sex organs and who currently self-identify as women.

The findings show narrations of shame, fear, and doubt, as well as how the participants identify themselves as victims of the patriarchal system. The participants' narrations identified male students and older men (ground staff, workers, security guards and those not affiliated with the university) as the perpetrators of sexual harassment. Discourse of "weak women", men's sense of entitlement to women's bodies, the male sexual drive, and discourses of the "good woman" were among those drawn on by the participants when describing their experiences. Such discourses provide insight into the ways in which participants make sense of their experiences by drawing on available socio-cultural discursive resources. The participants' narrations illuminated the complexities around naming/labelling their experiences as sexual harassment and the importance of their experiences, and drew on dominant discourses and cultural meanings to position themselves in different ways. Finally, the participants provided agentic narrations through which they criticised and challenged patriarchy, patriarchal discourses, and support structures on campus.

Keywords: sexual harassment; patriarchy; South African university; social constructionism; critical discourse analysis; discourse; power relations; agency; victimhood

Uittreksel

In 'n Suid-Afrikaanse konteks het geslagsgeweld en seksuele teistering 'genormaliseer' geword tot 'n mate waar baie vroue[3] in vrees leef om op baie verskeie maniere geskend te word. Baie berigte oor seksuele teistering werp lig op wat die slagoffer gedoen het om die teistering te inisieer en wat hulle kon gedoen het om te voorkom dat dit plaasvind. Dit het 'n kultuur van blaam op slagoffer geskep waar die slagoffers herhaalde viktimisasie ervaar. Daar is 'n ernstige behoefte om die ingewikkelde lae van vroue se ervarings aan te spreek. Die doel van hierdie tesis is om vroulike nagraadse studente van die Universiteit Stellenbosch (US) se ervarings van seksuele teistering wat op die kampus voorkom, te ondersoek.

Met behulp van 'n sosiale konstruksionistiese benadering en kritiese diskoersanalise, probeer hierdie studie om vroue se verhale oor hul ervarings van seksuele teistering op die Universiteit Stellenbosch-kampus te ondersoek. Dit lei tot die begrip van hul ervarings binne die sosiale en patriargale konteks, asook 'n ondersoek na die diskoerse rondom vroulikheid en seksuele teistering. Data is versamel deur die gebruik van in-diepte semi-gestruktureerde onderhoude van tien deelnemers. Hierdie vroulike studente is ondervra omdat hulle self geïdentifiseer het dat hulle seksuele teistering op die kampus beleef het. Kritiese diskoersanalise is gebruik om onderliggende diskoerse en betekenisse uit die student taal te identifiseer.

Drie breë temas het na vore gekom uit die weergawes, naamlik 'die aard van seksuele teistering', '(nie)die naam van seksuele teistering' en 'die uitdaging van patriargie en die weerstand teen slagoffer'. Die bevindinge toon dat die deelnemers seksuele teistering in lesingsale, koshuise en ander sosiale ruimtes regdeur die Universiteit ervaar het. As ons besin oor hierdie ontleding, argumenteer hierdie studie dat seksuele teistering binne die breër sosiale en patriargale konteks verstaan moet word, wat vroue uitdaag en / of dit moeilik maak om te praat oor seksuele teistering. In die besonder bied 'n sosiale konstruksionistiese en feministiese teoretiese lens insig in die magsverhoudinge wat seksuele teistering aanlok, en die sien ons die volharding van sulke ervarings binne universiteitskontekste.

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[3] Ek erken wel dat daar baie verskillende geslagte is, maar binne hierdie tesis gebruik ek die term vroue as 'n beskrywing van die wat vroulike gebore is en wat identifiseer as 'n vrou.

3

Die bevindings toon verhale van skaamte, vrees, twyfel sowel as hoe die deelnemers hulself beskryf as slagoffers van die patriargale stelsel. Die verhale van die deelnemers het manlike studente en ouer mans (grondpersoneel, werkers, veiligheidswagte en dié wat nie aan die universiteit verbonde is nie) geïdentifiseer as die oortreders van seksuele teistering. Die diskoers oor 'swak vroue', mans se gevoel van aanspraak op die liggame van die vrou, die manlike seksuele dryfkrag en diskoerse van die 'goeie vrou' was onder die wat die deelnemers gebruik het om hul ervarings te beskryf. Sulke diskoerse bied insig in hoe deelnemers sin maak van hul ervarings. Die deelnemers beskryf die kompleksiteit rondom die benaming / etikettering van hul ervarings as seksuele teistering en die belangrikheid van hul ervarings, op grond van dominante diskoerse en kulturele betekenisse om hulself op verskillende maniere te posisioneer. Laastens het die deelnemers agentskaplike vertellings gegee oor hoe hulle patriargie, patriargale diskoerse en ondersteuningstrukture op die kampus kritiseer en uitdaag, asook hoe hulle as agente teen slagoffer weerstand bied.

Sleutelwoorde: seksuele teistering; patriargie; Suid Afrikaanse universiteit; sosiale konstruksionistiese lens; kritiese diskoersanalise; diskoers; magsdinamika; agentskap; slagoffer

Chapter One: Introduction

Context and Background

Violence against women has become normalised in South Africa, and the lack of authoritative intervention has resulted in a 'culture of fear' amongst women who live in constant fear of being violated verbally, physically, emotionally, psychologically, and sexually (Gordon & Collins, 2013; Gqola, 2015). Factors, such as patriarchy, culture, and class, play major roles in whether gender-based violence takes place (Mazibuko, 2017). This is associated with the concept of 'culture of violence' whereby hegemonic discourses of masculinity and femininity structure the way in which women are treated, and the extent to which men's behaviours are permitted (Mazibuko, 2017). With regard to the above statement, I believe that patriarchy does indeed play a role in the establishment of men's opportunities to engage in sexual harassment. However, there are several factors that could contribute to this, such as young adult sexual exploration/needs and the accessibility of a potential victim. Additionally, there is the creation of a social environment that provides the opportunity to get away with oppressive behaviours by, for example, promoting victim-blaming discourse.

Gender-based violence (GBV) is violence that occurs because of one's gender, and can be directed at anyone whereas violence against women is directed solely at women. Violence, in general, can be defined as "the intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against oneself or another, or against a group or community, that either results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, maladjustment or deprivation" (Duncan, 2003, p. 362). In the context of this thesis, when GBV or violence, in general, is mentioned, it is not necessarily with extreme forms of violence in mind, such as murder or rape. Instead, it is to iterate that women are susceptible to experiencing multiple levels of harm in society because of the existing power dynamics between men and women. When it comes to the experience of violence, in general, research shows that women are more vulnerable to becoming victims, and have been found to experience violence at the hands of people they know (Collins, 2014; Dosekun, 2007). Ayenibiowo (2010) found that males are more likely to instigate violence against females in social interactions because society has created the perception that

women are subordinate to men, and that within the Nigerian context (like others), men still hold more power than women.

In South Africa, gender violence and discrimination have high prevalence rates. Initiatives, such as the #HearMeToo and Shatter the Silence help not only to create awareness but to encourage those who have experienced gender-based violence to speak out and empower themselves. The #HearMeToo activism campaign was the theme of 2018's anti-gender-based violence initiative in South Africa, and is linked to "the global #MeToo and #TimesUp movements, which aim to be intersectional and non-discriminatory" (Kahla, 2018, para. 2). The above-mentioned movements have shown that gender-based violence can range from "unwanted verbal sexual advances to physical acts of violence" (Kahla, 2018, para. 3), and may include behaviour, such as unwanted physical touch, *quid pro quo* behaviour in the workplace or, perhaps, even intimidation. I learned about the Shatter the Silence activism campaign from Volvo Group Southern Africa, who has been supporting the campaign and sending out documents containing information on gender-based violence, forms of abuse, how to actively combat violence, and who can be contacted to each employee when gender-based violence has occurred. This is significant as it highlights the involvement of several corporations that are both aware of, and create awareness of, violence against women and children.

However, South Africa is not idle in terms of its attempts to address gender-based violence, sexual harassment or sexual violence on university campuses (Retief, 2019). South Africa's Minister of Higher Education and Training, Naledi Pandor, established a team whose purpose is to address and prevent the above-mentioned forms of violence on South African university campuses. Moreover, a policy framework will be implemented to protect students and staff from all forms of harassment and abuse (Retief, 2019). This team was established when universities from across South Africa wrote letters to the Minister of Higher Education, highlighting the struggles faced on campuses (Retief, 2019).

In the South African context, unreliable statistics cause the numbers related to sexual harassment to be no more than an educated guess (Smit & Du Plessis, 2011). Few statistics provide information on the prevalence of sexual harassment. The South African Police Service's crime statistics of 2017/2018, however, state that 50 108 cases of sexual offences were formally reported (South African

Police Service (SAPS), 2018). The apparent decrease in these crimes may be due to an increase in policing or a decrease in reported offences (SAPS, 2018). While these statistics include rape, sexual assault, attempted sexual offences, and contact sexual offences, there is no specific category for sexual harassment statistics (SAPS, 2018). According to the SAPS, the above-mentioned "sexual offences involve sex without consent, unwanted sexual touching, or being forced to engage in humiliating sexual activity" (SAPS, 2014).

The current study explores the sexual harassment that female university students face on a daily basis, and how they narrate and give meaning to these experiences. Finchilescu and Dugard (2018) assert that

> [b]ehaviors defined as sexual harassment include physical acts such as unwanted touching, pulling off of clothes, stalking, hitting; verbal acts such as jeering, insults, starting rumors, emailing or showing sexual material, badgering for dates; and *quid pro quo* acts such as offering money, resources, academic or work advantages in exchange for sex (p. 3).

Experiencing any of these forms of sexual harassment may have serious effects on female students' academic achievements, as well as their physical and psychological wellbeing (Gouws & Kritzinger, 2007; Oni et al., 2019). According to Gouws and Kritzinger (2007), sexual harassment is a way for men to control women on an emotional, academic and social level by impeding their ability to function in a hostile environment, forcing them to think that such behaviour is acceptable and 'normal', and that their traumatic experiences are not serious enough and will be ignored if reported.

In an interview with Catharine MacKinnon (American feminist scholar), she mentioned how she heard of a woman who had experienced severe and prolonged harassment by her employer and how, whilst deliberating the case at the time, she chose sexual harassment as the official term (Mitra, 2018). Sexual harassment was coined by Catharine MacKinnon, who also noticed that when students, specifically female students, had experiences akin to abuse, their performance was affected both socially and academically (Oni et al., 2019). South Africa has specific laws in place to respond to sexual harassment, such as "The Code of Good Practice on the Handling of Sexual Harassment Cases (1998)", and specifically identifies sexual harassment as any sexualised behaviour that is *unwanted* and

7

non-consensual (Oni et al., 2019, p. 1478). Despite this code and university policies, sexual harassment occurs frequently. This may be attributed to university rape culture, too few security figures being present throughout the campus, victims' under-reporting of sexual harassment and, perhaps, even universities not enforcing policies in efficient ways (Oni et al., 2019).

In South Africa, because of women's silenced voices and, often, the fear of speaking out, we have no idea as to the full extent of sexual harassment taking place at our universities (Smit & Du Plessis, 2011). According to Smit and Du Plessis (2011), "gendered performance intersects intimately with relations of power" (p. 173). This means that men confirm their masculinity and heterosexuality in a social/educational environment by sexually harassing females. Gender stereotypes can be defined as the "preconceived ideas whereby females and males are arbitrarily assigned characters and roles determined and limited by their gender" (European Institute for Gender Equality, 2018, para. 1). These stereotypes are reinforced by the values, norms and expectations of each sex, and maintain the oppression of women (European Institute for Gender Equality, 2018).

Problem Statement and Rationale

I have chosen the topic of female students' experiences of sexual harassment on campus in an attempt to provide women on campus who experience it, sometimes daily, but who, for whatever reason, do not stand up for themselves or others, with a voice. There are few studies depicting the prevalence and experiences of violence and sexual harassment of female students within the South African university context (see, for example, Clowes et al., 2009; Dosekun, 2007; Gordon & Collins, 2013; Gouws & Kritzinger, 2007). This study explored sexual harassment at one tertiary institution in South Africa by focusing on female postgraduate university students' experiences of sexual harassment and how they articulate these experiences within the South African context. Stellenbosch University has identified the need to support students, and is utilising an Unfair Discrimination and Harassment policy to do so. This policy (Stellenbosch University, 2016) states that on campus, all staff and students are prohibited from engaging in "unfair discrimination, harassment, sexual harassment and victimisation" (p. 8), and that the implementation of this policy should protect women from such experiences.

There is a gap in the existing literature with regard to the way in which women make sense of, and cope with, experiences of sexual harassment. Therefore, this study explores these aspects through the narratives of Stellenbosch University students' experiences of sexual harassment, and the discourses of patriarchal power and language that they draw upon to narrate these experiences. There is a practical implication in the collective witnessing and narration of sexual harassment, which will not only help other victims to feel more supported in speaking about their experiences, but also to expose patriarchal culture and discourses in an attempt to shift the blame from victims to perpetrators. This research will be shared with the Stellenbosch University Equality Unit and Transformation Office, and will be published in an academic journal. This study highlights students' constructions of sexual harassment and the discourses they draw upon to describe their experiences.

GBV is an ongoing concern within our society, on which policies and political/public responses have yet to make an impact (Shefer, 2013). The way in which the public and political spheres have been addressing GBV has created the impression that this type of violence is normal. Consequently, this not only creates the impression that those who have been victimised will not be 'heard' when they speak up, but also reinforces the patriarchal roles and masculinities that lead to the violence in the first place (Shefer, 2013). An example of this is when a female student is at a social hub around campus and drinks with her friends. Should she be sexually harassed by a man, she could resist his advances and be labelled a tease or as someone who 'asked for it'. According to Shefer (2013), this normalisation and addressing of GBV results in the creation of GBV policies to protect those experiencing "extreme forms of violence" (for example, femicide or rape) and, essentially, ignores those experiencing "other forms of violence" (for example, sexual harassment or intimate abuse from a partner) (p. 2). A particular area of concern is sexual harassment, which will be addressed in this study. In our patriarchal society, more violent GBV cases are broadcasted. These violent cases take precedence over others ('less severe' forms of GBV) by focusing on occurrences that are deemed 'important' and are influenced by the assumption that the experiences of certain race and class groups matter more than others. Fewer cases of 'less extreme' forms of violence are covered (such as domestic violence or sexual harassment),

with the result that many people may not even be aware of them. Consequently, many women may regard their experiences of GBV or sexual harassment as unimportant or 'normal'.

Within the university context, female students may become so uncomfortable that their academics may fall behind. Alternatively, they may stop going in to campus while some may even be thought of as trouble makers if they report sexual harassment (Gouws & Kritzinger, 2007). Studies have found that sexual harassment has negative effects on students, such as physical or psychological effects. For example, students may develop stomach aches, fear of going to campus, shame, depression and anxiety (Gardner, 2009; Gouws & Kritzinger, 2007; Mamaru et al., 2015; Newman, 1998). The above-mentioned findings are important to this study as they provide a backdrop with regard to student experiences of sexual harassment on campus. Within the analysis section, the participants narrate some of the above effects, as well as how they have worked to overcome these negative effects. Studies have also shown that the fear of experiencing trauma or harassment influences the sense of safety on campus (Gordon & Collins, 2013; Ngabaza et al., 2015) and that the effects of traumatic experiences on individuals impact their campus experiences (Schreiner, 2013, 2015, 2016; Zapata, 2015).

While many of the above-mentioned studies focus on sexual harassment behaviours, as well as the negative experiences of those being harassed, and the coping mechanisms they use, they do not explore how women make sense of these experiences and challenge these behaviours. This study fills this gap by shedding light on how participants view themselves in light of these experiences, and the language they use not only to assign blame to, and criticise campus structures, but also to narrate strategies to protect themselves and other students.

Aims of the Study

The aim of this study is to explore lived experiences of sexual harassment that occur on campus, as articulated by female postgraduate students at Stellenbosch University. There is a need to address the complex layers of women's experiences. This will be done by examining the way in which women give meaning to their experiences and the discourses they use to describe sexual harassment.

Research Questions

The main research question guiding this study is:

What are female Stellenbosch University students' experiences of sexual harassment on campus and how do they make sense of these experiences?

The sub-questions of this study are:

- What forms of sexual harassment take place on this South African university campus, as narrated by female students?

- How do female Stellenbosch University students make sense of their experiences of sexual harassment on campus?

- What is the significance of these experiences in their lives, and how do they shape their lives?

- How do female students respond to such experiences of sexual harassment on campus?

- Do students utilise the existing support structures on campus, and what are their narrated experiences of utilising such services?

- What are the students' narrations of possible ways to deal with sexual harassment at the university?

Concluding Remarks

Violence and sexual harassment has become normalised in South Africa resulting in a 'culture of fear' (Gordon & Collins, 2013; Gqola, 2015) and a ' culture of violence' (Mazibuko, 2017). Within South Africa, fluctuations in crime statistics show that decreases in sexual harassment may be due to an increase in policing or a decrease in reported offences (SAPS, 2018). This normalised violence highlights how women are more vulnerable to becoming victims, due to society's perception that women are subordinate to and controlled by men. This form of control creates an environment whereby sexual harassment is considered 'normal', acceptable and that experiencing sexual harassment is not serious enough to report. As mentioned in the Context and Background section, South Africa has specific laws in place to respond to sexual harassment, such as "The Code of Good Practice on the Handling of Sexual Harassment Cases (1998)", and specifically identifies sexual harassment as any

sexualised behaviour that is *unwanted* and *non-consensual* (Oni et al., 2019, p. 1478). However, despite these laws, sexual harassment is still frequent and under-reported (Oni et al., 2019).

The rationale of this thesis was to provide women who experience sexual harassment on campus with a voice. The gap in existing literature – regarding how women make sense of and cope with sexual harassment on university campuses was addressed through narrations that drew on patriarchal discourses and language to describe these experiences. 'Severe' GBV is frequently described by the media, which not only gives the impression that so-called lesser forms will not be heard, but also that the women who experience it will be blamed (Shefer, 2013). This normalisation of sexual harassment, may be traumatic to some and have psychophysical effects (Gardner, 2009; Gordon & Collins, 2013; Gouws & Kritzinger, 2007; Mamaru et al., 2015; Newman, 1998; Ngabaza et al., 2015). This thesis sheds light on how women who experience sexual harassment on the Stellenbosch University campus describe their experiences, the coping mechanisms the use, their agentic strategies, how they view themselves and what language they use.

Overview of the Chapters

There are seven chapters in this thesis, each have been structured and written in a way that provides detailed information and findings about the experiences and sense-making of sexual harassment in the Stellenbosch University space. Below is a summary of these chapters:

Chapter 1: This chapter gives readers an introduction to the study by specifying the context of the study, the rationale of the study, the aim of the study, including the research questions that guide the study.

Chapter 2: This chapter explores the theoretical framework of Social Constructionism. This chapter provides an insight into important concepts and theories such as power, language, discourses, agency, feminism and sexual objectification, which gives context to language used by participants. I decided to explore the theoretical framework before the literature review, as many important concepts should be conceptualised first.

Chapter 3: This chapter presents existing literature on the topic of this thesis, in the form of a literature review. This chapter mainly focuses on discussions of power dynamics between men and women in the form of patriarchal and gender discourses, defining sexual harassment and its effects, gender violence and sexual harassment within the university context. This chapter ends with a summary of each discussed section.

Chapter 4: This chapter presents the research methodology of this thesis. Within this chapter, a qualitative research design is described along with a qualitative epistemological approach. The readers are provided with information pertaining to the participant selection, recruitment, and the research context of Stellenbosch University. The data collection method, data analysis (analytical tool of critical discourse analysis and process), quality of this thesis and description of the participants is detailed. Readers will be provided with a reflexivity section through which I situate myself within the context of the study and in relation to the participants. Lastly, the ethical considerations of the research are outlined.

Chapter 5: This chapter presents the data findings within two themes that aims to answer the first three research questions and is supported by literature. Findings reflect narrations of the participants. In theme one, the types of sexual harassment are interpreted, how men exert power over women, the commonality of sexual objectification as well as some of the spaces within which sexual harassment thrives. In theme two, I analyse how participants make sense of these experiences, who they blame and how they are treated after being victimised.

Chapter 6: This chapter presents the data findings from the third theme and aims to answer the last three research questions and is supported by literature. These findings, as narrated by the participants, shed light on the women's agency – how some women adopt strategies to resist and cope with sexual harassment, their narrations of what they need to feel safe within the campus space, as well criticisms of existing support structures on campus.

Chapter 7: This chapter draws the thesis together by summarising existing literature and the findings. This chapter offers implications and recommendations for future research and the limitations of the study are also presented.

Chapter 2: Social Constructionist Theoretical Framework

Introduction

  This study draws broadly on a feminist approach which aims to challenge patriarchy and promote an equal and just society in which men and women have equal opportunities and rights (Crossman, 2018a). This approach provides a focus on the voices of female students, and sheds light on the ways in which they make sense of their experiences and the unequal power dynamics in society. Usually, the theoretical framework comes after the literature review, however, I have placed this first as many concepts that are important to the conceptualisation of this paper, are explored first. The broad umbrella of social constructionism explains that power is given to discourses through the language used to describe them, and the practices that accompany these discourses (Burr, 2003). Social constructionism is based on the idea that we can 'construct' different discourses and realities, and that these can be reconstructed as time passes (Burr, 2003). Power is infused throughout social relationships and sexual harassment is maintained and given meaning through these social relations. Depending on the language used, we can resist or challenge dominant discourses and the ways in which they are understood, as well as create new and/or alternative discourses (Burr, 2003).

  Social constructionism does not have a simplified definition, but is an umbrella term used to describe the significance of the power of language. In fact, the fields of Psychology and Sociology have identified the power of discourse in everyday life (Burr, 2003). However, to put it simply, social constructionism aims to explain the ways in which people describe, experience and understand the world, as well as themselves as individuals living in it (Gergen & Gergen, 2003). Burr (2003) asserted that "[i]t is concerned with how the human subject becomes constructed through the structure of language and through ideology" (p. 17). In this sense, a discourse is a symbolic system through which individuals construct varying experiences. Moreover, to understand these experiences, we can 'deconstruct' them in order to gain many other perspectives on them (Burr, 2003). Burr (1995) suggested that existing discourses may serve to hide the existing power relations in society, and that by describing our experience in terms of generalisations and the experiences of others, we are succumbing to the power that results from these discourses.

Similarly, if sexual harassment is seen as a side effect of patriarchy or a moral failing of society – depending on the language used, either the harasser or victim can be blamed, or both. In this study, it is important to differentiate between the ways in which experience is viewed by social constructionism and phenomenology. The purpose of this, for example, is to shed light on not only how socially constructed labels attached to the phenomena affects how those involved see themselves, but also to discuss how the phenomenon came to be and impacts their lives. According to the phenomenological perspective, experience is viewed from a subjective, 'first-person point of view' and an individual's conscious description of that description (Smith, 2013). On the other hand, social constructionism focuses on the language used to describe experiences, and posits that these experiences can be objectively viewed from many different perspectives.

Overview of Patriarchy

Patriarchy can simply be defined as the oppression of females in a male-dominated society through the use of cultural traditions, power struggles and forms of violence (Barry & Yuill, 2008). It is, however, not that simple. Patriarchy, in this sense, refers to the privilege of one social group (namely men), and the control it has in relation to another (namely women). This privilege is not earned but is maintained by oppressing women in an attempt to prevent them from challenging male power in society (Crittenden & Wright, 2012; Johnson, 2005). Culturally, a man is identified by qualities that promote desired male occupations (such as being a rational, controlling lawyer or a tough, competent businessman), and it is through the power attached to this symbolic maleness that women are devalued because of their femininity (Johnson, 2005).

As subjects of a patriarchal upbringing, many men believe that they are entitled to certain male privileges, even at the cost of female well-being (Pease, 2016). Men are taught to internalise male superiority which naturalises their oppression of women, and violence results as a form of control (Pease, 2016). This by no means insinuates that all men are vindictive or have issues with superiority over women, but that society regards men as more efficient leaders and women more suited for subservient roles. In patriarchal societies, females who adhere to, and comply with, expected gender roles and norms are accepted (Rogers, 2009). This also indicates that, should a woman challenge

patriarchy, or be more successful than a man, she would not be so readily accepted. Socially, women are subordinate to men, many of whom, in turn, are subordinate to the dominant hegemonic masculinity (the ideal male image). Feminism, on the other hand, is in opposition to patriarchy. It attempts to promote the welfare of women and aims to create equal power dynamics. However, even though South Africa, as a nation, needs to address the violence that ensues as a result of this unequal power, we also need to provide a platform for women to safely voice their experiences.

Patriarchy is an endless loop of the control, power, and fear that men have within society. Not only do men play an active role as 'male' to maintain power over women and other men who do not meet the dominant male status quo, but they are also forced to take part in order to avoid the fear of being controlled by other men (Johnson, 2005). Within this patriarchal loop, as a man strives to be controlling in an attempt to avoid being controlled, so, too, do other men strive to be controlling to keep up with the increasing standard of men who maintain power (Johnson, 2005). This feeling of control is accompanied by the fear of losing control, and is often not something that will be surrendered willingly (Crittenden & Wright, 2012; Johnson, 2005). This competitiveness not only occurs between men, but also with women who strive to succeed in a 'man's world'. This, by no means, indicates that men are victims of their social environment and that they are 'forced' to harass women. This also does not indicate that all men are consciously exerting power over women to keep them in a submissive state, but that men, too are caught within this patriarchal loop of expected behaviour and face being ostracised should they fail to practise masculinity (Johnson, 2005). Instead, it suggests that South Africa, in general, needs to address the patriarchal structure that supports this behaviour.

As mentioned above, patriarchy is an endless loop. Whilst much literature focuses on the oppression and victimisation of women at the hands of men, we need to consider how men are impacted by patriarchy as well and how they have come to be part of this patriarchal loop. According to Ratele (2008), intersections of gender, employment/poverty and expected masculinity impact male violence towards women. This said, it is a generalisation that men are hard-wired or born capable of violence towards women, without considering their socialised up-bringing and that they are 'slave' to hegemonic masculinity (Ratele, 2008). This means that the mere definition of hegemonic masculinities implies

that men are prone to violence, oppressing women and within this patriarchal loop – unable to escape their predestined 'nature'. Men too suffer under patriarchy because of the modes of being that inhibit emotional expression and the expression of vulnerability. This puts immense pressure on men to constantly maintain a conflicting self-image and expected image. On this note, when I speak of men within this study as a collective, please consider that not all men are sexual harassers and that prior research and the findings within this study are subject to interpretation.

Discourses and Patriarchy in South Africa

The concept of agency

The relationship between an individual and society can be explained in terms of agency and its opposite, namely structure (Barry & Yuill, 2008). Similar to society, structure determines our perceptions and experiences through the ways in which we are expected to behave whereas agency states that individuals behave according to their own interpretation of their societal role and that they do not act out roles that have been predetermined by society (Barry & Yuill, 2008). To Foucault (1982), agency refers to the ability to recognise power relations, and strategically refusing to be objectified or oppressed by those who are capable of power, by being agentic and challenging those 'in power'. Challenging those in power could also refer to a more covert or invisible resistance to 'normalised' behaviour within the broader patriarchal society.

From a feminist perspective, agency refers to the "forced choices" one has to make to either comply with the expected patriarchal prescriptions or challenge these by choosing what is not 'expected' (Davies, 1991, p. 46). This means that society teaches women to comply with, and accept, certain expectations and behaviours even if this results in them being disadvantaged. Agency, therefore, refers to the potential that individuals have to influence their structure, change their environment, and determine the course of their own lives (Barry & Yuill, 2008). An example of this (as narrated by the participants) could be that if a woman is aware of the subtle sexism she faces in the classroom, she exerts her agency by criticising the system that allows this treatment of women and challenges those who are sexist towards her. This challenging is not necessarily physical, but can be in the forms of

ignoring the harasser, reporting him, avoiding him, and many other such forms of resisting the power exerted over her.

In the context of this study, individuals are part of a larger, interconnected patriarchal structure which produces discourses, social practices, and gendered roles. The participants position themselves within this society through their narrations, and by describing their experiences and perspectives through the use of discourses (Davies, 1991). While our patriarchal society generates discourses that blame women for their own victimisation, silences them for "challenging" patriarchy and permits sexual harassment as an act of control and oppression, agency is exerted by narrating discourses that resist the label of becoming a 'victim', and which criticise and confront patriarchy and its structures. This sense of agency is important as it highlights the way in which women become empowered and continue to challenge the discourse and practices that oppress them. Phillips (2000) states that patriarchy is ingrained in society and is unavoidable. However, every person within this society "can choose *how* they participate in it" (p.19). This is worth noting since the narrations in Chapter 5 explore the ways in which the participants make sense of their experiences, as well as their agentic positioning in relation to sexual harassment.

Phillips (2000) states that women can choose to act within this patriarchal society and face the consequences thereof. Therefore, when women 'actively' challenge patriarchal discourses, act in non-stereotypical ways to avoid oppression, and confront men or broader patriarchal systems, they perform as active agents and effectively avoid positioning themselves as 'victims'. In certain instances, the position of 'victim' is strategic, as has been the case in many feminist approaches to addressing patriarchy (Fohring, 2018). The position of 'victim' can and has been used to acknowledge violence and call it out, and to acknowledge the negative effects of such violence on women. To some, accepting 'victim' status may indicate that they have been treated unfairly and injured by not only an individual, but perhaps also by the oppressive patriarchal system (Bartky, 1990).

To others, the term 'victim' indicates that they have been weakened to an extent. Thus, they may avoid using the term as a form of personal empowerment, and as a challenge to the patriarchal system that blames *women* for experiencing sexual harassment at the hands of men (Bartky, 1990). In

many instances, reporting sexual harassment requires the individual to take on the role of 'victim' for the lawful report to be taken seriously (Vijayasiri, 2008). This indicates that women are required to accept/identify as a 'victim', regardless of how they see themselves. In this thesis, I use inverted commas when referring to 'victim(s)', because to me, the term may have negative connotations (as mentioned above) and may also suggest that women have been 'weakened' to the extent that they need support and are therefore not agents who are capable of their own empowerment. Meanings around this term not only refer to physical weakness, but often also suggest that their identity as women is regarded as static and less powerful in relation to men.

In some instances, women may internalise discourses of 'women are responsible for their own safety' and 'they asked for it'. As a result, many women engage in the patriarchal project of self-surveillance through which they monitor their own behaviour and the behaviour of other women. Patriarchal discourse demarcates what behaviour is acceptable for women and what physical spaces they can occupy to safely avoid harassment (Gqola, 2015).

The social construction of gender

The term 'gender' can be defined as the "social, cultural and psychological aspects of being a man or a woman" whereas the binary term 'sex' "refers to the biological differences between men and women" (Barry & Yuill, 2008, p. 144). Rather than being limited to sex or male/female characteristics, gender depends on the way in which it is defined by society. The process of creating, assigning and enforcing gender is considered to be 'doing gender', and many structural concepts in society exist to ensure that this process is ongoing (West & Zimmerman, 1987, p. 137). The social constructions of gender, as well as sexual harassment, are not only socially accepted descriptions of male and female roles within society, but are also a determinant of the authority that men have over women and as a result, women's experiences thereof (Towns & Adams, 2016). By this I mean that within our patriarchal society, many men have more power than women and some men may exert control over women by performing sexually harassing behaviours. This same society has given linguistic meaning to gender roles and the sexual harassment label, which allows men (who are abusive towards women) to draw on male privilege and distance themselves from the responsibility of this abuse (Towns & Adams, 2016).

This is important because within the South African context, media, university campuses and even societal roles use language that benefit men and as a result ensure that women are viewed unequally within conversations regarding violence.

South Africa is a multicultural society in which different languages, religions, socio-economic status, sexual orientation, ethnicities and social environments influence our behaviours and growth (Baron & Branscombe, 2012). Some have suggested that institutions, such as the workplace, schools and, specifically, universities are microcosms of the broader South Africa (Vandeyar, 2010). Within these microcosms, gender roles and stereotypes are enforced to maintain the patriarchal structure of the broader society (Woodward, 1999). An example of a stereotype relevant to this study would be a man who publicly teases a woman for being emotional. Should the woman react negatively, she would be perceived as being overly sensitive, thus reinforcing the negative stereotype of women as being overly emotional. The sociological term 'other' refers to how an individual is seen as part of a constructed social identity (Crossman, 2018b). This concept of 'other' determines an individual's or group's social standing in society and, of course, who holds power in relation to that group (Crossman, 2018b). Thus, the term 'other' is based on a collection of knowledge attained by interacting with other individuals, sharing language, seeing how others respond to different situations, and creating and/or sharing symbols that create an identity (Crossman, 2018b). In this way, for example, women may be regarded as the 'other', the 'minority', or the proverbial outlying group which experiences sexual harassment by men who dominate various spheres of society. An example of this is narrated by Lerato (see the analysis section), who found herself in a situation where male students rated her body in a sexually-degrading manner, knowing full well that she could hear them.

Within the South African context, a 1997 study compared the "Ambivalent Sexism Inventory (ASI)" scores of several cultural groups, and found that at the time, both South African men and women had one of the highest ambivalent and hostile sexist views directed towards women (Shefer et al., 2008, p. 159). Shefer et al. (2008) commented on this study, saying that these forms of sexism (including benevolent sexism) had helped support modern patriarchy. Sexism "punishes women who challenge the status quo" and "rewards those who accept conventional gender norms and power relations" (Shefer

et al., 2008, p. 160). This is as a result of the enforcement of patriarchal ideals, but does not insinuate that all South Africans condone such behaviour. Despite the fact that many South African men and women shared these views, and perhaps still do, younger generations can unlearn sexist views and patriarchal discourses that aim to oppress women and allow sexual harassment to persist. As sexual harassment is experienced differently by different people, describing and naming these experiences may also differ. Therefore, the process of naming sexual harassment experiences is often more complex than anticipated. This is why this study is important as it offers a critical approach to understand how women make sense of these experiences and position themselves as agents.

As mentioned above, gender is socially constructed according to sex and appearance. Sexual objectification refers to when a person is treated as an object, a thing to be used by others to fulfil their sexual needs (Fredrickson & Roberts, 1997). Sexual objectification theory proposes that although women experience sexual objectification differently, most women are vulnerable to negative psychological impacts caused by unwanted experiences (Fredrickson & Roberts, 1997). This sexual objectification theory posits that women experience sexual gazes more frequently, many women are aware of this, the looks tend to be unwelcome and the looks are commonly paired with sexual comments of the female body (Fredrickson & Roberts, 1997). This awareness of being sexually objectified, paired with the knowledge that patriarchal society condones it and has discourses that villainises women, can create a sense of hopelessness in some women.

Shaping experiences using discourses

Discourses are ultimately "a set of meanings, metaphors, representations, images, stories, statements and so on that in some way together produce a particular version of events" (Burr, 1995, p. 48). These descriptions paint a picture of an event or experiences of individuals and/or groups, from different perspectives and may each be interpreted differently by different people through the language they use (Burr, 1995). Burr (1995) suggested that existing discourses may serve to hide the existing power relations in society and that by describing our experience using a discourse, we are succumbing to those who exert power over us. In short, discourses are used to describe specific experiences, and relating to such discourses generalises an experience. An example of this is when a woman who has

experienced sexual harassment decides not to report her harasser because she was raised in a patriarchal household where her brothers were seldom punished for bad behaviour, and the excuse she often heard was 'boys will be boys'. This implies that although she may feel uncomfortable after having experienced sexual harassment, she has taken on certain meanings such as boys or men behaving in this manner is normal; because she is a woman, she may not act in the same way; or authority figures may decide not to punish her male harasser.

On this note, competing discourses are also important in analysing language. All individuals are different and so their experiences and narratives thereof may also differ. Regarding discourses, we tend to use dominant discourses – or language used by the broader society – to describe our experiences, however, occasionally individuals may use discourses that compete with one another to describe the same event, depending on the narrator's state of mind, company and topic of discussion (Pringle, 2001). An example of competing discourses is mentioned in the findings section, whereby Tanya mentioned her harasser was a 'nice' person. She relinquished his responsibility by saying "guys will be guys", and yet also narrated that she did not want to report him of fear of being disbelieved, indicating she was aware she was being harassed. This describing the harasser as a 'typical guy', but also as a 'nice guy' simply acting based on human nature, is competing discourses. Tanya makes use of these discourses as if they are fact. Importantly, the language we use constructs a perspective and ultimately gives it meaning (Lee, 1992). Tanya continued to narrate how she did not want to report the harasser for fear of being disbelieved – this is noteworthy as she has yet to report him, but still expects to be disbelieved. In this instance, Tanya has already positioned herself as a 'victim' of circumstance and that being a woman who is harassed, she will not be believed. Tanya referred to herself as a "stupid woman", thereby acknowledging her victimisation, but by being a woman, she will be expected to remain silent and 'stupid' for not reporting the harasser in the first place. Essentially, the competing discourses of "guys will be guys" and "stupid woman" indicate that male sexualised behaviour is normal and that when a woman becomes aware of sexual harassment or seeks to challenge it she is behaving abnormally. Competing discourses usually consist of similar power relations, social practices and language used to give perspective to the same discourse (Allender et al., 2006).

The purpose of utilising social constructionism in this study was to take historical, cultural and socially-constructed subjective meanings (for example, patriarchy or what it means to be a 'woman'), and to explore these meanings and experiences as narrated by the different female participants in this study who have experienced sexual harassment. I examined the discourse(s) they used to describe their experiences of sexual harassment through the use of critical discourse analysis (see the Methodology chapter below).

Essentially, the term 'woman' has different meanings and values attached to it as compared to, and differentiated from, the term 'man'. Furthermore, the term has become the socially-constructed 'other' in patriarchal society (N'Guessan, 2011). N'Guessan (2011) used a wonderful example in his article in which he describes a woman living in a patriarchal society as being forced to wear a socially-constructed mask of an inferior, weak, and socially-identifiable 'woman'. Should the woman deviate from her expected gender identity, she will be shunned by the dominant man. However, should she unwillingly accept the ideal female identity, she will become a 'victim' of the ever-present power struggles in patriarchy (N'Guessan, 2011). Patriarchal power in South Africa manifests itself more complexly in terms of the intersections of different social identities, such as race, class, sexuality, and socio-economic status. In South Africa, there are many different races, ethnicities, and genders. Therefore, when exploring the experiences of women within institutions, we cannot ignore the fact that these intersections of gender and race are also influenced by power dynamics between men and women (Davis, 2008). According to Davis (2008), intersectionality acknowledges that women are different and experience various social interactions differently.

Critically, individuals can be framed by discourses, and have the capacity to analyse these themselves. This means that not only are individuals shaped by discourses, but they can also manipulate those discourses to affect their lives (Burr, 2003). For instance, discourses that frame women who have experienced sexual harassment may include myths about how 'victims' instigate their own victimisation or, perhaps, even that this behaviour is 'normal' and should go unchallenged. These discourses not only shape the way in which society views these 'victims' but also the way in which the women see themselves. Once individuals have an understanding, they can either accept or resist the discourses,

depending on the effect that these may have on their sense of agency (Burr, 2003). For example, when a female student has been sexually harassed, she may face being seen as a vulnerable 'victim' or survivor of misogyny. In this sense, she can either accept her 'victim' status and the negative stereotypes that follow or resist this powerful label and stand up for herself and others who are in the same situation, regardless of the consequences. Having knowledge of the discourses and power dynamics that shape and manipulate our lives gives us a better opportunity to resist and challenge these forces so that we can empower ourselves.

Power in relationships

It is important to consider that in the South African university context, power is not possessed by a group of individuals over others (in this case, males have power over females). Rather, those who have knowledge of a group, use language to describe that group, practise the discourses, and work to exert and maintain power in relation to others. According to Gergen (2001), language is not merely used to describe but can also be a form of an action. This ultimately means that spoken language is not a reflection of the world but of the way in which the world is created. In this context, it refers to behaviour and action (Gergen, 2001). This is relatable to this study as, in our ever-developing society, the meaning of sexual harassment and the language used to describe it can change and develop as society changes and develops. In a sense, to Foucault (1995), power is the capability or ability to act. Moreover, this power is used to punish and conform those who resist or challenge patriarchy (Foucault, 1995). In this context, it is women who are oppressed by men and who are harassed or punished for challenging patriarchal culture or refusing to conform to expected gender roles.

To Foucault, a relationship that evidently has power dynamics can be beneficial to either party within the relationship (for example, parent and child) or can be a form of negative domination (for example, sexual harasser and 'victim'), and is always mutually changeable by both parties (Nielsen, 2013). This does not necessarily mean that the 'victim' wants to be harassed, but that the individual in power remains in power because the oppressed individual is unable to successfully resist the power that oppresses them (Nielsen, 2013). Foucault, in turn, states that individuals with less power in relation to a specific other must, therefore, resist the perceived or actual power domination against them in order

to regain power over their own lives (Nielsen, 2013). Using discourse analysis assists in taking a closer look at how those in power use language to exert power, as well as how those being dominated resist, and the implications of such resistance (Holland & Bedera, 2019). Therefore, the goal of this study is to explore the participants' narratives, and understand the discourses and language they use to describe their experiences.

Within the power dynamic relationship (whether or not the individuals are known to each other), Foucault considers both violence and consensus by both parties, and views both factors as the cause or result of the power display (Foucault, 1982). Within this relationship, some form of violence may occur when there is a power struggle. This belief is that such violence is normal or even that the harasser may retaliate once the 'victim' threatens the power dynamics. An example of such a threat would be reporting the incident to the appropriate authorities, telling the harasser to stop, or even naming the violence. To Foucault, power and knowledge discourses are not mutually exclusive and do not occur in one structure or institution. Rather, these occur in society as a whole (Hekman, 1990). This means that the result of power in society is the subordination of women, which cannot be overcome simply by enforcing safety policies in universities, creating nationwide awareness, creating more gender-neutral schooling or political rallies to promote equal gender rights. It is only when all social spheres join together that visible change will occur (Hekman, 1990).

When individuals break free from this subordination and challenge those in power, they display agency. To Foucault (1982), agency refers to the ability to recognise power relations, and strategically refusing to be objectified or oppressed by those who are capable of power, by being agentic and challenging those 'in power'. To me, agency refers to the participants' 'voices' or the perspective we gain from their narratives and how, through these narrations, they shape their environment and their lives. This means that not only are many of the participants aware of the "choices" that society expects women to make, but they also, at times, actively challenge these dominant patriarchal discourses and move away from blaming and positioning themselves as 'victims'.

The participants who took part in this study narrated how they made sense of their experiences, as well as the campus environment wherein these experiences had taken place. However, the

participants articulated that they did not simply adopt this 'culture of fear' but attempted to challenge their harassers and the patriarchal structures on campus as methods of coping rather than avoidance.

Conclusion

This chapter began with an investigation into important concepts of gender, discourses, and patriarchy underpinning the research and which provide context regarding the data collected. Sexual harassment was explored in greater detail, within the larger context of gender-based violence, including behaviours that can be defined as sexual harassment, and how both the institution and students respond to sexual harassment within the university context. Types of sexual harassment were discussed, as well as the effects thereof on victims. While the literature explored within this chapter is valuable in terms of describing the types of sexual harassment and the effects thereof on the 'victims', it does not sufficiently acknowledge the complexities related to the ways in which 'victims' make sense of, and cope with, experiences of sexual harassment. Therefore, there are gaps in the literature regarding whether the 'victims' actually regard themselves as such, whether they regard their experiences as sexual harassment (according to legal definitions), and how they 'deal' with their experiences. In the current study, the agentic narrations of the participants filled these gaps.

The last section of this chapter theoretically explored the social constructionist theoretical framework and its importance for this study. As discussed within this section, gender is socially constructed and language is informed by power and, in turn, shapes power dynamics. Following this outline of social constructionism, the concepts of discourse and power were discussed in order to pave the way for the introduction of the data analysis tool used, namely critical discourse analysis. In the following chapter, I discuss the research methodology and methods used, the data analysis method employed, and the ethical considerations of the study.

Chapter Three: Literature Review

Introduction

In the following section, I discuss existing literature that explores patriarchy and gender discourses in the South African context, and the sexual harassment experienced by women on South African university campuses. I begin with an outline of patriarchy and gender discourses to provide insight into the power dynamics between men and women. This is followed by a section that broadly examines gender violence and sexual harassment within the context of universities. I then discuss types of sexual harassment that may occur on university campuses, followed by the effects of experiencing sexual harassment on 'victims', more specifically, students.

Naming and Labelling Sexual Harassment

As mentioned above, Finchilescu and Dugard (2018) assert that

[b]ehaviors defined as sexual harassment include physical acts such as unwanted touching, pulling off of clothes, stalking, hitting; verbal acts such as jeering, insults, starting rumors, emailing or showing sexual material, badgering for dates; and quid pro quo acts such as offering money, resources, or academic or work advantages in exchange for sex (p. 3).

This is a legal definition of what constitutes sexual harassment. However, it can also be seen as ambiguous when it comes to the human experience thereof and the perceptions of individuals (Phillips, 2000). By this, I mean that individuals may have their own definitions of sexual harassment, or classifications thereof, based on perceptions of their experiences. In this study, sexual harassment includes experiences of attempted and actual sexual assault.

Magley and Shupe (2005) conducted a study with American military personnel, which addressed the factors that influence individuals' choice to self-label their experience(s) as sexual harassment. In this context, the term 'self-labelling' was used as an acknowledgement of an actual experience and the assumption that all of the participants were aware of the behaviours that constitute sexual harassment. Magley and Shupe (2005) found that less than a third of harassed women would regard and label their experiences as sexual harassment despite extensive media coverage, organisational awareness, legal cases, and research done on the topic. Perhaps this is an opportunity to

revise the definition of sexual harassment. Magley and Shupe (2005) explain that when experiencing something with a vague definition, such as sexual harassment or even a more defined sexual assault event, 'victims' may categorise it according to an existing schema or a new schema if it does not fit the mould of an existing one. For instance, Magley and Shupe (2005) reported that if a woman is sexually assaulted, she may not label the experience as sexual assault if the event is seen in a traditional way rather than assessing it according to what should or should not be normal. To put this simply, if a woman is raped by her husband, and she deems the act of sex as something that is expected of her, whether or not she consents to it, she might not categorise it as rape. The same is true for sexual harassment if, for example, a female student sees a behaviour such as catcalling as a minor or normal experience she may not label it as sexual harassment because it does not meet the standards of a distressing experience that others call *sexual harassment*.

In addition to societal expectations pertaining to whether an experience may be deemed 'sexual harassment', certain myths may also influence beliefs about sexual harassment. Some of these myths include the notion that 'women who wear revealing clothing' or who drink alcohol are, essentially, 'asking for it'; most harassment or assault happens at night or in isolated areas; most harassers are strangers to the 'victims'; women enjoy the attention; if a woman does not scream, fight back or become injured, she was willing; and sometimes 'no means yes' if a woman appears to be 'playing hard to get' (University of Pretoria, 2020; Western Australia Department of Health, 2020). These myths can also be described as patriarchal discourses aimed at discrediting women. As a result, many women may refuse to label their experiences as sexual harassment for fear of receiving socially-accepted backlash that not only blames them for instigating these experiences, but which also blames women for 'crying wolf' (Phillips, 2000; Vijayasiri, 2008).

The concept of 'victim' (first mentioned in the section on discourse and patriarchy) may impact the perception of not only the women who have experienced sexual harassment, but also the patriarchal society that condones it. Within our society, which tends to blame 'victims' for their own victimisation, accepting the label of 'victim' is coupled with other labels, such as guilty and blameworthy, which is

not only a form of patriarchal manipulation, but is also used to dissuade women from challenging the harasser and the system that allows this harassment (Bartky, 1990).

Victim-blaming and naming sexual harassment comes hand in hand with 'silencing'. Referring back to the social constructionist approach (the theoretical framework of this study), language gives meaning and South Africa's patriarchal context makes use of tools such as sexual harassment and patriarchal language to oppress and discredit the experiences of women. According to Kelly and Radford (1990, p. 40), "In order to be able to speak about something, one must first be able to name and define it", but because of the abovementioned myths and patriarchal discourses, women are left with language that blames them for sexual harassment, and labels them as troublemakers. There is also a lack of language or often no language to label these subtle forms of violence. This naming is a challenge to the 'natural' behaviour of men and in many cases the legal definition assigned to certain experiences and the role of the 'victims' (Kelly & Radford, 1990).

Individuals are less likely to accept the label of sexual harassment if the social perception of the 'victim' is negative, such as calling the 'victim' an instigator, attention-seeker or using the term 'victim' negatively. Individuals may reject the label of sexual harassment as a way of protecting their self-esteem or confidence, using it as a coping mechanism or as a way of resisting the judgement of others or, perhaps, even because the experience of sexual harassment does not meet their understanding of the types of behaviours that constitute sexual harassment (Magley & Shupe, 2005). This is especially relevant to this study because so many students who may become 'victims' of sexual harassment may either refuse to name their experiences as sexual harassment, avoid seeking assistance from support structures and, perhaps, even minimise the seriousness of their experiences, which results in sexual harassment going unchallenged within the university.

Gender Violence and Sexual Harassment in the University Context

Within a Spanish university context, when a woman experiences abuse of any kind, she often faces several challenges when attempting to report it to the university authorities (Puigvert, 2008). Examples of such challenges include secondary victimisation by the perpetrator or even the institution. Like many universities worldwide, protocols to address violence against women are usually used to

30

sweep the incidents under the rug because of the existing patriarchal powers at play in society, thus making it difficult for women to speak out against such violence (Puigvert, 2008). While this does not refer to Stellenbosch University, specifically, it does shed light on how these patriarchal systems are ingrained into our everyday lives.

Many university students and staff actively campaign in solidarity against gender violence and rape. An example is the "Sexual Violence = Silence" protests held at Rhodes University from 2006 to 2010 in support of the One in Nine Campaign which supported 'victim' Khwezi Johnson (Khosi, 2010). During this campaign, men, women, students, and staff, came together to protest violence against women and those who inflict it (Khosi, 2010). Throughout the campaign, supporters fasted together; women taped their mouths shut, refusing to speak and describing their cause through flyers; and men spoke to others about violence and rape against women (Khosi, 2010). Small demonstrations were held throughout the campaign to spread the message that 'victims' of sexual violence should be able to speak out about their experiences. One of the most famous demonstrations was the "Take Back the Night" march in which all supporters marched through Grahamstown whilst chanting "in a symbolic effort to reclaim the rights of women to walk safely at night" (Khosi, 2010, para. 5). These initiatives, which aimed at promoting safety for women, have been ongoing since the early 2000s, and highlight students' efforts to challenge patriarchal culture at the university. These efforts are extremely important in today's social climate, especially in view of the frequency of GBV against women. Moreover, I have personally encountered a few men who are taking a stance to work against the oppression of women and address those who harass them.

Many women become 'victims' of GBV and are less likely to speak out because they do not wish to land the perpetrator in trouble. Instead, they choose to cope with the violence by minimising the experience (Collins, 2014). Within the South African context, GBV is so common that the "country has been labelled the 'rape capital' of the world", even though rape is rarely reported (Gordon & Collins, 2013, p. 1). This may be due to several reasons. For example, the attacker is known to the 'victim', the 'victim' fears blame and judgement, the attacker or patriarchal system has silenced the 'victim', and

so on. This patriarchal intimidation silences women from speaking out, and similarly discussed within the naming and labelling section, may influence how women name their experiences.

In the South African context, Gordon and Collins (2013) highlight the view that for most university students,

> speaking out is constrained by their distrust of university services, the reported lack of support from university security guards, and the idea that sexuality is a private and personal matter that should not be articulated in public, and that the female sexual experience is shameful (p. 101).

This was emphasised by the women, who stated that it is inappropriate to talk to anyone about these matters as it not only embarrasses themselves but, should they have relationships with their harassers, it would be embarrassing to those who perpetrate against them as well. These women also revealed that if they were to receive an apology from the perpetrators, the apologies would lack sincerity and the perpetrator may even assault them again, should they stay in contact with each other (Gordon & Collins, 2013). This can be seen as avoiding further victimisation and allows the harassment to continue and remain unchallenged. However, this strategic decision to name or not name their experiences may also be impacted by the language used to define sexual harassment, existing stigmas, and so on.

According to Arulogun (2013), sexual harassment in the university context is extremely prevalent, but the majority of such incidences goes unreported. Possible reasons for sexual harassment going unreported include feeling intimidated; the perception that the perpetrator will retaliate if the case is reported or that the harassment will stop if the 'victim' ignores it; feeling embarrassed, helpless or ashamed; and fearing that no one will believe that the harassment is occurring (Arulogun, 2013; Phillips & Associates, 2020). Sometimes 'victims' may not be aware of any policies or procedures that protect them, or may believe that the policies will be ineffective in terms of preventing secondary victimisation from other staff and students (Arulogun, 2013). This view is shared by Gouws and Kritzinger (2007), who suggested that a possible reason for the lack of institutional support as far as the 'victim' is concerned may be due to an attempt by the university to protect its image. Thus, in order to avoid

damaging its image, the university may be unwilling to publicly declare that sexual harassment has occurred.

Gordon and Collins (2013) conducted interviews with several young women living in university's residences. Their study focused on how these women interpret the fear and threat they face, as well as how they see themselves within such violent social situations (Gordon & Collins, 2013). The study was conducted with 12 young, Black women who were randomly chosen to take part in the study, two of whom were not South African (Gordon & Collins, 2013). The results of the study revealed that some women who had not experienced gender-based violence were, nevertheless, fearful because they anticipated it (Gordon & Collins, 2013). The women who participated in the above-mentioned study stressed the importance of speaking out against violence and mentioned that awareness of any such discrimination would deter its occurrence. However, they added that due to their distrust in the services and support systems of the university, they would personally not speak out (Gordon & Collins, 2013).

Little research has been done on people's perceptions of safety at South African universities (Ngabaza et al., 2015). Female students often adopt 'avoidance strategies' to avoid becoming 'victims' of sexual harassment and feel safer on their campuses. Such strategies include "walking in groups when necessary, carrying weapons and approaching campus security guards to be escorted" (Ngabaza et al., 2015, p. 31). Regardless of the time of day, women still feel unsafe. However, the fear they experience depends on the area they are in and their proximity to others (Ngabaza et al., 2015). This fear limits their movement around campus and affects their daily lives.

Accounts of female students from the University of the Western Cape showed instances of being stalked and assaulted because they had refused sexual advances (Ngabaza et al., 2015). These participants, who personally knew other females who had experienced harassment or violence, steered clear of bustling locations to avoid being groped, tried to avoid using public transport to and from campus, and avoided walking alone between campus buildings (Ngabaza et al., 2015). This may be a concern to the universities that have no clear boundaries separating the campus and the surrounding town, thus potentially allowing external threats, to students and staff, to enter the premises.

Why sexual harassment persists at universities

A study conducted on the sexual harassment discourses on a Canadian university campus yielded results that could explain why sexual harassment constantly occurs and what happens when it is reported to the university authorities (Eyre, 2000). Eyre (2000) conducted this study from a feminist perspective, and stated that while the university in which the study took place had policies in place, these were ineffective in terms of addressing the specific issues experienced by 'victims', that their experiences were undermined, and that the university managed to silence them before the cases became public. From a feminist perspective, the lack of policies shows that there was a lack of concern for potential 'victims', and that the agendas of a patriarchal society were prioritised over the safety of students and staff. The institutional failure to report the events for fear of tarnishing the university's reputation may not only create the impression that violence against women is of no concern, but will also cause alienation of those who may want to speak out against their harasser(s).

Eyre (2000) listed numerous ways in which sexual harassment and other possible forms of gender violence had been glossed over by the university in the forms of victim-blaming, silencing feminist and female voices, and using familial or cultural values as a means of explaining who does and does not belong on campus. In this way, the university insinuated that women should not be on campus since it could do 'nothing' to protect female students. Women face risks when reporting sexual harassment, such as retaliation from involved parties, and male authority figures minimising the experience of sexual harassment (Eyre, 2000). This is a possible way for men to maintain their socio-economic power in the institution and/or society (Eyre, 2000). All the above-mentioned discourses assist in creating a culture of violence wherein women's experiences are silenced, and men maintain their power advantage.

In a study conducted by Dougherty (2001), she stated that sexual harassment in the workplace is considered a normal, day-to-day experience for both men and women. However, the experiences and acceptance of such behaviour differ. Furthermore, this may be applied to the university context. An example of this is when a man lays his hand on a woman's shoulder. Whereas the man may be of the opinion that he is simply flirting, the woman may be of the view that he is touching her without her

permission. Newman (1998) provided possible reasons as to why sexual harassment in the university context occurs and is not given as much attention: in universities, the students have more freedom to do as they please, are not legally required to attend classes, and are legally considered autonomous adults. This implies that university students are considered mature enough to address any behaviours or situations that may make them uncomfortable, or even that because of their biological age, their actions are justified or appropriate.

Clowes et al. (2009) conducted a study on the heterosexual practices and culture on the University of the Western Cape campus, as well as the discourses upon which the participants drew. The research participants reported an awareness of the double standards that is culturally and heterosexually normal on campus, and whether these practices contribute to gender violence, especially violence against women. However, in order to avoid being stigmatised, bullied, and discriminated against, they reported having engaged in practices of oversexualised behaviour, frequent drinking of alcohol, and the very behaviours they deemed as having double standards. Even among the students involved in the above-mentioned study, there were certain expectations with regard to both sexes when it comes to being openly sexual: men are seen as assertive, promiscuous and dominant over women whereas women are seen as submissive and monogamous (Clowes et al., 2009). Either sex (women more so) who deviates from these expectations is stigmatised and discriminated against (Clowes et al., 2009). This is significant as it may indicate that although some students may be aware of the harmful gendered expectations they are expected to live up to, they draw upon these discourses in their daily campus life as a way of belonging to the campus culture.

These discourses and normative gendered behaviours obviously play a role in shaping men's behaviour and women's experiences regarding sexual harassment on campus. Speaking about sexual activities, approaching first-year students who are naïve and less likely to report harassers, and successfully manipulating them for sex are all considered sexual harassment by the researchers (Clowes et al., 2009) as these behaviours display a gross power difference between female first-year students and male senior students. There are, however, some language uses that influence the experience, perception and understanding of sexual harassment (Potter & Wetherell, 1987). Ultimately, while "a

35

discourse can exist only if it is socially acceptable" (Sunderland, 2004, p. 28), this does not mean that it is easily identified since a discourse is not usually named. In a sense, discourses give meaning to what we communicate and are enforced by the dominant patriarchal culture – all practices are driven and given meaning by these discourses.

In the appendices section (see Appendix 8), I have included two images from a defaced library book that speaks about subjectivity and social regulation within the psychological context (Henriques et al., 1998). These images comprise only two of several pages from the Stellenbosch University library book in which notes have been scribbled and in which an individual clearly rejected the proposed feminist/critical psychology discourses, even going as far as signing their name and dating it. This defacement is a prime example of the existing patriarchal context of Stellenbosch University.

Types of Sexual Harassment

Harassment

Sexual harassment is a frequent and normalised problem within universities, whereby certain inappropriate behaviours are labelled 'jokes', showing interest and natural sexual desire (Berdahl, 2007; Wood et al., 2018). Sexual harassment constitutes "unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favours, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature which an individual considers offensive" (Ekore, 2012, p. 4358). Therefore, this refers to any behaviour or attention that makes the 'victim' feel uncomfortable or harmed because of her gender. Referring back to the 'joke' rhetoric – there are different considerations surrounding the 'joke', such as the behaviour is deemed a 'joke' in an attempt to absolve responsibility, an actual sexist 'joke' is made which is meant to demean women and a sexual 'joke' which creates a hostile environment (Otsiri, 2020). In many instances, referring to an inappropriate behaviour as a 'joke' functions as a patriarchal tool to allow men to avoid taking responsibility for their actions (Otsiri, 2020).

There are generally three categories of sexually-harassing behaviour: gender harassment, unwanted sexual attention and sexual coercion (Sbraga & O'donohue, 2000; Yoon et al., 2010). For the purposes of this study, I have chosen to combine gender harassment and unwanted sexual attention under the term 'hostile academic environment' since both use gender discrimination and sexualised

methods of making the 'victim' feel uncomfortable. I also refer to the term 'sexual coercion' as quid pro quo, which is a legally recognised term for using power over a more vulnerable 'victim' in order to obtain sexual favours. Although quid pro quo is part of sexual harassment, none of the participants in this study reported having experienced it. Therefore, it will not be included in this study.

Micro-aggression, which is a form of harassment, can be defined as "a comment or action that subtly and often unconsciously or unintentionally expresses a prejudiced attitude toward a member of a marginalized group" (Merriam-Webster Dictionary, 2018). Although this term was coined for racial minorities, it is also useful in terms of understanding women's experiences of harassment in a patriarchal context. Sexist or gender micro-aggressions are easily dismissible by those who instigate inappropriate behaviour. The same can be said for more overt forms of sexual harassment because of patriarchal ideals (Montana, 2017). These micro-aggressions are usually reinforced by the behaviours of men who are sexist and who draw upon gender stereotypes. Typical examples of everyday forms of sexist micro-aggressions include sexist language; shaming aggressive or sexually-active women; blaming women when they are harassed or degraded; labelling assertive women as aggressive; blaming female emotions on their hormones; the objectification of women as sexual objects; and adherence to gender stereotypes (Weiss, 2015).

Arulogun (2013) conducted a study on the prevalence of sexual harassment in a nursing school in Nigeria, where the female-dominated profession is already subjected to gender-related discrimination. The majority of the participants were female, and almost all had an accurate understanding of what sexual harassment is and could identify it when it occurred (Arulogun, 2013). The participants in this study were aware that sexual harassment can occur anywhere on and off campus and that given the opportunity, anyone can be a harasser. The participants reported having experienced unwelcomed stares, fondling, hugs, kisses, hand-holding, sexual gestures or jokes, quid pro quo behaviour, and inappropriate comments about their attire (Arulogun, 2013). Oni et al. (2019) conducted a study in Limpopo, South Africa, which yielded similar results to those of Arulogun, but also noted self-reports of actual and attempted rape. These findings are consistent with the narrations of the participants who took part in the current study.

Table 1 below lists some of the behaviours that are considered sexual harassment within the workplace (Grobler, Erasmus, & Kolkenbeck-Ruh, 2003).

Forms of sexual harassment				
	Verbal	**Visual**	**Written**	**Physical**

B E H A V I O U R	• Sexually charged jokes
	• Questions about one's sex life
	• Smutty remarks regarding a person's gender/ body
	• Verbal requests for sexual favours
		• Posters of a sexual nature
		• E mails of jokes
		  • jokes
		  • posters/pictures of a sexual nature
		• Hand/boy gestures
		• Staring at a person's body/ undressing with one's eyes
			• Letters of a sexual nature
			• E mails of a sexual nature
			• Written jokes/ comments of a sexual nature
				• Touching
				• Pinching
				• Brushing against another in a sensual/ sexual manner
				• Grabbing/ fondling
				• Kissing
				• Forced sexual intercourse

Table 1:

A Sexual Harassment Behaviour Grid (Grobler et al., 2003: 40)

Although these behaviours are notarised as sexual harassment, they still occur frequently and may go unreported. Many of these behaviours may occur within the university context as well, but despite this, many women may refuse to report these experiences in fear of being further victimised, punished or have their academics impacted – as women in the workplace may fear an impact on their job.

Hostile academic environment: unwanted sexual attention and gender harassment

A hostile academic environment is the result of sexual harassment behaviour negatively affecting the learning environment. Unwanted sexual attention is essentially experiencing sexualised behaviours, such as inappropriate touching, being threatened with sexual assault and even being called sexually derogatory names (Pina & Gannon, 2012; Sbraga & O'donohue, 2000). Gender harassment demeans a person's gender, and can include nude photos, sexist jokes, and objectifying a person's body (Sbraga & O'donohue, 2000). 'Victims' may feel so uncomfortable that they no longer wish to go to campus. According to Ekore (2012), this environment is created "as a result of unwelcome sexual advances, sexist or degrading statements and behaviours" (p. 4360). This is due to a discrepancy between what may be regarded as appropriate and inappropriate comments. For instance, a woman may feel that a comment is insulting or inappropriate while a man may feel that he was simply showing sexual interest or that the woman is overly sensitive. A hostile academic environment is created when the 'victim' experiences both gender harassment and unwanted sexual attention (Pina & Gannon, 2012). Before I continue further, I will discuss the motivation to combine unwanted sexual attention and gender

harassment under one concept and why this concept falls on a continuum. As mentioned above, unwanted sexual attention refers to unwanted behaviours and gender harassment is the objectification of one's gender – I have included both under the term hostile academic environment because they are not mutually exclusive. They both, individually and together, create an environment wherein the 'victim' feels discomfort, fear and threatened. According to the Equality Unit within Stellenbosch University (2019), sexual harassment includes anything from sexism to sexual assault, as all these experiences/behaviours are a tool through which one gender oppresses another.

Ekore (2012) conducted a study in which he described the experience of sexual harassment in university and work environments from the viewpoints of both men and women. Although the current study only examines the experiences of female university students, it is worth noting the reasons as to why a man may engage in inappropriate behaviour or why he may not deem certain behaviour inappropriate. Ekore (2012) stated that men usually feel that women are overly sensitive to certain topics and are easily offended by discussion content that comes from someone who is sexually interested in them. While Ekore's (2012) research focused predominantly on the hostile environment type of sexual harassment, he also mentioned that previous research showed that 27% of university students experienced sexual harassment at the hands of university professors, and 44% at the hands of other students.

A new type of harassment has emerged as a result of global technological advances and, as many university students are youthful, use their phones frequently and are dependent on the Internet for their studies, they can easily become 'victims' or perpetrators of cyber harassment or stalking (Bastiani et al., 2019). Stalking can also be considered sexual harassment and, as technology advances, so, too, do the opportunities for cyberstalking (Scott & Cooper, 2011). Stalking can be defined as the repeated and threatening following, observing, waiting for the 'victim', and harassing of an individual, all of which are of malicious intent (Buhi et al., 2009; Scott & Cooper, 2011). Amongst others, cyber harassment usually consists of "threats, insults, intimate rumors about you, unwanted sexual pictures, sexual requests, and other disturbing messages" (Bastiani et al., 2019, p. 230), as well as constant phone calls and/or emails to the extent that the 'victim' becomes fearful or distressed (Buhi et al., 2009; Finn,

2004; White & Carmody, 2018). Stalking, cyberstalking, online harassment and cyberbullying can evoke fear and discomfort, causing individuals to feel uncomfortable and concerned about their safety or that of others (Scott & Cooper, 2011). According to Scott and Cooper (2011), stalkers behave according to certain motives: unrequited love, delusion that the 'victim' loves them, rejection from the 'victim', sexual attraction to the 'victim', hatred towards the 'victim', and even choosing a 'victim' who seems vulnerable.

Effects of Sexual Harassment

The effects of experiencing sexual harassment can include "problems, leading to psychosomatic consequences, anxiety/depression, insomnia and stomach ache" (Buhi et al., 2009; Gouws & Kritzinger, 2007, p. 70). Gouws and Kritzinger (2007) reported that female students may experience negative feelings as a result of sexual harassment, including distress, hopelessness, posttraumatic stress disorder and a sense of powerlessness.

Maria Root (as cited by Brown, 1991) defined the term 'insidious trauma' as "the traumatogenic effects of oppression that are not necessarily overtly violent or threatening to bodily well-being at the given moment but that do violence to the soul and spirit [sic]" (p. 128). By this, we can infer that most women who have experienced forms of violence such as sexual harassment can experience the effects of trauma, and that those who may not have experienced this violence are still aware of the threat and may experience similar forms or symptoms of trauma caused by fear. The oppressive actions inflicted on the oppressed often cause hypervigilance and fear of further violence and trauma. In the context of this research, this is associated with the term 'culture of fear' (Gordon & Collins, 2013, p. 94), in which women in our society often anticipate some form of harm.

Aggressions that are 'normalised', such as cultural discourses, as well as patriarchal and socially-enforced discriminations can have an accumulative effect similar to the experience and symptoms of trauma (Schreiner, 2013). Insidious trauma forces people to question their place in the society that marginalises them for being who they are (Schreiner, 2013). The experience of insidious trauma is so severe that individuals do not always realise they have experienced traumatic events until they experience mental and physical symptoms of distress (Schreiner, 2013). Examples of these

symptoms include hypervigilance in unfamiliar situations, fatigue that can affect academics, and other symptoms of anxiety. It is also important to note that individuals may be affected and may make sense of their experiences in different ways. The analysis section of this thesis will shed light on some of these complexities.

Experiencing sexual harassment greatly reduces the trust, commitment, loyalty and attachment that the 'victim' has towards the institution in which it has occurred because she may feel that the institution has allowed the harassment to occur by not protecting her or enforcing policies that may have prevented it from occurring (Pina & Gannon, 2012). International studies have found that the effects of experiencing sexual harassment include acting out, and women's tendency to internalise the harassment, leading to psychological and physical symptoms, such as anxiety, hypervigilance and stomach aches (Gouws & Kritzinger, 2007; Joubert et al., 2011; Pina & Gannon, 2012; Yoon et al., 2010). Female students report that they experience the psycho-social environment as negative, resulting in feelings of powerlessness. Moreover, it has been noted that women become distressed when experiencing gender and/or sexual harassment (Gouws & Kritzinger, 2007, p. 70). Psychological/physiological symptoms, such as self-consciousness, self-blame, embarrassment, headaches, weight fluctuations, nightmares and even phobias, could arise (Joubert et al., 2011).

Gordon and Collins (2013, p. 98) found that women live according to what is referred to as a "rape schedule". This means that their day-to-day schedules revolve around engaging in activities and behaviours to avoid being raped (such as wearing non-revealing clothing). The notion of "discourses of women's responsibility" shapes harmful meanings surrounding abuse and harassment and specifically refers to how women are expected to ensure their own safety and are responsible and instigators of their own harassment (Gordon & Collins, 2013, p. 104). An example of such harmful meanings is the view that violence or gender-based experiences are occurrences that women have implicated for themselves. Thus, according to such patriarchal discourses, it is the women's responsibility to ensure that sexual harassment does not occur (Gordon & Collins, 2013). An example of this is when a woman is required to stay indoors at night or wear conservative clothing. Otherwise, she is 'asking for it'. This practice of blaming the 'victim' effectively hides the power of patriarchy,

and not only limits the lives of 'victims' (potential or actual 'victims') but also gives more social freedom to perpetrators (Gordon & Collins, 2013). The feeling of helplessness is a common result of prolonged exposure to sexual harassment and is, ultimately, the feeling that no matter how desperately the individual tries to overcome the threat, avoid the threat or react differently, the outcome will always be the same, namely a negative one (Schreiner, 2015). This realisation that nothing can protect one may lead to experiencing emotional detachment, as mentioned above.

Some of the most obvious effects of sexual harassment on academics are that the harassed individual becomes absent, has lower work performance, and avoids the environment in which the harassment takes place (Joubert et al., 2011). Sexual harassment may impact students' academic performance by forcing them to withdraw from class participation, and affects their concentration (Gouws & Kritzinger, 2007). Sexual harassment not only has severe effects on the 'victims'. Logically, the university itself can also experience the negative effects thereof in that some of the ramifications could include poor academic percentages, low enrolment of prospective students, and even legal action. This creates a reputation for the university as being unsafe for students who are now more vulnerable because of the university's inability to protect them from harassment and other forms of violence (Gouws & Kritzinger, 2007). To further understand Stellenbosch University's social environment and student experiences, I outline the social constructionist theory and its usefulness for this study in terms of the way in which it informs our understanding of existing patriarchal discourses.

Chapter Four: Research Methodology and Methods

Introduction

I begin this chapter by positioning my study within a qualitative epistemological paradigm. Thereafter, I outline the research questions and aims guiding the study. The methods used to select, and recruit participants are discussed, followed by a description of the research context in which the study is located, as well as the data collection and analysis procedures used. I have included a section on reflexivity in which I narrate my own past experiences, position myself within the study, and critically discuss my involvement in the research process. Lastly, I discuss the ethical considerations of this study since these were important in terms of ensuring that the participants' narratives remain confidential and the process free from harm.

Qualitative Epistemological Approach

This study adopted a qualitative epistemological approach which is ideal for the social sciences because of its in-depth focus on individual experiences rather than the collective statistics of quantitative research (Guba & Lincoln, 2005). A qualitative methodology therefore serves to form a descriptive dialogue with regard to the phenomenon under investigation, and those who experience it (Guba & Lincoln, 2005). Firstly, it is necessary to clarify the difference between method and methodology since these terms will be mentioned in this chapter. A method is a tool or set of tools used to answer the proposed research questions and, in this study, the research method used was interviews. Methodology, on the other hand, is the framework used to analyse the data that has been collected. In this study, social constructionism provides the theoretical framework (discussed in the previous chapter).

A qualitative research design was chosen for this study because it allows for flexibility when deciding the overall structure/design of the study, as well as the methodologies and methods used (Shuttleworth & Wilson, 2008). By this I mean that, depending on the research questions, type of information gathered and desired participants of the study, the researcher can combine different methods and theory relevant to exploring the main research question. This means that using a qualitative research design allows for the analysis and interpretation of meanings, experiences and complex subjective topics (Shuttleworth & Wilson, 2008). However, some limitations of qualitative research

include the fact that it can be time-consuming, prone to some forms of bias and, because of its subjective nature, it cannot be perfectly replicated or representative of groups or populations (Atieno, 2009; Shuttleworth & Wilson, 2008). Another limitation is that because qualitative research recognises subjective language, ambiguous terms or slang, some recognised terms may be misinterpreted (Atieno, 2009). I aimed to overcome this by providing definitions of these terms and confirmed with participants, where necessary, whether these meanings were indeed what they had intended.

Below is an outline of the research questions guiding this study.

Main research question:

What are female Stellenbosch University students' experiences of sexual harassment on campus and how do they make sense of these experiences?

Sub-questions:

- What forms of sexual harassment take place on this South African university campus, as narrated by female students?

- How do female Stellenbosch University students make sense of their experiences of sexual harassment on campus?

- What is the significance of these experiences in their lives, and how do they shape their lives?

- How do female students respond to such experiences of sexual harassment on campus?

- Do students utilise the existing support structures on campus, and what are their narrated experiences of utilising such services?

- What are the students' narrations of possible ways to deal with sexual harassment at the university?

Participants

Participant Selection

The participants in the study comprised 10 female Stellenbosch University postgraduate students, who were selected by means of purposeful criterion sampling. This involves choosing participants who have specific characteristics that are beneficial to the study (Leedy & Ormrod, 2013). Female participants who had experienced sexual harassment on campus were recruited. Other inclusion criteria included the fact that the students needed to be postgraduate students (to ensure that they had had sufficient time to adapt to student life and were of a more mature age to reflect on their experiences) and fluent in English. Sexual harassment happens to many individuals. Thus, this study did not exclude certain races, departments, or ages (postgraduate students may be in their 20s or even in their 40s).

Recruitment

The method of recruitment used in this study was as follows: potential participants were recruited by means of a leaflet containing details pertaining to the study (see Appendix 3 for the participant recruitment leaflet). The leaflet included information on the purpose of the study, the researcher's contact details, and those of psychological support services. The leaflet was distributed to students throughout and around the Stellenbosch University campus, after having been approved by Stellenbosch University. The recruitment process was as follows: I walked around campus and, upon encountering females, I briefly introduced myself, asked whether they were currently postgraduate students and would like to take part in the study pertaining to the experiences of sexual harassment on campus. If they responded in the affirmative, I provided them with a short description of the study along with the leaflet which also contained my contact details. I explained the importance of the study with regard to increasing awareness and improving understanding of sexual harassment. I also asked them to contact me if they were interested in taking part in the study or if they knew of someone else who might be.

Considering the sensitivity of the topic, psychological support was offered to mitigate any negative emotions that emerged during the interviews (see ethics section below for more detail). The director of the Stellenbosch University Centre for Student Counselling and Development (CSCD), Dr

Munita Dunn-Coetzee, was informed about the study, and agreed to provide free psychological services (see Appendix 6 for the letter of confirmation of access to psychological services). This information was provided in the consent form. The reason for this was to protect the emotional wellbeing of the participants. Should they have experienced any negative emotions during or after the interviews, they were informed that they could contact the Centre for Student Counselling and Development directly or ask me to assist them in doing so.

As time passed, my supervisor and I realised that the recruitment method of distributing the leaflet was somewhat unsuccessful. Towards the middle of September, I decided to reach out to potential participants in the Eikestad Mall and the surrounding coffee shops. The sampling strategy then evolved into snowball sampling which worked extremely well. Snowball sampling is used when it becomes challenging to obtain participants with the characteristics needed for the study (Naderifar et al., 2017). Snowball sampling is useful as it allows participants to assist in the recruitment process by directing acquaintances to the study within a short period of time (Naderifar et al., 2017).

Research Context

According to Stellenbosch University, "in 2018, 58.1% of enrolled students were white, 20.1% African black, 18.1% coloured, 3.1% Indian and 0.2% Asian" (Stellenbosch University, 2018). One of the University of Stellenbosch's news sources, MatieMedia, gathered crime statistics in 2018, and found that sexual offences in Stellenbosch had increased drastically from the previous year, specifically rape and forms of gender-related hate crime (Du Plessis, 2018). A SU spokesperson commented that the rape crisis was confirmed in 2016, after rapes were confirmed to have occurred near female residences, and in spite of the student body's dissatisfaction with the procedures that had been put in place to combat rape culture on campus (Stone, 2018). Despite this, recent traumatic events have been occurring nationwide, against which students and staff of universities are taking a stand. The publicity of these events has not indicated whether these sexual assault crimes are on the increase, or whether they are simply being reported more frequently, or perhaps both (Stone, 2018). This is evident from the rape statistics provided by universities, which show that in 2018, UCT reported nine rapes out of almost fifty that had occurred nationwide, resulting in this campus having the highest number of reported rape

incidents (Nkosi, 2018). This increase in sexual crimes, or the increase in the reporting thereof, could describe Stellenbosch University as an increasingly unsafe space for women, and a place in which there is a greater emerging rape culture that encourages these crimes on campus.

Stellenbosch University has existing support services which are available to staff and students. As researcher, I have been in contact with both the Equality Unit and Transformation Unit, and the purpose and strategies of these facilities are outlined below. The information provided was gathered through meetings with two individuals who are part of these facilities and who have a greater understanding of their inner workings. These individuals are staff members in the Transformation Office and the Equality Unit.

According to one staff member, the Transformation Unit is a facility that provides resources and support to the institution by creating transformation infrastructures, assessing certain structures that may contribute to discriminatory behaviour, and presenting workshops and training students and staff to be advocates for equal rights, and on institutional culture (including rape culture) (Personal Communication, 2019b). The staff member provided insight into the responsibility of the Transformation Unit by saying that it focuses on the institutional culture with regard to sexual harassment, and has the authority to intervene at a structural level. Moreover, should patterns arise within an environment, they consult with the Head (or transformation committee) of that environment and offer forms of intervention (Personal Communication, 2019b). I was advised that the university, in general, does not have a strong activist stance with regard to sexual harassment or gender-based violence. The discourses surrounding sexual harassment and gender-based violence on campus are toxic due to intense patriarchal cultures that exist on campus. Therefore, the Transformation Unit also aims to create greater awareness of these discourses to allow women, homosexual, and gender-fluid persons to have the language and space to speak about, and respond powerfully to, their experiences. Concerning sexual harassment, there are existing stigmas that may cause further harm to those who experience it since sexual harassment is not spoken about freely and is grossly under-reported (Personal Communication, 2019b).

The Equality Unit was opened in 2016 and aims to implement its Unfair Discrimination policy and create awareness of social injustices that occur on campus (Stellenbosch University, 2019). The role of the Equality Unit is to offer support to any staff or students who have experienced discrimination. Another staff member stated that the Equality Unit is a facility that assists staff and students with complaint procedures and directs those who need them to other appropriate services, such as Counselling and Health (Personal Communication, 2019a). This staff member also mentioned that the complainant's health is their first priority, and that she should feel comfortable reporting the incident. Furthermore, the complainant is able to do so freely after seeking medical treatment, where necessary (Personal Communication, 2019a). The staff member also explained that the Equality Unit's new policy encompasses 'mild' to 'severe' forms of sexual harassment (this could mean anything from staring or catcalling to sexual assault or rape) (Personal Communication, 2019a). This means that all cases of sexual harassment are considered a serious matter, and the most appropriate steps are taken to ensure that the complainant's concerns are addressed in a manner with which she is comfortable. According to the staff member, the Equality Unit is still in the process of establishing an image for itself on campus, and is busy working on maintaining relationships with different student bodies and support structures.

Data Collection Method

The data collection method used in this study consisted of in-depth, semi-structured interviews. Sexual harassment is a sensitive topic, and the face-to-face interview was selected as the most appropriate and more personal data collection method to assist in gathering data which consists of the subjective, lived experiences of the participants (Parker, 2005). Using interviews helped me to understand the participants' points of view, their opinions, and the ways in which they make sense of their world. Within the context of this study, the interviews allowed me to explore the language used by the participants and the ways in which they make sense of sexual harassment. Data saturation occurs when collected data has similar themes that arise and this overlapping of similar responses ensures that the study can be replicated and that no new information appears during the analytical process (Fusch & Ness, 2015). Data saturation is important in qualitative research as it indicates that collected and analysed data yields similar results, which means that further collection of data is unnecessary (Fusch

& Ness, 2015). All collected data should, ultimately, provide information which helps to answer the research question. The female participants in this study could be considered a vulnerable group as they have experienced sexual harassment. It is important to note that this does not assume women's inherent vulnerability. Rather, it emphasises the need to be sensitive to the fact that some of these students may have experienced, and may continue to experience, extremely disempowering practices of degradation and oppression, often at the hands of men in more powerful positions (for example, lecturers, fellow students).

Semi-structured Interviews

Primary data was collected through the use of face-to-face interviews (see Appendix 2 for the interview schedule). The interviews were semi-structured to allow for flexibility in the interview process and adaptation of the interview schedule as promising themes arose. Although this structure helped the researcher to guide the topic, it also gave the participants an opportunity to provide subjective responses, as well as the right to refuse to answer certain questions (Parker, 2005). This qualitative data collection method enables the participant to become a co-researcher in that it not only allows the participant to decide what is important in the dialogue, but also diffuses the researcher's power in the relationship (Parker, 2005). This concept of co-researcher is delicate in research as it means that the participant is given agency within the study (Parker, 2005). According to Kvale (1996), in an individual or face-to-face interview, the participant is seen as an informant. This implies that as a co-researcher, the participant is actively involved in the data collection process and has an equal right to decide how her contribution should be represented (Kvale, 1996). Thus, in the current study, the participants were able to decide how they were portrayed; at the end of their respective interviews, I asked each participant whether she had any concerns regarding the interview. Jasmien, for example asked to be portrayed as younger than she is in reality for confidentiality purposes while Maryke asked that no one be allowed to hear her audio recording. In some cases, I contacted the participants to enquire whether a particular piece of information had been represented accurately, such as the features of the harasser or place of harassment. Ultimately, I was responsible for making the final choice with regard to representation (how I represented participants in the final analysis).

As the researcher of this study, I had the role of ensuring that it is the voice of the participant that is analysed. I maintained an ethically appropriate relationship with the participants, and strove towards fair representation and transparency (Kvale, 1996). This was achieved by having my supervisor and peers review my analysis. According to Kvale (1996), by regarding the interviews as *social interactions* rather than merely *collected data*, these interactions can be analysed easily as co-constructed meanings that arise whilst the participants articulate their experiences. This view prevented me from simply collecting and forming themes like a puzzle, and allowed me to carry the participants' voices throughout the analysis section – from arising discourses to the many meanings that could be interpreted from them.

The participant, as co-researcher, and the information that is co-constructed during the interview implies that the participant has her own expectations with regard to the study and that she can decide on the information provided (Parker, 2005). For example, when I provided Lerato[4] with an answer as to how the results of the study will be utilised, she was willing to add more information. In this instance, Lerato became an active participant who asked me a question in order to gain a better understanding of the purpose of the study. Another example was when I questioned Tanya about her choice of wording. She described her reasoning in order to provide me with an understanding, and to ensure that what she had said would not be misinterpreted. It is also worth noting that I did not simply repeat the participants' articulations, but *analysed* them instead. This means that I separated relevant topics, critically discussed the narrations that answered my research questions, and compared the findings with those of existing literature (Kvale, 1996).

Conducting the Interviews

Prior to the interviews, I contacted the participants, and made sure that they had understood what was expected of them, as well as their rights as participants. Firstly, I attempted to ensure that the participants were comfortable by providing them with soft drinks, tissues (in case they needed them), and engaged in light discussions. I mentioned that I valued their presence, and asked them to provide

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[4] The participants from this study have been given culturally appropriate pseudonyms for confidentiality purposes.

me with their demographic information. During the first interview, I behaved as though I was involved in a normal discussion. I responded by using verbal and non-verbal cues that may have impacted the flow of Andiswa's narrative. This occurred again after months of searching for participants and, finally, interviewing Katryn. After the interviews with Andiswa and Katryn, I learned to allow the participants to speak freely without distraction, allowed them sufficient time to come to their own decisions, and probed them at appropriate times by means of questions that were pertinent to the study. On certain occasions, I was unable to hide my reactions to their narrations. My reactions, fortunately, were not inappropriate which, I believe, may have created a sense of rapport and solidarity with the participants, and encouraged them to speak more freely. I related with many of the participants' experiences, but in order to make them feel safe and comfortable, I refrained from commenting on their narratives or responding non-verbally to ensure that they did not feel judged or pressured in any way. I did, however, use words, such as "Oh, okay," or "Mm-hmm," to indicate that I heard what they had said or understood what they had been trying to say.

The interviews were conducted in the boardroom of the Historical Trauma and Transformation Unit and, in some cases, at certain participants' homes to ensure confidentiality. The interviews were audio-recorded using a password-protected smartphone device, after having obtained permission from the participants to do so. After each interview, the audio recording was removed from the smartphone device and placed on an external hard-drive and back-up storage device (kept in a locked safe in the researcher's home) to prevent of any loss of data. The data will be kept for a period of five years after completion of the study as recommended by the American Psychological Association (2010). A professional transcriber transcribed the first three interviews verbatim. After each interview session, the audio files were sent to the transcriber, using Dropbox. Thereafter, I followed up every day or two to provide her with an indication of the deadlines, and when to expect the next audio file. When I received each transcript, I reviewed it to confirm that it had been transcribed accurately. The transcriber later had pressing matters to attend to. Therefore, I used the services of a second transcriber, and followed the same procedure (see Appendix 5 for both transcriber confidentiality disclaimers).

Semi-structured interviews provide a sufficient means of gathering data, as the use of open-ended questions allows participants to speak freely without feeling that there is a right or wrong answer. Unfortunately, this means that because each answer is followed by another, perhaps unrelated question, the narrative flow can seem disconnected, almost as though the participant has been interrupted (Riessman, 1987). I attempted to overcome this by asking probing questions between each main question to obtain as much relevant information as possible and to keep the discussion in line with the main question being asked. These probing questions also consisted of questions pertaining to certain information that the participants had provided, as a way of allowing them to explain and to expand upon what they had said, and as a way of ensuring that I had understood what was being narrated.

Data Analysis and Interpretation

Critical discourse analysis (CDA) was utilised during the data analysis process to identify and interpret discourses that the participants had drawn upon while making meaning of their experiences of sexual harassment.

Critical Discourse Analysis

CDA was used to provide a rich description of the role language plays in power relations and "the ways in which discourse produce subjectivity" (Burr, 2003, p. 150). In other words, discourse is language used to communicate socially and discourse analysis is an analysis of how this language is practiced (Fairclough, 2013). The term 'text' refers to any form of communication that provides a representation of subjective experiences and/or perspectives, and which helps us to understand them by communicating about them, for example a conversation, written accounts, a piece of art, and so on (Fairclough, 2013). From a critical point of view, CDA examines what is written between the lines, and does not regard any text at face value. Rather, texts should be considered from multiple perspectives for a holistic interpretation of an experience, event or behaviour (Fairclough, 2013).

CDA helps provide an explanation, understanding or interpretation of subjectivities and the language individuals use to describe their experiences and situations (Lewins et al., 2010). Discourse analysis differs from other forms of qualitative data analysis, such as thematic analysis. While thematic analysis is extremely useful in terms of grouping quotes and recurring themes identified in the

52

transcripts, it does not offer any in-depth meanings of, or critical links between, the information in the same way that discourse analysis is able to (Parker, 2005). Influential social theorist, Judith Butler, described gender as a performance whereby individuals behave, embody and, perhaps, even believe in expected social norms and gender stereotypes (Lumen, 2016). It is through this process of doing gender, that individuals establish their gender identity and are either accepted by society for fulfilling an ideal gender expectation or are seen as deviating from it (Lumen, 2016). By using critical discourse analysis through a social constructionist lens, we are not only able to explore the language or meaning ascribed to gender, but also the way in which power is produced through gendered interactions (Cosgrove, 2000).

Discourse analysis has no specific coding guidelines (Wiggins & Riley, 2010). Therefore, coding during the analytical process was done by identifying emerging keywords and discourses, and categorising them under the appropriate theme, which is continuously evolving. Discourse analysis is always political in the sense that it sheds light on existing and new discourses. This is why as researcher, I must position myself and my study within the South African context.

The Analytical Process

Within the social constructionist framework, discourse analysis was used to analyse the data that had been collected. Firstly, the transcripts were structured according to Braun and Clarke's thematic analysis process, which helped guide the coding of this study, and assisted in creating a means to visibly differentiate between the text, comments, and discourses. When the transcripts were complete, I checked the accuracy of the transcripts against the audio recordings of the interviews. Secondly, critical discourse analysis was used as an analytical tool and an inductive approach was used to identify major themes. Inductive approaches to research means that the researcher first identifies a gap in literature – which can be focused in theoretical inconsistencies, contradicting theories or even the need to improve on existing theories (Faems, 2020). Secondly, the researcher then gathers and analyses findings exploring a phenomenon to gain new insights into the chosen theory (Faems, 2020). An inductive approach can be explained in terms of a funnel: the transcripts are filled with findings, some relevant to the research questions, and some less so. Going down this same funnel, many codes are identified and those that stand out and are appropriate to the study are sifted through, until the most

relevant remain. Thereafter, these codes are combined to form overarching themes – as part of inductive coding, themes are not predetermined but evolve and emerge throughout the coding process. The transcripts were analysed in four stages: (1) I added reflective interpretations and comments as the interviews were being conducted – such as reactions, body language and possible probing questions. (2) Any emerging codes or concepts of interest were written in the right-hand margin after the interviews were complete. An example of codes I chose (see Chapter 4 for reference to these findings) are an analogy of being a "stupid woman", "guys are guys" and "it's natural" among others. (3) All listed codes were analysed by grouping and/or separating these from one another to identify themes important to answering the research questions. These codes mentioned above, explore minimising experiences of sexual harassment and formed a theme as such. Finally, (4) the themes were tabled, after which the major themes were identified and then tabled to answer the research question (Clarke, 2013).

Transcripts are useful in qualitative research as they allow researchers to have a visible recording of the interview conversation. Furthermore, they provide a medium by which the analysis can be conducted by referring back to written accounts and allowing for the notation of reflections and interpretations (Kvale, 1996). As mentioned above, the analytical method used was critical discourse analysis, whereby codes were gathered from the first transcript and clustered together to create initial themes. These were subject to evolving into the concrete themes documented in the analysis chapters, namely Chapters 4 and 5. Thereafter, all codes were tabulated in personal notes to establish themes and links to the research questions. Following this, prominent quotes that answer these research questions were identified and analysed according to notions of patriarchal/gender discourses, language used and power dynamics that play a role in the participants' experiences.

It is important to note that I gathered reflective notes after each interview to state my understanding and feelings regarding what was discussed. I was aware that this topic may be psychologically taxing to me. Therefore, I made preparations ahead of time to ensure that I took mental breaks when necessary, and relieved any stress or anger experienced after each interview. The process

of identifying codes and themes was an extensive and tiring one, but using the research questions as a guideline made the process easier.

Trustworthiness

In qualitative research, the "trustworthiness or rigor of a study refers to the degree of confidence in data, interpretation, and methods used to ensure the quality of a study" (Connelly, 2016, p. 435). This trustworthiness or rigour ultimately ensures that the study is credible, authentic and that the findings are dependable and replicable (Connelly, 2016). As a trustworthy researcher, I indicated all of the processes and steps I had taken, from the initial conceptualisation of the topic to the final conclusion of the study. These include introductions to new chapters, the steps taken in terms of data collection and analysis, my role as researcher, a section on reflexivity in which I position myself within the study, and the permission I obtained from various gatekeepers (see appendices). I had disclaimers signed by transcribers, had peers and my supervisor ensure that my study was not leading or biased in any way, and acknowledged each literary source used in the study.

The terms 'reliability' and 'validity' are often used in quantitative research, but can be used in qualitative research as part of declarations related to trustworthiness and rigour (Connelly, 2016; Cypress, 2017). Reliability refers to the replicability of the study, but is a more statistical measurement (Cypress, 2017). Therefore, within the context of this study, reliability will be used interchangeably with the terms 'replicability' and 'credibility'. In order to ensure that this study was reliable, I went through each transcript to make sure that what had been said was noted accurately (this included verbatim wording, pauses, laughter, and so on). Moreover, my supervisor also made connections during the analytical process to ensure that my interpretation of the interviews was not biased in any way. Prior to the interviews, I conducted a pilot study with peers to ensure that the questions were not biased, leading or offensive. Furthermore, to ensure transparency and credibility, and to show that I had no ulterior motive in conducting this study, I had peers and my supervisor review my analysis to ensure that the participants had been fairly represented, and that the results were not manipulated or steered in any particular direction.

The term 'rigour' is used in qualitative research as part of the validation process (Creswell, 2013). To further validate the study, I ensured that the data collected and the literature consulted represented what the initial author had intended to say, rather than changing any of its meanings or intentions by, for example, presuming what a participant was trying to narrate. I aimed to prevent this by confirming what the participant had meant, but only when necessary. As far as the secondary research is concerned, I used the appropriate referencing techniques to ensure that each author had been cited correctly. In addition, this study was relevant to the South African patriarchal context in that the data was gathered at a South African university. This does not, however, imply that this study is generalizable to other South African universities. Generalising the results is not an aim of qualitative research.

Description of participants

The participants in this study comprised 10 female postgraduate students who were willing to give up some of their time to speak about personal and intimate experiences. The participants self-identified as cisgender, postgraduate women who had experienced inappropriate behaviour on campus. Cisgender refers to an individual whose biological sex and gender identity correspond with that at birth (Merriam-Webster, 2019a). For example, I was born a female (biological sex) and identify as a woman (gender). All participants indicated that they were fluent in English, and that they were either first or second language speakers. In line with the ethical concern to uphold confidentiality, the participants were given culturally appropriate pseudonyms. For example, I gave an Afrikaans woman an Afrikaans pseudonym.

According to Davis (2008), "'[i]ntersectionality' refers to the interaction between gender, race, and other categories of difference in individual lives, social practices, institutional arrangements, and cultural ideologies and the outcomes of these interactions in terms of power" (p. 68). The term 'intersectionality' was originally coined to address the struggles that women of colour faced in their respective patriarchal societies (namely the US), and has presented new opportunities to address the concerns of marginalised women (Davis, 2008). Accordingly, females from different combinations of race, gender and class will experience, define, and react differently to sexual harassment (Richardson

& Taylor, 2009). These reactions depend on culture, their position within the institution, and the perceived anticipation with regard to the way in which the institution will react, should they report the behaviour to the authorities (Richardson & Taylor, 2009).

Below are descriptions of the various participants, with their given pseudonyms:

Andiswa is a 28-year-old Black, Xhosa student. She lived in many places before coming to Cape Town. After the interview, she mentioned that she had lived in Johannesburg, but came to Cape Town to complete her doctorate.

Emily is a 24-year-old White, English-speaking student. She has lived in Cape Town her entire life, and moved closer to Stellenbosch to make her daily commute easier.

Jasmien is a self-identified Coloured student. For confidentiality purposes, she assigned herself the age of 24 before the interview started. She was born and raised in Cape Town, and travels to Stellenbosch to attend classes.

Katryn is a 23-year-old White, Afrikaans-speaking student. She originally comes from Wellington, but moved to Stellenbosch to complete her studies.

Lerato is a 24-year-old Black, Sesotho-speaking student. She has lived in many different provinces in South Africa throughout her life due to her family's various employment and living opportunities. She decided to enrol at Stellenbosch University since it is smaller than other universities. Lerato resides in one of Stellenbosch University's all-female residences.

Maryke is a 25-year-old White, Afrikaans-speaking student. She moved to Cape Town after having completed high school in Pretoria.

Nadia is a 22-year-old White, Afrikaans-speaking student. She moved to Stellenbosch from Oudshoorn in order to complete her studies.

Susan is a 24-year-old White, English-speaking student. She originally comes from Claremont, and moved closer to campus in July 2019.

Tanya is a 23-year-old White, Afrikaans-speaking student who is doing her Honours in Natural Sciences. Tanya was born in Johannesburg, and her family moved to Cape Town when she was young.

Veronica is a 23-year-old White, English-speaking student. She was born and raised in Johannesburg and moved to Cape Town prior to her undergraduate studies. She resides in one of Stellenbosch University's all-female residences.

Reflexivity

Reflexivity is a practice whereby researchers learn from their experiences and the way in which they perceive others in order to position themselves appropriately within the research (Bolton & Delderfield, 2018). In this section, I outline my own opinions, experiences, and the ways in which my past experiences and field of study have influenced the way in which I cope as a 'victim' of sexual harassment, and engage with the participants' narrations. According to Koch and Harrington (1998), outlining my own opinion will not only help to inform the reader about the way in which I analyse my data using critical discourse analysis, but also the manner in which I express my subjective opinion.

To ensure that I do not report my research findings as mere facts, it is important to know what my stance and history are regarding the subject, how I asked the participants questions, and the relationship that was formed between myself, the data from the participants and the existing data on the topic (Parker, 2005). As a subjective researcher, I needed to use the knowledge I have gained from the narrations of the participants and my own past experiences in order to turn subjective opinion into a theoretical stance. Moreover, I utilised the chosen theoretical framework to guide the research process during the analysis of the data collected (Parker, 2005). I examined the way in which the participants articulated their experiences and the discourses used, to provide insight into the role played by patriarchy in perpetuating sexual harassment on university campuses.

Thanks to my field of study, I have learned how to understand the experiences of others and empathise with them. I am a Master's student in Psychology and have, through trial and error, taught myself that having experienced sexual harassment was not my fault. I was not to blame and I need not feel guilty, ashamed, or anxious about what happened in the past. The problem is the system in which

men and women are socialised into thinking that men hold more power in relation to women. This is difficult to contemplate as a woman who was raised in a household in which my brother and I were not differentiated in terms of our gender, but rather according to our capabilities. For example, whereas I am more adept at maintaining a garden, my brother does household chores more efficiently than I do. After having entered university, I noticed that few others fight the discourse of male superiority and female inferiority. After having studied Psychology for several years, I have learned to create my own support structures and steel myself emotionally against any unwanted advances. This is not due to my having accepted that such experiences are normal, but because I, alone, cannot prevent men from acting upon their desires.

I have personally been impacted by sexual harassment when I was sexually harassed by a self-defence instructor from whom I sought help in an attempt to protect myself. This forced me to remove myself from the martial arts studio where I was training and to cut off communication with the instructor to prevent him from trying to contact me. I once left a university building and proceeded to walk to my car when near the edge of campus, in front of about half a dozen students, a man approached me and proceeded to drag me across the street. Despite my yelling at him and trying to break free, no one came to assist me. A few of the students stared in my direction and at least one simply kept on walking. After this incident, I enrolled in a self-defence class so that I could learn to protect myself, seeing as though no one else would. It is now clear how that turned out. Another incident occurred on my way to campus in Pretoria. A man kept smiling at me on the highway, and after a few gruelling minutes in unmoving traffic, I reluctantly smiled back, hoping that this would appease him and encourage him to move along. Almost an hour later, as I was parking my car near campus, the same man walked up to me and demanded my phone number because I had 'led him on' with a smile. Fortunately, a security guard was nearby and noticed the man, of whom I was not the first target.

Subsequently, listening to the stories of the participants made me feel that there is a severe lack of awareness regarding sexual harassment at the University of Stellenbosch. There is also a lack of support services to assist victims. I went into the study with the thought that not many students would be aware of the behaviours related to sexual harassment and the support services that are available.

59

Unfortunately, this was confirmed in the findings. I empathised with their stories and wished to console them. However, as a researcher, I had a greater desire to teach them about sexual harassment and that it should not be allowed, regardless of the circumstances. I wanted them to learn from my mistakes, and hearing their stories made me feel frustrated about the fact that sexual harassment is so common. Gender is a sensitive topic for me. My parents have always encouraged me to be independent, strong willed and to strive for happiness, but this is difficult because I have experienced situations in which my gender has deterred me from attaining certain goals. For instance, my male Criminology lecturer advised me to study Psychology instead of Criminology, as the Criminology field sought more males than females. Still, I believe that he advised me out of concern for my well-being.

It is important to note that as a White, Afrikaans-speaking woman, I do not have the right to speak on behalf of women of other cultures and races. While I acknowledge that I may never experience sexual harassment in the same way as others do, this reflexivity section serves to provide my own background and experiences. As students of similar ages and experiences, I was able to connect with the participants, and to create a space in which they were able to feel comfortable and free from judgement. To ensure that no harm would befall the participants as a result of taking part in the study, I needed to ensure their safety. I went in knowing that any individuals who were seen with me during the data collection phase, and any documents that were in my possession which may have contained any reference to them would be a direct sign of their involvement. Therefore, in order to ensure that the research was ethically sound, certain steps and procedures were followed in order to protect my participants prior to my contacting them. Considering this, I have listed several ethical considerations in the section below.

Ethical Considerations

The final report of this paper was provided to the Equality Unit at the Stellenbosch University, with the aim of increasing the University's knowledge about sexual harassment on campus. As stipulated by the American Psychological Association (2010) and Stellenbosch University, the ethical guidelines I have adhered to in this study are outlined below:

(1) I obtained permission from the University of Stellenbosch to conduct the study. This includes permission from the Stellenbosch University Division for Information Governance to conduct research with the students (see Appendix 6 for the institutional permission document). (2) I obtained permission from the Arts and Social Sciences Ethics Committee for Social, Behavioural and Educational Research (REC: SBE) of Stellenbosch University to collect data by interviewing participants (see Appendix 7 for the REC: SBE permission letter) (project number: 9064). (3) I protected the confidentiality, privacy, and autonomy of the research participants. This was done by obtaining the participants' informed consent, showing respect for them and their wellbeing, and by being honest, respectful and calm (American Psychological Association, 2010). I removed identifying information such as the names of university residences so that the participants will not be identified through this information (to ensure further protection of participants' identities). I excluded the participants' real names from the final report and will do the same for any publications that may emanate from this work (I used pseudonyms). Furthermore, I deleted all information that can be used to identify a participant directly and respected their decisions regarding their information. Such decisions included who may have access to their interview audio files, how they wished to sign the consent form, and so on. The participants had the right to refuse to answer any questions which made them feel uncomfortable, as outlined in the consent form (see Appendix 1 for the consent form). The consent form was given to the participants during the first meeting with the researcher so that they could read through it prior to the interview and ask any questions they had beforehand. The initial meetings were conducted via email, telephone, or face-to-face encounters with the participants during the recruitment phase.

(4) Plagiarism of data and literature was avoided by acknowledging the works of the relevant scholars, and ensuring that all secondary sources were referenced properly (American Psychological Association, 2010) (the authorship declaration appears after the title page). (5) Data collected from the participants was recorded onto a smartphone device, and was transcribed with the consent of the participants, in the form of a document; the transcribers were asked to keep all of the data that had been collected confidential, and were given a non-disclosure form to sign (see Appendices 4a and b for the

confidentiality disclaimer forms). The purpose of this non-disclosure form was to uphold confidentiality. (6) Safe and secure storage of data were ensured. This was done to prevent the participants' private information from becoming accessible to anyone other than the researcher and her supervisor. The data was stored on a secure, external hard-drive, and kept in a locked safe in the researcher's home, to which only the researcher has access. The data will be destroyed five years after completion of the study (American Psychological Association, 2010). Hard copies of the data (such as the signed consent forms and interview notes) were stored electronically on a hard-drive, and all hard copies were destroyed.

(7) As the researcher conducted face-to-face interviews, the participants could not remain truly anonymous. However, the researcher will not reveal any information regarding the participants or what was discussed (unless legally required by law). Fortunately, issues around legality did not arise. The researcher followed up with the participants after the interviews to make sure that no harm had been done. Two participants asked for a copy of the final thesis. (8) The participants had the right to withdraw from the study at any time, for whatever reason (American Psychological Association, 2010). In such cases, the participants could state whether or not the data could be used in the study. If not, it would be erased immediately, and they would be thanked for their time. Since this was documented in the consent form, the participants were aware of this information. None of the participants withdrew from the study.

(9) As a researcher, I refrained from offering incentives or using coercion to recruit participants as this may have affected the integrity of the research and influenced the quality of information. Participants were offered a small gratuity (R100.00 for each participant) for their time upon completion of the interview process, as advised by Stangor (2015). (10) Counselling services were made available to the participants to assist in case any negative or uncomfortable emotions arose during the interviews (American Psychological Association, 2010). The director of the Student Counselling Department, Dr Munita Dunn-Coetzee, was aware of the study and agreed, in the form of a letter, to provide psychological services (see Appendix 5 for access to psychological services). This information was

provided in the consent form. The participants did not utilise this service, and no incidents occurred during the interviews.

Conclusion

This chapter explored the qualitative research procedures used, outlined all ethical considerations aimed at protecting the participants, and included a section on reflexivity. The chapter was introduced by means of a discussion on a qualitative epistemological approach, which was identified as the most suitable in terms of the topic of this study. The participants in this study consisted of postgraduate female students, who were chosen due to their 'mature' age and because they had experienced sexual harassment on campus. Initially, the participants were recruited through the distribution of leaflets pertaining to the study, and later through referrals from other participants. Data was collected by means of semi-structured interviews, which were conducted in English, and consisted of probing questions aimed at assisting the participants to expand on interesting topics or phrases that needed clarification. The interviews were transcribed, verbatim, by a professional transcriber to assist in the data analysis process.

The data analysis tool used in this study, namely critical discourse analysis, was described as a method of analysis which allows the researcher to examine the deeper meanings underlying the participants' articulations about their experiences. Ethical considerations were listed, and elaborated on the protocols used to protect the confidentiality, anonymity, and agency of the participants. A section on reflexivity was included to contextualise my own experiences and thoughts pertaining to the study, as well as how my experiences and field of study have helped me to understand myself better and the way in which I view sexual harassment. In turn, these realisations have shaped the way in which I regarded the participants, analysed their narrations, and interacted with them. In the next section, Chapter 4: *Power, space, and language: Female students' narrations of sexual harassment on campus*, I will present and discuss the participants' narratives, as gathered from the semi-structured interviews.

Chapter 4: Power, space, and language:

Female students' narrations of sexual harassment on campus

Introduction

This study explored the lived experiences of sexual harassment at Stellenbosch University, as articulated by female postgraduate students. These students were interviewed and asked to describe their experiences of sexual harassment on campus, as well as the ways in which they coped with these experiences. The main focus was on the *language* they used throughout the interviews. While sexual harassment is, by no means, a new phenomenon, it is, evidently, not an easy concept to define. Factors, such as discourse, power dynamics, gender roles, and the like, influence the language that is available to women in describing their experiences of sexual harassment (Johnson, 2005). 'Victims' of sexual harassment may not even be aware that their experiences can be defined as sexual harassment. This lack of a definition, or the lack of language to describe their experiences is a function of patriarchy and, ultimately, results in the perpetuation of sexual harassment (Magley & Shupe, 2005). To position this analysis, the main research question is reiterated below:

What are female Stellenbosch University students' experiences of sexual harassment on campus and how do they make sense of these experiences?

The sub-questions guiding this chapter are: What forms of sexual harassment take place on this South African university campus, as narrated by female students? How do female Stellenbosch University students make sense of their experiences of sexual harassment on campus? Finally, what is the significance of these experiences in their lives, and how do they shape their lives?

While conducting the analysis, three major themes arose from the participants' narrations of their experiences: the nature of sexual harassment; (not) naming sexual harassment; and women's agency: confronting patriarchal discourses and resisting victimhood. The first two themes (the nature of sexual harassment and (not) naming sexual harassment) in this first findings chapter speak to the challenges that women face within our patriarchal society, and the complexity and challenges involved in naming such experiences within this particular social space. The last theme (women's agency:

confronting patriarchal discourses and resisting victimhood) in the next analysis chapter provides insight into the agency that the participants exert through their critical reflections on patriarchal power and female safety.

The broad theme of 'the nature of sexual harassment' covers the participants' narrations of shame, fear, and doubt, as well as their narrations of themselves as 'victims' of the patriarchal system. Within the subthemes, they describe men's sense of entitlement to their bodies in particular spaces within the university context. It also covers the subtle forms of violence and the participants' 'mapping' of the spaces within which they feel more vulnerable and shamed. The theme '(not) naming sexual harassment' discusses the participants' narrations of labelling their experiences as sexual harassment. Within the subthemes, they narrate their constructions of sexual harassment and the severity of their experiences. They draw on dominant socio-cultural discourses to position themselves within the patriarchal sphere. The analysis that follows highlights the ways in which these discourses shape how they make sense of their experiences of sexual harassment. Table 2 below summarises these themes.

Table 2: *Summary of Themes and Subthemes*

Themes	Subthemes
The Nature of Sexual Harassment	- Subtle forms of violence - The virtual/unknown threat - Invading physical space: men's sense of entitlement - Residences: toxic social environments

Themes	Subthemes
(Not) Naming Sexual Harassment	- Minimising the experience - Self-blame - Patriarchal culture of silencing - Rape culture
Women's Agency: Confronting Patriarchal Discourses and Resisting Victimhood	Women's narrated strategic performances

| | • Agentic narrations of student safety at Stellenbosch University |
| | • Women's criticism of support structures on campus |

Within the findings section below, I explore the themes 'the nature of sexual harassment' and '(not) naming sexual harassment', as narrated by the female postgraduate participants, along with relevant subthemes that I have identified during the analytical process.

The Nature of Sexual Harassment

In this study, many forms of sexual harassment were identified – from unwanted attention to attempted and actual rape – according to legal definitions of sexual harassment and rape. Arulogun (2013) reported that "[s]exual harassment has been described as any unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favours or other physical and expressive behaviour of a sexual nature" (p. 1). In addition, rape can be defined as the serious act of sexually violating a person using coercion and force against the person's will (Merriam-Webster, 2019b). The participants' narratives provide rich insight into how these young women construct sexual harassment. These participants are unique, and experienced sexual harassment differently. Within the subthemes that follow, the language used, as well as the affective narrations of the participants will be analysed and discussed alongside the various forms of sexual harassment in order to provide a more holistic view thereof.

The first subtheme, namely 'subtle forms of violence', aims to provide insight into how the blurred line between sexual harassment and 'normal' behaviour may affect the ways in which the participants make sense of these experiences. The second subtheme, namely 'the virtual/unknown threat', speaks to how women can be harassed not only through technology but also by means of different forms of stalking, which often instil fear in women. In this way, they face daily threats of being assaulted or harassed by unknown individuals. Within a patriarchal society that allows such behaviour, this often gives the harassers the opportunity to deny causing 'physical' harm to women.

The subtheme 'invading physical space: men's sense of entitlement', explores the participants' narrations of men's sense of entitlement to women's bodies, and men's objectification of the female body. This subtheme of invading physical space also describes the participants' experiences of physical and more overt forms of sexual harassment. As narrated by the participants, these behaviours have been dismissed as 'jokes', and comprise patriarchal discourse about which the participants seem to be aware. The last subtheme is 'residences: toxic social environments. Here, participants describe experiences of sexual harassment within university residences, and how these toxic environments not only threaten the safety of women on a daily basis, but also allow the men who reside therein to adopt and perpetuate rape culture and displays of female oppression as forms of entertainment.

Subtle forms of violence. Within this subtheme, the analysis centres on verbal harassment and unwanted attention. This subtheme was named 'subtle forms of violence' because it is descriptive of the many subtle and 'everyday' experiences narrated by the participants. These behaviours are so common that the line between normal behaviour and sexual harassment becomes blurred. These blurred definitions may not only influence whether or not a 'victim' recognises or defines her experiences but whether or not she reports these as well. The participants may or may not name their harassment as such and may or may not report these experiences. Furthermore, through their narrations, using existing dominant discourses, they may either position themselves as a 'victim' or place themselves in an agentic position of power. In the extract below, Andiswa described such an experience crossing the street to enter campus:

> *It sounded like, "I like your ass," but it was in Afrikaans, so it sounded like, "Ek like jou arse," or something like that, right. [Laughs] And I was like, "Oh, wow!" But it wasn't flattering because it was – it was kind of like… I don't know. But also, like the Afrikaans sound, Coloured Afrikaans is also very hard to the ear, so it was like… It's like you know when they say, "Jou ma se[5] [makes censor sound]".*

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[5] Afrikaans for "your mom's [censor sound]"

In this scenario, Andiswa experienced a behaviour that could be seen as catcalling or an inappropriate sexual comment, whereby a non-student male 'complimented' her body. Andiswa began by mentioning that the event had occurred in an area that could be considered part of the campus – this was while crossing the road to campus. The Stellenbosch University campus does not have a clear boundary, thus providing easy access to the community. Andiswa experienced an unwanted compliment, which she seemed unsure – perhaps even embarrassed – about repeating. She said that the compliment was not flattering, and that hearing that man say it in his Coloured, Afrikaans accent, sounded as though he was cursing or objectifying her. She did not say that she was uncomfortable repeating what he had said but may have felt that it was inappropriate to repeat it whilst being recorded. Andiswa remarked that this was not her only experience of catcalling, and had experienced many instances in which the ground staff that work around campus called after and greeted her in ways that made her wary of their intentions. Andiswa later constructs this instance by saying "*it's like your usual catcalling.*" This not only implies that it happened to her frequently, but also that there is a discourse of normality surrounding catcalling. Such discourse conveys meaning that this type of catcalling is not an important issue that needs to be addressed. Andiswa continues her narrative below:

> *It's almost like he wanted to whisper it in my ear. You know, like he wanted to – he wanted me to hear it, and I was like, "Oh, gosh, no." [Laughs] I felt like hiding my ass. [Laughs]*

…

> *Yah. I definitely felt, especially with that one at the robot, I felt very like… If there was like an automatic Ziploc bag, but it has to be black, almost like a body bag, you know. [Laughs] that just like suddenly just formed around me and just zoop up to the top of my head. Like just like, I just wanted to like hide.*

…

> *Yah, so it's a combination of feeling like embarrassed, ah, embarrassing is one. And then, there's anger, and then there's just annoyance.*

Towards the beginning of this extract, Andiswa spoke about how her harasser had made his comment so that only she could hear it, as if he wanted to whisper in her ear. This paints a picture of a seduction, an intimate moment, which was forced onto Andiswa. However, because the setting involved a passing moment between two strangers, it seemed to make Andiswa cringe in disgust. This was a scenario in which both Andiswa and the man were bound to pass each other (at the traffic light), and it seems as though this presented the harasser with a perfect opportunity to make his comment because the chances of Andiswa stopping, confronting him or making a scene were limited due to having to cross the street quickly.

When Andiswa said that she felt like hiding her ass, this suggests a sense of shame. Describing feelings of self-consciousness and anger could mean that Andiswa experiences conflicting emotions of blaming the harasser and herself as well. Her comment that in this instance, after she had been catcalled, she wanted to wear a Ziploc bag, is also interesting. The image of the black Ziploc bag, and her narrated need to hide her body and face (to "zip it up") suggest a sense of shame attached to the way in which the harasser had objectified her body. The language that Andiswa used here reflects the power dynamics infused into the experience, and how a man of an obviously lower social class was able to make her feel so embarrassed and ashamed. This sheds light on how sexual harassment is a pervasive patriarchal tool, as the harasser, who from Andiswa's description, seemed to be a Coloured man of a lower class, but still defied racial and class categories to harass her.

Andiswa narrated that she had felt embarrassed, annoyed, and angry, and went on to say that these experiences no longer affected her. This is important as she later stated that the best prevention for sexual harassment is to castrate men (this will be expanded on in another theme). Perhaps, this indicates that Andiswa was feigning confidence, when, in reality, she might have felt insecure or even have been traumatised by her past experiences. Here, Andiswa minimises her experience by saying that even little boys are socialised into a "*catcalling culture*", thus normalising it, and she conveys that being catcalled is an everyday occurrence for many women. After having experienced it, Andiswa seemed to suggest that the 'victim' can simply ignore it at the end of the day and start anew the next. Related to

69

the topic of how sexual harassment has become an almost normalised occurrence, Lerato had the following to say:

> *If I am being honest, it is not the sexual harassment that I felt isn't actually directly from the students most of the time; it is actually from the older men on campus, so your maintenance staff, your security staff.*

...

> *I would be walking alone and they would call me over to their car kind of thing just to have a quick chat, but I know what that chat means. They will whistle at me, they will call me sexy, they will, I had actual students, right in front of me and then where the one guy with – knocked on this friends shoulder and said, "Look how big her tits are." And then he's like, "Ja, but she's got a bit of a waist so I'd give her a 7," like that whole conversation was happening right in front of me. So, I think just the nature of how indiscreet people are.*

In this extract, like Andiswa, Lerato addressed the topic of women being seen as sexual objects who should be readily available for the male gaze. Lerato narrated how she had experienced sexual harassment at the hands of the campus security and maintenance staff. She said that the older men on campus had called her to their cars *"just to have a quick chat"*. When Lerato described the act as a quick chat, it gave the impression that it had been an innocent request. Perhaps, Lerato thought this as first, but when she said, "*but I know what that chat means,"* this indicates that she had experienced this request enough times to realise that there was nothing innocent about these men's suggestions. As Lerato previously mentioned, her body is very mature despite her age. By saying this, Lerato narratively presented a possible reason why much older men might approach her. By describing her body as mature, she may have constructed herself as a sexual object that was more prone to experiencing sexual objectification. Perhaps this indicates that Lerato may have regarded sexual harassment as unavoidable due to her body shape. She narrated how these men had boldly whistled at and objectified her in a brazen manner. Lerato narrates how male students would loudly rate her body in front of her. She states, "*I think just the nature of how indiscreet people are*", which is interesting as her word choice suggests that the problem lies with the intention for the 'victim' to hear this sexual objectification. This

is yet another example of how sexual harassment has become normalised within society. The excerpt below highlights Veronica's narration of her own experience with regard to catcalling:

I remember, it was like my first year. It was the first time I decided to go run by myself, or one of the first times. And I was like jogging and minding my own business, and this like bakkie full of res boys was like driving next to me, and they started like catcalling me just like… They like slowed down and drove next to me. And eventually, I just got so like irritated 'cause they wouldn't. You know, I kinda just tried ignoring them, and then I was like, "Please just go away." And I just like turned around and ran in the opposite direction to like get rid of them. Uhm, so that was one of the reasons why I didn't… I… Like I still think about that if I like run on a road, you know.

Here Veronica described and named her experience of catcalling in which she was followed by a bakkie full of *"res boys"* shouting things at her. She said that she had initially responded by ignoring them but eventually turned around and ran in the opposite direction. This may indicate a sense of powerlessness in relation to these men, and that she had to drastically alter her route to escape their catcalling. When she said that she had been minding her own business before the bakkie arrived, it creates the impression that their presence was intrusive, unexpected and a nuisance. She seemed to use the term 'irritated' to convey that the boys' behaviour was a mild inconvenience to her day and exercise routine. Should a South African woman have a bakkie full of men driving alongside her, she would probably be afraid, so it is interesting that Veronica said that she felt irritated. To others, perhaps, this may be an intimidating experience, and this display of overt hegemonic power may be so overwhelming that, similar to Veronica, others may be forced to run in the opposite direction, not only to get away from them, but also to prevent them from following her. Veronica narrated that this experience of being followed by the men in the bakkie was something that she still thought about when jogging after the event occurred. This suggests that this invasive experience is something that she "carries with her," and that it continues to affect her daily life and sense of safety on campus. This is interesting as Veronica draws on competing discourses: agency in running the opposite direction, avoiding victimisation, whilst still narrating how this experience has affected her sense of safety and intimidated

71

her. This suggests that although Veronica voiced concern for her safety in the moment, she may not regard herself as a 'victim', but that she has taken it upon herself to be an agent in ensuring her own safety, by becoming vigilant.

The virtual/unknown threat. This subtheme relates to stalking and cyberstalking as narrated by the participants. In this section, the virtual/unknown threat refers to harassers who make use of technology from a distance to create a hostile environment for their 'victims'. The participants' narrations not only referred to the feeling of being observed but also the persistence of their harassers, who may or may not be known to the 'victims'. Some theories that describe stalking explain that the stalker wishes to retain some semblance of power over the 'victim', and that by seeking an attachment to, or control over, this individual, he develops a strong sense of longing for, or bond with, the 'victim', that is borderline obsessive (Scott & Cooper, 2011). Campus is an environment in which students are confined to a space where physical, emotional, academic, or psychological contact with one another is inevitable. We live in an advanced technological age where people update their locations, life events, and post pictures online. This not only gives potential stalkers the opportunity to easily identify their targets, but also allows them to stay connected emotionally, to some degree, to their 'victims' (Scott & Cooper, 2011). The feeling of being observed, followed, threatened and coerced can be very distressing to individuals, and often has an impact on students' campus experience (Scott & Cooper, 2011). Below, Jasmien described her experience of online harassment:

> He showed me a picture of his private parts. But it is a very good friend of mine and it came down to, which I didn't even know how it came down to, because this person is like a brother to me. So, in the sense of me having that mind set, like okay, this is my brother.

...

> That was very disturbing and it came down to he didn't just like me as a sister, he liked me more than a sister. But, I mean, after so many years being a friend and studying with this guy, it is like I can't even describe it how I felt and [Laughs], which I actually had to send a text back and said to him, "Are you serious? Are you like sending this to me?"

72

Jasmien narrated how a good friend of hers had sent her a picture of his "*private parts*". She repeated her feelings towards her harasser, saying that he was like a brother to her. This brother-sister relationship that had been disrupted by his sexual feelings towards her may imply that the shock she felt could be akin to the shock of hearing about incest, which is considered taboo in society. Jasmien stated that they had shared secrets, studied together, and knew each other for five years, and that one simple text ruined their friendship and her trust in him. This possible feeling of betrayal and inappropriate feelings of a 'sibling' were the reason she cut her ties with him. Her narration of her harasser seems to indicate an acknowledgement of his sense of entitlement to force his overt sexuality onto her by sending her pictures of his private parts. However, Jasmien's narration also demonstrates her challenging this sense of entitlement. His actions further show how ready he was to cross the earlier mentioned blurred lines, with the expectation that she would reciprocate his urges. Jasmien specifically appeared to disagree with the harasser's behaviour through her narration of "*Are you serious?*". Her narration seems to convey a sense of disbelief or, perhaps, disappointment. Similarly, Maryke recounted an incident that she had experienced through technology:

I used to get these phone calls while I was busy actually working from, I don't know, it sounded like a guy, he was obviously breathing, but...

...

And then this guy spoke up that he sees me every morning walking to class and everything, and I was completely freaked out by this. He would call me at least four times a day. I mean, I am not on campus all the time. It was quite scary. To me, it is just like where the hell did he get my number, number one, and how does he know, for instance my name, because I do not even know who the hell this person is, and the fact of the matter is he knows so much about me. That was just, that was very – that freaked me out so much.

Maryke narrated how she had experienced a form of harassment in which an unknown man phoned her daily, regardless of whether she was on campus or not, and either breathed loudly into her ear or told her personal details about herself. It was a terrifying thought and not only does Maryke live

73

in a society rife with cultures of fear and rape, but she also had an unknown threat observing her. She later said that she had access to numerous social media accounts, but had never included any personal information on these, and was unsure as to how the harasser knew her personal details. The fact that the person was unknown and could have been watching her from anywhere without her even realising it may include some of the many reasons as to why she had constructed this event as so upsetting. This is a gross display of power which, Maryke conveyed, not only made her feel vulnerable but perhaps also helpless. Her saying that "*that freaked me out so much"* indicates a sense of panic and correlates with Dosekun's (2007) assertion about the constant fear of violence that women face daily on South African campuses. This daily fear of violence, coupled with the 'normality' of sexual harassment, may cause the 'victim' to feel hopeless and that sexual harassment is unavoidable. The language used in *"freaked out"* is interesting as it indicates alarm, distress, or a sense of emotional instability. Through such language, Maryke conveyed that the anonymous phone call had affected her psychologically. Similar findings have been described by Bastiani et al. (2019) who found that although women have become accustomed to experiencing sexual harassment, the experiences may still cause them to panic.

In the extract below, Emily described an experience in which she had been watched secretly by another student who proceeded to harass her via social media.

> *It was a friend of mine's brother who was also at UWC Physiotherapy, and it basically just started that I didn't even know, I never acknowledged him in the classes. I didn't even, honestly I didn't even realise him until the incident started. Where I was at our graduation, and I got a message from a random number saying, "My goodness! You looked so sexy at the graduation," and I didn't even know, and also it was a very strange feeling I got, because I didn't actually, I didn't actually know who it was, firstly, and, secondly, I felt like very watched and very aware.*

Emily narrated that she and her harasser had attended the same university during their undergraduate studies and, most likely, shared the same classes. However, she was unaware of his existence at the time. After their graduation, he contacted her for the first time and, according to her narration, this was where her struggle began. Emily repeatedly tried to articulate that she had been unaware of his presence and that she did not know who he was. This may indicate a sense of violation

74

or intrusion because of the sexual objectification she experienced by this unknown person every day, who made her feel "*watched and very aware*". Emily described herself as having experienced hyper-awareness during that time. Moreover, the "*strange feeling*" she mentioned indicates her awareness of his observation. Her use of language revealed something about her experience of sexual objectification, as well as the fact that she had some knowledge about this. She displayed resistance to this sexual objectification as she made meaning of the situation and reflected on her stance in the world in relation to this oppressive experience (being aware). In the extract below, Emily continued her narration:

> *And then the one day we would be doing Anatomy; we're helping the younger students with Anatomy and part of Anatomy is not that you have to strip down entirely, but you go down into your sports bra and your hot shorts, and they have to look at landmarks and we have to show them how you analyse landmarks.*

> *...*

> *It is a medical thing so it never occurred to me that somebody would be watching me when we're doing it. I have never ever felt uncomfortable doing it up until this point. I have been doing it for my entire Physiotherapy degree. And, then afterwards, again, I got a message from him saying the things that he wanted to do to me. I just felt so uncomfortable that somebody even, look when I am working in a professional sense, analysing me in that way, uhm, and I tried to mention it to my supervisor once just in passing. I was like, "He's just so inappropriate," and he (supervisor) was like, "Ag[6], you know you are in your underwear," (my supervisor is also a male).*

Emily narrated an experience in which she and her harasser (being senior students) were asked by their supervisor to assist the junior students during an Anatomy class. She began her description with how she had to strip down into her underwear – stating that it was for medical purposes – but his gaze and comments made it sexual. Her mentioning, "…*the things that he wanted to do to me,"* suggests

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[6] 'Ag' is an Afrikaans term that means consideration, but in this context, it is a slang expression of frustration, similar to a sigh or a tsk sound.

her subjective experience of sexual objectification through these words that rendered her somewhat passive in relation to this man. Understandably, Emily said that this sexual objectification had made her feel uncomfortable. Importantly, when Emily tried to inform her male supervisor, his response was "*Ag, you know you are in your underwear*". This appears to convey the oppressive and unsupportive environment that she faced when experiencing such sexual harassment. Emily stated that this experience of being silenced by patriarchal power led to her feeling unsupported and that because of the lack of support she experienced, there was a sense that she was to blame or that she was overreacting. Emily's language conveyed a sense of the climate of patriarchal control and silencing, which she described as being a central feature of this virtual/unknown threat of sexual objectification and constant unwanted messaging.

Invading physical space: men's sense of entitlement. This subtheme outlines the participants' narratives of their experiences of objectification by men on campus. They discussed what, for them, seemed to be a central feature of patriarchal culture and sexual harassment on campus, namely men's sense of entitlement to observe women's bodies, and sometimes even encroach physically on their physical space/bodies. This subtheme is connected to the above subtheme of the virtual/unknown threat whereby men have a sense of entitlement to women's bodies, in that the extracts below speak to the physical action of inappropriate and unwanted touching. The participants narrated that some of the harassers had treated the incident as a game or a joke. They spoke about men's sense of entitlement to forcing their sexual desires onto women. Jasmien described her own experience of a friend who had touched her inappropriately:

> *You've got your group of friends, for example, and then you always get the odd one. You know there is always an odd one [referring to a male friend] who would be just typically, like been as ok he is like pulling my hair, or he just actually touch my boob and he thinks it is okay. [Laughs] and, you know, for him it is funny and at the moment you get people around you would think, but it might become a habit. You know, then at the end it is not funny.*

Jasmien mentioned that she had been touched inappropriately by one of her male friends, and indicated that this happened more than once. She referred to this friend as the "*odd one*", which may

76

signify that he was the odd one out, that he was not like her other male friends, or that she perhaps regarded his behaviour as odd. Jasmien said that he thought it was funny and that it might have become a habit, which implies that her reaction may have been amusing to him and that he would continue with this behaviour if no one stopped him. By saying that the people around her also may have thought that it was funny provides insight into how, as a society, even when friends are touched inappropriately by other friends, for the most part, no one will stop the harassment from occurring. Often such behaviours are considered normal teasing or joking. Jasmien's narrative clearly conveys her male friend's sense of entitlement to touching her body sexually as he pleased. Such male entitlement is an integral part of cultures of violence (akin to rape culture, which will be discussed in another subtheme) stemming from patriarchal notions that women lie about their experiences, men cannot control their urges, and that certain sexualised behaviours are a normal display of masculinity (Gqola, 2015). Such discourses constitute the underlying threats of gender violence. Writing in the South African context, Gqola (2015) suggested that we are all socialised to ignore the threat of violence, especially when someone else is in danger, in an attempt to avoid becoming targets ourselves.

Tanya also described an experience pertaining to inappropriate and unwanted touching, but her description suggested that she viewed her experience as very different from Jasmien's. However, similarly to Jasmien, those around her did not seem to recognise her discomfort.

> *Okay, so the – the time he – he, uhm, touched my leg, it was kind of like… That was… It was so… He was really s–... He was really clever about, uhm, because in the first place, he never did it in front of anyone. And then, in the second place, he always made it or did it in such a way that you can turn back and say, "No, but that was an accident," or, "I didn't mean it in that way." And you know, he could always turn around and say, "But she's overreacting."*

During this experience, the student placed his hand on Tanya's leg whilst squatting on the ground. He looked her in the eyes and proceeded to use her leg as leverage to stand up. Tanya stated that this was a smart move on the harasser's part because not only did he successfully touch her without anyone else seeing, but he could also use the excuse that he was unaware of where he was touching. She proceeded to convey that it was definitely not an accident: "*I knew he did it like consciously because*

he looked at me and then like put his hand on my upper leg, and then he got up". This may have given Tanya the impression that the harasser could easily get away with such behaviour. This, in turn, may have contributed to her reluctance to report him. This bold physical contact – whilst maintaining eye contact – as narrated by Tanya, once again provides evidence of men's sense of entitlement to touching women's bodies. This is a form of wielding power over the female body because this is done without her consent or permission. In South Africa, men's sense of entitlement to women's bodies, and the 'normalisation' of sexualised behaviours on the part of men, maintain the patriarchal discourse that male sexual urges (no matter how forceful) are normal and that women should accept this.

Despite the fact that sexual harassment can be quite distressing, women do not receive the necessary support after having been victimised. Gordon and Collins, (2013), highlighted that for most university students,

> speaking out is constrained by their distrust of university services, the reported lack of support from university security guards, and the idea that sexuality is a private and personal matter that should not be articulated in public, and that the female sexual experience is shameful (p. 101).

This was emphasised by the participants in the current study who stated that it is inappropriate to talk about these matters to anyone as it not only embarrasses themselves but, should they have relationships with their harrassers, those who perpetrate against them as well. Below, Maryke described an experience in which another student had deliberately touched her chest:

> *There was an incident where we were actually sitting having a conversation and two – I do not know, what students they are or whatever, they came past and the one actually brushed his arm across my chest and started laughing. I found it very offensive and very violating as it was in front of quite a few people. It was a joke, so I find that the most offensive or violating thing that happened to me on campus.*

...

> *There was a bunch of people standing in a group and these two split out of them obviously. I didn't see it, but one of my friends actually told me she saw it, so it must have been a game to*

the guys, because it was a bunch of guys that was standing there so it was obviously – I don't know if it was a dare or anything like that, but I feel that it was probably like a game to them.

In this extract, Maryke described an experience in which a male student separated from his group of friends and, together with another friend, walked past her and inappropriately touch her chest. She narrated how the student immediately started laughing and referred to the entire scenario as a joke or a game numerous times. This creates the impression that this student and his friends intentionally acted out the incident to either elicit a reaction from Maryke or to see how she and her group of friends would react. Despite the act itself being a violation and unwanted, Maryke described the lack of action from those around her, or perhaps more accurately their inability to identify the harassment as having added to her discomfort. This public invasion of physical space further highlights the notion that many men regard women's bodies as objects and emphasises how easy it is to get away with such violation. Maryke's narrative suggests that these male students may have viewed the female body as a sexual object – one that is readily available for their touch or whatever they may wish (such as playing a part in this joke). Maryke narrated how she had witnessed the male sense of entitlement within the campus space. Importantly, her language conveys a sense that no one was willing to help her or that no one knew how to respond. Maryke's narration suggests that the fact that this happened in front of other people, in a social environment, meant that the oppressive experience was heightened for her.

Residences: toxic social environments. Social spaces such as university residences are environments in which students of different backgrounds and cultures can come together with the common goal of studying. Such residences, where many students share a small space for a period of time, can also foster abuse and invasions of privacy by those who reside within this tight-knit space (Times Square Chronicles, 2018). Ingrained practices, such as traditions or initiation ceremonies for first-year students, can foster many forms of inequality and discourses from which violence stems. Within this subtheme, residences were mentioned, specifically, by participants Veronica and Lerato, who voiced significant concerns surrounding the issues that young South African women face within, and in relation to, these institutions. Lerato narrated that her residence had a linguistic and cultural hierarchy, with Afrikaans students demonstrating a sense of entitlement. Although it is important to

understand such experiences in this type of condensed social environment, the focus of this analysis is directed towards the experiences of sexual harassment within the broader campus context rather than specifically as racial or cultural discrimination between the women of the same residence. This is beyond the scope of the current study. Lerato also narrated that she knew of rapists who resided within university residences and were permitted to stay, whereas some victims felt that they need to leave their respective residences. This is a perfect example of the gross power exhibited by certain men within the campus structure, and how women have become responsible for bearing the consequences of their own victimisation (Gordon & Collins, 2013). Below, Veronica narrated an experience within a residence:

> *I had a situation that kind of nothing happened, but I was seeing this guy. We got home quite drunk from a party. My roommate made us food, and I went upstairs and I fell asleep. And then, the next day I woke up early 'cause I had a shift at MFM. And I… He wasn't there, so I was like, "Okay, well, he probably left." You know, like ate and left. And then… But I remember I woke up and I didn't have my pants on. I just had like sh– a shirt on. And then, my roommate messaged me and she was like, "Hey, did you let the guy out this morning?" And I'm like, "What? He didn't sleep over. He wasn't there." And she's like, "Yah, he did. He went up to your room when… After you – after you guys had eaten." And I was like, "What?" And I messaged him and I like just had this massive like rape anxiety. I was like, "Oh, my God. What if something happened?" And it's a guy I was seeing. I trusted him completely, I thought.*

This extract speaks to the normalised fear that most women share of being violated by men. Veronica shared a drunken experience of arriving home from a party with a male student with whom she was well acquainted. She described waking up the next morning, wearing no pants, and saying that he was no longer there. She described her experience of what she called "*rape anxiety*", which she experienced after she realised that he had spent the night in her bedroom. In South Africa, rape is a common threat, and the term 'rape anxiety' not only refers to women's awareness that they could be 'victims' of sexual assault – even in the safety of their own homes – but also to a deep fear that they could be victimised merely because of their sex. Dosekun (2007) described this normalised threat of gender violence as a form of control over women, saying that this power struggle often forces women

to experience themselves as vulnerable in relation to men. Veronica's narration of rape anxiety within her residence – where her roommate was present – portrays a sense of fear that has become part of the fabric of women's lives even in supposedly safe and private environments, as well as how women are at risk within university residences. Despite Veronica's feminist stance, and the fact that she did not regard her experiences as 'rape', she seemed to position herself as being at risk of being raped within the residential space. This is consistent with Dosekun's (2007) findings that rape anxiety and female fear have become so common, that even in residences, women experience a heightened fear of being victimised. Veronica continued by saying,

> *… like working with rape culture, working with that kinda stuff, being like a feminist, being aware of these kinda things. And having the history that I have, I was just like… I was so vulnerable in that moment. I was asleep. I didn't have pants on. He could have done. And maybe I wouldn't have woken up.*

Veronica's narration suggests that she was unsure as to whether the male student actually did something to her. This uncertainty fuelled her anxiety around what had possibly occurred in her residence room. Veronica referred to her history of having been a 'victim' of rape, and how her sister was raped. Veronica also mentioned being a feminist and that working with rape culture had made her aware of the risks and vulnerability of being a woman. This significance of vulnerability, and the ease with which a woman can become a 'victim' are extremely important in understanding the complexity of the fears that women face daily, especially when they fear repeated victimisation.

Veronica constructed herself as fearful, particularly in relation to someone she knew and trusted. She later said that soon after this incident, she and the man broke up, which may also insinuate that she lost her trust in him. However, the rape anxiety she described at the beginning of the extract also seems to suggest that she did not trust him to begin with. She conveyed the meaning that part of living as a woman within patriarchal residence culture is a source of constant vulnerability as it is often extremely difficult to trust men, even those with whom one is in a relationship. This refers to the culture of fear discussed in the literature review, in which women live in constant fear of being violated (Gordon

& Collins, 2013). Veronica continued by describing another experience that she had had in the all-male residence:

> *There was the thing with the guy where I was at [all-male residence] and we were just hooking up and he like kind of put his penis in me like once or twice and I didn't… I was like, "What? That's not what we spoke about happening." Uhm, I went to the residence [all-male residence]. I wasn't… I wouldn't say that… I… There… I wasn't sexually harassed there, but the entire environment was very icky because it was [all-female residence][7] in [all-male residence] and it was just… The jokes that were being made, the – the language that was being used, uhm, the way that they were talking about women. Even about us, you know. It was icky. Uhm, So, I think often it doesn't have to be, you know, overt for it to be… For it to have an effect, I think…*

Here, Veronica described not only some of the experiences that she had had in the male residence, but also described an instance in which her female residence went to [all-male residence] for an event. She provided insight into the way in which the men treated the women. This excerpt, within this subtheme, provides a meaningful description of the male residence [all-male residence], as narrated by a woman. Earlier in this chapter, I discussed Veronica's understanding of the term 'sexual harassment' and analysed her narratives accordingly. In this extract, however, it is important when Veronica stated that "*the entire environment was very icky*". Apart from the obvious image relating to poor hygiene that initially comes to mind, it is also worth considering the more figurative meaning associated with this description, implies that the environment was dirty.

The term 'icky' refers to something that is offensive to one's senses or that is distasteful (Merriam-Webster Dictionary, 2019). Veronica's narration that "*The jokes that were being made, the – the language that was being used, uhm, the way that they were talking about women. Even about us, you know. It was icky,*" seems to indicate that the residence males may have been making sexist, sexual, discriminating remarks, as well as using foul language aimed at, and in front of, the women. This may

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[7] In the above extract, the residence has been anonymised for confidentiality purposes. Veronica narrated how her all-female residence had had a social event at an all-male residence, and what she experienced at this event. This refers to a traditional social event in which the all-female, first-year residents visit the first-year male residence as part of social bonding. Traditionally, these social events are compulsory.

shed light on Veronica's narration about the environment she described: it seemed as though Veronica opposed this behaviour since she conveyed that she was offended by the ways in which the male resident students had spoken about women.

Veronica continued by saying, "*it doesn't have to be, you know, overt for it to be… For it to have an effect,*" which may imply that these kinds of comments made towards women are not overt sexual harassment or that Veronica may have considered overt forms of sexual harassment to be more physical in nature. She implied that not only the overt behaviours, but also these jokes and the language that these men had used affected her as well. This provides a sense of the network of subtle behaviours and language which degrade femininity – a culture of meanings which serves as the social scaffolding for sexual harassment and other forms of violence against women (Gqola, 2015). Veronica narrated that the men's use of language had an effect on her. Moreover, she conveyed meaning about the harmful patriarchal culture of the university residence – a culture which functions through "subtle" linguistic degradation of the feminine. In the excerpt below, Veronica described another experience she had had in the male residence, and how it affected her:

> *Like I have very, very, very negative experiences with [all-male residence]. I was sleeping with a guy there in my second year, and it was totally consensual, but it was one of those like, we would meet up in – on – in town. We'd be super drunk, and then we'd go back to [all-male residence] and we'd have sex, and we'd fall asleep, and he would like… It would be fine, you know. It would be like a very consensual… Just a drunken booty call situation. And in that, we actually did share a lot and we did get closer. And I do think I started having feelings for him, but then… So, my sister was raped and he knew that. And we… He joked the one day after one night that we'd gone out and got really drunk. And he was like, "Oh, my God. I can't remember anything about last night." I was like, "Yah, no hey. Even me. It's like…" And he was like… And like that night, like some of his friends walked in and they like saw us having sex, and it was just like very awkward. Uhm, and then he walked me back to res the next day and he was like, "Yah, haha. It's pretty much like you raped me then because I can't remember,*

hey. That's how it works." And I was like, "What the fuck, dude? You can't say that." Uhm, and he was like, "Oh, yah, no, just joking, you know."

From the above extract, it is clear that Veronica did not regard this experience as 'sexual harassment', per se. However, she did eloquently allude to a deeper challenge regarding patriarchal masculinity, namely a lack of sensitivity, and support for the rape culture. The concept of 'rape culture' will be discussed in the next theme. The above extract is important to this subtheme as it sheds light on a display of patriarchal power within the specific space of the university residences. As narrated by Veronica, this young male student was sexually intimate with her, knew intimate secrets about her and her sister's past experiences of rape, and yet he still made a joke about those experiences. Ironically, a joking reversal of roles signifies that males have the power not to take violence against women seriously and to degrade feminist efforts to call for an acknowledgement of the seriousness of such experiences (rape). Rape is a serious issue in South Africa, and is a secret fear shared by most women (Dosekun, 2007). Through her narrative, Veronica described a sense of the culture of misogynist humour that fuels patriarchal culture in this residence. She went on to say:

Because some of his friends had walked in, they had a newspaper in [all-male residence] that they used to, uhm, circulate. It wasn't one that actually had any perm– They didn't have permission. It was like a really disgusting like one eight-sided, that can, uhm, print on both sides thing where they would like have everything ranging from like homophobic jokes, fat shaming, to like just everything. And lots of rape jokes in there. And he was, you know, mentioned in it because he like – like he'd made this joke and it was like, "Oh, yah, no, you know." He was like passed out and this chick was just having sex with him. And like it was this massive joke in [all-male residence]. And I confronted him about it. And I was like, "How… Like you know. Like you're studying Law. Like you know that that's not an okay joke to make." And he was like yah, no, he knows but it was just you know, like … I'm like, "Do you actually feel this way?" And I remember he sent me these like – you know, those like laughing crying emoticons? Like, "Oh, my gosh. Don't be ridiculous. It's just a joke."

84

Veronica narrated that even after apologising, the male student allowed the retelling of this "*joke*" in a student-initiated, eight-page, "*disgusting*" booklet in which the students in the male residence made gender discriminatory jokes and sexist comments. Veronica mentioned that the students did not have permission for this booklet, which could mean that the residence heads were unaware of its existence and/or that the students were publishing personal matters without the permission of the people involved. Veronica used the word *"disgusting"* to describe this booklet and to express her disapproval of its contents, wherein her involvement (depicted as raping the young man when he was drunk) was a gross misinterpretation and was distorted for comic effect. Here, Veronica not only exposed one of the ways in which toxic masculinity was perpetuated within this specific residence, but through her narrative, she also openly challenged male privilege and entitlement to degrading women through sexist jokes.

Veronica mentioned that the student had been studying Law and, despite his degree of choice, he still took part in gender oppressive and degrading behaviour, showed no remorse or concern for the possible consequences thereof, and still sent her laughing emoticons after she confronted him. This creates the impression that within male residences, toxic masculinity flourishes and that only by addressing such environments can an impact be made on curbing sexual harassment. Veronica expressed the anger she had felt and continued to feel when seeing the male student on campus. This may indicate underlying feelings of humiliation and shame because she had personal experience in working to create awareness of rape on campus and, still, the male student demeaned her experience and the work she had been doing. This toxic residence culture fosters behaviour that not only degrades women but also allows gender-based violence to thrive (Collins, 2013).

Furthermore, this toxic residence culture and rape culture that are perpetuated by men in society may not only instil a shared fear among women of being victimised, but also renders oppressive and violent patriarchal behaviours 'normal'. Our society maintains patriarchal discourses and practices which oppress and demean women, to the extent that experiences of sexual harassment are also maintained (Pease, 2016; Rogers, 2009). This not only creates the impression that women should accept this behaviour, but also that men will not be reprimanded for it (Rogers, 2009). This could result in

women choosing not to speak up after having experienced sexual harassment, as well as a fear of speaking, perhaps because of potential retaliation from their harassers, or the system which protects them. On this note, some women may have differing opinions on how to name or describe their experiences of sexual harassment, and some may perhaps reject the label entirely.

(Not) Naming Sexual Harassment

As far as this theme is concerned, the participants' narrations of naming their experiences as sexual harassment will be discussed. The theme will centre on minimising experiences (on an individual level), and the patriarchal culture of silencing (on the broader, societal level). According to a staff member of the Equality Unit at Stellenbosch University, sexual harassment consists of any behaviour that is sexually inappropriate and causes the victim distress. This could be anything from catcalling to stalking and even rape. This is, of course, important to this study as many students may not know what sexual harassment entails, how to notice it when it occurs, or may even be unable to name experiences as sexual harassment for various reason(s).

Similar to the findings of Gordon and Collins (2013) who conducted a study on gender-based violence at a KwaZulu-Natal university, the discourses that arose during this study seemed to suggest that the participants were not only coping with the sexual harassment and fear with which women live on a daily basis, but also maintained the very gender inequalities and social powers that facilitate sexual harassment. By this, I mean that although the students seemed to recognise discourses and practices that facilitate gender inequality, they still performed these practices to avoid being ostracised. Many of the participants seemed to be unsure of what language to use in the naming and describing of their experiences as sexual harassment. Consequently, this may have affected how they regarded their experiences.

The subthemes within this theme are: "It's nothing to write home about": minimising experiences, self-blame, patriarchal culture of silencing, and rape culture. The subtheme of minimising experiences provides insight into the way in which women describe their experiences of sexual harassment by drawing on feminist and patriarchal discourses. Within this subtheme, the use of language provides an understanding as to how students give meaning to their experiences. The

subtheme, self-blame, sheds light on the participants' narrations of self-blame. Seemingly, the participants narrated that they had taken the responsibility upon themselves of ensuring their own safety and discuss a sense of blame after having experienced sexual harassment. Some of the participants described their own behaviours and actions that could have contributed to their victimisation. It is important to note that the concept of self-blame indicates that the there is an aspect of blame or guilt. This may shed light on how society causes women to feel guilty about being victimised and may also be a reason as to why many women choose to remain silent (Ahrens, 2006).

The subtheme of the patriarchal culture of silencing sheds light on how society reacts to women who have experienced sexual harassment. Through this analytical work, I do not intend to blame the participants for their experiences. Instead, my intention is to highlight how patriarchal culture has normalised sexual harassment and teaches women that their experiences make them blameworthy. This is especially evident within this subtheme, wherein two participants described conversations with family members and friends regarding their experiences. During these conversations, the participants were silenced with patriarchal discourses that describe male sexual behaviour as normal and these experiences as unavoidable. Similarly, Ahrens (2006) notes that the silencing and dismissing of experiences constitutes a patriarchal discourse whereby 'victims' are blamed and the harassers go unchallenged. The last subtheme, rape culture, ties into the theme of (not) naming sexual harassment as it provides insight into the participants' sense making around rape culture on campus. Veronica described experiences of constant fear and anticipation of being sexually harassed on campus and blamed the broader society for sexual harassment.

The subthemes below reflect the meaning the participants made about these experiences in their own lives, as well as the discourses that they had drawn upon in order to do so.

"It's nothing to write home about": Minimising experiences. Certain social discourses may either portray a woman as a helpless 'victim' or identify her as an attention-seeking troublemaker who takes exaggerated offence to sexual interests. Gouws and Kritzinger (2007) use the example of female medical students who experience harassment from their male counterparts, and do not report the incidents as they 'come with the territory'. Many women do not report their experiences because they

87

fear that the harasser will retaliate or that the system from which they seek support will not believe them (Hart, 2019; Patterson et al., 2009). This may contribute to a woman minimising her experiences of sexual harassment or, perhaps, being unable to name her experiences as sexual harassment. Andiswa narrated her experience as follows:

> *I mean, it's like your usual catcalling. Like that incident is – is, you know. But it's mostly like from people of colour that do the catcalling, or the men that sort of like work around campus. So, it's the ground staff. Generally respectful, but there'll be like that one incident where this weird one will just be like, you know, trying to greet you but you know they want something else or something. [Laughs] Yah.*

When Andiswa said "*like your usual catcalling*" and "*It's nothing to write home about*", she seemed not only to insinuate that the behaviours she had experienced were normal, but that they were not impactful in her life to a degree of concern. When she narrated, "*it's mostly like from people of colour that do the catcalling*", this links the race and class of the ground staff in such a way that it paints a picture of men who work around campus as the sexual harassers. Thus, she minimised the threat, as she positions the men who harass regularly as having less power than her, socially, as a Black female, who holds power in relation to the harasser (class and level of education). She distanced herself from potential perpetrators and, in doing so, distanced herself from the threat of violence, to some degree.

These findings are consistent with those of Dosekun (2007), who interviewed South African women who had never been raped, about their constructions of rape. Dosekun (2007) found that the participants minimised their personal risk of becoming rape 'victims' by constructing men who rape as 'others' from a different racial or cultural background, or of a lower educational level. By describing these men who are, in a sense, of a lower status than herself, namely the "*ground staff*", Andiswa may have attempted to regain a sense of power over her vulnerability within the patriarchal context. In the extract below, Tanya provided insight into her own sense-making of her experience:

I didn't know if it was okay, or if it wasn't okay, or was he just being nice, or… I mean, guys are guys, I guess, but yah, at a stage, it made me a bit uncomfortable and I didn't really know what to do or not to do. [Laughs]

In the extract above, Tanya narrated how she made sense of her experience after her harasser had consistently complimented her on her appearance. Tanya seemed to refer to this behaviour as normal when she said, *"guys are guys, I guess"*. Perhaps, here, Tanya made sense of men's behaviours by drawing on patriarchal discourses of men's sexual appetite. This discourse is called "the male sexual drive discourse" which, ultimately, means that male sexual aggression is normal and should be accepted (Dosekun, 2007, p. 90). Tanya seemed to be drawing on this discourse, perhaps to justify why her harasser had behaved the way he did. The terms "*usual*" and "*guys are guys*" create the impression that the participants may have regarded these experiences as every day, normal occurrences, and that this normality rendered the experiences less impactful or serious. In the two extracts above, feminist discourses of sexual objectification ("*it made me a bit uncomfortable*"; "*you know they want something else*") and patriarchal discourses of 'guys will be guys' collide with the prevailing sense that participants are minimising their experiences. To some extent, the patriarchal discourse prevails.

Below is an extract in which Tanya compared her experiences to those that she may have regarded as more severe:

I don't mean it to be insensitive. But I mean, it's not that I was like raped or something. So, it's not something really physical-physical happened to me that I wanna say left permanent damage. Uhm, I mean, okay, there was this one guy. He literally… Ooh. This one time he just touched me, like on my upper leg, but uhm, it wasn't… I mean, you can't even compare it to something that's like way worse. Uhm, so it didn't have… Or, I feel like I can't really say it had an impact, thinking about this sexual harassment that's like way more complex or more intense than my situation.

From this, both Andiswa and Tanya described their experiences of harassment as not too serious because their experiences did not have the 'traumatic' impact of rape. They described their experiences

as less important than rape and, therefore, more normal because their experiences had not been as physically violating. The "true victim discourse" conveys an understanding of who may be considered a 'victim': individuals who have experienced violence or threat of physical harm, try to avoid the occurrence of the event, and seek assistance from support services, are considered 'true victims' in line with this discourse (Phillips, 2000, p. 65). Women who are considered to play a role or have agency in their situation are considered to be blameworthy or responsible for the event and, therefore, do not warrant sympathy (Phillips, 2000). Perhaps Andiswa and Tanya did not regard their experiences as concerning due to the lack of physical violence. Therefore, according to patriarchal discourse, they were not seen as 'true victims'. On the other hand, by minimising their experiences of sexual harassment, women could in a sense reject the knowledge that they have been in an unsafe situation or that someone has violated them in some way (Kelly & Radford, 1990). By rejecting this 'victimhood', women reshape their experiences and perhaps even use such language to cope with what would have been a traumatic experience.

Nadia had the following to say about naming experiences of sexual harassment, as defined by society:

I think they (individuals who do not name their own experiences) are afraid of labelling, especially in broad daylight something stupid that has happened. Labelling it as sexual harassment because they are too afraid that they get that person in trouble or make it a much bigger situation than what it is. "As jy verstaan[8]*".*

…

"Soos[9]*" my situation is big, but it is not something that big. They don't think it is something that big. So, they would just brush it off and go on.*

This extract provides insight into the reasons as to why a woman may refrain from labelling her experience as sexual harassment, as narrated by Nadia. When she said, "*I think they are afraid of*

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[8] Afrikaans for "if you understand"
[9] Afrikaans for "like"

labelling, especially in broad daylight something stupid that has happened," Nadia raised themes of having to name an experience as sexual harassment, and the perception that others may have of the experience in relation to that label. Firstly, Nadia narrated how individuals are afraid of labelling an experience as sexual harassment. Perhaps this is because many perceive sexual harassment as having certain characteristics or, perhaps, because there are certain criteria for labelling a 'victim' of sexual harassment. According to Magley and Shupe (2005), individuals are less likely to accept a label of sexual harassment if the social perception of the 'victim' is negative, such as calling the 'victim' an instigator, attention-seeker or using the term 'victim' negatively. Individuals may reject the label of sexual harassment as a way of protecting their self-esteem or confidence, as a coping method, resisting the judgement of others or, perhaps, even because the experience of sexual harassment does not meet their expectation of what the experience should entail (Magley & Shupe, 2005). Nadia seemed to refer to the experiences of women, in general, and commented on why some would not regard their experiences as sexual harassment. Perhaps this minimising of her own experiences was why Nadia did not seek support from the university, particularly since she may have regarded her experiences as not severe enough to warrant support.

Secondly, Nadia said, "*something stupid that has happened,*" which may indicate that she may have felt as though the experience was stupid/minor or, perhaps, not severe enough to mention. She continued by saying that labelling an experience as sexual harassment could get the harasser into trouble or that others in her social sphere would make a big issue out of it (this is a consequence of naming experiences as sexual harassment). This may insinuate that, typically, women are expected not to cause a scene, or to embarrass themselves and others, or that certain sexual harassment experiences may not be an issue worth addressing. Nadia may have brought this up because she either shared this viewpoint or may have been silenced, to a degree, in the past, and adopted this thought process. In the extract below, Veronica questioned the label, as well as her experience of rape:

> *Like I was at a party that my cousin was hosting, and one of his friends in [all-male residence]*
>
> *and I ended up in a bathroom together and we also like… It – it was just weird. I was really*
>
> *drunk and we had swapped shirts at one point outside at the party, and like at… We were gonna*

swap back and then every… Like he just kept taking off my clothes and I kept going, "No," and he kept taking off clothes. And it was like that acquiesce eventually. Like okay fine. Uhm, and we had sex. But it's not sex, is it, if every step that leads you there you say no? But I wouldn't say I'm comfortable calling it rape.

Veronica began her description of the events by saying that she was at a social event, and had ended up drunk, in a bathroom, with a guy. She expressed her resistance to his advances, repeatedly telling him "No," while he continued to remove her clothes, and eventually giving in and having sex with him. Veronica continued by saying that "*it's not sex, is it, if every step that leads you there you say no? But I wouldn't say I'm comfortable calling it rape*". This is interesting because, while it seemed as though she had not regarded the encounter as consensual, she did not seem to regard it as rape either. This could be because she had viewed sex differently than I do, that she had her own definition of what constitutes rape or perhaps she did not feel comfortable accepting the term 'rape'. Being raped has stigmas and discourses that surround the 'victim' (Bartky, 1990; Doherty & Anderson, 1998; Gavey, 2005; Phillips, 2000; University of Pretoria, 2020; Western Australia Department of Health, 2020). Thus, it is possible that she did not want to be regarded as a 'victim'. Some examples of such discourses (and other rape myths) are that women 'ask for it' by dressing in a certain way, that rape does not actually hurt anyone because it is just sex (Gavey, 2005; Kelly & Radford, 1990), real rape involves extreme violence, women are spiteful and will lie about being raped and that "real rapists are psychopathic" (Doherty & Anderson, 1998, p. 583). In the above extract, Veronica avoided the definition of rape. This seems to indicate that she recognised her own agency during the encounter and thus did not position herself as a 'victim'.

This speaks to how the positioning of self as agent complicates the 'victim' status (Phillips, 2000). Veronica referred to herself subjectively as someone who may have played a role in the incident and that by identifying herself as a 'victim' of rape, she would have to accept being labelled a 'victim'. In this sense, the image of a 'victim' is publicly reinforced, and those who have experienced victimisation that may not be considered inherently physical or violent, may be aware of the potential blame that would be cast upon them should they speak up (Doherty & Anderson, 1998; Hart, 2019).

Essentially, for argument's sake, it can be said that the act of sex is consensual whereas rape is not. On this basis, rape has an element of violence that is acted out in a sexual manner and, perhaps, because the act is not outright 'physically abusive', 'victims' may choose not to name the experience 'rape' (Phillips, 2000). This is yet another competing discourse, as Veronica is a feminist and knows about rape culture and its defining features, and therefore positions herself as an agent by redefining her experiences as assault not rape – this can be a way to subjectively give meaning to her own experiences, instead of claiming victimhood along with the labels attached to it. In the extract below, Veronica continued her narration:

> *It's family. It's my cousin's friend. I never wanted to say anything. I didn't want to make him feel uncomfortable. Uhm. My friend had… had actual consensual sex with him in the past and she really liked him, so I was like, oh, I didn't wanna… Blah. So, I mean that… Also, like hearing his name, thinking about that. And also, I was really mad at myself because I was like, "Ah, you're meant to be a feminist. You're meant to, again, like you're the one who goes around and like teaches people about consent and about rape culture and about all these things. And you… Yet, this happened. Like you let it happen."*

In this extract, Veronica articulated possible reasons as to why she did not speak up after the event. She mentioned that all the individuals who had had positive relations with this man, and because she and her 'rapist' shared the same loved ones, she probably did not want to ruin their perceptions of him. Many women are vulnerable to experiences of intimate forms of violence, but because of their relationship with the perpetrator, they are less likely to speak out because they do not wish to get the perpetrator into trouble (Collins, 2014). Other literature shows that this may also be because women face immense scrutiny by the judicial system when they report rape, and are therefore at risk of experiencing secondary victimisation and judgement (Avalos, 2017; Doherty & Anderson, 1998). When Veronica said that she did not want to make him feel uncomfortable, she may consciously or unconsciously have been perpetuating a form of self-blame, which perhaps indicates an internal struggle between the 'victim's' fear of speaking up and the power of the rapist in keeping her silent. Her

narrative provided insight into the fact that knowing the perpetrator may be a factor that influences naming/not naming of sexual harassment experiences.

Veronica described her anger directed at herself for allowing the event to occur. She highlighted the contradiction between her having allowed this to occur and her being a feminist. This could further explain her resistance to naming the experience as rape because as a feminist, she mentioned that she had taught others about rape culture. Her reluctance to speak out against her rapist, and not being more resistant towards his advances, may have resulted in her refusing to accept the "rape" label as well as the 'victim' label that follows. Veronica narrated that she had been confident in her sexuality, and that this sense of sexual liberation may have given her a feeling of having power and agency. Due to her feminist ideals, she understood and advocated female liberation from oppressive ideologies. Nevertheless, she perpetuated patriarchal discourses of the role women play in their own victimisation, and how she should behave like a "good woman" – these patriarchal discourses ultimately shift the responsibility/blame to the 'victim'. Veronica narrated the following in terms of naming her experience:

> So, I'm happy calling it assault. And I think it's because that's like a much broader… I don't know why. I mean, again, I read. I know. I know the definitions. I just don't want to call it rape. I just don't know why. I don't think I'm… Maybe it is minimising, but when I think about it, I think of it as unwanted sex. And that's a category, you know. That's a category that we can use. It doesn't have to be rape, and – and you know. So, you can have… And it – it is a debate in the literature where you go like, "Is all unwanted sex rape?" because you get a lot of unwanted sex in marriages. And a lot of people who are… Women who are married don't want to call it rape, uhm, because it's like you consent to unwanted sex, which is like it seems like a, like an opposite thing but sure… I also don't want to diminish people's agency because at one point, I also did make a decision like, "Fine," you know"… "Uhm and in hindsight, you can say a lot of things and you can ask a lot of questions, but it's still something I'm grappling with today.

This extract speaks to the broader theme of naming an experience as sexual violation. Throughout this extract, Veronica narrated that she was unwilling to call her experiences "rape". She went on to say that she felt comfortable referring to these experiences as assault or unwanted sex, as the term 'rape' has many connotations with which she may not agree. Veronica continued by saying that many wives are unwilling to call unwanted sex with their husbands' rape, but that people have the agency to label their own experiences according to that with which they are comfortable. This decision of naming an experience involves the use of patriarchal language (the dominant language in society that blames the 'victims') to describe certain experiences and label them as sexual harassment or not. This further highlight how society's language used to describe certain experiences can change the 'victim' into someone blameworthy. Perhaps Veronica chooses not to label her experiences using the dominant patriarchal language and in doing so resists the label of 'victim'. By this I mean that Veronica may have accepted some responsibility in being sexually violated and in doing so, lessened the responsibility of the harasser, but perhaps also strategically to avoid the stigmas and blame that is attached to being a 'rape victim'. In this extract, Veronica ended off by saying that "*it's still something I'm grappling with today,*" which may insinuate that she herself was still making sense of what had happened to her and that she was reflecting on these experiences.

In this subtheme of minimising experiences, dominant patriarchal discourses and the broader patriarchal culture paint the picture that women are to blame for their experiences, and that these 'inappropriate' behaviours are normal. The fact that these women are speaking out bears testimony to the reality that these behaviours are not normal and, perhaps, they are aware of this. These patriarchal discourses are confusing as they may leave women feeling that what they are experiencing should be accepted. The patriarchal culture's disregard for women's experiences of sexual harassment, as well as discourses which suggest the 'normality' of these experiences may make women feel that seeking support will be met with dismissal, judgement, and blame. Male ideology and patriarchal society is filled with discourses of "she's over-reacting" and "she's a troublemaker", and by minimising their own experiences of sexual harassment, women can cope within the same society that allows their victimisation to occur (Kelly & Radford, 1990).

Self-blame. In this subtheme, participants' narrations of self-blame are discussed. Sexual harassment has become so normalised that women have become responsible for ensuring their own safety (Phillips, 2000). It is therefore assumed that women are blameworthy for their harassment. This subtheme does not draw on discourse of victim-blaming and does not insinuate that women are to blame for their experiences of sexual harassment. Rather, it discusses how women articulate self-blame, in other words, how patriarchal discourse of victim-blaming shape the ways in which these young women make sense of their experiences. In the next extract, Tanya described her feelings of being harassed by a male student and her thoughts about reporting him:

> *Honestly, I'm really mad at myself for not being stronger at the time. Like, I'm mad at myself for not immediately like, uhm, like… I don't know. Stood up for myself and tell the guy in his face, "Listen, I don't know what you – what you doing or what you think you're doing, but, uhm, this isn't appropriate." Uh, even like in the beginning when he was just giving comments like, "You look nice today," I felt like I immediately had to tell him down or to tell him, uhm… So, I'm quite mad at myself and I think if I'm – if I'm ever placed in that situation again because of what I went through, I would, or I hope I would, uhm, like recognise it sooner, and then… Or like, take steps sooner as well. Uhm, so if it's that I had to go to my boyfriend sooner, or tell a friend sooner, or go to someone that's, uhm, like higher up like the tutor.*

…

> *Like, it made me more conscious in a way that I don't think I can ever really meet a new person and not start looking for signs [harassing behaviours].*

Tanya said that she was angry at herself for not speaking up because if she had done so sooner, the situation may have been diffused and she might have saved herself the discomfort. In this instance, she may have felt helpless because society and the general patriarchal culture itself encourages the shaming of women even though many sexual harassers are men. This practice of blaming the 'victim' effectively hides the power of patriarchy and not only limits the lives of 'victims' (potential or actual) but also gives more social freedom to perpetrators (Gordon & Collins, 2013). According to Kelly and

Radford (1990), not speaking up is not necessarily a sign of a woman being intimidated or unsure of herself, but that it may take time to acknowledge experiences of abuse, find the language to describe it and also denying that a 'strong woman' such as herself has been abused.

This may indicate that Tanya seemed to blame herself for the prolonged sexual harassment and that the feeling of helplessness may have contributed to the power that the student held over her. The responsibility to recognise the situation was, however, not hers to begin with. Instead, it was the harasser's responsibility to know that it was inappropriate. The "discourses of women's responsibility" refers to a patriarchal discourse in which women are responsible for ensuring that these incidents do not occur. This could be by dressing conservatively or, perhaps even staying indoors at night (Gordon & Collins, 2013, p. 104). This discourse surfaces in other sections of this analysis as well. Tanya referred to his 'niceness' as a contributing factor to her discomfort and stated that she would have preferred it if the harasser had not been nice to her. This dual impression of him is interesting and paints a sinister 'two-faced' picture. Her narrative implies that the harasser was extremely kind-hearted and nice to everyone but had secretly made her so uncomfortable that she even began to doubt her own experience. This can be considered a kind of psychological manipulation and may have contributed to her self-blame and lack of conviction in reporting him.

Below is a further description of Nadia's experiences of being observed intensely by an old man in the Stellenbosch University sports faculty:

> *I felt really dirty like I can take five showers and it wouldn't rub that feeling off. I wouldn't feel clean. Uhm, I just feel like, I feel like I am just there like for "ietsie mooi wat verby loop. Nie dat ek sê ek is mooi nie, maar net soos"*[10] *that is what I am there for. I do not have a purpose and stuff, and that is literally what I am there for.*

This extract speaks to the impact of these experiences on Nadia, specifically the looks the old man gave her. Nadia described how the old man's gaze had made her feel dirty, and is something she described repeatedly. She emphasised the feeling of dirtiness by saying that not even five showers

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[10] Afrikaans for "something pretty that walks past. Not that I am saying I am pretty, but just"

could wash away the feeling. Her saying, "*something pretty that walks by*, *like… that is what I am there for. I do not have a purpose and stuff, and that is literally what I am there for*" provides insight into the awareness that Nadia had of being sexually objectified by the old man. There is also an element of self-blame in Nadia's narration:

> *It makes me feel like I'm the wrong one, like, how can I say this? Even if I didn't do anything, but I just feel like the wrong one because what am I wearing, what am I doing? That they are looking at me – that they feel like – am I exploiting the situation that they feel they need to come and do that?*

By referring to herself as the possible cause or instigator of the harassment, Nadia drew on patriarchal discourse that blames women and conveys the meaning that the assertive and active male sexual drive, coupled with the sexual objectification of women, are both normal and acceptable. This extract, which is a self-criticising internal dialogue, sheds light on the ambiguity 'victims' face when trying to make sense of their experiences. Statements such as: "*makes me feel like I'm the wrong one*"; "*how can I say this*"; "*I just feel like the wrong one*"; "*what am I wearing*"; and "*am I exploiting the situation*" reflects on societal language used to silence women and blame them for their role in the sexual harassment. Critically, Nadia uses an active present tense to describe her sense-making of her role in the sexual harassment which could insinuate that she still feels some responsibility.

Within this context of sexual harassment, a display of power could be expected with regard to sex-roles (women are expected to submit to men), the biological capability of overpowering another (men are physically stronger), and cultural respect. By shifting the blame from the harasser to herself (this can be seen when she referred to her clothing and the notion that she may have been exploiting the situation), Nadia seemed to refer to the discourse that women play a role in their own victimisation, and that the overt display of the sexual nature of men is normal. According to Moffett (2006), although women dress according to the way in which they wish to exert their independence and agency, they may become 'victims' of gender-based violence – not because a man failed to recognise this independence, but because he wished to punish her for it. This discourse of "she asked for it" is a patriarchal tool used to justify the behaviour of sexually-violent men (Moffett, 2006). The extract above

98

shows that Nadia drew on this patriarchal discourse of "she asked for it" to give meaning to her experience of sexual objectification.

Veronica continued by discussing how she had made sense of the experience pertaining to the rape joke and the student in the male residence (discussed above):

And the thing with the [all-male residence] guy, his joke, rage. Just that entire situation was just rage and also embarrassment because I was like, "People can't think that I can do that. Like what the fuck?" And then, the friend in the bath – uh, my cousin's friend in the bathroom; that for me, like I remember writing after that like I... How can I even like be an advocate for women on campus? Like how can I put... Like how can I like be in this role and like preach consent and education and all of these things when like I couldn't even like stick to saying no, you know, in that situation? I was very like ashamed.

...

I think I had to blame someone, and it's easier to blame yourself.

The context of this extract is that Veronica had a consensual, drunken encounter with a [all-male residence] student. After waking up one morning, the man told her that he was so drunk that she could have had her way with him and, according to him, that is how rape works. This student was close to Veronica and had intimate knowledge of how both she and her sister had been raped in the past. Veronica narrated her embarrassment and rage after the [all-male residence] student made the 'joke' about her being a rapist. Her saying that "*People can't think that I can do that*" implies that Veronica may have been concerned that other people would think of her as a rapist despite her efforts to campaign against rape on campus. This student to which Veronica referred had made this joke and shared it with the other males in the residence who, in turn, had turned it into a long-standing joke within the residence. These male students kept the *joke* alive by printing an exaggerated story thereof (how Veronica had 'raped' him) in a student-initiated newsletter.

Veronica also spoke about the shame she had felt whilst engaging with people on campus after the experience she had in the bathroom with this man. This is possibly where Veronica's struggle to

99

name her experience stems from and can be attributed to her statement: "*I think I had to blame someone, and it's easier to blame yourself*". Phillips (2000) wrote about naming, or not-naming, in terms of accepting the labels that accompany victimisation. While women are more likely to refer to another woman's experiences as sexual harassment or rape, they tend to refer to their own experiences as unexpected or assault. This indicates that Veronica may have seen herself as an active agent in the experiences; that she may be excluded as a 'victim' because she 'consented'. This feminist discourse of "no means no and yes means yes" (Phillips, 2000, p. 158) had, ultimately, shifted the blame away from the harasser to Veronica herself. By this I mean that Veronica narrated that she eventually 'gave in' to his sexual advances and therefore cannot claim victimhood. It is ironic that by claiming a level of agency through her narration, Veronica simultaneously positioned herself as blameworthy. This is, perhaps, reflective of the double bind with which women are faced as a result of a multitude of intersecting patriarchal discourses whose ultimate function is to blame women and maintain oppressive behaviour and forms of violence against women.

In this study, many of the participants described feelings of shame and self-blame. This indicates that these socially constructed meanings shaped the way in which they made sense of their experiences within this particular patriarchal context. This patriarchal discourse which blames the 'victims' was also found in the study conducted by Gordon and Collins (2013) at another South African university. Gordon and Collins (2013) found that female university students live with the daily fear of being harassed or victimised, and that some female students blame themselves for harassment or take on the responsibility of ensuring their own protection. This may be maintained by the university as a system that silences women through disbelief, judgement, and blame. These findings are similar to those of the current study, as many of the participants drew on patriarchal discourse to describe their experiences, and also expressed a distrust in the existing university support systems. This suggests the need for programmes that will increase students' trust in the university, and which can be used to abolish the culture of silencing in universities in order to create an inclusive system in which women feel more comfortable. The above-mentioned programmes should promote student safety and help 'victims' realise that they are not to blame for their own victimisation.

Patriarchal culture of silencing. In this subtheme, I discuss narrations of women that could explain the significance and perpetuation of sexual harassment in their lives. This, by no means, implies that the participants played a role in the instigation of sexual harassment, but that patriarchal socialisation may have taught them to believe that sexual harassment is normal. This subtheme is part of the broader theme of (not) naming sexual harassment as it speaks to the broader patriarchal silencing of women who wish to speak about their experiences, but because of patriarchal discourses that blame women and shifts responsibility to the 'victims, women may choose not to name their experiences (Gordon & Collins, 2013; Johnson, 2005). From a male perspective, Johnson (2005) explained that it is generally difficult to blame men for sexual harassment because responsibility, guilt or blame are only accepted when men feel that they should take responsibility for their behaviour. This refusal to accept responsibility therefore allows the blame to be shifted to women and becomes a patriarchal tool by which women are silenced, disbelieved, and stigmatised for sexual harassment. In a sense, this silence may occur when women believe that speaking out is futile and that their experiences will be ignored. This may result from women receiving threats not to speak out, being coached to describe their experiences as less severe, their distrust in authority figures, and the fear of retaliation which may cause the reluctance of women to challenge these patriarchal discourses (Thomas & Kitzinger, 1997).

Below is an excerpt in which Tanya described her thoughts on her inability to take action towards her harasser after he had harassed her for several months. This topic arose when Tanya described her experience of remaining silent when the harasser touched her leg. Tanya compared this keeping silent to "*it's like you – you become stupid as a woman,*" in which she referred to women who experience domestic abuse and remain silent as "stupid". In this way, she alluded to seeing herself as a "*stupid woman*" in relation to the narrated moment of her reaction to sexual harassment. This conveys her meaning that her silence had allowed the harassment to continue. The following extract shows Tanya's sense-making of the language, "stupid as a woman":

> *And at that moment, I didn't… Like, in that moment, I – I actually needed to tell him something or said something, but I don't – I don't even know how to describe it. Like it's – it's like you – you become stupid as a woman.*

Here, Tanya seemed to indicate similarities between her responses and those of other 'stupid women' who do not challenge abusers. This draws on patriarchal agendas that devalue women's intellect, their independence, and portray women as seductive or naïve. Tanya's interpretation of a stupid woman seemed to be one who stays with an abusive partner and refuses to report or challenge this behaviour. Tanya draws on stereotypes of battered woman, who not only put up with the behaviour for a considerable amount of time, but who also chose not to report her harasser because others had seen him as a nice person. This silencing of women is a patriarchal tool whereby women are taught that it is safest to remain submissive and that they are blameworthy. This not only conveys meaning that women are responsible for these experiences but also conveys the idea that women are expected to feel a sense of shame for 'asking for it'. Perhaps, in this instance, Tanya took on the role of "*the stupid woman*" by narrating her indecisive action after every instance in which this student had harassed her. Veronica, narrated something similar:

> *I can't say that I actually felt scared in the situation. I don't think I did. I don't think I've ever really felt fear like, "Oh, I have to because I'll get hurt if I don't." Uhm, I just think more than anything like, I don't know what the fear of making a scene is rooted in. Like are you gonna be embarrassed? I think its embarrassment. I think you're scared of being embarrassed, or like drawing attention to yourself.*

Both Tanya and Veronica mentioned being concerned about embarrassment, and judgement from others should they speak out whilst being harassed or when reporting their experiences. Veronica, however, indicated that she had never felt fear of being forced into a violent situation. This, in turn, refers not only to the way in which Veronica labelled her experience, but also the way in which she viewed her 'harasser'. Veronica stated that when she was in the bathroom with the man at her cousin's party, she did not regard the experience as rape.

Patriarchal silencing of women's voices is a result of patriarchal discourses of sexual harassment that shame and blame women, often rendering them powerless in terms of their capacity to define and/or communicate their own experience to others. This effectively protects patriarchal values by blaming the 'victims', and highlighting their shortcomings and behaviour that triggered the events

instead of focusing on the inequalities in society or the perpetrators' aggressions (Collins, 2014). According to Gardner (2009), "[m]any students attempt to ignore incidents in the hope that they will not recur" and that "[t]heir optimism usually proves false, since most harassers are encouraged by a student's failure to resist" (p. 179). Sexual harassment and other uncomfortable situations are rarely resolved by the 'victim' in fear of retaliation by the offender, or the stigma that might be attached to the 'victim' (Gardner, 2009). This may be the reason as to why women are hesitant to report their harassers and, through this patriarchal silencing, the harassers go unchallenged. As Veronica suggested, being an 'attention-seeking woman' is a dangerous position to occupy. In the extract below, Veronica described her mother's response, and the patriarchal culture of silencing that had shaped her experiences:

> *I mean, honestly, everyone's also just like, "You're the angry feminist." You know, everyone was like, "You're…" I think my mom was genuinely concerned about my ability to find a boyfriend, which is fine 'cause I'm bi so I could… It's like, "I can find a girlfriend who's just as mad as men. At men as me." But I mean, every… I think she was genuinely like, "You're gonna scare men away. You can't just be talking about rape all the time."*

The first sentence in the above extract is very important within this subtheme of patriarchal culture and silencing as it suggests the way in which Veronica is treated (or perceived to be treated) in terms of her feminist identity. She seemed to openly identify as a feminist, which led to her being named the "*angry feminist*" by some. Usually, being associated with a feminist identity consists of "women's gender-related experiences (sexist events and exposure to feminism), gender-related cognitions (social gender identity, gender-egalitarian attitudes, and awareness of sexism), and stereotypes regarding feminists" (Leaper & Arias, 2011, p. 476). Essentially, this means that it can be assumed that Veronica shares the ideals of feminism, has shared these ideals with other feminists, and is viewed by others as a feminist. Publicly, feminists have been demonised by means of exaggerated myths, for example feminists generally hate all men (Johnson, 2005; Leaper & Arias, 2011). She narrated her experiences of being silenced by not only the broader patriarchal culture, but also by the women in her life, as a result of her feminist identity.

It is interesting that Veronica's mother said, "*You're gonna scare men away,*" as this not only insinuates that Veronica said something she should not have said, but also that Veronica seemed to be displaying behaviour that would make her unappealing to men. Veronica's narrative shows that her mother had perpetuated the discourse of what Phillips (2000) called a "good woman" (p. 38). This discourse conveys the meaning that a woman should be submissive, family-oriented and pleasing. Moreover, it maintains assigned patriarchal roles and power that serve as a platform to shift blame onto the 'victim' by indicating that she asked for the attention or that her behaviour was not 'good' enough (Phillips, 2000). As suggested by Ahrens (2006), women experience secondary victimisation when they are silenced about sexual harassment or rape, as well as being disbelieved or stigmatised following the incident.

In the extract below, Maryke seemed to refer to the broader culture that is to blame rather than individual men, specifically, as well as the notion that sexual harassment has become normal:

I talk a lot with my mother; she gives me advice. I always tell her all the stories and everything, but the same she is also a strong female; she is a very strong woman and she always says to me: "Life is full of these things and we can't always help for these things that happens, but these things happen and you have to deal with it as it comes." So, I find a lot of my, a lot of things that happens that I tell her, she helps me by assuring me that this is what happens in life. Life is not just a white picket fence with you sitting with a cocktail in your hand and smiling at everybody and everything is okay. Shit happens; that is exactly what happens everywhere. In some or other form, you are going to be touched by somebody; you are going to be violated, all of these things. It is going to happen, no matter what you do, it is going to happen. It is the way you deal with it that is going to make a change.

…

I have a very good best guy friend in Pretoria that I speak to quite often because he flies overseas actually quite a lot, so I speak to him quite often as well and especially when it is guy stuff, it is easier to speak to him because he would then obviously make a joke and be like, "Ja,

like this is how guys are and they think like this," so it makes it you a little bit more comfortable knowing it from a guy's perspective.

In this extract, Maryke described some of the conversations that she had had with her two main support structures, namely her mother and her best friend. The advice that these two individuals had given Maryke seemed to bring her comfort. However, there was an underlying suggestion that both were generalising male behaviour, as well as labelling these behaviours as normal, which speaks to the broader theme of (not) naming sexual harassment. The voices of these support structures, as narrated by Maryke, seemingly represented patriarchal forms of silencing in which sexual harassment is condoned by labelling it as 'normal', inevitable and 'just a joke'. This not only teaches women that they should accept 'sexual harassment' as normal behaviour, but also that speaking out is futile. According to Maryke, her mother had told her that "*life is full of these things and we can't always help for these things that happens, but these things happen and you have to deal with it as it comes*". This piece of advice is important to this theme as it not only speaks to (not) naming, but also the perpetuation of patriarchal discourses that convey the idea that sexual harassment is actually normal behaviour and that women should simply accept it. Maryke's mother is a White Afrikaans woman and, assuming that both women were raised within a traditional Afrikaans household, patriarchal values would have been an important part of family life (Van der Westhuizen, 2017). Not only does this piece of advice insinuate that sexual harassment is normal and unavoidable, but also that the only way to deal with such situations is to cope with them and be silent. Maryke ultimately described the patriarchal discourse maintained by her support structures and which served to silence her experiences.

Maryke continued her narration of her mother's advice, namely that "life is full of such *things*". As a woman, she had been told that she would be violated, touched, and harassed in some way and that that was unavoidable. Moreover, she was taught that her life could only be changed for the better depending on how she reacted to, and coped with, what had happened. Maryke also referred to her male friend from whom she had received advice. She said that "*he would then obviously make a joke and be like, 'Ja, like this is how guys are and they think like this,' so it makes it you a little bit more comfortable knowing it from a guy's perspective*". Maryke described how her friend had made a joke

about the situation, and had generalised male behaviour (that can be regarded as sexual harassment) as normal. This is important as Maryke had repeatedly been told by her support structures that these male behaviours were normal. She reported that her friend had given her advice in a joking manner. This may have been done with the purpose of comforting her, and making light of the situation, but it also functions to construct her experiences as less serious. The joke and game theme is seemingly common throughout the participants' narratives. This could be interpreted as a patriarchal attempt to maintain power over women by not only making light of sexually-harassing behaviours but also by diminishing the experience of women by claiming that these behaviours are merely for 'fun'. This "It's just a joke" rhetoric may alter the way in which women make sense of their experiences as it blurs the line between a joke and sexual harassment. Furthermore, this vague perception of their experiences may make it challenging for women to name patriarchal violence.

Rape culture. With continued reference to the above-mentioned culture of silencing, this subtheme speaks to the participants' understanding of rape culture and how its 'normality' creates a constant fear of becoming a 'victim' of rape. Below is Veronica's narration:

> *Uhm. But you get so caught up in that, that you start thinking of it as normal. You know how it is with rape culture. It's the normalisation of these things. And so, I think you know, being in that bathroom at a braai, really drunk with a very attractive guy, uhm and being… You know, and like we had been flirting. I don't know. I think I didn't wanna make a scene. I know that for a fact. So, you know. And I think that's something that women are taught is, you know, "Don't make a scene. Don't, you know, make… Like don't embarrass yourself or the guy. Uhm, so I think it was just like what my options were. I mean, I could have left, you know. I could have just unlocked the bathroom and walked out. But I mean, I suppose he had put himself between the door and me. I would have had to… I don't know. I would have had to like kind of assert myself in that situation.*

In this extract, Veronica responded to a question in which I asked her opinion as to what may have played a role in the initiation of the event. She narrated that rape culture has been normalised and that in our society, women are not taught how to be assertive, which often results in passivity and,

106

perhaps, even a sense of hopelessness for women. This alludes to the discourse of being a "good woman" where, essentially, when women are faced with rape or harassment, they may be expected to be submissive or complicit, which further perpetuates rape culture. Internal or self-stigma is reinforced through the "societal context, via media representations, dominant narratives, stereotypes, and so on, that certain behaviors are considered to be morally and socially unacceptable" and that the victim can be considered blameworthy (Kennedy & Prock, 2016, p. 513). This form of victim-blaming is significant within the patriarchal context as it serves to not only silence 'victims', but also perpetuates propaganda that men are not blameworthy or liable for the victimisation of women.

Below is an extract in which Veronica described how Stellenbosch had been changing into an environment that was increasingly dangerous for students:

We started saying a year or two ago, "The bubble is bursting", 'cause it used to be Bubblebosch. Like it used… And I mean, it – it used to be this idyllic town where you could walk around at night and be drunk. And, I mean, I had so many friends who'd like stumble from town to Irene drunk, you know. (Sighs) And you just stopped being able to do that. After a while, it just wasn't safe enough. And that's also… That's not just the problem of rape culture. That's just the problem of crime, in general. We live in a very violent and unsafe country. Uhm, and Stellenbosch is becoming more and more like representative of that.

Veronica's narration of "*The bubble is bursting*", as well as referring to Stellenbosch as Bubblebosch, may suggest that the bubble which comprises the student hub/campus/central is changing. This bubble may refer to a safer, invisible boundary surrounding Stellenbosch University. As an idiom, when someone says that the bubble has burst, essentially, this means that the dream or fantasy is over. This may suggest that Veronica had slowly been 'woken' up or that she had been brought back to the reality that Stellenbosch, similar to the rest of South Africa, is no exception when it comes to crime and violence. Symbolically, once this bubble bursts, Stellenbosch will change permanently. Veronica described how in the past, Stellenbosch had been so safe that all students were able to wander around at night and drink without fear of being unsafe. When she sighed, it almost seemed dramatic in a sense,

as though she had been reminiscing about her idyllic Bubblebosch that was no longer as safe as it once was.

Conclusion

This chapter examined the way in which the women who participated in this study utilised discourses and made sense of their experiences of sexual harassment. This chapter was divided into two major themes, namely the nature of sexual harassment and (not) naming experiences of sexual harassment.

In this chapter, I analysed narrations of sexual harassment experienced by the participants, who their harassers were, and how they made sense of these experiences. This was done in light of the research questions relevant to this chapter, namely:

- What forms of sexual harassment take place on this South African university campus, as narrated by female students?

- How do female Stellenbosch University students make sense of their experiences of sexual harassment on campus?

- What is the significance of these experiences in their lives, and how do they shape their lives?

Existing studies on the occurrence of sexual harassment were incorporated into the analyses to highlight the fact that sexual harassment was, and continues to be, a problem. This study, however, sheds light on *how* these participants narrate their experiences, the discourses upon which they draw in order to describe these experiences, as well as the ways in which they make sense thereof.

The first theme focused on the participants' experiences of sexual harassment. Throughout their narratives, the women described the forms of sexual harassment they had experienced, as well as their feelings and reactions. Close attention was paid to how these women described their experiences and the broader patriarchal discourses that arose. In these narratives, many of the participants described feelings of anger, embarrassment, fear, and shame after having experienced sexual harassment. This theme of the nature of sexual harassment yielded similar findings to those in previous literature, namely

that sexual harassment on campus is a 'normalised' and pervasive issue for South African women, and that women are taught to accept these behaviours, remain silent, and experience the daily fear of being harassed. The broader theme of the nature of sexual harassment shed light on how power is infused within spaces on campus. The subthemes demonstrate that patriarchal power is present and maintained throughout campus. This is done through patriarchal discourses of sexual harassment as 'normal' behaviour; a culture of fear; men's sense of entitlement to women's bodies, as well as "it's just a joke" rhetoric that blurs the line between sexual harassment and joking.

Similar findings have been described by Bastiani et al. (2019), who found that South African women have become accustomed to experiencing sexual harassment. South Africa also has a culture of fear, as discussed in the literature review, in which women live in constant fear of being violated (Gordon & Collins, 2013). These findings open up avenues for continued research on the patriarchal culture that allows sexual harassment to occur. Gordon and Collins (2013) conducted a study on gender-based violence at a KwaZulu-Natal university. The discourses that arose during the above-mentioned study seemed to suggest that the participants were coping with the sexual harassment and fear with which women live on a daily basis. This appears to be consistent with the narrations of the participants who referred to the 'normality', and subsequent persistence, of sexual harassment. The findings further reveal that women are potential 'victims' on university campuses and that even classrooms or bedrooms are not immune to the toxic patriarchal culture that aims to oppress and shame women. This study explored participants' experiences of sexual harassment and can be linked to existing literature describing the negative impact of sexual harassment on young women (Gardner, 2009; Gouws & Kritzinger, 2007; Mamaru et al., 2015; Newman, 1998). The findings of this study support the existing literature to some extent. For instance, while the participants in this study did not describe any direct academic effects of sexual harassment, they did mention feelings of self-blame, shame, embarrassment, and anger, which is consistent with the findings of previous studies. There is a further correlation between the current study and previous studies in that similar coping strategies and the distrust in university authorities were identified.

In the second theme, (not) naming experiences of sexual harassment, the practice of choosing to name or label experiences as sexual harassment could be influenced by drawing on existing patriarchal discourses that aim to minimise these experiences, disagreement with regard to the definitions of sexual harassment, and the refusal to accept the term 'victim' and the stigmas attached to it. Within our society, which tends to blame 'victims' for their own victimisation, accepting the label of 'victim' is coupled with other labels, such as guilty and blameworthy, which are not only a form of patriarchal manipulation, but are also used to dissuade women from challenging the harasser and the system that allows this harassment (Bartky, 1990). In a few of the narrations, instances of silencing arose, whereby the broader patriarchal discourse and those who perpetuate these discourses, seemed to dismiss, and silence the participants. For example, Veronica's mother had told her to stop talking about rape. Similarly, Maryke received advice from loved ones, in the form of patriarchal discourses, to simply accept sexual harassment as normal and unavoidable. As narrated by the participants, the "it's just a joke" rhetoric seemed to influence the way in which these women made sense of their experiences, as well as the way in which they named their experiences, particularly in view of the fact that the line between sexual harassment and joking had become blurred. Some of these women described their understanding of rape culture, and the complicit role played by the broader society in sexual harassment. These findings shed light on the pervasive patriarchal culture within this South African university, and how this institution not only silences and blames 'victims' who experience sexual harassment, but also creates an environment on campus that oppresses, silences and makes women feel unsafe.

In the following findings chapter, *Women's Agency: Confronting Patriarchal Discourses and Resisting Victimhood*, I will analyse one theme surrounding the way in which women resist becoming 'victims', and how they criticise and challenge patriarchy, thus conveying a sense of agency through their narratives. These concepts of agency and resisting victimhood are the main focus of the chapter. Although the concepts of agency and 'victims' were touched upon in Chapter 4, the next chapter moves away from their narratives of minimising experiences, victim-blaming, silencing of 'victims' and self-blame, and focuses, instead, on narratives of increased self-awareness and refusal to become a 'victim'

through strategic performances, narrating an awareness of the patriarchal tendencies present on campus, and challenging and criticising these power structures that fail to protect women.

Chapter 5: Women's Agency: Confronting Patriarchal Discourses and Resisting Victimhood

Introduction

In this analysis chapter, I once again utilise critical discourse analysis to analyse the data collected, as explained in detail in Chapter 3. Critical discourse analysis helps to "describe the ways in which power and dominance are produced and reproduced in social practice through the discourse structures of everyday interactions" (Lazar, 2005). Therefore, I examine the language and discourses used by the participants to challenge and criticise the patriarchal systems on campus, as well as how the participants position themselves as agents within this space. Within the context of this study, the patriarchal culture of Stellenbosch University, South Africa, the participants are able to exert their agency by not only describing the events from their perspective, but also by positioning themselves as individuals with power in their lives and resisting victimhood.

It is important to note that many women refuse to be viewed or labelled as 'victims' as it not only instils a sense of hopelessness, but perhaps also a feeling of self-blame. Some women may resist this victimhood by carrying weapons, coming across as emotionally distant, offering solutions to curb sexual harassment, and criticising the existing patriarchal nature of support structures aimed at assisting 'victims'. The findings within this chapter is structured in terms of the participants' narrations of strategic performances within the public space, as well as challenging and criticising the patriarchal structures on campus. This will move from an individualistic response level to criticising public safety and, finally, criticising support structures that aim to help 'victims'.

Structuring the analysis in this way allowed me to answer the research questions guiding this study. The main research question is:

What are female Stellenbosch University students' experiences of sexual harassment on campus, and how do they make sense of these experiences? The specific sub-questions relevant to this analysis chapter are how do female students respond to such experiences of sexual harassment on campus? Do students utilise the existing support structures on campus, and what are their narrated experiences of utilising such services? And finally, what are the students' narrations of possible ways to deal with sexual harassment at the university?

112

This chapter consists of one theme and three subthemes, namely women's narrated strategic performances, agentic narrations of student safety at Stellenbosch University, and women's criticism of support structures on campus. This chapter highlights powerful views of the women who participated in this study, namely how they make sense of the university environment; its role in perpetuating sexual harassment; how they think a safer world for women can be created; how they respond to, and act, within situations of sexual harassment; and, finally, who the women regard as being responsible for sexual harassment, along with possible solutions.

Women's Agency: Confronting Patriarchal Discourses and Resisting Victimhood

This theme was identified in response to the interview question pertaining to what the participants feel needs to be done to curb sexual harassment and create gender equality on the university campus. The concepts of agency, criticising patriarchy, and resisting 'victimhood' will be explored by focusing on the female students' narrations. The term 'victim' is loaded with socialised meanings, labels, and stigmas. Therefore, this chapter considers not only whether 'victims' view themselves as such, but also how they are treated. Fohring (2018) stated that "[s]ocially, the word [victim] is associated with a powerful stigma and may draw blame, derogation, weakness and shame" (152). Fohring (2018) conducted a study in which men and women who had been 'victims' of crime were interviewed on their experiences and how they regarded the term 'victim'. In Fohring's (2018) study, the participants not only regarded the term 'victim' as derogatory, but also actively avoided labelling themselves as 'victims'. Thus, they refused to describe themselves as weak and suffering (terms they associate with being a 'victim'). This is worth noting since within this analysis chapter, the participants move away from this position of 'victim' to providing narrations of self-empowerment and how they emotionally/physically distance themselves from harassers as a form of coping with sexual harassment. This resistance to victimhood, and their agentic criticism of patriarchal culture sheds light on the way in which female students make sense of, and cope with, sexual harassment on campus.

The subtheme of women's narrated strategic performances explores how women adopt agentic strategies to 'protect' themselves in an environment in which sexual harassment is always a possibility. It is through these very strategies that they resist becoming the 'victim'. The participants not only

described how they had carried weapons to defend themselves, but also how they had adopted strategic performances when out in public to shield themselves from becoming 'victims'. The subtheme, agentic narrations of student safety at Stellenbosch University, sheds light on what female students identified as needed to ensure the safety of women on campus. They position themselves as active agents by criticising the existing 'patriarchal' safety measures currently in place and which fail to protect women. The participants described agentic strategies to improve campus safety and explained how the current security measures had contributed to the victimisation of women. The last subtheme, women's criticism of support structures on campus, consists of women's views pertaining to the existing support structures on campus and why they would or would not utilise these services. Moreover, the participants described the possible judgement they may face from the patriarchal support structures on campus.

Women's narrated strategic performances. When individuals experience sexual harassment, they will react in some way, whether the reaction is instantaneous or takes effect later on in their lives. This subtheme explores the participants' narrations of their reactions/responses to sexual harassment, and the varied strategic performances that they have adopted in order to curb such experiences within the patriarchal context. This notion of strategic performances refers to the participants' narratives of their own agency, which involves trying to avoid sexual harassment, the use of coping strategies and social support, confronting patriarchal discourses, and resisting victimhood.

Andiswa narrated her strategic performance in the extract below:

I – I usually get nervous around a group of guys, generally, a group of men because you just never know what they're gonna do. Uhm. I mean, they're not gonna grab me, but you never know, but they'll definitely say something.

…

So, it's almost like a little game that I play. It's like you… Yah, it's like that – that accessory game. It's almost like a little armour. It's like, "Okay, here they are." And you gotta flex yourself. And you – you – you – you don't wanna show them that they are affecting.

…

114

If I was walking at a certain pace and I was staring straight ahead because I'm not trying to make eye contact, then that's what I wanna maintain for as long as I – I go past them, you know. So, it's almost like you prepare for that short performance and you keep going.

Putting up her "armour" seemed to be a coping method that Andiswa used strategically to act emotionally distant and avoid any contact with men/potential harassers as a way to deter them from approaching her. In Andiswa's narrative description of this strategic performance (putting on her "armour"), it is clear that her sense-making of this performance was influenced and shaped by patriarchal discourses which sexualise women's bodies. This "putting on armour" may have been Andiswa's way of acknowledging that she was going into battle. Typically, men wore armour when going into battle and, if she did not do so, she would risk becoming a 'victim' of sexual harassment. Society, in general, expects women to dress conservatively and behave a certain way because if they do not, they are 'asking for it'. On the other hand, Andiswa seemed to don her emotional armour (her form of protection) as she faces daily struggles (battles) inhabiting a female body in a world in which sexual harassment is always a possibility. Andiswa mentioned that in some cases, she would have liked to have addressed the groups of men that she passed. However, the occurrence was usually so unexpected that she had little time to respond and therefore simply pretended that she did not hear them.

Noting this avoidance of becoming victimised, Andiswa may also have 'put on her armour' to figuratively defend her body. Perhaps she viewed this strategy as the only effective deterrent to becoming victimised. This is interesting as she had actively protected herself from a collective, patriarchal culture that victimises women continuously. By strategically taking on this role of 'indifferent woman' or someone who was genuinely disinterested in their advances, she may also inadvertently have created a symbolic barrier that had prevented them from engaging with her physically. From personal experience, when confronted with a scary or stressful situation, I would strengthen my 'armour' by adding characteristics (such as confidence, emotional distance, or a façade of being an irritable or unapproachable individual). Perhaps this was what Andiswa's strategic performance had aimed to accomplish. Her "armour" was seemingly not only a defence mechanism, but according to Nahman (2017), also a matter of being prepared for sexual harassment that helps the

115

'victim' to respond appropriately. This may indicate that Andiswa was not simply hiding her fear or protecting herself from getting hurt, but that she was displaying a powerful message to her harasser's that their behaviour was not worthy of her attention, that she would not be subjected to their sexual objectification, and that her "armour" made her more powerful than the men who attempted to oppress her. Here, it seems, Andiswa challenges those who sexually harass her by appearing as intimidating and giving the impression that these men are not worth her attention. From Andiswa's narration, it can be inferred that the campus space is one where women constantly need to protect themselves from potential harassers by adopting similar strategies as Andiswa's "armour".

Susan seemed to confront her harasser and resisted becoming a 'victim'. Her narration indicated that she had to adapt to make herself feel safer as a woman going to and from campus. She described the methods she had used to protect herself as follows:

So, for example like I won't go to campus without my pepper spray or just message friends –
so are here – so that you walk together. Making sure that you not by yourself in an area on
campus that you feel uncomfortable on campus, so make sure that I am – I am meeting people,
have parked in a different area. Ja, but I wouldn't go to varsity without pepper spray and like
I always have a knife in my bag. [Laughs]

Susan described carrying a knife and pepper spray on her person when going to and from campus. She confronted patriarchal discourses of women being weak and powerless: by breaking away from the stereotypical defenceless woman illusion, she managed to convey an active strategy of carrying weapons to campus, thus positioning herself as someone with power and allowing herself the opportunity to defend herself against a possible harasser. This defence is something the university, its policies and security measures should offer female students, but it seems that many women are forced to ensure this themselves. This highlights how Susan had to take on strategies to protect herself from a possible threat by carrying weapons. Some studies have shown that women who experience sexual harassment experience a sense of helplessness and that this 'normalised' sexual harassment cannot be avoided (Schreiner, 2015). Susan's narration seemed to contradict such literature. The narrations of the participants provided insight into how many women not only take active steps to avoid becoming

116

'victims', but also engage in strategic performances to protect their mental and/or physical wellbeing, and challenge these systems that have labelled them as helpless 'victims'.

Susan continued by narrating that she had walked with friends, avoided walking alone in certain areas on campus, and parked in different places. This is significant as it appears that Susan had taken up the mantle of ensuring her own safety – discourse of women's responsibility. Susan seems to have taken this responsibility upon herself and criticised the university's security measures. The patriarchal discourse of women's responsibility insinuates that women are responsible for their own victimisation, and that they essentially 'asked for it' (De Klerk, Klazinga, & McNeill, 2007; Phillips, 2000). Here, it is clear that Susan may have realised that many men will continue to assault women and that within this patriarchal society, she had been made accountable for her own safety. She seemed to blame men for her experiences. Perhaps, she was tired of being victimised and was willing to protect herself, even if by force.

In the extract below, Katryn narrated her strategic performance when walking in public:

I will always try and be like on a mission. Like not standing there wandering where am I going or like looking like you don't know where you are. Because I feel like that then is when you are an easy target or something. So, I always try to be on a mission and I am always like not too much eye contact with, because it feels like even, if you just look at them and smile they would think like...

... I wanna say bitch-like...

... putting up a wall for people.

Katryn narrated how she had consciously put up an emotional wall when she went out into public. She later described this as "*sometimes it does make you feel fake*", which may mean that she did not like the attitude that she had to portray or her strategic performance. She gave a detailed description of this performance: in essence, she would ensure that she did not seem approachable. Katryn explained that she would avoid making eye contact with people, act as though she had a purpose, and as though she had no time to interact with others, in an attempt to make herself seem less of a target.

117

This may insinuate that women who do not engage in this game are considered to be easy targets or seem approachable to potential harassers. Here, Katryn may have seen herself as being preyed upon (the target) by the hunters (men). This may not be indicative of men 'illegally hunting' women, but perhaps, that the social hierarchy of power permits men to act out these behaviours and get away with it. This policing of women is made possible within our patriarchal society as men are socialised to believe that many crimes against women are 'safe' to commit and that society will more likely blame the women than the men who commit the crime (Moffett, 2006). Essentially, Katryn also described this performance as being a "*bitch*", which may mean many different things to different people, such as being unfriendly, unapproachable or, perhaps, even rude to others as a way of protecting herself. This speaks to Andiswa's description of "armour" as it is an attitude that she had adopted in order to appear stronger and to protect herself both physically and emotionally.

Essentially, when women do not put on "armour" or a façade, they could be seen as 'asking for it' and may be blamed for opening themselves up to the experience of sexual harassment. The participants narrated how instead of accepting the role of 'victim', they not only resisted victimhood, but also confronted patriarchy through strategic performances that had been shaped by their experiences and knowledge of the patriarchal setting in which they live. Their narratives provided rich insight into the experience of being a young female student at Stellenbosch University – an environment in which sexual harassment is always a possibility.

Agentic narrations of student safety at Stellenbosch University. In this subtheme, the participants' perspectives will be discussed in terms of how the university environment fosters sexual harassment. Concepts of university safety will also be incorporated into this subtheme to paint a picture of the broader campus environment and how women position themselves as agents therein. In this subtheme, the safety of the university, and the participants' thoughts about what can be done to improve it are described in terms of resisting becoming 'victims' and improving the safety measures on campus that are supposed to protect students from victimisation. Studies have not only revealed that an increase in armed security personnel show a decrease in violence and crime on university campuses, but also that the security needs to be adjusted according to the size of the campus (Ayenibiowo, 2010; Rodriguez

et al., 2013). According to Rodriguez et al. (2013), campuses such as Unisa (and Stellenbosch University) that are openly accessible to the outlying community are, consequently, targeted because of their lack of safety, valuables (such as students' laptops), and many potential 'victims'.

Patriarchal discourses in South Africa ultimately shift the responsibility of men to women. Thus, women are expected to ensure their own safety (Gouws & Kritzinger, 2007). This subtheme sheds light on how women resist becoming 'victims' within this patriarchal environment and, interestingly, criticise patriarchy as though it is an object – something that should be changed or fixed. In the excerpt below, Andiswa explained what could be done to make women feel safer on campus:

> *I think knowing that there are active security people around, like you know, that wear certain uniforms, or maybe… Because you can't control the whole of Stellenbosch. At this point, we're just talking about the university. So, maybe if every student got a panic button, for instance. I don't know. That would be one example where it's part of your – your… Like when you register, you get a panic button. I wouldn't discriminate it for just women, no, but I think it would at least be a fair starting… I don't know if it's fair, but you know, it will be a starting point so that if you don't feel safe… [Laughs] If you don't feel safe, then you can at least press the panic button, uhm, and yah, help will be on its way.*

In this extract, Andiswa suggested that guards on campus need to be more visible and that every student needs to be given panic button upon registration. She stated that these panic buttons would allow security guards (who are not always close enough to assist) to easily hear the noise and quickly help the student in need. As mentioned in Chapter 4, women are seen as weak and as needing men (namely the security guards) to protect them from other men. This discourse of "weak woman" is a patriarchal discourse that insinuates that women are incapable of doing certain tasks, are physically incapable of protecting themselves, and need a man who is physically competent to protect her (sometimes from herself) (Phillips, 2000). In this extract, Andiswa's narration seemed to draw on the patriarchal discourse of "weak woman" as part of her criticism of the patriarchal system. Furthermore, her narration appeared to illustrate her frustration with the lack of security by means of which women are 'supported' on campus, therefore suggesting the use of panic buttons to 'assist' security guards in

119

protecting women. She suggested a way in which women could regain a sense of control and power in light of the threats they face on campus, as well as a means of supporting the very security structures on campus that are ineffective. Andiswa continued her narration below:

I'm talking from a very privileged point of view. But for someone who would like, God forbid, experience like a rape scenario, then I say panic buttons would – would probably be helpful.

When Andiswa said "*a very privileged point of view*", it is very interesting in that it not only referred to how fortunate she was for not having experienced rape, but also, perhaps, her positioning herself as someone who could contribute to ideas that promote change and curb sexual harassment. Andiswa's term 'privileged' – as opposed to 'lucky' or 'fortunate' – indicated that in a society where rape has become an everyday threat for women, she could be one of the lucky few to not have experienced it. This links back to the fear of rape and South Africa's rape culture, whereby many women face the daily threat of being raped and should seemingly be thankful when they are not. Andiswa narrated that a way for women who are in danger to receive immediate help (panic button, security doing more along these lines) will help them feel safer on campus. She continued as follows:

Okay. It's not very controversial. We just need to castrate the men. That's what I would say. [Laughs]

Andiswa explained that another way to curb sexual harassment and make women feel safer on campus would be to castrate men. Here, she (jokingly) suggested that men cannot help their behaviours and should, instead, be de-sexed. This is yet another indication that men's sexual needs are 'normal' and should be accepted. That men are incapable of keeping their interests to themselves, and as a result, removing all sense of accountability for their actions. She referred to this unconventional method on two other occasions during the interview, without naming it as such. Katryn mentioned a similar violent method that could be used to make women feel safe on campus, saying that "*I would like wish that I had super powers, like in just flippen... [Laughs]… Just cut all their heads off or something*". This narration paints a picture of a powerful woman who decapitates the men who make women feel unsafe. While it is possible that Katryn may have said this out of anger, she was the second participant to

120

suggest a method that did not involve the cooperation of men. This may indicate that the participants regard sexual harassment as unavoidable and did not believe that men would be willing to change, lest they be threatened with death or being de-sexed. Through these narrations of women being superheroes, the women imaginatively positioned themselves as more powerful in relation to men. This confrontation of the current patriarchal system that permits men to get away with harassing women may cause certain women to feel that they need to do something themselves, as the system and/or institution would not.

Oni et al. (2019) conducted a study at a South African University, and found that different forms of sexual harassment were experienced frequently and that those who were most at risk were first-year students. Oni et al. (2019) recommended an awareness programme for first-year students, which included information on the forms of sexual harassment, who to approach for assistance, and the existing university polices that were in place to protect students. Similar to the recommendations made by Oni et al., the participants suggest that first-year male students should go on a male camp to learn about sexual harassment. Below is Nadia's narration about what women may need to feel safer on campus:

> *Sjoe, hm, "ek dink soos 'n manne kamp*[11]*", where the boys must actually go on a camp, or something on how to treat girls, how to look at girls, whatever, just to realise the seriousness of a situation. Or maybe you can arrange camps, even on the first year, in orientation days, they can maybe one day, the girls must act like the boys and the boys must act like the girls, just to, but not just to like act, just to create awareness of sexual harassment and stuff. Where the girls do stuff with the boys and they can see we are actually looking at girls in this way and they don't even realise it. Or something like that, of just like a sexual harassment awareness camp or something.*

Nadia suggested that "*the boys must actually go on a camp*". This highlights her view that men must take responsibility for their actions. Her narrative suggests that sexual harassment can be curbed

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[11] Afrikaans for "I think like a men's camp"

by having compulsory training for all men who enter university because the current power system on campus fails to protect women and deter men. Through Nadia's narration, it can be inferred that she had resisted becoming a 'victim' by positioning herself as someone who challenged the patriarchal culture on campus to educate young men. However, instead of men being taught how to treat and look at women, it may be more beneficial for men to be taught how to control their sexual behaviour, in general. In this way, Nadia's suggestion (men must be held accountable) actively challenges the patriarchal "male sexual drive" discourse (men's urges are natural and normal). Nadia narrated that this camp should aim to increase awareness of sexual harassment. However, education or rehabilitation may be more effective in terms of changing behaviour. Ngabaza et al. (2015) similarly suggested that certain forms of awareness such as brochures can be easily overlooked, and that practical engagement is more memorable. Pease (2016) conducted several workshops aimed at creating awareness of male privilege and patriarchy with male participants. Pease (2016) found that although resistant at first, once men become emotionally invested in the oppressed experiences of women and children, their expectations of entitlement and privilege can be disrupted. If similar workshops can be facilitated during the first year of university, perhaps male students could learn to be empathetic towards female students, and become role models of male behaviour for their juniors. This also implies that current prevention/deterring measures, if any, implemented on the Stellenbosch University campus are ineffective and can be improved.

Describing these men as *"boys"* and saying that they need to be made aware creates the impression that, perhaps, Nadia regarded the men as unaware and naïve. This could be interpreted as a way of taking away their responsibility for their actions in the same way that one cannot hold a child responsible or accountable for sexual harassment. Nevertheless, this could also mean that Nadia positioned herself as being more responsible, mature or, perhaps, even more powerful in relation to the first-year male students. This could mean that Nadia did not seem to blame the men outright, but was, instead, critical of the larger patriarchal culture, thus suggesting a method that could be used to teach rather than punish men. She positioned the larger patriarchal culture as though it were an object that could be blamed for harassment and violence against women. Patriarchy is usually reinforced in

122

households, the workforce, the government, 'normal' displays of male violence, socialised gender roles and sexualities, as well as individual cultures that promote female oppression (Pease, 2016). There are many social spheres in which patriarchy is taught and maintained. However, as inferred from Nadia's narration, punishing men is perhaps not a long-term solution to sexual harassment. Rather, teaching men within these spheres or, perhaps, changing the broader culture, could be more effective.

Despite Andiswa's narration about her approval of the freedom that Stellenbosch University offers, Katryn, on the other hand, suggested the implementation of security cameras to make the campus safer. However, Katryn's suggestion did not seem to provide a means to proactively curb harassment or serve as a deterrent to possible harassers. According to Lewis et al. (2018), freedom and safety are two sides of the same coin, but when it comes to curbing violence against women on campus, one is usually sacrificed. Katryn's narration, "*Maybe also cameras because then you would also have proof that, because… I know… like if go and they would like deny it, there is no proof*" implies that the footage from the security cameras would be useful in terms of helping the 'victims' to prove their story. This indicates that Katryn may perhaps be unwilling to report her experiences in fear of not being believed by the authorities. Perhaps Katryn regards that the authorities on campus are using their power to purposefully ignore sexual harassment experiences on campus and even silence 'victims' to maintain its patriarchal culture.

Katryn criticised the effectiveness of the security on campus, and conveyed meaning that the university may have used the lack of security measures to silence the 'victims' instead of allowing the harassment to be publicised. For example, should a woman experience sexual harassment, those to whom she reports this could say that they do not have sufficient evidence that the sexual harassment has occurred. Katryn also drew on an opposing discourse to the above 'silencing', that with security cameras in place, 'victims' would no longer have to struggle to convince authority figures that they had been harassed. This could reduce victim-blaming and the silencing of 'victims' of sexual harassment. Moreover, this would not only serve to deter potential perpetrators, but would also let other women know that there would be evidence that the authorities can use to assist them. This refers to the "true victims discourse" (Phillips, 2000, p. 65) mentioned in the (not) naming section of Chapter 4, which

123

elaborates on how women need to have experienced violence and show signs thereof in order to be considered 'victims'. This is connected to the (not) naming sections, and is relevant to this subtheme as it may result in women fearing secondary victimisation by authorities and distrusting security services who may have failed to protect them during their initial harassment. This could also shed light on Katryn's sense-making, as she seemingly did not blame herself for her harassment, but rather narrated that the lack of security cameras may have resulted in her being dismissed by authority figures.

In Chapter 2, the concept of institutional betrayal was introduced to describe how the institution fails to keep students safe. This betrayal may cause a 'theorised' betrayal trauma, which means a fellow student, friend, supervisor or institution – one with whom the 'victim' is familiar – betrays not only her trust, but also creates an environment that is deemed unsafe and creates traumatic outcomes (Rosenthal et al., 2016). For example, this means that after having experienced sexual harassment by a peer, and on campus (which is supposed to be a safe environment), Katryn (the 'victim') may not only regard the campus environment as one in which she is under constant threat of sexual harassment, but also that the university has failed to protect her, and will continue to do so. This is important in light of South Africa's current sexual harassment crisis, especially within university contexts, because this failure by universities to keep women safe not only creates further distrust in the support services they offer but also in their 'security measures', for being unable to offer 'protection' from the harassment.

While campus security was important to many of the participants in this study, some were for, and others against, increasing security. The extracts below highlight the significance of the way in which the participants had constructed the university as a powerful entity capable of addressing sexual harassment. The participants stressed the importance of visible security. Similarly, Ngabaza et al. (2015), who conducted a study exploring safe and unsafe areas within a South African university, found that women feel unsafe on campus, and would prefer the presence of security guards who would be willing to escort them when they feel unsafe. The participants in both this current study and that of Ngabaza et al. (2015) exerted their own agency by recommending that the university supply women with security guards to prevent them from becoming 'victims'. This is a criticism of the security measures, which have resulted in the participants taking it upon themselves to assist the security that

should have protected women in the first place. While the young women had positioned themselves as agents criticising the patriarchal system, their narratives focused on women as weak and needing protection.

On the other hand, Nadia's narration contradicts the above. She highlights the notion that power inequality is a concern on campus as well as throughout South Africa and that campus security staff embody the patriarchal power:

> *It wouldn't help putting more security on campus and stuff. They just make us feel more uncomfortable because they just make us feel like you can't move around as they will also be looking at you and stuff [laughs].*

Nadia's narration seemed to contradict Susan's when she stated that adding more security would make women feel even more uncomfortable on campus. Earlier, Andiswa spoke about how Stellenbosch's openness had given her a sense of freedom whereas Nadia's narration seemed to suggest that the surveillance system may be a patriarchal means to observe women and exert patriarchal control. This may allude to the discourses of "women's responsibility" and "good woman" in which women are expected to behave in certain ways, otherwise, they would be "asking for it". Perhaps Nadia was suggesting that the surveillance cameras were in place to ensure that women behaved accordingly. Nadia also seemed to suggest that the security guards who were currently present were the ones who had been making her uncomfortable by staring at her. This indicates that the security (who should protect students) had been misusing their authoritative power to oppress women. This is perhaps why Nadia's narration showed her opposition to increasing security, as the university would be inviting more potential harassers to 'guard' the students who are vulnerable to harassment. Below is Lerato's narration on feeling safe on campus:

> *I only walk in Victoria Street because there is lights not because there is security guards, because I don't trust them. If they gave us pepper spray that would be nice. If they gave us data Wi-Fi points to share my live location that would be nice. If they told us in like orientation week, to – actually which routes to take when we were violated, that would be very nice. The*

varsity must stop lying to us about security cameras, that would be nice, because once there is a protest, they will find those security tapes, find out who was a part. But you say you have been violated, they say sorry there is no cameras for us to check that. So, I feel that the transparency of the University's care is also an issue.

In the above extract, Lerato touched on similar points discussed by Nadia. Lerato described how the university could do more to inform students about security measures, and assist them to feel safer. However, she mentioned that it did not acknowledge assaults or violations, only civil unrest. This alludes to the notion that women are more at risk at night, and should learn to protect themselves. Lerato seemed to criticise the University for prioritising student order over safety, and named a specific street on campus that had the most visibility. This indicated that at certain times of the day, women may have been restricted in terms of movement, given their fear of violence in dark places. Lerato described a sense of vulnerability while walking around campus spaces, as a way of criticising the University's security system. She strategically positioned herself as vulnerable, through her narration, to convey the meaning that had helped her to criticise the University's security system. Through this narrated vulnerability, she indicated that the security on campus was insufficient in terms of creating a 'safe' environment for students. The next subtheme addresses some of the participants' criticisms of the support structures available to students on campus, and possible reasons as to why they would or would not use them.

Women's criticism of support structures on campus. In this subtheme, I discuss the participants' narrations of the support structures available on campus, as well as their willingness to seek assistance. According to Gouws and Kritzinger (2007), universities need to address "the role that the university's institutional culture plays in addressing gender hierarchies" (p. 76), as patriarchal culture seeps into support facilities. This patriarchal culture disempowers women who attempt to report sexual harassment, results in delays in the reporting process, and further victimises through blaming and shaming women (Bashonga & Khuzwayo, 2017; Gouws & Kritzinger, 2007). This may contribute to women avoiding formal support services on campus or perceiving the authorities as being

judgemental and dismissive. Tanya suggests a possible alternative support service on campus as follows:

> *I would say there must be like a more, if you can use the word chilled environment where someone like I [sic] would go to. Like, I will never just walk into a building and go talk to like a complete stranger about this here. I would rather wanna make a friend or, you know, talk to someone that's been kind of through the same thing. So, I wanna say kind of like a group where people come together, you know, that went through something similar or whatever. And then, you can… Because then you have someone to relate to. So, then I can say, "Hey, what – what happened to you?" or, "What… Why – why are you joining this group?" or something. And then, you can immediately like open up to them a bit more easily or easily because you feel like they would understand because they've also been in like a similar situation.*

In the above extract, Tanya seemed to be criticising not only the reporting process, but also the individualistic nature of the support services. Tanya described this individualistic, one-on-one service as ineffective, and stated that a support group would have made her feel more comfortable to talk about her experiences on campus. She appeared to position herself as part of the collective who are in need of collective processes rather than the individualised processes available on campus. Here, Tanya said that speaking to a peer to whom she could relate, or a friend, would be more cathartic than speaking to an individual who had studied the inner workings of someone's mind. This suggestion may also have emanated from a sense of insecurity when speaking to someone in a position of authority about her experiences. She conveys that they may use their authority or power to dismiss her claims and judge her for it. Tanya positioned herself as an agent within the campus environment by indicating her views that a peer support group that was less patriarchal and facilitated by women would be more beneficial to her than the existing support structures. It is important to note, that this may be Tanya's perception of the support services – as she did mention that she had yet to seek assistance from these services. It is therefore important to note that this is her perception, not necessarily the reality for all female students.

Tanya positioned herself as an active agent who displayed an awareness of the patriarchal system on campus and criticised those who are supposed to protect women. This distrust in university

support services and authorities was also found in a study conducted by Roosmalen and McDaniel (1999) in which women reported that they were often disbelieved and labelled for reporting, which resulted in the reluctance of many women to report, in fear of being treated in the same way.

A support facility is crucial to the healing process of the 'victim' of harassment or assault. However, university support staff often respond negatively to the reports made by 'victims' (Holland & Bedera, 2019). The literature states that individuals need a formal port of call when dealing with psychological concerns. However, as narrated by Tanya, some individuals actually prefer peer support. This contradicts institutional notions of psychological support and may provide new insights into ways in which support systems can be altered and adapted to the needs of victims. Some negative responses that 'victims' experience when reporting to support services could include blaming the 'victim' for the incident, doubting the narrative of the 'victim', minimising the experience of the 'victim', and making decisions for the 'victim' (Holland & Bedera, 2019). This may result in the fear that, should a woman report an experience of sexual harassment, this is how she will be treated. There is a patriarchal myth that labels females who report or 'whine' about being sexually assaulted or harassed as 'victims', thus ultimately referring to them as weak, powerless and easily dominated by men (Johnson, 2005). Perhaps this very myth is why Tanya refused to seek the university's support, as she appeared to deem these support systems patriarchal, victim-blaming, and dismissive.

Another study on reporting sexual harassment found that 'victims' of sexual harassment are more concerned with how they are treated by peers after seeking assistance from support structures (Vijayasiri, 2008). The article notes that sexual harassment takes a toll on both the 'victim' and institution, 'victims' therefore usually formally report their experiences to these structures once other informal organisational support has failed (Vijayasiri, 2008). These above-mentioned articles (Holland & Bedera, 2019; Johnson, 2005; Vijayasiri, 2008) shed light on how the fear of further victimisation and distrust in others have manipulated many women into keeping silent after having experienced sexual harassment. Tanya, as well as the other participants, reveal that support structures, peers, authority figures and larger institutions as a whole, play a role in silencing women. Tanya indicated that she had not sought support from campus services, but still expressed distrust in them.

In the extract below, Nadia spoke about her own thoughts pertaining to the psychological services on campus:

Well, I definitely won't go talk to someone there about it because "hulle sal dit net aflag en sê of wat rerig, ek kan nie glo dat dit nou gebeur het nie. Het jy iets vir hom gesê.[12]*" That's gonna be like, did you tell him something or stuff, like that or they will laugh off, but otherwise, I would… normally in that situation, I would just go and sit in my car, I will chill and then I will go in. But then later in the night or along the day, I will tell my boyfriend about it. He is very supportive – he knows what happens and is very supportive like that. I will go talk to him. I wouldn't talk to anyone about this because mostly the people wouldn't take it as seriously. They will see it as a joke, "lag*[13]*" it off and go on.*

Nadia narrated that should she turn to someone, she would not talk to others . Again, this speaks to the previously mentioned psychological violence, and is a burden which women have to bear. The social/patriarchal environment, mentioned earlier, prevented her from speaking out and addressing what had happened to her because, according to Nadia, "*they will just laugh it off and say, 'Oh, what really? I can't believe this just happened. Did you say something to him?'*" This is yet another narration of how people fail to believe the 'victim' of assault/harassment. This speaks to the notion of victim-blaming and not believing the 'victim', as discussed earlier, where the 'victim' has to prove that she has been violated, or risk being seen as responsible for her own victimisation (Gordon & Collins, 2013). This fear of being disbelieved may have contributed to her decision not to seek support from campus services or other professionals. Nadia narrated her perception of how support services tend to blame the 'victims' of sexual harassment for their experiences and silenced them through this disbelief. Nadia seemed to criticise this service that should support women who have been victimised, without judgement, instead of ridiculing their experiences.

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[12] Afrikaans for "they will just laugh it off and say, 'Oh, what really? I can't believe this just happened. Did you say something to him?'"

[13] Afrikaans for "laugh"

Nadia's narration indicated that she openly resisted further victimisation by Stellenbosch's patriarchal discourse of victim-blaming, by saying that she would not seek their support. Her preference for sitting in her car after being harassed was her own agentic method of protecting and steeling herself against further harassment. This is not surprising when viewed against her previous criticism of the support services which were described as unhelpful. Nadia's description of how she had sat in her car after having experienced sexual harassment, further speaks to how the guilty do not take responsibility; rather, it is expected of women to compose themselves. This alludes to the normality of sexual harassment, which women are expected to accept, and remain silent. Nadia's narrative exposed the cracks and injustices within the system. Consequently, she positioned herself as someone who had been aware of this misogyny and refused to be subjected to it.

When Nadia narrated that she confided in her boyfriend, this perhaps reveals that confiding in another man made her feel as though she was being understood and, especially because of their intimate relationship, she may have felt supported by a man in a world in which other men had let her down. Nadia's statement that she would not speak to others as they may simply joke about it or laugh it off, provides insight into society's perspective on 'victims' of sexual harassment and the mistrust that individuals have in the system, as those to whom the 'victims' report this harassment seemingly do not believe them. This is what Johnson (2005) referred to as male invisibility. Here, men possess the highest ranks in society and are commended for every accomplishment. However, they become invisible once they behave in ways that are socially inappropriate or expose male privilege. This male invisibility helps shift the blame to the 'victim', who becomes responsible for her own victimisation, particularly since it is only an issue to the 'victim' and not the one benefiting from harassing her (Johnson, 2005). As illustrated in previous subthemes, this culture is infused into everyday life at Stellenbosch University. This may explain why the 'victims' do not trust the limited support available to them on campus. Nadia, however, narrated how she had rejected being victimised by this system and, instead, sought support from her boyfriend. The participants seemed to criticise this culture, and it is through this criticism that it becomes clear that there is a lack of appropriate and useful support within the Stellenbosch University context.

Holly, on the other hand, agreed that utilising campus support services is healthy, and described why she would not necessarily go to the campus support structures. Holly narrated that "*sometimes counsellors, especially the ones at varsity, have such a backlog that you can't even make an appointment*". This could mean that for many students, making an appointment for urgent support is difficult on campus. Holly seemed to criticise the Centre for Student Counselling and Development (CSCD) for being incapable of accommodating the large quantity of students seeking support: "*So, then, the next thing your appointment is like two weeks later and now you are not as, as traumatised by the event.*" Holly then explained that after a certain amount of time had passed, it would no longer help to speak to someone as the event would no longer be as traumatising as it was after it had occurred. Holly's narration indicates the importance of immediate support from the appropriate authority figures because those initial experiences are 'traumatic'. Therefore, support services may need to increase their staff to assist students who have an urgent need for counselling. This also provides context with regard to the support structures available at Stellenbosch University – perhaps they are understaffed, incapable of addressing the needs of the countless individuals seeking assistance and, perhaps, incapable of prioritising those who require immediate support. An example of this is when students apply for a consultation: unless a student indicates that she needs urgent support, she will be placed on a waiting list. This is what Lerato narrated with regards to her interaction with campus support services:

> *Every now and then when I go in to see 'so and so' [the psychologist], they seem slightly disinterested as the year is going on. Their resources are straining them and I also think that it would be beneficial if there was an in-house psychiatrist, just because I think it they are certain issues that if you need to be referred higher.*

In this extract, Lerato also criticised the understaffed Centre for Student Support and Development. This also sheds light on the pressing need for psychological support for students since as the year progresses, more students experience stress, and are in need of support. Unfortunately, however, the support services are unable to assist such vast numbers of students. Although the reasons for needing to see a psychologist can range from academic counselling, to time management or even trauma counselling, students can wait from two to four weeks for a consultation, depending on the

131

"severity" of their issue. As Holly mentioned earlier, this may cause the experience to be seen as less severe, and may even deter students from seeking support. The lack of resources and staff, as well as the overwhelming number of students who seek assistance daily may cause the 'supporters' to feel overwhelmed and the students neglected. Lerato recommended an in-house psychiatrist who would not only be able to assist with possible referrals (as these referrals may seem dismissive to some students seeking support), but would also help students with urgent psychological needs. By making this suggestion, Lerato may have been criticising the extent to which the current support services had been able to provide assistance. In addition, she positioned herself as an individual who was not only aware of this ineffectiveness, but also indicated that the support systems needed to be improved. Personally, after having sought assistance from support services on campus, I, too, was referred to an off-campus psychologist, as the campus had too many other students who were seeking urgent support, and not enough psychological staff required to assess some of the students. Perhaps, Lerato's narration insinuated that the support structures were not equipped to assist students with psychological concerns since those students who had sought these services were referred to mental healthcare students instead of being provided with immediate assistance.

Another form of support, such as confiding in a supervisor, is also something which a postgraduate student may need in order to cope with difficult choices or experiences that may affect her university experience. Emily experienced harassment from a student with whom she had shared a supervisor. To reiterate her experiences: her harasser would contact her constantly and make comments about her appearance. In the extract below, Emily narrated having reported these experiences to her supervisor, who had responded in an inappropriate manner:

> *Having spoken to my supervisor, like I think there is always that condescending attitude where if you speak to him, or like you say do you want to have a meeting tomorrow and then I will say when is his [harasser's] meeting? And then that sort of attitude at 'you being ridiculous', but it is always, there, it is always there, like I can hear it in his tone or his responses that he always thinks that I am being ridiculous and that I am being dramatic. Uhm, and as with most people you can tell them the situation like that and they think you are just being overcautious, over*

dramatic, so that has been something that I am aware of. I don't like the fact that people think it is a dramatic situation until you have actually been in that situation or you had someone watch you like that.

As a student who had completed her coursework and was doing fieldwork, Emily simply went to campus to meet with her supervisor. As described in the previous chapter, she had attempted to alter her schedule to meet with her supervisor when her harasser was not on campus. She described her interactions with her supervisor, stating that she was constantly met with "*that condescending tone*". Emily conveys a sense of the power relations that existed between her and her supervisor. Once again, the personal experience of the student was not considered as important as the actual academic course. Emily narrated, "*I can hear it in his tone or his responses that he always think that I am being ridiculous and that I am being dramatic,*" which speaks to the disbelief in women's experiences. Moreover, Emily seemed to be attuned to the subtle sexism and misogyny that had been directed at her. She criticised this patriarchal practice, as seen in her use of language: "*I don't like the fact that people think it is a dramatic situation.*" Emily called her male supervisor out for not being willing to acknowledge her experiences of sexual harassment. Men usually adhere to a 'guy code' or form of male bonding through which they avoid confronting other men (on what appears to be personal issues with women) as a way of maintaining friendship or trust even if they disagree with this behaviour (Pease, 2016). The participants' narrations revealed the possibility that many men are fighting to maintain their patriarchal power even if it means allowing one another to harass, possibly even assault, women. Moreover, Emily has positioned herself as someone who is aware of the subtle ways in which men and those in power silence women who attempt to reach out after having experienced sexual harassment. Emily exerts her own agency by criticising her supervisor's responses and others part of the patriarchal system who minimise women's experiences. This awareness of silencing and acknowledgement of men's roles and their responsibilities in the perpetuation of sexual harassment is vital to promote the resistance of such behaviour and the prevention of violence against women (Towns & Adams, 2016).

Conclusion

This chapter examined how the participants in this study positioned themselves as agents within the patriarchal institution. The narratives were divided into the last three subthemes, namely, women's narrated strategic performances, agentic narrations of student safety at Stellenbosch University, and women's criticism of support structures on campus. Within the context of this study, the women narrated how they navigate the patriarchal space of campus, exerting agency through the ways in which they move about on campus on a daily basis, how they responded to and acted in light of sexual harassment experiences, and how they, as women, made sense of these experiences.

Within this chapter, the participants drew on discourses of the male sexual drive discourse and the women's responsibility discourse to make meaning of their strategic performances. These patriarchal discourses shaped the meaning that they made about their experiences, and perpetuated patriarchal sexisms of female weakness and the normality of male behaviour. It is through drawing on these discourses of "women's responsibility" and "the male sexual drive discourse" that the participants were actually able to critique the system. Although the participants positioned themselves as agents, they are still members of a patriarchal system that assigns meaning. The participants criticised the patriarchal support structures on campus that should be assisting women, but instead oppress them, and alleviate male responsibility for this oppression. The participants positioned themselves as agents by not only narrating their awareness of the patriarchal structures on campus, but also challenging these structures and further 'victimisation' by making recommendations with regard to the improvement of the support systems.

The first subtheme examined the way in which the women had responded and reacted to potential harassment. Some of the strategic performances that the participants described included wearing "armour" or putting up a wall – or so-called "bitch face" – to seem emotionally distant and unapproachable as a means of showing the harasser(s) that they had been shielded and that the men's behaviour was unwelcome. According to the participants, if women do not put on this "armour" or "bitch face", potential harassers may see this as permission to sexually harass them. Therefore, the participants positioned themselves as agentic individuals who criticise the broader patriarchal culture

134

as to blame for sexual harassment. Some of the participants narrated how, as agents, they had avoided certain areas in which sexual harassment was prone to occur, carried weapons on their person, and adjusted their characters in certain situations in order to avoid unwanted attention.

In the second subtheme, the women described Stellenbosch University within a broader context, which included their perception of safety, what they felt was needed to feel safer, the support structures they utilised, as well as their interactions with campus support structures. Most of the participants exerted agency by criticising Stellenbosch University's safety measures and suggested that additional security should be present and should have measures in place to ensure female safety when walking to and from campus. Lerato, for instance, narrated a sense of vulnerability while walking through campus, thus not only positioning herself as a potential 'victim', but also criticising the security on campus for contributing to her vulnerability. Nadia, on the other hand, criticised the security on campus for observing women, suggesting that they had aimed to further oppress and intimidate women into behaving appropriately. These women criticised not only the broader patriarchal culture, but also that of Stellenbosch University as well. These patriarchal institutions blame women for their own victimisation, make them responsible for their own safety, and protect their harassers' behaviour under the guise of 'normal behaviour' (De Klerk et al., 2007; Moffett, 2006; Phillips, 2000).

The participants described their own sources of support, but mainly expressed a distrust in the campus support services, which had led to their fear of being judged, dismissed, or victimised further. This was also found in a study conducted by Roosmalen and McDaniel (1999), who found that students feel judged, silenced and disbelieved. This speaks to the current literature that indicates that although professional institutional support for students is essential, students experiences thereof are often negative (Holland & Bedera, 2019). The participants' language suggests that they were aware of the subtle sexism and misogyny that had been directed at them, as well as patriarchal ideologies infused within certain support structures that judge and blame them for experiencing sexual harassment. The participants refused to be regarded as 'victims' in spite of being subjected to these inequalities, through narrations of seeking their own forms of support and refusing to utilise services that may victimise them

135

further. Some of the participants sought support from fellow students instead of support structures on campus because of past experiences of being dismissed and/or disbelieved by authority figures.

In the final chapter, I summarise the findings of the study and discuss, not only the limitations that arose, but also recommendations for future research.

Chapter 6: Summary and Conclusion

Introduction

In concluding this study, I revisit the research questions which I sought to answer. The main research question guiding this study was: What are female Stellenbosch University students' experiences of sexual harassment on campus, and how do they make sense of these experiences? This study was conducted to explore lived experiences of sexual harassment that occur on campus, as articulated by female Stellenbosch University postgraduate students. Existing literature pointed to a need to address the complex layers of women's experiences. This was done by drawing on a social constructionist approach and Foucault's critical discourse analysis. This allowed for the understanding of participants' experiences within the social and patriarchal context, as well as some of the discourses that shape the subjectivities of women who experience sexual harassment at Stellenbosch University.

Data was collected through the use of in-depth, semi-structured interviews conducted with 10 participants. These heterosexual female students were interviewed because they had experienced sexual harassment on campus. The reason for choosing postgraduate students was because of their extensive time spent as university students. This sense of 'university maturity' meant that they had most likely already adapted to student life, and would have had time to reflect on these experiences. Critical discourse analysis was used to identify any underlying discourses and meanings from the language the students used. I separated the analysis into two chapters. In Chapter 4, I analysed and discussed what I titled, *Power, space, and language: Female students' narrations of sexual harassment on campus*, and in Chapter 5, *Women's Agency: Confronting Patriarchal Discourses and Resisting Victimhood.*

Both Chapters 4 and 5 explored significant themes. This chapter begins with a summary of the core findings, and then moves on to discuss the limitations of this study and recommendations for future research.

Summary of Findings

The purpose of this study was to explore how female university students make sense of their experiences of sexual harassment on the Stellenbosch University campus and how they articulated these

experiences. The topic of the study was made clear to all students prior to data collection. Furthermore, all of the participants deemed their experiences important enough to speak about. The findings of this study show that the participants in this study experienced sexual harassment in many, if not all, social spaces located on and around the university campus. While on campus, women are under constant threat of violence, as many of their harassers seem to be fellow students, university ground staff, and members of the broader Stellenbosch community, as well as the security guards tasked with keeping students safe. This 'culture of fear' has forced society to view sexual harassment as 'normal' and unavoidable (Gordon & Collins, 2013; Gqola, 2015; Mazibuko, 2017). These women, however, narrated their own strategies to combat violence.

Making meaning of the textures of sexual harassment – power, place and language

In the first analysis theme, the main forms of sexual harassment identified within this specific study included sexual objectification, unwanted sexual advances (verbal and via technology), sexual and rape-related jokes, catcalling, cyberstalking, stalking, inappropriate physical touching, and 'rape'. Similarly, a study conducted by Oni et al. (2019) also yielded findings with regard to these common forms of violence. In this study, students and older men (ground staff, workers, security guards and those not affiliated with the university) were identified as the perpetrators of sexual harassment as narrated by the participants.

Similar to the findings of Joubert et al. (2011) and Pina and Gannon (2012), the participants narrated feelings of shame, self-blame, embarrassment, sexual objectification and self-consciousness with regard to sexual harassment. This is important as the patriarchal society and its discourses blame women for sexual harassment as a form of control and exertion of power. Although the participants made use of patriarchal language to describe their experiences, they still expressed their own sense of agency by considering the consequences of their actions, speaking out and in some cases made the conscious decision to keep silent. This is may be an example of what Burr (2003) intended when she stated that these existing discourses manipulate the lives of women and the way they view themselves. This relates to the social constructionist theoretical approach presented by (Burr, 1995, 2003), in which

power is infused into language and society uses this language to oppress women – by blaming them for and forcing them to be responsible for their own victimisation.

Within the Stellenbosch University context, however, sexual harassment was not shown to have an impact on the participants' academics. This may be because the participants' agentic narrations suggest that they had resisted victimhood and that perhaps they would not allow the experience of sexual harassment to affect their academics. The findings have, however, revealed that the students may regard the campus as unsafe, and that they may avoid certain areas on campus, which may result in their dropping out or avoiding campus in an attempt to feel more comfortable. This is consistent with past literature that has found women adopt avoidance strategies to help them feel safer on campus (Ngabaza et al., 2015). This is not new information and only highlights how many women still face sexual harassment and the threat of rape daily in an environment where they are supposed to feel safe. The language used by the participants reveal that although they contemplate their own involvement in becoming 'victims', they still make agentic decisions regarding their choice to challenge the harasser and the consequences thereof.

Some of the student's narrated feeling sexually objectified, hypervigilant, violated, embarrassed, self-conscious and oppressed after having experienced sexual harassment. These effects of sexual harassment are profound as they may become more traumatic as women experience more sexual harassment, but may also force women to question how safe the university campus is and whether or not they have a place in it (Pina & Gannon, 2012; Schreiner, 2013). The language used by the participants show that they are reflective in their own experiences and have thought of the consequences of speaking out. Although the participants did not outright name their experiences as sexual harassment (this will be discussed later) they described their sense-making of the sexual harassment in terms of the effect the experiences had on them. These effects have also been found in previous literature (Gouws & Kritzinger, 2007; Joubert et al., 2011; Pina & Gannon, 2012; Schreiner, 2013; Yoon et al., 2010) and have been used to describe how *traumatic* sexual harassment is on the 'victims'.

Men's entitlement to women's bodies was also described. Participants narrated that university residences are particular social spaces within which men perpetuate rape jokes, the degradation of

139

women and rape culture. Within these social spaces, the "it's just a joke" rhetoric was seen to recur, and highlighted how easily the line between sexual harassment and a joke becomes blurred. This not only normalises sexual harassment, but also removes the accountability of men, and increases the possibility of women being blamed for their own victimisation. The language used by the participants seemed disapproving as perhaps they were aware that sexual harassment is perpetuated through social relations and to some may seem unavoidable. This 'joke', was also found in past literature when describing behaviour that constitutes sexual harassment behaviour (Otsiri, 2020), this not only makes defining sexual harassment more complicated, but forces women into hostile environments whilst they try to make sense of their experiences. Within residences, especially, women have been found to be subjected to degrading and misogynistic remarks, sexual objectification, and rape jokes. These findings shed light on how patriarchal and rape culture on campuses disguise physical violations as jokes, and how social environments on campus can foster such behaviour.

Naming and labelling sexual harassment

In the second analysis theme, the participants narrated their sense-making around their experiences. The majority of the participants 'chose' not to name their experiences sexual harassment, and have, instead, opted to describe these as less "severe" forms of violence. Despite narrating many different forms of sexual harassment, the participants did not seem to name their experiences as such. This could have been for different reasons, because of stigma, patriarchal language used to describe experiences and also avoiding further victimisation, amongst others. This highlights the ways in which participants exert agency through their decisions to avoid the sexual harassment 'victim' label. Past literature also presents findings of 'victims' not naming their experiences as sexual harassment (Collins, 2014; Magley & Shupe, 2005; Puigvert, 2008). The differences in making sense of their experiences may shed light into how 'victims' experience further victimisation and victim-blaming, and perhaps that some women who have not experienced sexual harassment are not aware of the full extent to which the patriarchal culture silences women. Patriarchal discourses drawn in the analyses, especially the "true victim discourse", claim that only when women experience violence, have attempted to avoid the violence and sought immediate support, can be considered 'victims' of this violence and are therefore

blameless (Phillips, 2000, p. 65) – as societal/patriarchal language blames women for their victimisation, the participants seemed not label themselves as true 'victims.

According to Magley and Shupe (2005), less than a third of women would regard and label their experiences as sexual harassment. This self-labelling with regard to sexual harassment depends on whether an individual acknowledges the experience as sexual harassment. The participants may have intentionally used language that minimised their experiences of sexual harassment due to the definition of sexual harassment not being consistent with their own definition thereof. The findings within this theme highlight how patriarchal and rape culture serve to silence women and influence how they would name or describe their experiences of sexual harassment. By this I refer to how patriarchal discourse easily shifts the blame to the 'victim'. Specifically "boys will be boys", "the male sexual drive discourse" (Dosekun, 2007, p. 90) and discourses sexual objectification which are considered to be 'normal' male behaviour in society and women should ultimately accept this. This power dynamic is essential for a patriarchal society as it keeps control over women and forces them into submission (Hekman, 1990). This may have influenced why some participants refused to name their experiences as sexual harassment – because along with this acknowledgement, society will criticise women's involvement in their own harassment.

Victim-blaming

In certain cases, the position of 'victim' is strategic (Fohring, 2018) since it can and has been used to acknowledge violence and call it out, and to acknowledge the negative effects of such violence on women. Perhaps the participants refused to accept the label of 'victim' because of the negative stigma attached to the 'victim' status or because the normalisation of sexual harassment has created the expectation that women should accept certain behaviours. The potential judgement of 'victims' was described by the participants. This is consistent with the existing literature on sexual harassment/rape myths, namely that "women who wear revealing clothing" or are drinking alcohol are, essentially, 'asking for it'; most harassment or assault happens at night or in isolated areas; most harassers are strangers to the 'victims'; women enjoy the attention; if a woman does not scream, fight back or become injured, she was willing; and sometimes 'no means yes' if a woman appears to be 'playing hard to get'

(Bartky, 1990; University of Pretoria, 2020; Western Australia Department of Health, 2020). Similarly, some of the participants referred to rape myths when narrating their choices with regard to naming their experiences, and reporting these to the authorities. As previously mentioned, the term 'victim' is loaded with negative connotations, and if some women speak out as 'victims' they may be expected to assume the role as 'victim' – and as a result the stigma that is attached to it. These findings shed light on the ways in which patriarchal discourse that blames women for their experiences and absolve men from their responsibility shape women's narratives and the ways in which they make sense of their experiences.

Patriarchal silencing and blaming the self

Through their narrations, the participants shed light on those in their lives who had attempted – and sometimes succeeded – to silence them and prevent them from speaking out against their harassers. Some of the participants minimised and described their experiences as less severe than rape. Whereas a few participants' narratives conveyed the sense that their experiences were unjust and inappropriate, many seemed to adopt discourses that blame the 'victims' or reduce the responsibility of men who rape or harass women. This victim-blaming discourse (Phillips, 2000) and "discourse of women's responsibility" (Gordon & Collins, 2013, p. 104) how women see themselves and was reported by many participants who narrated that their fear of being blamed, dismissed and judged, affected their choice to report their experiences and confront their harassers. This may be an indication of the severity of silencing, cultures of victim-blaming, fear, violence, and rape within our society. The concepts of self-blame and that the participants had 'asked for it' (clothing, entering certain campus spaces) were evident throughout the narrations and discourses upon which they had drawn. The participants who narrated that they blamed themselves for their experiences of sexual harassment, described how they had failed to "say no", resisted reporting the harassment to the authorities or simply 'allowed' the sexual harassment to continue as to avoid being blamed by others, and the retaliation of their harassers. Towns and Adams (2016) link the silencing of women's experiences of sexual harassment to male privilege, whereby patriarchal discourses serve to absolve men from the responsibility of their abusive behaviour and manipulate women into internalising this responsibility.

This is consistent with the participants' narrations and imply that the university culture is still highly patriarchal. Some participants articulate their awareness of the power dynamics on campus and how some authority and support structures exert power over women in various ways to maintain patriarchal control. The participants, however, make use of patriarchal discourses to describe their experiences. In some instances, it seems that they strategically use these discourses to express their awareness of society's view of 'victims' and in other instances their language indicates that they may have drawn on these discourses strategically as part of their critique of the patriarchal system.

Patriarchal discourses of victim-blaming, silencing, not believing 'victims', and the 'normality' of certain 'sexual harassment' behaviours have contributed to the lack of reporting with regard to harassment, and women's reluctance to speak out against their harassers. The participants in this study described keeping silent, avoiding harassers, and adopting mechanisms, such as altering clothing, attitudes and carrying weapons as ways of coping with possible harassment. These avoidance and coping mechanisms provide insight into the patriarchal culture aimed at keeping 'victims' silent and make women take responsibility for their own victimisation. The notion of "discourses of women's responsibility" refers to the power of discourses to shape harmful meanings surrounding abuse and harassment (Gordon & Collins, 2013, p. 104). Within this study participants described carrying weapons, taking routes near security services, and altering their attitudes in public as a form of coping and exerting their own agency. Thus, according to such patriarchal discourses, women are responsible for ensuring that sexual harassment does not occur (Gordon & Collins, 2013). The participants narrated how they had been expected to be submissive and to reciprocate men's interests – this links back to the discourse of "good woman". Although the women used patriarchal discourses to articulate how they make sense of their experiences, they also seemed to criticise the patriarchal system that makes use of such language to control women.

Some participants spoke about how close friends and family had minimised, silenced, or made the harassment out to be a 'joke', thus reducing the seriousness of their experiences. These findings are consistent with past studies which found that South African women are still expected to abide by discourses of societal gender roles, culture and gendered power relations (Shefer et al., 2008). Though

143

the participants may not have viewed these discourses as normal, some did make use of patriarchal discourses to describe their experiences and how they had made sense of these. By contrast, other participants distanced themselves from these patriarchal discourses, and provided descriptions that drew on feminist discourses. This shows that, similar to the study conducted by Shefer et al. (2008), women challenge patriarchal culture in a myriad of different ways. The participants conveyed an awareness of rape culture by naming it outright.

Strategic performances as agentic strategies

Previous studies contextualise the power dynamics between men and women as a result of societal discourses (Hekman, 1990), and indicate that power struggles, such as those involved in sexual harassment, can only be curbed by addressing the society that allows them to occur. The participants in this study demonstrated an awareness of this power imbalance, and continued to exert their own agency by criticising this 'normal' power dynamic, and challenging the men who harass them. Despite this so-called 'normality' of sexual harassment, the participants narrated that they had exerted their own agency by not only criticising the patriarchal systems and discourses on campus, but also by resisting becoming 'victims' through strategic performances. These strategic performances are consistent with literature that describes effective coping mechanisms and avoidance strategies that women use to protect themselves from victimisation. The findings presented in Chapter 5 reveal that women are aware of the stigmas and social meanings attached to the term 'victim', and therefore actively avoid referring to themselves as such. Not only did they challenge patriarchy and their harassers, but they also provided possible alternatives through their criticism of the patriarchal system. This avoidance of victimhood is also present in previous research in which female students often adopted 'avoidance strategies' to avoid becoming 'victims' of sexual harassment and feel safer on their campuses. For example, findings have shown that female students describe "walking in groups when necessary, carrying weapons and approaching campus security guards to be escorted" (Ngabaza et al., 2015, p. 31). This is consistent with the findings of this study, which suggest that on campus, women continue to resist victimhood, and challenge the patriarchal campus culture that makes them feel unsafe.

Criticising the university's patriarchal culture

A South African study conducted by Wilken and Badenhorst (2003) focused on comparing sexual harassment policies throughout South African universities, as well as their effectiveness. Wilken and Badenhorst (2003) found that sexual harassment is so broad that many experiences can be regarded differently, depending on the harasser and 'victim's' gender. This gendered power difference not only makes it difficult to identify experiences as sexual harassment, but can also impact the way in which the harassed person is viewed. Wilken and Badenhorst (2003) made recommendations to improve sexual harassment policies on campuses and suggested that universities need to specify how they define sexual harassment, and the existing policies, and support and grievance procedures that are available. In addition, they recommended having systems in place to ensure student and staff involvement. This is significant as it shows that even though more than 15 years have passed, some university students (such as Tanya and Maryke) are unaware of the sexual harassment policies, support structures and grievance procedures available to them on campus, while others do not have trust in these systems. Participants expressed distrust in the university authorities, a desire for a more informal support service facilitated by other students and offered recommendations to increase student safety.

On the one hand, within our patriarchal society, women who speak out against poor safety measures, or victimisation are met with a paternal 'protection' by which women are exposed to measures that serve as inhibitors to their freedom under the guise of safety (Lewis et al., 2018). An example of this is when women are required to dress conservatively or stay indoors at night as a way of ensuring their safety. The students who participated in this study narrated an awareness of these measures and criticised the patriarchal system. The participants challenged these measures through narrations about increasing female safety, as well as how to curb sexual harassment. These solutions ranged from carrying weapons on campus to de-sexing/decapitating men. This chapter highlights female students' awareness of unequal power relations within the university and ways in which they utilise discourse to position themselves as agents in relation to the patriarchal system. They not only criticised the measures implemented by the university to protect them from victimisation, but also criticised the full range of support systems available to students. The findings of this chapter provide

an opportunity for Stellenbosch University to change existing services and liaise with students regarding their own needs and ideas about what can be done to dismantle the patriarchal system.

Faculty, such as supervisors, security guards and support personnel need to be involved in student safety and need to play an active role in addressing and curbing sexual harassment. Thus, it should not be the sole responsibility of women or female students to ensure their own safety. In this study, the participants expressed a sense of distrust in university staff and, Emily, in particular, described experiences of dismissal and judgement from her male supervisor. Through their narrations, the participants criticised the security on campus, and offered suggestions to improve campus security by increasing the number of security guards, carrying weapons, and having security cameras throughout campus to aid in identifying perpetrators and to serve as evidence of the claims made by 'victims'.

Within the South African context, Gordon and Collins (2013) conducted a study within a South African university's residence and found that female students that have not experienced violence on campus, still anticipate and fear becoming victims. The participants of the abovementioned study advocated the reporting of violence against women – this finding contradicts the findings of this study. Within this study, participants who have experienced sexual harassment, narrate a sense of distrust in the support structures available to students. Arulogun (2013) and Gouws and Kritzinger (2007) found similar narrations, whereby 'victims' may be unaware of the university policies that exist to keep them safe or believe that the university may silence them to protect its own image and the perpetrator.

Some individuals usually require a formal port of call when dealing with psychological concerns. However, as narrated by Tanya, some individuals prefer peer support. This contradicts institutional expectations of psychological support and may provide new insights into ways in which support systems can be adapted to suit the needs of 'victims'. These 'victims' face blaming and silencing, which seems to contribute to the existing literature's explanation as to why few experiences and/or crimes are reported. Similar findings were found in the study conducted by Lewis et al. (2018) in which students sought a sense of community and, in sense, avoided the university's support structures since they had been run by the patriarchal culture that oppressed women. It is important to note that many of the participants expressed the fear of being disbelieved by the support structures on campus.

Other students may require peer support as they may feel uncomfortable speaking to campus support structures and may distrust these services. Literature also reveals that many 'victims' of sexual harassment that reveal a distrust in support services, have yet to report to these services and that 'victims' who have reported their experiences to support services, express a greater satisfaction in the support that they have received (Vijayasiri, 2008). This contradiction is very important as it may shed light on why individuals seek support, if they have sought support and perhaps even how the broader patriarchal culture teaches women that if they report their experiences, they will be treated a certain way.

Limitations of the Study and Recommendations for Future Research

Although this study yielded significant results that can be used to inform the understanding of female Stellenbosch University students' experiences of sexual harassment, and the meaning they make of such experiences, there are no accurate or official prevalence rates and statistics of sexual harassment that occur on the Stellenbosch University campus. These prevalence rates could assist the university in identifying where and who commits the harassment, to improve students' safety on campus. A limitation of this study involved time constraints, which affected the selection of participants recruited into the study, as well as the time spent working on the final document. I had an adequate sample pool, but perhaps my recruitment strategy was not as efficient as it could have been. A follow-up study would be beneficial in that it could provide more participant narrations, which may reveal additional information that could assist the University in curbing sexual harassment. The few participants who were willing to take part in the research may reveal information on the reluctance of those who have been victimised to speak out about their experiences. Of the participants, two were Black, one was Coloured, and seven were White. A study with a more diverse selection of participants in terms of racial background may reveal different perspectives.

Since these students were all within a specific age bracket, and were recruited on the Stellenbosch University campus, they are not representative of all 'victims' and races in South Africa. The study can however be repeated in different universities and is therefore transferable. As I am a White Afrikaans-speaking researcher, this may have impacted the relationship between certain

participants and myself, as well as their willingness to speak openly about certain subjects. Moreover, the experiences of students may be also be culturally different. By this, I mean my familial background; the fact that I have never lived in a university residence (or been a part of residence and its events); I spend most of my days in the Historical Trauma and Transformation offices on the Stellenbosch University campus (and thus do not interact with many others on campus); and, as a White student, I do not experience the racial discrimination that my Black participants would encounter. Perhaps a study conducted by racially diverse co-researchers would be beneficial in that it may serve to counter any distancing or closeness with the participants' experiences.

The choice to conduct individual interviews was carefully decided upon as the data collection method. This was chosen to maintain confidentiality, particularly in view of the sensitive nature of the topic. While focus group discussions were under consideration, they would have presented the possibility of some individuals dominating others during the discussions. Individual interviews allowed the participants to narrate without interruption or distraction. Conducting a focus group discussion once the interviews had been concluded would have benefited the overall study, as the participants have extremely interesting views and experiences. Therefore, the group dynamic may have yielded rich, in-depth information. Whilst conducting the interviews several opportunities arose to conduct further probing questions, many of which I missed and did not follow up on. Probing questions are highly beneficial in research of this nature. They allow researchers to delve more deeply into certain topics and to explore contradictions in participants' accounts.

The selection of this study's participants resulted in a number of limitations. This study opted for the recruitment of postgraduate students and has yielded findings that are isolated to a select group of women, some of whom no longer frequent campus, as they are nearing the completion of their studies. Future research can include undergraduate students who are on campus more frequently, as well as those who live near campus or in university residences, as they would be exposed to campus cultures. Future research can also be conducted with a larger sample of participants to ensure rich findings that may not have emerged in this study. Language fluency was an issue in two of the interviews, as these participants started speaking Afrikaans to articulate their experiences more

passionately. Translating these interviews may have resulted in their meaning becoming lost or altered. This could have been avoided had I offered to conduct the interviews in their home language. Therefore, future research may be necessary to allow individuals to be interviewed in their native languages, for more impactful statements and descriptions.

Participants narrated experiences of racial and cultural discrimination in university residences. This theme was touched on in chapter 4. Although this was not fully explored within this thesis, as it was not within its scope, it may be beneficial for future research to be conducted on how race and gender intersect to shape these female students' experiences. The findings also show that when men and women have social gatherings at university residences, patriarchal culture, rape culture and toxic masculinity create an environment in which women are degraded and harassed. I recommend that future research be conducted on university residences, with a specific focus on university cultures that foster environments that are unsafe for women and how to address these issues.

Policies should be developed to support female students; they should be able to talk about their gendered experiences without fear of stigmatisation or retaliation. If universities are to fulfil their role in transforming harmful power relations, exposing such experiences is of utmost importance. GBV is currently a hot topic which is on the agenda of top management at many universities in South Africa. This study contributes first-hand experiences of sexual harassment on the Stellenbosch University campus, as well as narrations in which participants draw on patriarchal and feminist discourses to describe and make sense of their experiences. From these findings, it is possible to ascertain that within this university context, many different forms of sexual harassment occur within many public, social and intimate spaces. In this study, I used a detailed, umbrella-definition of sexual harassment which ranges from inappropriate looks to rape, as some women may have different opinions on what constitutes sexual harassment. The findings of this study will be given to the Stellenbosch University's Equality Unit, Historical Trauma and Transformation Unit and Transformation Offices who have aimed to address problem areas within the university to increase the safety of women on campus and improve existing sexual harassment policies.

The topic under study has not received sufficient attention in the existing literature. Therefore, further studies on the ways in which women make sense of their experiences of sexual harassment, as well as the ways in which they cope or deal with it on university campuses will provide a more nuanced understanding with regard to the experiences of female students on campus. These understandings may allow for new ways to support female students who have experienced, or will experience, sexual harassment on university campuses. The findings of this study reveal that female students can thrive within hostile environments by utilising and developing agentic strategies to shield themselves against emotional and physical harm. Finally, Stellenbosch University should proactively transform its institutional culture. Such efforts should be focused on dismantling the patriarchal tendrils throughout campus life and creating an environment in which women can feel safe and supported.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: **Consent Form**

UNIVERSITEIT·STELLENBOSCH·UNIVERSITY
jou kennisvennoot • your knowledge partner

STELLENBOSCH UNIVERSITY
CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

You are invited to take part in a study conducted by Janine Markram, from the Psychology Department at Stellenbosch University. You were approached as a possible participant because you are a female Stellenbosch University student who has experienced, or is still experiencing, sexual harassment on campus.

1. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this study is to explore the sexual harassment experiences of female Stellenbosch University (SU) students. What are your experiences of sexual harassment and how have they influenced your life as a student?

2. WHAT WILL BE ASKED OF ME?

If you agree to take part in this study, you will be asked to answer questions regarding your experiences of sexual harassment on campus, whatever they may be. The interview will last for about one hour to an hour and a half, and will be conducted on campus in a quiet location of your choice. The interview will be recorded on a smart phone device with your permission.

3. POSSIBLE RISKS AND DISCOMFORTS

You may discuss topics that are sensitive to you or which make you uncomfortable. Should you experience any negative emotions either during or after the interview, counselling services have been arranged for you.
The CSCD, namely the Unit for Psychotherapeutic and Support Services based at Stellenbosch campus (49 Victoria Street) will provide the necessary support should you require someone to speak to about any negative feelings. These services will be offered free of charge.

Main reception: 021 808 4707
24 hour crisis service: 082 557 0880

The director of the CSCD is aware of the study and has offered the services. Should you wish to contact her, her details are as follows:
Munita Dunn-Coetzee: mdunn@sun.ac.za
Landline: 021 808 4707

4. POSSIBLE BENEFITS TO PARTICIPANTS AND/OR TO THE SOCIETY

The findings of this study may not benefit you directly but will contribute valuable knowledge which could inform strategies to address patriarchy and gender oppression on campus.

5. PAYMENT FOR PARTICIPATION

You will receive a small gratuity as a token of appreciation for your time spent doing the interview. The amount each participant will receive is R100.00.

6. PROTECTION OF YOUR INFORMATION, CONFIDENTIALITY AND IDENTITY

Any information you share with me during this study and that could possibly identify you as a participant will be protected. This will be done by keeping your name anonymous by providing a pseudonym and by making sure that no personal information is included so that you are not identifiable. The interviews will be audio-recorded so that the researcher has a detailed account of what was discussed. These audio recordings will only be accessible to the researcher and the researcher's transcriber, who has signed a confidentiality agreement. These recordings will be erased 5 years after the research study has been completed. The data will be transcribed into written transcripts and this will be stored on a password-protected external hard-drive and locked in a safe to which only the researcher has access.

7. PARTICIPATION AND WITHDRAWAL

You can choose whether to be in this study or not. If you agree to take part in this study, you may withdraw at any time without any consequence. You may also refuse to answer any questions you don't want to answer and still remain in the study. The researcher may withdraw you from this study if she sees that you are distressed; this is out of concern for your wellbeing. Should you withdraw from the study, you may decide if you want the collected data to be used. If you decide that you do not want the data to be used, it will be deleted from the researcher's database.

8. RESEARCHERS' CONTACT INFORMATION

If you have any questions or concerns about this study, please feel free to contact Janine Markram on 0726234623 / janinemarkram1992@outlook.com and/or her supervisor, Dr Samantha van Schalkwyk on + 27 (0)21 808 9742 / samanthavs@sun.ac.za.

9. RIGHTS OF RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS

You may withdraw your consent at any time and discontinue participation without penalty. You are not waiving any legal claims, rights, or remedies because of your participation in this research study. If you have questions regarding your rights as a research participant, contact Ms Maléne Fouché [mfouche@sun.ac.za; 021 808 4622] at the Division for Research Development.

DECLARATION OF CONSENT BY THE PARTICIPANT

As the participant, I confirm that:

- I have read the above information and that it is written in a language that I am comfortable with.
- I have had a chance to ask questions and all my questions have been answered.
- All issues related to privacy, and the confidentiality and use of the information I provide, have been explained.

By signing below, I _____ agree to take part in this research study, as conducted by <u>Janine Markram</u>.

_____   _____

Signature of Participant   **Date**

	DECLARATION BY THE PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR

As the **principal investigator,** I hereby declare that the information contained in this document has been thoroughly explained to the participant. I also declare that the participant has been encouraged (and has been given ample time) to ask any questions. In addition, I would like to select the following option:

X	The conversation with the participant was conducted in a language in which the participant is fluent.
	The conversation with the participant was conducted with the assistance of a translator (who has signed a non-disclosure agreement), and this "Consent Form" is available to the participant in a language in which the participant is fluent.

_____   _____

Signature of Principal Investigator   **Date**

Appendix 2: **Interview Schedule**

Good day, thank you for your time and for giving me the opportunity to conduct this interview with you. This interview will consist of seven main questions, and will last for approximately one hour. Have you read the consent form that you have been given prior to the interview? If so, do you have any concerns or questions regarding the consent form and what is expected of you? Do you have any questions before we start the interview?

I would like to reiterate that because we are discussing your experiences of sexual harassment on the Stellenbosch University campus, we may discuss some sensitive topics. Please take note that psychological services will be offered should you feel that you are in need of them, free of charge. The CSCD, namely the Centre for Student Counselling and Development based at Stellenbosch campus (49 Victoria Street), will provide the necessary support, should you require this. The contact information is also outlined on the copy of the consent form which I gave you.

Main reception: 021 808 4707

24-hour crisis service: 082 557 0880

The following questions are about your experiences of sexual harassment on the Stellenbosch University campus.

<u>Interview Questions</u>

Q1. As a woman studying at Stellenbosch University, what is your daily life like on campus?

Prompts:

What aspects of your campus life are most meaningful to you?

Please tell me about some of your most positive experiences on campus.

Please tell me about some of your more negative experiences on campus.

Q2. I'd like to know more about your experiences of sexual harassment on campus. Please describe any specific instances or experiences?

Prompts:

Could you tell me a bit more about that?

Please describe the circumstances around this particular experience, and what led up to it.

How did/do these experiences make you feel?

Q3. What significance has sexual harassment had on your life? Please tell me what your life is like in light of these events?

Prompts:

Please say more about that.

Could you describe any examples of this?

How did you feel about that?

Q4. What have some of your responses been to such experiences of sexual harassment? Please tell me about some of your in-the-moment responses.

Prompts:

Any physical responses?

Any emotional responses/feelings?

What did you do at the time of the experience?

Q5. Please tell me how you have coped with such experiences within the broader campus environment. How do you deal with such experiences on a day-to-day basis?

Prompts:

Please elaborate.

Please describe any challenges that you face?

Please tell me how you have coped with such experiences within the broader campus environment.

Who do you usually turn to for support?

Q6. Are you aware of any support structures on campus? If so, please tell me about your interactions with these support structures.

Prompts:

Please tell me more about that experience. What was it like for you?

Are there any sources of support that you need on campus?

Q7. Can you imagine a campus or even a world that has gender equality – a world in which sexual harassment would not occur? Please describe, in detail, what this world would look like to you.

Prompts:

What do you think needs to be done to make such a world possible?

What would we need to make it happen?

Is there anything you need to feel safer on campus? What do you think needs to be done for women to feel safe on campus?

Appendix 3: **Participant Recruitment Leaflet**

Unwanted sexualised and/or sexist behaviour directed at women is prevalent at universities globally. Not much research has been done on women's experiences in South Africa, but worldwide studies show that student's experience negative physical, psychological and academic effects as a result (Finchilescu & Dugard, 2018).

Please contact Janine Markram at janinemarkram1992@outlook.com or 0726234623 to find out more about the study and how to get involved.

The *Centre for Student Counselling and Development (CSCD)* is based at Stellenbosch University campus (49 Victoria Street)

Main reception: 021 808 4707

24 hour crisis service: 082 557 0880

Have you experienced this on campus?

Your experiences are important.

A 2019 Masters study is being conducted on women's experiences of unwanted sexualised and/or sexist behaviour on the Stellenbosch University campus. If you are a postgraduate student that identifies as a woman and have experienced any unwanted behaviour from men, I would like to hear your story.

Such behaviours may include sexist insults; starting rumours; badgering for dates; sending sexual material; unwanted touching; pulling off of clothes; stalking; and forced sexual activity

Please turn over

Appendix 4a: **Transcriber Confidentiality Form**

Ulenda Myburgh
Mill Cottage, Henry Elliot Road
Cathcart
5310

Ulenda.t@gmail.com
info@ulendamyburgh.com
076 460 6723

CONFIDENTIALITY DISCLAIMER FOR RESEARCH PROJECT

Dear Ms. Janine Markram

This is a confidentiality agreement for the following research project:

Project name	:	A Qualitative Study Exploring Female Stellenbosch University Students' Experiences of Sexual harassment
Student's name	:	Janine Markram
Student number	:	19277784
Student	:	Dr. Samantha van Schalkwyk, Senior Researcher, Historical Trauma and Transformation Studies, Stellenbosch University

All transcripts completed by myself, Ulenda Myburgh, and any data and recordings connected to these transcripts are completely confidential and intended solely for the use of the individual or entity to whom they are addressed.

Disclosing, copying, distributing or taking any action in regard to the content of this information is strictly prohibited in the case that you are not the intended recipient.

Regards,

U.Myburgh

_____

Ulenda Myburgh

Appendix 4b: **Transcriber Confidentiality Form**

Structured Business Solutions (Pty) Ltd
RegNo.2005/014428/07

PO Box 39798
Moreleta Park
0044

Tel: +27 (0) 12 997 6664
Fax: +27 086 619 7312
Cell: 079 0770 207
Email: antoinette@sbsol.co.za

CONFIDENTIALITY DISCLAIMER FOR RESEARCH PROJECT

Dear Ms. Janine Markram

This is a confidentiality agreement for the following research project:

Project name	:	A Qualitative Study Exploring Female Stellenbosch University Students' Experiences of Sexual harassment.
Student's name	:	Janine Markram
Student number	:	19277784
Student	:	Dr. Samantha van Schalkwyk, Senior Researcher, Historical Trauma and Transformation Studies, Stellenbosch University.

All transcripts completed by myself, Antoinetté E.J. Markram, and any data and recordings connected to these transcripts are completely confidential and intended solely for the use of the individual or entity to whom they are addressed.

Disclosing, copying, distributing or taking any action in regard to the content of this Information is strictly prohibited in the case that they are not the intended recipient.

Regards

Antoinette Markram

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Antoinetté E.J. Markram
18 Berry place
Moreletapark
0044

174

Appendix 5: **Psychological Support Form**

From: Dunn-Coetzee, M, Dr [mdunn@sun.ac.za] <mdunn@sun.ac.za>
Sent: Thursday, 17 January 2019 12:45 PM
To: Van Schalkwyk, S, Dr [samanthavs@sun.ac.za] <samanthavs@sun.ac.za>
Cc: Kruger, E, Mev [elmarievdw@sun.ac.za] <elmarievdw@sun.ac.za>
Subject: RE: Psychological support for research participants

Dear Samantha

Thank you for the email. I take note of the amended title and we will be able to assist with the participants needing therapeutic assistance, however, as stated below, these participants will not be given preferential treatment.

Dr Munita Dunn-Coetzee

Direkteur: Sentrum vir Studentevoorligting en -ontwikkeling | Director: Centre for Student Counselling and Development

Studentesake | Student Affairs

e: mdunn@sun.ac.za | t: +27 21 808 4707 | a: Victoriastraat 37 | 37 Victoria Street | Stellenbosch

w: www.sun.ac.za/studentesake | www.sun.ac.za/ssvo

Appendix 6: **Institutional Permission Form**

UNIVERSITEIT • STELLENBOSCH • UNIVERSITY
jou kennisvennoot • your knowledge partner

INSTITUTIONAL PERMISSION:

AGREEMENT ON USE OF PERSONAL INFORMATION IN RESEARCH

Name of Researcher:	Janine Markram
Name of Research Project:	A Qualitative Study Exploring Female University Students' Experiences of Sexual Harassment
Service Desk ID:	IRPSD-1291
Date of Issue:	10 April 2019

You have received institutional permission to proceed with this project as stipulated in the institutional permission application and within the conditions set out in this agreement.

1	**WHAT THIS AGREEMENT IS ABOUT**	
What is POPI?	1.1	POPI is the Protection of Personal Information Act 4 of 2013.
	1.2	POPI regulates the entire information life cycle from collection, through use and storage and even the destruction of personal information.
Why is this important to us?	1.3	Even though POPI is important, it is not the primary motivation for this agreement. The privacy of our students and employees are important to us. We want to ensure that no research project poses any risks to their privacy.
	1.4	However, you are required to familiarise yourself with, and comply with POPI in its entirety.
What is considered to be personal information?	1.5	'Personal information' means information relating to an identifiable, living, individual or company, including, but not limited to:
	1.5.1	information relating to the race, gender, sex, pregnancy, marital status, national, ethnic or social origin, colour, sexual orientation, age, physical or mental health, well-being, disability, religion, conscience, belief, culture, language and birth of the person;
	1.5.2	information relating to the education or the medical, financial, criminal or

Institutional Permission Standard Agreement: 13 March 2017 V1

Appendix 7: **REC - SBE Approval Letter**

UNIVERSITEIT
STELLENBOSCH
UNIVERSITY

NOTICE OF APPROVAL

REC: SBER - Initial Application Form

25 June 2019

Project number: 9064

Project Title: A Qualitative Study Exploring Female University Students' Experiences of Sexual Harassment

Dear Ms Janine Markram

Your response to stipulations submitted on 14 May 2019 was reviewed and approved by the REC: Humanities.

Please note the following for your approved submission:

Ethics approval period:

Protocol approval date (Humanities)	Protocol expiration date (Humanities)
25 April 2019	24 April 2020

GENERAL COMMENTS:

Please take note of the General Investigator Responsibilities attached to this letter. You may commence with your research after complying fully with these guidelines.

If the researcher deviates in any way from the proposal approved by the REC: Humanities, the researcher must notify the REC of these changes.

Please use your SU project number (9064) on any documents or correspondence with the REC concerning your project.

Please note that the REC has the prerogative and authority to ask further questions, seek additional information, require further modifications, or monitor the conduct of your research and the consent process.

FOR CONTINUATION OF PROJECTS AFTER REC APPROVAL PERIOD

Please note that a progress report should be submitted to the Research Ethics Committee: Humanities before the approval period has expired if a continuation of ethics approval is required. The Committee will then consider the continuation of the project for a further year (if necessary)

Included Documents:

Document Type	File Name	Date	Version
Informed Consent Form	Consent form	18/01/2019	
Request for permission	Institutional Permission	24/01/2019	
Default	Proposal Amendments	14/03/2019	DESC amendments
Data collection tool	Interview schedule	29/03/2019	REC
Budget	Research budget	01/04/2019	REC
Default	Samantha van Schalkwyk abbreviated CV	02/04/2019	REC
Proof of permission	Institutional Permission_Standard Agreement Janine Markram 10 April 2019	10/04/2019	1
Proof of permission	Institutional Permission_Standard Agreement Janine Markram 10 April 2019	10/04/2019	1
Research Protocol/Proposal	Proposal 6 May 2019 REC draft	06/05/2019	Final
Default	Proposal Amendments for the REC	06/05/2019	REC

177

			amendments
Letter of support_counselling	Psychological support	12/05/2019	2
Recruitment material	Recruitment method	13/05/2019	pdf

If you have any questions or need further help, please contact the REC office at cgraham@sun.ac.za.

Sincerely,

Clarissa Graham

REC Coordinator: Research Ethics Committee: Human Research (Humanities)
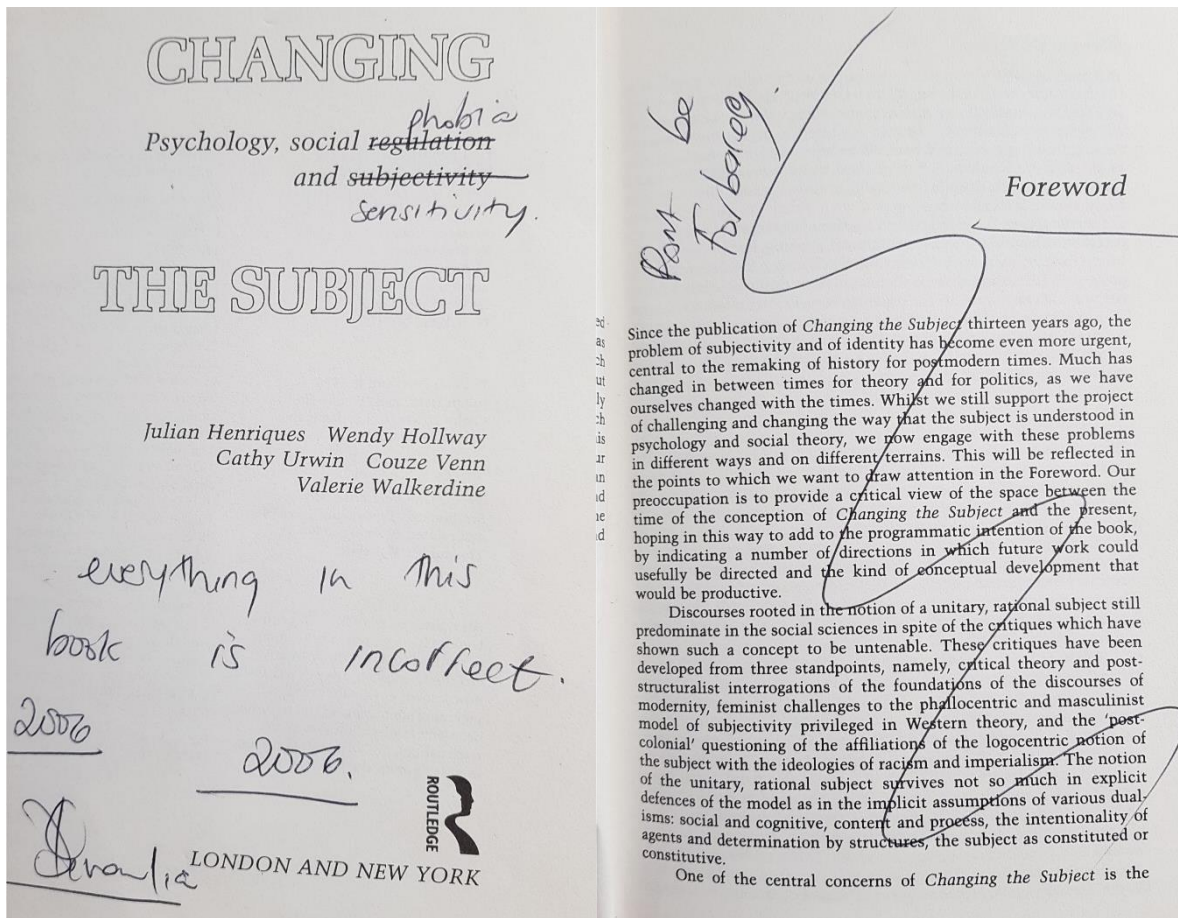
Appendix 8: **Figure 1**

Figure 1: Images taken from a defaced book from the Stellenbosch University library. "Changing the Subject: Psychology, Social Regulation and Subjectivity", by Henriques et al., 1998, London: Routledge.