

# Sexual Harassment and Associated Factors Among Teenage Females in Pawi District, Beneshagul Gumuz Regional State, Northwest Ethiopia, 2021

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**Abstract:** Background: Sexual harassment can be defined as unwelcome and unwanted sexual advances desires for sexual favor, and verbal, non-verbal, or physical contact of a sexual nature that creates a hostile or offensive environment. Sexual harassment occurs anywhere commonly in schools and teenage females faced psychological, social, and environmental problems. Few studies have been performed in Ethiopia related to sexual harassment, but some variables were, not included in the previous study like body makeup, and wearing style, and qualitative study was not included and also there is no baseline information on sexual harassment and possible risk factor in this study area. Objective: This study is aimed to assess sexual harassment and associated factor among teenage females of Pawi district Benishangul Gumuz Northwest Ethiopia in 2021. Method: Community-based cross-sectional study supplemented by qualitative was conducted in Pawi district Benishangul Gumuz Northwest Ethiopia from April 30 2021 to May 30, 2021. The study includes 422 teenagers female and a simple random sampling technique was used to select study participants. Data entered using Epi Data-V.3.1 and exported to SPSS version 23 for analysis. Qualitative data were collected through in-depth interviews with purposively selected key informants were included and analyses were thematized manually. Result: The prevalence of sexual harassment among teenagers females of the pawi district within twelve months was 185 (44%). Residence (rural) AOR=[1.717 95%CI (1.117-2.639)], marital status (single) AOR=3.158 95%CI (1.268-7.864), current living status (alone) AOR=[4.701 95%CI (1.268-17.431)], alcohol consumption AOR=[4.533 95%CI (2.311-8.890)], having body makeup AOR=[1.967 95%CI (1.178-3.284)], and having a boyfriend AOR=[3.242 95%CI (1.798-5.844)] has positive significant association with sexual harassment. Conclusion and recommendation: The sexual harassment among teenage females in the pawi district was 44%. Furthermore, being single/unmarried, living in a rural area, current living status (alone), alcohol consumption, and having a boyfriend were significantly associated with sexual harassment. Therefore government and the community need to work together to minimize sexual harassment and create a safe environment for teenage females.

**Keywords:** Sexual Harassment, Teenage, Pawi, Ethiopia

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## 1. Introduction

According to the international labor organization (ILO), Sexual harassment can be defined as unwelcome and unwanted sexual advances desires for sexual favor, and verbal, non-verbal, or physical contact of a sexual nature that creates a hostile or offensive environment and Harassment is

often an unnoticed form of violence that frequently makes it difficult for affected individuals and groups to realize their full capacity [1, 2]. Sexual harassment of teens can occur anywhere commonly in schools, workplaces, and the community [3] and the occurrence at work or school with the intent of eliciting sexual favors from the recipient in return for favorable job benefits such as compensation,

advancement, or working hours [4].

Stud among American women overall, 69% of women who say they have experienced sexual harassment say this happened in a professional or work setting; 85% say they have experienced this outside of work [5, 6]. As a result of sexual harassment, female teenagers may experience difficulties in their academic performance, including absenteeism, reduced school quality, missing classes, lower grades, loss of friends, tardiness, and stress [7].

Since the mid-1970s, when sexual harassment was first recognized as a barrier to women's equality, it has become increasingly clear that harassment in its multiple forms is widespread. Today, nine out of ten countries have laws against sexual harassment in the workplace, but nearly six out of ten lack adequate laws against sexual harassment in higher education and schools [8, 9].

Sexual harassment can occur in many different ways the harasser can be the victim's supervisor an agent of the proprietor, a supervisor in another area a co-worker and Today's teenagers who are socialized in a safe and healthy environment are the adults of tomorrow and the basis for the future development of a country and the world [10, 11, 13].

The effects of violence against teenagers will cause various psychological and physical effects which may have a lifelong impact on the mental and physical development of the adolescent but still difficult to determine the full impact of sexual harassment against teenagers since most research focuses on an institutional-based study that not considered those teenagers out of school and the workplace, and in transportation are the gaps to fills in these studies [11, 12, 14].

Prevalence of sexual harassment Jimma university Ethiopia rates of psychological distress among all-female student participants and students who had experienced sexual harassment were 60.3% and 63.0%, respectively [15].

Teenage female harassment is Ethiopia because females who faced harassment are of low interest to report, and perpetrators are not reported to the appropriate authorities [16]. This ongoing violence has a variety of effects on survivors, including the manifestation of physical, emotional, and social conditions, and as a result, it limits their capacity to engage in educational and professional activities, as well as public life [17-19].

However, there is still a lot of ambiguity and inconsistency in how to recognize, deter, and eliminate sexual assault, as well as who is responsible for it [20]. Sexual harassment is a persistent problem affecting all countries, sectors, and occupations around the world. However, victims of sexual harassment are often unlikely to report it [21]. This is often due to a lack of awareness about what constitutes sexual harassment, fear of reprisals from co-workers, supervisors, family members, or the employer, lack of effective reporting mechanisms. [21]. Thus, these teenagers grow up with all sorts of disturbing behaviors and personality mixes and society becomes the worse-off for it [22].

Globally sexual health sexual harassment issue is taking place in every society but common among teenagers. The problem has been spread at every corner of our society very

rapidly forming a national problem [23]. Sexual harassment is a smaller incident to serious abuse which maybe even force sexual activity that creates an intolerable atmosphere for the recipient. teenage females are bound to endure inappropriate behavior because they lack power, social security, and fearlessness and are associated to endure peacefully [24].

Sexual harassment has been studied worldwide prevalence ranges widely also differing from region to region, that is from 25-57% in the western countries, from 1-56% in the Far East It is important to study because it not only carries social implications as a form of gender discrimination and sexual violence but it also poses a serious public health concern for teenage [25].

Many studies on sexual harassment cause distress and discomfort to the victims, which can interfere with the normal life of students in schools [26]. On sexual harassment among teenagers have either not asked about the location of the event or focused specifically on the sexual harassment occurring at any place [27].

However, it is still difficult to determine the full impact of sexual harassment against teenagers since most research does not address teenage female harassment and few studies are focused on an institutional-based study that does not consider those teenagers out of school, out workplace, in public transportation, at home another neighborhood nearby or another place, and some variable not included in the previous study but that might have related to the effect on female teenage harassment are the gaps to fills in these studies [11, 14, 25].

Generally, evidence related to sexual harassment in our country especially in beneshagul gumuz is scarce. Studies related to sexual harassment had not been conducted in the study area. This study has assessed the prevalence and associated factors of sexual harraaseement.

## 2. Methods

### 2.1. Study Area, Design, and Period

A community-based cross-sectional study supplemented by a qualitative study was conducted in Benishangul Gumuz regional state paw district, northwestern Ethiopia 2021. The Estimates numbers of reproductive age group women were 15,539, Teenage (13-19) year are 4329 from this around 2217 are female teenagers (woreda report 2012).

### 2.2. Study Population

The study populations consisted of randomly selected teenage females in the selected kebele of Pawi district during the study period and those who fulfilled inclusion criteria.

Teenage females who were volunteers and have the willingness to participate in selected kebele were included in the study.

#### 2.2.1. Sample Size Determination

The maximum sample size is determined using a single population proportion formula.

$$n = \frac{Z_{\alpha/2}^2 p(1-p)}{d^2} = 422$$

Some basic assumptions of sample size determination

P = prevalence of sexual harassment (offensive comment previously done in Jimma zone Ethiopia 49.8% (28).

$Z_{\alpha/2}$  = critical value for normal distribution at 95% confidence level which equals 1.96, The degree of precision = 0.05 (5%), Non-response rate = 10%

The total sample size is 422.

### 2.2.2. Sampling Procedures

From 21 Kebeles in pawi district, 7 (seven) Kebeles were selected by using the lottery method. The numbers of study participants are allocated to each kebele proportionally according to the size of teenagers in kebele. To select study participants from each kebele, simple random sampling was employed in seven kebeles to get 422 teenagers female.

### 2.3. Data Collection Tools and Procedure

Data collection tools were adapted from different kinds of literature [29-32] and contained two parts, the first part containing the experience of sexual harassment, and the second part containing associated factors with sexual harassment.

Data were collected through face-to-face interviews with all teenage females, and data collectors are seven diploma female midwifery and two BSc, nurses.

#### 2.3.1. Study Variables

Dependent variable  
Sexual harassment

#### 2.3.2. Independent Variable

Age, Marital status, Residence, Parent income  
Education, occupational status, culture  
current living status, having a boyfriend  
Substance use, wearing clothes style, body make-up style  
Operational definitions

Sexual harassment: - Teenage females faced at least one of the three types of sexual harassment (physical, verbal, and nonverbal) that creates a hostile or offensive environment [33, 34].

Verbal harassment: -Teenage females faced at least one common verbal sexual harassment (Offensive sexual remark or joke, offensive comment on posture, clothes, weakling, and Sexualized conversation) [33, 34].

Non-verbal harassment: -Teenage females faced at least one common nonverbal sexual harassment (unwanted looking a person up and down, blocking a person's path, following the person giving personal gifts, and displaying sexually suggestive visuals) [33, 34].

Physical harassment: - Teenage females faced at least one common physical sexual harassment (unwanted touching the person's clothing, hair, breast, buttocks, rubbing against sexually, bent your fingers, or bit you) [33, 34].

Teenage female: -adolescent female age between 13-19 age group [35].

Good knowledge:-Teenage females answer at greater than or equal three sexual harassment from the five (yes or no) knowledge questionnaire and Poor knowledge:-Teenage females answer at Less than three sexual harassment that asking knowledge questionnaire [36].

### 2.4. Data Analysis Procedures

The data were cleaned, checked for completeness, and entered using Epi Data-Version. 3.1 and exported to SPSS version 23 for analysis. Then, the data were analyzed using appropriate descriptive statistics, and summarized by frequency, percentage, and mean. bivariate and multivariable logistic regression analyses were performed to identify associated factors of sexual harassment. The variables in analysis with  $p < 0.2$  were entered into multiple logistic regression. Finally, the analyzed data were organized and presented in tabular, graphical, and narrative form accordingly. P-value  $< 0.05$  were considered statistically significant. Qualitative data was analysis thematized manually.

## 3. Result

### 3.1. Socio-demographic Characteristics of a Female Teenager

A total of 420 female teenagers were included in the studies making a response rate of 99.5%. Out of the total participants, 262 [62.4%] were aged between 13-17 years and the mean age of the respondents was 16.89 [16.89+1.510]. About 272 [64.8%] were from rural areas. The religion of the respondent was Orthodox Christian 270 [64.3%] followed by Muslim 77 [18.3%] and the majority of the respondent Amhara in ethnicity 301 [71.7%]. Regarding the marital status of the respondents, unmarried 366 [87.1%] and about 250 [59.5%] of the respondents were secondary schools, 138 [32.9%] and about 345 [82.1%] of the respondents had no income.

At the time of the study, 270 [64.3%] of the respondents were living with families. About 85 [20.2%] of the respondents reported that they have a boyfriend in the pawi district in 2021 (Table 1).

**Table 1.** Socio-demographic characteristics of a female teenager in pawi district, Beneshagul Gumuz northwest Ethiopia, June 2021, (n = 420).

Variable	Frequency	Percentage
Age		
13-17	262	62.4%
18-19	158	37.6%
Residence		
Urban	148	35.2%
Rural	272	64.8%
Religious		
Orthodox	270	64.3%
Protestant	66	15.7%
Muslim	77	18.3%
Other	7	1.7%

Variable	Frequency	Percentage
Ethnicity		
Amhara	301	71.7%
Shinasha	46	11.0%
Gumuz	10	2.4%
Agaw	42	10.0%
Other	21	5.0%
Marital status		
Single	366	87.1%
Married	41	9.8%
Divorced	9	2.1%
Widowed	4	1.0%
Monthly income		
No income	345	82.1%
less than 500	36	8.6%
Equal 501-1000	33	7.9%
Greater than 1000	6	1.4%
Currently living status		
Family	270	64.3%
Alone	108	25.7%
Relative	27	6.4%
Houseband	15	3.6%
Having boyfriend		
Yes	85	20.2%
No	335	79.8%

Other (religious)\*\*tawot\*\*, (ethnicity)\*\*kambata, Oromo\*\*.

### 3.2. Parental Socio-economic Characteristics

The majority of the participants [71.9%] reported that their parents are living together whereas 123 [28.1%] reported that they are separated. The educational level of respondents' parents, [42.9%] of mothers could read and write but [44.5%] of fathers were able to read and write. About their occupational status, [39.3%] of mothers were housewives, and (36.9%) of fathers were farmers. For about 158 (34.3%) of the respondents' parents/husbands, monthly income was in the range of 500-1000 Birr per month. (Table 2).

**Table 2.** Socio-demographic characteristics of a female teenager in paw district, Beneshagul Gumuz northwest Ethiopia, June 2021, (n = 420).

Variable	Frequency	Percentage
Age		
13-17	262	62.4%
18-19	158	37.6%
Residence		
Urban	148	35.2%
Rural	272	64.8%
Religious		
Orthodox	270	64.3%
Protestant	66	15.7%
Muslim	77	18.3%
Other	7	1.7%
Ethnicity		
Amhara	301	71.7%
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Variable	Frequency	Percentage
Other	21	5.0%
Marital status		
Single	366	87.1%
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Currently living status		
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Houseband	15	3.6%
Having boyfriend		
Yes	85	20.2%
No	335	79.8%

Other (religious)\*\*tawot\*\*, (ethnicity)\*\*kambata, Oromo\*\*.

### 3.3. Knowledge Related Teenager's Females on Sexual Harassment

According to the findings, approximately 169 [40.5%] of female teenagers know about sexual harassment, whereas 251 [59.5%] do not know about sexual harassment, and 65 [35.1%] know the impact of sexual harassment. This study showed the knowledge of female teenagers on sexual harassment from a total of 420 respondents that have a history of sexual harassment 114 [27.1%] has good knowledge and 304 [72.9%] has poor knowledge.

### 3.4. History of Respondents' Substance Use

Among the respondents for sexual harassment, chewing khat, alcohol, and cigarette smoking were reported by 40 [9.5%], 72 [17.1%], and 28 [7.6%], respondents, respectively. Regarding the frequency of substance use, 9 [21.4%] and 2 [13.3%] of respondents were using khat and smoke frequently whereas the rest use infrequently.

### 3.5. Prevalence of Sexual Harassment

The prevalence of sexual harassment within the twelve months was 185 [44%] 95%CI [38.6-48.1] and 55 [13%] after twelve months. Of those who experience sexual harassment, 79 [42.7%] were physical, 139 [75.1%] verbal and 44 [23.8%] were nonverbal sexual harassments and out of the total respondents, 240 [57.1%] 95%CI [53.1-61.9] of them had faced at least one form of sexual harassment practice.

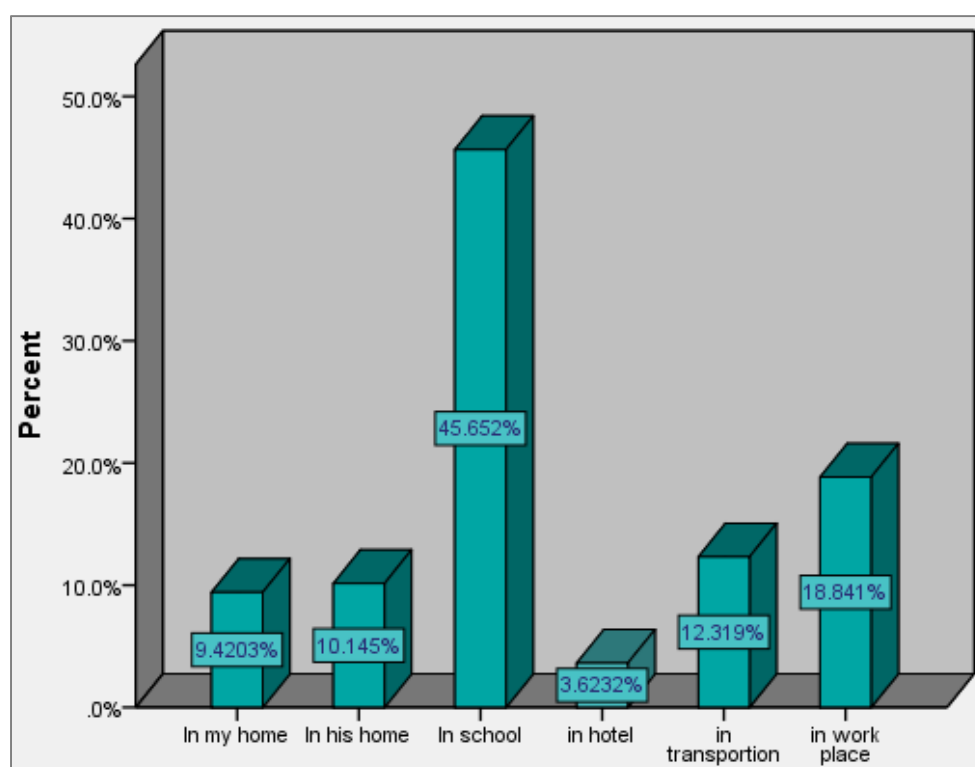
Among the respondents that have a history of sexual harassment has experienced an attempt to kissing were 74 [40%], touching of the person's (clothing, hair, breast, buttock) 60 (32.4%), offensive comments on posture cloth and wake 87 (47%), and displaying sexually suggestive visual 17 (9.2%) (Table 3).

**Table 3.** Common sexual harassment teenage females experienced in the pawi district in the last twelve months, 2021 (n=185).

Variable		Frequency	Percent
Attempt to kissing	Yes	74	40%
	No	111	60%
Touching personal body	Yes	60	32.4%
	No	125	67.6%
Rubbing against the sexual way	Yes	36	19.5%
	No	149	80.5%
Bennet's finger	Yes	31	16.8%
	No	154	83.2%
Offensive sexual remarks	Yes	116	62.7%
	No	69	37.3%
Offensive comment on pasture/cloth/wake	Yes	87	47%
	No	98	53%
Sexual conversion	Yes	57	30.8%
	No	128	69.2%
Looking person up and down	Yes	36	19.4%
	No	149	80.6%
Attempt to block the personal path	Yes	24	13%
	No	161	87%
following person giving a personal gift	Yes	15	8%
	No	170	92%
displaying sexually suggestive visual	Yes	17	9.2%
	No	168	90.8%

### 3.6. The Perpetrator and Place of Sexual Harassment

The main perpetrators of sexual harassment in the pawi district were male students 61 [33%], followed by boyfriend 39 [21%], male teachers 38 [20%], other staff 17 [9.2%], and managers 16 [8.6%] and other 14 [7.5%] and regarding places of this sexual harassment occurred were in the school's 84 [45.3%], followed by at workplace 26 [18.7%] (Figure 1).

**Figure 1.** Distribution of places where sexual harassment occurred in the pawi district in 2021.

Among the sexual harassment that happened 13 (7%) teenagers had faced physical injury where 3 [23.1%] of them go for medical care, and. regarding reporting sexual

harassment were 11.9% reported to the concerned body and the reason for not reporting [44.8%] was fear of the perpetrator (Table 4).

### 3.7. A consequence of Twelve Months of Sexual Harassment

The consequence of sexual harassment in the paw district among teenage females was stress 100 [54.1%], followed by loss of friend 44 [23%], (Table 5).

**Table 4.** Sexual harassment reporting and reason for not reporting among teenage females in the paw district in 2021.

Variable	Frequency	Precent
Reporting to the appropriate body after being sexually harassed		
Yes	22	11.9
No	163	88.1
Total	185	100.0
Reason for not reported		
Culture	61	37.4
Fear of perpetrator	73	44.8
No police/lawyer around the area	23	14.1
Other	6	3.7
Total	163	100.0

\*\*other\*\*1 hit him, reported to my brother.

**Table 5.** Consequences of sexual harassment among female teenagers of paw district, Beneshagul Gumuz northwest Ethiopia, in 2021.

Variable	Frequency	Present (%)
A consequence of sexual harassment to teenagers females		
stress	100	54.1%
loss of friend	44	23.8%
school drop out	17	9.2%
loss of work	9	4.9%
other	15	8.1%
Total	185	100.0

Other \*\*fear of transportation home to school\*\*.

### 3.8. Factors Associated with Sexual Harassment of Female Teenager of Paw District in 2021

In the bivariate logistic regression analysis, sexual harassment was associated with residence, marital status, current living status, alcohol consumption, smoking, mother education, body makeup, family income, and having a boyfriend. However, in multiple logistic regression analyses, sexual harassment was associated significantly with the residence of the female teenager, marital status, current living status, alcohol consumption, body makeup and, having a boyfriend.

In this study, female teenagers living in rural areas were 1.717 times more likely to experience sexual harassment compared to those living in urban areas [AOR= [1.717, 95% CI [1.117, 2.639]] and the marital status of teenagers females have a significant association with sexual harassment who were single teenagers females were 3.158 times more likely to sexual harassment compared with married female teenagers.

The current Living status of the teenage female also showed a statistically significant association with sexual harassment; Female teenagers who live alone were almost 4.701 times more likely to be sexually harassed than those who live with families [AOR=4.701 95%CI [1.268, 17.431]]. Teenagers female who alcohol consumed had 4.533 more likely to be sexually harassed compared with those who had never alcohol consumed [AOR=4.533 95%CI [2.311, 8.890]].

Sexual harassment had a significant association with having a boyfriend that Teenagers female that had no boyfriend were 3.242 times more likely sexually harassed compared with the female teenager who had no boyfriend [AOR= [3.242 95%CI [1.798, 5.844]] (Table 6).

**Table 6.** Multivariate logistic regression analysis for potential factors associated with twelve months of sexual harassment among female teenagers of paw district, Beneshagul Gumuz northwest Ethiopia, in 2021.

Variable	Sexual harassment		Crude OR (95% CI)	Adjusted OR (95%CI)
	Yes	No		
Residence				
Urban	96	52	1	1
Rural	144	128	(1.641, 1.086, 2.480) **	1.717 (1.117, 2.639) **
Marital status				
Married	30	11	1	1
Single	200	166	2.511 (1.275, 4.945) **	3.158 (1.268, 7.864) **
Divorced	7	2	1.543 (0.357, 6.675)	1.444 (0.299, 6.968)
Widowed	3	1	0.643 (0.061, 6.7640)	0.928 (0.074, 11.708)
Family income				
Less than 500	11	39	1	1
501-1000	28	35	0.3539 (0.153, 0.811)	0.530 (0.115, 2.454)
Greater than 1001	12	58	1.363 (0.547, 3.398)	0.159 (0.037, 0.688)
No income	4	49	4.607 (1.201, 17.666)**	0.621 (0.131, 2.957)
Mother education				
can't read and write	81	43	1.408 (0.877, 2.260)	0.579 (0.125, 2.688)
read and write	103	77	2.066 (1.121, 3.807)**	0.626 (0.140, 2.804)
elementary	31	34	1.662 (0.757, 3.650)	0.826 (0.171, 3.984)
secondary	17	15	3.767 (0.898, 15.812)	1.399 (0.247, 7.910)
preparatory	3	6	1.884 (0.517, 6.868)	1.202 (0.153, 9.465)
colleg/university	5	5	1	1
Alcohol consumption				
Yes	59	13	4.187 (2.216, 7.912) **	4.533 (2.311, 8.890)**
No	181	167	1	1

Variable	Sexual harassment		Crude OR (95% CI)	Adjusted OR (95%CI)
	Yes	No		
Body makes up				
Yes	77	33	1	1
No	163	147	2.104 (1.322, 3.349)**	1.967 (1.178, 3.284)**
Current living status				
Family	129	141	1	1
Alone	78	30	4.372 (1.207, 15.843)**	4.701 (1.268, 17.431) **
Relative	21	6	1.538 (0.406, 5.837)	1.423 (0.367, 5.515)
Husband	12	3	1.143 (0.241, 5.422)	1.129 (0.232, 5.491)
Having boyfriend				
Yes	65	20	1	1
No	175	160	2.971 (1.723, 5.125)**	3.242 (1.798, 5.844)**

Note (\*\*) Indicates those variable P. value < 0.05.

### 3.9. Results of a Depth Interview

The study was conducted to supplement the quantitative findings of the study. The theme of the key informant was to explore the presence of sexual harassment on teenage females, where and when sexual harassment occurs, common attackers, administrative response to unwanted sexual harassment, perceived consequences, and possible prevention measures of sexual harassment.

### 3.10. Where and When Sexual Harassment Occurs

The majority of the interviewer responded that Sexual harassment, where and when sexual harassment occurs. They explained that sexual harassment—words and actions—happened in the community often, occurred in school, and was very upsetting to them. Some examples of sexual harassment were: Sexual rumors (fugera) about their personal sex life, Pulled off their clothing in a sexual way unwanted force for sexual favors, Threatening to harm with stab or sharp materials, Sexual comments about a person's appearance, and clothing, and unwanted telephone.

*A 43 years old kebele leader key informant stated:*

*".....I know a girl who moved to pawi town from a nearby rural kebele in the hopes of receiving a higher education. She was renting one of the rooms in the kebele. She informed me she had never had a sexual relationship before, but after she moved here (pawi), two males stood in her way one day about 2:00 pm while she was returning from her female classmates' home after study and On other days, the harasser waited for her in the dark and pleaded for love, and when she answered no, the harasser became too heated and struck her, she went to the hospital for treatment, and in the end, she discontinued school."----- (Male 43 years old).*

## 4. Discussion

This study investigates the prevalence of sexual harassment and its associated factors among the female teenager of the pawi district. The prevalence of sexual harassment among teenage females within the twelve months 185 [44%]. These findings were higher than the study conducted in Bangladesh, the prevalence rate was 35%, and

study in ambo [33.3%] prevalence of sexual harassment were 21.6% [37, 38], and Lower than study in Swedish were 50% [40], studies conducted in Kenya were 64.4% [32], and studies conducted in Jimma Zone were the prevalence rate was 73.4% [40]. One of the possible reasons for this sexual harassment might be, the silence of the community that does not count as a problem and time of starting to married. Another reason for this study, weakness of governmental structure to dial about sexual harassment and cultural issue.

Out of the total respondents, 240 [57.1%] of them had faced at least one form of sexual harassment practice. This finding is higher than the study done in Bahir Dar on which sexual harassment was reported by 35.8%[39, 42]. This might be due to differences in study areas and lack of knowledge. But, the result is lower when compared with the study conducted in Debark which revealed that sexual harassment was reported by 65.3% of the respondents [43]. The reason might be due to differences in the level of education and the study subjects' perception of sexual harassment.

In this studies the common types of sexual harassment were verbal sexual harassment in 139 [75.1%] were higher than studies in Kathmandu (Nepal) were 14.4% [44], in limmu genet were 32.4% [11], Jimma zone was 49.8% (28) and ambo were 47.8% [37] and physical sexual harassment in 79 [42.7%] which were higher compared with physical sexual harassment study conducted in Germany were 31.6% [45], Kathmandu in Nepal 42.37% [44], a study in monofin (Egypt) 1.1% [31], Jimma zone 31.1% [28], and ambo 35.5% [37]. The possible explanation for the difference in these findings might be not having commonly accepted definitions of types of sexual harassment. It could be also due to the cultural differences of these populations in reporting sexual harassment. Other reasons could be due to the type of occupation itself.

The commonest sexual harassment, that unwanted attempts to kissing had been found higher than studies in Butajira 46 [13.9%] [37], and limmu gentwere [19.8%] [11]. The possible explanation might be victims' belief as culture and maybe silence of authorities body to take action on the perpetrator.

In this study, among the teenage females who experienced sexual harassment only 11.9% reported to the concerned body which is lower than studies conducted in Nigeria were

30.2% [24], and ambo 21.7% were reported sexual harassment [37]. The possible explanation might be victims' fear of the harasser, shame, and embarrassment that authorities may not believe them, and belief that silence is power.

Sexual harassers female teenagers were identified as male students 33% followed by boyfriend 21%. This lower than study conducted in the USA that 79% reported being harassed by boyfriend and 59% reported being harassed by male students [41] and also studied in ambo were higher in male students 58% and teacher 33% and was comparable with the study in Jimma zone [31.2%] regarding male student [28, 37]. The possible explanation for this finding might be the difference in study setting and difference in socio-cultural and loose rule and regulation as affirmed during the in-depth interview.

This study had assessed some factors which stated as factors for the female teenager to be sexually harassed in literature. Sexual harassment was significantly associated with a residence that female teenagers living in rural areas were 1.71 times more likely to experience sexual harassment compared to those living in urban areas. This result is consistent with the study conducted in ambo [37]. The possible reason for this study to rural teenagers females has no information that sexual harassment as criminal and fear partner to communicate about a sexual issue area and might be because some harmful socio-cultural practices are more common in the rural part of Ethiopia like the time of finding a husband.

The finding of this study showed that sexual harassment of single/unmarried teenagers females 3.15 times more likely to sexual harassment compared with married female teenagers. This result is consistent with a study in northeast Nigeria, debark (Ethiopia) [23, 43]. This might be linked with that single female teenagers are considered free of husband regulation and social norms. The other explanation might be they are on time for choosing the good male they want.

There was also a statistically significant association between ever substance use of participants and sexual harassment. Teenagers females who had alcohol consumed had 4.533 times more likely to be sexually harassed compared with those who had never alcohol consumed. This study was similar to the study conducted in Jimma [15]. The possible explanation could be alcohol consumption causes loss of judgment and protective power of females from sexual harassment. Another possible explanation could be alcohol consumption make female teenagers more at risk to protect them and places them in setting where the chance of sexual harassment is high.

According to this study, current living status was found to be the crucial factor in predicting the occurrence of sexual harassment among teenagers females living alone were 4.701 times more likely to sexual harassment compared to teenage females living with their families. The possible explanation was those who have a stable family and their parents monitored well were like those who do not have monitor less likely and also female living alone not controlled by anyone

and perpetrator can't fear to harass her.

Limitation of the study

Since sexual harassment is a sensitive issue, some of the respondents did not provide their full experience information because of stigma.

Male teenager respondents cannot be included in this study.

## 5. Conclusion

This study showed that the prevalence of sexual harassment in the pawi district among female teenagers within twelve months was 44%. This indicates female teenager of the pawi district was exposed to a variety of inappropriate and unacceptable experience of sexual nature that may infringe their right to a supportive, respectful, safe learning and work environment. Those female teenagers who had to live in rural, who are not married, alcohol consumption, body makeup, and having boyfriends showed a positive association with sexual harassment.

## List of Abbreviations

AOR – Adjusted odds ratio

AAUW-American association university of women

BSC -Bachelor of Science, CI -confidence interval

EU-European Union, ETB- Ethiopia birr

ILO -international labor organization

SH -sexual harassment, SS -sample size

SPSS -Statistical package for social science

USA-United states of America

WHO – world health organization

## Declarations

### *Ethics Approval and Consent to Participate*

Ethical approval was obtained from an ethical review committee of Jimma University. Letter of the permission was secured from Woreda health offices. Confidentiality of the information was assured and the privacy of the respondent was maintained by removing personal identities.

### *Consent for Publication*

Not applicable.

### *Availability of Data and Material*

Additional file: Data abstraction tool.

### *Competing Interests*

The authors declare that they have no competing interests.

### *Authors' Contribution*

BS: conception of the research idea, study design, data collection, analysis and interpretation, and manuscript write-up. AL, BT, and ML, data analysis, interpretation, and



supervision. SE: data collection, analysis and interpretation, and manuscript write-up. All authors have read and approved the final manuscript.

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