

Understanding of Sexual Harassment among Year 6 and Year 12 Students in Jakarta, West Java, West Nusa Tenggara and South Sulawesi

Iwu Dwisetyani Utomo, Peter McDonald, Anna Reimondos and Ariane Utomo

**Draft paper – please do not quote*

Introduction

Sexual harassment can be defined as unwelcome behaviour of a sexual nature. It can take the form of an unwelcome sexual advance, a request for sexual favour, verbal or physical conduct or a gesture of a sexual nature, or any other behaviour of a sexual nature that might reasonably be expected or be perceived to cause offence or humiliation to another (UN 2005). Some examples of specific behaviours that can be classified as constituting sexual harassment include:

- Verbal, making sexual comments about a person's clothing, anatomy or looks, asking personal questions about social or sexual life, making sexual comments or innuendo;
- Non-verbal, staring at someone, following a person, making sexual gestures with hands;
- Physical, touching the person's clothing, hair or body and hugging, kissing, patting or stroking (UN na).

In recent years, the issue of sexual harassment of children and adolescents has gained prominence (Jones et al 2008). A large scale worldwide study conducted by the United Nations found that children are vulnerable to sexual and gender-based violence in educational settings (UN 2006a). Although both males and females can be either the victims or the offenders in cases of sexual harassment, typically girls are particularly vulnerable of being victims of unwanted sexual behaviour from male classmates or teachers (UN 2006b).

Sexual harassment of children can have significant negative effects on health and safety, enrolment and educational achievement, as well as dignity, self-esteem and social relationships (Jones et al 2008). In more severe cases of sexual violence of girls, unwanted pregnancies may be another consequence. While schools may in some cases be environments in which sexual harassment occurs, they can also be a place where children learn about sexual harassment, and a place where they can potentially seek help and support from teachers in cases of sexual harassment. Adults who oversee and work in educational settings have a duty to provide safe environments that support and promote children's dignity and development (UN 2006b).

In this paper we examine the actions teachers and students would take in response to sexual harassment. The first part of the analysis examines the responses of over 400 teachers regarding their understanding of sexual harassment, as judged by whether they classify a

series of behaviours as constituting sexual harassment or not as well as the actions they would take if a student came to them with a report of sexual harassment. The second part examines what actions students would take in response to unwanted physical touching, using data from 925 female students in Year 6 and 3,692 female students in Year 12.

Research from the US has highlighted the negative effects that can result from sexual harassment in school settings. For example, 40 per cent of students that were sexually harassed did not go to school or skipped certain classes (American Association of University Women, 1993; Fitzgerald, 1993). Victims of sexual harassment may also suffer from negative psychosocial impacts such as, depression, loss of appetite, nightmares, disturbed sleep, low self-esteem, sadness, fear, and embarrassment (Gruber and Fineran, 2007; Hand and Sanches, 2000; Lee et al., 1996). Most worrying, perpetrators of sexual harassment can be either students or adults. Students report incidents of sexual harassment more than teachers. Teachers and school administrators might know about sexual harassment by a male teacher of his female students, but do not intervene (Wishnietsky, 1991).

In Indonesia, media coverage of sexual harassment in the school setting often reports severe misconduct on the part of teachers including oral sex, sexual intercourse and anal sex with students. Cases that have been brought to court have resulted in strong sanctions being applied to the teacher (Kompas, 2008a and 2008b). But other forms of sexual harassment by teachers upon students such as touching, staring, using inappropriate sexual words, and requesting sexual favours so the student can pass exams are under reported (Kompas, 2008c). Sexual violence may often go unreported unless it is manifested in extreme or serious behaviour because of the culture of the teacher being seen as being in an authoritative position.

Unlike studies of sexual harassment in the school setting conducted in the United States, there are no studies yet on this issue in Indonesia. Published studies relate to sexual harassment specifically rape in the conflict areas of Aceh, Papua and Timor Leste as well as rape during the May 1998 riots before the Soeharto resignation (Kamaruzzaman, 2003; Primariantari, 1999; Blackburn, 1999; Wandita, 1998), but there are no studies of sexual harassment in the school environment. This paper seeks to understand sexual harassment and how to deal with sexual harassment among teachers and students in both general school and Islamic religious schools in four provinces in Indonesia.

Data and Methods

The analysis used data from the 2011 Indonesian Gender and Reproductive Health Survey. This is a school-based survey of principals, teachers, Year 6 students and Year 12 students, conducted in four provinces of Indonesia: Jakarta, West Java, West Nusa Tenggara and South Sulawesi. The survey was conducted through self-completion questionnaires, which contained a range of questions aimed at evaluating respondents' understanding regarding reproductive health and gender issues. The sampling of schools was performed in several stages. First, in every province two districts were selected, one urban and one rural. Two public schools and two religious schools were selected in each district, one that was a top-

performing school and one that was a medium performing school. Thus in every province, 16 schools were selected. In the selected schools all students in Year 6 and Year 12 participated in the survey and filled in the self-administered questionnaire in class.

Teacher sample

In each school a sample of teachers was also asked to participate in the survey. The total number of participating teachers is 521, however in this study we restrict the analytical sample to 441 teachers who had valid, non-missing, answers for all the variables of interest. Teachers were asked to sets of questions relating to sexual harassment. The first set of questions was designed to test their understanding of what constitutes sexual harassment. Here they were presented with a list of behaviours and were asked for each one, if they believed that could be considered to be sexual harassment. The behaviours were:

1. Mocking
2. Talked about using inappropriate words
3. Unwelcome staring
4. Being touched in general
5. Being forced to reveal parts of one's body
6. Being touched in the genital area
7. Being forced to touch another person's genitals
8. Being made the object of pornography
9. Being raped

To begin we examine the distribution of answers for each behaviour, that is whether the behaviour was classified as either constituting sexual harassment or not. We then count the number of behaviours each teacher identified as sexual harassment, with the minimum being no behaviours, and the maximum being all nine behaviours. We use poisson regression to see whether individual level characteristics including sex and age influence the number of behaviours identified. We also examined whether there were any differences by the type of school (secular or religious), quality of school (top performing or average) and by province. Also included is an independent variable measuring teacher's gender role attitude. Gender role measured using a scale created from 17 gender related questions. The scale ranges from -17 to +17, with a higher number reflecting a more egalitarian gender role perspective.

Student sample

Although the student sample included both male and female students, for this paper only female students are included in the analysis. This is because the vast majority of sexual harassment is directed towards girls, although sexual harassment and abuse of boys is an important issue. The final analytical sample includes 925 female students in Year 6 (aged approx.12), and 3,692 female students in Year 12 (aged approx. 18)

In the students' questionnaire, respondents were presented with a list of seven behaviours and were asked which, if any, they would engage in in response if someone touched them in an inappropriate or unwanted way. Multiple responses were allowed. The seven options were:

1. Get angry and fight back
2. Tell friends
3. Report to parents
4. Report to police
5. Report to teacher
6. Report to school principal
7. Do nothing

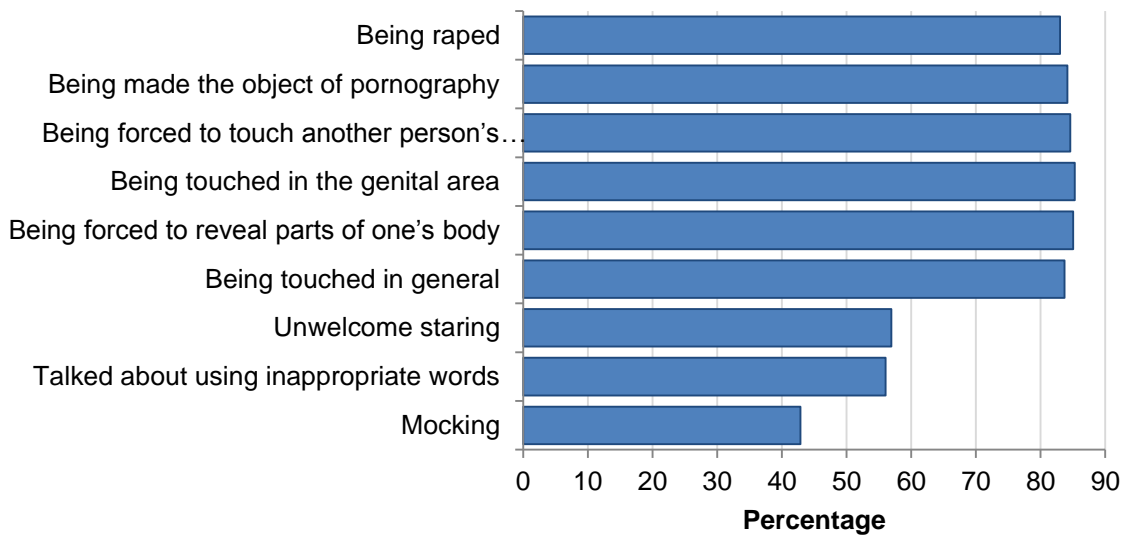
At the first stage of the analysis, we examine if there is any difference in the responses to unwanted touching comparing Year 6 and Year 12 students. We then group together the proposed behaviours into two categories for further analysis. The first group consists of those students who indicated that they would not tell any authority figure about the touching. In other words they may get angry and/or tell their friends, but they would not tell their parents, the police, a teacher, or a school principal. The second group consists of those who would tell at least one authority figure. Bivariate analysis is used to investigate how the proposed response to unwelcome touching (measured by the dichotomous variable described above) differs according to the type of school the student attends (secular or religious), the quality of the school they attend (top performing or secular) and the province that they live in. The same variables are then used as independent variables in a logistic regression. The dependent outcome is equal to 1 if the student stated that they would report the incident to at least one authority figure, and zero otherwise. Robust sandwich estimators are used to control for the fact that students are clustered within schools.

Results for teachers

Definitions of sexual harassment

Figure 1 shows the percentage of teachers who reported that a behaviour could be identified as being sexual harassment. Of the nine behaviours, there was strong agreement that six of them constituted sexual harassment, with over 80 per cent of teachers agreeing that they were examples of sexual harassment. These behaviours were: being raped, being made the object of pornography, being forced to touch another person's genitals, being touched in the genital area, being forced to reveal parts of one's body, and being touched in general. There was less agreement for the remaining three behaviours (unwelcome staring, inappropriate speech, and mocking). For these there was some division in whether or not they could be thought of as constituting sexual harassment.

Figure 1. Percentage of teachers who classify a behaviour as constituting sexual harassment



Counting the number behaviours which were seen as being sexual harassment can give an indication of how encompassing the definitions used by individual teachers. On the one hand, a teacher who said that all nine behaviours can be thought of as being domestic violence can be seen as having a broad, and encompassing definition. A teacher that only identified one behaviour, for example rape, can be thought of as having a much narrower definition.

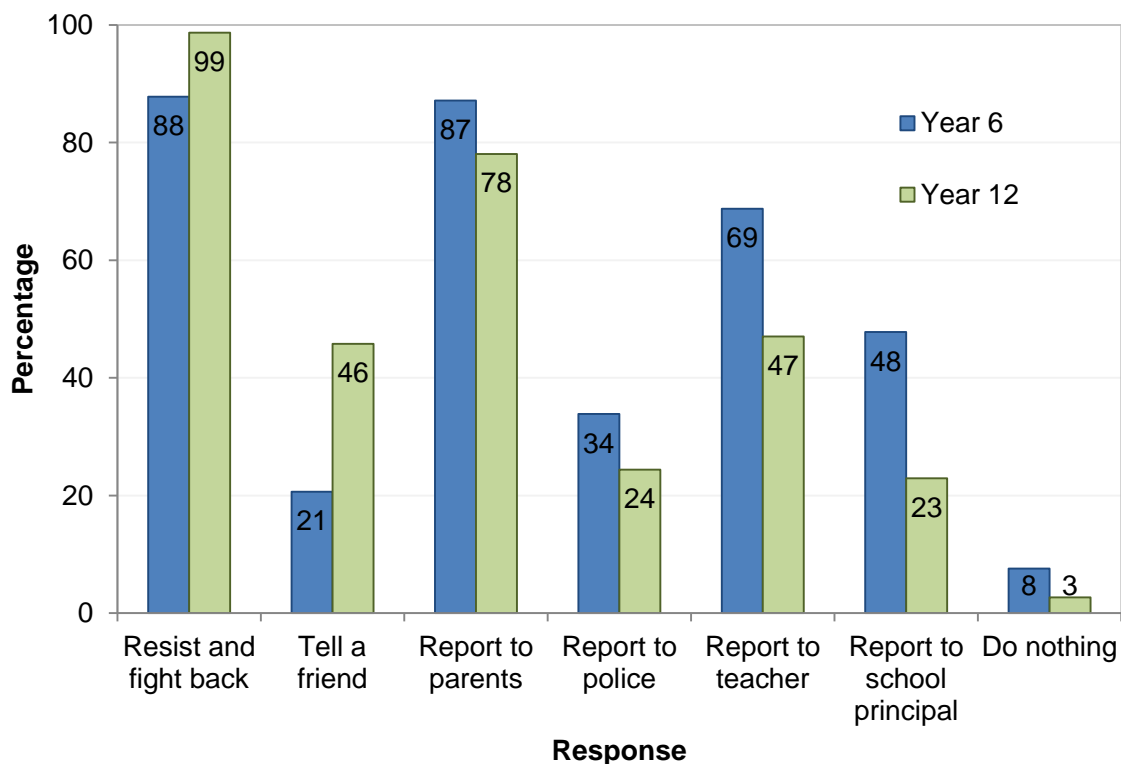
The results of the poisson regression on the count of behaviours, is shown in Table 2. While there do not appear to be any differences between male and female teachers, a teacher's age is a significant predictor (at the 10% level) the breadth of their definition. Older teachers were more likely to have a narrower definition compared to their younger peers. School type and school quality were not significant predictors, but we do see some effect of province level. Teachers in South Sulawesi also display a significantly more narrow view of sexual harassment compared to their counterparts in Jakarta. Teachers own gender role attitude score was also a significant predictor. The more traditional their gender views, the more narrow their view of sexual harassment.

	Coeff.	Probability
Sex		
Male (ref)	--	--
Female	0.03	0.41
Age		
	-0.01	0.09
Province		
Jakarta (ref)	--	--
West Java	0.03	0.60
West Nusa Tenggara	-0.02	0.70
South Sulawesi	-0.14	0.04
School type		
Secular(ref)	--	--
Religious	0.04	0.31
School quality		
Top-performing (ref)	--	--
Other	-0.06	0.10
Gender role attitude score		
	0.01	0.03
Intercept	2.03	0.00
Wald chi2(8)	19.04	
Prob > chi2	0.01	

Student responses to sexual harassment

Figure 2 shows the overall responses, comparing female students in Year 6 students with those in Year 12. An important distinction can be made between those students who would said that they would report the incident to an adult authority figure, and those that would not. In general, Year 6 students were more likely to indicate that they would any incident of unwanted touching to an authority figure such as a parent, police, teacher, or school head. For example nearly 70 per cent of Year 6 girls said that they would report it to a teacher, compared with less than 50 per cent of those in Year 12. In contrast class 12 students were more likely to handle the matter themselves by expressing anger and resisting the perpetrator or by telling their friends about the incident.

Figure 1. Response that would be taken if unwanted touching occurred, by year (female students)



Source: The 2011 Indonesia Gender and Reproductive Health Survey

If we count the percentage of students that indicated that they would report the incident to at least one authority figure, we find that 93 per cent of Year 6 girls, and 81 per cent of Year 12 girls would do so. Logistic regression is used next to examine the school level and geography level determinants of reporting to at least one authority figure (parent, police, teacher, or school principal). Table 1 shows the odds ratios, and associated probabilities, of reporting the behaviour to an authority figure for each Year.

In Year 6, there is a significant difference in the odds of reporting to at least one authority figure, between students in secular schools and those in religious schools. Girls in secular schools were significantly more likely to indicate that they would report the matter to at least one authority figure compared their peers in *madrasah* schools. In Year 6 we also see a significant difference in proposed reporting behaviour according to where the students live. Compared to girls living in Jakarta, those living in West Java, West Nusa Tenggara, and South Sulawesi were significantly less likely to report the behaviour to an authority figure. For Year 12 students, the results are less consistent. There is no significant difference in reporting comparing secular and religious school students, but students in top-performing schools were less likely to report to an authority figure than those in regular performing

schools. In terms of province level differences, compared to students in Jakarta, only those in West Java were significantly less likely to the behaviour to an authority figure.

Table 1 Odds ratio of reporting unwanted touching to at least one authority figure, by year (female students)

	Year 6		Year 12	
	Odds ratio	Probability	Odds ratio	Probability
School type				
Secular (ref)				
Religious	0.38	0.01	1.04	0.78
School quality				
Top-performing (ref)				
Other	1.46	0.29	1.47	0.01
Province				
Jakarta (ref)				
West Java	0.31	0.03	0.55	<0.01
West Nusa Tenggara	0.16	<0.01	0.92	0.68
South Sulawesi	0.18	0.01	0.77	0.14
Number of observations	925		3692	
chi2(5)	16.37		42.36	
Prob>chi2	0.0059		0.001	

Discussion

Defining sexual harassment is a difficult and elusive because it can manifest itself both in terms of overt and subtle/covert behaviour (Strauss 2011). The data from the teacher’s survey indicates that while there was strong agreement between the teachers that serious overt behaviours such as rape, or molestation could be regarded as “sexual harassment”, views did tend to differ for the more subtle behaviours such as the making of derogatory comments, or unwanted staring. The data suggests that older teachers, and those with more traditional gender role attitudes are more likely to have a much more narrow definition in mind when they it comes to defining sexual harassment. This has potentially important implications since it may affect how teachers deal with students who come to them to report incidents of sexual harassment. A teacher with a very narrow definition of sexual harassment, may not take any action if one student for example makes derogatory or sexual comments to another class member. They may dismiss such behaviour as “boys being boys” (Straus 2011).

From the student’s perspective the percentage who said that they would report the behaviour to at least one authority figure was high for both Year 6 and Year 12 students. Year 6 students were more likely to report the behaviour, compared to their older counterparts though. There could be a number of reasons for this, although it is likely to be due to the general maturation process whereby children form stronger bonds with their peers and are

more likely to turn to them for help and advice, compared to their parents or other authority figures.

Conclusion

Our survey results show that there are some provincial differences where teachers in South Sulawesi were the least likely to classify any behaviour as constituting sexual behaviour compared to teachers in other provinces.

Year 6 students were more likely to report harassment to parents, police or teachers and school principals while Year 12 students will handle the matter themselves by resisting the perpetrator or talking with friends.

This exploratory study has contributed to knowledge of sexual harassment in the school setting in Indonesia and has revealed that students as young as Year 6 have a good understanding of sexual harassment and who to report to in case of harassment. Further study needs to investigate the actual incidence of sexual harassment in schools, identification of the perpetrators whether they are teachers or other adults working in the school environment or other students and whether the school authorities tolerate sexual harassment behaviour. School policies and programs need to be developed and socialised regularly to protect students and teachers from sexual harassment.

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