



Analysis the Level of Sexual Harassment Among Adolescent Girls in Faridpur Sadar Upazila

**An Initiative under Youth Engagement in Democracy Project
Implemented by Nondita Surokkha**

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Acknowledgement:

This study is an outcome of Nondita Surokkha's involvement in Youth Engagement in Democracy Project. This has addressed the serious issue of sexual harassment among adolescent girls in Faridpur Sadar Upazila. The research intends to assess the occurrence of such harassment and design resistance programs. Information were acquired from 201 adolescent females through survey, two focused group discussions, three stakeholder interviews, and one case study and victim interview, all of which were kept strictly confidential. The study's goals include determining the safety levels of females, identifying forms of harassment, and investigating coping techniques. The study's questions focus on safety concerns, specific types of harassment, and adolescent girls' post-incident behaviors in Faridpur Sadar. This report presents crucial insights into the nature of sexual harassment and its prevention, underscoring the critical nature of implementing focused interventions to protect the welfare of those who are most susceptible to it. Thanks to the members of Nondita Surokkha who were working on this study by collecting data from respondents.

Table of Contents

1. CHAPTER 1: Introduction	01
1.1 Background of the Project	01
1.2 Objective of the Project	01
2. CHAPTER 2: Literature review	02
3. CHAPTER 3: Methodology	03
3.1 Study area profile	03
3.2 Target Population	04
3.3 Survey Design	04
- Qualitative Sampling Techniques	04
- Quantitative Sampling Techniques	04
3.4 Finalization of Data collection Instrument	05
3.5 Data Collection, Cleaning, and Data Management	05
3.6 Quality Control Mechanism	05
3.7 Ethical Consideration	05
3.8 Limitation and Challenges of this Study	06
4. CHAPTER 4: Analysis and Finding	06
4.1 Qualitative Data Analysis and Finding	06
4.2 Quantitative Data Analysis and Finding	11
5. CHAPTER 5: Democracy and Human Right Alignment	17
6. CHAPTER 6: Recommendation	17
7. CHAPTER 7: Conclusion	20

8. CHAPTER 8: Reference	21
9. CHAPTER 9: ANNEXURE (Tools of the study)	22

Executive Summary:

With the support of the "Youth Engagement in Democracy Project" Nondita Surokkha aims to investigate the issue of sexual harassment among adolescent girls in Faridpur Sadar Upazila. The research focuses on detailed analysis with an aims to assess the occurrences of such harassment. This study employed both qualitative and quantitative tools for collecting the information.

The findings revealed that the young women in Faridpur Sadar feel constantly unsafe, especially at night, and that harassment can occur in various forms, including inappropriate touching or explicit messages on social media. Fear of retaliation and social pressure discourages reporting and seeking help. Girls often avoid reporting incidents due to lack of trust, fear of societal blame, and fear of the harasser.

In-depth interviews revealed that the victim, a 15-year-old girl from a low-income village family, experienced sexual harassment and violence. Factors contributing to this issue include lack of taken legal action, victim's hesitancy due to family concerns and economic constraints, emotional pain and fear towards men, and prevalent instances of harassment in public places, including public transport and markets.

The case study highlighted the need for more awareness about sexual harassment, schools teaching about it, and girls protesting to raise awareness. The victim's case highlights the importance of social, familial, and emotional support for those who have experienced sexual harassment.

The victim's family faces societal bullying and intimidation, leading to mental health challenges and a lack of legal action. The primary causes of sexual abuse include ignorance, lack of education, and societal difficulties. Harassment occurs most frequently at fairs, Eid-Puja, Haatbazars, cars, and crowded areas.

To ensure access to continuing assistance to prevent sexual abuse, the government, non-governmental organizations, social groups, and religious organizations should work together. Recommendations include increasing awareness, addressing primary causes, overcoming legal obstacles, identifying high-risk locations, collaborating efforts, and ensuring access to support.

A study involving 201 adolescent girls aged 13-19 found that 84% of them were sexually harassed, with the level of harassment varying with the respondent's family income. Physical harassment included unwanted touches in private parts, attempted rape, unethical hugging,

running away by touching or touching private parts in public places, and harassment on social media.

Most respondents who experienced sexual harassment shared that they were unable to share the matter with anyone due to shame, fear, and mental pressure. They also reported being subjected to both verbal and physical harassment by strangers while walking on the streets.

The Barefoot Research by Youth Engagement in Democracy Project focuses on sexual harassment among young females in Faridpur Sadar Upazila. The study aims to advance democracy and human rights by examining the prevalence, types, and consequences of sexual harassment, as well as the coping mechanisms used by victims. The research adheres to democratic ideals of openness, involvement, and responsibility, and establishes a critical framework for targeted interventions.

The findings reveal a widespread sense of insecurity among young women, particularly after sundown, and various types of harassment, including inappropriate touching and explicit messages on social media. Victims face barriers to reporting incidents due to fear of retaliation, social pressure, and societal blame. Quantitative data analysis supports the qualitative findings, indicating a link between family income and the prevalence of sexual harassment.

The recommendations include comprehensive moral education programs, community engagement initiatives, legal awareness campaigns, active police support, empowerment programs for young girls, media and technology awareness, policy advocacy, and psychological and social support. The study is consistent with the larger goals of democracy and human rights, promoting equal opportunity and combating discrimination and violence. The findings and recommendations can inform policies and activities aimed at protecting the well-being of vulnerable adolescent girls, fostering a safer and more inclusive environment for their development.

Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Background of the Project

Through a barefoot research project, the Nondita Surokkha help of Youth Engagement in Democracy (YED) project and the Manusher Jonno Foundation have launched a groundbreaking program. The goal of this project is to thoroughly investigate the widespread problem of sexual harassment that teenage girls in Faridpur Sadar Upazila face.

A group of enthusiastic and energetic young people from Nondita Surokkha are spearheading this project. They have accepted the challenge of performing field research to explore the various facets of sexual harassment. The study is being carried out as part of the YED project, which demonstrates a dedication to promoting democratic ideals and youth empowerment.

The research aims to quantify the frequency of sexual harassment and, more significantly, to conduct focused resistance initiatives with a careful attention to detail and thorough analysis. Strong data collection methods are used, including two focused group discussions, three stakeholder interviews, one case study with a victim interview, and data from 201 teenage girls. All of these methods are handled with the strictest confidentiality to protect participant safety and privacy.

Beyond finding out how safe girls are, this study also wants to find out what kinds of mistreatment girls in Faridpur Sadar face and how they deal with them. The study questions aim to explore safety concerns, particular forms of harassment, and the activities that the impacted persons took after the encounter.

This research provides an important foundation for acknowledging and addressing sexual harassment, highlighting the critical need for specific responses. The findings from this barefoot research project will help to shape policies and activities that protect the well-being of disadvantaged adolescent girls, creating a safer and more inclusive environment for their growth and development.

1.2 Objectives of the Project

The study's objectives are to determine the prevalence of harassment, assess safety levels, define various types of harassment, assess ways to deal with it, and lay the ground work for targeted interventions that would enhance the well-being of vulnerable individuals. The research questions were:

1. What is the current level of safety, including the freedom to move and participate in daily activities, among adolescent girls in Faridpur Sadar, considering factors such as time of day, location, and social circumstances?

2. What specific types of sexual harassment have adolescent girls in Faridpur Sadar reported experiencing, both in terms of physical actions and verbal/nonverbal abuse?
3. After experiencing harassment, what type of actions strategies do adolescent girls in Faridpur Sadar employ?

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Sexual harassment among adolescent girls is an alarming issue in Bangladesh. A large portion of girls have experienced sexual harassment at least once; some have to deal with it every day or often (Parvej, 2020). Strangers are the ones who harass women sexually the most in Bangladesh (Busrat Jahan 2022). Teenagers younger than 18 are especially at risk, which shows how important it is to focus interventions to protect this group from the terrible problem of harassment (Shohel, 2014). Teenage girls who are sexually harassed can experience a wide range of negative effects, from fear and anxiety to sadness and problems at work or school (Md. Khobair Hossain, 2022). The other fact that anonymous social media sites have become popular places for sexual harassment shows that victims in Bangladesh don't have enough help (Fayika Farhat Nova 2019). On the internet, abuse needs more complex solutions that include programs that teach girls how to use technology safely and help them understand how to stay safe online. Eve-teasing is a type of sexual harassment that has gotten a lot of attention as a big problem in cities, where it causes girls mental and social problems (Jinnatul Airin 2015). Rates of eve-teasing have been reported to hit an alarming 75.9%, which has a lasting effect on the lives of female students. People who do eve-teasing are very different. They include students, unemployed young men, and people from many different jobs (Jinnatul Airin, 2015). Harassment like this has terrible effects; sometimes it even leads to sad events like students trying to kill themselves (Islam 2015). Therefore, eve-teasing becomes a strong obstacle to the progress of women in Bangladesh, making it much harder for them to go to school and find work (Mahmud 1* 2022). BRAC found that 713 children under 18 years old were raped or tried to be raped in rural Bangladesh between July 2007 and June 2010 (Kazi Nazrul Fattah 2013). These incidents made up 64% of all recorded cases of violence against children. The issue isn't just happening in schools; teenage girls are also regularly sexually harassed on public transportation. Also, it's important to note that men are harassed in these situations too, which shows how widespread the problem is (Samnun Yasir, 2022). One reason why sexual harassment still happens is that schools don't teach about sexuality in an official way. In Bangladesh, traditional norms make it hard to talk openly about sex and sexuality, which keeps teens from learning the truth and spreading false ideas (Yasmin 2022). Getting rid of this education gap is important for giving young people the skills and information they need to handle relationships and stay safe from harassment. Women being abused, including sexual abuse, physical attack, and mental harassment, is a shocking social crime that happens way too

often (Biplob Kumar Dey 2013). To make successful prevention and support systems, we need to know what causes these victims to be victims in the first place. As a conclusion, sexual harassment of adolescent girls, such as Eve teasing, verbal, non-verbal, and physical harassment is a complicated problem with wide-ranging effects. To solve this issue, we need a multifaceted plan that includes education, legal action, community engagement, and strong support networks.

Chapter 3: Research Methodology

3.1 Study area Profile:



Administration Faridpur Sadar Thana was formed in 1896 and it was turned into an upazila in 1983.

Faridpur Sadar Upazila (Faridpur district) area 412.86 sq km, located in between 23°29' and 23°34' north latitudes and in between 89°43' and 89°56' east longitudes. It is bounded by Goalanda and Harirampur upazilas on the north, Saltha upazila on the south, char Bhadrasan and Harirampur upazilas on the east, Boalmari, Madhukhali and Rajbari Sadar upazilas on the west. Upazila town is situated on the bank of Kumar river. Faridpur Sadar Upazila is divided into Faridpur Municipality with 12 Union Parishads and Faridpur Municipality is subdivided into 27 wards now.

Population Total 567621; Male 280719, Female 286902

3.2 Target Population

- Adolescents girls of Faridpur Sader Upazila
- Deputy Commissioner, Faridpur
- Superintend of Police, Faridpur
- Human Right Activist

3.3 Survey Design:

Qualitative Sampling Techniques :

Methodology	Type	Type of Respondent	Number
Qualitative	Focus Group Discussion	Adolescent Girls	1
	In Depth Interview	Adolescent Girls	1
	Key Informant Interview	Deputy Commissioner, Faridpur Superintend of Police, Faridpur Human Right Activist	3
	Case Study	Adolescent Girls	1
Total			6

Quantitative Sampling Techniques:

Methodology	Type	Type of Respondents	Area	Name of Institution	Number of Responded
Quantitative	Survey	Adolescent Girls	Faridpur Sader	Gerda A.F Mujibur Rahman High School	45
				Police Lines High School, Faridpur	25
				Govt Saroda Sundari High School, Faridpur	50
				Faridpur City College	46
				Random Adolescent Girls, Faridpur Sader	35
				Total	201

3.4 Finalization of Data Collection Instruments:

Following the completion of a training session with Global Research and Marketing (GRM), the Nondita Surokkha team held a meeting with members of the team who will be working on the study as well as some respondents. Subsequently, and in the presence of Manusher Jonno Foundations authority the Nondita Surokkha team prepared a discussion guide and a questionnaire.

3.5 Data Collection, Cleaning, and Data Management:

We visited three high schools, one college and also collected data from some randomly selected respondents in Faridpur district, including school and college girls. There, we conducted the survey with 201 girls. Then through the training and instruction of GRM, data cleaning, data management was completed.

3.6 Quality Control Mechanisms:

Data Collection has been done with the consent of 201 respondents and findings, recommendations have been extracted through data analysis from there. Pivot table, filter is used for data analysis. FGD, IDI, KII, case study are all done with the consent of respondent or interviewee.

3.7 Ethical Considerations:

Adolescent girls in Faridpur Sadar Upazila, from 13 to 19 years age category, were the respondents of the study. Participants were chosen randomly to provide representation from a variety of socioeconomic backgrounds within the designated age range. Inclusion criteria included a willingness to discuss personal experiences with safety and occurrences of sexual harassment. The exclusion criteria encompassed persons who were below the prescribed age range and those who did not reside in Faridpur Sadar Upazila. The study preserved confidentiality, with collected information utilized solely for research purposes. The selected group of individuals corresponded to the research goals, focusing on the prevailing safety standards, occurrences of sexual harassment, and the methods adopted by teenage girls to deal with such situations. These factors were crucial in upholding the ethical principles of the investigation.

3.8 Limitation and Challenges of this Study:

- Due to the closure of all schools during the December holidays, a total of 273 samples were unable to be collected.
- Respondents were unwilling to provide a complimentary duration of either 30 or 40 minutes.
- A significant number of respondents were unwilling to provide their phone number.
- Key informants were not available due to the election.

Chapter 4: Analysis and Findings

4.1 Qualitative Data Analysis and Findings

Insights from Focus Group Discussion (FGDs):

During a focus group discussion in Faridpur Sadar, it was revealed that young women generally felt insecure, especially after sundown. Participants discussed their individual experiences, views on safety, responses to events, and recommendations for improving safety. The perception of girls' passivity, moral degradation, the tolerance of online harassment, and placing the blame on provocative behavior and attire were among the reasons given for harassment. Among the preventive measures were teaching young girl's response techniques, planning community seminars, educating boys about the legal consequences, creating awareness through posters, and encouraging girls to be assertive. It had been suggested by the responder that the police station is only institution that may have a role in preventing assault on women. The conversation emphasized on how important it is to take comprehensive action to protect young women's safety and wellbeing

One respondent said, 'When we go to the market, boys intentionally touch our body'.

Another respondent said, 'I don't feel safe even when I am with my own relatives'.

Another respondent said, 'Stepping out of the house creates a fear of what might happen!'.

Findings:

Young women in Faridpur Sadar, Bangladesh, live in a constant state of fear and insecurity, particularly when it comes to their safety at night. They face various forms of harassment, such as unwanted touching and receiving explicit messages on social media. However, the fear of retaliation and societal pressure discourages them from reporting these incidents and seeking help.

One of the main reasons why girls hesitate to report harassment is the lack of trust in the system and the fear of being blamed by society.

The feedback highlights several concerning issues related to moral degradation, online harassment, passive perception of girls, and provocative clothing and behavior. These factors contribute to a culture that perpetuates sexual violence and harassment. The mention of the police station as police station is only the institution that may have a role in preventing assault on women.

Insights from In-Depth Interview (IDIs):

The respondent, who comes from a low-income village family, has been the victim of sexual harassment and violence also. When he discovered her alone, her brother-in-law touched her and made offensive remarks, harassing sexually. She was sexually harassed, but remained silent because she was concerned about her sister's and her own families. She went through a mental breakdown and yet she remains afraid of men. She feels uncomfortable moving along the Padma River's banks of Faridpur and in the Char areas. In Faridpur New Market, she also experienced sexual harassment and muggings. Loss of morality, poverty is the main causes of violence and sexual harassment. More people need to know about sexual harassment, schools should teach about it, and girls should protest if they want to stop it or raise awareness of it. Those who have experienced sexual harassment require social, familial, and emotional support.

She said, 'Apa, we are poor people that's why these things happen more with us'.

She also said, 'I initially believed that only my brother-in-law had questionable intentions, but later I discovered that my uncle harbors similar intentions'.

Findings:

The statements make it clear that harassment and attack cases are not being dealt with legally. The failure to take action can be linked to the victim's unwillingness, which is impacted by various factors, including concerns for the well-being of her family and economic constraints. The victim's day-to-day life and interactions are badly impacted as a consequence, which results in the victim experiencing emotional discomfort and dread in regard to men.

The victim highlighted the frequent harassment of teenage girls in public spaces, particularly in Char areas and riverbanks, highlighting their overall sense of safety.

Insights from Case Study:

Profile of the Victim:

The victim's name has not been disclosed, but she is a 15-year-old girl and the second child of her parents. Her father is a food store owner (45 years old) and her mother is a housewife (41). Their first child was a girl, and this is their second. In Faridpur Sadar Upazila, the family lives. At the moment, the subject is a tenth-grade student.

Assault incident:

The victim went to her neighbor's house on June 22, 2022, to store meat in their fridge. When she knocked on the door to store the meat, the homeowner of the neighbor, who is thirty years old, opened it. The victim quickly found out that he was alone and that his wife wasn't at home. After that, the man asked the victim to come into the room, when she refused, he grabbed her hand and pulled her inside. He then threw her on the couch and tried to rape her but the perpetrator forgot to close the door of the house. A woman from next door heard the victim screaming and crying she entered the room, after her presences the perpetrator left the victim but he also threatened both of them and told them to leave the house.

It's hard for the victim's family to do anything about the abuser because the perpetrator was a powerful person of the area, also there is a high chance to be bullied, intimidated, and pressurized by society. The whole thing has had a big effect on the victim; she had a hard time with her mental health and trying to get back to her normal life and studies.

Findings:

There is a fear among the family members of victims that they would be bullied or intimidated by society. The societal pressure and the abuser's position in society, the victim has decided not to take legal action against the person who assaulted her. The incident affected her mental health and she is unable to return to her normal life.

Insights from Key Informant Interview (KIIs):

1. MD. Quamrul Ahasan Talukder

Deputy Commissioner and District Magistrate

Faridpur

The District Administrator's Office in Faridpur Sadar has taken several steps to avoid sexual harassment and assault against young females. They are establishing mobile courts and increasing awareness among individuals at all levels to prevent all forms of violence against girls and women. The primary causes of sexual abuse include ignorance, a lack of sufficient

education, and societal difficulties. Teenage females in Faridpur are hesitant to pursue legal action owing to the lengthy legal process and a lack of bravery.

Harassment occurs most frequently at fairs, Eid-Puja, Haatbazars, cars, and crowded areas. The primary locations for harassment occurrences are unknown; however they are more likely to occur at fairs, Eid-Pujar, Haatbazars, cars, and congested areas.

To ensure that all young girls in Faridpur Sadar have access to continuing assistance to prevent sexual abuse, the government, non-governmental organizations, social groups, and religious organizations should work together. This will assist to minimize the prevalence of sexual abuse and guarantee that everyone is aware of the problem and takes the necessary precautions to protect themselves.

He said, 'All girls can report their problems by calling the district administrator's official helpline number or Whatsapp for any problem'.

He also said, 'We solve the cases of harassment through mobile court'.

Findings:

The main causes of sexual abuse include ignorance, lack of education, and social issues. Victims are afraid to sue due to lengthy legal procedures and lack of courage. High-risk areas like fairs, Eid-Puja celebrations, Haatbazars, public transport and crowded streets.

2. Mohammad Morshed Alam

Superintendent of Police

Faridpur.

The Superintendent of Police of Faridpur Sadar discussed various measures taken by the police to prevent sexual harassment and violence. These initiatives include awareness workshops for police officers, legal actions against perpetrators, and efforts to educate the community. The types of harassment identified include eve-teasing and domestic violence, with the main reasons attributed to a lack of family education and the availability of drugs. Addressing the mental development and future prospects of young women, the effects of security-related barriers on their lives were emphasized. To enhance ongoing services the importance of raising social awareness, family education, and organizing awareness workshops in educational institutions. Additionally, beat policing and collaboration with local representatives, journalists, and teachers were suggested to ensure accessibility and enforcement of the law.

Findings:

Harassment, including eve-teasing and domestic violence, is primarily due to family education and drug availability. Teenage girls' reluctance to take legal action is influenced by family perceptions. Security concerns impact girls' mental development and future prospects.

2. Advocate Sipra Goswami

Co-Ordinator

BLAST, Faridpur Unit

The organization Bangladesh Legal Aid & Services Trust (BLAST) in Faridpur Sadar is working to prevent sexual harassment and violence against teenage girls. They contact victims' in person or by phone and send them to the police station if they don't receive necessary support. The main reasons for sexual harassment include cybercrime, blackmail, bullying, and rape. The main reasons for girls not wanting to take legal action are social barriers, lack of legal help, and lack of awareness about legal services. Sexual harassment incidents are more common in areas near girls' schools, colleges, public transport, rural areas, and grazing areas. To make services accessible to all, awareness should be raised about the government helpline number 109,999, police stations should have separate desks for adolescent girls, adult and youth partnerships should be formed, and law enforcement agencies should view violence as zero tolerance.

She said, 'Though incidents of violence usually occur in isolated areas, but incidents of harassment occur in public places'.

She also said, 'Every police station needs a separate help desk for girls with a female-friendly officer'.

Findings:

Social barriers, lack of legal help, and lack of awareness about legal services are the main reasons girls don't want to take legal action. Sexual harassment incidents are more common in areas near girls' schools, colleges, public transport, rural areas, and rural areas.

4.2 Quantitative Data Analysis and Findings:

201 adolescent girls aged 13 to 19 were carefully selected as respondents for this study, and the essential data was collected from them and all the adolescent girls from Faridpur Sader area.

Level of Sexual Harassment:

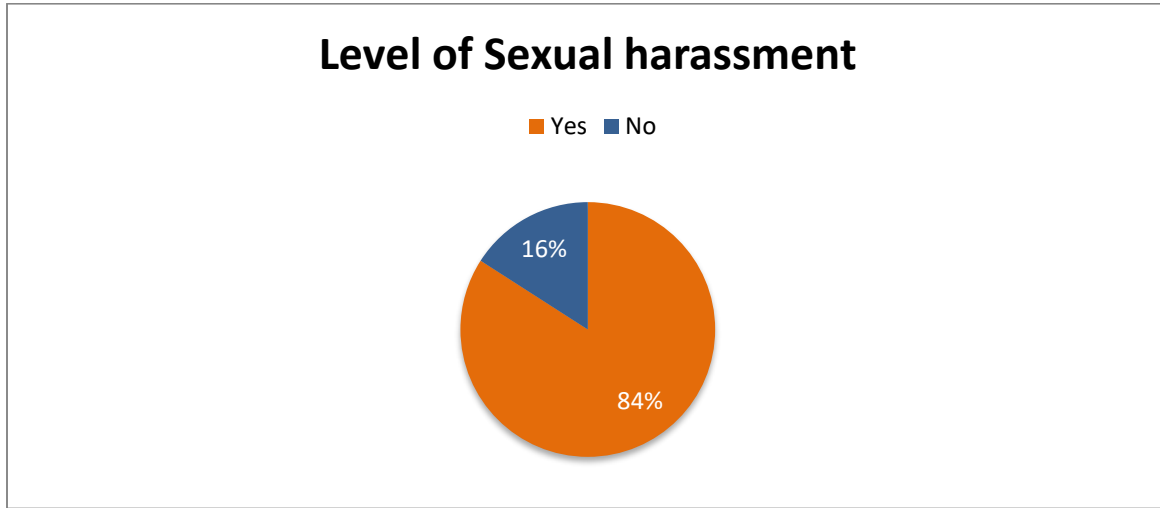
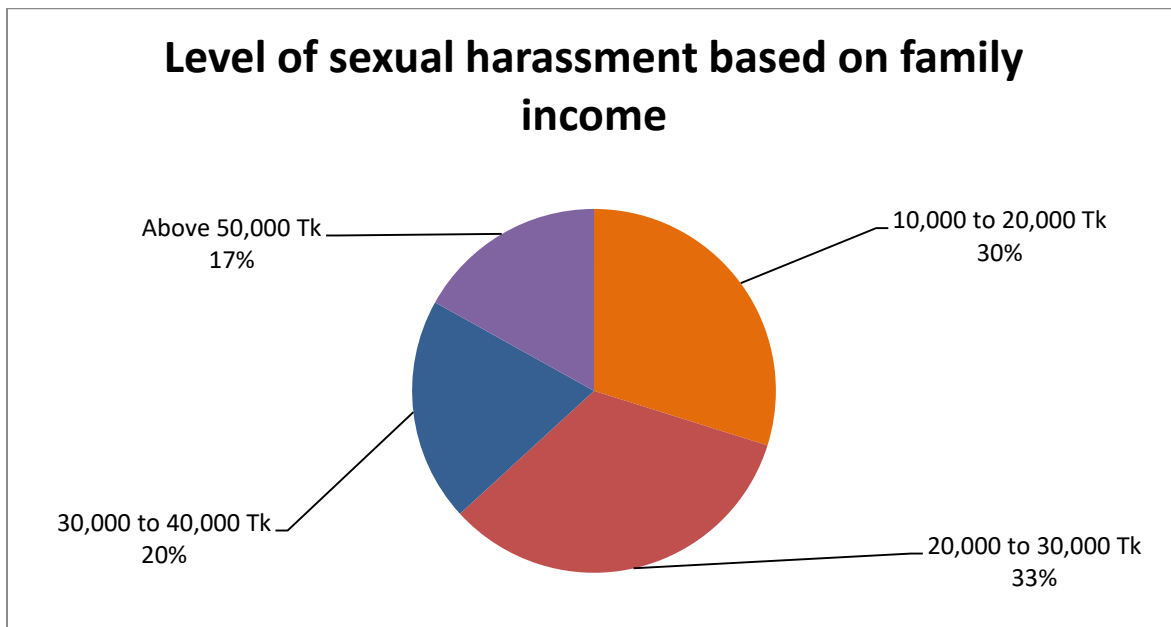


Figure shows that among 201 girls 84% of adolescent girls are sexually harassed and only 16% of girls are not been sexually harassed.

Level of sexual harassment based on adolescent family income:

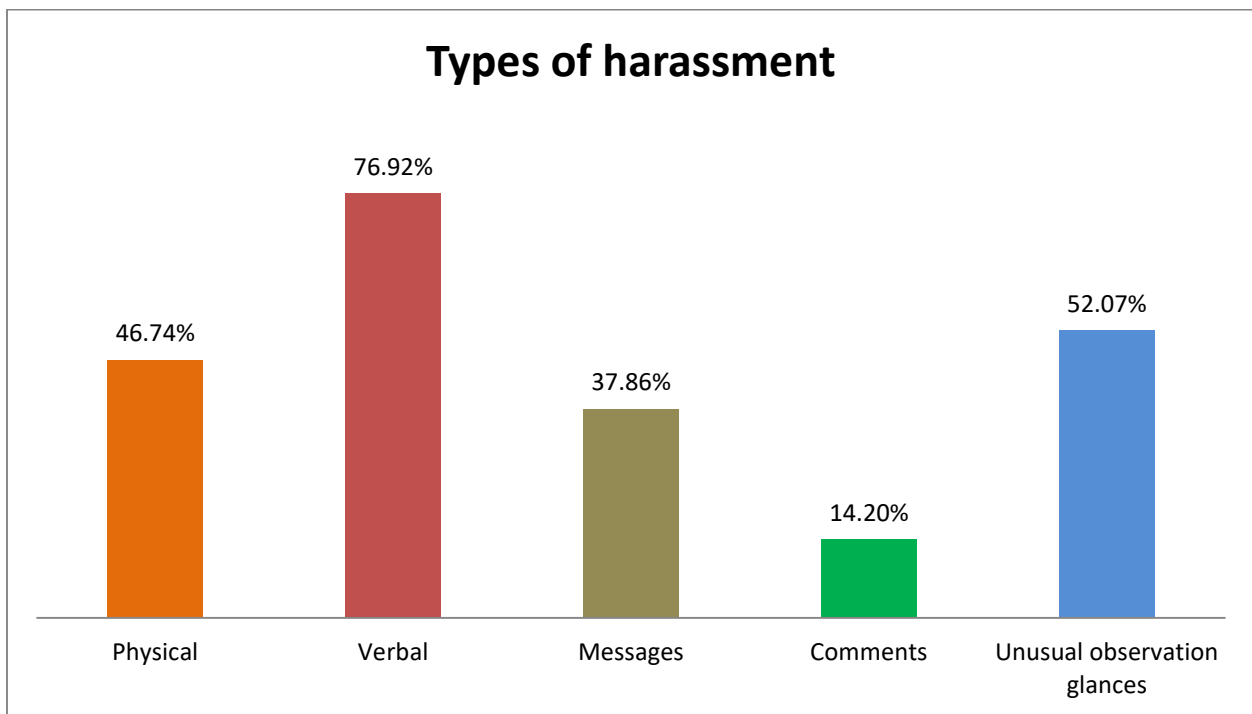


The level of sexual harassment experienced by respondents is shown to vary with their family income, as demonstrated by this figure.

Those families whose monthly income is between 10 and 20 thousand taka, which indicates that the level of sexual harassment of girls from low-income families is 30 %; those families whose monthly income is between 20 and 30 thousand taka, which indicates that the level of sexual harassment of girls from low-middle class families is 33%; those families whose monthly income is between 30 and 40 thousand taka, which indicates that the level of sexual harassment of girls from middle class families is 20%; and those families whose monthly income is above 50 thousand taka, which indicates that the level of sexual harassment of girls from upper class families is 17 %.

Dimensional analysis shows that girls from lower class families are relatively more victims of sexual harassment.

Types of harassment:

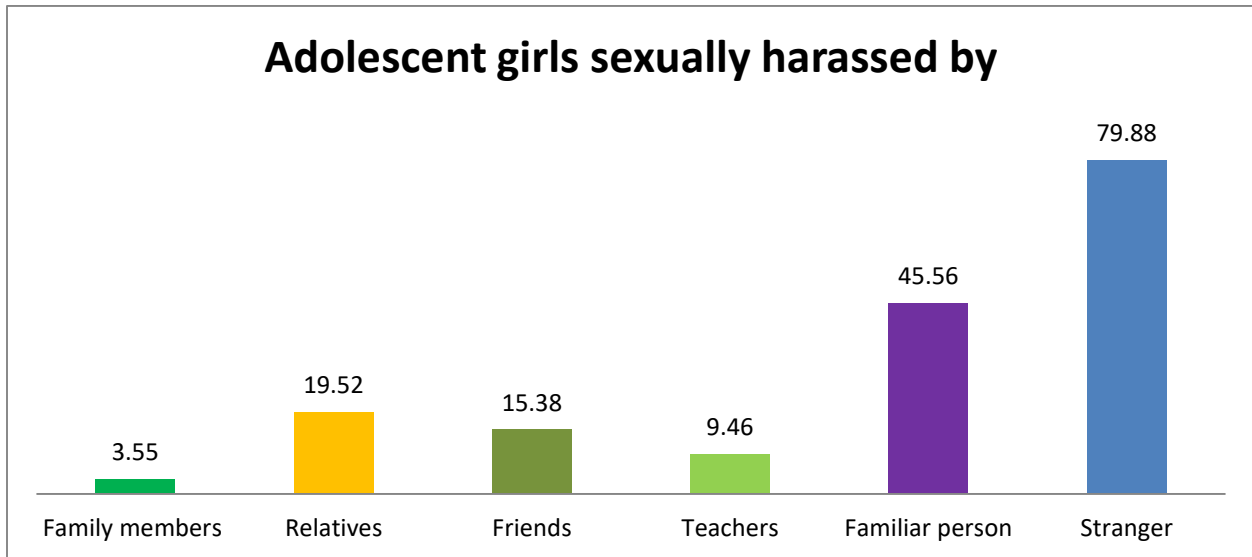


Regarding this figure, 46.74% of girls faced physical harassment, 76.92% of girls faced verbal harassment, 37.86% of girls harassed by unwanted text or message, 14.20% of girls harassed by unwanted comments, and 52.07% of girls harassed by unusual observation glances.

Physical harassment included unwanted touches in private parts of teenage girls, as well as attempted rape, unethical hugging, running away by touching or touching private parts in public places, etc. Teenage girls have been victims of harassment on social media, such as

sending unwanted pictures on Facebook, adding unknown pornography messenger groups, etc. Some adolescent females claimed that men sexually harassed them by exposing their private parts when they were alone in the early hours of the morning.

Adolescent girls sexually harassed by:



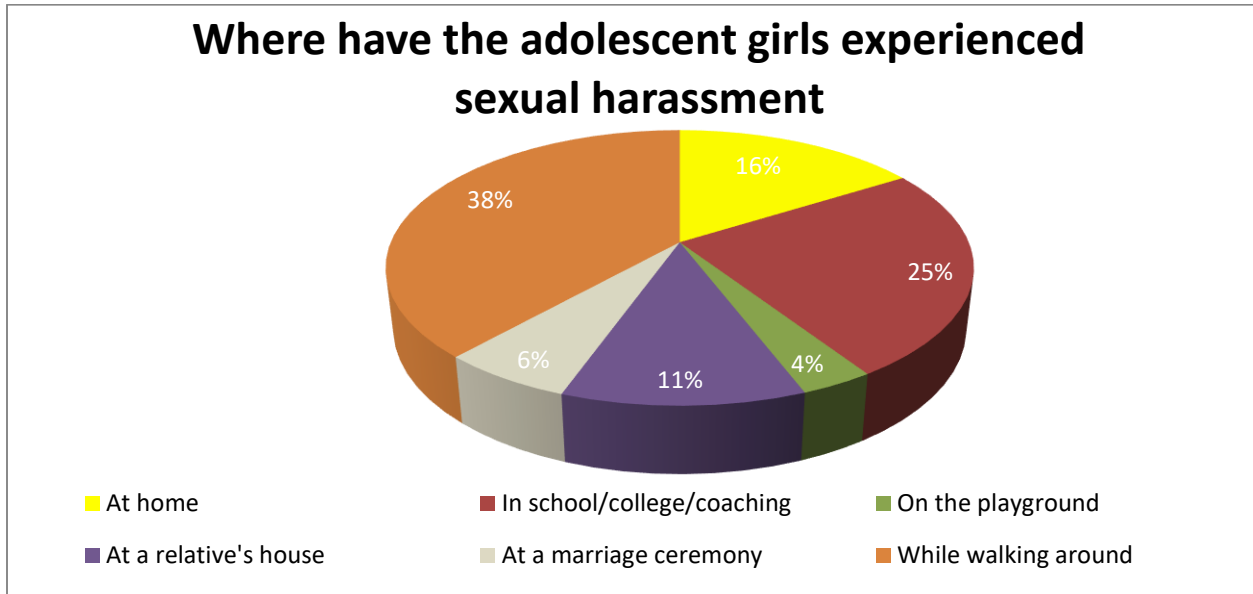
Regarding this figure, 3.55% of adolescent girls are sexually harassed by family members, 19.52% by relatives, 15.38% by friends, 9.46% by teachers, 45.56% by familiar people, and 79.88% by strangers.

During the data collection, most of the respondents who experienced sexual harassment shared that when they were victims of sexual harassment by family members, they were unable to share the matter with anyone due to shame and fear and also felt mental pressure and depression.

On the other hand, those who experienced sexual harassment from a teacher didn't report it to the family out of concern that they might misunderstand her or that the school administration might expel her.

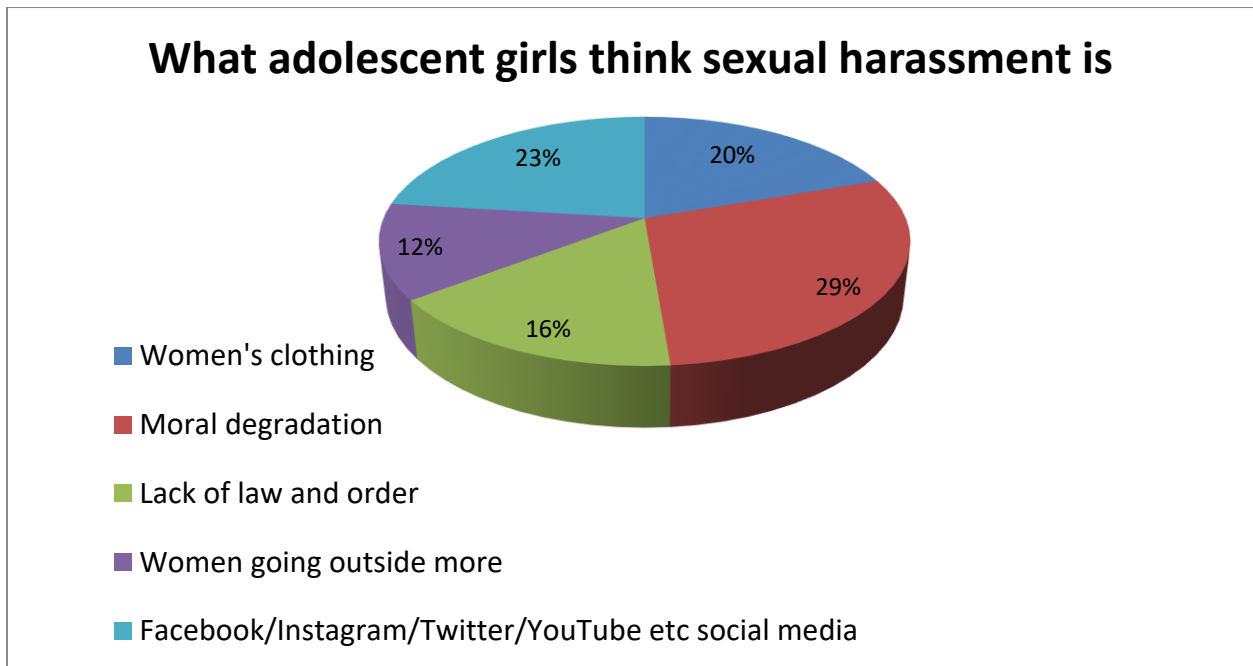
Besides, most of the girls explained that they were subjected to physical and verbal harassment by unknown persons of various categories on their way to school, new market, fairs, and crowded places.

Places of the occurrences:



Regarding this figure 38% of adolescent girls were sexually harassed while walking around, 6% during a marriage ceremony, 11% at a relative's house, 4% on the playground, 25% at school/college/coaching, and 16% at home. Adolescents are subjected to both verbal and physical harassment by strangers while walking on the streets.

Perceived causes of sexual harassment:



Regarding this figure 23% of adolescent girls believe that girls are sexually harassed because of their clothing, 20% of adolescent girls believe that girls are sexually harassed because of moral degradation, 12% of adolescent girls believe that girls are sexually harassed because of a lack of law and order, and 23% of adolescent girls believe that girls are sexually harassed because women are going outside more nowadays.

"It has become normal to hear bad comments about body structure, makeup, clothing, and other things every day on the street," claimed a few of the girls. As a result, they don't even want to say anything about the harassment to their family.

The majority of teenage girls mentioned lack of interest in wearing religious attire and females spending more time outside as the leading causes of sexual harassment. It was identified as the primary cause of sexual harassment. In contrast, a number of girls who follow to religious beliefs have expressed the opinion, that the fundamental cause of sexual harassment is not clothing but rather moral deterioration. Based on their social perspective, circle of connections, social position, family and social education, adolescents selected the causes of sexual harassment.

Sexual Harassment among Adolescents: Day vs. Night:

76.33% of teenage girls were sexually harassed during the day, 3.55% during the night, and 20.11% throughout both. 67.45% of teenage girls express the incident of harassment to their family. 61.19% of respondent shared that they faced barriers in their daily activities due to fear of sexual harassment or lack of proper safety.

Family Responses to Sexual Harassment; Blame, Privacy, Support, and Action:

Most of the time, they feel safe discussing the occurrence with their mother, elder sister, and grandma. After discussing the experience of sexual harassment with responders' family members. 13.01% of their family blamed them, 22.48% advised them to keep the matter private, 27.21% psychologically supported them, and just 15.97% of the family took action against the oppressor.

The family took several steps, including informing the matter of harassment to the oppressor's family, informing the school/college/coaching authorities, the local leader, informing the Upazila Parishad, and submitting a complaint with the local police station.

Among the 169 girls who were sexually harassed, just 10 reported the incident to any authority or group.

Only 1 family reported the incident to the local police station, 1 family reported it to the local leader, 2 families reported it to the Upazila Parishad, and 6 families reported it to the school, college, or coaching authority that were responsible for the situation.

In addition, among the 159 teenagers who did not disclose, the reasons are as follows: 41.50 % for the pressure from their families, 42.76 % for the pressure from society, 13.20 % for the fear of not receiving justice, and 32.70 % for a lack of recognized necessity.

Awareness Gap; Services for Sexual Harassment Victims in Faridpur Sadar:

66.66% are aware of the services available to victims of sexual harassment in Faridpur Sadar. However, almost every one of them referred the local police station as service center. Only 10.94% of adolescent girls are aware of sexual harassment. Young people need to be made aware of this.

Only 40.29% of adolescent girls know about government provided emergency number and most of them know about 999 only. But just 2.48% of girls used the number during emergency. Others did not use it out of shame and fear, even if it was necessary.

According to the girls, women are more likely to be sexually harassed on social media. Although they are not very active on social media, sometimes they use Facebook, Imo with in their family members mobile. **But in the study, 75.12% of girls are sexually harassed through social media.**

Note 1

Girl's suggestion to prevent sexual harassment:

They address lack of moral awareness, lack of family support, lack of taken legal actions against perpetrators, and awareness among girls about body exposed clothing, free mixing with boys and girls freedom of movement is vital causes of sexual harassment. Encourage boys also to pursue legal action against perpetrators. Advocate for legal support for drug reduction, responsible social media and internet use.

Note 2

Girl's suggestion for victims support:

To provide victims of harassment with the emotional and legal support they require, it is recommended that awareness be raised and that legal action be taken against those who have committed harassment. In addition to this, it highlights the significance of enhancing social and family awareness, establishing security personnel in educational institutions, and creating awareness among the general public on sexual harassment.

Chapter 5: Democracy and Human Rights Alignment

Nondita Surokkha's research, carried out as part of the "Youth Engagement in Democracy Project," demonstrates a deep commitment to advancing democracy and human rights, which are the main objectives of the project. The study's focus on sexual harassment among young females in Faridpur Sadar Upazila directly contributes to the safeguarding of human rights, specifically the right to live without violence and discrimination. Democracy fundamentally requires the protection of individual freedoms and the provision of equal opportunity for all members of society. Examining the prevalence of harassment, comprehending its intricacies, and developing initiatives to combat it demonstrate a dedication to cultivating an equitable and fair society. Furthermore, through the engagement of stakeholders, using different research tools, and the observance of confidentiality, the research adheres to democratic ideals of openness, involvement, and responsibility. Finally, this study establishes a critical framework for targeted interventions, stressing the interconnectedness of democracy, human rights, and the well-being of teenage girls in the Faridpur Sadar Upazila.

Chapter 6: Recommendations

Public Awareness:

Use a variety of platforms to spread awareness about sexual harassment, its consequences, and prevention strategies. Engage celebrities, influencers, and community leaders to help spread the word and encourage people to act together.

Community Engagement:

Create community forums and awareness campaigns to promote open dialogue about sexual harassment. Involve local leaders, non-governmental organizations, and community members in developing a zero-tolerance culture toward harassment.

Comprehensive Moral Education Programs:

Include comprehensive sexual education in school curricula to encourage respect, consent, and healthy relationships. These programs should address the ethical aspects of human behavior and promote empathy and understanding.

Addressing the Root Causes:

Address drug availability, societal norms and gender stereotypes that lead to harassment. Implement educational programs that challenge harmful attitudes and promote gender equality from a young age.

Legal Awareness:

Conduct regular workshops and seminars to educate communities about existing sexual harassment laws. Create easily accessible resources to educate people about their rights and legal options.

Active Police Support:

Provide specialized training for law enforcement officers to handle sexual harassment cases sensitively. Encourage individuals to report incidents through confidential channels.

Policy Advocacy:

Preventive Measures in Support strong anti-sexual harassment policies at the institutional and national levels. Collaborate with policymakers to ensure effective implementation, reviewing and updating policies as needed.

Overcoming Legal Obstacles:

To address the issue of young girls in Faridpur who are hesitant to seek legal action due to lengthy procedures and lack of courage, a proposal is made to simplify procedures and provide assistance to encourage victims to come forward.

Set up separate desks for adolescent girls in police stations:

Advocate for the establishment of dedicated desks within police stations to address the needs and concerns of adolescent females who have been sexually harassed.

Viewing violence with zero tolerance:

Advocate for a zero-tolerance policy toward sexual assault in law enforcement agencies. This entails taking all cases of sexual harassment seriously and responding quickly and appropriately to abusers.

Identifying High Risk Locations:

The chapter identifies specific venues where harassment is most common, including fairs, Eid-Puja festivities, haatbazaars, autos, and congested streets. This suggests the necessity for targeted initiatives and improved security measures in certain areas.

Collaborative Efforts:

Under the clause, government, non-governmental organizations, social groups, and religious organizations must collaborate to provide ongoing assistance to prevent sexual abuse. To

handle the issue comprehensively, a multi-sectorial strategy is crucial. Improve relations with educators, journalist, and local officials.

Media and Technology Awareness:

Launch public awareness initiatives to educate people about the importance of responsible media consume and conduct online platform. Create digital literacy initiatives to inform the public about the risks of cyber bullying and crime.

Active monitoring of service providers:

Establish monitoring protocols to assess the effectiveness of support services. Encourage victims to provide feedback often so that services can be modified appropriately.

Psychological and Social Support:

Sexual harassment survivors need specialized counseling. Create ongoing support partnerships with mental health specialists and NGOs. Raising awareness can minimize the stigma of receiving help.

Girls and boys have equal participation:

Encourage equal participation by both genders in all aspects of society. Challenge stereotypes and encourage inclusivity in educational and professional settings.

Empowerment Programs for Young Girls:

Develop mentorship programs and workshops to help young girls gain confidence and skills. Emphasize education and career opportunities, and give them tools to resist and report harassment.

Human Rights Awareness among Youth:

Include human rights education in school curricula, emphasizing the dignity and equality of all people. Empower youth to advocate for their own and others' rights.

Institutional Activities Concerning Women's Rights:

Run activities on institutions that actively promote and protect women's rights. Establish gender-sensitive policies, train staff, and promote equal opportunities for women.

Form Adult and Youth Partnerships:

Encourage adults and youth to work together to combat sexual harassment. This could entail collaborating with organizations, local communities, and academic institutions.

Active Sexual Violation Prevention Committees in Schools and Colleges:

Many girls are unaware of their school's Sexual Violence Prevention Committee. School or college administration should address this issue.

Raise Awareness about the Government Helpline:

Promote the government hotline numbers to ensure that victims of sexual harassment are aware of the available resources.

Justice Obstacles

It takes a long time to get justice after filing a complaint, due to which victims of harassment are not interested in taking legal help. Therefore, the trial should be conducted in a short time.

Chapter 7: Conclusion

This study under MJF's Youth Engagement in Democracy Project sheds light on the widespread issue of sexual harassment among adolescent girls in Faridpur Sadar Upazila. The study, which included both qualitative and quantitative data, revealed important insights into the prevalence, types, and consequences of sexual harassment, as well as the coping mechanisms used by victims. The findings highlight the urgent need for targeted interventions to address this critical concern and create a safer environment for the well-being of vulnerable adolescent girls.

The findings reveals a widespread sense of insecurity among young women in Faridpur Sadar, especially after sundown. Various types of harassment were identified, including inappropriate touching and explicit messages on social media. Fear of retaliation, social pressure, and societal blame emerged as major barriers to victims reporting incidents and seeking help. Victim narratives shared through case studies and interviews highlighted the emotional and psychological impact of such incidents.

Physical, verbal, and technological harassment were identified as common forms of abuse, with a significant number of girls experiencing such incidents in public spaces, schools, and even their own homes. The study also found that victims were hesitant to report incidents due to societal pressures, family concerns, and a lack of trust in the legal system.

This research is consistent with the larger goals of democracy and human rights, as evidenced by its commitment to protecting individual liberties, promoting equal opportunity, and combating discrimination and violence. By delving into the complex issue of sexual harassment, the study helps to build a more equitable and just society. The involvement of stakeholders, adherence to democratic principles of openness and participation, and the development of

targeted interventions highlight the interdependence of democracy, human rights, and adolescent girls' well-being.

Finally, this study establishes a critical foundation for recognizing and addressing the widespread problem of sexual harassment in Faridpur Sadar Upazila. The findings and recommendations presented in this report have the potential to inform policies and activities aimed at protecting the well-being of vulnerable adolescent girls, fostering a safer and more inclusive environment for their development. Organizations such as Nondita Surokkha, Youth Engagement in Democracy (YED), and the Manusher Jonno Foundation work together to catalyze positive change and create a society free of sexual harassment.

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Chapter 9: ANNEXURE (Tools of the Study)

Survey Questionnaire

1. Name:
2. Age:
3. Class:
4. Address:
5. Contact No:
6. How many family members do you have?
7. How many economically active members are there in your family?
8. Monthly Income of the Family/ Monthly household income –
 - 10,000 to 20,000 Tk
 - 20,000 to 30,000 Tk
 - 30,000 to 40,000 Tk
 - 50,000 and above
9. What do you understand by sexual harassment?
10. What do you consider as sexual harassment based on the following terms:
 - Unwanted sexually suggestive behavior, such as physical touch or indirect efforts;
 - Attempting to establish sexual relations with someone using institutional and professional power;
 - Making hateful and harassing comments;
 - Engaging in illegal solicitation for sexual activities;
 - Showing pornography;
 - Making sexually suggestive comments or gestures;
 - Disturbing someone through indecent poses, signs, language, or comments;
 - Approaching or following someone for inappropriate purposes;
 - Mocking others using vulgar language;
 - Writing sexually suggestive or vulgar content through letters, phone calls, mobile messages (SMS), notices, pictures, cartoons, on benches, tables, chairs, in offices, factories, classrooms, and on bathroom walls.
 - Capturing still or video images for the purpose of blackmail or impersonation;

- Forcing someone to abstain from participating in sports, cultural, institutional, and educational activities due to sexual harassment;
- Threatening or pressuring someone after rejecting love offers;
- Trying to engage in a sexual relationship with someone by frightening, deceiving, or making false promises.

11. Have you ever been sexually harassed?

- Yes
- No

12. What types of harassment have you experienced?

- Physical
- Verbal
- Messages
- Comments
- Unusual observation glances

13. By whom have you been sexually harassed?

- Family members
- Relatives
- Friends
- Teachers
- Familiar person
- Stranger

14. Where have you experienced sexual harassment?

- At home
- In school/college/coaching
- On the playground
- At a relative's house
- At a marriage ceremony
- While walking around

15. When have you have been sexually harassed?

- In the day
- At night

16. Are you comfortable discussing sexual harassment with your family?

- Yes
- No

17. Have you shared the incident of sexual harassment with your family?

- Yes
- No

18. If yes, what was their response?

- Blamed you
- Said to keep the matter secret
- Gave you mental support
- Action was taken against the oppressor
- Felt Unnecessary

19. Have you reported any sexual harassment issues to an authority or agency?

- Yes
- No

20. If 'no', then why not?

- Family pressure
- Social pressure
- Fear of the oppressor
- Fear of not getting justice

21. Yes', to which authority or agency did you inform or report the sexual harassment issue?

- Nearby police station
- Department of Women Affairs
- Upazila administration
- Upazila Parishad
- Women's Parishad
- Bangladesh Legal Aid and Services Trust
- A prominent person in the area
- School/College/Coaching Authority

22. What was the result after the notification or report?

- Good
- Very good

- Bad
- Very bad
- Roughly/average/so-so/fair
- Unresponsive

23. Have you ever faced barriers in your daily activities due to fear of sexual harassment or lack of proper safety?

- Yes
- No

24. What do you think is the main cause of sexual harassment?

- Women's clothing
- Moral degradation
- Lack of law and order
- Women going outside more
- Facebook/Instagram/Twitter/YouTube etc social media

25. Do you think age plays a role in being sexually harassed?

- Yes
- No

26. What do you think the age limit is?

- 10 to 15 years
- 15 to 20 years
- 20 to 25 years
- 25 to 30 years
- Over 30 years

27. Have you participated in any activities to prevent sexual harassment?

- Yes
- No

28. Are you aware of any services provided by Faridpur Sadar Upazila for victims of sexual harassment?

- Yes
- No

29. If yes, what is it?

30. Do you think the girls of Faridpur Sadar Upazila are aware of the issue of sexual harassment?

- Yes
- No
- some knows/some doesn't know

31. Do you think women are more sexually harassed through social media?

- Yes
- No

32. Have you ever been sexually harassed on social media?

- Yes
- No

33. Have you ever witnessed someone else being sexually harassed?

- Yes
- No

34. When you saw someone else being sexually harassed, did you take any action?

- Yes
- No

35. Do you think that everyone in society is aware of the effects of sexual harassment?

- Yes
- No

36. Have you ever participated in an initiative to prevent violence against women?

- Yes
- No

37. Has any program been conducted in your school or college to prevent violence against women or sexual harassment in the past?

- Yes
- No

38. Do you know about the government helpline numbers?

- Yes
- No

39. If yes, what numbers do you know?

40. Have you used any government helpline numbers before?

- Yes
- No

41. What are your suggestions for preventing sexual harassment?

42. What kind of support do you think victims of sexual harassment need?

43. Is there anything else you would like to share on this topic?

In-Depth Interview (IDI) Questions

1. Name

2. Age

3. Class

4. Address

5. Contact

6. Have you ever experienced any form of physical/ verbal / non-verbal/cyber harassment?

- Yes
- No

7. If yes, please describe the incidents briefly.

8. Did you seek legal assistance after facing the harassment?

9. What was the situation after the accusation of violence?

10. Do you have any suggestions for creating awareness or prevention about sexual harassment?

11. What support do you believe would be beneficial for victims of harassment?

12. Is there anything else you would like to share regarding this issue?

Focus Group Discussion(FGD) Questions

1. How safe do you feel as an adolescent girl in Faridpur Sadar when moving around the town?
2. Can you share any personal experiences or stories related to sexual harassment in Faridpur Sadar?
3. Have you or someone you know experienced any forms of physical, verbal or non-verbal abuse in public places in Faridpur Sadar? If so, please describe these incidents.
4. What is your opinion, are the factors that contribute to the prevalence of sexual harassment in your community?
5. Are there specific areas or locations in Faridpur Sadar where you or other adolescent girls feel particularly unsafe? Can you describe why these places are perceived as more dangerous?
6. How do you believe the social circumstances and norms in Faridpur Sadar influence the experiences of adolescent girls regarding safety and sexual harassment?
7. When adolescent girls in Faridpur Sadar experience sexual harassment, what coping mechanisms or strategies do they typically employ to protect themselves or seek support?
8. What role do family, friends, and the community play in supporting adolescent girls who have experienced sexual harassment?
9. Are there any local initiatives or organizations in Faridpur Sadar working to address the issue of sexual harassment and ensure the safety of adolescent girls? Can you share your experiences or knowledge of their work?
10. In your opinion, what changes or measures could be taken to improve the safety and well-being of adolescent girls in Faridpur Sadar and reduce incidents of sexual harassment?

Key Informant Interview(KII) Questions

1. Please let us know about the initiatives taken by your organization to prevent sexual harassment or violence in Faridpur Sadar.
2. What are the types of sexual harassment or violence against teenage girls in Faridpur Sadar?
3. In your opinion, what are the main reasons, why young girls in Faridpur Sadar are subjected to sexual harassment?
4. In your opinion, what are the reasons why most of the girls in Faridpur Sadar do not want to take legal action after being sexually harassed?
5. Which of the following places or localities in Faridpur Sadar has the highest rate of sexual harassment of adolescent girls? And what are the reasons behind it?
6. In some cases, how do you think the restrictions on movement and participation in daily activities are affecting the lives of adolescent girls in Faridpur Sadar due to lack of proper security?
7. What steps do you think can be taken to make the ongoing services to prevent sexual harassment of adolescent girls in Faridpur Sadar accessible to all?