AFRICAN GENDER INSTITUTE (AGI): YOUNG WOMENS LEADERSHIP (YWL) PROJECT.

WITSIE PARTICIPATORY ACTION RESEARCH PROJECT

RESEARCH TOPIC: ENGAGEMENT WITH SEXUAL HARASSMENT AT WITS UNIVERSITY.

DATE: FROM MAY 2013 TO JUNE 2014 (PROJECT PROGRESS REPORT)

BY: ANDILE MTHOMBENI

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Introduction

This report aims to give input of the WITSIE AGI project activities that have taken place since the beginning of the project last May 2013 up until June 2014. It provides an overview of what the team members have done thus far, what the group aims to accomplish as well as keeping track of the overall project success/activities that have taken place. The WITS project is academically focused. Even though the main themes is Sexual Harassment for 2013-2014 we continue to research, advocate and mobilise around all other areas of sexual and reproductive health and our students are encouraged to participate in scientific meetings, conferences and publish. In all these conferences one or both of the staff members who are mentors on the project participated. Also our alumni are encouraged and did participate and presented on some of these conferences from our previous AGI work. The team has managed to get almost half of the work done with almost all the data collected. Our collaborating partners are CCDU, WALE, GALA and the WITS sexual harassment office

Goals of the YWL project this year

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project aim: to reduce young women’s vulnerability to sexual harassment</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Project objectives:</td>
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<tr>
<td>I. to gain insight of how men and women on campus understand sexual harassment</td>
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<td>II. to create awareness among women and men about what sexual harassment is – identifying and naming it</td>
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<td>III. to increase women’s knowledge of how to respond to sexual harassment – assertiveness vs. aggressiveness</td>
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<td>IV. to increase women’s knowledge of where to report and how to get the perpetrator to take responsibility for their actions – evidence</td>
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<td>V. to strengthen institutional response to reports of sexual harassment – MACC and SW</td>
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VI. to share with other AGI participating institutions in the Southern Africa lessons learnt from our process on how to strengthen institutional response to sexual harassment on campus

CURRENT UPDATED LIST OF GROUP MEMBERS AS OF JUNE 2014

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NAME &amp; SURNAME</th>
<th>DEPARTMENT</th>
<th>GENDER</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Prof Mzikazi Nduna</td>
<td>Psychology</td>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ms Peace Kiguwa</td>
<td>Psychology</td>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr Cily Tabane</td>
<td>Social Work</td>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Andile Mthombeni</td>
<td>Psychology</td>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nobenkhosi Dlamini</td>
<td>Psychology Masters Student</td>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Polite Chauke</td>
<td>Social Work Masters Student</td>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Naledi Sebano</td>
<td>Social Work Masters Student</td>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elvis</td>
<td>Social Work Masters Student</td>
<td>Male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lungile Ndlovu</td>
<td>Biochemistry Masters Student</td>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Palesa Nkwadi</td>
<td>Social Work Masters Student (new)</td>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alexa Polka</td>
<td>B.A Undergraduate Student (new)</td>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eve Hova</td>
<td>B.A Undergraduate Student (new)</td>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nonhlakanipho Mabuza</td>
<td>B.A Undergraduate Student (new)</td>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lesego Ndhlovu</td>
<td>B.A Undergraduate Student (new)</td>
<td>Female</td>
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</tbody>
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Activities undertaken

Seminar study groups: so far the team has held 5 seminars that were based on readings of academic papers on Action Research and participatory methodologies.


4. Sexual Harassment, Sexual Assault and Rape Policy and Procedures (2013). *(June 2014 Article).*

![Figure 1: student team members discussing Sexual Harassment policy with the WITS sexual harassment officer](image)

**In-house training of members**

- Training on how to facilitate a workshop on Sexual Harassment was held by one of the team leaders (Prof Mzikazi Nduna).

- Training on how to facilitate a Focus Group Discussion was held by one of the team leaders (Prof Mzikazi Nduna).

- Training on how to facilitate a gender-based violence workshop on using In Her Shoes was held by one of the team leaders (Prof Mzikazi Nduna).
Inter-varsity awareness campaigns: one of the team members attended a Women’s Day event at the University of Kwa-Zulu Natal on invitation by partners based there. During this visit we facilitated the In Her Shoes gender-based violence awareness workshop. We also gave input at the launch of the Young Women’s Forum on SRHR.

Digital group discussion: the group also had a discussion amongst themselves to a reflexive exercise on understanding and positions on the issue of sexual harassment. This was video recorded.

Inter-varsity regional workshop: three of the four group members attended the regional workshop on SRHR at UCT in October 2013.

Beginning of March there was THE 2ND SRHR Workshop in Cape Town (Stellenbosch) and all of our team members attended except for the male member of the group.
Outreach

Within campus activity:
1. One of the team members in 2013 collaborated with a gender and sexuality unity reference group “Safe Zones”. This unit is currently run by the Transformation Office. A collaborative panel discussion forum co-hosted with Gay and Lesbian Memory in Actionas part of Asexual Awareness Week was initiated. Contributions made by the panellists were valuable in breaking ground with regard to dialogue on asexuality and asexual identities in Africa and South Africa. Also, on-going work focusing on incidents of gender discrimination on Wits Education Campus, which included incident of transphobia and the use of public toilets by trans individuals.

OUTSIDE CAMPUS ACTIVITIES:
1. The group was invited to a Vasectomy meeting that was hosted by the AIDS Accountability International network (some of our team members plus a mentor attended the meeting).

2. Attended the Ford Foundation Meeting/workshop that held a discussion on Gender Based Violence/Sexual Harassment in Higher Education.

3. Feminist Dialogue: Transforming of violent culture and building platforms for young women held at the HSRC in Pretoria.

4. One of the group members also attended a PHRU body mapping seminar/workshop at Baragwaneth, which helps expose the group to other action research projects being carried out outside campus.
CONFERENCES ATTENDED

1. In 2013 two of the students presented papers at the Psychological Students Congress.


3. One student presented at the Gender, discourse and Sexuality South-to-south Dialogues Conference 2013. As a result one of the students published an article on male cancers and is actively involved in research and advocacy around male cancer and other SRHR issues.

4. ICASA 2013 in December (one of our team members attended in Cape Town).

5. WCY 2014 (World Conference on Youth Sri-Lanka) one of the team members were selected to attend this conference early May and represent the youth issues on SRHR.

6. Partners Forum (PMNCH) Meeting 2014 – One of the group members was asked to be one of the panellists at the forum addressing SRHR issues in relation to young people. (June 30).

Organisational and campus challenges

Beginning of the year 2014 the team lost one team member who was a mentor. She resigned from the project due to her career plans to leave Wits she has since resigned from WITS. The team however managed to replace the member with Dr Cily Tabane, above mentioned (see group member list) who is from the Social Work Department.

The current student body is predominantly MA and they have submitted their thesis in March 2014 and are now thus Wits alumni, some are also working as interns in other organisations. Because of this it made it difficult to meet as a team to conduct our weekly activities. With this challenge we undertook to recruit additional students who are either undergraduate or at least 4th to join the core team, these are the student researchers whom we hope will participate as leaders in 2014 activities going forth though the alumni will also be allowed to continue to participate. (See member list above to reference the new recruited members of the team).
When it came to data collection, we were/still are faced with the challenge of recruiting the academic staff (due to intimidation) for data collection activities. Also recruiting male participants was a challenge as well, as most of them took the issue very lightly.

**Impact made on campus**

This project has contributed to ensuring Post graduate student’s visibility at university-based conferences.

Students also get an opportunity to develop, practice and horn their presentation skills. By attending meeting, forums, conferences and etc. students get to be exposed to more than just SRHR issues affecting young women. Not only that but they also get to share and globalise their views when it comes to our own project related subjects.

One of the team members was part of a reference group tasked with redrafting the institution’s sexual harassment policy. The previous policy was amended to include other aspects of relations between staff and students and amongst students in different hierarchical positions within the institution such as tutors and students. Guidelines were proposed on the revised policy and submitted to the senate. The previous collation of sexual harassment, rape and sexual assault under the same umbrella term was also challenged.

Through the data collection activities that have been conducted thus far, students have managed to form an alliance/partnership with the new Sexual Harassment Office and thus making them more visible to the public eye. Furthermore the participants have been getting the benefit of being made aware of SH in their surroundings and everyday lives.

**Research data collection**

- Three workshops with separate peer groups (support staff and students). One per week.
  - There was a Sexual Harassment workshop conducted with the 3 support staff on campus, majority of the turnout being females and only 1 male present.). Another PAR workshop was conducted with the female students on campus on a separate day.

- Focus Group Discussions (1\textsuperscript{st} with students and 2\textsuperscript{nd} with support staff). One per week.

- The group utilised the ‘In Her Shoes’ workshop tool as a practice/training workshop for the group members.
Research ethics
This study was approved for ethics by the University Committee for Human Research (non-medical).

- We formed an alliance with the new Sexual Harassment office that has been newly developed at Wits. They provided pamphlets that give detail on S.H as well as outlining where to report if any one of our participants feels they need assistant. These would be handed out to our participants during the data collection (at the end of each section).

UPCOMING PROGRAMS/ACTIVITIES: JUNE – DECEMBER 2014
These are the programs/events that we are yet to carry out:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TIME</th>
<th>ACTIVITY</th>
<th>PERSON RESPONSIBLE</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>July</td>
<td>o Partners Forum in Sandton o Readingseminars o Pre-presentation of the PSYSSA conference papers o Recruitacademic staff and finish the data collection o In-House Training on how to transcribe data</td>
<td>o Andile o Team leaders o Peace o Whole team o Mzi, Cily and Peace</td>
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August

- Transcribe and analysing of the data.
- Data coding
- Data analysis

- First draft journal manuscript

- Students
- Whole team

- Mzi, Peace and Cily

September

- Training on how to collect digital stories.
- Data interpretation continues
- Present papers at PSYSSA

- Peace
- Whole team
- Andile, Lungi and Peace

- Team leaders

October

- Compile the digital stories
- Finale report submitted to AGI

- Team leaders

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<th>Outputs</th>
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**Publications:** The group has managed to publish 2 articles, one of which was by one of the mentors who got a paper accepted by the Journal Gender Questions and the second article was by one of the group members. The details are:


**Conference presentations**

