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Sexual Harassment in the Workplace

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Since Catherine MacKinnon (1979) first analyzed sexual harassment as an illegal form of sex-based discrimination, considerable research has examined a wide range of topics associated with women's experiences of such behavior, as well as how to conceptualize the behavior. In fact, a recent review of the literature states, "there has been remarkable progress toward understanding sexual harassment as a workplace phenomenon in a relatively short amount of time" (O'Leary-Kelly et al., 2009, p. 529). The literature is so broad, at this point, that any single chapter cannot possibly do justice to its full breadth. Hence, in keeping with the volume, we have chosen to focus this chapter on aspects of sexual harassment that make for "risky business." In other words, what is it about sexual harassment that inhibits employees and organizations from functioning at their best?

We believe that the answer to this question needs to be presented in two parts. First, how is it that employees are negatively affected by sexual harassment? There simply is no doubt at this point that sexual harassment can devastate its victims. Although we will briefly review this literature—beginning with the impact of sexual harassment on working women's psychological, health-related, and work well-being—we argue that two remaining classes of employees are important to consider: male targets and witnesses. We review the state of the literature on these two classes in an effort to shed light on why organizations need to retain a wide-angled perspective on sexual harassment.

Second, organizations are at risk depending on how they respond (or don't respond) to instances of sexual harassment. It would be nice to think that employees of US-based organizations have at least a minimal understanding of organizational liability surrounding sexual harassment, including responsibility to prevent sexual harassment from occurring and to intervene when prevention is ineffective. Surprisingly, though, there is very little scholarship on this topic. We review this literature in the final section of the chapter in an effort to entice additional research.

Setting the Stage with Definitions, Theory, and the Risk of Sexual Harassment for Women

Before moving straight into the reviews, we need to take a step back and carefully define our constructs. To be clear, this chapter will focus solely on experiences of sexual harassment, with very little attention to outsider perceptions of what to call "sexual harassment." From the target's perspective, the psychological definition of sexual harassment involves unwanted sex-related behavior at work that is appraised by the recipient as offensive or threatening (Fitzgerald, Swan, and Magley, 1997). These behaviors can be classified into three types of harassment: gender harassment, unwanted sexual attention, and sexual coercion (Fitzgerald, Gelfand, and Drasgow, 1995; Fitzgerald et al., 1988). Falling under the legal definition of "hostile working environment," gender harassment consists of behaviors conveying misogynist attitudes and unwanted sexual attention includes unwanted, unreciprocated sexual attention. Sexual coercion mirrors the legal term *quid pro quo* harassment, which involves attempts to make job rewards contingent on sexual cooperation.

A number of theoretical models have been proposed to explicate the correlates of sexual harassment. We ground our review largely in Fitzgerald, Hulin, and Drasgow's (1994) model that explicitly connects the organizational context and employee impact of sexual harassment. Specifically, they proposed that sexual harassment was the direct result of (1) a job-gender context in which women work under male supervisors and primarily with male co-workers and (2) an organizational climate that tolerates such experiences. Sexual harassment, in turn, negatively affects employees' psychological well-being, health, and job-related attitudes. This model has been touted as having had a "great influence on recent empirical research" (O'Leary-Kelly et al., 2009, p. 510).

Not surprisingly, the bulk of the research testing this model (or pieces of it) has focused on women's experiences. Considerable work has been conducted on the antecedents of sexual harassment, particularly on the impact of organizations' climate on the incidence of sexual harassment. Specifically, organizations that create climates that do not tolerate and clearly discourage harassment through rules, policies, and procedures have a lower incidence of sexual harassment than other organizations do (Fitzgerald et al., 1997; Fitzgerald, Drasgow, and Magley, 1999; Williams, Fitzgerald, and Drasgow, 1999; Willness, Steel, and Lee, 2007). Perceptions of an intolerant climate not only predict respondents' reports of their own sexual harassment experiences, but also those of their work-group members (Glomb et al., 1997). Further, recent research has shown that women who worked in a climate intolerant of sexual harassment but, nonetheless, found themselves sexually harassed suffered from intensified negative work-related outcomes—e.g., lower job satisfaction, affective commitment, greater job withdrawal (Kath et al., 2009). Finally, along similar lines, sexual harassment was found to be less prevalent within positive social climates and when women and men work in gender-equitable climates (Timmerman and Bajema, 2000).

Willness, Steel, and Lee (2007) also meta-analytically examined the impact of job-gender context on the prevalence of sexual harassment, finding a significant, negative relationship such that sexual harassment was more likely to occur in male-dominated work groups. Berdahl (2007a) also found evidence for increased harassment for women working in male-dominated organizations, which was even more pronounced for women who further deviated from a feminine ideal and espoused more masculine personalities.

Perhaps one of the most important reasons why workplace mistreatment is of concern is because of its broad negative effects. The meta-analytic evidence of the impact of sexual harassment (Willness, Steel, and Lee, 2007) is irrefutable: sexual harassment significantly damages targets' work satisfaction and commitment, as well as their physical and emotional well-being. Specific cross-sectional studies include the following outcomes:

- lowered job satisfaction,
- increased job stress,
- greater conflict and lower cohesion in teams,
- reduced organizational commitment and productivity,
- performance decline,
- organizational withdrawal,
- anxious and depressive symptoms,
- post-traumatic stress symptoms,
- alcohol use, and
- decreased life satisfaction.

Given that Glomb and Cortina (2006) have recently reviewed these general, negative consequences in great detail, we opt not to repeat their efforts. However, we do want to note that these negative effects absolutely bleed over into high economic costs for the organizations, in terms of productivity, recruitment and training, reputation, and administrative, legal and medical costs. Faley and colleagues (1999) estimated that sexual harassment cost the US Army over US$250 million in 1988.

What's the Risk for Men?

With the stage set, we now turn to our two specific populations, men and witnesses, to broaden our understanding of the impact of sexual harassment. Despite evidence that men are also frequently targets of sexual harassment (Stockdale, Visio, and Batra, 1999), little is known about their specific experience of this type of mistreatment. As has been stated in the sexual harassment literature for well over a decade, the sexual harassment of men is as controversial as it is understudied.

First, how frequently are men being sexually harassed? In 1995 a sample of approximately 22,696 service men and women in the US Department of Defense was surveyed concerning their experiences of sexual harassment in the military. Thirty-eight percent of the men indicated experiencing at least one instance of unwanted sexual behavior in the previous year (Fitzgerald et al., 1999). In 2008 nearly 16 percent (roughly 2,200 cases) of the sexual harassment complaints registered with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) were filed by men, a percentage that has remained relatively consistent for the past six years (EEOC, 2009). Although the sexual harassment of men is by no means as frequent as the sexual harassment of women (e.g., Fitzgerald et al., 1999), clearly a visible trend of harassment is present.

Although we might have some sense that men are, indeed, experiencing sexual harassment, this does not necessarily mean that the behaviors that men might consider to be harassing are identical to those that women identify. To assess this, Berdahl, Magley, and Waldo (1996) used open-ended questionnaires to determine what alternative forms of behavior men find harassing. In addition to traditional harassment (gender harassment, unwanted sexual attention, and sexual coercion), men indicated three other distinct types of gender harassment: general lewd language and personal comments, negative stereotyping of men, and harassment for deviating from the male gender role, the latter of which was considered to be the most harassing (Waldo, Berdahl, and Fitzgerald, 1998). This deviation from the traditional masculine gender role is what Stockdale et al. (2004) refer to as rejection-based sexual harassment, which polices non-masculine behavior by enforcing the gender role standard through degrading actions of men that are seen to either delineate from a masculine ideal or are feminine in nature. As would seem to be the nature of such policing, most of this type of harassment is perpetrated by men against men (same-sex sexual harassment, or SSSH; Waldo, Berdahl, and Fitzgerald, 1998). SSSH is much more frequent with men than with women (e.g., DuBois et al., 1998) and is more likely to result in negative consequences and subjective appraisals from men than other-sex sexual harassment (OSSH; Stockdale, Visio, and Batra, 1999). OSSH with male targets frequently results in approach-based sexual harassment (Stockdale, Visio, and Batra, 1999), and includes behaviors traditionally viewed as sexually harassing, such as unwanted sexual advances, sexual attention, and, in extreme cases, sexual bribery (i.e., *quid pro quo*).

In addition to Stockdale's research, the other well-known theoretical explanation of the sexual harassment of men centers on sex-role spill-over. Specifically, this theory suggests that the same gender conceptualizations that exist within a society will "spill over" into the workplace, causing an individual to be viewed and interacted with primarily in terms of their gender. Sex-role spill-over has previously been used to explain how women can be targets of sexual harassment in gender-skewed work environments, as mentioned previously (e.g., Welsh, 1999), but can also help explain SSSH gender policing that occurs against men, particularly in male-dominated workforces. As Welsh states, "heterosexual norms exclude or sexualize women, but they also constrain the behavior of men" (1999, p. 186). Such societal constraints, when exhibited in the workplace, can result in men experiencing sexual harassment.

WHAT MAKES THE SEXUAL HARASSMENT OF MEN CONTROVERSIAL?

Sexual harassment, as a concept, has undergone many identity changes in the past 40 years in which it has been studied. Originally conceptualized as inappropriate sexual behavior in the workplace (e.g., *quid pro quo*; see MacKinnon, 1979), it is difficult to conceive of sexual behavior being as traditionally threatening to the status of men in the workplace as it has been for women. Indeed, Waldo, Berdahl, and Fitzgerald (1998) argue that men perceive sexual harassment as less harassing than do women because more social, organizational, and physical power is inherent in men. The main contention behind the controversy asserts that women are overwhelmingly sexual victims (e.g., of assault, coercion) in a society established on patriarchical grounds. However, Berdahl (2007b) later cautions against overhomogenizing the conceptualization of sexual harassment; the solicitation of sexual relations and harassment based on sex are both groups of harassing behaviors which are qualitatively different yet are still behaviorally and legally under the sexual harassment umbrella.

Berdahl (2007b) further argues for conceptualizing sexual harassment as harassment based on sex, rather than sexualized harassment. Using this lens, men need not experience the traditional *quid pro quo* scenario to be sexually harassed, and indeed the frequency for male targets of sexual coercion and bribery are substantially lower than the frequency for female targets (e.g., Fitzgerald et al., 1999). The sexual harassment of men can then be understood as behaviors that derogate, demean, or humiliate men simply based on the function of being male (sex) and aligning or delineating from maleness (gender). Also, Berdahl (2007b) argues that conceptualizing sexual harassment in strictly male dominance language (i.e., male-to-female) reinforces sex segregation instead of sex equality in the workplace. If sexual harassment is more about protecting one's social status, as Berdahl suggests, then the sexual harassment of men is the utilization of the male sex role to demean an individual just as the sexual harassment of women is the utilization of the female sex role to demean an individual. Just as women are sexually harassed for embodying masculine traits or working in masculine environments (Berdahl, 2007b), so too are men for embodying feminine traits or working in feminine environments (e.g., Erikson and Einarsen, 2004).

RESPONDING TO EXPERIENCES OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Sex differences in the coping research have revealed that men employ more problem-focused coping strategies, such as learning skills and developing strategies, whereas women tend to use emotion-focused coping, such as distracting oneself and using relaxation techniques (Folkman and Lazarus, 1980). However, in more recent work, these sex differences did not replicate empirically (Tamres, Janicki, and Helgeson, 2002) and, in fact, the opposite patterns may be true for male targets of sexual harassment, given the potentially emasculating nature of such mistreatment. For example, women are much more likely to self-label their experiences as sexual harassment than are men (Magley and Shupe, 2005), possibly due to the disparity between being sexually harassed and believing that sexual harassment is something that doesn't happen to men. The rigid heterosexual male gender role (e.g., O'Neil, 2008) perpetuates maladaptive coping responses, which restricts interpersonal disclosure and reinforces passive coping strategies. Along these lines, Bauerle and Magley (2009) found that, after controlling for harassment frequency and subjective appraisal of the harassment within two samples of working adults, men were less likely to be assertive and more likely to self-blame than were women.

Also contrary to expectations, sexual harassment appears to affect men and women similarly. For example, Magley and colleagues (1999) discovered similar negative psychological, health- and job-related outcomes for men and women. Recent meta-analytic research on such outcomes of sexual harassment (Chan et al., 2008) established that gender was not a significant moderator of experiences. The bottom line seems to be that when men and women are harassed in similar ways both sexes experience the negative repercussions.

ORGANIZATIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES

Although we consider broader organizational liability issues later in the chapter, there are specific concerns when considering the sexual harassment of men. In recent years, the US Supreme Court has held that SSSH is actionable under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act, which prevents sexual discrimination (see Knapp and Kustis, 2000, for a brief legal history of SSSH). In other words, organizations are recently being held liable for behaviors and organizational climates that contribute to more "non-traditional" forms of harassment.

As limited as the literature is on the sexual harassment of men, even more limited are recommendations for organizations to better handle men's experiences with sexual harassment. Knapp and Kustis (2000) suggest that sex-imbalanced work environments are most susceptible to incidents of sexual harassment, especially within male-dominated environments. They recommend adapting environmentally customized employee assistance programs (EAPs) which can assist in organizational interventions and one-on-one counseling. Also, in the academic environment, DeSouza and Solberg (2004) advise college administrators to establish strategies, centers, and functions that recognize and affirm sexual diversity on campuses, not just in terms of sexual orientation but in various manifestations of the male gender role.

Finally, although no empirical examination yet exists, we suggest that considering the role of positive masculinity in men's experiences of sexual harassment might prove fruitful. Specifically, positive masculinity has very recently begun to be explored in therapy-centered conferences (e.g., Synnott, 2009; Kiselica, 2010). Positive masculinity combines the men and masculinity literature with concepts found in the newly established field of positive psychology, providing a framework by which the positive traits of masculinity are studied, highlighted, and reinforced. Although positive masculinity needs work in terms of an empirical concept, integrating a positive masculinity model into the work environment could have some helpful uses. For example, a sexual harassment training protocol could be constructed on the tenets of positive masculinity. Such a training method would highlight positive aspects of masculinity that can combat sexual harassment tolerance instead of focusing on what men are not supposed to do (i.e., the negative masculinity that contributes toward an organizational culture of sexual harassment). By expanding the variety of acceptable behaviors within men's conceptualization of masculinity (e.g., patience, humility, courage), less "organizational policing" of masculinity may be required.

FUTURE DIRECTIONS OF RESEARCH ON THE SEXUAL HARASSMENT OF MEN

As illustrated, the sexual harassment of men is a legitimate issue that affects organizations in palpable and comparable ways to the sexual harassment of women. Research that addresses the integration of the sexual harassment of men into training paradigms is badly needed in the literature. Additionally, although some research has suggested that men who conform to more traditional gender roles are less responsive to sexual harassment training (e.g., Kearney, Rochlen, and King, 2004) and are more target-blaming (e.g., De Judicibus and McCabe, 2001), further directions could investigate the propensity to which such men are likely to reinforce stereotypical masculine workplace norms and perpetrate SSSH. This research could be helpful in identifying the source of the sexual harassment of men and, ultimately, in assisting in the development of training.

Bystander Harassment

The second at-risk group we want to discuss is that of witnesses of sexual harassment. A majority of the literature investigates sexually harassing behaviors in isolation—that is, without regard to organizational climate, structure, or even the general context in which it occurs. However, when sexual harassment occurs, it is not always hidden in one-on-one situations. In fact, the individuals working in an environment that tolerates sexual harassment may undergo similar psychological and work-related outcomes experienced by targets of sexual harassment as a result of simply observing or witnessing others' experiences. Glomb et al. (1997) referred to this phenomenon as "ambient sexual harassment," or "bystander harassment": a type of counterproductive work behavior in which "coworkers who witness, hear about, or are cognizant of the sexual harassment of others may experience negative outcomes similar to those of the victim" (p. 310). By explicitly including bystanders as potentially affected by the witnessed harassment, our present understandings of sexual harassment are transformed from a simple harasser-to-target model into an environmental model in which the harassing event sends out "ripples" that affect others' behavior in the workplace.

Witnessing the sexual harassment of other work-group members creates stress for bystanders in that the interpersonal workplace dynamic is changed for those bystanders, even if they are not directly victims themselves. Specifically, bystanders worry about themselves becoming targets, are exposed to the negative consequential behaviors of the target(s) and harasser(s), and may feel unable to implement change to decrease or curb the harassment (Glomb et al., 1997). Hitlan, Schneider, and Walsh (2006) add, "multiple harassment stressors [i.e., being a target and a bystander of harassment] may be worse for individuals than exposure to any of the stressors in isolation, especially in terms of the stressors contributing to perceptions of a climate tolerant of harassment" (p. 188).

Gender harassment, for example, has the potential to be quite far-reaching in that once it exists in the environment, all bystander witnesses of the same sex immediately become vicarious victims. For example, if a harasser tells a misogynist joke to a specific female target while in earshot of other women, the other women become victims simply by the nature of being female and, thus, the demeaning subject of the joke. In support of this notion, Hitlan, Schneider, and Walsh (2006) found that bystander experiences of gender harassment uniquely contributed to the prediction of how upset women were by personal experiences (i.e., by being targets) of gender harassment. Miner-Rubino and Cortina (2007) expanded this concept by demonstrating that a climate that supports misogyny increases organizational withdrawal for both men and women. Finally, in a structural equation model, Glomb and colleagues (1997) demonstrated that ambient sexual harassment was more strongly related to both job satisfaction and psychological conditions than were direct experiences of sexual harassment.

CORRELATES OF WITNESSING SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Bystanders' perceptions of sexual harassment are affected by a number of factors, which are important in that they have the potential to alter how both the target and the organization as a whole respond to harassment. First, although the effect is small, women identify a wider range of behaviors as sexually harassing (e.g., Rotundo, Nguyen, and Sackett, 2001), suggesting that women might be more likely to perceive harassment in their work environment. Bystanders do seem to follow the lead of the targeted individual in terms of labeling witnessed harassment. Specifically, bystanders are much less likely to label behavior as sexually harassing if the victim does not explicitly vocalize that the actions directed at them are unwanted (Osman, 2007), and this is especially true for male bystanders (Elkins and Velez-Castrillon, 2008). Other such characteristics that influence bystander labeling and reporting include harasser status, type and severity of harassment, scenario differences, organizational norms, and work environment/industries, among others (see O'Leary-Kelly et al., 2009 for a brief overview).

The reasons why a target might not take direct action in response to sexual harassment are complex (Magley, 2002). However, researchers (Bergman et al., 2002; Magley, Hulin, Fitzgerald, and DeNardo, 1999; O'Leary-Kelly, Tiedt, and Bowes-Sperry, 2004) have highlighted that labeling an experience as sexual harassment is a crucial step in reporting it to organizational authorities. Oftentimes a target will come to understand that their experience was sexual harassment through dialogue with bystanders or co-workers, a process by which the meaning of the event is formulated and understood only through the communicative process of coordinated management of meaning (CMM) (Pearce and Pearce, 2000). This further illustrates the integral role that bystanders play not only in labeling, but also in reconciling, workplace harassment, especially when previous research shows a tendency on the part of bystanders to rate women who report sexual harassment more negatively (e.g., Sbraga and O'Donohue, 2000). Conversely, O'Leary-Kelly, Tiedt, and Bowes-Sperry (2004) also caution against bystander judgment concerning delayed response on the part of the victim, and indeed bystanders may slip into a *pluralistic ignorance* in which perceptions of inaction from either the target or other bystanders influences their own inaction concerning a harassing event. Furthermore, perhaps due to a combination of workplace norms and organizational culture, bystanders may see themselves as having a limited role in intervening in harassment (i.e., they do not want to be labeled as a meddler) and may wish to avoid making more trouble for the target, even if the event in question is indeed correctly labeled as sexual harassment.

ORGANIZATIONAL INTERVENTIONS

Including bystander harassment in the conceptualization of workplace sexual harassment is critical when considering realistic solutions for addressing the occurrence of sexual harassment in organizations. As discussed earlier, the presence of sexual harassment in the workplace environment negatively affects the well-being and productivity of witnessing employees by altering the larger organizational climate within which it occurs. Bystander dynamics also change the way in which targets respond to sexual harassment by shaping perceptions of organizational fairness. Finally, bystanders play a large role in how occurrences of sexual harassment are perceived at the organizational level, and thus in how such occurrences are handled and reported. Clearly, bystanders need to be acknowledged when addressing sexual harassment in organizations.

Although bystanders are often overlooked in sexual harassment training, Bowes-Sperry and O'Leary-Kelly (2005) explicitly included bystanders as a resource for reducing sexual harassment in organizations. They proposed a type of intervention which not only addressed the non-targeted bystander, but also suggested that such individuals may be instrumental in preventing or reducing sexually harassing behaviors, particularly given that relying solely on active coping responses made by the victim can be detrimental (Fitzgerald, Swan, and Fischer, 1995). By showcasing the complex response patterns of victims and explaining reasons why those who are sexually harassed may not exhibit assertive coping response styles (Fitzgerald, Swan, and Fischer, 1995), training could focus on creating collective responsibility for reporting incidents of sexual harassment (Gilson, Fedor, and Roth, 2005). In other words, transitioning from a "how should *you* respond" to a "how should *we* respond" attitude might significantly enhance sexual harassment awareness training efforts.

Sexual Harassment Training

This brings us to the final major part of our overview: sexual harassment training. Researchers (e.g., Bell, Quick, and Cycyota, 2002; Williams, Fitzgerald, and Drasgow, 1999) recommend that organizations be proactive in their efforts to minimize the occurrence of sexually harassing behavior, largely as a way of minimizing liability. Specifically, employers in the US can be held liable for harassment in a number of situations. Strict liability applies for harassment committed by an owner or high-ranking officer in a company and for harassment committed by an individual with supervisory authority if it results in a tangible employment action being taken against a subordinate employee. Automatic liability applies for all other forms of supervisory harassment, but employers have the opportunity to prove a two-prong affirmative defense, which may lead them to avoid liability or damages. That defense requires employers to show that they took reasonable measures to prevent and correct harassment and that the victim failed to make use of corrective opportunities. Finally, employers can be held liable for co-worker or third-party harassment under a negligence standard, which asks whether the employer knew and failed to respond to harassment.

Taken together, these standards mean that employers can reduce their exposure to liability by undertaking prophylactic measures. Case law interpreting the affirmative defense, in particular, has cemented the importance of these measures for employers. In both the US and the UK, formal, written, anti-harassment policies are virtually mandatory—from the litigation-avoidance standpoint—as are the establishment of usable internal grievance procedures. In the US, survey data suggest that almost all employers above a certain size have *legally* sufficient policies and procedures in place.

US case law also shows that courts value training when making assessments about the good-faith efforts of employers to prevent harassment and encourage complaints, or when considering their relatively culpability in permitting harassment to occur (cf., Bisom-Rapp, 2001; Grossman, 2003). Training is not mandatory, however, under any of the federal standards of liability; no employer has ever failed to succeed on the affirmative defense or failed to refute an allegation of negligence solely because it failed to offer anti-harassment training. Yet courts talk approvingly of employers' efforts to train their employees, particularly those with supervisory authority, about the problem of harassment and the available internal grievance procedures to redress it. (Several US states do require at least some employers to offer anti-harassment training.) And, regardless of the applicable case law, human resource professionals tout both the necessity and effectiveness of training, and urge employers of all sizes to offer or require it. There are countless consultants that offer training and a seemingly endless of assortment of training products—videos, computer-based training programs, books, pamphlets, and so on—for employers to buy. Sexual harassment training is sufficiently part of US culture to be satirized in *New Yorker* cartoons and be mentioned on prime-time television shows.

Despite this apparent "training culture," there is very little information about its usefulness (Fitzgerald and Shullman, 1993; Grundmann, O'Donohue, and Peterson, 1997). This next section will address the growing body of research that has aimed to evaluate the effectiveness of sexual harassment training. Although the vast majority of this research has been conducted with student samples, the research has addressed the effectiveness of sexual harassment training on criteria that include the degree to which training enhances recognition of sexually harassing behaviors, increases knowledge surrounding sexual harassment, changes attitudes about sexual harassment, and minimizes the perpetration and experience of sexual harassment (e.g., Antecol and Cobb-Clark, 2003; Beauvais, 1986; Bingham and Scherer, 2001; Kearney, Rochlen, and King, 2004; Moyer and Nath, 1998; Perry, Kulik, and Schmidtke, 1998; Wilkerson, 1999). This research has begun to address several questions such as: (a) whether sexual harassment is effective; (b) whether sexual harassment training effectiveness varies as a function of trainee individual differences or gender; and (c) why sexual harassment training is or is not effective. As can be seen from this review, far less research has tackled the latter question.

Specifically, in the following sections, we provide a brief review of the sexual harassment training research to date. We organize this review around the various criteria that have been examined, beginning with criteria receiving the most attention (e.g., attitudes toward/tolerance of sexual harassment) and ending with criteria receiving the least attention (e.g., knowledge of sexual harassment). Following the review of the research, we outline areas where additional research is needed.

ATTITUDES TOWARD SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Most sexual harassment training research has focused on the extent to which training affects attitudes toward sexual harassment. The evidence for the effectiveness of such training on attitudes toward sexual harassment is generally positive, although some variability in effects is evident. For example, Antecol and Cobb-Clark (2003) analyzed data from the 1994 US Merit Systems Protection Board survey and found that 50 percent of respondents reported being more sensitive to sexual harassment due to training. Beauvais (1986) studied the effects of sexual harassment training for resident advisors and found some evidence of positive effects of training on attitudes toward sexual harassment. Bonate and Jessell (1996) also found positive effects of training on participants' sensitivity to the negative effects of sexual harassment experiences. Moreover, Lonsway, Cortina, and Magley (2008) observed that students who self-reported having had sexual harassment training endorsed sexual harassment myths to a lesser degree than students who had not received training.

Others have reported mixed or negative training effects, including evidence of backlash toward training for some participants. For example, Perry, Kulik, and Schmidtke (1998) found no effects of training (i.e., watching a 20-minute sexual harassment video) on attitudes in a sample of male students. In a sample of full-time employees, Bingham and Scherer (2001) found that trained employees were more likely than untrained employees to perceive workplace sexual behavior as inappropriate; however, there was no difference between the groups on the perceived harm of such behavior. Further, Robb and Doverspike (2001) found an interaction in their experimental study with male students such that trained participants (i.e., students who had watched a one-hour video on sexual harassment) high in likelihood to sexually harass (LSH—Pryor 1987) reported *greater* acceptance of sexual harassment following training, whereas low LSH trainees had lower acceptance of sexual harassment. Likewise, Kearney et al. (2004) observed a three-way interaction among training, gender role conflict (GRC—O'Neil, Good, and Holmes, 1995), and initial attitudes toward sexual harassment in predicting post-training attitudes. The nature of the interaction suggested backlash toward the training among high GRC men; the relationship between pre- and post-training attitudes was significantly stronger for trained high GRC men compared to trained low GRC men and untrained high/low GRC men. In sum, although some studies suggest positive effects of sexual harassment training on attitudes toward sexual harassment, others indicate that some trainees (e.g., men high in GRC and LSH) may in fact react negatively toward training.

ABILITY TO RECOGNIZE SEXUALLY HARASSING BEHAVIOR

Research has also examined the degree to which sexual harassment training enables trainees to better recognize sexually harassing behavior. This is important because effective training should provide trainees with the ability to better distinguish between appropriate and inappropriate workplace conduct; however, the evidence for effectiveness is mixed. On the positive side, Antecol and Cobb-Clark (2003) generally observed that trained employees were more likely to view sexually harassing behaviors as constituting sexual harassment. Likewise, Kearney, Rochlen, and King (2004) found that trained males had greater awareness of sexually harassing behavior. In addition, Moyer and Nath (1998) found that training eliminated the gap between male and female participants in recognizing sexual harassment. Specifically, untrained females were far better at identifying sexual harassment compared to their male counterparts, but this gender difference was essentially eliminated among trained participants.

These results are not consistent, though, with other research. For example, Blakely, Blakely, and Moorman (1998) found that trained males were able to recognize gender harassment to a greater degree than untrained males, but untrained females felt that more behaviors constituted sexual harassment than trained females. In addition, Bingham and Scherer (2001) found that trained men were *less* likely to view behaviors as sexual harassment relative to untrained men, and Wilkerson (1999) found no effects of having prior sexual harassment training on the ability to recognize sexual harassment in scenarios. Thus, findings pertaining to effects of training on the ability to recognize sexually harassing behavior are equivocal at best.

REPORTING SEXUAL HARASSMENT, PERPETRATION, AND EXPERIENCES

Researchers have studied the impact of sexual harassment training on behavioral criteria, including the extent to which individuals are likely to report sexual harassment, engage in sexually harassing behavior, and experience sexual harassment. With respect to sexual harassment, Gruber and Smith (1995) noted that the majority of women respond with non-assertive techniques such as minimization or avoidance. The current laws regarding sexual harassment reflect the burden that is unduly placed on targets in terms of expectations for how they should cope with their experiences. Specifically, in 1998, the US Supreme Court established the "affirmative defense" to sexual harassment by declaring that organizations would not be liable for sexual harassment claims if the target did not make reasonable attempts to use established organizational complaint procedures (Bergman et al., 2002). However, recent studies have demonstrated that negative outcomes of sexual harassment are often exacerbated by target reporting and that reporting may *not* in fact be a "reasonable" course of action for most targets (Bergman et al., 2002; Gruber and Smith, 1995); this was found to be particularly true for men in a secondary analysis of the US Merit Systems Board data conducted by Stockdale (1998). Assertiveness is generally used when the harassment is severe, when the perpetrator is someone other than the target's supervisor, and when the gender composition of the group is skewed such that the target works in a group of mostly men.

Effects of training on the likelihood of reporting sexual harassment have generally been negative. Bingham and Scherer (2001) found evidence of backlash because trained males were significantly less likely to report sexual harassment than trained females, untrained males, and untrained females. Goldberg (2007) studied effects of conflict avoidance and training on engagement in voice behaviors (e.g., formal reporting, confronting the harasser) and exit behaviors (e.g., quitting, transferring) in sexual harassment scenarios. Goldberg found no main effects of training on reporting gender harassment, and trainees were significantly *less* likely to report confronting the perpetrator in an unwanted sexual attention scenario. Also, conflict avoidance and training interacted such that, among non-avoidant individuals, reporting was higher in the trained group. However, among avoidant individuals the trained group was less likely to report sexual harassment.

Limited experimental research suggests that training may have positive effects by reducing perpetration of sexual harassment. The experimental study by Perry, Kulik, and Schmidtke (1998) is the only one we are aware of that directly tested effects of training on participants' behavior. This study found that high LSH men who received sexual harassment training engaged in fewer sexually harassing behaviors in later interaction with a female confederate compared to high LSH men in the control condition. The extent to which these positive effects persist over time, however, remains unknown.

Despite the positive effects observed by Perry, Kulik, and Schmidtke (1998), large-scale survey research suggests that sexual harassment training may not have a meaningful unique effect in reducing experiences of sexual harassment. Williams, Fitzgerald, and Drasgow (1999) studied dimensions of organizational tolerance for sexual harassment (i.e., implementation practices, provision of resources, provision of training) and their association with the frequency of experiences of sexual harassment in a sample of 22,372 women and 5,924 men in the armed services. Although perceptions of implementation practices were significantly associated with sexual harassment experiences, provision of resources and training were not. In sum, limited evidence suggests that training may reduce sexually harassing behavior among men most likely to harass, but existing survey research indicates that training in and of itself may not lead to fewer experiences of sexual harassment among organizational members.

KNOWLEDGE OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Of the criteria examined in sexual harassment training research, the most consistent effects of training appear to be on trainees' knowledge of sexual harassment. Beauvais (1986) reported some positive increases in knowledge about sexual harassment among trainees using pre- and post-training surveys. Perry, Kulik, and Schmidtke. (1998) also found that the trained high LSH men had greater knowledge about sexual harassment relative to untrained high LSH men. Finally, although Bingham and Scherer (2001) found several unexpected negative effects of sexual harassment training, they did find that trainees had greater knowledge of sexual harassment than individuals who did not receive training. Although the effects of sexual harassment training on knowledge of sexual harassment appear to be positive, this particular criterion has received the least research attention. Consequently, additional work is needed to further support the effects of training on knowledge acquisition.

SUMMARY AND RESEARCH NEEDS

The research reviewed above suggests that evidence for the effectiveness of sexual harassment training depends somewhat on the criterion of interest. Some studies indicate positive effects, whereas others suggest negative effects. Studies have shown that effectiveness varies not only as a function of the criteria under study, but also as a function of trainee individual differences and gender differences. This evidence is useful for understanding which trainees may react positively (and negatively) to training. However, the glaring omission in the sexual harassment training research is the lack of focus on *why* sexual harassment training is or is not effective. Such research could shed some much needed light on why considerable variability in effectiveness has been observed.

One possible reason for the lack of research addressing the "why" question is that the broader literature on training effectiveness has, for the most part, not been integrated into sexual harassment training research. Drawing on this research could help advance our understanding of sexual harassment training effectiveness. Models of training effectiveness emphasize that factors such as trainees' motivation both to learn the content of the training and to transfer the knowledge and skills learned in training when back on the job (i.e., training transfer) have critical influences on the effectiveness of any particular type of training (e.g., Cannon-Bowers et al., 1995; Colquitt, LePine, and Noe, 2000; Mathieu and Martineau, 1997; Noe, 1986). This research also asserts that personal characteristics (e.g., personality, work attitudes) and contextual factors (e.g., organizational climate, situational constraints) have significant influences on trainee motivation. These factors are relevant not only to traditional forms of training related to the development of job-related skills, but also to sexual harassment training. Nonetheless, these important influences on sexual harassment training effectiveness have not been studied, and the personal and contextual factors driving sexual harassment training motivation and effectiveness are largely unknown.

Furthermore, researchers have primarily relied on experimental designs and undergraduate student samples—characteristics which are evident in most of studies reviewed above. Such designs afford great experimental control, which is needed to provide the most rigorous tests of the effects of a particular sexual harassment training method, but they do not easily allow researchers to study training as a process that includes factors affecting employee motivation for sexual harassment training (and motivation to transfer), which could potentially address reasons behind observed inconsistencies in effectiveness. These factors can be more easily studied in samples of employees before and after sexual harassment training. Moreover, findings from such studies would also be more generalizeable to organizational settings. Thus, there is a need to conduct more sexual harassment training research in field settings.

An excellent example of sexual harassment training field research is in the recent dissertation work by Kath (2005). Kath developed and tested a model of sexual harassment training effectiveness in two samples of full-time employees. She found that cynicism about sexual harassment training was (a) an outcome of fairness perceptions with respect to previous organizational change efforts and general cynicism about organizational change, and (b) a significant negative predictor of motivation for sexual harassment training and outcomes, including satisfaction with sexual harassment training. Kath's (2005) research suggests that organizations need to address employees' negative fairness perceptions about previous organizational change efforts or else heightened cynicism and decreased motivation for sexual harassment training will likely result. Such insights provide valuable information for practitioners seeking to implement sexual harassment training within their own organizations. This research is unique in its theoretical and practical contribution, however, and we encourage more research of this nature to enhance our understanding of factors driving the effectiveness of sexual harassment training.

Summary and Conclusions

In general, it is clear that workplace sexual harassment is risky for both individuals and organizations. Although the costs are quite different—individual well-being versus organizational productivity—they obviously are interrelated in that productivity is significantly decreased when individuals are not well. Throughout each of the sections above, we have outlined a number of future directions for research. We briefly summarize them here, as well, in an effort to create additional connections that might not yet be obvious.

First, we concluded that there are considerable opportunities for continued research on the sexual harassment of men. In trying to move past a "one-size-fits-all" model that characterizes the experiences of both men and women, we argue that some experiences might be sufficiently unique to warrant unique theory development of the sexual harassment of men. Such work could assist in the conceptualization of how training can be developed and how harassment prevention can be conducted in an ethical manner. Specifically, we argued that considering the influence of masculine gender role identification on men's experience with sexual harassment might assist in designing training that is proactive and positive, rather than reactive and damning.

Second, we considered the role of bystanders in the meaning-making and reporting processes associated with targets' sexual harassment experiences. Because bystanders experienced quite similar, if not worse, outcomes from witnessing others' mistreatment, we are particularly concerned about how overlooked this group of employees is from an intervention perspective. The stress and coping literature suggests that ambiguous stressors are experienced as more stressful than are very clear stressors. Although it is an empirical question, we can imagine the level of ambiguity involved in witnessing harassment as being quite high. We look forward to researchers developing a greater understanding of bystander harassment and how it intersects with experienced harassment and the organization's attitude toward sexual harassment.

Finally, we presented a review of the sexual harassment training efficacy research. Clearly still in its infancy, research in this area continues to lack any focus on the "gold standard" of training actually reducing sexual harassment incidence, which we find surprising. Perhaps the study designs to adequately capture this phenomenon are simply too difficult to undertake? In addition to an expansion of criteria assessed as indicators of training success, we would like to see greater examination of the *process* by which training is (or is not) effective. Such efforts could guide more careful implementation of sexual harassment training, as well as more thoughtful creation of training materials.

To close, we are impressed with the sophistication with which recent research on sexual harassment has been conducted. We hope that future research will be willing to tackle some of the difficult problems, particularly those associated with examining harassment training efficacy.

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