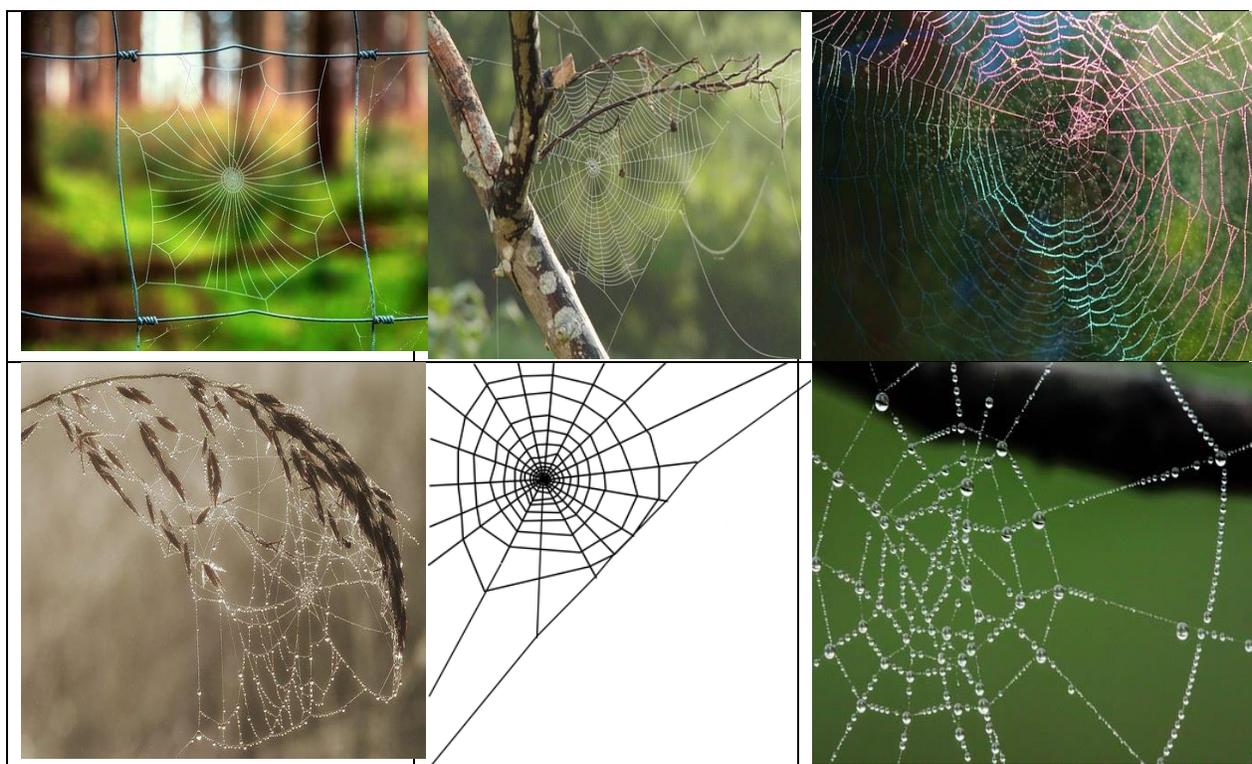


# Power Plays in Sexual Harassment of Women Via Lenses of Moral Typecasting and Discounting: The possibilities of Collaborative Research

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## The Focus Points

- Aren't you curious what is going on and why sexual harassment of women is the problem?
- What are the reasons the harassed do not complain?
- What an ethical perspective has to do with bystander passivity?
- What are the principles of immediate perception of unfairness?
- What TA concepts could provide the basis for researching the problem?
- How would you frame research questions for solving the SH problems?
- What are some examples of collaborative research and could TA community use them?

### Multiple Ways to Discovery of Scientific Proof



## Sexual Harassment

The following definition of sexual harassment is provided by the U. S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission:

It is unlawful to harass a person (an applicant or employee) because of that person's sex. Harassment can include "sexual harassment" or unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical harassment of a sexual nature. Harassment does not have to be of a sexual nature, however, and can include offensive remarks about a person's sex. For example, it is illegal to harass a woman by making offensive comments about women in general... Although the law doesn't prohibit simple teasing, offhand comments, or isolated incidents that are not very serious, harassment is illegal when it is so frequent or severe that it creates a hostile or offensive work environment or when it results in an adverse employment decision (such as the victim being fired or demoted). (USEEOC, n.d., a).

Sexual harassment is the discrimination based on sex that violates Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which applies to all labor organizations and employment agencies, including government organizations in the United States (USEEOC, n.d, b). Sexual harassment could be perpetrated by a man or woman, and individuals in different work positions, directly or indirectly (offended bystander), and when such conduct is unwelcomed (USEEOC, n.d, b). An employee must complain to an employer for appropriate actions to be taken by the employer.

A standard liability principle is applied in cases of a harassment by a supervisor; this means the supervisor/harasser's actions are considered as the actions of the employer and there is no affirmative defense (USEEOC, 2010). One of the problems in reviewing SH complains is determination of the cause why a victim of SH has been demoted or otherwise assigned work changes, because of refusing supervisor's sexual advances or other causes (2010). The standard of liability in cases of harassment by a supervisor when actions against the employer are not taken includes two points: "(1) the employer exercised reasonable care to prevent and correct promptly any harassment; and (2) the employee unreasonably failed to take advantage of any preventative or corrective opportunities provided by the employer or to avoid harm otherwise" (USEEOC, 2010). The reasonable care may include a zero-tolerance training for employees on unlawfulness of sexual harassment (USEEOC, n.d.b).

A "Dear Colleague" letter was addressing SH on college campuses initially while following Title IX and enforcing federal civil rights laws (USDE & USOCR, 2011). However, the letter has been withdrawn in 2017 due to increased pressure on educational institutions and lack of fairness in resolving complains (USDE & USOCR, 2017). Instead, the United States Department of Education (2017) released an interim guidance that emphasized confidentiality of the victims and the necessity for victims to file complaints. The guidance clarified evidentiary standards, prompted educational institutions to designate a Title IX coordinator, and the range of flexibility of developing fair procedures for investigating complaints.

## Research on Prevalence of SH Against Women

### Work Setting

- ✓ Gender-based role carry to the work setting meaning that when women come to a workplace or position, which have been traditionally occupied by men, the situation emphasizes women's sexual availability;
- ✓ Women face sex-based hostility and reduced access to information about advancement at work;
- ✓ SH of women is motivated by "occupational turf protection" (p. 61);
- ✓ 30% of women experienced gender harassment and 15% sexual advance harassment over one year;
- ✓ Women experienced more GH, but not more SAH, in the male-dominated work setting;
- ✓ Men experienced decrease in GH, but no difference with SAH, in work setting dominated by women;
- ✓ 41% of women court employees described at least one instance of GH and 33% reported more than one for the last year in the male-dominated workgroup

(Kabat-Farr & Cortina, 2014).

- ✓ 13, 055 sex-based harassment charges have been filed with the U. S. EEOC in 2018; 15.9% of them have been filed by males

(USEEOC, n.d.)

- 3% of national adults in the U. S. believe their workplaces are sensitive enough to the SH problem;
- 39% (33% women, 45% men) believe the workplaces are too sensitive and 54% (61% women, 46%) are not sensitive enough;
- 30% of population reported being a victim of SH: 48% women and 12% men

(Gallup, 2019).

### Prevalence of SH targeting women, internationally:

The Highest Rate	The lowest Rate
Austria – 81% Luxembourg – 78% Germany – 72% Other – from 72 to 44% U. S. A. – 44%	Denmark – 11% Sweden – 17%  (Hersch, 2015).

## **Educational Setting**

### Qualitative Results:

- Female students in social and natural sciences in academic field experiences reported:
- Crying, being afraid of sleeping, and leaving the site because of systematic prey on women exhibited by a head of the site;
- Feeling weird and very uncomfortable when a field site director pursued a close physical contact often;
- Enduring gender-discriminating comments when they needed to drink or eat;
- Being a target for the “next mistress” (p. 715);
- Being forced to meet their harassers by institutional placements;
- Facing favoritism for male students’ academic advancements

(Nelson, Rutherford, Hinde, & Clancy, 2017)

- Female graduate students are primary targets of vertical SH (by male professors and staff);
- There are serial male harassers in academia; the harassers are typically moved to a different university;
- There is the stereotype that verbal or visual SH by a professor is not SH;
- Graduate students spend a considerable length of time with their professors and depend on them for academic advancement

(Cantalupo & Kidder, 2018).

### Quantitative Results:

- 61.7% female graduate students have been harassed;
- From 38.3% of the female students, 86% of them have been harassed by a male faculty or staff and 29.8% by female staff harassers

(Rosenthal, Smidt, & Freyd, 2016).

- From 64% students who have been experiencing inappropriate sexual comments and jokes at field research sites, female trainees were more frequent targets (Clancy, Nelson, Rutherford, & Hinde, 2014).
- 26% of women and 6% of men trainees experienced sexual assault overall at field sites (Clancy et al., 2014).

## Failure to Address the SH Problem

A sexual harassment (SH) awareness training for employees did not change their myth-based attitudes toward SH but did modestly increase knowledge what constitutes SH (Cheung, Goldberg, King, & Magley, 2018).

- ❖ Motivation to learn did not influence either of the two objectives, myth-based attitudes toward SH or knowledge (2018).
- ❖ Workers' cynicism to organizational change reduced ability to learn about SH but did not affect posttraining myth-based attitudes toward SH (Cheung et al., 2018).
- ❖ After the training on SH, men who conformed to gender stereotypes evaluated women as less considerate and less competent (Tinkler, 2013).
- ❖ Women-conformists evaluated women as more competent and equally considerate; there was no negativity activated toward women, but the evidence of activation of paternalistic stereotypes (2013).
- ❖ After the training on SH, women non-conformists to paternalistic gender stereotypes evaluated women as less competent. The effect was hypothetically attributed to the effect of rejection of the sexual harassment policy training as one of the paternalistic expressions toward women. Evidently, the SH training serves as the reminder about women who complained about SH and, therefore, as the reminder of negative gender stereotypes (Tinkler, 2013).
- ❖ The fear of sanctions for complaining promotes gender stereotypes furthermore and disempowers women. The use of Implicit Association Test (allows omission of conscious control over answers) showed that women in policy condition increased their traditional beliefs about gender norm interactions; there was no gender difference in this outcome (2013).



### Victim's Responses to SH

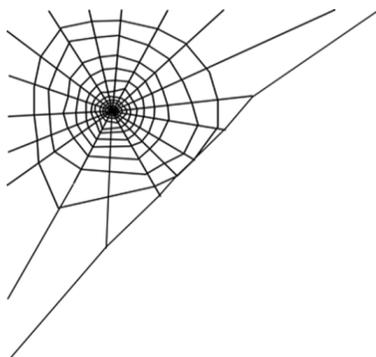
<b>The Two Dimensions</b>	<b>Example the Victim's Response</b>
Self-focus + Self-Response	Avoidance/Denial: The victim ignores the behavior, avoids the perpetrator, blames herself. Frequently used.
Initiator Focus + Self-Response	Confrontation/Negotiation: An assertive request to stop the behavior and threatening the harasser with a complaint or asking to stop. Very rare.
Self-Focus + Supported Response	Social Coping: The victim complains to her friends, seeks their emotional support and protection. Used the most.
Initiator Focus + Supported Response	Advocacy Seeking: Use of organizational support, filing an official complaint or telling a supervisor. Rarely used.

(Knapp, 2016; Knapp, Faley, Ekeberg, & Dubois, 1997).

## Barriers to Reporting SH and Confronting a Harasser

Wasti and Cortina (2002) used the Sexual Experiences Questionnaire (SEQ; Fitzgerald et al., 1988; Fitzgerald, Gelfand, & Drasgow, 1995) with excellent psychometric properties (Arvey & Cavanaugh, 1995; Beere, 1990). The SEQ measures frequency of gender harassment and unwanted sexual attention. The authors (Wasti & Cortina, 2002) the status of the perpetrator (ranging from manager to subordinate) and workplace climate, the strategies that encourage or discourage SH.

- Women reject formal complains due to feeling paternalized (Tinkler, 2013);
- Institutions fail to support women who complained (Clarke, 2014; Madera, 2018; Nelson et al., 2017; Rosenthal, Smidt, & Freyd, 2016; Smith, & Freyd, 2014);
- Colleagues deny social and professional support to victims when they fail to file a formal complaint (Diekmann, Walker, Galinsky, & Tenbrunsel, 2013);
- Their peers see them as impertinent, if they assertively confronted the harasser (Herrera, Herrera, & Expósito, 2014, 2017);
- Social backlash against competent women (Otterbacher, Bates, & Clough, 2017)
- There is lack of social consensus on SH definitions and harm from SH (Klein, Apple, & Kahn, 2011);
- Victims blame themselves (Loughnan, Pina, Vasquez, & Puvia, 2013);
- Harassed women need to focus on the resultant form discrimination health issues (Okechukwu, Souza, Davis, & de Castro, 2014).
- Women peers dehumanize sexually objectified women targets (Puvia & Vaes, 2015).



### **Power Plays in Vertical SH of Women**

Power plays are interactions that manipulate others to do something they did not want to otherwise, or that preclude others from engaging in actions they wanted to pursue (Steiner, 2004, 2009). The expression of power progresses in intensity on the dimension from psychological to physical and on the dimension from subtle to crude and overt.

<b>Dimensions of Power Plays</b>	<b>Examples</b>
Physical + Crude	The most harmful physically and psychologically actions toward a human: severe beating, starvation, sexual assault.
Crude + Psychological	Action that are very harmful psychologically: Obvious discounting, threatening tones, blunt lies, and interrupting.
Psychological + Subtle	Actions that could be portrayed as serving a positive purpose, or harmless: gossip, sarcastic humor, purposeful omission of available and needed information, and
Subtle + Physical	Actions that could be portrayed as harmless but aimed to evoke a secondary gain for the perpetrator at the expense of the victim: invading personal space, manipulating other person to change posture, demonstrating alarming posture, and touching.

Steiner (2004, 2009).

## **Sexual Harassment and Power Plays**

Cortina (EEOC, 2015) emphasized that gender harassment does not target sexual cooperation but meant to be insulting and degrading. Unwanted sexual attention is non-reciprocated sexual comments and sexual touching. Sexual coercion is the offer of work promotion in exchange for sexual favors or the threat of losing a job, if sexual favors were not provided. The organizational characteristics that encourage SH are: skewed gender ratio where majority of workers are male, historically masculine job duties, organizational tolerance to uncivil behavior (EEOC, 2015). Not only direct victims suffer from SH, but witnesses of such behavior suffer too.

According to Steiner (2004, 2009), people use power plays because they believe in scarcity of strokes (units of recognition) and feel they need to use power to get the strokes for themselves. The second reason is that power players feel powerless and have subjective feeling of being restricted in self-determination and competency. Domination of others brings them temporary relief and coercion empowers them. Exercise of power may lead to control of resources (Steiner, 2004). In SH of women, this is the control of traditionally male positions: seen as more competent (Heflick, Goldenberg, Cooper, & Puvia, 2011), expecting women's subordination (Herrera et al., 2014, 2017; Leskinen & Cortina, 2014), stereotypically congruent in traditionally male occupations (Clancy et al., 2014), established in higher social hierarchy (Cantalupo & Kidder, 2018), entitled to higher income (Connor & Fiske, 2018).

## Bystander's Reactions to SH



(Diekmann et al., 2013; Hellemans, Dal Cason, & Casini, 2017).

- Witnesses tend to overestimate how they would respond to SH in similar situation, thinking they would directly confront the harasser or file a formal complaint against a power figure (Diekmann et al., 2013).
- The female witnesses change their negative view of the victim after they come in touch with their own experiences of intimidation (Diekmann et al, 2013).
- Observers of SH may have been the victims of the same harasser (Cantalupo & Kidder, 2014).
- They may affect the workplace in the way that is consistent with women workers (Kossek, Su, & Wu (2017), and support the victim in filing official complaint (Clarke, 2014).

## Tricks of Moral Perception

Witnesses of SH have to notice that something unfair and harmful is going on (Bowes-Sperry & O'Leary-Kelly, 2005; Bowes-Sperry & Powell, 1999). Before deciding whether they want to intervene, they have to sense moral intensity of the situation. A preliminary finding is that observers of SH differentiate gradations of harm in situations that are non-SH, verbal SH and slight touching, and those similar to sexual assault (Heretick & Learn, 2019, in progress).

## Moral Typecasting

Moral typecasting (Gray & Wegner, 2009; Gray, Schein, & Ward, 2014) is a quick intuitive appraisal of the two people involved in morally charged situation. The dyadic comparison occurs automatically across moral domains, when the actor and the target are both present, or when one of them absent via understanding of existing or future harm. If one person in the dyad is perceived as causing harm, the other would be perceived as the victim who deserves compassion. Moral agent is blame-worthy and praiseworthy (is benefited the recipient) and capable of actions while moral patient is seen in the experiential dimension, capable of feeling pain and pleasure (Gray & Wegner, 2009).

## Moral Typecasting

### Moral Agency



- Responsible for harm
- Blame- and praiseworthy
- Intentional

### Moral Patiency

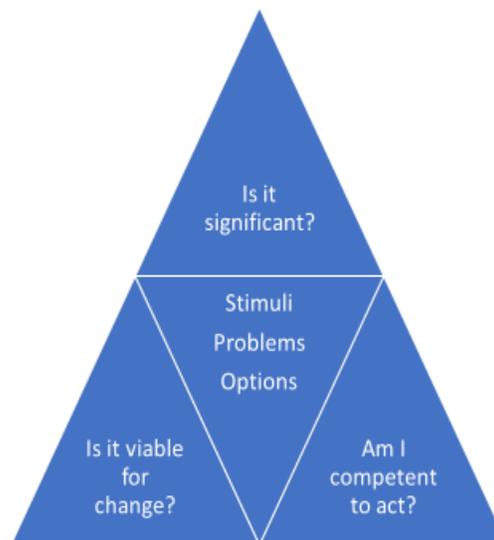


- Sensitive to pain and pleasure
- Deserves compassion
- Has rights for justice

## Discounting a Problem and Personal Abilities

Discounting is the process of devaluation of self, others, and/or the situation (Stewart & Joines, 1996). The process of devaluation of either area listed above could concern particular stimulus (action or state), option, or a problem. Noticing morally charged event is the opposite of discounting the stimulus; seeing harm from unfairness is opposite of discounting that there is a problem. In morally charged situations, harm to something or someone is occurring or could occur (Gray & Wegner, 2009; Gray, Schein, & Ward, 2014). There is also different levels of significance of each area of discounting: situation, others, or self (Stewart & Joines, 1996).

## Discounting



The concept of Discounting could applied to many social and psychological problems.

## **Collaboration in Research**

Research in social sciences is a very useful activity in recognizing that problems exist and in solving them. Moral perception requires to, first, recognize that SH is a problem (Bowes-Sperry & O'Leary-Kelly, 2005):

There are options given by EEOC and institutional policies that are not used. The tentative answers provided by research are: (a) witnesses doubt that appropriate actions would take place in the face of official complaint (Clarke, 2014; Madera, 2018; Nelson et al., 2017; Rosenthal, Smidt, & Freyd, 2016; Smith, & Freyd, 2014); (b) witnesses are not sure that SH is significant problem or a norm; (c) witnesses lack knowledge and skills to produce effective actions (Brinkman, Dean, Simpson, McGinley, & Rosén, 2015). The cost-effectiveness of bystander's actions is the decision on viability of change.

### **Examples of Collaborative Research**

<https://leibniz-psychology.org/en/research/big-data/>

<https://www.apa.org/research/responsible/collaborate/>

<https://us.sagepub.com/en-us/nam/doing-collaborative-research-in-psychology/book235071>

<https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/ulterior-motives/201709/using-big-data-study-psychology>

<https://www.nutonian.com/research/psychology/>

[https://www.researchgate.net/publication/311449807\\_Big\\_Data\\_in\\_Psychology\\_Introduction\\_to\\_the\\_Special\\_Issue](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/311449807_Big_Data_in_Psychology_Introduction_to_the_Special_Issue)

<https://ocean.sagepub.com/blog/2018-concept-grant-winners-an-interview-with-minivan>

## Free Child Play, Curiosity, and Research

Share the Summary of Our Research in Small Groups

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