

Title: How do individual and parental work centrality attitudes and social support impact young adults' perceptions of sexual harassment at work?

Abstract: The purpose of the study is to examine how young adults perceive sexually harassing behaviors at work. I examine how these perceptions about sexual harassment are influenced by one's individual work centrality beliefs, parent's work centrality beliefs, and parental social support. To analyze these perceptions multiple regression will be used.

Summary of the Project:

Many individuals experience sexual harassment for the first time as a high school student at their first part time job and do not realize they were harassed until later in life. From these

experiences, individuals have begun to recall previous experiences as sexually harassing. The #metoo movement has spurred women and men to come forward with their stories and claims of sexual harassment. Young adults have experienced sexual harassment in a variety of settings. These may include school, work, or even on the street. Around 51% of women and 53% of men had experienced some form of unwanted sexually charged interaction in public places, like cat-calling, *by the age of 17* (Kearl, 2014).

Given these issues, the purpose of the present research is to examine whether young adults perceive potentially sexually harassing behavior as harassment or not. I propose to examine the importance of work to one's identity (i.e., work centrality), the perceived importance of work to one's parents' identity (i.e., parental work centrality), and social support as potential factors that may influence whether a behavior is viewed as sexually harassing or not. Specifically, I am posing the following research questions:

- Research question 1. Will young adults who have strong work centrality beliefs be less likely to perceive workplace sexual harassment?
- Research question 2. Will young adult's perception of their parent's work centrality beliefs influence their perceptions of sexual harassment?
- Research question 3. Are young adults with strong parental support more likely to perceive experiences as sexual harassment?

Methods

Participants

A total of 200 undergraduate students ranging from 18-23 years old will be recruited from general psychology courses at Middle Tennessee State University (MTSU) through SONA systems.

Procedures

Participants will be asked to complete a series of questions to assess their own work centrality beliefs, their parents' work centrality beliefs, and their social support. Next, participants will be instructed to rate the degree to which they believed a behavior is sexually harassing. A follow-up question will be asked to see whether the participant has personally experienced that behavior at work. Then participants will be prompted to rate the degree to which they believed a behavior was bullying. The same follow-up questions will be asked as mentioned above. Demographic information will be collected at the end of the survey.

Measures

In order to measure work centrality beliefs, Hirschfeld & Field's (2000) 12-item work centrality scale will be used. This scale has a coefficient alpha of .76. Items will be rated using a 6-point Likert scale (1 = *strongly disagree*, 6 = *strongly agree*).

In order to measure parental social support the Family Support Inventory for Workers (FSIW) scale will be used. The FSIW was developed to measure perceived family social support provided to workers (King, L.A., Mattimore, L. K., King, D. W., & Adams, G.A., 1995).

Lastly, perceptions of sexual harassment will be measured using the Sexual Experiences Questionnaire (SEQ) (Fitzgerald et al. 1999).

Results

In order to assess the research questions, a series of hierarchical regressions will be conducted.

References

Fitzgerald, L. F., Magley, V. J., Drasgow, F., & Waldo, C. R. (1999). Measuring sexual

harassment in the military: The Sexual Experiences Questionnaire (SEQ-DoD). *Military Psychology*, 11(3), 243-263.

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Kearl, H. (2014). Unsafe and Harassed in Public Spaces: A National Street Harassment Report (Rep.).

King, L. A., Mattimore, L. K., King, D. W., & Adams, G. A. (1995). Family support inventory for workers: A new measure of perceived social support from family members. *Journal of organizational behavior*, 16, 235-258.