

# Organizational Justice and Men's Likelihood to Sexually Harass: The Moderating Role of Sexism and Personality

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This study demonstrated relations between men's perceptions of organizational justice and increased sexual harassment proclivities. Respondents reported higher likelihood to sexually harass under conditions of low interactional justice, suggesting that sexual harassment likelihood may increase as a response to perceived injustice. Moreover, the relation between justice and sexual harassment proclivities was especially marked for men low in agreeableness and high in hostile sexism. This finding is consistent with an interactionist perspective, suggesting that individual differences in hostility in general and toward women in particular affect how a person reacts to perceived unfairness.

*Keywords:* sexual harassment, organizational justice, personality, sexism, workplace deviance

Male sexual harassment (SH) of women at work is widespread (Gruber, 1997). It is one of the most common forms of aggression at work and encompasses a wide range of behaviors, ranging from telling sexist jokes to putting pressure on someone to elicit sexual favors. Despite a growing body of literature on workplace SH, knowledge about SH from the actor's perspective is still scarce (O'Leary-Kelly, Paetzold, & Griffin, 2000). Most research has focused on prevalence, on targets' reactions and perceptions, and on prevention. Little is known about why and when actors engage in harassing behavior. Pryor and colleagues (Pryor, 1987; Pryor, LaVite, & Stoller, 1993) have proposed a Person  $\times$  Situation model for explanation of sexually harassing behavior from the actor's perspective. Similar models have been proposed to explain workplace deviant or counterproductive behaviors (Bennett & Robinson, 2003; Spector & Fox, 2005).

We adopted this perspective in our study to explain men's likelihood to sexually harass women at work, as measured by the Likelihood to Sexually Harass (LSH) Scale (Pryor, 1998). We examined the joint influence of personal and organizational variables and thus responded to the repeated calls for studies that integrate person and organization factors as antecedents of deviance (Berry, Ones, & Sackett, 2007). For organizational predictors of SH likelihood, we focused on organizational justice perceptions. Organizational justice is a promising construct for understanding workplace deviance. Perceptions of unfairness in the organization

often precede acts of deviance, and this fact suggests that employees may attempt to "get even" by behaving in a norm-violating, aggressive manner (Greenberg & Alge, 1998). Negative feelings, such as hostility and anger, are a vital part of reactions to perceived unfairness (Folger & Cropanzano, 2001). Therefore, personality differences related to the experience and expression of negative feelings may influence the emotional and behavioral reactions of people when they feel unfairly treated (Spector & Fox, 2005). We focused on individual differences in control and expression of hostility in general and toward women in particular, and we hypothesized that these differences moderate the relation between perceived justice and SH likelihood.

The paucity of research on SH from the actor's perspective is probably due to the difficulties in obtaining appropriate samples of actual sexual harassers (Conlon, Meyer, & Nowakowski, 2005; Pryor, Giedd, & Williams, 1995). Consequently, research has relied either on men's self-reports of past SH behaviors (e.g., Dekker & Barling, 1998) or on SH likelihood as measured by the LSH scale (e.g., Dall'Ara & Maass, 1999). We adopted the latter approach because SH likelihood is strongly related to actual SH behaviors. It correlates with self-reports of past SH behaviors (Barak & Kaplan, 1996) and predicts SH behaviors in laboratory settings, such as sexualized behavior toward female job applicants (Rudman & Borgida, 1995) or sexual touching of female confederates (Perry, Kulik, & Schmidtke, 1998; Pryor et al., 1993).

## Organizational Justice Perceptions and SH

How are perceptions of organizational justice and SH likelihood related? Models linking justice with deviance suggest that perceived unfairness evokes feelings of resentment, anger, or hostility that may motivate employees to engage in antinormative acts in order to redress justice and reduce negative emotions (Greenberg, 1990; Greenberg & Alge, 1998; Skarlicki & Folger, 1997). Thus, deviant acts prompted by injustice serve both instrumental motives (e.g., restore justice, redistribute desired resources, improve the situation) and expressive motives (e.g., vent and express negative feelings; Neuman & Baron, 2005; Robinson & Bennett, 1997).

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Similarly, although research has not examined whether injustice may prompt SH, an employee who feels unfairly treated may want to engage in SH for instrumental motives, expressive motives, or both. SH may serve instrumental motives, if the actor, following unfair treatment, desires to punish someone for the injustice and, thus, to exact retribution through SH (O'Leary-Kelly et al., 2000). Moreover, unfair treatment may be perceived as an insult and a threat to social status. Thus, SH may be motivated by a desire to protect and restore social status (Berdahl, 2007; Maass, Cadinu, Guarnieri, & Grasselli, 2003). In both cases, SH can be seen as an attempt to restore justice or to reestablish a valued social condition (e.g., by putting a colleague "in her place" through harassment). At the same time, SH may serve expressive motives and may reflect attempts to vent or reduce negative emotions that were triggered by the unfair treatment (Berkowitz, 1993). Because negative emotions are central reactions to unfairness (Folger & Cropanzano, 2001), expressive and instrumental motives are closely intertwined.

We expected different components of organizational justice to relate differentially to SH likelihood, because the source of the perceived unfairness may determine the target and the severity of the aggressive act. Organizational justice can be decomposed into structural (distributive and procedural justice) and social (interactional justice) components, on the basis of their main determinants (see Ambrose, Seabright, & Schminke, 2002). Distributive justice is the perceived fairness of outcomes. Procedural justice is the perceived fairness of the organizational procedures used to make outcome decisions. Both forms of justice are determined by the organizational system (i.e., they are structurally determined). Interactional justice concerns perceptions of the fairness of interpersonal treatment during the enactment of a procedure. Therefore, it is largely determined by how supervisors interact with employees.

Because responses to violations of justice are likely to correspond to the specific justice component, that component may determine the target of the deviant act (Ambrose et al., 2002; Cohen-Charash & Spector, 2001; O'Leary-Kelly, Griffin, & Glew, 1996). When injustice is structural, deviant acts should be directed against the organization (organizational deviance). When injustice is social, acts should be directed against the person enacting the procedure or organizational representatives (interpersonal deviance). Support for this argument comes from Ambrose et al. (2002), who found more sabotage targeted toward individuals following social injustice than structural injustice. The opposite pattern was found for sabotage targeting the organization. A recent meta-analysis confirmed that interactional justice is a stronger predictor of interpersonal deviance than of procedural or distributive justice (Berry et al., 2007).

Justice components may also relate to the severity of the act (Ambrose et al., 2002). This conjecture is supported by the observation that interpersonal concerns are more crucial to employees when they evaluate fairness rather than aspects of procedural and distributive justice (Mikula, Petri, & Tanzer, 1990; Skarlicki & Folger, 1997). Moreover, violations of interactional justice provoke strong emotional reactions that are often hostile in nature (Bies, 2001; Judge, Scott, & Ilies, 2006). As a consequence, the likelihood of severe acts of interpersonal deviance may increase.

These arguments suggest that SH likelihood is most strongly related to perceptions of interactional justice. At first glance, they also suggest that SH likelihood should target the source of the injustice (i.e., the supervisor). However, an employee is unlikely to

sexually harass his own supervisor, given his fear of the consequences (O'Leary-Kelly et al., 2000). Indeed, aggression is not always targeted toward the object that caused the frustration; it may target any object that is perceived to be suitable and convenient (Berkowitz, 1993). For a male employee, a female colleague or subordinate may appear to be a more suitable and opportune target than his own supervisor because a colleague seems less socially powerful (O'Leary-Kelly et al., 2000).

We expected SH likelihood to be related to structural justice perceptions as well. When they face structural injustice, individuals may blame other people rather than the organizational structure; this tendency would make interpersonal aggression more likely as a response (Aquino, Lewis, & Bradfield, 1999). This argument suggests that the relation between structural justice perceptions and SH likelihood may further depend on individual differences (e.g., the extent to which a person tends to hold others responsible when he or she perceives structural injustice). Thus, relations between structural justice perceptions and SH likelihood should be weaker than relations between social justice perceptions and SH likelihood. Meta-analytical evidence has shown that, indeed, the effects of distributive or procedural justice on interpersonal deviance are weaker than are those of interactional justice (Berry et al., 2007).

The arguments presented above led us to hypothesize as follows:

*Hypothesis 1:* SH likelihood is negatively related to perceptions of interactional justice (1a), of procedural justice (1b), and of distributive justice (1c). SH likelihood is more strongly related to perceptions of interactional justice than to perceptions of procedural or of distributive justice (1d).

### Moderating Effects of Personality

We assumed that person and situation factors interact to predict SH: Personality factors may influence the degree to which justice perceptions give rise to SH likelihood. As outlined above, we based our expectations regarding the relation between justice perceptions and SH likelihood on models holding that perceived unfairness evokes negative emotions that may motivate employees to engage in deviant behaviors, such as SH. If negative emotions are indeed an important path between unfairness and SH likelihood, personality factors that amplify or reduce these emotions or affect ways of coping with them should moderate the relation between justice and SH likelihood. We focused on individual differences related to hostility in general and hostility toward women in particular, because hostility is a frequent emotional reaction to unfairness (Judge et al., 2006) that is related to aggression in general and SH in particular (Bettencourt, Talley, Benjamin, & Valentine, 2006; Dekker & Barling, 1998).

We investigated the role of three of the Big Five personality traits: agreeableness, conscientiousness, and neuroticism. All three are concerned with impulse control and control of hostility and aggression, forming the so-called factor alpha (Digman, 1997). Moreover, all three traits are related to interpersonal workplace deviance (Berry et al., 2007). Agreeableness describes the extent to which people are oriented toward interpersonal relationships and the needs of others. Example facets are altruism, empathy, and tender mindedness. Agreeable individuals possess efficient skills for defusing anger and aggression (Meier, Robinson, &

Wilkowski, 2006). Disagreeable individuals tend to be arrogant, hostile, and vengeful. Moreover, they have a low regard for members of disfavored groups: Low agreeableness is related to prejudice, including sexism (Ekehammar & Akrami, 2007). These characteristics suggest that men low in agreeableness react more negatively to injustice than do men high in agreeableness. Moreover, they may lack efficient skills with which to cope with negative feelings triggered by injustice. Indeed, Skarlicki, Folger, and Tesluk (1999) found that the combination of low interactional and low distributive justice was more likely to prompt retaliation at work in individuals who are low in agreeableness and high in negative affectivity. Finally, because of their sexist attitudes, men low in agreeableness may be more likely to turn against women as targets for subsequent aggressive acts and to have a higher behavioral readiness to engage in SH.

*Hypothesis 2:* Agreeableness moderates the justice perceptions–SH likelihood relation, such that relations between SH likelihood and perceptions of interactional justice (2a), of procedural justice (2b), and of distributive justice (2c) will be stronger (more negative) for men low in agreeableness.

Neuroticism describes the tendency to frequently experience negative affectivity and psychological distress. Example facets are anxiety, hostility, impulsiveness, and vulnerability. Individuals high in neuroticism tend to be tense, irritable, and self-conscious, and this behavior pattern suggests that they react to injustice with frequent and strong negative emotions (e.g., hostility). Conscientiousness describes the extent to which a person is responsible, dutiful, self-controlled, and achievement oriented. High conscientiousness implies the ability to control emotions and behavior. Thus, individuals high in conscientiousness have greater control over negative emotions, such as hostility, and are less likely to react with aggression when they feel they have been treated unfairly. Indeed, highly conscientious persons tend to refrain from any kind of deviant behavior (Salgado, 2002). Taken together, these considerations suggest that men high in neuroticism and men low in conscientiousness may react negatively to unfair treatment and may not be able to control their actions associated with negative emotions in an appropriate manner. However, neither neuroticism nor conscientiousness is related to prejudice toward women (Ekehammar & Akrami, 2007). Thus, it is questionable whether aggression would express itself in the form of increased SH likelihood or in other forms. Given these considerations, we did not formulate hypotheses but investigated in an explorative fashion whether conscientiousness and neuroticism moderate the relations between justice perceptions and SH likelihood.

Among narrower person variables, hostile sexism was our focus (Glick & Fiske, 1996). Hostile sexism is a component of sexism that refers to sexist antipathy toward women (i.e., the viewing of women as inferior beings who should be dominated). Men high in hostile sexism experience hostility toward women and have largely negative stereotypes of them. Sexism may lead to motives related to SH and implies a behavioral readiness for SH; however, factors within the organizational context determine whether these motives translate into behavior (Fiske & Glick, 1995). We suggest that one element of context may be unfair treatment. When they feel they have been unfairly treated, men high in hostile sexism may be more likely to react with increased SH likelihood, because hostility

and aggression are likely to be directed against women. Supportive evidence for an interaction between hostile sexism and justice comes from Dekker and Barling (1998), who found that only those men who held hostile attitudes toward women reported more SH behaviors when doubting the seriousness of the organization's sanctions in reaction to SH.

*Hypothesis 3:* Hostile sexism moderates the justice perceptions–SH likelihood relation, such that relations of SH likelihood with perceptions of interactional justice (3a), of procedural justice (3b), and of distributive justice (3c) will be stronger (more negative) for men high in hostile sexism.

## Method

### *Participants and Procedure*

Participants were 110 male employees of different companies in Switzerland. The majority (93%) worked full time. The rest worked at least 21 hr per week. Forty-two percent were supervisors. Of those sampled, 36% worked in the technical and information technology sector and 21% worked in industry and construction. The remaining participants worked in sectors such as service, banking, insurance, health, and education. Most participants worked in organizations that had 51–500 (42%) or 501–1,000 (28%) employees. Mean tenure was 12 years.

Seventy-four percent of the participants had completed vocational training, and 21% had a university degree. The following age ranges (in years) were reported: 23% were between 16 and 25, 31% were between 26 and 35, 14% were between 36 and 45, 18% were between 46 and 55, and 13% were between 56 and 65. Two participants did not report their age.

Two student researchers each recruited about 20 men who were currently employed (minimum 21 hr per week) and worked for different companies. They explained that the university was conducting a study on working conditions and work behavior. SH was not mentioned. They explained that they were looking for participants willing to fill out a questionnaire that took 20 min to complete. Questionnaires could be filled out at home and mailed back to the university. Furthermore, they explained that participation was completely anonymous and that responses would be analyzed by the university only at the aggregate level. Participants were asked fill out the questionnaires themselves and to distribute three questionnaires to individuals who were acquainted with them and who were employed (fulfilling the criteria above). There was no compensation for participation. Participants received four sealed envelopes (one for themselves, three to pass on); each contained a letter with the instructions, the questionnaire, and a prepaid return envelope addressed to the university. Of the 141 questionnaires distributed, 110 were returned (response rate = 78%).

### *Measures*

Reliabilities of all measures are reported in Table 1.

*Organizational justice.* We measured distributive and interactional justice perceptions using the two scales developed by Niehoff and Moorman (1993). The Distributive Justice Scale contains five items (e.g., "I consider my workload to be quite fair") and the Interactional Justice Scale contains nine items (e.g., "When deci-

Table 1  
*Descriptive Statistics and Intercorrelations Among Study Variables*

Variable	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1. Distributive justice	4.87	0.87	(.69)								
2. Procedural justice	4.89	1.04	.48**	(.96)							
3. Interactional justice	5.06	1.06	.47**	.81**	(.91)						
4. Hostile sexism	3.59	0.70	-.11	-.07	-.06	(.87)					
5. Benevolent sexism	3.52	0.71	-.02	.02	.06	.34**	(.79)				
6. Neuroticism	2.57	0.57	-.08	-.24*	-.23*	.12	.14	(.60)			
7. Agreeableness	4.61	0.59	.05	.27**	.31**	-.14	-.06	-.36**	(.70)		
8. Conscientiousness	4.76	0.81	.17	.14	.19*	.02	-.05	-.42**	.41**	(.81)	
9. LSH	1.36	0.53	-.24*	-.22*	-.28**	.28**	.13	.33**	-.35**	-.26**	(.82)

Note. *N* = 110. Reliabilities (alpha coefficients) are reported in parentheses along the diagonal. LSH = Likelihood to Sexually Harass.  
 \*  $p < .05$  (two-tailed). \*\*  $p < .01$  (two-tailed).

sions are made about my job, my supervisor treats me with respect and dignity"). We used the scale developed by Naumann and Bennett (2000) to measure procedural justice perceptions. The scale contains nine items (e.g., "When decisions concerning me are made, they respect established rules and procedures"). For all scales, responses were indicated on 7-point scales (1 = *do not agree at all* to 7 = *totally agree*).

**Sexism.** We administered the Ambivalent Sexism Inventory, which measures two, positively correlated components of sexism (i.e., hostile and benevolent sexism; Glick & Fiske, 1996). The Hostile Sexism subscale (11 items) reflects sexist antipathy toward women (e.g., "One a woman gets a man to commit to her, she usually tries to put him on a tight leash"). The Benevolent Sexism subscale (11 items) measures a subjectively favorable but sexist attitude offering protection and affection to women in conventional roles (e.g., "Women should be cherished and protected by men"). Ratings are made on 6-point scales (1 = *strongly disagree* to 6 = *strongly agree*). Scores on the two subscales were correlated ( $r = .34, p < .01$ ; see Table 1).

**Personality.** We administered the neuroticism, agreeableness, and conscientiousness scales of a short version of the 45-item bipolar adjective rating originally developed by Ostendorf (1990) and validated by Schallberger and Venetz (1999). Each scale contains six bipolar items. Ratings are made on 6-point scales (1, 6 = *very*, 2, 5 = *quite*, 3, 4 = *rather*).

**Likelihood to sexually harass.** The LSH scale (Pryor, 1998) applies a methodology that has been successfully used in other areas (e.g., in the study of rape proclivities; Bohner et al., 1998; Malamuth, 1981). It contains 10 scenarios in which the protagonist is described as having control over an attractive woman in a professional setting. Respondents are asked to imagine themselves in these situations and to rate on three items, for each situation, the likelihood of their demonstrating certain behaviors, assuming they need not fear any negative consequences. The key item describes an act of quid pro quo SH. The other two items are filler items (see Appendix for an example). The LSH score is calculated by averaging responses on the key LSH items. All ratings are made on 5-point scales (1 = *not at all likely* to 5 = *very likely*). Note that the scale focuses on quid pro quo SH. This focus limits the influence of individual differences in perceptions of what constitutes SH, because quid pro quo SH or sexual coercion are consensually recognized as SH (Gutck & O'Connor, 1995). The construct

and predictive validity of the LSH scale have been widely demonstrated (see Pryor, 1998; Pryor et al., 1995).

For the purpose of the present study, we constructed a short version by choosing 5 out of the 10 scenarios. We excluded 1 scenario that did not refer to workplace SH but to SH among college students and 4 scenarios that seemed less appropriate for the Swiss cultural context. For example, in 1 scenario we excluded, the participant has to take on the role of a Hollywood film director who is casting an actress for a role in a film. Previous studies have used a reduced version of the LSH scale and have found good reliability and both construct and predictive validity (Dall'Ara & Maass, 1999; Pryor & Meyers, 2000). We found a Cronbach's alpha of .82 across the scenarios we used. Because power differences can be an important element of SH (Berdahl, 2007), we calculated reliabilities separately for supervisors ( $\alpha = .93$ ) and employees ( $\alpha = .80$ ). Further, we performed a principal-components analysis that extracted one factor (eigenvalue = 2.97) and thereby accounted for 59.3% of the variance. Factor loadings of the five scenarios ranged from .65 to .86. The mean interscenario correlation was .49. These results are similar to those reported in Pryor (1987) for the long version of the LSH.

**Control variables.** We included age and supervisor status as control variables. Age was included because deviant behaviors in general (including aggressive behaviors) are more frequent in young adults than in older persons (Osgood, Johnston, O'Malley, & Bachman, 1988). It was assessed by six age categories, each spanning 10 years (1 = *16 to 25 years*, 2 = *26 to 35 years*, 3 = *36 to 45 years*, 4 = *46 to 55 years*, 5 = *56 to 65 years*, 6 = *above 65*). Supervisor status was included because supervisors are in a position of power over subordinates and this condition may increase the likelihood of sexually harassment (Berdahl, 2007). On the other hand, supervisors may be more aware of their role model function and of organizational rules; this possibility suggests lower SH likelihoods. Supervisor position was coded as 1 = supervisor and 2 = nonsupervisor.

## Results

We used two moderated hierarchical regression analyses to test our hypotheses. Regression 1 tested the main effects of justice perceptions (Hypotheses 1a, 1b, and 1c) on LSH, the moderator effects of agreeableness (Hypotheses 2a, 2b, and 2c), and, in an

explorative fashion, the moderator effects of neuroticism and conscientiousness. Regression 2 tested the main effects of justice perceptions (Hypotheses 1a, 1b, and 1c) on LSH and the moderator effects of hostile sexism (Hypotheses 3a, 3b, and 3c). For both regressions, we entered the control variables in Step 1 and the three justice perceptions in Step 2. In Step 3 of Regression 1, we entered the three personality factors. In Step 3 of Regression 2, we entered the two forms of sexism. (We included benevolent sexism in the model to control for its influence and to obtain "purer" estimates of the effects of hostile sexism; see Glick & Fiske, 1996.) In Step 4, we entered the interaction terms: for Regression 1, interactions between justice and personality; for Regression 2, interactions between justice and sexism. We mean-centered predictor variables before computing the product terms of the interactions.

Table 1 shows means, standard deviations, and correlations among the variables. The following data are noteworthy. LSH correlated negatively with procedural and interactional justice perceptions, positively with hostile sexism, and negatively with agreeableness. LSH also correlated negatively with perceived distributive justice. The distribution of the LSH scores was similar to that in previous studies (Driscoll, Kelly, & Henderson, 1998; Lee, Gizzarone, & Ashton, 2003): Mean scores ranged from 1 to 3.5. Fifty of 110 participants had a score of 1 (the lowest possible score). Mean scores of the remaining 60 respondents varied between 1.16 and 3.5. Responses ranged from *not at all likely* to *very likely* for all but one scenario.

The distribution of LSH was positively skewed. Positively skewed distributions are common in research on SH that uses the LSH, men's self-reports of past SH, or women's self-reported experiences of SH (e.g., Fitzgerald, Drasgow, Hulin, Gelfand, & Magley, 1997). Nevertheless, given the distribution, we could not

assume that basic assumptions of ordinary least squares (OLS) regression were fulfilled. Violations of basic OLS assumptions inflate error variance and reduce power (Wilcox & Keselman, 2004). We thus estimated our models with Stata's robust standard errors, using Huber/White variance estimators (Huber, 1967; White, 1980). In regression with robust standard errors, the estimates of the regression coefficients are identical to the estimates of OLS regression analysis but the standard errors are robust against failure to meet assumptions of OLS regression.

### *Justice Perceptions and Personality Factors*

Table 2 shows the result of the regression that tested the effects of justice perceptions and personality factors on SH likelihood. Supervisor status had a significant effect on LSH: Employees reported higher SH likelihoods than supervisors did. Age had no effect on LSH. Results of Step 2 showed that, consistent with Hypothesis 1a, higher levels of interactional justice were associated with lower LSH. Contrary to our expectations (Hypotheses 1b, 1c), perceived procedural and distributive justice had no effect on LSH. Following Hypothesis 1d, we tested whether the effect of perceived interactional justice on LSH was equivalent to the effects of perceived procedural and distributive justice. A Wald post-estimation test indicated that the effect of interactional justice on LSH was stronger than that of procedural justice,  $F(1, 90) = 43.78, p = .06$ , but did not differ from that of distributive justice,  $F(1, 90) = 0.09, ns$ . Thus, Hypothesis 1d was partially supported.

Results in Step 3 show that higher levels of agreeableness were related to lower levels of LSH. Neither neuroticism nor conscientiousness was related to LSH. Results of Step 4 revealed a significant interaction between interactional justice perceptions and

Table 2  
*Regression Results for Organizational Justice Perceptions and Personality, Predicting the Likelihood to Sexually Harass*

Variable	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3	Step 4
Age	-.04 (.04)	-.04 (.04)	-.06 (.04)	-.04 (.04)
Supervisor status	.29** (.10)	.30** (.10)	.19 (.10)	.15 (.10)
Distributive justice (DJ)		-.10 (.07)	-.12 (.07)	-.13 (.08)
Procedural justice (PJ)		.13 (.08)	.12 (.08)	.13 (.08)
Interactional justice (IJ)		-.21* (.09)	-.14 (.08)	-.17* (.09)
Neuroticism (N)			.14 (.10)	.13 (.09)
Agreeableness (A)			-.22** (.08)	-.18 (.10)
Conscientiousness (C)			-.03 (.07)	.01 (.08)
DJ × N				.03 (.14)
PJ × N				.16 (.11)
IJ × N				-.06 (.12)
DJ × A				.02 (.14)
PJ × A				-.25 (.13)
IJ × A				.27* (.11)
DJ × C				.06 (.12)
PJ × C				.28 (.15)
IJ × C				-.22 (.13)
R <sup>2</sup>	.09	.20	.30	.35
ΔR <sup>2</sup>	.09**	.11**	.09**	.06
F	6.27**	4.48**	6.04**	4.01**

Note. Unstandardized regression coefficients and robust standard errors (in parentheses) are shown. Changes in R<sup>2</sup> may not equal differences between R<sup>2</sup> values due to rounding. Supervisor status was coded 1 = supervisor, 2 = no supervisor.

\*  $p < .05$ . \*\*  $p < .01$ .

agreeableness. The interaction is depicted in the upper part of Figure 1, following the procedure proposed by Aiken and West (1991). Consistent with Hypothesis 2a, the effect of perceived interactional justice on SH likelihood was stronger for those respondents low in agreeableness ( $-1 SD$  from the mean) than for those high in agreeableness ( $+1 SD$  from the mean). The result was further supported by significance tests for each slope. These indicated that the simple slope for respondents low in agreeableness was negative and significant,  $B = -0.33$ ,  $t(106) = -2.83$ ,  $p < .01$ , whereas the slope for respondents high in agreeableness did not differ from zero,  $B = -0.01$ ,  $t(106) = -0.14$ , *ns*. Hypotheses 2b and 2c were not supported (interactions between agreeableness and procedural or distributive justice). Further, neither neuroticism nor conscientiousness interacted with justice perceptions to predict LSH.

*Justice Perceptions and Sexism*

Table 3 shows the result of the regression that tested the effects of justice perceptions and sexism on LSH. Results for Steps 1 and 2 are identical to those reported above. Moreover, the Wald post-estimation test revealed results similar to those reported above. The effect of perceived interactional justice on LSH was stronger than that of perceived procedural justice,  $F(1, 94) = 4.11$ ,  $p = .05$ , but did not differ from that of perceived distributive justice,  $F(1, 94) = 0.45$ , *ns*. Results in Step 3 shows that higher levels of hostile sexism were related to higher levels of LSH. Results of Step 4 revealed a significant interaction between perceived interactional justice and hostile sexism. Consistent with Hypothesis 3a, the effect of perceived interactional justice on LSH was stronger for those respondents high in hostile sexism,  $B =$

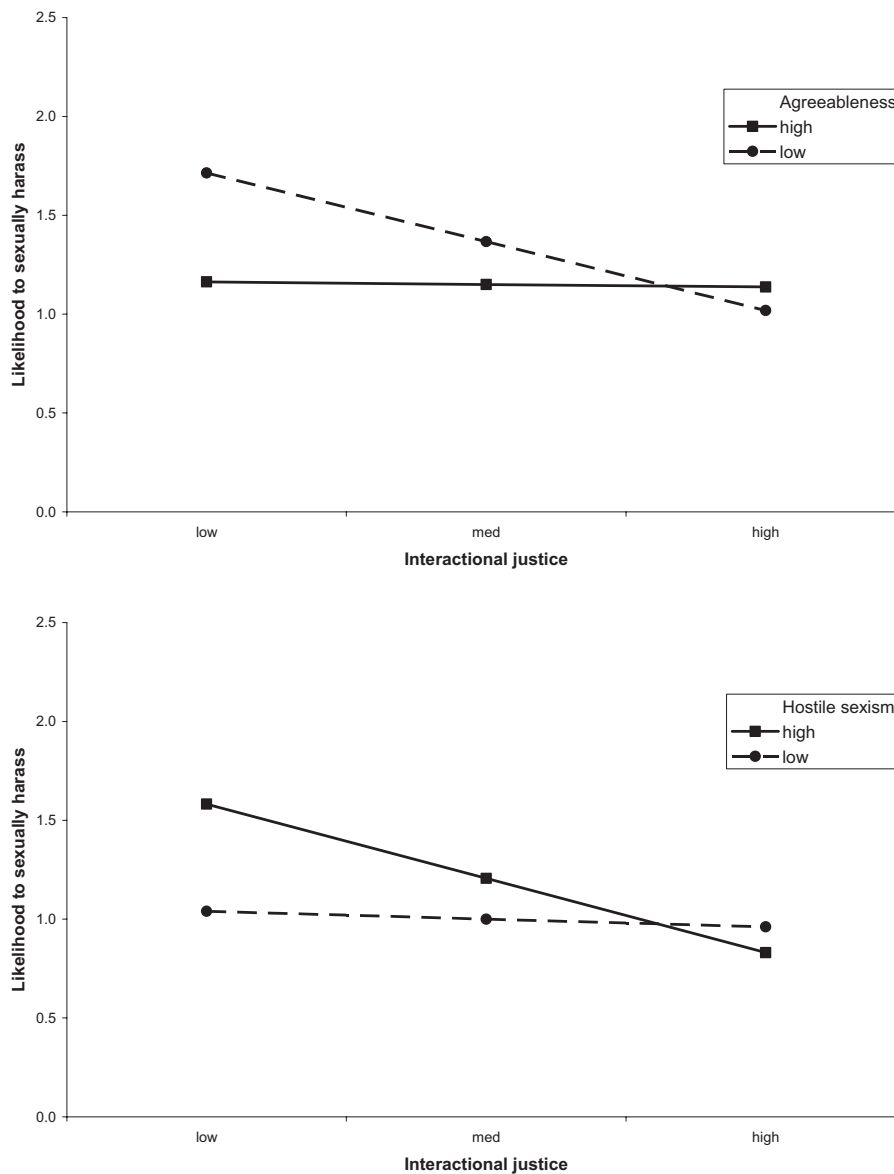


Figure 1. Interactional Justice  $\times$  Agreeableness interaction (upper part) and Interactional Justice  $\times$  Hostile Sexism interaction (lower part), for the likelihood to sexually harass.

Table 3  
*Regression Results for Organizational Justice Perceptions and Sexism, Predicting the Likelihood to Sexually Harass*

Variable	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3	Step 4
Age	-.04 (.04)	-.04 (.04)	-.04 (.04)	-.04 (.03)
Supervisor status	.29** (.10)	.30** (.10)	.26** (.09)	.23* (.09)
Distributive justice (DJ)		-.10 (.07)	-.09 (.07)	-.10 (.08)
Procedural justice (PJ)		.13 (.08)	.13 (.08)	.13 (.09)
Interactional justice (IJ)		-.21* (.09)	-.21* (.09)	-.19* (.09)
Hostile sexism (HS)			.16* (.07)	.15* (.07)
Benevolent sexism (BS)			.04 (.06)	.05 (.06)
DJ × HS				-.13 (.10)
PJ × HS				.21 (.11)
IJ × HS				-.22* (.11)
DJ × BS				-.04 (.07)
PJ × BS				-.03 (.13)
IJ × BS				.09 (.12)
$R^2$	.09	.20	.25	.30
$\Delta R^2$	.09**	.11**	.05*	.05
$F$	6.27**	4.48**	3.66**	4.16**

Note. Unstandardized regression coefficients and robust standard errors (in parentheses) are shown. Changes in  $R^2$  may not equal differences between  $R^2$  values, due to rounding. Supervisor status was coded 1 = supervisor, 2 = no supervisor.

\*  $p < .05$ . \*\*  $p < .01$ .

-0.35,  $t(106) = -2.55$ ,  $p = .01$ , than for those low in hostile sexism,  $B = -0.04$ ,  $t(106) = -0.42$ , *ns* (see lower part of Figure 1). Hypotheses 3b and 3c (interactions between hostile sexism and procedural or distributive justice) were not supported.

### Discussion

This study showed that person and organization factors jointly contribute to determine SH likelihood. First, we argued that SH likelihood may increase following unfair treatment. The negative relation between interactional justice perceptions and SH likelihood that was found supports this notion: Men who felt unfairly and disrespectfully treated by their supervisor expressed greater likelihood to sexually harass. Moreover, SH likelihood was related only to perceptions of social (interactional) justice and was unrelated to perceptions of structural (distributive or procedural) justice. To our knowledge, this is the first study to have tested relations between organizational justice and SH likelihood. Our findings support an organizational justice perspective on deviance: When unfairly treated, employees may “even the score” by engaging in norm-violating, aggressive behaviors. Moreover, our findings support the notion that structural and social components of justice differentially relate to deviant behaviors. Indeed, interpersonal deviance (e.g., SH) may be primarily prompted by social injustice and less so by structural injustice. Moreover, social justice perceptions are crucial to people and create strong emotional responses that may ultimately increase the likelihood of severe aggression (Bies, 2001).

We assumed that personality factors influence the degree to which justice perceptions give rise to SH likelihood. On the basis of the claim that unfairness prompts negative emotions that motivate employees to engage in antinormative acts (e.g., Skarlicki & Folger, 1997), we expected individual differences related to hostility in general and toward women in particular to moderate relations between justice perceptions and SH likelihood. As ex-

pected, the relationship between interactional justice perceptions and SH likelihood was stronger for men low in agreeableness and high in hostile sexism than for men high in agreeableness and low in hostile sexism. This finding supports the argument that low agreeableness and hostile sexism may increase the likelihood of negative emotions and aggressive reactions when a person feels unfairly treated. Those traits may also increase the likelihood that hostile feelings and aggression will be directed against women.

Neuroticism and conscientiousness did not moderate relations between justice perceptions and SH likelihood. Like agreeableness, both traits relate to the control of hostility and aggression. However, they do not entail sexist attitudes, as agreeableness does (Ekehammar & Akrami, 2007). Thus, they may increase the likelihood of aggression following perceived unfairness, but aggression may not necessarily be directed against women.

Results also revealed direct relations between low agreeableness, hostile sexism, and SH likelihood. These relations have been reported in previous research (Begany & Milburn, 2002; Lee et al., 2003). Our results indicate that they may be quite robust, because they persisted after we controlled for the effects of justice. Thus, agreeableness and hostile attitudes toward women may be important personality antecedents of SH likelihood and, possibly, of SH.

Predictors of SH likelihood partly match predictors of other interpersonal deviant behaviors: Interactional justice and agreeableness predict many forms of interpersonal deviance (Berry et al., 2007). This parallel supports current models that highlight similarities between SH and other forms of aggression (O’Leary-Kelly et al., 2000; Robinson & Bennett, 1995). Further support comes from the finding that in victims’ experiences, SH often co-occurs with other forms of interpersonal deviance (Lim & Cortina, 2005). Results of our study that focus on the actor’s perspective suggest the same conclusion.

More generally, the moderating effects we found give insights into the mechanism linking justice and aggression. They point to

the key role of hostility in reactions to perceived unfairness and link justice perceptions and deviance (Judge et al., 2006). Finally, they highlight the importance of considering both personal and contextual factors in explaining deviance in general and SH in particular. Differences in personality imply important differences in affect, cognition, beliefs, and behavioral tendencies and thus influence how an employee may react to unfavorable working conditions, such as unfairness.

### Limitations and Future Research

This research relies on SH likelihood based on cross-sectional, self-report data that came from a single source. This reliance limits the generalizability of our findings. First, single-source methods may inflate relationships between personality, justice perceptions, and SH likelihood because of common method bias. Second, likelihood may not reflect actual behavior. One alternative would have been to measure past SH. In research on workplace deviance, frequency ratings of past behaviors are common. Some studies have included other ratings of deviance to avoid common method variance and usually have shown that self- and other ratings are strongly correlated and have similar antecedents (e.g., Mount, Ilies, & Johnson, 2006). But other ratings are not unproblematic. Most important in the context of this study, they may suffer from “limited observational opportunities” (Mount et al., 2006, p.601). Employees are less likely to exhibit deviant acts, especially severe forms of deviance such as sexual coercion, in the presence of their supervisor or colleagues. Another way to measure SH would have been to observe actual SH behaviors. Obtaining such observations is, however, a difficult undertaking, especially if one is studying workplace SH in employees rather than laboratory SH in students.

The self-report scale used in this study asks respondents to use a particular frame of reference when they are responding (i.e., it assumes that they need not fear any negative consequences of their behavior). One might argue that this framing biases responses (SH is prohibited by law and, thus, sanctioned) and possibly detaches reports of likelihood from actual behavior. The framing, however, makes the socially undesirable nature of SH less salient and thus may limit the influence of social desirability on responses. Indeed, studies (e.g., Begany & Milburn, 2002) have found no or slightly negative relations between LSH and scores on social desirability scales.

Finally and most important, the SH likelihood scale used in this study has been consistently shown to predict actual SH behavior. In the light of the arguments presented above, we believe that the LSH scale is an appropriate proxy measure of SH behaviors in men.

Some of our findings parallel those found for predictors of interpersonal deviance and thus suggest that SH can be conceptualized as a form of interpersonal deviance. Nevertheless, research on SH and research on deviance have remained largely distinct (Willness, Steel, & Lee, 2007), so empirical evidence for a link is still scarce. Moreover, some of our hypotheses were not confirmed. This result may be due to our small sample and resulting low power. Also, the fact that results are based on a convenience sample further limits their generalizability. In future studies, researchers should use a larger, random sample to further explore relations between SH likelihood and different types of deviance (e.g., by studying similarities in underlying mechanisms).

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## Appendix

## Sample Scenario From the Likelihood to Sexually Harass Scale

Imagine that you are a physician. You go over to the hospital one day to make your rounds visiting your patients. In looking over the records of one of your patients, you discover that one of the attending nurses on the previous night shift made an error in administering drugs to your patient. She gave the wrong dosage of a drug. You examine the patient and discover that no harm was actually done. He seems fine. However, you realize that the ramifications of the error could have been catastrophic under other circumstances. You pull the files and find out who made the error. It turns out that a new young nurse named Wendy H. was responsible. You have noticed Wendy in some of your visits to the hospital and have thought of asking her out to dinner. You realize that she could lose her job if you report this incident. How likely are you to do each of the following things?

- a. Would you report Wendy to the hospital?
- b. Assuming that you fear no reprisals, would you tell Wendy in private that you will not report her if she will have sex with you?
- c. Assuming that you fear no reprisals, would you ask Wendy to join you for dinner to discuss the incident?

*Note.* Sample scenario from “The Likelihood to Sexually Harass Scale,” by J. B. Pryor, in *Sexuality-Related Measures: A Compendium* (p. 298), edited by C. M. Davis, W. H. Yarber, R. Bauserman, G. Schreer, and S. L. Davis, 1998, Beverly Hills, CA: Sage. Copyright 1998 by Sage. Participants answer on a scale from 1 (*not at all likely*) to 5 (*very likely*), for each behavior listed under Items a, b, and c. Item b is the LSH item. Items a and c are filler items. The LSH score is calculated by averaging the score for all Item bs, across the scenarios.

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