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The Moderating Effect of Organizational Policies and Procedures in Relation to the Consequences of Sexual Harassment of Women

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THE MODERATING EFFECT OF ORGANIZATIONAL POLICIES AND
PROCEDURES IN RELATION TO THE CONSEQUENCES OF SEXUAL
HARASSMENT OF WOMEN

by

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of Bachelor of Science
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ABSTRACT

Sexual harassment is common in the workplace and leads to negative outcomes for individuals and organizations. Previous research has shown that turnover is a negative outcome of sexual harassment. Organizations can implement policies and procedures, but little research exists examining the impact of these policies on employee perceptions and intentions. Thus, the aim of this study is to examine perceived enforcement of organizational policies and procedures as a moderator of the relationship between sexual harassment and turnover intentions. Social exchange theory is used to explain this concept between women from male-dominated professions and gender-balanced professions. Participants were 66 employed females from different industries. A series of regressions and ANOVAs indicated that sexual harassment and turnover intentions had significant results. Future research directions and limitations are discussed.

Keywords: sexual harassment, social exchange theory, turnover intentions, organizational policies, organizational procedures, male-dominated, gender-neutral

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Table of Contents

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION.....	1
CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW	3
SEXUAL HARASSMENT IN MALE-DOMINATED PROFESSIONS	3
SEXUAL HARASSMENT AND TURNOVER INTENTIONS.....	6
ORGANIZATIONAL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES	7
SOCIAL EXCHANGE THEORY.....	12
CHAPTER 3: METHOD	15
PARTICIPANTS AND PROCEDURE.....	15
MEASURES.....	16
Demographics.....	16
Sexual Harassment.....	16
Organizational Policies and Procedures on Sexual Harassment	16
Turnover Intentions	17
CHAPTER 4: RESULTS	18
CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION	21
FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTIONS AND LIMITATIONS	23
CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSION.....	26
APPENDIX A: DEMOGRAPHIC SCALE	27
APPENDIX B: SEXUAL EXPERIENCES QUESTIONNAIRE SCALE.....	30
APPENDIX C: CHRONIC WORK DISCRIMINATION AND HARASSMENT: ABBREVIATED (CWDH-A) SCALE	32
APPENDIX D: ORGANIZATIONAL TOLERANCE FOR PSYCHOLOGICAL WORKPLACE HARASSMENT (POT) SCALE	34
APPENDIX E: TURNOVER INTENTION SCALE.....	36
APPENDIX F: LIST OF TABLES.....	38
LIST OF REFERENCES	41

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Sexual harassment, a form of discrimination that has become increasingly prevalent in the workplace, has impacts felt beyond just the harassing interaction. The U.S. estimates that the number of women reporting sexual harassment in the workplace ranges from 40% to 75%, whereas men experience 13% to 31% of workplace sexual harassment, which was a 37% increase from 1992 (McDonald, 2012). There have been countless amounts of research done revolving around the organizational climate and the interactions of employees within a work environment. The consequences of a negative organizational climate can have substantial negative effects on both the personal and professional lives of the women in it. One of them being women's experiences with sexual harassment and the unique challenges they face.

To varying extents, all experiences of sexual harassment have negative job-related, psychological, and health consequences. Previous research has demonstrated that direct antecedents to sexual harassment are the organizational climate and job context. Various empirical studies have evaluated the antecedents and consequences of sexual harassment in the workplace and have found it to cause negative effects for employees in the workplace (Fitzgerald & Cortina, 2015; Lengnick-Hall, 1995; Willness et al., 2007). These effects include, but are not limited to depression, absenteeism, and decreased job performance.

This study aims to evaluate the relationship between sexual harassment and one of its effects, intentions of leaving an organization, in male-dominated professions. To moderate this

interaction, the enforcement of organizational policies and procedures will strengthen the relationship between sexual harassment and intentions on leaving an organization. Women from different industries are expected to face varying levels of sexual harassment. Male-dominated industries, where the majority of the employees are males and women are considered the minority, are predicted to have increased levels of sexual harassment incidents. Additionally, it is predicted that women in these industries are less likely to report sexual harassment or to see enforcement of organizational policies regarding the incidents. While on the contrast, more female-dominated or gender-neutral industries can be expected to have fewer incidents of sexual harassment.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

SEXUAL HARASSMENT IN MALE-DOMINATED PROFESSIONS

The legal definition from the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) defines sexual harassment as “unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical contacts when (a) submission to the conduct is either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual’s employment, (b) submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as a basis for employment decisions affecting that individual, and/or (c) such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with work performance, or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment” (Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, 1980). There are two types of sexual harassment that are identified in the definition; quid pro quo sexual harassment and hostile work environment.

Quid pro quo sexual harassment occurs when a perpetrator request some form of sexual activity from the individual in exchange for workplace benefits (e.g., hiring, promotion), usually in the case of someone who is in power, and a hostile work environment occurs when there is no overt attempt to manipulate or threaten the individual but is based on the general behavior of others in the workplace (Jex & Britt, 2014; O’Leary-Kelly et al., 2009). Sexual harassment includes sexual coercion, unwanted sexual attention, and gender harassment, to name a few.

The components under the umbrella of sexual harassment are interrelated and overlap. Unwanted sexual attention includes verbal and nonverbal incidents that are unwelcome or unreciprocated by the victim. Gender harassment is the most common and it refers to offensive, misogynist, or demeaning comments and behavior that is not necessarily intended to cause sexual cooperation, and sexual coercion refers to the victim's job or rewards being dependent on sexual cooperation (Fitzgerald et al., 1997; Wasti et al., 2000). This study focuses on women in various professions, such as in the field of aviation, firefighting, and education, that are either male-dominated, female-dominated, or gender-neutral.

Male-dominated industries are defined as those comprising of at least 70% of men (Hulls et al., 2020; Roche et al., 2016). Previous research has predicted that male-dominated workplaces have higher levels of sexual harassment (Fitzgerald et al., 1997), which supports why women in these occupations tend to experience higher levels of sexual harassment than women in female-traditional positions. Since gender is used in many organizations and society to differentiate between individuals, to define their status, and their roles in an organization, it can be assumed that men are usually given a higher status. This is associated with more control and in male-dominated professions, where the gender ratio is extremely unequal, increasing the risks of women experiencing harmful experiences.

There are low-intensity and high-intensity harmful workplace experiences under the realm of sexual harassment that are significant predictors of well-being and commitment to an organization (Sojo et al., 2016). Low-intensity experiences present a hostile work environment and include sexist discrimination, sexist organizational climates, or gender harassment. High-

intensity experiences present a higher level of threat and can pose immediate harm, which includes sexual coercion and unwanted sexual attention. These intensities will be most relevant in male-dominated industries where women are considered lower in standing and where there is a gender imbalance between males and females.

The most significant antecedent of sexual harassment is the organizational climate that demonstrates a tolerance of sexual harassment in the work environment, and the group's gender ratio (Fitzgerald et al., 1997; O'Leary-Kelly et al., 2009). Essentially this is influenced by the enforcement of organizational policies and procedures. Where a woman works and the environment that she is part of is more significant than what a woman does for a living. The gender predominance of that environment is a predictor of hostile work environments (Gruber, 1998). Having an unproportionate ratio of males to females in a work environment leads to the endorsement of traditional gender norms where there are strong, negative stereotypes about women in that profession, subsequently serving as a limitation, restricting women to roles of less power and control (Yang, 2016). Studies have demonstrated that sexual harassment rarely occurs alone, but that it is experienced along with incivility, which is a result of a work environment of mistreatment (Lim & Cortina, 2005; Willness et al., 2007). Women in these occupations can pose threats to the power held by men and can as a result receive the strongest forms of discrimination, stereotypes, and attitudes which negatively impact women's identity. This brings into question the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis One: Sexual harassment will be more prevalent in male-dominated professions than in gender-balanced professions.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT AND TURNOVER INTENTIONS

These gender-based sexualized harassments are associated with a plethora of negative impacts on the mental and physical health of women. These include job outcomes, such as job satisfaction and withdrawal, psychological outcomes that include stress, anxiety, and depression, and health-related outcomes such as sleep disturbances (Fitzgerald et al., 1997). Women who have moderate to severe experiences of abusive behaviors in the workplace result in a higher occurrence of depressive symptoms, anxiety, and were also related to more injuries (Jahnke et al., 2019). As previous research has found, there has been evidence of impaired concentration, productivity decline, and turnover cognitions (Bowling & Beehr, 2006; Lim & Cortina, 2005). Withdrawal and turnover intentions are a common response to harassment and have been supported as causality in previous research.

Turnover intentions refer to an individual's voluntary plan to leave a job or organization. Sexual harassment incidents have been shown to generate negative impacts on job performance and lead to higher levels of turnover intentions (Fitzgerald et al., 1997; Russo, 2013). Lack of commitment to an organization, which can be caused by harassment faced in the workplace, can be predictive of future intentions to leave. Additionally, job attitudes are strongly predictive of turnover intentions, since it has been found to have negative associations between characteristics of the work environment and commitment (Bentein et al., 2005). Hence, when women face sexual harassment in their work environment, where the relationship between employees and their organization is developed through exchange processes, it will create negative job attitudes

and lead to a lack of commitment. Male-dominated professions are more likely to have physically hostile and intimidating environments and are more likely to view women as sexually objectifying (Gruber, 1998). Thus, the effects of sexual harassment resulted in women spending more time thinking about leaving their current organization than women who had not been harassed. Turnover is also undesirable for organizations because it is demonstrative of an ineffective organization. Thus, when is sexual harassment significantly related to turnover intentions? The following hypothesis was generated:

Hypothesis Two: There will be a positive relationship between sexual harassment and turnover.

ORGANIZATIONAL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

The severity, presence, and frequency of sexual harassment in the workplace are influenced by the extent to which an organization enforces its policies. Women who are in a work environment where they feel unsafe and unprotected by the organization will have negative experiences. The extent to which harassment escalates and continues is influenced by how committed the leaders of the organization implement the policies and tolerate the harassment (Gruber, 1998). In today's age, sexual harassment workshops, policies, and procedures exist in every organization, as required by the law and by standards of human resources (McLaughlin et al., 2012), however, that does not affect the organizational climate if it is not being enforced.

Previous research has demonstrated that familiarizing employees with sexual harassment policies lead to an increase in the awareness of sexual harassment and subsequently a reduction in those behaviors (McCabe & Hardman, 2005). Results from another study revealed that organizations that conducted sexual harassment training had a higher likelihood of labeling sex-related behavior as sexual harassment than organizations without the training, suggesting that organizational policies and procedures influence employees' thought processes around sexual harassment (O'Leary-Kelly et al., 2009). Hence, if employees are aware of the consequences associated with sexual harassment and are assured of the enforcement of said consequences, then there is a decreased likelihood of the behavior occurring.

The leaders of male-dominated professions essentially set the stage for what is expected from their employees and what is considered appropriate in their organization. They influence others and communicate the organizational practices and structures of the work environment. Most importantly, they play a role in the organizational culture, which refers to the collectively held beliefs, values, and assumptions held by the organization's employees (Stamarski & Son Hing, 2015). If sexual harassment is reported and the leaders of the organization fail to demonstrate intolerance, then that sends the message that the harassing behavior is acceptable. It is important that women feel comfortable in their work environment and with their supervisors, such that when they come forward about sexual harassment, they know it will be addressed. Women in a work climate that is unresponsive are more likely to think about leaving the profession and less likely to report when sexual harassment occurs.

According to a study, it was found that about 90% of harassment claims were never formally filed or instigated (Węziak-Białowolska et al., 2020). If women who are being sexually harassed know that filing a complaint will not be taken seriously, then they are less likely to report it. A meta-analysis that reviewed the harmful workplace experiences of women indicated that a work climate that is permissive of sexual harassment could have negative effects on their work attitudes (Sojo et al., 2016a). An organization that conducts training directed towards harassment in the workplace enforces its policies on it, and takes immediate action once it occurs will change the behavior and culture of the organization.

Women who experience sexual harassment in their workplace and do not receive support from their supervisors are more likely to consider leaving the organization. A study that was conducted on women firefighters found that about 32% of women felt as if their supervisors did not address gender-related incidents and more than half of them did not feel that they were treated equally by their male colleagues (Jahnke et al., 2019). How seriously an organization approaches sexual harassment incidents in the workplace will define the likelihood of it continuing. The policies and procedures are only effective to the extent to which they are enforced, and the necessary consequences implemented. However, if an organization fails to follow through with the accusation, then the harassing behavior will continue. A study conducted on women in the military support the belief that an organizational climate influences women's willingness to report sexual harassment and found that a majority of the women studied did not file sexual harassment accounts with the idea that the organization would not do anything about

it (Pershing, 2003). This supports the influence an organization has on its employees and in its culture.

As previously mentioned, one of the outcomes of sexual harassment is turnover intentions. Organizational factors, such as how the supervisors enforce their policies against sexual harassment, influence how satisfied an individual is with their environment and their commitment. When an individual does not receive the support they were expecting, this, in turn, leads to intentions to quit, and possibly turnover (Michaels & Spector, 1982). This is especially true when viewing women from male-dominated professions, who have a higher probability of leaving the organization. To further support this statement, a previous study mentioned that the US Army estimated that turnover accounted for roughly 67% of the combined total annual cost of sexual harassment reported (McDonald, 2012). The alignment between an organization's core values and the workplace behavior of the members is known as values enactment, which has been connected with turnover (Gruys et al., 2008). Individuals who demonstrate high levels of value enactment are less likely to quit because their behaviors align with the values of their organization.

Previous research has shown that not only is it important in maintaining relationships at work, but it also influences the context of those relationships. This comes into effect when analyzing the encounters of sexual harassment. An organization that does not enforce its policies against a hostile work environment would not be enacting their core values. Hence, this would be perceived as a lack of fit between the victim and the organization, which subsequently would lead to intentions to quit. According to Gruys et.al (2008), higher levels of values enactment

from employees lead to reduced voluntary turnover, whereas the individuals who left the organization had low levels of values enactment. In a study regarding female lawyers, the authors determined that women who experienced or observed sexual harassment by their male colleagues and supervisors demonstrated an increased likelihood of turnover intention (Laband & Lentz, 1998). These findings further support the idea that sexual harassment leads to turnover intentions.

For example, women make up a small percentage of employees in the fire service. In this profession, there is a devaluation of females and occupational segregation reflects gender inequality (Russo, 2013). Women report feeling harassed, discriminated, and isolated which have a multitude of effects that range from anxiety, PTSD, depression, substance abuse, and fatigue; the more severe the discrimination, the higher the symptoms (Jahnke et al., 2019). Especially for the careers such as the fire service, where the occurrence of sexual harassment and being in an abusive work environment can have life-threatening effects on the fireground. The resulting factors of these stressors lead to behavioral consequences such as turnover and absenteeism (Hollerbach et al., 2017). Hence, the following hypothesis was generated:

Hypothesis Three: Perceptions of enforcement of organizational policies and procedures will moderate the relationship between sexual harassment and turnover, such that the relationship will be stronger for individuals who perceive low levels of enforcement.

SOCIAL EXCHANGE THEORY

This study draws from social exchange theory to explain the moderating effect that organizational policies have on the relationship between sexual harassment and turnover intentions. An organization needs to enforce its policies on sexual harassment with the aim of altering the exchange behaviors between employees in the workplace. Social exchange theory proposes that in a binary relationship, if something is given, then there is a silent promise to return it equivalently (Choi et al., 2019). In the case of women who experience sexual harassment, they are generating poor social exchange relationships with their co-workers and leaders because they do not receive help from the organization to reprimand the perpetrators. The organization is viewed as an exchange partner where women provide their commitment and expect in return for the organization to provide fair treatment. Hence, when sexual harassment occurs, women expect that the organization would support them by handling the situation accordingly in return for their dedication to the organization. The relations between an employee and the organization are strengthened or weakened depending on the perceived benefits or losses gained during the exchanges.

Social exchange involves a series of interactions that generate obligations that are interdependent and reliant on the actions of the other person (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2014). However, when these obligations are not carried out, women experience a lack of trust and organizational fit, leading to turnover intentions. Social exchange theory suggests that individuals make rational decisions to maximize positive experiences and minimize negative

experiences through their social interactions (Romani-Dias & Carneiro, 2019). Of the two types of social exchange that are supported, this research study focuses on the social aspect that encompasses intangible rewards (e.g. personal sense of well-being, gain in self-esteem, social status) and intangible costs (e.g. feelings of anxiety, failure, inability to engage in other value activities) (Weiss & Stevens, 1993). How an individual perceives the tradeoffs between the costs and rewards leads to engagement and continuity in the organization. When the social exchange relationship is high, there is a reduced possibility of turnover since the organizational commitment is higher (Harris et al., 2007). This theory explains why women who do not receive support from the organization in enforcing their policies against sexual harassment are likely to view this as a cost, ultimately leading to their termination at the organization.

Organizational policies and procedures moderate the severity and occurrence of sexual harassment. The organization's tolerance of sexual harassment affects how women will respond, and institutions with proactive strategies for dealing with harassing situations were likely to see it end (Gruber, 1998). As previously mentioned, sexual harassment causes an array of negative outcomes and is more likely to occur if the environment allows it. When women perceive that their expectations are being met by their organization, then the probability of leaving decreases. Employees modify their level of organizational commitment as a function of the way they interpret the exchanges within their work context (Bentein et al., 2005). This study contributes to the literature by filling a gap in the theoretical foundation that social exchange theory explains the outcomes of turnover intentions caused by sexual harassment in male-dominated professions. Although there is an abundance of literature covering sexual harassment, there has not been a

study evaluating the moderating effect of organizational policies and procedures in male-dominated professions via the social exchange theory.

CHAPTER 3: METHOD

PARTICIPANTS AND PROCEDURE

A subjective construct of sexual harassment will account for more variation in the responses of the women and the organizational outcomes, such as turnover intentions. The construction of the survey focuses on assessing the presence of sexual harassment, organizational enforcement of policies, and turnover intentions. Using the subjective construct will provide greater predictive validity in explaining the individual responses (Lengnick-Hall, 1995). Participants were recruited through various organizations via social media and subsequently passed along to colleagues through social networking. The platforms used to recruit participants included LinkedIn, Instagram, Facebook, and Twitter. Participants were required to be at least 18 years old and a female working full-time or part-time.

A total of 80 participants took the study. After reviewing the data, 14 participants were excluded because they had not completed the survey in its entirety. Hence, the final sample consisted of 66 participants.

Participants were asked to complete an online survey since it allowed for a widespread sample. Women in male-dominated professions were the focus of this study because they face increased levels of stigmatization due to endorsed traditional gender norms. Prior to beginning the survey, participants were provided an explanation of the research.

MEASURES

Demographics. Standard individual demographics were collected (e.g. age, race/ethnicity) at the beginning of the survey. Additionally, to assess the criteria of women in male-dominated professions, they were asked whether they perceive their industry to be male dominated, to specify what their industry was, and to identify the occupational sex ratio. The scale is provided in Appendix A.

Sexual Harassment. For the dependent variable, participants were asked to complete The Chronic Work Discrimination and Harassment: Abbreviated (CWDH-A) Scale, which was adapted from the Perceived Racism Scale (Jahnke et al., 2019) and an abbreviated version of the Sexual Experiences Questionnaire (SEQ) scale (Gettman & Gelfand, 2007; Jacobson & Eaton, 2018; Lim & Cortina, 2005) to measure the frequency and occurrence of perceived sexual harassment experienced in their organization. This behaviorally based scale measures women's exposure to sexist comments, unwanted sexual attention, and sexual coercion. The items will be answered on a five-point scale: (1- once a week or more; 2- a few times a month; 3- a few times a year; 4- less than once a year; 5- never). The scale is provided in Appendix B.

Organizational Policies and Procedures on Sexual Harassment. To evaluate how the organization perceives the seriousness of sexual harassment in the workplace, the Organizational Tolerance for Psychological Workplace Harassment (POT) was used (Perez-Larrazabal et al., 2019; Wasti et al., 2000). Participants were asked to respond on a five-point Likert scale: (1- strongly disagree; 2- disagree; 3- neither disagree nor agree; 4- agree; 5- strongly agree), which

evaluated the level of tolerance and negligence that can be demonstrated by an organization when dealing with sexual harassment reports. The women will also be asked about their knowledge on their workplace policies and procedures in relation to sexual harassment and to indicate if their organization follows official complaint procedures for sexual harassment. The scale is provided in Appendix C.

Turnover Intentions. To measure the independent variable, turnover intentions among women, the five-item Turnover Intention Scale (Bothma & Roodt, 2013) was implemented. This scale assessed respondent's likelihood and desirability to quit. This scale will be measured by using four-point scale: (1- Never; 2- Seldom; 3- Sometimes; 4- Often). The scale is provided in Appendix D.

CHAPTER 4: RESULTS

To test Hypothesis 1, a one-way ANOVA was performed. Results indicated that gender composition had a significant impact on sexual harassment (SEQ; $F(2, 63) = 11.92, p < .05$). LSD post-hoc tests demonstrated that male-dominated fields ($M=3.80, SD=0.79$) experienced significantly less sexual harassment than gender-balanced fields ($M=4.64, SD=0.47; p < .05$). Results also showed that female-dominated fields ($M= 4.65, SD= 0.47$) experienced significantly more sexual harassment than male-dominated fields ($p < .05$). No significant difference was found between gender-balanced fields and female-dominated fields (*n.s.*).

A one-way ANOVA was performed using an alternative sexual harassment scale (CWDHA). Results indicated that gender composition had a significant impact on sexual harassment (CWDHA; $F(2, 63) = 19.50, p < .05$). LSD post-hoc tests demonstrated that male-dominated fields ($M=2.33, SD=1.13$) experienced significantly less sexual harassment than gender-balanced fields ($M=4.04, SD=0.74; p < .05$). Results also showed that female-dominated fields ($M= 3.80, SD= 1.05$) experienced significantly more sexual harassment than male-dominated fields ($p < .05$). No significant difference was found between gender-balanced fields and female-dominated fields (*n.s.*).

An additional one-way ANOVA was performed to evaluate for unequal sample sizes and variances. This ANOVA was performed on sexual harassment using Welch with a Games-Howell post-hoc. The statistics did not assume equal variances.

A series of bi-variate correlations were conducted. First results found that male-dominated fields had a significantly positive relationship with sexual harassment ($r(34)=.72, p<.05$). Second, results found that gender-balanced fields had a positive relationship with sexual harassment, but it was not significant ($r(13)=.45, n.s.$). Lastly, results found that female-dominated fields had a significantly positive relationship with sexual harassment ($r(13)=.60, p<.05$). Thus, Hypothesis 1 was not supported. The table is provided in Appendix F.

For Hypothesis 2, two simple linear regression models were analyzed. When SEQ was used as a predictor, results demonstrated a significant negative relationship with turnover intentions ($\beta=-0.27, p<.05$), such that higher levels of sexual harassment led to lower levels of turnover intentions. When CWDHA was used as a predictor, results also showed that there was a significant negative relationship with turnover intentions ($\beta =-0.23, p<.05$), such that higher levels of sexual harassment led to lower levels of turnover intentions. Thus, Hypothesis 2 was not supported. The table is provided in Appendix F.

For Hypothesis 3, two hierarchical linear regression models were analyzed. When SEQ was used as the sexual harassment variable, it did not have a significant main effect on turnover intentions ($\beta =-0.09, n.s.$). However, perceptions of organizational tolerance did have a significant main effect on turnover intentions ($\beta =-0.34, p<.05$), and thus, as perceptions of tolerance increased, turnover intentions decreased. The interaction of SEQ and POT was not significant ($\beta =-0.08, n.s.$), and thus, POT is not a significant moderator of the relationship between SEQ and turnover intentions.

When CWDHA was used as the sexual harassment variable, it also did not have a significant main effect on turnover intentions ($\beta = -0.13, n.s.$). However, perceptions of organizational tolerance did have a significant main effect on turnover intentions ($\beta = -0.26, p < .05$), and thus, as perceptions of tolerance increased, turnover intentions decreased. The interaction between CWDHA and POT was not significant ($\beta = -0.16, n.s.$), hence, POT is not a significant moderator of the relationship between CWDHA and turnover intentions. Ultimately Hypothesis 3 was not supported. The table is provided in Appendix F.

CHAPTER 5: DICUSSION

The present study attempted to identify instances in which sexual harassment will result in turnover intentions within an organization. The aim of this study was to evaluate this interaction within organizations of varying gender compositions, specifically on organizations that are male dominated. Additionally, organizations that are female-dominated and gender-neutral were also examined and compared. Social exchange theory suggests that generating social exchange relationships will influence how committed an employee is to their organization. If an employee senses that their organization is supportive, then they will likely continue working there. This exchange between employee and organization is a foundation to the study. This study examined the effect that an organization has on enforcing their policies regarding sexual harassment in the workplace and an employees' desire to leave their organization. Finally, this study sought to investigate organizational policies and procedures as a moderator to further identify the instances in which it may impact this relationship.

Results from the study on a whole did replicate past findings related to the presence of sexual harassment in male-dominated professions, however, the relationship was not as strong as expected. Although significantly positive, male-dominated fields had the lowest level of sexual harassment, which was contrary to my hypothesis. Sexual harassment was the most present in female-dominated professions and then slightly less present in gender-balanced professions. A possible explanation could be that females in male-dominated professions were more hesitant on

reporting sexual harassment as compared to in female-dominated fields. Another explanation for these results could be the stereotypes that are ascribed to the job itself. For example, female-dominated occupations are attributed as more nurturing and entailing more feminine attributes and values. Women in female-dominated professions can perceive these stereotypes as discriminatory, leading to results of a significantly higher level of sexual harassment.

Additionally, it may be the case that women in male-dominated settings experience sexual harassment, but they do not report it because of dissonance. Dissonance is a lack of agreement between one's beliefs and one's actions. Individuals will attempt to reduce dissonance by believing nothing is occurring. As an example, women who are experiencing sexual harassment, but continue staying in their jobs. If they are experiencing these negative incidents, then why are they still in that environment. Rather than report the incident, it may be easier to pretend nothing is happening. Previous research has found that cognitive and emotional dissonance can be improved in cases where individuals can communicate with their organization (Barsade & Gibson, 2007; Sojo et al., 2016), and in this situation with reporting sexual harassment.

In regard to the simple linear regression, there was a negative relationship between sexual harassment and turnover intentions. Although hypothesized that this relationship would be positive, it was still significant. These results indicated that individuals who experienced more sexual harassment were less inclined of leaving their jobs. In this study, there was a considerable amount of range restriction for turnover intentions, caused by participants not using the high end of the scale, which could account for the negative relationship. This means that most participants

indicated less of an intention in leaving their current organization. An explanation for this restriction could be that employees were hesitant about revealing their true intentions on leaving their organization. Additionally, there was minor range restriction with the organizational tolerance of perceived harassment. This could be a reason as to why the hypotheses were not supported.

Results from the main effects analysis indicated that perceived organizational policies and procedures was not a significant moderator of the hypothesized relationship between sexual harassment and turnover intentions. Although there was not a significant relationship between organizational policies and procedures with sexual harassment, there was a significant relationship between it and turnover intentions. In relation to turnover intentions, women who felt as if their organization enforced their policies were less likely to want to leave. Social exchange theory supports this assumption that if an individual senses that their organization is supportive of them by following through with their policies, then they are going to be committed to the organization.

FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTIONS AND LIMITATIONS

Future research directions should further examine the relationships that sexual harassment has on occupations of varying gender compositions. As this study demonstrates,

there is a significant impact between gender composition on the frequency of sexual harassment. It would be ideal to delve further into this relationship. Since this study presented a higher significance of sexual harassment in female-dominated fields, it would be insightful for future research to examine why there is a stronger relationship as compared to male-dominated or gender-neutral professions. Previous research has examined the influence of differing supervisor characteristics on hostile work environments, which could be a topic further explored and compared between the groups of the three gender compositions. Additionally, future research should investigate the different policies that organizational workplaces may have and its affect on the frequency of sexual harassment.

Secondly, future research should conduct a longitudinal study examining how turnover intentions in women who experience sexual harassment change over time. Organizations can be evaluated throughout a span of time to see if their organizational policies improve, how it affects the rates of sexual harassment. Some practical implications to decrease sexual harassment in the workplace would be to implement prevention training programs and workshops explaining the antecedents, consequences, and characteristics of sexual harassment. Sexual harassment is less likely to occur in organizations where all employees are aware of its factors.

Several limitations have been encountered. The most prevalent limitation is the sample size. Due to a small sample size, there was insufficient power to successfully conduct the moderations, hence leading to a lack of support for Hypothesis 3. In future research, there should be adequate sample sizes to make the study more generalizable. Another limitation is response

bias, where responses to prior scales in the survey may influence the individual's subsequent responses.

CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSION

The present study utilized social exchange theory (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2014; Emerson, 1976) to better understand the effect sexual harassment has on women in male-dominated occupations. Results demonstrated that sexual harassment was the least prevalent in male-dominated occupations and that it had a negative relationship with turnover intentions. Although there was not a large enough sample to test for moderation, women in organizations that were perceived to enforce their policies were more committed to the organization and were less likely to leave. Based on the results from this study, sexual harassment is still prevalent in the workplace, some professions more than others, and has negative impacts on the employees.

APPENDIX A: DEMOGRAPHIC SCALE

1. What is your gender?

Male

Female

Other

2. Are you of Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin?

Yes

No

3. What race/ethnicity do you best identify with?

White

Hispanic, Latino

Black or African American

American Indian and Alaska Native

Asian

Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander

Other (please indicate)

4. What is your age group?

18-20

21-29

30-39

40-49

50-59

60 or older

5. What is your marital status?

Single

Married

Divorced/Separated

Widowed

6. What is your occupation (industry)? _____

7. What is your employment status?

Full-time

Part-time
Unemployed

8. How long have you held your current profession?

Less than 1 year
1-5 years
6-10 years
11-15 years
16-20 years
More than 20 years

9. What is the gender dominance in your current profession?

Male-Dominated
Gender Neutral
Female Dominated

10. Move the slide bar to indicate what value is the most accurate.

0-100

11. (Pipe Text: What is the gender dominance in your current profession?) In what basis did you make this judgement? _____

APPENDIX B: SEXUAL EXPERIENCES QUESTIONNAIRE SCALE

In the last 2 years, how often have you been in a situation where a male supervisor or coworker...

1. Told offensive sexual stories or jokes?
2. Made unwelcome attempts to draw you into discussion of sexual matters?
3. Treated you differently because of your sex?
4. Made offensive remarks about appearance, body or sexual activities?
5. Made gestures or used body language of a sexual nature that offended you?
6. Displayed, used, or distributed sexist or suggestive materials?
7. Made offensive sexist remarks?
8. Made unwanted attempts to establish a romantic relationship with you despite your efforts to discourage him?
9. Continued to ask you for dates, drinks, dinner, etc., even though you said "No"?
10. Made you feel like you were being bribed with a reward to engage in sexual behavior?
11. Made you feel threatened with some sort of retaliation for not being sexually cooperative?
12. Touched you in a way that made you feel uncomfortable?
13. Made unwanted attempts to stroke, fondle, or kiss you?
14. Treated you badly for refusing to have sex?
15. Implied better treatment if you were sexually cooperative?
16. Put you down or was condescending to you because of your sex?

APPENDIX C: CHRONIC WORK DISCRIMINATION AND HARASSMENT:
ABBREVIATED (CWDH-A) SCALE

Discrimination

1. How often do you feel that you have to work twice as hard as others to get the same treatment or evaluation?
2. How often are you watched more closely than other workers?
3. How often are you unfairly humiliated in front of others at work?

APPENDIX D: ORGANIZATIONAL TOLERANCE FOR PSYCHOLOGICAL
WORKPLACE HARASSMENT (POT) SCALE

1. My organization gives high priority to dealing with harassment complaints.
2. If I report a harassment incident, my organization will try to deal with it diligently.
3. My organization offers us training in communication skills or conflict resolution.
4. My organization has clearly explained to us how to act if we suffer workplace harassment
5. My organization has clearly explained to us how to act if we are not sure whether we are suffering workplace harassment.
6. The workers' representatives have collaborated with my organization in the design of a harassment prevention plan.
7. My organization encourages us to report any potential harassment incident we may suffer as soon as possible.
8. My organization encourages us to report any potential harassment incident suffered by a colleague as soon as possible.
9. My organization often updates the information we receive on workplace harassment actions.
10. My organization will deal with any harassment incident in the same way if either a manager or an employee is accused of workplace harassment.
11. I have answered the psychosocial risk survey carried out in my organization.
12. My organization has clearly explained to me the results of the psychosocial risk survey.
13. My organization has launched actions based on the results of the psychosocial risk survey.
14. The decisions taken by my company based on the results of the psychosocial risk survey have improved working conditions.
15. In my organization, the workers who have reported workplace harassment have suffered reprisals.
16. My organization has publicly explained lessons learned when they have dealt with cases of workplace harassment.
17. My organization has respected the anonymity of the people involved in reported incidents of workplace harassment.
18. My organization will not try to stop me from reporting a workplace harassment incident.

APPENDIX E: TURNOVER INTENTION SCALE

1. How often have you considered leaving your job?
2. How satisfying is your job in fulfilling your personal needs?
3. How often do you dream about getting another job that will better suit your personal needs?
4. How likely are you to accept another job at the same compensation level should it be offered to you?
5. How often do you look forward to another day at work?

APPENDIX F: LIST OF TABLES

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics and Correlations

Variable	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4
1.SEQ	4.18	0.81	(.94)			
2.CWDH-A	3.06	1.30	0.77**	(.85)		
3.POT	3.02	0.89	0.47**	0.58**	(.96)	
4.TI	2.24	0.78	-0.28*	-0.38*	-0.42**	(.82)

Note: (N=66) * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$; SEQ= Sexual Experiences Questionnaire, CWDH-A= Chronic Work Discrimination and Harassment: Abbreviated, POT= Organizational Tolerance for Psychological Workplace Harassment, TI= Turnover Intention; Internal consistencies are presented along the diagonal in parentheses.

Table 2. Regression Results for Main Effects and Moderation

Variable	B	SE B	β	R ²	Adjusted R ²
Intercept					
SEQ	-0.268	0.115	-0.280	0.078	0.064
CWDH-A	-0.230	0.069	-0.382	0.146	0.133
POT	-0.335	0.114	-0.381	0.191	0.151
TI	-0.083	0.126	-0.091	0.191	0.151

Note: (N=66) * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$

Table 3. ANOVA Results for Main Effects

Variable	F	df	p
Intercept		1	0
SEQ	11.92	1	.05
CWDH-A	19.50	1	.05
POT	7.05	1	.05

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