

A study to assess organizational antecedents and women's experiences of sexual harassment in the workplace

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Introduction

When more women began entering the workforce in the 2001s, sexual harassment was first publicized as a problem in the workplace. Globally, women report being sexually harassed at work. In the India, 40% to 75% of women reported experiencing sexually harassing behaviors while at work, and more than 70% reported verbal behaviors as the most common form of sexual harassment. The objectives of this paper are: 1) to systematically examine the antecedents of women's exposure to sexual harassment in selected male-dominated occupations and identify research gaps; 2) Assessing the psychometric properties of an author-developed antecedent scale of sexual harassment agency, and 3) examining relationships between perceived organizational antecedents, demographic variables, and sexual harassment; and determining the associations between job control, workplace culture, and self-reported sexual harassment, age, race, ethnicity, income, and tenure.

Background

Overall, 60% of women experience sexual harassment in the workplace, defined as unwanted verbal statements or physical gestures of a discriminatory or sexual nature. On average, 65% of women working in male-dominated industries report experiences of sexual harassment. In recent years, researchers have examined organizational antecedents as contributors to sexual harassment in the workplace. However, there are few studies of organizational antecedents to sexual harassment in male-dominated workplaces such as law enforcement, firefighting, Car driving, and construction.

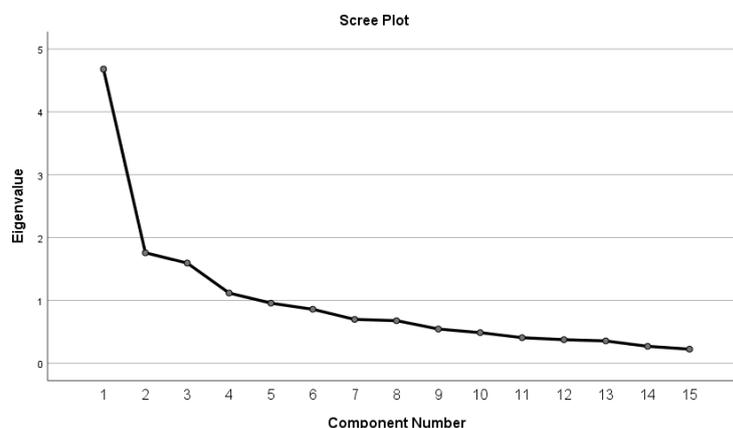
Methods

Survey items, with response options on a 6-point Likert-type scale, were designed to measure the constructs of the workplace, workplace culture, and workplace gender climate. Three reviewers with expertise in occupational and public health evaluated the initial 20 items on the content validity dimensions of relevance, objectivity, clarity, simplicity, practicality, and vocabulary. The item characteristic score is based on a scale from 1 (acceptable) to 4 (unacceptable).

There was low-moderate agreement among three expert panel reviewers for the original 20-item scale. Based on reviewer scores of item characteristics and recommendations to confirm what the items were supposed to measure, three items were added to capture aspects of the constructs relevant to the Car driver population. An 18-item scale was tested on a sample of female Car drivers over 20 years of age, with a Class A commercial driver's license and at least 3 months of Car driving experience. Before testing reliability and validity, one item from workplace culture and items from gender context were omitted because they are more populous in nature.

Because Car driving is a male-dominated occupation, the second item (male to female ratio in the workplace) was removed from the gender context. Removal of these items resulted in a 20-item scale. Labor force scores ranged from 8-40; Workplace culture scores ranged from 5 - 65 and gender environment scores ranged from 6 - 30. The higher the employee power scores; the more control female workers have over their work environment.

Figure: Scree Plot to the Principal Component Analysis



The higher the workplace culture score, the more supportive the culture. high gender context scores; And women were spoken to and treated equally. Internal consistency reliability was assessed using Cronbach's alpha and inter-item correlations. Construct validity was tested through principal component analysis with varimax rotation. Correlations between components were analyzed for strength of relationship using Pearson's correlation coefficient.

Results

The internal consistency reliability of the 15-item scale was .83 showing strong reliability. Inter-item correlations of the 15-items showed no heterogeneity between items. Staff (8 items) had acceptable internal consistency ($\alpha = .78$).

Workplace culture (3 items) and gender climate (4 items) showed poor–moderate internal consistency ($\alpha = .31$ and $.58$, respectively). PCA revealed that model fit was supported by Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (.81), and Bartlett's test of sphericity ($p < .001$) indicated that the correlation matrix was not an identity matrix. Four instead of three components (structures) were identified by PCA, which explained 61% of the total overall variance. A post-hoc analysis revealed that subscales one (job control; 5 items) and two (workplace culture; 6 items) each had acceptable internal consistency ($\alpha = .80$ and $.76$, respectively).

Three (formal complaint procedures; 2 items) produced factor loadings of .88 (knowledge of grievance procedures) and .80 (knowledge of who can file a complaint). Four (peer relationships; 2 items) had factor loadings of .67 (strength of peer relationships) and .87 (peer relationships). Because constructs three and four had two items each, they were not analyzed further.

Conclusion

I present OP reliability and validity evidence of the 15-item Sexual Harassment Organizational Resistance (SOYA) scale. Furthermore, when the constructs were tested independently, only the 8-item labor force construct had adequate reliability. For construct validity, factor analysis revealed four constructs in which an item loaded on more than one factor.

In the 15-item scale, there were two valid and reliable constructs: job control (5 items) and workplace culture (6 items). Two additional builds, complaint policies and peer relationships, identified based on 4 items, with two weights on each build. Research is needed to develop and test additional items to measure formal complaint policies and peer relationships (eg, daily contact with peers, support systems, comfort in discussing incidents of sexual assault with friends or colleagues). To better understand the organizational antecedents of sexual harassment. Women working in male-dominated occupations such as Car driving.

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