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SEXUAL HARASSMENT:  
MALE DOMINANCE OR POSITIONS OF POWER IN THE WORKPLACE?

by  
Bobbi Jo Hardimon

A Thesis

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirement of the  
Master of Arts, Mental Health Counseling and Applied Psychology Degree  
of  
The Graduate School  
at  
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May 8, 2009

Approved by \_\_\_\_\_  
Advisor

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## ABSTRACT

Bobbi Jo Hardimon  
SEXUAL HARASSMENT:  
MALE DOMINANCE OR POSITIONS OF POWER?  
2008/09  
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Master of Arts in Mental Health Counseling and Applied Psychology

Sexual harassment in the workplace is a growing issue. It is difficult to determine which case is sexual harassment and which is not. Many cases that make it to the court room involve female victims. This study examines if women are in fact seen as the victim more often or if men are taken less seriously. Participants include 98 employees of various organizations of Southern New Jersey. Each participant was given four case studies. The genders and relationship of workers vary in each case. Each case involves one male and one female that have either a co-worker relationship of equal status or an authority/subordinate relationship. It was believed that in those cases where the victim was male, participants will have a lower rating of sexual harassment. It was also believed that in the cases with an authority figure, there will be a higher rating of sexual harassment. The results revealed no significant difference for gender; however, the results were in the direction of significance when examining authority.

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## CHAPTER I

### Introduction

#### *Overview of Sexual Harassment*

Sexual harassment was prohibited in the workplace in the 1960s when the first federal statute recognized it as a problem (Siddiqui, 1998). Almost 50 years later, we continue to believe the same stereotypical behavior; however, it is still unclear as to what exactly is considered sexual harassment. When most of us think of sexual harassment, we imagine a female employee who is promised a promotion if she performs sexual favors for her male boss. Or perhaps we think of male coworkers making sexually inappropriate comments and gestures towards female workers. What is unclear is what is considered “inappropriate.” It is also necessary to look at those involved. Are all victims of sexual harassment women or can a man be harassed as well? Can a woman sexually harass a coworker? Very little research is out there that allows us to answer these questions.

Defining sexual harassment is a difficult task. It includes a variety of behaviors that range from comments and jokes to abuse and rape (Sbraga & O’Donohue, 2000).

According to the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) Guidelines (2008), sexual harassment is defined as:

Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature constitute sexual harassment when this conduct explicitly or implicitly affects an individual's employment, unreasonably



interferes with an individual's work performance, or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment.

According to the research, there are two types of sexual harassment: hostile work environment and quid pro quo. According to *Ruhling v. Tribune* (2007), a hostile work environment occurs when the work environment becomes abusive to the victim due to intimidation, mockery, and insult based on the victim's sex. Folgero & Fjeldstad (1995) further break down such behaviors into three categories: verbal, non-verbal, and physical. Verbal harassment includes behaviors such as comments about one's body, personal life, or jokes while non-verbal harassment includes unwanted looks, views of body parts, and pornography. Physical harassment includes any type of touching or rape.

Quid pro quo is the legal term for sexual coercion. It is defined as promising benefits, or threatening one with work-related punishment, in order to exchange for sexual favors (Sbraga & O'Donohue, 2000).

One problem with these definitions is that they are not specific. According to O'Donohue, Downs, and Yeater, there are still many questions to be answered such as: does a power differential need to be present, does it have to take place in a specific location, who must perceive the act as harassment, and if men are included as possible victims of sexual harassment (as cited in Sbraga & O'Donohue, 2000).

A second problem with these definitions is that the definition of sexual harassment changes depending upon whom you may ask. This is especially true concerning the hostile work environment which remains individually defined (Thacker & Gohmann, 1993). What may be bothersome and harassing to one person may not be to another.

McDonald, Jr. (2005) states that most cases of sexual harassment consist of complaints of sexually-related talk and horseplay which include bragging of sexual endeavors, gossiping about co-workers' sexual activity, and passing or displaying sexually related emails or cartoons around the office. Although these behaviors may not seem serious enough to go to court, studies have found that to a victim these actions can cause physical and emotional damage that affects the overall work environment. It has also been found that incidents last anywhere from a week to over 6 months (Pryor, 1985).

Symptoms which would lead to a diagnosis of post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) can be found later on in victims after being subjected to sexual harassment in the workplace (Palmieri & Fitzgerald, 2005). Victims of sexual harassment may also have feelings of anger, guilt, and fear (Thacker & Gohmann, 2001) as well as humiliation, embarrassment, intimidation, helplessness, lowered self-confidence (Baugh & Page 1998) substance abuse, gastrointestinal problems, and fatigue (Sbraga & O'Donohue, 2000). It is not clear, however, who is more likely to experience emotional consequences: men or women (Thacker & Gohmann, 1993).

Sexual harassment not only affects the individual but the company as well. The workplace may (1) suffer a high turnover rate due to those who choose to leave the environment in order to deal with the harassment, (2) lose money for sick time the victim uses in order to avoid the situation, and (3) lower productivity (Thacker & Gohmann, 2001).

Once a claim has been made of sexual harassment, it is able to be placed in the hands of the legal system to decide whether or not sexual harassment has in fact occurred. The EEOC uses their guidelines to enforce Title VII. Title VII provides guidance for the

following: 1) determining whether sexual conduct is "unwelcome", 2) evaluating evidence of harassment, 3) determining whether a work environment is sexually hostile, 4) holding employers liable for sexual harassment by supervisors, and 5) evaluating preventive and remedial action taken in response to claims of sexual harassment (2008).

The EEOC recognizes that day-to-day contact may result in a variety of situations such as invited, uninvited-but-welcome, offensive-but-tolerated, and flatly rejected (2008). These situations may be difficult to distinguish; however, for sexual harassment to have occurred, the behavior must be unwelcome. In order to determine welcomeness, the role of the plaintiff must be closely examined in order to view a complete picture of the event (McDonald, 2005). However, unwelcomeness is subject to individual interpretation. Evidence for a claim relies upon the credibility of the parties involved as in many cases there are either no witnesses or the situation may appear to be consensual. Those questioned while evaluating evidence include the plaintiff, alleged perpetrator, and anyone that may have been spoken to about the incident.

After the cases are presented in court, the jury uses what is known as reasonableness or the reasonable person test in order to decide if the case is in fact sexual harassment. This test compares what was actually done, or thought to be done, to what a reasonable person believes they would do in the same situation; it should reflect the perspectives of the average person (Scalet, 2002). The reasonable person standard is not full proof, however. First of all, who decides what is reasonable? Saltman believes that by using the reasonable person standard, the judges are able to impose their own beliefs upon the jury (as cited in Scalet, 2002). Mison states that the reasonable person standard is actually a perfect model of what our society wants its people to become (as cited in

Scalet, 2002). If this is true, how is it fair to compare the behavior of the defendant to the behavior of an ideal person? Those interpreting reasonableness should keep in mind the capacities of the average person. How the jury interprets reasonableness depends upon the wording of the judge and each individual juror.

Secondly, who is asked to be on the jury to decide if the behavior is in fact sexual harassment? Lee & Greenlaw (1995) explain that “behavior considered to be acceptable in some work sites, and therefore might be regarded as ‘reasonable,’ might well be considered unreasonable to others” (p.360). They give an example of the construction industry, which has been known for sexist behavior. If a construction worker were on the jury for a case that took place in an office conducting research, the outcome may be biased.

The last issue with the reasonableness standard is what to call it. Depending on which article or legal case is read, the terms vary from “reasonable employee standard,” “reasonable person standard,” or “reasonable woman standard.” Most cases refer to the “reasonable woman standard.” This new concept is based on the idea that men and women view sexual harassment differently (Blumenthal, 1998). Circuit Judge Keith in *Rabidue* believes that without the reasonable woman, the jury is able to view the case through the eyes of the offender, men (as cited in Blumenthal, 1998). Implementing the reasonable woman standard makes sense only if the victim is a woman. Past research has found that men are also victims; they are being harassed by other men as well as women. Wayne & Thomas (2001) stated that in 1997 12% (1,843) of sexual harassment claims were filed by men.

## CHAPTER II

### Literature Review

Most research investigating sexual harassment examines situations in which the female is victimized. It has not been until recently that men have been viewed as victims as well. Pryor (1985) believed that according to the lay person, sexual harassment involves male behavior. He states that “a person who takes the target’s perspective may be more likely to see the behavior of a harasser as having been caused by characteristics of the harasser rather than by something the target did” (p. 278). In his study he presented 18 male participants and 18 female participants with twenty-four scenarios and a questionnaire. They were asked to rate the perception of sexual harassment from three different perspectives: their own, that of the actor, and that of the victim. Actors played the part of three different social roles: a professor, teaching assistant, and student. When the actors played the part of a professor, the behaviors were rated more potentially harassing than when the actors played the part of a teaching assistant. The results of the study were consistent with the theory that the behavior was more likely perceived as harassing when the actor behaved in such a way that was inconsistent with the ordinary expectations of the actor’s role. Although this study has females as the victims, it begins to open the door to the idea that sexual harassment is more than just about harassing women.

For example, men have been found to be sexually harassed by other men. In 1995, Dressler wrote an article concerning heterosexual men that attack due to sexual advances by homosexual men. The article explains that same sex sexual harassment does occur, which means then that men are in fact victims of sexual harassment by definition. Dressler focuses on the homosexual advances of men and discusses whether or not it is reasonable to expect a man to become so outraged by the advance that he loses all self control and is motivated to kill. If the defendant is motivated to kill because of sexual orientation then the case would be an example of sexual harassment and is reason why we need to consider both genders as potential sexual harassment victims when we conduct studies.

When considering both genders as potential victims of sexual harassment, one concern involves the effects of the harassment of men and women. Thacker & Gohmann (1996) conducted a study examining the emotional and psychological effects of sexual harassment of both men and women. They hypothesized that women would be more likely to experience more severe feelings about work and suffer a worse physiological and emotional state from sexual harassment than men. In their findings, they discovered that people viewed sexual harassment differently if from a supervisor than from a co-worker; their results suggested that sexual harassment from supervisors asserted control and power. No difference was found between men and women concerning the psychological trauma of sexual harassment. Vaux believes that the perception of men being sexually harassed is overlooked and that more men are harassed than are reported (as cited in Thacker & Gohmann, 1996). The results also suggested that trauma from a hostile work environment was worse when combined with *quid pro quo*.

The exploitation of power has also been considered as a variable in sexual harassment. In one study, power was defined as the ability to control another person and to be able to resolve one's conflicts to their own advantage (Berdahl, Magley, & Waldo, 1996). With this definition, the researchers believed that the most common forms are abuses of social/physical power by co-workers and not by organizational power by supervisors. Challenging societal norms and gender roles seemed to have an effect on sexual harassment concerning peers.

In their first study, Berdahl, Magley, & Waldo (1996) hypothesized that men are not as vulnerable to sexual harassment as women are; when exposed to the same behaviors, men would report less anxiety than women. The results of the women's responses were comparable to those of previous studies, however, the results of the men's responses varied greatly. The variety of responses was attributed to the possibility that men may not be exposed to the same behaviors that women are exposed to which may lead to uncertainty and guessing. When comparing the results, men did in fact report that they would experience less anxiety than did the women.

In their second study, they examined levels of discomfort. Participants were given the Sexual Experiences Questionnaire; women were given the original while the men were given a modified questionnaire. It was discovered that men would be least bothered by gender harassment, more bothered by unwanted sexual attention, and most bothered by sexual coercion. Because women were given the original questionnaire which did not have a perceived discomfort response, there was no female comparison group. Several of the men that responded to an open-ended question stated that they were unsure if they have been the victim of sexual harassment. In response to another

question, few men agreed that sexual coercion was a form of sexual harassment of men. One common theme in the responses to the open-ended questions was that men were more likely to be harassed by other men. Other themes discovered in this study include the belief that women are given unfair privileges concerning hiring and promotions and that women's complaints of sexual harassment are taken too seriously. One male participant stated: "Sexual harassment of men is reverse discrimination for not hiring men because they are men..." (p. 540). These themes are examples of abuse of power by sexual harassment.

A study by Thacker & Gohmann (1993) indicates that women are more likely to define a behavior as sexual harassment as well as demand the need for emotional and medical counseling. However, if we look back to the previous study, the responses of males could be due to societal norms, the fact that the average person views men as the harassers and not the victims.

Another concern with sexual harassment deals with the debate of the reasonable woman standard v. the reasonable person standard. Rotundo, Nguyen, & Sackett (2001) found that women are more likely to define a broader range of behavior as sexual harassment. Their study also states that when the harasser has an authority over the harassee, the threat is clearer than when the harasser is a co-worker because there is no threat of job loss or prevention of promotion. Rotundo, Nguyen, & Sackett (2001) believe this may be why men perceive the same behaviors as harmless and not a form of sexual harassment. In their study, they hypothesized that the female-male difference would be greater when the harasser has no authority over the harassee than when the harasser does have authority. Gender differences were found but were small. The



differences also varied according to the social-sexual behavior examined. Men and women were found to agree about sexual coercion and propositions being a form of sexual harassment. The differences were greater when the behavior consisted of sex-stereotyped jokes or repeated requests for dates.

Most of the research examines male harassers and female harassees. Wayne, Riordan, & Thomas (2001) examined female harassers with male harassees as well as same-gendered sexual harassment. Their study had four hypotheses: 1) cross-gender cases would have more guilty verdicts with more monetary awards when the harasser is a male as opposed to a female, 2) female mock jurors will have more guilty verdicts and more monetary awards with cross-gender cases, 3) mock jurors will have more guilty verdicts and more monetary awards when the harasser and harassee are of the same gender than opposite, and 4) mock jurors will have more guilty verdicts and more monetary gains when the same-gender cases are both males than both females.

The findings of the study suggest potential biases of juror even though they were given the EEOC definition of sexual harassment, juror instructions, as well as asking them to view the cases with a reasonable person standard. In the cross-gender sexual harassment, the results revealed that in identical sexual behaviors, women harassing men were more likely to be found guilty than men harassing women. They attribute this finding to the societal norms that women are not expected to initiate sexual activity. They also suggest that men were less likely to be found guilty due to backlash against the laws and company policies that target men. In the same-gender cases, both male and female jurors viewed the same behavior as more serious when the harassers and harassees were of the same gender than of the opposite gender.

Recent research is focusing more on jurors and how they interpret sexual harassment cases. Four cases were involved in a study conducted by Huntley & Costanzo (2003); all four had a female plaintiff and a male harasser. Their study found that the plaintiff and defense jurors described the stories differently when explaining the same case. The only juror characteristic that was consistently related to outcome was gender. Gender was not found to be a direct predictor of verdict but it is believed that experiences of female jurors may make them more likely to view the plaintiff's case as credible.

## CHAPTER III

### Present Study

Previous studies have looked at juror characteristics and differences in gender of perception of sexual harassment behaviors. The purpose of this study is to examine if men are taken as seriously as women when they are the victims of sexual harassment. If sexual harassment is viewed less seriously when men are the victims, then organizations will need to review their guidelines and trainings on the topic. Taking sexual harassment less seriously because a man is the target is a form of sexual discrimination.

This study uses four cross-gender cases. Two cases involve authority and two involve co-workers. All four cases exhibit behavior that has been identified as sexual harassment. It is hypothesized that participants will have a lower rating of sexual harassment for the cases that include a male victim than those with a female victim. It is also hypothesized that the cases involving an authority will have a higher rating of sexual harassment than the cases with co-workers.

## CHAPTER IV

### Method

#### *Participants*

Employees from various organizations of southern New Jersey were asked to volunteer in the study. Organizations were contacted by examiner and were told that the present study consists of several questionnaires that will help gather information concerning sexual harassment in the workplace. Organizations participating in the study submitted letters of approval to collect data from their employees. Questionnaires were given to all employees, however, it was stated that it is not mandatory to complete them. There was not any compensation for participating in the study and all data remained anonymous. University students were excluded from the study as the amount of experience in the workforce may be limited.

The current study consisted of 98 participants. Of the sample 24 were male and 68 were female; the remaining six remained unidentified. The participants included 30 high school graduates/some college, 27 college graduates, and 35 post graduates.

#### *Materials*

Each participant received one of two packets consisting of a letter of instruction and informed consent (Appendix A), definition of sexual harassment (Appendix B), four sample cases (Appendix C), and a demographic survey (Appendix D). There were a total of eight sample cases; four different situations were used. Each situation was used twice

but gender and work relationship were switched. Each packet of four had two male-harasser/female-victim situations and two female-harasser/male-victim situations. One of each had an authority and the other was a co-worker. Once all packets were collected, participants received a debriefing statement (Appendix E).

Each case has similar characteristics to real life cases that went to court (Bundy v. Jackson, 1981; Chamberlin v. 101 Reality, Inc, 1990; & Polidori v. Societe Generale Group, 2006). The cases were developed to vary the gender of the harasser and victim as well as the type of work relationship between the employees. Two cases involve a male harasser; in one case he targeted a female subordinate and in another he targeted a female co-worker. The other two cases involve a female harasser; the target in one case was a male subordinate and in the other, the target will be a male co-worker. After each case, participants were asked to answer several questions using a 7 point Likert Scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree). The questions ask if the case is an example of sexual harassment, how employees should behave towards each other, and how the employee's behavior affected the situation. All four cases were sorted differently in each packet to counterbalance order effects. The demographic survey includes general questions to obtain information about the participants' age, sex, ethnicity, and work experience.

## CHAPTER V

### Results

Two questions were examined when determining the results for the hypothesis: Question1, “In your opinion, this scenario is an example of sexual harassment,” and Question2, “This scenario meets the definition of sexual harassment according to the EEOC.” Hypothesis1 predicted that participants would give a lower score of sexual harassment for those scenarios in which the victim was male than those scenarios in which the victim was female. A Paired Samples *t*-Test was conducted to analyze the results. For Question1, the scenarios with a co-worker relationship were paired,  $t(93) = .385, p = .701$ , and the scenarios with an authority relationship were paired,  $t(96) = -.113, p = .910$ . These differences were not significant. The scenarios were paired the same way for Question2. The scenarios with a co-worker relationship,  $t(96) = .175, p = .861$ , and those with an authority relationship,  $t(96) = .173, p = .863$ , were also not significant; Hypothesis1 was not supported. However, for three of the four pairs, the means were lower for those scenarios with a female victim than those with a male victim (See Table 1).

Hypothesis2 predicted that participants would give a lower rating of sexual harassment in those scenarios in which the relationship between victim and harasser was a co-worker relationship than those that had an authority relationship. A Paired Samples *t*-Test was used and revealed results in the direction of significance when the victim was

a female for Question1,  $t(93) = -1.904, p = .06$ . The mean for the co-worker relationship was 6.36 while the mean for the authority relationship was 6.59. Although no other significant differences were found, it was shown that those scenarios that had an authority relationship had a higher mean for both Question1 and Question2.

To counterbalance the possibility of the results being affected by the details of the scenario instead of the gender of the victim, the participants were given one of two packets. Each packet had the same scenarios; however, the genders were switched. Question1 and Question2 were examined as well as Question3 (The behavior was unwelcome), Question4 (The situation created a hostile work environment), Question5 (The incident should be reported to human resources), and Question6 (The outcome was due to the person's initial response). Using Repeated Measures Analysis of Variance of Between-Subjects Effects on packet number, a statistically significant effect was revealed for Question1,  $F(1, 92) = 4.042, p = .047$ . Packet1 had a higher mean,  $M = 6.59$ , than Packet2,  $M = 6.33$ . Between-Subjects Effects revealed results in the direction of significance,  $F(1, 95) = 3.709, p = .057$ , for Question2. Packet1 again had a higher mean,  $M = 6.52$ , than Packet2,  $M = 6.23$ . There were no other significant differences found for the other questions when comparing packets.

A Repeated Measures Analysis of Variance of Between-Subjects Effects revealed statistically significant results,  $F(1, 61) = 4.559, p = .037$ , when examining the participants' position of power in his/her workplace for Question2. Between-Subjects Effects revealed results in the direction of significance,  $F(1, 61) = 3.577, p = .063$ , when examining the specific packet the participants were given with the participants' position of power in his/her workplace for Question2. It was observed that those participants who

had been in a position of power in their workplace had lower means per scenarios one through four,  $M = 6.69, 6.23, 6.60,$  and  $5.40,$  for Question2 than those participants who had not been in a position of power in their workplace,  $M = 6.94, 6.74, 6.62,$  and  $6.34$  (See Figure 1). Scenario 4 had the lowest means for both groups.

Question7 (Is it common to meet outside of work?) was also examined using Repeated Measures Analysis of Variance of Between-Subjects Effects and revealed statistically significant results,  $F(1, 64) = 8.145, p = .006,$  stating that the participants who had been in a position of power in their workplace rated the question lower,  $M = 4.517,$  than those who had not been in a position of power in their workplace,  $M = 5.323.$



## CHAPTER VI

### Discussion

The findings of this study do not support Hypothesis1 (predicted that participants would give a lower score of sexual harassment for those scenarios in which the victim was male than those scenarios in which the victim was female) and the results revealed that it did not matter what the gender of the victim was for each scenario. A reason for Hypothesis1 to be rejected could be due to the fact that in recent years, people are becoming more educated about sexual harassment. There are employee trainings, hot lines, and information on the internet. As sexual harassment becomes less taboo, it is likely that the possibility of a man being sexual harassed is more acceptable. The lack of a significant difference could also be due to the fact that there were fewer males than females in the study. Our culture has biases and what men may view as a “badge of honor,” women may view as sexual harassment. Therefore, if there were more women in the study, they may have viewed each scenario according to the situation and not the gender of the study. Future studies may benefit by having a larger male sample.

Hypothesis2 (predicted that participants would give a lower rating of sexual harassment in those scenarios in which the relationship between victim and harasser was a co-worker relationship than those that had an authority relationship) was also not supported; however, the findings of this study did reveal results in the direction of significance. Situations in which the victim and harasser were in an

authority/subordinate relationship were more likely to be found as sexual harassment than those situations in which the victim and harasser were equal co-workers. Sexual harassment involves some kind of power, either real or perceived. When the relationship involves a supervisor or manager it is easier to observe the power in the situation than when the relationship involves co-workers and the power must be perceived. It is likely that the reason the results were only in the direction of significance is due to the small sample size.

Switching the genders of the victims and using two packets made a difference for Question1 and a possible difference in Question2. This could be due to the fact that Question1 and Question2 asked specific questions about the situation and the victim whereas the remaining questions were broader and could be generalized to many situations. When examining the means for each scenario, gender and relationship did not appear to matter. In some scenarios the male was scored higher than the female and in some scenarios the co-worker relationship was rated higher than the authority relationship. The differences appeared to depend on the gender and relationship for that specific scenario and is not a general idea applied to every situation.

Another finding of this study was that those participants who had experience supervising others in their careers scored lower on the Likert Scale for Question1 and Question2 than those who did not have experience supervising others. There are several possibilities as to why. One reason could be that in order to be in such a position, a person would have to be in the workforce longer. Having more experience in the workforce exposes one to more realistic situations between co-workers and therefore

would better understand the difference between sexual harassment and “office flirting” or joking among co-workers, as inappropriate as it may be.

A second reason could be that since those participants are already in the higher position, they have the power already and may not be as likely to feel threatened. Future studies may focus on the different views of sexual harassment between supervisors and subordinates.

One finding when analyzing the results was that participants scored Scenario 4 lower than the other three. When viewing the scores for Question 1 for each scenario by packet number, Scenario 4 had the lowest means (See Table 2). Scenario 4 involved co-workers of equal status, however, according to some responses by participants, it is suggested that the details were not clear and left confusion for some. One participant in particular noted that it was not clear as to why the “victim” called out of work. This participant was unsure if the “victim” was calling out due to illness or in order to avoid the alleged harasser. If other participants shared this confusion, they would be less likely to view it as sexual harassment and would result in lower means. When comparing the means for Scenario 4 by packet, Packet 2—which had a male victim—had lower means than Packet 1.

Overall, the scores for each scenario were very close. There is the possibility of a ceiling effect. The Likert Scale ranged from one to seven; averages were near five and six. If the range was broadened, the results could have more variance and could produce more statistically significant results giving us more information about sexual harassment in the workplace.

Another possibility could also be that three of the four scenarios were clearly sexual harassment. Having more ambiguous scenarios, similar to Scenario 4, could lead to more significant differences. These results indicate that workers do not differentiate between male or female victims of sexual harassment in unambiguous cases. It is suggested for future research to consist of ambiguous cases.

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## APPENDIX A

### Letter of Instruction & Informed Consent

Thank you for choosing to participate in this study. Participation in this study is voluntary and all information gathered will remain anonymous and confidential. This study is examining sexual harassment for the purpose of completing a master's thesis. Although helpful, it is not necessary to answer all questions. Once the data has been completed, you will receive a debriefing statement. If you have any questions or concerns you may contact Bobbi Jo Hardimon at [Hardim18@students.rowan.edu](mailto:Hardim18@students.rowan.edu) or (856) 227-7479. You may also contact Dr. Gaer at [Gaer@rowan.edu](mailto:Gaer@rowan.edu) or (856) 256-4872.

This packet includes a definition of sexual harassment, a demographic survey, and four scenarios. Please read each scenario carefully. Following each scenario will be several questions which you will need to answer using a 7 point Likert Scale; 1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=slightly disagree, 4=undecided, 5=slightly agree, 6=agree, and 7=strongly agree. Please answer the questions according to the scenario you have just read. It is important that you complete this packet on your own without assistance from others. After you have completed this packet, please return it in the supplied sealed envelope to your supervisor no later than xx /xx/20xx. Again, thank you for your time.



## APPENDIX B

### Definition of Sexual Harassment

Definition of sexual harassment according to the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC):

Sexual harassment is a form of sex discrimination. Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature constitute sexual harassment when this conduct explicitly or implicitly affects an individual's employment, unreasonably interferes with an individual's work performance, or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment.

## APPENDIX C

### Scenario #1A

Mark is an employee of a computer company. Every Friday after work his co-workers get together at the local bar for happy hour. They usually stay there until the evening and sometimes the male workers would continue on to a gentleman's club. Mark did not participate in these activities as it was his choice not to drink. His co-workers continually asked him to come hang out. After several attempts, rumors started going around the office that Mark was a "prude" and that he would be more likely to go out if it was to a gay bar. Because Mark worked mostly by himself at a cubicle he decided to pay no mind to his coworkers and that the rumors were a way of "breaking him in" to the new company.

After working at the company for several months, the rumors continued. One day during lunch, his co-worker, Marissa, came over to his cubicle asked Mark if he was shy around women. Mark attempted to answer when Marissa interrupted and offered to "teach" him how to be "a real man." When Marissa walked away Mark heard several co-workers laughing. Following the incident, Marissa sent several e-mails with suggestive pictures and messages offering to show him a good time. When Mark continued to not respond, Marissa sent him an email that said, "The guys were right, you must be gay to pass this up."

Scenario #1A

Please answer the following questions. 1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=slightly disagree, 4=undecided, 5=slightly agree, 6=agree, and 7=strongly agree

In your opinion, this scenario is an example of sexual harassment.

strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 strongly agree

This scenario meets the definition of sexual harassment according to the EEOC.

strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 strongly agree

The behavior towards Mark was unwelcome.

strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 strongly agree

The situation created a hostile work environment for Mark.

strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 strongly agree

Mark should report this incident to human resources.

strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 strongly agree

The outcome was due to Mark's initial response.

strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 strongly agree

It is common for employees to meet outside of work at a gentleman's club.

strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 strongly agree

It is acceptable for employees to meet outside of work at a gentleman's club.

strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 strongly agree

It is common for employees to have a close relationship.

strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 strongly agree

It is acceptable for employees to have a close relationship.

strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 strongly agree

## Scenario #2A

Mary is a drug rep for a pharmaceutical company. She has been with the company for six years, works overtime, and never shows up late. A managerial position opens up and Mary is interested. She submits her resume to her boss, Ryan, and inquires about an interview. Ryan replies by saying, "Meet me at 8:00 and we'll discuss your promotion over some drinks." Mary stated that she was busy and could not meet with her boss for drinks. The following day, Ryan approached Mary in the office again about meeting after work to discuss the promotion and began rubbing her shoulders. Mary felt uncomfortable and politely thanked him for the offer but declined. Ryan then stated that if she wants to move up in the company she needs to be more of a "team player."

Mary attempted several times later that week to reschedule a meeting during work hours with Ryan about the promotion but was continuously given a run around about his busy schedule. Two weeks later, the position was given to another employee, Ann, who has been with the company for less time than Mary. Mary was concerned about the decision not only because she felt she deserved the promotion but remembered hearing rumors about Ann going out with Ryan after work. Mary confronted Ryan about the decision, and he stated simply that Ann was far more qualified for the position. When she inquired to Ryan about being seen after hours with Ann he replied with, "well maybe you should've accepted my offer."

Scenario #2A

Please answer the following questions. 1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=slightly disagree, 4=undecided, 5=slightly agree, 6=agree, and 7=strongly agree

In your opinion, this scenario is an example of sexual harassment.

strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 strongly agree

This scenario meets the definition of sexual harassment according to the EEOC.

strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 strongly agree

The behavior towards Mary was unwelcome.

strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 strongly agree

The situation created a hostile work environment for Mary.

strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 strongly agree

Mary should report this incident to human resources.

strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 strongly agree

The outcome was due to Mary's initial response.

strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 strongly agree

It is common for employees to meet outside of work for drinks.

strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 strongly agree

It is acceptable for employees to meet outside of work for drinks.

strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 strongly agree

It is common for employees to have a close relationship.

strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 strongly agree

It is acceptable for employees to have a close relationship.

strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 strongly agree

### Scenario #3A

Dan recently graduated college with a bachelor's degree in architecture, and got hired at a company and working for a woman named Candice. She knew that he was inexperienced but loved his enthusiasm and drive. Early in the summer, Candice took Dan on a site visit for a new project the company just acquired. On the ride over, Candice made comments about Dan's body. She stated that he looked pretty good but if he worked out that he would look even better. Dan was unsure about how to react so he decided to brush off the comments and change the subject.

Later on in the project, they took another visit to the construction site. Dan made a comment about the heat to which Candice whispered, "Maybe you should take your shirt off." Dan pretended not to hear the comment, hoping that Candice was just joking.

While having lunch on another day, Candice started telling Dan all about her marital problems. She stated that her husband was just not satisfying her and how she preferred younger men because she enjoys their energy and how they can "go all night long." Dan finally told Candice that her comments made him very uncomfortable and that he was engaged to his girlfriend of five years. Candice apologized and changed the subject.

During the final week of the project, Candice told Dan that she had to miss a few days of work. She had left a substantial work load for Dan to finish while she was out. Dan was unable to complete the work on his own during this time. When Candice returned to work, she told Dan that he was fired for not taking his work seriously and slacking off on the job.

Scenario #3A

Please answer the following questions. 1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=slightly disagree, 4=undecided, 5=slightly agree, 6=agree, and 7=strongly agree

In your opinion, this scenario is an example of sexual harassment.

strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 strongly agree

This scenario meets the definition of sexual harassment according to the EEOC.

strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 strongly agree

The behavior towards Dan was unwelcome.

strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 strongly agree

The situation created a hostile work environment for Dan.

strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 strongly agree

Dan should report this incident to human resources.

strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 strongly agree

The outcome was due to Dan's initial response.

strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 strongly agree

It is common for employees to meet outside of work for lunch.

strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 strongly agree

It is acceptable for employees to meet outside of work for lunch.

strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 strongly agree

It is common for employees to have a close relationship.

strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 strongly agree

It is acceptable for employees to have a close relationship.

strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 strongly agree

#### Scenario #4A

Katie and Alex are employees at a bookstore. On one occasion, while in the break room, Alex asks Katie about what she likes to do in her free time. She stated that she loves the outdoors. Alex then asked her if she likes to ride horses. When she stated that she loves horses he proceeded to tell her that he heard about how women can be sexually gratified while riding horses and asked her if it were true. She giggled in reply thinking he was just joking and returned to work.

That night Alex calls Katie and asks her if she wants to hang out. They meet at a local coffee shop, talk, and seem to have a good time. Alex then asks if she would like to go back to his place. Katie politely declines. Alex ignored Katie's response and stated that "any normal girl would want to sleep with him." Katie then got up and left the coffee shop.

The next day, Katie called out sick from work. Around lunchtime, Katie's phone rang several times but she did not pick up. On her voice mail was a message from Alex stating that he likes a girl that plays "hard to get."



Scenario #4A

Please answer the following questions. 1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=slightly disagree, 4=undecided, 5=slightly agree, 6=agree, and 7=strongly agree

In your opinion, this scenario is an example of sexual harassment.

strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 strongly agree

This scenario meets the definition of sexual harassment according to the EEOC.

strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 strongly agree

The behavior towards Katie was unwelcome.

strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 strongly agree

The situation created a hostile work environment for Katie.

strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 strongly agree

Katie should report this incident to human resources.

strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 strongly agree

The outcome was due to Katie's initial response.

strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 strongly agree

It is common for employees to meet outside of work at a coffee shop.

strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 strongly agree

It is acceptable for employees to meet outside of work at a coffee shop.

strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 strongly agree

It is common for employees to have a close relationship.

strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 strongly agree

It is acceptable for employees to have a close relationship.

strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 strongly agree

## Scenario #1B

Pam is an employee of a computer company. Every Friday after work her co-workers get together at the local bar for happy hour. They usually stay there until late evening. It was not uncommon for some of the workers to go home together. Pam did not participate in these activities as it was her choice not to drink. Her co-workers continually asked her to come hang out. After several attempts, rumors started going around the office that Pam was a “prude” and that she would be more likely to go out if it was to a gay bar. Because Pam worked mostly by herself at a cubicle she decided to pay no mind to her coworkers and that the rumors were a way of “breaking her in” to the new company.

After working at the company for several months, the rumors continued. One day during lunch, her co-worker, Ryan, came over to her cubicle asked Pam if she was shy around men. Pam attempted to answer when Ryan interrupted and offered to “teach” her how to be “a real woman.” When Pam walked away Pam heard several co-workers laughing. Following the incident, Pam sent several e-mails with suggestive pictures and messages offering to show her a good time. When Pam continued to not respond, Ryan sent her an email that said, “Everyone was right, you must be a lesbian to pass this up.”

Scenario #1B

Please answer the following questions. 1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=slightly disagree, 4=undecided, 5=slightly agree, 6=agree, and 7=strongly agree

In your opinion, this scenario is an example of sexual harassment.

strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 strongly agree

This scenario meets the definition of sexual harassment according to the EEOC.

strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 strongly agree

The behavior towards Pam was unwelcome.

strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 strongly agree

The situation created a hostile work environment for Pam.

strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 strongly agree

Pam should report this incident to human resources.

strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 strongly agree

The outcome was due to Pam's initial response.

strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 strongly agree

It is common for employees to sleep together.

strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 strongly agree

It is acceptable for employees to sleep together.

strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 strongly agree

It is common for employees to have a close relationship.

strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 strongly agree

It is acceptable for employees to have a close relationship.

strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 strongly agree

## Scenario #2B

Frank is a drug rep for a pharmaceutical company. He has been with the company for six years, works overtime, and never shows up late. A managerial position opens up and Frank is interested. He submits his resume to his boss, Nicole, and inquires about an interview. Nicole replies by saying, "Meet me at 8:00 and we'll discuss your promotion over some drinks." Frank stated that he was busy and could not meet with his boss for drinks. The following day, Nicole approached Frank in the office again about meeting after work to discuss the promotion and began rubbing his shoulders. Frank felt uncomfortable and politely thanked her for the offer but declined. Nicole then stated that if he wants to move up in the company he needs to be more of a "team player."

Frank attempted several times later that week to reschedule a meeting during work hours with Nicole about the promotion but was continuously given a run around about her busy schedule. Two weeks later, the position was given to another employee, Jack, who has been with the company for less time than Frank. Frank was concerned about the decision not only because he felt he deserved the promotion but remembered hearing rumors about Jack going out with Nicole after work. Frank confronted Nicole about the decision, and she stated simply that Jack was far more qualified for the position. When he inquired to Nicole about being seen after hours with Jack she replied with, "well maybe you should've accepted my offer."

## Scenario #2B

Please answer the following questions. 1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=slightly disagree, 4=undecided, 5=slightly agree, 6=agree, and 7=strongly agree

In your opinion, this scenario is an example of sexual harassment.

strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 strongly agree

This scenario meets the definition of sexual harassment according to the EEOC.

strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 strongly agree

The behavior towards Frank was unwelcome.

strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 strongly agree

The situation created a hostile work environment for Frank.

strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 strongly agree

Frank should report this incident to human resources.

strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 strongly agree

The outcome was due to Frank's initial response.

strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 strongly agree

It is common for employees to meet outside of work for drinks.

strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 strongly agree

It is acceptable for employees to meet outside of work for drinks.

strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 strongly agree

It is common for employees to have a close relationship.

strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 strongly agree

It is acceptable for employees to have a close relationship.

strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 strongly agree

### Scenario #3B

Danielle recently graduated college with a bachelor's degree in architecture, and got hired at a company and working for a man named Carl. He knew that she was inexperienced but loved her enthusiasm and drive. Early in the summer, Carl took Danielle on a site visit for a new project the company just acquired. On the ride over, Carl made comments about Danielle's body. He stated that she looked pretty good but if she worked out that she would look even better. Danielle was unsure about how to react so she decided to brush off the comments and change the subject.

Later on in the project, they took another visit to the construction site. Danielle made a comment about the heat to which Carl whispered, "Maybe you should take your shirt off." Danielle pretended not to hear the comment, hoping that Carl was just joking.

While having lunch on another day, Carl started telling Danielle all about his marital problems. He stated that his wife was just not satisfying him and how he preferred younger women because he enjoys their energy and how they can "go all night long." Danielle finally told Carl that his comments made her very uncomfortable and that she was engaged to her boyfriend of five years. Carl apologized and changed the subject.

During the final week of the project, Carl told Danielle that he had to miss a few days of work. He had left a substantial work load for Danielle to finish while he was out. Danielle was unable to complete the work on her own during this time. When Carl returned to work, he told Danielle that she was fired for not taking her work seriously and slacking off on the job.

Scenario #3B

Please answer the following questions. 1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=slightly disagree, 4=undecided, 5=slightly agree, 6=agree, and 7=strongly agree

In your opinion, this scenario is an example of sexual harassment.

strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 strongly agree

This scenario meets the definition of sexual harassment according to the EEOC.

strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 strongly agree

The behavior towards Danielle was unwelcome.

strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 strongly agree

The situation created a hostile work environment for Danielle.

strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 strongly agree

Danielle should report this incident to human resources.

strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 strongly agree

The outcome was due to Danielle's initial response.

strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 strongly agree

It is common for employees to meet outside of work for lunch.

strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 strongly agree

It is acceptable for employees to meet outside of work for lunch.

strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 strongly agree

It is common for employees to have a close relationship.

strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 strongly agree

It is acceptable for employees to have a close relationship.

strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 strongly agree

#### Scenario #4B

Pete and Alice are employees at a bookstore. On one occasion, while in the break room, Alice asks Pete about what he likes to do in his free time. He stated that he loves to play music. Alice then asked him if he plays the electric guitar. When he stated that he owns two, she proceeded to tell him that she heard about how men can be sexually gratified while playing an electric guitar and asked him if it were true. He laughed in reply thinking she was just joking and returned to work.

That night Alice calls Pete and asks him if he wants to hang out. They meet at a local coffee shop, talk, and seem to have a good time. Alice then asks if he would like to go back to her place. Pete politely declines. Alice ignored Pete's response and stated that "any normal guy would want to sleep with her." Pete then got up and left the coffee shop.

The next day, Pete called out sick from work. Around lunchtime, Pete's phone rang several times but he did not pick up. On his voice mail was a message from Alice stating that she likes a guy that plays "hard to get."



Scenario #4B

Please answer the following questions. 1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=slightly disagree, 4=undecided, 5=slightly agree, 6=agree, and 7=strongly agree

In your opinion, this scenario is an example of sexual harassment.

strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 strongly agree

This scenario meets the definition of sexual harassment according to the EEOC.

strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 strongly agree

The behavior towards Pete was unwelcome.

strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 strongly agree

The situation created a hostile work environment for Pete.

strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 strongly agree

Pete should report this incident to human resources.

strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 strongly agree

The outcome was due to Pete's initial response.

strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 strongly agree

It is common for employees to meet outside of work at a coffee shop.

strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 strongly agree

It is acceptable for employees to meet outside of work at a coffee shop.

strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 strongly agree

It is common for employees to have a close relationship.

strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 strongly agree

It is acceptable for employees to have a close relationship.

strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 strongly agree

APPENDIX D

**Demographic Questionnaire**

Please answer the following questions. It is not mandatory to answer all questions; however, it is encouraged as it will help when analyzing data. All answers will remain anonymous.

Age: \_\_\_\_\_

Sex: \_\_\_\_\_M \_\_\_\_\_F

Sexual Orientation: \_\_\_\_\_

Ethnicity: \_\_\_\_\_ Asian

\_\_\_\_\_ Black/African American

\_\_\_\_\_ White/Caucasian

\_\_\_\_\_ Hispanic/Latino

\_\_\_\_\_ Other

Education: \_\_\_\_\_ High School

\_\_\_\_\_ Some College

\_\_\_\_\_ College Degree

\_\_\_\_\_ Graduate Studies and/or Above

How many years have you been in the work force? \_\_\_\_\_

Have you ever been in a position of authority?

Current Job Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Have you ever been exposed to sexual harassment in the workplace? (this includes  
witnessing others)                    \_\_\_\_\_ Yes                    \_\_\_\_\_ No

## APPENDIX E

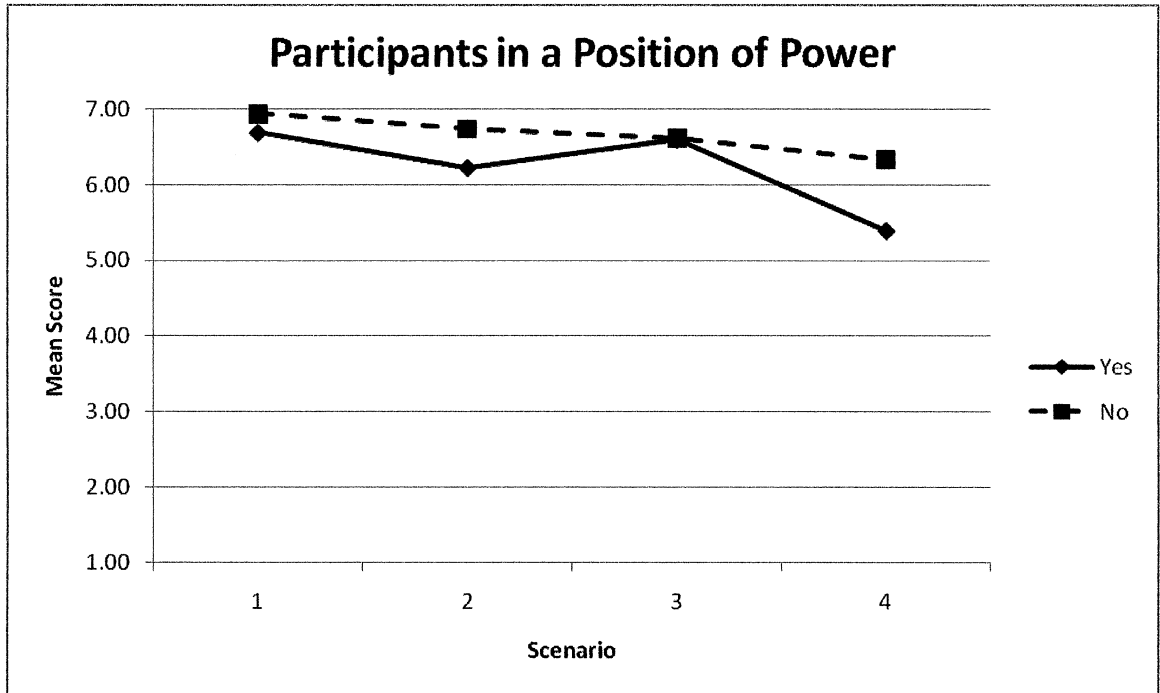
### Debriefing Statement

Thank you for participating in this study concerning sexual harassment and the workplace. The purpose of this study was to examine positions of power and the perception of sexual harassment among coworkers. Some people in the workforce experience some form of sexual harassment. It is important to understand how others perceive sexual harassment in order for the court system to make fair and proper decisions. The data collected from this study will help determine the connection of sexual harassment and its relationship to the workplace.

The results of this study will be available at the end of the Spring 2009 semester. If you are interested in obtaining the results of this study, please contact Bobbi Jo Hardimon at [Hardim18@students.rowan.edu](mailto:Hardim18@students.rowan.edu).

APPENDIX F

Figure 1 Interaction Between Power in the Workplace and Scenarios



APPENDIX G

*Table 1* Average Scores for Question1 & Question2

	Victim Gender	Mean Score Question1	Mean Score Question2
Co-Worker Relationship	Male	6.41	6.31
	Female	6.36	6.28
Authority Relationship	Male	6.56	6.51
	Female	6.57	6.48

Question1 = In your opinion, this scenario is an example of sexual harassment.

Question2 = This scenario meets the definition of sexual harassment according to the EEOC.

## APPENDIX H

*Table 2* Participant Means Per Scenario

	Scenario	Means for Question 1	Means for Question 2
Packet 1	1	6.782	6.855
	2	6.655	6.491
	3	6.709	6.691
	4	6.218	6.036
Packet 2	1	6.564	6.595
	2	6.385	6.262
	3	6.487	6.476
	4	5.897	5.595