MORALITY FRAMING AND SEXUAL HARASSMENT TRAINING

EFFECTIVENESS

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ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS

Morality Framing and Sexual Harassment Training Effectiveness
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Sexual harassment has been shown to lead to detrimental effects for victims, bystanders, and organizations. Only a handful of studies have focused on the effectiveness of sexual harassment training, and some training programs have actually been found to have negative effects, such as decreasing identification of coercive sexual harassment, decreasing willingness to report sexual harassment, and increasing blame for the victim. A possible explanation for this is that sexual harassment training is often conducted for legal purposes and therefore discusses monetary fines, jail time, job termination, etc. that can occur if convicted of sexual harassment. Research has shown that the way in which a situation is framed influences how people make decisions on how to act on it. Regulatory focus theory describes how a person is oriented to achieve a goal by either seeking pleasure (promotion focused) or avoiding pain (prevention focused), which can be influenced both dispositionally and situationally. Past studies have applied regulatory focus theory to diversity training by examining the difference between moral ideals and moral obligations. Moral ideals focused on the promotion of positive outcomes such as equal treatment, while moral obligations focused on preventing negative outcomes such as avoiding discrimination. Therefore, while moral ideals and moral obligations present the same core message, the technique used to deliver the message is different. The goal of this study is to apply regulatory focus theory to sexual harassment training and examine if there are any differences in the effectiveness of sexual harassment training that is either focused on moral ideals or moral obligations. It is anticipated that regulatory focus theory applied to sexual harassment training can lead to increased training effectiveness, as measured by Kirkpatrick’s training outcomes of reactions and learning. One-hundred and twenty seven participants were recruited through the undergraduate psychology student participant pool system at a large, public university in the southwest. A Solomon-four group design was utilized to better examine pre-testing effects. Therefore, half of the participants for each condition were randomly assigned to take an online pretest and half were not. Half of the participants were randomly assigned to view the sexual harassment training video that is focused on moral ideals and half of the participants were randomly assigned to view the sexual harassment training video that is focused on moral obligations. While information in both conditions were equivalent in length, words were altered on the slides to induce either a moral ideals perspective that focused on positive outcomes or a moral obligations perspective that focused on negative outcomes. ANOVA, ANCOVA, t-tests, and Stouffer’s z-method analyses were utilized. It was found that moral ideals had significant and positive affective learning outcomes in the form of sexual harassment myth endorsement, but all other variables were either not significant or positively
significant for moral obligations. It is recommended that future studies pursue this topic further to better understand the theoretical underpinnings of sexual harassment training effectiveness and the influences of negative outcomes.
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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Society in the United States has come a long way in regards to gender equality since women first entered the workforce. Before this time, women were often not considered ideal candidates for occupational positions, and their job choices were limited to traditional gendered roles such as teaching or nursing. Now, it is difficult to imagine the workplace without women. However, this progression of equality of women is not as complete as we might think. To this day, women continue to be objectified and disrespected in the workplace when sexual harassment occurs. In 2011, 11,364 sexual harassment discrimination charges were filed and resolved with a total of $52.3 million dollars in monetary benefits (Employment Discrimination, Diversity, Harassment, Gender and Labor Issues [EEOC], 2011). This implies that sexual harassment is a serious and costly problem in which preventative and corrective measures need to be examined. The sections that follow will provide a definition of sexual harassment as well as the consequences of sexual harassment, present training as a remedy for sexual harassment, summarize past research on regulatory focus theory, and apply regulatory focus theory to sexual harassment training.

WHAT IS SEXUAL HARASSMENT?

According to the EEOC (2011), 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.

Legally, there are two different classifications of sexual harassment. One type, called quid pro quo, is an exchange for an offer such as an employment opportunity. For example, a manager can offer their subordinate a promotion in exchange for a date. The other type of sexual harassment is called hostile environment. According to the Federal Communications Commission (FCC, n.d.), “Hostile work environment harassment occurs when unwelcome
comments or conduct based on sex, race or other legally protected characteristics unreasonably interferes with an employee’s work performance or creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment”.

Title VII of the Civil Rights Act was created in 1964 to prevent and reduce discrimination in the workforce based on gender, race, color, national origin, and religion (EEOC, 2011). This law was first utilized to include sexual harassment as a form of sexual discrimination in the 1970s. The Meritor Savings Bank v. Vinson case was the first sexual harassment case to reach the Supreme Court in 1986. This case established hostile environment as a form of sexual harassment and also that employers should be held accountable for sexual harassment their organization (Collins & Vaughn, 2004; Jorgenson & Wahl, 2000).

**CONSEQUENCES OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT**

At the same time case law about sexual harassment was evolving, social scientists were examining the consequences of sexual harassment, which has been shown to lead to a variety of detrimental effects. An individual can experience many psychological problems such as fear, depression, and anxiety (Berdahl & Aquino, 2009; de Haas, Timmerman, & Höing, 2009; Willness, Steel, & Lee, 2007). These psychological problems also contribute to potential physical consequences such as digestive problems, headaches, and inability to sleep (e.g., de Haas et al., 2009). Research has suggested that many of the symptoms experienced by victims of sexual harassment are similar to the symptoms experienced by those who suffer from post-traumatic stress disorder. These victims tend to re-experience the event of distress, avoid the associated stimuli, and feel a sense of hyper-arousal (Avina & O’Donohue, 2002; Willness et al., 2007). Research has also supported that victims of sexual harassment are more prone to develop drug addictions to cope with their emotions (Richman, Rospenda, Flaherty, Freels, & Zlatoper, 2004). Overall, these symptoms together decrease the life satisfaction for the victim (LeBlanc & Kelloway, 2002; Munson, Hulin, & Drasgow, 2000; Willness et al., 2007).

These psychological and physical problems can spill over into an individual’s work and disrupt one’s occupational well-being. For example, sexual harassment can make someone despise coming to work every day and increase their job stress (Barling et al., 1996;
This in turn can make the victim feel disconnected from the company, decreasing the pride one has in his or her company and decrease organizational commitment (Willness et al., 2007). The victim can experience a lot of interpersonal conflict with coworkers and those in supervisory positions since there is a lack of assistance and support from others. This in turn decreases their job satisfaction (Glomb, Muson, Hulin, Bergman, & Drasgow, 1999; Goldenhar, Swanson, Hurrell, Ruder, & Deddens, 1998; Mueller et al., 2001; Willness et al., 2007). Because of this, a victim may choose to cope with the situation through different forms of withdrawal including showing up late to work, being absent or disengaged at work, or quitting one’s position (Berdahl & Aquino, 2009; Glomb et al., 1999; LeBlanc & Kelloway, 2002; Mueller et al., 2001; Munson et al., 2000; Sims, Drasgow, & Fitzgerald, 2005; Willness et al., 2007).

The research is clear that sexual harassment has serious consequences for the victim “whether they label their experiences as harassment or not” (Magley, Hulin, Fitzgerald, & DeNardo, 1999, p. 390). What may not be as obvious is how the people around the victim are affected by sexual harassment. This phenomenon is called ambient sexual harassment (Glomb et al., 1997). Past research has shown that bystanders who work in an environment in which sexual harassment occurs are still susceptible to similar consequences that the victim faces. Ambient sexual harassment can potentially lead to significant decreases in job satisfaction as well as significant increases in psychological conditions for the bystander. These effects can also lead to indirect consequences for the bystander such as job withdrawal and health conditions.

The negative effects for the victim and bystanders taken together decrease the overall productivity of the workgroup, since absenteeism, tardiness, and turnover increase for both the victim and bystanders (Hanisch, 1997). Also, research has found that sexual harassment decreases team cohesion on both relationship and task levels (Raver & Gelfand, 2005). In other words, a team will have more difficulty performing together due to conflicts in personality and opinions on how to accomplish goals when sexual harassment is present. In addition, organizations can have large financial losses since they are legally liable for sexual harassment on their premises if they are aware of it and neglect taking action against it. For example, Mistubishi was fined $34 million dollars in a very public trial in 1996 (Ganzel,
1998). If an organization is taken to court for sexual harassment charges, it not only tarnishes the public image of the company but can also potentially result in a loss of investment from stakeholders (Gutek & Koss, 1993).

**TRAINING FOR SEXUAL HARASSMENT**

All in all, it is apparent that sexual harassment is detrimental and should be avoided for the benefit of everybody. Research has often suggested training for correction and prevention of sexual harassment (Bell, Quick, & Cycyota, 2002; Reese, 2004; Tang, Tang, & McCollum, 1996; York, Barclay, & Zajack, 1997). Unfortunately, while research stresses the importance of examining training effectiveness (Grossman & Salas, 2011), only a handful of studies have focused on the effectiveness of sexual harassment training (examples include: Antecol & Cobb-Clark, 2003; Barak, 1994; Blakely, Blakely, & Moorman, 1998; Goldberg, 2007; Robb & Doverspike, 2001). It cannot be assumed that all training is effective, especially considering that some sexual harassment training programs have actually been found to have negative effects, particularly for men. One study showed that men who participated in sexual harassment training were less likely to perceive coercive sexual harassment, less willing to report sexual harassment, and more likely to blame the victim compared to those who did not participate in sexual harassment training (Bingham & Scherer, 2001).

A potential reason for this negative effect is that many organizations use sexual harassment training to protect them from liability. California harassment law, AB 1825, mandates that organizations in California provide sexual harassment training for supervisory employees every two years (Society for Human Resource Management, n.d.). If employees perceive legality to be the sole motivation for implementation of the sexual harassment training, it implies that the organization lacks a genuine concern for the safety of their employees and may instill a sense of cynicism amongst them, which may ultimately decrease their motivation to learn (Kath, 2005).

Because of these negative effects, some studies have examined the differences in effectiveness of legal and ethical perspectives of sexual harassment training. A legal perspective discusses monetary fines, jail time, job termination, etc. that occurs if convicted of sexual harassment. An ethical perspective is focused more on positive mood, strong
interpersonal relationships, and respect that occur in the workplace when sexual harassment is not present. Perry, Kulik, Bustamante, and Golom (2010) examined these differences in the training effectiveness of legal and ethical perspectives in a quasi-experiment. Results were obtained from 321 employees who worked in human resources that responded to a survey in the mail. Participants answered questions regarding knowledge of sexual harassment and what they believed was the motivation of management for providing the training. The results from the questionnaire showed that while any training is better than no training at all, the training that focused on encouraging diversity (ethical-based training) showed to be more effective than legal-based training. Kath (2007) also studied legal and ethical perspectives of sexual harassment training by manipulating these conditions in an experiment utilizing computer-based training with a student sample of 240. Her results supported Perry et al. (2010) in that using an ethical perspective yielded higher training effectiveness compared to a training based on a legal perspective.

Despite these findings, sexual harassment training today is frequently conducted for legal purposes. As mentioned previously, sexual harassment training from a legal perspective often includes information on negative consequences that occur if convicted as a harasser. Although training focused on negative consequences has been shown to be effective in some circumstances such as in public health (Baron, Inman, Kao, & Logan, 1992; Gleicher & Petty, 1992; Rippetoe & Rogers, 1987), it may not be the best technique for training regarding interpersonal relationships. For example, a negative consequences approach can often lead employees to be paranoid and distance themselves from those around them to avoid punishment (Thongsukmag, 2003). Social relationships are often a key to productivity (Baruch-Feldman, Brondolo, Ben-Dayan, & Schwartz, 2002), so a focus on negative consequences that elicits distance between men and women may not be the best technique for sexual harassment training because it may have the unintended effect of decreasing productivity.

Another reason why a legal perspective is not ideal for sexual harassment training is that the definition of sexual harassment is somewhat ambiguous and therefore cannot be relied upon to pinpoint all of the “grey” areas (Kenig & Ryan, 1986). Because the definition of sexual harassment is broad, harassers may find specific situations that are not explicitly covered by the definition. When they find these loopholes in the system, it may give them a
false sense of immunity. For example, sexual harassment in the workplace is explicitly against the law; however, some people may think that their inappropriate acts toward a coworker are legal if it occurs outside of the workplace. In reality, the act is offensive and harmful whether it happens at your desk or whether it happens off the clock. Consequently, an approach to training that is based on ethics rather than law may help clarify this ambiguity and thus be more efficient.

**REGULATORY FOCUS THEORY**

Research has shown that the way in which a situation is framed influences how people make decisions and react to the situation. The same scenario can be presented in a way that focuses on the positive consequences of a choice (promotion-focused) or the negative consequences of a choice (prevention-focused). For example, people are more likely to choose a plan with an 80% survival rate than a 20% mortality rate even though the two plans are clearly equivalent in actual risk (Kahneman & Tversky, 1984). Higgins (1997) called this phenomenon regulatory focus theory, which is how a person is oriented to achieve a goal by either seeking pleasure (promotion-focused) or avoiding pain (prevention-focused). Studies have shown that while a component of regulatory focus is dispositional (Hoyle, 2010; Scholer & Higgins, 2010), other studies have shown that it can be primed in a situational context (Higgins, 2005).

Although the concept of seeking pleasure or avoiding pain may seem primitive, recent studies have applied regulatory focus theory to the workplace (Brockner & Higgins, 2001; Wallace, Johnson, & Frazier, 2009). A recent meta-analysis showed that a relationship existed between being promotion- or prevention-focused and certain organizational outcomes, such as performance, organizational citizenship behavior, and counterproductive work behavior (Lanaj, Chang, & Johnson, 2012). The latter two are of interest to this study, because sexual harassment is considered a CWB, or counterproductive behavior (Popovich & Warren, 2010), while the opposite of sexual harassment, respect, is an aspect of OCBs, or organizational citizenship behavior (Erkutlu, 2011). Based on this, it is hypothesized that sexual harassment training can be modified to induce promotion or prevention perspectives, thus increasing the probability of encouraging OCBs while decreasing CWBs.
**REGULATORY FOCUS THEORY FOR SEXUAL HARASSMENT TRAINING**

The goal of this study is to apply regulatory focus theory to sexual harassment training and examine if there are any differences in the effectiveness of sexual harassment training that is either focused on gaining positive outcomes (promotion-focused) or avoiding negative outcomes (prevention-focused). Regulatory focus theory has never been applied to sexual harassment training in research; however, the theory has been examined on a similar topic.

Because of the minimal research of sexual harassment training effectiveness, it may be helpful to also examine research regarding diversity training effectiveness. Both sexual harassment training and diversity training are designed with the same goals; so that the organization can adhere to Title VII of the Civil Rights Act and to be morally and politically correct in business practices. Therefore, because a recently published meta-analysis found that diversity training overall had a small to medium effect size (Kalinoski et al., 2012), it would be logical to expect that sexual harassment training may have similar effect sizes. Because sexual harassment is such a serious issue, organizations should not settle for training that has such little impact. In addition, researchers should be encouraged to focus on finding ways to increase sexual harassment training effectiveness.

Does, Derks, and Ellemers (2011) applied regulatory focus theory to diversity training by examining the difference between moral ideals and moral obligations. In this experiment, participants were randomly assigned to one of two conditions. The moral ideals condition emphasized equal treatment and was promotion-focused, while the moral obligation condition emphasized non-discrimination and was prevention-focused. Results showed that those in the moral ideals condition had a higher prioritization of equality after training than those in the moral obligation condition. Does et al. (2011) attribute these results to the collective guilt the advantaged group experiences if it is pointed out to them that they are given superior treatment over a different, disadvantaged group (Branscombe, Doosje, & McGarty, 2002; Doosje, Branscombe, Spears, & Manstead, 1998) and because of this, will partake in coping strategies to prevent this guilt, such as withdrawal from the situation (Derks, Van Laar, & Ellemers, 2006; Walton & Cohen, 2007). Therefore, in order to keep all participants engaged, Does et al. (2011) suggest that diversity training from the perspective...
that emphasizes equality (moral ideals) is more effective than diversity training that emphasizes non-discrimination (moral obligation).

**EXPECTED OUTCOMES OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT TRAINING**

Effectiveness of training is most often measured by Kirkpatrick’s (1977) four training outcomes: reactions, learning, behavior, and results. *Reactions* refer to how satisfied the participant felt about the training. *Learning* encompasses information or skills that were acquired by training. Kraiger, Ford, and Salas (1993) further categorized learning into the dimensions of cognitive, affective, and skill-based outcomes. Cognitive outcomes include verbal knowledge or organization of knowledge, while affective outcomes pertain to attitudes and motivation. Skill-based outcomes refer to the acquisition of technical or motor skills. These skill-based outcomes are not to be confused with Kirkpatrick’s (1977) classification of behavior as a training outcome. While skill-based outcomes refer to the initial development of skill during or shortly after training, *behavior* is more long term and captures how often the material of the training was applied once back on the job. *Results* indicate the financial benefits for the organization that were gained either directly or indirectly because of training.

It is anticipated that regulatory focus theory applied to sexual harassment training can lead to increased training effectiveness, as measured by Kirkpatrick’s (1977) training outcomes. First and foremost, it is expected that reactions will be more favorable in the moral ideals condition than in the moral obligation condition. This inferential leap is based off of Kath’s (2005) examination of the relationship between sexual harassment training effectiveness and cynicism. Because a legal condition can instill negative feelings including cynicism, similar results may replicate in a moral obligation condition since both are prevention-focused. Accordingly, I hypothesize the following:

- **Hypothesis 1:** Sexual harassment training that is framed with moral ideals will yield more positive reactions compared to sexual harassment training that is framed with moral obligations.

In addition, it is believed that regulatory focus theory can increase training effectiveness in regards to cognitive and affective learning when applied to sexual harassment training. Cognitive learning in this context can refer to knowledge of sexual harassment law or knowledge of organizational policies regarding sexual harassment.
Motivation is a form of affective learning and is necessary for the acquisition of cognitive learning. Perry et al. (2010) found that trainees had more motivation to learn in sexual harassment training designed from an ethical perspective than from a legal perspective. This shows that the organization has true concern for their employee’s health and well-being (promotion-focused) rather than to protect themselves from liability (prevention-focused). Because an ethical perspective is aligned with moral ideals in that they are both promotion-focused and a legal perspective is aligned with moral obligations because they are both prevention-focused, I hypothesize the following:

- **Hypothesis 2:** Sexual harassment training framed with moral ideals will lead to more cognitive learning than sexual harassment training framed with moral obligation.
- **Hypothesis 3:** Sexual harassment training framed with moral ideals will lead to more affective learning than sexual harassment training framed with moral obligation.
CHAPTER 2

METHOD

PARTICIPANTS

There were 126 students total who participated in the study, 54.80% of whom were male and 100% were single. Due to a clerical oversight, the ethnicity question was omitted from the survey. However, the participants were largely psychology majors, and the ethnic makeup of that department is 39.21% Hispanic, 34.76% White, and the rest of the 26.03% are other or a combination of ethnicities. Of the students who completed both a pre-test and a post-test, 24 were in the moral obligation condition and 23 were in the moral ideals condition. Of the students who only completed a post-test, 40 were in the moral obligation condition and 39 were in the moral ideals condition. Participant ages ranged from 18-28 years old ($M=19.72$, $SD=1.70$), with the majority of participants being under 21 (76.20%). The participants’ work experience ranged from 0-10 years, with the majority (67.20%) of participants having two years or less of part-time experience. The majority of participants who held jobs worked in restaurant or retail customer service. Other participants held jobs relating to fitness, childcare, healthcare, etc. Only 31.70% of participants have had sexual harassment awareness training previously.

PROCEDURE

Participants were recruited through the undergraduate psychology department participant pool at a large, public university in the southwest and received course credit in exchange for their time. A trained experimenter guided the participant through the process using predetermined instructions. A consent form was provided to the participants at the beginning of the study to ensure that they were aware of their rights.

This study utilized a Solomon-four group design to better examine testing effects. Therefore, half of the participants in the moral ideals condition and half of the participants in the moral obligation condition were randomly assigned to take an online pre-test in addition to a posttest, whereas the rest did not take a pre-test and took the post-test only. This allowed
for direct examination of any effects the pretest may have on training effectiveness.

Following the introduction from the experimenter (and the pre-test if in that condition), participants watched one of two sexual harassment training videos. Half of the participants were randomly assigned to view the sexual harassment training video that was focused on moral ideals and half of the participants were randomly assigned to view the sexual harassment training video that was focused on moral obligation.

Although information in both conditions were equivalent in length, statements were altered on the slides that induced either a moral ideals perspective that focused on positive outcomes or a moral obligation perspective that focused on negative outcomes. For example, both conditions discussed the outcomes of sexual harassment. In the moral ideals condition, the slide stated, “If sexual harassment can be avoided, the consequences are positive physical and emotional health, high work performance, and a respected reputation.” On the other hand, in the moral obligation condition, the slide stated, “If sexual harassment does occur, the consequences are negative physical and emotional health, low work performance, and a disrespected reputation.” Therefore the messages in both conditions were the same, but the way in which the message is framed differed across conditions.

Although this concept of message framing (or in this case morality framing) has been referred to by a variety of names in the literature, I will consistently use the terms “moral ideals” and “moral obligation,” to define the experimental conditions in this study. To help reduce confusion that is created when multiple terms exist for a very similar concept, I have included Table 1, which shows the synonyms that fall under the moral ideals and moral obligation condition categories.

**Table 1. Terms from Past Research Describing Framing Conditions**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Moral Ideals</th>
<th>Moral Obligations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Promotion-focused</td>
<td>Prevention-focused</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focus on positive outcomes</td>
<td>Focus on negative outcomes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seeking pleasure</td>
<td>Avoiding pain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emphasize equality</td>
<td>Emphasizes non-discrimination</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethical</td>
<td>Legal</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the training, some slides were identical in both conditions for practical purposes. For instance, both conditions defined what the laws are in regards to sexual harassment, since it is not feasible to alter this information in any way. An example of this is a slide that would
contain information such as how and when sexual harassment can occur. The slide stated, “Harassment does not have to be from a supervisor: Harassment can come from a coworker, a subordinate, or even a non-employee (e.g. a client).” Statements such as this are more informational than persuasive. They are intended to define legal fact rather than encourage or discourage behavior. Therefore, statements such as this are unable to be molded to adjust to moral ideals or moral obligation perspectives and were kept equivalent in both conditions.

Both videos were about 30 minutes in length and developed using the software PowerPoint. Narrating audio for the videos utilized both male and female voices equally to decrease the chances of trainer gender effects from occurring. Each participant was assigned computer in the lab room so that they were able to watch the video individually with headphones. Once the video was finished, all participants were instructed to complete a survey online. After this, the trained experimenter debriefed the participants on the purpose of the study and offered to answer any questions.

**Measures**

Overall, the measures of this study were intended to measure whether the training was successful and why. As mentioned previously, Kirkpatrick (1977) measures training effectiveness through reactions, learning, behavior, and results. Due to feasibility, this study focused solely on reactions and learning, specifically cognitive and affective learning. Measures utilized a 5-point Likert scale with 1 representing “Strongly agree” and 5 representing “Strongly disagree,” unless otherwise specified. In general, higher scores indicate a higher level of the particular construct that is being measured (see Appendix for full list of survey items).

**Reactions**

Reactions were measured with three items that capture training satisfaction developed by Kath (2005). Such items included, “I was satisfied with the usefulness of my company’s sexual harassment training” and have reported reliabilities of .84 and .90. Higher scores indicate higher learner satisfaction with sexual harassment training.
Learning-Cognitive

Cognitive learning is reflected by the knowledge gained from the training and were assessed with items regarding sexual harassment law and organizational policies about sexual harassment. Because there are no publicly used measures for the law and organizational policies, items from Kath’s (2007) unpublished manuscript were adopted. There were 10 multiple-choice questions that quizzed participants on sexual harassment law such as “The type of harassment that involves an exchange of sexual favors for a bribe or avoided threat is called____”. The five items for knowledge about organizational policies about sexual harassment were also from Kath’s (2007) research. Because organizational policies vary, policies that are typically enforced in an average organization were focused on and embedded throughout the training. Items included, “Who is legally responsible for putting the organization on notice about potential harassment?”

Learning-Affective

Affective learning was measured by assessing attitudes toward sexual harassment. Ten items from Lonsway, Cortina, and Magley’s (2008) study evaluated sexual harassment myth endorsement and included items such as “As long as a woman doesn’t lose her job, her claim of sexual harassment shouldn’t be taken too seriously.” The published reliability for this scale is .79. Additional sexual harassment importance attitudinal items were included that measured the extent to which one feels that sexual harassment is in important issue. This was measured with 5 items (Krosnick, Boninger, Chuang, Berent, & Carnot, 1993) such as “Sexual harassment is an important workplace issue.”

Training cynicism and training motivation scales were also used to measure affective learning. The 3-item training cynicism scale (Kath, 2005) included items such as “Acme, Inc. pretends to care more about sexual harassment training than they do” and has reliabilities of .83 and .84. The training motivation scale used 3 out of the original 7 items (Noe & Schmitt, 1986) and has reliabilities of .82 and .81. The items were adapted to be specifically relevant to sexual harassment training and included items such as “I am willing to exert some effort to learn about sexual harassment issues”.

Affective learning was also captured with five items that measured harassment reporting self-efficacy and twelve items that measured bystander intervention self-efficacy.
These scales utilized a 5-point Likert scale with 1 = “Not at all confident” and 5 = “Completely confident”. An example item of harassment reporting self-efficacy is “How confident are you that you...know whom to contact to report potential sexual harassment?” and was based off of the operationalization of self-efficacy by Lee and Bobko (1994). Applied in the context of harassment, higher scores indicate a higher confidence in completion of tasks relating to reporting harassment issues if you are the victim. The bystander intervention self-efficacy scale was based off of Bowes-Sperry and O’Leary-Kelly (2005) and included items such as “In a situation of potential harassment, how confident are you that you would...recommend that a target avoid the harasser?”

**Promotion/Prevention Disposition**

To measure disposition influences on respondents’ reactions to conditions guided by regulatory focus theory, two additional scales were included to measure participants’ dispositional regulatory focus. The event reaction questionnaire (Higgins et al., 2001) was included to assess the promotion or prevention focus of the participants. This scale comprised of items like “Growing up, would you ever ‘cross the line’ by doing things that your parents would not tolerate?” The questionnaire has 11 items with responses indicated on a 5-point frequency scale (1 = “never or seldom” and 5 = “very often”) with reliabilities of .73 and .80. In addition, the 18-item promotion/prevention scale (Lockwood, Jordan, & Kunda, 2002) was employed with items such as “In general, I am focused on preventing negative events in my life.” This scale assesses the promotion or prevention focus of the participant with a 5-point scale (1 = “not true at all of me” and 5 = “very true of me”) and has reliabilities of .75 and .81.

**Analyses**

Once data were collected, analyses were conducted for each of the reactions, learning-cognitive, and learning-affective training outcomes, according to the recommendations made by Braver and Braver (1988). The first analysis that was performed was a 2 (pre-test condition) X 2 (moral framing condition) ANOVA. The analyses thereafter depend on if these results are significant or not. If the 2 X 2 ANOVA results were significant,
the simple main effects of the pre-test condition were examined to determine if the results occurred due to sensitization of the testing or due to the morality framing condition.

If the results from the ANOVA were not significant, the main effect of the morality framing condition was computed. If these results from of the main effect were significant, it was concluded that the morality framing condition had an influence on the training effectiveness. If the results of the main effect were not significant, then an ANCOVA was performed on the data for those participants that took the pre-test. Significant results of this equation can once again be attributed to the morality framing condition. However, if the ANCOVA yielded results that were not significant, then a t-test was performed on the data for participants that did not take a pre-test. If the t-test showed no significance, then these results were compared to the results of the previously mentioned ANCOVA using Stouffer’s z-method. It is only if Stouffer’s z-method was not significant that it was concluded that there was no evidence to support that the morality framing condition had an effect on training effectiveness.

Exploratory analyses were also conducted to determine if disposition interacted with experimental condition to affect results.
CHAPTER 3

RESULTS

Table 2 reports the means, standard deviations, and intercorrelations of all study scales. Overall, cynicism has the highest mean ($M = 3.55, SD = .76$) and harassment reporting self-efficacy has the lowest mean ($M = 1.83, SD = .59$) of all scales rated on a Likert scale. The strongest relationship across scales is between harassment reporting self-efficacy and bystander intervention self-efficacy ($r = .68$). Sexual harassment importance had the highest frequency of significant relationships with other scales, including sexual harassment myth endorsement ($r = -.23$), training cynicism ($r = -.26$), training motivation ($r = .62$), harassment reporting self-efficacy ($r = .50$), and bystander intervention self-efficacy ($r = .58$). On the other hand, knowledge of sexual harassment organizational policies was not significantly related to any other scale.

Table 2. Descriptives, Reliabilities, and Correlations among Study Variables for Sample 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>$M$</th>
<th>$SD$</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Knowledge of law</td>
<td>6.11</td>
<td>1.68</td>
<td>.07</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Knowledge of policies</td>
<td>2.60</td>
<td>1.14</td>
<td>.44</td>
<td>.26**</td>
<td>.13</td>
<td>(.65)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Myth endorsement</td>
<td>2.91</td>
<td>.44</td>
<td>.26**</td>
<td>.13</td>
<td>(.65)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Cynicism</td>
<td>3.55</td>
<td>.76</td>
<td>-.03</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>.10</td>
<td>(.75)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Motivation</td>
<td>2.20</td>
<td>.83</td>
<td>.17</td>
<td>.07</td>
<td>.17</td>
<td>-.30**</td>
<td>(.92)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Reporting Self-efficacy</td>
<td>1.83</td>
<td>.59</td>
<td>-.06</td>
<td>-.10</td>
<td>-.06</td>
<td>-.27**</td>
<td>.49**</td>
<td>(.87)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Bystander Self-efficacy</td>
<td>2.10</td>
<td>.56</td>
<td>.07</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>-.11</td>
<td>-.33**</td>
<td>.50**</td>
<td>.68**</td>
<td>(.84)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Training Satisfaction</td>
<td>2.57</td>
<td>.55</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td>-.05</td>
<td>.13</td>
<td>-.28**</td>
<td>.23*</td>
<td>.15</td>
<td>.21*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Importance</td>
<td>2.11</td>
<td>.62</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td>.12</td>
<td>-.23*</td>
<td>.26**</td>
<td>.62**</td>
<td>.50**</td>
<td>.58**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).
*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).
Numbers in parentheses represent alpha levels for that scale.

MANIPULATION CHECKS AND GENDER EFFECTS

An independent samples $t$-test was conducted on the items included the survey that were intended to measure the strength of the manipulation of the training conditions. Of these items, only two, “This training focused on gaining ethical benefits at Acme” and “This training emphasized equality and respect in the workplace,” were significantly different
across the moral ideals and moral obligation training conditions ($t = 2.63, p < .05$ and $t = 2.42, p < .05$). Unfortunately, although these manipulation check questions were intended to measure the moral ideals manipulation, participants in the moral obligation condition had higher scores on average for these items ($M = 2.52$ and $M = 1.97$) compared to participants in the moral ideals condition ($M = 2.03$ and $M = 1.56$). See Figure 1 for the distribution of means for all manipulation check questions.

Qualitative data were also collected in the post-test to assess the strength of the manipulation. Participants were asked “What is the main motivation of Acme in conducting this training?” Three participants did not answer the question and were therefore excluded from the qualitative analysis. Responses were blind coded by two raters to determine if the word choice reflected the concepts of the moral ideals condition or the moral obligation condition. For example, if a participant responded that the motivation of Acme Inc. was “to promote a respectful work environment”, it would be coded as moral ideals because it represents the principles of that condition. Similarly, if a participant responded that the motivation of Acme Inc. was “To stop sexual harassment at Acme Inc. and to protect themselves from being liable for any sexual harassment damages,” it would be coded as reflecting the moral obligation condition. Once this was complete, raters were made aware of the actual training condition that the responses belonged to, and the raters further categorized responses as “matching” if the responses correctly aligned with the training condition, or “not matching” if the responses reflected the opposing training condition. For example, if the response was coded as reflecting moral ideals and the participant actually was in the moral ideals condition, it was considered “matching.” However, if the response was coded as reflecting moral ideals but the participant was actually in the moral obligation condition, it was considered “not matching.” Similarly, if the response was coded as reflecting moral obligation but the participant was actually in the moral ideals condition, it was considered “not matching.” The raters agreed that 24.4% of responses were “not matching” and therefore these participants were not appropriately influenced by the training condition that they were in.

Analyses were conducted to determine if gender influenced the results in any way. An independent samples $t$-test shows that for the most part, there were few differences between the results of males and females, with the exception of knowledge of sexual harassment
Figure 1. Means for manipulation check items. (1) This training focused on promoting positive outcomes. (2) This training focused on preventing negative outcomes. (3) This training focused on gaining ethical benefits at Acme [significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)]. (4) This training focused on avoiding legal consequences for Acme. (5) This training emphasized equality and respect in the workplace [significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)]. (6) This training emphasized non-discrimination in the workplace.
organizational policies \((t = 2.92, p < .05)\) and sexual harassment myth endorsement \((t = 2.27, p < .05)\) such that females had higher scores \((M = 2.91 \text{ and } 3.00, \text{ respectively})\) than males \((M = 2.33 \text{ and } 2.83)\). Analyses also examined if gender contributed to a three-way interaction with training condition and testing condition. All results were non-significant \((p > .05)\). Subsequent analyses for hypothesis testing followed the approach for analyzing Solomon 4-group designs recommended by Braver and Braver (1988).

**REACTIONS OUTCOMES**

Hypothesis 1 stated that the moral ideals condition will yield more positive reactions than the moral obligation condition. Looking at the interaction effect in the 2 X 2 ANOVA, there is no evidence to suggest that the relationship between testing condition and training satisfaction changed as a function of training condition \((F (1, 125) = .004, p > .05)\). The next step in the Braver and Braver (1988) analysis is to examine the main effect of the training condition. The training condition did significantly predict training satisfaction when controlling for testing condition \((F (1, 125) = 6.67, p < .05)\). Unfortunately, this was not in the hypothesized direction and the moral obligation condition had higher scores of satisfaction \((M = 2.68)\) than the moral ideals condition \((M = 2.48)\). Thus, Hypothesis 1 is not supported.

**LEARNING-COGNITIVE OUTCOMES**

Hypothesis 2 stated that more cognitive learning will take place in the moral ideals condition compared to the moral obligation condition. Cognitive learning was measured in two ways, with *knowledge of sexual harassment law* and with *knowledge of sexual harassment organizational policies*. The 2 X 2 ANOVA for knowledge of sexual harassment law showed that there is no evidence to suggest that the relationship between training condition and knowledge of sexual harassment law changed as a function of testing condition \((F (1,125) = 2.89, p > .05)\). However, the main effect of training condition did significantly predict knowledge of sexual harassment law when controlling for testing condition \((F (1, 125) = 5.51, p < .05)\). Unfortunately, these results were not in the hypothesized direction and the moral obligation condition had higher scores \((M = 6.39)\) than the moral ideals condition \((M = 5.82)\).
For knowledge of sexual harassment organizational policies, the 2 X 2 ANOVA demonstrated that there is no evidence to suggest that the relationship between training condition and knowledge of sexual harassment organizational policies changed as a function of testing condition \((F (1,125) = .003, p > .05)\). Also, training condition did not significantly predict knowledge of sexual harassment organizational policies when controlling for testing condition \((F (1, 125) = 1.11, p > .05)\). In follow-up analyses using ANCOVA, training condition did not significantly predict knowledge of sexual harassment organizational policies for the pre-test/post-test group when controlling for the post-test only condition \((F (1, 47) = 2.05, p > .05)\). A t-test was then computed and there were no significant differences between the moral ideals and moral obligation conditions for the post-test only group \((t (1, 77) = -.48, p > .05)\). Stouffer’s z-method also yielded non-significant results \((z = -1.57, p > .05)\). Thus, Hypothesis 2 is not supported.

**LEARNING-AFFECTIVE OUTCOMES**

Hypothesis 3 stated that the moral ideals condition would result in more affective learning than the moral obligation condition. Affective learning was captured with measures of sexual harassment myth endorsement, sexual harassment importance, training cynicism, training motivation, harassment reporting self-efficacy, and bystander intervention self-efficacy. Regarding sexual harassment myth endorsement, there is evidence to suggest that the relationship between training condition and myth endorsement changed as a function of testing condition as seen in a 2 X 2 ANOVA \((F (1,125) = 9.13, p < .05)\). As shown in Figure 2, myth endorsement scores are higher for participants in the moral obligation condition compared to the moral ideals condition. However, this effect is reversed when participants are required to complete a post-test only, as opposed to completing both a pre-test and a post-test.

A 2 X 2 ANOVA for sexual harassment importance demonstrated that there is no evidence to suggest that the relationship between training condition and sexual harassment importance changed as a function of testing condition \((F (1,125) = .55, p > .05)\). The main effect of training condition did not significantly predict sexual harassment importance when controlling for testing condition \((F (1, 125) = 2.34, p > .05)\). In follow-up analyses using ANCOVA, training condition did not significantly predict importance for the pre-test/post-
test group when controlling for the post-test only condition ($F (1, 51) = .00, p > .05$). A $t$-test was then computed and there were no significant differences between the moral ideals and moral obligation conditions for the post-test only group ($t (1, 77) = 1.86, p > .05$). Stouffer’s $z$-method also yielded non-significant results ($z = -1.24, p > .05$).

Training cynicism was only measured after training, and thus, only a one-way ANOVA was computed. There is no evidence to suggest that training condition predicts cynicism ($F (1, 125) = 1.58, p > .05$).

For training motivation, a 2 X 2 ANOVA showed that there is no evidence to suggest that the relationship between training condition and motivation changed as a function of testing condition ($F (1, 125) = .76, p > .05$). The main effect for training condition did not significantly predict motivation when controlling for testing condition ($F (1, 125) = 1.31, p > .05$). An ANCOVA demonstrated that training condition did not significantly predict motivation for the pre-test/post-test group when controlling for the post-test only condition ($F (1, 47) = .05, p > .05$). As seen in a $t$-test, there were no significant differences between the moral ideals and moral obligation conditions for the post-test only group ($t (1, 77) = 1.68, p > .05$). Follow-up analyses using Stouffer’s $z$-method were also not significant ($z = -1.33, p > .05$).
Regarding reporting self-efficacy, a 2 X 2 ANOVA showed that there is no evidence to suggest that the relationship between training condition and reporting self-efficacy changed as a function of testing condition \( F(1, 125) = .43, p > .05 \). The main effect of training condition did not significantly predict reporting self-efficacy when controlling for testing condition \( F(1, 125) = .14, p > .05 \). An ANCOVA demonstrated that training condition did not significantly predict knowledge of sexual harassment law for the pre-test/post-test group when controlling for the post-test only condition \( F(1, 47) = .43, p > .05 \). As seen in a t-test, there were no significant differences between the moral ideals and moral obligation conditions for the post-test only group \( t(1, 77) = .85, p > .05 \). Follow-up analyses using Stouffer’s z-method were also not significant \( z = -1.05, p > .05 \).

For bystander intervention self-efficacy, a 2 X 2 ANOVA showed that there is no evidence to suggest that the relationship between training condition and bystander self-efficacy changed as a function of testing condition \( F(1, 125) = .23, p > .05 \). The main effect for training condition did not significantly predict bystander self-efficacy when controlling for testing condition \( F(1, 125) = .27, p > .05 \). In follow-up analyses using ANCOVA, training condition did not significantly predict bystander self-efficacy for the pre-test/post-test group when controlling for the post-test only condition \( F(1, 47) = 2.39, p > .05 \). A t-test was then computed and there was no significant differences between the moral ideals and moral obligation conditions for the post-test only group \( t(1, 77) = 1.75, p > .05 \). Fortunately, Stouffer’s z-method yielded significant results \( z = -2.21, p < .05 \). Unfortunately, these results were not in the hypothesized direction and the moral obligation condition had higher scores \( M = 2.30 \) than the moral ideals condition \( M = 2.09 \). Thus, Hypothesis 3 is partially supported because sexual harassment myth endorsement was significantly higher in the moral obligation condition compared to the moral ideals condition, while all other affective measures were not.

**Overall Training Effectiveness**

Paired samples t-tests were computed for each variable to examine the overall effects of training. For participants who completed both a pre-test and a post-test, there was a significant change in scores for reporting self-efficacy \( t(1, 46) = 7.38, p < .05 \) and bystander intervention self-efficacy \( t(1, 46) = 5.58, p < .05 \) from before the training to after
the training. Unfortunately, reporting self-efficacy decreased from $M = 2.57$ to $M = 1.72$ and bystander intervention self-efficacy decreased from $M = 2.27$ to $M = 1.95$ after training which is the opposite of the desired direction.

**PROMOTION/PREVENTION DISPOSITION EFFECTS**

Follow up analyses were conducted to determine if promotion/prevention disposition (or one’s regulatory focus) acted as a moderator, interacting with the training condition to predict the outcomes. Promotion/prevention disposition as measured by the event reaction questionnaire significantly interacted with the training condition to predict sexual harassment importance ($F(1, 48) = 2.84, p < .05$). As seen in Figure 3, participants with a promotion focus disposition have higher scores for sexual harassment importance when in the moral ideals training (a match for their disposition) compared to those in the moral obligation condition. However participants with a prevention focus disposition see a reversal of this effect, where they have higher scores for sexual harassment importance when in the moral obligation training (a match for their disposition) compared to those in the moral ideals training. A significant interaction was also found when predicting training cynicism ($F(1, 48) = 2.41, p < .05$), displayed in Figure 4. In general, participants with a prevention focus disposition have higher scores for training cynicism when in the moral ideals training (a mismatch for their disposition) compared to those in the moral obligation training. However participants with a promotion focus disposition see a reversal of this effect, where they have higher scores for training cynicism when in the moral obligation training (a mismatch for their disposition) compared to those in the moral ideals condition.

As seen in Figure 5, those with a promotion focus disposition have higher scores for bystander self-efficacy when in the moral ideals condition (a match for their disposition) compared to those in the moral obligation condition. However participants with a prevention focus disposition see a reversal of this effect, where they have higher scores for bystander self-efficacy in the moral obligation condition (a match for their disposition) compared to those in the moral ideals condition. A significant interaction was also found when predicting training satisfaction ($F(1, 48) = 3.25, p < .05$), displayed in Figure 6. In this interaction, participants with a promotion focus disposition had higher scores for training satisfaction.
Figure 3. Regulatory focus moderating the training and sexual harassment importance relationship.

Figure 4. Regulatory focus moderating the training and training cynicism relationship.
Figure 5. Regulatory focus moderating the training and bystander self-efficacy relationship.

Figure 6. Regulatory focus moderating the training and training satisfaction relationship.
when in the moral ideals condition (a match for their disposition) compared to those in the moral obligation condition. On the other hand, participants with a prevention focus disposition had higher scores for training satisfaction when in the moral obligation condition (a match for their disposition) compared to those in the moral ideals condition.

Regulatory focus was also measured by the promotion/prevention scale. With this scale, training cynicism is the only outcome predicted with the significant interaction between promotion/prevention disposition and training condition (F(1, 48) = 5.06, p < .05). Figure 7 shows that cynicism was high for the moral ideals training condition and for promotion-focused participants in the moral obligations condition (a mismatch). Prevention-focused participants in the moral obligation training had the lowest ratings of training cynicism.

**Figure 7.** Promotion/prevention focus moderating the training and training cynicism relationship.
CHAPTER 4

DISCUSSION

Overall, this study had mixed findings. In terms of hypothesis testing, the moral obligation condition had more positive reactions than the moral ideals condition, providing evidence against Hypothesis 1. Cognitive learning was higher in the moral obligation condition than the moral ideals condition when testing for knowledge of sexual harassment law. However, there were no significant differences of cognitive knowledge between training conditions when testing for knowledge of sexual harassment organizational policies. Thus, Hypothesis 2 was not supported. In regards to affective learning and Hypothesis 3, participants had significantly lower sexual harassment myth endorsement scores in the moral ideals condition compared to the moral obligation condition as hypothesized. Contrary to expectations, participants had higher levels of bystander self-efficacy in the moral obligation condition compared to the moral ideals condition. On the other hand, there were no significant differences in affective learning on the cynicism, training motivation, sexual harassment importance, and reporting self-efficacy scales between the moral ideals and moral obligation conditions. Overall, training had little effect on the variables, with the exception of reporting self-efficacy and bystander intervention self-efficacy, which actually decreased after training. However, regulatory focus disposition moderated the relationship between training condition and sexual harassment importance, training cynicism, bystander intervention self-efficacy, and training satisfaction.

Interesting results were found when examining the match between promotion/prevention disposition and training conditions. When looking at the event reaction questionnaire, match between disposition and training condition led to improvement in a number of outcomes. Although results did not provide much support for the hypotheses, findings that take into account disposition provide additional support for regulatory focus theory.
IMPLICATIONS

The hypothesis testing results of the current study imply that to obtain better reactions to sexual harassment training, the focus of training should be more on the negative consequences of a work environment with harassment than the positive benefits of a respectful work environment. While this finding contradicts regulatory focus theory, these results could be attributed to influences besides the theory, such as the implementation of the theory. Regardless, trainee’s reactions are of importance considering that they are often used to measure training effectiveness (Twitchell, Holton, & Trott, 2000) and are sometimes the only measure organizations use to measure training effectiveness (Morgan & Casper, 2000). Although there are mixed opinions on the relationship between training reactions and training success (McKeachie, 1997), research acknowledges that training reactions have benefits, such as training reputation (Brown, 2005; Kraiger, 2002). Due to the importance of training reactions and the contradictory results of this study, future studies should continue to examine this outcome in the context of sexual harassment training to gain better understanding of what influences positive and negative reactions.

Trainees may learn more about law if negative consequences are emphasized as the main focus of training. The moral ideals training had some definitional aspects of the law incorporated into it, while moral obligation training had constant messages regarding consequences of the law throughout the training. Because the moral obligation condition had significantly higher scores on knowledge of sexual harassment law than the moral ideals condition, the repetitive messages about the legal consequences of sexual harassment in the moral obligation condition may have influenced the focus of the participants and thus increased cognitive learning in that condition. Although the government holds organizations responsible for employee’s knowledge of sexual harassment law, caution should be taken when designing sexual harassment training that emphasizes the law, despite these results. Because Regulatory Focus theory is well supported in research, a replication of this study with a stronger manipulation might suggest knowledge of sexual harassment law is equivalent or better in the moral ideals condition.

Because affective learning had mixed results in this study, it is beneficial to examine the patterns of significance for the affective scales to begin identifying underlying reasons for these results. The affective learning scales that were not significantly different across training
conditions were cynicism, training motivation, and sexual harassment importance. These results may have occurred because these scales measure deeply-rooted attitudes that cannot easily be manipulated by training. For example, training cynicism is typically based on experience and reflects not only how the participant feels about the training, but also how they feel about the organization as a whole. Also, training motivation is not just an individual characteristic, but rather, is influenced by extraneous variables as well (i.e., manager and peer support). In addition, sexual harassment importance can depend on past experiences of the participant. For example, if they or someone that they know has been sexually harassed, they are more likely to consider sexual harassment as a very important issue.

The two scales that had significant results were sexual harassment myth endorsement and bystander intervention self-efficacy. Both of these scales capture not only attitudes, but rather, attitudes that lead to action. For example, if one is high in sexual harassment myth endorsement, they are more likely to partake in the action of blaming the victim. Also, if one is high in bystander self-efficacy, they are more likely to engage in the action of stopping the harasser. Both of these constructs may be more malleable than the other constructs because they relate to actions and participants may feel that they have control over changing their behavior. Thus, one possible implication of the results is that sexual harassment training may be more effective when the intent is to change attitudes that lead to behavior, rather than deeply-rooted attitudes. This aligns with research by Lubove (1997) that argues for sexual harassment training to be more focused on behavior as opposed to beliefs or awareness.

The decrease in reporting self-efficacy/bystander intervention self-efficacy and all other non-significant results from the time before training to the time after training reflect that the training was not effective. A possible explanation for this could be attributed to the significant interactions between regulatory focus and training condition to predict training cynicism, sexual harassment importance, bystander intervention self-efficacy, and training satisfaction. This supports research that suggests regulatory focus is more dispositional than situational. Therefore, a participant that had a dispositional prevention focus before the experiment may experience backlash effects of training that is promotion focused, and vice versa. If training has a promotion or prevention focus that is contradictory to an individual’s personality, it may make it more difficult for them to engage in the training or may lead to negative outcomes. This finding may generalize to employees working in organizations as
well. Because of this, it might be helpful for organizations to determine if their employees have a predisposition to be either promotion or prevention focused, and match them to sexual harassment training accordingly. However, it may not be practical or feasible for organizations to implement two different kinds of sexual harassment training, so another option would be to develop training that will be effective for both types of dispositions.

**LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH**

The results of this study should be considered in light of its limitations. The use of a student sample is a common criticism of organizational research, and this study does employ a student sample. This is particularly relevant in this study because the participants, in general, had little or no work experience. Therefore, participants may have had difficulty putting themselves in the perspective of an employee participating in sexual harassment training. This artificiality may have been enhanced because the training was presented form the perspective of a fictitious company. Therefore, items in the survey that mentioned Acme Inc. may have had muted results because participants did not feel that they actually belonged to that company as real employees would. For example, an item in the cynicism scale was “Acme, Inc. pretends to care more about sexual harassment training than they do.” Students pretending to be an employee for this company for less than an hour may not have a deep understanding of an organization’s values regarding sexual harassment compared to actual employees that are embedded in an organization. For one, the socialization process that occurs in the workplace is different than what students are used to, because employees are often surrounded by their coworkers for about 40 hours a week. Because students do not spend this much amount of time with their classmates, they may not be able to imagine how detrimental constant exposure to sexual harassment can be. Also, working in teams is more common in the workplace than in an educational environment, and because of this, relationships in the workplace can be more prone to sexual harassment. Employees face a bigger threat than students when it comes to sexual harassment because it can affect how much money they make, their job stability, etc.

Because of this, student participants may not have felt as motivated to learn about sexual harassment compared to an employee sample. Research has shown that adult participants are more likely to identify sexual harassment in a scenario compared to college
students (Baker, Terpstra, & Cutler, 1990; Fitzgerald et al., 1988; Frazier, Cochran, & Olson, 1995; Reilly, Lott, & Galloghy, 1986). Thus, future studies may want to utilize upper division undergraduate students that are likely to have more work experience, although using employee participants would be ideal. Also, because research shows that men are more likely to have negative training outcomes after sexual harassment training (Bingham & Scherer, 2001), it is suggested that participants only be men to better understand and prevent these negative training outcomes.

The way in which participants were collected for this study also acts as a limitation. Originally, male participants were supposed to be recruited through the undergraduate psychology department participant pool. Unfortunately, the participant pool was relatively slim in the semester that the study took place. Because of this and time constraints of this study, an undergraduate psychology of learning class was targeted for recruitment. The implications of this were that participants now included males and females. It was anticipated that this might decrease the power of the study, since the backlash effects found in previous studies were found in males. Fortunately, analysis showed that there were no significant differences in outcomes between males and females on all measures.

Another methodology limitation is the training itself, both because of its format and because of the manipulation. The format of the training was computer-based, which may have resulted in participants being more disengaged in learning than they would have been compared to classroom training. However, this format of training was selected for this study because organizations often use computer-based formats for sexual harassment training due to feasibility and cost. Because organizations are not likely to switch to more costly classroom training, it is important to understand what maximizes effectiveness in computer-based training.

In regards to the manipulation of the training, the moral ideals and moral obligation distinction may not have been strong enough. The findings that only two out of the six manipulation check questions were significant support this idea. A potential explanation for this could be attributed to the frequency in which the manipulation was presented within the training. Because certain aspects of sexual harassment training must be covered by law, about half of the PowerPoint slides in each condition were identical. The manipulations of the conditions might have had more influential effects if it was present in more than half of
the content of the training. Also, because the training itself was limited to about thirty minutes, the manipulations may not have had enough time to have the intended effects on participants.

A stronger manipulation of the training conditions is recommended for future studies. For one, the experimenter can include the manipulation in their instructions to participants so that participants are susceptible to either the moral ideals or moral obligation conditions from the moment the study begins. For example, experimenters for the current study would start off by telling students to imagine that they are working for an organization called Acme Inc. and saying, “As is common for lots of large companies in the U.S., you have been asked to go through sexual harassment awareness training as part of your new employee orientation.” In future studies, the experimenter can instead say “Because your company cares about respecting you and your well-being, you have been asked to go through sexual harassment awareness training as part of your new employee orientation” if participants are in the moral ideals condition. Or, the experimenter can say “Because your company cares about protecting themselves from the law, you have been asked to go through sexual harassment awareness training as part of your new employee orientation” if participants are in the moral obligation condition. Jargon that is more representative of the moral ideals and moral obligation concepts can also enhance the manipulation. For example, the moral ideals condition can better emphasize that the intent of the training is to educate employees about sexual harassment because the organization is concerned about the well-being of the group. In addition, the moral obligation condition can better emphasize that the purpose of training is to prevent sexual harassment from occurring by instilling fear in employees because the organization does not want to be held liable for an individual’s actions. The language selected needs to evoke more positive emotions and a positive perspective of the organization in the moral ideals condition whereas the moral obligation condition needs to evoke more negative emotions and a negative perspective of the organization. Also, more time can be allocated to training to allow for more content to be presented that reinforces the training condition.
CONCLUSION

In summary, sexual harassment training effectiveness is not examined as much as it should be, despite evidence showing that there are potential backlash effects (Bingham & Scherer, 2001). This study attempted to apply regulatory focus theory to sexual harassment training to determine if participants had better learning outcomes if the training was framed to focus on the benefits of promoting a respectful work environment (moral ideals) or if it was focused instead on preventing the legal consequences of sexual harassment (moral obligation). It was found that the moral ideals condition had significant and positive affective learning outcomes in regards to sexual harassment myth endorsement, but all other variables were either not significant or favoring the moral obligation condition. It is recommended that future studies alter the manipulation of the present study to better reflect regulatory focus theory. This can be done by dedicating more time to the training to increase the frequency of the manipulation and also using vocabulary that better demonstrates the emotions behind moral ideals and moral obligation. Another fruitful avenue to explore is determining the effects of mixed training (both moral ideals and moral obligation) across promotion/prevention disposition types. It is necessary to pursue this topic further to better understand the theoretical underpinnings of sexual harassment training effectiveness to prevent negative outcomes of training.
REFERENCES


APPENDIX

SURVEY ITEMS
Knowledge about Sexual Harassment Law:
Sexual harassment is a violation of
a) U.S. federal laws only.
b) specific state laws only.
c) both U.S. federal and some state laws. *
d) the U.S. Constitution.

It is illegal to discriminate against people on the basis of membership in certain, specially designated ________________________, such as race, gender, and age.
a) protected classes *
b) shielded factions
c) constitutional groups
d) federal groups

All of the following are true about sexual harassment EXCEPT:
a) it can occur between members of the same sex
b) it has to be shown to be intentional *
c) it does not have to be face to face (for example, it can be through e-mail)
d) it can occur between employees and customers

The type of harassment that involves an exchange of sexual favors for a bribe or avoided threat is called
a) a hostile work environment.
b) quid pro quo harassment. *
c) voir dire.
d) retaliation.

If a court rules that a person has indeed been subjected to sexual harassment, who can be held financially responsible?
a) only the organization as a whole.
b) only the harasser as an individual.
c) both the organization and the harasser. *
d) either the organization OR the harasser, but not both.

A hostile work environment is one in which the conduct has been shown to be hostile according to:
a) the victim’s perspective.
b) a reasonable person’s perspective. *
c) the judge’s perspective.
d) the victim’s coworkers’ perspectives.

Pervasiveness in a hostile work environment has to do with:
a) how severe the actions are.
b) how unwelcome the actions are.
c) how offensive the actions are.
d) how frequent the actions are. *
Riley accuses AJ of sexual harassment, and as a result, AJ does not recommend Riley for promotion. This is best described as an example of:

a) retaliation. *
b) a hostile work environment.
c) a prima facie case of harassment.
d) quid pro quo harassment.

All of the following are true about retaliation EXCEPT:

a) close friends of the complainant are protected.
b) job applicants are protected if they complain of harassment.
c) it is covered by Title VII of the Civil Rights Act.
d) filing a meritless claim disqualifies the complainant from protection. *

In this state, sexual harassment awareness training is

a) strongly encouraged but not required.
b) completely optional for all employees.
c) legally required for supervisors. *
d) legally required for all employees.

Knowledge about Organizational Policies about Sexual Harassment:

Who is legally responsible for putting the organization on notice about potential harassment?

a) Supervisors only *
b) Victims and supervisors

c) Witnesses and victims

d) Victims only

During an investigation of potential harassment, which of the following best describes the confidentiality of the investigation?

a) The identity of the victim is completely confidential.
b) The identity of the harasser is completely confidential.
c) The identities of everyone involved are completely confidential.
d) The identities of everyone involves are kept as confidential as possible. *

An investigation of potential harassment has shown the claim to be without merit. What recourse does the complainant have if s/he disagrees with the results of the investigation?

a) Joining a class-action lawsuit ONLY if it is brought by someone else
b) Filing a claim with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission *
c) Suing the company under criminal instead of civil law

d) Appealing the investigation
If the investigation of potential harassment indicates the claim is valid (that is, the conduct was indeed harassment), what must the organization do to be in compliance with anti-harassment laws?

a) Fire the harasser(s)
b) Transfer the victim away from the harasser
c) Take reasonable care to correct the harassment *
d) Transfer the harasser away from the victim

A victim of hostile work environment sexual harassment does not complain about the harassment to anyone at the company, despite policies, posters, and training encouraging employees to report any such behavior. The victim wishes to file a lawsuit against the company. How is a court likely to rule?

a) The company is not liable, because the victim did not take advantage of opportunities to report the harassment. *
b) The company is liable, unless it can demonstrate that the harassment did not occur.
c) The company is not liable, because a reasonable person would complain of the harassment to at least one person.
d) The company is liable, because reporting the harassment is not required of victims.

### Sexual Harassment Myth Endorsement:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Myth</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Neither agree nor disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>As long as a woman doesn’t lose her job, her claim of sexual harassment shouldn’t be taken too seriously.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sometimes women make up allegations of sexual harassment to extort money from their employer.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women should not have to tolerate sexual harassment in the workplace.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Most women are flattered when they get sexual attention from men with whom they work.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women can usually stop unwanted sexual attention by simply telling the man that his behavior is not appreciated.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women who claim that they have been sexually harassed are usually exaggerating.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexual harassment complaints must be taken seriously.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women who are caught having an affair with their supervisor sometimes claim that it was sexual harassment.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Most women secretly enjoy it when men “come on” to them at work.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women can usually stop unwanted sexual attention from a co-worker by telling their supervisor about it.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Training Cynicism:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Neither agree nor disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Acme, Inc. pretends to care more about sexual harassment training than they do</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If training was not legally required, Acme, Inc. would have no sexual harassment training</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acme, Inc. only conducts sexual harassment training to make sure they’re covered legally</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Training Motivation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Neither agree nor disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I am willing to exert some effort to learn about sexual harassment issues</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am motivated to learn the material in sexual harassment training</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am interested in improving my understanding of sexual harassment</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Sexual Harassment Importance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Neither agree nor disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sexual harassment is an important workplace issue.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I care a great deal about preventing sexual harassment in my workplace.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The issue of sexual harassment in the workplace means a lot to me.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The issue of sexual harassment in the workplace is more important to me than many other workplace issues.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexual harassment is an important workplace issue.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Harassment Reporting Self-Efficacy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How confident are you that you…</th>
<th>Not at all confident</th>
<th>Moderately confident</th>
<th>Completely confident</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>…know whom to contact to report potential sexual harassment?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>…know under what circumstances you should report potential sexual harassment?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>…could handle a coworker who confided in you about experienced sexual harassment?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>…could find appropriate information about how to report potential sexual harassment?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>…know the limits of confidentiality associated with reporting potential sexual harassment?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Bystander Intervention Self-Efficacy

In the items that follow, the “target” is the person who is potentially being harassed, and the “harasser” is the person who is potentially engaging in harassing behavior.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>In a situation of potential harassment, how confident are you that you would…</th>
<th>Not at all confident</th>
<th>Moderately confident</th>
<th>Completely confident</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>…recommend that a target avoid the harasser?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>…covertly try to keep the harasser away from the target?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>…advise the target to report the harassment without your involvement?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>…redirect the harasser away from the harassing conduct?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>…remove the target from the situation?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>…interrupt the incident?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>…report the incident to management after it is over?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>…accompany the target when s/he is reporting the incident?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>…confront the harasser after the incident?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>…confront a harasser while the harassment is ongoing?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>…publicly encourage the target to report the conduct?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>…try to get the other observers to denounce the conduct?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Training Satisfaction

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Perception</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Neither agree nor disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I was satisfied with the usefulness of my company’s sexual harassment training</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I felt my company’s sexual harassment training was not relevant to me</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall, I was satisfied with my company’s sexual harassment training</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Demographics:

- **Gender**: Male  Female
- **Marital Status**: Single  Married  Divorced  Widowed
- **Age**: ______ years
- **Part-time work experience**: ______ years
- **Full-time work experience**: ______ years
- **What industry are you in?**: __________________
- **What is your job title?**: __________________
- **Have you had any workplace training on sexual harassment before today?**: Y  N